

He Sent Hunt to Do It

Colson Admits Kennedy Probe

Washington

Former White House special counsel Charles W. Colson conceded yesterday that he had authorized convicted Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt to probe the private life of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem-Mass.).

But in testimony before a House Armed Services subcommittee, Colson denied accusations linking him to a series of political dirty tricks.

Colson appeared behind closed doors, but afterward he and subcommittee chairman Lucien E. Nedzi (Dem-Mich.) gave newsmen a general outline of his testimony. It followed by one day an appearance by Hunt in which he linked Colson to both the Kennedy probe and the falsifying of State Department documents.

DISGUISE

Nedzi said Colson denied he was aware that Hunt used Central Intelligence Agency equipment to disguise himself before traveling to Providence, R.I., to ask Clifton DeMotte if he knew any scandalous materials about Senator Kennedy.

In 1960, DeMotte was public relations director of the Yachtsman Motor Inn in Hyannisport, where the late President John F. Kennedy had his campaign headquarters.

Asked why he had authorized the interview, Colson replied, "If someone offers you information on a prospective opponent, if you turn him down you are either very naive or don't stay in politics very long."

MISSION

Nedzi said Colson also denied ever asking the CIA to aid Hunt in his mission. According to Nedzi, Colson testified he asked former presidential adviser John D. Ehrlichman to contact the CIA's then deputy director, General Robert H. Cushman, and Ehrlichman said he had already made the call.

Cushman has testified before the subcommittee that he received a call from Ehrlichman requesting CIA assistance, but Ehrlichman has stated he doesn't remember ever making such a call.

Nedzi said Colson denied having told Hunt to alter State Department cables so as to implicate falsely the Kennedy administration in the assassination of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem. Nedzi quoted Colson as saying he was not aware of the cables' contents.

ENEMIES

In his testimony to the House subcommittee, Colson also denied any involvement in drawing up the list of political enemies described by Dean in his Senate Watergate testimony. Colson said his assistant, the late George Bell, kept a list of administration supporters and opponents but only for purposes of issuing White House invitations. Colson said he strongly resented Dean's charges.

Standing beside Nedzi, Colson further denied ever attempting to leak false stories about Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Rep.-Conn.) during his 1972 campaign for the Senate, as Weicker had accused him of doing.

Associated Press