

w/s

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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Hammer Fined \$3,000 by U.S.

Draws Probation of a Year for Gifts to Nixon Drive

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Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, March 23—

Dr. Armand Hammer, the chairman of the Occidental Petroleum Corporation, was fined \$3,000 and placed on probation for one year today for making and concealing \$54,000 in illegal campaign contributions to the 1972 re-election campaign of former President Richard M. Nixon.

In another of the last footnotes to the Watergate scandal, Federal Judge Lawrence T. Lydick said he had elected not to sentence the 77-year-old oil millionaire to jail because of his age and poor health.

Dr. Hammer, who attended the 12-minute hearing in a wheelchair, pleaded briefly for mercy, prior to his sentencing, although Judge Lydick had already indicated he would not send him to jail.

Hands Trembled

"Your honor," he said, his face pale, his hands trembling, his voice strong, "this is the first time I've been charged with a criminal offense. I greatly regret my actions. All my life I have tried to lead a useful life, and I trust, in the time that may be allowed me, your honor will give me the opportunity to be a useful member of society."

Earlier, his lawyer, Arthur Groman, attempted to make



Associated Press

Dr. Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum being wheeled from Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles earlier this month. He was on his way to court. The man at right tried to shield Dr. Hammer from photographer.

a lengthy speech appealing for mercy, stressing that several medical examinations had shown Dr. Hammer to be suffering from serious heart trouble that, he said, could lead to a possibly fatal heart attack

if Dr. Hammer was sent to jail.

The judge, growing impatient, ordered him several times to cut short his speech, saying

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at one point: "We do not intend to impose a prison sentence on a 77-year-old man, and the best you can do is talk us out of it."

Faced 3 Years in Jail

Dr. Hammer could have been sentenced to a maximum of three years in jail. Instead, he was fined \$1,000 on each of three misdemeanor violations. He initially pleaded guilty to the charges in December, but a Federal judge ordered the pleas stricken after he subsequently wrote a letter to a probation officer saying that not he but an associate, former Montana Gov. Tim Babcock, was responsible for the illegal contribution.

Dr. Hammer reappeared in court earlier this month and again pleaded guilty, and stressed that he had stood by the guilty plea.

The misdemeanor charges had been accepted under a plea-bargaining arrangement with the Watergate special prosecutor's office, which was part of the arrangement, urged that Dr. Hammer's medical problems be taken into consideration in his sentencing.