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Former Nixon Aide On Sudden Leave

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Egil Krogh Jr., under secretary of transportation and a former White House aide, yesterday took sudden leave from his job after Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar prodded him to explain publicly his role at the time of the alleged burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office.

Krogh was named by John D. Ehrlichman this week as a participant in a White House-ordered investigation of Ellsberg, who is on trial in Los Angeles in connection with the disclosure of the Pentagon Papers.

Krogh's departure came as President Nixon took steps to strengthen his administration in the wake of the Watergate disclosures by asking Vice President Spiro T. Agnew to assume new duties in the domestic field.

Amid reports that Mr. Nixon would not name specific replacements for former aides Ehrlichman and H.R. Haldeman, press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said that the President had discussed a number of staff



EGIL (BUD) KROGH
... gone

plans but had made no decisions.

The Vice President will become vice chairman of the Domestic Council, of which Mr. Nixon is chairman, a member of the Quadriad, the top economic advisory group to the President, and more active in supervising the carrying out of domestic policy, it was announced.

Mr. Nixon spent a busy day conferring with West
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German Chancellor Willy Brandt, meeting with the Quadriad and with members of the Labor-Management Advisory Committee, but again he worked to repair the damage of the Watergate disclosures.

In addition to his "biting" criticism of Percy (R-Ill.) for demanding the appointment of a special Watergate prosecutor, as reported in yesterday's Washington Post, the President told a Cabinet meeting that Percy would never become President "if I have anything to say about it."

Press secretary Ziegler said that the President was upset because Percy's action implied lack of confidence in Attorney General-designate Elliot L. Richardson, whom the President put in overall charge of the investigation. The President also reportedly told the Cabinet that Percy's move was motivated by presidential ambitions.

Krogh, one of the former White House aides placed in strategic positions in the departments to see that Mr. Nixon's orders are carried out, was an assistant to Ehrlichman when the latter directed G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt Jr. to investigate Ellsberg in connection with the publication of the Pentagon Papers.

Krogh was head of the so-called "plumbers" at the White House, who included Liddy and Hunt. They were charged with suppressing leaks of official papers.

Federal investigators said this week that Ehrlichman told the FBI last week that he was informed after the event that Liddy and Hunt broke into the office of a psychiatrist Ellsberg had consulted.

David Young, a National Security Council staff member who also worked with the "plumbers," resigned a few weeks ago with no announcement or explanation.

Ziegler refused to say whether the President knew, at the time he expressed great confidence in Ehrlichman Monday night, of Ehrlichman's statement to the FBI last week that he had been told of the break-in of the psychiatrist's office. There is evidence, however, that Mr. Nixon did know of the statement.

Ehrlichman's account was not specific about the role Krogh played or whether he also knew of the break-in.

A Transportation Department spokesman said that Brinegar felt he had to take some action and that the "status quo wasn't acceptable."

"He had no information on which to base a request for a resignation," the spokesman said, but he did tell Krogh to speak publicly about his role.

However, Krogh asked for a few days of leave, which Brinegar granted. Krogh was not in his office yesterday and attempts to reach him were unsuccessful.

One source said that Krogh, was "obviously shaken" by the Ehrlichman

statement to the FBI as made public in federal court in Los Angeles where Ellsberg is on trial.

Yesterday, in another FBI report to the court, Ehrlichman was quoted as saying that he had had no contact with the Ellsberg investigation for more than a year and that Krogh and Young handled the matter.

An FBI report also quoted Haldeman as saying he had never heard of the White House investigation of Ellsberg.

When asked about Mr. Nixon's annoyance over FBI agents guarding the offices and papers of Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Counsel John W. Dean III, Ziegler said the President's irritation was over the stationing of guards outside the offices.

All the files of the three former aides have now been placed in a central location in the White House, Ziegler said, and FBI agents guarding them are in that office. The FBI has supervision over access to these files, Ziegler said.

Haldeman and Ehrlichman are continuing to wind up their affairs and clean out their offices, Ziegler said, but they have not met the President or conducted official business since their resignations were announced Monday. Ziegler said he did not know when they would vacate their offices.

A White House official who declined to be identified said that if investigators believe there is specific information in the files relevant to the investigation they would have access to the papers in question.

But because the files contain presidential papers, they are not generally available to the FBI to search at random, the official said.

In discussing those allegedly involved in the Watergate case, Ziegler said Tuesday in answer to a question that the President has not consulted Herbert W. Kalmbach, once his personal attorney, in some months.