

Miss Woods Testifies to Grand Jury

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Rose Mary Woods, President Nixon's personal secretary, testified yesterday before a federal grand jury investigating the 18½ minutes of erasures on one of his Watergate tapes.

She said she answered every question put to her and gave the same account she has already stated publicly.

"I have only one story to tell," Miss Woods told reporters after her day-long appearance at the U.S. Courthouse here. "I have told only the truth all the way through."

Miss Woods has said she might have caused a five-minute gap in the tape—but no more—when she was reviewing it for Mr. Nixon on a Uher recording machine in her White House office last Oct. 1.

Asked whether she thought the entire 18½ minutes were erased accidentally, she said: "I have no idea. It could even have been just a lousy machine, as a matter of fact."

Her attorney, Charles B. Rhyne, sharply denounced the technical experts who reported last month that the 18½-minute gap was the result of five separate erasures, all done manually. The experts said that none of the erasures—which obliterated a discussion of the Watergate scandal between Mr. Nixon and former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman—could have been made by the footpedal Miss Woods said she was using.

Calling the experts "professors who don't know what they're doing," Rhyne assailed their study as "a \$100,000 boondoggle." Speaking to reporters while Miss Woods testified, he criticized the technical panel for replacing a faulty part in Miss Woods' Uher 5000 during the course



Associated Press

Rose Mary Woods leaves U.S. Courthouse with her attorney, Charles Rhyne.

of their work instead of reporting it to the court.

Rhyne said he had a report from a Virginia firm, Dektor Counterintelligence & Security, Inc., suggesting that the faulty part itself could have erased the tape by sputtering on and off while Miss Woods was on the phone, as she has testified.

The head of the firm, Allan D. Bell, Jr., told a reporter, that he feels, that the faulty part could have decreased voltage to the machine, then suddenly cut it off, and turned it back on again—leaving the same "erase" signatures on the tapes that the experts

found. However, he acknowledged that this theory still left unanswered the "problem" of how 18½ minutes could have been erased. Miss Woods has repeatedly stated that she noticed and corrected her mistake immediately after a five-minute phone call.

The Dektor firm had no access to the erased tape and performed its tests on a Uher 4000 recorder, which has a different type of power supply. But Bell, who had once hoped to see his firm represented on the panel of experts, said "we made allowances" for these factors.