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Ford's Advice to Colson on Pardon

Washington

President Ford's lawyer has told imprisoned Watergate figure Charles W. Colson to take his petition for a pardon first to the Justice Department, not to the White House.

Reversing a previous statement, the White House press office said yesterday that presidential counsel Philip W. Buchen sent Colson's request back to his attorney, Charles H. Morin, with a suggestion that he communicate "directly with the department."

Deputy White House Press Secretary John W. Hushen had said Thursday that the request was referred by Buchen to the pardon attorney at the Justice Department.

(26 SEP)
"The earlier incorrect statement was caused by a

misunderstanding in the press office," said the statement Hushen issued yesterday.

Justice's Pardon Attorney Lawrence M. Traylor said earlier in the day that Colson probably would be a good candidate for a presidential pardon but that his request could not be considered for years unless Attorney General William B. Saxbe waives certain pardon regulations.

Even with such a waiver, Traylor added, it could take up to a year to process the pardon. Colson, serving a one- to three year sentence for obstructing justice, will be eligible for parole next summer. He was convicted in June for spreading defamatory information about Pentagon papers figure Daniel Ellsberg.

Associated Press