

Ervin Panel to Investigate Burglary in Ellsberg Case

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WASHINGTON, June 8—Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. said today that the Senate Watergate committee would expand its investigation to include the burglary of the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist in Beverly Hills, Calif., in September, 1971.

Senator Ervin, the committee chairman, said that his panel would also look into such Watergate spinoffs as the Nixon Administration's 1970 plan, later abandoned, for domestic surveillance of radical organizations.

But, according to the Senator, a North Carolina Democrat, the committee will investigate these matters only insofar as they related to the 1972 election campaign and the burglary last June 17 at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office and apartment complex.

As the Senator explained his intentions in an interview, the committee will try to determine whether the 1970 intelligence plan led to the Watergate break-in. But it will not go into the substance of the plan, he said.

Similarly, the relationship between the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation and the Nixon Administration will be investigated only as to its effects on the 1972 election.

Objection by Gurney

Senator Ervin's plan to broaden the committee's mandate has the support of the other Democrats on the panel, and the ranking Republican, Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee, said that he would raise no objection.

But Senator Edward J. Gurney, Republican of Florida, objected to expanding the inquiry, saying that such matters as the domestic intelligence plan were "no function of our committee at all."

Senator Gurney, who has complained for the last week that the panel was moving too slowly, said in an interview that the Watergate committee had been established to delve into the events surrounding the 1972 election campaign.

He reiterated his belief that the committee should focus right away on the question of whether President Nixon knew about the Watergate burglary or the subsequent cover-up and lay aside for the time being all other questions.

Senator Gurney said there should be a Congressional investigation of the 1970 intelligence plan but that it "should be conducted elsewhere." He suggested that the Government Operations Committee, of which Senator Ervin is chairman and Senator Gurney is a member, might be the proper panel for the inquiry.

Limited to Campaign

The Senate resolution creating the Watergate committee, which was adopted by unanimous vote in February, authorized it "to conduct an investigation and study of the extent, if any, to which illegal, improper, or unethical activities were engaged in by any persons, acting individually or in combination with others, in the Presidential election of 1972, or any campaign, canvass, or other activity related to it."

Mr. Ervin said that when news of the break-in at Dr. Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office came out in April, he became concerned that the committee's mandate might not be broad enough to allow an investigation of that matter.

Two of the men convicted in the Watergate conspiracy—G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt Jr.—were reported also to have been involved in the burglary of the psychiatrist's office.

Because of that connection between the two burglaries, Senator Ervin said, he drafted a resolution proposing that the committee be specifically authorized to investigate the Ellsberg break-in.

However, he said, he then discussed the situation with several other members of the committee. They agreed, he said, that the committee's original mandate permitted an investigation of the Ellsberg connection.

At that point, according to Mr. Ervin, he discarded the proposed resolution.