

Kennedy Aides Disclaim Tapes

Cambridge, Mass.

Several high officials of the Kennedy administration said yesterday they had no knowledge of the recordings of presidential meetings or telephone calls, despite the announcement by the John F. Kennedy Library that it had discovered 68 dictabelts of presidential telephone calls and 125 magnetic tapes of presidential meetings.

Dan H. Fenn Jr., director of the library, said in a brief statement that "a cursory check" of the recordings ap-

peared to indicate that they were concerned with national security affairs.

McGeorge Bundy, President Kennedy's national security adviser, said that the announcement was "the first I knew" of any recording of meetings.

HISTORIAN

"I know nothing about it," Bundy said, adding that he did not recall seeing any recording equipment during meetings he attended. He speculated that if there was taping, it was "a very private decision by President Kennedy."

Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. described the idea of secret recordings during the Kennedy era as "absolutely inconceivable."

"It was not the sort of thing Kennedy would have done. The kind of people in the White House then would not have thought of doing something like that," the former White House aide was reported as saying.

He added, however, that "it is my impression there were occasions — a few critical meetings — where recordings were made," and suggested that the negotia-

tions with Governor Ross Barnett over the integration of the University of Mississippi may have been recorded.

RECORDING

Larry O'Brien, the former Democratic national chairman and a key political operative under President Kennedy said that he "never had any knowledge" of any recording. He, too, said that he had "no recollection" of seeing any recording equipment during meetings.

Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark told a democratic breakfast meeting in New York that he was unaware of any "surreptitious taping" of White House conversations during either the Kennedy or Johnson administrations.

"I don't believe it happened," Clark said. "It's a shameful thing to do. It's unacceptable that a president could ever condone, much less order, secret tapings."

The Kennedy recordings, dating to mid-1962, were discovered Tuesday in a search of the archives of the Kennedy library.

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