

# Doar Staff

## Interviews

### Kleindienst

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The House Judiciary Committee impeachment staff interviewed former Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst yesterday to determine whether he should be called as a witness before the committee.

The interview was conducted by special counsel John Doar and his staff. The subject of the interview was not announced afterward, but Kleindienst could supply crucial evidence on President Nixon's role in the ITT matter.

One of many unanswered questions in the Nixon impeachment inquiry is whether the President was involved in Kleindienst's false testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee in April, 1972, when Kleindienst stated that the President had not tried to influence his actions in the anti-trust suit against International Telephone and Telegraph Corp.

Kleindienst later admitted, and the House Judiciary Committee has heard a tape of the conversation, that Mr. Nixon telephoned him a year earlier and ordered him not to appeal a lower-court ruling in ITT's favor. Kleindienst recently pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge that he had failed to testify fully and accurately before the Senate committee.

Mr. Nixon reversed his order not to appeal, but the case was settled out of court before reaching the Supreme Court.

In another area of the impeachment inquiry, Kleindienst was instrumental in convincing the President in April, 1973, that the government should inform U.S. District Court Judge W. Matt Byrne Jr., then presiding over the trial of Daniel Ellsberg for releasing the Pentagon Papers, that the White House "plumbers" had broken into the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist in September, 1971.

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Byrne dismissed the charges against Ellsberg because of the break-in.

Kleindienst resigned as attorney general April 30, 1973, the same day that top White House aides H.R. (Bob) Halde- man, John D. Ehrlichman and John W. Dean III left because of mounting talk of their involvement in the Watergate cover-up.

No such allegations were brought against Kleindienst. He left, according to President Nixon's letter accepting his resignation, because Kleindienst felt his longtime association with persons allegedly involved could place him in a conflict of interest.

Today, the House Judiciary Committee returns to the Watergate story as it begins the sixth and final week of examining in closed session staff evidence on the impeachment allegations. Mr. Nixon's possible involvement in the Watergate cover-up is considered the major allegation against him.

The committee earlier spent 10 days reviewing evidence on the break-in of Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office

building here on June 17, 1972 and the cover-up through April 30, 1973.

The committee will now review former Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox's efforts to obtain White House materials, his firing for seeking court enforcement of his subpoena, Mr. Nixon's subsequent turning over of the tapes with the announcement that two were missing and the discovery that one contained an 18½-minute gap. Experts have since reported that it had required at least five manual erasures to produce that gap.

Later in the week, the committee will review the President's tax situation to determine whether he sought to defraud the government by underpaying income taxes by \$432,787 during his years in the White House. The underpayment was caused by taking a deduction, later disallowed, on donation of his pre-presidential papers, and the treatment of his real estate transactions.

The committee will also review evidence to determine whether bombing Cambodia from 1969 to 1973 was unlawful and constituted an impeachable offense.

Next week, the committee plans two or more business

meetings to decide the future course of the inquiry. It must first decide on ground rules for rebuttal to this initial presentation by the President's lawyer, James D. St. Clair. Then it must decide on what witnesses or other evidence are needed to fill gaps in the staff's evidence.

(A major potential witness for the committee is former White House special counsel Charles W. Colson, who has promised to cooperate. The Associated Press quoted a secretary in Colson's office as saying she believes he met informally with the committee staff last week on possible testimony.

Committee Chairman Peter W. Rodino (D-N.J.) has said he hopes for a final committee vote on impeachment by mid-July, or shortly after, and to get the issue to the House floor by the first week in August.

Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) yesterday reiterated his request that the committee vote now to impeach Mr. Nixon for contempt of Congress for defying committee subpoenas for more tapes of his conversations on Watergate. Rodino is opposed to this as diverting attention from the substantive allegations.