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MEET THE PRESS
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NBC TELEVISION

MODERATOR: Ned Brooks
GUEST: Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, (D. Minn.)
PANEL: Wm. White, NY Times
Jack Bell, AP
Richard Wilson, Cowles Publications
Hay Craig, Portland (Me.) Press Herald

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, Meet the Press, the prize-winning program produced by Lawrence E. Spivak. Ready for this spontaneous, unrehearsed conference are four of America's top reporters. Please remember their questions do not necessarily reflect their point of view, it's their way of getting a story for you. Here is the Moderator of Meet the Press, Mr. Ned Brooks.

BROOKS: And welcome once again to Meet the Press. The crisis in the Middle East has raised new problems for the Administration, for Congress, and for the United Nations. The decisions to be made involve the future of the Western Alliance, our foreign aid program, and the size of our military appropriations. Our guest today is Sen. Hubert Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and as a delegate to the United Nations he is in close contact with these problems on foreign policy. Sen. Humphrey also is one of the leaders in the movement by northern Democrats to press for action by Congress on a 16-point program of domestic legislation. It includes a

civil rights bill which is certain to meet strong opposition from southern Senators. The group also will make a fight to revise the Senate rules to prevent filibusters. Sen. Humphrey has been appointed a member of the new Democratic Advisory Committee set up by the national party headquarters with a view to enacting into law national promises of the 1956 platform. Now, Senator, if you are ready we'll let Mr. Wilson have the first question. E Lawrence Spivak, regular member of our Meet the Press panel is on vacation and he will be back with us two weeks from today.

WILSON: Sen. Humphrey, I would like to ask you some questions with respect to the effort to change the rules of the Senate so that the Senate can adopt civil rights legislation. As I understand it you are proposing, you and some other Senators, are proposing to open the session of Congress with this proposal?

HUMPHREY: That is correct, Mr. Wilson.

WILSON: Why is it, Senator, that this was a matter of principle in 1953 and now you're making it a matter of principle in 1957, but it wasn't a matter of principle in 1955?

HUMPHREY: Oh, Mr. Wilson, I don't think it's ever been questioned whether or not it was a matter of principle. I think it's been whether or not it was a matter of judgment. I mean of good judgment to pursue this particular course. There are two ways, as you know, that one can change the rules in the United States Senate. One can do it through the normal channels of the Rules Committee, reporting a change of rules back to the Senate; and the second way, as we believe at least, is on the opening day of the Senate, when the Senate reconvenes for new ~~xxxx~~ business. Now there's a question in the ~~xx~~ minds of some of my colleagues as to

whether or not that latter method can really be done under the traditions of our Congress. The argument is whether or not the Senate is a continuing body and therefore not subject to a change of rules on the opening day or adoption of new rules or whether or not ~~x~~ it is really a brand new body. Now I want to say that there is honest difference of opinion in this area and those of us who propose to advance a change of rules on the opening day are doing so because we do believe that Article 1, Section 7 of the Constitution imposes upon the Congress the duty to adopt new rules at the opening of each new session of Congress.

WILSON: Yes, well now Senator, merely the change of the rules so that you can't have a filibuster is that really a basic problem or is not the basic problem that the leadership of the Democratic Party in the Senate does not want civil rights legislation. I'm referring here to men like Sen. Byrd, Sen. Eastland and others. Isn't that the basic problem?

HUMPHREY: Well now, Mr. Wilson, if you're asking me are there Democrats who do not want civil rights legislation the answer is of course there are; and if you're asking me are there Republicans who do not want civil rights legislation the answer is of course there are; but conversely may I say there's a large number of us that do and we want civil rights legislation; we want other legislation. I happen to be one that believes that the duty of government is to govern and that the purpose of Congress is to legislate and not procrastinate, and the present rules of the Senate make it possible to stop doing business, make it possible to literally thwart the will not only of a majority but of a very handsome and substantial majority by the pursuit of a filibuster.

WILSON: In other words, you've decided to break with the Senators you were trying to cooperate with in 1955; is that right?

HUMPHREY: Mr. Wilson, I think you know I'm the one who believes everyone has a right to their opinion. As I said to some of my friends I chose to disagree on occasion without being disagreeable. I have a high regard for many of the men in the Senate who will disagree with me very openly and considerately about this opinion. We don't expect in the Democratic Party ~~unanimity~~ ^{unanimity} because unanimity is a kind of imposed discipline. If we can get unity based upon the respect for the rights of others and for the rights of a personal opinion I think we'll be mighty happy.

WILSON: There's a question---

HUMPHREY: We're going to get civil rights legislation, Mr. Wilson, I make that prediction to you on this program, and I'll be back one of these days to say I told you so because it's going to happen.

BELL: Senator, is your great desire for civil rights legislation more a matter of principle or is it a matter of politics at this point?

HUMPHREY: Mr. Bell, whenever you can get both good principle and good politics in the same package may I say you have something that is very choice indeed and in this instance it is both. May I point out to you, sir, that my life has been dedicated as a public servant to the field of improvement of human rights. I did this as a mayor of a city, I did it may I say in terms of fair employment practices in my community, mayor's council on human relations. I did it at the Democratic convention in 1948; I did it at the expense, may I say, of political future, possibility of

destroying oneself. But I still believe that it's the best politics to do what's right and in this instance a civil rights program is doing what's right and in the long term it will be the best politics.

BELL: Well didn't this desire, though, to move ahead right at this point, come from the results of the November election?

HUMPHREY: Well if you're asking me did it give us any additional impetus the answer is yes. I believe in being candid. It hasn't given me any additional impetus however because I've always believed this way and I think you know that. I have remonstrated with my colleagues repeatedly that we had a duty in the Democratic Party to fulfill the pledges of our platform and our platform for years has carried out or has listed out an overall civil rights program. And by the way, I believe all you need to do in this area is get some beginnings. I have no illusions to the fact we're going to accomplish everything but if we can get a start it will be pretty good.

BELL: Senator, if you can't accomplish anything why tilt at this particular windmill at this point?

HUMPHREY: I think we can accomplish something, Mr. Bell.

BELL: I think you said recently ~~xxxx~~ that the Democrats would be digging their own political graves unless they passed civil rights legislation.

HUMPHREY: I think may I say that's a---

BELL: Isn't the political motive the prime one then?

HUMPHREY: Well if you're asking me whether or not we in Congress are immune from politics I'll say of course we're not, but if you're asking me whether or not this is a long term conviction of

I'll
mine ~~XXXX~~ say indeed it has been.

BELL: I don't challenge that sir.

HUMPHREY: Yes, sir, I know that.

CRAIG: I want to change the subject. You have just come down from the United Nations. Do you think we should prevent the Hungarian delegate from voting in the UN?

HUMPHREY: Mrs. Craig, may I say it has been my view that the Hungarian delegate should be denied his credentials to the UN. I want to be very honest about this, however, because it poses some serious problems. When I first came to this conclusion I am frank to say I didn't see all the problems that were involved but I just can't bring myself to believing that the ~~xx~~ representative of the Kadar government, which is a Soviet-imposed government in Hungary, ~~Hungary~~, should be given the honor of being a delegate to the United Nations. But when we do deny him his credentials we are running the risk, May I say, of having our embassy closed in Budapest, and not only our Embassy but that of others. I say this is a calculated risk and I've had very deep, some mixed emotions about it, let me say, but I do feel in the ultimate we may be better to deny him his credentials. This does not mean, however, kicking Hungary out of the UN because I want the Hungarian people to know in the United Nations there is a seat for them and we want them to know that in the United Nations their representatives of a ~~XXXX~~ freely-elected government or a government that was not Soviet-imposed, would be welcomed, that those delegates would be welcomed.

CRAIG: In regard to the very serious question of closing up all embassies so we'd have no witnesses there is this: We have

in our legation Cardinal Mindszenty. If we got thrown out we could not take him with us, could we?

HUMPHREY: Well that is a problem I'm not prepared to answer, and I want to say I've been deeply concerned about it. I think it would be well for our government to make it quite clear that Cardinal Mindszenty presently located at the American Embassy House is under the custody of the United States government and that whatever may happen in the days to come that we shall protect the person of Cardinal Mindszenty.

CRAIG: Do we have the right to do that? To what they call an escaped Hungarian criminal? Do we have the right to keep him in our embassy there?

HUMPHREY: Yes we do, we have a right to offer hostage.

WHITE: Senator, on this general question of foreign policy, since you're a member of the foreign relations committee and since the recent Democratic campaign indicated a great deal of criticism of the Administration about it, may I ask you what you think the Democratic foreign policy proposals should be this time? What specifically or concretely is wrong with the Administration, and what the Democrats should do about it?

HUMPHREY: Mr. White, that is indeed a big assignment but let me point out this to you. Number one, if we're going to have a bi-partisan foreign policy it must be bi-partisan not only at its administration but at its conception. In other words, it seems to me that at the advisory level, at the level where programs are being formulated, I mean in the Executive branch as well as in the Congress, you must have bi-partisan participation. I notice that Mr. Herter, Governor Herter of Massachusetts, is to succeed

Mr. Hoover. I think this is excellent. This is a splendid replacement by a very fine and able American. I would hope that there would be other replacements, and may I suggest at the present that he may very well find some good Democrats that could offer some very good help to this Administration not only in the State Department but in our ambassadorial service. It's a crime, may I say it's a shame to have a man like Chester Bowles spending his time in this country making lectures when he ought to be over doing diplomacy for the American people, and I think he could do a good job in the Middle East and the Far East, and I could mention others who could serve their country very well. You ask what could we do. The first thing is we ought to have in Congress a complete review of what's been transpiring in our foreign policy in the Middle East.

WHITE: Do you mean an investigation by the Senate?

HUMPHREY: Right, I mean by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a complete analysis and study and investigation of our foreign policy in the Middle East. Our relationships with the Arab States, with Israel, our relationships with Egypt in particular and Col. Nasser, and what if anything we were doing when we were caught so short and caught napping at the time of the British and the French attack upon Egypt.

WHITE: That would involve an investigation of our Intelligence, would it?

HUMPHREY: It surely would.

WHITE: Senator, what apart from learning what errors may have been made in the past, what ~~an~~ constructive purpose would this have, this investigation?

HUMPHREY: I think you always have a constructive purpose out of knowing the mistakes you've made and profiting from them, but if you're asking what I think we should now do I'd be happy to outline one or two proposals.

WHITE: I'd appreciate it sir.

HUMPHREY: Number one, I think the United States finds itself today in the Middle East in a very fortunate situation in this sense that at long last we've gained a certain amount of respect and popularity with the Arab States. Therefore, we're in a position now to use our good offices for a settlement in the Middle East. If all we're going to have in the Middle East by the replacement of British and French forces with UN forces is the return of the status quo then indeed we're in for a deep trouble, terrible trouble in the days to come. Therefore, I suggest that immediately the President of the United States ^{who's} ~~xxxxx~~ popular at home and popular abroad, ~~xxx~~ respected in America and respected abroad, use his power, his influence, use the prestige of the office of President of the United States to call upon the Government of Israel and the Governments of the Arab States at once to sit down and start to negotiate their differences. Those differences, number one, are a boundary differences. Number two, the resettlement of the Arab refugees. And number three, making ~~xxxx~~ it positively clear that every national state's jurisdiction will be respected. No expansionism, no aggression. Now ~~xx~~ once you've done that you're ready to talk about economic aid in the area ~~and~~ and more economic progress. Now it's a big order but I think we're in a position to do it and may I say, Mr. White, I've talked to the representatives of Arab States at the United Nations. I've

talked to the representatives of Israel; I think they're waiting for the government of the United States to do something, and instead of just floating with the problem to take constructive and positive action.

WILSON: Senator, have not representatives of this government through the United Nations and other ways repeatedly asked the Israel government and the Egyptian government to sit down together to work out their differences?

HUMPHREY: I don't believe so, Mr. Wilson, not with any consistency of purpose or persistency of purpose, nor with any designed plan.

WILSON: Has not this actually been a matter which has been up before the United Nations for years? The reason there was no negotiation was because the Egyptians refused to negotiate except through an intermediary.

HUMPHREY: That is correct. It has been a problem before the United Nations to which may I say that you can point to very little ~~extended~~ consistent, persistent direct effort on the part of the United States. It became one in which we were so concerned and yet never quite willing to take the risk that went with trying to be a mediator, or a conciliator. Let me be quite specific about it. We're in a better position today. Number one, we have admonished the ^{British,} ~~British,~~ French, and Israel's, ~~and~~ friends of ours. We have told them to get out of Egypt. We've proven we are not ~~x~~ willing to have a double standard of justice, one standard for our friends and one standard for others, and today we sit in a very enviable position and may I say in a very strategic position too because if we don't act you can rest assured one of two things

will happen. Either there will be continued chaos and belligerent activity in the Middle East or the Soviet Union will move in deeper and deeper and deeper because there is a power vacuum there now. The British and French are out. Who's going to come in. We don't want any territory. What we want is a settlement and I'm suggesting means, let me say, broad outlines of what a settlement could consist of.

WILSON: Are you suggesting the Eisenhower Administration is not already doing these things?

HUMPHREY: I'm suggesting that the Eisenhower Administration is not persistently dedicating its efforts to these very objectives.

WILSON: Now sir, let me just conclude by ~~xx~~ asking you this question. Your comments with respect to our foreign policy have been highly critical. How does this contribute to a bi-partisanship in this field.

HUMPHREY: Well now Mr. Wilson I don't think they've always been highly critical. I've commended this administration on occasions and on many occasions on its foreign policy. I commended the President, for example, on his peaceful use of atomic energy. I commended Mr. Dulles at one time when I thought he was definitely trying to restrain the British and French from acts of violence and belligerency.

WILSON: But you're critical right now, you want a Congressional investigation, you say they have fallen down on the job.

HUMPHREY: I do indeed. We must have more facts before us about what transpired in the Middle East. For example, I want to know did our State Department give our embassy in Cairo definite instructions/as to what to do in case Nasser seized the Suez Canal. I'm

willing to say on this program it did not. And I want to know why. I want to know what if any alternatives we had in the Middle East in light of what transpired with the invasion of the British and French. What did we do to try to restrain them? Why did our communications break down with ourselves, the British and French? I think the American people have a right to know.

BROOKS: We have got to move on.

WHITE: Senator, on this point of the proposed Senate investigation of the Middle Eastern policy, you've mentioned here, I'd like to tie this down a bit closer. You're a member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate. Do you propose to move for such an investigation in this next Congress?

HUMPHREY: I have already written to some of my colleagues on that particular committee suggesting this might be done and we're not looking for any kind of a witch hunt. What I want is a sensible systematic interrogation and investigation of what has transpired in our foreign policy in the Middle East, if we had a policy -- I've never been able to find out just exactly what kind of a policy we've had. We've had one that apparently irritated the Arab States and raised doubts in the minds of the Israelis and apparently was so bad that the French and British could no longer tolerate it. I want to say that if that is the condition, if that is what happened then indeed the American people ought to know it and we ought to take immediate steps to repair it.

CRAIG: Speaking of mistakes, Senator, back in the Truman Administration why was nothing done when the Canal, Suez Canal, was blocked way back in '40 against the Israelis? Nothing was done, it began way back that far.

HUMPHREY: You're absolutely right, May, and may I say I don't think one can excuse this. I think this was the beginning of some of the trouble when we were willing to tolerate discrimination of shipment in the Suez Canal. I'm not saying that the Truman Administration's foreign policy in the Middle East is without blame. I am saying that I think it ~~xx~~ has deteriorated since that time.

CRAIG: Has not Nasser said he will destroy Israel and has he not said he will not allow international control of the Canal? How are you going to get him to agree to anything?

HUMPHREY: I want to say I'm sure Mr. Nasser says many things which are for home consumption and may I say the sooner we make it crystal clear to Mr. Nasser and all others in the area that the State of Israel will remain as an independent state and also that we make it clear to Israelis and Arab States alike that this country is opposed to aggression from without from the European sector or aggression from within the Middle East the better we're going to be off. I think, and I am of the opinion from my conversations with leaders of Arab States that they're looking for the United States to be a leader rather than a glider.

CRAIG: Shall we offer Nasser the money again for the Aswan Dam.

HUMPHREY: It depends on what kind of political settlement might be arrived at.

CRAIG: You'd be willing to swap the money for the hope to get a settlement.

HUMPHREY: I'd say if you could stabilize the boundaries in the Middle East, if you could get a recognition of peaceful

conditions in the Middle East. If you could have an opportunity for those nation states to pool their economic resources for economic development that this Senator would favor first the Jordan River development and secondly favor helping other governments, the government of Egypt with the Nile River development, which includes the Aswan Dam. Yes, I would, I'd be willing to help pay that price for peace in this area.

BELL: Senator, I take it you think we should give our European allies assistance despite any mistakes they might have made in the Middle East.

HUMPHREY: Yes, I do, Mr. Bell.

BELL: We should help them financially, cancel the interests for the British--

HUMPHREY: Don't take ^{me} ~~me~~ along too fast, Mr. Bell. First of all may I say I was one of those who insisted that we should make sure that our European allies in Western Europe were not starved of oil; ~~xyou~~ you know that. In other words, I protested to the State Department when I found that our government was on the one hand telling the British, the French and Israelis to get out of Egypt and on the other hand holding back oil shipments until they did get out of Egypt. It's one thing to tell your friends they have made a mistake in an area but it's another thing to rub their nose in it, as I said, to continue to be punitive and act as if you're kind of peeved about it. We've got ~~x~~ a great stake in the Western Alliance and besides that there were many Western European nations that had done nothing in Egypt at all that were being starved of oil so to speak, in a fuel economy.

BELL: Now let's jump to Asia. Why do you want the national-

ist Chinese taken off of the permanent seat on the ~~Security~~ Security Council.

HUMPHREY: I made that suggestion, Mr. Bell, I believe two years ago.

BELL: And repeated it.

HUMPHREY: Because I think this is going to happen in due time and I thought it would be much better for the United States of America to take a good look to the future and prevent what could be a very tragic thing happening. My personal feeling is after having been at the United Nations, that pressure for the admission of Red China to the UN is growing by days and while I'm against it and our government is against it and we've been able to stop it again this year on a procedural motion -- not on the substance but on a procedural motion -- that I think ~~xxxxxxx~~ one of these days it may happen, and if that does happen I want to be sure that on the Security Council is an Asian power, not Red China.

BELL: You want to ~~kk~~ take our ally off.

HUMPHREY: No, I want to keep our ally in the UN. I want to keep her on as one of the non-permanent members of the Security Council because I do not think she'll be able to sustain herself as a permanent member if Red China should ever get in, and I want to make it clear I'm not for Red China's getting in.

WHITE: Senator, taking another jump almost as large as Mr. Bells, to Asia, and back to domestic affairs, specifically about filibusters, one short question, sir: Have you ever participated in a filibuster in the Senate.

HUMPHREY: Well not to my knowledge, Mr. White. There have been some people that said I have engaged in rather extensive

debate, and I would want to preserve the right of extensive debate. The difference between an extended debate and filibuster is that in an extended debate you know you've got to come to a decision. A filibuster is as they say, to the oratorical death; there will be no decision.

BROOKS: I'm sorry, at that point I'm going to have to interrupt. Thank you very much, Sen. Humphrey, for being with us. Now tonight, before closing this message from the American Red Cross.

(Public Service Announcement.)



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