

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 18B

Conversation #2: President Kennedy and Dean Rusk

May 8, 1963

Sec. Rusk: ----- including some of our close allies like the Greeks. The Greeks went along with us last time, but they say that they just can't do it again.

President: Yeah.

Sec. Rusk: Uh . . . I would recommend that we, uh, as far as you are concerned, uh, the White House is concerned, you let the State Department simply take this one. We will not change our own view, but we won't force a vote of the sort that would give us a big defeat. Uh . . . and then if it comes up later, you can say, if you are questioned in a press conference, that we, uh . . . that the State Department was faced with this situation and made a judgment as how best to handle it.

President: How will we indicate our opposition?

Sec. Rusk: Well, this would, uh . . . this would, uh . . . be made perhaps in the course of comments in the general committee . . . in the committee.

President: There won't be a roll call, you mean.

Sec. Rusk: It probably won't come to a roll call vote. But we can speak in the credentials committee.

President: I see.

Sec. Rusk: Uh . . . But a . . .

President: I think we probably ought to be on the record against it. And you say if we asked for a vote, we'd be beaten.

Sec. Rusk: There is no question we will be beaten this year, or this time. And this is chiefly because there have been enough changes in Hungary . . .

President: Yeah.

Sec. Rusk: . . . so that the, uh . . .

President: Well, I would like to be able, uh . . . just for our own protection, to indicate our opposition.

Sec. Rusk: Right, right, well, we will, uh . . . we will find a way to record it.

President: Well, maybe, it's, uh . . . I think White could say it at the right time or some way up there.

Sec. Rusk: Right.

President: Ok.

Sec. Rusk: Thank you.