

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.

Dictabelt 23A

Item 23A1¹

July 10, 1963

JFK: . . . had any private thoughts on it.

Meany:² Well, let me . . .

JFK: How much trouble am I going to have with labor if we go for compulsory arbitration?

Meany: Well, I don't know. It's, uh, it's one of these things, [and, and?] make sure everybody realizes . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Meany: . . . you can't have the country shut down.

JFK: Yeah. Right.

Meany: Uh, let me, Mr. President, let me talk to Ed Gilbert,³ er, and see, or some of his boys . . .

JFK: Okay, okay.

Meany: . . . and see if I can come up with something. But, I, I really don't know. They sort of, they sort of got them com-, selves committed [against?] . . .

JFK: That's right, I don't think they can take on the responsibility. I should think that we could get some proposal out of this thing that would save most of everybody's jobs.

Meany: Yeah. Yes, I thought that, that if it went to Arthur⁴ they might get . . .

JFK: Yeah, that was . . .

¹ JFK's side of more of this conversation appears in meeting item 97.2.

² George Meany.

³ Henry Edward Gilbert.

⁴ Arthur J. Goldberg.

Meany: . . . a good view, but evidently they're committed someway, to each other, I imagine, on, on the question of arbitration.

JFK: Yeah, yeah.

Meany: Well, I don't, I don't have an idea at the moment . . .

JFK: Good.

Meany: . . . but let me, let me reach out and see if I can talk to some of the fellows.

JFK: Yeah, but on, I just wanted to get your private, uh, thought. I'm gonna just talk to the Congress and see what they say. But I'll be talking to you a little later.

Meany: Fine.

JFK: Thanks a lot.

Dictabelt 23A

Item 23A2

July 10, 1963

JFK: [Reading] ". . . Harrison,⁵ Joe Block,⁶ Stuart Saunders, George Meany, the secretary of labor and the secretary of commerce undertake in consultation with the parties, a review and report limited to the facts and issues," the statement I put out, "limited to the facts and issues in this case and the respective positions of the parties. This report will be transmitted to the Congress on July 22, 1963, with appropriate legislative recommendations from me which would be designed to dispose of the issues in this particular case. After consultation with congressional leaders, I am asking the parties to withhold any rule change or strike notice until July 29 to permit appropriate consideration of this matter, with the understanding that no further such request for a continuance will be made by this administration."

Harris:⁷ Yeah.

JFK: So, uh, that puts it until then. Then, of course, they'll come in on Sunday and Monday, that, uh, of the, in which they'll probably disagree. Then I will make a rec-, recommendation with their report on Monday and if there's [not?], my understanding is it will go to your committee in the House and the Senate. There will be a week in which there won't be any action. Then, of course, it's up to whether, they're, after that they're not bound beyond the 29th as to what action the railroads would take or the unions would take.

Harris: Your message would then, uh, get here the 22nd, Monday, the 22nd?

JFK: That's right. That's right. So we'll see.

Harris: Well, that will be a whole ba-, that will give us a week.

JFK: That'd give us a week. That's right. Well, if we're, we just have to, uh, after talking to a couple of the boys over in the Senate who were very much opposed to any congressional action, it would seem to me probably that there won't be much action until the hot breath is on everybody's neck up there.

⁵ George M. Harrison.

⁶ Joseph L. Block.

⁷ Oren Harris, congressman from Arkansas.

Harris: I think that's right.

JFK: So this gives 'em a week without it and, uh, maybe a few days with it.

Harris: Yup, well, has there been any discussion as to whether or not, uh, you would want to undertake in the Senate first?

JFK: No, no, maybe have a joint, at least, maybe a joint, uh, hearing at least of the various parties who will be complaining about whatever I propose or whatever your judgment would be on that. We can have a meeting, maybe next week, and see what looks like the best thing or the week after.

Harris: All right, fine.

JFK: Good, thank you, Oren.

Harris: Thanks for the report.

JFK: Okay.

Harris?: Bye.

Dictabelt 23A

Item 23A3

July 10, 1963

JFK: Maggie?⁸

Magnuson: Yeah.

JFK: Oh, well, now this thing's put off for a couple of weeks.

Magnuson: Oh, good.

JFK: And here's what our, uh, situation is. Uh, here's the en-, statement I've just got in. "In view of the unique and all-important nature of this labor-management dispute, I'm asking a special six-man subcommittee of the Labor-Management Advisory Committee--to be composed of George Harrison, Stuart Saunders, George Meany, Joseph Block, the secretary of labor as chairman, the secretary of commerce as vice chairman--to undertake immediately, in full consultation with the parties, a comprehensive review and report limited to the facts and issues in this case and the respective positions of the parties. This report will be transmitted to the Congress on July 22, 1963, with appropriate legislative recommendations from me which would be designed to dispose of the issues in this particular case. After consultation with congressional leaders, I am asking the parties to withhold any rules change or strike notice until July 29 to permit appropriate consideration of this matter, with the understanding that no further such request for a continuance will be made by this administration."

Magnuson: Uh-huh.

JFK: So, uh. . . .

Magnuson: Well, would that require legislation?

JFK: That's correct, if they don't, uh . . .

Magnuson: If they don't . . .

JFK: . . . if in the next two weeks . . .

⁸ Warren G. Magnuson, senator from Washington.

Magnuson: . . . have time to get together.

JFK: And I don't think they probably will, so we're probably gonna be faced with the strike and therefore. . . .

Magnuson: What are we going to have, the one-shot thing?

JFK: Yeah, and we'll have a proposal for a solution.

Magnuson: Yeah, well, we'll, we'll have to work that out . . .

JFK: Right.

Magnuson: . . . and see what we're gonna do.

JFK: Okay, well, we'll wait for a couple weeks . . .

Magnuson: Yeah.

JFK: . . . anyway.

Magnuson: Say, while you're on the phone. Uh, uh, that Black⁹ is perfectly okay for that Power Commission.¹⁰

JFK: That, uh, let's see now, well . . .

Magnuson: Black.

JFK: . . . let me check on that. Dungan¹¹ had . . .

Magnuson: Well, Dungan, Dungan called me and said that you, uh . . .

JFK: Well, that's all, uh, fine, good.

Magnuson: Yeah. [Words unintelligible].

JFK: That's all set. Is that all right with you?

⁹ David S. Black.

¹⁰ Federal Power Commission.

¹¹ Ralph A. Dungan.

Magnuson: Yeah, that's marvelous.

JFK: Okay, now, Maggie, uh, uh, how are you doing up there with, uh, civil rights?

Magnuson: Pretty good.

JFK: Are you?

Magnuson: Yeah.

JFK: When will you be st-, when . . .

Magnuson: Dean, Dean Rusk this morning was just marvelous.

JFK: Was he, was he.

Magnuson: He was . . .

JFK: I noticed, I saw something about it on television.

Magnuson: Oh, he was just about as good a witness and then Thurmond¹² blew up which made it, uh, you know, helped us.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Magnuson: He called all the witnesses left-wingers and [everything?] [words unintelligible?] . . .

JFK: Yeah, I heard them on television.

Magnuson: . . . public, uh, in the hearing room, and, uh, and Bobby¹³ was marvelous, too.

JFK: Um.

Magnuson: He answered all the questions just perfectly.

JFK: Right. Right.

¹² Strom Thurmond, senator from South Carolina.

¹³ Robert F. Kennedy.

Magnuson: But we've got to have a, I gotta talk with [Mick?] Monroney¹⁴ and those fellows. They always want to get off on some other tangent, you know.

JFK: Yeah, I know, I know.

Magnuson: So we got to do some work on them. But I'll finish this up in about ten days.

JFK: Yeah, I think we don't have to push too fast . . .

Magnuson: No.

JFK: . . . because it'd be good to get, that a, it would be good, uh, it seems to me, to get some action on that, uh, tax bill before, uh, in the House, before...

Magnuson: I don't want to be, I just don't want to be accused of stalling . . .

JFK: No.

Magnuson: . . . get it out of committee, and then we can, the policy committee can handle it from there.

JFK: Yeah, well, we can, yeah, I don't think that we have to push on it.

Magnuson: [No?].

JFK: Good.

Magnuson: Well, then I won't hear anything from you about this until next week.

JFK: Right.

Magnuson: Okay.

JFK: Thanks, Maggie.

Speaker?: Operator.

¹⁴ A.S. Mike Monroney, senator from Oklahoma