

Meany Demands a 'Vigorous' Inquiry

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WASHINGTON, May 8—George Meany, president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., describing the Nixon Administration as "steeped in scandal and twisted by privilege," called today for a "vigorous and impartial investigation" of the Watergate conspiracy.

He said it should be conducted by an "outside commission" of citizens completely unconnected with the Government.

At a news conference, Mr. Meany read a statement approved by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor and Council of Industrial Organizations asserting that "we are not satisfied that anything like the full truth has been put forth or that the cover-up is over."

"The sooner we get a full airing of this bizarre and sickening chapter in the history of dirty politics, the better for the Administration and for the

American people," the statement declared.

Mr. Meany said in response to a question that the Watergate disclosures, combined with what he said were the Government's economic failures, "has caused many Americans, including workers, to lose confidence" in the Nixon Administration.

Mr. Meany said that he was one of those who had lost confidence.

At least one union prerepresented on the Executive Council, the Communications Workers of America, has called within the last week for an investigation of "whether or not President Nixon's resignation or impeachment should be sought."

Mr. Meany said that this demand was discussed at today's council meeting, but he declined to answer any questions about the Watergate issue beyond reading the statement.

Colson Is Accused

However, Mr. Meany did accuse Charles W. Colson, until recently special counsel to President Nixon, of sending 40 "operatives" to the federation's convention in November, 1971, to "contrive a confrontation between the President and the A.F.L.-C.I.O." (19 NOV NIXAD)

Mr. Meany suggested that the agents were dispatched by Mr. Colson to act as agents provocateur to provoke convention delegates into insulting the President in order to create a political issue.

"When we did not insult the President, he just put his gang on the phone or call all the radio stations and newspaper offices around the country to tell them that they did," Mr. Meany asserted.

The labor leader brought up Mr. Colson's name in connection with another event tainted with the suspicion of political sabotage.

He told of a telephone call to his secretary from someone purporting to be the campaign manager for the Democratic Presidential nominee, Senator George McGovern, Gary Hart, demanding, in arrogant terms, a meeting with Mr. Meany.

Mr. Hart subsequently denied he had ever made or authorized such a phone call. But the incident was one of many that

exacerbated the breach between the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the Democratic party last year.

When asked if similar calls had been received, Mr. Meany said no, and then he added, "You think Chuck Colson made that phone call?"

He went on to say that he did not know Mr. Colson but that "I know he tried to cut my throat." When asked how, Mr. Meany related the account of the 48 political operatives and said he had a transcript of a White House telephone memorandum in which aides of Mr. Colson discussed plans for making the federation look bad as a result of Mr. Nixon's appearance at the convention.

Later today Mr. Colson issued a statement saying: "Mr. Meany's charge with respect to my role in his 1971 convention is untrue. The President was accompanied to the best of my knowledge by the normal advance personnel and Secret Service personnel who travel with him when he attends any public events. There was present at the convention with the Presidential party one man from my office. The events that took place at the convention speak for themselves."

Mr. Colson recently left the White House and is practicing law with the firm of Colson & Shapiro.

The Executive Council statement said: "Corruption is no stranger to American politics. But what makes this case particularly outrageous is that the object was not the satisfaction of personal greed so much as the large-scale subversion of the Democratic political process."

The statement went on to say that "the Watergate scandal not only damages the Presidency in the midst of a Presidential redesigning of our foreign relations; it also comes amid increasingly aggressive assertions of executive powers over our domestic affairs by means of economic controls, impoundments, vetoes and the like."

"The American people cannot help but wonder whether such extraordinary powers can be wielded wisely, and for the common good, by an Administration so steeped in scandal and twisted by privilege," it declared.