

NYTimes
Statement by Kleindienst

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WASHINGTON, May 17—
Following is the text of a
statement by Richard G.
Kleindienst, former Attorney
General, after he pleaded
guilty to a misdemeanor in
United States District Court
today.

I have entered a plea of
guilty before Chief Judge
George L. Hart Jr., of the
United States District Court
for the District of Columbia,
to a misdemeanor (title 2,
United States Code, section
192), namely that I refused to
answer certain questions
asked of me during my con-
firmation hearings in 1972
before the Committee on the
Judiciary of the United States
Senate. I wish to make the
following statement:

On April 19, 1971, while I
was Deputy Attorney Gener-
al, I received a call from
John Ehrlichman, who said
that the President ordered
me to drop the appeal in U.S.
v. I.T.T. (Grinnell), which had
to be filed the next day in
order to keep the case alive.

After I refused Mr. Ehr-
lichman's instruction, the
President called me and di-
rected me to drop the appeal.
When the President hung up,
I considered immediately re-
signing but realized that if I
did so the case might not be
appealed, which would be
tantamount to compliance
with the order.

Reply to 'Insinuation'

Instead, I decided to get
the extension of time and
then offer my resignation,
which I did by asking John
Mitchell to convey my plans
to the President. Shortly
thereafter the President re-
tracted his order and the case
was in fact appealed to the
Supreme Court. Subsequently
this case was won by the
Government when it and two
others involving I.T.T. were
settled.

After I had been nominated
for Attorney General one year

later, charges were made
that the I.T.T. cases had been
settled because I.T.T. had
made a contribution relating
to the Republican National
Convention.

So far as I was aware,
these charges were false and
I therefore asked that my
confirmation hearings be re-
opened in order to dispel any
insinuation of impropriety on
the part of the Department
of Justice or myself.

As the special prosecutor
has indicated, I did not fully
answer questions by the Sen-
ate Committee on the Judi-
ciary which would have elic-
ited the circumstances sur-
rounding the extension of
time in the original appeal.
I was less than candid be-
cause I viewed the Presi-
dent's order as ill conceived,
quickly retracted, in my
opinion privileged and in any
event not the focus of the
committee's inquiry, which
dealt with the reasons why
the three I.T.T. cases were
settled during the summer of
1971.

I was wrong in not having
been more candid with the
committee and I sincerely re-
gret it. It is my earnest pray-
er that in due time history
will record that in I.T.T. the
Department of Justice ful-
filled its charge fairly and
fully to enforce the laws of
the United States without
fear, interference or favor. So
far as I know, this is the
truth.

In making my guilty plea
to the misdemeanor which I
have described, I do so out
of respect for the criminal
justice system of the United
States and the indisputable
fact that the system must
have equal application to all.
This same respect for the
criminal justice system re-
quired that I voluntarily and
fully cooperate with the
Watergate special prosecu-
tion force, and I am morally
certain that I have done so.