

## FOREWORD

### **Transcript Warning:**

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### **Punctuation:**

The following conventions are used throughout the transcripts:

- \* \* \*      To indicate a pause in the recording while the speaker listens to the person speaking at the other end of the telephone. Used when only one side of a telephone conversation is recorded.
- [ ? ]      When the transcriber is not certain of what is said on the recording.
- . . . .      To indicate a sentence which the speaker trails off without completing it.
- . . .        When a speaker is interrupted before a sentence is completed.
- \_\_\_\_\_    To indicate the speaker's emphasis.
- [ / ]        Used to enclose editorial comments of the transcriber such as */Meeting appears to be breaking up/* or */Several speakers speak at once and none of the words are intelligible./*

### **Names:**

The first time a name is mentioned, the full name is provided whenever it is known. "JFK" and "RFK" are used for President Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, respectively. When the identity of a speaker is unknown, "Speaker?" is used; when the identification of a speaker is uncertain, a question mark follows the name. The heading of each transcript gives the names of all participants listed in the President's Appointment Books as scheduled to attend the meeting.

### **Preparation:**

These electronic documents were created from transcripts available in the audiovisual research room in the John F. Kennedy Library. The transcripts were scanned using optical character recognition and the resulting text files were proofread against the original transcripts. Some formatting changes were made.

Papers of John F. Kennedy

Presidential Recordings

Dictabelts

## **Dictabelt 14B**

Conversation #5: President Kennedy and Lawrence F. O'Brien

March 12, 1963

President: -----construction will add a billion dollars to the budget, the pay raise will be almost automatic. Construction you have to have appropriation for, so maybe we will be back with our budget figures. But it does . . . There are two things, first, as a practical matter, it does raise our budget, secondly, it is not a bad point to make. I mean, it takes a lot of the guts out of the attacks on us.

Mr. O'Brien: Yeah.

President: If we can made the point that the House of Representatives, in one week, went a billion dollars over the President's budget, it seems to me it is pretty important for us politically. Indicating we, after all, sent up a pretty hard budget, and maybe we are not the ones who are the great spenders, etc., etc.

Mr. O'Brien: I gather the reluctance . . . the reluctance of the leadership in this instance in some degree is that there is unanimity in this area. You know that is the problem we will be faced with.

President: Well, you will have a voice vote. We don't want a roll call. What we're wondering is whether Kermit Gordon should write a letter of the budget, indicating what this will cost. And indicating that it will also cost about 60 or 70 million dollars in our gold flow. Now, if he wrote the letter gratuitously, that's rather hard, or added a statement. The other way would be if a Congressman wrote and asked him. I would just like to have the point made, because I don't want to have a fight with [Carl] Vinson. I think it is a goddam good point.

Mr. O'Brien: I think it is is a damn good point, and I know that [Hale] Boggs for one, at least, it is perfectly willing to make the point on the floor, and I am sure that he could do it in a way that wouldn't get us in a jam up with Vinson. But it . . . it a . . . I think this it is worthwhile. Actually, I think there would be some real mileage in this in the press if they catch it.

President: Well, now, there are two issues. You really have to put them together. Isn't the other one the construction bill that will come out Thursday, supposedly?

Mr. O'Brien: Yeah, yeah.

President: Now, maybe we could oppose that better than we could the pay raise. Kermit Gordon could then let it say what you did in the House 691 million plus this, adds a billion, and we just feel that this, you know, makes our budget problems more difficult, etc., etc. So it is is a question of whether he writes it on the pay raise or waits and does it Thursday on this other matter, or whether he puts the two together or what he does. Would you think about it?

Mr. O'Brien: Alright, I can see your point on the pay raise. That it is a little touchy. Not only in the same area as we have the other one, but also in the area of the reaction of the military and their families, et cetera.

President: Well, the Budget Bureau it is not me and it is is not McNamara. It is looks just like discussing what, uh, I mean, they will pass it, but it will, a . . . it's a valid point.

Mr. O'Brien: Why don't you let me think about the procedure on it.

President: Alright.