



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Department of Justice filed a civil antitrust suit today to enjoin three Illinois men from holding controlling interests in two banks in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Attorney General John N. Mitchell said the suit was filed in United States District Court in Louisville, Kentucky, against the Owensboro National Bank, M. Jackson Mitchell and Raymond A. Alexander of Mount Vernon, Illinois, and Edward E. Curtis of Texico, Illinois.

The suit said the individuals, who as a group already controlled the majority stock interest in Central Bank and Trust Company of Owensboro, on September 12, 1970, acquired 63 percent of the outstanding stock of Owensboro National Bank.

The suit charged that the defendants combined and conspired to unreasonably restrain and monopolize the commercial banking business in Owensboro, in violation of Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act.

As a result of the defendants' common control of the majority stock interest in the two banks, the suit charged, actual and potential competition between them has been restrained, concentration in commercial

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banking has been increased, and the defendants have achieved a monopoly of commerical banking in the Owensboro area.

Assistant Attorney General Richard W. McLaren, head of the Antitrust Division, said the suit was part of the Justice Department's effort to insure competition in local banking markets.

"As the Supreme Court made clear in its recent Phillipsburg decision, strict rules are applied to the mergers between significant competitors in local banking markets," Mr. McLaren said, "We do not intent to let these rules be circumvented by individual stockholding arrangements which have the same effect upon competition."

The suit asked the Court to order the individuals to divest all of the stock of Owensboro National owned or held by them. It also asked for a permanent injunction enjoining them from acquiring any stock or assets of any commercial bank in the Owensboro area so long as they control any stock in a competing bank.

Pending a final disposition of the case, the suit asked for a preliminary injunction preventing the individuals from any participation in the business operations of Owensboro National.

Owensboro National is the largest commercial bank in the Owensboro area. As of June 30, 1970, it had total assets of \$70,456,878 and total deposits of \$62,969,650.

Central is the second largest commerical bank in the Owensboro area in some categories. As of June 30, 1970, it had total assets of \$36,957,946 and total deposits of \$32,001,731.

Owensboro National and Central combined accounted for about 74.3 percent of the total assets and about 74.8 percent of the total deposits held by the three commerical banks serving the Owensboro area.