

FOREWORD

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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 9A

Item 9A1

March 2, 1963

[Continued from Item 8B5]

JFK: *[We were dynamite?]*

RFK: Better than you were in '60.

JFK: *[Laughs.]* Okay.

RFK: *[Bye, now?]*

Dictabelt 9A

Item 9A2

March 4, 1963

JFK: Tourist balance.

Kaysen¹: Right.

JFK: On the Common Market. I mean I don't know if they've got the figures broken down that way, but certainly country by, if they have 'em by country, put 'em together. But anyway, the tourist balance plus the troop expenditure balance.

Kaysen: And, do you want the . . .

JFK: Uh, and . . .

Kaysen: . . . investment, too?

JFK: . . . plus. . . . Well, the investment I'd like, but it's a separate matter. They have no obligations to us on investment. That's our own choice. But, I'd like to get that. But that, those'd be the three items. Then, of course, then, of course, the trade balance.

Kaysen: I can have the figures later in the morning.

JFK: Okay.

[Kaysen: Bye?]

¹ Carl Kaysen

Dictabelt 9A

Item 9A3

JFK:

. . . our failings as well as, uh, the good things about, uh, the United States. Most of all, to get some idea of where we're going, and of how we're trying to fulfill the promises of the Constitution. We welcome you here and hope that, uh, you leave us as friends. We can assure you that, uh, we will learn more from your visit, than you could possibly, uh, learn in the days ahead. In any case, you're most welcome here, and we're very honored that you've chosen our country to visit. Thank you. [Applause or static?]

Dictabelt 9A

Item 9A4

Voice 1: I'll call you back.

[JFK?:] Right.

Dictabelt 9A

Item 9A5

March 4, 1963

Baggs²: . . . what we call Interama.

JFK: Oh, yeah, that's right. Right, right.

Baggs: I'm, I'm told that after you, the committee you referred this to-- an interdepartmental committee--is now writing a report favoring Federal participation.

JFK: Eh-yuh.

Baggs: This has taken on a new importance, Mr. President, in our community, because of the economic dilemma here, because of the Cuban agitation to go invade the island. Uh, it would seem to me after generating some cerebral wattage with some other people on it, it seemed to me it would be a very prudent investment on the part of the government, which is making a considerable investment here already . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Baggs: . . . to create jobs, and possibly if, if the, the theme of this Interama of, of, of progress through freedom in the Americas is properly, uh, done, that it might divert some of these more militant Cubans to a positive, uh, thing, an Interama here.

JFK: Well, I, uh, let me say I . . . What, uh, sort of threw me off about the presentation was, number one, the great emphasis on free enterprise, that this was going to be an ornament to the free enterprise system. I thought that was sort of, uh, rather nonsensical. If we're, if the Federal government's going to have to put 50 million dollars into it . . .

Baggs: I don't . . .

JFK: . . . uh, to prove that, uh, the government ought to stay out of everything.

² William C. Baggs

Baggs: Yep.

JFK: And the other thing was the amount of the Federal participation. It would really add up to, uh, sort of a permanent fair, uh, which would be constructive, but it was, uh, the question I have was it really worth the dough? We're going to end up really building the Latin American, and contributing the Latin American, uh, pavilions, and I didn't really think we're gonna get much out of it. There'd be a lot of visitors pass by it, but, I didn't know whether it would really make much difference.

Baggs: Well, here's what we have done. We've put up land--uh, 17 hundred acres of bay-front land--roads, road money, and, uh, self-liquidating bonds, uh, to the amount of 80 million dollars. Our own community has done this. Uh, uh, this will be more than just. . . . This will be more than a serious Disneyland.

JFK: Uh-huh.

Baggs: Um, we have many little projects, such as getting, uh, a hundred students from each country, say from Venezuela, and fifty of them would work as guides in the Vene-, Venezuelan hall every morning, while the other fifty went to the University of Miami.

JFK: Yeah.

Baggs: A Peace Corps idea in reverse. There're many little items like this, which would make this more than just a Seattle fair.

JFK: Yeah.

Baggs: And the idea of the free enterprise system, uh, the theme of this is, is, is, "Progress through the Environment of Freedom," not necessarily economic, uh, uh, free enterprise as Barry Goldwater mouths . . .

JFK: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Baggs: . . . just what free man can do.

JFK: Yeah. Who is that fellow that made the presentation up here, I . . .

Baggs: Dr. Irving Muscat.

JFK: Yeah. What's he like?

Baggs: Uh, he's a good, uh, solid man, who started out with Bob Hutchins /Robert Maynard Hutchins/ at the University of Chicago and then went into private industry. And, uh, has many of the basic patents on plastics in this country.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Baggs: He's a retired, active person.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Baggs: The reason I bother you is that, uh, this thing is. . . . I think if we could. . . . Uh, Dr. Muscat and a couple of us would like to come up there, uh, before you go to Costa Rica, and present this thing to you, uh, and to show you. . . . Uh, and your own interdepartmental committee is now working on a draft to you . . .

JFK: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Baggs: . . . recommending this. Uh, and . . .

JFK: Yeah. What's the Federal contribution? Do you, you remember? I thought it was 50 million. Now that may be too much.

Baggs: No, I think, I think what we're talking about is something like 25, and much of this I think we could get out of ARA money.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Baggs: Uh, but what I wanted to do is, uh, to intrude upon your calendar, uh, uh, some time, say the first of next week if I could.

JFK: Yeah, I'll be glad to see you, uh, Bill. As I say, I thought Muscat had an awfully sort of, uh, ceremonial presentation, and it made me feel that it was really a sort of, was not the sort of thing we ought to put that kind of money into, because it would add up to, well, as you say, a serious Disneyland. It would add up to a tourist attraction, but would not have any particular political significance. Now it may have some domestic political significance, which is not to be sneezed at, I didn't think it had any inter-American political significance.

Baggs: Well, what we were hoping was this. We're hoping to. . . . I hold to the old view that the only way you're going to break, uh, start any reform down in South America is through these wealthy families . . .

JFK: Uh.

Baggs: . . . which have the land and own the generals, or the generals and the families.

JFK: Yeah.

Baggs: We're going to try to get these people here to look at this and to see what homesteading, for instance, did for this country.

JFK: Yeah.

Baggs: Uh, what social reform has done in this country. Uh, we'll get their cultural expressions here.

JFK: Well, I'll tell you what, I'll be glad to see you next, uh, Monday.

Baggs: All right, sir.

JFK: Uh, now would you talk to Mrs. Lincoln, and, uh, you can work out a satisfactory time?

Baggs: All right, sir. Can I impose on you for one more thing?

JFK: Sure.

Baggs: Probably when you were at Harvard you remember Dr. Fabien Sevitzky, who is the nephew of Serge Koussevitzky, who built that Boston Symphony.

JFK: Yeah. I knew, oh, I knew Serge, uh, Koussevitzky, right.

Baggs: Well, Dr. Sevitzky came to this country as an immigrant in 1923, in March, and the town is having a celebration for him on the evening of March 31. Uh, he is the conductor of our symphony . . .

JFK: Oh, I see. Yeah.

Baggs: . . . orchestra here.

JFK: Right.

Baggs: And we wanted to solicit--we have a committee here putting this on-- and we wanted to solicit a letter from you . . .

JFK: Right.

Baggs: . . . and I will send a letter to Mrs. Lincoln, outlining the facts of the matter, and, if you could give us, uh, a letter we . . .

JFK: Okay.

Baggs: . . . we'd like to read it on that evening.

JFK: Fine. Why don't you just give me a draft, and I'll be glad to send it.

Baggs: All right, sir.

JFK: Good. Fine. Well, now you'll be in touch with her, and, and, uh, I'll see you on Monday.

Baggs: All right, sir, and Mrs. Lincoln can set up the time?

JFK: Right.

Baggs: All right.

JFK: Okay. Good.

Baggs: Thank you, Mr. President.

JFK: Thanks, Bill.

Baggs: Bye.

[Connection disconnected]

Dictabelt 9A

Item 9A6

JFK: Hello?

RFK: Jack?

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: Oh, uh, Ed Guthman [Edwin O. Guthman] went to a party the other night . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . and was talking to Doris Fleeson . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . who's evidently very bitter.

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: You know as she always, uh, usually is. But I don't know whether, uh, there might be some attention paid to her or somebody look at her or something.

JFK: Yeah. What's she bitter about?

RFK: [I'd say?] she's just mad, generally . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . you know the way she gets . . . [skips] . . .

JFK: Yeah. . . . [skips] . . . be Republicans there, and she doesn't like McCone [John A. McCone], and she's. . . . What is it particularly?

RFK: Well, he didn't, uh, didn't, uh. . . . She just seemed mad, generally, but I don't know whether, uh. . . . She seems always somebody that if somebody gave her a little attention occasionally then maybe she'd come around a bit.

JFK: Uh, well, it's pretty difficult.

RFK: Is it?

JFK: Well, she, you know, is just a waspish woman and she's always mad at something. She's mad at the Republi-, uh, because we have the Republicans or we're not fighting hard enough for, I dunno, civil rights or some god damned thing, whatever it may be. She's always sore. I don't have any contact with her.

RFK: Yeah.

JFK: And, uh. . . .

RFK: Well, anyway, you might keep it in mind if something comes up.

JFK: You never see her, do you?

RFK: Well, I don't, no. No. [Words missing] but she is just a bitter bitch.

JFK: Yeah. She's around yelling all the time. Somebody I, uh. . . . Tell me, we hear a rumor that John McCone's gonna quit some time, at a time when it suits him.

RFK: Ah, Marquis Childs.

JFK: You hear that?

RFK: You know what Marquis Childs . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . told Ed Guthman?

JFK: Yeah? He told Ed Guthman what?

RFK: He said that they're really pouring that stuff out of CIA against the administration.

JFK: CIA is?

RFK: Yeah. Did you see his article today?

JFK: Yeah. Well, that was obviously based on Jo-, what John told him.

RFK: [I thought that?] John McCone looked good in that thing.

JFK: Yeah, but I didn't think he looked great. No matter how . . .

RFK: Well, that's what Dave sa-. . . . He said, "I wrote the. . . . He said, "I wrote that story," uh, "in order to make sure that the record was clear on what they're doing."

JFK: What? That they're putting it out?

RFK: Yeah. I tell ya . . .

JFK: But, of course, he put it that he was only sending it into the, into the, uh . . .

RFK: Yeah, CIA.

JFK: . . . CIA. But he says that CIA is pouring it out?

RFK: Yeah. And, uh, and I think he specified, uh, on behalf of John McCone.

JFK: And McCone was right?

RFK: Well, that John McCone, that they're trying to make themselves look good.

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: And that's what he said. "This is where it's coming from," he said.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah. He's a real bastard, that John McCone.

RFK: Yeah.

JFK: Yeah. We got him. Do you have an- . . .

RFK: Well, he was useful at a time.

JFK: Yeah, but, boy, it's really evaporate-. . . . But he's making such a. . . . Uh, of course, everybody's on to him now. That's the trouble. He's stupid himself. Everybody's saying he's a horse's ass. Uh, but you mean that fifteen hundred terrorists and guerrillas that are being trained over there. . . . Isn't quite the way it was. They've got fifteen hundred students, how many of them are being

trained as terrorists and guerrillas, how many have been picked up is another good question. They don't, never have anything very precise.

RFK: Yeah.

JFK: Uh. The, uh. . . .

RFK: Shall I give you another problem?

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: This TFX.

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: Is somebody watching that? The beginning of that whole contract, is that what it is that [came?] . . .

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

RFK: Well, because the newspapermen think that there's something there now.

JFK: Uh, not that we know. Uh, who, what do they think is there?

RFK: Well they think it's, uh, that there's . . .

JFK: What?

RFK: . . . something funny that went on, but I just think that somebody better . . .

JFK: Well, you know what went on? [Laughs.] Nobody wanted to go to Topeka, Kansas. [Laughs.] That's all that went on. [Laughs.]

RFK: Yeah. But I want, think we ought to make sure somebody's looking at it.

JFK: Unh.

RFK: Look at the hearings and everything.

JFK: Well, m-. . . . I don't, you know I think it's a sha-. . . . Your friend John McClellan.

RFK: Yeah.

JFK: But, actually, nothing went on, so that's why they're never going to find anything. I know what went on.

RFK: Umh.

JFK: Nothing. 'Cause a' Topeka, Kansas. [Laughs.] That's where that contract would have gone, you know, that was the alternate.

RFK: Yeah. Well, I remember the discussion.

JFK: Yeah. Well, that was the whole thing.

RFK: Yeah.

JFK: But, uh, the, uh, let's see, there's that and Doris and what was the other matter?

RFK: Oh, it's just John McCone.

JFK: Yeah, well, I don't know what we can do about old John.

RFK: Except the. . . . Uh, I suppose if somebody could get the message to him that there . . .

JFK: I thought that you could say that, uh, first that . . .

RFK: They're saying . . .

JFK: . . . all the press are saying that they're pouring out a lot of stuff to try to make, you know, the CIA or McCone look good at the expense of the administration, that there's a lot of talk about it on the Hill and everything. I'd like to have John know about that. So maybe he'd then decide it wasn't so wise.

RFK: Yeah.

JFK: You, you aren't going to be seeing him, are you? Is he coming . . .

RFK: Yeah, I'm going to see him Thursday, Wednesday. He's coming to the house for dinner.

JFK: Uh-huh. Well, he's going up tomorrow to testify. Thought you . . .

RFK: He's been . . .

JFK: . . . might give it to him Tuesday night.

RFK: . . . better, though, hasn't he, on his testimony?

JFK: I guess he has, though there were. . . . Well, that thing of. . . . Uh, I don't know where Marq Childs got that thing, do you know?

RFK: Yes.

JFK: Did he get it from McCone? ,

RFK: McCone. That's what he implied to Ed Guthman.

JFK: Yeah, well, I mean that's not, you know, giving the dates when he sent the messages and everything. Christ, he never sent the message to anybody else.
[Needle sticks]

RFK: Um.

JFK: Why didn't he come back from his honeymoon?

RFK: Well, I know that . . .

JFK: Huh?

RFK: Well, you know, I understand . . .

JFK: [Laughs] I think that's the only thing that. . . . I mean he isn't going to. . . .

RFK: Yeah, I don't think Marquis Childs was too impressed.

JFK: Yeah?

RFK: I mean, the way he talked, he just said that that's where the stuff's coming from and that, uh, they're sticking it to you, the administration. So he just wanted to tell us . . .

JFK: Yeah.

RFK: . . . that that's going on.

JFK: Well . . . [Conversation fades.]

[Conversation is continued In Item 9B1.]