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WASHINGTON (AP) — A regulatory-agency chief has disclosed contacts with a White House aide in a dispute with Congress over access to secret files involving a probe of International Telephone & Telegraph Corp.

Under oath at a House subcommittee hearing Thursday, Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman William J. Casey said he consulted with presidential counsel John Dean the day before the SEC decided to send 34 boxes of its ITT papers to the Justice Department instead of making them available to Congress.

Casey's executive assistant, Charles Whitman, describing some of the ITT papers as being "politically sensitive" and relating to "the obstruction of justice," said he gave Casey a summary of the contents. Whitman also said he talked to Dean as part of efforts to find out what other agencies do in such cases.

Before SEC refused to give congressional investigators a chance to examine the ITT papers, Casey said, he checked other agency chairmen about their policy on such matters, and "stopped by and talked to" Dean on Oct. 3. Casey said Dean "confirmed my view" that ITT matters still were being investigated and thus the papers should not be turned over to congressional probers. SEC then decided Oct. 4 to transfer the files to the Justice Department.

Casey insisted he acted properly in the case and said he would not have "resisted a subpoena" to hand over the ITT papers to Congress at the time they were in SEC possession.

Access to the documents had been sought by the House Commerce Committee's special investigations subcommittee, which took 4½ hours of testimony from SEC officials Thursday.

Casey supplied the subcommittee with digests and records to summarize contents of the documents.

Rep. Harley O. Staggers, D-W.Va., chairman of both the subcommittee and its parent panel, charged the records had been "abruptly purged from an agency building and bundled over to the executive branch." Congress is responsible for watching over how agencies conduct the public's business but "this process cannot take place under a cloud of agency secrecy," he said.

Staggers said his panel had received "definite and strong allegations that certain documents in the possession of SEC detailed numerous contacts between ITT and high government officials seeking to obtain preferred treatment for that corporation under the law."

Earlier this year, ITT issues figured in Senate confirmation hearings on Atty. Gen. Richard G. Kleindienst. That controversy centered on an alleged memo by ITT lobbyist Dita D. Beard suggesting settlement of antitrust cases against ITT was linked to a commitment by one of its subsidiaries to help San Diego meet costs of this year's Republican National Convention.

A majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee found no basis for the charge. The GOP eventually held its convention in Miami Beach.

In June, SEC said ITT consented to a permanent injunction blocking further violation of securities law in sale of ITT stock. The injunction alleged the firm and two officers used inside data to sell stock before public disclosure of an antitrust settlement.