

TELECON

David Frost

7/3/72 10:45 a.m.

K: Where are you?

F: I'm in Acapulco?

K: Oh, isn't that great.

F: I've got to go back to New York tomorrow, but I zipped down for two or three days. I wanted to sketch out a book which I've managed to do.

K: On what?

F: It's a novel in fact. I've never written a novel before and I've had this idea brewing around in my head for about 6 months and I thought if I just sat in front of an electric typewriter I could do it and I think I have. I haven't written the book obviously but I've written a 40-page synopsis. So I'm full of moral complicity today.

K: How is the weather in Acapulco now?

F: Marvelous, quite hot, but really delicious.

K: Well, I adore Acapulco.

F: It's a marvelous spot. You ought to come down for dinner tonight Henry. You've done a lot of traveling lately and I don't blame you for wanting to stay in one place.

K: I'm going to stay in one place now for two weeks.

F: I was calling you, A to greet you and B, I've had three calls this morning about a hilarious diplomatic matter that I just wanted to ask you whether you thought it was worth anyone at the White House, from yourself down, as it were, doing anything about. It's an extraordinary story. Can I tell you about it?

K: Certainly.

F: It's about America's gift to the world of chess -- Bobby Fischer. He's a very, very mixed-up gentleman. I got to know him when he appeared on my show. He came to the party in Bermuda and so on.

K: That's right.

F: And he's a very mixed-up guy. But I lent him my lawyer, I got my lawyer to do it at no charge -- to sort out his various problems/ with the International Chess Federation. And he is in fact . . . I mean mentally disturbed would

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be fair to say, Bobby Fischer. He thinks he's the victim of a conspiracy and goodness knows what else. And now, face to face with what he's worked for all his life he's terrified to get on that plane to Iceland and if he doesn't get on a plane to Iceland today he'll be disqualified. That's part of it and my lawyer washed his hands of him because he got impossible two weeks ago. But now Bobby has asked him to get involved again.

Now, Jim Slater, my business partner in London who is a chess fanatic and also a man with a lively feeling for the free world and so on called me from London to say that ~~Bobby Fischer's latest~~ . . . Bobby Fishher's latest claim was that he wanted 30 percent of the gate in addition to the prize money and so on. Jim Slater called me from London and said "I don't know whether you realize this, but in Europe Bobby Fischer's front page and it will look very bad for the west as opposed to the east because Spassky is behaving superbly" ~~and so on~~ if he doesn't turn up. "I have just called Bobby Fischer" whom he's never met "and offered him to double him whatever he wins in prize money so he won't press for the gate money and so on." And in fact, I think the Icelanders have now given in on the gate money. But Jim's point was that worldwide Bobby Fischer of America, the first American to be pitched against the Russians for the world chess championship, ain't looking too good in the world's press today. And that's going to continue. And Bobby Fischer is greedy but he's not greedy for money so much as that's his way of . . . Well, Paul Marshall, my attorney thinks that's his way of revenging himself on the world that has mistreated him, by not turning up for this match. So of course what he is in fact destroying is himself.

Anyway, Paul Marshall thought that one of the few things that would get him there, if it was thought worthwhile getting him there, and it will be awful public relations certainly if he doesn't, was a call from someone in authority like yourself or whoever would make a call like this saying "Do it for America, Bobby, we're all rooting for you." And he might well then fly up there and do it.

Now the question is, is it worth someone doing that?

K: Yeah, I'll do it. I do all the nutty things around here. Where is he?

F: Well, now, I've got two phone numbers. Now unfortunately, . . . he is staying at the moment with a Mr. Fred Sady who is a Broadway writer of things like Brigadoon. And his son is a grand master in chess. S-A-I-D-~~V~~ in Douglaston Long Island. And the man who knows his psyche backwards in case you need his number is my attorney, Mr. Paul Marshall.

K: I think if I call him I should just call him and tell him from a foreign policy point of view I hope the ~~hell~~ hell he gets over there.

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F: Right. And I think he would be so thrilled. Let me just give you this number in case he's left Saidey's and then your secretary could find out from Paul Marshall . . . Paul Marshall is the attorney who has been helping him and that's 201/568- 671. But I think . . . I wouldn't have troubled you but it seemed . . . obviously I'm not directly involved, but it did seem. . .

K: I thought he was just plain chicken, but apparently he's really nuts.

F: Yes, it's deeper than just plain chicken. I just thought it was worth putting it before you because I think it is bad publicity for America. It may be unavoidable but whereas if he wins . . .

K: But is he in any shape to win?

F: I don't know. I mean I guess those people have incredible nervous energy. You know, maybe this has put him in great condition, or maybe he'll be a basket case. I don't know. But it just occurred to me it might be saveable by a phone call.

K: I'll give him a call. When does he have to get over there?

F: Well, that's the hell of it Paul was saying. The only flight is an Icelandic airlines flight through the night tonight.

K: Okay, I'll give him a call.

F: If he says, oh, I've got to fly through the night. He does get in at 5:00 in the morning and he's then got 12 hours to rest. He has to be on the court . . . or what are you on? On the board, on the chair at 5:00 tomorrow afternoon. So he has 12 hours to rest.

K: Does it mean he's already starting three games behind?

F: No, they gave him the . . . it should have started Sunday and they gave him the maximum postponement which is two days. And if he's not there tomorrow he's disqualified.

K: Right. Okay, fine, I'll call him.

F: It makes a change Henry, doesn't it?

K: Yeah.

F: How long are you in California?

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K: Two weeks, until the 16th or 17th.

F: I think I may be incarcerated in New York that length of time, but I'll call if I'm going to be anywhere near.

K: Would, it would be great to see you.

F: And Dihann sends her love.

K: Thank you and give her my best regard.

F: I will indeed.

K: Bye.

F: Lovely to hear you Henry.

K: Thank you, bye.