

Mitchell, ITT Deny Charges of 'Donation'

Washington

Attorney General John N. Mitchell joined International Telephone and Telegraph yesterday in denying new charges that settlement of a federal antitrust suit against ITT was tied to a large financial donation by the firm to the Republican party.

The allegations were made by columnist Jack Anderson, who said a secret memorandum from ITT files indicated the case was settled when the company pledged to contribute up to \$400,000 for the GOP National Convention in San Diego next August.

Democratic National Chairman Lawrence F. O'Brien said the Anderson report raised "grave questions" about the integrity of the Nixon administration.

FAMILIAR

Mitchell, serving his last day as Attorney General before assuming command of President Nixon's reelection campaign, acknowledged that he had talked once about the case with Dita Beard, the ITT lobbyist identified by Anderson as the author of the secret memo. But Mitchell said he told Mrs. Beard at that time that "I was not familiar with the matter" and that

ITT would have to discuss it with the responsible people at the Justice Department.

Beyond that, Mitchell said he "was not involved in any way with the Republican National Committee convention negotiations and had no knowledge of anyone from the committee or elsewhere dealing with ITT . . . When the Department of Justice first brought action against ITT, I removed myself from all consideration of such matters."

For its part, ITT declared that "There was no deal of any kind to settle our antitrust cases." It also said in a statement that the contribution made by Sheraton hotels, an ITT subsidiary, "was made as a nonpartisan joint effort of the San Diego community and was purely in support of a local situation."

INTERVIEW

Anderson based his allegations in part on an interview that his associate, Brit Hume, had with Mrs. Beard.

Anderson said in his column: "She said she met with Mitchell at the governor's mansion in Kentucky during a dinner reception given by Republican Governor Louie Nunn after the Kentucky Derby . . .

"She said Mitchell confid-

ed to her he was sympathetic to ITT but had been prevented until then from helping the company because of the zeal of the Justice Department's antitrust chief, Richard McLaren . . .

"And, she said, when the Justice Department announced its settlement on July 31, more than two months later, it conformed to the agreement she had made with Mitchell."

INTEGRITY

O'Brien issued a statement saying that "the latest disclosure raises grave questions about the very integrity of the Nixon Administration."

"For the implication is clear — a favorable antitrust settlement in exchange for a pledge by an ITT subsidiary to underwrite the Republican National Convention in San Diego for up to \$400,000," O'Brien said.

The Democratic chairman also charged that Richard G. Kleindienst, nominated by Nixon to succeed Mitchell as attorney general, wrote him in December that Mitchell had removed himself from any role in the ITT case because his law firm previously had performed legal services for some of the firm's subsidiary.

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