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U.S. Flier Who Fled Prison Camp Tells of Ordeal

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**Depicts Torture After Being
Shot Down Near Border of
Laos and North Vietnam**

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SAN DIEGO, Calif., Sept. 13 (AP)—A German-born United States Navy flier who escaped from a North Vietnamese prison camp said today that American prisoners had been beaten, shot at and hung upside down from trees, with ants put on their faces, in a campaign of harassment.

The apparent aim of the captors, said Lieut. (jg.) Dieter Dengler, was to persuade the prisoners to sign statements condemning United States actions in Vietnam.

Lieutenant Dengler, 28 years old, of Pacifica, Calif., described his experiences at a news conference.

He was rescued July 20, six months after his plane crashed on his first flight over North Vietnam. He said he had crawled from the wreckage and evaded the enemy for a day, then was captured.

He escaped after six days, was captured again, then escaped anew with six other prisoners June 29 and spent 23 days walking through the jungle to safety.

Handcuffed in Camp

In captivity, the lieutenant said, he was marched through villages to a prison camp, where "we were locked up in crude wooden blocks and handcuffed." He added: "We were taken out and beaten for no reason. They hang you upside down on a tree for five hours and put ants on your face."

In the mornings, he said, prisoners were shot at as they ran to a latrine. None were hit, he added, "but they came pretty close."

The flier said that so far as he knew no prisoners yielded to pressure to condemn the United States.

He said that his captors had no knowledge of Geneva Convention regulations regarding the treatment of prisoners and that he saw no representatives of the International Red Cross.

The pilot has been hospitalized at the naval hospital here since July 27, and appeared to have regained most of the 59 pounds he lost while in prison and during his escape.

He announced that he planned to wed a research assistant at Stanford University Laboratory, Marina Adamich of Belmont, Calif.

Lieutenant Dengler's remarks were censored at times when they touched on areas of security. A Navy spokesman said that the flier's information had been "extremely helpful" in training pilots to fly in Vietnam.



Associated Press Wirephoto

Lieut. Dieter Dengler and mother at news conference

Had West German Passport

SAN DIEGO, Sept. 13 (UPI)

In his first meeting with newsmen since his escape, Lieutenant Dengler said today that he carried his former West German passport when he was captured to explain his German accent. He became a naturalized United States citizen Aug. 3, 1960.

He said he had been captured by the pro-Communist Pathet Lao forces on the Laotian side of the border and marched through villages until his captors reached the prison camp.