

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 12A

Conversation #3: President Kennedy & Robert F. Kennedy

RFK: Hello.

JFK: Hello.

RFK: Um, I spoke to you the other day about this transportation problem . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . Well, we have another one, now, the B&O-C&O railroad merger.

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: The unions are very strong for us entering this case and entering it actively. Uh, it's, uh, . . . it went before the board and now it's before the courts and they want us to try to get it, uh, bring in a, uh, . . . a, uh, and ask that it be sent back before the board.

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: Uh, the companies, on the other hand, are very anxious to go ahead with the merger . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: From our examination of the facts here, we find that nobody, really, in government has ever examined wh - to determine whether this is a good merger or a bad merger. And it's been before the government, really, for a year and a half, now. . . .

JFK: What does Dan Martin's group say?

RFK: Well, they don't know . . . and, uh, and Mike, uh, we talked to Mike Feldman and he--he admits that nobody knows. But, uh, we don't know what effect this merger's gonna have on future mergers, and, uh, so we're really shooting in the dark and at hazzard. Now the unions feel very strongly about it, and then of course business feels very strongly on the other side about it. So no matter what we do, . . . uh, it's gonna have an effect on one group or another, and, uh, and, uh, and, uh, and what we're doing is, uh, we're . . .

JFK: What d'you suggest? What d'you suggest?

RFK: Well, I think that if we could get, uh, uh, urge once again if we could get some--somebody in there . . .

JFK: But I can't do anything about Dan Martin just now 'cause we got our whole transportation bill up there in front of [Senator Warren] Magnuson and everything, and Magnuson's gotta--I mean Martin--Magnuson's Martin's sponsor, so I can't move him out right now.

RFK: Well, ah, can we get somebody at the White House to be resp--assigned to that responsibility . . .

JFK: Well . . .

RFK: . . . do nothing but mergers?

JFK: . . . if you can suggest anybody, I'd be glad to take 'em on. I'll see if I can find somebody. Carmine's [Bellino] supposed to be looking around for somebody. And, uh, just look at merge--and if you've got a name over there, some bright fellow who's got some sense, I'd be glad to take him on.

RFK: Okey-dokey.

JFK: O.K.?

RFK: Righto.

[disconnect]