THE PUEBLO CASE HANGS FIRE

No progress is visible in the Pueblo case although bilateral talks at Panmunjom are continuing.

During the celebration of the "Korean People's Army" 20th Anniversary in Pyongyang, Premier Kim Il-song accused the Pueblo of a "gangster-like, piratic act" which proved that "US maneuverings" for a new Korean war had reached a "grave stage." He insisted that the North Koreans do
not want war, but warned the US.
would get "only corpses" if it
tried to solve the case through
"threat and blackmail."

Pyongyang publicized a
second, more detailed "confes­
sion" by Pueblo captain Bucher
and published four photos of al­
laged US documents which place
the vessel in North Korean ter­
ritorial waters on six occasions.

Despite Pyongyang's charges
of an armed incursion this week,
the level of incidents along the
DMZ has been low.

Soviet Party Secretary Pono­
marsy visited Pyongyang on 9 and
10 February following his visit
to Tokyo where he and politburo
member Suslov had held talks with
the Japanese Communist Party.

Ponomarsy's visit, though offering a
gesture of Moscow's "fraternal"
solidarity with North Korea, pro­
vided no indication that the So­
viets had departed from their
policy of minimal involvement
in the Pueblo issue.

Fifteen Soviet ships, five
of them armed with missiles are
deployed off Korea. Although most
have remained in the Sea of Japan
north of the 38th parallel, a few
have moved south of the line and
are trailing the American task
force.