

29 JAN 69
1015' PPSX5660
PMS PUEBLOBY ROBERT M. BURNETT
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

CORONADO, CALIF. (AP)-- THE FORMER SKIPPER OF A VESSEL SIMILAR TO THE CAPTURED INTELLIGENCE SHIP PUEBLO SAYS HE BELIEVES IN THE IDEA OF THE UNARMED SPY SHIP, BUT THAT HE WOULDN'T WANT TO TAKE ONE NEAR RED CHINA OR NORTH KOREA AGAIN.

CMDR. CHARLES R. CLARK, WHO WAS COMMANDER OF THE PUEBLO'S SISTER SHIP BANNER, TOLD A NAVAL COURT OF INQUIRY WEDNESDAY OF HARASSMENT SIMILAR TO THAT EXPERIENCED BY THE PUEBLO, AND SAID HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT HEAVY ARMAMENT WOULD BE USEFUL IN SUCH A SITUATION.

CLARK'S TESTIMONY FOLLOWED THAT OF ADM. FRANK L. JOHNSON, COMMANDER OF NAVAL FORCES JAPAN AT THE TIME OF THE PUEBLO CAPTURE A YEAR AGO. BY NORTH KOREA.

JOHNSON SAID THAT HE HAD NO FORCES UNDER HIS DIRECT CONTROL WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN SENT TO HELP THE PUEBLO. HE ALSO TESTIFIED THAT IT DID NOT APPEAR TO HIM THAT THE PUEBLO'S TWO .50-CALIBER MACHINE GUNS PROVIDED "SIGNIFICANT DEFENSE CAPABILITY."

AFTER RECOUNTING REPEATED INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT BY SOVIET SHIPS WHILE OFF THE COAST OF NORTH KOREA AND RUSSIA, CLARK SAID THAT HE NOW HAS DOUBTS WHETHER SUCH OPERATIONS WERE WORTH THE CHANCE OF CAPTURE.

ASKED BY E. MILES HARVEY, CIVILIAN ATTORNEY FOR PUEBLO SKIPPER LLOYD BUCHER, IF HE BELIEVED THE RESULTS OF SUCH SPY VENTURES JUSTIFIED THE RISK, CLARK REPLIED:

"YES, I DID. I AM NOT SO SURE SINCE THE PUEBLO, BUT PRIOR TO THAT TIME..."

CLARK SAID HE "STILL BELIEVES THE BASIC CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION IS GOOD."

"I WOULD BE PLEASED TO TAKE THE BANNER UP WHERE WE DID MOST OF OUR OPERATING. BUT I WOULD NOT WANT TO GO NEAR NORTH KOREA OR RED CHINA," HE SAID. HE ADDED THAT IN MISSIONS FOLLOWING THE CAPTURE OF THE PUEBLO HE WAS ALWAYS MORE THAN 70 MILES FROM THE COAST.

CLARK WAS ASKED BY CAPT. WILLIAM NEWSOME, COUNSEL FOR THE COURT, IF THE QUESTION OF RISK HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH HIM BEFORE HE TOOK THE BANNER ON THE SPY MISSIONS.

"THE GENERAL FEELING WAS THAT THE RISK WAS NOT VERY HIGH BECAUSE EVERYTHING WE WERE DOING WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW, WAS IN THE OPEN AND ON THE HIGH SEAS WHERE ANY SHIP HAD THE RIGHT TO BE," CLARK ANSWERED. "OUR ACTIONS WERE COMPLETELY OVERT."

QUESTIONED BY NEWSOME ABOUT HIS UNDERSTANDING OF SUPPORT MEASURES WHICH WOULD BE AVAILABLE IF HIS SHIP RAN INTO TROUBLE, CLARK SAID THAT HE KNEW THAT DUE TO THE DISTANCE INVOLVED, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO GET HELP QUICKLY.

"ON MISSION, OUR AIR SUPPORT WAS ON 15-MINUTE ALERT AND FLYING TIME WAS ABOUT AN HOUR," HE SAID.

"DO YOU FEEL THAT THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN OF HELP," ASKED NEWSOME.

"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY MARGINAL," SAID CLARK. "THERE WERE MANY POSSIBLE SITUATIONS WHERE HELP WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL, AND OTHERS WHERE IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN."

CLARK SAID THAT HE BELIEVES THE BANNER WAS ADEQUATELY DESIGNED AND EQUIPPED FOR ITS MISSION. HE SAID THE SHIP WAS ASSIGNED TO OPERATE IN THE VICINITY OF OTHER COUNTRIES OR PORTS WHERE U. S. VESSELS DO NOT GENERALLY OPERATE.

"WE WERE TO GATHER INFORMATION, NOT ONLY INTELLIGENCE, BUT INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEATHER, OCEAN CONDITIONS AND OTHER THINGS," HE SAID.

CLARK OUTLINED TALKS HE HAD WITH BUCHER REGARDING THE ARMAMENT ABOARD THE PUEBLO AND THE BANNER.

"I FELT MUCH BETTER NOT HAVING MACHINE GUNS ABOARD. IN THE CONCEPT OF AN UNARMED SHIP, THE IDEA OF HAVING MOUNTED GUNS MIGHT BE PROVOCATIVE.

"MY IDEA WAS THAT THE GUNS WERE NOT VERY USEFUL. I DIDN'T LIKE THEM," CLARK SAID.

"DID BUCHER SAY WHAT HIS SENTIMENTS WERE ABOUT THE GUNS?" NEWSOME ASKED.

"I KNOW HE WAS UNHAPPY WITH THEM AND DID NOT WANT THEM", CLARK ANSWERED. TWO .50 -CALIBER MACHINE GUNS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY INSTALLED ON THE PUEBLO.

CLARK TESTIFIED THAT HE BELIEVED HE HAD AN EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF CLASSIFIED MATERIAL ON BOARD THE BANNER AND THAT HE DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE MEANS TO DESTROY IT WHILE WITHIN THE 100-FATHOM LINE.

HE SAID THAT EXPLOSIVE DEVICES FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE MATERIAL WERE CONSIDERED BUT THAT HE REJECTED THEM AS BEING IMPRACTICAL.

HE SAID THE PUBLICATIONS COULD BE DESTROYED ONLY BY THROWING OVERBOARD IN WEIGHTED BAGS IN WATER MORE THAN 100-FATHOMS DEEP, AS PRACTICAL MATTER.

BURNING WAS NOT PRACTICAL BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN TOO LONG, HE SAID.

CLARK SAID THAT OPENING SEA VALVES TO SCUTTLE THE SHIP WOULD HAVE TAKEN ABOUT 20 MINUTES AND THAT IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN "A FEW HOURS" FOR IT TO SINK.

THE BANNER'S EXPERIENCES WITH HARASSMENT WERE FULLY OUTLINED TO BUCHER BEFORE THE PUEBLO WENT ON ITS MISSION, CLARK SAID.

HE DESCRIBED SPECIFIC INCIDENTS IN WHICH SHIPS CHALLENGED HIM, ORDERED HIM OUT OF THE AREA AND PRETENDED THEY WERE GOING TO RAM RAM THE BANNER.

"WERE GUNS EVER TRAINED ON YOU," NEWSOME ASKED.

"YES," CLARK SAID. "ONCE FROM AS CLOSE AS 20 YARDS."

CLARK, UNDER QUESTIONING BY HARVEY, BUCHER'S ATTORNEY, SAID IT TOOK HIM 10 TO 12 HOURS TO GET AN URGENT MESSAGE TO HEADQUARTERS IN JAPAN AND UP TO 24 HOURS FOR A ROUTINE MESSAGE.

THIS DELAY INVOLVED ONLY NON-CLASSIFIED MESSAGES. HE SAID HE COULD MAKE ALMOST IMMEDIATE CONTACT USING AN UNCLASSIFIED VOICE SYSTEM CALLED HIGH COMMAND NET.

"COULD YOU SAY WHY THE PUEBLO COULDN'T GET ON THE HIGH COMMAND NET?" HARVEY ASKED. BUCHER HAS SAID HE HAD DIFFICULTY CONTACTING HIS HEADQUARTERS.

"I HAVE NO IDEA," ANSWERED CLARK. "IN MY ONE EXPERIENCE, I GOT ON THE HIGH COMMAND NET INSTANTLY."

CLARK SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF USE OF GUNS WAS DISCUSSED AT A MEETING WITH U. S. NAVAL HEADQUARTERS OFFICERS IN JAPAN AT WHICH BUCHER ATTENDED.

"THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT THE GUNS SHOULD NOT BE USED IN A PROVOCATIVE MANNER AND WERE NOT TO BE UNCOVERED UNTIL IT WAS REALLY NECESSARY TO SHOOT.

"BUT I DON'T (5 43:-)) BUCHER'S SPECIFIC STATEMENT REGARDING THE USE OF THE GUNS ON HIS SHIP," CLARK SAID.

"I BELIEVE THE QUESTION OF ARMAMENT AND SIZE OF THE GUNS HAS AND THEIR USE HAS BEEN OVEREMPHASIZED," CLARK SAID.

"IN MY OPINION, THESE SHIPS SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ARMED. YOU HAVE TO DEPEND ON THE FACT THAT THERE IS LAW AND ORDER IN THIS WORLD AND IF A SHIP ON THE HIGH SEAS CAN'T HAVE THE PROTECTION OF THE LAW, THEN IT IS A BAD SITUATION. IT SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT WHETHER A DESTROYER IS 10 MILES AT SEA TO PROTECT IT," HE SAID.

REAR ADM. JOHNSON TOLD THE COURT WEDNESDAY THAT THE PUEBLO WAS TOO FAR AWAY FOR SHIPS OR PLANES TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO IT.

REAR ADM. MARSHALL WHITE OF THE COURT THEN ASKED HIM: "THEN WE REALLY HAD A CONTINGENCY PLAN TO USE FORCES THAT DIDN'T EXIST. THERE WAS NO HELP AVAILABLE TO HER."

JOHNSON ANSWERED: "NO FORCES WERE AVAILABLE TO ME."

HE ADDED THAT HE WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF ARMING INTELLIGENCE SHIPS.

"WE HAD SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT 16 MISSIONS IN UNARMED STATUS AND I CONSIDERED THIS A GOOD BASIS FOR CONTINUING THIS TYPE OF MISSION UNARMED. I DID CONSIDER THE GUNS MIGHT WELL BE PROVOCATIVE-- I WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE REACTION TO THIS ARMED STATUS.

"AND THE ADDITION OF TWO .50 CALIBER S DID NOT APPEAR TO ME TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT CAPABILITY," HE SAID.

AN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER ON THE STAFF OF THE COMMANDER OF NAVAL FORCES IN JAPAN AT THE TIME OF THE PUEBLO CAPTURE GAVE HIS RECONSTRUCTION OF THE INCIDENT BASED ON MESSAGES AND RADIO REPORTS.

LT. CMDR. DUANE L. HEISINGER SAID HIS STUDY SHOWED THAT THE SHIP WAS NEVER CLOSER THAN 17 MILES TO NORTH KOREA. HE SAID THE WATER WAS ABOUT 50 FATHOMS DEEP AT THE POINT WHERE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CLASSIFIED MATERIAL BEGAN.

THURSDAY'S PUEBLO HEARINGS ARE CLOSED. LT. STEPHEN HARRIS, WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF THE PUEBLO'S INTELLIGENCE DETACHMENT, IS SCHEDULED TO TESTIFY THE COURT, WHICH CAN RECOMMEND ANYTHING FROM MEDALS TO COURT-MARTIAL, WILL THEN RECESS UNTIL MONDAY.

RMB1015PPS JAN 29 X