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GOP Can't Get 2 Suits Settled

Washington

Both Common Cause and the Democratic national committee said yesterday that they would not settle their civil suits against the Republicans, holding them instead as a weapon for investigating the Republican party's finances and the Watergate affair.

The central point in the financial investigation by Common Cause is reportedly an estimated \$10 million in expenditures that have never been accounted for.

Layers involved in the two cases said that the congressional hearings on Watergate and the grand jury investigation — supplied with information by the Justice Department — were both open to possible presidential influence, and they felt the civil suits may remain as the only way to get at the truth of the affairs.

Both organizations have been approached in recent days with offers of settlement by Republicans. John W. Gardner, chairman of Common Cause, characterized the Republican effort to settle a suit over full disclosure of campaign gifts and expenses as "fairly urgent."

He met Wednesday with Maurice H. Stans, who served as President Nixon's chief campaign fund-raiser, and commented yesterday, "we haven't the slightest intention of settling short of what we set out to get."

Robert Strauss, the Democratic chairman, said in a telephone interview from Dallas, that there is "no question" that the \$14 million Democratic damage suit would be "maintained."

Strauss said Wednesday that he had met with John N. Mitchell, former attorney general, and that the party was considering settling the suit for \$525,000.

He said the discussions over a possible settlement had been conducted "with the knowledge and approval of the Democratic leadership on the hill (the Congress), after talking to a number of Democratic governors and with eight or ten members of the democratic national committee."

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