

November 29, 1963  
6:30 p. m.

96  
✓

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 on...

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