

The Krogh Case

I was outraged this morning (Jan.25) when I read that Egil (Bud) Krogh received a mere six month jail sentence for the burglary of Dr. Fielding's office. What this really means is that, within a few months, Mr. Krogh will be back on the streets as a free man. He will not have lost that much time nor social position because of his incarceration. He received orders from someone higher up on the political ladder and these same people will see that his future is taken care of and that his career will not be badly smudged.

Day after day I read about people in the District of Columbia — mostly poor and uneducated, many unsophisticated and powerless — who come before the court with similar charges. Most of



these people are granted court-appointed lawyers who do not give the necessary time and skill so that their clients can get through the system with dignity and lighter sentences. I remember specifically a 19-year-old male who was convicted of a burglary. He received a sentence of two to 15 years in jail. He did not break into a psychiatrist's office to steal information. He did not enter a campaign headquarters illegally to obtain evidence. He entered a grocery

store to steal food that could be in turn changed to money for drugs.

When the 19-year-old is released from Lorton no one will rush to his aid with job offers and monetary support for his family. He will be forced to carry around with him, first of all, the dreadful and dehumanizing prison experience, and secondly, a record that will probably keep him unemployable. He will not have been rehabilitated and thus will be forced to return to the environment which produced many of his problems. The community will never forget nor allow him to forget that he is an ex-con — even at 19-years-old. And so, another human being falls by the wayside and the system goes on.

The inequity of our judicial system overwhelms me at times. I am constantly put off when I read about people in high governmental positions getting by with gentle slaps on the wrists while the products of a sick society get hard knocks that set them spinning for the rest of their lives. If any of us broke into a building, where would we be today? If certain ones of us cheated the I.R.S. by only one thousand dollars would we be granted the courtesy of claiming oversight? If we lied in open testimony or in a court setting would we be free to retire to our pleasant surroundings and watch the dirt fly?

Unless these gross inequities are corrected immediately then what the late Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis said will indeed come true:

"If the Government becomes a law-breaker, it breeds contempt for the law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy."

ANDREW A. BARASDA JR.
 Washington.

The recent statement of Egil Krogh in which he took full responsibility for the Fielding break-in combined with a very lenient sentence only serves to increase the suspicion of the public as to the truth. We were led to expect a "bombshell" statement in which Mr. Krogh would outline the full extent of White House involvement in the case; this did not materialize. We can only wonder whether there has been another cover-up.

The press has a continuing obligation to investigate the circumstances surrounding the Krogh case in order to make clear to the American public that the truth, the whole truth, has come out.

RON FREUND,
 Midwest Directory,
 Clergy and Laity Concerned,
 Chicago.