

# The Appearance of A Political Deal



**Jack Anderson**

A PROMINENT ad agency broke off its campaign to help Senator Jim Eastland's rival in Mississippi's Democratic primary after being promised it might get a cut of President Nixon's lucrative campaign advertising.

Eastland, of course, is the Senate Judiciary Chairman who bailed out Richard Kleindienst, the President's choice for Attorney General, during the ITT hearings. Before the first witness was heard, Eastland declared his faith in Kleindienst and, thereafter, steered him helpfully through the stormy hearings.

Yet, despite the appearance of a blatant political deal, the parties to it insist it can all be explained away as fast as you can say ITT.

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HERE ARE the facts: Taylor Webb, a moderate Leland, Miss., lawyer, decided early this year to run against Eastland, whose power in the Senate is based on 30 years seniority.

Webb resisted pressure to keep out of the race and announced his candidacy. He then sought an advertising agency to handle his campaign, but four in a row turned him down.

He was compelled, finally, to go out of the state for help, and he signed up the respected Houston firm of Culberson, Heller and Norton.

Webb advanced the agency \$7500. The Houston firm cashed the check and started producing TV spots. On April 15, they

were still working loyally for Webb against Eastland when Senator John Tower (Rep-Tex.), one of their key clients, flew into Houston.

It's an open secret in Washington that Tower is an errand boy for the White House. He notified the Houston ad agency that if they wanted to stay in his good graces, they would have to drop Webb.

Earlier, Tower had promised the agency to seek the Texas contract for President Nixon's campaign with its millions in billings. This, too, was in the balance.

As one of the partners, Ed Norton, explained to us: "Tower told us months earlier he would try to get us the presidential business. We felt that before, during and after (the meeting with Tower), he intended to help us."

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WITHIN 24 hours of Tower's warning to the agency, another partner, Bob Heller, was on the phone with an outraged Taylor Webb. Recalls Webb: "Heller told me he was going to withdraw from my campaign at the direction of Senator John Tower. Heller said that Tower did not want them involved in Mississippi in a campaign against Senator Eastland." Heller denied to us that he had mentioned Eastland's name.

The ad agency put out the story that they had dropped the Webb account solely because they were too busy with the Tower campaign. But the agency knew how busy they would be before they signed on with Webb.