

## Excerpt from Interview with Robert Kirby

# VRK-A-L-2010-046

Interview date: October 8, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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Kirby: "In the next month I learned that we have several prisoners in our compound that are anticommunist but will not divulge themselves because they will be dead. This came hard to me one morning as I prepared to take head count. I waved to the tower and proceeded to open the first gate. I moved and opened the second gate to be confronted immediately by a prisoner, grabbing me around my legs, squatting low and yelling something I didn't understand. In a second, I looked up to see several POWs running towards me. I was frantically trying to move with the prisoner around my leg, grasping for the gate. Two POWs grabbed the prisoner around the legs and were tugging him and beating him with their feet. My guard leveled his rifle at us and yelled some words in Korean. I noticed a letup in the skirmish and that the rest of the POWs held back. This gave me ample time to get myself and the prisoner out of the gate and under the protection of my guard. The major sent a reinforcement to

rescue the situation and the prisoner. He would be taken to a secluded place for questioning as to his wishes of turncoating. I soon learned that this wasn't out of the ordinary. They had had these before and worse incidents, including suicide squads jumping GIs in unexpected and opportune times to harass troops and keep us on edge."