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Nixon ITT Suit Role

Claimed

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WASHINGTON — A lobbyist for the International Telephone & Telegraph Corp. was quoted before the Senate Judiciary Committee today as having said that President Nixon ordered former Attorney General John Mitchell to take a direct hand in reaching a "reasonable settlement" in an antitrust suit pending against ITT.

The testimony came from Brit Hume, an aide to columnist Jack Anderson, who has published an ITT inter-office memo attributed to lobbyist Dita Beard.

Hume met with Mrs. Beard at her home and confronted her with the memo, which also linked a \$400,000 ITT commitment to the Republican national convention in San Diego with the eventual out-of-court settlement.

Confrontation

Hume said she described a confrontation with Mitchell at the governor's mansion in Frankfort at a reception following the Kentucky Derby last May.

Hume quoted Mrs. Beard as saying:

"He (Mitchell) said at the party in Kentucky he had received a call or had been contacted by the President to lay off ITT."

Later, Hume said Mrs. Beard softened her description of what the President allegedly wanted in regard to the conglomerate "to make a reasonable settlement"

"This is her version of it," Hume said of Mrs. Beard, who is now hospitalized in Denver.

Collapsed

On Tuesday, former Kentucky Gov. Louie Nunn told the committee that Mrs. Beard had collapsed in a stupor during the same reception she described to Hume.

Earlier Hume said Mrs. Beard told him the ITT president, Harold Geneen, ordered that the company underwrite the GOP convention, when Geneen met her last May before an out-of-court settlement of the antitrust suit.

Preceding Hume on the stand, columnist Anderson charged that Richard Klein-

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dienst was a liar and "unfit to be attorney general" because of his role in the out-of-court settlement. Kleindienst's nomination to be attorney general is before the committee.

With Sen. Roman Hruska (R-Neb.) wagging his finger in protest, Anderson told the committee that ITT's \$400,000 offer to underwrite the convention clearly violated the Corrupt Practices Act. Kleindienst, he said, "has trouble recognizing a crime when he sees one."

Natty in a bright red sports jacket, Anderson declared: "This country needs as its top law enforcement officer a man who understands the law and respects the truth. Richard Kleindienst is not such a man. He is unfit to be attorney general."

Hruska argued that contributions like ITT's were commonplace in helping a city bear the cost of a national political convention.

"Conventions all over the country are bought by businesses all the time, and everyone here know it."

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Hruska said as the audience burst into laughter. "Everybody goes out and buys conventions."

'The Fact'

Anderson said the facts were that "one of the biggest antitrust suits in history was being settled at the same time the company was offering to contribute to a convention. If there are people in the Senate who can't see this is wrong, there is something wrong with their eyesight."

Anderson claimed Kleindienst had "lied" several times about his role in the ITT case, first by asserting that it was negotiated exclusively by the antitrust division, and then by acknowledging he had "set in motion a series of events" that led to the settlement.

Anderson also took issue with a statement by Mitchell that he had no knowledge of dealings with the convention contribution.

"This statement is false," Anderson said of Mitchell, who is President Nixon's campaign manager.

Hume, who provided An-

derson with much of the key material for his original column on the subject, testified that two ITT public relations officials sought to persuade Mrs. Beard to deny the authenticity of the memo she wrote concerning the matter.

Persuade

Hume said at two meetings he had with Mrs. Beard on Feb. 23 and 24 she confirmed she wrote the memo to a company official but insisted she had not meant to imply a political payoff was made in return for the antitrust settlement.

He said the second interview was in the kitchen of her home. Hume said Mrs. Beard said two ITT public relations officials suggested she end the controversy over the memo by claiming "she just made it up."

But Hume said Mrs. Beard told him she had refused to do this and that one of the officials then "suggested that I get out of town and stop talking about it."

Hume said ITT ran other documents written by Mrs. Beard through a paper shredder to prevent them from being subpoenaed.

Semantics

Anderson said Kleindienst's "version of events departed from mine only when he and his fellow witnesses began dancing a semantic tango around the word 'negotiate.'" He referred to testimony by Kleindienst, McLaren and Felix Rohatyn, an ITT director.

Kleindienst did not deny meeting with Rohatyn, Anderson said. "Indeed, he said his contacts with Mr. Rohatyn 'set in motion a series of events' which led to the resolution of the case. Yet he argued before this committee that he had done no negotiating. Perhaps more astonishing," the columnist continued, "Mr. Rohatyn and even Judge McLaren endorsed this transparent disclaimer."