

## N. Korea Quotes Bucher as Giving Spying Details

Came to Probe Navy, Army, Says Agency

By SEHYON JOH

TOKYO (AP) — North Korea quoted the skipper of the USS Pueblo as saying Thursday his mission before the ship's seizure last January was to spy on the North Korean navy and to "determine the electromagnetic activities of the Korean People's Army including all radar signals intercepted."

A broadcast dispatch of the official Korean Central News Agency said Cmdr. Lloyd M. Bucher told foreign newsmen at a news conference in North Korea that his job also was to test the reaction of North Korea "to the presence of an intelligence collection ship, such as ours, which was operating within their coastal waters."

U.S. officials never have made any secret of the fact that the Pueblo was on an intelligence-gathering mission when it was seized and its 83-member crew made prisoners off the port of Wonsan last Jan. 23. One crewman subsequently died.

But Washington has insisted that the vessel was operating legally well outside North Korea's claimed 12-mile limit when seized and has said there is no evidence that it had penetrated North Korean waters at any time during its mission.

### DEMANDS REJECTED

The United States has offered to let a neutral commission determine the Pueblo's position at the time of its seizure. But pending such an inquiry it has rejected North Korean demands for an admission of guilt and an apology.

To bolster its version of the incident, the State Department late Thursday took the unusual step of making public what was described as the text of the secret orders to Bucher prior to the mission. These set the closest permissible approach to North Korea at 13 nautical miles—nearly 15 statute miles.

Bucher was told to observe maneuvers of any Soviet naval

vessels if his ship was discovered by them while en route to his operations area off Korea.

Commenting on the remarks attributed to Bucher, the State Department in Washington said the Pueblo was under specific instructions to stay at least 13 miles off the North Korean coast.

"We continue to have no rea-

son to believe that the captain of the Pueblo violated the 13-mile instructions in his sailing order."

North Korea claims a 12-mile limit. The United States generally recognizes a three-mile limit.

The North Korean news agency said Bucher admitted that the Pueblo violated North Korean territorial waters 17 times before she was captured off Wonsan in northern North Korea.

It quoted Bucher as saying the vessel was also assigned "to report the discovery of anything new which would be for military interest to the U.S. naval operations."

"Should any of these missions be successfully accomplished," Bucher was reported to have said, "they would be of military value to U.S. naval operations."

The agency said Bucher made the following statement in a reply to a written question by foreign newsmen who asked whether he "felt repentant:"

### INTELLIGENCE SHIP

"The Pueblo was designed and built as an intelligence gathering ship, which operated under the cover of an oceanographic research ship. Pueblo was commissioned in May of 1967 in Bremerton, Wash., and commenced operations in September the same year. Upon arrival in Japan I was informed that the first operations of the ship would be conducted in the coastal waters of the east sea of Korea.

"As mentioned, Pueblo was built as an intelligence collection ship and our capabilities

extended to three principal areas. First we were capable of collecting electromagnetic intelligence, including the interception of radar and conventional radio signals. Special equipment such as superheterodyne receivers and oceanographic equipment were installed for this purpose. A special detachment of 30 men under L. Harris were also aboard for electronic intelligence.

"Secondly, we were capable of making visual and photographic intelligence of targets of military interest.

"Thirdly, we were capable of making oceanographic measurements and had two oceanographers assigned aboard who could take ocean condensity, salinity, temperatures and plankton population measure-

ments of military interest.

"For the operation to be conducted in the east sea of Korea we were assigned four specific tasks. First we were to determine the naval activities of the Korean People's Army. Secondly, we were to determine the electromagnetic activities of the Korean People's Army including all radar signals intercepted. Thirdly, we were to determine the reaction of the Democratic People's Republic of Ko-

rea to the presence of an intelligence collection ship, such as ours, which was operating within their coastal waters. Lastly we were to report the discovery of anything new which would be of military interest to the U.S. naval operations.

#### NAVAL OPERATIONS

"Should any of these missions be successfully accomplished they would be of military value to U.S. naval operations."

The Lt. Harris referred to in

the statement apparently is Lt. Stephen I. Harris, son of Mrs. Robert T. Harris of Melrose, Mass. Lt. Harris' name is on the Pentagon's list of crewmen held prisoner by the North Koreans.

The North Korean news agency also quoted Bucher as saying at one point in the news conference: "The eight months since their (the crewmen's) detention was a period long enough to take measures for their repatriation."

The agency said that as the newsmen were about to leave the news conference, Bucher summoned them back to express an "ardent desire."