

Butterfield Quits as FAA Chief

Alexander P. Butterfield, Federal Aviation administrator and the man who disclosed the existence of the taping system in the Nixon White House, has resigned effective March 31, the White House announced yesterday.

Butterfield was named to the FAA post after President Nixon's 1972 re-election victory and after nearly four years as a deputy assistant to Nixon.

He startled the nation in July, 1973 when he told the Senate Watergate committee that he had supervised installation of the tapes in the President's offices.

In a letter to President Ford, Butterfield said he was

resigning because he was aware of the President's desire "to put those of your own choosing" in a pointive posts. He denied that he had "argued or maneuvered" to retain his position and praised the President's leadership.

In an obvious criticism of the former President, butterfield wrote Mr. Ford that "no one could have been more delighted or re-energized than I when you assumed the presidency."

While Butterfield has been criticized as failing to improve

aviation safety, he strongly defended the FAA's record and said it was one of the "finest" organizations in the government.

Mr. Ford thanked Butterfield for the "significant progress" he had made in developing a more efficient air navigation system.

Butterfield's resignation has been expected for weeks, and he has consulted with White House aides regarding the choice of his successor. But a spokesman indicated no one has yet been chosen.