

# Pro-Arms Unit Was Boosted By Nixon Aide

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A White House aide last month distributed copies of "Operation Alert," a brochure published by the American Security Council, to veterans organizations and other persons on mailing lists of conservative groups.

The brochure states that the United States is "now number two in strategic military power . . . A large coalition of Senators and Congressmen is trying to reduce our strength further." Included in the pamphlet is a "ranking" of members of both houses of Congress on ten national security problems.

The 15-year-old American Security Council is based on Culpeper, Va., and maintains offices here. Its president, John M. Fisher, described the group as a nonprofit, bipartisan research and educational association "concerned solely with national security matters."

The White House aide who circulated the group's brochure is special counsel Charles W. Colson. A memorandum on White House stationery, dated Sept. 17 and attached to the brochure, stated: "The American Security Council has provided us copies of a very interesting analysis, which I thought you might like to have because of your interest in the subject."

The memo, which was signed by Colson, was made public by an antiwar businessman's group, "Task Force for Peace," headed by Los Angeles businessman Harold Willens.

Willens also sent a letter to President Nixon calling on the White House to disown the Colson memo, which Willens

said was an "implied endorsement" of the American Security Council's poll and ratings.

"This is an urgent matter worthy of your personal attention," Willens told the President. "In this time of national crisis you would be doing yourself, your party, and your people a grave disservice by remaining associated with a slick device intended to deceive voters . . ."

Colson said yesterday that he did not "see how President Nixon is either associated or disassociated with my memo," which he said was "just information." Colson, a Washington attorney before joining the White House staff about a year ago, said he forwarded the council's rating brochure to about 30 people in veterans and national security groups. He said it did not imply White House political endorsements.

Colson also charged that Willens was following a "double standard" by objecting to distribution of such material while Willens sends out material which "supports his views." A spokesman for the Willens group said it had

raised about \$50,000 in its drive to solicit funds for antiwar senators.

Willens also filed a brief Friday asking the Federal Communications Commission to rule that "any station accepting spot ads during the last two weeks of an election campaign which employ inflammatory, fraudulent, or libelous claims (or in any way attack a candidate's integrity,

character or patriotism) . . ." must provide advance notice to the target of the attack and afford time for reply under the "fairness doctrine."

Willens said the American Security Council hopes to spend between \$500,000 and \$1 million before election day on advertisements in 200 newspapers and on radio and television. A full-page ad, which appeared in last Tuesday's Washington Star, said in part that "a powerful coalition of members of Congress is trying to reduce our defenses." The ad did not mention legislators by name, but asked readers to write for details and to send contributions.

In a telephone interview, Fisher said there was a "target goal" of similar ads in about 200 newspapers—some the result of regional donations and local newspaper "cooperation." But he said that the council had nowhere near the amount to spend that Willens mentioned.

Fisher said his group raised more than \$430,000 in the last few months from 42,946 donors across the nation who participated in a poll on national security problems. He said the council received 115,599 replies to its poll and that the results were then compared to voting records.

In its rankings, the council applied a scale of zero to 100 per cent devotion to what the group said was the American public's national security goals.

The "key national security votes" selected for the council's "security index" of senators were the 1969 and 1970 Safeguard ABM votes, C-5A transport plane, AMSA bomber, aid for Korea, the Byrd-Griffin amendment to the Cooper-Church amendment and the Cooper-Church amendment itself (to gauge sentiment on Vietnam and Cambodia respectively), ABM deployment, the Subversive Activities Control Board and the McGovern-Hatfield antiwar amendment.

These senators—all up for re-election this year—got zero grades: Republican Charles E. Goodell (N.Y.) and Democrats Philip A. Hart (Mich.), Edward M. Kennedy (Mass.), William Proxmire (Wis.), Harrison A. Williams (N.J.) and Joseph D. Tydings (Md.).