

A Report of Hunt Visit to Dita Beard

Washington

Former White House aide Charles W. Colson said yesterday he sent Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt to Denver three years ago to talk with lobbyist Dita Beard about a memo that linked a \$400,000 contribution to the Republican party and the ITT antitrust settlement.

Hunt reportedly made the trip in early 1970, while he worked for the White House, using a disguise and an alias. *

Colson, testifying before the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce investigating subcommittee, said he did not know whether Hunt used a disguise. But he said Hunt told him he intended to make the trip under an alias.

Colson, who served as White House counsel until early this year, said it was "critical" for the White House to determine whether the memo allegedly written by Mrs. Beard was "authentic or a forgery." She later claimed the document was a forgery.

The memo alleged that a government antitrust suit against International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. (ITT) was settled out of court in exchange for a \$400,000 contribution to help finance the 1972 GOP convention.

"We had reason to believe it was a forgery," Colson said. He noted the memo was critical to Senate confirmation of Attorney General designate Richard Kleindienst, who had been linked to the ITT settlement.

Colson said he received a memo from Hunt on March 10, 1970, asking that he be allowed to go to see Mrs. Beard — who was then convalescing in a Denver hospital from a heart attack — "to determine the memorandum's authenticity."

"I called him in and told him to go ahead and interview Mrs. Beard," Colson said.

Colson, now a senior partner in a Washington law firm, was called before the subcommittee to discuss another memo written to him by a law partner earlier this year urging him to put political pressure on the Securities and Exchange Commission. He testified that he ignored the suggestion.

The memo, written by Charles H. Morin, suggested pressure be brought on J. Bradford Cook, then SEC chairman, to name Morin's choice as chief counsel to the SEC. Morin's choice, King Mallory, later was passed over and another man was named to the post.

United Press

* " ... in March, 1972 ... Mr. Colson dispatched
Hunt, disguised by a red wig and heavy make-up,
to the Denver hospital room of Dita Beard.
Shortly after Hunt's visit, Mrs. Beard denounced
the memo as a fraud."

NYTimes 11 May 73, ^{p. 20} Christopher Lydon,
"Colson Ends Bogus-Cable Denial."