

Colson, Hunt - filed Cover-Up, W.H. 6/20/73

Lyndon's NYTimes 6/8/73 Colson Says Dean Urged Hunt to Flee the Country is in many ways fascinating, probably fairly dishonest, and gives an interesting self-portrait as it does insight into the frame-up(s).

From this I'd say Colson is not as sharp as he is reputed to be or is out to get GL as well as Ehrlichman. For several weeks I've had a feeling that the first of the top dogs to be heaved from the troika will be Ehrlichman. Colson has said what makes it impossible to believe that GL didn't know from the very first, meaning not later than two days after the arrests. Nobody would have dared order Hunt to flee the country on his own. Colson goes out of his way to pin it on Ehrlichman through Dean. Or, he is out for both at the least. How can he justify not telling GL after he exploded?

He appears to forget that as of the time he gives Hunt was still a WH employee. He can't help but know his office was still taking messages for Hunt later than that. Two reporters told me, separately.

He now says that in early January 1973 he had reason to suspect WH involvement in the cover-up. This is contrary to what he said in his Press Club facing of Mollenhoff. He then proceeds to list three things that he says in retrospect only should have made him suspicious. When he knew Hunt worked for WH, he needed no more. But if he felt he did, the first of these should have been enough. He said he told Magruder to watch the Hunt-Liddy operation closely. Mrs. Hunt's October, hysterical call about hush money also should have sent him circling the oval office.

He appears to be making an effort to address himself self-protectively to what he has every reason to believe Dean will reproduce, Colson's memo on his Hunt relationship and Colson's tape of his conversation with Hunt by phone at the least for he enumerates them.

It now seems that all these WH guys had their phones rigged for taping. All the top ones now seem to acknowledge making tapes.

There have been later indications of many splits inside the top WH echelon. Several point to Ehrlichman as an intended victim, with Dean. They have to have someone on whom to pin responsibility for what Dean can produce and since he was under Ehrlichman and the choice is Haldeman (perhaps Colson also), Ehrlichman had to show his loyalty and dedication to GL and all he stands for. Whether or not he wants to. I think this is now clear.

What Colson seems not to have considered is that in all of his new expositions he has to account for his not going to the prosecutors in person with his hindsight. I think his failure to do this would, were he not of the party in power, be enough to get him indicted. There is less excuse for a lawyer not doing this than for a mere mortal. The lawyer is the agent of the court and he knows the law, so Colson has only his duty to GL to use as defense.