



JOHN NEUBAUER

EHRlichman AFTER SENTENCING

## WATERGATE

### Stiff Sentences

After he heard his sentence read from the bench last week by U.S. District Judge Gerhard Gesell, John Ehrlichman momentarily lost his usual steely grip on himself. Standing glumly erect as he listened to the judge's words, Ehrlichman returned silently to the witness table when Gesell finished, reached out to steady himself on the back of his chair, then slowly sank down into his seat. Gesell had just sentenced the former White House domestic adviser to three concurrent prison terms of 20 months to five years each—for one count of conspiracy in authorizing the bur-

DEAN AFTER SENTENCING



AP

## THE NATION

glary of the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis Fielding, and two counts of perjury in testifying before federal grand juries. Ehrlichman will not be eligible for parole until he has served 20 months. He is appealing the verdict.

It was the harshest sentence yet meted out to a former top Nixon aide convicted in the Watergate scandal. But, Gesell told Ehrlichman, except for "the many affirmative aspects of your life, the sentence would have been far more severe." Ehrlichman had told Gesell earlier: "I believe that I am the only one in this room who really knows if I am guilty or not guilty. Your Honor, I am innocent of each and every one of the charges in this case." Unmoved, Gesell snapped back: "The court accepts the verdict of the jury." Gesell characterized the Fielding break-in as a "shameful episode in American history."

Two days later, John Dean came before Judge John Sirica to be sentenced for the single count of conspiracy in the Watergate cover-up that he pleaded guilty to last October. Accompanied by his attorney, Charles Shaffer, and Shaffer's wife Susan (Maureen Dean was at home in Los Angeles), Dean placed himself at the mercy of the court: "The only thing I would ask for is your compassion and understanding. I realize to say I am sorry is not enough." After denying Shaffer's request to postpone sentencing until the newly released Watergate tapes could shed more light on Dean's role in the conspiracy, Sirica handed down a stiff one- to four-year sentence. Noting the current serious illness of Dean's mother-in-law, Sirica allowed Dean until September 3 to arrange for her care before entering prison. It will be at least one year before he will be eligible for parole, though he is likely to spend a fair amount of his sentence outside as a witness in court or before the U.S. Senate sitting in trial of Richard Nixon.