

Selection of Jury Begins For Ehrlichman, Plumbers

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Jury selection begins today for the trial of John D. Ehrlichman, G. Gordon Liddy and two others in connection with the 1971 break-in at the offices of the psychiatrist of Daniel Ellsberg.

According to James E. Davey, clerk of U.S. District Court, 150 prospective jurors will be available today for jury selection, and another 100 are on call for tomorrow if needed.

Davey said the clerk's office took the unusual step of asking prospective jurors in advance if sequestration would cause them any particular problems—without specifying which trial they were being called for—and those on call said it would not.

Judge Gerhard A. Gesell has said he will select 12 regular and 6 alternate jurors, and sequester them for the remainder of the trial, which is expected to last from two to four weeks.

ON TRAIL are Ehrlichman, former assistant to the President for domestic

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affairs and one of Nixon's closest former advisers; Liddy, former White House aide who has already been convicted in the Watergate break-in and bugging case; and Bernard L. Barker and Eugenio R. Martinez, Cuban refugees with CIA backgrounds convicted with Liddy in the original Watergate case.

The indictment in the case, returned May 7, also had charged Charles W. Colson, former special counsel to the President; and Felipe DeDiego, an associate of Barker and Martinez. But Colson pleaded guilty on June 3 to a related charge, and Gesell dismissed the charge against DeDiego during the pretrial period.

The charges stem from the burglary the night of Sept. 3, 1971, of the Beverly Hills office of Dr. Lewis J. Fielding, former psychiatrist of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg.

MEANWHILE, the prosecutors confirmed yesterday, negotiations have been going on which could have led to

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Barker and Martinez pleading guilty in the case. The negotiations broke down, however, and the two men are now going ahead with a full trial.

As part of their defense, they have attempted to subpoena files from the CIA. Gesell held a 95-minute

closed hearing on the issue yesterday, the last bit of legal controversy before the trial actually begins, but no resolution was announced.

Ehrlichman still has a subpoena outstanding, but Gesell has decided to reserve arguments on that subpoena until the jury is sequestered, to avoid any further pretrial publicity.

The only defendant who has raised no unusual considerations is Liddy, who, as he has done ever since Watergate broke, is quietly going ahead to what looks like a sure conviction. In addition to his conviction in the original Watergate case, Liddy has been convicted of contempt of Congress and has been cited for contempt of court for refusing, even under court order, to testify about his knowledge of Watergate-related activities.