

# ROLE IN I.T.T. SUIT IS LAID TO NIXON

Lobbyist Quoted as Saying  
Mitchell Said President  
Ordered a Settlement

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WASHINGTON, March 9 — Dita D. Beard, a Washington lobbyist, was quoted today as saying that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell had told her that President Nixon ordered him to "make a reasonable settlement" of three antitrust cases against the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.

Brit Hume, a 28-year-old investigator for the syndicated columnist Jack Anderson, brought a stunned silence to the packed Senate Judiciary Committee chamber when he told about Mrs. Beard's alleged account of her conversation with Mr. Mitchell at a Kentucky Derby party at the Kentucky Governor's Mansion last May 1.

"The Attorney General said the White House, even the President, had called and said, 'Lay off I.T.T.,'" Mr. Hume quoted her as saying. Mr. Hume said that he was taken back and asked, "The President said that?" According to Mr. Hume, Mrs. Beard replied, "No, it was more like 'Make a reasonable settlement.'"

A few moments later, Senator James O. Eastland, chairman of the committee, inter-

Continued on Page 21, Column 1

# Role in I.T.T. Suits' Settlement Is Ascribed to Nixon at Hearing

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

rupted the hearing to ask, "Was that the President of the United States?"

"Yes," Mr. Hume replied.

On Tuesday, Louis B. Nunn, former Kentucky Governor, told the committee that Mr. Mitchell had fended off Mrs. Beard's efforts to discuss the T.T.T. case. He added that the 53-year-old mother of five had been drinking and collapsed from the effects of alcohol and heart trouble shortly after the conversation.

Mrs. Beard is hospitalized in the cardie ward of a Denver hospital and has been declared not well enough to testify.

The introduction of President Nixon's name into the testimony for the first time in connection with the decision to settle the cases appeared certain to broaden the inquiry far beyond the purpose initially stated by acting Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, who had requested the hearings.

Mr. Kleindienst called for the hearings to dispel "a cloud over my head" caused by allegations that he had misled the public regarding his role in the settlements. Now, it appears certain that the hearings will range into all aspects of the allegations that I.T.T. agreed to make a large contribution to the 1972 Republican National Convention in exchange for a favorable settlement of the anti-trust suits.

Mr. Eastland said after today's session that the hearings would extend at least another week, because "these charges have to be explored." He said that the committee had not yet decided if it would attempt to reach into the White House to compel Peter M. Flanigan, a Presidential assistant whose name has been mentioned frequently during the hearings, to appear and testify.

John W. Hushen, the Justice Department's press spokesman, said after the hearing that Mr. Mitchell stood by his earlier statement that he had not been involved in the I.T.T. negotiations in any way and "with respect to allegations that the President discussed the matter with me, there would be no occasion for him to do so, and he did not."

The Republican National Committee initiated a counter-attack in a statement by its chairman, Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, that he would hold a news conference tomorrow to disclose "improper activities involving the Democratic National Convention involving vast sums of money improperly received from big business."

In describing his interview with Mrs. Beard at her home here on Feb. 24, Mr. Hume gave what he characterized as Mrs. Beard's reasons for writing the memorandum whose publication by Mr. Anderson touched off the current hearings. The memorandum linked a "noble commitment" of some \$400,000 by I.T.T. to the Republican convention to settlement of the antitrust cases.

Mr. Hume quoted Mrs. Beard as saying that she had been asked to write the memorandum by E. J. Gerrity, chief of public relations for I.T.T., after she had objected to the way the commitment to the San Diego convention was being handled.

Mr. Hume said that she was upset because confusion had developed as to whether the commitment was to be made in cash or partly in services.

Also, he said that Jack Gleason, a former White House aide who is now a public relations man, had told him that he had been asked by W. R. Merriam, head of the I.T.T. office here, to try to clear this up with the White House. Mr. Hume quoted Mr. Gleason as saying that he had discussed this with William E. Timmons, a White House assistant.

Mr. Hume concluded that when the word got back to Mrs. Beard that the commitment was being discussed in the White House, she wrote the memorandum to urge I.T.T. personnel to be more discreet and to clear up the uncertainties about the extent of the commitment.

He pointed out that the memorandum stressed an agreement "that under no circumstances would anyone in this office discuss with anyone our participation in the convention," and that it stated that Harold S. Geneen, president of I.T.T., had agreed to "up the original amount" to include services and cash.

According to Mr. Hume, Mrs. Beard said that I.T.T.'s commitment to help take the Republican convention to San Diego was made at a meeting at the Half Moon Inn in San Diego last May, when Mr. Geneen told Representative Bob Wilson, a Republican who represents San Diego, "Well, we'll support it, we'll underwrite it."

Mr. Hume said that he had been told by an official of the San Diego Host Committee that a check for \$100,000 had been sent to it by I.T.T.'s subsidiary company, the Sheraton Corporation of America.