

# Colson or Aide Seen Directing Protest Attack

By John Hanrahan  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Charles W. Colson or his administrative aide at the White House last year requested that something be done to counter an antiwar rally scheduled outside the Capitol, according to private testimony given to Senate investigators.

Other sources involved in the Watergate investigation said it was Colson, rather than an aide, W. Richard Howard, who requested Jeb Stuart Magruder to arrange for counter-demonstrators to disrupt the rally on May 4, 1972, outside the Capitol where FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's body was lying in state. Magruder was then deputy director of the Nixon re-election campaign.

Both Colson, who was special counsel to the President, and Howard denied the allegations through spokesmen. Colson left the White House in March to return to private law practice. Howard is employed by the Office of Management and Budget.

Colson yesterday denied knowledge of plans to disrupt an antiwar rally.

The rally was infiltrated by a group headed by Watergate conspirator Bernard Barker, who has said he was acting at the request of E. Howard Hunt Jr. Hunt is the former CIA agent and White House consultant who pleaded guilty in the Watergate bugging.

Hunt was recruited for his job as a White House consultant by Colson in 1971 and, at least for a time, worked directly for Colson, according to sworn statements of Hunt and Colson.

Other counter-demonstrators have previously told The Washington Post that

the group physically attacked demonstrators and that Barker ordered the group to "get" Daniel Ellsberg and radical lawyer William Kunstler, both of whom addressed the rally.

Ellsberg then was under indictment in the Pentagon Papers case and his psychiatrist's office previously had been broken into by Barker and two others upon Hunt's instructions, according to Hunt and Barker.

In private testimony to Senate Watergate investigators, Robert Reisner, former executive assistant to the campaign director at the Nixon re-election committee, said that Colson or Howard requested Magruder last May to "see what could be done about a counter-demonstration at the time of Hoover's funeral."

Magruder then passed on the request to G. Gordon Liddy, since convicted as a Watergate conspirator, Reisner told investigators.

Reisner was quoted by Senate sources as saying that the re-election committee had a "petty cash fund for the hiring of demonstrators during the campaign," including the counter-demonstration about the time of the Hoover funeral.

One source said Reisner's testimony involved much speculation, but that Reisner was absolutely certain that Colson or Howard had initiated the counter-demonstration plan. Other sources said it was Colson, not the aide, who initiated the idea.

Reisner, reached by The Post, said he could not talk because "I'm in the position of trying to cooperate with the committee, so I don't think it would be appropriate for me to comment."

Reisner reportedly will testify publicly next week before the select committee.

An anti-Castro Cuban ac-

tivist, Pablo Fernandez, last week told The Post that he and nine other anti-Castroites came from Miami to Washington to disrupt the antiwar demonstration last May 4 by means of physical violence.

Fernandez and three others in the group told The Post that the organizer of the trip to Washington appeared to have been Barker, who later pleaded guilty in the Watergate conspiracy. Each of the counter-demonstrators had his air fare, hotel bills and other expenses paid by Barker, in addition to being given \$100 apiece in cash, Fernandez said.

Barker, in his testimony last week to the Senate select committee on the Watergate, told of organizing the counter-demonstration upon Hunt's order.

Barker made no mention of Colson or Magruder during

his testimony. He said Hunt had told him the counter-demonstration involved national security, just as Hunt also told him that the Watergate break-ins and bugging and a break-in at the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist in 1971 also involved national security.

His law partner, David Shapiro, responded yesterday to two of a reporter's many calls to Colson's office and relayed the contents in this story to Colson.

Shapiro then said that Colson denied knowledge of any plan to disrupt an antiwar rally. Shapiro said Colson was busy with legal work and could not respond personally to a reporter's questions.

It was later learned that Colson spent three hours yesterday with federal prosecutors who are investigating the Watergate case. Shapiro described the session as "part of our continuing cooperation with the investigation." He would not elaborate.

As early as last summer, federal investigators told The Post that Colson directed an extensive "dirty tricks" operation of political sabotage against Democratic candidates during the 1972 presidential campaign. As the investigation has proceeded, Colson's name has periodically been linked with the Watergate probe and related matters.

He has repeatedly denied any advance knowledge of the bugging.

Recent news stories concerning Colson have stated that:

• Two officials of the Nixon re-election campaign

told federal prosecutors that Colson knew of the Watergate bugging plans and urged that the illegal electronic surveillance be expedited, according to executive branch sources.

• Phillip Joanou, former executive vice president of the November Group, which handled the Nixon campaign advertising, told The Post that Colson "initiated the idea and wrote the copy" for a newspaper ad that purported to be a citizens' group effort in support of Mr. Nixon's decision to mine Haiphong Harbor in May, 1972.

• Other November Group sources told The Post that Colson also proposed that a photo be doctored to make it appear that Democratic presidential candidate Sen. George McGovern was meeting with a group of strange looking, Vietcong sympathizers. Sources said the photo was doctored, but was never publicly released.

• Watergate conspirator Hunt, in grand jury testimony made public in the Ellsberg case three weeks ago, said he discussed with Colson the fabrication of State Department cables designed to implicate the late President Kennedy in the 1963 assassination of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem. I Hunt testified he showed the phony cables to Colson and that "he seemed to like them..."

• Colson, and two of his law partners made plans in April of this year to place a lawyer in a key position in the Securities and Exchange Commission to assist the law firm in representing its clients, according to an internal law firm memorandum.