

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.

Copyright:

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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 4G

[October 1, 1962]

Item 4G1

[Continued from belt 4F, item 4F7.]

Abrams¹: . . . got ahold of 'em and it hasn't been recast. But, uh, I can get it very shortly.

RFK: Yeah. Will you call me back at the White House?

Abrams: I will.

RFK: Okay. Thank you.

Abrams: Yes, sir.

[Phone hangs up.]

¹ Creighton Abrams

Dictabelt 4G

Item 4G2

[Phone rings.]

Lincoln²: Hello.

Voice 1: General Abrams calling the president from Millington³ Tennessee.

Lincoln: *[Off the phone to JFK]* General Abrams is on the line at the other end.

JFK: Hello. Hello?

Voice 1: Here you are, sir.

Abrams⁴: General Abrams.

JFK: Yes, General.

Abrams: I have a report from General Billingslea.⁵

JFK: That's right. Now, the attorney general has him on the other phone. *[Off the phone to RFK]* Is that General Billingslea you got? *[Back to Abrams]* We got him on the other phone. So we'll be talk . . .

Abrams: The MP company . . .

JFK: Right.

Abrams: . . . arrived on the campus at 2:15 local time.

JFK: Right. Okay, now, General, what about the rest of. . . . When are these other MPs gonna get there? Do you know?

Abrams: The, uh, 503rd MPs should arrive at approximately zero four-thirty.

² Evelyn Lincoln

³ Location of Memphis Naval Air Station.

⁴ Creighton Abrams

⁵ Charles Billingslea.

JFK: That's local time there?

Abrams: Local time.

JFK: That's in, in other words, that's two hours.

Abrams: Local time here.

JFK: That's the group that set out by truck, is it?

Abrams: Yes, sir.

JFK: So, your addition- . . .

Abrams: They're followed by another MP battalion at, that should arrive at 5:00. There, there's just the length of the battalion between 'em.

JFK: In other words, but the next MP group to arrive won't be for two hours. Is that correct?

Abrams: That's correct, sir.

JFK: Then after that there'll be some more in a half hour. Then what about that battle group?

Abrams: They, uh, they, uh. . . . Just a moment, sir. [Off the phone to someone in the room.] The battle group is [here?]/[words unintelligible]. [Back to JFK.] Six o'clock, sir.

JFK: What? Six o'clock.

Abrams: Six o'clock.

JFK: Well, now, General, you oughta consider what kind of communication you're going to set up at that airport because you're going to have people flying in there. Seems to me you oughta have very good communications . . .

Abrams: Yes.

JFK: . . . with that airport as well as the campus.

Abrams: Yes.

JFK: With General. . . . In other words, General Billingslea oughta have a com-, communication with the airport. You oughta have a communication with the airport and Billingslea because we're going to have people flying in there all day tomorrow.

Abrams: Yes.

JFK: And then, of course, we got the problem of transportation and all the rest. So these are all matters that you'll be dealing with. But I think communication is very important.

Abrams: Yes, sir.

JFK: Okay. Fine, General. Thank you.

[Phone hangs up.]

Dictabelt 4G

Item 4G3

[Begins mid-conversation]

Barnett⁶: . . . let the public know that we talked so many times, don't you think?

JFK: That's correct. Now here's what I, I'm gonna . . .

Barnett: Now, I can tell you, uh. . . . I think you said it mighty well last night, that tried to reach the, uh, conclusion and couldn't, or words to that effect.

JFK: Now, I was very. . . . As you know, in my speech, I didn't even mention [will?] . . .

Barnett: “[Avenues to negotiate?] fail,”⁷ I believe you said.

JFK: That's right, you know, and I didn't go into, uh . . .

Barnett: You made a wonderful statement there.

JFK: Well, now, the thing is, uh, Governor, I want your help in, uh, getting these state police to continue to help during the day, because they're their own people. And, uh, we are gonna have a lot of, uh, strange troops in there, and we are gonna have paratroopers in and all the rest. And I think the state police should be the key, and that depends on you.

Barnett: Oh, I. . . . You'll have, you'll have the whole force that we have.

JFK: Well, now, you tell 'em . . .

Barnett: The [word unintelligible] men are not equipped like yours.

⁶ Ross R. Barnett

⁷ The full text of the president's radio and television report to the nation on the situation at the University of Mississippi, September 30, 1962, may be found in the Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1962, pages 726-728.

JFK: I understand that. But during the daytime they can help keep order on these roads and keep a lot of people from coming in. And that's the. . . . I think that, uh, that doesn't change your position on the issue, but at least it helps maintain order, which is what we've got to do today.

Barnett: All right, Mr. President.

JFK: Thank you, Governor.

Barnett: I'll stay here now.

JFK: Thank you very much.

Barnett: Thank you so much.

JFK: And keep, keep after your state police now.

Barnett: I will.

JFK: Thanks.

Barnett: I, I'll, I'll call him soon as we hang up . . .

JFK: Thanks.

Barnett: . . . 'n' tell him to do all he can to keep peace.

JFK: Okay, thanks, Governor.

Barnett: And when'll I hear from you again?

JFK: I'll be talking to you about noon . . .

Barnett: Okay.

JFK: . . . my time.

Barnett: Thank you so much. Good-bye.

JFK: Okay, Governor.

[Phone hangs up.]

Dictabelt 4G

Item 4G4

Voice 1: Waiting. Waiting.

Voice 2: [Words unintelligible]

 [Phone rings.]

Lincoln⁸: Hello.

Voice 3: I have Mr. Archibald Cox, the solicitor general, returning the president's call.

Lincoln: Okay.

Voice 3: Thank you.

 [Pause of about 40-45 seconds.]

JFK: Hello.

Cox⁹: Good morning, Mr. President.

JFK: Good morning, Arc-. . . . I'm just on my way up there. Now, the only question I had was whether there are any additional proclamations or powers, et cetera, that we might need in the Mississippi matter if it gets worse, and, uh, the, uh, for arresting people, and under what charge and what legal penalties they face and so on. For example, we wanna arrest General Walker,¹⁰ and I don't know whether we just arrest him under disturbing the peace or whether we arrest him for more than that. I wonder if. . . . How long are you going to be at the court this morning?

Cox: Not beyond, uh, half past ten.

JFK: Yeah, well then I wonder if we can get, uh, more precise information on where we are legally on arresting people, including the governor if necessary and others?

⁸ Evelyn Lincoln

⁹ Archibald Cox

¹⁰ Edwin A. Walker

Cox: Right.

JFK: And what the penalties are because we might want to announce that on the radio and television that anyone involved in any demonstration or anything would be subject to the, this penalty, and if not, maybe the general could announce it.

Cox: Right. Good-bye.

JFK: All right. Okay. Thank you.

Cox: Thank you.

[Phone hangs up.]

Dictabelt 4G

Item 4G5

Voice 1: Waiting. Waiting.

[Phone rings.]

Voice 2: *[Words unintelligible]/[Mr. Crowley Johnson?].*

Lincoln¹¹: Hello.

Voice 3: *[Words unintelligible]*

[Phone hangs up.]

Voice 4: Hello. Hello. The *[top?]*. . . .

Voice 5: Yes, please.

Lincoln: Usher's office.

Voice 5: Thank you.

Voice 6: Howdy.

Lincoln: He had a hat in his hand when he left so you don't need to bother about . . .

Voice 6: Oh, very good. Thank you.

Lincoln: Okay.

[Phone hangs up.]

[Phone rings.]

Lincoln: Hello.

Voice 7: Um, secretary of defense calling the president.

¹¹ Evelyn Lincoln

Lincoln: He's en route, uh, to the Supreme Court to . . .

Voice 7: Oh . . .

Lincoln: . . . see the swearing-in of Arthur Goldberg.

Voice 7: . . . oh, yes, that's right. Thank you.

Lincoln: Um-huh.

[Phone hangs up.]

[Phone rings.]

Lincoln: Hello.

Voice 8: Uh, Miss, the secretary would like to talk to you.

Lincoln: Okay.

Voice 8: Mrs. Lincoln.

McNamara¹²: Mrs. Lincoln?

Lincoln: Yes, Mr. Secretary.

McNamara: Has the president left yet?

Lincoln: Yes, he just went out of the, uh, the grounds. He . . .

McNamara: Probably has telephone communication, doesn't he?

Lincoln: I think he ma-, might have. Uh, let me see if I can't establish that.

McNamara: Would you and I'd . . .

Lincoln: Um-huh.

McNamara: . . . like to talk to him.

¹² Robert S. McNamara

Lincoln: Okay.

McNamara: Thank you.

Voice 9: Yes, please.

Lincoln: The secretary would like to speak to the president in his car.

Voice 9: Thank you.

Lincoln: Okay.

[Phone hangs up.]