

national

Exxon Corp. questions \$895 million liability

WASHINGTON — Exxon Corp. is challenging a federal judge's opinion that holds the nation's largest oil company liable for \$895 million worth of crude oil overcharges. U.S. District Judge Thomas Flannery said Friday that Exxon had improperly classified oil taken from its Hawkins Fields in Wood County, Texas between 1975 and 1981. Under price control regulations in effect at the time, U.S. crude oil prices were operated on a two-tier pricing level with old oil prices set at one level and

new oil prices set at a higher level. Flannery said Exxon listed old oil from the field near Tyler as new oil. Jack Bennett, spokesman for Exxon in New York, called the judge's opinion incorrect and unfair and said the company will proceed promptly in the courts to correct this decision. He said Flannery seemed to be applying retroactively regulations that were not even announced by federal energy officials until almost two years after the investments began.

"Without any doubt the investments involved would not have been made if regulations now being used by the court had been in effect at the time," he said.

Flannery said the Houston based company contends the Department of Energy's overcharge calculation of \$895 million is grossly inflated but has not challenged the mathematical accuracy of DOE's calculations nor the accuracy of the underlying data.

He ordered Exxon to make payment to the Treasury for the overcharges plus interest but did not set an amount. Depending on how the interest on \$895 million in overcharges are calculated, Exxon's liability could approach \$1 billion.

Reagan's nuclear policy same as previous leaders'

WASHINGTON — The tone may have changed, but the thrust of the Reagan administration's directives on preparing for nuclear war has remained constant over the past two years. The premise for the directives, as stated publicly by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, is that the Soviet Union is gearing up to wage a prolonged nuclear conflict, and the

United States must be capable of deterring it.

Previous administrations shared much the same view.

President Reagan addressed that concern Wednesday in a televised speech calling for development of an advanced missile-defense system that one day will make the policy of relying on massive retaliation obsolete.

What is not said publicly but is spelled out in secret Pentagon

blueprints obtained by United Press International this year and last is that the administration seeks also to make the United States capable of outlasting the Soviets in a nuclear war and winning it.

Although the possibility of a prolonged nuclear exchange between the superpowers was accepted by the defense community for years before Reagan took office, last year's defense

guidance document is notable for its inflammatory rhetoric. The 1982 paper has modified that rhetoric.

Concern in America and Europe that the belief that fighting can continue under a caustic of mushroom clouds become official government policy apparently motivated change in tone of the defense guidance document.

Heart inventor optimistic

SALT LAKE CITY — The inventor of the Jarvik-7 artificial heart predicted the next pump could be implanted in a patient within a few months and hopes the next recipient will be healthier than Barney Clark was. "No matter how well the heart did, it could not improve

the emphysema," Dr. Robert Jarvik, inventor of the air driven polyurethane pump, told a gathering of high school science students Friday night.

He said Clark's lungs were the victims of 25 years of smoking, and the 62-year-old heart patient's chances of survival would have been enormously

better if his lung dysfunction was secondary to the heart disease.

Doctors earlier said Clark's emphysema caused the degenerative heart disease that led to the historic Dec. 2 implant of the first permanent artificial heart. Clark died Wednesday of a massive circulatory collapse,

secondary to a multiorgan system failure.

"Hopefully, everybody would like to have a patient who is on the brink like Dr. Clark because he was going to die at a time when most of the systems are in pretty good shape," Jarvik said.

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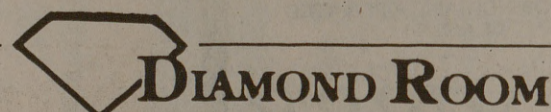
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