

MAY 9 1972

Kleindienst

Raked by

Tunney

SF Examiner

WASHINGTON — (UPI)

— Sen. John Tunney (D-Calif.) has accused acting Attorney General Richard Kleindienst of dereliction of duty in a case indirectly related to President Nixon's 1968 election campaign.

Tunney's charge came as he and other Senate Judiciary Committee members who voted against the nomination of Kleindienst as attorney general prepared to release their minority report urging the full Senate to reject him.

"One of the primary reasons why Richard Kleindienst should not be confirmed as attorney general is his conduct in the case of Harry Steward, U. S. attorney for the Southern District of California . . ." Tunney said.

"Despite strong evidence of serious misconduct and despite a finding by the criminal division of 'highly improper' conduct by Steward, Kleindienst officially and publicly cleared Steward of any wrongdoing whatsoever and stated that he served with the full confidence of the attorney general," Tunney's report said.

Kleindienst was assistant attorney general at the time.

Three federal investigators, according to Tunney, swore that Steward quashed a subpoena against Frank Thornton, a personal friend and political benefactor of Steward. They said in FBI affidavits that Steward told them Thornton got him his job as U.S. attorney and was going to get him a federal judgeship.

A grand jury at the time was investigating allegedly illegal contributions to President Nixon's 1968 election campaign. The inquiry not only involved Thornton, but also C. Arnholt Smith, a major GOP contributor who reportedly raised more than \$1 million for the campaign.