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Report of Plan to Leak Ellsberg File

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Despite assertions by President Nixon and some of his top aides that Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatric records were sought only to assist a "national security" investigation, key figures in the White House intended to leak the confidential material to the press to discredit Ellsberg and damage his image, according to sources familiar with the operation.

John D. Ehrlichman, Mr. Nixon's former chief domestic adviser, told the Senate Watergate committee last week that he had approved two years ago a "covert" attempt to obtain Ellsberg's psychiatric history for a psychiatric "profile" of Ellsberg, a former Defense Department and Rand Corp. official, to help determine what his motives had been for releasing Pentagon papers, whether he had acted along or as part of a group, and what he might do next.

However, a memorandum written to Ehrlichman on August 26, 1971, and initialed by him shows that some in the White House hoped to use data gathered by what was labeled "Hunt-Liddy project number I" to create a "negative press image" for Ellsberg by leaking the information to the press

through the House Armed Services Committee.

Senate sources and others confirmed that the "Hunt-Liddy project number I" mentioned by David Young, the author of the renaissance to the Ellsberg break-in a week later.

Young wrote that the "situation being attacked" was "too big to be undermined by planted leaks among the friendly press," and he suggested that "if there is to be any damaging of Ellsberg's image and those associated with him, it will therefore be necessary to fold in the press planting with the congressional investigation."

The conduit for the confidential information on Ellsberg was to have been Charles W. Colson, at the time a special counsel to President Nixon, according to the Young memorandum.

A source close to Colson confirmed that "Colson was supposed to leak" the Ellsberg information to the press. *Washington Post*