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Pueblo-North Korea Bjt Insert 140

WASHINGTON Pueblo-North Korea Bjt A027-51WX insert after 10th graf: evening.

Meanwhile, defense officials said the decision against sending warplanes to help the beleaguered Pueblo was made by Navy commanders in the Pacific. They said the field commanders made no request to Washington authorities and no instructions were transmitted from the capital to the ship.

The officials said Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara was called about the Pueblo at 12:23 a.m. EST Tuesday. That was nine minutes after the ship's radio went off the air, according to the Pentagon timetable, and about half hour after the ship sent its call for help as it was being boarded.

Defense officials told newsmen they were unable to say when Washington was first notified that the Pueblo had been approached by the gunboats. They were unable to say also why help was not sent to the Pueblo by the field commanders.

The Pueblo's captain, Cmdr. Lloyd M. Bucher, 38, was described by the officials as operating entirely on his own.

One of 11th graf

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