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Excerpts from an interview with
Henry Petersen, by
Archibald Cox and James Vorenberg,
May 19, 1973

[Date of interview is May 29, 1973.]

that meant I was reduced only to ultimate conclusions.

MR. VORENBERG: Just the two of you at those meetings?

MR. PETERSEN: That's right.

MR. VORENBERG: Kleindienst only came to the first one?

MR. PETERSEN: Kleindienst excused himself at the first meeting because of the involvement of John Mitchell.

MR. VORENBERG: How would they be initiated? The President would just call you up and say would you come over and talk to me about the case?

MR. PETERSEN: Well, would you come on over. What's happening? And you would go over there and basically it came down to a reiteration: Yeah, you think I ought to get rid of these guys? Yeah, and I don't think I should. I've got to think about this and that and a thousand other things. And I said, Fine. My viewpoint is parochial. I think you ought to do it. We went around and around on that issue.

MR. COX: Well now, going back to this first rather long meeting: Was the President surprised when you said that Ehrlichman and Haldeman were implicated, so far as you could judge?

MR. PETERSEN: Well, so far as -- He said he couldn't believe it. You know, just these are fine upstanding guys. Just couldn't be, you know. We had to concede we hadn't corroborated the information. We are here to alert you. We think we've got something. We could be wrong, but we are telling you it's time for you to move to protect yourself and the presidency. That was the thrust of the thing.