

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH
DAVID LAWRENCE

NOVEMBER 29, 1963

84a

The President said: "I want to tell you what I've told you a good many times before....I think, first, you've got the best magazine in the business and I think you were extremely imaginative and quite partial and generous to me during this trial I went through the last two or three days....and second, to tell you how much I appreciated your own personal confidence and how hard I'll try to be worthy of it.

Mr. Lawrence: "...All of us have been thinking of you and... everybody has shared the feeling that you've undertaken a tremendous responsibility and yet how everybody thinks you've had the training for it....here we have a man that trained in our parliamentary system, who has come at the right moment to use his background and knowledge...I think it is a fortunate coincidence for the country.Everybody who listened to you and watched you on television got from the presentation the feeling of confidence...members of my family, who hadn't followed things too closely, but it did convey confidence to them and that was the big thing in this particular moment."

The President asked Mr. Lawrence to give him memos from time to time of things that he thought would benefit the country.

November 29, 1963

3:37 p. m.

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TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND WADDY BULLION (f)

LBJ Waddy.. where are you?

WB I'm out at 12th and K... where you catch the bus to the airport.

LBJ What.. are you going to the airport?

WB Well, I don't have to, sir. You want me to stay over?

LBJ I want to talk to you before you leave.

WB Y^u do... well I won't go then.

LBJ Come over here as soon as you can.

WB Over to where? White House?

LBJ White House... yes. Just tell them you have an appointment with me and check it at the Gate... I'd come in the Southwest Gate.. and come in Marie and Juanita's office.. just come up the sidewalk.. and come on by the President's office ..to Juanita's office. Southwest Gate.

WB OK ..Southwest Gate. All right, sir.

LBJ Yes and tell them who you are ..and tell them I asked you to come in.

WB OK..be right there.

Date: September 15, 1993

Processing Note

Re: Telephone Conversation between the President and Sen.
Russell Long, 11/29/63, 3:45 p.m.

While working on preservation of the dictabelts, the archives
staff observed the following inaccuracy in the transcript:

On page 1, the transcript reads:

RL: "I need to know how much you know about this
fellow McKissen..who is running against us in this
race."

The archives staff heard:

RL: "I need to know how much you know about this
fellow McKeithen..who is running against us in this
race."

Claudia Anderson
Archivist

November 29, 1963
3:45 p. m.

86

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SEN. RUSSELL LONG
(f)

RL
help one of our friends.. with the Governor.. if you need me why... let them
know and they'll send for me.

LBJ All right, I sure will.

RL I need to know how much you know about this fellow McKissen.. who is running
against us in this race.

LBJ Nothing.. never heard of him.

RL Well I thought that.. he's got some of his liars saying that he's a close friend
of yours.. he's going to fill up the State with federal money.. I'm not going to
get you into it.. don't worry about that.

LBJ You're the only man I know down there.

RL I'm just going to leave you out of it except to say that... I'll bet you wouldn't
recognize him across the street...

LBJ Well you just say that you've worked with me and just that I don't take any
parts in primaries but that you know this... that I'll work for anybody named
Long..

RL O. K.

LBJ I want to get that tax bill reported though before we go home. Now they tell
me hearings close on the 6th.. it is going to look mighty bad.. all these fellows
writing about the Congress unable to act... we've been on it a year.. and if they
close on the 6th.. it took them 4 or 5 days to write the market up last time..
we had a complex bill.. seems to me they can take a week markup and a week
to consider the amendments and a week to pass it.

RL You can count on me, Mr. President.. don't worry about that.

LBJ Thank you Russell. Get back here though and help me...

RL Goodluck.. I will.

LBJ I'll call you.

RL All right, sir.. thanks.

November 29, 1963
4:05 p. m.

✓ * 87

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SEN. RICHARD RUSSELL (t)

LBJ

.....
it concerns Hoover and Secretary of State and some others. We're trying to avoid all the House Committee, Hale Boggs and a bunch has got some things started over there and Jim Eastland and Ev Dirksen and a bunch has got them started in the Senate...and Bobby Kennedy has got his ideas.. Hoover has got his report and they want to have Dewey in ...so I've about concluded that I can get people pretty well together and I talked to the leadership on trying to have the three branches..have two Congressmen and two Senators..and maybe two or three outsiders..and maybesomebody from the Court...or at least some person of a judicial background..that are absolutely top-flight folks..on about a 7 men board to evaluate Hoover's report and it would be largely done by staff..but they can work on it.. and I want to get your reaction to it. I think it would be better than the Judiciary running one investigation, the House running another investigation ..and having four or five going opposite direction..

RR

I agree with that..but I don't think that Hoover ought to make his report too soon..

LBJ

He's ready with it now and he wants to get it off just as quick as he can

RR

Oh..Oh.

LBJ

And he'll probably have it out today..at most on Monday..

RR

But he ain't going to publish the damned thing..is he?

LBJ

He's going to turn it over to this group and there's some things about it I can't talk about.

RR

Yes, I understand that..but I think it'd mighty well if that thing was kept quiet another week or ten days..I just do.

LBJ

Well I think it would be turned over ..as they're taking this Court of Inquiry in Texas and I think the results of that Court of Inquiry..Hoover's report and all of them would go to this group and they would evaluate it and then maybe evaluate it for the general public. Now here's who I'm going to try to get on i ...I don't know..I don't think I can get any member of the Court..but going to

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH
SENATOR RICHARD RUSSELL NOVEMBER 29, 1963 4:05 p.m.

President Johnson discussed the possibility of a Commission to study the assassination with Senator Russell. Senator Russell agreed that it would be a good idea.

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Senator Russell: "oh no--no--no--get somebody else...I haven't got time..."

President Johnson continued: "Jerry Ford...Hale Boggs....Cooper as a Republican and you're a good States Rights man...I think we might get John McCloy, Allen Dulles and maybe somebody from the Court..."

The President then asked Senator Russell to let Senators Fulbright and Hickenlooper come into his CIA Committee. Senator Russell agreed to invite them on a personal basis.

They then discussed appointments for the Committee and Senator Russell continued to protest that he could not serve on it.

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LBJ
Contd try to...going to try to get Allen Dulles..going to try Senator Russell
and Senator Cooper from the Senate...

RR Oh no..no..no...get somebody else, now..

LBJ Well, wait a minute, now..I want to try to get..

RR I haven't got time..

LBJ Jerry Ford. ...It is not going to take much time..but we've got to get states
rights in there and somebody that the country has confidence in...and I'm
going to have Boggs ...he has entered a resolution over there and I haven't
talked to anybody about the membership but you...but I would think that Ford
and Boggs would pretty good..they're both pretty young men..

RR Both solid citizens..

LBJ And I think that Cooper as a Republican and you're a good states rights man.
I think we might get John McCloy, Allen Dulles and maybe somebody from the
Court...

RR If you don't get somebody from the Supreme Court..I don't know him per-
sonally but this Judge Medina..that tried all those communists..is known all
over the United States..I don't know what kind of man he is..he might not do
..but Judge Medina..I think he's on the Court of Appeals up in New York now

LBJ Who would be the best then if I didn't get the Chief?

RR I don't know..you wouldn't want Claude Harvey.

LBJ I understand none of the Court...no, I can't have a Texan.

RR No, that's why I say..that would disqualify him.

LBJ Hoover tells me all three of these shots were aimed for the President...
and that this telescopic sight will bring this thing up where you could see shoot
a man as easy as you can get a man sitting talking to you.

RR I thought it was just a \$7.50 thing...

LBJ Well, it was a \$21,00 job...but he said he looked through the telescopic
sight himself and he said, Mr. President, I could hit a man on that street

LBJ going 20 miles an hour...as easy as I could hit you. .talking to you. That's his language..

RR Well, really, Mr. President, unless you...really think it would be of some benefit...it would really save my life, I declare I don't....

LBJ I know you don't want to do anything but I want you to and I think that this is important enough and you'll see why and now the next thing...I know how you feel about this CIA...but they're worried about having to go into a lot of this stuff..with foreign relations committee...how much of a problem would it give you to just quietly let Fulbright and Hickenlooper come into your CIA Committee..

RR As long as it is confined to those two..it wouldn't be any problem at all.

LBJ That's all we make it now..

RR But there'd be changes made up there and I don't want some of those fellows ...some of them have got no business there...I've got a lot of bad talkers on that committee..

LBJ Why don't you do by invitation then?

RR And we've had a splendid record up to now...there's never been one thing

LBJ You've got a perfect one..yes sir..but they know that..they're worried about they can't do it...

RR Yes, I've been very careful..I've even kept Margaret Chase Smith off that committee so..even though I've got a lot of faith in her...but I've kept her off because I just want to be sure that I knew what I was doing.

LBJ Couldn't you do it quietly by invitation? Just on a personal basis..and then that invitation could end anytime you wanted it to and I'd say that to them.

RR Yes, I'll be glad to do that. Invite them over there.

LBJ OK. When you coming back"?

RR Well, I just got down here..came in here Sunday afternoon.

LBJ I had a nice visit with your Governor and told him..

RR Yes, he told me you'd invited him up here..

LBJ I didn't invite him up here...

*

RR Well, how did he happen to get ahold of you?

LBJ You told me that he was coming up here... so I came in back in my office ...I told you to tell him that I wanted to see him..

RR I know it..that's the reason I couldn't understand it..

LBJ Well... when I came back in my office...I told him that you said he was going to have lunch with you and to get ahold of him and tell him I wanted to see him before going back...hell..I hadn't invited him up here...never heard of it..

RR Oh..I saw where he was in the box there with Lady Bird...

LBJ Oh..well they..they heard that he was coming you see when you told me that afternoon that he was coming..and so they wanted some Southerner..some outstanding Southerner...

RR Well...it was a good thing.. I don't think you could have done better...but I just was surprised you didn't say something about it.

LBJ No..I didn't know at the time I'd seen you that he was invited. See Bird got up the list for the folks..and I guess we got...

RR Well, you couldn't have done better...he's an awful nice young fellow...

LBJ Well, I just told him how much I loved Georgia and he told the Press ..said he was damned happy he came from there...laughter..

RR Yes. Well he's a good boy.

LBJ Well, Georgia is a good state..that's what I like about it.

RR Yes, it is a good state... Mr. President.. see if you can get someone else ...

LBJ Well, if I can, I will. But I'm not going ..this country has a lot of confidence in you and if I have it my way, you'd be in my place and I'd trade with you..

RR Well...no.no..that would never do.

LBJ The country would be in a hell of a lot better shape...it would too...

RR You're...going to run it the next nine years...I'd be dead in another 2 or 3 yr

LBJ You get your rest..I don't want to bother you anymore but I'm going to have

LBJ
Contd to be calling you every once in awhile...

RR Well, you know, I'm always available..

LBJ OK ..all right.. Goodbye . You think about anybody else, now ..besides Medina. What about that old man...died..that was on that Circuit Court down there..

RR Oh, he would have been ideal..but he's dead. He was a magnificent man.. he would have been perfect.

LBJ That fellow you've got on there now, though, he's not too good, is he?

RR No. Tuttle? No.

LBJ No...Eisenhower appointee ?

RR Yes. He's a pretty good man, but...

LBJ They tell me he gives them some problems..

RR He's going to give them more problems..he's the kind of fellow thinks he's the last word...isn't there someone there...

LBJ You know Prettyman?

RR Yeah.

LBJ What do you think about him?

RR Pretty good man..he's getting a little old isn't he?

LBJ Yeah.. Yeah..I don't think he's known.

RR Well, he's not but he don't have to be..he doesn't have to be..now you're going to let the Attorney General nominate someone, aren't you?

LBJ No...

RR Well, you going to have Hoover on there?

LBJ No..it is his report.

RR Oh, that's right...that's right..it wouldn't do..

LBJ ~~KEX~~ ...but he is agreeable to folks like Dulles.

RR Well Dulles is a good man...

LBJ McCloy

RR McCloy..good man ..I don't hold him in near as high regard as I do Dulles.. but he's all right..he's got a big reputation.....let me see..if I think of a judge in the next 30 or 40 minutes...I'll call you..but you can get plenty of them...

LBJ Thank you.

RR Some of these Circuit Court judges...is there somebody there in the District?

LBJ What do you think about a Justice sitting on it?

RR I think..I don't know...I think it would be all right.

LBJ Why shouldn't you...how many..you don't have a President assassinated but every 50 years.

RR Well, they put them on the Pearl Harbor inquiry, you know..

LBJ I know...that's why he's against it now..

RR Afraid it might get into the Courts..

LBJ I guess so, I don't know.

RR That's probably the theory of it...that's probably the theory of it. I'm not very good on thinking about things like that..

LBJ Well, give me the arguments why they ought to.

RR Well, the only argument about it is that..of course...a matter of this magnitude...that the American people would feel reassured to have a member of the highest Court..that's the only argument you've got..you have many more Circuit Court judges that are far abler than some of your Supreme Court justices..but that is the argument..only argument you can make for it..if you would have some top-flight Supreme Court justice...State Supreme Court Chief Justice..but they're not known all over the country..don't care how able they are..this thing in television and radio has narrowed the group of celebritiesI don't know..you've got some smart boys there around you who can give

RR
Contd you the name of some outstanding United States Circuit Court judge..

LBJ OK. You be thinking. Bye

RR Bye

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PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH
SPEAKER McCORMACK NOVEMBER 29, 1963 4:55 p.m.

President Johnson told Mr. McCormack that he had planned to have the following on the Presidential Commission: the Chief Justice, John McCloy, Allen Dulles, Richard Russell, Senator Cooper, Hale Boggs, and Congressman Ford.

Speaker McCormack approved of all of the men selected.

Speaker McCormack then asked the President to speak to Congressman Otto Passman who was in the office.

Congressman Passman: "Mr. President, how are you? God bless you and remember that I will cooperate in every way that I possibly can and any time that I can help...I shall do anything within my power...."

President Johnson and Congressman Passman then discussed the Foreign Aid bill.

November 29, 1963 4:55 p. m. (t)

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SPEAKER MCCORMACK

LBJevaluate this report. It is not going to be like the Nuremberg trial ...or the railroad strike or anything like that..but this is..now Edgar Hoover thinks he'll be ready tomorrow ..or maybe Monday. We think we ought to announce this thing as quickly as we can because Rusk is rather concerned about it and..

JMc You mean..announce the...

LBJ The commission..say they are going to evaluate the report.

JMc I sent you down..You haven't get it yet..a complete memorandum on the Pearl Harbor..so you'd have it..you know on the Executive Order and the other things that happened. I just sent it down in case you'd want to have as a sort of guidance background.

LBJ Now here is who I would think ..who we think..ought to make pretty good one..I want to tell it to you and I don't want you to repeat to a human being cause I haven't talked to any of them. I've talked to Russell. I've talked to Dick Russell. Got to have some outstanding states rights man and Eastland was kind of the head of the resolution investigating it over there..better get him to call off his investigation. I thought we'd take the Chief Justice and John McCloy and Allen Dulles, Richard Russell, Sen. Cooper and considering Representative Boggs who had been talking about this stuff all the time..

JMc What Boggs?

LBJ Hale Boggs..and Congressman Ford.

JMc Hmmm-hmmm. Good man.

LBJ Can I get any better ones that you think of. I've talked to nobody but Russell about it..now I've got to be sure that the House and Senate don't mess with them and that I've got to have someone who can work with the Justice, the Administration and with Hoover and that has been interested in it..so it is kind of like the author of a resolution. I really, just between us, I don't want Eastland..so that's why I got Russell.

JMc On the Republican member, I'd have to consult with ..the House..you know you consult with Halleck.

LBJ Well that's on your appointments up there..but this is going to be appointed by the President.

JMc Oh, you're going to appoint it.

LBJ Yes.

JMc Well, what do we do up here?

LBJ Well, you give me advice. I'm just asking you do you think there's anybody better that I could get?

JMc No. No.

LBJ Do you know of an abler or better..or more patriotic fellow than..a Republican that would suit this mission..if you were President, than Ford?

JMc No. He's top-flight man. And who would rise to the consciousness of responsibility, too ..

KEX

LBJ And, Boggs. You'd feel all right, too about him?

JMc Yes... yes.
LBJ Anybody shown more interest in it.. ?
JMc He's a good man.. those are two good man.
LBJ All right... now what do you.. don't you think... see I just want to make a Mr. Rayburn out of you... Dick Russell and John Cooper.
JMc Yes, Cooper.. Dick Russell, too. Of course Cooper is a strong man..
LBJ Now who doesn't much like McCloy?
JMc Let me see... of course you'd have Cooper and Russell, more or less from the South.
LBJ Well, Cooper is a border state... Russell would be the South. Boggs would be the south.
JMc You wouldn't have any.. really from the North?
LBJ Get McCloy.. get Dulles
JMc Yeah.. I mean on the legislative level?
LBJ No.. No... No. I have Cooper border state, Ford from Michigan and they consider that pretty North.. but I'd have the Chief from California and McCloy from New York, Dulles from New York..
JMc You're the one to make the decision..
LBJ Yes, but I'm .. I just want to get the best of them.. but I'm going to make it.. do you know anything about McCloy yourself?
JMc Not myself. No.
LBJ My impression is very good of him.
JMc I... everything I've heard about him.. has been very favorable.. about the man personally.
LBJ Now I told the Chief that Egeland had promised me in the Senate that he wouldn't go on.. that I'd talked to you about it in the House.. I don't want to appoint a commission if they're going to start a whole bunch of investigations.. so..
JMc Well as far as the House is concerned I'll do anything I can to stop investigations.
LBJ I know it. Well, I think we ought to. Some fellow will be testifying.. coming up from Dallas.. and I think Khrushchev planned this whole thing and he got our President assassinated.. then this fellow saying that Assistant Chief said today that he believes Khrushchev did so and so... you can see what that'll lead us to right quick.
XXXX
JMc Who said that?
LBJ Nobody said it.. but if they do, you know.
JMc When are you going to make the appointments?
LBJ Just as quick as I can talk to them and get an Executive Order drafted .. so forth. I'd better get on with it.. I just thought I'd better talk to you before I did it, my friend. You think it is all right?
JMc The theory of the commission is absolutely correct... I know nothing on the legislative level.. you see the only thought was.. on the legislative level with Russell, Cooper and Boggs... three from the South..
LBJ No... Cooper is not a Southerner.. and Boggs is not much of a..
JMc No... I agree with you on that.

LBJ Beggs has been kind of authoring the resolution, you know. He's been wanting to investigate it over there.

JMc Who? Beggs?

LBJ Yes. He made a speech about it today.

JMc Well, he was just answering some questions.

LBJ Yes, but he's been getting..he's been on television three or four times about ..there ought to be a Congressional investigation.

JMc Well, I haven't heard of it..if I had, I'd spoken to him..tensed him down..

LBJ But, Cooper is considered pretty liberal fellow, you know.

JMc There's no question about that

LBJ And Ferd is from the North...and Cooper is from a border state..and you've got two Southerners..but you've got two Northerners..that are civilians.. you see what I mean, to offset them.

JMc Yes, I'm not...I wasn't undertaking to argue with you...I wouldn't do that under any circumstances...

LBJ Well, I should want you to if you disagree with me...just tell me.

JMc But...you couldn't have better men...but I was just thinking of the geographical location on the legislative level and that is something...I just simply called to your conscious mind for you to consider..but you would have ...Cooper..Kentucky up north is considered South..I agree it is a border state...

LBJ Well you see from the public..I wouldn't have any Southerner..

JMc What's that?

LBJ There are three men that are appointed to represent the public and none of them are Southerners..

JMc No, that is true. Listen, you go ahead..

LBJ Well, you take care of the House of Representatives for me.

JMc Well, how am I going to take care of them?

LBJ Well, just keep them from investigating..

JMc Well, oh that, I've been doing it..now listen, outside, I had Otto Pass in here doing some state work and I want to call him in and would like for you to say hello to him..

LBJ You betcha. I've got a pack them bastards waiting on me..since 4:45...but put him on..

JMc Mr. President, Here's Otto. I was having a conference with him when you called me and he's in the outer office.

LBJ Well that's fine. I'd like to say hello to him.

JMc Wait a minute, Mr. President.

Otto Mr. President, how are you? God bless you..and remember that I will cooperate in every way that I possibly can and anytime that I can help..

LBJ Well, I wished I could trade jobs with you..Otto..

Otto Well I know that you do..but remember that my prayers are with you and I shall do anything within my power...I'm not going to make it any harder than I have to..and I was in here conferring with our great Speaker a little while ago about foreign aid..it is not going to be an easy thing..but if and when..

LBJ

Otto, remember this.. remember this.. this is just between you and me.. I don't want you to repeat it to anyone.. but you've been my friend and one thing I've found out since I've been down here.. in my relations with 110 other nations.. about all I've got is foreign aid bill to deal with them with.. and we've got more damned problems than you ever saw. I just finished talking to the Chairman of the AEC and he said the only one knew this was Kennedy and I'm the only one that knows it now and when he walked out.. I wished I hadn't. known it..

Otto
LBJ

I know what you mean..

But.. you can.. we're spending over a hundred billion this year.. the Budget is being made and coming up the 15th and the only thing I've got is a little checkbook of 3-1/2 - 4 billion dollars.. just whatever you give me .. and you'll cut it some but you've already worked on it.. and that's the only thing I've got is 110 nations.. now give me a year and I'll try to sit down with you and take your recommendations and try to make the clean-up over there in any way that I can do.. I'm practical.. I can't do it the first month but .. cause they'd say that the South is destroying everything.. but I'll get my teeth into that and try to clean that agency up where it will smell better to you but please go home and say your prayers and say now.. I'm the banker and I can let Johnson have \$400 a month or I can let him have \$300 but I'm ... that's all I'm going to have.. in foreign aid. That is the only way I can deal with the world and whatever you cut it to.. it is going to cause me trouble cause Kennedy is not here and I'm new and when I have to cut them back.. they're going to say, well hell, last year they did this.. and this is what he did to me.. I'm going to do everything I humanly can but you do it too.

Otto
LBJ
Otto

Could I say one thing? Before we get off the line, Mr. President?

Yes sir.

And this will be worthwhile at the proper time. As I told our great Speaker here.. I think in 17 years I've asked our President to see me for 15 minutes .. I don't feel with people when they're busy. If and when you want to discuss this with me.. I'll come running with our beloved Speaker..

LBJ

Will do it. I want to that .. I'll tell you right now. If you want to do it with me.. we'll just do it and as soon as I can move in this place, we'll just sit down and me and you and John will talk about it.

Otto

Let me.. let me do it with my Speaker because he's always been so helpful to me but I want to say this before we get off the line and I think this will be something you'll be churning over because when I come, I'll be factual. Last year, I guess maybe I was jumped on by more people and criticized more by cutting foreign aid a billion dollars than any other time since I handled the bill... but ... they came back this year and said, yes, you took out a billion ... but you still gave us a half a billion dollars more than we need.. and we're going ~~now~~ to lose most of it.. see these are some things I'll have to talk to you about.. and I told the Speaker, I said these people don't know what they want.. what they need.. they just are full of bull.. and they never pin it down.. but I will say this.. there's a half a billion dollars .. almost a half.. 578 million clean, unobligated funds that we're going to give most of it up.. I've talked to the Speaker and I have arranged to tell these people how to keep a half a billion dollars... of unobligated... and at the proper time, when you want to talk

Otto

Centd

to me about this, I'll come running and I will lean over backwards, Mr. President, to help you and my Speaker.

LBJ

Thank you my friend, I'll be calling you.

Otto

Thank you.

LBJ

I appreciate it..if you want to come in..I want you to come and you just ask invite the Speaker or anybody else you want to come with you.

Otto

When you are ready, Mr. President, cause you have a....let..when you are ready, you tell the Speaker..and I want him with us because he knows that my word is my bond..

LBJ

God bless you. Thank you Otto.

Otto

Bye

Date: September 16, 1993

Processing Note

Re: Telephone Conversation between the President and Speaker McCormack, 11/29/63, 4:55 p.m.

While working on preservation of the dictabelts, the archives staff observed the following inaccuracy in the transcript:

On page 2, the transcript reads:

LBJ: "Now who doesn't much like McCloy?"

The archives staff heard:

LBJ: "Now Hoover doesn't much like McCloy?"

Claudia Anderson
Archivist

November 29, 1963

90

5:10 p. m.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SEN. DIRKSEN (t)

LBJ Everett?

ED Yes.

LBJ This thing has been heating up here on this investigation and I've got the House to agree not to do anything and after I talked to you I had already talked to Jim. . and the Senate wouldn't do anything if I'd appoint a Special Commission. . . now here's the Commission I'm thinking about appointing. . and I didn't want to do it until I talked to you. . I don't want this repeated because I haven't even got my orders drawn. . and it is going to take some time but I'm going to ask the Chief Justice to go on it because the country needs the highest Judicial officer in evaluating this report. I thought I'd invite Dick Russell and maybe John Sherman Cooper. . kind of offset each other. . now, unless you had any objections to it. . I thought I might name Hale Boggs and Jerry Ford. . couple off fellows over in the House and then get Allen Dulles and maybe John McCloy. . generally. Now I don't want that to get out to a human because I haven't talked to these people and I've got to talk to you. . . I want your real counsel because I thought that this would be a pretty acceptable group. . judicial -wise. . I talked to Russell. He didn't want to take it. . but he will. . and I'm going to make him do it. . I'm just going to order them all to do it. .

ED Let me make one suggestion. What about John McCone?

LBJ Well, he's in government and CIA. . . and I think John McCloy would be a little better.

ED Yes, of course, McCone is a knowledgeable guy.

LBJ Well he and Hoover will give them all the information, they've got, you see. Same reason I haven't got Hoover on it. . . they'll make available everything they've got.

ED Uh. . . huh. . . well that would be a good group.

LBJ OK. Well. . you protect my planks in the Senate, Everett?

ED OK, I will.

LBJ God bless you.

ED Goodbye

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH
SENATOR DIRKSEN

NOVEMBER 29, 1963 5:10 p.m. ^{9Ca}

The President: "...now here's the Commission I'm thinking of appointing....I'm going to ask the Chief Justice to go on it because the country needs the highest Judicial officer in evaluating this report. I thought I'd invite Dick Russell and maybe John Sherman Cooper....unless you had any objections to it....I thought I might name Hale Boggs and Jerry Ford....then get Allen Dulles and John McCloy....I talked to Russell. He didn't want to take it -- but he will."

Senator Dirksen suggested John McCone and the President said he did not want him or Hoover on it because they were in the Government but that both McCone and Hoover would give the Commission all of the information they had.

Senator Dirksen said: "...Well that would be a good group."

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S NOTES ON CONVERSATION WITH
ALLEN DULLES NOVEMBER 29, 1963 5:41 p.m.

President Johnson: "We're going to name very shortly a Presidential Commission made up of seven people -- two from the House, 2 from the Senate, two from the public, and one from the Court -- as a study group to go into this FBI report and this Court of Inquiry and all the incidents in connection with the assassination....and you've got to go on that for me..."

Mr. Dulles: "You think I can really serve you? I would like to be of any help..."

The President then asked him to keep it quiet as he had cleared it with only one other man.

November 29, 1963

5:41 p.m.

71

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND ALLEN DULLES (t)

LBJ:have a little unpleasant news for you..

AD Yes....

LBJ We're going to name very shortly a Presidential Commission made up of 7 people, 2 from the House, 2 from the Senate, 2 from the public and 1 from the Court...as a study group to go into this FBI report...this Court of Inquiry and all the incidents in connection with the assassination of our beloved friend...and you've got to go on that for me.

AD You think I can really serve you?

LBJ I know you can..I know you can..there's not any doubt about it..just get ready now to go in there and do a good job..we've got to have ..America has got to be united in this hour..

AD I would like to be of any help..and you've considered the work of my previous work and my previous job

LBJ I sure have.. and we want you to do it..that's that.

AD Well, I'll follow..

LBJ You always do what is best for your country..I found that out about you a long time ago. Thank you very much.

AD Thank you...

LBJ Thank you..I'll be talking to you, my friend..

AD And I'll keep this entirely quiet..

LBJ Please do..please do...because I haven't cleared it but with one other man.

AD I understand..I'll do..and am at your orders...

LBJ Thank you..sir..

AD Thank you

November 29, 1963
6:00 p. m.

93

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SEN. COOPER (t)

LBJ
 today establishing a Presidential Commission composed of 7 distinguished Americans headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the U.S. I've ~~acted~~ ^{acted} after full consultation with the leaders of the Congress and with members of my own Cabinet. This Commission will be establish^{ed}/before the end of the day by Executive Order. Its functions will be to receive and to evaluate information by all ^{obtained} sources of the Executive Branch to satisfy itself the truth is known as far as we can know it and report its findings and conclusions to me to the American people and to the world.

JC Think that's fine..

LBJ Now...I want you to go on that Commission.

JC You what?

LBJ Yes...

JC Well, if you want me to go on it..I'll do it..of course.

LBJ Thank you my friend. Bye

JC Yes sir...

LBJ Don't say a word about it now.

JC I won't say anything....Bye

November 29, 1963
6:15 p. m.

94

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND CONG. ARENDS (4)

LBJ
.....please do and I just ... most of these boys are going to be leaving here not later than 6:30 and I tried to get him over an hour...

CA You want ... to make this tonight?

LBJ Yes... oh yes... I'm going to make the announcement tonight... of course, I'd like to be able to say that I had consulted with the leadership..

CA That was my problem..

LBJ But it is a Presidential Commission, you see, and I just want to work with my friends..

CA That's right.. that's right. That's why I called you back, Mr. President.

LBJ What I want to do is.. I want to try to get someone who is pretty familiar with the defense picture and the foreign relations picture and also the CIA picture.. you see.. the Hoover picture.. that's why I'm trying to get the man that's kind of high over in the military over in the House... but Russell on Armed Services in the Senate.

CA Well, I'll tell you the reason...

LBJ Cooper is a former Ambassador to India.. you see.. and McCloy is a former Ambassador.. Dulles is former CIA... and I don't know.. had no particular reason for interest in the Republicans but the hell of it you can't clear these things.. you can't even talk to them.. you can't get them. Mike Mansfield is in Florida. Dirksen is in Illinois....

CA Well.. let me see if I can't get him but in the meantime.. I didn't want to be put in the position where I'd put an OK on something and then find out that Charlie was jumping or something like that...

LBJ What I was going to do... I was going to try to get him for another 15 minutes and then have to decide what to do about it because..

CA I'll do likewise.. I'll work on it too.. I'll try to call you back...

LBJ Fine. Just tell him what we'd like to do... is have men with the military background... the CIA background.. the appropriations background.. see we're doing a good deal in this field, Les.. but I think you're on the Committee, aren't you?

CA I'm on the Armed Services....

LBJ Yes. yes. yes... Subcommittee there.. and so we're trying to spread it out.. we're getting the Chairman of Armed Services... one group, you see and then we're trying to go to appropriations with the other that handles appropriations and we're trying to go to somebody that has a little foreign service, like John Cooper, Ambassador.. and Dulles, you see the CIA ... Hale has been talking about this thing and he talked a little bit too much today.

CA Laughter...

LBJ That's the trouble..they all talk..you know..and you tell them..he called down here and said this fellow was talking and I said well I'm trying to work out things like that..

CA Well..that's right..that's right. You're doing the right thing on this..

LBJ But if I talk to them..they talk to the press..so you try to get back to me in 15

CA Just as quick as I can...bye.

LBJ Bye

November 29, 1963

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND ABE FORTAS

AF
.....have one Mr. President add I rewrote it..I told him I was going to..
LBJ That's good..OK..go ahead..
AF You're ready?
LBJ Yes, have you got anything else to say to me?
AF Yes sir. Boggs made his announcement..Carr called me the Attorney General
of Texas..and he was going on and on and I thought he ought to be told about
the plans for the Commission ...and I ~~max~~ swore him to secrecy..because
Boggs had already said it..and I didn't tell him anything..he was very
much for it..said it was a wonderful idea and all to the good that I think I
got that underway..I just wanted to cover that..
LBJ You think I ought to tell him...talk to him before it is over..I imagine so..
AF I can do it..don't you bother with him..I can talk to that guy every day..
every day..practically every hear..
LBJ Well, somebody better call him because he'll think I have broken faith with
him..
AF I called him and already told him I'd call him again..
LBJ You tell him as soon as it is done..put that first on your list..as soon as I
get some clearances..O.K..go ahead..
AF The President today announced that he was appointing a Special Commission
to study and report upon all facts and circumstances relating to the
assassination of the late President, John F. Kennedy and the subsequent
murder of the man charged with the assassination.
The President stated that the majority and minority leaders of the Senate
and the House of Representatives have been consulted with respect to the
proposed Special Commission. (I do not know the facts...relating to this
paragraph and this has to be confirmed)
The members of the Special Commission are:
The President stated that the Special Commission would be instructed to
evaluate all available information concerning the subject of the inquiry.
The Federal Bureau of Investigation, pursuant to an earlier Directive of the
President, is making a complete investigation of the fact. An inquiry is also
scheduled by a Texas Court of Inquiry, convened by the Attorney General
of Texas under Texas law.
The Special Commission will have before it all evidence uncovered by the FBI
and all information available to any agency of the Federal government. The
Attorney General of Texas has also offered his cooperation. All Federal
agencies and offices are being directed to furnishing services and
cooperation to the Special Commission. The Commission will also be
empowered to conduct any further investigations when it deems desirable.
The President stated that the investigations now underway by the FBI and
others..together with the report of the Special Commission, will make
certain that all aspects of the assassination and murder are known and that
the public is fully informed.
That is the end.

Copy LBJ Library

Harrisburg ~~December~~ 29, 1963
6:20 p. m.

✓ 95

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SENATOR
HUMPHREY (t)

HH:but my wife...

LBJ Well, I know..it..

HH But, I'm just down here with all the Republicans..but I'll say a good word.
LBJ I talked to the Secretary of State and they had some doubts whether they
ought to go to these meetings and I said if they didn't ...he'd have more
problems on the Hill than he ever thought and I had all of them with you
I wanted anyway..and some damned Republican nominated you against me
today and I said..well I didn't know why we had them at our convention..

HH Laughter.

LBJ Fellow named Dominic? Do you know Dominic? Is he a pal of yours.
I've got to check..

HH Dominic nominated me?

LBJ Yes,....he nominated you for President..he said that you were probably
going to run so you'd better answer it and tell them that...

HH By God, Mr. President, I'll tell you...I'm not..I'm not going to give you
any worries..... so you can sleep better tonight..

LBJ All right..all right. Goodnight. Laughter.

November 29, 1963
6:30 p. m.

76-
✓

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND CONG. HALLECK (t)

LBJ Charlie?
CH Mr. President, how are you?
LBJ I'm fine...you having a good time?
CH Just got here..I'm going to kill one of these turkeys..
LBJ Well you kill one for me and bring it back, now..don't put any arsenic in it!
CH Laughter...Arsenic?...my friend..I'd fix it up so that it would be real good for you.
LBJ Charlie..I hate to bother you but all you damned fellows advocate...I talked to Les Arends and told him I was going to keep trying to reach you till 6:30...I've got to appoint a Commission and issue an Executive Order tonight on investigation of the assassination of the President because this thing is getting pretty serious and our folks are worried about it...it has some foreign complications..CIA and other things...and I'm going to try to get the Chief Justice to go on it..he declined earlier in the day but I think I'm going to try to get him to head it..I'm going to try to John McCloy...
CH Chief Justice Warren?
LBJ Yes..
CH I think that's a mistake...
LBJ I'd be glad to hear you but I want to talk to you about...he thought it was a mistake till I told him everything we knew and we just can't House and Senate and FBI and other people going around testifying Krushchev killed Kennedy or Castro killed him..we've got to have the facts..and you don't have a President assassinated once every 50 years...and this thing is so touchy from an international standpoint that every man we've got over there is concerned about it and we think we've got to have somebody that can not only be judicious and a sure American but somebody that has had some experience with these CIA matters and other things...so we're going to try to get John McCloy from an international standpoint. ..Allen Dulles..we want to get Jerry Ford from Appropriations Committee..we want to get Dick Russell from the Armed Service Committee...we want to get John Sherman Cooper because he's had some international background and Ambassador with experience..and Allen Dulles and John McCloy..and we want to ask the Chief Justice to preside..we hope..that we talked to the leadership in both houses...and asked them to cooperate with the Commission..
CH I'll cooperate my friend, I'll tell you one thing..Lyndon...Mr. President.. I think that the call on Supreme Court guys to do jobs is kind of a mistake..
LBJ It is on all these other things...I agree with you on Pearl Harbor and I agree with you on the Railroad Strike..but this is a question that could involve our losing 39 million people..this is a judicial question..
CH I..of course...don't want that to happen. Of course, I was a little disappointed in the Chief Justice...I'll talk to you real plainly...he's jumped at the gun..and of course..I don't know whether the right wing was in this or not...you've been very discreet...you have mentioned the left and the

CH

Contd

right...and I am for that..well look Gerry Ford is a top-drawer guy on my part...

LBJ

This is just between us..don't want you to repeat this to a human..but can't name George Mahon because he's from Texas...and it happened in Texas..

CH

Of course the guy that I'd prefer on there would be Tom Clark...

LBJ

No...no..he cain't do it..I wanted Tom Clark..but he can't do it..he's Texas Charlie...and there might somebody say a Texan did it...you know..you see what I mean..

CH

Well if you're set on that...

LBJ

Well I'm not set..I want to talk to you about it...discuss it...this is my best judgement..I think I can get Dick Russell..haven't talked to most of these people but I did talk to Russell...Russell doesn't want to do it but he thinks it ought to be done..he thinks I've got to have some top Justice...

CH

I'll back Gerry Ford..

LBJ

O.K. All right.. O.K..Thank you my friend. Now you help us and protect my planks there because I don't want a bunch of television cameras running on this thing..

CH

Well, I don't want any television..

LBJ

I don't want the House and Senate committees...I've talked to Eastland and he said he's not going to run his...McCormack...

CH

I don't think we've started one...

LBJ

No...no you haven't and McCormack said he wouldn't and I just want..you're my leader, too.

CH

You damned right, Mr. President.

LBJ

I noticed the other night...a man spoke up..first man in line and I haven't forgotten it..thank you my friend.

CH

OK

November 29, 1963

6:30 p. m.

97

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY RUSK
(f)

DR Ah...two points..I do hope that we can let Halaby go ahead and have these technical talks with Moscow about the civil air possibility ...in any event.. it would take several months to work it out..and this is one of the easiest ways to keep open a door when we're talking about something that might be of some importance in the future. This agreement was initialled in 1961..but not signed because of the Berlin crisis that summer..we were planning to go ahead with it and I think we perhaps ought to now.

LBJ When do we need to make the decision. .

DR Well he would be going over about the 11th of December..

LBJ Give me a note on it tomorrow and let me look at it..I'm trying to appoint this Presidential Commission and make a statement right now. I want to tell you about this Commission.....the Chief Justice, John McCloy, Allen Dulles, Sen. Russell and Sen. Cooper, Cong. Boggs and Cong. Ford.

DR Good..absolutely first class.

LBJ Now..does it worry you that I have more Republicans than Democrats.. Chief Justice is not regarded... McCloy I guess is regarded as a red-hot partisan, is he?

DR Oh no..he's not a partisan. The Chief Justice certainly is not...

LBJ What about Dulles?

DR Dulles...on this kind of an issue I think would not be partisan..I think that would be good.

LBJ OK, my friend.. Thank you.

DR Goodluck.

6:37 p.m.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND CONG. ALBERT (t)

LBJ

.....

.....we think tonight ... after talking to the Justice Department and the Secretary of State.. we think we ought to have the highest level of a Commission that we have to study the reports relating to the assassination of the President.. and FBI.. will be in.. and we don't want anything going in the House and Senate... bunch of television cameras or a lot of loose testimony around... ~~Eastlands~~ Committees and otherwise... saying that You've got it all under control all right..

CA
LBJ

Khrushchev has done this or Castro has done this.. and something else... but it could be very dangerous.. I'm going to try to get the Chief Justice to serve as Chairman of it.. Sen. Russell, Sen. Cooper, Cong. Boggs, ~~YK~~ he's been talking a good deal about it and Rep. Ford and Allen Dulles, and John McCloy... and that's who I'm thinking of.. have you got any suggestions? Any better ones?

CA
LBJ

No.. that'd be ~~me~~... nothing wrong with those...

There may be a good many Republicans but I think this ought to be a partisan thing and I think that nobody look s upon McCloy or Chief Justice either as a Republican and Ford... I guess... is he a pretty vicious Republican?

CA
LBJ

Well... he's kind of level-headed, you know...

CA

Pretty judiciary?

LBJ

Yes he is ...

CA

Is he ~~known~~ a lawyer?

LBJ

I don't know whether he's a lawyer or not.. I assume he is but I don't know... haven't had occasion to know..

CA
LBJ

The reason I suggested Hale because he's been talking about it and relating to it and if it didn't take your time and didn't work you to death.. I'd be glad to put you on it..

No.. No.. I really don't want it..

I don't think we ought to ask the Speaker to go on it.. and I thought .. I'd rather have you in the House of Representatives... and I talked to them about that but then.. I don't know how you're going to mess around with this thing and be a leader..

CA

No.. I agree with you... I think Hale is a good man for it and he's been interested in having it done and I think it should be done since we're not going to have a jury and verdict when that man is dead.. it is important that some Commission say something about it, I think.. you know this fellow was killed before he was tried.. I think it is very important that you have somebody and some Commission.. and I think you'd better take it away from the headline hunters out on the Hill.. and I think you have, by this. I'm all for it and I like your Committee ... now the Speaker didn't like.. his first impression was that there shouldn't be anybody from the Judiciary on it since they might have to tie something on the issue.. to pass on the issue...

LBJ
CA

He's not going to pass on Oswald.. he's deader than hell.

That's right.. I think Warren should be Chairman of it....

Yes sir..I think it is perfect.

LBJ Well, I haven't done it. I'm drafting the executive order and I don't need to but I believe it is better to do it than NOT to do it.

CA I do too and I think you ought to do it before everybody starts moving in ...I had a letter from Danny Cassell..and Steve and I talked it over and he thought his Committee had it..jurisdiction..other committees thought they had jurisdiction..and they were all going to start putting in resolutions..and of course, a few have put them in...we've buried them in the Rules Committee and I think this will shut it up..I think that's what you should do

...

LBJ And you'll protect my flank on it.

CA Yes sir..and I'll tell you one other thing..I'll never bother you but whenever you need me, I'm there.

LBJ I know that..I know that..and that's what makes it possible to do this job. I thought you'd treated me very good the other day..and you were quite generous..

CA Listen..it was terrific..I have not heard ONE word...not ONE word..

LBJ About 100 to 1 with the wires..

CA Well it was....it was...

LBJ I got 7...^{of} from Knoxville Tennessee and one..two or three from Mississippi criticizing me and one from Pennsylvania...six from the South..and they'll all criticized the civil rights part of it..about 100 to 1..

CA I have not heard ONE word..and I've heard some Southerners from right down the middle of the South say that it was the only thing you could do..many people have ranked it as one of the great speeches that has been delivered on the Hill in this centuryi...you'd be surprised..I mean it..and it was..take it from me..I think I have touched as many bases as anybody and I know on the House side..I know that only one or two people from Mississippi had to say that they wished you hadn't dealt in civil rights..but privately,....they were all right..

LBJ Well, incidentally, they want me to help them get their Postmaster back..wish you'd talk to me about that and see what we ought to do about that. Talk to them..I don't know whether we ought to or not..but you think about it and I'll be talking to you.

CA All right, sir.

LBJ Bye

CA Bye

Date: September 16, 1993

Processing Note

Re: Telephone Conversation between the President and Cong.
Albert (t), 12/29/63 (sic.), 6:37 p.m.

While processing the December 1963 folder, the archives staff found a copy of the conversation with Carl Albert which took place on November 29, 1963, but was dated December 29, 1963. Other copies of the conversation had been corrected. The archives staff moved the document to the November 1963 folder.

Claudia Anderson
Archivist

Copy LBJ Library

December 29, 1963
6:37 p. m.

99

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND CONG. ALBERT (t)

LBJ

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There may be a good many Republicans but I think this ought to be a partisan thing and I think that nobody look s upon McCloy or Chief Justice either as a Republican and Ford... I guess... is he a pretty vicious Republican?

CA
LBJ

Well... he's kind of level-headed, you know...
Pretty judiciary?

CA
LBJ

Yes he is ...
Is he ~~hopeless~~ a lawyer?

CA
LBJ

I don't know whether he's a lawyer or not.. I assume he is but I don't know... haven't had occasion to know..

LBJ

The reason I suggested Hale because he's been talking about it and relating to it and if it didn't take your time and didn't work you to death.. I'd be glad to put you on it..

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CA

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I have not heard ONE word..and I've heard some Southerners from right down the middle of the South say that it was the only thing you could do.. many people have ranked it as one of the great speeches that has been delivered on the Hill in this century!...you'd be surprised..I mean it.. and it was..take it from me..I think I have touched as many bases as anybody and I know on the House side..I know that only one or two people from Mississippi had to say that they wished you hadn't dealt in civil rights..but privately,....they were all right..

LBJ

Well, incidentally, they want me to help them get their Postmaster back.. wish you'd talk to me about that and see what we ought to do about that. Talk to them..I don't know whether we ought to or not..but you think about it and I'll be talking to you.

CA

All right, sir.

LBJ

Bye

CA

Bye

November 29, 1963

6:43 p.m.

100

CONGRESSMAN

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND LES ARENDS (t)

LBJ

.....

..... said he was for Ford fine... said he didn't like much for the Supreme Court Justice to go on but when I told him that there were foreign implications to it..and we had to have the highest judicial officer we could get... why we just don't want to leave any doubt that any foreign nation had anything to do with this, you see , and we will want the facts..and Hoover is going to have the facts..and this Commission can go over them. He said he'd protect this Commission..I mean the flanks..go all the way and back Gerry Ford

...

LA

Well, I talked to him..it was good of you to call but I was just talking to him..

LBJ

Well, I'll be darned..

LA

So it was all right.

LBJ

OK..now will you...

LA

Am glad that it has been clear...

LBJ

Well I'm glad that he's my friend and you heard him speak up the other day ...there...he's personable, too..

LA

Fine..and we'll work along all right...

LBJ

Well, he's my leader..OK...you make them stay around here though.. I can get you and damn it..these turkey hunters ought to carry a walkie-talkie with them..

LA

All right. Bye

LBJ

Bye

6:52 p. m.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND CON. GERALD FORD

(t)

101

GF Hello Mr. President, how are you?
LBJ Happy Thanksgiving...where are you?
GF I'm home, sir.
LBJ You mean Michigan?
GF No...I'm here in Washington.
LBJ Well, thank God, there's somebody in town! I was getting ready to tell McGregor Burns he's right about the Congress..they couldn't function.
GF I thought your speech was excellent, sir.
LBJ Well thank you Gerry...Gerry I've got something I want you to do for me..
GF Well, we'll do the best we can, sir..
LBJ I've got to have a top blue-ribbon Presidential Commission to investigate this assassination...I'm going to ask the Chief Justice to head it and then I'm going to ask John McCloy and Allen Dulles ...and I want it non-partisan ..I've got 5 Republicans, 2 Democrats...you forget what party you belong to and just serve as an American and I want Dick Russell and Sherman Cooper ...John Cooper of the Senate...Dick is on the Armed Services over there and I want somebody on appropriations who knows CIA over in your shop.. I'm covering armed services with Russell ..going to ask Hale Boggs and you to serve from the House..will be McCloy and Dulles and Ford and Boggs Cooper and Russell and Chief Justice Warren as Chairman.
GF Well you know very well I will be honored to do it and I'll do the very best I can..
LBJ You do that and keep me up to date and I'll be seeing you.
GF All right. Thank you very much and I'm delighted to help out.
LBJ Thank you Gerry.

November 29, 1963
7:00 p. m.

102

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND JOE ALSOP (t)

LBJ
..... making a Special Commission to study the report of certain facts and circumstances relating to the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy. The President stated that he consulted with the Democratic and Republican leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives with respect to the proposed Special Commission. The members of the Special Commission are: Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman, Senator Richard Russell, Georgia; Senator John Sherman Cooper, Kentucky; Representative Hale Boggs, Louisiana; Representatives Gerald Ford, Michigan; Honorable Allen Dulles and Honorable John J. McCloy.

JA I think that's very good.

LBJ I believe that covers every section ... have a good many Republicans on it but I guess they ought to be.
The President stated ^{the} Special Commission is being instructed to evaluate all available information concerning the subject inquiry, the Federal Bureau of Investigation pursuant to other directives. The President is making a complete investigation of the facts. The Inquiry is also scheduled by Texas Court of Inquiry convened by the Attorney General of Texas under Texas law. The Special Commission will have before it all the evidence uncovered by the FBI, all information available in any of the Federal agencies. The Attorney General of Texas offered his cooperation. All Federal agency offices are being directed to furnish services and cooperation to the Special Commission. The Commission will be empowered to conduct any further investigation it deems desirable. The President is instructing the Special Commission to satisfy itself if the truth is ~~not~~ known as far as it can be known and report its findings ... to the American people and to the world.

JA That's just fine, sir. I think that's just fine.

LBJ Well thank you very much... Hope you write as good..

JA I'm glad you put Dulles and McCloy on and Warren. I think that to have a Congressional one would... have been... but it is just the right.. I think

LBJ Well we've 2 and 2 from both places.. I hope you continue in your old age to write as good a column as you do these days when you're a young man... And goodbye.. goodbye.. Give your bride my love.

JA Sure will.. goodbye.. goodluck to you. But I think.. if you please.. I'm in a nest of Republicans...

LBJ Well this is a nest of Republicans here I've got.. Warren and Cooper is 2 and Ford is 3 and Dulles is 4 and McCloy is 5 out of the 7 men Commission.. you reckon I can trust that many?

JA Yes sir.

L All right. Goodbye

LBJ All right. Goodbye

November 29, 1963
7:03 p. m.

103

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SEN. EASTLAND (t)

JE
.....I wouldn't have it..

LBJ Here's what I'm going to announce..in a few minutes and I want ...
The President announced he is appointing a Special Commission to study all the facts and circumstances relating to the assassination of the late President and a subsequent file on the death charge of the man charged with the assassination. The President stated the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives had been consulted with respect to the proposed Special Commission. The members of the Special Commission are Chief Justice Warren, Senator Richard Russell, Senator John Cooper, Rep. Hale Boggs, Rep Gerald Ford Hon. Allen Dulles, Hon. John J. McCloy.

JE All right.

LBJ Now we had to have a Justice and then I wanted to have the head of the CIA Committee in the Senate that controls all the money and that they report to

JE That's all right.

LBJ I thought I'd get Cooper because he'd had international experience because this Russian thing is getting in it..I got Boggs ...he's been talking over there and Ford handles the money on appropriations and then Dulles is ex-CIA and John McCloy will help it from the international standpoint a little bit.. it gives us..

JE & It would've improved it if you'd put Harlan on there instead of Warren... you see Warren..you'd kill it politically...

LBJ Yes, but I've got to get the top one and he's the Chief.

JE Well, that's true.

LBJ Don't want to do it but I've got to do it and you've got to protect my flank over in the Senate now.

JE I'll do that.

LBJ Thank you Jim.

JE yes sir.

November 29, 1963

7:11 p.m.

104

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SEN. FULBRIGHT (t)

LBJ Bill?
WF Yes.. Mr. President.
LBJ I was talking to Dick earlier today and I expressed the hope that he would invite you and Hickenlooper to sit in with him on his CIA Committee for these briefings..he said he'd be glad to do that..that he didn't want to add to it and he wouldn't let a good many members of his own Committee sit in on them because..of obvious reasons..but he'd take you too and I guess he's going to come along with and I just hope that you agree to get on it and serve on it...because I think it is very important that you know all they tell them and then I want to be talking to you from time to time and get your judgments on it.
WF Sure...sure...be glad to..
LBJ All right. Well you just wait until he invites you because I told him to extend the invitation because it'd be better for him to do it than for me to be saying who serves on his Committee..on the other hand..I wanted you to know it that I want you to do it very much...and I'll be talking further sometime..
WF Good..good...good
LBJ How's Betty..is she still living with you?
WF Fine...and she and I both want to tell you we thought you were absolutely marvelous at the speech the other day...really..cause I know you've been told ..but it was absolutely breathtaking...
LBJ Is she there?
WF Yes.
LBJ Let me talk to her?
WF Fine, she'd love to...hold on a second ... you really were wonderful Lyndon.. I may slip every now and then and call you Lyndon...don't hold it against me..
LBJ That's all right...I make it myself..
WF Hope you don't mind until I get used to it...
LBJ You know I'm like the Jewish boy..said..how can I trust God when I don't trust myself.....laughter..I can't blame you for something that I do myself..
Mrs F Mr. President.
LBJ Hi, Betty, how are you, honey..
Mrs FX I just want to tell you..you've never been so eloquent or delivered it so beautifully in all your life...I was just sending Bird a note about it..
LBJ Well you're a mighty sweet girl and I just wanted to tell you how much I love you and that old Bill Fulbright is a jealous man..but he just got in there first..
Mrs F I know he is..
LBJ And I'll tell you he's got a lot of men that are pretty envious of him.
Mrs F Well..I hope he's just jealous as can be of you...and I hope he has reason to be... you're wonderful.
LBJ Well, I love you and if you run into any pretty things when you're shopping for Christmas...pick them up and send me a bill cause I'll have a lot of women I want to send things to and men too so I'll ask you to do what you do for Dick Russell..

Mrs F Well, I'm writing Bird.. and you tell her.. anytime there's anything.. I know she has lots of friends who she knows better than I am.. but if any of them are ever all tied up.. you tell her I would love to.. anything I can..

LBJ Thank you and she'll want you and she'll need you and she's so shy that she'll never tell you but I'll tell you now.. she does .. and she was asking me yesterday.. would it be all right to ask a couple of friends to do some things that she just couldn't do because she doesn't get but 10,000 letters a week..

Mrs F I know.. and you tell her that short of making a speech.. I'm not good at that ...but anything short of that.. I'd love to do.

LBJ Thank you, dear.

Mrs F Thank you. Bye