

Homemade Radio Code Used in H-Bomb Search

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The commander of the Navy force that recovered the hydrogen bomb off Spain disclosed yesterday that he used homemade code to confuse any foreigners monitoring radio transmissions.

Rear Adm. William S. Guest told Pentagon newsmen: "We

called the weapon Robert, for one of my sons, and the parachute Douglas, for the other."

A Russian trawler was in the Mediterranean area, the Admiral explained, "and could have monitored our voice transmissions."

Guest discussed the recovery after receiving the Distinguished Service Medal from Secretary of the Navy Paul H. Nitze.

Guest was praised for his "leadership and tenacity" as head of the special Task Force 65, which retrieved the nuclear weapon April 12 off the southern coast of Spain.

The bomb had drifted by parachute into the ocean after its mother B-52 collided with a tanker in flight in January.

Guest said the Navy is analyzing the operation for any information that could be applied to future recoveries.

From the experience, he said, "I would prefer to use unmanned devices for all recovery operations." The bomb was actually brought up by a television-controlled unmanned device, but manned submersibles such as the Alvin and Luminaut were essential in locating and keeping visual contact on the bomb.