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THURSDAY

SURRENDER IS ISSUE

Bucher Suspect, Court Declares

By RICHARD MEYER

CORONADO, Calif. (AP)—A navy court told Cmdr. Lloyd M. Bucher yesterday that he was suspected of violating naval regulations in surrendering the intelligence ship Pueblo to the North Koreans. He was informed by the five admirals constituting a court of inquiry that anything he said from now on might be used against him in court-martial proceedings.

But Bucher, obviously shaken by the statement, said he would continue to give "full details" of the Pueblo's capture and of the 11 months he and his 81 surviving crewmen spent in captivity.

Bucher resumes his testimony today—the first anniversary of the seizure of the ship by the North Koreans.

YESTERDAY BUCHER, 41, described how he gave up the Pueblo with her guns still covered. The court recessed briefly after he told of "receiving" aboard a party of North Korean riflemen about 20 miles off Wonsan Harbor and how they prodded his crew to sitting positions on the deck.

After their return, his face tensed as he heard counsel for the Navy, Capt. William Newsome declare: "Commander Bucher, it is my duty to tell you that facts revealed in this court of inquiry render you to be suspect of a violation of USNR Article 0730."

A court of inquiry is not a military trial, like a court-martial, but only an investigative hearing. Nevertheless Bucher's status suddenly had changed from "a party to the court" to "suspect." Shortly after the crew's release just before Christmas at least two Navy admirals had called Bucher and his men heroes.

WITH A Brooklyn twang, Newsome quoted regulations: "The commanding officer

shall not permit his command to be searched by any person representing a foreign state nor permit any person representing a foreign state nor permit any other personnel under his command to be removed from that command by such a person, so long as he has the power to resist."

Bucher's civilian attorney, E. Miles Marvey, immediately demanded, "Commander, at the time the North Koreans first set foot on your ship did you any longer have the power to resist?"

"No, I did not," Bucher answered.

"Commander Bucher remains fervent in his desire to tell this court the full details," Harvey said.

The Navy, through yesterday, had raised these points against Bucher:

1. That he failed to compre-

hend fully the possibility of an attack.

For example:

Q. Vice Admiral Harold G. Bowen Jr.: "Did you ever consider an attack and what you would do?"

A. Bucher: "No sir, I never considered I would ever be attacked on this mission. It never occurred to me . . . It never occurred to me nor did it cross my mind that I would ever be put in the position I found myself in that afternoon."

2. That his men weren't issued small arms.

Bowen: "How about small arms for the men?"

A. Bucher: "Small arms were issued in drills in port and under way, but not on the day of capture."

3. That Bucher waited too long to order destruction of classified equipment and documents.

Bucher testified that he waited until after one boarding attempt by the North Koreans, a sea chase and their first salvo of cannon fire before giving the order.

Until then, Bucher said, he had only ordered preparations for destruction.

He said at least two mattress covers full of documents fell to the Communists.

4. That Bucher failed to realize his incinerator was too small to burn all the documents and he didn't sail into water deep enough for jettisoning them.

"It was a complete oversight on my part," Bucher said.

5. And finally, that he surrendered 81 of the most classified items on his ship when he turned over his men.

Q. Newsome: "Isn't it true that in deciding to surrender your vessel you also decided to surrender some of the most classified, items on your ship, your personnel?"

A. Bucher: "Yes sir, that's right."

Bucher, in the first four days, raised these points against his superiors:

1. That they sent him on a dangerous intelligence mission without giving him the explosives he asked for to destroy secret equipment in case he had to.

2. That they failed to meet his request for adequate mounted cannon and gave him two machine guns instead, along with the mount for a third gun he never received.

3. That he messaged repeated pleas for help when he was at

tacked — even directed messages to the White House — without getting any aid.

4. That at no time did he receive radioed advice or guidance from superiors about what action to take.

5. That he was given inadequate communications, both on the ship in the form of an Army telephone system insufficient in emergencies, and between his ship and Naval headquarters in Japan because of improper radio frequency synchronization.

"I had no confidence in it," he testified.

6. That he was given a steering system that failed more than 60 times in two weeks before it was finally repaired in Hawaii.

Bucher's testimony yesterday gave new details about the shelling of the Pueblo and indignities to her men when they were finally taken on shore in North Korea.

He said the crewman killed, Fireman Duane Hodges, of Creswell, Ore., was hit by a cannon shell that exploded in his upper thigh and abdomen.

"He could not possibly have survived even if there had been a team of expert surgeons aboard," Bucher said.

He added that Hodges died after emergency first aid as the Pueblo was being escorted to port.

Bucher and two other of his men were wounded.

Bucher said he was struck several times by his captors when he refused to disconnect the Pueblo's radio or uncover her guns.