

Classified Ads Cont'd

the state

\$100 million suit filed against drilling firms

United Press International
HOUSTON — Citing "crushing blows" to their economy, a group of South Texas political districts, businesses and towns Monday filed a \$100 million damage suit against the U.S. and Mexican drilling firms that leased or operated the offshore rig involved in history's worst oil spill.

The suit was the second filed as an answer to the federal court motion of SEDCO, a Dallas-based drilling company, to limit its liability in the oil spill to \$300,000.

A lawyer representing Texas shrimp, oyster and crab harvesters last week filed a \$155 million suit against the same defendants — SEDCO; PEMEX, the Mexican na-

tional oil monopoly; and Pemargo, a private drilling contractor that leased the rig Ixtoc I from SEDCO and in turn subleased it to PEMEX.

Spokesmen for South Padre Island, the tourist community at the tip of the 113-mile long strip of white sand off the Texas coast, said the Gulf of Mexico disaster had dealt a severe blow to its residents and businesses.

Spokesmen for the Hilton Sea Island hotel said it stood to lose \$1 million as a result of the drop in tourism on the island.

The Port Mansfield Utility District and other political subdivisions in Cameron and Willacy counties said they lost tax revenues.

SEDCO last week told U.S. District Judge Robert O'Connor it should be absolved of blame in the June 3 accident and, in lieu of that, be limited to \$300,000 in liability for damages.

SEDCO was founded by Gov. William P. Clements, who has placed his business interests in a trust. The company is operated by his son, Gil.

SEDCO has admitted receiving about \$20 million in an insurance settlement because of damages suffered by the rig in the blowout. The rig later was sunk in 15,000 feet of water, according to a SEDCO lawyer.

Evicted for 3rd straight day

Media barred from drug trial

BEAUMONT — A federal judge who last week ordered a reporter from the courtroom for chewing gum Monday temporarily evicted news media representatives — for the third consecutive day — from a racketeering and drug smuggling trial.

Although he has instructed jurors to avoid reading about the trial in newspapers, U.S. District Judge Joe Fisher required reporters to leave again Monday while he screened testimony outside the jury's presence from a witness one defense lawyer said would be extremely prejudicial.

Other spectators were allowed to remain in the courtroom during the testimony.

Fisher earlier this summer said his court would not adhere to President Carter's plan to save energy by raising thermostats in public buildings to 78 degrees. For this trial he instituted a dress code for reporters and last week said at one point they could not listen to testimony and if they did, they could not report it. The reporters present at the time walked out of the courtroom.

The alleged prejudicial testimony was an account by Robert Hamm, 34, of negotiations to buy the

shrimp boat "Monkey" which the government claims was used for two years to smuggle marijuana into the United States from South America.

Hamm originally was one of the 22 persons from Texas, Louisiana, Florida and Tennessee indicted in the case. Sixteen are on trial, two were never caught, one has been dismissed and three are testifying for the government.

A 27-count indictment alleges the defendants smuggled 127,000 pounds of marijuana into Port Arthur, Orange and High Island, Texas during a two-year period.

Rio Grande island sanctuary from feds?


United Press International
LOS INDIOS — If Col. Herbert Williams' dream is realized, his 200-acre island in the Rio Grande will be a plush gambler's paradise subject only to Cherokee Indian rules, and a haven for individuals and corporations believing themselves oppressed by U.S. laws and taxes.

Williams, as he has been doing for the past year, predicts it will not be long until he and nine partners declare the island — separated from the U.S. mainland by Hurricane Beulah in 1967 — a sovereign nation.

The group, which Williams said includes "King of the Gypsies" Mike Adams, already has declared the island's independence from the United States and Mexico and said any disputes over its sovereignty ought to be decided by the World Court or International Court of Justice.

To be known as Cherokee Nation, the approximately 150 city blocks of land might be crowded if all Williams' plans came to fruition, because it would include a radio station, a university and hospital operated by doctors fed up with federal regulations, an aircraft factory with non-union labor, a pari-mutuel dog race track, and headquarters for international banks and insurance companies seeking loopholes in U.S. tax laws. He said it also could compete with Panama and Liberia as a registry for ships.

Williams, 69, a native of Kenedy,



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