

# SEGRETTI DENIES CAMPAIGN GUILT

He Is Arraigned in Florida  
on Fake-Letter Charges  
—Gets a 30-Day Delay

By JOHN M. CREWDSON

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TAMPA, Fla., May 17—Donald H. Segretti, a California lawyer who allegedly headed a political sabotage operation for the Republican party in last year's campaign, pleaded not guilty today to charges that he helped to prepare and distribute a fictitious letter in the Florida primary election.

In a brief appearance before a United States magistrate here, Mr. Segretti, who was indicted with another man two weeks ago over the bogus letter, entered pleas of not guilty to two misdemeanor counts — conspiracy and distributing falsely signed campaign literature.

His alleged co-conspirator, George A. Hearing, a 40-year-old Tampa accountant, entered a guilty plea last week.

The letter, which the two men are accused of mailing to voters in central Florida three days before the primary last March 14, was printed on letterhead stationery used by Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine in his unsuccessful campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination.

## Two Rivals Accused

It accused two of Mr. Muskie's Democratic rivals, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota and Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington, of sexual misconduct.

Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Jackson denied the charges vigorously at the time, and Senator Muskie disclaimed any knowledge of the letter.

Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama won the primary. Senator Humphrey finished a distant second, Senator Jackson was third and Senator Muskie fourth.

Mr. Segretti arrived 20 minutes late for this morning's arraignment, which had been scheduled for 10 A.M. The magistrate, Paul Game Jr., quickly accepted his plea and granted a request by his lawyer, Raymond LaPorte of Tampa, for a 30-day delay to prepare preliminary motions.

Less than five minutes later, Mr. Segretti, whose height of 5 feet 6 inches and boyish appearance make him look 10 years younger than his age of 31, was fingerprinted and photographed and then released. A personal recognizance bond of \$10,000 was continued.

During the block-long walk to Mr. LaPorte's office, both he and his client refused to answer all questions from pursuing newsmen, even a request for Mr. Segretti's correct age (the indictment lists him as 28 years old).

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Since he first came to public attention last October, Mr. Segretti has refused to comment on any aspect of his alleged activities in last year's campaign.

## Kalmbach's Testimony

However, he was reportedly paid more than \$30,000 in Republican campaign funds in 1971 and 1972 by Herbert W. Kalmbach, who until recently was President Nixon's personal lawyer. According to Mr. Kalmbach's account to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the money was paid on orders from Dwight L. Chapin, who resigned in January as the White House appointments secretary.

Mr. Segretti has told friends that, during the time he worked for the Republicans, he reported directly to Mr. Chapin, with whom he attended the University of Southern California in the early Nineteen-sixties, and also to E. Howard Hunt Jr., who pleaded guilty in the Watergate bugging case.

Other friends have said that Mr. Segretti attempted to recruit them to spy on and otherwise disrupt the campaigns of Democratic candidates, particularly Mr. Muskie's. In some instances, it was said, the offers were accepted.

The indictment handed down two weeks ago was the first criminal charge brought against any member of the so-called "dirty trick" operation.

Two of Mr. Segretti's alleged operatives, Robert M. Benz and Patricia E. Griffin, both of Tampa, were given immunity from prosecution in return for their testimony before the Federal grand jury in Orlando.

That panel and another one here are continuing to investigate other incidents of alleged political sabotage in the Florida primary, and there have been reports that more indictments will be issued soon.