

# Colson Reported Passing A Lie Test on Watergate

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Special to The New York Times

4/8/73

WASHINGTON, April 7— Charles W. Colson, former special counsel to President Nixon, has voluntarily taken a private lie-detector test in New York to buttress his sworn testimony that he had nothing to do with the Watergate raid last summer.

Close friends of Mr. Colson in New York disclosed that Richard O. Arther, president of Scientific Lie Detection, Inc., who is an authority in his field, conducted the test and concluded on Wednesday that Mr. Colson had "truthfully" denied all foreknowledge of the plot.

Mr. Arther and Mr. Colson's personal lawyer, who helped to prepare the examination refused to elaborate on the questions asked and the results. Mr. Colson was unavailable.

Other associates of Mr. Colson who have examined Mr. Arther's report said that Mr. Colson had passed the test on five questions about the Watergate affair.

Link to Break-In Denied

The examination did not deal with the campaign of espionage and disruption that was reportedly directed from the White House against several Democratic Presidential candidates last year.

Mr. Colson's resort to the lie detector, believed to be the first of its kind in the Watergate case, appeared to signal a new eagerness among members of the President's inner circle to document their innocence.

The 41-year-old Mr. Colson has consistently denied all involvement in the break-in at the Democratic party head-

quarters at the Watergate complex last June 17.

It is acknowledged that Mr. Colson hired and supervised E. Howard Hunt Jr., a former officer of the Central Intelligence Agency, in his work as a White House consultant. Yet the Watergate conspiracy, to which Hunt pleaded guilty last January, was a complete surprise, Mr. Colson has insisted.

Ten days ago it was reported

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at James W. McCord Jr., another convicted conspirator, had told Senate investigators that he had gathered the impression from Hunt and others that Mr. Colson had been in on the planning of their raid.

Mr. Colson branded the hearsay charge a "goddamned lie." Referring to a grand jury appearance last summer, a sworn deposition in a civil suit and an interview with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Mr. Colson repeated, "I've testified under oath three times that I had no knowledge of it." But with his name in the headlines again, and with the search for masterminds continuing, he decided last week to clear his name.

He was also concerned, friends say, about the effect of rumors on his law practice. Partners in his New Law firm, Colson & Shapiro, which has hired 10 new lawyers in anticipation of the business that Mr. Colson could attract, also urged him to undergo the test.

New York associates of Mr. Colson who have read the test results say that he was asked to state whether he had any knowledge of the bugging of the Democratic National Com-



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Charles W. Colson

mittee offices before June 17, 1972, when five invaders were captured, with their electronic recording equipment, in the Watergate office building. He was also asked to say whether he had been telling the truth earlier when he denied all involvement.

On these and three other closely related questions, Mr. Arther, the examiner, is reliably understood to have concluded that Mr. Colson was "truthful in all respects."

Gene Sandacz, a vice president of Mr. Arther's company, said today that David I. Shapiro, Mr. Colson's law partner and is legal adviser in this case, had helped to frame the questions in a manner that also relieved Mr. Colson in advance of the wording of the questions.

Independent experts in the use of the polygraph, or lie detector, said today that the preparation of subjects on the content of their examination was standard procedure that helped to heighten the sensitivity of the test.

Mr. Colson, a tough-talking ex-marine, has in the past seemed to take pride in his reputation as President Nixon's "hatchet man." He once said that he would do "anything Richard Nixon asked me to do—period."

## Takes Credit For 'Leak'

He took credit for leaking the report, hinting at conflict of interest, that helped to defeat Senator Joseph D. Tydings, a Maryland Democrat, in 1970. And he was proud last year to have nursed the White House alliance with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the nation's largest union.

The teamsters union endorsed the Republican President last year and recently hired Mr. Colson's law firm as its Washington counsel.

In a famous memo to his staff in the White House, Mr. Colson wrote last August, "I would walk over my grandmother if necessary" to re-elect the President. However, he has vehemently and repeatedly denied that the Watergate break-in was his project.

Mr. Arther, who administered the examination of Mr. Colson, is a busy New York practitioner and one of the country's ranking experts on lie detector tests and their use as legal evidence. Trained 20 years ago by John F. Reid in Chicago, Mr. Arther now runs his own school in New York, the National Training Center of Lie Detection, Inc., and edits The Journal of Polygraph Studies. His offices in Manhattan are at 57 West 77th Street.