Supreme Court Agrees To Review Miranda Rule

By John P. MacKenzie
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Supreme Court agreed yesterday to take another look at its 1966 Miranda v. Arizona decision in a case that could lead to overturning the controversial ruling on confessions.

Acting on a petition by Philadelphia District Attorney Arlen Specter, the court called for full dress review of decisions that toss out the confession of a man who admitted four murders.

The hearing will take place in the fall term, perhaps amid a presidential campaign in which the Supreme Court could be an issue, as it was in 1968. A ruling probably would not be issued for several months after the election, however.

Although the court could easily decide the case without disturbing the Miranda precedent, its overruling has seemed for some time to be chiefly a question of time and of self-restraint by the justices.

Even before the addition of Lewis F. Powell Jr. and William H. Rehnquist—both on record criticizing the decision—it appeared that a court majority already existed for a dramatic turnaround.

Only four justices who took part in the 5 to 4 Miranda decision are still on the court. Justices William O. Douglas and William J. Brennan Jr. have since been joined only by Justice Thurgood Marshall as vigorous supporters of the ruling.

Dissenting Justices Potter Stewart and Byron R. White have been joined by Chief Jus-

See COURT, A8, Col. 7