

Colson Says Ehrlichman Sought Aid for Plumbers

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Charles W. Colson, the former White House special counsel who will go to prison Monday for obstruction of justice, testified today that John D. Ehrlichman asked him to raise \$5,000 for the White House "plumbers" unit a few days before the break-in at the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist.

Mr. Colson was the last of the major prosecution witnesses in the case, in which Mr. Ehrlichman, the former White House adviser on domestic matters, and three others are charged with having conspired to violate the civil rights of Dr. Lewis Fielding by burglarizing his Los Angeles office for files on Dr. Ellsberg.

In addition, Mr. Ehrlichman is charged with four counts of having made false statements.

Mr. Colson, 42 years old, wearing a tie clasp with the Presidential seal across his striped tie, also testified that it had been "the President's desire and Dr. Kissinger's desire and the desire of others to get out whatever was available" concerning Dr. Ellsberg in the summer of 1971.

Kissinger to Testify

Mr. Kissinger, then the chief White House foreign policy and now Secretary of State, has denied knowledge of the so-called plumbers' unit set up by the White House to investigate security leaks and the Pentagon papers. He will be called as a witness when the defense presents its case.

The prosecution, which rushed through four minor witnesses after Mr. Colson's testimony was completed this afternoon, expects to complete its presentation Friday morning. Mr. Ehrlichman is also scheduled to take the stand, and the defense expects to have written interrogatories from President Nixon as well.

Mr. Colson was asked who had requested that information damaging to Dr. Ellsberg be obtained and disseminated.

"Specifically, in this instance, the President," he replied.

He went on to say that both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kissinger had wanted to "get out" anything available "that would bear on Dr. Ellsberg's motives, what had been done, those with whom he might have been acting, an effort to counter his public views he was expressing."

Mr. Colson said that he had also had discussions with Mr. Ehrlichman about "the desire to get information out publicly about Dr. Ellsberg." Mr. Colson, who was also charged with conspiracy in the original indictment, pleaded guilty last month to trying to obstruct Dr. Ellsberg's trial over the release of the secret Pentagon papers about United States involvement in Southeast Asia and was given a one-to-three-year sentence.

Laughter in the Court

Mr. Colson sent a ripple of laughter through the courtroom when he described his occupation as "at the moment . . . unemployed." He said that his role as the plumbers' financier began when David R. Young Jr., a co-director of the unit, made a reference to "needing funds for an operation."

"I simply said I would talk to Mr. Ehrlichman about it," Mr. Colson said.

In late August, he said, he received a telephone call from Mr. Ehrlichman. "Mr. Ehrlichman said that Mr. Krogh needed \$5,000 and could I obtain it," he said.

Egil Krogh Jr., whose cross-examination was completed at the start of today's proceedings, headed the plumbers with Mr. Young.

Mr. Ehrlichman, Mr. Colson said, stressed that the money was needed "right away" and told him to "check with Bob Haldeman—Bob has a fund that we can draw on for this." H. R. Haldeman was then President Nixon's chief of staff.

Mr. Haldeman was evidently unable to provide the needed \$5,000, for Mr. Colson said that he called "an individual in Washington who I believed might have money that might be advanced." The "individual" was later identified as Joseph D. Baroody, a public-affairs consultant in Washington. Mr. Baroody, testified later in the day.

Mr. Baroody, who Mr. Colson said had raised funds for the White House on previous occasions, came to Mr. Colson's office with \$5,000 in cash in an envelope the next day and ultimately delivered the money to Mr. Krogh. He was repaid, Mr. Colson said, in cash raised by soliciting a contribution from milk producers to a Washington political committee headed by George Webster.

Break-In Financed

It was this money that was used to finance the break-in Sept. 3, 1971, at Dr. Fielding's office by the small group that included G. Gordon Liddy, Bernard L. Barker and Eugenio R. Martinez, the other defendants in this trial.

Mr. Ehrlichman has maintained that he was not aware that the "covert operation" he authorized was, in fact, the breaking and entering of Dr. Fielding's office. Mr. Colson, under cross-examination, said that he and Mr. Ehrlichman had not discussed the nature of the project for which the money was needed.

Some time after the break-in,

he said, he had a discussion with Mr. Ehrlichman about it, in which he quoted Mr. Ehrlichman as saying "The boys tried to get Dr. Ellsberg's psychiatric records but they failed, they didn't get any."

None of the prosecution's witnesses thus far has been able to establish their central point—that Mr. Ehrlichman knew of the break-in before it took place.

Mr. Krogh, in the morning's cross-examination, was asked if, during a discussion with Mr. Ehrlichman, he told him "that you were going to enter or that the unit was going to enter Dr. Fielding's office."

Mr. Krogh replied, "No, sir."

Shortly afterward, Mr. Krogh was asked by William H. Merrill, who heads the prosecution team, why he had not been specific about the planned operation when he got Mr. Ehrlichman's final approval in a telephone call at the end of August. Mr. Ehrlichman was on Cape Cod.

"It was an open telephone line," he said, adding that he had tried to convey that the plan was feasible "without specifying what would take place."

Teams Used

In response to Mr. Merrill's next question, he said, "I don't recall using the term 'entry' or 'enter.' However, we used the terms 'operation,' 'effort,' 'covert,' which embraced what took place."

He said that the term "special project number 1," as the operation was called, had "a larger significance" than just the forced entry into the doctor's office "but did include the entry."

Mr. Baroody, who testified for seven minutes following Mr. Colson, corroborated Mr. Colson's account of the \$5,000 loan. He said that Mr. Colson had not described the purpose for which he had an "immediate need" of the money.

Mr. Baroody was followed by Gen. Robert E. Cushman Jr., the Commandant of the Marine Corps, whose testimony was largely a repetition of his previous statements about the role of the Central Intelligence Agency in furnishing E. Howard Hunt, another member of the plumbers, with false identification, a wig and other technical assistance. General Cushman was the deputy director of the C.I.A. from May, 1969, to January, 1972.

General Cushman related having received a phone call from Mr. Ehrlichman in July, 1971, asking him to give Mr. Hunt "carte blanche." Mr. Hunt, he was told by Mr. Ehrlichman, was working on "security problems."

F.B.I. Agent Testifies

The next witness was Charles A. Regan, an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for 15 years, who was questioned about his two interviews of Mr. Ehrlichman, in April and May, 1973. Mr. Ehrlichman is charged with having made "false, fictitious and fraudulent statements" to the F.B.I. agents, who questioned him about the Fielding break-in and whether any information had been obtained.

Earl J. Silbert, the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, testified about having obtained from Mr. Young the Aug. 11 memorandum in which Mr. Ehrlichman approved a "covert operation if under your assurance that it is not traceable."

The jurors, who are sequestered in a junior college in northwest Washington, will be allowed visits tomorrow from their families to celebrate Independence Day. But Judge Gerhard A. Gesell, who wished them a pleasant holiday and had earlier recommended that they be allowed to have a picnic, cautioned them not to discuss the case with anyone.