

CW-LA

NY ONLY

ADV AMS MON FEB 3.

PUEBLO

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CORONADO, CALIF. (AP)--LLOYD MARK "PETE" BUCHER KICKED SOME PIPE FITTINGS, SWORE AND HURLED A COFFEE CUP AT THE NORTH KOREAN GUNBOAT COMING ALONGSIDE THE USS PUEBLO.

HE TOLD A COURT OF INQUIRY LAST WEEK ABOUT BOOTING THE PIPES AND ABOUT HIS SAILOR'S LANGUAGE. BUT HE SAVED THE STORY ABOUT THE COFFEE CUP TO TELL A FRIEND.

BUCHER GRABBED THE CUP FROM THE PUEBLO'S BRIDGE AND FLUNG IT ACROSS A CHUNK OF THE SEA OF JAPAN. IT SHATTERED ON THE DECK OF THE GUNBOAT.

"IT WAS A STUDY IN FRUSTRATION," SAYS LT. CMDR. ALAN HEMPHILL, A CLOSE FRIEND WHO ONCE SERVED WITH BUCHER. HEMPHILL THINKS THERE'S A GROWING MISCONCEPTION ABOUT THE SKIPPER WHO SURRENDERED HIS SHIP, RESULTING IN THE DEATH OF A CREWMAN AND 11 MONTHS OF CAPTIVITY FOR THE REST.

"HE'S BEING PICTURED AS A HUMANITARIAN, SORT OF A GOOD GUY CHARLIE BROWN WHO'D GIVE UP HIS SHIP NO MATTER WHAT TO KEEP HIS MEN FROM GETTING HURT," SAYS HEMPHILL.

BUCHER WAS INDEED DEEPLY TORN BETWEEN THE LOSS OF HIS VESSEL, THE J.S. INTELLIGENCE SHIP PUEBLO, AND THE SAFETY OF HIS MEN, SAYS HEMPHILL.

BUCHER TOLD THE COURT HE PASSED THE WORK, "PREPARE TO RECEIVE THE KOREANS ABOARD," TO PREVENT THE SLAUGHTER OF HIS CREW.

AND IT WASN'T UNTIL THE NORTH KOREANS THREATENED TO SHOOT HIS MEN IN FRONT OF HIM, ONE BY ONE STARTING WITH THE YOUNGEST, BUCHER SAID, THAT HE DECIDED TO "CONFESS" TO SPYING.

"BUT," SAYS HEMPHILL, "THOSE WERE RATIONAL DECISIONS THAT PETE BUCHER MADE. HE DECIDED THAT THE LIVES OF HIS MEN WOULD BUY HIM NOTHING.

"HE COULD HAVE COMPROMISED IN HIS DECISION. HE COULD HAVE LET THEM KILL SAY 20 OF HIS MEN OR MORE. BUT HE KNEW THEY WOULD HAVE TAKEN HIS SHIP ANYWAY.

"HE HAD SEEN HOW THEY TORTURED A SOUTH KOREAN, AND HE KNEW HE WOULD HAVE SIGNED A CONFESSION EVENTUALLY. THEY WOULD HAVE BROKEN HIM, ME, ANYBODY. WHAT WOULD YOU BUY BY ALLOWING YOUR MEN TO BE SHOT? THAT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN RATIONAL.

"PETE MADE A RATIONAL DECISION, ONE I THINK ANY OFFICER WOULD HAVE MADE, INCLUDING THE ADMIRALS, EVEN THOSE CRUSTY OLD TYPES WHO SAY HE SHOULD HAVE BONE DOWN TO THE LAST MAN."

THERE'S NO SECOND OR THIRD PLACE FOR PETE BUCHER, SAYS HEMPHILL. "THERE ARE ONLY WINNERS AND LOSERS. HE'S A NAVAL OFFICER WHO LOVES TO WIN.

"AND THAT'S WHY THE LAST THING HE DID, AND HE DIDN'T SAY THIS IN COURT, WAS THAT HE THREW HIS COFFEE CUP AT THEM. IT WAS A STUDY IN FRUSTRATION."

HEMPHILL HAS KNOWN BUCHER SINCE THEY SERVED TOGETHER ON THE SUBMARINE RONQUIL IN 1962. BUCHER WAS EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND HEMPHILL OPERATIONS OFFICER.

THEN BUCHER GOT COMMAND OF THE PUEBLO. HEMPHILL DREW SHORE DUTY HANDLING COMPUTERS. THEY REMAINED GOOD FRIENDS.

WHEN THE PUEBLO WAS CAPTURED, THE HEMPHILLS HAD THEIR TELEPHONE LISTED UNDER BUCHER'S NAME, SO THEY GOT THOUSANDS OF CALLS INSTEAD OF BUCHER'S ALREADY-BURDENED WIFE ROSE.

TELEGRAMS AND LETTERS FROM THE BUCHERS STILL GO TO THE HEMPHILL HOME, WHERE THEY'RE OPENED AND SAVED FOR PETE AND ROSE.

THE BUCHERS WENT INTO OUT-OF-TOWN SECLUSION OVER THE WEEKEND. THE COURT WAS IN A THREE-DAY RECESS AT A NAVY DOCTOR'S SUGGESTION TO GIVE BUCHER SOME REST. (MORE)

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CORONADO PUEBLO ADV MON AMS FEB 3 TAKE 2: REST.

HEMPHILL SAYS HE WOULD BE A MESS COOK FOR BUCHER IF HE COULD SERVE UNDER HIM AGAIN. HE ADMIRES THE MAN, BUT WHEN HE'S QUESTIONED HE NOTES SOME THINGS OTHERS MIGHT CONSIDER FAULTS.

"PETE IS A MAN OF TWO SPEEDS--ALL-AHEAD FULL, AND WHEN HE DOES THAT I GIVE UP BECAUSE I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH HIM, AND ALL-STOP, WHEN HE RECHARGES HIS BATTERIES BY READING," HEMPHILL SAYS.

WHEN HE'S AT "ALL-AHEAD FULL," SAYS HEMPHILL, "PETE BUCHER'S NOT REALLY KNOWN FOR HIS PATIENCE.

"AND HE'S HARD-HEADED--VERY STUBBORN. WHEN PETE BUCHER'S MIND IS MADE UP, THAT'S IT. WE'VE HAD DISAGREEMENTS, BUT HE'S NOT STUBBORN AGAINST OVERWHELMING LOGIC."

BUCHER CAN BE MELLOW, TOO. HEMPHILL SAYS HE IS VERY CLOSE TO HIS TWO TEEN-AGE SONS. AND HEMPHILL SAYS HE HAS SEEN BUCHER MOVED DEEPLY BY POETRY.

BUCHER IS A PAINTER--AND NOT A BAD ONE, EITHER. MOST OF HIS PAINTINGS ARE SEASCAPES. THE ONE IN HEMPHILL'S LIVING ROOM IS IN SOFT BLUES AND BROWNS.

NO RAGING WAVES, NO LIGHTNING, NO WINDTORN SAILS.

BUCHER IS A THOUGHTFUL PERSON, SAYS HEMPHILL, AND HE CAN BE HURT--ESPECIALLY BY SOMEONE WHO SHOWS ANY DISLOYALTY TO HIM.

BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH OF THAT FROM HIS CREW, SAYS HEMPHILL, WHO MAINTAINS THAT THE 81 SURVIVING PUEBLO CREWMEN ARE LOYAL TO THEIR SKIPPER TO A MAN.

HEMPHILL SAYS BOTH HE AND BUCHER HAVE CONSERVATIVE PULLTICAL VIEWPOINTS. WHEN BUCHER IS AT "FULL-STOP" RECHARGING HIS BATTERIES, HEMPHILL SAYS, HE READS AYN RAND AND WILLIAM BUCKLEY.

BUT THEY'RE NOT A STEADY DIET. TWO DAYS AFTER HE ARRIVED HOME IN LATE DECEMBER, BUCHER SAW A FULL-PAGE NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT FOR A BOOK SALE, SAYS HEMPHILL.

HE SENT IT HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL WITH ROSE AND TOLD HER TO BUY AN ANTHOLOGY OF SHAKESPEARE AND FIVE COPIES OF A BOOK ON THE JAPANESE CHARACTER--ONE FOR EACH OF HIS JUNIOR OFFICERS.

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