

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 24A

Item 24A1

July 26, 1963

JFK: Hello.

Truman:¹ Mr. President.

JFK: How are you?

Truman: Well, I'm all right and I want to congratulate you on that treaty.

JFK: Well, I think Averell Harriman² did a good job and, I think, it, uh, protects our interests without, uh, but on the other hand maybe it's going to help.

Truman: I do too, and I'm writing you a personal confidential letter about, uh, certain paragraphs in it, which, uh, uh, I know you're familiar with it but that I [looked at because that's what you'd want me to do?].

JFK: Right. Right.

Truman: But I'm in complete agreement with what, what it provides [words unintelligible]. My goodness life, maybe we can save a total war with it.

JFK: Well, I think, that's the whole, uh, I think that's just to see where we go and see what happens with China. I think that's our. . . .

Truman: Well, and I'm, I'm congratulating you on getting that thing done. I think it's a wonderful thing.

JFK: Well, I appreciate that very much, Mr. President, that's very generous and I, and I'm going to make a li- . . .

Truman: I will send a special airmail letter from me, uh, confirming what I'm saying to you now.

¹ Harry S. Truman, former president.

² W. Averell Harriman, assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs and head of the treaty delegation.

JFK: Good, fine. Well, I think that anything you say about it will be very helpful.

Truman: Well, I'm not going to say anything publicly until you give me permission to do it.

JFK: Yeah, well, I think . . .

Truman: I don't like these fellows who quote the president on [interpretation?].

JFK: Well, no, but I tell you what. I'm going to make a speech tonight then any time you could say anything would be very helpful.

Truman: I'll be glad to do it.

JFK: Fine.

Truman: I'm going to the, St. Louis tomorrow . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Truman: . . . to the American Legion convention . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Truman: ... do you think that's a good [time?]?

JFK: What, I can't imagine a better.

Truman: I'll, I'll make statements on the subject if it's satisfactory with you in connection with the letter which I am sending you. You'll get it in the morning.

JFK: That'd be very helpful.

Truman: Well, I want to do it the way you want it.

JFK: Well, fine. Well, if you could say something tomorrow, I think that would really give us a lift.

Truman: I'll be glad to say it. I thought maybe, uh, Sunday morning's papers might be a good place to say it.

JFK: Oh, good. That's fine, [Mr?] President. Well, you sound in good shape.

Truman: [Oh, I'm?] alright. Only trouble with me is that the main difficulty I have is [keeping?] the wife satisfied. [Laughter].

JFK: [Laughter]. Well, that's alright.

Truman: Well, you know I've had the [word unintelligible] and she's very much afraid I'm gonna hurt myself--well, you know I'm not.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Truman: [Word unintelligible] I want to do whatever'll be helpful to you.

JFK: Well, that's fine, I think anything you can say tomorrow'd be very good.

Truman: All right.

JFK: Thank you very much. [Yeah. Bye?]

Note for Researcher

No Kennedy Library Transcripts were prepared for Dictabelt numbers 24A.1A, 24A.2, 24A.3, and 24A.4.

Dictabelt 24A

Item 24A5

July 30, 1963

JFK: Hello.

Rusk:³ Mr. President.

JFK: Yeah.

Rusk: Uh, two points. The first one [CLOSED PENDING REVIEW] proposed that the three governments invite U Thant⁴ to come over for the signing. It's so hard for us to say no to that one. Uh, there could be some, some advantages, but the disadvantages of saying no would be, uh, pre-, pretty serious, I think.

JFK: Is he going to sign it then?

Rusk: No, he wouldn't sign it. He would be present for it.

JFK: Yeah, well, I think that's probably all right then.

Rusk: Well, now, the point here is though that if U Thant goes then this raises to a new level of sensitivity at our problem.

JFK: Well, I think then that if U Thant goes then Adlai⁵ can go.

Rusk: I think he ought to go.

JFK: If U Thant goes.

Rusk: Right.

JFK: But, uh, but that ought to be the condition.

Rusk: All right.

³ Dean Rusk, secretary of state.

⁴ U Thant, secretary general, United Nations.

⁵ Adlai E. Stephenson, United States representative to the United Nations.

JFK: It oughta be, it oughta be sold on that basis that if U Thant's gonna go, 'then Stevenson . . .

Rusk: Right.

JFK: . . . can go.

Rusk: All right, fine. Well, we'll check that out.

JFK: Uh, the, uh, what is the State Department going to put out on, uh, on, uh, de Gaulle?⁶ What's the sort of line?

Rusk: Well, we haven't, uh, we thought here that we would not, uh, uh, do anything today on this . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Rusk: . . . that you might want to comment . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Rusk: . . . in your press conference.

JFK: Yeah.

Rusk: But we're studying it. I mean that's the lead . . .

JFK: That'll be our line that we're analyzing it.

Rusk: Because it's pretty, pretty long statement and has a lot of, uh, subtleties in it that we've got to think about.

JFK: [Laughs.] I should say it has, right. Okay.

Rusk: All right. Fine.

⁶ Charles de Gaulle, president of France.

Note for Researcher

No Kennedy Library Transcript was prepared for Dictabelt number 24A.6