

Edison Dictaphone Recording

LBJ--Sorensen

June 3, 1963

Tape 1 of 2 (very short)

LBJ: --give to the President if he wants it. I don't think it's good to just give him an H [?] and try to--

(Interruption)

--perhaps get Bundy in civil rights and, see, have a bunch of Democrats speaking constantly in the Senate and some in the House, leaving the Democratic Party with an image of anti-Negro. Now, I don't think that necessarily needs to be. I think that we got to do our homework before we send a message, one, and we can't do that unless we spend some time on the message. Two, I think we ought to exchange some viewpoints on what legislation we can get--

Tape 2 of 2

LBJ --when he talks, say, "Now, I don't want to come here without talking about our constitutional rights. We're all Americans. We got a Golden Rule, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Now I'm leader of this country. When I order men into battle I order the men without regard to color. They carry our flag into foxholes. The Negro can do that, the Mexican can do it, others can do it. We've got to do the same thing when we drive down the highway at places they eat.

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I'm going to have to ask you all to do this thing. I'm going to have to ask the Congress to say that we'll all be treated without regard to our race."

I believe that he'd run some of the demagogues right in the hole. This aura, this thing, this halo around the President, everybody wants to believe in the President and the Commander in Chief. I think he'd make the Barnetts and the Wallaces look silly. The good people, the church people, I think have to come around to him, not the majority of them maybe, but a good many of them over the country, and it would really unify the North. He'd be looking them straight in the face, not lecturing to them as a father but what his responsibilities were as President. He sent these boys to Vietnam, and he didn't say pick out the whites and say whites only. I'm telling you they'd be out there by the hundreds of thousands.

S: I think that's a good idea.

LBJ: I'd do it in San Antonio. I'd let a Mexican congressman. I'd just show them that there's not anything terrible about this business. That here, right in the heart of the southland, you've got a fellow who's father and mother were born right out of this country and he's in the Congress. I'd let him introduce him with that white suit on and every television in America for maybe a fifteen-minute stop at a space medical center. They'd talk two minutes on that, maybe seven minutes on America. I think that would seep in before this thing gets

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up here. Then a man is put in the position almost where he's a bigot to be against the President.

As it is now the President's message doesn't get over. He gets it up here and every man--it's just like a manifesto, Ted. Every person has to sign that manifesto or he's ostracized in his own community and he's defeated. Now, the President has to go in there without cussing anybody or fussing at anybody with a bunch of congressmen sitting there listening to him, and be the leader of the nation and make a moral commitment to them. They can't insult him for doing it. Not in a lecture form but in kind of an informational form.

You see, this fellow Baldwin, he says, "I don't want to marry your daughter, I want to get you off my back," and that's what these Negroes want. They want that moral commitment, and that will do more to satisfy them than your bill will. I mean, you got to have your bill, too. But I think we run the risk of touching off about a three- or four-month debate that will kill his program and inflame the country and wind up with a mouse. I don't think that means that a legislative approach ought to be abandoned. I think it means that some specific proposals have to be weighed a lot more carefully than I've been able to weigh them, then reach a conclusion as to all of us lining up on this play that's going around the right end. I don't think there's any institution that can pick--

(Interruption)

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--the conscience of the nation. It could go over the world I think. I wouldn't have him go down there and meet Wallace and get in a tussle with him. I'd pick my own time and my own place. The hell with confronting those people. But I think he ought to talk frankly and freely, rather understandingly and maybe fatherly. He should stick to the moral issue and he should do it without equivocation not as a demon trying to punish a child, but

I know these risks are great and it might cost us the South, but those sorts of states may be lost anyway. The difference is if your President just enforces court decrees the South will feel it's yielded to force. But if he goes down there and looks them in the eye and states the moral issue and the Christian issue, and he does it face to face, these Southerners at least respect his courage. They feel that they're on the losing side of an issue of conscience. Now, I think the Southern whites and the Negroes share one point of view that's identical. They're not certain that the government is on the side of the Negroes. The whites think we're just playing politics to carry New York. The Negroes feel and they're suspicious that we're just doing what we got to do. Until that's laid to rest I don't think you're going to have much of a solution. I don't think the Negroes' goals are going to be achieved through legislation and a little thing here on impact area or vote or something. I think the Negro leaders are aware of that. What Negroes are really seeking is moral force

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and be sure that we're on their side and make them all act like Americans, and until they receive that assurance, unless it's stated dramatically and convincingly, they're not going to pay much attention to executive orders and legislative recommendations. They're going to approach them with skepticism. So. . . .

S: I agree with that and I think that's very sound.

LBJ: And I think he's got to have his bill. He's sitting over here, we've got six months, we haven't passed anything! I think he ought to make them pass some of this stuff before he throws this thing out. This is just what the Republican Party, if I was their manager, this is what I'd recommend they do. And this is what they're doing. They're sitting back giggling. Here Javits gets Humphrey souped up; they put on a few terrible demonstrations; we get civil war going on in the South; they move Kennedy in and they cut off the South from him and blow up the bridge. That's what they want to do.

If I were Kennedy I wouldn't let them call my signals. I'd pass my program, make them stand up and vote for it. While I was doing that I'd go into the South a time or two myself. While I was doing that I'd put the Republicans on the spot by making them buy my program. Or if they want more, just let Dirksen say how much he wants and I would try to call in my southern leaders that got Lockheeds around over the country and others and say, "Now here we got to do it either in the streets or in the courts. And they're going to do it in the streets. I can't sit idly by

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and what do you recommend, Senator?" Let them chew on it a day or two, because this world wasn't made in a day. I would be sure that I got a good solid program, that I got the Republicans with me if I can get them, that I got my leaders with me. Then when I move, I wouldn't be stopped. He's already tried out this literacy bill by this shooting from the hip business. Hell, they messed around there four or five days, had a little perfunctory vote and said it was hypocritical and disgraceful. Didn't you think so?

S: Last year?

LBJ: Yeah.

S: Well, I think we could have done better.

LBJ: Sure we could have, sure we could have. We better just see what we want to do and be sure that everybody wants to do it and then go ahead. I don't think we're at that stage now. I told the Attorney General that, and I tell you that. Now, if you are at that stage I'm making it abundantly clear I'm on the team and you'll never hear a word out of me.

S: I think really what it comes down to is this question of timing--

LBJ: And substance.

S: I think what you say is right. I think we're in agreement on substance. I think this bill has been gone over pretty carefully. I think the changes we made in it the other day were good changes. I think it's the minimum we can ask for and a maximum we can

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stand behind. But the question is one of timing, and I think that this--

LBJ: I don't agree.

S: --thing is hot enough now it's pretty tough to--

LBJ: I don't agree with that. I don't know though, I haven't seen it. But I don't believe the legislators agree with that because I don't think they know. But I think you ought to give a good deal of thought to a conciliation sort of issue. Instead of the Attorney General or the district attorney being the conciliator, I'd have a trained mind do it. I'd have him available to every community in this land just as the troops are.

S: Oh, I agree, I agree.

LBJ: I think there are a good deal of things you can do. You ought to get your tax bill passed instead of killed. This Kennedy program oughtn't go down the drain, and I'm afraid that's what will happen if you send this up here.

Now, I want to make it clear, I'm as strong for this program as you are, my friend. But you want my judgment now, and I don't want to debate these things around fifteen men and then have them all go out and talk about the Vice President and how he is, because I haven't talked to one southerner about this. I haven't been able to talk to one executive man about it except the Attorney General and you and Ken very briefly this morning. I haven't sat in on any of the conferences they've had up here with the senators. I think it would have been good if I had. I

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don't care. I'd just as soon be included out on all these things, but if at the last minute I'm supposed to give my judgments, I'm going to do it honestly as long as I'm around here and I'm going to do it loyally.

I think that he'll be cut to pieces with this and I think he'll be a sacrificial lamb. I think his program will be hurt, if it's not killed. I don't want to be extreme. We may be able to pass it. But I think he's entitled to more support than he's got to go in with or that he'll get after he does. I think the presidency can get it for him. I have spoken from Milwaukee to Chicago to New York to Los Angeles to Illinois last night, and Gettysburg and Dallas, and Johnson City, Texas, and I think that I know one thing, that the Negroes are tired of this patient stuff and tired of this piecemeal stuff and what they want more than anything else is not an executive order or legislation, they want a moral commitment that he's behind them. If he'd make it in Jackson, Mississippi it would be worth a hell of a lot more than it would in Harlem.

I don't think that it's impossible to pass a good constructive bill along the lines that you've got. I think it's possible to pass probably a stronger one. But I don't think it's been thought through. The procedures, I've given a good deal of thought since you suggested it go to Interstate one in the Senate. I sent it there and Judiciary in the House. It's almost laughable.

S: I was laughing myself.

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LBJ: Yes. You're not that sadistic though, are you?

Anyway, I think we ought to have that planned out, and we ought to know that we got the votes to do it, and we can get them a whole lot better before the message than we do afterwards. The moment that message hits and every cruel and evil influence in this country, plus all the uninformed, plus all the people that got a wounded air and a persecution complex, are going to be unified against the President. That oughtn't be. He ought to make it almost make a bigot out of nearly anybody that's against him, a high lofty appeal, treat these people as Americans.

I said some of the things I said at Gettysburg from nearly every train stop in the South. I looked them right in the eye and said them, and every reporter from Dorris Fleeason on was trying to watch me run from them. But we said them and they respected us. They knocked Lady Bird's hat off in Dallas, but by God they voted for us! If I can do it--they called it corn pone and all that kind of stuff--but the President can sure do it. When he does, the decent people and the preachers, they'll come support him. I've been into North Carolina this year at Jefferson. I've been into Florida. Neither place would they allow Negroes to come. I said, "I'm going to come and I'm going to talk about their constitutional rights and I want them on the platform with me, and if you don't let them I'm not coming, period." By God, they put them on both places, right on the platform and right eating with

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us, the first time George Smathers ever had dinner with them in St. Augustine. But we had them.

I think the President could do this in North Carolina or some place. I'd invite the congressmen and senators to be on the platform. I wouldn't do like Roosevelt did to Walter George and let him get up and say, "I accept your challenge." I'd have him talk about the contributions that they had made and then I'd say, "Now, we have a problem here. No nation can--a hundred years ago in the Lincoln-Douglas debate, Lincoln said, 'No nation can long endure half slave and half free.' Now no world can endure half slave and half free and we've got to do something about it in our own country. How would you like to be treated? Treat the other fellow the same way. I don't think you want these people to go to the unemployment rolls in Detroit and Los Angeles. I think they ought to be trained here at home so they can earn a job like your children."

I'd have that governor on the platform with me, John Connally in Texas. In San Antonio Henry Gonzalez introduced me. I took the United Nations down there and they said they didn't believe this was the South because they saw fifty high school bands with Negroes, Mexicans and whites all marching down the same street. They saw five hundred thousand people like a football stadium and they just saw black, brown, white, everything in San Antonio. I think television ought to see that. I think that's the place for him to make a Gettysburg speech. That's just a part of the space

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medicine thing or as a part of space in Mississippi or as a part of space in New Orleans. Then I tell you, it'll be a lot easier for Hale Boggs--anyway, Hale will have already voted for his tax bill and he'll have that behind him.

Now, summarizing everything, I'd say the legislation ought to be screened much more carefully, ought to be added to and taken from. I don't know, I haven't seen it, but that would be my guess. It can be done. I've never seen one that can't be, and I think it would be a better product a month from now than it is now.

Second, I think he ought to talk to the Negro leaders and give them that moral commitment right in the horse's mouth that he's going to help get them off their back.

Three, I think he ought to talk to Republican leaders from Eisenhower on down, particularly legislative leaders.

Four, I think he ought to get his own team in line about chairmen of committees. He got Humphrey; what the hell is Humphrey? He's a wonderful man, but we know he like Bob Taylor's goat, he's done voted. We've got to get some other folks in this thing to get that cloture. You got to get a good many of your westerners. You got to sit down with them, help them have a reason, let their people go to writing to them from Wyoming, and Montana, and Idaho, and some of these other places.

Fourth [Fifth], I think he ought to look them in the eye and say this in the South, not wrestling with Wallace, but a place

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of his choosing and a time of his choosing with the image of his choosing and leading. That will pulverize a good many of them. I honestly believe the Negroes will appreciate his appearing in New Orleans, Louisiana or Jackson, Mississippi and saying what I know is in his heart, they'll appreciate all these damn things if you pass them tomorrow which I don't think you'll ever pass as it is.

S: Well, I think that's a good point.

LBJ: So I make a point, that you haven't done your homework on public sentiment, on legislative leaders, on the opposition party, or on the legislation itself. I think it can be more constructive and I think it can be better without any reflection on anyone. I don't know who drafted it; I've never seen it. Hell, if the Vice President doesn't know what's in it how do you expect the others to know what's in it? I got it from the New York Times and from that message of yours this morning. I've never seen anything else. But that's the way Eisenhower took Part Three and Russell just ran him out of the White House balcony, because he said, "I never heard of it, didn't know what was in there, they slipped it in on me."

My guess is they'll be picking at this thing and they'll have seven things. I'd let them pick at it before I sent it up, and I'd find the answers to it. Do you follow me?

S: I do.

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LBJ: I would have Dick Russell sit down with Lyndon Johnson--I'm not a lawyer, but with a lawyer. Bobby's been negotiating with him. I'd just say now I got--and let him advance every argument he can and be sure he got the answers. Then go on and send the bill if you want to. But I would make them show every card they got. You know, they forced me, this Javits group forced me to give a commitment to pick civil rights in 1960--you remember that, before the convention?

S: Oh, yes.

LBJ: That's the worst mistake we ever made because it killed all the other programs. We couldn't get medical care; we couldn't get wage and hour; we couldn't get anything else because we divided our forces, split them to pieces. And we passed the Civil Rights Bill, but we killed everything else that we had. And we were prostrate when we came back here, Kennedy and Johnson. I'd pass my program and let Mr. Javits go straight to hell. He's not going to win this election between now and July 1 or September 1. And when I got my bills--

(Interruption)

--bills passed, by that time I'd be ready and I'd have a plan, I'd have a program, and I've have the power behind it. And it would be every Cabinet officer would know what's in it and be for it. And every northerner, including Republicans, would have to be for it. I would have already pulverized the South pretty well myself. They can't attack this President.

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But I'll tell you, when he sends this message they're going to come running out there and Howard Smith is going to be in the lead in one place and Dick Russell in the other place, and they're going to sit quietly in these appropriation committees and they're going to cut his outfit off and put it in their pocket and never mention civil rights. So I'd move my children on through the line and get them down in the storm cellar and get it locked and key, and then I'd make my attack. I'd tell the Negroes what I'm doing. Well, maybe I'm wrong.

S: I don't know whether the--

LBJ: But you asked for it. I could go into a good deal, and I think I have the feeling the Negro has in this country. I've been talking to a good many of them. Bobby came in the other day to our Equal Employment Committee and I was humiliated. He took on Hobart and said about Birmingham, said the federal employees weren't employing them down there, and he just gave him hell and said, "We got twenty-six jobs for them." Well, obviously the President and the Attorney General can get twenty-six or twenty-six hundred if they tell them, "Put them on." But the only way we can tell them is take them from the civil service register and they're presidential appointees and we can't make them do anything, although we had urged them in a letter in March, "Please, this meant business. The President insisted it be done." Well, we did it. But I don't believe, I believe those twenty-six will cost us in the long run. I think that we got to say to those

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southerners, "You don't want to send these people to Detroit and Los Angeles and go on the relief rolls, you want them to work and make their own living, stand on their own feet. So we're going to give them jobs. We're going to do it in the labor union; we're going to do it in the federal government." Then I think they will. But only the President I think can do it. When it got through, the committee came around to me and said, "Well, it looks like there's a great division in the administration. And why don't you do this in every city like you've done in Birmingham?" I said, "I can't very well ask the Civil Service to do something that--the laws already provide they'll do right, and I can't say that the President's a man that's not doing it. [?] Now the President can."

If they want that done I'll sure love to do it in every city, Montgomery right on down. Now, we've called every large employer in twenty-five large cities and we've said to them, "Please go out privately and hire your maximum number of Negroes." But you know what happened in Birmingham. Fourteen hundred took the exam, eighty passed it. Only forty of them all want to come to Washington. We did it right here at Howard. A hundred and fifty were screened. Eight were qualified and only two we could finally get on the job. The same thing in Chicago, three hundred and fifty examined. The trouble is that our school system has been unfair to them all these years and they're not qualified most of these places.

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We've got training programs going on. Why, in Los Angeles got a hundred graduated last week. I went out there and spoke to them. But I can't get it in the paper. Had every aerospace manufacturer in California present with a hundred graduates. And they're semi-skilled people that all got jobs when they come out of this technical school that they're graduating from. Van Kimble [?], president of Lockheed, president of Northrup, president of North American, every one of them. Now that's what's got to be done all over this country. I went and spent ten days getting up a letter and urged the Secretary of Labor to send it out a month ago, to every labor union saying, "We're going to get a report from you and see if you're complying with what you said." He sent all this stuff out and the labor unions are not. We're going to have to bring some suits. The Attorney General has got the power under that executive order to do it. But I think the President ought to tell them before he does and say to the South that, "Here you got 35 per cent of the people in Birmingham are Negroes, but you haven't got one in a single union in Birmingham. So I hope they'll take them in. If they don't, we're going to have to ask that the Attorney General go into court and go to the National Labor Relations Board." Now, you know who wrote that provision in the executive order on authorizing the Attorney General to go in? Dick Russell. And I think you can--they want these people to work. You know who helped on Lockheed? Mr. Russell. It's got the best employer record in the country, because, by God, he knew

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the President wasn't going to give him that contract if they didn't employ Negroes. That's the loudest language the President can speak. Do you follow me?

S: I sure do.

LBJ: I think it would be good for him to appear at Lockheed. He's looking at all these White Sands things right in the middle of Georgia and not say something they say, "I accept your challenge," but say, "I appreciate what you've done here. You've been the beacon light for the nation. But you people don't believe in starving your fellow man. You think a man wants to work ought to have a chance to do it, so see that these unions let them in. See that these employers let them work." And I tell you these Negroes will be whispering to each other, "He walked right in there and he stood right up to them and he told them the facts."

And I think the South--I don't know much about it--but I think they'll respect him because here's a man of conscience. They think that they don't believe in anything that the Pope believes in. You know that. But they believe this man is a sincere man and he is a Catholic because he believes that's what ought to be. And when you tell them about Joe Kennedy and that Baptist boy up in Fort Worth going down in the same plane, they'll knock the damn bigot down that questions his religion. They'll do the same thing here. But you got to put it to them and we haven't. And you got to do it in Georgia and Mississippi and Texas. I got as much of a problem here as any human being. They'll

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probably boo me off the platform, but I'll be right there with him. I'll be saying it myself if he wants me to, but I just don't think. . . .

The only person that's hurt by this is the President and the Democratic Party, if he does this now. He's played right into the Republicans' hands. They've done exactly what they've wanted to do. I got a memo from the head of the Civil Rights Commission who talked to a friend of mine. He wrote me four or five months ago, and he said, "This thing is going to boil, and we're going to have in the streets and here's what Mr. Rockefeller is going to do." I told the President at that time that Rockefeller was going to try to out-Negro our administration just like he out-Negroed Averell Harriman. He's going to lay it onto us and they are going to try to make them take a position between the Negro and the South. We couldn't get into that position. I think that they're going to make us do it. But we ought to do it our way instead of their way.

S: [inaudible]

LBJ: Suppose you sent it yesterday. Hell, you've got two bills up here. Where are they? I don't know where Smathers is, I don't know where Mansfield is, but I'd find out where they are and I'd see what's going to do about those. If you ask me, "Should we have legislation?" the answer to these questions is yes. Should we have legislation substantially of this type? The answer is yes. Can it be improved on? The answer is yes. Should we? Yes. What should we do before we send it? I'd say Republicans, one.

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Public sentiment, two. The South, three. Legislators, four, individually. Negro leaders, five. Then when I got ready to swing I would go in for the kill and I wouldn't let anybody deter me or persuade me. I slept on this couch I'm looking at for thirty-seven nights, but I produced quorums at two o'clock and four o'clock and that's what you've got to be prepared to do and might as well notify these wives that you're going to have some unpopularity because they cussed me all the time. But that's what you're going to have to do because this crowd, they're experts at fighting this thing and we're not prepared for them.

We got a little pop gun, and I want to pull out the cannon. The President is the cannon. You let him be on all the TV networks just speaking from his conscience, not at a rally in Harlem, but at a place in Mississippi or Texas or Louisiana and just have the honor guard there with a few Negroes in it. Then let him reach over and point and say, "I have to order these boys into battle, in the foxholes carrying that flag. I don't ask them what their name is, whether it's Gomez or Smith, or what color they got, what religion. If I can order them into battle I've got to make it possible for them to eat and sleep in this country." Then how does everybody--he goes home and asks his wife, "What's wrong with this?" and they go to searching their conscience. Every preacher starts preaching about it. We ought to recognize that and put them busy. Why? Because Dean Sayre spoke up at my meeting the other day, how derelict they've been and what all he wants to do.

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I said, "I'll just put you on a country circuit right now and you can head south." But you saw what the Episcopalians did and I commended him for it.

But the President ought to get all of his troops, and he's entitled to put every Republican in there with him, every preacher in there with him, every decent southerner in there with him. If he acts this way my judgment is these leaders will all be against him because they will be so poisoned. The newspapers-- the only newspaper that will be there, the Jackson paper and the Dallas News and all of them, and they'll just hear one side of it. They'll say about how Bobby and Lyndon Johnson, the traitor, and what all they've done, and the poor President is just being misled. They look at him on television speaking down there right from the shoulder. They'll examine their consciences that night.

He's got plenty of time to propose. He can propose right up to September. You ain't going to get even started discussing it until September anyway. You got to pass your tax bill. You got to pass some of your other bills. September is just about the time. You'll have so many night sessions before you get closure. So the only big problem is saying to the Baldwins and to the Kings and to the rest of them, "We give you a moral commitment. The government is behind you. You're not going to have to do it in the streets. You can do it in the courthouses and the Congress. Now let's get ready for that. Let this same energy go into talking to your people and letting their congressmen know." You've

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got some of your legislatures in session. You may have this situation you had in Florida and Louisiana. You may have it sweep all the country, this message right now. But if he pulverizes away, why, he'll have as many voters on his side as these little legislators got on theirs if he tells them the truth. Because he's right, Ted.

S: Sure.

LBJ: But do you think we have exploited that personality and that office and that man and lead him to everything he's got to give this leadership movement. I don't think we've got any of it.

S: We have to do a lot more of it. We're going to be doing it, I'm sure, all summer. I'm not so sure you have to wait and send up a bill afterwards though.

LBJ: I don't think you have to wait. I think you have to do this other and as soon as you do it go ahead. But I don't agree with you it's been done. I think this is a Republican time to send it up.

S: The question is whether it's the Negroes time to send it up.

LBJ: Well, I talked to the Negroes. I think what the Negroes want, unless I misjudge them. They've heard about these voting rights, and they've heard about these public facilities, and they've heard about taking down the white signs on buses. But they know that that hasn't happened and they know the law is not going to happen, and they know it's not going to be done in three or four months. What they want to know is the President's own really at heart on

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their side. I believe that they'd believe he is. They believe the Attorney General is. I think they believe I am. But I just want to convince them and be sure they believe it, and then I would get them some support. This is the way I think you'll run it off.

You might want to talk to Mansfield--I've never mentioned it to him--see what he thinks. I was informed that his plan was to take the House bill, commit it to Judiciary with instructions to bring it back within a month. Now, I haven't explored that. But I rather believe, just my hunch is, that would be the best way to get it back.

S: Yes, I think so.

LBJ: If you take it up direct, you lose some votes because it hasn't been considered.

S: Oh, I agree. Besides that--

LBJ: If you get it to a committee without instructions you can't get it back. So it's got to do that, and I wouldn't consider any other committee.

S: No, I agree with that.

LBJ: Although, if I could report it out of House Interstate I'd do it, but I've looked at that and I don't believe you can. But I--
(Interruption)

--I'd do that and I wouldn't consider any other committee. I'd just--

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S: No, I agree with that.

LBJ: I'd do that and I wouldn't consider any other committee. I'd just--

S: Yes. No, I agree with that.

LBJ: Although, if I could report it out of House Interstate I'd do it. But I've looked at that and I don't believe you can. But I would sure get the Republicans in on this thing. I wouldn't say that we're in on the landing but we're not in on the takeoff. And if this is not warfare I don't know what it is. Arresting them by the thousands; they're killing them by the dozens. Carl Albert said down there this morning, "We can't pass an FEPC," and I said, "What makes you think you can't?" just to get the truth. "Halleck told me under no circumstances would he vote for it." I'd let them see what these Republicans want to do about this thing. Because while you get your message off tomorrow, my friend, probably Everett Dirksen and Dick Russell will be sitting around next Sunday over a mint julep with an understanding that they're going to do a good deal more, Dirksen is, than you've asked, and that he hadn't been consulted and he's got a right to offer more than you've asked and that will be defeated and then he won't go along. Then he'll go along with Russell. And he's made a book against you. I'd make a book with him instead of Russell making it with him. Didn't I turn every moral force in this country loose on him?

S: I think that's a good suggestion.

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LBJ: I want to talk to the President about this and about the supersonic bomber. Do you want to take one minute on that?

S: Yeah.

LBJ: There are thirteen government agencies involved. There is the same amount of jealousy and envy involved in that question as Roosevelt had with Ickes and Hopkins. I've never seen it in this government up to this point. It's there now. We finally got them all to agree that we would recommend to the President that we start on a program. We asked the Congress for a hundred million dollars. We asked for design competition immediately, and when it came in, we decide whether we wanted mach two or three and whether we should go on or not. We all think we should. The people who really know we should are Dillon and Harriman and Halaby and I think Labor doesn't care. The people who question it, Commerce Department thinks it ought to be in Commerce. McNamara is just against--he has no need for it and I think pretty generally is against supersonic stuff. Last August he wanted to study it and he got a report from Rand. Last August he wanted to study it and got a report from Stanford and still wants to study it after a year. If we study it much more the British and the French will have theirs. Trip's [?] signing up this week for six of them anyway. I got McNamara to go along and I've got Budget to go along with the understanding that they would add some more characteristics before they asked for design competition, so I'm appointing

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him on a committee and he's meeting with them in the next day or two.

My judgment is that the British had the leadership of the world because they dominated the sea for centuries. We've had the leadership of the world because we took the air away from Hitler and we've had it ever since we took it away from him. My judgment is we ought to keep the leadership in aviation and the only way to keep it is not sit on your fanny and let the British and the French build mach 2.2 and let us do nothing.

S: I'd like to see a copy of your report.

LBJ: All right, it's in the President's hands. It's a two-page letter. I think he ought to adopt it and then he ought to send Halaby up here and let Halaby testify to the Congress. Make it the same kind of message you sent on space. This is a far-reaching decision. If it were up to me alone I would go. I submit you the facts. You oughtn't to undertake it unless you plan to do it and if you do decide to do it I hope you'll not look back. Kind of the same message you did on space. It's a billion dollars. They'll ridicule him for it. They'll laugh at him, just like they do the space thing. But my friend, if he didn't do it he'd be in worse shape. So Dillon is strong for it; Harriman is strong for it. Budget, McNamara are weak although they agreed to go over this letter and I think the President ought to act on the letter soon.

He's got to name one man to be the czar. He's in the FAA. There's a pretty good man named Bayne [?] that I saw in these

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conferences. Never heard of him. Don't know his given name. He wrote the FAA report. He's got brains and guts, vision I think. He might be the man, I don't know. But whoever the President wants ought to be selected tomorrow. Say, "Now you go and present this." I think it's pretty important because the plane people are buying them now. They came down and showed Dillon their contract that they've already signed with the British and the French to buy six. They'll be doing more unless we show we got a program. That man ought to be named and the first thing he ought to do is get ready for his testimony on the Hill and go there playing the lines and say, "Here, here is what we're going to do. Now we want you to agree to put up some of the money." The manufacturers the same way. He ought to be an able, tough negotiator. I know if the President asked me who I recommended, I don't have anyone to recommend, don't know. Maybe Bayne is the man. I'd look into him awfully carefully if I were in the President's place but I'd sure urge a prompt decision. Just like I did in space in January and then April. We're going to have a storm on it, but I think you're going to be proud of it twenty-five years from now.

S: No doubt about it. I'll pass that on on the supersonic. I want to look into it myself.

LBJ: They scheduled a fifteen-minute appointment for me today at eleven, and then as we suggested, twelve. I am not asking for any at all, but the President asked me this morning, "Do you have any suggestions?" I've had some experiences. I don't want to spend a week

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telling these newspaper reporters why I disagree, and I never do.

So whenever he wants them, why, I'm available.

S: Well, I'll pass all this on to him, you can be sure.

LBJ: Thank you, Ted.

S: Thank you very much.

LBJ: Bye.

[End of Tape 2 of 2]