

Former Nixon Aide Enters Guilty Plea

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Charles W. Colson, saying he wants to tell the full Watergate story, pleaded guilty Monday to obstructing justice. In return, he won agreement that he will no longer be prosecuted for the Watergate cover-up or plumbers' cases.

The former special counsel to President Nixon said he hadn't been able to testify fully because he was under indictment in the two cases.

"To have fought the two in-

dictments might well have resulted in my eventual exoneration," he said. "As a defendant, I would have been necessarily concerned with protecting my position in the trials. That would have limited my ability to tell everything I know about the Watergate and Watergate-related matters."

Colson pleaded guilty to a newly drawn charge: that in 1971 he concocted and carried out a scheme to "defame and destroy the public image and

credibility" of Daniel Ellsberg and his attorney, then nearing trial in the Pentagon Papers case.

The 42-year-old Colson, a lawyer who now faces disbarment, will be sentenced June 21 by U.S. District Judge Gerhard A. Gesell. The maximum penalty on the felony charge is five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

Dismissal of three previously-leveled charges, which could have brought a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and \$20,000 in fines, is just a formality awaiting separate court proceedings.

Colson was one of five defendants in the White House plumbers case, each charged with conspiring to violate the rights of Dr. Lewis Fielding, Ellsberg's psychiatrist, in the break-in of Fielding's office. The remaining four, including former presidential aide John D. Ehrlichman, are tentatively scheduled for trial June 17.

Colson also was one of seven defendants in the Watergate

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(Continued From Page A-1) cover-up trial, set for Sept. 9, where he faced prosecution for obstructing justice and conspiring to obstruct.

Special prosecutor Leon Jaworski told Colson's lawyer in a letter that the plea will "dispose of all potential charges against your client which might otherwise arise out of those matters which are or have been under active investigation.

Once one of President Nixon's closest advisers, Colson is in a position to provide extensive information on a number of cases: the cover-up, the Ellsberg burglary case, the ITT matters and the milk fund contributions.

Jaworski's letter of "understandings" spelled out that Colson would now agree to testify under oath, produce all relevant documents and be a prosecution witness against others.

"My plea acknowledges that I endeavored to disseminate derogatory information about Dr. Ellsberg and his attorney at a time when he was under indictment by the same government of which I was an officer," Colson said in a statement after the plea.

The charge does not spell out which of Ellsberg's attorneys was the target of the search for dirt. Sources said it probably was Leonard Boudin, who was in Washington Monday but not reached for comment.