

KENNEDY DENIES CANDIDACY PLANS

Rebuts C.B.S. News Report
He Is Closer to Decision

Senator Robert F. Kennedy was reported in a television broadcast Thursday night to be closer than ever to deciding to seek the Democratic Presidential nomination. However, the Senator promptly denied that there was any change in his position.

The report, which was broadcast on a Columbia Broadcasting System news program, said the New York Democrat was reconsidering his earlier decision not to oppose President Johnson, and that he might run in the California, Oregon and South Dakota primaries.

The television report also said several close advisers to Mr. Kennedy, particularly his brother, Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, now wanted him to make himself available for a draft.

The Massachusetts Senator who with Theodore C. Sorensen argued most strongly against his brother's entering the race when the move was considered earlier this year, was said by C.B.S. to have changed his mind.

Robert Kennedy, reached here by telephone, denied that his brother's opinion had changed.

He said that he saw "no foreseeable circumstances" under which he would challenge President Johnson for the nomination.

Other Reports Cited

Mr. Kennedy said the same thing at the end of January after other reports that he was re-evaluating his determination not to contest the nomination.

The television network report, which was broadcast on "The C.B.S. Evening News" with Walter Cronkite, said there were three reasons for Senator Kennedy's purported reconsideration of his position.

It said that he was disappointed in President Johnson's response to the riots report by the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. It cited the Senator's growing concern over escalation of the

war in Vietnam. And it said he was encouraged by signs of "new life" in the campaign by Senator Eugene J. McCarthy of Minnesota for the Democratic nomination.

Such signs, said the report, which was given by John Hart, a C.B.S. News correspondent, are regarded by Kennedy supporters as a barometer of anti-war and anti-Johnson feeling.

Edward Kennedy could not be reached for comment Thursday night.

Denial by Sorensen

Mr. Sorensen, who was an aide to President Kennedy and now advises Robert Kennedy, discounted the television report.

"I know of no substance to the report," he said in a telephone interview here.

Clayton Rost, head of the California branch of Citizens for Kennedy, which filed preliminary papers Wednesday to put Senator Kennedy's name on the June 4 primary ballot there, said he had had no indication from the Senator about his position.

The group has until April 5 to name candidates for con-

vention delegates and to gather the 13,746 signatures needed to put Senator Kennedy's name on the ballot.

Senator Kennedy's reluctance to oppose President Johnson for the nomination has not prevented him from attacking the President on his conduct of the war in Vietnam.

Earlier Thursday, the Senator said in the Senate that it was "immoral and intolerable to continue the way we are going" in Vietnam.