

CIA Official Tells of ITT Chile Rôle

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Washington

ITT board chairman Harold Geneen offered to set up a CIA-controlled fund in 1970 to block the election of Salvador Allende as president of Chile, a top CIA official has testified.

The official, William V. Broe, who headed clandestine operations in Latin America for the CIA, said—in testimony made public yesterday—that he rejected the “substantial” offer, made to him by Geneen at a meeting July 16, 1970, in a Washington hotel.

However, according to a transcript of Broe's testimony to a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on Tuesday, the CIA official explored with an ITT vice president two months later the possibility of bringing economic instability to

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Chile. The purpose, he indicated, would be to influence a number of Christian Democratic congressmen not to vote for the Marxist candidate.

The subcommittee chairman, Frank Church (Dem-Idaho) told newsmen that Broe's discussions with ITT's senior vice president Edward Gerrity were with the “knowledge and concurrence” of his superiors at CIA. They included Richard Helms, then the agency's director and now U.S. ambassador to Iran, he said.

The disclosure yesterday of Broe's secret testimony to the subcommittee — the first ever by a CIA official under oath — came on the fifth day of the panel's inquiry into allegations that International Telephone and Telegraph Co. attempted to influence U.S. policy in Chile in order to head off Allende's election.

The company's investments in the Chile Telephone Co. were taken over by the Chilean government in 1971, a year after the Chilean Congress certified Allende's election.

Broe said the meeting with Geneen in a Sheraton-Carlton hotel room had been suggested to Helms by John McCone, who preceded Helms as head of the CIA. McCone is an ITT director.

Asked about the apparent conflict between Broe's account and accounts given by Gerrity and other ITT officials, Church said he would not “pass judgment” on the possibility of perjury until Geneen appears before the subcommittee on Monday.