

Colson Says CIA Planted Stories

Washington

Former presidential adviser Charles W. Colson charged yesterday that the Central Intelligence Agency planted derogatory stories about him in the press to divert attention from one of its cover agencies under scrutiny by Watergate investigators.

Colson, under indictment in both the Watergate cover-up and White House Plumbers cases, cited stories allegedly stemming from the CIA as typical of the "flood of publicity" about the scandal that makes a fair trial impossible anywhere in the U.S.

Asking that his indictments be dismissed, Colson submitted 39 bound volumes containing more than 5000 newspaper and magazine clippings to U.S. District Court seeking to prove his point. His co-defendants in both cases endorsed his brief.

Colson's lawyers said much of this adverse publicity was the fault of deliberate news leaks by government agencies.

"The most outrageous instance of government misconduct occurred when the CIA planted adverse publicity about defendant Colson in order to divert attention from Mullen Co., a CIA cover agency which employed Howard Hunt after his 'retirement' from the CIA," the brief said.

Mullen is a public relations firm with offices a block from the White House that has been reported in the past to be a CIA cover. Hunt worked there as a writer — and parttime White House consultant under Colson — from 1971 until a few days after the June 17, 1972, arrests when his name was linked to the case. He later pleaded guilty in the bugging plot.

United Press