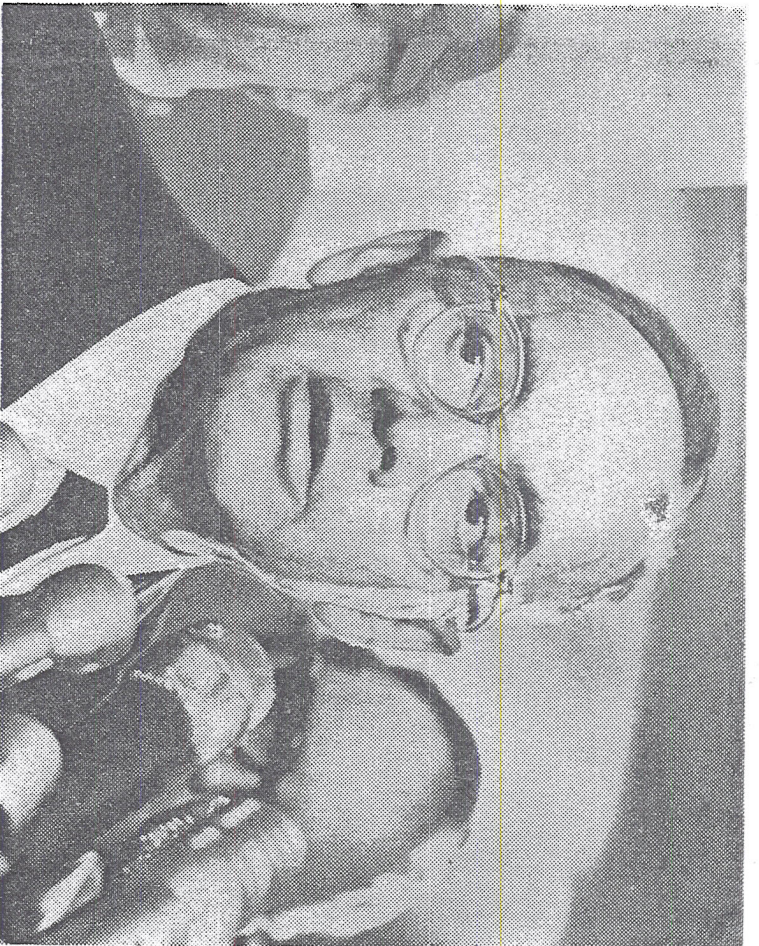


Many former executives call Geneen a 'man-killer'



UPI Telephone

Geneen after testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee

'Hurry-Up Hal'--The Dynamo of ITT

New York

IF YOU WANT to learn what a man is really like, ask an executive who once worked for him. Harold S. Geneen, president and chairman, International Telephone & Telegraph Corp., is called both "the greatest corporation executive of his day" and "a man-killer."

You could interview a score of presidents and numerous vice presidents who used to hold middle management posts at ITT and are now facetiously grouped as

"graduates of Geneen U" and "ex-ITTs." Their former leader is the nation's highest-paid corporate executive. His 1970 salary and bonus totaled \$766,755.

Geneen is scarcely a shadowy figure like Howard Hughes and is far less reclusive than the non-charismatic, non-controversial men at the helm of most giant corporations. ITT, which is Geneen, has been investigated or criticized in recent years by Ralph Nader, the House Judiciary

Department, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

The double-barreled guns of current inquiries by the Senate Judiciary Committee and the SEC place ITT and its mastermind in particularly uncomfortable positions. This embarrassment is perhaps alleviated by moral support extended to the corporation by the White House.

British-born Harold Sydney Geneen, 62, came to this country when he was one year old. He began his career as a Wall Street runner while attending night courses at New York University.

He became a CPA and was on the staff of Lybrand Ross Brothers and Montgomery. Subsequently, he was with American Can Company, Bell and Howell, Jones and Laughlin and Raytheon Manufacturing Company before his appointment as president of ITT in 1959.

"Hurry-Up Hal" took this foreign-oriented communications company and transformed it into one of the principal conglomerates in the world.

Sales have risen in the past ten years from \$811 million to more than \$7 billion. Still, Geneen shies from identifying the 51-year-old ITT as a conglomerate. He prefers such descriptions as "a unified-management multi-product company," "multi-national diversified company" or "management co-operative."

Geneen is 5-feet-10, 180 pounds. He is a pleasant-looking, brusque, fast-thinking, fast-talking man. He lives with his wife in a duplex apartment in Manhattan's East 60s, has homes on Cape Cod and in Key Biscayne, is a devotee of calisthenics, likes fishing, quail hunting, boating and golf. At 62, three years from mandatory retirement, he hasn't slacked off too much from the 18-hours-a-day work schedule he maintained for many years.

More than most big company presidents, Geneen is immersed in the kind of detail often left to staff assistants. He says, "I delegate

but I don't abdicate." He demands the same dedication he gives the job, the same virtual lack of a private life, from his subordinates and pays them well for signing away their independence.

One alumnus, who was unwilling to endanger his marriage — a not infrequent price paid for frenetic job pressure — says of those who stay on at ITT, "He's got them by their limousines."

Geneen takes it as an insult when men leave him for what he has characterized as "meaningless mediocrity." However, when they assume top posts elsewhere, he accepts it as a compliment to ITT.

It couldn't be ascertained how he feels about one alumnus — Robert H. Kenmore, chairman and chief executive officer, Kenton Corp., which controls a number of retail and manufacturing companies, among them FBC Stores (discount chain), Cartier, Mark Cross, Georg Jensen, Ben Kahn, Georges Kaplan, Kenneth Jay Lane and Valentino.

Manhattan-born, UCLA-graduate Kenmore joined

'He's got them by their limousines'

ITT as director of financial planning and acquisitions in 1963 following experience as a securities analyst and portfolio manager. Three years later, he became ITT's youngest vice president.

In 1968, Kenmore and Gardiner S. Dutton, an associate at ITT, resigned to buy control of Family Bargain Centers, nucleus of Kenton Corp. Kenmore is chairman and chief executive officer. Dutton, the "ton" of Kenton, is executive vice-president. The company had 1970 sales of about \$109 million.

Kenmore says, "Hal Geneen has had the greatest influence on my business life. He taught me a tremendous amount, mostly to look for the unshakable fact. Most of us make so many decisions in both our business and private lives based on half

truths. I get an answer to a question and we assume it is correct. However, if we are also asked six other questions, we might finally come up with the unshakable fact.

"Geneen revitalized that concept for anybody who worked for him. As he puts it. 'The highest art of professional management requires the literal ability to smell a real fact from all others — and moreover to have the temerity, intellectual curiosity, guts and/or plain impoliteness, if necessary, to be sure that what you do have is indeed what we will call an unshakable fact.'

"A man would come in with an analysis. Geneen would tear it apart, would suggest something might be done better another way and guide people to better performance. He has an uncanny ability in a business meeting not only to focus on all levels of a problem simultaneously but also to run up and down the scale quickly and see how a decision might affect other levels of the business. I have never seen anyone else who could do this.

"Yet, Geneen is not a dogmatic individual, which is not to say he doesn't have preconceptions. Given the facts that disagree with these preconceptions, he could change his opinion over 180 degrees, if need be.

Kenmore agrees a paragon of business virtues need not be a paragon of personal virtues. "Geneen," he explains, "never really focused on other people as human beings who might have private lives outside the office. He thought others should feel the same way. He asked of others no more than he gave. He could work 18 hours a day, had tremendous physical and metabolic stamina. Apparently, he never got hungry and had perfect bladder control.

"The higher anyone climbs at ITT, the more limited his social life becomes. There's no question in my mind that Geneen is living the kind of life he wants to lead, so he must be a complete man on his own terms. But many other men won't accept life on those terms," he said.

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