

Chilean Official Linked to the CIA

Washington

A secret court session has been told that Hernan Cubillos, Chile's foreign minister, has been a "principal" Central Intelligence Agency operative, the Los Angeles Times learned yesterday.

Patrick M. Wall, defense lawyer for Robert Berrellez, an International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. official, cited the information in a closed court hearing October 23, informed sources said.

Wall considered the subject so sensitive that he turned over his copy of the sealed court record to John T. Kotelly, a Justice Department prosecutor, saying he did not want disclosure blamed on him.

Berrellez has been charged with conspiracy, perjury and obstructing governmental proceedings as a result of testimony he gave in 1973 to a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee investigating ITT-CIA attempts to block the 1970 election of Chilean President Salvador Allende.

Sources said Wall told the court he had seen information on Cubillos' covert role, but did not have physical access to it. The lawyer was seeking government documents to bolster Berrellez' defense that he is being prosecuted for acts he contends he was induced to do by CIA representatives, including Cubillos.

Wall could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Juan Prado, press officer for the Chilean Embassy in Washington, said the information sounded "impossible" to him. "It's the first time in my life I have heard something about Mr. Cubillos and the CIA. For sure, I can say it's a lie."

A CIA spokesman would not comment on the ground the case is still pending.

U.S. District Judge Aubrey Robinson Jr. dismissed the jury in the Berrellez case last month rather than accept the Justice Department's special procedure for protecting sensitive information in the case.

Cubillos had been mentioned in the criminal information that the Justice Department filed against Berrellez, but prosecutors dropped references to him without explanation on the day the trial was to begin.

Cubillos, 42, was named foreign minister last April 20, although his only previous government service had been as a Chilean naval officer.

Before dismissing the Berrellez' jury, Judge Robinson had said of the government's secrecy proposals: "I just sense there is one name that if it pops up could blow . . . I don't know what."

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