



COLUMNIST ANDERSON WITH MUCK RAKE

Show and Tell?

For months, right up to last week, William E. Colby, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, spent a good deal of his time on an unusual undercover task. By phone calls, visits and through his emissaries, Colby made contact with a number of news organizations. His purpose: to persuade them, on national security grounds, not to print a story that they all knew about—the attempt by the CIA to raise a sunken Soviet submarine from the ocean bottom.

Colby's request immediately created a dilemma for the newsmen. Each organization had to decide whether to withhold knowledge from the public of a secret Government operation or publish a story that, as Colby argued, might damage the nation's defenses. In short, the press was face to face with an old question: When does the right of the people to know end and the need to protect national security begin?

Personal Plea. In the recent past the problem was simpler. Editors had few qualms about revealing CIA operations—like domestic spying—that were clearly illegal. But the case of the Soviet sub was different. The CIA was operating in its legitimate sphere—foreign intelligence; and the operation was still going on, Colby had personally pleaded for restraint, and there was in any disclosure a risk of severe damage to U.S.-U.S.S.R. détente. In hindsight, however, some journalists are wondering whether the CIA wanted the story out for its own reasons (see THE NATION).

For more than a year Colby was able to keep the lid on. Seymour Hersh of the New York Times first heard of the salvage operation's code name, "Project Jennifer," but without details, in 1973.

By early 1974, Colby knew what Hersh knew and privately cautioned the *Times* not to pursue the story. In September 1974, Lloyd Shearer of *Parade* magazine learned from a crewman on the *Glomar Explorer*, the Howard Hughes ship, about the quest and tried to confirm it through Hughes' Summa Corp., without success. Alerted by Summa, Colby some months later reached Shearer, confirmed the basic facts and persuaded him to keep mum, arguing that recovery of the sub might yield some "ultra-secret" Soviet coding equipment.

By midwinter, however, a number of other news organizations were on to the story. On February 8, the first edition of the Los Angeles *Times* carried a front-page article on the Jennifer mission, but it was incomplete and garbled the details (e.g., the paper placed the submarine in the Atlantic, not the Pa-

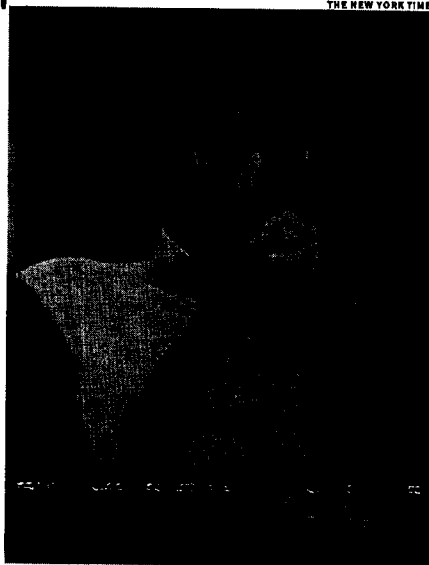
A.C.L.U. lawyer was about to break the secret, revealed on his radio broadcast the outlines of the salvage effort. At that point the New York *Times* ran a ready-to-go story by Hersh, devoting a full page to his reportorial details.

Was it right for the *Times* to rush the revelations into print? *Times* Managing Editor A.M. Rosenthal, who had originally postponed the story at Colby's request, had been willing to hold off until the mission was completed or called off, or until its cover was blown. Said Rosenthal: "The advantages of immediate publication did not outweigh the considerations of disclosing an ongoing military operation." But after Anderson's broadcast, he felt that the issue of publication was academic. "In future cases," says Rosenthal, "it's impossible to say how I would act. My answer is: show me the case, let me read the story, and then I'll come to a decision."

To some, like former California Governor Ronald Reagan, CIA operations are inviolate. Last week Reagan excoriated the press for being irresponsible in its revelation of the CIA operation. But most newsmen side with the Rosenthal "case by case" approach. Explains Benjamin C. Bradlee, executive editor of the *Washington Post*: "When you have these decisions, you have a balance. On the one side, there's a claim by a government of some standing that what you're about to print will harm the country's security. And on the other side you have the conviction that you're being conned." The burden, in short, is on the editors to make up their minds in each instance.

Watchful Press. George E. Reedy Jr., the onetime press secretary to Lyndon Johnson and now dean of Marquette University's College of Journalism, does not accept so balanced a view. Says he: "I don't think newspa-

pers should be in the business of deciding what should or shouldn't be in the national interest. They should print the news. If every newspaper decided what is or is not in the national interest, you soon wouldn't have any newspapers, you'd just have Government propaganda sheets." Jack Anderson, in his turn, claims that since Watergate, "a lot of editors and reporters are wearing a hair shirt, trying to prove too hard how patriotic and responsible we are. The country was better served by a watchful press." Adds Columnist Tom Wicker of the New York *Times*, who criticized his own paper's restraint: "It is hard to see how a news organization—let alone so many—could have thought such a story ought to be withheld."



THE NEW YORK TIMES'S SEYMOUR HERSH
Taking off the hair shirt.

cific). A CIA official was quickly on the telephone to L.A. *Times* Editor William F. Thomas. Unable to get the story killed, he managed to talk Thomas into burying it on page 18 in later editions. Later Colby briefed Thomas, and, says the editor, "publication would have had some negative results." Shortly afterward, TIME learned about the story, but at Colby's personally telephoned request, decided not to run it because of the CIA's claim that it was a legitimate project involving national security. The *Washington Post*, NBC, ABC, *Newsweek* and the *Washington Star* all got wind of the project. In each case, after a call or visit from Colby there was a decision not to go ahead. Last week, however, Jack Anderson, claiming that an

THE PRESS

There seems little doubt that certain CIA and other Government secrets can be violated only at peril to the nation. Some projects, notably the CIA's 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, may well need what Justice Louis Brandeis called "the disinfectant" of public exposure. But in the case of Project Jennifer, given what editors knew at the time, they were right to use restraint.

Reunion in Retreat

The startling pullout by South Vietnamese troops from the northern provinces and the Central Highlands took the world by surprise, and foreign journalists stationed in the country were no exception. Actually, President Nguyen Van Thieu acted with such secrecy that even his Joint General Staff did not know of his decision to abandon the provinces until they read about it in a Saigon newspaper. To find out what was happening, journalistic improvisation was in order.

In Saigon, when the big retreat began, almost all U.S. news bureaus were shorthanded, as they had been ever since the 1972-73 U.S. troop evacuation. In many cases there was only a lone correspondent in the capital. Moving fast to help cover the refugees and troops streaming south, the American press jetted in reinforcements from everywhere. The Chicago *Tribune* switched its Far Eastern correspondent, Ronald Yates, from Phnom-Penh to Saigon within 24 hours of the news of the retreat; the New York *Times* moved in Pulitzer Prizewinner Malcolm Browne from Belgrade, Bernard Weinraub from India and Fox Butterfield from Tokyo; TIME dispatched William McWhirter from London and Tokyo Bureau Chief William Stewart; ABC pitched in with twelve full-time personnel.

Studiously Indifferent. Even the routes of retreat, moving around and getting word back were problems for the newsmen. In palmier days American troops had provided helicopters, telephone links and logistical support. Now the South Vietnamese army ran the show, and it was studiously indifferent. When some commercial flights within the country were suspended, newsmen had to turn to charter planes. Said NBC's TV News vice president, Richard Fischer: "We are totally in the hands of the various crooks who run charter services."

However, in the confusion there was, surprisingly, no censorship or harassment of reporters by the Thieu regime—at least for the moment. Such freedom was a marked change from the secret-police tactic of beating up Western newsmen covering demonstrations, or the possibility that the Information Ministry might not renew the visa of any reporter writing an unfavorable story. It was almost old home week for the press in Saigon. But the shadow of defeat darkened the occasion.

TIME, MARCH 31, 1975

THE THEATER

Haunted House

ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT WINGS
by EUGENE O'NEILL

T.S. Eliot once wrote a review of the printed text of *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. He observed, "Mr. O'Neill not only understands one aspect of the 'Negro problem,' but he succeeds in giving this problem universality—in implying, in fact, the universal problem of differences which create a mixture of admiration, love and contempt, with the consequent tension."

The trouble with the revival at Manhattan's Circle in the Square/Joseph E. Levine Theater is that it lacks that larger tension. One suspects that the drama has been revived for its presumed topicality and that the audience is supposed to generate strong emotions that scarcely exist in O'Neill's dead-battery prose.

Jim (Robert Christian), a black, and Ella (Trish Van Devere), a white, had been childhood playmates. Growing up, she marries a boxer who deserts her. Despite her aversion to blacks, Ella then marries Jim. However, the stress of social ostracism drives her insane, and she prays for Jim to flunk his bar exams, which he does. With his dream shattered, Jim reverts to a kind of devoted slave to a spectral child bride.

In giving Jim and Ella his real parents' names, O'Neill clearly showed that he felt a parallel to his mother's drug addiction and its role in stunting his father's capacity to become a great actor. Blacks, in this play, are not so much a race as a symbol for what O'Neill's mother regarded as the dark, tormenting world of the stage.

Van Devere is not ready to project that torment, and Christian fares no better. Nor has Director George C. Scott, Van Devere's husband, been able to elicit from the rest of the cast that sense of transcendence through suffering by which alone O'Neill's lesser texts can be salvaged. ■ T.E. Kalem

Iron Thane

MACBETH
by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Macbeth articulates a gangrenous world where leadership is a pretext for ambition and power an end in itself. It is all there in the text, but too often the hysterical wife and the weird sisters upstage the man's essential corruption and *Macbeth* turns into the lady's play.

The energetic Scotsman Nicol Williamson has swung a deadly claymore at this flawed reading. At the Royal Shakespeare Company's Aldwych Theater in London, he portrays Macbeth as an anti-hero of feral self-knowledge and focuses on the play's real theme: the psy-

chological disintegration of a man who would be king but discovers that as a murderer he can only be a tyrant. When Williamson and Director Trevor Nunn did their first version at Stratford last year it was encrusted with hoodoo gimmickry and medieval fatalism. Now they have cut to the quick.

Race to Doom. Wearing spurred boots, jodhpurs and black military tunics, Williamson and a cast of toughs speak in Lowland Scots to accent the masculine hardness of Shakespeare's verse. The witches are haggard cockney washerwomen offering a willing Macbeth a potion distilled from the slops of his own ambition. Helen Mirren's Lady Macbeth is a useful foil: an oversexed and undersatisfied vixen in form-fitting velvet.

But Williamson's performance provides the chief engine of the play's race to doom (two hours without an intermission). Swordplay and stage business have been slashed and ghosts reduced to the actors' imaginations, all to emphasize verse. Williamson speaks with a strangled intensity that shows a man totally aware of what he is doing yet too weak to stop. The key to his projection lies in his iron control over the poetic rhythms. He instructs Banquo's murderers with a flat naturalism that echoes the White House tapes, then whinily rationalizes his supposed invincibility while twiddling a now useless dagger. As the armies close in, he crouches fetus-like at the foot of his throne and, in choked pauses, speaks the play's final nihilistic soliloquy.

Laurence Olivier once summed up the play: "The man knows everything, the woman nothing." Williamson demonstrates, step by bloody step, how Macbeth comes by his awful knowledge. ■ Lawrence Malkin

WILLIAMSON IN MACBETH



PEGGY LEEDER

THE NATION

linked has long been held by Kissinger. Yet the idea seems both faulty and dangerous when applied so obsessively to such peripheral situations as South Viet Nam and Cambodia. As U.S. policy-makers argue for last-ditch aid to Cambodia, for instance, warning of worldwide repercussions if the demands are denied, they run the risk of creating self-fulfilling prophecies of doom. Certainly Americans are disillusioned with their Viet Nam experience, and rightly so. They are less ready to support U.S. military aid or intervention elsewhere. But that does not mean that even the collapse of South Viet Nam would turn Americans so sour on foreign affairs that they would desert their commitments in more vital areas: Europe, the Middle East, Japan and some other parts of Asia. There will be no such desertion, unless the Ford-Kissinger rhetoric convinces the public that each global trouble spot is equally significant, or equally insignificant, to the U.S.

Tragic Effort. The hard fact is that the government of Cambodia's Lon Nol is tenuous at best and probably ultimately untenable. South Viet Nam has far stronger moral claims on U.S. support, and, until this week at least, seemed to have far greater strength to resist. But in Viet Nam too, U.S. military aid cannot go on indefinitely. President Ford's suggestion of three more years and \$5.5 billion is undoubtedly too much for Congress. On the other hand, the proposal to cut off military aid by June 30 would end the help too abruptly. Dates and amounts are arguable.

Is the rest of the world really losing confidence in America because of events in Indochina? The evidence so far suggests otherwise. Most of the world some time ago absorbed the long-overdue U.S. decision to cut its losses in Southeast Asia, after an enormous and tragic effort. Many of America's friends indeed were relieved, and still are, hoping that the U.S. will henceforth be freer to concentrate on other areas and problems. Confidence in America ultimately depends not on the aftermath of Viet Nam but on how firmly and wisely the U.S. acts elsewhere.

ESPIONAGE

The Great Submarine Snatch

It all began with an accident. Some time in 1968, somewhere in the northwest Pacific, the Soviet submarine surfaced to recharge its batteries. There was an explosion, perhaps caused by a spark that ignited trapped gases in the hull. Before a single member of the crew could escape, the craft plummeted to the ocean floor about three miles below. But not to an unknown grave. U.S. Navy devices picked up the stricken submarine's last throes and were able to place the wreckage within a ten-mile-square area. The Soviet navy was not so fortunate. A Soviet task force searched for traces of its missing vessel far from the actual site. When the Soviets finally gave up looking, U.S. authorities realized that only they knew the lost submarine's resting place—and Project Jennifer was born.

Part I: The Salvage Operation

Project Jennifer, whose existence was disclosed last week, grew into an enterprise that eventually cost \$350 million, employed more than 4,000 people, and brought into partnership America's most secret institution, the CIA, and its most secret citizen, Howard Hughes. It also, in its way, pushed the limits of engineering and technology almost as far as Project Apollo, which took man to the moon, and may well have been the largest and most expensive espionage effort in the long history of man's spying on man. The aim was simple: to raise the submarine from its grave without the Soviets' knowledge, in order to learn some of the secrets of their nuclear weaponry, targeting and codes. The submarine was believed to be armed with three nuclear missiles and perhaps some nuclear-tipped torpedoes; like all Soviet warships, it had an array of sophisticated coding and decoding devices for secret communication.

The first step was to locate the submarine precisely. The Navy dispatched to the waters north of Hawaii its ultra-

secret research ship *Mizar*, a floating electronics laboratory. Like a fishing boat seeking to snare an exotic fish, *Mizar* put overboard an array of devices: sonar, electronic scanners, cameras equipped with powerful strobe lights, and a magnetic sensor that reacts to the presence of metal on the seabed. For two months *Mizar* patiently towed its paraphernalia across every inch of the ten-mile-square area until it had detected, scanned and thoroughly photographed the Soviet submarine.

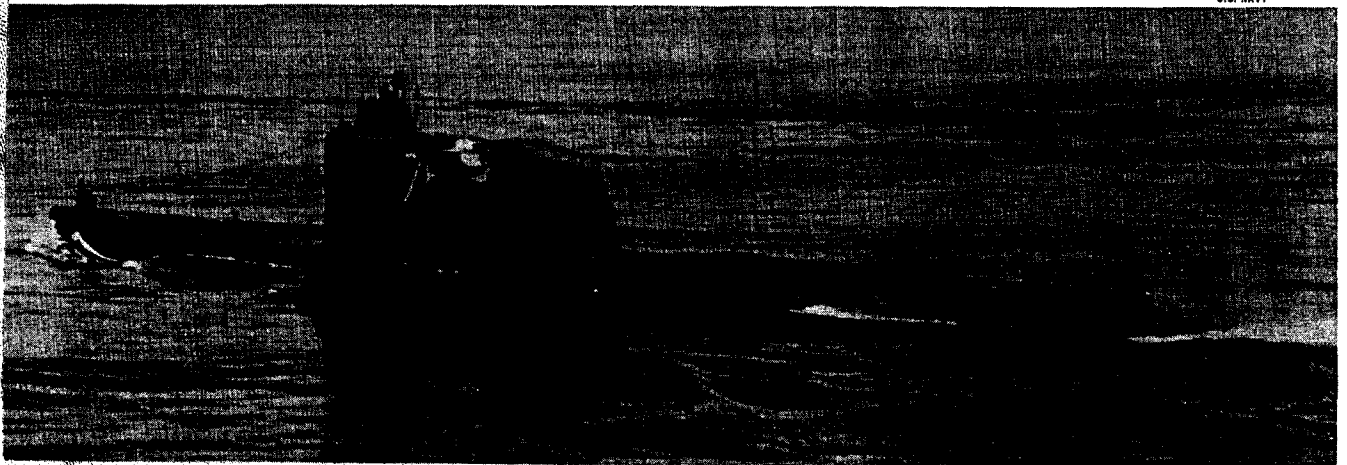
The next problem was to bring the sub to the surface. Since the operation would have to be paid for and carried out in deepest secrecy, the Navy turned to the CIA for help. One of the agency's deputy directors presented the proposal to Richard Helms, then CIA director. "He damn near threw me out the window," says the man, recalling Helms' initial reaction. "You must be crazy," he told me."

Later, Helms began to see the beauty of the plan. Soon his other top aides, who knew nothing about the proposal, became curious about the brisk parade of Pentagon officials and high-ranking Navy officers that passed through Helms' office.

Once the green light was received from the White House, the CIA knew exactly whom they wanted to use as the cover for the submarine salvage: Howard Hughes, the eccentric billionaire who personally commands a business empire of airlines, hotels and electronics companies. Explains a CIA official: "The Hughes organization had the technical know-how for a project of that difficulty, and moreover Hughes has a passion for secrecy, which frankly was precisely what we had in mind." There were other advantages. The new president of Hughes Aircraft, A.D. Wheelon, was an agency alumnus, and the upper ranks of the company were studded with former ranking military and CIA officers. Hughes was known to be intrigued by

G-CLASS SOVIET SUBMARINE SIMILAR TO THE ONE THAT WAS LOST IN AN ACCIDENT IN PACIFIC OCEAN IN 1968

U.S. NAVY



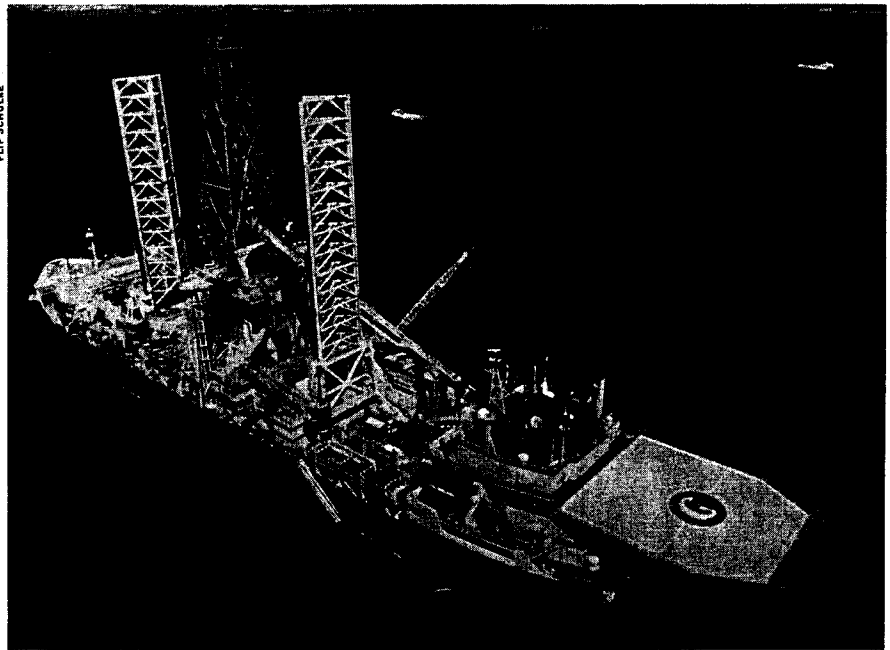
the possibility of mining the sea for mineral deposits. That interest would make an ideal cover under which to conceal the salvage operation.

Hughes was also pleased—so pleased that he took the project on for very little fee profit. For the design of the entire recovery system, Hughes revived his old relationship with Lockheed Co. The firm, which has in recent years acquired expertise in deep-sea rescue vessels, developed an innovative design. The main ship—a hefty 36,000-tonner that would be 618 ft. in length and 115.5 ft. in beam—would serve as a floating, highly stable platform. Amidships would stand a high derrick that would pass piping directly through a well, or “moon pool,” in the ship’s hull, which could be opened or closed with a sliding panel. The ship’s companion was to be a huge submersible barge roughly the size of a football field, which would be covered by an oval roof. The barge’s purposes would be to carry the huge retrieval claws that would grapple for the submarine and later transport it to the U.S. The roof was meant to conceal its cargo from prying Soviet satellites.

With those plans in hand, Hughes’ men sought out builders. They engaged the respected Los Angeles-based firm of Global Marine Inc. to supervise the construction of the ship and chose the Sun Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co. to construct the ship, which was to be christened the *Glomar Explorer*. The barge, designated the HMB-1, was constructed by the National Steel & Shipbuilding Co. in San Diego. While the ships were abuilding, the Hughes people, who normally are noncommittal, delighted in spreading stories about Hughes’ deep-sea-mining plans. Everyone, including *TIME* (July 29), accepted Hughes’ account, and the press ran glowing stories about the ship’s capabilities. “If all sails smoothly,” went one typical newspaper account, “the mystery ship may be at work next year, scooping such metals as titanium, manganese, uranium, copper and nickel up out of the depths to add to the fortune of the world’s wealthiest recluse.”

Shakedown Cruise. The *Glomar Explorer*’s 170-man crew was selected and put on contract by the CIA. The 40 men on the mining staff obviously knew the ship’s secret mission; the others probably did not. All refused to talk to outsiders about the ship, except to say that it had a gymnasium and the food was good. On Nov. 4, 1972, the *Glomar Explorer* was launched and left shortly thereafter on its shakedown cruise. According to one account, it tested its detection equipment and some of its recovery systems at the site of the 1968 accidental explosion of the U.S. nuclear-powered submarine *Scorpion*, which went down near the Azores in about 10,000 ft. of water.

Then *Glomar Explorer*, her beam too wide for the Panama Canal, sailed round the Horn and made for Los Angeles,

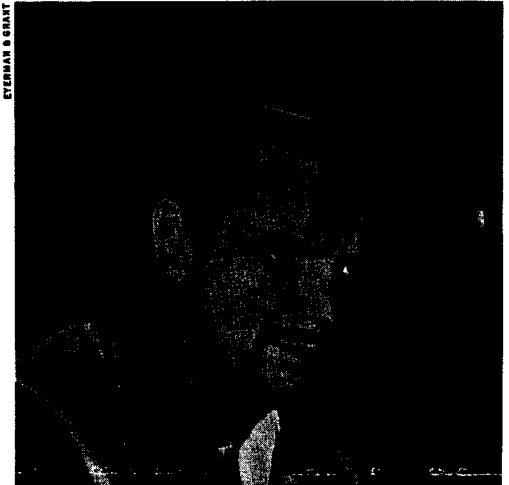


GLOMAR EXPLORER WITH DERRICK AMIDSHIPS USED TO RAISE THE SOVIET SUBMARINE

where she rendezvoused with her companion, HMB-1. Fittingly, *Glomar Explorer* docked at Long Beach’s Pier E, which is located only about 50 yds. from the hangar that for years has housed Hughes’ gigantic plywood flying boat, known irreverently as “the Spruce Goose.” Though Howard Hughes last month finally agreed to dispose of the Goose, giving parts of it to the Smithsonian, it remains at present in the hangar, a monument to his single-minded determination.

Delicate Operation. Sightseers were barred from approaching either the ship or the barge. When local fire officials insisted upon inspecting HMB-1, they found its interior completely shrouded by tarpaulins. “Surveillance TV cameras follow anyone who approaches the barge, and guards with big pistols walk beside you on board,” reported a tug pilot who once towed the barge.

Towing the ungainly barge in her wake, the *Glomar Explorer* headed for the open sea on June 20, 1974, ready at last to attempt the culmination of Project Jennifer. By about mid-July the odd convoy reached the site of the sunken Soviet sub. The delicate salvage operation got under way. Despite the chop of waves and force of the current, it was necessary for the *Glomar Explorer* to maintain an almost impossible stationary position, straying no more than 50 ft. in any direction. To do that, the ship dropped a series of bottom-placed transducers, which detected the force and direction of the water’s flow and transmitted that information to a shipboard computer. The computer, in turn, kept the ship in one place by activating a series of water jets and small propellers placed at intervals along the ship’s hull. Next the barge opened its sea cocks until it had taken on enough water to sink



HOWARD HUGHES (1947)
The most secret citizen.

to a depth of 150 ft. It was maneuvered directly beneath the *Glomar Explorer*’s moon pool and held in place by stanchions from the mother ship. Pipe from the ship reached down to the barge and attached itself to the giant grapping claws, which resembled a series of four or six interconnected ice tongs hanging from a long platform. Then the ship’s crew began to feed length after length of pipe through the hole. By the time the claw reached the Soviet submarine 16,000 ft. below, the pipe alone weighed more than 400,000 lbs. Television cameras equipped with strobe lights enabled the claw operators to see what they were doing (see diagram page 25).

One by one, the giant grappels, which were attached by cables to the *Glomar Explorer*, seized sections of the stricken submarine in their steel jaws. Slowly the winches aboard the *Glomar*

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Explorer began to lift the submarine from its grave, tugging hard to unstuck the hull from the seabed. It was a nerve-racking process. The submarine's dead weight of at least 4,000 tons taxed even *Glomar Explorer's* powerful winches. The ship shuddered and reverberated with the protesting scream of straining electric engines and the scrape of taut steel cables.

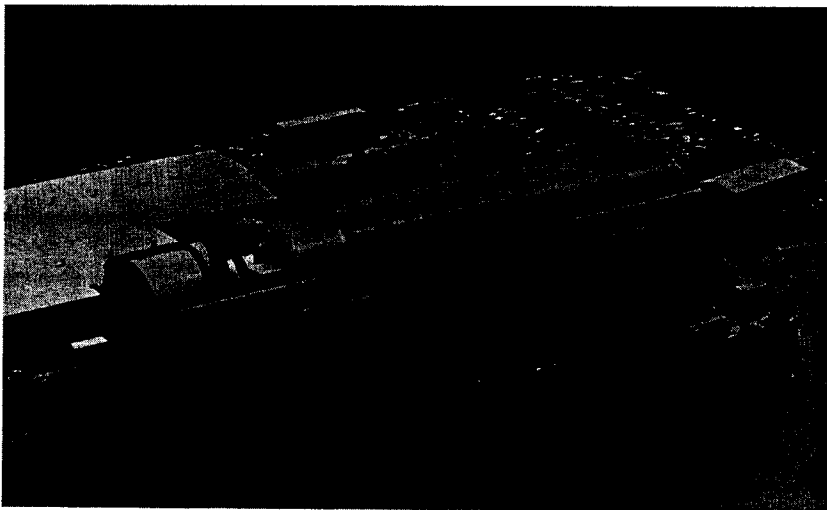
At some point in the lift—one estimate places it at about halfway up the 16,000 ft.—the cables rattled. Though the cause remains a secret, the consequence was soon evident. The sub's hull, already weakened and damaged by the explosion and severe water pressures, cracked into two pieces. According to the CIA's account, the aft two-thirds, including the conning tower and the coveted missiles and code room, slipped back to the seabed. The forward third, which remained gripped firmly in the grappels, was deposited in the still submerged barge. Blowing its water ballast, HMB-1 rose to the surface. Even if only partially successful, as the CIA claims, the mission was a major technological achievement. Nothing so large had ever before been raised from so great a depth.

Aware that the salvage operation would also raise the bodies of the dead Russian officers and men, the CIA had made what it felt was the proper arrangements. The *Glomar Explorer* was equipped with special cooling facilities that could accommodate up to 100 corpses. In the forward section of the submarine were a number of bodies. While a loudspeaker played a recording of the Soviet national anthem, a funeral service was read in Russian and English. As a CIA cameraman filmed the proceedings in color and sound, the bodies were buried at sea from the *Glomar Explorer*, each neatly shrouded in canvas.

Part II: Aims of the Mission

Was the Project Jennifer trip necessary? Would it have been worth its high price tag if the entire submarine had been recovered? Some congressional critics of the CIA last week said no; Senator Frank Church suggested that the agency had wasted money on the project, saying, "No wonder we are broke." By contrast, a top CIA official insists that had the project succeeded, it would have been "the biggest single intelligence coup in history."

Such a claim rests on the incredibly complex and ever-changing nature of military technology. To U.S. analysts, the sunken submarine contained a potential treasure-trove of invaluable and hitherto unattainable information. No outsider can imagine the degree to which the U.S. and the Soviet Union are locked in intense competition to gain an edge, no matter how slight, over each other in a whole array of weapons systems and intelligence-gathering devices. Hence each side seeks to find out all it



SUB-RECOVERY BARGE AT BERTH IN CALIFORNIA

Wary about the prying eyes of Soviet satellites.

can about the other's weaponry, countermeasures, and research.

U.S. experts study Soviet equipment captured from Arab armies by the Israelis, but that is only conventional weaponry. For knowledge about Soviet nuclear missiles, the U.S. relies mainly on the pictures of Soviet missiles taken by intelligence satellites that course across Soviet skies and aerial reconnaissance shots of Soviet test firings that record the re-entry of Soviet warheads in the Pacific. But so far as is known, U.S. experts have never had the opportunity

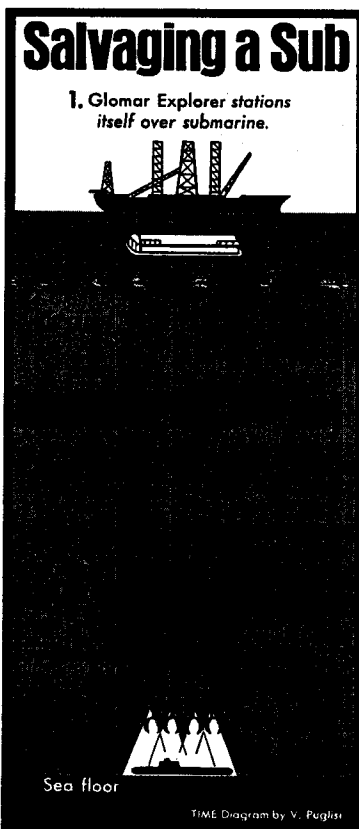
to run their hands over a Soviet nuclear warhead, or look inside. Nor, presumably, have U.S. cryptographers ever had the chance to examine the construction of a Soviet cipher machine or to read Soviet code books.

The sunken submarine offered those opportunities. The diesel-driven ship of the G or Golf class (vintage 1958-62) had long since been made obsolescent by the Soviet nuclear-powered submarines of the Yankee and Delta classes. Nonetheless, in the superstructure behind its tall conning tower, the submarine typically carried three nuclear-tipped missiles of the Serb class, which has a 650-mile range and a 500 kiloton warhead. At the time the SALT I negotiations were about to start, and an examination of the Serb warheads would have given U.S. experts an invaluable insight into the state of Soviet nuclear technology. They could have learned about the reliability, accuracy and method of triggering the nuclear matter of Soviet missiles. They could have compared their earlier evaluations based on satellite data against the real thing. Hence U.S. negotiators could have entered the SALT talks with the advantage of having a clearer understanding of Soviet nuclear strength.

Defense System. In 1968 the U.S. was building a widespread anti-missile defense system intended to intercept and destroy Soviet ICBMs before they struck American cities. A study of the guidance system and flight characteristics of the Soviet warhead would have enabled U.S. scientists to program more effectively the computers directing the U.S.'s targeting radar.

There were other incentives. The Navy had never examined a Soviet torpedo; the G-class subs carried at least ten in bow and aft tubes. U.S. naval experts also had never subjected the steel used in Soviet sub hulls to metallurgical analysis. Test results could tell them how deep Soviet subs can dive, a vital bit of information in undersea warfare.

The U.S. intelligence community has its own special enthusiasms. Aboard



THE NATION

the sub were cipher machines and Soviet code manuals; provided they were stored in watertight safes, those manuals might still be legible. "It would be an absolutely unique, unprecedented opportunity to capture an entire Soviet code room," said a ranking U.S. intelligence expert. "We have never before had access to the Soviets' top-secret cryptographic equipment or to any individual who had worked inside one of their code rooms."

In retrospect, many intelligence experts now play down the potential value of obtaining a code machine and possibly a legible code book. They point out that code machines, Western and Russian models alike, are constructed in a manner that enables the operator to re-set circuits and insert new encoding or

mining scheme implausible but that "we had to treat it seriously because we all knew that Howard Hughes does not involve himself in uneconomic undertakings." Some knowledgeable defense contractors and electronics makers doubted the *Glomar Explorer's* stated purpose because of the extraordinary specifications of contracts, such as those for the giant grappling hooks and the cryptographic equipment. The fact that the seamen of the *Glomar Explorer* were not permitted to frequent the usual Long Beach bars aroused local curiosity.

But the CIA had only two real security scares before the story finally broke. The first came in 1973, when a labor dispute erupted between engineers and the mining complement on board the *Glomar Explorer*. The engineers re-

erring accuracy, some people speculated that either it was an inside job in which Hughes had in effect robbed himself to get rid of incriminating documents, or the CIA did the favor for him. Then a man claiming to represent the burglars offered to return the documents in exchange for \$500,000.

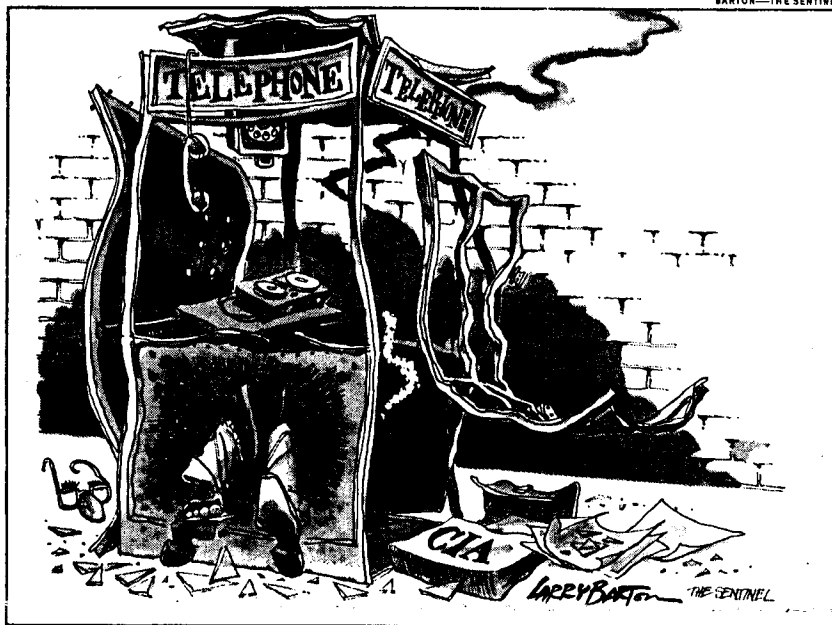
Alerted that the stolen papers could endanger national security, the FBI tried to buy them back, but the deal fell through. Last week a grand jury in California returned a secret indictment in the theft. It reportedly cited only one defendant, Donald Woolbright, who is still at large. But in the process of investigating the theft, local police got into the act, and eventually the Los Angeles *Times* got a garbled version of Jennifer from a tipster. On Feb. 8 of this year the newspaper ran a story about a CIA-Hughes contract to raise a Soviet submarine supposedly sunk in the Atlantic. The CIA waited with bated breath to see if the rest of the press would pick it up or, worse, if the Soviets would.

Astonishingly, insists the CIA, the Soviets did not, which presumably means that there are some very nervous KGB agents somewhere in the Western Hemisphere this week. But the press kept asking the CIA questions about Howard Hughes and submarines. Eventually, Director Colby moved to suppress the story, pleading national security. His rationale: since Moscow still had not got wind of Jennifer, *Glomar Explorer* this summer would return in good weather to attempt to raise the rest of the submarine, and secrecy was needed to protect the operation. All this posed a sharp dilemma for editors (see THE PRESS).

Quick Switch. What Colby offered was unusual: briefings on Jennifer in exchange for silence. He seemed to feel that only by being briefed on the stakes involved could the press be expected to join the conspiracy of silence.

A curious turnabout took place once the story did become public: the CIA had nothing more to say about Jennifer. The formula seemed simple if slightly surreal: "We'll tell you something if you won't tell anybody; now that you've told everybody, we won't tell you anything."

Reason for that wall of silence: by not publicly admitting the existence of Jennifer, the U.S. hopes to permit the Soviets to avoid any official response that could damage relations between the two nations. Soviet Party Leader Leonid Brezhnev is due to visit the U.S. this summer, and CIA officials remember all too well that Moscow used the U-2 spy-plane incident to ruin a summit in 1960. Last week, when the Jennifer saga broke, the acting Soviet ambassador in Washington sent a strong cable to Moscow advising the Kremlin to make a firm protest to Washington. But Moscow has remained silent, and the Soviet press has not mentioned the matter at all.



"Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to (click!) self-destruct in five seconds (click!) Your mission . . ."

decoding disks at random so that yesterday's code may give scant clue to today's. Even so, influential U.S. cryptologists at the time believed that an examination of the Russian equipment would increase the possibility that the U.S. might finally succeed in breaking Soviet codes, a feat that in 1968 had still defied the best efforts of the American intelligence community.

Part III: The Story Gets Out

Although so many thousands of people worked on Jennifer in a dozen Government departments and private companies, the project was a remarkably well-kept secret for more than six years. There were occasional suspicions. Famed oceanologist Jacques Yves Cousteau, for example, said last week that he had always thought Hughes'

sent the fact that the mining technicians, rather than the captain, really ran the ship. That dispute moved quietly into the courts. The second scare came shortly before the *Glomar Explorer* put to sea to salvage the submarine. A rash of burglaries of Hughes' company offices scattered across the West culminated in the early morning of June 5, 1974, in a break-in of Hughes' two-story communications and storage center at 7000 Romaine Street in Los Angeles.

A group of four or five armed men slipped past a formidable electronic alarm system and heavy locks and overwhelmed the guard. Using acetylene torches, the men burned their way into the safes and filing cabinets that contained some of Hughes' most sensitive documents, including one memo outlining his participation in Jennifer. Since the robbery was executed with such un-

Part IV: Puzzling Aftermath

A host of puzzles large and small clings to the Jennifer story. Example: Why was Hughes so anxious to make the CIA connection that the Jennifer partnership represented? According to Robert Maheu, an ex-FBI agent and former manager of Hughes' operations in Nevada, the billionaire had tried for years to arrange a connection with the CIA. Explained Maheu: "He wanted it so that Uncle Sam could never take after him. If he got in a jam with the Internal Revenue Service or the Securities and Exchange Commission, they couldn't afford to touch him because of what he was doing with the CIA." But it was the agency, in fact, that made the initial approach to Hughes about Project Jennifer.

It was followed, however, by several other arrangements. TIME has learned. For example, the agency supplied information about Maheu in connection with his successful defamation suit against Hughes for calling him a thief. For their part, Hughes' employees kept the CIA informed about the activities of White House Plumber E. Howard Hunt. Among other things, they reported that he had interviewed ITT Lobbyist Dita Beard and planned to rifle the files of Las Vegas Publisher Hank Greenspun in search of information that might embarrass Democratic Presidential Candidate Edmund Muskie. At the time, ex-CIA Agent Hunt was also working for Robert R. Mullen & Co., a now defunct public relations firm in Washington that provided cover for CIA agents in Europe and the Far East. The firm was headed by Robert Bennett, who also worked for Hughes.

Then there is the puzzle of why so many reporters for major newspapers, magazines and TV networks simultaneously stumbled upon the Jennifer trail. On the morning after, some journalists got the feeling that the CIA had actually been helpful all along in getting the story out, while at the same time it apparently tried to suppress the story. There are several theories, including the reasonable possibility that the agency effort was just what it seemed to be. Another is that, battered by a lot of bad publicity of late, the agency felt that it was time for some good news. Jennifer was a clean, highly creative enterprise that had served its purpose.

A third and by no means improbable theory has it that in fact Jennifer wholly succeeded: the entire submarine, missiles, codes and all, was raised intact and gleaned. But with the story beginning to leak out, it was decided to make one final effort to deceive the Soviets on the extent of the coup by floating a version of only partial success. The last theory goes off into the wild blue yonder, suggesting that raising a Soviet submarine was not Jennifer's mission at all, but the supreme cover for a secret mission as yet safely secure.

Shivering from Overexposure

There are those who fear that continuing controversy, of which Project Jennifer is only the latest fuel, may irreparably damage the CIA. The dissension has contributed to an exodus of veteran employees, among them David Phillips, 52, former chief of CIA operations in Latin America, who resigned last week and advised CIA Director William Colby that he planned to organize an association of retired intelligence officers to defend the agency. But younger employees have also been affected. In Washington, for example, some young analysts had joined the CIA only after assurances from recruiters that the cloak-and-dagger exploits of the cold war were a thing of the past. Now some of these idealistic employees are disillusioned. At the same time, CIA agents in Western Europe are worried that they can no longer count on headquarters to protect them. As a result, they are reluctant to mount any risky or out-of-the-ordinary operations and mutter darkly that the CIA debate only encourages the Soviet Union's KGB to step up efforts to penetrate Western defenses.

Colby's more pressing concern, however, is the controversy's effect on the agents operating under deep cover in Communist and other potential enemy countries and on allied and other friendly intelligence organizations. He told TIME Correspondent Strobe Talbott: "A lot of them are in a state of shock. They cannot put into their own framework this idea of going on television, going to Capitol Hill, going into these secrets. They ask, 'Are we going to get in the middle of this? Is it going to come out that we have this secret relationship?'"

Buttoned Up. Colby believes that he can allay such fears, if the members and staffers of the House and Senate investigating committees now being set up to look into the intelligence community exercise restraint in their requests for access to secrets and prevent what they receive from being leaked.

The committees share Colby's concern about leaks. House Committee Chairman Lucien Nedzi plans to hire a director who can keep his staff buttoned up, much as John Doar did for the House Judiciary Committee's inquiry into the impeachment of Richard Nixon. At the request of the Senate committee, the FBI and CIA installed electronic devices to secure the committee's workroom from bugging and illegal entry. Staffers will be required to go through FBI and CIA security checks, and have been told that they will be fired if they discuss their work with outsiders. Further, the staff members will be prohibited from removing any materials from the room.

Colby told Talbott that in principle he welcomed the investigations. He said: "There has been much exaggeration and misunderstanding. I both hope and sincerely believe that after reviewing the

whole matter, it will come out that these were minor problems rather than major issues." The director predicted that the hearings will result in closer congressional scrutiny of the CIA, though he added: "This confronts us with a problem. How do you resolve the need for secrecy with the desire of a substantial number of Congressmen to have significant knowledge?"

In Secret. Colby argued against some suggested reforms of CIA operations. He opposed restricting the agency's clandestine activities to those first approved by a congressional watchdog committee because it would "interrupt the constitutional process of the Exec-



COLBY BEFORE A HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE
"A state of shock."

utive executing and the Legislative legislating. If you put the Congressmen in the chain of operations, I think you have a very complicated problem of who is really responsible." As for the proposal that Congress set specific guidelines for CIA activities, Colby said: "It would be very hard to set any that wouldn't come back and bite us some day." Instead, he urged that the agency be required only to report on its activities after the fact to a congressional committee.

Congress may not be in the mood to accept this, and no doubt stronger supervision is needed to guard against illegal CIA activities. But in the real world, in which other nations engage in espionage and "dirty tricks," the U.S. cannot do without an agency more or less like the CIA, and such an agency must, up to a considerable point, function in secret.