

SFC  
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# The 'Tough' ITT Order Nixon

## Washington

The House Judiciary Committee heard a recording yesterday of President Nixon ordering then Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst to drop plans to appeal a court decision favorable to International Telephone & Telegraph Corp.

"It was a very tough call," said Representative James R. Mann (Dem-S.C.).

"It was a flat order to cut

it out," said Representative Hamilton Fish Jr. (Rep-N.Y.). "Poor Dick Kleindienst didn't get a word in edgewise."

Committee members agreed that the tape tends to support Mr. Nixon's contention that his ITT decision was based on policy, not politics.

Representative Delbert Latta (Rep-Ohio), quoted the President as saying it would

be bad for business if the ITT ruling were appealed.

The recording of the April 19, 1971, conversation was played during a closed committee session at which the panel began hearing evidence its impeachment staff has compiled on White House involvement in the ITT antitrust settlement.

The committee's inquiry is focusing in part on whether the President was aware a

year later that Kleindienst and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell would refuse to tell the Senate Judiciary Committee about White House involvement in the ITT settlement.

Kleindienst and Mitchell testified before the Senate committee in March, 1972, at hearings on confirmation of Kleindienst to succeed Mitchell as attorney general. Most of the questioning

## Gave Kleindienst

focused on the ITT settlement and an allegation. The settlement was influenced by a \$200,000 pledge from an ITT subsidiary to help underwrite the cost of the Republican National Convention.

At his confirmation hearings, Kleindienst was asked if he had talked to anyone at the White House about the ITT case.

"Not that I can recall," he

replied.

But in a White House statement issued last January 8, it was acknowledged that the President had called Kleindienst and ordered him not to appeal a court decision favorable to ITT in a government suit challenging its acquisition of Grinnell Corp.

On May 16, Kleindienst pleaded guilty in federal court to a misdemeanor

charging that he "did refuse and fail to answer accurately and fully" the Senate committee's questions about the case.

The White House statement also said that, on April 20, 1971, Mr. Nixon discussed the Grinnell appeal with Mitchell and that the attorney general persuaded the President to drop his opposition to it.

Associated Press