

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.

Papers of John F. Kennedy

Presidential Recordings

Dictabelts

Dictabelt 27B

Conversation #2: President Kennedy and Prime Minister Lester Pearson

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

[Note: Virtually all of Pearson's remarks are totally inaudible.]

P. M. Pearson: Good morning.

President: Prime Minister, how are you?

P. M. Pearson: Well, the sky is blue up here, but the political landscape is a little stormy.

President: Well, I read your discussion and I am sorry that we got into, uh, I know Bill Wirtz is sorry if any embarrassment they caused.

P. M. Pearson: If you have a minute, I will tell you the background, and then see what we can do to calm this all down. We passed our bill last night in the House of Commons around midnight by almost unanimous vote, and that doesn't actually put it in the courts, it has to go through the Senate, and it will be three or four days before it is called. [This part is so weak it was inaudible]

President: You know, I talked to Bill Wirtz just this morning and last night. He said that the AFL-CIO were prepared to have a Canadian be the third. But the didn't want to agree to it publicly in advance.

P. M. Pearson: I know that, but if we were [again inaudible].

President: Well, I just read Meany's statement this morning and I said to Bill Wirtz's that I thought that last sentence could have been, uh.

P. M. Pearson: Well, that was the only part that [again inaudible].

President: As I say, I would have rewritten it if I had seen it.

P. M. Pearson: I am sure you would have. Now in the light of his statement and now that has been passed by the House of Commons, if his invitation and his . . . results in further trouble, we will be in one helluva mess, because he has practically invited the unions on the American side to have nothing to do with it. *[again inaudible]*

President: Well, he is not worth anything. The difficulty, of course, is this fellow Hall, uh. Meany has to deliver Hall and you know . . .