

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 11A, Item 11A3

March 7, 1963

JFK: Hello.

Fisher:¹ Yes, sir.

JFK: Oh, how'd ya. . . . You read Mr. Dodd's?²

Fisher: Yes, I did.

JFK: What'd ya think of it?

Fisher: Well, I, it, it's temperate and about as good a presentation of that point of view as you can get. I'm debating whether I should answer it again.

JFK: Why don't you get another one ready and let me look at it?

Fisher: All right, fine.

JFK: I think you might point out two or three. . . . One point is that if we'd gotten an agreement four years ago, you wouldn't have perhaps had these tests.

Fisher: I think that's right.

JFK: And, uh . . .

Fisher: If we'd an agreement four years ago, we'd have been a lot better off [right?] now.

JFK: If we'd not been. . . . If we'd been able because, uh, the fact of the matter is it isn't, uh, we tested, uh. . . . He gives the impression in that letter that if the Soviet testing that's closed the ga-. . . . As if we didn't test.

Fisher: Yes.

JFK: The fact of the matter is that we were ahead. The more they test, the more we test, even if we each ran a hundred tests . . .

¹ Adrian S. Fisher.

² Thomas J. Dodd.

Fisher: We tend to equalize.

JFK: . . . we tend to equalize. And so that will be with anyone else who begins to develop. They'll start way behind and if each country continues to test, because you can't make those kind of extraordinary advances you made at the beginning and the fact of the matter is if we'd gotten the agreement back in '59 or whenever it was we started, but if, if it had prevented this last series of tests, we would've been better off. The second thing is that neutron bomb. He's a nut on the neutron bomb. Two years ago, I think, he was making some speeches about it was right around the corner, wasn't he?

Fisher: Yes. Yes.

JFK: The fact of the matter is I don't see the neutron bomb as making any specific difference.

Fisher: Uh, neither do I. And, . . . I've got to write. . . . I think I . . .

JFK: See if you can write a letter.

Fisher: . . . got a tone, if it is agreeable with you, Mr. President, that, that. . . . Arguing with Tom Dodd is better than arguing with a Republican on this. It just so happens that Dodd and I are friends.

JFK: Yeah, why is it bet-. . . . I'm not.

Fisher: *[Words unintelligible]* cordial note.

JFK: Yeah, all right. Well, let's see what you get.

Fisher: I'll get it over to you.

JFK: And then let me look at it.

Fisher: Right, sir.

JFK: Okay.

Fisher: Okay. Okay.