

The Man Who Revealed Nixon Tapes Resigns

Washington

Alexander P. Butterfield, who startled the nation in 1973 by revealing the existence of Richard M. Nixon's secret White House taping system, resigned yesterday as chief of the Federal Aviation Administration.

The FAA has come under intense criticism during the past year for failure to act more promptly on aviation safety matters. But Mr. Ford, accepting Butterfield's resignation "with sincere regret," praised the agency chief for advancing the cause of air safety.

Butterfield took charge of the FAA March 14, 1973, after serving four years as a deputy assistant to Mr. Nixon. His resignation from the FAA post is effective March 31.

"Aware of your desire to put those of your own choosing into cabinet and key sub-cabinet posts, I hereby tender my resignation . . ." Butterfield told Mr. Ford in a letter.

Only four months after he



AP Wirephoto

A. P. BUTTERFIELD
Chief of the FAA

took over the FAA, Butterfield made his surprise disclosure to the Senate Watergate committee that Mr. Nixon had secretly taped conversations in the Oval Office. Some of those tapes, wrestled from the White House in a long legal battle,

finally forced Mr. Nixon to resign the presidency.

Butterfield, who was in charge of White House security prior to his FAA job, always denied he was directly involved in Watergate or had acted — as was reported in new accounts — as White House liaison man with the CIA.

Mr. Ford's letter accepting the resignation made an apparent reference to the Nixon tape disclosure, saying: "I know that events outside of your duties of the past two years have presented a particular burden, but you have never permitted them to effect the quality of your service to my administration."

Butterfield, 48, was born in Pensacola, Fla., and served in the Air Force from 1949 until 1969. The FAA noted his Air Force experience in his official biography, saying he brought to the agency "a personal history of . . . firsthand experience as manager in the field of aviation."

United Press