

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.

Copyright:

The donors assigned copyright that they might have in the recordings to the United States; however, copyright of the donors does not extend beyond statements uttered by John F. Kennedy, his minor children, and the donors themselves. Statements uttered by officials of the United States government in the course of their duties are considered to be in the public domain. Users of this material are cautioned, however, that not all persons recorded were members of the Kennedy family or government officials. A number of the people recorded were, at the time of recording, private citizens. Therefore, those intending to quote from this material beyond the accepted limits of fair use are cautioned to determine the copyright implications of any intended publication.

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 27C

Conversation #1: President Kennedy and Prime Minister Lester Pearson

October 12, 1963, 10:45 a.m.

[Continued from Dictabelt 27B, Conversation #2. Virtually all of Prime Minister Pearson's remarks inaudible.]

President: . . . deliver Hall, he has to take a certain position. That is the problem. I am not able to deliver Hall, because I have no contact with him, and he has already denounced this Administration because of what we did out in Chicago with that injunction. So the problem really is how to get Hall to go along. And you know George Meany will do anything reasonable that I ask him, but, uh.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Well, now, I've got a statement that I thought I might issue. And let me ask you whether you think its . . . Let's see, I would say that you and I have talked, and I say, "I share with the Prime Minister the hope that the Great Lakes maritime matter can be settled quickly, fairly, and without further misunderstanding. There has been earnest effort on both sides to find a basis for settlement in an agreement between the Canadian and U.S. labor organizations. These efforts have apparently failed. This is cause for serious regret, but not for mutual recrimination that might prejudice future relationships between the two countries. The United States Government has not and will not express any judgment regarding the legislation which is now pending in the Canadian Parliament. We stand ready at the same time, however, to pursue any course of cooperative action which will serve the public and private interests which are involved here." Now, I will be glad to change that any way that you think would be useful.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Yeah, would you read me back that statement of yours, uh, that last part.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Alright, now, I will get [/ Ritchie over here right now.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Yeah, well, I know . . . you know everything that a . . . sounds like . . . everything [laughs] . . . we surely lumped everything together. Now the problem, Prime Minister, is what are we going to do from here? Because, unfortunately, the way it is now, I am just afraid that these ships will come down and then there will be some picketing by our people here, which we will try to get an injunction on it, but the penalty is only 300 dollars a day, and then the Canadians are going to be really sore.

P. M. Pearson: They certain are. They really will be [goes inaudible]

President: That's right. I understand. Now, what about this private trusteeship?

P. M. Pearson: Now, if that private trusteeship has two out of three Canadians, one AFL-CIO, and if there were no restrictions on that trusteeship and he would put first class men, he wouldn't have anybody in command incompetent . . . and there is still time to put that into effect.

President: Alright, now, what about this? What about if we take the two trustees; one American and one Canadian and the two groups agree that you and I will appoint the third in agreement, and we will appoint a Canadian, but we won't say that at that minute, that we will appoint him within that same day, and he will just end up as a Canadian.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Well, why don't we, in order not to get back hung up on whether the third man is going to be a Canadian or not in advance, why don't we just announce, uh, why don't we get it organized and have one Canadian and one American? The announcement in the morning that you and I are going to pick the third man, without saying who he is, and that afternoon, we'll just pick a Canadian.

P. M. Pearson: Well, if we can do that, that might be well, because there will be only a few hours in between.

President: That's right, the same day. That is not a problem.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: I saw that part of it.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Alright, well, now what we got to try to do, it seems to me, is get a situation that we can get not only your people to go along with, but Hall to go along with and Meany. Now, let's just tentatively, uh.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Well, let me, uh, I will get on to that and have Bill Wirtz talk to your fellow and see if they can get the detail and you and I will talk once again.

P. M. Pearson: I won't say anything about it.

Pearson: I will just put out this generalized statement. I will read it to Ritchie on the phone. If he doesn't have any objections, we will put it out.

P. M. Pearson: [inaudible]

President: Fine, now, as I say, on the question of the third man, we would, uh, let's see now, wait a second, Bill Wirtz is here. I will have Bill Wirtz and your, uh, yea, why don't you bring him up to where we are and let them negotiate it out. Then let's see if you and I can get it worked out this weekend. Good, fine, Prime Minister.

P. M. Pearson: O.K.

President: O.K. good.

Papers of John F. Kennedy

Presidential Recordings

Dictabelts

Dictabelt 27C

Conversation #2: President Talking to Others in Office

Very little of the conversation can be heard. Occasionally voices come through clearly. Once the President is clearly heard to say, "Oh, Mrs. Lincoln." The words "prime minister" are heard once and then again later. At one point the following complete exchange comes through:

U/I: Do you want to use this phone?

Lincoln:[?]: I'll have an answer in just a moment.

U/I: O.K. I'm holding. Thanks.

Lincoln:[?]: Thank you

Other snatches that are heard include

" . . . that's all I have . . . ,"

"Yeah, . . . I'll be responsible for that . . . phone the Canadian Embassy
because the Prime Minister knows that it's going out doesn't he?"

"Yeah."

and,

"I'll get Ritchie."

Occasionally other words are heard. Not enough anywhere, however to string together the conversation.