

The Weather

Today—Cloudy, chance of rain, high near 75. Thursday — Cloudy and warm. Probability of rain is 40 per cent today and 20 per cent tonight. Temp. range: Today, 54-74; Yesterday, 52-67. Details on Page D7.

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N. Korea Claims It

Washington Post

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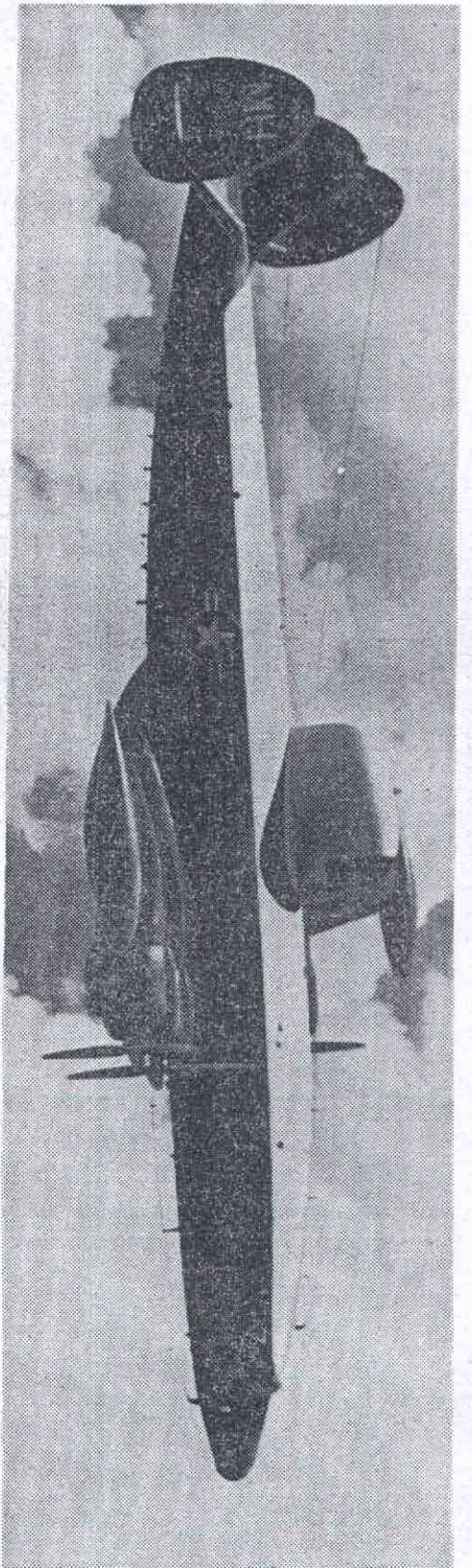
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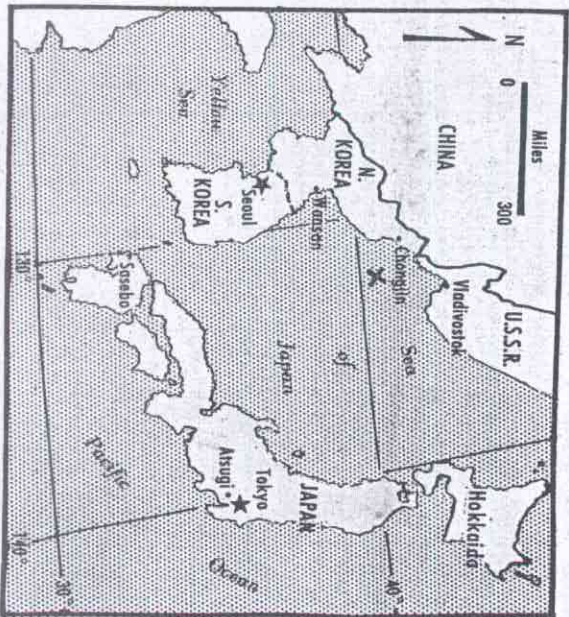
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Downed U.S. Plane



A Navy EC-121 reconnaissance plane like this one is missing. Radar bubbles are atop the fuselage and radio antenna are below.

Defense Dept. Photo



April 16, 1969
Cross locates where U.S. plane came down.

The Washington Post

'Spy' Craft And 31 Lost, U.S. Admits Hunt Is Pressed For Survivors In Sea of Japan

By George C. Wilson
Washington Post Staff Writer

North Korea claimed yesterday that it had shot down "with one stroke" an American reconnaissance plane that had intruded into its air space.

The Pentagon took note of the report and said Navy EC-121 reconnaissance plane with 31 men aboard was missing from a mission over the Sea of Japan off North Korea's coast.

A giant plane and ship search was launched for survivors. There was no sure sign of them as of early last night.

The apparent downing of an American plane confronted President Nixon with an international incident grimly resembling the capture of the USS Pueblo by North Korea last year.

However official Administration spokesmen refrained from emphasizing the parallels, evidently trying to damp down what appeared to be a fresh crisis in Asia.

The Pentagon, for example, gave out far fewer details about the missing plane than did Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen (R-Ill.) after a White House briefing.

Daniel Z Henkin, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, would not confirm that North Korea had shot down the plane. He said only that an EC-121 "has been missing since about midnight Monday, EST."

Dirksen, however, said that Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's assistant for national security affairs, told him that two North Korean planes jumped the unarmed reconnaissance plane.

"Evidently the radar checks

showed that the Migs took off a half hour before the attack," Dirksen said.

The Senator added that the American plane "supposedly" flew no closer than 60 miles to the North Korean coast, adding: "I am a little hesitant about those figures after the Pueblo."

The EC-121 flew in an elliptical pattern off the North Korean coast. Dirksen said there had been at least seven or eight such missions—about two a month.

The Defense Department, in a statement at 5 a.m., said "the aircraft commander was under orders to approach no closer than 50 nautical miles to the coast of North Korea."

That statement, by stopping short of a flat assertion that the plane was that far out at all times, provided a hedge in case the pilot had strayed off course.

See PLANE, A6, Col. 1

Downed plane was an elaborate Pueblo-type electronic "ear" and transmitter. Page A6.

PLANE, From A1

The EC-121 is crammed with six tons of electronic equipment and bulges with radars and antennas for analyzing another nation's air defense and eavesdropping on radio communications.

A lumbering military version of the Lockheed Super Constellation passenger liner, the 300-mile-an-hour EC-121 would be no match for North Korean fighters like the Mig 21, which can go 900 mph.

As the Pueblo did, the EC-121 went out on its ferreting mission alone. It was not escorted by American fighter planes.

Again as on the Pueblo mission, the Navy evidently was relying on the freedom of international air space to protect its reconnaissance plane.

Henkin said yesterday that he knew of no last-minute calls for help from the EC-121. Presumably, the plane's elaborate equipment would have given its crew some warning of the Korean fighters speeding toward the EC-121.

Migs could have shot down the EC-121 with either air-to-air missiles or guns. The translation of the North Korean broadcast about the incident made it sound like a missile

as the "one-stroke" weapon.

The broadcast said: "The air force unit of our People's Army scored a brilliant achievement by immediately intercepting and shooting down with one stroke a reconnaissance plane of the U.S. imperialist aggressor troops at a high altitude at 1350 this afternoon."

The broadcast indicated that the downing of the aircraft was in retaliation for American fire along the demilitarized zone separating North and South Korea.

Provocation Charged

The Americans, the broadcast charged, sent the plane "deep" into North Korean airspace "and perpetrated the serious provocation of acts of reconnaissance while simultaneously perpetrating a serious provocation along the military demarcation line."

Specifically, the North Koreans accused the United States of "grave acts of provocation" southwest of "Woldi-san in the eastern sector of the front line and in the Sobang-san area of the western sector of the front line, firing hundreds of shots from heavy weapons at our side in each place."

In contrast to the restraint that Pentagon and other official spokesmen showed toward these statements and the downing of the plane itself, Chairman L. Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.) of the House Armed Services Committee told reporters it was time "to let them have it"—even if it meant using nuclear weapons.

Before making that statement, he had heard Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird testify on the Pentagon budget in closed session. Chances are the fate of the EC-121 crew was discussed Rivers said afterward there is "no doubt" that all 31 men are dead.

The Navy search continued last night. The Pentagon reported that a P-3 patrol plane had spotted wreckage in the Sea of Japan that could have been from the EC-121. But there was still no sign of survivors.

The reconnaissance plane—capable of staying in the air as long as 20 hours—took off for its mission from the Atsugi, Japan, Naval Air Station at 7 a.m. Tuesday, Japan time. It

was reported missing at 2 p.m., Japan time.

Selig S. Harrison of the Washington Post Foreign Service reported from Tokyo that a giant search was started shortly afterward in the Sea of Japan. Air Force rescue planes combed a three-square-mile area, dropping flares as night fell, he reported.

A spokesman for the 36th Air Rescue Squadron at Tachikawa Air Base north of Tokyo said that two C-130 planes combing the area had "pretty well pinned down" the search zone shortly before midnight. They illuminated with 12 parachute-dropped flares, each of which lit up an area a quarter of a mile around.

Radio Beeps Picked Up

The spokesman said that crew members on the EC-121 had radio sets. The search team picked up radio beeps, raising hopes that some of the crew had survived, Harrison reported.

At the Pentagon, officials said 26 aircraft were involved in the search. Crew members on the search planes reported seeing "dim lights," the Pentagon said, "but there was no confirmation of any survivors."

The search area is about 95 miles southeast of Chongjin, North Korea, at coordinates of 41.12 degrees north and 131.48 degrees east.

The EC-121 carries three 20-man life rafts. The sea was moderate at the time the plane is believed to have gone down, with waves of about four feet. The wind also was moderate, coming from the northeast at a velocity of about 10 to 16 knots. But the air and sea were cold, with air temperatures estimated between 42 and 48 degrees and the sea slightly higher.

Besides the 26 aircraft searching the Sea of Japan for survivors, the Navy has dispatched the frigate Dale and the destroyer Henry W. Tucker from Sasebo Naval Base, Japan, to assist in the search.

Those ships left port yes-

terday and were scheduled to arrive on the scene early today.

Pentagon officials gave no details yesterday on the purpose of the reconnaissance plane's mission. Nor was there any statement regarding involvement of any intelligence agency in the flight.

The National Security Agency was deeply involved in the ill-fated Pueblo mission. Two Marines on that ship were supposed to translate intercepted North Korean radio messages.

The Pentagon said that one of the 31 men in the EC-121 was a Marine. He, too, may have been a translator.

The EC-121, on such missions as the one flown along North Korea, usually concentrates on figuring out the capability of warning radar. Standard practice is to record the radar frequencies so that equipment can be designed for jamming them in a crisis or war time situation.

Another standard mission of the EC-121 is to listen in on radio communications. The altitude of the plane enables the equipment to pick up such radio signals at long distances and also pinpoint the locations of the stations.

The Pentagon said the EC-121 was flying a routine reconnaissance track similar to hundreds of missions which have been flown over inter-

national waters in that area since 1950."

North Korea claims territorial limits of 12 miles. Cmdr Lloyd M. Bucher of the Pueblo said he was 16 miles from the nearest North Korean land when his ship was hijacked Jan. 23, 1968. The Navy, according to a spokesman, observes the 12-mile claimed limit in flights along North Korea.

Some Navy leaders believe the North Koreans seized the Pueblo for propaganda. Others went so far as to speculate the seizure was designed to touch off another Korean war.

There no doubt will be similar theories concerning the EC-121. And Congressional critics are expected to ask some of the same questions about the EC-121 as they did the Pueblo—such as why the ferret airplane mission was undertaken when relations between the United States and North Korea were so tense.

Military leaders put a high priority on such missions because they often detect gaps in a nation's radar warning system—showing where it would be vulnerable for a surprise air strike.

The United States and Russia have been probing each other's air defense with such planes for years. The RB-47 was a plane the U.S. used for this electronic intelligence role.

President Maintains A Deliberate Calm

By Carroll Kilpatrick and A. D. Horne
Washington Post Staff Writers

Faced with its first serious international crisis, the Nixon Administration maintained a deliberate calm yesterday over the loss of an American reconnaissance plane off North Korea.

No crisis language was used by any official spokesman to describe the incident and no official declared that the

plane had been shot down, as North Korea claimed.

Herbert G. Klein, the Administration's Director of Communications noted that there was an absence of a "crisis atmosphere" and said President Nixon was "calm but determined." Klein added that it is better "not to jump until you know where you are jumping."

North Korea, it was learned last night, has requested an armistice commission meeting with the United States at Panmunjom, presumably to discuss its charges that the plane had violated its airspace. As of last night, it was understood that the United States had not yet decided whether to hold such a meeting.

The answer may come after President Nixon meets this morning with the National Security Council. White House Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said he expected the incident to be discussed at the NSC meeting, which he said had been scheduled prior to loss of the plane.

Ziegler said that Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, awoke Mr. Nixon early yesterday with news of the latest conflict with the North Koreans.

He declined to say what time.

See **DIPLOMACY, A7, Col. 1**

DIPLOMACY, From A1

The two men later met at 7:30 a.m. in the President's office to map strategy. They quickly decided, it was understood, to maintain an outward calm and to seek further facts.

They were confronted not only with an attack on an American craft, as the Johnson Administration was in January 1968 with the capture of the Pueblo, but they also recognized that this time there was little hope for the crew.

Nevertheless, the State Department already had instructed American embassies in Moscow, Seoul and Tokyo to request all possible help in searching for the downed plane.

Later in the morning, Secretary of State William P. Rogers summoned Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin to his office to request help from Soviet ships in the area.

"We felt, perhaps, that the Soviet Government could be of assistance in light of the possibility that they may have vessels in the area," State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said.

Asked if any protest was lodged with the Soviet Ambassador, he said there was not "in any sense" a protest.

Since Emory C. Swank, deputy chief of mission in the American Embassy in Moscow, several hours earlier

Nixon 'Calm but Determined' Over New Korean Incident

had called on G. M. Kornienko, head of the American desk in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, requesting rescue help, there was speculation that Rogers had a more extensive talk with Dobrynin.

Directing the Administration's activities at the State Department were Rogers, Deputy Secretary Elliot L. Richardson, Under Secretary for Political Affairs U. Alexis Johnson, former Ambassador to Japan; Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs William P. Bundy and Deputy Assistant Secretary Ambassador to South Korea.

The Administration's decision to maintain an outward calm hit two snags. First, Senate Minority Leader Everett M. Dirksen (R-Ill.) reported more about a White House briefing on the incident than had been expected. And at the Pentagon Vice Adm. John R. Colwell, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, told reporters that North Korea was guilty of "a clear-cut case of international piracy and a breach of international law."

Dirksen reported, and the White House later denied, that some crewmen had been spotted in the water. He also said the aircraft had "flown seven previous missions and was flying an elliptical pattern" 60 miles off the North Korean coast when Migs attacked it.

House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.) said the

Administration had "several options," but he declined to say what they were. And he said nothing would be decided until more than "fragmentary information" was obtained.

What diplomatic or military options were open remained unknown last night, and Dirksen said there was no discussion of retaliation at the White House meeting.

Despite the strong language Mr. Nixon used in the campaign about the Pueblo incident, he was moving cautiously last night.

Only one member spoke on the House floor about the incident. Rep. E. Ross Adair (R-Ind.) told the House that the United States must "make it crystal clear to the North Koreans through a response that they understand that their provocations will not be tolerated."

However, after a House Armed Services Committee meeting, Chairman L. Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.) said he did not believe nuclear weapons would be needed to bring "this crowd to its knees, but if it requires that, let 'em have it."

On the Senate side, comment was divided. Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) of the Foreign Relations Committee said he could not "conceive of any kind of information these planes could pick up that warrants the kind of risk they are taking."

Sen. Gordon Allott (R-Colo.) said the North Koreans apparently believed "that they had established a very successful precedent with the Pueblo incident. We must find ways immediately of coping with these acts of international piracy and aggression."

On the other hand, Sen. Gale McGee (D-Wyo.) said it was important "that we don't lose our cool and set in motion irretrievable actions which could heighten the crisis."

U.S. Releases Names Of Lost Plane's Crew

United Press International

The Defense Department yesterday identified the following crewmen aboard the Navy reconnaissance plane which North Korea claimed to have shot down:

Aviation Electronics Technician L. C. Bernie Joel Colgin, no home town.
Aviation Machinist Mate Chief Marshall Harry McNamara, no home town.
Communications Technician 3C. Phillip David Sundby, Camas, Wash.
Communications Technician 2C. Fredrick Arthur Randall, no home town.
Communications Technician Chief Richard Earl Smith, Phoenix, Ariz.
Communications Technician 1C. John Howard Potts, Forest, Miss.
Lt. Denis Baird Gleason, no home town.
Aviation Electronics Technician 1C. James Leroy Roach, no home town.
Communications Technician 3C. Gary Ray du Charm, no home town.

Lt. Robert Frank Taylor, no home town.
Aviation Electronics Technician 2C. Timothy Harlan McNeil, Pleasanton, Calif.
Aviation Electronics Technician 1C. Richard Edson Sweeney Jr., no home town.
Aviation Machinist 1C. Dallard Franklin Conners Jr., no home town.
Aviation Electronics Technician 3C. Gene Kenneth Graham, Northville, Mich.
Lt. JG Joseph Richard Ribar, no home town.
Aviation Electronics Technician 2C. Dennis Joseph Horrigan, Framingham, Mass.
Aviation Electronics Technician 1C. Stephen Curtis Charlier, no home town.
Lt. John Halleck Singer, no home town.
Aviation Machinist Mate 2C. Louis Francis Balderman, Philadelphia.
Other names were withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Cool Manner Contrasts With Pueblo Response

By Bernard D. Nossiter
Washington Post Staff Writer

In his quest for the Presidency last year, Richard Nixon spoke strongly of the Pueblo seizure by North Korea a little more than a year ago.

"When respect for the United States of America falls so low that a fourth-rate military power like North Korea will seize an American naval vessel on the high seas," he declared, "it is time for new leadership . . . I pledge to you the American flag is not going to be a doormat for anybody at home or abroad."

There was no belligerence, however, in his response yesterday to the loss of an American plane—presumably shot down by the North Koreans. Instead, the President was playing it cool—far cooler than had been the case with the Johnson Administration in the

face of the Pueblo provocation.

Throughout the Government, there was a deliberate effort to tone down emotions over the loss of the Navy spy plane. Officials were cautious and avoiding shoot-from-the-hip judgments. Instead, the stress was on rescue operations, finding and saving any survivors.

This was all in sharp contrast with the sound and fury that followed hard on the seizure of the Pueblo in January, 1968. Almost immediately, President Johnson dispatched—with dramatic fanfare—asea-air task force, led by the nuclear carrier Enterprise, to the Sea of Japan where it stood menacingly, 150 miles east of the North Korean port of Wonsan.

See FLASHBACK, A6, Col. 1

Cool Manner Differs From '68 Response

FLASHBACK, From A1

Secretary of State Dean Rusk was saying within 24 hours that the incident was a "matter of utmost gravity." The next day, he said he wouldn't object to calling it an "act of war."

The National Security Council was hustled into session. At Panmunjom, Rear Adm. John V. Smith, the American representative on the Mixed Armistice Commission, was telling his North Korean opposite number that the capture was an "act of piracy" and "the most heinous crime since your barbaric invasion" of South Korea in 1950. Maj. Gen. Pak Chung Kuk told Smith to "stop screaming like a frightened mad wolf."

Two days after the Pueblo was taken, President Johnson called up 14,787 air re-

servists—some of whom are just now being released from service.

In the end, the rhetoric and bluster signified nothing. The Soviet Union quietly passed the word that the North Koreans meant what they said, that the crew could come home when the United States apologized. Eleven months later, Washington did so and the men were freed.

Yesterday, officials were not eager to draw parallels. But as one said, "It would be surprising if we had learned nothing from the futile gestures of the Pueblo affair." And so the Government was following Mr. Nixon's inaugural prescription to "lower our voices."

If Mr. Nixon's manner so far is vastly different from Mr. Johnson's, he is still left with the same broad ques-

tions raised by the Pueblo affair.

Was this trip necessary? If intelligence must be gathered, should Navy planes and ships cruising near hostile shores do the job in an era of reconnaissance satellites?

If Sen. Everett Dirksen (R-Ill.) understood his White House briefing properly, Navy planes have been flying such missions only in the last four months. Apart from the spy satellites, the United States maintains a powerful radar station on Paengyong-do Island, one mile south of the 38th parallel that divides the two Koreans. Why, then, a Navy radar plane? Are these ventures another instance of what Gen. David Shoup has called the bitter fight between services to carve out roles far themselves?

In an age when warplanes fly a mile in three seconds, how realistic are restraining flight orders based on the territorial limits established by a cannon shot?

Finally, how interested is the Pentagon here and its opposite number in Pyongyang in cooling off their overheated relations? Just last month, the American military concluded Operation Focus Retina in South Korea, a war game involving 7000 airlifted paratroopers and South Korean forces. With monotonous regularity, North Korean guerrillas slip across the demilitarized zone into South Korea. Each regularly accuses the other of provocative acts and generals from both sides can glare at each other for hours without talking as they did when the Mixed Armistice Commission last met at Panmunjom on April 10.