

Ehrlichman Hires A New Lawyer

Washington

John D. Ehrlichman has revealed that he has retained William S. Frates of Miami, an attorney closely associated with presidential confidante Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, to represent him in the pending Watergate coverup trials.

30 MAR
In a statement issued from his Seattle home, Ehrlichman confirmed Saturday that he has dropped John J. Wilson of Washington and retained Frates because "I have concluded that it is important for me to have separate counsel."

Ehrlichman refused to amplify his statement. The New York Times had reported that Wilson, who will continue to represent H. R. Haldeman, had been dropped by Ehrlichman because of what sources close to the matter depicted as an inevitable conflict of interest.

In subsequent interviews, these sources again emphasized that the Ehrlichman decision — which brought to an end Wilson's unique role as the attorney for the two highest White House aides implicated in the Watergate scandal — did not presage any significant change in attitude on the former domestic adviser's part toward Haldeman or President Nixon.

Ehrlichman was also reliably reported to have known Frates for "a long time" — as one Ehrlichman associate put it — and also to "have admired him as a trial lawyer."

Frates could not be reached for comment.

Most recently, he has been representing Rebozo during his appearances before the

Senate Watergate Committee in connection with a \$100,000 cash contribution to Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign from Howard R. Hughes.

One closely involved official told of Ehrlichman's decision to hire Frates, raised the question of whether the Miami attorney might also face a conflict of interest problem because of his involvement with Rebozo.

New York Times