

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 22B

Item 22B1

June 18, 1963

[Continued from item 22A4]

- Thompson:¹ . . . the head of the thing.
- JFK: Reverend. Is he a reverend?
- Thompson: No.
- JFK: He's a professor.
- Thompson: Uh, and then there's, uh, L. L. Williams.
- JFK: Yeah.
- Thompson: And Stevens. Although Stevens is not, uh, hasn't been too good a friend of mine. He's come around. He's the head of Campbell College. And he's a *[smart? or hard?]* man.
- JFK: Well, now let me ask you this, uh, what about these policemen? How many can ya, uh, if these people all stop demonstrating and went home for a period, when do you think you could take the policemen and how many?
- Thompson: That's up to. . . . Well, I just pick 'em as I get 'em ready.
- JFK: Yeah. Have you got anybody ready?
- Thompson: Uh, I mean as I get them, when I think that they're qualified.
- JFK: Have you got anyone that's qualified?
- Thompson: Well, I had two I was going to take on. I may even have to get a call from you to put 'em on.

¹ Allen C. Thompson, mayor of Jackson, Mississippi.

[Laughter]

JFK: I'll tell you what. It seemed to me, that if I, if we could say to these fellows . . .

Thompson: Uh-huh.

JFK: . . . that, uh, that you were going to do something about the policemen, and, uh, which after all every, I mean that's not too tough . . .

Thompson: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: . . . and these cross guards . . .

Thompson: [No, here is?] the only thing, Mr. President, I want to, when I put a policeman on, I want him to be responsible to me and not to the NAACP² . . .

JFK: Well, that I agree. That I agree.

Thompson: . . . or any other place.

JFK: God, there must be some bright young fellow down there that you can get, a couple of those.

Thompson: Well, I had one picked out this morning. And I had two. One of 'em weighed 260, I'd known him for five years and the other one weighed 300 . . .

JFK: Uh-huh.

Thompson: . . . and they were fine men.

JFK: He's five feet how much?

Thompson: Fine, fine men.

JFK: Fine men.

Thompson: Oh, and, uh, [maybe?] I can get two I know within the next three or four days.

² National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

JFK: I see. Well, now what about the cross guards?

Thompson: We've got those. [See?], we don't need those until September. But I've already talked to the chief in charge of that and he's got them.

JFK: He's got them and then about, uh . . .

Thompson: No, he hasn't got them but he's ready, ready to pick 'em out.

JFK: Well, now why don't I do this? Why don't I get, give you a call ba-. . . . You going to be around, uh, for, within another hour or two?

Thompson: Here's what I'm doing, I'm meeting Governor Wallace,³ he's coming in on the plane and then I am going home.

JFK: [Laughs]

Thompson: Uh, I'll be home, uh, Fleetwood 20323.

JFK: Fleetwood?

Thompson: Two, o, three, two, three. That's my home.

JFK: Okay.

Thompson: Uh, but, and, uh, if you can't [never?] get in touch with me just get the police?

JFK: Are they?

Thompson: They watch me like a baby, I wanna tell you.

JFK: Well, I tell you, [laughs] I'll tell you what. I'll talk to one or two of these fellows and see if there's anything that they got to say and then maybe I'll call you back this evening. You'll be home in about how long a time?

Thompson: Well, let's see, I'll be home [by?] six o'clock and I'll be there until we go to this banquet at seven.

JFK: Yeah.

³ George C. Wallace, governor of Alabama.

Thompson: Now, look, uh, don't get your feelings hurt in anything that comes up . . .

JFK: *[Laughs]* Okay.

Thompson: . . . about anything anybody says that I say . . .

JFK: Oh, that's all right.

Thompson: . . . because I think the world of you.

JFK: Well, listen, you got, I give you full permission to denounce me in public as long as you don't in private.

[Laughter]

Thompson: You're rich. Give my regards to your wife.

JFK: You say hello to Governor Wallace.

Thompson: I'll do that and then I'll tell my wife you said that.

JFK: Okay.

Thompson: Don't forget to tell your wife.

JFK: All right. I'll call you back tonight. *[All right?]*?

Thompson: *[Thank you?]*.

Dictabelt 22B

Item 22B2

June 18, 1963

Operator: [Waiting?].

Hays:⁴ Hello, Mr. President.

JFK: Wayne, how are you?

Hays: All right.

JFK: Um, I just wanted to speak to you a minute on the aid matter. Where do you think they're gonna end up?

Hays: Well, I, I would think from the way Passman⁵ talks below 3 billion . . .

JFK: Oh, my God. Jesus.

Hays: . . . but then I don't know how much of his is talk and how much is, uh, hot air.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Hays: I, I think we'll, we've about agreed to get one out of the Foreign Affairs Committee with about 4 billion I authorized.

JFK: Right, right, fine. Well, I, I'm, uh. . . . Damn. I think if we can get, uh, that or anything above that, it would be helpful.

Hays: Well Passman said to me on the floor, he said, "What are you going to come out with?" And I said, "Well, I think somewhere about, slightly above 4 billion." And he said, "That much!" And I said, "Well, yeah, I guess." He said, "Well, 3 billion's too much, I'm gonna cut it below that."

JFK: Yeah, yeah, that's all right. I think we can try to fight that and do the best we can.

⁴ Wayne L. Hays, congressman from Ohio.

⁵ Otto E. Passman, congressman from Louisiana.

Hays: Yeah, well, uh, the only trouble is the way we go through these maneuvers up here, uh, I've long since, uh, maintained that this is a waste of time to have two committees operate all the time [words unintelligible].

JFK: I know. Well, as a matter of fact though, when you think of it, last year we did end up finally with what, 3.9?

Hays: Yeah.

JFK: So that I think if we can get at least . . .

Hays: Well, I think you might end up, uh, with, if you can, if. . . . I don't know what the Senate's gonna do, that's the trouble.

JFK: Yeah, I know. I haven't talked to anybody over there.

Hays: If they hold up, uh, somewhere near what we do, then, uh, even if Passman cuts it, you can get a compromise probably at 3.6, 3.7 [or something like that?].

JFK: Yeah, yeah. Uh, but you think we'll get 3, uh, 4.1?

Hays: Well, we tentatively talked the other day about 4, uh, 4 . . .

JFK: Ninety-five.

Hays: . . . 95, yeah, 4.095.

JFK: If they can put that figure over, the 4.1, it seems to me it makes it a little easier for us to, uh, influence the Senate, even if it's not too much over 1. [Authorize?] once it's under 95, then really it's in the 4 billion, then the escalator takes us down another step. Well, fine, whatever . . .

Hays: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: . . . you can do, whatever. . . . Maybe you can talk to Doc⁶ about it. I haven't talked to him today and I don't know where. . . . I just, I talked to him last week. Perhaps, you'd speak to him.

Hays: Sure. I . . .

⁶ Thomas E. Morgan, congressman from Pennsylvania and chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

JFK: Okay, fine, thanks a lot.

Hays: *[Words unintelligible]*

Dictabelt 22B

Item 22B3

June 18, 1963

Operator: Mr. Mayor.

Thompson:⁷ Hello.

Operator: Just a minute. Mr. Mayor.

Thompson: Hello.

JFK: Mr. Mayor.

Thompson: Hello.

JFK: How are you?

Thompson: Fine.

JFK: How we doing?

Thompson: Uh, General.

JFK: No, this is the president.

Thompson: Oh, Mr. President.

JFK: How you doing?

Thompson: How you doing?

JFK: Oh, very good indeed, fine.

Thompson: [Words unintelligible]

JFK: How's everything down in Jackson?

⁷ Allen C. Thompson, mayor of Jackson, Mississippi.

Thompson: I'm very honored that you called me and I hate to take up your time.

JFK: Not a bit, not a bit.

Thompson: Feeling all right today?

JFK: Oh, you bet. Very good.

Thompson: Uh, Mr. President, we're in a tough spot here. We have the, uh, I have some police around me, my commissioners, it will take just a minute, have you got just a minute . . .

JFK: Sure.

Thompson: . . . for me to talk to you.

JFK: Sure.

Thompson: We, uh, are going to go ahead and do everything and more than I talked to you and the, and your brother about.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: We have to do it our way.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: Uh, we have an explosive situation here. It's not with the grown people, Mr. President . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Thompson: . . . it's, uh, they're doing their best honestly, a lot of these preachers are.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: But these young people are being used as, as shields and, uh, they have just gone wild.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: They have got it in their system . . .

JFK: [Yeah?].

Thompson: . . . and the people can't control them or anything.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: Well, now I am honest with you, uh, you know I've never told [you?] and you've known me for a long time.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: And I have never misrepresented anything to you, or to anybody else.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: We are going to put some Negro policemen on.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: But my police just want me to shift into it without coming out and making a great big statement about it right now.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: They want, uh, in fact we've already got the, as I told your brother this morning, the chief has already gotten places picked out for the school crossing Negro guards in September.

JFK: Yeah.

Thompson: But they will be put on then.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: Uh, the commissioner in the sanitation department is already making arrangements to up-grade, uh, two, uh, people in the, in the Negro district to put them as foremen. They went in there Saturday and the Negroes almost mobbed them. They had to come back. They're afraid to go in there.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: Now all of the white sanitation folks are getting upset about that.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: And so what I would like, uh, I'd appreciate you doing is letting us, uh, just tell, uh, this committee, uh, I mean, that you and I have been talking. I have taken up a lot of your time and a lot of your brother's time.

JFK: Oh, no, no.

Thompson: When they come in this afternoon at 3:30 for me just to tell them that, in other words, I have got to maintain my image with the white and the colored people . . .

JFK: Right.

Thompson: . . . with the police, with my employees, with everybody . . .

JFK: Right.

Thompson: . . . tell them that what I told 'em the other day is so. And that it's going to be done but it's going to be done in, in the only way that we know how to do it. And that is to work at it right.

JFK: Right.

Thompson: Now, we're going to do it and it's going to be worked out. Uh, do you have any objections to me going about it that way?

JFK: Well, now, uh, I, let me, what I'll do, uh, mayor, is switch you over to the attorney general who has been following it closely.

Thompson: Yes.

JFK: Before I do, I think, I know the difficulty of you saying, Well, we're going to do it by such and such a date.

Thompson: That's right.

JFK: On the other hand, I suppose these people, the Negro . . .

Thompson: That's right.

JFK: . . . groups are out on a limb, so they have to look like when they call off these demonstrations that they're getting someplace. Now it should be possible in this meeting to work out some language which would save your situation and at the same time not make it look like they've all quit, because they all got themselves, uh, pretty far up.

Thompson: *[Words unintelligible]*. That's right. We had it all worked out the other day.

JFK: Why don't I get the attorney general on . . .

Thompson: Fine.

JFK: . . . and he can talk to you because I think that he has been talking . . .

Thompson: *[Words unintelligible]*.

JFK: . . . to some of the Negro community there? How is Governor Wallace?⁸

Thompson: Oh, getting along fine.

JFK: Is he, make a good speech last night?

Thompson: Oh, it was a good one.

JFK: He spoke a good word for the Democratic party? *[Laughs]*

Thompson: Oh, he did, off and on. *[Laughs]*

JFK: Off and on. *[Laughs]* Okay.

Thompson: But I want to talk to you sometime when we have got more time just to talk about general things.

JFK: Well, okay, now, let me. . . . Just hang on here a second . . .

Thompson: *[Words unintelligible]*.

⁸ George C. Wallace, governor of Alabama.

JFK: . . . but I appreciate what you're trying to do. And let me get you him because he's talked to them.

Thompson: Tell him, tell him . . .

JFK: Wait a minute, I'll switch you right over there.

Thompson: You gon-, you gonna go off the line then, are you?

JFK: Yeah. I'll switch you over to him.

Thompson: [Words unintelligible] now you tell him to do everything he can to work along with me on it . . .

JFK: Right.

Thompson: . . . and just let me work it out the best way I can.

JFK: Okay, well, let's see now, what, I think the problem is to see what it is we can get the Negro community to accept and, uh, let's, and without any of these riots. Let me switch you over to him because he's been talking to them.

Thompson: Yup.

JFK: Wait just a second, mayor.

Lincoln:⁹ Operator?

Thompson: Hello.

Lincoln: Operator? Mr. Mayor?

Thompson: Yes, ma'am.

Lincoln: You still holding on? Oh . . .

Thompson: Yes.

Lincoln: . . . I'll get the operator.

⁹ Evelyn Lincoln, the president's secretary.