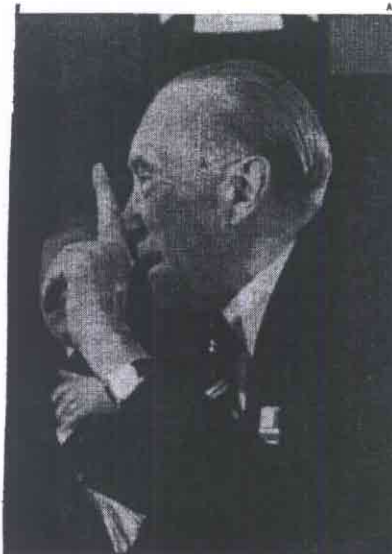


## SPAIN

### Rough Sea for Charlie

Finding the H-bomb that fell into the water off Spain's south coast last Jan. 17 was hard enough. Bringing the stubby, 2,800-lb. weapon to the surface turned out to be an even more difficult problem.

The bomb rested, half shrouded by its own grey parachute, on a steep 70° slope on the ocean floor. The danger was that it might slip farther down the incline into the craggy depths of a 3,000-ft. undersea valley in which the midget submarines could not maneuver. With that consideration in mind, Rear Admiral William S. Guest, 52, commander of the 15-vessel Task Force 65, put into action Plan Charlie to re-



ADENAUER  
shocked and shocked.

to members of the press and photographed—the first time in history that the U.S. was dropping the top-secret wraps that surround its current nuclear weaponry.

On the first try, *Alvin* accidentally nudged the bomb, and it rolled 20 ft. down the steep slope. On the second try, the bomb ominously rolled another 5 ft. down the slope. For a third try, the Navy attempted to snag the bomb's parachute with grappling hooks, but that failed too. All the while, the Navy's recovery operation was severely handicapped by high winds that roiled the Mediterranean.

Finally, at week's end the sea calmed, and little *Alvin* at last succeeded in slipping a line around the bomb without sending it tumbling down the underwater hill. Ever so gingerly, the U.S.S. *Hoist* began to drag the bomb up the slope. The bomb had just begun to budge when suddenly the steel cable snapped. Fortunately, the bomb settled near its old position. Admiral Guest ordered his men to try again.

cover the unarmed 20-megaton weapon.

The main job went to the same submersible that originally found the bomb: *Alvin*, a 22-ft. deep-sea research ship whose bulbous shape resembles a puffed-up blowfish. Using its mechanical claw, *Alvin* was supposed to slip a cable around the bomb so that it could be towed by surface ship up the incline to a plateau 2,000 ft. below the sea's surface. Once it was on level ground, the bomb would be clamped in steel jaws and brought up to the 400-ft. level, where Navy divers would inspect the bomb. If it was intact and constituted no radiation danger, it was to be winched aboard the U.S.S. *Hoist*. By special order of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, the bomb was to be shown

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