

POWs Accuse Reporter

Sydney

Former American prisoners of war in Korea have testified in a dramatic court hearing here that Wilfred Burchett, an Australian-born foreign correspondent, was actually a Communist agent who participated in the brainwashing of Americans captured in North Korea.

One former U.S. fighter pilot, close to tears, testified that Burchett had personally edited a false confession obtained under intensive interrogation in 1952 in which the pilot said the U.S. Air Force was conducting germ warfare.

Paul Kniss of Knoxville, Ill., an Air Force lieutenant shot down in North Korea in May, 1952, accused Burchett of playing a leading role in the North Korean propaganda campaign during the war. He also said that Bur-

Israel Slays

3 Guerrillas

Tel Aviv

The Israeli military command said its soldiers yesterday tracked down and killed three Arab guerrilla infiltrators from Lebanon in a brief gun battle.

United Press

chett had tried to persuade him to defect to the Communist bloc rather than be repatriated to America in September, 1953.

Kniss and three other former POWs testified that they had seen Burchett in Chinese army uniform in North Korea in 1952.

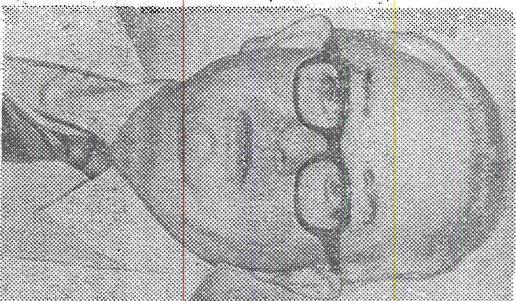
"He is a traitor to the allied cause," Kniss snapped. "I personally feel that Burchett was very high in the organization which was running the propaganda about germ warfare."

The accusations against Burchett, 63, were made in a libel hearing before the New South Wales Supreme Court. For more than 20 years a correspondent for the London Daily Express and other newspapers, Burchett is suing a right-wing former senator, John Kane, over a 1971 article that accused the correspondent of working as a spy for the Chinese and Russians during the 1940s and 1950s.

Although Burchett has acknowledged his Communist sympathies and openly supported the Viet Cong during the Vietnam war, his role in Asia has long been an enigma. He was a confidant of North Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh and is known to be on good terms with many Communist leaders, including Chinese Premier Chou En-lai. Burchett has vigorously denied, however, that he ever worked as an espionage agent during his long and controversial career.

A succession of witnesses has told the packed courtroom of meetings with Burchett in East Berlin, Moscow, Pyongyang and South Vietnam.

But Cong Young, a former province chief of the Viet Cong who defected in 1970 after 20 years as a member of the Vietnamese Communist party, told the court through an interpreter of meetings with Burchett in the Mekong delta in February, 1964. He said that Burchett, accompanied by Viet



Will FRED BURCHETT
The correspondent in 1968

Cong officers, had attended a propaganda school in the Delta and given advice to guerrilla leaders.

Earlier, a statement by a former Soviet secret police agent, Yuri Korikov, who defected in London in 1963, was read to the court. Korikov testified that during the early 1960s Burchett boasted that he was "on the payroll of the party in Hanoi."

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