

Weicker Asks Testimony on Colson Action

By Lawrence Meyer
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The Senate select Watergate committee may recall former special presidential counsel Charles W. Colson at the request of Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.) to clear up what the senator called a "controversy" over whether Colson is providing information to some members of the committee.

Colson, who refused to answer questions under oath when the committee called him to testify in closed session last September, has since responded to inquiries from the committee vice chairman, Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), and minority counsel Fred Thompson.

Baker has said in a letter to another committee member that "Colson is not cooperating with me or the committee in the investigation."

A column by Jack Anderson



CHARLES W. COLSON
... center of controversy

March 13 triggered an inquiry from Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), to Baker about whether Colson had been "cooperating" with Baker. Anderson had written that Colson and Baker had "collaborated" to shift the blame for the Watergate scandals to the Central Intelligence Agency.

A spokesman for Baker acknowledged yesterday that Baker and Colson had been in contact but he said the issue was one of "semantics."

Baker, who has been conducting an investigation to determine if the Central Intelligence Agency was involved in the Watergate affair, responded on March 26 that Colson "is not cooperating" although Baker said he had talked to Colson "one time at my request."

The staff, as you know, has interviewed him otherwise and will provide you whatever information you request," Baker said.

Thompson said Wednesday that he has talked to Colson "several" times since Sept. 19, including one or two times in Colson's office. In addition, Thompson said, the two have exchanged telephone calls. Although Thompson declined to discuss the substance of his conversations with Colson, he said that the subject matter was "totally" concerned with the CIA. Thompson said that when he met with Colson at his office no other member of the committee staff was with him.

Weicker wrote chief committee counsel Samuel Dash yesterday requesting that Colson be "directed to appear before the full committee" so that "the controversy of subsequent contacts (after Sept. 19) be resolved immediately."

The spokesman said that Baker, in his letter to Inouye, had in mind Anderson's statement that Colson and Baker had "collaborated." Baker admits being in contact with Colson, the spokesman said. "In essence, that's what we're saying—that there has been contact but there's no collaborating going on."

Colson has been indicted twice: in connection with the Watergate cover-up and for alleged participation in the Ellsberg break-in.