

Oilman Misses Court Date

Washington

Millionaire oilman Armand Hammer, seeking to plead guilty of illegal contributions to Richard Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign, missed a scheduled court appearance yesterday because of what his lawyers termed a serious heart problem.

U.S. District Judge George L. Hart Jr., who arranged the session to hear Hammer personally renew the plea rejected previously by another judge, ordered that an independent physician examine the 77-year-old businessman and report to him.

One of Hammer's attorneys, Arthur Groman, told Hart that

Hammer was hospitalized in Los Angeles Tuesday after suffering severe chest pains.

Another Hammer attorney, renowned trial lawyer Louis Nizer, then moved that, in light of Hammer's health, the case be transferred to U.S. District Court in Los Angeles. Hart rejected the motion pending receipt of the physician's report.

Hammer, facing possible felony charges, initially submitted to U.S. District Judge William B. Jones a plea of guilty to three misdemeanor counts in connection with donations totalling \$54,000 to Mr. Nixon's Committee to Re-elect the President.

Jones accepted the plea, but later changed his mind after learning of a letter Hammer wrote to a probation officer in California apparently trying to shift the blame for the donation to former Montana Governor Tim Babcock.

Hammer appealed, and the U.S. Court of Appeals returned the case to the lower court under agreement that Hammer would withdraw the letter and plead guilty again.

* Jones then withdrew from the Hammer case because of the "protracted" nature of the plea bargaining, and Hart took over.

United Press