

# Mitchell to Press Antipollution Suits

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By Ken W. Clawson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Attorney General John N. Mitchell yesterday promised more anti-pollution lawsuits and intensified governmental action in the "whole environmental quality area."

He punctuated his pledge at the opening of a 40-minute news conference by announcing that the Justice Department has filed suit against the Cleveland works of Jones and Laughlin Steel Corp. for discharging cyanides, phenols, grease, oil and solids into the Cuyahoga River.

Mitchell also disclosed that

on Thursday night a suit was filed against the Burdett Oxygen Co. of Cleveland for discharging waste lime slurry into the Cuyahoga. A similar suit was filed Dec. 9 against Armco Steel Corp. in Houston.

The suits were filed, Mitchell said, at the request of the new Environment Protection Agency headed by William Ruckelshaus, a former assistant attorney general.

The Attorney General also disclosed that the administration is working on a new policy on racial discrimination in suburban housing early next year.

Mitchell was relaxed and confident at his second news conference of the year. It came a few hours before his departure for a holiday vacation in Florida.

The Attorney General fielded a total of 43 questions. He said he had no intention of bridling FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover because his controversial declarations haven't gone beyond the bounds of proper conduct; he praised new Treasury Secretary-designate John Connally as a "strong advocate" who will forcefully represent President Nixon's economic policies, and he declined to volunteer as manager of Mr. Nixon's 1972 election campaign.

Mitchell also denied knowledge of any impending resignations from the Supreme Court, and said he knew of no commitments by President Nixon for the high court should a vacancy occur.

See MITCHELL, A7, Col. 1



By Margaret Thomas—The Washington Post

Attorney General John N. Mitchell, in his second news conference of the year, announces an intensified effort in the "whole environmental quality area."

#### MITCHELL, From A1

Peppered with questions on his reaction to Hoover's calling former Attorney General Ramsey Clark a "jellyfish," accusing the imprisoned Berrian brothers, a pair of anti-war priests, of plotting to kidnap a high government official, and saying that Mexicans and Puerto Ricans can't shoot straight, Mitchell came down hard on the side of the 75-year-old FBI director.

"I wouldn't try to impede Mr. Hoover's freedom of speech," Mitchell said. "Until he gets to the point where he is doing something improper, and he has not come anywhere near reaching that point, he can say anything he wants to."

Regarding Hoover's comment that Mexicans and Puerto Ricans pose little threat against a President because "they can't shoot very straight," Mitchell said it should not be construed as a racial slur.

"You have to read the statement in context," said Hoover's boss, "He was not castigating any race or creed or anything else."

Sen. Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.) and Rep. Edward Yoybal (D-Calif.) have contended that Hoover's remarks defamed Spanish-Americans and undermined public faith in the FBI. Yoybal has requested that President Nixon seek Hoover's resignation. Mitchell said yesterday he has received "1,000 per cent cooperation" from Hoover. "From where I sit," he added, "he's doing a great job."

Mitchell was asked whether the appointment of former Texas Gov. Connally, a Democrat, to a Cabinet post was the first step in dumping Vice

President Agnew from the 1972 presidential ticket. His response was that the nomination had nothing "whatsoever to do with the Vice President now or in the future."

Regarding rumors that he will resign as Attorney General to manage Mr. Nixon's 1972 campaign, Mitchell said, "I haven't been asked and I sure as hell haven't volunteered." He said he thinks Mr. Nixon's chances for re-election are excellent.

Mitchell also gave an updated version of the administration's school desegregation efforts in the South. Out of 2,700 school districts, he said, all but 50 have been changed from dual to unitary systems.

Of the 50, he said, 16 are involved in Justice-initiated litigation, 22 are involved in lawsuits with private plaintiffs and the balance are in negotiation.

In-school discrimination investigations total about 100, he said, adding that the emphasis is on negotiation but that Justice will bring legal action where that falls.

On the government's tougher stance on pollution, Mitchell said he has created a pollution control section and shifted criminal litigation into the new section of the lands and natural resources division of the department.

Nine attorneys are assigned to the section under Martin Green, and Mitchell said he expected it would be expanded because of case referrals from EPA.

The three anti-pollution suits, Mitchell said, "... foreshadow more to come . . . I can safely predict intensified action in the whole environmental quality area."