

MAR 15 1972

Mitchell Says He Met

ITT Chief

SF Chronicle

Associated Press

Washington

Former Attorney General John N. Mitchell testified yesterday that he met for 35 minutes with the president of International Telephone & Telegraph Corp., even though Mitchell had disqualified himself from taking part in antitrust suits against the conglomerate.

But Mitchell told the Senate Judiciary Committee that the discussion in August, 1970, dealt only with ITT president Harold Geneen's arguments that the Nixon administration's antitrust policy was too vigorous.

Mitchell, who disqualified himself because his old law firm had advised an ITT subsidiary, said there was no discussion of the company's court battles with the Justice Department.

PLEDGE

Mitchell denied knowledge also of a reported \$400,000 pledge by ITT to help finance the Republican National Convention in San Diego next August. The committee was in its eighth day of hearings requested by Richard G. Kleindienst on a report published by columnist Jack Anderson that ITT was given a favorable settlement of the antitrust action after making the pledge.

Kleindienst was deputy Attorney General at the time of the settlement last July. He has been nominated to succeed Mitchell who stepped down March 1 to manage President Nixon's re-election campaign.

As Mitchell underwent rather mild questioning from Democrats, there were indications that some Senators will be traveling to talk with ITT lobbyist Dita D. Beard, now in a Denver hospital with a heart ailment.

MEMO

Mrs. Beard, 53, is the author of a memo cited by Anderson as evidence that the antitrust settlement and convention commitment are related.

During the hearing, Mitchell was questioned about meetings in his office last spring with California Re-

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Asked by Senator Philip Hart (Dem-Mich.) if the convention were discussed in April before the ITT settlement was reached, Mitchell answered:

"We might have talked about the possibility of locating the convention in the state."

Hart: "Might have or did?"

Mitchell: "I don't recall."

Mitchell said his meeting with Geneen came at the ITT executive's request. Its purpose, Mitchell said, was "to discuss the over-all antitrust policy of the department with respect to conglomerates."

AIDE

In another development, Senator Thomas F. Eagleton (Dem - Mo.) delivered a Senate speech charging that another "missing witness" in the ITT investigation is White House aide Peter M. Flanigan.

Eagleton called Flanigan "the mastermind, the possessor of the scuttling feet that are heard faintly, retreating into the distance in the wake of a White House-ordered cave - in to some giant corporation."

Democrats on the judiciary committee have demanded that Flanigan testify about recruiting Richard J. Ramsden, a New York investment banker, to evaluate ITT's claim of "financial hardship" during the antitrust settlement negotiations.

Mitchell testified that the President would probably be justified to invoke "executive privilege" if Flanigan is called and prevent him from testifying, even if confidential communications with the President are not involved.

Senator John V. Tunney (Dem - Calif.), who has pressed hardest for Flanigan's appearance, said that if executive privilege were invoked, it would be a "reasonable inference" that Mr. Nixon and Flanigan had discussed the ITT cases.

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publican Lieutenant Governor Ed Reinecke.

Two weeks ago Reinecke said he met with Mitchell in mid-May and told him about financial arrangements and attempts to get the convention in San Diego. Mitchell said at a news conference three weeks ago, "I don't know the faintest thing about convention financing," and added he had nothing to do with the arrangements.

RECORDS

Yesterday Mitchell said his records showed he met with Reinecke in his office both April 26 and Sept. 17, 1971, rather than in mid-May as reported by Reinecke. Reinecke later said the discussion on the convention took place in September.

Mitchell said both meetings generally concerned economic developments in California.