

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 15A

Conversation #1: President Kennedy and Dean Rusk

March 13, 1963

President: Hello.

Sec. Rusk: Mr. President.

President: Yes.

Sec. Rusk: We're being pushed pretty hard on the management of news thesis about making . . . not making available information on the local currency payments we make to Congressmen and Committees traveling abroad. Now this is something in which we act solely as the agent of the Congress. I'd like to read you three or four sentences to see what you think of it. "In making payments of local currency to committees and members of the Congress traveling abroad, the Department of State acts as a disbursing agent for the Congress. It was determined in 1953 that in as much as the Congress does not have disbursing agents abroad, the Department of State would provide that service. The relevant legislation confers on the Department no discretion or judgment with respect to such payments, which are made on basis of receipts issued by Congressional travelers. The Department considers therefore that the question of public disclosure of such payments is a question for the Congress to decide. The Department would of course comply with any directive received from the Congress on the matter."

President: Yea, that's alright, fine. Are they going to put it out.

Sec. Rusk: Well, I don't know. We are being put in a great cross fire here. All these Congressional committee chairmen say you put it out and we will cut your throat. And on the other side the press is saying, well, you are managing news, you see. So I think we will just have to pin the responsibility down and if they can't get the information from the Congress then that's just their problem.

President: Yea, yea.

Sec. Rusk: Right.

President: Ok.

Sec. Rusk: Thank you.

President: Right.

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Dictabelts

Dictabelt 15A

Conversation #2: President Kennedy and Dave Hackett

March 13, 1963

President: Dave.

Mr. Hackett: Yea, how are you?

President: Dave, I noticed in the paper this morning where the Swedish team beat the American hockey team 17 to 2.

Mr. Hackett: Yea, I saw that.

President: Christ, who are we sending over there, girls?

Mr. Hackett: I don't know, they haven't won a game.

President: I know it. I mean, who got them up?

Mr. Hackett: I don't know, but I can check into it.

President: God, we've got some pretty good hockey players, haven't we?

Mr. Hackett: Yea.

President: I suppose they are all playing on their college teams, are they or something? I would like to find out whether it was done . . . under what sort of sponsors it and what kind of players they've got. Because I think that it is a disgrace to have a team that 17 to 2. That is about as bad as I have ever heard, isn't it?

Mr. Hackett: And they have been beaten by everybody by scores almost equal to that.

President: So it obviously, uh, we shouldn't sent a team unless we can send a good one.
Would you find out about it and let me know.

Mr. Hackett: Yea, I will find out and let you know.

Papers of John F. Kennedy

Presidential Recordings

Dictabelts

Dictabelt 15A

Conversation #3: President Kennedy and Unidentified Staff Member

[begins in mid-conversation]

President: . . . got it. Now, it seems to me we'd better have a brief conversation about it with . . .

Voice: Yes.

President: . . . before we go to Costa Rica.

Voice: As a matter of fact, it's set up . . . set up immediately after your ten-thirty meeting . . .

President: Well, will Helms be there, and the others?

Voice: Yes, sir.

President: O.K.

Voice: Yes, sir.

President: O.K., thank you.

Voice: Yes, sir.

[disconnect]