Two Marines discharged for involvement in scandal

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (AP) - Two Marines have been discharged for their alleged involvement in a mail-order

pornography ring.

An internal investigation identified 10 Marines - nine men and a woman - who posed for sexually explicit pictures, Camp Pendleton officials said.

In addition to the two Marines discharged and three others who might be. a sixth Marine was disciplined but remains in the Corps and a seventh faces similar punishment, said Camp Pendleton spokesman Sgt. Marc Lobdell.

An eighth Marine faces a hearing to

determine whether a court-martial is nec-

essary. A ninth was discharged "for other misconduct which occurred prior to the start of the investigation," base officials said in a statement.

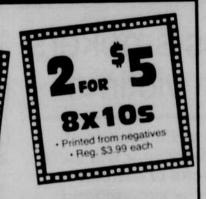
The status of any disciplinary action taken against the 10th Marine was unavailable Wednesday, Lobdell said. Luciano Ceballos-Vasquez, a self-

described porn kingpin, said he photographed Marines engaged in homosexual acts. But Chief Warrant Officer Mike Hedlund, a base spokesman, said the photos depicted no homosexual activity.

Some of the Marines were identified from photographs police seized at Ceballos-Vasquez's house.

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Navy finds no grounds to overturn convictions

WASHINGTON (AP) - Black seamen charged with mutiny in a World War II incident were subject to racial prejudice but there are no grounds to overturn their courts-martial, the Navy said Thursday

The Navy, in a review of the 1944 incident at Port Chicago. Calif., in which 258 black sailors were court-martialed and 50 sent to prison, rejected a campaign led by California lawmakers

The Navy acknowledged that the seamen were victims of racial prejudice in being put in segregated units and assigned to manual labor jobs. They also had a 'reasonable basis of fear" in their refusal to load live ammunition after a huge ammunitions dump explosion at the dock that killed 320, including 202 blacks.

But "the secretary of the Navy concluded that neither racial prejudice nor other improper factors tainted the original investigations and trials," the Navy said.

'They're making a mistake," said Percy Robinson, 69, a Los Angeles photographer who was one of the seamen. "They can say all they want to, but what they did back then was prejudice."

Robinson said he was ordered back to work even though he was injured in the explosion, while white sailors who were injured were all excused from returning to the docks.

Four California lawmakers said in a statement that they found the

Navy review "highly disturbing." Reps. George Miller, Ronald Dellums and Pete Stark, and Sen. Barbara Boxer, all Democrats, said: "The Navy cannot understand that under those conditions, the decision to refuse to resume loading ammunition after the shock of the accident was not an act of rebellion but an act of self-preservation in light of the danger they faced specifically because they were black."

The lawmakers introduced legislation in the 1992 defense spending bill requiring the Navy to review the case.

The incident followed a July 17. 1944. explosion that destroyed two ammunition ships, leveled much of the town of Port Chicago and was felt as far away as Nevada.

The blast at what is now the Concord Naval Weapons Station caused the worst military loss of life within the continental United States in World War II.

Two weeks later, when the black enlisted men at the port were ordered back to work, 258 refused, contending it was unsafe. Of those, 208 later returned to their jobs after being threatened with court-martial. They eventually were given summary courts-martial and disciplined but later were discharged under "honorable conditions.

The 50 who continued their boycott were convicted of mutiny and sentenced to 15 years at hard labor. They spent 16 months in a military prison.

According to accounts of the trial in a 1989 book by Oakland writer Robert Allen, the Navy allowed no testimony about the causes of the explosion or unsafe conditions and the courtmartial panel took an hour and 10 minutes to find all guilty of mutiny

The Navy, in its review, said leniency had already been shown to the men. It said all those convicted in the incident were given an opportunity to complete their enlistments and receive honorable discharges or discharges under honorable conditions.

It said no sailor was denied retirement benefits solely as a result of the court-martial convictions.

The four lawmakers said they will "continue to search for other means to address this issue in the belief that the surviving sailors and their families and the families of those now deceased deserve the chance to clear their

