



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 1971

The Department of Justice filed a civil antitrust suit today challenging American Building Maintenance Industries' merger with Benton Maintenance Company and its acquisition of the janitorial services business of J. E. Benton Management Corporation.

Attorney General John N. Mitchell said the suit was filed in the United States District Court in Los Angeles, California.

The complaint charged that the merger and acquisition, which occurred on June 30, 1970, violated Section 7 of the Clayton Act by eliminating actual and potential competition between ABMI and the Benton companies in the sale of janitorial services in Southern California and the Los Angeles area and by increasing the level of concentration in those markets.

At the time of the merger and acquisition, the Benton companies were among the largest sellers of janitorial services in the Los Angeles area, according to Richard W. McLaren, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division. ABMI is one of the largest sellers of janitorial services in the United States and the largest such seller in Southern California, he said. ABMI and the Benton companies

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accounted for approximately 10% and 7%, respectively, of the sale of janitorial services in Southern California in 1969.

The complaint asked that the merger and acquisition be declared unlawful and that ABMI be required to divest both Benton Maintenance Company and the janitorial services business of J. E. Benton Management Corporation.

Janitorial services companies such as ABMI provide a broad range of cleaning, repairing, and related types of services, primarily to landlords, managing agents and tenants of commercial, industrial and institutional buildings.

In 1969, ABMI's sales of janitorial services in Southern California were \$10,922,395. The Benton companies sales of such services totalled about \$7,243,000 during the same year.