

# Sub Finds H-Bomb Off Spain

Weapon Reported  
Intact in Water  
2500 Feet Deep

PALOMARES BEACH, Spain, March 17 (AP)—The U.S. midget submarine Alvin has found the hydrogen bomb that was lost two months ago in an American bomber-tanker plane crash over Spain, official sources said tonight.

They reported that it was sighted with its parachute still attached 2500 feet under the Mediterranean Sea, five miles offshore. The weapon was apparently intact — indicating no lethal leakage in the waters of this resort.

Officials said it would take up to three days for Rear Adm. William Guest's Task Force 65 to bring the bomb ashore or put it aboard a search vessel. Warships ringed the area and recovery operations were expected to start Friday morning.

The official sources said the Alvin found the weapon Wednesday. Directors of the search were just settling down to a long sweep of the sea bottom when word of the contact was flashed from the sub.

*Howard Simons, the Washington Post's science writer, further reported:*

American officials' optimism that the bomb has been found is based on underwater photographs of a parachute shrouding a large unidentified object presumed to be the bomb.

Parachute and object are resting precariously on a slope of the Mediterranean Sea floor a few miles off the coast of Palomares. The location has been a prime suspected site for the missing weapon that fell along with three others after an Air Force B-52 and a refueling plane collided over

Palomares.

Preparations for recovering the parachute and whatever is beneath it already have begun. Top American officials are already on the scene in anticipation. Gen. Stanley Donovan, chief of the U.S. military mission in Spain, flew to Palomares from Madrid yesterday. Recovery promises to be a

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delicate operation, informed sources said.

These same sources point out that not only is the parachute-shrouded object already in deep water, but apparently it is balanced on the slope in such a way that a wrong nudge could send it rolling into even deeper water.

There is no guarantee that the object is the bomb. It presumably was identified more from sonar than from photographs of the parachute. However, its location and other clues seem to account for the optimism among officials.

The object is resting about where the missing bomb would be if its parachute had fully deployed at the time of the accident, as some experts conjectured after the tail plate from the missing bomb's parachute had been found soon after the accident.

Moreover, the photographs of the parachute off the coast fit a Spanish fisherman's account of seeing an object on a parachute plummet into the sea just after the midair collision.

Recovery of the missing

bomb presumably would bring to an end the intensive and expensive search for it that has been made on land and under the sea since the crash.

This will not end the Palomares incident, however. There still are claims to be settled with the villagers, whose farmland, crops and animals were dusted with small amounts of radioactive plutonium when two of the unarmed weapons had high-explosive detonations upon impact.

Then, too, the United States will still have to counter Russia propaganda about the incident.

Finally, it is not inconceivable that the United States will try to renegotiate strategic bomber refueling rights over Spain—rights Spain took away at the time of the incident.