

transcribed from tape

Excerpts from report by Paz Cohen, Pacifica, Washington:

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Warren said yesterday that Mr. Buzhardt had decided the tapes were non-existent on the 20th of October after Secret Service investigation failed to turn up the tapes. However, ... Cox said that Nixon had dictated a memo of that April 15th conversation and this, as I understand it, was also ... Petersen's understanding.

Warren said yesterday that the tapes are now being stored - those tapes which do exist - in the residential quarters of the White House. But then today Buzhardt and Mr. Zumwalt, the Secret Service agent who was in charge of installing those things in the White House (the tape mechanisms), said that all the existing tapes are being stored in the Executive Office Building.

Yesterday Buzhardt said the April 15th tape had not been recorded due to "a malfunction of the system" - this is a quote - "or the basic inadequacy of the system." But then today he said that the conversation had not been recorded because the tape had run out. However, also today, Mr. Zumwalt, who was questioned by Mr. Ben-Veniste ... said that there may have been indeed a 15th April tape and this looks more likely than ever because two boxes which contained tapes, or would contain tapes, were put in evidence. Both of them were marked for the April 15th weekend. One box said on it that a full reel had been removed on April 16th, and that box was marked Part One. Zumwalt acknowledged that there may be a Part Two, which would be the Dean tape.

Zumwalt also said today - I had left the court before this happened, I was just reading it off the wire - that Mr. Haldeman, as we knew before, had listened to some of the tapes, and Zumwalt said today that the Dean tape (or what would be the Dean tape) was removed from his safe on orders of a senior White House official at a time that Haldeman is known to have listened [9 - 11 Jul] to at least one of Nixon's tape-recorded conversations bearing on Watergate, although I believe Haldeman has said he did not listen to the April 15th tape. And through questioning of Zumwalt, Ben-Veniste brought out that a tape covering the period of April 11th to 16th was removed on July 11th and returned July 12th. He also said that from his notes he could not ascertain that the critical April tape had ever been returned. Haldeman said that he had only listened to the September 15th tape.

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Tim Gillis, Pacifica: Now the reason we should look carefully at this business about whether the tapes - the April 15th tape - were removed from the files and so forth, is that there might, of course, be another explanation for why the Dean tape is missing, and that is, that someone took out of the files the continuous tape that ran all day April 15th and removed the portion on which the Dean conversation was recorded and made it sound like the tape had simply run out. So that would be the reason that following the check-ins and check-outs of this particular tape would be a particularly important thing to do.

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Cohen: I guess another possibility is that if the conversations Nixon had on that day - the pre-Dean conversations - were between himself and some other person that he could get to re-stage the conversation, that he could make it look as though the tape had run out, by recording the conversation now rather than by actually submitting the tape. I don't know if there would be any way to show that.

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Cohen: One other thing, ... there are a couple of other possible discrepancies. One which I'll mention now, is that ... Petersen, on April 18th, told the Ervin committee that Nixon had telephoned him and said that he had a tape of the April 15th conversation. And Nixon later said that he had not said that, that Petersen must have misunderstood.

[End of Paz Cohen's report.]