

# Nader's ITT Suit Rejected

HARTFORD (Conn.) — (AP) — A Superior Court judge today dismissed a lawsuit filed by Ralph Nader challenging the merger of International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. and Hartford Fire Insurance Co.

The merger was part of the controversial Justice Department antitrust settlement with ITT.

Judge Walter Sidor ruled that Nader, the consumer advocate, and three fellow plaintiffs did not have sufficient standing to bring the suit and did not prove they had been injured in the merger, the largest in the nation's history.

Nader charged in the suit that certain facts about ITT finances and promises the company made to Connecticut officials were not made public as required by law.

He also alleged that former State Insurance Commissioner William Cotter, now a congressman, was under political and economic pressure that affected his May 1970 decision approving the merger.

Nader's suit was filed in June, 1970, and was not related to charges recently made by columnist Jack Anderson that the U.S. Department of Justice settlement with ITT was arranged after the conglomerate pledged \$400,000 toward next August's Republican convention in San Diego.

However, the Justice Department agreed in the same settlement to let ITT

keep Hartford Fire in return for divesting itself of some smaller subsidiaries.

Nader's suit was the last pending challenge to the Hartford Fire-ITT merger.

Under the settlement announced by the Justice Department last July, ITT would divest itself of Canteen Corp., the Fire Protection Division of Grinnell Corp., Avis Rent-A-Car, ITT-Levitt & Sons Inc., and

two smaller insurance subsidiaries. In return, the Justice Department agreed to drop its antitrust suit against the ITT-Hartford Fire merger.

Hartford Fire, with assets exceeding \$2 billion, is generally considered to be more valuable to ITT than the companies it has agreed to give up, primarily because its assets include an annual cash flow of \$1 billion.