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Nixon Aide Allegedly Wrote Ad Backing Haiphong Mining

By John Hanrahan

Washington Post Staff Writer

Charles W. Colson, the former special counsel to President Nixon, was the author of a newspaper ad that purported to be a citizens' group effort in support of the President's decision to mine Haiphong harbor last May, The Washington Post was told yesterday.

Colson, according to one Nixon-election committee source, also attempted to get the committee to publish another ad using a doctored photo designed to make it appear that Democratic presidential candidate Sen. George McGovern was supported by "long-haired freaks" and Vietcong sympathizers.

Phillip Joanou, former executive vice president for the November Group, which handled the committee's advertising, said yesterday in a telephone interview that Colson "initiated the idea and wrote the copy" for the apparently illegal Haiphong ad that appeared last May 17 in The New York Times.

Colson was called for comment yesterday, but did not return the call. A reporter made a second call but Colson's law office said he had left on a trip and could not be reached. Colson previously was implicated in a 1970 political advertising scheme in which a series of ads, denouncing 10 liberal senatorial candidates as "extremists," appeared in newspapers around the country.

Joanou also said he assumed the ad had been cleared by H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff, "because that was the usual procedure. Everything we did was cleared through Haldeman first." However, Joanou said he could not recall specifically if Haldeman had cleared the ad that appeared in The Times.

The Washington Post first reported Wednesday that the Committee for the Re-election of the President, acting chiefly through the November Group, conducted a campaign last May to give a distorted view of the American public's response to the Haiphong mining.

Among the tactics in the campaign was The Times' ad that criticized a Times' editorial opposing the mining.

The General Accounting Office is investigating the ad because the expenditure for it was not reported as required by campaign finance law.

The ad was signed by 10 persons and appeared to represent ordinary citizens' support of the President's controversial decision.

The ad, titled "The People Vs. The New York Times," quoted from four polls that showed public support for the mining. The ad went on to ask: "Who Can You Believe—The New York Times Or The American People?"

Several sources have told The Post that there was nothing spontaneous about the ad and that all the signers were friends or relatives of members of the November Group whose signatures had been solicited for the ad.

Joanou had previously told The Post that the ad was paid for by 44 \$100 bills that were sent from the Nixon committee in Washington to New York. Advertising officials at The Times said the ad had been paid for by a check from SFM Media Services, a New York ad agency.

Ann Carver, the SFM merchandise manager, said yesterday that the agency had placed the ad, but that she did not know who brought the ad to the agency. The official who handled the ad did not return a call to The Post.

Joanou acknowledged yesterday that the person named as "coordinator" on the ad—Patricia O'Leary—was the wife of Stephen O'Leary, a November Group official who wrote copy for other advertisements placed by the group.

He said this was done because when O'Leary took the ad to The Times, the paper said it would not print it unless someone's address were listed on it. So, he said, O'Leary called him

and I said, 'put down your wife's name.'"

Joanou insisted that everyone whose name appeared on the ad intended to pay her or his share of the cost of the ad.

"That's why we didn't put the money we paid out for the ads in our books," Joanou said.

One of the signers of the ad, Rabbi Abraham Gross, yesterday disputed Joanou's contention that the signers had agreed to pay for the ad.

Rabbi Gross, president of the Rabbinical Alliance of America in New York, said in a telephone interview that he had been told by a re-election committee representative that he would not have to pay for the ad.

"I've never paid anything and I've never been billed anything for it," Rabbi Gross said. He said he could not recall who had asked him for permission to let his name be used in the ad. He said he "agreed with what they said, and I said I would sign it."

The November Group obtained its name, campaign officials said, because of its goal: Re-elect the President in November.

According to Joanou, the hierarchy of the November Group was like this: Jeb Stuart Magruder, as deputy campaign chief at the re-election committee, was Joanou's immediate boss. Everything that the November Group produced, both in Washington and New York, was cleared by Joanou and Magruder and was then sent for approval to Haldeman, himself a former advertising executive.

For The New York Times ad, though, Joanou said, the idea came directly from Colson. Joanou said Magruder approached him about the ad "and I went over to see Colson about canceling the deal, but Colson said we should go ahead with it."

During the campaign, Joanou said, Colson "came up with a lot of bad ideas which we always ignored or rejected," but he said he did not recall any proposal to use a doctored photo of McGovern with Vietnam veterans.

Another November Group aide said that Colson "pushed hard" to get the doctored photo into newspaper ads. The source said an artist had sketched in long

hair on the veterans and drew in a small Vietcong flag on one of their shirts "to make them look like a bunch of freaks."

A November Group official, Elizabeth Johansen, yesterday gave further details of the re-election committee's plan to drum up telegram support for the President on the Haiphong mining.

Miss Johansen, administrative assistant to Joanou, said that all of the committee's 300 employees were told to stay on the job that day and make calls across the country to friends to ask them to watch the President's speech. After the speech, she said, the employees were told to call the same people back and ask them what they thought of the speech.

"If they told us they thought it was a terrible speech, we just thanked them and cut off the conversation," she said. "If the responses were positive, we suggested that they send telegrams to the President and members of Congress expressing their support for the President's action."

She said that committee members also urged people who were favorable to the President's decision to tell other friends who were favorable to send telegrams, also.

Another former Nixon campaign worker in California, Larry Carroll, said in a telephone interview yesterday that many of the telegrams expressing support for the President's decision were paid for out of re-election committee funds.

Carroll, now a newsman at KABC-TV, Los Angeles, said he observed campaign employees calling friends, acquaintances and other campaign workers asking for permission to use their names on telegrams. In many cases, he said, when people could not be reached by phone, telegrams were sent out under their names anyway.

Carroll served for almost four months as a radio liaison man at California re-election committee headquarters in Los Angeles. He said he did not know how much money was spent for phony or solicited telegrams, but that one worker told him she spent \$216 herself the night of the President's speech.