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Ehrlichman Arraigned, Pleads Not Guilty in L.A.

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LOS ANGELES, Sept. 7— John D. Ehrlichman, who until four months ago was among the most powerful men in the federal government, appeared in a local criminal courtroom today to answer an indictment for burglary.

Ehrlichman pleaded not guilty.

The former presidential adviser, who until his resignation April 30 was chief of President Nixon's domestic policies, appeared before Superior Court Judge James G. Kolts on a three-count indictment of burglary, conspiracy and perjury in connection with the burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office by a special White House unit in 1971.

After his arraignment, Ehrlichman declined all questions from reporters and then went to the Los Angeles County sheriff's office where he was booked on the charge, posed for the standard mug shot, was fingerprinted and then released on his own recognizance.

The 48-year-old lawyer, who has resumed residence in his hometown of Seattle, appeared slightly ruffled in a gray suit with black loafers. He was smiling affably before the battery of news cameras, though he refused to discuss the case.

In the courtroom, Ehrlichman stood with his hands clasped behind him and nodded as the judge advised him.

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of his constitutional rights as a defendant. A deputy prosecutor, Stephen Trott, then presented him with indictment No. 300388 from the Los Angeles County grand jury.

"John Ehrlichman—is that your true name?" the prosecutor asked.

"Yes," the former White House adviser said.

"Mr. Ehrlichman, how do you now plead to the charges in this indictment?"

"Not guilty," Ehrlichman said, nodding to the young lawyer.

Ehrlichman's lawyer, Joseph Ball of Long Beach, a highly regarded criminal lawyer, fielded reporters' questions without offering much information.

"I am always confident that

a client of mine will be exonerated," Ball said.

A newsman asked if this was the first time Ehrlichman had ever been booked for a crime.

"I hope so," Ball said. Ehrlichman standing behind him, grinned broadly.

The next scheduled hearing in the case is Sept. 20, but Ehrlichman was told he did not have to attend preliminary hearings where only legal issues are to be discussed. He was originally scheduled to surrender voluntarily next Tuesday, but appeared today because he has business in Washington next week, his lawyer said.

Earlier in the day, a co-defendant, David E. Young, former administrative assistant to Henry A. Kissinger, also entered a plea of not guilty. Young, who worked for the President's National Security Council until his resignation last spring, helped direct the special investigative unit known as the "plumbers," which allegedly burglarized the Los Angeles office of Dr. Lewis Fielding. Fielding is a psychiatrist who was treating Daniel Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon papers to several newspapers.

Young, a 36-year-old lawyer who resides in Washington, is charged with two crimes — burglary and conspiracy to commit burglary.

"I've come out here voluntarily and that means at my own expense," Young told reporters afterwards. "I have been arraigned and I have pleaded not guilty I'm confident about that plea and my own innocence."

Egil Krogh, a former assistant to Ehrlichman, was arraigned and released Thursday. That leaves only one remaining defendant to make an appearance, G. Gordon Liddy, who is already in jail and under sentence for his role in the Watergate break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters, the scandal that ultimately unveiled the Ellsberg burglary.

Four other men who participated in the Ellsberg burglary, who were also sent to jail for wiretapping Watergate, were not indicted here because the Los Angeles prosecutor gave them immunity in exchange for their testimony before the grand jury. They are E. Howard Hunt, Jr. the former CIA operative, and the three Cu-

bans whom he recruited for the White House undercover work.

As the indictment describes the plot, Krogh and Young, acting on Ehrlichman's authorization, directed Liddy and Hunt and the others to burglarize the psychiatrist's office in search of Ellsberg's medical records.

The defendants have claimed that the "covert operation," as they call it, was undertaken to protect national security, to obtain material for a psychological profile of Ellsberg that might help in preventing future leaks of government secrets. The mission was a flop, however, and the burglarly squad returned to Washington without any information.

Among other things, the prosecution of Ehrlichman for perjury before the grand jury here will probably feature a replay of his tape-recorded testimony before the Senate Watergate committee in Washington. The indictment charges that Ehrlichman told the Los Angeles grand jury that he had no prior knowledge of the attempt to obtain information from Dr. Fielding's files, but Ehrlichman acknowledged at the Senate hearings that he was aware of the "covert operation," though not that it would mean burglary.

Deputy District Attorney Trott advised Ehrlichman's lawyer after today's arraignment that tape recordings of the Senate testimony by Ehrlichman were part of the evidence which will be presented against him.

In Washington, Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox issued a statement on the Los Angeles case, pointing out that his federal investigators are also pursuing the activities of the "plumbers."

"In our view," Cox said, "the federal interest in dealing with any possible illegal activities by White House employees is clearly predominate." He said he is confident that federal and California authorities will still work cooperatively on the overlapping prosecutions.