

See also letter to editor, SFChronicle,
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Sirica May Hire Tape Experts

Washington

U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica was said by aides yesterday to be considering the hiring of experts to authenticate the White House tapes if necessary, although audio specialists say verification may be impossible.

The aides said the use of technical consultants is only one of many possibilities that the judge has under review in connection with his monitoring of the tapes. They also said the judge does not feel that the White House is deliberately trying to trick him.

A survey of audio experts whose opinions were sought by the New York Times found they believe that it would be almost impossible to detect an expert doctoring job if the nine tape recordings have indeed been edited.

OPINION

"There would be only one chance in a million to detect the work of a very skillful editor," said Mike Randall, a consultant to Syntonic Research Inc. of New York.

The collective conclusion of experts employed by the major producers of magnetic tape and recording instruments was that for every method of detecting an editing job, there was another method of covering it up.

All those questioned assumed that if editing had been made that it had been done by an expert who had access to the most sophisticated of electronic gadgetry.

ROLE

The tapes themselves may shed light on President Nixon's role in the events that immediately followed the break-in of Democratic national headquarters in the Watergate office building here on June 17, 1972.

Originally subpoenaed by Archibald Cox, the ousted Watergate special prosecutor, the tapes are secret recordings of conversations Mr. Nixon had with four former aides, H. R. Halde-
man, John D. Ehrlichman,
John N. Mitchell and John
W. Dean III.

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