

Col. Risner Talks About the POW Years

Philippines

One of the best known American war prisoners released by the North Vietnamese told a news conference today that the years in prison "developed a comradeship and an integrity that may never be found again amongst men, a comradeship that went beyond service."

Air Force Colonel Robinson Risner of Oklahoma City, Okla., a prisoner for 7½ years, said he doubted whether his fellow prisoners would have to make more than "a minor adjustment" to life outside prison.

FIRST

Risner and another prisoner released Monday, Marine Lieutenant Colonel John H. Dunn of Jacksonville, Fla., also held for over seven years, were the first two newly released men to meet officially with reporters at Clark Air Base, center for Operation Homecoming.

Both Risner and Dunn

spoke slowly and clearly in answer to reporters' questions. There was no hesitation in Risner's voice when, in reply to one question, he said: "As far as I know, every man who has been imprisoned in North Vietnam supports the President and his policies."

Asked to comment on statements and interview attacking U.S. policy, attributed to American POWs in Hanoi over the years, Risner said: "We should consider the source of those statements; they were made from prison in North Vietnam."

REPLY

A reporter said some of the statements were attributed to Risner himself. He replied: "At no time during my imprisonment have I failed to support my President and my country and my President's policy, and never have I been prouder of my country and my President."

Risner made an opening statement, then questions were permitted during the 15-minute press session.

Both men were in uniform, Risner with five rows of ribbons and decorations on his chest.

In his introductory statement, Risner said, "the tough, and hard and smart" men who came back with him from Hanoi "found it difficult to maintain their composure when they saw the sincerity of the people waiting out on the flight line for us to land."

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