

Report That Stans Will Plead Guilty

Washington

Former Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans is expected to plead guilty soon to several misdemeanor charges arising from his handling of illegal donations to former President Nixon's re-election campaign, informed sources said yesterday.

They said Stans' plea could come this week. It would climax more than two years of investigation of Stans' activities by the Watergate special prosecutor's office.

Robert W. Barker, Stans' attorney, declined comment on the matter, as did a spokesman for special prosecutor Henry S. Ruth Jr.

Stans, 66, resigned his cabinet post in 1972 to head a national drive that raised a record \$60 million for Mr. Nixon's re-election.

Executives of more than ten large firms, including Gulf Oil, American Airlines and Goodyear Tire and Rubber, have acknowledged that their campaign donations were drawn from corporate funds in violation of federal election law.

The charges in Stans' case will involve only misdemeanor and not felony counts, the sources said.

Stans was acquitted last April along with former Attorney General John N. Mitchell on charges that he tried to obstruct a Securities and Exchange Commission investigation of financier Robert L. Vesco. Vesco had contributed \$200,000 in cash to the Nixon campaign. Mitchell was later convicted in the Watergate coverup conspiracy.

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