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Demo Move For Delay on Kleindienst

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The Senate Democratic leadership put a "hold" yesterday on Richard G. Kleindienst's nomination to be Attorney General and one of his harshest critics promised a full airing of charges of improper political influence in the Justice Department.

The delay in Senate consideration of the disputed nomination was requested by one of the four Democratic members of the Senate Judiciary Committee who voted Thursday against Kleindienst's approval.

Senator Robert C. Byrd (Dem-W.Va.) said the "hold" would be honored at least until Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield returns week after next from a visit to China with GOP Leader Hugh Scott, and decides when the nomination will be taken up on the Senate floor.

TUNNEY

By Senate tradition, Byrd did not identify who made the "hold" request. But Senator John V. Tunney (Dem-Calif.), one of the four dissenters, called a news conference to announce he intended to arrange a "full airing" of the committee's two-month investigation.

While disclaiming any idea of leading a filibuster against Kleindienst, Tunney said he would concentrate on the decision by John N. Mitchell's former deputy to clear Harry Steward, the U.S. attorney in San Diego who blocked a subpoena in a grand jury investigation of alleged illegal contributions to President Nixon's 1968 campaign.

It appeared to Kleindienst's friends and foes alike that Senate debate would last several weeks. But Byrd and Senator James O. Eastland (Dem-Miss.) the judiciary committee chairman, said they were sure any filibuster attempt would fail.

VOTING

Byrd himself, although he voted for Kleindienst in committee, reserved the right to change his mind once the full Senate is ready to act.

The committee originally voted unanimously on February 24 to endorse Klein-

dienst as Mitchell's successor as Attorney General. But, after two months of reopened hearings on the Justice Department's settlement of an antitrust case against International Telephone and Telegraph Corp., four members switched and voted against him.

They were Tunney and Senators Edward M. Kennedy (Dem-Mass.) Birch Bayh (Dem-Ind.) and Quentin Burdick (Dem-N.D.), Senator John L. McClellan (Dem-Ark.) abstained from voting.

Both Kennedy and Tunney have predicted a prolonged debate. But Byrd said yesterday that "as of now," he did not believe Kleindienst's foes could prevent a two-thirds majority — or 66 members of the full Senate — from acting to halt a filibuster.

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