

Court removes obstacle in Dalkon Shield suit

WASHINGTON -- The Supreme Court on Monday removed the last legal obstacle to carrying out a \$2.5 billion settlement for victims of the Dalkon Shield birth-control device.

But compensatory payments may not begin until next spring, and no one could say definitively how many of the nearly 100,000 women with active claims will receive substantial payments.

The justices, over one dissenting vote, rejected a challenge by some 650 women to the settlement reached out with A.H. Robins Co., manufacturer of the intrauterine device.

Marketed in the early 1970s, the Dalkon Shield allegedly caused infertility, spontaneous abortions, pelvic inflammation or, in some cases, death.

Sharon Lutz, a Detroit lawyer representing 18,000 of the women who had sued Robins and who had urged the court to uphold the settlement, said payments might start by late February or early March.

Baltimore lawyer Michael

Pretl, who also represented women who alleged injuries, said payments may be delayed for several months beyond the February target date.

"I don't think it's realistic to expect we'll have money flowing before next spring," Pretl said, predicting that individual women with serious injuries will receive payments ranging from \$25,000 to \$250,000.

Pretl said that many thousands of women with active claims may get relatively little money for varying reasons. For example, they may have used more than one brand of device, he said.

And most women who will receive substantial awards likely will have to pay one-third to their lawyers.

Sales of the Dalkon Shield ended in 1974 but the product was not actually recalled until 1984.

A.H. Robins, based in Richmond, Va., created the \$2.5 billion trust fund as part of its 1985 reorganization under federal bankruptcy law.

Lebanese strike virtually closes east Beirut; election protested

BEIRUT, Lebanon -- A strike called by Gen. Michel Aoun, the Christian army commander, virtually closed down east Beirut on Monday and his followers filled the streets to protest the election of a Syrian-backed president.

Rioting Aoun loyalists stormed the residence of Nasrallah Sfeir, the Maronite Catholic patriarch, who supported Rene Mouawad's election as president Sunday, and forced him to kiss a portrait of the general. Mouawad, 64, and Aoun, 54, are Maronites, the main Christian sect in Lebanon.

Aoun declared a "war of liberation" this year on the 40,000 Syrian soldiers stationed in Lebanon under a 1976 peacekeeping mandate from the Arab League. He issued a statement Monday urging supporters to "limit your protests to civilized and peaceful methods."

Schools, shops, restaurants, banks and government offices closed in Christian east Beirut and many parts of the 310-square-mile Christian enclave north and east of the city.

Patriarch Sfeir, 68, fled to his summer home in an area of north Lebanon under Syrian control and said he would not return to his official residence on the wooded slopes of Bkirki "until peace prevails."

Lebanese police issued a statement saying they "ensured the patriarch's safe drive" early Monday to Diman, 52 miles north of Bkirki.

"We plead with God to forgive" the attackers, Sfeir said at Diman, where he was greeted by Mouawad, Parliament speaker Hussein Hussein, Arab League envoy Lakhdar Ibrahimi of Algeria and many legislators.

A police spokesman said 100 supporters of Aoun drove to Bkirki in 30 cars shortly after midnight Sunday and stormed the walled compound. A 40-man unit of Aoun's command assigned to protect Sfeir did not try to stop them, said the spokesman, whose name was withheld under standing regulations.

"The rioters broke into the patriarch's bedroom, dragged him out of bed, forced him to kneel with two

senior aides who rushed to help him and forced them all to kiss posters of Aoun," the spokesman said.

Other Aoun loyalists broke into at least six churches in the Christian enclave to protest Mouawad's election. The spokesman said they fired automatic weapons into the air, "burned rubber tires at several churches and rang bells."

Pro-Aoun rioters went into the streets hours after legislators, forced out of Beirut by the general's threat to shell the Parliament building, convened in the Syrian-controlled north Sunday and elected Mouawad.

On Saturday, Aoun said he was dissolving the legislature. He and acting Prime Minister Salim Hoss have led rival Christian and Moslem governments for 14 months, since President Amin Gemayel's six-year term ended without agreement by Parliament on a successor.

The new president, a moderate lawyer, met Monday with spiritual leaders and politicians to try to form a national reconciliation government capable of ending the 14-year-old civil war.

VISSER from Page 1

He said that after talking with then Faculty Senate President Jim Lewis, he was worried that athletes' records were circulating around campus. Visser had sent an athlete's transcript she had found irregular to Director of Registration and Records Ted Pfeifer and then Faculty Senate Grading Committee Chairman Fred Wagner.

"When we recruit athletes, we tell them their records will be confidential," Osborne said.

In February 1988, Osborne said he talked to Wagner and indicated that circulating records might be illegal. He said he told Wagner that if anyone in the athletic office had done this, action would be taken.

Osborne said Wagner wouldn't tell where the transcript came from, but said he would talk to Griesen about it.

Griesen, Osborne said, came to his office and told him that the person who had sent the transcript was a "long-term faithful employee," that it was not Shada, and that the

situation had been taken care of.

Osborne said that although he thought the situation was serious, he never told Griesen he wanted the person fired.

Papik testified that the transcript in question was checked with the registrar at the student's high school in September 1988. The registrar responded that she was not there during the grade processing of the student's senior year, which is why the student's final year's grades were handwritten and the transcript was un-

signed.

Cope questioned why the authenticity check with the high school occurred after Visser's termination.

Shada testified that he became angry with Visser when she let others think that he had circulated the transcript.

Shada also said he and Visser jointly had discussed alleged athletic irregularities and concerns about student athletes with Gregory many times.

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