

The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “Interview Transcript of "Salient" Portions” of the Alexander P. Butterfield Papers, 1973 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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This stenographic notebook the
interview of Alexander Butterfield
by Watergate Committee staff on
Friday, July 13, 1973.

It was in this interview that
Mr. Butterfield stated that
"there is tape in the oval office"

→ The accompanying 15 pages of
hand-written notes represent
my verbatim transcription of
the salient portions of this
interview. The transcription
was made the day after.

Marcus A. Bauer
August 25, 1974



ORIGINAL RETIRED TO
SPECIAL DOCUMENTS FILE



There is tape in the oval office. Its kept by the SS & only 4 SS men know about it.

This was put in about 2 1/2 years ago. — at the 18 month point. The President is very history oriented about the rule he is going to play, and is not subtle about it.

Higby came to me & said the President wants you to get together w/ the SS & have the Oval office, Cabinet Room & EOB set up for taping.

ORIGINAL RETIRED TO
SPECIAL DOCUMENTS FILE

I got the technical security people - Wong was in charge there - they did the sweeping there.

TSD are the type that go to

China. They said O.K. & did

it on a weekend when the President was out of town.

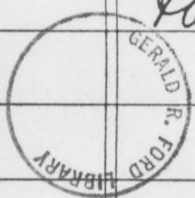


There's a locator system in the White House. Steve Bull

me and Haldeman had locator lights on our desks. Only activated

by the SS when the President was in the Oval Office.

the taping device in
the Oval Office is not running
but is triggered when you start
talking.



This is all something
I know the President didn't
want revealed. But you've
asked me & I feel I should
be honest. I was told none
was to know this.

I had a switch put
on my phone which activated
the Cabinet Room, where he met
w/ groups of 12 or more.

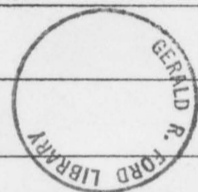
Question

Re - who knew of the

taping system?

Only Higley Waldeman

Wong SS - Zoomuro





located under the White House.



Question Who knew of the taping system

Only Alderman Higley Wong (SS)

Zumwalt (SS) & the telephone specialists

Question Was Dean _____?

I feel certain. Higley in
my own private thoughts.

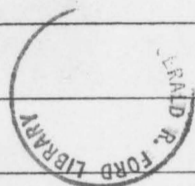
Question Who changed the tapes?

The secret service changed
the tapes @ least once a day.

Question Where is the master unit
located?

They're located under the White House
?

Question Re - location of recording devices?

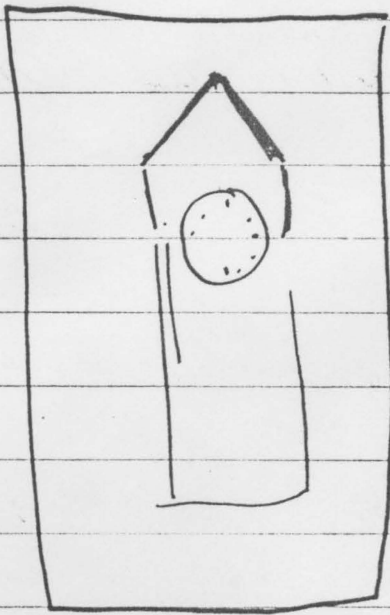


President's telephone in the Lincoln Room, Oval Office, EOB
Inner Office, President's telephone in his study @ Camp David.

There is a storage problem on the tapes

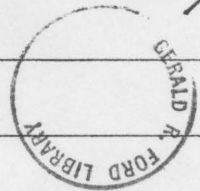
Zumwald takes the tapes off.

When Lou Sims came all Wong said was "I told him about the thing".



Has always _____ in the
EOB with locks on them that
no one knows about.

And I told my secretary
Mary Sidley.

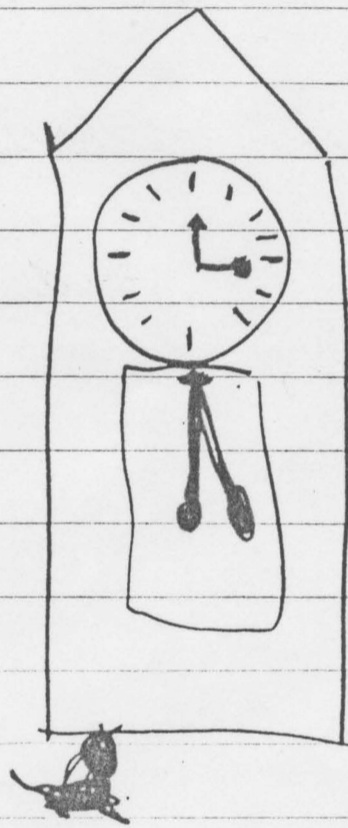


The Cabinet Room can be
cut off.

EOB is activated by locator
light.

In the Oval Office - all
it takes is sound.

In those ~~offices~~ tapes
of the Cabinet Room the sound
is not so good.



The whole idea was historical

Question

Do you recall any memos that this was done in the Johnson Administration?

I have heard that LBT had a lot of things recorded — & the SS indicated that they played these tape games before.

Question

Were these transcriptions ever made of the tapes or did he ever request a tape?

No — not to my knowledge.

Dean would not know
about it.

~~L~~umwald put the tapes
in the storage area.



Question: Where are the tapes located
physically?

One place is in the main
corridor back of the stairs behind
an iron gate.

Question: ~~Do~~ Would you say that
this material was being processed
for the Archives?

He said to Waldeman
that the smartest thing to do
is to get 4 or 5 trustworthy
people (to do nothing but
transcribe to tapes for the
archives)

They planned for Trudy
Brown to be in charge of this.

There is ~~not~~ cut-off.

Question could it be cut-off in
the Oval Office.

No.

~~No - the SS activities~~

S/A We're getting beyond
vicinity of a conversation.

S/A

The plan was that it would
be typed?

Yes.

Zumwalt dated the tapes.

He takes whole thing off at the
end of the day.

Question To your knowledge there
is no manual cutoff

No manual cut off. ~~is~~

_____ in oval office which
is activated when the light is on
reflecting the President's being in
the room.



I have heard them &
there is nothing wrong w/ the
tapes @ all. (re. oval office etc)

The tapes are very bad
& almost inaudible in the
Cabinet Room.

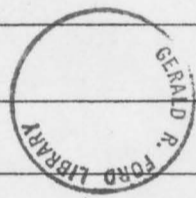


The President never
inquired about the tapes.

Question Has President ever re-
-quested that SS. not activate
locator light?

No.

The President has had
Cabinet meetings & didn't want
anyone in there. And I was
sure that he didn't want that
recorded.

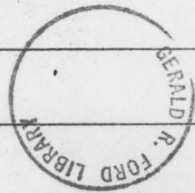


At Camp David the taping
device is on the phone in the
study called Aspen.

The SS was concerned
about that because if state
visitors come they stay in
there. They have their own
security guards.

It might be taken off
& removed.

This information was
not in session w/ Special
Prosecutor.



When Haig was appointed
I told him about that since
he had Haldiman's Junctions.
& he said "I know, I
know about that."