

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 26C

Item 26C1

August 23, 1963

Fulbright:¹ . . . [words unintelligible] we are in pretty . . . we are in pretty good shape . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . and, uh, I have a feeling that much of this criticism is, uh, politically inspired. Uh, I can see the Republicans are pretty mad that they've tried to make this same thing and they wouldn't do it . . .

JFK: Um.

Fulbright: . . . and now Khrushchev's² come around and they think you're going to get credit out of it.

JFK: Yeah, yeah, what about Jackson?³ Is he going to vote for it?

Fulbright: Well, I can't tell.

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: He, he is such an advocate of Teller⁴ . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . and he's so devoted to him and all this. I can't tell what he's going to do, uh. . . . It's incredible to me that a fellow of his, uh, normal common sense could vote against it. What I think our greatest danger is, is an effort will be made by Jackson or someone like him to propose a, uh, a reservation. I, I just cannot believe he'd vote against it because of the public impression. You can always vote, uh . . .

JFK: Yeah.

¹ Continued from Item 26B5. J. William Fulbright, senator from Arkansas.

² Nikita S. Khrushchev, premier, U.S.S.R.

³ Henry M. Jackson, senator from Washington.

⁴ Dr. Edward Teller, physicist.

Fulbright: . . . propose a reservation. I think that this ha-, is the place where it's most dangerous.

JFK: A, a reservation needs a majority, doesn't it?

Fulbright: And that's the trouble. And, uh, I, uh, told, uh, my staff member that first you try to find out if you can from other staff members if any reservations are in preparation and also to ask State Department if there are any kind of not reservations perhaps but interpretations which are in accord with their understanding that we might accept.

JFK: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Fulbright: If, uh, there're several things been said about the use of nuclear, uh, weapons in war or . . .

JFK: God, we've made that so clear haven't we . . .

Fulbright: You made it very clear.

JFK: . . . in my own statement I did not . . .

Fulbright: That's right and I think it is clear and I, I was thinking of this not because I wish to propose it but . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . as a kind of a rear . . .

JFK: That's right.

Fulbright: . . . guard action.

JFK: Would that mean, would that mean we would have to renegotiate it with the Russians or get them to agree?

Fulbright: No, I don't want [it there?]. That would be maybe a reservation. There, there're several degrees of these things they . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . call interpretations on, uh. . . . And also we can sometimes put something in the report without it in, being put on . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . the treaty.

JFK: I see.

Fulbright: Or in the resolution affirming it, uh, what they sometimes call an interpretation.

JFK: Right.

Fulbright: It's our understanding in approving this, for example . . .

JFK: I see.

Fulbright: . . . that, uh, nuclear weapons in warfare are not used.

JFK: Right.

Fulbright: And I, I asked the staff to get ahold of the State Department to see if, uh, anything of this kind that is quite unobjectionable that they could take. And then if I knew about this, if we can, if there is, there are any of these then I could give, offer this as a sop to them to keep off a reservation.

JFK: Right, right.

Fulbright: I personally don't wish to propose anything. I'm just thinking of the technique . . .

JFK: Right.

Fulbright: . . . that, of fighting off any, any reservations which would, uh, which would cripple the treaty.

JFK: Right. Right. Okay, good, fine. Well, I'll talk to Dutton⁵ over there.

⁵ Frederick G. Dutton, assistant secretary of state for congressional relations.

Fulbright: Yeah, I, I think we ought to be ready if we, so far as we can to, to take something of an innocuous nature that would give these boys a little face saving. You know what I mean.

JFK: Yeah, well, now we've sent those, that letter I guess they're going to release for Sunday, uh, they, uh, that one from Gilpatric.⁶ That's going to Dick Russell⁷ on the, uh, that Jackson resolution about the four safeguards that . . .

Fulbright: Un-huh.

JFK: . . . the Chiefs insisted on.

Fulbright: You've already sent that?

JFK: Yeah, well that's supposed to be going, uh, we sent it up, I approved it yesterday. It's going up, I guess, today or tomorrow. So that, uh . . .

Fulbright: Good.

JFK: . . . that will have, let them claim they got that out of us. [Laughs.]

Fulbright: Good. Well, I, I, what I was thinking about is, is to let them feel they had done something, uh, as a result . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . of all this criticism but, but I certainly don't advise anything of any serious nature. I don't want to give them any damn thing that, that you don't want to . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . I mean, that is, you can't live with.

JFK.: That's right. Okay, good. Well, thank you very much, Bill.

Fulbright: I really think we, we got the votes. I just cannot believe these fellows are so stupid as to vote against this treaty. But you know how the old good-you're-all-amending thing of trying to gut it by amendment.

⁶ Roswell L. Gilpatric, deputy secretary of defense.

⁷ Richard B. Russell, senator from Georgia.

JFK: Kistiakowsky,⁸ I guess, is going to testify Monday, isn't he? He should be helpful.

Fulbright: I believe he's . . .

JFK: Eisenhower's⁹ man.

Fulbright: . . . Monday at two.

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: Then York¹⁰ is coming.

JFK: Oh, that'll be good.

Fulbright: I, I don't much want to, uh, to delay this.

JFK: No.

Fulbright: I don't think we gain much by . . .

JFK: No.

Fulbright: . . . by many more witnesses . . .

JFK: I think this week'd be. . . . No. I agree with that.

Fulbright: . . . so I'm going to try to . . .

JFK: I think Kistiakowsky'll be good because he was Eisenhower's fellow . . .

Fulbright: Un-huh.

JFK: . . . but that's about it.

Fulbright: The only thing Teller had over the others is he is such an actor. I mean . . .

⁸ Dr. George B. Kistiakowsky, former special assistant to the president for science and technology.

⁹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, former president.

¹⁰ Dr. Herbert F. York, physicist.

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . he's John L. Lewis and Billy Sunday all wrapped in one.

JFK: Oh, is he a good witness?

Fulbright: Huh?

JFK: He's an effective witness, is he?

Fulbright: Well, he's, he's an actor. I mean . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Fulbright: . . . dramatic and all. He's the same way old Lewis was, you know, uh, uh . . .

JFK: Uh-huh.

Fulbright: . . . and this upset particularly some of the younger members but, not some of the older ones. I, uh. . . . It's hard for me to judge it, but I just, uh, have a feeling that we've got the votes for it, uh, except this business of an amendment with a majority. And I don't, I don't like that. It, it presents some hazards. So I, I thought we ought to give most of our attention to that.

JFK: Right. Okay, fine.

Fulbright: How're you feeling?

JFK: Oh, very good. Good shape.

Fulbright: That's good. I hear your golf is good.

JFK: Well, every now and then I get a good one.

Fulbright: Well, I can't [forget it?]

JFK: You know that, don't you? You've had that experience.

Fulbright: Yeah, it's better than mine, I can say.

JFK: Okay, good, well, thanks a lot.

Fulbright: Good luck.

JFK: Bye, Bill.

Note for Researcher

No Kennedy Library Transcripts were prepared for Dictabelt numbers 26C.2, 26C.2A, 26C.2B, and 26C.3.