

Hard-Talking Lobbyist

NYTimes *Dita Davis Beard*

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WASHINGTON, March 5
—Mrs. Dita Davis Beard, the purported author of a memorandum linking the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation's reported contribution to the 1972 Republican convention with settlement of three antitrust suits against the company, is

Woman
in the
News

one of the capital's thousands of lobbyists who work behind the scenes and make every effort to stay out of the public limelight.

Even today, after her name has been in the headlines for several days, few details of her life and activities were available here. However, she has been described by those who know her as a hard-talking, strong-minded fiercely independent woman.

"She's one of the boys; talks like a man in a poker game," one friend said.

Edward Gerrity, I.T.T. vice president for public relations, said, "She has the vocabulary of a drill instructor in the Marines."

When Mrs. Beard became ill on a flight to Denver Thursday, she was asked if she wanted a doctor.

"I don't need a damn doctor," she reportedly told a stewardess.

Mrs. Beard was born in Fort Riley, Kan., in November, 1918. "Her father was at least a colonel," Mr. Gerrity said. "She has an awful lot of army friends."

A Good Rifle Shot

Formerly a horse rider, Mrs. Beard is reputed to be a camping and skiing enthusiast and a good rifle shot. However, in the last two years she may have curtailed those activities because of her heart ailment.

"She has been complaining of heart trouble for the past two years," Mr. Gerrity said. "She told me her doctor has said she had emphysema as well. I tried to get her to take a physical with our company doctors, but she adamantly refused. She said Dr. Liszka would take care of her."

The staff directors of both the House and Senate Commerce Committees and of the subcommittees on communications, which deal with legislation affecting I.T.T., have rarely if ever seen Mrs. Beard.

Nicholas Zapple, counsel for the Senate Subcommittee on Communications, said that he had dealt with her once "at least several years ago"



United Press International

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but could not remember her clearly.

And staff members on House committees could not remember even hearing of Mrs. Beard before publication by Jack Anderson last week of the memorandum she supposedly wrote.

Some Congressional sources and officials in the White House and the communications industry expressed astonishment today that a person about whom so little was known could wield the influence that Mrs. Beard is said to command at the highest levels of Government.

Mr. Beard completed four years of high school followed by what she described on her I.T.T. biography form as "extensive travel and informal tutoring." She never went to college. Mr. Gerrity said that in World War II she worked with the American Red Cross in the Mediterranean.

Mrs. Beard has been married and divorced twice and has five children, some of whom still live at home. But she gets no alimony or child support from either of her former husbands, according to Mr. Gerrity.

Mr. Gerrity said that Mrs. Beard was "a pretty tough disciplinarian but is very proud of" her children.

Her eldest son, Ben, is said to be in law school in Florida, and her youngest boy, known as Bull, is in military school.

Her daughter Lane, who joined her mother in Denver Friday night, works in the finance section of the Republican National Committee. Her other daughter, whose name was not available, is said to work in the Washington area, as does her other son, David.