

Paper Links Mitchell to Trust Case

ST. LOUIS, Dec. 16 (UPI) — The St. Louis Post-Dispatch said in today's editions that after meeting with executives of the Granite City (Ill.) Steel Co. and the National Steel Corp. in July, 1971, then-Attorney General John N. Mitchell overruled the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department and allowed the two firms to merge.

The merger created the third largest steel corporation in the country. It was criticized by congressional antitrust experts, who said it violated restrictions of the Clayton Act.

The Justice Department never officially acknowledged that the Antitrust Division opposed the merger, and never gave a public explanation of the reasons for its decision.

"The secrecy surrounding the case has contributed to consistent but unconfirmed reports that the White House intervened in the case because of the political influence of the parties involved," the Post-Dispatch said.

Officers and directors of the two firms and of the Hanna Mining Co. in Cleveland, closely tied to National, contributed at least \$110,000 to President Nixon's re-election campaign, according to records compiled by Common Cause.