

Cases Overlooked in Kleindienst Hearing



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THE SENATE Judiciary Committee shut off the hearings on the Richard Kleindienst flap without exploring his role in a number of Justice Department cases.

Meanwhile, he is awaiting final Senate action on his nomination to be Attorney General.

Not only did he set in motion the machinery that led to the settlement of the celebrated antitrust case against International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT), but he also reportedly had a hand in some other big cases that escaped Senate scrutiny. For example:

- — There were rumblings in the Justice Department about filing an antitrust case against the New York Stock Exchange. Hans R. Reinisch, head of a stockholders association, has given us an affidavit swearing that Justice attorneys had indicated to him they favored a suit. But they said it was a "political decision" which higher Justice officials would have to make. No such suit was ever filed.

- — In a case involving General Motors' pollution of the Hudson River, GM's special counsel, Lawrence Walsh, carried in a letter of complaint for Kleindienst to Washington about the prosecutor in the case. The prosecutor was promptly fired, although Kleindienst insists that it was not at his instigation. Walsh is the same influential attorney who wrote a "Dear Dick" letter to Kleindienst urging settlement of the ITT case.

- — In 1971, a federal court ruled that

a law forbidding any single party from owning more than 160 acres of federally-watered land did not apply to vast sections of California's Imperial Valley. The Justice Department, instead of appealing the dubious ruling, let it die. Some California conservationists have now charged that Kleindienst prevented the U.S. Attorney in San Diego from appealing.

- — The Justice Department has delayed prosecution of another giant antitrust case against International Business Machines that controls over 70 per cent of the computer market. Hints have leaked out of the back rooms that Kleindienst and company are dragging their feet.

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INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS—South Vietnamese planes have been dumping leaflets like autumn leaves on the attacking North Vietnamese troops. The leaflets show President Nixon posing happily with Chinese Premier Chou En-lai. The message claims that the Chinese have already sold out Hanoi, that the terms have already been agreed upon in Peking and, therefore, that the North Vietnamese are risking their lives for nothing.

- — The prospects of a joint Soviet-American space flight have improved. Russian and American space scientists, conferring in Moscow, agreed to try to persuade their governments to approve a joint expedition into space.