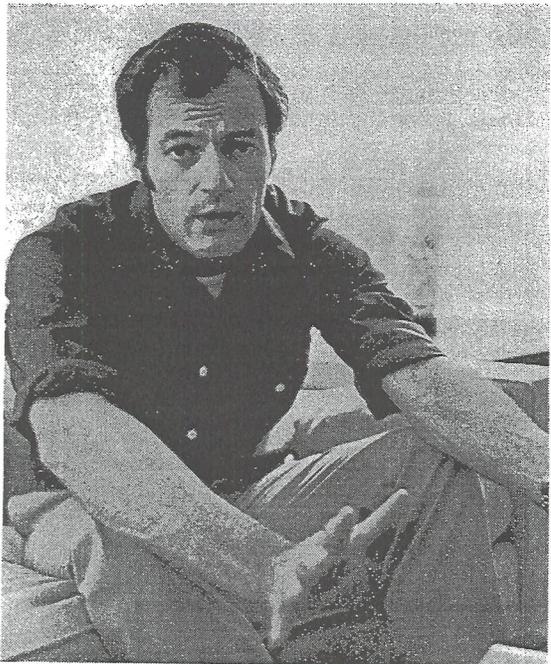


## JUSTICE

## The Fuse Burns Ever Closer



FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT KROGH  
Bedeviled by his conscience.

One of the major arguments used by President Nixon and the White House staff to justify the Watergate abuses has been that they were committed in the name of national security. Last week that rationale was discredited in a U.S. district court in Washington by one of Nixon's former top aides, a man who had used the same excuse to explain his own role in the scandal. "I now feel that I cannot in conscience assert national security as a defense," he said, adding that he now understood "the transcendent importance of the rule of law over the motivations of man."

The speaker was Egil Krogh, 34, for-

FORMER APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY CHAPIN



mer deputy assistant to the President for domestic affairs. He was pleading guilty to a charge of violating the civil rights of Dr. Lewis Fielding, Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. Krogh had authorized the burglary in 1971 of Fielding's Beverly Hills office in an effort to dig up dirt on Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon papers to the press.

Last week Watergate also caught up with another former White House staffer. Dwight Chapin was indicted for having lied when he disclaimed any official connection with Donald H. Segretti, the convicted political saboteur. Chapin thus became the 18th man to be indicted on charges stemming from the Watergate affair and other scandals; Krogh was the twelfth to plead guilty or be convicted in the Watergate matter.

Both Krogh and Chapin were prime examples of the key Nixon aides: young, athletic, religious, handsome, clean-cut, bright, ambitious, and tough enough to be ruthless.

The smiling, well-scrubbed Chapin had been working for Nixon since 1962. In the 1968 campaign, he was Nixon's personal aide—the man who, according to one joke, held down his boss's coat-tails when Nixon jammed both arms high into the air to salute the crowds. After the election, Chapin became Nixon's appointments secretary, working under the wing of Bob Haldeman. Even Chinese Premier Chou En-lai was impressed with Chapin's skill at detail work, telling him in Peking: "You are an example of how we should utilize young men in government."

In the 1972 presidential campaign, according to Segretti, Chapin directed a clandestine guerrilla-warfare operation against Democrats. Segretti has testified that he was hired by Chapin, whom he had known since both attended the University of Southern California, to play malicious tricks on the opposition, including distributing a letter, printed on stationery stolen from Senator Edmund Muskie, that accused Senators Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson of sexual misconduct.

After the Segretti operation was exposed by TIME and the Washington Post, Chapin quit the White House under pressure last January and took an executive job with United Air Lines. If found guilty, he could be jailed for as long as five years on each of four counts, and fined up to \$10,000.

**Policymaker.** Compared with Chapin, Egil Krogh was a White House heavyweight. A former Naval officer and member of John Ehrlichman's Seattle law firm, he was brought to Washington by Ehrlichman as one of his top assistants in 1968. Krogh's importance rose when his mentor became Nixon's ranking domestic affairs adviser. Diligent and levelheaded, Krogh worked on,

among other major projects, the Administration's anticrime and antidrug programs. In June 1971 he became operational head of the White House undercover unit called the plumbers because one of its jobs was to stop leaks to the press. In particular, he set out to discredit Daniel Ellsberg. Nixon has admitted that, not knowing what other "national secrets" Ellsberg might disclose, he wanted Krogh to find out all that he could about Ellsberg's associates and motives on the grounds of security. Last January, Krogh got his reward from President Nixon: he became Under Secretary of Transportation.

On May 5, Krogh took full responsibility for the burglary of the office of Dr. Fielding, and quit the Government. Following the President's line, he said that at the time of the burglary he had thought it was justified for reasons of national security. But Krogh, a Christian Scientist whom friends describe as a "straight arrow," could not accept that rationale forever. He told the court: "I simply feel that what was done in the Ellsberg operation was in violation of what I perceive to be a fundamental idea in this country—the paramount importance of the rights of the individual. I don't want to be associated with that violation any longer by attempting to defend it."

**Telling All.** For pleading guilty to one charge in the Fielding case, Krogh could be sentenced to as long as ten years in prison and fined as much as \$10,000. In return for his guilty plea, Watergate Prosecutor Leon Jaworski agreed to drop perjury charges against Krogh. As part of his plea bargaining, Krogh agreed that after he is sentenced he will tell all that he knows about the various activities of the plumbers—testimony that could quite possibly blow Watergate even higher.

Krogh is expected to testify at the trial of John Ehrlichman on charges stemming from the Fielding burglary. Ehrlichman has admitted having had overall supervision of the plumbers. Even that could be only the beginning for Krogh. He is expected to be closely questioned by Jaworski's staffers. They will be interested in hearing what Krogh has to say about the activities of Charles Colson, a former special counsel to the President, who obtained the \$5,000 that was used to bankroll the burglary of Fielding's office.

Most important, Bud Krogh is the man who might be able to link President Nixon to the plumbers' illegal activities. The President has insisted that he did not authorize and had no knowledge of the Fielding break-in. But John Dean, Nixon's ousted counsel, testified to the Senate Watergate Committee that Krogh had told him that he had received his orders for the burglary "right out of the Oval Office." Speaking of the devout and well-informed Krogh, one man close to the White House says: "He is the last guy in the world I'd like to see mad at the President."