

Hunt, While Aiding Colson, Directed Julie's U.S. Film

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E. Howard Hunt Jr., novelist, espionage agent and public relations man, served as project director for a \$500,000 Office of Education contract at the same time that he worked as a \$100 a day consultant to White House counsel Charles W. Colson, the aide who handles sensitive political problems for President Nixon.

Hunt's boss at the public relations firm of Robert R. Mullen and Co., which received the education contract, says Hunt was not paid by the firm on days that he worked on White House business for Colson.

In fact, says Robert F. Bennett, the son of Utah Republican Sen. Wallace Bennett, Hunt's real relationship

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served as a help for the Office of Education project, which was designed to produce radio, television and newspaper publicity to aid handicapped children.

The most recent product of the project, known as "Closer Look," is a 30-second film of Julie Nixon Eisenhower speaking in behalf of education for handicapped children.

Bennett, who says he satisfied his own reservations that the film might be seen as a free political document in a campaign year, adds that Hunt was instrumental in getting the President's daughter to appear in the film.

"We couldn't have gotten Julie to do it if Howard hadn't been a White House consultant. We thought it was quite a coup," Bennett said yesterday in an interview.

The film has not yet been accepted by "Closer Look," and Bennett said he thought he might withdraw it as an offering. A spokesman for the Office of Education said the film arrived there in a package from New York on Wednesday. The film package was entitled "Campaign '72 Closer Look."

Hunt, a 53-year-old ex-CIA agent, dropped from sight when it was disclosed that his name appeared in the address books of two men arrested inside the Democratic National Committee early last Saturday.

Bennett said he was called long distance by Hunt on Wednesday night and that Hunt said he would not return home in the near future.

Hunt was quoted as saying he

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wished to avoid having his family bothered by newsmen, but, Bennett said, he refused to give his employer any explanation for his leaving town or any indication as to whether he was linked to the Watergate Hotel incident, in which the suspects were found with bugging devices at the Democratic headquarters.

In an earlier conversation Hunt told Bennett, "I was nowhere near" the Watergate last Friday night.

All of this has turned into an extreme embarrassment for Bennett, the president of the Mullen public relations firm. Although Bennett insists that his firm does not take political clients, he admits that both he and Robert Mullen have long connections to the Republican party, and both of them do GOP campaign work on their own time.

Kept Own Time Sheets

So Hunt's reticence to talk with either the press or his employers about the case has posed a problem for Bennett, who says he suspended Hunt.

According to Bennett, once Hunt was recommended by Hunt's friend, Colson, for part-time work at the White House at a \$100-a-day job declassifying secret documents, the Mullen firm changed Hunt's salary from \$24,000 a year to \$125 a day, and paid him only when he

did not work at the White House.

The records of just when Hunt worked at the Mullen firm were not available, Bennett said, because Hunt kept his own time sheets.

And Hunt's pay checks wouldn't be much of an indication, because, Bennett said, he didn't miss that many days. He appeared to do most of his White House work on weekends.

The White House did not immediately return a reporter's call on how Julie Eisenhower had become involved in the Closer Look firm project.

Reason Offered

Bennett said the firm sought Julie Eisenhower because "she was the most prominent teacher we could find," and the film concerns educating the handicapped.

"In the public mind she's a schoolteacher," Bennett said. Julie broke her foot and was able to teach only two days at a school in Jacksonville, Fla., during the school year. She worked as an unpaid volunteer helping slow readers.

The Mullen firm first got the education contract in June 1969, Bennett said, and the income to the firm from it amounted to slightly over \$100,000 a year. He said the contract was a sensitive matter because loss of it could mean the end of his firm.

The contract has been the subject of a past audit by the Government Accounting Office, and apparently a second one is under way.

Awarded On Bids

It was awarded on bids in 1969, but the Division of Contracts and Grants, which supervises the bidding on contracts, did not supervise this one. A spokesman said that under the law, a bid proposal procedure on the contract should have been drawn by the contracts division.

"Closer Look" has involved other public figures, specif-

cally actor Paul Newman, to endorse the goals of helping handicapped children.

Its purpose, according to Bennett, is to encourage those with handicapped children to shed their embarrassment and reject any suggestion of social stigma attached to the children.

Bennett said the Office of Education is spending large amounts of public money to set up programs to help these children, and "Closer Look" is an attempt to spread the word of opportunities available to such children.

In another development, it was learned that although Hunt and Robert Salisbury Dietrich are the same person, they somehow have widely differing "biographies" in two major reference books.

Dietrich is one of three pseudonyms used by Hunt in writing 42 novels, according to Hunt's biography in "Who's Who." Dietrich's biography is carried in a guide called "Contemporary Authors."

Despite the fact the two names belong to one person, the biographies report that

Dietrich is 10 years younger than Hunt. Dietrich was born in Washington; Hunt was born in Hamburg, N.Y. Hunt graduated from Brown University in 1940; Dietrich from George Washington in 1950.

Hunt served with the naval reserve and Army air corps in World War II, receiving Naval commendations; Dietrich fought in Korea and received a bronze star. Hunt serves as a government consultant, Dietrich has a private tax consulting business.

Authors usually supply their own information for biographical reference books by filling out forms. But Hunt's listing in two other books have brought him to more immediate prominence.

The 1963 edition of "Contemporary Authors" lists Dietrich's name, along with a parenthetical reference to another Hunt pseudonym, Gordon Davis. Hunt also wrote under the name John Baxter.