

SOVIET TRAWLER CALLED SPY SHIP

Navy Says Craft That Sailed Through Missile Test Area Off L. I. Was 'Snooper'

By JACK RAYMOND

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, July 13—A Soviet trawler that cruised through a Polaris submarine test area off Long Island last April was an "electronics spy ship," the Navy said today.

New, heretofore classified, details of the incident were disclosed by Navy Intelligence officers at a hurriedly called Pentagon news conference.

The announcement appeared intended to reinforce the United States position at the United Nations, where the Soviet Union has demanded a hearing on United States air reconnaissance activity.

The Navy disclosed that it had tracked the Soviet trawler, first spotted sixty miles off Long Island, over a period of five days. During that time the Soviet ship sailed close along the coast to a point one mile east of the Chesapeake Bay Lighthouse, Navy officers said. That is twelve miles from Cape Henry, Va.

Rear Admiral Charles C. Kirkpatrick, Navy chief of information, described the ship, which he said was equipped with considerable electronic equipment, as a "snooper."

Ship Not Molested

But he emphasized repeatedly that, since it was in international waters at all times, the Soviet ship remained unmolested by United States ships and planes.

"We are a legal people and

abide by international law," Admiral Kirkpatrick said.

Asked whether he meant to contrast the United States reaction to the Soviet trawler with the Soviet downing of an RB-47 reconnaissance bomber July 1, Admiral Kirkpatrick said with a smile:

"I'm talking about this incident, nothing else."

Discussing the Soviet trawler, a 600-ton vessel similar in design to Soviet fishing trawlers that lie constantly off the Grand Banks off Newfoundland, Admiral Kirkpatrick said:

"From the United States point of view she was obviously collecting electronic reconnaissance information."

An intelligence officer at the meeting said that the Soviet ship with its electronic gear could monitor radio information for "hundreds of miles" and that this information would be of considerable use for military purposes.

The Navy called newsmen late this afternoon to hear what was described as the intelligence report on the trawler that was given to Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, Chief of Naval Operations.

Huge slides of the Soviet vessel were shown. A Navy Intelligence officer, recalling that the ship had been spotted on April 26 coming from the south but turned eastward about sixty miles south of Long Island and eighty-five miles east of Sea Girt, N. J.

The pictures were taken from a Navy blimp observing the missile-firing maneuvers of the Polaris submarine George Washington, first of the nuclear-powered underseas vessels that will be armed with 1,200-mile-range ballistic missiles.

The Soviet trawler was tracked as it moved into the maneuver area, to a point twenty-five miles east of Sea Girt. As it sailed, the Navy spokesman reported, the Soviet ship at one point reversed its engines in an effort to ram a Navy tug. The tug was assigned to pick

up dummy missiles that the submarine was firing.

The Intelligence officer called attention to eleven antennas protruding from a huge van mounted on the bridge. He noted two radio transmitters, of a size comparable to those on large Navy ships.

An officer described the design of the electronic van, as one intended for "surreptitious" use. For example, he said, the photographs taken April 26 and 27 showed the eleven antennas, but photographs taken April 29 showed only gaping holes where the antennas had been. On May 1 the antennas were back again.

Observers lost visual contact with the trawler April 26 at a point thirty miles east of Atlantic City because of heavy fog, the Navy spokesman said.

The trawler was picked up again on the evening of April 27 eighteen miles off the southern tip of Cape Charles, Va.

The ship was finally observed turning west, swinging to twelve miles off Cape Henry and one mile east of the Chesapeake Bay Lighthouse, then turning southeast into the Atlantic.