

25 January 1969

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Pueblo 2nd NL

By RICHARD B. MEYER

Associated Press Writer

CORONADO, Calif. AP - The top intelligence officer at headquarters for the U.S.S. Pueblo in Japan was not aware the North Koreans threatened "determined counter measures" against intelligence ships before the Pueblo sailed, the Navy said Saturday.

He also said he didn't know of any effective way to destroy secret material such as the Pueblo carried, then or now, the Navy said.

Capt. Thomas L. Dwyer, assistant chief of staff for intelligence in Japan when the Pueblo was seized a year ago by North Korea, was a witness Friday and Saturday at closed-door sessions of a court of inquiry.

A Navy spokesman said at a briefing when the sessions recessed for the weekend that Dwyer was the top intelligence officer at the command to which the Pueblo reported in Japan.

Counsel for Cmdr. Lloyd M. Bucher, skipper of the Pueblo when she was captured, "used ample opportunity to question" Dwyer in the closed session, the spokesman said.

A brief summary of his nonsecret remarks said: "Dwyer said he had not seen" the threat in two broadcasts intercepted two days before and on the day the Pueblo sailed on an intelligence mission off the coast of North Korea.

"They monitor that stuff fairly regularly out there," the spokesman said, "but there's so much of it spewing out, it's tough to stay on top of it."

The broadcasts 5th graf A2671A

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He also said he did not know of any effective way to destroy secret material such as the Pueblo carried, then or now, the Navy said.

Capt. Thomas L. Dwyer, assistant chief of staff for intelligence in Japan when the Pueblo was seized a year ago by North Korea, was a witness Friday and Saturday at closed-door sessions of a court of inquiry.

A brief summary of his non-secret remarks said: "Dwyer said he had not seen" the threat in two broadcasts intercepted two days before and on the very day the Pueblo sailed on an intelligence mission off the coast of North Korea.

The broadcasts, the Navy said, declared that "as long as the U.S. imperialist aggressor troops conduct reconnaissance by sending spy boats our naval ships will continue to take determined counter measures."

The Pueblo was captured by North Korean gunboats 12 days after it sailed from Japan.

The Navy's summary did not indicate whether Dwyer said what action he might have taken had he known of the broadcasts.

Dwyer also was reported as saying "he was not aware of any effective destruct devices at that time or now, although he understood one was in the offing."

Bucher, the Pueblo's skipper, told the court earlier that the Navy deferred his request for explosive devices to destroy secret items due to "time and money" problems and his men had to use axes and sledgehammers. The North Koreans got some secret things, Bucher said, without being specific.

A Navy spokesman said telegrams "very much in support and praise of" the Pueblo's skipper have poured into the amphibious training base where the court hearings are being held.

There have been 160 to 170 wires to the base or Bucher's home, the spokesman said, and many were like the one that said "our hearts were very saddened by the headlines and articles . . . covering your hearing and perhaps your court-marshal sic by the Navy. You and your crew shtuld be shown a hero's weldome. . . ." It was signed by nine couples in Aurora, Ill.

The spokesman said the court received about 100 wires, too, and that they did not praise the Navy. "Many castigate the court for court-martialing Cmdr. Bucher," the spokesman said, "but this is not the case."

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 Pueblo NL insert

CORONADO Pueblo NL A267LA insert after 12th graf: case."

In Washington, Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, chief of Naval Operations, commented, "The Navy is searching for facts—not scapegoats."

He appealed to Americans "to be patient, not to prejudge, and to have full trust and confidence" that the inquiry is "being carried out by experienced men of great integrity who have truly the welfare of the country at heart."

Moorer said he and the Navy we

e troubled that the inquiry "has been widely misinterpreted."

The court: 12th graf

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The court of inquiry is not a trial but a fact-finding hearing conducted by five admirals with power to recommend measures ranging from court-martial to decorations.

Bucher's closed-door testimony Friday, the Navy said, was almost entirely secret. He did say, however, a spokesman reported, that his crew made hundreds of tries to let Americans know their "confessions" of spying were phony—but most of the attempts, in letters and photographs, were intercepted by North Koreans and followed by severe beatings.

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