Q  Uh huh. I suppose these were all worked out in advance of the visit, weren't they?

A  I do not know whether they were all completely worked out in advance of the visit or not, to be honest with you.

At 2:30 -- at two o'clock, as you all know, Donald Easum, our Assistant Secretary for Africa, is testifying before the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. His statement is available in the Press Office now for you.

I wanted to mention that the Secretary hopes to meet later in the day -- I do not have the time yet, but will get it to you when it is finally confirmed -- with Senators Jackson, Javits and Ribicoff up on Capitol Hill. And following that meeting the Secretary will see Senator Javits and Senator Pell with regard to their trip to Cuba -- also on Capitol Hill.

Q  Bob, didn't he see them last night?

A  No, he did not.

Q  Did he see Senator Jackson last night?

A  No. Senator Jackson had an engagement, I think, at six o'clock, and the meeting that the Secretary had with the President over in the White House was delayed,
so it was agreed they try and meet today.

Q When you say Capitol Hill, it's, I suppose, in one office or the other, isn't it?

A I have not got the details on that yet. But you might want to check up there.

Q Can you say whether the purpose of that meeting is just for their briefing of him or whether he has got something he has got to take up with them regarding legislation on Cuba?

A You're talking about the Javits-Pell meeting?

Q Yes.

A I wanted to say one thing here because there have been a number of reports in the press in the last week or so that the State Department opposed the visit of the two Senators down to Cuba, and I just wanted to say for the record that the State Department did not oppose the visit.

The Secretary knew about the visit in advance, and he had their passports validated. And he looks forward very much to meeting with the two Senators tonight to hear their report on their visit to Cuba.

Q What time is the meeting, Bob?
A: I cannot give you the exact time. It will be after the meeting with Senators Jackson, Javits, and Ribicoff, at the end of the day.

Q: Do you have the time of that meeting?
A: No. As I said in the beginning, I haven't got the exact time. The end of the afternoon.

Q: Is the sole purpose of the meeting for him to hear their report on their visit, or does he have something to take up with them?
A: No, the purpose of the meeting with them is to hear their report of the trip down there.

Q: Bob, I think the reports I had read were not so much that he opposed the visit but that he had serious reservations. You now have said that the Secretary opposed their visit. Let me ask you, did he welcome their visit to Cuba?
A: I'll just say that he did not oppose their visit to Cuba.

Q: Did he have reservations about it?
A: No, he didn't have any reservations.

Q: He had no reservation?
A: No reservations.
Q Bob, is it not accurate that the Senators wanted to go down earlier however and that the Secretary asked them not to go at the time that they had originally planned to go?

A I do not know. I honestly don't. I just don't know at what point they may have talked in the last few months.

Q Bob, why didn't you make this denial before their visit? That's when most of the stories were being printed. You didn't come forth then and say the Secretary did not oppose or didn't have any reservations about the visit.

A To my knowledge, I don't believe I was ever asked.

Q You weren't asked now either, Bob.

Q We didn't ask you today either.

A Well, to be very honest with you, one of the Senators telephoned and said that he had read all these reports that the State Department opposed the visit, so I wanted to just put something on the record setting us straight.

Q Which Senator was that?
Q But the Senators also said that they had applied several times previously and had received no permission.

A To my knowledge, there was never any question of them not being allowed to go to Cuba, the question of their passports being validated. They can be validated, in accordance with the law, at any time they want.

Q Bob, just so we can get the record straight on this, the story, as I understand it, was that the Senators had applied for validation of their passports, that Secretary Kissinger had told them that if they insisted he would, of course, agree to have their passports validated, but that he asked them not to go at the particular time that they requested. Now, if you don't know the answer to that would you please check on it?

A I'll try and check on it, because I don't know the answer.

Q Bob, the reason I am interested in this and bring this up is because I distinctly remember his letter to Pat Holt when Pat Holt asked to go to Cuba. And the letter had very strong reservations about Pat Holt going
to Cuba. Now, I didn't read any correspondence on Javits and Pell, but it would take a remarkable shift of position for him to welcome Javits and Pell going to Cuba so soon after he told Mr. Holt that he thought it was a terrible idea.

A I don't know of any correspondence between the two Senators and the Secretary. To my knowledge, there was none.

Q Which Senator called, Bob, asking that the record be set straight?

A I would rather just leave the private conversation between the Department and Senator --

Q Bob, you just made public the conversation by disclosing the contents of it. I don't think it's unfair for us to ask then who was the one who protested the news story.

A I'm not going to go into which Senator it was. If you want to check you can.

Q Bob, did the Secretary call Senator Kennedy quite recently and ask him to withdraw his amendment to the Foreign Assistance Bill?

A I don't know.

Q Could you check on that, Bob?