

Around the World

Judge Closes Hearings On Chilean Extradition

SANTIAGO, Chile—The chief justice of Chile's Supreme Court has barred legal counsel from all hearings as he considers the U.S. request for extradition of three Chilean secret police officers charged with the 1976 assassination of Orlando Letelier in Washington.

Attorney Alfredo Etcheberry, representing the U.S. government in the proceedings, said yesterday that he will appeal the ruling barring his presence. It was made late Friday by Supreme Court President Israel Borquez.

Etcheberry said that if the decision is not overturned by a panel of five other Supreme Court justices, he will be unable to cross-examine the accused or any witnesses they call, and will have no chance to clarify evidence submitted with the U.S. request for extradition.

The chief justice's ruling also barred the press from the hearings. Borquez is to keep all testimony secret until he decides whether to extradite the Chileans, probably two or three months from now, reported Washington Post correspondent Charles A. Krause.