

PEOPLE

Kleindienst And His Future

By Dorothy McCardle

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Acting Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst showed up at a reception at the Turkish embassy Wednesday night and found himself the center of attention.

Kleindienst went jovially through the receiving line as he was welcomed by the visiting Prime Minister of Turkey and Mrs. Nihat Erim and Turkish Ambassador and Mrs. Melih Esenbel.

Then he was followed from room to room by guests and press who wanted to know whether he thinks he will be confirmed as Attorney General.

"I don't know," he said forthrightly. "I guess you'll have to ask members of the Senate Judiciary Committee about that."

But he did admit that his confirmation has been delayed as the aftermath of the investigation of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company and the favors it may have granted to the Republican National Committee in return for alleged Justice Department leniency.

Kleindienst had kind words for Dita Beard, the ITT lobbyist, whose memos to her bosses touched off the Senate hearings.

"I have never met Mrs. Beard," he said. "But I do feel very sorry for her as the result of all this. She is certainly having a hard time."

When one guest observed that he looked "happy," he said with a smile widening his broad, smooth-shaven face, "I am a very happy man. I have had a very happy life no matter my future."

The smile weakened a bit when he was asked about the charges of corruption made against the Justice Department in the current issue of Life magazine.

He grasped his questioner's hand, held it, clutched it, waved it up and down and explained that he was "searching for just the right word."

"What is the name for that . . . well . . . I want to say more than just false . . ."

There was another squeeze and out came the words: "It's absolutely unfounded."

He was there minus his wife. His eyes glowed when he was asked if his wife will be "another Martha Mitchell" if he ever gets to be Attorney General.

"My wife and Martha Mitchell are two different people," he said.