

The National Broadcasting Company Presents



MEET THE PRESS

America's Press Conference of the Air

Produced by LAWRENCE E. SPIVAK

Guest: Senator HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
(D.-Minn.)

VOLUME 2

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1958

NUMBER 47

National Publishing Company

Printers and Lithographers

301 N Street, N. E., Washington 2, D. C.

10 cents per copy

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CLIFTON DANIEL, *The New York Times*

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST, JR., *Hearst
Newspapers*

LAWRENCE E. SPIVAK, *Regular Panel Member*

Moderator: NED BROOKS

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MEET THE PRESS

ANNOUNCER: Now MEET THE PRESS, winner of every major award in television and radio, 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 is their way of getting behind the headlines. And here is the Moderator of MEET THE PRESS, Mr. Ned Brooks.

MR. BROOKS: Welcome once again to MEET THE PRESS. Our guest today is Senator Hubert Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, whose recent eight-hour interview with Russian Prime Minister Khrushchev has attracted world-wide attention. The confidential messages he brought back for President Eisenhower have become the subject of much rumor and speculation.

Senator Humphrey is a high-ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and he is the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Disarmament. He has served as a delegate to the United Nations and more recently as an advisor to the Geneva conferences on the control of atomic weapons. He is a former college professor and a former mayor of Minneapolis.

Now, Senator Humphrey, if you are ready, we will start the questions with Mr. Spivak.

MR. SPIVAK: Senator, now that you have had a week or so to consider carefully what Mr. Khrushchev said to you, what would you say was the most significant thing he told you that our government didn't already know?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I would say the most significant thing was the emphasis that he placed upon the Soviet position relating to Berlin. I would couple with that the two pieces of technical information, which I hope were of some help to our government.

MR. SPIVAK: On Berlin, after your meeting the New York Herald Tribune reported you as saying that the Berlin crisis was fraught with danger,

also, that you did not see the basis for any compromise on Berlin. In view of those statements, why did you also say that you had a feeling of cautious optimism?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I believe my feeling about cautious optimism was somewhat reflected relating to the test suspension of atomic weapons. I said I doubted there would be war over Berlin, and I still do. I say indeed that the Berlin situation is fraught with danger, but the danger will become less so if the position of our government and our allies is calm, firm and one of unity.

MR. SPIVAK: You say the most significant thing he said was what he said about Berlin? Can you tell us specifically what he said about Berlin that was so significant to you?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: What he said to me about ten days ago relating to Berlin is about what appeared in the American press about three days ago, as an official release out of the Tass News Agency, which I believe is the Soviet official news agency. I gave that information to our government. In other words, I believe I provided our government with about a ten-day or an eight-day advance statement on the Soviet position. That position was, of course, the one of the free city of Berlin and the threats that Mr. Khrushchev continues to make about the use of troops in case we try in any way to keep open the channels of communication.

MR. HEARST: When we saw him—we saw him twice, you may remember, Bob Considine, Frank Conniff, Kingsbury Smith and I—we tried to elicit something from him naturally which would have some importance. In regard to Austria, we got him to say something—and Chancellor Raab asked us to come back there and he attributed some little credit to us for it—and we tried to stick him with the subject of religion and bring him out on that at a time when—well, it will always embarrass him with anyone who has any religion. You said what you thought he said of importance. What did you say to him that you felt was the most important—what you got across to him?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: First of all let me say I recall very well the write-ups of your visit and the reports that you made. I took the liberty of inserting them in the Congressional Record because I thought they were excellent and very informative, and I thought that our government ought to study them very carefully.

I tried to the best of my limited ability to explain to Mr. Khrushchev the position of the United States government relating to the conference in Geneva on the prohibition of nuclear tests and what our position was relating to the necessity of an effective control system, so as not to permit evasion or avoidance of responsibility in that agreement. I would like to believe that I made a little headway there. I also tried to explain something about our system, our social system. I am afraid I didn't make much headway there.

MR. HEARST: He didn't seem to understand it when we were there.

I think he either has a blind spot or—

SENATOR HUMPHREY: He listened, but I don't think he changed.

MR. BELL: Senator, it seems fairly well established now that one of the secrets that was told to you by Mr. Khrushchev was the fact that the Russians have a five-megaton bomb in a small package. I am curious about the context in which this came up. What was the discussion about when he told you "I will tell you" this particular secret?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: First of all, I regret that the word "secret" has been attached to this. Maybe this was somewhat my fault, or maybe it was a matter of interpretation. I did report to our government immediately the information that was given to me. There was a six-page cable sent to the Secretary of State within 24 hours after my visit with Premier Khrushchev. The matter relating to weapons, rockets and atomic bombs, or thermonuclear bombs came up during the discussion of Berlin. I am sure that this was all a part of the system of threat which is used along with sweetness and light. I described this once as the old way of treating chilblains, of putting feet into hot water and cold water, quickly.

MR. BELL: Was he suggesting or threatening to use a five-megaton bomb against Berlin as a warhead in a missile or anything of that sort?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: No, he was not. He was merely pointing out the power of their weapons. I recall once he said to me, speaking of our government, "Senator, don't threaten me." And he repeated that three or four times.

MR. BELL: Did you at that point say "Mr. Khrushchev, don't threaten me"?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I can assure you I reminded the Premier of the Soviets that we were first of all not a warlike people but that we were not a frightened people, and that we were not going to be intimidated. He knew full well my position.

MR. BELL: He was trying to scare you, in other words?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: But I wasn't frightened.

MR. BELL: That is good. I am glad you weren't.

MR. DANIEL: Senator, any of us who have been in the Kremlin know that this was a phenomenal interview to go on for eight hours. Why do you think Premier Khrushchev gave you so much time?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I have tried to figure this out many times myself. I don't believe it was premeditated, may I say. I had expected that the interview would be very brief, and it just kept going on. I say most respectfully—I don't want it to be misunderstood—on three occasions, I suggested that possibly we had spent enough time because, after all, I didn't want to take too much time. On all three occasions, I was told that there was more to talk about and was given the opportunity of a rather extended interview.

MR. DANIEL: What did he show an interest in? Did he show an interest in you as an individual, as a representative of the Democratic

Party, or if I might say so, a potential candidate for President of the United States?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: He didn't mention that, may I say. He did mention about the elections and what had happened in terms of the Democratic majority. But I think what he was really trying to do was to impress one member of the United States Senate with his position, vis-a-vis two items: Trade, and the number one item, Berlin. This is the immediate cold war objective of the Soviet Union, and I think he was trying to impress upon me how far they would go. At the same time I think he was trying to impress upon me how far they wouldn't go. I tried to be a good, accurate, responsible reporter to the President of the United States and the State Department and our other agencies of Government.

MR. DANIEL: Although Premier Khrushchev didn't mention it, other people have; they have said that your interview and the publicity it received has put you out in front as a candidate. How do you feel about standing out in the front rank, now?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: It is always kind of lonesome if you are really out in front, but I don't feel that way. I assure you that my interview in the Soviet Union was not one that was premeditated. Those of you who have been there know that these things come almost out of the middle of the night. I asked for many things, and some things were granted. I went to the Soviet Union primarily on the subject of international medical research cooperation. While there I asked for many other things. I wish I could give you the answers why the interview went on so long, but I am pleased that it did.

MR. SPIVAK: Did you come away feeling that there was anything we could offer on Berlin that would ease the crisis without hurting the West?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I am one of those persons who has taken a very definite stand about Berlin. I visited Berlin before I went to the Soviet Union. I did this for a purpose, too. I wanted the Soviets to know exactly what our position was and that our American position was a united one without regard to party. I feel that in Berlin, as I said, number one, we must make positively sure to the whole world that West Berlin will be preserved as a free area of the world and not as Khrushchev talks, a free city. That access to it will be guaranteed. That West Berlin will not be bargained away by itself.

MR. SPIVAK: Does that mean that you would be prepared, if necessary to use force to stay there?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think that the American people have to make up their minds that they are living in a tough world. I don't believe force will be necessary, but I do feel that Mr. Khrushchev would like nothing better than to seal off this city and literally to blot it out of existence because it is an oasis in a desert of totalitarianism. It is literally a beacon light in a sea of darkness. It is one hundred miles inside the iron

curtain, and, insofar as its geography is concerned, that is relatively unimportant. What is important about it is that it represents freedom in the iron curtain area. It is a haven for refugees, and it is, as you know, the capital of the united Germany. I don't think we can afford to compromise this away a bit. You must think about it, I will say quickly, in a broader context of a European settlement.

MR. SPIVAK: Is it your impression that, if we stand firm and let Khrushchev understand that if he is going to go to war for Berlin, we are going to be there when he comes—

SENATOR HUMPHREY: We have already said this.

MR. SPIVAK: We have not quite said that, I think.

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think we have said, through NATO, that we consider Berlin to be a part of the NATO area, since Berlin is in fact a part of the West Republic of Germany.

MR. SPIVAK: But isn't the meeting in NATO that is now going on to consider what to do about Khrushchev's note? I don't think anybody has said in so many words that we are going to stay there no matter what.

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think we have in the past, and if we haven't, we'd better say so now.

MR. SPIVAK: And you think if we do say so, that he will step away?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think that if we do say so it may in the long run open up the possibilities of some sensible negotiations about a settlement in central Europe relating to a united or reunified Germany and other areas that we ought to be discussing. I don't think you are going to get any place walking out. What it will mean is that he seals off the one place in central Europe where East and West face head on, where the two ideologies are in open contest and where the people of the world are watching to see whether or not we have the courage to stand our ground.

MR. SPIVAK: Is that what he is trying to do, to seal it off, or is he simply using that in your judgment as a bargaining point?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think he is attempting at the present to seal off Berlin, not seal it off, to erode it. He really means he wants a free city for a while, and after a while it will become free in theory and not in fact. It will die on the vine. And it is imperative that we keep the life lines running to a free Berlin, so that ultimately it can be the center of, I think, a broader negotiation relating to boundaries, relating to the military set-up in central Europe and indeed to a reunited Germany.

MR. HEARST: The words "stand firm" have been used rather frequently. Would you give us a definition of what you mean by "stand firm"? Does that mean break a blockade on the ground if they set one up?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: First of all, I think what it means is that we and our allies, particularly the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic and France, must have a position upon which we all agree. There can be no loose threads.

Secondly, standing firm to me means that even if the Soviet withdraws,

which they may very well do as an occupation party in Berlin, that we stay there.

And thirdly, it means that we use all of the diplomacy and all of the statesmanship that we have to see to it that the corridors of contact with Berlin are kept open and that we notify the Soviet full well in advance that we are not going to permit the East German Republic, the Communist area of Germany, to stand in our way of maintaining the supplies or the forces that we have in Berlin. I think, if we do that, that Mr. Khrushchev is not about ready to have a war. He needs peace, and I don't believe that he is about ready to have a war about Berlin, because his satellites are too unsteady and unreliable. This is one time where we need very cold and cool nerves if we are going to last out this cold war. Here is a place where I believe you have to draw the line.

MR. HEARST: Agreed. But did he give you the idea that he thought we would back down at all?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think he is probing us to see whether or not the British public opinion, for example, will not force the Macmillan government to make a concession here, or the French public opinion to force de Gaulle to make a concession here. What I am advocating is—I am not an expert in this area—I am merely advocating that our foreign ministers and our heads of state come to agreement as to just what we will do and that we leave no loose threads for Mr. Khrushchev and his people to be working on. Then to broaden this out into an area of movement, I want to say I think we ought to be pushing for German reunification. I think we ought to be talking about the necessity of establishing permanent boundaries. I think we ought to be giving some possible consideration of—they call it disengagement, I don't want to go that far, but some reasonable withdrawal of military forces. I think these things are at least possibilities.

MR. BELL: Senator, you are one of those people whom President Eisenhower designates as radical Democrats. You are also a member of the Democratic Advisory Council. There have been some suggestions that Democrats in Congress ought to write a foreign policy of their own. Do you think that that is possible or likely?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: First of all, in my mind there is no basic disagreement between the President and the leadership and indeed the members of the Democratic Party in the Senate and the Congress, over the objectives of American foreign policy. We agree on those objectives. We have occasionally some disagreement on their implementation, the means to fulfill those objectives. It is there where I think that we might be of some help. We cannot write a foreign policy in Congress. Let's face up to it. We can condition one, we can encourage, we can counsel, we can advise, we can sit down and discuss things, and I think this we ought to do. But the foreign policy of our country, the American people must know, is in the hands of the President of the United States and his Secretary of State. We can limit this by budget cuts and appropriations or direction, but we can't run it, and I don't intend to try.

MR. BELL: Since the last election you have 66 Democrats in the Senate, now, and 34 Republicans, counting Alaska. Don't you think that the Administration should do something about getting a Democrat operating in the policy-making portion of foreign policy?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I believe that it is necessary to have closer cooperation today than ever before between the responsible majority in the Congress and the President, and prudent judgment on the part of the President would dictate that.

MR. BELL: Whom would you suggest as a Democratic representative?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Mr. Bell, you are a very subtle man and clever man. I am not in the position of selecting and choosing today, thank you very much.

MR. BELL: Would you be willing to serve?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I haven't been asked, but let me say this: If the President of the United States should ask me to serve in any capacity relating to the fulfillment of our foreign policy, I will do so and try to do it honorably and well.

MR. DANIEL: I believe you told Mr. Khrushchev that in this country we were essentially united and that we didn't intend to get run out of the ball park?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: That is correct.

MR. DANIEL: What was his reaction to that? What reaction does he have when you talk that way to him—talk tough?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: His reaction was "What are your counter proposals?" I found Mr. Khrushchev a bit of an enigma. He is a paradoxical fellow. On the one hand he talks about the position that they take, that he took on Berlin and that Berlin is a bone in his throat, a cancer. "We must get rid of it," he says. Then he says "Don't threaten me. Don't talk about running tanks through us and so on," because he has tanks, too. And in the next breath when you stand up to him, without any arrogance, but just politely, calmly, he says, "What are your counter proposals? What do you suggest?" What I am saying here today is, we must, number one, have a firm position, one we all understand, and then, by the same token, do have some counter proposals that you ask Mr. Khrushchev to discuss.

MR. DANIEL: Do you really think he is willing to negotiate? Does he want counter proposals upon which he can have discussion, or is this just a maneuver?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I am not sure, but I know standing still is not enough. You must have some freedom of movement, some maneuver. Because he wants nothing more or less than the status quo in Eastern Europe, which means also taking Berlin into his fold, and I hope that we won't agree to that.

MR. DANIEL: One other question: You spoke also to the Soviet people. You told them we must try to learn to live together?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

MR. DANIEL: Did you have any reaction to that at all? Do you have any reason to think that they are interested in that?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Yes, I do, Mr. Daniel, I really do. I think one of the great needs today is communication with the peoples, not only in the Soviet Union but in the so-called satellite countries. This is very, very important. The more contacts we can have with these people, particularly in the Eastern states, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia and Romania, and with the Soviet peoples themselves, the better. I brought them a message of peace from America, with justice, and also brought them a message of cooperation in these great non-political areas of health, for example, and education.

MR. SPIVAK: Did Mr. Khrushchev tell you why he thought relations between the United States and the Soviet were so bad and so tense?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: He denounced our leadership, starting with after the war. He, of course, accused us of all sorts of imperialistic designs, which I am sure that he doesn't quite believe, but nevertheless he proceeded to talk that way.

MR. SPIVAK: Did he ask your advice on how the relationship between us can be improved?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: He didn't ask my advice.

MR. SPIVAK: Did you give him any?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I suggested that one way to improve relationships was to keep agreements. That is number one.

MR. SPIVAK: What was his response to that?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I suggested that the atomic bomb test agreement that we were attempting to negotiate in Geneva was a real test as to whether or not they wanted any agreements.

MR. SPIVAK: What was his response when you suggested that he didn't keep agreements?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: His response, of course, was very definitely that they did. My response was to the contrary. I must say also that I suggested to him that it would be good if we had less of the bellicose and vitriolic language, that it didn't help world peace a bit, and on this he said "Let's have an agreement." He said he was prepared to agree to such a statement.

MR. SPIVAK: Did you discuss with him the question of giving nuclear weapons to Germany on the part of NATO?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I did not.

MR. SPIVAK: Did he bring it up at all?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: He did not bring it up except indirectly. This is a very delicate subject, and I was not in a position to discuss it.

MR. DANIEL: Senator, why do you think it is that we seem to be making progress on the nuclear talks in Geneva? What is the Soviet interest in getting agreement there?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think they feel they have progressed rather far in the technology of nuclear weapons. Secondly, they have talked themselves into agreement insofar as banning the tests is concerned, and thirdly, their scientists agreed last August in Geneva to the feasibility of a control system. I think they really are in a situation where it is rather difficult except in outright arrogance to walk out, which they might do, but I doubt it.

MR. HEARST: Do you think we should make any major change in the way we are dealing with Khrushchev?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I think that we need at least a change of emphasis or tactics in the total picture of our relationships with the Iron Curtain countries. It is only a matter of emphasis here, again. I think we must emphasize the works of peace. I think we need to emphasize non-political contacts. I think we need to encourage the broadest of exchanges on the cultural and the educational scientific basis. I think we have to realize there will be no immediate political settlements and that we sort of have to pave the way, or prepare the way, by touching the people themselves and particularly in the satellite countries.

MR. BELL: Senator, I would like a Yes or No answer to this question, if I may have it. Are you available for the 1960 Democratic presidential nomination?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: You are not going to get a Yes or No answer, simply because no one has asked me but you. Thank you, sir.

MR. BELL: Certainly more people than I have asked you.

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Mr. Bell, I want to treat this question with great sincerity and seriousness. My objective between now and 1960 is to do as good a job as I can possibly do as a United States Senator. I said this to the people of Minnesota last night, and I repeat it to you. We will see what 1960 does.

MR. BELL: Isn't that the best possible way to run?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: It is the best possible way to be a public servant, worthy of the trust of the people.

MR. SPIVAK: Senator, I think you thought it would be a good idea to bring Khrushchev here, or at least invite him here. Why do you think it would be a good idea?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: First of all, let me say that I think our contacts with the leadership of the Soviet have to be very, very restrained, in terms of bringing them here as such. Mr. Khrushchev would be under the most careful police surveillance if he were here, in terms of protection, and I am afraid if he were here under those circumstances that he might feel this is the way everybody was treated in the United States.

MR. BROOKS: Senator, I am sorry, but I am going to have to interrupt. I see that our time is up. Thank you very much for being with us.

Next Week: Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge.

The Proceedings of
M E E T T H E P R E S S

as broadcast nationwide by the National Broadcasting Company, Inc., are printed and made available to the public to further interest in impartial discussions of questions affecting the public welfare. Transcripts may be obtained by sending a stamped, self addressed envelope and ten cents for each copy to:

National Publishing Company, 301 N Street, N.E., Washington 2, D.C.

MEET THE PRESS is telecast every Sunday over the NBC Television Network. This program originated from the NBC studio in New York.

Television Broadcast 6 pm EST

Radio Broadcast 6:35 pm EST



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