

# Scrap Heap Claims Last Spy Ship

Washington Post Foreign Service

TOKYO, Nov. 18—The Banner, sister ship to the Pueblo and last of the electronics intelligence ships in the U.S. Navy, was quietly decommissioned last Friday at the nearby Yokosuka naval base.

Navy sources said that a formal decommissioning ceremony was conducted without fanfare and that scrap operations began yesterday following removal of radar and other communications equipment. The Pentagon had announced in September that it planned to take the ship out of service.

The Banner was the only electronics intelligence vessel known to be operating after North Korea's seizure of the Pueblo in January, 1968, and the slashing attack on the Liberty by Israeli jets and torpedo boats off the Sinai coast in June, 1968.

Informed sources said that it has stayed on the high seas since the Pueblo capture, avoiding close-in missions near the Korean, Soviet or Chinese coasts.