

15 Jan 74 ①

Tape (gap) - "Technical experts reported in federal court [today] that the 18½-minute gap on [WH tape, 20 Jun 72] was the result of at least five separate erasures, all done manually. They said that none of the erasures could have been caused by the floor pedal that ... Rose Mary Woods said she used." Experts also say the buzzing sounds "were put on the tape in the process of erasing and re-recording at least five, and perhaps as many as nine separate and continuous segments."

After court session St. Clair tells Richard H. Bolt, chairman of the panel that he is "going to talk to my own experts" before resuming questioning 18 Jan. Bolt says, "I thought we were your experts."

WH statement, issued by St. Clair's office, says there will be no "premature comment" on the experts' findings.

NYT story carries comment by Elliott Richardson, Baker, Weicker, Montoya, Henry M. Jackson.

WXP 16 Jan 74, Lardner

SFC 16 Jan 74 [NYT]

Ford - "In what appeared to be a new, more aggressive defense of President Nixon by the White House, [Ford] lashed out [today] at what he called 'a few extreme partisans' who he said are 'bent on stretching out the ordeal of Watergate for their own purposes.' .... " Ford spoke to members of American Farm Bureau Federation, before he learned of experts' report on tape erasure.

SFC 16 Jan 74 [NYT]

Goldwater, in speech to Maryland GOP fund-raising dinner, charges liberal Democrats with using Watergate scandal for their own political advantage while creating an impeachment lobby to remove Nixon; says he does not believe they have "what it takes, either in evidence or guts" to push through impeachment and subsequent trial.

SFC 16 Jan 74 [NYT]

Bull categorically denies that he erased portion of tape of 20 Jun 72, says there were "a number of other people" at the WH who had had access to the tape and the Uher recorder.

SFC 16 Jan 74 [NYT]

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Nixon/Hughes - Richard G. Danner is understood to have told Ervin committee staff that Nixon personally suggested to him before the 1968 presidential election that he solicit a campaign donation from Hughes. Danner at the time was working in the campaign; now manages Hughes' Sands Hotel in Las Vegas.

SFC 16 Jan 74 [NYT] See fuller story NYT, Crewdson

Frederic V. Malek, "according to documents before the Senate Watergate committee," said he drafted and monitored a secret plan in 1972 to use multi-million-dollar federal grants where they would win votes for Nixon's re-election. Unclear whether Malek himself said this, or it was said of him by others.

Malek, a special assistant to Nixon in 1972, now deputy director of Office of Management and Budget, commenting on this report, says the project was designed neither to buy votes nor to put improper political pressure on government agencies.

SFC 16 Jan 74 [NYT]

Impeachment - Joseph Kraft: "The true character of the President's defense was reasserted last week with the White House statement on [the ITT and AMPI cases]. In each the President acknowledged responsibility but refused blame. .... [Kraft also deals with attempt to use the CIA in cover-up, tax deduction for papers, erasure of tape.] Time after time, Mr. Nixon has acknowledged responsibilities with stories that hold together only as hedges against criminal prosecution. .... The country has to accept the challenge. .... "

SFC 15 Jan 74, Joseph Kraft

ITT - See clipping, "U.S. Must Accept Nixon's Challenge,  
AMPI - by Joseph Kraft  
SFC 15 Jan 74