

Cover-Up Trial Of Nixon's Aides Postponed For 3 Weeks By Sirica

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Watergate cover-up trial of some of former President Richard M. Nixon's chief lieutenants was postponed for three weeks Thursday to allow lawyers on both sides more time to prepare their cases.

U. S. District Judge John J. Sirica, under the prodding of the U.S. Court of Appeals, said he was resetting the opening trial date from Sept. 9 to Sept. 30.

Less than two hours earlier the appeals court, while refusing to intervene in Sirica's earlier denial of the continuance, recommended that he give the lawyers three to four more weeks.

The appeals court ruling was not an order but a strong hint that any guilty verdicts in the case might be overruled on appeal if the defense lawyers complained they had been unable to prepare adequately

for the trial.

"I have adopted the suggestion of the Court of Appeals and I have decided to continue the trial until Sept. 30," Sirica told reporters in his chambers moments before entering his order.

Sirica said he still hoped to have the case completed before Christmas even if it requires longer work days and possible week-end sessions. The appeals court, while ap-

pearing to sympathize with the need of more preparation time, seemed to reject a companion plea that the trial be delayed until next year because of Watergate publicity.

Andrew Hall, attorney for former White House chief domestic adviser John D. Ehrlichman, said he planned to appeal to the Supreme Court on the pretrial publicity question.

Attorneys for most of the cover-up defendants have argued that the massive publicity surrounding the Watergate scandals, impeachment proceedings in Congress, and Nixon's ultimate resignation from the presidency have created a climate in which the ex-President's former White House, administration and campaign aides could not receive a fair trial.

In addition to Ehrlichman, other defendants in the case are John N. Mitchell, former attorney general and Nixon campaign manager; H. R. Haldeman, former White House chief of staff; Robert C. Mar-dian, former assistant attorney general and Nixon campaign official; Kenneth W. Parkinson, a lawyer for the Nixon re-election committee; and Gordon Strachan, a former White House aide to Haldeman.

In another Watergate development Thursday, Chief U.S. District Judge George L. Hart Jr. ordered lawyers for Nixon's friend Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo to turn over some records sought by the Special Prosecutor's office.