

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 32, Item 32.3

October 23, 1962

JFK: But as I understood there was some report that the Russian ships were not going to stop. That we were going to have to sink them in order to stop them. I thought that--or we were going to have to fire on them. I was wondering whether the instructions on how that's to be done, or where there to be shot at and so on to cause the minimum of damage. And in addition if they're boarded, it's very possible the Russians will fire at them as they board and we'll have to fire back and have quite a slaughter. I would think we'd want two or three things. First, I think we'd want to have some control over cameras aboard these boats so we don't have a lot of people shooting a lot of pictures, which in the press might be--

Gilpatric¹: Yeah we're gonna control all the picture taking.

JFK: On the boats?

Gilpatric: Yeah.

JFK: They all turn in their cameras. Secondly, I don't know enough about the ships, but where they ought to fire and whether they ought to go through three or four steps, such as ask them to stop. If they don't stop asking them to have their crew above deck so that they don't be damaged, and three, so that we have this record made. Maybe you could talk to somebody about this.

Gilpatric: Yeah. We've got instructions at CINCLANT which start with those steps. Shot across the bow, shot through the rudder.

JFK: Shot through the rudder.

Gilpatric: Then a boarding party and then order the crews to come on deck. And the minimum amount of force at each stage. Now maybe we haven't thought of everything but we'll take another look at it.

JFK: Okay fine. How'd those photographic expeditions go this morning? Do you know?

Gilpatric: No incidents. They were back a couple of hours ago. We'll see the pictures later.

¹ Roswell L. Gilpatric.

JFK: I see. You're getting that one from me, aren't you? Of those Florida bases?

Gilpatric: That's right!

JFK: Okay. Have you taken a look at West Palm Beach?

Gilpatric: Yeah. The Air Force is doing that. We can look all of the dispersal possibilities down there.

JFK: Okay good.

Gilpatric: Did you decide anything about Nelson Rockefeller or are you going to leave that--

JFK: Wait a minute now. What about--

/Background conversation: JFK: Do we know anything more about Nelson Rockefeller?
RFK: We sent him a telegram./

JFK: We sent him a telegram saying that I'd be in touch with him later. I thought we'd meet at six but what my thought was is that we'd bring down the Civil Defense Committee. If we bring down every governor then it seems to me we're kind of in the obligation to bring every congressman down to brief.

Gilpatric: No, he just wanted to have the Civil Defense Committee.

JFK: Well then that's what we'll be in touch with him about, because I'm hoping Pitman and Ed McDermott(?) will come today anyway--

Gilpatric: They will.

JFK: Then we'll send a wire from them to him and arrange that meeting.

Gilpatric: Do everything right.

JFK: Okay, Ros.

/Background conversation/

JFK: Hello? Taz has it.

Gilpatric: Ros Gilpatric--

JFK: Taz has it. It's alright there Ros, thank you.

Gilpatric: All right.