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Accuse 2 Top ITT Aides Of Perjury on Chile Acts

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington (News Bureau)—The Justice Department yesterday charged two top officials of International Telephone & Telegraph Corp., Edward J. Gerrity, 54, of Larchmont, N.Y., and Robert Berrellez, 58, of Chatsworth, Calif., with lying to a Senate subcommittee in 1973 about ITT's work with the CIA in Chile.

The two men were charged with six counts of perjury, obstructing government procedures and making false statements in connection with the 1973 investigation by a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee into ITT's activities in the 1970

election in Chile. Gerrity is a senior vice president and former chief lobbyist of the big conglomerate, and Berrellez is southwest regional public relations director and a former corporate official in Latin America.

Geneen Not Named

ITT Chairman Harold S. Geneen, who also had been a target in the justice Department's perjury investigation, was not named in yesterday's action, and the department said in a statement that "no other actions ... are contemplated."

Asked why Geneen, a major force in the formerly close cooperation between ITT and the CIA in Latin America, was not cited, the acting deputy attorney general, Benjamin Civiletti, replied: "The law doesn't depend upon (whether to prosecute) senior or junior officials, it depends upon the evidence."

Civiletti also was asked about the severity of the felony charges placed against Gerrity and Berrellez in light of the Justice Department's action in accepting a bargained "no contest" plea from former CIA Director Richard M. Helms from similar misleading or incorrect testimony before the Senate subcommittee. Helms got only a \$2,000 fine

in that instance, and is now a consultant on Iranian affairs here. He is a former U.S. ambassador to Iran.

In the Helms case, Civiletti said, the bargained plea was accepted because of fear that national security secrets might be disclosed if a trial were held. The two ITT officials did not have the same access to the nation's secrets as Helms, he said.

The action against Gerrity and Berrellez came on the last day that charges could be brought before the five-year statute of limitations expired. Geneen's case was within two weeks of that expiration date.

All three men testified at the Senate subcommittee hearings that ITT had not acted in any substantive way to prevent the election of Marxist Salvador Allende as president of Chile in 1970. Geneen, for example, testified on April 1, 1973, that he had twice offered funds to the U.S. Government to be used against Allende but that the CIA declined.

Funding Revealed

However, in late 1975, it was disclosed that both the CIA and the ITT had funded Allende's election opponents, and that ITT had given at least \$350,000 to support Allende's opponents in the 1970 elections. Allende was killed in a September 1973 coup.

If convicted on all counts, the maximum penalty would be 30 years in prison and \$33,000 in fines for Gerrity and Berrellez. There is little likelihood of any such penalty, however, even upon conviction.