

Ehrlichman—On His Own

John Ehrlichman said yesterday in San Francisco that he was startled by former President Nixon's decision to re-enter partisan politics by joining in a fund-raising event for Republican Representative Charles Wiggins on Monday.

"It certainly never occurred to me that's something he might do," Ehrlichman said in an interview.

The former White House aide, here to promote "The Company," his novel about Washington, said he had no intention of following the Nixon lead. For that matter, he added, he could not imagine anyone in public life who would welcome an Ehrlichman endorsement.

Ehrlichman, who lives in Santa Fe, N.M., while awaiting the outcome of his appeals on burglary, perjury, conspiracy and other convictions, said he has never had an "articulated" political outlook.

"My public outlook has always been derivative — to defend Richard Nixon's activities," Ehrlichman said.

Now, Ehrlichman said, he is getting an opportunity to explore his own ideas.

"I came to be a Republican by inheritance," he said. "You can live in a community and be guided by its practices and its standards without making any fundamental deci-

sions for yourself because you know what your friends and associates agree with. You float along involuntarily.

"In the last ten years young people have tended to challenge those assumptions, as my generation didn't. Now I have an opportunity to think out how I want to spend my days."

He said he no longer is interested in what he called the "glamor" of serving as a key aide to a president or any other public official.

"The derivative role is one that obviously has aspects that are inevitably destructive," Ehrlichman said.



JOHN EHRLICHMAN
He promoted his book in S.F.

"You tend to rationalize it. You say you are working not for the man but for public service. It's a subtle cost you pay."