

Louis

# Most Who Followed Hearings

In a test of credibility concerning the recent congressional hearings involving ITT, 38 per cent of those who followed the case tended to believe the charges made by columnist Jack Anderson, while 24 per cent were inclined to believe the Justice Department's denials. However, among those who were aware of the case, 11 per cent did not believe anyone, and 27 per cent more were unable to come to any conclusions. In all, only 59 per cent of the public paid attention to the ITT controversy, despite its wide exposure in the press and on television.

When the entire public was asked whether Richard Kleindienst should be confirmed by the U.S. Senate as attorney general, a plurality, 32-26 per cent, felt that he should not, with 42 per cent simply not sure.

Thus, it can be concluded that by a relatively narrow margin, the ITT case should be viewed as a setback for the Nixon Administration, although it does not appear to have become the political bombshell some Democrats hoped it might. As might be expected, the division of public opinion over the case ran sharply along partisan lines.

Just before the hearings were concluded, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 2,973 households:

"Have you read or heard about the ITT Corporation

anti-trust case, in which the case was settled out of court at the same time ITT was supposed to be pledging \$400,000 for the Republican convention in San Diego?"

## HEARD ABOUT ITT CASE

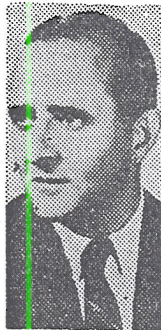
	Total Public
	%
Heard or read about case .....	59
Did not follow .....	41

Those who had heard or read about the ITT case were then asked this question: "Columnist Jack Anderson has charged that the ITT case was a fix by the Nixon Justice Department — to let ITT off in return for a contribution to the San Diego Republican convention. Former Attorney General John Mitchell and Acting Attorney General Kleindienst have denied these charges, claiming they are not based on any real evidence. Whom do you tend to believe in the ITT anti-trust case, columnist Jack Anderson or Attorney Generals Mitchell and Kleindienst?"

## WHO IS RIGHT IN ITT CASE?

	Total Followed Case
	%
Believe Anderson story .....	38
Believe Justice Dept. denial .....	24
Believe neither .....	11
Not sure .....	27

Jack Anderson's story met with greatest credibility among people who live on the East and West coasts, city and



LOUIS HARRIS  
2,973 households

Harris Survey

# Believed Anderson, Not ITT

suburban dwellers, young people under 30, the college-educated, those with incomes over \$10,000, Democrats, and independents. In general, the more affluent and better-educated groups both followed the case more closely and were more inclined to believe Anderson's charges. To the extent that these groups are swing voters in the 1972 election, the ITT case can be said to have somewhat damaged the Nixon Administration politically.

Defenders of the Justice Department's position could be found chiefly among Republicans, older people, those living in smaller towns and rural areas, and in the border states and the deep South.

Then the entire cross section was asked:

**"From what you know or have heard, do you think Richard Kleindienst should be confirmed as Attorney General by the U.S. Senate or not?"**

**KLEINDIENST CONFIRMATION**

	Total Public
	%
Should be confirmed .....	26
Should not be confirmed .....	32
Not sure .....	42

By a small margin, the weight of public opinion was against confirmation of Kleindienst by the Senate. Again, the division was sharply political with Republicans over 2-to-1 in favor and Democrats almost 2-to-1 opposed. However, the pivotal independent voter group was nearly 2-to-1 in opposition to the appointment.

The sharply partisan nature of public reaction to the ITT

case can be seen in the following analysis in relation to voter preferences for Presidential candidates:

**IMPACT BY VOTER PREFERENCE**

	Version Believed			
	Anderson's	Justice Dept.'s	Neither	Not Sure
	%	%	%	%
<b>Voting for:</b>				
Humphrey .....	56	17	30	28
Nixon .....	21	71	48	45
Wallace .....	15	9	13	19
Not sure .....	8	3	9	8

As might be expected, among people who believed the Justice Department's denials, President Nixon holds a wide edge in the voting. However, Sen. Humphrey easily wins the vote of people who were persuaded that the Anderson charges were valid. The difference is made up by the 38 per cent who believed neither side or were unable to draw a definitive judgment. Among these groups, President Nixon maintains a wide lead.

The net result of the case, therefore, is that unless people believed the original Anderson charges, most of the remainder of the public was inclined to give the Nixon Administration the benefit of the doubt.

However, it is a safe bet that the ITT case will be echoed throughout this fall's political campaign, for it will add fuel to expected Democratic charges that the Republican incumbents are "too close" to big business.