Notes on People by Laurie Johnson

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As "public penance" instead of jail terms, John D. Ehrlichman and H. R. Haldeman should be assigned to help rebuild the District of Columbia areas burned out in the 1968 riots that followed the death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a letter to Judge John J. Sirica suggested this week. When the former White House aides were sentenced Feb. 21 to up to eight years, Mr. Ehrlichman offered to go to New Mexico to give legal help to Indian tribes—an idea later turned down by the Indians. But George Frain, a Washington inner-city activist, charged in a letter to the judge that both men—contrary to the intent of Richard M. Nixon—were "the responsible White House officials who cut off urban renewal funds" to rebuild the areas. Judge Sirica's clerk, Bob Ruyak, said yesterday that the form of "commitment" was "out of the judge's hands" once he passed sentence.

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