

Op-Ed article by Charles Colson,
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Letters to the Editor

Another View of the Nixon Record

To the Editor:

What is especially disturbing about President Nixon's special counsel Charles Colson's Jan. 30 Op-Ed article, "The Georgetown Blacking Factory," is not the importance of the charges it makes—for they are as absurd as those Mr. Colson claims were made by his "adversaries"—but the care with which he sought to set the record straight on a matter of colossal unimportance, except for propaganda purposes. President Nixon has gathered around him a large group of P. R. men to "get the record straight" who can only be described as amateur Josef Goebbelses.

Mr. Colson attempts to show that there is a "left-wing" conspiracy to tell nasty lies about Henry Kissinger's relationship with Richard Nixon. It is made up of Dan Rather who has "twenty million faithful followers," the "Georgetown cocktail circuit," Joseph Kraft of The Washington Post, George McGovern, John Osborne of The New Republic, Newsweek and Time magazines, Clark Clifford, Tom Braden, and Senator McGovern's other "fuzzy-headed friends."

It is difficult to tell whether Mr. Colson's mental impairments are congenital or feigned. On thing is "perfectly clear," however, and that is that no one in his right mind would either equate political opposition and news reporting from other perspectives as a conspiracy or as calculated to sabotage the peace talks.

Mr. Colson complains that the media have created a "myth" and "erroneous

[sic] impressions" about a split in the Nixon-Kissinger relationship which they have "elevated to gospel," which is "holy writ to the sellout brigades." Mr. Colson's excessive concern with creating the right impressions about the Administration of King Richard the Last is too much to take silently. He equates reporting of unfavorable stories with "a gleeful feeling" that "the peace talks would fail." He thus, as always in this authoritarian Administration of secrecy, "protective reactions," "incursions," impounded funds and paid history-fabricators, makes opposition and reportorial disagreement ("those who wished the worst for America's course in Indochina") tantamount to treason by reason of giving aid and comfort to "the enemy."

Second, he regards the media as tools of Administration policy at home and abroad and is quick to take them to task for not telling the Administration's version of The Truth. Third is a belief that we must maintain the consistency and continuity of history even if it is made up of lies, because if people know the truth about the Indochina "war," the Government will lose its needed support.

This last antidemocratic belief is a reason for the lack of admission of a break with the goals of the Johnson Administration in Indochina and of the attempt to suppress publication of the Pentagon Papers.

One might suggest that if Mr. Colson is interested in dispelling an important myth it should be the one that

"peace with honor" was sought or has been achieved.

What that phrase means is difficult to understand. It seems to be a catch phrase for deceiving oneself that one has not lost a war one has failed to win. If, on the other hand, "honor" means worthy of respect and dignity, one can hardly conclude that that word has anything to do with the incineration of countless men, women and children who "wished the worst for America's course in Indochina."

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New York, Jan. 31, 1973