

Ehrlichman Memo Called Phony

Coverup Report Blasted

Washington

A Watergate prosecutor accused John Ehrlichman yesterday of writing a "phony" report in April, 1973, and then trying to introduce the document as evidence that he took no part in the Watergate coverup.

Ehrlichman was on the stand, when prosecutor James F. Neal said the report was designed solely for the protection of Ehrlichman and others "in case things came unstuck."

The eight-page, undated, hand-written report on White House stationery was discovered about a month ago among Ehrlichman's files remaining at the White House.

The document names three of Ehrlichman's co-defendants at the Watergate coverup trial as participants in the coverup.

Although Neal said Ehrlichman has testified previously that there never was such a written report, Ehrlichman said yesterday he handed the report to former President Nixon on April 14, 1973.

Ehrlichman's lawyer, William S. Frates, said the report is vital to his client's defense as evidence that Ehrlichman made a sincere attempt at Mr. Nixon's request to ferret out the facts

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The Naked Man Named by Dean

Washington

Walter C. Minnick remembers with stark clarity hearing himself mentioned on television by John W. Dean III during the Senate Watergate hearings in the summer of 1973.

"I was standing nude in the basement health unit at the Executive Office Building," Minnick told the Watergate coverup trial yesterday.

The judge, the jury, the defendants, the lawyers, the

press and the public promptly burst into laughter. Minnick flushed scarlet.

Minnick, now a corporate official in Boise, Idaho, says he was then a "lowly" White House staffer.

"That'll probably be in every paper in the country," said U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica, grinning and shaking his head.

"It doesn't take much to be news in Boise, your honor," Minnick said.

United Press

of Watergate.

When other defense lawyers objected that the jury should not hear the report, U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica asked Neal for his view.

The prosecutor pointed out that former White House counsel John Dean had already warned Mr. Nixon by March 21, 1973, about the dangers and most of the facts of Watergate.

Neal said that on March

21, 1973, Dean "gave the President of the United States a far more complete and better report than this and doesn't try to protect himself and doesn't — I must say this — make it as phony as this report."

Neal said the Ehrlichman report "never went anywhere because it was one co-conspirator, giving a self-serving statement to another co-conspirator to rely on in case things came unstuck."

The prosecutor said he is unable to "see that this is anything but a charade in which (Ehrlichman and Nixon) were to help protect one another once the coverup began coming apart."

Ehrlichman testified that after interviewing several persons involved in Watergate, he drafted the report in the middle of the night and handed it to Mr. Nixon April 14.

Although Neal said the prosecution had no objection

to introduction of the report, Sirica said he will rule today on the admissibility of the document as evidence.

Taking the witness stand in his own defense — the third of the five defendants to do so — Ehrlichman said that within hours of the June 17, 1972, Watergate arrests, Mr. Nixon's press secretary, Ronald Ziegler, asked Ehrlichman the whereabouts of E. Howard Hunt.

The reference was puzzling since Hunt no longer worked for the White House and his connection to the bugging was not known until two days later, the day Ziegler publicly dismissed the Watergate break-in as a "third-rate burglary attempt."

Ehrlichman did not elaborate, but his testimony appeared to indicate that Ziegler either knew of or suspected almost immediately Hunt's involvement in the bugging.

Ehrlichman denied using the CIA to stall an early phase of the FBI's Watergate investigation. But he said Mr. Nixon told him on July 6, 1972, that he, Mr. Nixon, believed CIA officials were covering up their activities and that a vigorous FBI probe might be "to the jeopardy of the national interest."

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