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Pueblo Bjt 300, 2 takes, 540 total

By RICHARD F. MEYER

Associated Press Writer

CORONADO, Calif. APQ - The U.S. Code of Conduct for servicemen taken prisoner doesn't "apply itself well" to modern psychological warfare, says the USS Pueblo's second in command.

"The underlying principle behind it must be maintained—that is, loyalty to our government," Lt. Edward R. Murphy Jr. told a Navy court of inquiry Monday after saying he signed a fraudulent spy confession following two days of North Korean torture and two death threats.

"But the state of the art (of war) has changed considerably . . . now we have a psychological warfare environment and I don't think it (the code) applies itself well in that environment."

Murphy was asked about the code by an attorney for Cmdr. Lloyd M. Bucher, skipper of the Pueblo. Bucher told the court four weeks ago that North Koreans used torture to make him admit falsely to spying. Murphy was Bucher's executive officer.

The court is investigating why the ship surrendered without a fight and the conduct of the crew as prisoners.

Murphy, 31, was the first to appear in the conduct phase of the inquiry. He said he considered his confession a deviation from the code. He said the code was posted on the intelligence ship before it was captured by the North Koreans last year. Its men were released 11 months later—just before Christmas.

The code, promulgated by former President Eisenhower after the Korean War, prohibits U.S. military men from divulging anything but name, rank, serial number and date of birth to their captors.

It also says the men must make "every effort to escape." Murphy said the Pueblo crewmen had several escape plans, but they were vetoed by the ship's officers for lack of practicality.

Murphy said he made a false confession to spying—and to invading North Korean territorial waters—but not before the North Koreans gave him three bloody beatings, threatened twice to kill him and he heard what sounded like Bucher and other officers confessing.

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ff246aes Feb. 18

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Murphy said he was stripped to his shorts and forced to crouch and balance on the balls of his feet with a stick about one and one-half inches thick behind his knees.

The effect of the stick, he said, "is to deaden the sensation in the bottom of your legs. I lost control of my legs and started to quiver."

"They hit me in the face and chest and kicked me backwards . . . another kicked me forward. It was back and forth until I was on the deck, and then they kicked me until I stood up. And then it was back down on the stick again."

"I don't know how many evolutions like that I made but on at least six occasions I passed out from being kicked . . . one of the times I fell over I was kicked severely in the side of the head and it split my ear open. There was an area on the floor completely covered with blood from my ear and I was cut on the lip."

"The one piece of clothing I did have, the shorts, were pretty well bathed in blood. I told them I was ready to sign what they wanted."

Vice Adm. Harold G. Bowen Jr., president of the court asked, "What was more influential . . . the belief that your shipmates had capitulated or the physical treatment given you?"

A. Murphy: "I was ready to endure more. I was in a physical state in which I well could have gone on forever—probably in oblivion . . . but why should I as an individual fight the war singlehandedly when others and the whole ship seemed to have fallen . . . I felt it would have been a useless attempt on my part to avoid the reality that was at hand."

Q. "What was the single most significant factor?"

A. "I would have to say the fact that I'd found my action was useless—nothing to be served, nothing to be gained by continuing resisting when others had already capitulated."

Court resumes 1:30 p.m., EST
ff251aes Feb. 18