

# Medals to 18 Pueblo Crewmen

## Washington

The Navy gave belated awards for heroism yesterday to 18 crewmen of the spy ship Pueblo, only U.S. Navy vessel to be boarded and captured in the past 111 years. The citations came 5½ years after the ship was seized by North Korean gunboats.

The awards had been recommended by Commander Lloyd M. Bucher, the Pueblo's commanding officer, for action by the men on Jan. 23, 1968, the day of the capture, Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Freidheim said.

They were freed three days before Christmas of 1968.

Bucher received no award, Freidheim said, because no higher-ranking officers recommended medals for the commander's actions on the day of the capture.

Freidheim said the action was delayed until now because it was decided to wait until all POWs in Indochina had been released. Freidheim said there had been concern that awards to other military prisoners might adversely affect treatment of American POWs in Indochina.

Bucher came under extreme criticism from many Navy officers for not fighting to prevent his ship from being captured.

Freidheim said the ship is still berthed in the harbor at Wonsan, the port to which the North Koreans took the Pueblo when they captured it.

*United Press*