

FOREWORD

Transcript Warning:

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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 6C

December 17, 1962

[Continued from tape 6B, Item 6B7. Conversation is very garbled and difficult to understand]

- JFK: . . . they got the British out there. So they've known it's in trouble. But, of course, this places Prime Minister Macmillan in a difficult position because this means that his, uh, that is right. The only problem is all we really can talk about doing is giving them *[MAC's?]* and missiles, which, of course, will cause the French to be awfully sore. . . . Uh, we go into the Polaris missile. . . .
- Eisenhower¹: *[Words missing]* I've always thought *[inaudible]*. . .
- JFK: Yeah.
- Eisenhower: . . . still think if we can *[words missing]*. . .
- JFK: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
- Eisenhower: *[Words missing]* no satisfaction by *[words missing]*.
- JFK: Right.
- Eisenhower: Now, I think that when dealing with *[words missing]* has come through. What can we do now?
- JFK: Of course, we are, we could give them Hounddog which is actually a better weapon.
- Eisenhower: It might make a better *[word missing]*.
- JFK: General, you know, to fire a missile from a thousand miles away on a plane going 600 to 700 miles an hour hitting the target on the nose is just about as difficult an operation as you could possibly devise.
- Eisenhower: Yes. I know *[words missing]* but the Air Force are the ones *[who have got to do it?]*.

¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower

JFK: [Words missing] gave them . . . [skips]. . . B-52's.

Eisenhower: [Words missing] about it, it's one of these things that doesn't have to hit so . . . [skips]. . . to raise hell, you know, from, uh, from up, from up topside . . .

JFK: Right. Right.

Eisenhower: . . . so you can get in, but I would. . . Well, as long as it's going to take 200 million dollars more in just . . . [skips]. . . -mental . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Eisenhower: . . . before you even think of putting in, uh, one of them in operational use, I would say it's . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Eisenhower: . . . pretty good . . . [skips]. . . When I came in, the first I recollect was, was Navaho and that cost us 720 million dollars for it and it never has been [worth it?] but, uh . . . [skips] . . . one of the things in operation, [not one?]. You got to at least start [words missing].

JFK: Yeah.

Eisenhower: That was the [words missing]. Well, this is one of those things, you know, you run into, Mr. President, with allies. You are trying to . . . [skips]. . . you're being fair. And I think that the, I would really, uh, talk to Harold. I just Is he coming here or are you going over there?

JFK: No, I, I'll go down to Nassau and meet him.

Eisenhower: Oh, oh, yes, that's right.

JFK: Yeah.

Eisenhower: Just by the way, uh, be sure to give him my, uh, warm greetings.

JFK: Oh, I will. I will, General. I can pretty much, uh. . . There's nothing that, uh, you recall or any notes that, beyond what we have on the official record that I ought to know about before I talk to him on, on Skybolt, is there?

Eisenhower: Nothing that I can think whatsoever.

JFK: Right.

Eisenhower: I just think, as well as [words missing] to be perfectly honest and say [words missing].

JFK: Right. Good.

Eisenhower: I would. . . . If I could, uh, I will, uh. . . . You talked to Tom Gates did you?

JFK: I talked to him just for a few minutes the other night. I spoke at that New York Economic Club.

Eisenhower: Oh, yes.

JFK: And, uh, they said I got almost as good a hand as you. [Both laugh]

Eisenhower: Well. . . .

JFK: Which evidently is supposed to be as high a compliment as they can pay you. [Both laugh]

Eisenhower: Oh, well. . . . I think [words missing] be [words missing] to you.

JFK: No, no.

Eisenhower: Well, in any event, uh, if Tom can't, uh, I would, I could talk to Neil McElroy, Neil McElroy . . .

JFK: Right. Right.

Eisenhower: . . . and I could talk to one or two others to find out. I tell you what you might do, you've got. . . . Call in, uh, Goodpaster [A. J. Goodpaster], he's around . . .

JFK: Yeah, well, that's right, we've been in touch with Goodpaster.

Eisenhower: And does he remember?

JFK: No, he thinks, uh, that, that, he gave us all he had and he didn't feel there was anything beyond the agreement.

Eisenhower: Yes.

JFK: And that was Tom Gates's impression.

Eisenhower: Yes.

JFK: And, uh . . .

Eisenhower: Well, I can't recall a single thing. That would make it just a case of here's something that didn't work . . .

JFK: Right.

Eisenhower: [Words missing]

JFK: Right. Well, of, of course, what they will, uh, I just wanted to be sure that, uh, there's no doubt that the, there was sort of a general agreement about Holy Loch and Polaris, uh, the Skybolt, but they were not contingent one upon the other.

Eisenhower: That is correct. As a matter of fact the only, the only agreement that I remember there was, that we went up. . . . Uh, the Laborites, of course, were against the Holy Loch.

JFK: Yeah, they must have been.

Eisenhower: But, uh, we did agree up there that this was, anything in there would, uh, be approved only by cooperation or agreement by the two of us.

JFK: Right. Right.

Eisenhower: It wouldn't be. . . . We wouldn't use it from their place, from their place without, uh, their consent.

JFK: Right. Right.

Eisenhower: And that meant. . . . And, of course, there are, outside of that, another program that we were trying to work out and that was giving the, uh, NATO a . . . [skips] . . . Polaris . . . [skips] . . . and a few other things like that where we could get . . . [skips]. . . a more cooperative basis, so that one would supplement the other.

JFK: Right.

Eisenhower: And I would think . . . [skips] . . . raise that question with him.

JFK: That's what we thought we would talk to him about this question of Polaris but in the context of a, uh, European nuclear force if that should be developed.

Eisenhower: That's what I mean.

[JFK: Right?]

Eisenhower: Instead of . . . [skips]. . . and, of course, they . . . [skips] . . .

JFK: What are you. . . . Are you going to stay up there, General, or are you . . .

Eisenhower: I'm going to stay here 'til the third of January I'm going out to California.

JFK: Oh, It was good out there, I was there a week ago and it was very good weather.

Eisenhower: Oh, I see, I saw in the paper that you were out there.

JFK: Very good.

Eisenhower: All right.

JFK: Well, thanks, General, and I certainly appreciate the chance to talk to you.

Eisenhower: Well, thank you and I, good luck on that meeting.

JFK: All right, thank you. [Bye?]