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MEET THE PRESS

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Guest: HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
The Vice President of the United States

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OTIS CHANDLER, *Publisher, The Los Angeles Times*
JOHN COWLES, JR., *Editor, Minneapolis Star & Tribune*
ROBERT LASCH, *Editor, Editorial Page, St. Louis Post-Dispatch*
JAMES A. LINEN, *President, Time, Inc.*
JOHN S. KNIGHT, *Publisher, Knight Newspapers*
J. R. WIGGINS, *Editor, The Washington Post*

Moderator: LAWRENCE E. SPIVAK

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M E E T T H E P R E S S

MR. SPIVAK: Our guest today on this one-hour special edition of MEET THE PRESS is the Vice President of the United States, Hubert H. Humphrey.

Interviewing the Vice President are eight of the leading publishers and editors from across the country.

John S. Knight, Publisher and Editor of the Knight Newspapers.

Otis Chandler, Publisher of the Los Angeles Times.

Turner Catledge, Executive Editor of The New York Times.

John Cowles, Jr., Editor of the Minneapolis Star & Tribune.

Robert Lasch, Editor of the Editorial Page of the St. Louis Post Dispatch.

J. R. Wiggins, Editor of the Washington Post.

Barry Bingham, Publisher and Editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times.

James A. Linen, President of Time, Inc.

We will begin the questioning now with John Knight of the Knight Newspapers.

MR. KNIGHT: Mr. Vice President, despite all of the millions of words about Vietnam, the editorial opinion, background, interpretation and even the Fulbright hearings, the American public is still divided and confused as to our ultimate aims and objectives.

Could you tell us what our national purpose is?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Knight, I am not at all convinced that the American public is confused, but if there is some confusion, then it is, I think, the privilege and the duty of all of us to try to clarify it and to clean away the confusion.

Our purpose is to prevent the success of aggression against

South Vietnam from the North. Our political objective is to help secure, with the Vietnamese, their freedom and their independence, so that they may exercise the right of self-determination.

Along with that objective is the helping of the people of South Vietnam to build a new social order, a viable economy with stable governmental institutions.

Of course, in order to achieve these goals and objectives, it is essential that there be peace, so the highest purpose of our national effort in Vietnam is to obtain peace, at least the conditions of peace that make possible the achievement of self-determination, social progress and a better society for those people.

MR. KNIGHT: By "peace" and since you rule out dealing with the Viet Cong, are you saying in effect that what the purpose is is total victory?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Knight, the word "victory" is often used—and if by "victory" you mean to thwart or prevent the success of aggression against the South—yes, we mean that kind of victory, but we do not mean to conquer or to dominate any other state or to destroy any other regime. We do not seek to invade North Vietnam nor do we seek to have confrontation or war with any other powers.

What we are seeking, sir, is a conference, negotiation that can lead to the conditions that can produce peace. This necessitates—one of the conditions, I would hope, would be a cease fire.

I am sure that if we can get any response at all from Hanoi that indicates a desire for peace that this government is prepared as of this hour to sit down and to negotiate the conditions that make possible peace.

May I add one final word about the Viet Cong. It has never been ruled out that the views of, or the words of, or the representation of the Viet Cong would not be at that conference table. It has been said by the President of the United States that this was not an insurmountable obstacle. It is not a difficulty that cannot be handled, if we ever get the opportunity for negotiation.

MR. CHANDLER: Mr. Vice President, you said Friday, and I believe the Administration has stated this on several occasions, that we will abide by the results of a free election in South Vietnam. If the Communists were to win such an election, would this not mean that we have lost many American lives for nothing?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Chandler, we are all students of history, and I must rely upon the lessons of history and the facts of history. The Communists have never won a free election, and I have no reason to believe, nor do I think you have any reason to believe, that the Communists would win a genuinely free election in South Vietnam. This is a risk, but let me tell you, if you never have to take a bigger risk in your life than this, Mr.

Chandler, you are going to have a life of happiness, tranquility and security.

MR. CHANDLER: Mr. Vice President, assuming you are correct in this supposition, how effective, now, is Premier Ky's government in winning a political war in South Vietnam in terms of influencing the peasants and the farmers towards Prime Minister Ky's point of view and against the Communist point of view?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am very pleased, Mr. Chandler, that you emphasized the political struggle, because this is a two-front struggle and war in Vietnam. One is the struggle on the military front to provide security and to prevent the success of aggression. And an equally important and maybe even more important ultimately, struggle, or war, is the one against social misery, the struggle to build a better society. This is what Prime Minister Ky referred to when he talked about the social revolution that was needed for his country.

He said to me—and I think you would be interested in his words, because I put pretty much the same question to him that you put to me. I had a long visit with him from Honolulu to Saigon, and that takes a few hours even by jet, and he said to me "Mr. Vice President, I know we are 12 years late in getting under way with these reforms, but we are not too late." And I believe that the government of South Vietnam is really exerting itself now to gain the allegiance and the support of the peasantry, to create conditions that will improve the life of the peasant and the farmer in the rural areas.

This is essentially a rural economy, as you have well noted. And there are training programs under way for the political cadre that must go back into these countryside areas. I will add one final word on it: Since 1958, Mr. Chandler, it is estimated that the Viet Cong has assassinated or kidnapped some 61,000 village leaders and governmental representatives. It is against this kind of background, may I say, that the struggle goes on in Vietnam, today to build a viable economy, to find a new way of life, and if this program permits us the time, I think I can show you that many things are under way that are very, very encouraging. And I only hope that this government will continue in its stability so that we can continue with these efforts of reform.

MR. CATLEDGE: Mr. Vice President, to what extent do you think China is involved in the present struggle in Vietnam?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Catledge, I think it is quite well recognized that China today is the main source of supply for the munitions, the small arms, the tube artillery, the shells and so forth that the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese use. China surely is an ideological source of irritation. She prods on Hanoi. I was informed in several capitals of Asia that as of this time it appears that Peking, China, the Communist

regime, has the major influence in Hanoi. I am not at all sure that the Vietnamese, North or South, are always too happy about the presence of China in any area of Vietnam. They were ruled by the Chinese for about a thousand years, and the Chinese are not the most popular type of ruler. But there isn't any doubt that Communist China has a significant influence, at least behind the scenes and in the ideological struggle that is maintained.

MR. CATLEDGE: Accepting your assessment of the situation in so far as it refers to China, do you think the struggle can be settled in Vietnam, North or South, just between us and Vietnam?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes.

MR. CATLEDGE: Or must we confer also eventually with Peiping?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: As to conference, sir, we have said that we are prepared, as you know, to enter into a Geneva Conference again, a Geneva-type conference which, as I recollect, did include Peking, China, and the Soviet Union. Major powers are obviously involved in this struggle in Vietnam. Some indirectly, some directly.

We have said that we would go through the United Nations and that has been rejected. We have said that we would accept the offer of the 17 non-aligned nations. Hanoi rejected that. We have said that we would accept the good offices of the Holy Father, the Pope. Hanoi has rejected that. We have said that we would accept the good offices of the President of India, President Radhakrishnan. Hanoi has rejected that. We have said we will go to a Geneva-type conference. The Soviets have rejected that and so has China. But we are prepared to sit down with anybody that wants to sit down and try to find a peaceful solution to the struggle that is under way in Vietnam.

MR. COWLES: Mr. Vice President, at our current level of operations in South Vietnam, we are losing about 100 to 200 American lives per month, plus several hundred more wounded each week.

Are you concerned about the American people's willingness to continue tolerating this kind of casualty rate or possibly an even higher casualty rate for the next six months or 12 months or 18 months?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Cowles when anybody hears about fatalities or casualties, it makes you very sad. But the American people recognize that this nation has a great responsibility in this world and that with responsibilities come sacrifices. I have never believed that a position of leadership gave you any privilege or any luxuries. Actually it imposes heavy demands and duties.

Our rate of casualties is, of course, always of concern, but I am happy to be able to tell you, sir, that, out of every 100 wounded, 99 live. This is the highest rate of survival of the wounded ever in the history of warfare. This is eight times better than in

World War I, four times better than in World II, twice as good as in the Korean War. What is more important, more men do get into the hospitals, and they get there within 35 to 40 minutes to an hour which is a remarkable feat, may I say, of rescue, and the military service to our soldiers, to our defense forces is excellent.

We do feel that the rate of casualties upon the enemy is something that they ought to be concerned about, because that rate is running five to one, approximately five to one over that of the allies, fatalities and casualties. And may I say with casualties to the enemy, from what information we get, most of their wounded, severely wounded, die.

MR. COWLES: To what extent do you think a continuation of our present policies in Southeast Asia will influence next fall's congressional elections, and conversely, to what extent do you think the prospect of congressional elections next fall may influence the Administration's own policies in Southeast Asia?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Let me say first that this administration and any administration that is entrusted with the security of this nation cannot let the political eye govern the decisions that must be made in reference to our national interest and our national security.

One of the prices that you pay in public office as an elected official is the risk of making decisions at times that are rather unpopular.

I happen to believe, that the American people understand what this struggle is about. They understand that we are not fighting just for a piece of geography. They understand that we are fighting for a principle: namely, that aggression cannot go unchecked.

We have learned some lessons in the last 25 and 30 years about aggressors, and we do not believe that the principle of aggression should be embodied into international conduct as a way and a means of gaining political power or national political objectives.

I have a lot of faith in the American people. They are a mature people, and they are an understanding people, and the forces that we have in Vietnam today manifest that. They reveal that. These are the finest fighting men that we have ever put into the field. They do their job. They are brave, they are courageous, they are able, they are efficient, and they understand what they are there for. I think that is a reflection of the American body politic.

MR. LASCH: Mr. Vice President, I would like to get back to the subject of negotiations. You have had a good deal to say about what Hanoi has rejected. This week the Secretary General of the United Nations said that if we are going to have any movement toward negotiations, three things must happen:

- (1) The cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam;
- (2) A substantial reduction by all parties of all military activities in South Vietnam; and

(3) The participation of the National Liberation Front in any peaceful settlement.

I don't know how Hanoi feels about any of these propositions, but I would like very much to know in detail how our government feels about it.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Lasch, our government has said that the four points of Hanoi, the 14 points of the United States in terms of peaceful negotiations, the five of South Vietnam, and 25 or 30 of anybody else, all of these can be placed on the table. Everything is negotiable, but before you can talk negotiations, Mr. Lasch, you have to have somebody to negotiate with.

Everybody seems to be telling us the kind of concessions that we ought to make to Hanoi in order to get to the conference table. Has anybody said anything to Hanoi about the kind of concessions they ought to make, since they are the aggressor?

What we have said is, we are prepared to come to the conference table with no pre-conditions: unconditional negotiations, sir.

We are prepared at this moment to accept a cease fire. We are prepared at this moment, if the North Vietnamese will quit bombing the South, we are prepared to quit bombing the North, but you cannot, my good friend, place upon the South Vietnamese and the Americans the onus of something that is not of their making. We didn't start this struggle. We did not aggress against North Vietnam. We did not send our bombers against North Vietnam until full regiments of the North Vietnamese forces were in the South, until it was recognized in every chancellery and every embassy around the world that the North Vietnamese had committed an act of aggression.

Any time that the North Vietnamese wish to come to a conference table, Mr. Lasch—and if anybody knows how they can get them there; we have tried every way we know—we are prepared to talk about every single subject that can be conceived by the mind of man.

MR. LASCH: What I had in mind, Mr. Vice President, was this: In our resolution which Ambassador Goldberg presented, which is now, of course, I presume a dead letter, but in any case the resolution he asked the Security Council to adopt called upon U Thant, the Secretary General, to offer his assistance as far as possible in bringing about negotiations. He has now made an offer of assistance, as it seems to him, of how to bring them about, and I don't believe our—do we simply flatly reject these proposals of his?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Lasch, we had 37 days of no bombing, total pause, de-escalation of the war during that 37 days. During those 37 days the North Vietnamese proceeded to move more troops into Laos—which is a fact—proceeded to move more troops into South Vietnam, proceeded to repair the

roads and the rails so that they could continue to move additional supplies into South Vietnam.

We already have accommodated point No. 1, and we didn't even get a feeler from Hanoi. I thought possibly that Hanoi, during those 37 days, might, as we put it, try to confuse the situation by indicating through some third party or directly that maybe they would like to negotiate—which obviously would have kept the bombing pause going. Instead of that, we got an arrogant defiance, and Mr. Lasch, in all kindness and goodness, may I just say that I think it is about time that leaders in the world tried to bring a little pressure to bear upon Hanoi as to what Hanoi is willing to do.

I remember my visit with Mr. Kosygin in New Delhi, and I have had the privilege of talking now with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union.

We have gone to the Soviet Union and asked them to help us. We have been to India. We have been in contact with the Viet Cong. We are in contact with Hanoi—if not directly, through third parties—and directly, may I add. And what did Mr. Kosygin tell me about the possibilities of peace in South Vietnam?

He never mentioned the National Liberation Front. He never mentioned the Viet Cong.

I don't believe that he really ever thought they amounted to anything. He said, "You will have to negotiate this with Hanoi."

Hanoi—all of the talk about the NLF, and the Viet Cong seems to have a particular American tinge to it. When you get into the councils of other nations, they talk about Hanoi. I think they are a little bit more realistic than we are.

MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Vice President, if we ever do have any negotiations or truce, what sort of interim arrangements do you think would be acceptable to us, pending preparations for a free election?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Wiggins, I think the one great disservice that the Vice President of the United States could do would be to try to describe what might come as an interim government or an interim solution.

I will say this, that we are prepared to sit down and discuss that formulation of such an interim government, but we are going to do it with South Vietnam being represented there. It is their country. The war is being fought in their country, and I would admonish my fellow Americans not to make this an American war. We are an ally. We are not in charge of South Vietnam. The South Vietnamese have a government. They have been there a long time. This is a very fine people, and I do believe that we ought constantly to keep in mind their wishes, as well as our own.

Needless to say, if we go to the conference table, we will speak up—and we want peace. We want it with all of our heart, but we do not want peace, Mr. Wiggins, at the price of appeasement and

at the price of a loss of principle. We have learned that lesson, and I hope that no generation of Americans will ever again have to learn it once again.

MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Vice President, you have spoken personally and for the government very strongly about reconstruction and social change and political improvement, but can we carry out a very large program of development and social improvement and economic reorganization with the sort of military tactics we are now pursuing? Aren't we going to be required, instead of striking and withdrawing from villages and rural areas, to take and hold areas so that we can provide the people with safety and security behind our own lines?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Wiggins, when I returned from my trip to the Far East, I said I had reasons to feel encouraged about the situation—the military situation—in South Vietnam, and one of the reasons was because we have a plan of action.

We are, in a sense, moving on a premeditated, preconceived plan, week by week and month by month. We are on the offensive, and that plan includes not merely military successes, it includes, if you please, the holding of the areas that have been cleaned of the Viet Cong. At the same time, it includes working with the South Vietnamese, and through the South Vietnamese, the rebuilding of the countryside.

This is going to be a slow process, at least for the immediate future, but we are not just going in and having a battle over a village and then retreating. We had to do some of that last year in order to contact the Viet Cong, but the Viet Cong is on the defensive today, and the villagers are beginning to cooperate much more with the forces of South Vietnam. They are not so frightened. The impact of terror and fear from the Viet Cong is less meaningful today.

I think the most encouraging sign in South Vietnam right now is the fact that we are getting information from the villagers, that the villagers are cooperating with the allied forces and that the representatives of the government of Saigon are also receiving cooperation.

MR. BINGHAM: Mr. Vice President, when you were in Asia recently, did you hear any discussion or did you find any enthusiasm for the development of the Mekong River Valley along the lines of the TVA development?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Bingham, this is the hope and the dream of the people of that entire area. I am very pleased you have asked about it, because most of the time when we talk about Southeast Asia, we are talking about killing and fighting and war. When I was there the one thing I tried to stress was that I didn't come there as a military expert, but I did come there to try to effectuate, at least in the beginning stages, some of the dreams and the plans of the Mekong River Development,

the Valley, the Mekong Valley regional development and the Honolulu declaration.

I said, "I come here to speak to you about the President's commitment under the Baltimore speech," where we pledged not only aid to the South but to the North in the development of the Mekong. I said, "I come to you to talk about the new social development, the social revolution that Prime Minister Ky and President Johnson pledged themselves to at Honolulu."

I went into the Mekong Valley, by the way. I made it my business to do so. I went to see some of the projects under way, and I can only say this, that if the Pathet Lao in Laos can occupy the banks of the Mekong backed up by the North Vietnamese forces—Pathet Lao being the Communist forces there—and if the Thais lose out in Northeast Thailand, there will be no Mekong River development.

One of the real important objectives in this struggle in South Vietnam is to permit the social-economic development along TVA lines of the Mekong River. It will do wonders for the people, but it can't come unless there is peace.

MR. BINGHAM: Sir, you were the originator of the Peace Corps idea. I wonder if you foresee in the future some usefulness for that type of American operation in Vietnam?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, at another date. I think it would be not advisable right now to put the Peace Corps into South Vietnam because of the terrible political disturbances and military disturbances there, but the International Voluntary Service is there; the IVS is doing a remarkable job. I visited with the International Voluntary Service. Mr. Gardner, our former AID Director, is the head man there, an American doing a fine job. Some graduates of the Peace Corps are there working with them. And another thing, Mr. Bingham, over 5,000 young students of the universities in Vietnam last summer went to the villages in the Vietnamese's own Peace Corps program. We don't hear much about this. They went on what they call their summer work project, and it worked out so well, sir, that it is now a national program, and I witnessed it at work. I saw it in District 8 in the slums and suburbs of Saigon, and they are doing fine work.

MR. LINEN: Mr. Vice President, you visited several other capitals on this recent trip of yours, and it is often said in Asia that the arguments going on in the United States tend to confuse Asians about our intent. Did you find that to be true?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, in some instances I did, Mr. Linen. Asians do not always fully understand our mores, our culture, our governmental procedures, our constitutional procedures, just as we, I might say, fail to understand many things that they believe in as a part of their pattern of life.

But I do believe that in the main the leaders of government now know that we have the will, that we have the determination, that we have the resources to stick it out, as we say. There is a

great deal of emphasis given, of course, by Communist propaganda to the dissent that takes place in our country.

But let me make it quite clear, I told the leaders in two or three nations that one of the reasons we were in South Vietnam was to afford the people of South Vietnam the right of dissent, the right of freedom of choice. Dissent is a part of our way of life. I am not advocating that everybody should dissent, but if you have a different point of view, you ought to be able to state it.

MR. LINEN: Mr. Vice President, seemingly the Chinese Communist's foreign policy has been suffering several setbacks. Did you hear anything in the neighboring capitals about the situation in Indonesia?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Of course I heard, Mr. Linen, about matters in Indonesia. Everyone in Asia was interested. Everyone was wondering what the developments would be. I was very circumspect in my remarks. In Indonesia there is a genuine local struggle for power going on. There isn't an outside force of aggression as such, even though the Chinese Communists' political apparatus had been at work in Indonesia for some time. But this is a struggle within the country, as compared, may I say, or as contrasted to what you see in Vietnam, where you have open aggression from another country moving into South Vietnam trying to overthrow a regime and to change a way of life.

I would only say that we are watching very carefully what happens in Indonesia.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Vice President, am I to understand from what you said a little while ago that the United States and South Vietnam would be ready to stop shooting in Vietnam, with or without negotiations, with or without agreements, if the enemy also stopped?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think it is fair to say if the North Vietnamese and their agents, the National Liberation Front, the Viet Cong, would cease its military operations—in other words cease fire and come to the conference table—that this would be a proposition that would meet with genuine acceptance in the United States.

MR. KNIGHT: Mr. Vice President, in discussing aims and objectives of Vietnam you did not discuss one point. The United Press reported the other day that you told Senator Clifford Case that our real objective was the containment of Red China. If this report is accurate, could you say whether this is really our objective, and how could this be brought about?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: It is my view that Communist China today is the militant aggressive force in large areas of Asia and that she is using some of this militancy through her agent in North Vietnam into South Vietnam.

I do believe that containment of aggressive militancy of China is a worthy objective, but containment without necessarily isola-

tion. Containment of its militancy, of its military power, just as we had to do in the post-war years in Europe, relating to the Soviet Union. But at the same time not trying to isolate from the family of mankind.

MR. KNIGHT: Mr. Vice President, my question was, was it accurate for the United Press to say that you felt the containment of Red China was our real objective and, secondly, since the Defense Secretary says they already have nuclear capacity within a range of five to seven hundred miles and it will be much longer as years go on, how do you contain a power like that without getting into direct conflict?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Knight, first of all, our immediate objective, as I indicated to you, is to prevent the success of aggression on South Vietnam.

It is our view that North Vietnam is acting with the support and the assistance of China, that China has shown—that is, Communist China—aggressive militancy against India, against Tibet, and surely against—in South Vietnam.

Therefore, it is in the interests of international peace that China be brought to understand that aggression is not a policy that can be pursued, that it is a dangerous policy in this nuclear age.

We have, of course, exercised a policy of containment and restraint on the Soviet Union in the past, and she had nuclear capacity far beyond anything that China has today. The Soviet Union is a powerful nation, and I am happy to say that that program of responsible containment, the building of collective security in the West, but at the same time a probing and trying to find ways of communication has been relatively successful, and I think it is in our interest and in the interest of humanity that the same kind of approach be exercised in Asia where Communist China today shows not only militancy against the West and against her neighbors, but also against the Soviet Union, sir.

MR. KNIGHT: Then you are saying, in effect, sir, that the United States is prepared for this kind of a confrontation with Red China if required?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Every decision that this nation has had to make in recent years has been one that carried with it terrible risks. When we faced up to the Russians in Berlin, there was always the risk that it might explode into a terrible war. When we faced up to the Russians in Iran immediately after World War II and asked them to get their forces out, there was a risk. When we aided the Greeks in the Greek Civil War, there was a risk of a confrontation, once again, with the Soviet Union.

And surely in the Cuban missile crisis we were right, mighty close to terribly, terribly destructive war.

Unless the Communist leaders believe that we mean what we say—I think the worst thing this nation could do for humanity

would be to leave any uncertainty as to our will, our purpose and our capacity to carry out our purpose.

This is why I believe that you resist little aggressions before they break out into massive confrontations. We seek no confrontation with China or with Russia.

MR. KNIGHT: But you would accept it?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: These are not choices that we make. They are sometimes forced upon us. Pray God that the choice never has to be made.

MR. CHANDLER: Mr. Vice President, last Saturday one of our top military leaders, U. S. Combat Brigadier General Ellis Williamson, reported to President Johnson at the LBJ Ranch that we can win the war.

Now, this, to me, would apparently mean that he feels that we can push the forces from the North back across their border and that we can occupy almost the whole of South Vietnam and hold it until the end of hostilities take place.

Are we prepared to make that commitment now, which would seem to be a very long-term commitment, and if we are prepared to make it, how long in your opinion will this take?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I had the privilege of visiting with General Williamson. He was with the President yesterday when the President and members of the Cabinet—Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, myself and others—General Taylor—met with the Governors, and General Williamson gave a full report. I was so pleased to hear what he had to say, because I had never talked to General Williamson on my visit to Vietnam, but I came back with the same conclusions. His conclusions or his observations were namely these, that things were better militarily; that we did have a plan of operation which we were following, as I said a moment ago; that the villagers were now cooperating with the government forces, that is, with Saigon and with the allied forces; that the rate of defection among the Viet Cong was running at over 2,000 a month; that we were being able to break into the strongholds, the military strongholds of the Viet Cong; we were defeating their main units, and what he is simply saying is, if we stick with it, sir, we will have to do less of what some people think we might have to do because we have it coming with us now. But we are prepared to do what is necessary, Mr. Chandler, to prevent the success of aggression. I think the American people must know that, and I think they do.

MR. CHANDLER: Turning to another question again, Mr. Vice President, regarding the criticism in this country of the Administration's conduct of the war and the impact of that in Asia, specifically, is this criticism of the Administration's conduct of the war hurting our efforts to hold the Ky regime intact?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Not as long as the government of the United States continues to express its faith and confidence, I would say. Let me add one other thing, Mr. Chandler.

I traveled in nine Asian countries on my recent journey. Several of them had some differences of view as to whether we were pursuing the tactical, the right tactical course. But I didn't find one single country that felt that we ought to be out of South Vietnam or that really contested our purpose in Vietnam. And I found every one of them knew that the blame for failure to achieve peace was on Hanoi and Peking.

MR. CATLEDGE: Mr. Vice President, one of the spill-overs out of the discussion of the situation that we are involved in in Southeast Asia involves considerable speculation as to the political future of some people whom the American people might want to call to higher duty sometime, including yourself.

A basis for this speculation, some of it, is an unhappiness felt by some of your present or former—especially former—spiritual kinfolk, that you had left the family circle and had gone off after some sort of political security.

I wonder how you feel about that, if there is any basis, or how do you feel that this speculation originates, and is there any basis for it?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: My good friend—I am not at all sure, Mr. Catledge, who has left any family circle. I feel very "family" and very much a family man, but let me make it quite clear that on matters of national security there is no room for basic partisanship. That is No. 1. We need to think as Americans. We may have different points of view, but we ought not to think as partisans, and I don't believe we do. I think it is very encouraging to see the tremendous support that comes from the Republican party for the President, and may I say from the Democratic party too.

I am of the opinion that much of the noise of criticism is limited to a few articulate voices.

The quantity is not always fully described by the velocity or by the vehemence of the outcry.

As far as my political future is concerned, I have never really been able to plan it very well, Mr. Catledge, and I am not going to spend much time doing it. Not at the expense, may I say, of national security; not at the expense of the life of our people or the honor or integrity of our country and its commitments. I haven't the slightest idea whether what I am doing is helpful to me or not, but I think that what I am doing is the right thing to do, and I have been brought up to believe that when you are in a position of responsibility, you had better do what is right. I have sat in on the councils of this government; I have studied long and hard the situation in Southeast Asia, and I believe we are following the right course.

I was one who thought we ought to have international responsibility in Europe. I believe in collective security. I believe that we need to learn how to have the free nations of the world stand together to prevent totalitarian power from consuming other

nations, large and small, and if the principle of collective security is good for Europe, Mr. Catledge, it is good for Asia, for the brown and the yellow people of Asia and not just the white people of Europe, and I think it is just about time we said so.

MR. CATLEDGE: Back to the matter of the job you are doing, which some people say is more than being a good soldier, I have seen it expressed that you are a recruiting sergeant. In your recruitment of support over the world let me ask you this question very frankly: Did you find in any government anywhere a great enthusiasm for the American policy in Southeast Asia?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I found in every government everywhere a deep concern lest we withdraw.

MR. CATLEDGE: My question was "enthusiasm."

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: May I say that other governments have their own problems, but I can assure you that those allies that are with us there understand that we are there for the right purposes, and I didn't find a single government that was critical of our presence there, and when you talk privately to government officers, Mr. Catledge, they will tell you very candidly, very frankly, that there is a danger of aggression in Asia and that that aggression needs to be checked.

Some of them feel that the aggression comes from other sources. When I am in Pakistan, for example, our friends in Pakistan were concerned about the matter of the power of India.

And, when you are in India, they are concerned about the power of two or three countries, including Communist China. But I didn't find anybody in Asia that thought we ought not to be doing what we are doing in Southeast Asia.

MR. COWLES: Mr. Vice President, I'd like to ask about China and the United Nations. There seems to me to be a perhaps new or revitalized line of thought growing, which is that our firm position in Southeast Asia may for the first time make it possible for the Administration and any U. S. Administration, both in terms of domestic politics and in terms of its effect on the overseas Chinese and other countries in Asia—for the United States to begin to reduce, if not eliminate, its opposition to the admission of China to the United Nations.

A few moments ago you referred to the isolation of China as being very undesirable, from the world. Would you care to comment on this matter of admitting China to the UN?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: One of the most fruitful procedures under way in this government are the hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Asia and China. I think that the American people know far too little about Asia and the countries of Asia. They are all very different, and we need to know much more about them. We are a European-oriented society, and so is our educational structure. We need much more going on in our universities and institutes on China and on Asia.

Our problem with China is not of our own making. We have

had over 120 meetings with representatives of Communist China. One is taking place next week again in Warsaw, and those meetings start out just this way, whenever we seek to have any broader contacts or discuss any matter of mutual concern, the first thing that the Chinese representatives says is, "You must yield"—what he says is Formosa, and what we call the Republic of China—"You must give us that, and if you are not willing to give over the 10 or 11 million people who are in the Republic of China to the Communists,"—if we are not willing to do that, they won't talk.

I think Dr. Fairbank made it quite clear before the Foreign Relations Committee that China has a position of isolating itself. We have only recently—the President has said scholars should travel there, journalists can travel there, doctors can travel there. We have tried upon several occasions to break into China for the purpose of the visitation with people—people-to-people. This is the beginning. It could be the beginning of a much better relationship. I am afraid that we are going to have to wait until the men of the Long March, of the Mao generation, are out of positions of leadership. But in the meantime we ought to maintain as best we can a spirit of friendship towards the Chinese people, but recognizing what the regime is and making that regime understand they can not achieve their purposes by military power.

MR. COWLES: I am not trying to lead you into unwise speculation, sir, but can you imagine circumstances wherein Red China may be admitted to the—might be admitted to the United Nations within the next three, four, five years?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: That is very difficult for me to conjecture about. China today still stands branded as the aggressor by the United Nations in Korea. China has never asked to be admitted to the United Nations. She has suggested several revisions of the United Nations Charter. So maybe we ought to get the picture of China in proper perspective. We are always worrying about that she is not in; she doesn't worry about it at all. I have a feeling that she has some things she'd like to do before she comes into the family of responsible nations, and she is busily engaged in doing some of those things. She as yet has not made formal application, and even when some others have applied for her, she has rebuked them.

MR. LASCH: Mr. Vice President, I'd like to ask about something you have had a good deal to say about lately, some rather hard words about the possibility of a coalition government as one element in an ultimate settlement.

Isn't this substantially what we have done and are doing in the Dominican Republic? We had a civil struggle, we have an interim government which is supposed to represent and be tolerable to both sides, while preparations are made for an internationally supervised election. What is the objection in principle

to doing in Southeast Asia what it seems to me we are doing in our own back yard?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: There is a great deal of difference, Mr. Lasch. I doubt that anyone in this country would have any objection to a government in South Vietnam that included the Buddhists and the Catholics and the Trade Union leaders and the peasants and so forth. Just as in the Dominican Republic you have many elements in that government, but not the Communists.

When you are talking about a coalition government, we have a coalition government in Italy between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats. But not between the Christian Democrats and the Communists. And we are talking about whether or not—the discussion was whether or not the Viet Cong, sir, the Communists, should be a part of a coalition government, at our insistence. I just—in all due respect, sir, I can't imagine that we would insist that we fasten upon the people of South Vietnam the enemy which has been the terror of the countryside.

MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Vice President, I wonder if you could say anything about our outlook in Thailand?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The Thais are deeply concerned. They feel themselves also, now, the victims of subversion, infiltration, and there have been regular units, by the way, of the North Vietnamese forces who have gone into Northeast Thailand. I think, however, the Thais are aware of it, and they are taking preventive action. They are doing a job, may I say, on their accelerated agricultural development. I believe the situation can be managed in Thailand.

MR. BINGHAM: Sir, in view of our heavy financial commitments in Asia, do you see any hope of real progress in some of the wars we are carrying on here in our own country, such as the war on urban blight?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Bingham, I noted yesterday in a discussion that we had, that the percentage of our gross national product that is now dedicated to defense, including the war in South Vietnam, is 7.6. That is the same as it was a year ago, and it is just 1/10 of 1 percent more than it was two years ago.

Our GNP continues to go up, and we have put in more money, may I say, into the programs of the Great Society.

We are hopeful that there can be some deescalation of this struggle. We are hopeful that we can get peace in Vietnam and if we can, we are prepared to make the budgetary adjustments that will advance what I think both you and I are very much concerned in, the war on poverty, our programs in education, health, and our urban blight—programs to eliminate urban blight.

MR. LINEN: Mr. Vice President, you are one of the few statesmen of the world who has seen General de Gaulle lately.

Would you care to comment on his current attitude toward NATO?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: This attitude expressed by General de Gaulle, I think, is one surely within his general expression of attitude over the many years. He believes in an independent France; he believes in an independent course of action for France.

He wants total protection without total involvement. Actually I regret this, because I think we have learned that collective security is absolutely essential if we are going to bargain with the nations of the Soviet bloc and if we are going to make a better world out of this, and to prevent aggression.

General de Gaulle seeks to go back to what I call the period of 1914, the kind of bilateral arrangements that led us through this unbelievable period of turmoil and tension and, ultimately, destruction from 1914 up through World War II.

I don't think we ought to return to that, sir, and I don't think we will.

The argument that is going on today is not between de Gaulle and the United States, it is between General de Gaulle and the other 14 members of NATO. We are all partners in this, and I think we ought to keep that in mind. Let's not make this a personal argument.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Vice President, I'd like to come back to Vietnam and ask you a question about the Saigon Government. As you know, there have been many reports that the government in Saigon is dead set against peace talks and any negotiations. Can you tell us what their position is on negotiations today? You have just come back from there.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Their position on negotiations is the same as the one expressed by the President of the United States. Prime Minister Ky, Chairman Thieu of the National Unity Council have agreed with our President that they are prepared to sit down at the conference table without any pre-conditions for unconditional negotiations.

MR. LASCH: You mentioned the Cuban missile crisis and how important it was that we stood up there, and I agree with you that it was very important that we should and I am glad—I think we had to, and we did.

That brings up the question of the double standard of international conduct. That was a case where the Russians, after being contained by us for many years, decided to try a little containment on us, and we wouldn't stand for it, very rightly.

Aren't we applying a different standard of conduct to the Russians and the Chinese in their part of the world, to the one that we claim for ourselves in our part of the world?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Lasch, I didn't think that we needed any containment. We are not an aggressor. This nation has given away hundreds of billions of dollars since World

War II. We have had 167,000 casualties in the defense of other people's freedom. We have aggressed against no one.

There is a great deal of difference, I might add. What Mr. Khrushchev sought to do was to penetrate with the powerful new nuclear weapons system the Western Hemisphere, and we said no.

The only reason we are in Europe, Mr. Lasch, is because Europe was a target for Soviet ideological and military penetration some years back. I am happy to say that our relationships with the Soviet Union are much more stable and steady now, but I don't think we ought to kid ourselves for a single moment that the Soviet Union is anything but a Communist power.

MR. SPIVAK: Gentlemen, we have less than three minutes.

MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Vice President, do you think a reasonable application of the Keynesian economic theories under which we have been operating now requires us to raise taxes?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: If the costs of defense go up as the President has said, if the demands on our public revenues are larger, then we will have to raise those revenues. We have no immediate plans of doing so. We keep a very close eye on the economy, not only in terms of revenues, but fiscal policies as a way and means of being able to curb inflationary pressures as well.

MR. BINGHAM: Do you think, sir, that a frank discussion of foreign policy differences among the American people is of potential usefulness to the enemy?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Limited, if any. I think, Mr. Bingham, that we ought to just face up to the fact that we are a strong, mature nation. We have differences of view. As long as those differences are expressed responsibly and in the national interest—

I think there are times that certain more abrasive comments could be subdued, but all of us that have been in public life have been a little guilty upon occasion of being anything but sweet and charitable, and I suppose I stand guilty, myself.

MR. LINEN: Mr. Vice President, is the Democratic Party in the fall congressional elections in trouble because of the war in South Vietnam?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think not, not if the Democratic Party understands that the people of the United States are a strong people, that they are a patriotic people, they understand their international responsibilities. If some Democrats get themselves in trouble, it will be individual. I don't think it will be party-wise—

MR. KNIGHT: Mr. Vice President, as a long-time liberal with one hundred per cent ADA voting record, you have in recent years said some very kind things about business. Does this represent a change in your attitude?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Not at all. My father was a businessman. I grew up in a business family. I had business

support when I was in Minneapolis as the Mayor of the City. I believe in the free enterprise system. It works better than any other. As a matter of fact, I have never found anything quite equal to it.

MR. CHANDLER: Mr. Vice President, when you were in Vietnam recently, were you satisfied with the lines of communication that have developed between our government here in Washington and our military and civilian personnel?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir. Much improved. Much, much better. I think that we are doing much better.

MR. SPIVAK: I think, Mr. Vice President, that we have come pretty close to the end of our time. We wouldn't have time for another question and certainly not for another answer. I am sorry to interrupt, but our time is up.

Thank you, Mr. Vice President, for being with us today on MEET THE PRESS.

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