

Mitchell Reported to Have Blocked a Milk Inquiry

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12 (AP)—Federal investigators have received reports that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell blocked a criminal antitrust investigation of a giant dairy cooperative that donated \$202,000 to President Nixon's campaign.

Mr. Mitchell said through his lawyer that he could not recall such an incident. The report, which apparently originated within the Justice Department, is being investigated by the Senate Watergate committee and a Senate judiciary subcommittee.

According to the report, Mr. Mitchell vetoed a staff request to conduct a grand jury investigation into alleged monopoly practices of the Texas-based Associated Milk Producers, Inc.

The department instead filed a civil antitrust action on Feb. 1, 1972, accusing the milk pro-

He Is Said to Have Prevented Criminal Antitrust Action— He Can't Recall Incident

ducers of using illegal tactics to gain a hold on milk markets in 14 states.

This contrasted with the department's handling of price-fixing cases against bakers in the Philadelphia and Baltimore areas, and against milk processors in the states of Washington and Alaska. In those cases, the department obtained criminal indictments and convictions that led to fines.

Richard W. McLaren, who headed the antitrust Division of the Justice Department and who is now a Federal judge in Chicago, declined to comment on the milk-producers case.

Several Justice Department officials who are familiar with

the case would neither confirm nor deny that Mr. Mitchell blocked a grand jury investigation.

Mr. Mitchell's lawyer, William G. Hundley, said that Mr. Mitchell could not recall any staff recommendation for a criminal investigation of the case.

"He doesn't recall having a dispute with McLaren or anybody else," Mr. Hundley said. "Our best recollection is that it never came to our attention until it was in the form in which it eventuated, which was the civil action that was brought."

Ford Meets Dobrynin

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11 (UPI)—Vice President Ford held a get-acquainted meeting today with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin in his office at the Executive Office Building.