

K6312-06-01_scroller

Date: 1963-12-09

Participant: Lyndon B. Johnson

Participant: Thomas C. Mann

Start Time: 15:30

Place: Oval Office

SCROLLER TITLE: "We've Been Talking Enough"

SCENE SETTER: Wanting to inject greater energy into U.S. policy toward Latin America, President Johnson asked U.S. ambassador to Mexico Thomas C. "Tom" Mann to remain in Washington, D.C., to discuss various options. Mann realized that Johnson intended to appoint him as the administration's primary point of contact for the region, a post that Mann would assume in early 1964 as U.S. assistant secretary of state for Inter-American Affairs.

President Johnson: [*answering on speakerphone*] Yes, Tom. When are you coming up here? [*Picks up the telephone receiver.*]

Thomas C. "Tom" Mann: Coming up tomorrow. Leave on a . . . think I'll get there about 4:30 or 5 [o'clock] in the afternoon.

President Johnson: Mm-hmm.

Mann: Coming up to testify on the Chamizal.

President Johnson: Mm-hmm. I may want you to stay up here.

Mann: [*Pauses, then chuckles.*] All right. [*Pauses again.*] Well, I kind of hope not, but what . . . I'd like [to] talk with you about it, in any case, if you decide to go ahead on that.

President Johnson: You know what I'm thinking about?

Mann: Well, I'm guessing, yes. I've got a good guess.

President Johnson: You know what I've thought all the time about having one man in—for the entire [Alliance for Progress] operation.

Mann: Uh-huh.

President Johnson: Kind of an under secretary.

Mann: [*Slight pause.*] Well, fine. I'll be at your service, as always, to talk about it.

President Johnson: Well, I want you to do more than talk about it: I want somebody to do something about it. We've been talking enough.

Mann: [*chuckling*] All right.

President Johnson: So you be thinking about—

Mann: I'll be thinking about it. Shall I get in touch with your office?

President Johnson: First thing you do, you call Walter [W.] Jenkins soon as you hit town, because we've got—I want you to kind of lay it out the way you'd like to see it done.

Mann: All right. Well, I'll be in touch with Walter as soon as I get there, then.

End of excerpt 1.

President Johnson: Well, I'm very anxious, though, to talk over some real important things with you, so you give it a lot of thought ahead of time. And we'll see where we'd fit in the Alliance and the OAS [Organization of American States] and some of the related things underneath, where we could have one central direction and one man in charge.

Mann: All right. Well, fine. I'll be thinking about it, and I'll call Walter tomorrow.

President Johnson: How well do you know [Ellsworth F.] Bunker?

Mann: Well, I used to know him fairly well. Ellsworth Bunker?

President Johnson: Yeah.

Mann: Used to know him [*President Johnson acknowledges*] when he was ambassador to the Argentine.

President Johnson: Well, they're talking about him kind of, the OAS, and so I'll talk to you about it tomorrow. But you give a good deal of thought to that.

Mann: I'll do it.

President Johnson: All right.

Mann: Thanks very much.

President Johnson: I don't want any noes, Tom.

Mann: [*chuckling*] Well, you never got a no from me.

President Johnson: OK. All right.

Mann: [*Unclear.*]

End of excerpt 2.

CITATION: "Lyndon Johnson and Thomas Mann on 9 December 1963," Tape K6312.06, PNO 1, *Presidential Recordings Digital Edition [The Kennedy Assassination and the Transfer of Power, vol. 2, ed. Robert David Johnson and David Shreve]* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014–). URL: <http://prde.upress.virginia.edu/conversations/9020103>