

ITT Aid Disputed by Connally

NEW YORK, May 28 (AP)—White House aide John B. Connally says he did not “personally intercede” in behalf of International Telephone and Telegraph’s successful effort in 1971 to retain the Hartford Fire Insurance Co.

The Hartford, Conn., Courant reported Saturday that ITT approached the former Treasury Secretary in April 1971 for help in a federal antitrust suit against ITT. A settlement allowed ITT to keep Hartford Fire.

The Courant also reported that the Securities and Exchange Commission had unearthed “politically sensitive” memoranda in which a high ITT official thanked Connally for helping obtain a delay in the case that helped the company reach the settlement.

The newspaper quoted a memo from an ITT vice president, William R. Merriam, to Connally, in which Connally’s aid was described as “most instrumental” in obtaining the delay.

Asked about the newspaper report, Connally, now a special adviser to President Nixon, said, “I don’t believe that’s true. I didn’t personally intercede.”

Connally, who was Treasury Secretary during the antitrust proceedings, spoke Sunday with newsmen before addressing the national dinner of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.