

Krogh Quits Over Burglary

By Carroll Kilpatrick
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Egil (Bud) Krogh Jr., a former White House aide who authorized an attempt to steal documents from Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, resigned yesterday as under secretary of transportation, admitting error of judgment.

In a letter to President Nixon, Krogh took full responsibility for the action and said that he acted without permission from any superior. At the time, he was an assistant to John D. Ehrlichman, the President's chief domestic affairs ad-

viser who resigned last week.

Krogh submitted an affidavit last week to U.S. District Court Judge W. Matt Byrne Jr., who is presiding at the Ellsberg Pentagon papers trial in Los Angeles, admitting that in 1971 he sent Watergate conspirators E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy to burglarize the psychiatrist's office.

When Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar learned of the affidavit he called on Krogh to explain his position publicly, and Krogh asked for a leave

of absence to consider what to do.

Krogh's letter to the President, released at the Transportation Department, said that the assignment to the two conspirators "was my responsibility, a step taken in excess of instructions and without the knowledge or permission of any superior."

Under the conditions that prevailed then, Krogh added, "I believed that my decision was dictated inescapably by the vital, national security interests of the United States.

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"I now see that this judgment may well have been in error, though prompted by what was then my highest sense of right.

"Its consequences, to my eternal regret, have proved injurious both to a number of innocent persons and to that reverence for law on which our society is founded."

The former White House aide told the President that his "overriding desire" now was to accept "full responsibility" and to assist in bringing all the facts into the open.

"With public confidence in our government already shaken by the Watergate affair," he said, "and with the complete affirmation of your personal integrity so imperative at this time, I cannot remain in the administration while my role in the special investigative unit is submitted to the legal scrutiny it must now properly receive."

Krogh headed a special White House unit called "the plumbers" set up at the time of the publication of the Pentagon papers to try to stop leaks of secret information and to determine how the Pentagon papers reached the press.

Brinegar named John W. Barnum, general counsel of DOT since June, 1971, as an interim official to succeed Krogh.

At the White House, press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler, who daily faces a barrage of questions about Watergate and related matters, said that the White House wanted back documents which former Counsel to the President John W. Dean III said he had placed in a bank safety deposit box.

Dean has turned the keys to the box over to U.S. District Court here.

Ziegler said that the White House had no objection to the court's making copies of the documents but that they are official papers and should be returned to the White House.

"I don't know that's in the papers," Ziegler said. "But

these were papers taken from the government. We want the papers back."

The President scheduled a Cabinet meeting for 9 a.m. today, after which, it is believed, he may make a new announcement either about the Watergate investigation or about his reorganization of the White House staff.

Asked what the reaction had been to the President's speech last week on Watergate, Ziegler said the White House had received 4,496 telegrams favorable to the speech and 1,715 that were critical.

The White House has been receiving about 700 letters a day on the speech since Friday, he said, with favorable letters outrunning the critical ones about 2½ or 3 to 1.

The majority of telephone calls have been in support of the President, Ziegler said.

He emphasized that he gave the figures reluctantly because of recent disclosures that the Committee for the Re-election of the President last year promoted a campaign to encourage telegrams and letters in support of the President's May 8 decision to mine North Vietnamese harbors.

Ziegler said he could state "categorically" that neither the re-election committee nor the Republican National Committee had promoted a letter or telegram campaign this time.

When asked whether the FBI was still guarding the papers of former aides Dean Ehrlichman and H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, the press secretary said the papers have all been moved to a central location in the Executive Office Building and are under Secret Service rather than FBI supervision.

Ziegler declined to comment on criticisms Vice President Agnew and Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) made Tuesday of press handling of the Watergate case.

They have a right to "make observations and I simply have nothing to add from here," Ziegler said.