

Krogh Gets 6 Months; Denies Nixon Role

Ex-Chief of White House Plumbers Unit Sentenced in Ellsberg Break-In

By ANTHONY RIPLEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24—Egil Krogh Jr., former head of a secret White House investigative unit called "the plumbers," was sentenced today to six months in prison on charges growing out of the burglary of the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

In a statement issued shortly after his sentencing in United States District Court, Mr. Krogh declared:

"I received no specific instruction or authority whatsoever regarding the break-in from the President, directly or indirectly."

Mr. Krogh, in talking with Judge Gerhard A. Gesell and to reporters, blamed only himself for what he called "a terrible mistake" and "repulsive conduct."

The 34-year-old lawyer showed no emotion during the sentencing. He stood at attention in a blue suit, his hair curling down over his white shirt collar, as Judge Gesell sentenced him to a term of from two to six years in prison. The judge ordered him to serve only six months, with another 18 months of unsuper-



The New York Times/Mike Lien

Egil Krogh Jr. after sentencing in Washington yesterday

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vised probation.

Mr. Krogh said the plumbers had been "established by the President, created by John Ehrlichman and I was put in command."

Mr. Ehrlichman is the former White House second in command and was assistant to President Nixon for domestic affairs.

Mr. Krogh said he had felt he had the authority to order the break-in on his own.

"Mr. Ehrlichman gave the unit authority to engage in covert activity to obtain information Dr. Ellsberg," Mr. Krogh said in his statement.

Mr. Krogh added later that "I was told by Ehrlichman [after the break-in] that what was done was in excess of he had approved."

"Is Ehrlichman free from guilt in the break-in?" a reporter asked as Mr. Krogh stood in a light rain before the television cameras on the sidewalk outside the courthouse.

"It is not for me to draw legal conclusions," Mr. Krogh replied.

Dr. Ellsberg had been charged with theft, espionage and conspiracy in connection with his copying of a set of top secret reports on the Vietnam war in what came to be known as the Pentagon papers case. The case against Dr. Ellsberg was dismissed when the burglary, wiretapping and other allegations of Government misconduct came to light.

Goal of Burglary

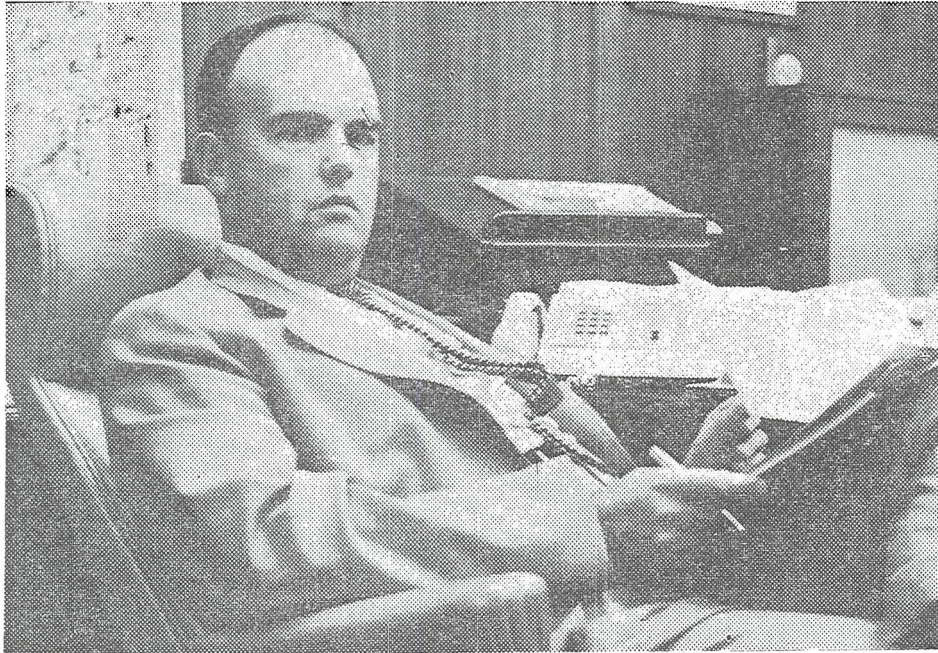
The burglary of his former psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis F. Fielding on Sept. 3, 1971, was carried out in Beverley Hills, Calif., in a search for information on Dr. Ellsberg's background.

When Mr. Krogh pleaded guilty Nov. 30 to charges of violating Dr. Fielding's civil rights, he said that he would put off talking in depth with the Watergate special prosecution staff until after his sentence.

It was an unusual move, but Mr. Krogh insisted that he did not wish to leave the impression that he was cooperating with the prosecutors only to help his own case.

Mr. Krogh is expected to begin the first of these in-depth discussions next week. He is believed to have extensive knowledge about the inner workings of the plumbers and their possible relation to other White House activities.

The White House has been



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John D. Ehrlichman at the White House, before he resigned from President Nixon's staff

very sensitive about the operations of the plumbers. There were reports that Mr. Krogh was prepared to drop a political bombshell today in the continued investigation of the Watergate scandals.

However, nothing explosive materialized. Mr. Krogh's lawyer, Stephen N. Shulman, distributed a 12-page statement reporters.

The statement outlined Mr. Krogh's role with the plumbers and confirmed reports, published earlier in The New York Times and attributed to informed sources, that the White House had feared Dr. Ellsberg might have been a Soviet agent or might have been preparing to release still further top secret information.

Mr. Shulman, standing with Mr. Krogh before the judge, argued against any jail sentence saying his client had for a period of time undergone "punishment and true suffering."

Krogh 'Deeply Sorrowful'

Mr. Krogh himself told Judge Gesell repeatedly how "deeply sorrowful" he was for casting disrepute on his friends, his profession and his family.

He said that in contrast to the Watergate break-in, the plumbers operation "represented official Government action."

He said that as "official Government action it strikes at the heart" of what American Government was set up to protect: the rights of the individual.

He praised the Watergate prosecutors, the press in general, the court and the hearings that he said are showing "the light as it was there" at the time of his activities with the plumbers.

He said he hoped there would be a "clearing away of much of the wrong thinking, mistakes of judgment" and that the political process would cleanse itself.

The judge noted that Mr. Krogh was not involved in other aspects of the case, had not received money for his part in the burglary and "made no effort to place primary blame on others."

"A wholly improper, illegal task was assigned to you by higher authority which you carried out," the judge said, adding the actions had been taken with "loyalty and a degree of vanity."

Mr. Krogh had served on the Domestic Council under Mr. Ehrlichman in the White House before he was put in charge of

the Plumbers in July 1971. Other members of the unit were G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt Jr., both convicted in the original Watergate trial, and David R. Young, who had been drawn from the staff of Secretary of State Kissinger, who at the time was Mr. Nixon's national security affairs adviser.

Members of the Watergate special prosecution force regarded Mr. Krogh as one of the more "honest, sincere and contrite" men to appear during their long investigation.

He had based his defense in the break-in on his belief at the time that he, was working on a matter involving national security.

"However, national security is defined, I now see that none of the potential uses of the sought information could justify the invasion of the rights of the individuals that the break-in necessitated," Mr. Krogh said in his statement.

In speaking of other young men and women who might be drawn to government, he added that "I hope they will recognize that the banner of national security can turn perceived patriotism into actual disservice. When contemplating a course of action, I hope they will never fail to ask, 'is this right?'"

Stuffed Bird Brings \$21,000

LONDON (UPI) — A rare stuffed bird, the Great Auk, which has been extinct since the middle of the 19th Century, was purchased at Sotheby's famous auction house for \$21,000 by Iceland's Natural History Museum.