

A Report That Glomar Lifted Lost Soviet Sub

New York

Contrary to public statements, the Central Intelligence Agency succeeded in lifting a Soviet submarine from the bottom of the Pacific ocean two years ago, Time magazine said yesterday.

The magazine said it had learned that the deep-sea exploring vessel Glomar Explorer recovered nearly intact a 320-foot long, 5500-ton Russian submarine of the Golf II class that sank 16,000 feet in 1968.

The magazine said in its current issue that CIA experts removed and analyzed three surface-to surface missiles armed with nuclear warheads and several torpedoes from the ship.

It quoted an unidentified U.S. Navy official as saying of the submarine's equipment: "It was dated somewhat, but still a technical mother lode of stuff."

At the time of the operation, in the summer of 1974, the CIA said that the Glomar Explorer belonged to the late billionaire Howard Hughes and was engaged in exploring for underwater minerals.

But when reports of the operation were published in March, 1975, the CIA indicated that the mission had failed — that the submarine broke in two and the more valuable half sank again.

Time said the CIA "floated" its story about a partial recovery evidently to justify the \$550 million

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cost of the project while at the same time avoiding unnecessary embarrassment for the Russians.

According to the magazine, the U.S. Navy learned that it had underestimated the ship's firepower, and that its missiles — with a range of about 700 nautical miles — were armed with hydrogen-bomb warheads, rather than the less-powerful uranium-fission weapons that one were the "staple of Soviet defense."

American experts also made discoveries about Soviet torpedo technology, about which little was previously known, the magazine said.

After subjecting the submarine's hull to metallurgical analysis, the submarine was broken up and parts of it were crushed like old cars and dumped in various spots of the Pacific ocean, the magazine added.

Reuters