

CHAPIN CONVICTED OF LYING TO JURY ON SEGRETTI LINK

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A 10-Year Sentence Possible
for Former Aide to Nixon,
but He Plans Appeal

JURY IS OUT 11½ HOURS

The Watergate Prosecutor
Wins First Case—White
House Bars Comment
NYTimes

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WASHINGTON, April 5 —

Dwight L. Chapin, President Nixon's former appointments secretary, was found guilty today on two accounts of lying to a Watergate grand jury.

The Watergate special prosecutor's office thus won the first case it brought to trial.

Mr. Chapin, who worked for four years in an office adjacent to the President's, was convicted of making two false statements to a grand jury last April about his relationship with Donald H. Segretti.

Mr. Segretti pleaded guilty to distributing bogus campaign literature about Democratic Presidential candidates and served more than four months of a six-month prison sentence.

10-Year Term Possible

Judge Gerhard A. Gesell of the United States District Court here said that Mr. Chapin would be sentenced on May 16. He faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine, but the actual sentence is expected to be considerably less severe.

He said that he would appeal the verdict.

Mr. Chapin was convicted of lying to the grand jury in the following two exchanges:

Q. To your knowledge, did Mr. Segretti ever distribute any statement of any kind or any campaign literature of any kind? A. Not that I am familiar with.

Q. Did you ever express any interest to him or give him any directions or instructions with respect to any single or particular candidate? A. Not that I recall.

The jury acquitted Mr. Chapin on one other count and

part of another, and Judge Gesell dismissed one count before it went to the jury.

11½-Hour Deliberation

The jury deliberated for 11½ hours before returning a verdict.

Mr. Chapin took the witness stand in his own defense Wednesday and contended that he had told the literal truth in his exchanges with the grand jury.

He said that he had not known that Mr. Segretti had personally distributed any of the literature and that, while he had given Mr. Segretti general instructions, he had not told him to concentrate on any specific candidate.

Mr. Segretti was the principal Government witness. He testified that he had regularly sent Mr. Chapin copies of the materials he was passing out—some of which Mr. Segretti conceded was scurrilous—and that Mr. Chapin had told him to try to disrupt the campaign

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of Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine. In addition, the prosecutors produced a note in Mr. Chapin's own handwriting in which he urged Mr. Segretti to take action against Senator Muskie.

The White House press office said tonight that there could be no comment, since the President and his top aides were on their way to France for President Pompidou's funeral.

Mr. Chapin is the eighth one-time White House aide to be convicted since the Watergate burglary in June, 1972.

He left the White House staff early in 1973 to become an executive of United Air Lines and was placed on unpaid leave after he was indicted last December. At the time, a United spokesman said that Mr. Chapin would be asked to resign if he were convicted of a crime.

Throughout yesterday afternoon and today, as the jury deliberated, Mr. Chapin talked amicably with reporters, lawyers and court officials and played an occasional game of backgammon with his parents. His wife and several friends played a constant game of gin rummy in a small waiting room across the hall from Judge Gesell's courtroom.

Friends Wait for Decision

Among the friends who stayed with Mr. Chapin at the courthouse while the jury was out were Ronald H. Walker, director of the National Park Service, and Bruce Herschensohn, a White House speech writer.

Mr. Chapin, 33 years old, sat expressionless as the jury's verdict was announced. After Judge Gesell had dismissed the

jury and set the date for sentencing, Mr. Chapin walked to the rear of the courtroom and kissed his wife, Susan, who was in tears.

Afterward, he told reporters, "I'm going to continue to fight for my innocence. On the day I was indicted, I went out on my front lawn and said I was innocent. I intend to fight this thing all the way through."

He said that he would return to his home in Winnetka, Ill., next week.

The charges against Mr. Watergate burglary or even political spying and sabotage but simply whether he had told the truth when he testified under oath before the grand jury.

Although the charges were relatively minor, the special prosecutor's office was especially interested in winning a first of its cases to come to trial.

Called 'Haldeman's Haldeman'

The assistant special prosecutor, Richard J. Davis, 28, who worked previously in the United States Attorney's office in New York City, was the most obviously nervous person in the courthouse while the verdict was being awaited.

Mr. Chapin's duties in the White House were principally administrative and clerical. He was not involved in policy-making, but he arranged the President's schedules and travel and went with him to China in 1972.

He was especially close to H. R. Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff. One person who was familiar with White House operations during the first four years of the Nixon Administration described Mr. Chapin as "Haldeman's Haldeman—the one who carried Haldeman's coat when Haldeman carried the President's."

Since he was indicted last December, there has been wide spread but unconfirmed speculation that the prosecutors were principally interested in Mr. Chapin as a potential witness against Mr. Haldeman, who has been charged with obstructing justice by covering up the facts of the Watergate burglary.

But Mr. Chapin, who proclaimed his loyalty to Mr. Haldeman during the trial, either could not or would not provide evidence against him.

In his testimony, Mr. Chapin acknowledged that he had hired Mr. Segretti, an old friend at the University of Southern California in the early 1960's, to play "political pranks" on the Democratic Presidential candidates.

But Mr. Chapin pictured himself as a busy man, concerned with such weighty matters as the trip to China, and he said he had paid little attention to Mr. Segretti's operations.

Mr. Segretti, however, recalled telling Mr. Chapin about printing a phony press release on Senator Muskie's stationery accusing Senators Hubert H. Humphrey and Edmund S. Muskie of drunkenness and sexual misconduct. He testified that release would raise.

Mr. Segretti also told of another phony release falsely accusing Representative Shirley Chisholm, the Brooklyn Democrat, of having been in a mental institution and said that Mr. Chapin had laughed about the release.