

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 10

THE TRIB
21 March 1978

The U.S.

2 ITT MEN CHARGED WITH SENATE LIES

The Justice Department yesterday charged two top officials of the International Telephone & Telegraph Corp. perjured themselves in testimony to a Senate committee five years ago about company cooperation with the CIA in Chile.

ITT senior vice president Edward Gerrity, 54, and Robert Berrellez, an ITT Latin American official during the early 1970s, were each charged with perjury and obstruction of the investigation by the subcommittee on multinational corporations.

Conviction carries a maximum five-year prison sentence.

The department decided not to prosecute ITT Chairman Harold Geneen, 68, in connection with his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee in 1973.

Attorney General Griffin Bell decided to go ahead with the prosecution of Gerrity and Berrellez despite fears in the intelligence community a perjury trial would disclose national security secrets, by opening the way for defense lawyers to demand classified CIA files.

Gerrity and Berrellez were both also charged with one count of perjury and one count of making false statements in 1974 hearings before the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

Berrellez also was charged with one count of conspiracy to obstruct the proceedings of the Senate subcommittee, while Gerrity faced a separate count of encouraging a fourth ITT official, Harold Hendrix, to testify falsely before the subcommittee.

CIA director Stansfield Turner met with Bell last Thursday to express his concern.

The cases arose from the Senate subcom-

mittee investigation of ITT's possible collaboration with the CIA in a vain attempt to prevent the 1970 election of Marxist Salvador Allende as president of Chile.

The statute of limitation was running out for all three officials.

Geneen and Gerrity denied ITT had given the CIA various amounts ranging up to \$10 million to help block Allende's election which they feared would lead to expropriation of the corporation's \$150 million holdings there.

The Senate passed on the question of perjury charges to the Justice Department in 1975 after disclosures ITT and the CIA had given funds to Allende's opponents.

Harold Hendrix, 54, a former ITT director of public relations in Latin America, pleaded guilty in 1976 to withholding information from the Senate subcommittee on ITT activities, including a \$1 million assistance to the CIA.

A grand jury was dismissed Feb. 2 without returning an indictment against Geneen, Gerrity and Berrellez. All three ITT officials waived their right to a grand jury hearing and so the same charges could be filed through a "criminal information" by prosecutors.

The five year statute of limitations for prosecuting Gerrity expires tomorrow, Berrellez's statute of limitations expires on today and Geneen's expires in two weeks.

Former CIA Director Richard Helms last fall successfully plea-bargained for a misdemeanor charge of failing to testify fully to the Senate about CIA operations in Chile after the intelligence community argued a criminal trial could publicize security secrets.

Helms was given a suspended sentence and a \$10,000 fine.

An ITT spokesman said last night that the company is confident that the two executives will be cleared.