

# BUCHER CONSIDERS HIMSELF CLEARED

He Looks Forward to His Next Assignment by Navy

By STEVEN V. ROBERTS  
Special to The New York Times

CORONADO, Calif., May 6—Comdr. Lloyd M. Bucher said today that he considered himself completely cleared of signment, "whatever it maybe." tremely relieved that the proceedings have been com- is satisfied with the final out- whatever it may be."

The former commander of the intelligence ship Pueblo appeared at a news conference at the Naval Amphibious Base here several hours after the announcement that no disciplinary action would be taken against him or his crew for surrendering the Pueblo to attacking North Koreans in January, 1968.

Muscles jumped in the commander's lean jaw, and he bit and licked his lips as his civilian attorney, E. Miles Harvey, read a statement that began:

"Commander Bucher is extremely relieved that the proceedings have been completed and that the matter has become final. It has been 15 agonizing months for the officers, the crew and their families as it has been for Commander and Mrs. Bucher. He is satisfied with the final outcome and is looking forward to his next duty assignment — whatever it may be."

The statement added that Commander Bucher "understands the philosophy" of the court of inquiry, which recommended that he be tried by a general court-martial, and indicated that he "has no personal feelings toward any member of the court."

## Praise for the Crew

"He continues to have the highest praise for the over-all conduct of his officers and crew and hopes there will be commendations for some of them," the statement said.

Mr. Harvey told reporters gathered in a gloomy barracks building that he would answer all questions for Commander Bucher, who was afflicted with a case of laryngitis.

When a reporter noted that the Navy Secretary, John H. Chafee, in dismissing disciplinary action, had not passed on the legal case against the commander, Mr. Harvey retorted sharply:

"As far as we're concerned, Commander Bucher has been cleared. There are no charges standing against him. We feel this is a final resolution."

As another reporter asked if any restrictions had been placed on the marketing of Commander Bucher's story, the commander himself shook his head. It has been estimated that the movie rights to his life story could bring as much as \$1-million.

Mr. Harvey said the original recommendation of a court-martial would "not prejudice" the commander's future naval career.

"We think," he added, "that Commander Bucher's chances for promotion depend on how he performs at his next duty station. He has not recieved any new orders but expects to get them soon."

When Mr. Harvey finished,

the commander was pressed to make at least one statement. Still thin and rather pale from his long stay in captivity, Commander Bucher said in a low

and raspy voice that he was "looking forward to a return of normalcy for the Bucher family."

Asked about his reaction to the decision, he replied that "the

findings of the court of inquiry had been anticipated by myself and Mrs. Bucher."

He refused to comment, however, when asked if he was "disappointed" by the original

recommendation for court-martial.

Mr. Harvey then stressed that the commander would not make any further public appearance or grant any interviews.