

Ehrlichman Friends Asked for Ideas on Sentence

By Jules Witcover

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 Friends of former White House aide John D. Ehrlichman are being solicited to write to Judge John J. Sirica with their opinions of Ehrlichman and the sentence Sirica should give him in the Watergate cover-up case.

The solicitation is in the form of a letter dated Friday and is signed by Harry W. Clark, until recently executive assistant to Rep. Jack F. Kemp (R-N.Y.). Clark could not be reached for comment but a friend confirmed Clark had sent out the letters.

The letter has been mailed bearing the home address in Arlington of Curtis Tarr, former director of the Selective Service System and former Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, who is now in private business.

Tarr's daughter, Pam, 17, said last night that her mother, Betty Tarr, had worked with Clark in organizing the mailing. Pam Tarr said she was a schoolmate and close friend of Ehrlichman's daughter Jody at Langelly High School, and that the families had become friends through the girls.

The letter says: "Many of us in the Washington, D.C., area believe it is essential that Judge Sirica hear from John Ehrlichman's friends before imposing a sentence in the pending case. Communication with the court is entirely proper at this time, although the judge might have disagreed it earlier."

It is not considered unusual for a judge to receive letters from interested parties in advance of sentencing, and the letters are often solicited by the defendant.

The letter from Clark suggests that the recipient in his letter to Sirica identify himself by occupation and say how long and how well he knew Ehrlichman, convicted on Jan. 1 of conspiracy, obstruction of justice and lying to the Watergate grand jury, and "your opinion of John, particularly as it bears on the issue of sentencing."

"The judge will be interested in these questions: (a) is John a danger to society? (b) does he need rehabilitation? (c) if he were made an example, would it serve as a deterrent to others?"

The letter says Ehrlichman already owes more than \$300,000 in legal expenses and fees in connection with his Watergate defense and it provides the Seattle address of the Ehrlichman Legal Expense Fund.