



Charles W. Colson

... "Maybe it gives you an advantage."

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The Wonderful

It's Connections That

N.Y. Times News Service

Washington — At a dinner party here not long ago, an old hand in the capital's legal circles was talking about a fellow lawyer who tells clients he has connections at the White House.

"The truth is the guy's never been inside the place," he continued. "But the customers like the idea, and he takes home a bundle every year."

That, of course, is definitely not the kind of perfidious gimmickry Charles W. Coison, a genuine White House insider, will either practice or require in his brand-new role as a Washington lawyer — but it is precisely the kind of image-building that characterizes the arena he has entered.

From the Capitol dome to the Pentagon basement, this city's most precious commodity is influence, and even the appearance of it can be worth its weight in six-figure retainers.

Seldom Appear in Court

It is a world where the most successful lawyers seldom, if ever, appear in court.

It is a world populated by lawyers whose connections often in greater demand than his legal abilities.

World of D.C. Lawyers

Count; Former Nixon Aide Wins New Clients Fast

It is a world populated by lawyers whose connections are their stock in trade and by teeming-with-affluence clients who believe that is how things are best done in Washington.

Colson, 41-year-old former Bostonian, who served as Mr. Nixon's special counsel from 1969 until just a few days ago, is not the first former White House lawyer to enter private practice here, nor is he even the first of the Nixon-lawyers to hang up his shingle.

But Colson is the first bona fide member of the President's inner circle to make the move and, as such, he has come to occupy a fairly special niche.

He is, for example, a deeply committed, instantly identifiable, high-visibility Nixonian Republican set against a power-landscape — the Congress, the federal bureaucracy and the legal establishment itself — that is predominantly Democratic and sometimes downright hostile to the President.

Nevertheless, Colson is already doing quite well.

One prominent Washington lawyer estimates that in his first year with his new firm, Colson should expect to earn between \$300,000 to \$400,000.

Not long after he announced late last year that he would soon be leaving the President's staff for a partnership at Morin, Dickstein, Shapiro & Galligan, the Teamsters Union announced that it would drop Williams, Con-

nally & Califano as its counsel and take its large business and chunky retainer over to Colson's chosen firm.

The firm has a total of 19 lawyers with offices in Washington, Boston and New York City. And with its newest member, its name has been changed to Colson & Shapiro.

"I guess you could say I'm the new 'front' man," Colson conceded, adding that he believes that his White House experience "made me a better lawyer" and "maybe, just maybe, it gives you an advantage."

The Capital Prototype

But Colson added, "I want to do everything I can to avoid the Clark Clifford syndrome." He referred to the man who has become the silver-haired, smooth-tongued prototype of the Washington lawyer.

Others who have made similar transitions take the same tack.

Thomas Corcoran, the venerable product of Franklin Roosevelt's White House, avoids the word "influence" and prefers instead, "entree."

And Clifford, who emerged from the Truman Administration to build a practice that several informed sources estimate brings in \$1-million a year, says: I tell clients that I don't have any influence. I don't know what it means, but whatever it means, I don't have it. What I do have is merely a record of associations."