

# How Dean Tried to Link Colson

## Washington

Charles W. Colson, a former White House aide who remains close to President Nixon, was singled out by John W. Dean III yesterday as a specialist in intrigue deeply involved in the Watergate scandal.

The Senate testimony of Dean dramatized the wide gulf between him and Colson, a Washington lawyer who in recent weeks has taken the lead in defending the President and seeking to discredit Dean.

Colson resigned as a special counsel to the President in March after four years on the White House staff.

## PROMINENCE

Dean mentioned Colson's name dozens of times as he read through a 245-page statement prepared for his first day's appearance before the Senate Watergate committee.

Dean presented no direct evidence to implicate Colson in planning of the Watergate break-in, but he said he thought Colson "protested too much" in trying to disassociate himself from E. Howard Hunt.

Colson had hired Hunt, later convicted in the Watergate break-in, as a White House consultant in 1971. The break-in at Democratic national headquarters took place June 17, 1972.

"I had always suspected, but never been able to completely substantiate my sus-

picion, that Colson was far more knowledgeable than he protested," Dean said.

## COVERUP

Dean also sought to link Colson to the Watergate coverup.

He said a lawyer involved in the case told him that Colson spoke by telephone over the weekend of the break-in, June 17-18, and that Hunt had suggested someone clean out his White House safe.

He said Colson subsequently urged that the contents of the safe be removed.

Among the contents of the safe were memoranda between Colson and Hunt, including one concerning a bogus cable Hunt fabricated to implicate the Kennedy administration in the murder of South Vietnam President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963, Dean said.

## CLEMENCY

Dean said Colson brought up the subject of executive

clemency for Hunt at a White House meeting, saying that it was imperative that it be granted.

Dean said that the President once expressed annoyance because Colson had personally discussed with Mr. Nixon the question of executive clemency for Hunt.

Dean said the President told him he had instructed another former White House aide, John D. Ehrlichman, to tell Colson not to discuss the subject with Mr. Nixon.

## McGOVERN

Dean singled out Colson as the White House aide most interested in intelligence information about Senator George McGovern and said that, in at least one instance, Colson leaked unfavorable information about the Democratic presidential candidate to the press.

He also said that Colson once suggested firebombing of the Brookings Institute, a prestigious Washington think tank, as a cover for a

burglary aimed at obtaining documents.

Colson could not be reached for comment yesterday. Colson has repeatedly denied involvement in Watergate, the coverup or any political espionage.

Associated Press