

Quinn 4/21/73 PM
'Rescued' From Hippies

\$100 million, he will control some 7,000 employees.

More importantly, however, he will supervise the Census Bureau and other vital statistical units. Critics fear the White House may have put him there purposely so he can tamper with figures to make the Nixon economy look rosy.

Failor, in a long talk with us, denied he took part in any Watergate-style activities as a member of the Attack Group. As Failor explained it: "We only wanted to show the [Democrats] were doing bad things, also, so people would say, 'A plague on both your houses!'"

Footnote: Others Colson swore were in the Attack Group include White House speech writer Pat Buchanan, and White House communications official Ken Clawson. Most of the group were White House aides, all on government pay at the time they plotted to undo McGovern.

Rabbit—Once more the government has put a rabbit in charge of the lettuce patch. This time it's almost literally true: an insurance official who spent his life fighting federal crop insurance has been slipped in to head the federal farm insurance agency.

The Federal Crop Insurance Corp., was set up in the dust bowl days to insure farmers against losses from dust, fire, hail and other disasters. Currently operating in the black,

the little agency is a boon to farmers in more than 1,400 counties.

But the FCIC has been constantly harassed by two powerful insurance industry lobbies, which go by the names: National Crop Insurance Council and Hail Insurance Adjustment and Research Association.

The founding father of the larger National Crop Insurance Council and ex-president of the hail insurance trade group is a hard-line fighter against federal farm insurance named Melvin Peterson, a former executive of the Fireman's Fund American Insurance Companies.

We have copies of his virulent prose as far back as 1966 seeking destruction of some of the federal farm agency programs. In 1971, he was a leader in an effort to cripple the agency and turn the cream of its business over to private insurers.

Now, to the surprise of farmers, Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz has named the scourge of the federal crop insurance agency as its new boss. Peterson urged us to wait until he had gotten well into his job before we wrote about him and the agency. We declined on the grounds that if we waited, there might not be any agency to write about.