

Hammer pleads guilty again *EPort* *3-6-76*

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Pushed into court in a wheelchair, ailing oilman Armand Hammer has pleaded guilty for the second time to three misdemeanor counts of making illegal campaign contributions to former President Richard M. Nixon in 1972.

Hammer, the 77-year-old chairman of Occidental Petroleum Corp., faces a possible sentence of three years in prison and a \$3,000 fine.

Hammer went to court directly from Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, where he has been under treatment since Jan. 20, and during the proceedings was hooked up to heart monitoring equipment stationed in the next room.

His attorneys earlier had argued unsuccessfully that the judge should go to Hammer's hospital bedside to accept the plea because Hammer's health might be imperiled by a courtroom appearance.

U.S. Dist. Judge Lawrence T. Lydick posed a series of questions to Hammer to determine whether his health might have impaired his judgment or influenced him to plead guilty despite his innocence. Hammer said he was in full command of his mental abilities and Lydick ruled to accept the pleas.

He had pleaded guilty to the charges last October in Washington, but the judge there overturned the plea after Hammer wrote a 20-page letter to his probation officer in which he blamed former Montana Gov. Tim Babcock for the \$54,000 in illegal contributions.

The government had originally indicted Hammer last year on charges of making the secret contributions under fictitious names to the Nixon reelection campaign. They were made through Babcock, then an official of an Occidental subsidiary.

Babcock, a Republican, was governor of Montana from 1962 to 1969. He pleaded guilty in December 1974 to concealing the source of contribution.