

Officer Quits in Nixon Oil Protest

Washington

A top official in the naval oil reserve program resigned his commission yesterday rather than support President Nixon's efforts to open the Elk Hills Naval Petroleum reserve in California to production for the oil industry.

In a letter to superiors, Lieutenant Commander Kirby Brant said that he could no longer work for policies with which he disagreed. He is deputy director of naval petroleum and oil shale reserves.

A congressional source quoted Brant as saying, "I've written my last lie" in support of Nixon administration policy.

However, Brant is known to have felt that the energy crisis was one in a series of "ploys" by the administration and the oil industry to open the Navy's multi-billion barrel oil reserve fields for production for commercial use.

By statute any production from naval oil reserves, beyond that required for the protection, conservation, maintenance and testing of the reserve, requires passage of a joint resolution authorizing the administration

to take 160,000 barrels of oil a day for a year from the reserve near Bakersfield.

The House also voted 216 to 180 to appropriate \$64.5 million for the development and production of Elk Hills Oil. But the House has not yet acted on the resolution authorizing the opening of the reserve.

The resolution is now bottled up in the House Armed Services' committee, a historic defender of the reserves against oil company attempts to develop them. Chairman F. Edward Hebert (Dem-La.) has said he has "no intention whatsoever, at this time, of letting this bill come up.

Los Angeles Times

1973 a Very Wet Year

Washington

At least one natural resource, water, remained in more than abundant supply last year, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

The USGS reports that 1973 was "one of the wettest years ever" in a report on streamflow, lake and ground water conditions.

Associated Press