

Segretti Is Linked to Calls To White House in Spring

NYTimes By STEVEN V. ROBERTS OCT 18 1972
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LOS ANGELES, Oct. 17—Donald H. Segretti, the man identified in news reports as a key figure in a campaign to sabotage Democratic political activities, has been linked to a number of telephone calls made last spring to the White House and to the home and office of a man indicted in the Watergate bugging incident.

Some of the calls were made from his home telephone and others were charged to his credit card.

The New York Times has learned that at least 28 calls were made to the White House; to the home of Dwight L. Chapin, a close aide to President Nixon, and to the home and office of E. Howard Hunt Jr. Mr. Hunt, a former White House consultant, has been indicted in connection with the break-in June 17 at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee at the Watergate complex in Washington.

News reports have alleged that Mr. Chapin and Mr. Hunt served as Washington contacts for Mr. Segretti, a 31-year-old lawyer who several persons have said tried to recruit them for political espionage.

Mr. Segretti denied the initial

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reports concerning his involvement in an espionage campaign but could not be reached for comment on the new information.

Spokesmen for the White House and the Committee for the Re-election of the President have denounced the press for printing articles based on what they call "hearsay" and "innuendo," but they have neither denied nor rebutted the material that has been published.

Mr. Chapin and Mr. Hunt could not be reached today. Ronald L. Ziegler, President Nixon's press secretary, said that he had "no knowledge" of the calls to the White House and "no idea" why they had been made.

The Times has learned that at least six calls were made to the White House from Mr. Segretti's phone or were billed to his credit card—one in April and five in June, the last on June 23. In late March, an unlisted number in suburban Maryland was called. A woman who answered that phone today confirmed that it was Mr. Chapin's home.

Two Calls to Home

On at least 19 occasions from March to June, the unlisted number of Mr. Hunt's office at Robert R. Mullen & Company, a Washington public relations firm, was called from the Segretti phone or were billed to him. Two calls were placed in that period to Mr. Hunt's home in Rockville, Md.

It was not known who participated in any of the telephone calls.

The calls to Mr. Hunt's home and office stopped shortly before June 17, the night five men were arrested in the offices of the Democratic National Committee at the Watergate complex. Mr. Hunt was not among those arrested that night, but he was immediately dismissed by the Mullen concern, for which he worked as a writer. He was later indicted for conspiracy in the case.

Mr. Hunt worked as a consultant to the White House in 1971 and 1972 mainly on domestic affairs. The White House has contended that he last worked there on March 29; some sources say he worked through June. At least two of the calls from the Segretti home to Mr. Hunt's phones were placed before March 29.

The Times has not been able to learn about any phone calls made from Mr. Segretti's phone before mid-March.

Last week, the Washington Post first named Mr. Segretti as an important operative in what it described as a broad campaign conducted by President Nixon's re-election committee

to disrupt and harass Democratic candidates.

At least eight persons around the country have told The New York Times and other newspapers that they were approached by Mr. Segretti and asked to perform undercover work of various kinds. Most of them said they were not sure whom Mr. Segretti was working for, but several have said that he told them he was working for President Nixon's campaign.

This week, Time magazine reported that Mr. Segretti had been paid more than \$35,000 for his work. According to the magazine, Justice Department files show that the money originated with the Committee for the Re-election of the President and was funneled to Mr. Segretti through Herbert W. Kalmbach, a California lawyer who has often represented President Nixon in his private affairs.

According to various accounts, Mr. Segretti's work included such activities as obtaining secret information about Democratic campaigns, planting false stories about rival candidates, distributing bogus literature, and generally fomenting trouble and discord among contenders for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

Classmates in College

Mr. Chapin and Mr. Segretti were college classmates at the University of Southern California in the class of 1963. While there, they joined in a campaign to overthrow the political powers on campus. Mr. Chapin also worked for Mr. Nixon's unsuccessful campaign for Governor of California in 1962 and apparently recruited Mr. Segretti to work in that campaign with him.

Mr. Chapin has served President Nixon as a personal aide and appointments secretary since the Administration took office. Lately he has concentrated on political activities.

Mr. Hunt had a colorful career as an agent of the Central Intelligence Agency and as an author of mystery novels before he went to work for the Mullen firm and the White House. Washington sources have identified Mr. Hunt as a prime organizer of the Bay of Pigs invasion against Fidel Castro's regime in Cuba.

After graduating from law school in 1967, Mr. Segretti spent four years as a captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, including a year in Vietnam. He left the service in September, 1971, and has lived in Los Angeles since then.