“I’m Just as Close as the Phone”

Date: 1964-06-20
Conversation: WH6406-12-3800
Participant: Lyndon B. Johnson
Participant: Robert F. Kennedy
Participant: Jacqueline B. Kennedy
Start Time: 18:45
Duration: 01:52
Place: Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles, California


President Johnson: Bobby? I’m sorry I—


President Johnson: How’s Teddy, Bob?

Robert Kennedy: [Clears throat.] Well, he’s got a lot of . . . broken bones, and his back is in bad shape, but he’s not paralyzed. And it’s going to take, they suppose, anywhere from six months to a year, but he’s going to be fine at the end of it.

President Johnson: Oh, well, thank God, he’s safe.

Robert Kennedy: Well, I do thank you for calling.

President Johnson: Looks like you just have more than you can bear, but you’re a mighty brave fellow, and you have my sympathy and all your family, and . . .

Robert Kennedy: Thank you, Mr. President.

President Johnson: Any way in the world I can help, I’m just as close as the phone.

Robert Kennedy: Well, I think [unclear].
**President Johnson:** Well, I appreciate it so much. It’s so distressing, and I know you’re carrying a heavy load. And I wished I could do something to help you. Give your mother [Rose Kennedy] my love.


**President Johnson:** Thank you, Bobby.

**Robert Kennedy:** Hold on.

**President Johnson:** Bye.

**Jacqueline B. “Jackie” Kennedy:** Hello? Mr. President?

**President Johnson:** My dear, it looks like you have more than we can bear, don’t you?

**Jacqueline Kennedy:** Yeah, boy, that [unclear]. [President Johnson acknowledges.] But you’re so nice to call.

**President Johnson:** Well, I’m thinking of you, and I wished I could do something.

**Jacqueline Kennedy:** Well, everyone here is very touched that you were. They thank you so much.

**President Johnson:** I talked to Mr. [Thomas F.] Corriden last night about three or four o’clock [a.m.], and he thought that it was going to take time, but everything’s all right—is that it?

**Jacqueline Kennedy:** Yes, that’s it. I just think [he’ll] pretty much be in bed and everything, but at least, you know, everything will be all right.

**President Johnson:** Give Joan [Kennedy] a hug for me.

**Jacqueline Kennedy:** I will.

**President Johnson:** Thank you, Jackie.

**Jacqueline Kennedy:** Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Johnson:** Bye.

*End of excerpt.*

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