



Breaking a world record – aided by pot

The media reported that Dr. A. Leonard Diamond, professor of psychology at the University of Hawaii’s Psychological Research Center, was about to conduct a project on sensory deprivation. The project team was seeking a volunteer. Captivated, I visited him and asked how they planned to run the experiment.

He replied, “We feel that if a volunteer is submerged in murky water for at least 24 hours we can accomplish our goal. We’ll learn a substantial amount regarding human isolation. We’ll be studying both the physiological and psychological reactions.”

“Dr. Diamond, if I could put the entire project together could I be that volunteer?”

“I can’t see why not, so long as you can prepare yourself physically.”

I asked that he write me a letter stating their objective, and acknowledging that they had selected me as the subject. When he handed me the letter we shook hands on the agreement.

All my life, I’ve enjoyed taking risks, pushing out the edge of the envelope, but only when I was convinced I had a good chance to accomplish the goal safely. This project was especially attractive to me because the information gathered might help others. As a father and husband, I was concerned about the risks of the dive, but I was convinced that with proper training the risk would be minimal.

Helped by industrialist Henry J. Kaiser

The day after my meeting with Dr. Diamond I made an appointment to meet with Henry J. Kaiser “regarding a scientific project to be

conducted by the University of Hawaii.” After recollecting our first encounter, he agreed to meet me at his new Kaiser Foundation Hospital in Honolulu.

I explained that my plan was to get the U.S. Navy to provide the necessary diving rig and teach me how to dive, and that we would need medical doctors to monitor me before, during, and after the submersion. Mr. Kaiser was intrigued. “If you’re willing to take that kind of risk, David, the very least we can do is to provide all the necessary medical assistance you require. If you should need hospitalization at any time, rest assured that our facility will be totally available at no cost.” That generous offer was a thrill, coming from probably the world’s greatest industrialist and one of the finest men I ever had the pleasure to know.

Mr. Kaiser owned the NBC television and radio affiliates in Hawaii. I suggested that, if his engineers could install a microphone inside the helmet of my diving suit, I would broadcast every 20 minutes, 24 hours a day, and report my physical condition.

“That’s a splendid idea. If you get the diving outfit, I will see that our engineers accomplish what you suggest.” (During our conversation I learned that Mr. Kaiser was up every morning at 3 a.m. so that he could telephone his companies around the world.)

Next I made an appointment to visit the Navy commander at Pearl Harbor. I told him that this would be a fine opportunity to improve the antiquated design of the standard diving rig. “I’ll give you a call and let you know if we want to be involved,” he said.

It seemed that it would also be a good opportunity to attempt to break the underwater world record, which had been set accidentally by a Navy diver in 1944. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Navy began a salvage operation that was still under way in 1944. A deep sea diver had been using a torch to cut through the heavy plates of one of the ships in Pearl Harbor’s West Loch, when the ship rolled, and buried him alive in the mud. His air lines were intact, but it took other divers days to dig him out. He was pinned down there for 74 hours and 55 minutes, a world record. We could only imagine the terror he endured before he was finally rescued.

The following day the Navy phoned to say that it wanted to be a part of this scientific research. The next challenge was to line up a large shirt manufacturer, Hale Niu, to donate 50 green shirts that would be imprinted with their trade name and *Underwater Medical Research Team*. The shirts would be worn by the volunteers who served food to the

Navy divers, members of the University of Hawaii's department of psychology, and others who would aid in the mammoth project. I enlisted the Hawaiian Land Company, a subsidiary of Dillingham Corporation, who promised to provide two cranes, (in case one failed when it was necessary to bring the diver – me! – to the surface) and operators at the submersion site around the clock. Finally, we needed a platform that could be submerged.

The owner of Pacific Builders, Jim Humpert, agreed to construct a platform with a large wooden chair that would be anchored to the floor so that the diver could sit in it. I suggested that they paint their name and logo on the platform, as the entire event would be covered by radio and television. "Agreed!"

In addition to his dozens of international corporations, Mr. Kaiser told me about his upcoming construction of an entire community. "It will be named Hawaii Kai, and will be located on 6,000 acres of Bishop Estate land. It will be a planned community for 60,000 people, featuring 12,000 homes, seven schools, and 2,000 one-acre parks. Included will be businesses, shopping centers, high-rise condominiums, and waterways to the ocean, as well as a golf course." It's worth noting that he was in his late 70s when he took on this last project, and completed it.

As much as I was tempted, I didn't have the temerity to ask Mr. Kaiser if he smoked grass. I daydreamed about asking him, and hearing him answer, "Of course. How else could one person come up with so many successful ideas and completed projects?" I could also imagine the DEA saying, "If he hadn't smoked marijuana, he might have *really* amounted to something!"

U.S. Navy trains me to be a diver

The diving rig weighed 210 pounds. On the inside of the helmet were two plungers that the diver operated with his chin. One valve brought air into the suit, one expelled it. If a diver is fatigued he may accidentally press the intake air valve, filling the suit with too much air. In that case the buoyancy of the suit and the weight of the brass helmet blows the diver upside down, and in a second or two water can fill the helmet, and drown him before he has a hope of getting right side up again. It was vital that the correct actions become automatic. I had some practicing to do!

To train for the experiment, I worked out at the YMCA each day for two hours, using the punching bag, swimming, and riding an exercycle.

From home I jogged three miles and then swam two miles in the ocean. As the big day drew near, Navy divers trained me for three weeks in the ocean near Pearl Harbor.

A site near Fisherman's Wharf in Honolulu was selected for the dive. Cranes, generators, and tables for sensitive instruments were assembled. The Kodak company provided motion-picture film to record the event. TV crews staked out sites for their cameras, and tents were set up for divers who would be tending me during the experiment. More tents were erected to create space for 80 volunteers who would support the technical crew; and of course one for the University of Hawaii's Department of Psychology. Engineers from Kaiser Broadcasting Company began working around the clock to wire the helmet for radio broadcasting, carefully sealing all the wiring.

Hazel enjoyed watching me work out. As the arrangements moved rapidly toward the day of the dive, I was asked to give a press conference. Newspapers, radio, and television did stories each day about the dive and increased public interest. Photographers began following me as I jogged, swam, and worked out at the Y. I was receiving weekly physicals at Kaiser Hospital from my appointed physician, Dr. Sing. He was scheduled to be at the dive site or on call during the entire submersion. The press was told that I wanted to remain under water for 80 hours.

I go for the record

Finally the day arrived, Thursday, October 23, 1959. At 8 a.m., Fisherman's Wharf looked as if preparations were being made to send a man to Mars. Several hundred curious onlookers watched from the sidelines. Generators and cranes filled much of the space on the wharf, and an ambulance stood nearby.

Numerous newspaper stories now quoted Dr. Diamond's statement that "The experiment will lead to important knowledge of human reactions to isolation." Professional deep-sea diver E. R. Cross, as well as members of the U.S. Navy, wanted to know specifically what breaks down first in a man – the mental or the physical function.

Operators stood by a vast array of medical equipment in a large tent that was my first stop when I arrived. The medical team shaved areas of my scalp, chest, and legs, and attached electrodes to capture brain waves with an electroencephalograph and to monitor heart function with an electrocardiograph. Dials and gauges for all the medical apparatus, including the intercom, were tested and re-tested.

TV cameras gaped at me and radio and TV personalities interviewed me while I was being prepped. In an unprecedented innovation, a urinator was connected to the diving suit. The national *MD Medical News Magazine* had flown a reporter and photographer from the mainland. As a technician began to insert a rectal thermometer about the size of a marking pen, the *MD* photographer edged forward to shoot a picture, but at that point, I put my foot down.

The Navy men helped me into the suit. Before they put the helmet on, I asked to kiss Hazel and my handsome seven-month-old son. I would have liked to hold them in my arms but I was too wired up. Finally two Navy men hoisted the helmet, placed it over my head, and bolted it into place. It was now 1:20 p.m.

“This is Dr. Diamond, David. Can you hear me?”

“Yes,” I answered, “loud and clear.”

“Dave, this is the engineer. Please do a radio check.”

Everything seemed to check out OK. I felt like The Man in the Iron Mask, claustrophobic and apprehensive. The hissing of the air began. I asked them to open the faceplate and wipe my face; sweat had run into my eyes. Then I was asked to stand up and walk twenty feet to the platform. The suit itself now weighed 215 pounds. I weighed 185. It took all the strength I had to walk to and climb onto the platform, and slowly sit down in the oversized chair that would be my home for the next three days and nights. The crane with its 30-foot boom gently began lifting the platform and swinging around to lower me into the Pacific waters of the Kewalo Basin. I could see people waving and saluting. I couldn't hear anything but the hiss of air entering the helmet.

I gave an awkward salute to Hazel and our son, and threw them a kiss. There was now no way I could get out of this on my own. I had to trust the good people around me, and their equipment. My thoughts raced, and not in the happiest directions. If the generator failed and the emergency generator wasn't started immediately, I'd use up the air in the helmet in three minutes, and suffocate – not exactly a comforting thought at this stage of the operation. The platform sank beneath the surface and green-blue water slowly rose to envelop me, and closed over my head. Visibility was no more than two feet. The sounds of hissing air and escaping bubbles were all that I could hear until a ghostly voice broke through.

“This is Len Diamond, Dave. Are you OK? Are you getting enough air?”

“Yes,” I answered. “I'm OK.”



The University of Hawaii needed a volunteer for a study of sensory deprivation. After weeks of training by Navy divers, I was lowered into the Kewalo Basin to begin a planned 80 hours underwater. That brass helmet was heavy – and, Hawaii or not, that water soon got cold.



Perhaps the world's greatest industrialist, Henry J. Kaiser created Kaiser Steel, Kaiser Aluminum, Kaiser Broadcasting, Kaiser Permanente hospitals, and many other companies. He built hotels, ships, dams, and highways, and supported my record-breaking dive wholeheartedly. And he was my friend.

“Let us know when you reach the bottom, Dave. The platform is sinking rapidly now. Sorry there’s such poor visibility in this area, but as you know, that’s necessary to the experiment. You’ll do just fine. We know that from all the tests you’ve taken. You’re well prepared. But remember, if you’re able to remain down there for 12 hours you will begin to suffer from sensory deprivation. You will begin to wonder where you are. You will become disoriented. And that’s what we need to happen. Do you hear me, Dave?”

“Yes, I hear you.” Moments later there was a shaking thud as the platform settled onto the muddy bottom and into three feet of silt. Clouds of mud reduced visibility to zero. I tested an old cliché: I truly couldn’t see my hand in front of my face. I felt as though I were blindfolded and turning in circles. In about a half hour the slurry of mud settled back to the ocean floor, and visibility went all the way back up to two feet.

Dr. Diamond administered tests of mental agility, to provide a baseline for comparison with results of similar tests after the physical and mental deterioration to come.

The suit leaked from the beginning. Within three hours the water was up to my neck and my teeth were chattering. Broadcasting and answering questions from the psychologists, adjusting air with my chin, and constantly concentrating on not being blown upside down kept me busy but not warm. I was already becoming fatigued, largely by the shivering. Water should not have come into the suit for several more hours. The leaks were later attributed to the holes drilled through the breastplate of the suit for the wires connected to my body. After 12 hours I was feeling the claustrophobia divers commonly experience during long dives.

A quarter-inch copper tube had been cut through the helmet and led to where my mouth could accept liquid food. “It’s time for your feeding, Dave.” Down came two divers. They had improvised a rubber bag that was filled with Sustagen, a high-protein, high-calorie, low-residue liquid which also included vitamin supplements. Over the course of the dive they added to the Sustagen 1,300 milligrams of Noludar, a hypnotic. The drug’s purpose was to make me more susceptible to sensory deprivation and hallucinations (it worked!) and at the same time to help me relax as much as possible under the circumstances. The liquid squirted into my mouth as a diver rolled up the bag like a tube of toothpaste.

Kaiser Broadcasting covered the dive as promised. Every 20 minutes whoever was on the air for them would cut in and ask me what I was experiencing.

“Can you see any fish down there, Dave?”

“Sure do,” I answered, and described the types and sizes of fish that swam close enough for me to see them.

Local radio stars George Groves and Hal Lewis were on top of the project, and were excellent. It was clear in their interviews that they were truly concerned about my teeth chattering after just three hours under water, and about my general health. I could tell that to them I wasn't just broadcasting fodder, some guy pulling a stunt.

I want cannabis down my air line

Twice, two young ladies in scuba gear swam up to the face plate and kissed it. I smiled, and they performed a little water ballet within two feet of me. Several times the support crew put Hazel on the radio to talk to me, and that was a tremendous boost for my morale. Then came the voice of Dr. Diamond.

“Dave, you've been down there now for 36 hours. We've gotten some fine information. The longer you stay down, the more useful information we can obtain. What do you say? It's totally up to you.”

The water temperature was 18 degrees lower than my body temperature and the cold was biting into my bones. I told them I'd stay down as long as I could stand it, but my body was feeling as if I'd been locked into a medieval torture chamber. Bones and joints that weren't becoming cramped and cold were entangled by wires and tubes, and were numb. I thought: if only someone could blow a few hits of grass down my air line, it would make the pain and discomfort go away.

Loneliness was overwhelming me. I couldn't sleep, or so I thought. Suddenly I was paralyzed by fear: I had blown upside down and I was drowning! I saw a fence covered with snow as the cold murky water closed around my face. God, I moaned, why did I allow myself to get into this intolerable environment, to die like this and leave Hazel and our little son? The bubbles were now coming out of my mouth as I gasped for a last breath of air.

“Dave, this is Dr. Spicer. Why did you scream? You've been asleep for almost two hours.”

My body was shaking and convulsed with cold. “Am I asleep?” I asked.

“No, you’re awake now. Apparently you’ve been hallucinating. You must eat. You refused your last feeding.”

“I’m so cold, so cold,” I heard myself saying, over and over.

“This time, Dave, we’ve made your drink taste like chocolate. You’ll like it. The diver is on his way. It’s imperative you drink. This will warm you up.”

My body was trembling continuously now and I couldn’t stop my teeth from chattering. The urinator did not work, and uric acid fumes were stinging my eyes. I had an inexplicable dread that I was doomed. I ached to go up to the surface; but even stronger was the urge to be a good sport and accept the agony in order to provide as much medical information as possible.

“The divers are there now, Dave. Put your mouth on the feeding tube. Is your mouth on the tube, Dave?”

“Yes. Yes!” I moaned in a haunted raspy voice coming from 185 of pounds of pain. Suddenly the liquid food was squirting all over my face and into my eyes. I was so exhausted I had forgotten to place my mouth over the feeding tube. I must wipe that syrupy liquid out of my eyes. Then my dazed brain realized that was impossible. My intellectual lassitude flashbacks became whimsical. I wanted those “mermaids” to come back to perform again. My right hand and foot were now totally numb.

Seconds from death

Minutes now seemed like hours. “You’re doing just fine, Dave,” said Dr. Diamond. “You’re at 71 hours. Four more hours and you’ll have broken the world’s record. You have already contributed much to science. Do you still want to remain down for a total of 80 hours? If you do, we’ll help you. If not, we’re ready to bring you up now.”

I was almost deaf and crazed from the hissing air but I murmured, “I’ll stay down for the 80 hours.” After three days and nights with only an hour or two of sleep, my thinking was far from lucid. Every muscle of my being that wasn’t numb or shuddering from cold was in agony from spasms. The thought came to me again: if only some person would exhale some pot down my air hose. It would stop those muscle spasms. I started hallucinating again: I was in our little guest home on Kahala Avenue and Hazel and our son were desperately trying to remove the deep sea diver’s helmet from my head.

Before I realized what was happening, I began gasping for breath. I

was barely able to make my mouth move. “Please. . . air. . . I’m suffocating!” No answer, and fear turned to hopelessness. The platform was shaking. The heavy wooden chair I was sitting on began to slide off the platform into the ocean. I was barely able to place my numb arm around a cable. The chair vanished. It seemed as though I was moving. Two shadows appeared in wet suits and put their arms around me. Was I dead? That constant, thunderous hissing of the air – stopped. It was peaceful now, not a sound. But I was gasping for air; I was strangling, and the water was up to my chin. Suddenly, brightness shattered the gloom of the murky water. The platform broke the surface of the water, like a breaching whale thrusting its body to the heavens, gasping for air.

But for me there still was no air. Blackness began to envelop me. It seemed that many shadows were holding me upright. One held a large knife and he was raising it as he came toward me. I tried to back away but I couldn’t move. The shadow raised the knife and plunged it into the diving suit. I thought he was stabbing me, and that I didn’t feel the blade penetrating my body only because I was numb. Water gushed from the suit.

Then suddenly, I could breathe! I sucked in huge gulps of air. The blackness that had been encompassing me began to lighten. The dying cells of my body were coming back to life. I could hear wrenches rapidly turning the brass bolts of the helmet, as the face plate was opened.

As the helmet was lifted off, my chin fell forward onto the breast plate. Hands lifted my head up and a voice said, “Inhale deeply, Dave... that’s it.” It was Dr. Sing. I began to focus my eyes.

Several voices were speaking at once. “Are you OK now, Dave?” I didn’t respond. “Were you aware that the generator quit? We couldn’t get the emergency generator to start. We’re so sorry.” My exhausted brain tried to focus. Another voice: “It’s 5:52 p.m., October 25. You just broke the world’s record for staying underwater in a deep-sea diving rig. You were down 76 hours and 42 minutes. Congratulations!”

Ambulance doors opened, ready to take me to the hospital. I stared at people surrounding me, and tried to nod, but the flash bulbs were hurting my eyes and the Hawaiian sun was blinding me. I did notice that the shirts of those around me were sweat-soaked.

“Are you OK, Dave?” It was Dr. Sing again.

I answered feebly, “I’m very cold and numb.” As they cut the diving suit off me I gazed at my wrinkled white hands. I was in some sharp pain. How I wished someone would put a joint into my mouth! I



MD PICTORIAL

DIVER FORD IS SURFACED, RELEASED FROM DIVING SUIT AFTER SETTING AN UNDERWATER ENDURANCE RECORD OF 76 HOURS 32 MINUTES

ETIOLOGY OF AN ENDURANCE RECORD

COOPERATING in an unusual research project on human endurance were the University of Hawaii, the United States Navy, Kaiser Medical Center of Honolulu. The object: to put a diver underwater for an undetermined length of time and register effects of prolonged isolation and monotony by depriving him of varieties of sensory stimuli normal to his environment.

MD, AUGUST, 1968

Originally planned to establish an endurance record, the project presented vast possibilities for the study of perceptual distortion and induced schizophrenia. Under the supervision of the University of Hawaii's Psychological Research Department, Kaiser Hospital physicians conducted extensive physical examinations before and after the descent, local merchants

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROBERT GOODMAN

and radio station contributed a heavy duty crane, diving gear, electronic and sound equipment, food. Navy divers attended the subject during submersion.

The purpose: to measure any corollary between physiologic and psychologic change in a non-gravitational atmosphere, demonstrate that preparation for vertigo-like disorientation minimizes panic in the sufferer.

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MD Pictorial

The national publication MD Medical News Magazine covered the dive, along with the Hawaiian media. The generator failed, and the emergency generator wouldn't start. When I was hauled to the surface after 76 hours and 42 minutes, I had less than 30 seconds of air left in the helmet.

almost begged for it. An ambulance siren stopped all of the questions from reporters and doctors. The sound was like a trumpet hitting a new impossible note. Men in white now lifted me onto a stretcher.

Navy diver Rocky Cochran climbed into the ambulance with me. As the siren wailed on its way to Kaiser Hospital, he said: "We could have lost you, Dave. We couldn't get the emergency generator started, and the crane wouldn't start! We tried to pull you up by hand, which no doubt severed your intercom wires. We tried telling you not to worry, that we were bringing you up. It must have been terrifying for you, as you could have known only that you were suffocating. Over a minute went by before the crane's engine caught. We divers estimated you had less than 30 seconds of air before you would have passed out."

"How are Hazel and David?" I asked groggily.

"They're just fine. Hazel spent hours down here with your son. She is really proud of you."

At the hospital, I asked if I could have a hot bath. I couldn't stand up. I asked to see a mirror. The stubbly beard was no surprise, but I was shocked when I saw that my lips were blue and cracked. Four competent nurses lifted me into a bathtub, and gently began to wash me. "Please put more cold water in the tub; the water is too hot," I pleaded.

"The water *is* cold, Mr. Ford. We didn't dare put you in warm water." My body was still shuddering from the cold, yet the water felt scalding. Minutes later a gurney arrived and took me to a private room overlooking the ocean. I feebly thanked the nurses for putting hot pads in the bed. "There are none, Mr. Ford. It will take your body several hours to adjust."

A newspaper photographer climbed into the window and shot a couple of pictures, and then was gone. A few minutes later Hazel and our smiling little son appeared in the doorway. I wearily held them in my arms. The next thing I knew, 12 hours had passed and Hazel was back with copies of the *Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* for the past three days. All had front-page stories of the dive. Two issues of *The Advertiser* gave it banner headlines and included front-page pictures and details of the dive. An *Advertiser* story published the second day began...

DOWN FOR OVER A DAY, DIVER AIMS TO STAY

Diver Dave Ford was still underwater at midnight last night, 35 hours after he slipped below the water of Kewalo Basin on a "mission for science."

...and continued over four columns.

On Monday, October 26th, the *Advertiser* came out with another banner headline: "DIVER DAVE FORD BREAKS ENDURANCE RECORD." There were two front-page pictures with captions below. Another headline read: "COMPRESSOR FAILURE ENDS DIVE." An excerpt:

Diver Dave Ford emerged from Kewalo Basin at 5:52 p.m. yesterday to claim a new world underwater endurance record of 76 hours and 42 minutes.

It was a five-column story and some of the details told of the medical success of the dive. That was the most important thing to me. The front-page story, with photo, in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* stated in part:

Mechanical trouble with the compressor that pumped air to diver Dave Ford led his handlers to call off the record attempt at 5:52 last night, a few hours short of his 80-hour goal. But a new record for a man in a diving suit of 76 hours, 42 minutes was set, and the scientific research objectives of the "isolation experiment" were completed, according to Dr. Leonard Diamond, University of Hawaii psychologist.

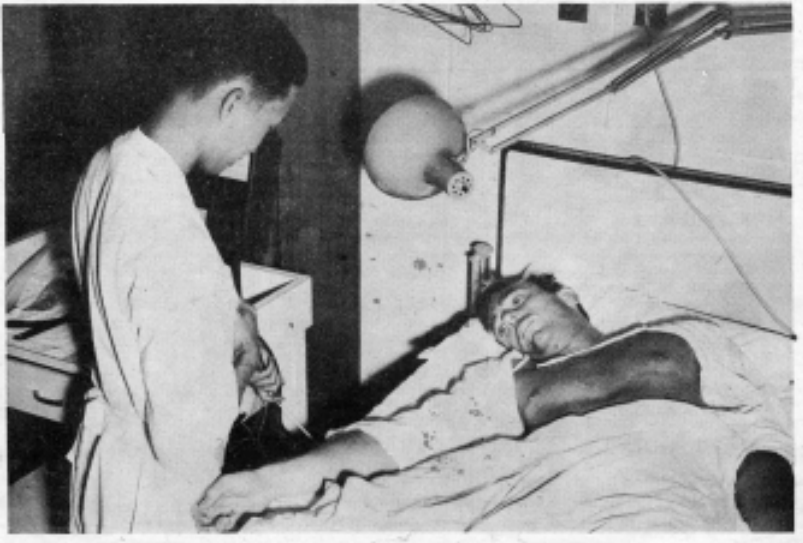
At about 3:45 p.m., Dr. Diamond, who was in charge of the experiment, said: "As far as the University is officially concerned, we have completed our research. It's up to Dave if he wants to go on." Forty-five minutes previously, Ford had seemed determined to go on. His voice, tired and weak-sounding over the intercommunications system, he asked for the time, calculated a few minutes, then said to one of his people, "Let's make the 80-hour goal a reality. I can do it."

I remained in the hospital for three days. Pinched nerves left a thumb and one of my toes numb for several weeks afterward. Uric acid caused sores on my legs that lasted for a month. It was good to be back home with my family. For the first time in my life I had had enough of being in water. I recuperated for a week before returning to the auto agency. I was content to watch as Hazel took our son into the pool, and felt no urge at all to join them.

The August 1960 issue of *MD Medical News Magazine* featured a six-page photo spread that presented a medical perspective of the dive under the title: "Etiology of an Endurance Record." Following are a few quotes:



BEFORE AND AFTER his weekend immersion in the waters of Kewalo Basin for 76 hours and 42 minutes, Dave Ford is pictured above and below. Above, the helmet is about to be put in place. Below, immediately after being taken to the hospital after air compressor failure forced an end to his experimental siege, Ford begins his first real rest in a long time.



Honolulu Advertiser, October 26, 1959
After three days underwater, I spent three days in the hospital. Navy hard-hat diver Rocky Cochran told me I was lucky to be alive.

Cooperating in an unusual research project on human endurance were the University of Hawaii, the United States Navy, and Kaiser Medical Center of Honolulu. The object: to put a diver underwater for an undetermined length of time and register effects of prolonged isolation and monotony by depriving him of varieties of sensory stimuli normal to his environment. The project presented vast possibilities for the study of perceptual distortion and induced schizophrenia.

Under the supervision of the University of Hawaii's Psychological Research Department, Kaiser Hospital physicians conducted extensive physical examinations before and after the descent. Navy divers attended the subject during submersion. The purpose: to measure any corollary between physiologic change in a nongravitational atmosphere, and to demonstrate that preparation for vertigo-like disorientation minimizes panic in the sufferer.

Having prepared the subject for immersion by intensive investigation into ego motivation and personality structure, clarification of panic responses, anticipation of danger and disorientation, the Hawaiian research team was ready to survey their acquired data: vertigo due to gravitational suspension was produced; visual and auditory distortion occurred with accompanying hallucination.”

I was grateful for reports like these. They gave me an external view of an experience that had been intensely internal and personal – but I always felt they shortchanged the contribution of the Navy divers. Through those long three days 12 Navy divers were on site 24 hours a day, to see whether I was in trouble, and rescue me in the event of any emergency. They were not in wet suits. On their dives to check on me they wore only bathing suits and scuba gear. Several of them were badly stung by jellyfish. I will never forget their courage and help.

During those years, television's *Sea Hunt* series, starring Lloyd Bridges, was one of the most popular TV shows ever. Bridges was in Hawaii at the time of the dive, and while I was still in the hospital he extended me a dinner invitation. He treated me to dinner at *The House Of The Golden Dragon*, a restaurant in the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel, and we enjoyed chatting about diving and his film career as we smiled for photographers.

I recuperated rapidly, and within a month I was back to normal physically – and I eventually returned to playing in the swimming pool with Hazel and David.