

# Haldeman Linked To GOP Saboteur



Jack Anderson

WHITE HOUSE chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, according to secret grand jury testimony, approved the hiring of Donald Segretti to be a political saboteur during the 1972 presidential campaign.

But former White House aides Gordon Strachan and Dwight Chapin swore under oath it was their idea to employ Segretti. Assistant U.S. Attorney Seymour Glanzer asked, incredulously, whether the two junior aides had the authority to unleash Segretti on a sabotage campaign "just on your own initiative?"

"Oh yes," replied Strachan.

"Did you go back," asked Glanzer, "and check with Mr. Haldeman to find out whether it was all right to engage in such (political sabotage)?"

"Yes we did."

"What did he say?"

"He said, yes, go ahead," testified Strachan.

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STRACHAN also acknowledged that he had put Segretti in touch with G. Gordon Liddy, the Watergate ringleader. As Strachan recalled the circumstances, Liddy phoned him in agitation to report strange activities in the field. Democratic and Republican candidates alike, Liddy reported, were encountering mysterious foul-ups.

Liddy demanded to know who the Republican undercover operative was. "I want that information about that individu-

al in the field," Strachan quoted Liddy as insisting.

So, said Strachan, "I gave him Segretti's telephone number. He was quite upset." Then Strachan notified Segretti. "I called Don Segretti and I told him to expect a call from Gordon Liddy . . . and that he should answer his questions."

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BOTH STRACHAN and Chapin insisted that Segretti operated on his own and seldom reported to them. "We thought we could pay him and forget him," explained Strachan.

"Do you mean," asked the grand jury foreman, "you would give him a lump sum and let him go on his own?"

"Yes," replied Strachan, "we wanted to set him up and get him started and not have to worry about him later." They heard from him, Strachan testified, "maybe once every six weeks."

Assistant Attorney General Donald Campbell broke in. "Mr. Strachan . . . let's just take one month, January of '72. During that month, there were 16 phone calls from Mr. Segretti to the White House. Now this is a little bit more frequently than once every six weeks." Campbell asked whether Strachan had "any explanation."

The former Haldeman aide answered simply "No." Later, he said sorrowfully that hiring Segretti "was a stupid decision and I sincerely regret it. But I did it."