

# Watergate Panel to Hear Buchanan, a Nixon Writer

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 18—The Senate Watergate committee decided today to call Patrick J. Buchanan, a White House speech writer and political strategist, as one of its

first witnesses when public hearings begin next week.

Mr. Buchanan, who holds the title special consultant to President Nixon, has not been mentioned prominently in the past in connection with the investigation of the Watergate burglary and other related scandals.

But, according to committee officials, the panel has obtained a series of memorandums Mr. Buchanan wrote at the outset of the 1972 election campaign that suggested political espionage and sabotage against Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine and other candidates for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

### 'Set the Tone'

The documents did not specify particular actions to be taken against the Democratic candidates, an investigator said, but rather "set the tone" for various "dirty tricks" that were subsequently performed.

Mr. Buchanan, who has worked for Mr. Nixon since 1966, said today that he had written many memorandums that suggested "broad strategy" and "political attacks" against Democratic candidates but had proposed nothing that could be characterized as a "dirty trick."

After meeting in closed session for more than an hour today, the committee announced that Mr. Buchanan would probably be the fourth witness after public hearings begin next Monday.

He is to be preceded by E. Howard Hunt Jr., who has admitted a role in the Watergate burglary at the Democratic National Committee headquarters and the break-in at the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's

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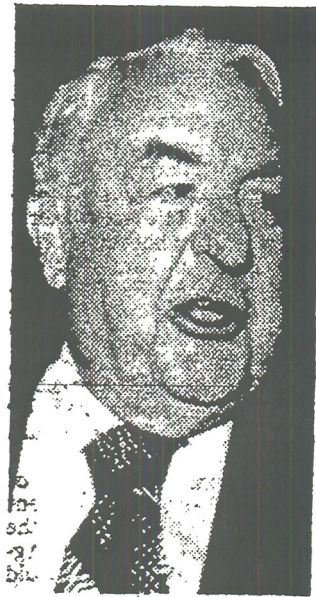
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former psychiatrist; John J. Caulfield, who is alleged to have conducted a spying operation for the Nixon campaign, and John Ragan, who has admitted to investigators that he placed a wiretap on the telephone of Joseph Kraft, the newspaper columnist.

The committee also agreed today to interview Charles W. Colson, former special counsel to the President, in a private session tomorrow before deciding whether to call him to testify in public.

"The purpose is to find out whether he knows anything he is willing to testify to," Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, the committee chairman, said after today's meeting.

Mr. Colson, who was a key



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Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. after an executive session of the Watergate committee yesterday.

political adviser to Mr. Nixon during his first term, was originally scheduled to be the first witness when the hearings resumed. But, last week, Mr. Colson's lawyer, David I. Shapiro, reportedly told the committee that Mr. Colson was a "target" of a Federal grand jury investigation and would prefer not to testify.

The committee staff took Mr. Shapiro's statement to mean that Mr. Colson would assert his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination and refuse to testify. One purpose of tomorrow's meeting is to determine if such is the case.

### Few Data Reported Given

Committee investigators who have interviewed Mr. Colson have reported to the Senators that he has provided them with little significant information.

One staff member said today that the odds were "20 to 1 that Colson will never testify in public."

Committee investigators were said to be far from finished with their exploration into the political sabotage and campaign finance phases of the committee's inquiry.

Staff members said, therefore, that they had no clear picture of how the public hearings would proceed after the first four witnesses. Senator Ervin did say, however, that Donald H. Segretti, who has acknowledged playing tricks on Democratic candidates, would definitely be called to testify.

The first four witnesses were described by the Senator as a "transition list" between the investigation of the Watergate burglary and its cover-up and the inquiry into campaign sabotage.

### Hunt's Role in Break-Ins

Hunt pleaded guilty last January to having participated in the burglary in the Watergate complex here in June, 1972, and he has told a Federal grand jury that he helped plan the September, 1971, burglary of the office of Dr. Lewis Fielding, who had once been Dr. Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

Yesterday, however, Hunt asked the Federal District Court here to set aside his guilty plea and allow him to plead not guilty and stand trial.

Hunt had been questioned about a dozen times by committee investigators, but several staff members said that they felt he was holding back information. Hunt recently hired a new lawyer, Sidney S. Sachs, and the committee was reported to be hopeful that Mr. Sachs would encourage Hunt to be more cooperative.

Chief Judge John J. Sirica has told Hunt that his final sentence for the Watergate burglary would depend in part on how well he cooperated with the Senate committee.

Mr. Caulfield testified in public hearings last May, acknowledging that he had met with James W. McCord, a convicted Watergate conspirator, and had held out an offer of executive clemency in return for a guilty plea from McCord.

The committee did not question Mr. Caulfield then in detail about his alleged wiretapping activities, announcing that he would be recalled later.

John W. Dean 3d, former White House Counsel, told the committee that Mr. Caulfield had tapped the telephone of

Mr. Kraft, ordered an audit of another newsman's income tax returns and participated in surveillance of the activities of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, the Massachusetts Democrat.

Mr. Ragan, a former agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who is now a private investigator living on Long Island, has acknowledged to investigators that he too participated in tapping Mr. Kraft's home telephone. Two separate sources said that Mr. Ragan, reputedly a wiretapping expert, had also helped install the tap

on the telephone of the President's brother, F. Donald Nixon, but that allegation could not be further confirmed.

[The Associated Press reported that Mr. Ragan, reached at home Tuesday, denied tapping Mr. Kraft's phone and also Mr. Nixon's brother's.]

Five persons who had been on the original list of witnesses to be called have been removed from the list, Senator Ervin said.

They are William O. Bittman, Paul L. O'Brien, Kenneth Wells

Parkinson, Egil Krogh Jr. and David R. Young. Mr. Bittman, Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Parkinson and lawyers who have figured in various testimony the committee has already heard. Mr. Krogh and Mr. Young were in charge of the White House special investigating unit, known as the plumbers, and are now under indictment for the Ellsberg burglary.

**Cox Dubious on Nixon Link**  
WASHINGTON, Sept. 18 (UPI)—There is "no reasonable basis for inferring" that Presi-

dent Nixon's Watergate tapes will show that Mr. Nixon approved the bugging of Democratic headquarters, the special Watergate prosecutor, Archibald Cox, said today.

But the Senate Watergate committee, which, like Mr. Cox, is seeking to obtain the Presidential tape recordings, said its need was greater than his because the committee was focusing on Mr. Nixon's "own possible criminality."

Mr. Cox and the committee filed briefs in United States District Court on their separate

suits to obtain nine tapes of White House conversations believed to pertain to the Watergate case.

Mr. Cox, in a brief opposing the appeal of convicted Watergate bugging conspirator, James W. McCord, disputed McCord's allegations that the tapes "probably" contain information to clear McCord of his crimes.

"There has been no testimony in any forum by any witness indicating that the President discussed the Watergate break-in in his offices prior to June 17, 1972," Mr. Cox said.