

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 #2: President Kennedy and /Robert C. Weaver/

President: Doc? How are you?

Weaver: Fine, How are you today, sir?

President: Good. Fine. I'm gonna--I've got a group waiting to talk to me about . . . let's see . . . [begins reading very rapidly]
“. . . He and his companions and all substantial figures in the building [one word indistinct] will want to discuss the problems of multi-family FHA mortgage insurance, and make these points: multi-family dwellings are mushrooming; there's a tremendous backlog of unprocessed applications for multi-family FHA mortgages, [Stalford?] says the total's two billion. He talked last year with the former commissioner, Hardy regarding this [several words run together] and received a tentative agreement setting up a separate authority in FHA for multi-family dwellings.”
[takes a deep breath]
"He'll wonder if Doctor Weaver, and the new Commissioner, [Philip] Brownstein, will accept this."

And then it says,

"Dr. Weaver and Brownstein regard two FHAs as unsound"

Weaver: Yes, sir.

President: Then it says, "After checking with Larry, I suggest the following: (1) The President begin to indicate concern regarding the backlog and the [unintelligible] tremendously positive effect that clearing would have on the economy. (2) The President could . . . curse the delays in FHA processing and instruct me and some other person to accompany [Stalford?] to a meeting with Dr. Weaver and Brownstein. I believe the President should indicate a reluctance to tie Brownstein to the plans of the predecessor, however, he could see if--look for quick action in this serious problem."

Now, do you have any thoughts about that? . . .

Weaver: Yes, sir.

President: . . . before I say all these things?

Weaver: Uh, I think, uh, two things. First, I think it would be tragic if we had two FHA's.

President: Yeah.

Weaver: Uh, because we've now had a tremendous--This is a part of a power struggle in there. We've had some guys in there who're trying to build themselves up, and they're using [Stalford?] and the other people who are dissatisfied - and they have a right to be dissatisfied; it hasn't been done well. Secondly, I think you could say, and I, uh, this is--I say this in all sincerity, that both Mr. Brownstein and myself are very much concerned with this. We're dedicated to make this program work, and we will do it; but, it'll take us a little time. The new commissioner has to have a little time to make the adjustment and, uh, that, uh, we're--we're guaranteed to you that we will uh, more in on this and, uh, . . .

President: Can't you set up a separate--Do you have a separate department for multi-family, uh, family FHA mortgages?

Weaver: The difficulty with this is that the separate department is a promotional department and they've got us in trouble by approving a lot of things they shouldn't approve.

President: I see.

Weaver: They're approving too much.

President: I see.

Weaver: . . . and we've got a tremendous scandal on our hands in one project. Fortunately not too many and there's going to be a hearing in the . . .

President: 's that the one in Texas?

Weaver: Yes. There's going to be a hearing in the Senate and we're gonna get the dickens knocked out of us on this because of this enthusiasm of the very

people who are lobbying through [Stalford?] and the others to get control of this.

President: I see.

Weaver: They're promotion. The difficulty, Mr. President is this. The guys in favor of the multi-family are promotional. And the old-line guys are insurance underwriters. They don't want to move fast enough, and the other guys want to move too fast.

President: I see.

Weaver: So we've got to get something . . .

President: Well, now have you talked to Stalford before?

Weaver: No, I haven't.

President: Would it be possible . . .? Evidently he helped us on the, uh, in the, uh, . . .

Weaver: Well, he has an appointment with, uh, Phil Brownstein this afternoon, and if he's not satisfied with that I'll be delighted.

President: Maybe you could stick your head in or something, for a couple of minutes.

Weaver: Alright.

President: Would that--Would it be too much trouble?

Weaver: If you--If you want it, if you'll have your office call me and I'll do what ever you . . .

President: O.K.; alright; thank you; O.K., thanks a lot.

Weaver: Thank you. Bye.

President: Bye.

[disconnect]