

A 'Conspiracy' in ITT Case Charged

Washington

Senator Marlow W. Cook (Rep-Ky.) said yesterday he believes Democratic Senators Edward Kennedy and Birch Bayh and columnist Jack Anderson have conspired to "discredit government officials despite the absence of wrongdoing of any kind" in the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. merger case.

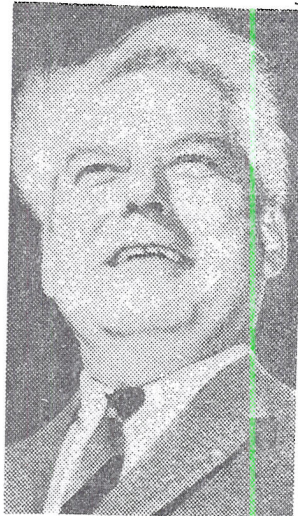
Cook said Brit Hume, an assistant to Anderson, has made material available to Kennedy and the Massachusetts Democrat has refused to give this to the committee.

Cook released a letter asking Chairman James O. Eastland (Dem-Miss.) of the Senate Judiciary Committee to call a closed committee meeting to consider his accusation.

HEARINGS

The committee has been conducting hearings at the request of Richard G. Kleindienst nominated to succeed John Mitchell after Mitchell stepped down March 1 to run President Nixon's reelection campaign.

Kleindienst's nomination



AP Wirephoto

GOP SENATOR COOK
He asked a hearing

had won unanimous committee approval before the publication by columnist Jack Anderson of allegations that the Justice Department gave ITT a favorable settlement in an antitrust action after ITT had pledged \$400,000 for the Republican national convention.

Kleindienst, who was deputy attorney general at the time of the out-of-court settlement, asked for the hearings on Anderson's allegations. And the Senate has withheld a vote on the nomi-

nation pending the outcome of the current inquiry. Eastland has said, however, that the nomination stands approved, as far as the committee is concerned, and he plans no new vote.

WITNESS

The hearings resume tomorrow with Mitchell as the next witness.

"I am compelled by the record of the hearings in the case to the conclusion that a political conspiracy exists among Senators Edward Kennedy, Birch Bayh and Mr. Jack Anderson," Cook said in the letter.

"At no time did Senator Kennedy make the information given to his office available to other members of the committee, nor even inform them of his possession of the same," Cook said.

"The giving of notes and other documents to a member of a senatorial committee which is investigating the very subject matter contained in those notes is a serious affront to the committee process bordering on contempt," Cook said.

REPLY

Kennedy said in response "I hope that each member of the committee has instructed his staff, as I have,

to develop every relevant piece of information, and that none of them will be deterred by the diversionary efforts of those who would rather not see this investigation proceed."

A spokesman said Kennedy's staff had been allowed to look at Hume's notes but said he was not sure whether they had a copy of the material.

Senator Fred Harris (Dem-Okl.), announced, meanwhile, that he has asked the Federal Trade Commission to reopen the antitrust case against the merger of ITT and Hartford Fire Insurance Co.

Associated Press