

Pueblo Case

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New Navy Probe Of Spy Ship Crew

San Diego

After six years of increasingly bitter controversy growing out of North Korea's capture of the American spy ship Pueblo, the Navy is preparing to open a new inquiry into the behavior of the vessel's crew during nearly a year of captivity.

The investigation will include psychiatric and medical studies of the Pueblo's officers and men. They have been exchanging recriminations since their return from 11 months' imprisonment that followed the ship's surrender on Jan. 22, 1968, while on a mission off the North Korean port of Wonsan.

In books, articles and interviews, the 82 survivors have given conflicting versions of their capture and imprisonment. They have accused one another of collaborating with their Communist captors, dereliction of duty, and generally denounced a 1969 naval court of inquiry as a "whitewash" of the Navy chain of command.

The new investigation will

be conducted by the Center for Prisoner of War Studies at the Navy's medical neuropsychiatric research unit here. That center organized the homecoming for the repatriation and rehabilitation two years ago of Americans held prisoners in North Vietnam.

Commander Newell H. Berry, the unit's executive officer, confirmed that planning is underway for the new Pueblo probe, but he declined to discuss the reasons, except to say that the findings would be added to the center's voluminous data on American prisoners of war.

Captain Ray Spaulding, a psychiatrist on the center's staff, will direct the inquiry.

It could not be learned whether the investigators would summon commander Lloyd H. Bucher, 47, who has retired to a small avocado farm near here, and his second in command, Lieutenant Edward R. Murphy, 37, the Pueblo's executive officer, who is also retired and in business in suburban El Cajon.

New York Times