

PLUMBERS OUSTED HIM, KROGH SAYS

He Tells of Dismissal in '71 for Refusing a Wiretap in India-Pakistan Case

By SEYMOUR M. HERSH

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—Egil Krogh Jr. said today that he was dismissed from his White House "plumbers" assignment in December, 1971, after he refused to authorize a wiretap in connection with an investigation into the publication of the India-Pakistan papers.

Reliable sources said that Mr. Krogh had been ordered off the plumbers unit by John D. Ehrlichman.

Mr. Krogh, who received a six-month sentence today for his role in the Ellsberg burglary, rebuffed a request forwarded from David R. Young Jr. for the wiretap because, according to one source, "he'd just had it with that stuff."

The removal of Mr. Krogh is the first known indication of disagreement inside the White House at the time over the operations of the special investigations unit set up by President Nixon in July, 1971. The four-man unit was jointly directed by Mr. Krogh and Mr. Young, with Mr. Ehrlichman, then President Nixon's chief domestic adviser, in over-all supervision.

At least two wiretaps were authorized in December by Mr. Young and Mr. Ehrlichman as the plumbers unit was attempting to determine how the India-Pakistan papers were disclosed and the extent of the military

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snooping operations inside the White House.

In a statement released after his sentencing in United States District Court, Mr. Krogh disclosed that he had been dismissed from the plumbers team.

"I was asked to authorize a wiretap in connection with a highly sensitive aspect of the [India-Pakistan] leak," he said. "I declined and was thereupon removed from the unit the same day." He did not say, however, that it was Mr. Ehrlichman who dismissed him.

At a news conference moments later, Mr. Krogh also refused to say whether the wiretap had been intended for Yeoman 1st Cl. Charles E. Radford, then a clerk assigned to the National Security Council who was suspected of leaking the India-Pakistan papers. Yeoman Radford subsequently told the plumbers that, while he had not leaked material to the news media, he had provided unauthorized documents to the office of Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Mr. Krogh told the news conference that he had refused to request the wiretap formally from the Federal Bureau of Investigation because "my feeling was that this kind of thing would become very well known inside the other departments [in the Government] and it was inherently an extremely risky thing to do. It's about as simple as that."

In his 12-page statement, Mr. Krogh noted that he had become disturbed after viewing photographs of the damage done to the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis Fielding, during the attempted burglary by the plumbers in September, 1971.

"When I saw the photographs," Mr. Krogh said, "I immediately felt that a mistake had been made." Dr. Fielding's office door and file cabinets were battered by the break-in team.

Over-all, Mr. Krogh's statement and subsequent news conference today provided little new information about the known plumbers operations, but he did say the following:

¶President Nixon once considered setting up a new security classification "which would condition access to national security information upon advance agreement to submit to polygraphing [lie detector tests]."

¶The President also expressed great concern during a July 24, 1971, meeting with Mr.

Krogh and Mr. Ehrlichman and "made clear that the protection of national security information must outweigh any individual reluctance to be polygraphed. He instructed that further leaks would not be allowed and made me feel personally responsible for carrying out this instruction," Mr. Krogh said.

¶Mr. Krogh's work with the plumbers ended in November, 1971, except for a brief recall after publication of the India-Pakistan papers by Jack Anderson, the columnist. The published papers showed that Henry A. Kissinger, then President Nixon's national security adviser, was privately "tilting" his efforts on behalf of the Pakistan Government while publicly declaring himself neutral in the ongoing war between India and Pakistan.

Kissinger Role Noted

Mr. Krogh told the news conference, in response to a question, that Mr. Kissinger, now the Secretary of State, had no role in the activities of the plumbers. "More than that," Mr. Krogh added, "I wouldn't say."

The New York Times reported last month that Mr. Kissinger participated in the high-level White House decision in July, 1971, to transfer Mr. Young from his National Security Council position to the plumbers. At the time, The Times's sources said, Mr. Kissinger was informed of the mission of the plumbers unit.

The Secretary of State has repeatedly denied any knowledge either of the plumbers' activities in general or of Mr. Young's specific duties.

At a news conference Tuesday, however, Mr. Kissinger acknowledged that he had once listened to a tape recording of an interrogation conducted by Mr. Young in which Rear Adm. Robert O. Welander, who was assigned to the National Security Council, told of the funneling of White House documents to Adm. Thomas H. Moorer's office.

Spy Ring Doubled

At a news conference today in the Pentagon, Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger revealed that his office had been told by J. Fred Buzhardt, a White House counsel, that the tap of the Young interrogation was not available to the Pentagon. "It was not clear to me whether it was impounded" in connection with a court proceeding," Mr. Schlesinger said. The Secretary of Defense scoffed at reports of a military spy ring. While "there were clearly improprieties," he said, "I think the thing has been

blown out of all context."

Mr. Schlesinger also publicly expressed full confidence in Admiral Moorer, who conceded last week—after earlier denials—that he had received some unauthorized materials from the White House.

The Secretary of Defense said that the admiral "may not have been sufficiently alert" in accepting two separate batches of documents, but he added that the lapse "does not detract significantly from Admiral Moore's past and future services."

Mr. Schlesinger joined with White House officials in denigrating the competence of the plumbers investigation into the military spying. "I'm inclined to doubt the plumbers had the answer," he told newsmen, adding that "I'm not the greatest admirer of the work of that group."

Some members of the Senate Armed Services Committee are known to be pressing Senator John C. Stennis, the committee chairman, for a full investigation of the military spying allegations.

None of the military men involved in the operation—including Yeoman Radford and his immediate superior, Admiral Welander, were punished for their activity. Nor, apparently, was Admiral Moorer criticized at the time for accepting the documents, although Mr. Young eventually filed a report for President Nixon highly critical of the snooping operations.