

Ehrlichman and Jaworski Deny Any Deal

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11 —

Both the special Watergate prosecutor and an attorney for John D. Ehrlichman denied today that the former Presidential assistant was engaged in plea-bargaining.

Mr. Ehrlichman, who was President Nixon's chief assistant for domestic matters until he was forced to resign last year as a result of the Watergate scandal, arrived in Washington last Sunday and plans to return tomorrow to his home in Seattle, Wash. He is expected to return to Washington next month.

Leon Jaworski, the prosecutor, said that his office had of-

ferred no deal to the former Presidential aide. And John J. Wilson, one of Mr. Ehrlichman's attorneys, said when asked whether his client had been asked to enter a plea, replied, "Not that I know of."

Mr. Wilson acknowledged that he and Mr. Ehrlichman spent 65 minutes with Mr. Jaworski yesterday.

But the capital was awash tonight with reports that something major was developing in the Ehrlichman case.

In the Administration, on Capitol Hill and in the law offices that have been dealing with the Watergate case and associated scandals, the denials were met with skepticism. One congressional source said:

"Jaworski hasn't formally offered him anything yet, but they're feeling each other out with just that in mind."

Friends Since College

Several sources said that they had been told the prosecutor hoped ultimately to persuade Mr. Ehrlichman to give testimony that would enable the prosecution to build a stronger case against H. R. Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff.

Mr. Ehrlichman and Mr. Haldeman have been friends since their college days, however, so such a deal might be difficult.

It was not clear what the

prosecution might be willing to offer Mr. Ehrlichman in return for such information. One legal source mentioned a chance to plead guilty to a single charge, with a reasonable chance of escaping with probation.

But a similar report this morning in the Los Angeles Times was labeled "erroneous" by a Jaworski spokesman.

Mr. Ehrlichman, who has testified before the Watergate grand jury but has not yet been charged, is under indictment by a Los Angeles county grand jury in connection with the 1971 break-in at the office of the former psychiatrist of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg, the key figure in the Pentagon paper case.