

# Why He Told the Truth

Washington

It didn't surprise his mother that Alexander Porter Butterfield gave Watergate investigators the unvarnished facts — including the news that disputed conversations between President Nixon and his aides are all on tape somewhere in the White House vaults.

"He always stood for moral integrity and straightforwardness," said Susan Butterfield in an interview from Tacoma, Wash., yesterday afternoon. "He doesn't like me to talk this way, but he was an Eagle Scout and he carried the cross in church.

"He was a very upstanding boy, ambitious to succeed in everything he undertook. When the kids dressed up in costumes for Halloween, he wanted to be the best, and he was," she said. "His great-grandfather was a West Pointer, and Alec was brought up very strictly by a navy father, who's trying to get me off the phone right now."

As a flying colonel in the air force, as a top administrative officer in the Nixon White House, and in the last four months as head of the Federal Aviation Administration, Butterfield seems to have impressed everybody as the sort of quiet, successful professional that any mother could be proud of.

## BRIGHT

Joseph Califano, a Pentagon "whiz kid" in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, remembers him as an exceptionally bright, 14-hour-a-day policy planner — "a first-class staff guy,



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ALEXANDER PORTER BUTTERFIELD  
His mother was proud of him

straight, essentially a political," Califano said yesterday. "If he disagreed with you, you knew it. I was thinking this afternoon, what if they had asked him to hold back about the tapes, but with Butterfield, nobody would have asked."

A former colleague at the White House recalled him as a model of dedication, without zealotry. It seemed typical that the morning after his wife and daughter were both seriously injured in an automobile accident, three years ago, Butterfield was on duty as usual at 7:30 a.m. because, as he said, he knew that the President relied on him to get the morning schedule moving.

At the FAA he told his staff that safety was henceforth going to be the agency's primary mission. "He read all the accident reports himself," said an associate. "He almost took them personally."

## INTERVIEW

Between his first interview with the Senate Watergate staff on Friday and his televised testimony yesterday, he spent large parts of Saturday and Sunday — as he normally does — in his FAA office. Later this week he will fly to Moscow to open a technology symposium and a sales promotion for American aerospace products in the Soviet Union.

Butterfield was born at Pensacola, Fla., on April 6, 1926 — the elder son of Horace B. Butterfield, a Navy pilot now retired. Flying has been his career and his lifelong passion.

After failing the naval academy's eye test, he joined the Army Air Force and flew the twin-fuselage P-38's in the Pacific during World War II.

## YOUTH

For several years in his youth he flew with the Air Force stunt team, the "Sky Blazers," which won the aerobatic prize at the Paris air show in 1953. He is also

a qualified parachutist. It is said that when he was an instructor at the Air Force Academy in the late 1950's, he would often take an F-80 to 35,000 feet and put it on automatic pilot to put himself in the proper mood to grade student papers.

In Vietnam he commanded a squadron of low-level reconnaissance flyers, for which he was awarded the distinguished Flying Cross. He also holds the Legion of Merit.

On his last military assignment — as the Air Forces F-111 project officer and senior defense department representative in Australia—he appeared to be heading for major command.

But as H. R. Haldeman assembled a new White House staff at the end of 1968, he remembered an old friend from the University of Southern California — the man, as it happened, who had married Mrs. Haldeman's sorority roommate at UCLA — and persuaded Butterfield to take an early retirement.

To become the FAA administrator this year, Butterfield had to resign from the Air Force entirely, sacrificing a pension that would now be more than \$10,000 a year.

Mrs. Butterfield, the former Charlotte Mary Maguire, was his sweetheart in the 5th grade in the public schools of Coronado — the seaside town across the bay from San Diego that Butterfield now calls home. The Butterfields have three children.

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