

Feb. 17 Trial Date Set in Theft At Hughes Coast Headquarters

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LOS ANGELES — Superior Judge Earl Riley today set Feb. 17 as the trial date for Donald R. Woolbright in the 1974 burglary of Howard R. Hughes's headquarters here.

Mr. Woolbright is charged with receiving stolen property and attempting to extort \$1 million from Mr. Hughes's Summa Corporation for the return of the billionaire's confidential files, reportedly taken from his Hollywood headquarters by safe-crackers on June 5 of last year.

Mr. Woolbright's attorney, Richard Kirchner, said he planned to subpoena all records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Summa Corporation dealing with the mystery shrouded safe cracking.

The loss of Mr. Hughes's files were not reported publicly when the burglary occurred and a Hughes spokesman asserted that only \$68,000 and some art objects had been taken. Only one guard was on duty the night of the burglary, and police investigators reported that the burglary alarm system at the building was not working. In a later police report, the investigators expressed the opinion that the safe cracking was an "inside job."

Five days before the burglary the S.E.C. served a subpoena on Summa for the production of Hughes records dealing with the acquisition of Air West, a regional airline. The agency has filed a civil action in San Francisco alleging that Air West stockholders had been defrauded of \$15 million in the airline's acquisition by the Hughes organization.

Early this year, as a result of the burglary, it became known that the C.I.A. had entered in to a secret contract under which Summa would pose as the builder and owner of the Glomar Explorer, a purported sea-mining vessel. Later, the Justice Department conceded in court that the true owner of the ship, which attempted to recover a sunken Soviet submarine from the Pacific in 1974, was the Federal Government and that the Hughes organization was a cover for the mission.

Existence of the C.I.A. contract leaked to the press when the Los Angeles Police Department was enlisted to attempt to recover the stolen files, which were believed to include a Hughes organization memorandum spelling out details of the C.I.A.-Glomar contract.

Nine months later, Mike Davis, the lone guard on duty at the Hughes headquarters on the night of the burglary, came

forward and told the Los Angeles District Attorney that he had picked up the C.I.A. memorandum, taken it home and flushed it down the toilet without informing his superiors.