

Columnist's Report

ITT Trade Deal With Russia Told

Washington

The International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. has been secretly negotiating a massive trade deal with the Soviet Union, reportedly with the encouragement of the Nixon administration, according to newspaper columnist Victor Zorza who specializes in analysis of Soviet affairs.

ITT officials postponed a second unannounced visit to the Soviet Union last week, Zorza reported in a column published today.

Zorza said that staff investigators of the Senate Judiciary Committee are looking into the possibility that the postponement might be linked in some way with the committee's hearings on ITT and its relations with officials of the Justice Department.

Zorza reported that the first visit of an ITT delegation to Russia took place in December, shortly after then Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans returned from Moscow and talked of dramatic expansion of U.S. - Soviet trade.

"Some Washington officials thought at the time that he was laying the groundwork for Mr. Nixon's summit visit to Moscow, so that the President could come back with an announcement of a huge trade deal that would make all previous trade between the two countries look puny by comparison. This, evidently, is where ITT came in," Zorza wrote.

Zorza said some of the goods and equipment which ITT hoped to sell to the Russians would require an easing of present U.S. embar-

goes on sales of strategic goods to the U.S.S.R. However, Zorza said there was a belief among some officials in Washington that ITT had been told by the administration to proceed with the negotiations on the assumption these restrictions would be eased. Zorza did not identify his sources.

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