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Ruling on Mystery Ship a Blow to L.A. Assessor

Los Angeles

The mystery ship *Glomar Explorer*, which in 1974 recovered part of a sunken Russian submarine, is owned by the federal government and not Howard Hughes' Summa Corp., a Los Angeles federal judge ruled yesterday.

The ruling by U.S. District Judge Manuel Real was a severe setback for Los Angeles county Tax Assessor Philip Watson, who had assessed more than \$7.5 million in back property taxes on the vessel on the ground the ship was owned by Hughes.

Real ruled that the vessel clearly has always been owned by the U.S. government. Global Marine Inc. was the contractor which built the ship.

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