

Pueblo Officer Says He Tricked Captors

By United Press International

SAN DIEGO, Dec. 26—The navigational officer of the Pueblo disclosed today that he used fabricated charts to foil an attempt by the North Koreans to make it appear the intelligence ship was captured inside North Korean waters.

The executive officer of the Pueblo, Lieut. Edward R. Murphy Jr., asserted the ship was well outside North Korea's territorial waters when she was seized. But he said he had inserted so many errors in the charts he was forced to make, that it would be apparent they were false.

The Navy also disclosed that the ship's commander and four crew members were wounded

Continued on Page 8, Column 3

during the boarding. One later died.

Charts and ship's logs were presented at a news conference and Lieutenant Murphy showed discrepancies that would have had the Pueblo moving at 2,500 nautical miles an hour.

The charts had been made public by the North Koreans with the intent of showing that the Pueblo was inside the 12-mile limit, and Lieutenant Murphy had disclosed that he had prepared most of them with the help of a Communist Army officer "who didn't know a thing about navigation."

Meanwhile, high Administration officials in Washington disclosed today that the Pueblo's skipper, Comdr. Lloyd M. Bucher sustained shrapnel wounds in the buttocks during the seizure of the ship last Jan. 23. At the Balboa Naval Hospital here, where the 82 men were undergoing medical examinations, Commander Bucher was described as having fever and chills resulting from a respiratory condition and did not appear at the news conference.

Other Wounds Disclosed

Four other members of the crew were said to have been wounded when the ship was boarded.

Capt. Vincent Thomas, the chief information officer for the commanding officer of the Pacific fleet, read a series of radio transmissions sent from the Pueblo on the day she was seized, reporting that a sub-chaser first had come alongside and then three PT boats with several MIG's overhead followed.

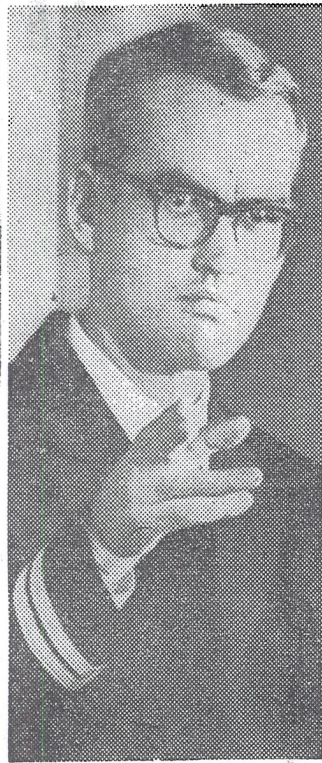
The radio messages sent from the Pueblo showed that the North Koreans opened fire on

the ship about an hour and 20 minutes after intercepting it. Four men were wounded, including Seaman Duane Hodges, who subsequently died.

Captain Thomas said that at that moment the Pueblo was at least 16 miles off the mainland and coastal islands of North Korea and was lying dead in the water, making water temperature and other checks.

He said that the radio reports had shown that the sub-chaser signaled the Pueblo to "heave to or we will fire" and the intelligence ship signaled back. "I am in international waters."

The messages showed that almost three hours passed from



Associated Press
Lieut. Edward R. Murphy Jr. during news conference.

the first interception until the ship was boarded at 2:32 P.M. Korean time, when the radio operator signaled, "Going off air now, destroying all gear."

The chief of the naval hospital at San Diego said that all of the men of the Pueblo had undergone physical mistreatment, but that it did not appear that any of them were permanently injured.

Statement of Naval Chief

He said all members of the crew showed the effects of malnutrition and that one man lost 70 pounds during his 11 months in captivity.

Captain Thomas said that Commander Bucher would not be available for questioning until he appeared at a court of inquiry expected to be convened in about two weeks. Crew members who have finished their debriefings will be given leave, but must stay in the

San Diego area pending the inquiry.

The news conference was opened with the reading of a statement by Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations. He said an analysis of the alleged evidence of the Pueblo's intrusion into North

Korean waters "revealed a number of inconsistencies in the documents, which further confirmed our official conclusion that the commanding officer had followed his orders."

"So long as the crew was held captive, we could not make this analysis public without risking grave harm to the men and jeopardizing negotiations for their release."

The Pueblo's secret orders, as outlined today, directed the ship to stay at least 13 miles off the North Korean coast and to operate at least 500 yards from any Soviet ship. The secret orders required surveillance of Soviet ships, but cautioned on not interfering with Soviet exercises. According to messages received from the Pueblo, her closest approach was 13 nautical miles from the North Korean coast. At the time of her seizure, the Pueblo was 16 miles from the coast.

Asked whether the approach of the sub-chaser had caused any alarm, Captain Murphy said no, because there always were a lot of different type ships in the area.

On Classified Materials

State Department officials in Washington said that the Communists had obtained some code books and other classified materials when they seized the Pueblo. But, the officials said, this only "momentarily" inconvenienced the United States and was easily rectified.

Sources said the operational codes were purely regional command arrangements and had nothing to do with top secret basic security codes.

The men of the Pueblo arose at dawn today to undergo their physical examinations and interrogations about the 11 months they spent in North Korean captivity.

The crewmen who arrived here on Tuesday were under orders to maintain public silence about details of their

treatment by North Koreans, but some of their relatives who greeted them passed along bits of information.

Irene M. Roose of Trenton, Neb., said her son, Quartermaster 2 Cl. Alvin H. Plucker, told her he had been kicked and beaten and threatened with death.

"They made him sit in a chair all day long with his legs straight, his head bowed and his hands clasped," Mrs. Roose said. "If he moved, he got beaten. He had to sit in this cramped position and then they ordered him to stand. If he staggered, they beat him."

Once, she said, his captors fired machine gun bullets around him and then asked if he was frightened. When he answered, "No," they resumed firing. He finally said he was afraid and they stopped, she said.