

FOREWORD

Transcript Warning:

All written transcripts are imperfect abstracts of spoken conversation. Variations in sound quality and in the aural acuity of listeners can and do produce wide variations in what is heard. Even though transcripts may be prepared at great effort and with great care, many points of ambiguity are inevitable, and erroneous interpretations from transcripts are always possible. Therefore, to ensure full confidence in any and all quotations from the presidential recordings, users are strongly urged to check all transcript renditions against the actual tape recordings before publication.

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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.

Dictabelt 26B, Item 26B2

[Between August 19 and 22, 1963]

[For most of this conversation there is a strong echo. Wherever possible the echo has been included in the text.]

JFK: Hello.

McCormack:¹ Hello, Mr. Pres- . . .

JFK: Mr. Speaker, how are you?

McCormack: Oh, sick.

JFK: What's the matter?

McCormack: Ah, I've had Wilbur Mills in, and I begged him to get his bill out so we could bring it up the Wednesday after Labor Day.

JFK: And he wouldn't do that?

McCormack: Well, I told him, uh, and I said, "If we go over for ten days, we're gonna be clobbered."

JFK: Um.

McCormack: And I said that the, uh, it takes three or four days, [Echo begins.] it takes three or four days to get anything functioning again aft- . . . I said, "I got to have something . . ." I said, "I got to have something to bring 'em back." [Echo is heard unintelligibly over the next sentence] So he called me a little while ago, he had his big staff in there, they told him they couldn't have it. And I said, "Well, think it over . . ." And I said, "Well, think it over now and let me know tomorrow [night?] because it is quite important." [Echo continues.] Carl² and I went over it with him, and I was wondering if you would call him up and say, tell him how important it is, not only for the bill, but for the, uh, psychological reasons.

JFK: Yeah.

¹ John W. McCormack of Massachusetts, Speaker of the House.

² Congressman Carl Albert of Oklahoma.

McCormack: Party psychological reasons to have it up, uh, the Wednesday following, uh, Labor Day and for his staff to, uh, to, uh. . . . Tell him how you talked with me and I told you the talk I had with him. He's willing to if his staff could do it.

JFK: Okay. Well, I'll get, get on to that today.

McCormack: Tell him it's vitally important, not only the bill itself, but for party psychological reasons.

JFK: Right. That's right.

McCormack: It is, Mr. President.

JFK: Right. That's right.

McCormack: If it isn't, I won't be justified in calling them back for some other minor bill.

JFK: Right.

McCormack: And furthermore if they're not back, the committees won't be and then he won't have it for the ninth.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

McCormack: Because he isn't gonna, he isn't gonna have his members back.

JFK: Yeah.

McCormack: So, I think, with the work I've done on, uh . . .

JFK: What day are you going to let them out? What day before Labor Day, which day?

[Echo ends.]

McCormack: Well, I'm gonna let them out Wednesday after the march.³

JFK: [Okay?].

³ March on Washington, August 28, 1963.

McCormack: And then they. . . . If we get the tax bill, then let them go out until Tuesday, including Tuesday.

JFK: I see. So it's, [*scratch? or stretch?*] a week.

McCormack: But if I don't have the tax bill, I haven't got anything.

JFK: Right. Okay, good, I'll get on that.

McCormack: Thanks.

JFK: Fine, Mr. Speaker.

McCormack: [*Will you call?/?*]

JFK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will.

McCormack: Fine, bye, Mr. President.

JFK: Thank you.

[*Phone hangs up.*]