

Hello and welcome again to another episode of Presidential Archives Uncovered--the podcast that brings to you cool clips from the collections of the Presidential Libraries of the U.S. National Archives.

In the following telephone conversation between President Kennedy and R. Sargent Shriver, the two men discuss possible CIA penetration of the Peace Corps. They also discuss returning Peace Corps volunteers entering the Foreign Service.

Please note the recording contains both original tapes. The first tape ends after a few seconds and the conversation is continued and partially repeated on the second tape.

JFK: Hello.

Shriver: Hello, Jack?

JFK: Yeah, Sarge.

Shriver: Hi, how are you?

JFK: Good. Fine. Fine.

Shriver: I'm sorry to bother you . . .

JFK: Not a bit.

Shriver: . . . but I'm getting rather suspicious over here that, uh, despite your instructions that, uh, some of our friends over in the Central Intelligence Agency might think that they're smarter than anybody else and that they are trying to stick fellows into the Peace Corps.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Shriver: And John McCone has told me on two occasions, and Dulles of course did, that they never would do that.

JFK: Right. Right.

Shriver: They sent out messages and the rest of it.

JFK: Right.

Shriver: But, uh, we've got a group in training now that looks suspicious, and I'd like, uh . . .

[End of item 17A4. Continues on item 17B1. Part of conversation repeats at beginning of item.]

Shriver: ... fellows into the Peace Corps.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Shriver And John McCone has told me on two occasions, and Dulles of course did, that they never would do that.

JFK: Right. Right.

Shriver: They sent out messages and the rest of it.

JFK: Right.

Shriver: But, uh, we've got a group in training now that looks suspicious, and I'd like, uh, to follow whatever you recommend, but I sure in hell want these guys, uh, . . .

JFK: Well, would you call Dick Helms?

Shriver: Dick Helms?

JFK: Yeah. He's the operations officer over there under . . . And just say to him that you've talked to me and that I don't want anybody in there.

Shriver: Okay.

JFK: And if they are there, let's get them out now before we have it. And if there is any problem about it that Dick Helms ought to call the President about it. That . . .

Shriver: Okay.

JFK: . . . this is very . . . we are very, very anxious that there be no, uh, we don't want to discredit this whole idea.

Shriver: Okay. Fine.

JFK: And, uh, they . . . Christ, they're not gonna find out that much intelligence.

Shriver: That's right.

JFK: Now, the other thing is, I notice with these people coming back, can we do anything about seeing if we can get some of them to go into the Foreign Service?

Shriver: Yes. The Foreign Service has already changed their, uh, examination schedules, and the kind of exams they give, and the, uh, places that they are going to be given, and done everything that they think they can this year to facilitate Peace Corps guys getting into the Foreign Service, and . . .

JFK: Yeah.

Shriver: . . . USIA has done the same thing, and AID is trying to do something.

JFK: Yeah. Yeah.

Shriver: Uh, I think we'll have to find out by one trial run to see whether it's successful.

JFK: Okay. Well, I just wanted to be sure. Uh, let me know if there's anything we can do, but these are the guys I'd like to get into the Foreign Service.

Shriver: Okay. Fine.

JFK: Okay.

Shriver: Thanks.

JFK: 'bye Sarge.

To learn more about the Peace Corps visit the Presidential Timeline, www.presidentialtimeline.org.