

# New Twist in ITT Case

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Federal investigators have learned that on March 6, 1972, an attorney for the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. delivered to the White House a set of what later became known as the "politically sensitive" documents in the ITT affair.

On the same day the documents were delivered, John D. Ehrlichman, then President Nixon's domestic adviser, called William J. Casey, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and suggested that the SEC's enforcement division not seek the documents by subpoena.

Casey testified about the call from Ehrlichman at a congressional hearing last June. When the call was made, Casey was unaware of what the documents contained and did not know that they had just been delivered to the White House, according to his testimony.

These 13 documents are considered central to the investigation — first entrusted to the Justice Department but shifted to the special Watergate prosecutor last June — of possible perjury and obstruction of justice in connection with the settlement in July 1971 of three antitrust suits against the corporation.

The documents are memos and letters by company officers detailing meetings of several high ITT executives, including ITT president Harold S. Geneen, with administration officials in 1970 and 1971.

At that time, the officials were Vice President Spiro Agnew, Attorney General John N. Mitchell, Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally, Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans, White House Foreign economic adviser Peter G. Peterson, and presidential counsel Charles W. Colson.

With the discovery of the March 6, 1972, delivery of the documents to the White House, the investigators believe they have found the answer to two key questions: How and when did Mitchell, Kleindienst, Ehrlichman, Colson and John W. Dean III, the dismissed counsel to the President, first see the documents?

Until now, it was believed that Mitchell might have seen the documents as early as March 1972, that Dean might have seen them about July 1, and that Kleindienst first saw them on August 25.

Investigators now believe that all three, plus Ehrlichman and Colson, saw the documents in March. And this has raised the following questions connected with possible perjury and obstruction of justice:

- Why, when the corporation was under subpoena to produce all documents relevant to an inquiry at that time by the Securities and Exchange Commission into the merger of ITT and the Hartford Fire Insurance Co., did ITT deliver the politically sensitive documents, which up to this time it had

withheld, to the White House two weeks before surrendering them to the SEC?

- Casey, acting with the approval of the other commissioners, rushed the documents to the Justice Department in October 1972 on the ground that ITT might have

obstructed justice by initially withholding them. Why didn't one of the administration officials who had seen them, and possibly had copies, turn them over to the Justice Department months earlier?

- Why, after receiving the

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13 documents from the commission on Oct. 6, 1972, did then Deputy Attorney General Ralph E. Erickson keep them in his safe until after the election, sending them only then to the criminal division?

- Did Colson perjure him-

self when he told the House Commerce subcommittee last June 14 that, with the exception of one memo addressed to himself, he had "read" it (the politically sensitive file) today for the first time" after the subcommittee staff had shown it to him?