

# Kleindienst Awaits The Senate's Vote

By Vera Glaser and Malvina Stephenson

## Washington

**DESPITE THREE** months in a political meat grinder, Richard Kleindienst appears chipper as a jaybird.

President Nixon's nominee for attorney general will face his moment of truth shortly, as the senate prepares to vote him up or down.

During a headline-studded flap, which involved a profane female lobbyist, shredded ITT memos and charges of a politically tainted Justice Department, Kleindienst and his family have earned points for grace under pressure.

The chunky, gregarious nominee, 48, and his charming, brainy wife have been cheerful during the ordeal. They haven't gone underground, but are much in evidence at political and social functions.

How has Kleindienst retained his good humor?

"I'm a happy man," he grinned. "I'm happy with my wife, happy with my home, happy with my children and my dogs."

He admitted being shaken by the sudden "impact" of a politically charged controversy threatening his nomination. He said he loses his temper "sometimes."

What triggers that?

"My wife, my home, my kids, and my dogs!" he exclaimed with a hearty laugh.

The Kleindienst residence in the Virginia suburbs is a comfortable oasis of books and paintings. At 6:45 each

morning the nominee feeds the birds, then sits on his tree-shaded patio, calmly absorbing coffee and editorial invective from his newspaper.

President Nixon has been "staunch and kind," according to Kleindienst's wife. Their four children have been supportive, despite some cutting jibes at school. Sheer adoration is supplied by a German shepherd and English pug, both aging and overweight.

Kleindienst's ups and downs usually come if he is worried or tired, his wife said. He works long hours at two jobs these days. While serving as deputy attorney general, he fills the top post in an "acting" capacity.

A new deputy won't be named, she said, until the senate acts on Kleindienst.

His Episcopal faith (he is a licensed lay reader) requires him to "forgive himself and others," Mrs. Kleindienst said. It partly explains his retention of U.S. Attorney Harry Steward of San Diego in the face of alleged illegal contributions to the Republican party.

If Kleindienst is confirmed, the justice department will get a new look. John and Martha Mitchell's successors are expected to be less political and less talkative, respectively.

Kleindienst's relations with the President are not as intimate as Mitchell's but date back farther.

A friend from Democratic Detroit predicted Kleindienst



AP Wirephoto

KLEINDIENST  
Nixon has been . . .



UPI Telephoto

MRS. KLEINDIENST  
. . . 'staunch and kind'

will make a "compassionate, fair and firm" attorney general. The friend, Hobart Taylor, Jr., served as former President Johnson's associate counsel.

The only cue Mrs. Kleindienst seems to have taken from Martha is leading the Justice Department wives in a fight against drug abuse. "We are totally different personalities," Marnie Kleindienst said. "I intend to be myself."

The Kleindienst family has been seasoned on controversy during his political career. While practicing law in Arizona, he served as GOP state chairman, then directed field operations in 1964 and 1968 for the presidential campaigns of Barry Goldwater and Richard Nixon. He grew close to Mitchell in the latter race.

In recent months, during three appearances before the Judiciary Committee, Kleindienst took sharp grilling, but his nomination was twice reported favorably.

He insists he has no re-

grets about requesting reopening of the hearings to clear his name after the ITT storm broke.

At home in the Kleindienst den with its big picture window and Navajo wall rug, the controversy is discussed often. Mrs. Kleindienst says her husband takes it "seriously, but not personally."

Kleindienst met the former Margaret Dunbar of Cleveland while she was a graduate history student at Radcliffe and he was studying law at Harvard. They appear to be personally devoted and possessed of a strong intellectual bond.

What if her husband doesn't make it?

"We'll go back into private law practice," she said. If the President asked him, however, Kleindienst would remain through the November election.

If he is confirmed, as seems likely, will they toss a big party?

Mrs. Kleindienst turned serious. "I don't think we feel like a blast," she said.