

FCC Asks Probe Of Nixon Phones

Washington

The Federal Communications Commission asked the American Telephone and Telegraph Co. yesterday to investigate the reported violation of company tariffs by the White House in connection with recording devices placed on telephones used by President Nixon.

The FCC action followed the disclosures Monday by Alexander P. Butterfield, a former White House aide, that recording equipment had been installed in the spring of 1971 on telephones in the Oval Office at the White House and elsewhere.

Butterfield told the Senate Watergate Committee that

the President's callers were not cautioned by an audible signal that their conversations were being recorded, which, if true, would violate AT&T tariff No. 263.

That tariff provides that any recording equipment used by telephone customers must include a device that emits an audible tone at 15-second intervals when the recorder is operating.

Bernard Strassburg, chief of the FCC's common carrier bureau, said that he had asked AT&T to establish whether the White House had used equipment without such a tone. The penalty for a violation is the removal of telephone equipment leased to the offending customer.

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