

Kleindienst Law License Is Defended

By Timothy S. Robinson.
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Former Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, continuing his fight to retain his law license, yesterday asked the federal courts here to decide that he should not be disciplined for his guilty plea to a charge of failing to testify accurately and fully at his Senate confirmation hearings.

In legal papers filed in U.S. District Court, attorneys for Kleindienst said that the charge to which he pleaded guilty "indicate no actions of Mr. Kleindienst's part that reflect adversely on his fitness to continue the practice of law."

They describe their client as "a man who has adopted a standard of honorable, honest and ethical conduct for himself that meets, indeed exceeds, what a proper respect for the law and the rules of the organized bar would require."

Kleindienst, who reportedly was facing a possible perjury charge for his testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, pleaded guilty instead to a misdemeanor plea

with the agreement of the Watergate special prosecutor's office. He was given a one-month suspended sentence by U.S. District Judge George L. Hart Jr., whose praise of Kleindienst during that sentencing was quoted by Kleindienst's attorneys in their pleadings yesterday.

Since that time, he has been attempting to keep various disciplinary bodies from ordering him disbarred or suspended from law practice. If he had been convicted of a felony, his disbarment would have been automatic.

The legal papers yesterday again outlined Kleindienst's role in the ITT hearings, in which he failed to tell the committee that the President had at one time ordered him explicitly to drop an appeal of antitrust cases against the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. He testified that the White House had never "pressured" him on ITT

Kleindienst's attorneys, in cases describing their case against disbarment, said that their client's answers to Senate Judiciary Committee members may have been "less than candid."

"Perhaps he should have been more open with the committee, but he surely did not deliberately lie," the attorneys said.