

Dean Tied to ITT Antitrust Cover-Up

By Jack Anderson

We now have evidence that ex-White House counsel John Dean directed not only the Watergate cover-up but the earlier ITT cover-up as well. In both cases, he obstructed investigators, suppressed evidence and tried to influence the testimony.

Here's what we have now learned about his ITT operation:

- During the ITT hearings, he would slip up to Capitol Hill and operate out of Vice President Agnew's office. On one occasion, Dean phoned the Senate Judiciary Committee and asked a secretary to deliver a message to attorney Edward P. Taptich. The lawyer, formerly associated with the same law firm as Dean, represented ITT consultant Jack Gleason who had been called to testify. The secretary handed Taptich a note, asking him to contact Dean in the Vice President's office.

In these august quarters, the two men discussed what Gleason might be asked on the witness stand. Then Taptich huddled with his client before the testimony.

Dita's Memo

- As part of our case against ITT, we turned over to the Senate the celebrated Dita Beard memo, which linked the settlement of ITT's antitrust troubles to a \$400,000 commitment to help finance the Re-

publican convention. The Senate asked the FBI to determine whether the memo was a forgery and got back a report that it was written on Dita Beard's typewriter with the ribbon she was using on the day it was dated.

But unknown to the senators, Dean asked acting FBI chief Patrick Gray for the memo. Not long after Gray delivered the memo to Dean, it was sneaked to ITT, which hired its own experts to try to prove it was a forgery.

- Howard Hunt, who earlier burglarized the offices of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist and later helped plot the Watergate break-in, was also assigned to the ITT case. He reported that Dita Beard had fabricated her memo to blackmail her bosses.

White House aide Charles Colson dispatched Hunt, wearing a preposterous red wig, to Denver with a message for Dita Beard that it would not be held against her if she would confess the alleged forgery. But the indomitable Dita insisted to Hunt that the memo was authentic. It came as a total surprise to the White House when she later hedged.

Anderson Tailed

- In addition to Hunt, ITT hired the famed private detective firm Intertel, and Dean asked Assistant Attorney General Robert Mardian to investigate us. Mardian used gov-

ernment gum shoes to stake out my house and tail me. Investigative reports from both Mardian and Intertel passed across Dean's desk.

- Most flagrant of all, Dean was behind the suppression of 34 cartons of documents that ITT had delivered under subpoena to the Securities and Exchange Commission. These papers included confidential memos which contradicted the sworn testimony of then-Attorney General John Mitchell at the ITT hearing and implicated Vice President Agnew and former Treasury Secretary John Connally in the ITT antitrust fix.

Under the law, the SEC falls under the jurisdiction of Congress, so House Commerce Committee Chairman Harley Staggers (D-W.Va.) asked to see the ITT documents. But then SEC Chairman William Casey defied Congress and sent his executive assistant, Charles Whitman, and general counsel, Bradford Cook, over to the White House on the hustle. They spent an hour with John Dean.

"There's a number of people like the Vice President . . . and Mitchell (in the documents) and it looks like they're going to be used for political purposes," Whitman reported to Dean. The White House counsel advised them not to send the documents up to Capitol Hill, at least not without a subpoena.

The two SEC officials reported this advice back to Casey who also spoke to Dean on Oct. 3. Dean suggested that Casey should give the documents not to Congress but to the Justice Department. Dean said he would take the matter up with the Justice Department.

Later the same day, Deputy Attorney General Ralph Erickson phoned Casey and asked him to stop by the next day. On Oct. 4, Casey reported to Erickson that "the committee has requested documents from the file, certain documents." They discussed the fact that both the SEC and Justice Department were conducting investigations of ITT. Erickson said Justice "ought to have them (the documents)."

Casey immediately returned to his office and called a special meeting of the SEC at 3 p.m. the same day. The meeting lasted 10 minutes. At Casey's urging, the SEC agreed to turn over the hot ITT documents to Justice.

The politically sensitive documents, which had been locked in a special safe, were hand-carried in a manila envelope to Erickson on Oct. 6. The 34 cartons were delivered in a rented truck the same day.

The House Commerce Committee is quietly investigating the ITT cover-up. Both Dean and Erickson probably will be called as witnesses.