

At. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701

11/26/73

Dear Barry,

It might be comforting to be able to believe that someone other than you (I hope) and I regret that my suggestions about an inquiry into Nixon's taping system were not heeded. By now this could have been a helluva story, could have been in court, could have opened up very much. Including those yawning steel doors.

I am no tape expert, but I do have experiences to draw upon. For your information, a story from the past you might find relevant to the mysterious erasure - the one that results in a tone when there should be total silence or assorted noises.

In mid-May 1967 I spoke at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Subject, The Integrity of Our Society. These great kids spotted two men in the audience with a poorly-hidden tape recorder. The kids gave them a rough time. I was excessively kind, which embarrassed them more. I got on a plane originating there and got off at the first stop, Kansas City. I had no luggage and I had seen it go down the chute.

Several days later it was delivered to me in New Orleans by an embarrassed man who told me frankly that he did not believe the explanations given him. Every piece of paper was missing. Even paper matches. My brand new portable typewriter was ruined but the case was unscratched. And a brand new and for its day expensive tape recorder had received the most professional attention. The needle indicating level worked perfectly, the playback was perfect, but it just would not record. Had I not had to check the quality of a very thin female voice I'd never have known that in the interviewing I was recording nothing.

The machine was similar to those Garrison's investigators used. I asked the chief investigator to have his repairman repair this one and I borrowed a machine to use. Several days later mine was returned with the report that it was close to unrepairable. When I got home I gave it back to the store at which I'd bought it, they sent it to the factory, this has happened perhaps six times, and it has never been properly repaired. Today I can't be sure it will record when all the mechanism is engaged. Whatever was done to it when it was intercepted apparently had not even been detected by the factory. With the typewriter there is no question what happened. It was a systematic job of careful destruction of all the major parts. It had to be junked, with the original ribbon still in it. I am without doubt that there was no accident to my recorder. I never use it now except for listening.

Any tape recorder can be fixed so that it cannot erase and it is a simple matter. Some machines are made this way. I have an old stenographic machine at least ten years old that will permit transcribing only. To put this another way, had it been desired that there be no accident, there would have been no "accident."

And to add to this, had my suggestions been followed and were there to be testimony on this, an instant story and an instant perjury charge would not be impossible. Perhaps subornation of perjury, too.

On the transcript of the AP MS convention speech, the first Post editorial indicated the writer had the transcript. I'd like to go over it with care now even more than before.

As I slowly accumulate more on Caddy, my interest in him increases, too.

Sincerely,