

Kleindienst: Loyal Aide

With his guilty plea yesterday, former Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst became the first former Cabinet member convicted of misconduct in office since Albert B. Fall, who in 1929 was found guilty of bribery in the Teapot Dome scandal while serving as President Harding's Interior Secretary.

Mr. Kleindienst became Attorney General in 1972, when John N. Mitchell left to head President Nixon's re-election campaign, and he resigned on April 30, 1973, along with H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, as the Watergate cover-up began to unfold.

Until then, Mr. Kleindienst had been considered the paradigm of the American success story. Born in Winslow, Ariz., on Aug. 5, 1923, the son of a railroad brakeman, he was an Air Force navigator in World War II, graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Harvard in 1947 and earned a law degree from Harvard three years later.

He practiced law in Arizona and was a member of the Legislature there in 1953-54. After an unsuccessful race for the

governorship in 1964, he worked in the Presidential campaign of Senator Barry M. Goldwater.

In 1968, Mr. Kleindienst was national director of field operations in Mr. Nixon's Presidential campaign, and was named deputy Attorney General in the new Administration. He became known at the Justice Department as a law-and-order advocate, taking a hard line on demonstrators and supporting "preventive detention" — denying bail to persons deemed liable to commit crimes if released.

He is an Episcopalian, has been a member of numerous veterans' and service organizations and is an avid gin-rummy player and a good golfer. Friends call him bright and candid, fiercely competitive and in the past totally loyal to the man for whom he has worked.

Since his resignation, he has been practicing law alone in Washington and making an occasional speaking appearance. Mr. Kleindienst, 50 years old, and his wife, the former Margaret Dunbar, have four children and live in McLean, Va.