



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AT

The Department of Justice filed a civil antitrust suit today challenging the acquisition of Masterpiece, Inc. of Blakely, Pennsylvania by American Technical Industries, Inc., of New York, New York.

At the time of the acquisition in July of 1971, ATI was the largest producer and Masterpiece was the seventh largest producer of artificial Christmas trees in the United States.

Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst said that the suit was filed in U.S. District Court in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

The suit alleged that the acquisition is a violation of Section 7 of the Clayton Act.

The complaint alleges that in 1970, prior to the acquisition of Masterpiece, ATI had artificial Christmas tree sales of approximately \$12 million which accounted for approximately 30 percent of the market. In 1970, Masterpiece had artificial Christmas tree sales of approximately \$1.6 million or about 4.2 percent of the market.

The complaint further alleges that the artificial Christmas tree market is highly concentrated, the four largest firms accounting for approximately 67 percent of the market.

OVER

Acting Assistant Attorney General Bruce B. Wilson, in charge of the Antitrust Division, said that the complaint alleged that the acquisition would:

- eliminate competition between ATI and Masterpiece;
- substantially lessen competition generally in the manufacture, import, and sale of artificial Christmas trees;
- entrench ATI in its position of market leader; and
- increase concentration in the manufacture, import, and sale of artificial Christmas trees.

The complaint asks that the acquisition be declared unlawful in violation of Section 7 of the Clayton Act, and that ATI be required to divest itself of all interests in Masterpiece.