

NYTimes  
Statement by Kleindienst

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WASHINGTON, May 17—  
Following is the text of a  
statement by Richard G.  
Kleindienst, former Attorney  
General, after he pleaded  
guilty to a misdemeanor in  
United States District Court  
today.

I have entered a plea of  
guilty before Chief Judge  
George L. Hart Jr., of the  
United States District Court  
for the District of Columbia,  
to a misdemeanor (title 2,  
United States Code, section  
192), namely that I refused to  
answer certain questions  
asked of me during my con-  
firmation hearings in 1972  
before the Committee on the  
Judiciary of the United States  
Senate. I wish to make the  
following statement:

On April 19, 1971, while I  
was Deputy Attorney Gener-  
al, I received a call from  
John Ehrlichman, who said  
that the President ordered  
me to drop the appeal in U.S.  
v. I.T.T. (Grinnell), which had  
to be filed the next day in  
order to keep the case alive.

After I refused Mr. Ehr-  
lichman's instruction, the  
President called me and di-  
rected me to drop the appeal.  
When the President hung up,  
I considered immediately re-  
signing but realized that if I  
did so the case might not be  
appealed, which would be  
tantamount to compliance  
with the order.

Reply to 'Insinuation'

Instead, I decided to get  
the extension of time and  
then offer my resignation,  
which I did by asking John  
Mitchell to convey my plans  
to the President. Shortly  
thereafter the President re-  
tracted his order and the case  
was in fact appealed to the  
Supreme Court. Subsequently  
this case was won by the  
Government when it and two  
others involving I.T.T. were  
settled.

After I had been nominated  
for Attorney General one year

later, charges were made  
that the I.T.T. cases had been  
settled because I.T.T. had  
made a contribution relating  
to the Republican National  
Convention.

So far as I was aware,  
these charges were false and  
I therefore asked that my  
confirmation hearings be re-  
opened in order to dispel any  
insinuation of impropriety on  
the part of the Department  
of Justice or myself.

As the special prosecutor  
has indicated, I did not fully  
answer questions by the Sen-  
ate Committee on the Judi-  
ciary which would have elic-  
ited the circumstances sur-  
rounding the extension of  
time in the original appeal.  
I was less than candid be-  
cause I viewed the Presi-  
dent's order as ill conceived,  
quickly retracted, in my  
opinion privileged and in any  
event not the focus of the  
committee's inquiry, which  
dealt with the reasons why  
the three I.T.T. cases were  
settled during the summer of  
1971.

I was wrong in not having  
been more candid with the  
committee and I sincerely re-  
gret it. It is my earnest pray-  
er that in due time history  
will record that in I.T.T. the  
Department of Justice ful-  
filled its charge fairly and  
fully to enforce the laws of  
the United States without  
fear, interference or favor. So  
far as I know, this is the  
truth.

In making my guilty plea  
to the misdemeanor which I  
have described, I do so out  
of respect for the criminal  
justice system of the United  
States and the indisputable  
fact that the system must  
have equal application to all.  
This same respect for the  
criminal justice system re-  
quired that I voluntarily and  
fully cooperate with the  
Watergate special prosecu-  
tion force, and I am morally  
certain that I have done so.