

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 28A, Item 28A4

October 30, 1963

JFK: Hello, Mike.

Mansfield:¹ Yes, Mr. President.

JFK: I talked to, uh, our friend, uh, of course, he's a hard man . . .

Mansfield: Yes.

JFK: . . . and he's got a, he thinks he's got a, he says, "This is a helluva issue," you know, and all the rest. Of course, it's easy to knock the jock off of this poor old, uh, lady, but, uh, anyway the two things he talked the most about was--he didn't object to economic assistance to Latin America--the two things he objected to most, of course, was (1) this question of recogni-, you know, giving assistance to, uh, military groups and the kinds of military assistance we give in Latin America. I talked to Fred Dutton² and asked him to look over that language and see if they could reverse that thing on coups that, uh, where we would provide aid unless the Congress disapproved. Put it, you know, in the negative rather than the affirmative.

Mansfield: Yeah.

JFK: And then the second thing would be, uh, uh, to see whether we could get him a list of the kinds of assistance we were planning to give which would. . . . He says he didn't mind rifles and trucks and so on. But he seems to mind the heavy equipment. And see if we could ease his fears a bit there. Uh, but, uh, he says no votes this week, then next week, but he'd stay in close touch with you.

Mansfield: Fine.

JFK: So, I guess that's about, uh, we'll see what Fred Dutton can come up with. I think if we can just say to him we don't want to prolong this thing too long. One way or another we got to take our medicine because we got these, all these other bills and with civil rights coming up, we may find ourselves really in horrible shape.

¹ Michael J. Mansfield, senator from Montana.

² Frederick G. Dutton.

Mansfield: Yeah. Well, I'll give him a chance to have some lunch and I'll try to get together with him.

JFK: Well, tell him that, uh, I think you might say the president enjoyed his conversation with you very much, he understands your point of view, he's just interested in, etc., etc., and . . .

Mansfield: Yeah.

JFK: . . . we'll stay in touch but I think we ought to try to vote as soon as we reasonably can beca-. . . . Now Gruening³ is hopeless, I guess, is he?

Mansfield: Oh yes, yeah, but then the key there is not Gruening but Morse.⁴

JFK: Yeah, he's the one who gets it.

Mansfield: I, I would [words unintelligible/].

JFK: Wayne could be helpful, I think. He says, "I may not be able to vote for it in final passage." Well, I said, "That's all right," but I said, "We need your help in getting the right amounts."

Mansfield: That's right, but, uh, but as of now he's the key and I think he's being used by other groups which he may not recognize as yet.

JFK: Yeah, that, uh, to delay everything.

Mansfield: Right. Right.

JFK: Uh, you, what about the, looking at sort of our schedule, if that civil rights bill is going to come out and that turned out damned well. If that civil rights bill is going to come out of that committee, the report we're gonna try to rush. . . . Let's say we get a rule and get it through the House before the end of November, then what would our schedule be?

Mansfield: We would still take it up, and, uh, and stay with it. And I would say, uh, two or three weeks of debate, a cloture, and if we can't get it, try it again.

JFK: Yeah.

³ Ernest Gruening, senator from Alaska.

⁴ Wayne Morse, senator from Oregon.

Mansfield: Not carry on too, too long because the, the responsibility is not yours now, it's not mine, it's the Senate's collectively.

JFK: Right. Then, Mike . . .

Mansfield: [Yep?].

JFK: . . . what about, can we stop these fellows from going away for a while . . .

Mansfield: Yes.

JFK: . . . or else tell them that they gotta give proxies? Nobody can go unless they give a proxy.

Mansfield: If we can't come to an agreement with Morse this afternoon, it's my intention to make a statement that, uh, no senators should go to the NATO⁵ meeting or to the Kuala Lumpur conference or any other place 'til this matter is disposed of.

JFK: I think that's right or otherwise. . . . Now, I wonder if we could get, I better get McCormack⁶ and have him say, 'cause I think we oughta keep everybody around and get this goddamned, we got a chance to do a lot of good things this year if we can get everybody to stay.

Mansfield: You gotta keep them now and this is the time that they're gonna want to get away.

JFK: Okay, I'll get . . .

Mansfield: [Words unintelligible],

JFK: . . . I'll get the Speaker.

Mansfield: Fine, sir.

⁵ North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

⁶ John W. McCormack, Speaker of the House.