

# Mitchell Linked to Anti-Trust Deal



**Jack Anderson**

WE NOW HAVE evidence that the settlement of the Nixon Administration's biggest anti-trust case was privately arranged between Attorney General John Mitchell and the top lobbyist for the company involved.

We have this on the word of the lobbyist herself, Dita Beard of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company. She acknowledged the secret deal after we obtained a highly incriminating memo, written by her, from ITT's files.

The memo, which was intended to be destroyed after it was read, not only indicates that the anti-trust case had been fixed but that the fix was a payoff for ITT's pledge of up to \$400,000 for the upcoming Republican Convention in San Diego.

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CONFRONTED with the memo, Mrs. Beard acknowledged its authenticity. The next night she met with my associate Brit Hume at her home to try to explain the document.

Although the memo suggests otherwise, Mrs. Beard insisted that her deal with Mitchell was unrelated to her company's pledge of cash for the GOP Convention.

She said she met with Mitchell at the governor's mansion in Kentucky during a dinner reception given by Republican Governor Louie Nunn last May after the Kentucky Derby.

At the time, there were three Justice Department suits pending which sought to strip ITT of several of the major companies it had acquired on the way to becoming one of America's largest conglomerate

holding companies. Two billion dollars hung in the balance.

At the governor's reception, she said, Mitchell took her and Nunn aside and launched into an hour-long diatribe against her. He criticized her for putting pressure on the Justice Department through Congress and the White House on the anti-trust cases.

She said Mitchell chastised her for using such tactics instead of meeting directly with him.

"Why didn't you come see me?" she said he asked. Mrs. Beard also quoted Mitchell as saying he had gotten pressure from President Nixon to: "Make a reasonable settlement with ITT."

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AFTER HIS harangue, Mrs. Beard said, Mitchell agreed to discuss the anti-trust matters and asked bluntly, "what do you want?" meaning what companies did ITT most want to keep if the anti-trust cases were settled.

And, she said, when the Justice Department announced its settlement with ITT on July 31, more than two months later, it conformed to the agreement she had made with Mitchell.

Mrs. Beard insisted the subject of the GOP Convention never came up with Mitchell and was never a factor in the anti-trust matter. But this clearly contradicts her memorandum, which was written about six weeks after the Kentucky Derby dinner.

**Footnote:** Mitchell would not talk to us but John Hushen, a Justice Department spokesman, told us there was "no truth" to Mrs. Beard's story.