

Nixon Unit Told To File Fund Data

By Morton Mintz

Washington Post Staff Writer

The Finance Committee to Re-elect the President was ordered yesterday to make public "a complete and accurate" account of its receipts and expenditures in the 15-month period before the current election-campaign financing law became effective last year.

The order, issued by U.S. District Judge Joseph C. Waddy in a lawsuit filed by Common Cause, the citizens' lobby, directs the committee to file its report within 60 days from now, by Sept. 28.

The order is "just what we've been seeking since we filed the suit last Sept. 6," Common Cause Chairman John W. Gardner said in a statement.

"Within 60 days the public will have a much clearer picture of the secret finances of the Nixon re-election campaign," he said. "Some of the murk surrounding the Watergate controversy will now dissolve . . . And this cover-up will have been shattered."

The order covers the period Jan. 1, 1971, through April 6, 1972. During that period the committee raised an estimated \$19.6 million—more than one-third of the estimated grand total of \$55 million.

Much of the \$19.6 million was solicited by committee chairman Maurcie H. Stans, a defendant in the suit, with an assurance to contributors that their identities never would be disclosed. He relied upon the election-financing law then in effect, the Corrupt Practices Act of 1925.

The \$19.6 million also included approximately \$1.7 million that was contributed in currency. Some of the cash donors now are known to have given corporate funds illegally, while others

gave in hopes of easing problems with federal agencies.

A few days before the Nov. 7 election, the committee released lists of contributors who had given more than \$5 million of the \$19.6 million. The lists were said to be complete through last March 10, the final reporting date under the now inoperative 1925 law.

Judge Waddy, in his order yesterday, retained custody over the suit. By doing so he makes it possible for Common Cause to seek his aid, should the citizens' lobby be dissatisfied with the completeness or accuracy of the report the committee is to file.

The report, under the order, must be filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives, the administrator of the 1925 law.

The essence of the dispute was the committee's contention that the old law, because it covered general elections and not primaries, did not reach it because President Nixon was not nominated for re-election until last August. Common Cause, however, argued that the finance committee was a "committee" as defined by the law.