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Connally's Advice on Tapes—Burn Them

San Antonio, Tex.

Former Texas Governor John Connally said yesterday that he urged that former President Nixon destroy tape recordings of his private White House conversations. Connally added that he believes any existing tapes should be destroyed now.

"They never should have been made in the first place. They should have been destroyed. They should still be destroyed," Connally told a news conference.

Connally, the Democrat-turned-Republican who served as secretary of the Treasury under Mr. Nixon, said the recordings "were an invasion of privacy that should never have happened."

He was asked to comment on a report by Mr. Nixon's former chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, who claimed Connally asked him to urge Mr. Nixon to burn the tapes.

"That's true," said Connally.

But he insisted that "under no circumstances," should any subpoenaed tapes have been destroyed.

Connally confirmed he told Haldeman in a telephone conversation that Mr. Nixon should gather up the tapes, invite the press and burn the tapes in the White House Rose Garden.

That way, he said, "there would be no secret about it."

Connally reiterated at the news conference that he is seeking no public office, including the Republican vice-presidential nomination.

He said he has no intention of announcing his support for either President Ford or challenger Ronald Reagan before the Republican National Convention.

Associated Press