

HUGHES GETS BILL FOR 3-MILLION TAX

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Los Angeles County Levies an Assessment on Ship

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LOS ANGELES, May 28—The refusal of Howard Hughes and the Central Intelligence Agency to disclose who owns the ship Glomar Explorer has brought Mr. Hughes's Summa Corporation a tax bill for \$3,119,865.

Philip Watson, the Los Angeles County Assessor, said today that he had levied that 1975 assessment against the ship, which last year attempted for the C.I.A. to raise a sunken Soviet submarine from three miles down in the Pacific Ocean.

When the Glomar Explorer was built in 1973 Summa Corporation announced that it had been paid for by Mr. Hughes as a private sea mining venture to retrieve valuable mineral nodules from the ocean floor.

Last March, however, William E. Colby, the C.I.A.'s director, privately acknowledged to a number of newspapers that Mr. Hughes had served as a "cover" for a C.I.A. attempt to retrieve a nuclear armed Soviet submarine that sank 700 miles northwest of Hawaii.

Government sources asserted

at that time that the Glomar had been paid for with Federal funds, unofficially estimated at \$350-million.

Mr. Watson said that he had appraised the Glomar Explorer at \$105-million and levied the tax bill against Mr. Hughes's Summa Corporation after trying without success to establish the vessel's true owner.

The assessor said that he had had several "cloak and dagger" visits from men who said that they represented the C.I.A., but carried no C.I.A. credentials. He said that they asked him to waive the tax on the ground that the ship was owned by the Government, but that they declined to document this contention. Government property is not subject to county taxes.

Mr. Watson said that he had written the Summa Corporation asking who held title to the Glomar Explorer, but got a reply that did not address itself to the question.

"They just said that the vessel was registered in Delaware, which doesn't affect tax liability if it is based in Long Beach," the assessor said. "Summa Corporation is the registered owner of the ship, so I've sent Summa the tax bill."