

David Selvin, Pacifica Washington Bureau:

..... Petersen then revealed that he had told Nixon on April the 18th of the Ellsberg break-in, but Nixon had told him to forget about it because it involved national security. Chief counsel Samuel Dash asked if Nixon had known before that time.

Dash [voice]: Did he indicate that he knew anything about that break-in when you told him about it?

Petersen [voice]: No, he did not - Mr. Dash, I have to be very careful there. I'd like to rephrase the question for you if I can.

Dash: Please do.

Petersen: "Did he indicate he knew anything about it" rather than "anything about the break-in." And the President said, when I told him, "I know about that. That's a national security matter. You stay out of that. Your mandate is to investigate Watergate." Now he didn't say he knew about the burglary, he said he knew about the report. I think that's a vital distinction to be recognized.

Dash: When were you reporting this to the President?

Petersen: It was on April 18th, sir. And he said, stay out of it, and after I got off the telephone, why, I called up Mr. Silbert and I called up Mr. Moroni and said - to Mr. Silbert I said the President said stay out of there, Earl, and that's it, and I called up Mr. Moroni and said, just forget it.

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