

Statement of Cpl Joseph Spano RA 44 109 538
made this 18 day of March 1964

A F F I D A V I T

I was captured on 19 May 1951 by the Chinese Communist Forces, but I do not know the exact place of capture. The day I was captured, we started a march of from two to three weeks to a camp that we nicknamed Camp Pines, but I am unable to remember the exact number of days that we were forced to march, and I never did know the location of the camp. We marched for about three weeks, but since I was wounded and could not see, I do not know how far we traveled or where. I do not know routes of march. I believe there were approximately 250 Americans involved in my first march. I did not see any deaths, but I heard that two Americans died enroute and I do not know what caused their deaths as I could not see. I do not know the names or the units of the victims. Very little food and no clothing, shelter or medical treatment were received during the march. I could not see, and one guard hit me with a rifle because I could not keep up and many other prisoners were mistreated also. The guards were Chinese Communist Forces and from the sound, there were quite a few, but due to my not being able to see, I cannot estimate the number.

I do not know location, direction or distance traveled to Collecting Point or Camp. Arrived approximately May 1951 and departed approximately June 1951, but I do not know or remember the exact dates. Americans, Turks and British were in the camp, but I do not know the total number of any nationality. Guard personnel was made up of Chinese Communist Forces but I do not know how many were present. I do not know the number of deaths, dates or causes at Camp Pines, which I guess was a collecting point as we only remained there two or three weeks. I do not know names, units, etc. of victims of atrocities, including beatings, torture, etc. I do not know the number of buildings in the camp, their size or shape, as I could not see and was not permitted to go outside the building that I was placed in. I cannot describe terrain, rivers, or mountains, locations of roads, railroads, bridges etc., as I could not see. Food was very poor as we were fed only some kind of sorghum and no rice. Meager medical attention and shelter was provided in some instances. No clothing was issued that I know of. To my knowledge none of the POW's were physically mistreated at this camp, but they did try to indoctrinate us with their Communist propaganda.

About July 1951 we started on a march that lasted for approximately three weeks and we arrived at a camp that we called Mining Camp. I do not recall any POW's dying on the march to this second camp, but the treatment and food at Mining Camp was bad and men were dying of starvation at the rate of from four to six a day. Food was about the same as at the first camp, except for the fact that about once a week they would give us a little rice, too. Minor medical treatment was given but no clothing was furnished. At this camp we did have fair shelter, but no heat, windows or bedding. Some POWs were mistreated by being tied up and over worked.


I finally was sent to the Pak Tong Hospital, for I had gotten in such bad condition that I could not walk. Here they gave me better food and some medical care, and after about a week I was recovered enough so that they sent me on to Camp No. 2. I arrived at Camp No. 2 about October 1951 and remained there until I was released 28 August 1953. The treatment at Camp No. 2 was a little better than at either of the other two camps that I was in, since we did get some winter clothing and better food and medical care. We were punished by making us stand out in the cold without sufficient clothing or removing our clothes and placing us down in holes in the ground.

I remember once when two POWs were carried off into the woods and terribly beaten up but we never saw any prisoners being beaten. I do not know the names of any POW that died or were mistreated other than the beating and cold treatment that I mentioned above.


JOSEPH SPANO

Sworn and subscribed to before me, the undersigned, this date
at Army Reserve Training Center (USAR Advisor Group) Tampa, Florida

18 March 1954


ROGER R FORLEY
CAPTAIN TC
Summary Court