

William McChesney Martin, Jr., Papers

Box 20/Folder 5

Series V, Subseries A

Kennedy Administration, 1964



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C.

April 10, 1964

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you know, we are planning an oral history program on the Kennedy Administration -- i.e., a systematic effort to interview President Kennedy's colleagues and contemporaries about the issues and decisions of the Administration. Such a program is unprecedented in American history. Its significance can be easily grasped when one considers the treasures which would have been available to historians if similar programs had been carried through for earlier Presidents -- Jefferson or Lincoln or Wilson or F.D.R.

You are obviously one of the persons who ought to be interviewed in order to get a full record of the Administration, its policies and its achievements. I emphasize the fact that the interviews will receive exactly the same treatment in the Library as any personal papers deposited -- that is, the man who agrees to an interview can decide on security classifications, if any are necessary, as well as make any stipulations he desires about access to the transcripts. The interviews will be seen by no one except the interviewer and the transcriber without your permission; and a copy of the transcript will be deposited in your possession.

I well know the demands on your time, and, assuming your willingness to join in this effort, would hope that the process can be made as efficient and expeditious as possible. It would help us immensely in planning the program if you could let me have your views on the following questions:

1. Are you willing, in principle, to grant interviews for this program?

2. What are the issues on which you think your testimony would be most valuable?

3. How would you prefer to be interviewed -- by a single interviewer on a range of problems? or by several interviewers, each on a particular problem?

4. What sort of person would you prefer as interviewer -- someone who is or has been in the Administration? an outsider with historical training? Are there any names which occur to you as an interviewer in whom you would have particular confidence?

5. Under what conditions would you prefer to be interviewed -- during the working day? on week ends?

I would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


Robert F. Kennedy

The Honorable
William McC. Martin, Jr., Chairman
Board of Governors
Federal Reserve System
20th & Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

POSSIBLE ITEMS
(Preliminary)

I. Items in the Field of National Security Affairs

1. Soviet Relations and Peace
2. Cuba
3. Berlin/Germany
4. Limited Test Ban Treaty
5. MLF
6. Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Laos, Diem family)
7. DeGaulle and France (e. g. EEC, NATO)
8. Latin America in general and Alliance for Progress
9. Arabs, Israelis, Nasser, and Yemen
10. Policy Towards Neutrals
11. General Defense Policy

12. Congo
13. Indonesia (W. Irian/Malaysia)
14. Ghana
15. Indian/Chinese Border War
16. Panama
17. Canada
18. Brazil
19. South Africa/Portugal/Azores
20. Balance of Payments (general, gold, in Government)
21. Trade (e. g. Kennedy Round, LDC's) and Relations with Common Market
22. Disarmament & Control of Nuclear Weapons (e. g. black box,
permissive links, Communist China)

23. Missile Gap
24. TFX
25. Skybolt
26. Moon Shot
27. Counter-Insurgency
28. How to Operate; Men and Means; Organization for Decision-Making
29. Wheat Sales to Soviets

30. Guinea (Toure)
31. Nigeria (economic plan)
32. Yugoslavia
33. Dominican Republic (recognition problem)
34. US/UK Alliance
35. British Guiana
36. Venezuela
37. Haiti
38. African Politics in UN
39. Meeting with Khrushchev

40. Khrushchev's Design for World Conquest
41. Grand Design
42. Reform & Social Change Abroad
43. Changes in U. S. Strategy
44. Revamping of US Force Posture
45. MAP Program
46. SSN
47. Deep Hole
48. Intelligence
49. Reconnaissance Policy
50. AID
51. Foreign Affairs Academy
52. The Arts
53. Good Press
54. Real & Political View
55. Personal Diplomacy
56. UN Bond Issue
57. Civil Defense
58. Food for Peace
59. Termination of Defense Projects

II. Items in the Domestic Field

1. Civil Rights
2. Ending the 1960 recession and unemployment
3. Aid to depressed areas -- ARA, APW, Appalachia, Eastern Kentucky
4. Separation of church and state
5. Relations with Congress
6. Relations with the press
7. Building a government team
8. Tax policy -- in the Berlin crisis, after the stock market decline, and the 1962 and 1964 laws
9. Balance of payments
10. The 1962 and 1963 steel price increases
11. Railroad strike legislation
12. Labor-management relations--newspaper strike, Maritime unions, advisory committee
13. Stockpile investigations and legislation
14. Monetary policy and the Federal Reserve Board

15. The following legislative struggles:
 - a) Education
 - b) Trade expansion
 - c) Department of Urban Affairs
 - d) The Communication Satellite bill
 - e) The drug reform bill and thalidomide
 - f) Cotton and relief for the textile industry in general
 - g) Feed grains, wheat and the wheat referendum
 - h) Hospital insurance for the elderly
 - i) And possibly these others:
 - minimum wages, housing, mass transit, mental retardation and mental health, youth employment, manpower training and development, juvenile delinquency and the President's Committee, National Service Corps, transportation, national seashores and outdoor recreation, welfare, postal rate increase, highway program, water pollution.
16. Physical fitness
17. Cultural affairs
18. Supersonic Transport
19. Commission on Status of Women
20. Exec. Order on Employee-Management Relations in Federal Service
21. Beautification of the District of Columbia including Jackson Place and Council on Pennsylvania Avenue Development
22. Missile Sites Labor Committee
23. Council on Aging
24. Consumer Advisory Council
25. Narcotics Conference
26. Conflicts of Interest
27. Billie Sol Estes Case
28. Executive Privilege - Clearing and Editing of Speeches by DOD
29. Federal Pay Reform (Executive and Classified)
30. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
31. Establishment of National Communications System
32. Reopening of National Service Life Insurance for Veterans
33. Commission on Campaign Costs
34. Commission on Registration and Voting Participation
35. National Power Survey
36. Reduction of Maximum Interest Rates on FHA-insured Mortgages
37. Interagency Committee on Transportation Mergers
38. Creation of Office of Science and Technology
39. Desalination of Water
40. Oceanography

41. Reorganization of Regulatory Agencies and the Administrative Conference
42. Oil Policy (including relationship to coal products)
43. Lumber program
44. International Air Policy (including important CAB decisions)
45. Expansion of Distribution of surplus foods
46. Improvement of Radio and Television programming (all channel sets, Wiener Research, Educational Television)
47. Security and Exchange Commission Study of stock market and needed reforms

III. A number of other items should undoubtedly be included, including particularly scientific and technical matters. Each person interested will almost certainly have special areas that he will want to cover beyond those set forth above.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

RELEASE: MORNING PAPERS OF THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 1964 UNIVERSITY NEWS OFFICE

Page 2 - A 25-year lid on some

Carnegie Corporation of New York has made a grant to Harvard University for recording on tape the oral history of the administration of President John F. Kennedy. The taped record will be deposited in the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

Under the Carnegie grant of \$300,000, Harvard University will collaborate with the Kennedy Memorial Library in compiling the oral history.

Commenting on the grant, John W. Gardner, President of the Carnegie Corporation, said: "We have been fortunate that many of our Presidents have been able, after they have left office, to put their papers in order and write their memoirs. This project should be particularly useful as a means of putting together the record of President Kennedy's actions and decisions by those who worked most closely with him and participated in the domestic and foreign events of his time in office. For historians and other scholars of the future, it should be an extremely valuable resource."

A University committee, consisting of Prof. Oscar Handlin, the American historian (chairman), Dean Franklin L. Ford of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Dean Don K. Price of the Graduate School of Public Administration, will supervise the project.

(more)

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They will work with a committee for the Kennedy Memorial Library consisting of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy; McGeorge Bundy, the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs; and Frederick Dutton, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.

At the initiative of the Attorney General, intimate associates of the late President have begun to record their recollections in taped interviews. This phase of the project, which is under the direction of Mr. Dutton, on leave from his State Department post, will be completed this spring.

The accumulated interviews will be reviewed by the Harvard scholars during the summer for the purpose of mapping out the full scale of a broad objective oral history.

Interviews will be conducted under careful security precautions, and it is expected that some of the taped material will not be made public for about 25 years.

(end)

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April 14, 1964.

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy,
The Attorney General,
Washington, D. C. 20530.

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

In Mr. Martin's absence from the office, I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter to him of April 10 with respect to plans for an oral history program on the Kennedy Administration .

Mr. Martin will return to the office on April 23 and I will bring your letter to his attention at that time. However, I know that I can speak for Mr. Martin in expressing his willingness to participate in the interview program in any way that may be helpful .

Sincerely yours,

(Miss) Margaret Muehlhaus,
Secretary to Mr. Martin.

② copy

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(Miss) Margaret Muehlhaus,
Secretary to Mr. Martin.

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Friday, November 13

Mr. Martin

This letter came in just before you left for New York and I did not bother you with it at the time.

It is a follow-up on the correspondence of last April with respect to the oral history program on the Kennedy Administration and is a specific request for your taped oral history interview--before Thanksgiving if possible. (The earlier correspondence is also attached.)

Miss Nancy Hogan in the State Department is coordinating the interview program and I talked to her by phone--to say (1) you were away and would not have an opportunity to see this immediately, and (2) that because of your heavy travel schedule it is possible you might not be able to fit it in before their Thanksgiving date (November 26) "deadline." On this I take it this could be worked out. The letter does state they hope to get the interviews taped in November and reviewed by those interviewed in December.

Miss Hogan indicated that they had been remiss in not following up on the April exchange of correspondence; for it is up to you to choose your interviewer. She said that of course this program of oral history is a rather new field; there are few "oral historians" in the country and they have not attempted to engage these professional men to make the interviews. Instead, they are more or less leaving to the men to be interviewed the choice of the person who will interview them.

For example, she said that Dixon Donnelly and Bob Wallace in the Treasury are interviewing the Treasury officials. Joe Peckman of Brookings is doing the interviewing for the members of the Council of Economic Advisers. In some cases, a particular official prefers to have a person in his own organization, familiar with its work and its relationship to the Kennedy administration, take the interview because of the confidential nature of the material.

You may name anyone you want--any economist you know, any professor, anyone in your office. Miss Hogan's office then contacts the "interviewer" and briefs them on the conduct of the interview though there is no set list of questions--the usual pattern is for the interviewer, by questions, to bring out when you first met John Kennedy, and to go on to bring out your association with him, as President--perhaps citing specific conferences, contacts, etc., specific problems considered, and, if you like, any personal evaluation you may care to make. Miss Hogan did say that they wanted to keep them on an "interview" basis--they want more than a "statement" from each individual interviewed (a "eulogy" she called it).

Incidentally, I showed this letter to Mr. Molony; you may perhaps want to talk to him about it.

mm

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY LIBRARY
INCORPORATED

LYNDON B. JOHNSON
Honorary Chairman

November 4, 1964

REPLY TO:

EUGENE R. BLACK
Chairman

ROBERT F. KENNEDY
President

JACQUELINE B. KENNEDY
Vice President

EDWARD M. KENNEDY
Vice President

Frederick G. Dutton
c/o Nanci Hogan
Room 7253
Department of State
Washington, D. C.

*Code 182-1-5396
6470*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

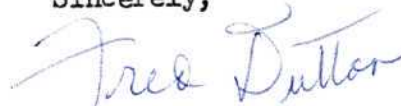
With the hectic campaign and election behind us, I want to express a hopeful reminder that you will have time before Thanksgiving to complete your Oral History interview for the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

We are undertaking to complete the interviews this year if at all possible and would like to use December for typing of the tapes and your own review of the manuscript.

I know how busy you are and hope that you will not consider this request out of place. But the relative immediacy which marks this phase of the project of the over-all Oral History Project is rapidly diminishing. We are consequently most anxious to get the tapes of your interview during November if at all possible.

We will be glad to offer any assistance that you might desire in trying to do that.

Sincerely,



Frederick G. Dutton
Coordinator
Oral History Project

The Honorable William McC. Martin, Jr.
Chairman, Board of Governors
Federal Reserve System
20th and Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C.