



**March 14, 1963**

**Memorandum from David L. Hackett to John F. Kennedy, 'Why Sweden Beat the United States, 17-2'**

**Citation:**

"Memorandum from David L. Hackett to John F. Kennedy, 'Why Sweden Beat the United States, 17-2'", March 14, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/122519>

**Summary:**

The previous day, President Kennedy had complained to Hackett about the poor quality of the United States hockey team during the 1963 World Championships. The US lost repeatedly, including an embarrassing 17-2 loss to Sweden.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

March 14, 1963

TO: The President of the United States

FROM: David L. Hackett, *D.L.H.* Special Assistant to the Attorney General

SUBJECT: Why Sweden Beat the United States, 17-2

The team in Europe is not representative of the hockey talent in the United States today. This team was sponsored by the American Amateur Hockey Association - managed by Walter Brown, owner of the Boston Celtics and the Boston Garden, and coached by Henry Cleverly of B.U. They did badly because:

1. It is difficult to attract the talent available in an off Olympic year.
2. Most of the good players who are out of college (like the Cleary brothers of the 1960 Olympics) cannot afford to go.
3. Most of the good players in college cannot afford to take the time.
4. Organization and management this year were not as good as in an Olympic year and in past world championships.

In 1960, we won the Olympic hockey championship in a very dramatic way at Squaw Valley. Cooney Weiland, Coach of the Harvard Hockey Team for the past 13 years, says that our team in the 1964 Olympics, to be coached by Eddie Jeremiah of Dartmouth, will be a good team and will be representative of this country. We have never done as badly in off years as we did this year, and unless we can generate more interest, support, and most important of all, financial backing, there is every possibility that we will do as badly in 1965.

Weiland says that in the past 13 years, hockey has improved. The sport is doing better than ever in the East and Midwest; i.e., when Harvard played B.C., the Boston Garden was sold out.

Harvard and B.C. had two of the best hockey teams in the country this year. As you know, this is the hockey equivalent to the Harvard-Yale football rivalry. B.C. won the first game when they played against Harvard due to one of the highest scoring lines in the country. Cooney Weiland then put together a checking line composed of Jerry Jorgenson, Bill Fryer, and Jene Kinasevich whose primary purpose was to harass the B.C. line. This strategy worked well because in the second game, Harvard won 3-1 and in the third game, the offensive playing of this line resulted in a dramatic victory. Weiland wanted me to tell you that this line became known in Boston as the JFK LINE!