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"PANORAMA"

Limewood Studios, London, England

Monday, April 3, 1967

GUEST: HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY,  
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

MODERATOR: Robin Day

PARTICIPANTS: 25 College and University Students

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MR. DAY: Good Evening.

Panorama, in two parts this evening: Question to the American Vice President, and a film report in which John Morgan investigates racial discrimination in Britain.

First, our distinguished guest from the United States, the man, who, under the American Constitution, would automatically become President in the event of President Johnson's death,

Mr. Hubert Humphrey was a Senator from Minnesota for 16 years until President Johnson chose him for the Number two place on the Democratic ticket in the 1964 election campaign.

Here to ask him whatever questions they wish are a group of students who come from many universities in this country. I don't think they would claim to represent the entire youth of the British Nation, but many of them, almost all of them, in fact, either hold or have held elective positions as student officers or officials of political clubs, and between them, they cover a pretty wide variety of political opinion.

The first question then to the Vice President, if you please. The gentleman over there on the left.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, we are told that being Vice President of the United States is like playing second fiddle without being given a bow. In view of the fact that many of your political rivals get much more publicity than you do, do you think this is not true?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I consider being Vice President of the United States an honor. It is a responsibility, in a sense it is a privilege. It does not permit you to be the first violinist, nor are you the conductor of the orchestra, but let me say you are in on the making of the music and the main thing to do is not to make too many sour notes.

I believe that covers the topic.

MR. DAY: Yes, the lady here.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, could you tell me what it is exactly that you do?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes. The office of the

Vice President has developed a great deal over the years. In the beginning his primary responsibility was as the Presiding Officer of the Senate; and then, just sort of waiting around, you know, on the sidelines to see what happened. John Adams once said, "It is either nothing or everything." Since that time, since our second president, there has been a fill that makes it a little of something and quite something in some areas.

I am a member of the President's Cabinet, and a member of the National Security Council, Chairman of the Space Council that coordinates all of the work of our government in space and aeronautics, Chairman of the Marine Resources and Engineering Council, that is oceanography. I am even a Regent of the Smithsonian Institution. And then I have a number of ad hoc temporary assignments from the President. For example, right now I am Chairman of the President's Youth Council, coordinating all of the activities of our government that relate to youth, all of the educational activities, training activities, our summer employment programs, and travel programs and a few other things that keep me rather busy, plus doing a bit of speaking around the country.

MR. DAY: Is anyone not very impressed by that list?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: And, Preside over the Senate. I wouldn't want you to forget that for a minute, and that is no small task.

MR. DAY: Any other questions about the political

situation in America which we have got onto?

The gentleman right at the back.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, there has been some speculation about the next Vice President of the United States, and who President Johnson would choose as his next running partner, and in this country the press has been speculating on the Kennedy-Johnson split. Can you give us your version of the split after the Senator's visit to Europe?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I look upon Senator Kennedy as a very able United States Senator. He has a different point of view on some subjects than the President may hold; but in our political system we do not have what you call rigid party discipline. When I served as a Senator, even though we had democratic presidents during that time I did not have a 100 percent voting record with the Administration. But I believe that Senator Kennedy, when he says he will support President Johnson in 1968, and I believe him implicitly, when he says he will support Vice President Humphrey.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Vice President -- the one behind this gentleman, the one behind --

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, on a slightly different topic, is the United States Government completely satisfied with the report of the Warren Commission on the death of President Kennedy, and if not, does it intend to hold a further inquiry?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We consider the Warren Commission

to be a reputable, responsible report. Remember that the Commission's name indicates the quality of the Commission. The Chief Justice of the United States, Mr. Earl Warren, a very distinguished man, was the chairman of that commission. I doubt that he would attach his name to any report that did not have responsible evidence to verify it. I can say that the whole commission was made up of highly respected American citizens. We see no need to reopen any inquiry. In the main, if any new evidence comes to the attention of the Government that requires reopening, of course that is another matter, but the Warren Commission Report stands as the official document and official policy of our Government.

QUESTION: Supplementary to this, as you know, there is a trial going on in the United States at the moment at which -- to bring to light new evidence on this question from the point of view there was, in fact, a conspiracy which the Warren Commission seems to deny.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I doubt that there is any new evidence. As a matter of fact, the Attorney General has indicated that those persons that are being presently listed as offering new evidence, that that evidence had all been very carefully screened before by the appropriate authority in the Government of the United States.

May I suggest to you that we were very anxious to get at the truth of the assassination of a very great and beloved

president and there would be no need or any desire on the part of any responsible official in the United States to cover up anything, and the Chief Justice of the United States has been a courageous man all of his life, he is not of the same political party as the President of the United States, or the Late President of the United States, and if Earl Warren puts his name to a report, I believe Earl Warren, the Chief Justice.

MR. DAY: There is somebody I know wanting to ask a question, several of you, about the situation in Alabama. The lady there.

QUESTION: As a liberal with a distinguished record of civil rights, how do you feel about the increasing conservatism of American politics, and especially the defiance of Mrs. Wallace to the Federal Court's desegregation in Alabama?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: May I take the latter part of your question first. First, may I thank you for your compliment. And in reference to Governor Wallace of Alabama, we have had other instances in the past few years where governors have momentarily before their legislatures uttered words of defiance, only to come around a little bit later to recognize that the Federal Union is intact, that the Constitution of the United States is the supreme law, and that the orders of the courts of the United States must be obeyed.

I have no doubt at all but what Alabama, as one of the 50 states and a very fine state, will be faithful to the

Constitution.

Now, in reference to the political environment in the United States, it is not conservative, as a matter of fact, I must say that it is the most liberal period of American political history. We have made more advances, but this, I think this might be a moment to just share a bit of thought with you on this, we have made more social advance in the last few years that we have made in the last 20 years. We have taken up where the New Deal left off, and gone far, far beyond it.

In the field of race relations no country on the face of the earth is making the progress that the United States is making in race relations. We have problems, but we have opened up vast new areas of opportunity for people long denied opportunity, and remember that our race problem is of some dimensions.

There are 22 million, 22 million Negro Americans, 22 million of them; and remember also that many of them for years were denied any opportunity at the ballot box or to economic or social opportunity. That today is over. The Federal Registration Act, voter registration, guarantees the right to vote and Federal Registrars are right this very day in certain states in the United States, registering voters,

There were over 450,000 more voters in the southern states last election than there was in the election of 1964, so we have made great progress.

In education, 8 million deprived young people were

enjoying new benefits of education last year that they had never enjoyed before, one million young people between the ages of 16 and 22 are in job training, six years ago there was none.

Medicare which, for 16-18 years was a topic of discussion and debate, is a reality. Our work in the field of model cities, or urban development, our poverty program, we are expending in Fiscal Year '68 in the President's Budget, over 25 billions of dollars in a war on poverty, 25 billion as compared to 9 billion in 1961, as compared to 11 billion in 1963.

MR. DAY: Before they forget, on a very point you made there, Mr. Vice President -- the gentleman there was saying something about the war in Vietnam. What did you mean, what were you going to say?

QUESTION: -- saying in spending all this amount of money on the war on poverty, you are spending a great deal of money on the war in Vietnam. Don't you think this money would be much better spent on this war on poverty?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Of course I do, if we could just get the war in Vietnam over. I am a peaceful man. We are spending \$22 billion dollars a year, in money, which is the least of the expenditures of the war in Vietnam. The lives are much more important and the tragedy of it, and we are expending, and while I want to make it quite clear and while money should not be the total factor, it is an indicator of the commitment that we are making, some 25 billions of dollars to groups in American society



that come under what we call the low income poverty level group.

Now, that is compared to six years ago of 9 billion and compared to three and a half years ago of 11 billion dollars, we are spending 300 percent, three times as much in our health programs over and beyond exclusive of Medicare in the coming Fiscal Year, three and a half times as much in Federal aid to education. We have tremendous programs under way, so when I hear people say what has happened to liberalism, I say well, as to the liberal program, much of which I sponsored in my political life, may I say, may I say we passed it and don't be unhappy because we passed it. You know, it doesn't make you a liberal to fail, you can still be a liberal and succeed. Some people that if you fail in a program and you can continue to talk of the failures then you are a liberal. I am the kind of liberal that likes progress and when you have passed medicare, aid to education, when you have passed conservation measures, air pollution control, water pollution control, model city programs, reorganization of health, medicaid, child nutrition acts, freedom, the war on hunger program in which we are putting billions, I think this is quite a liberal program and I am mighty proud of it and I had something to do with it.

MR. DAY: The gentleman in the back row with the glasses on, there, moving on from that --

QUESTION: -- Mr. Vice President, there is another problem. The CIA appears to be a state within a state. How can

an espionage agency of the United States Government make policy decisions, often in dire contradiction of the stated policy of your government?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, first it doesn't, it doesn't make policy decisions in contradiction of our government. Every nation today has some system of intelligence operation. Now, we are not as old at this as the British.

(Laughter)

We have had our hand involved in this sort of thing for about 20-some years, since World War II, as a matter of fact, starting with the OSS and going on with the Central Intelligence Agency, and we have made some mistakes, there is no doubt about that, and in fact we would like to live a lot of it all over.

We think, for example, that amongst these student organizations we would have been better advised had we followed your British Counsul program here and as you know, President Johnson has ordered all of the CIA activities related to private organizations to stop, no further financing.

MR. DAY: Are you satisfied with that? The students obviously were concerned about the CIA question. The gentleman there --

QUESTION: The Vice President said that the CIA was not in contradiction of the Government policy. As a matter of fact, CIA policy is the elimination of Communism. Are you suggesting, sir, that the Government policy then, is then by extension

the elimination of Communism in the world?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: What we said that the Government policy is, we seek to live in a world of peace. We seek peaceful coexistence. We are not unaware that Communism has powerful forces in this world today, and we are not so naive or childish as to think we are going to eliminate it. We do think, however, that the forces of freedom have more momentum to them than the forces of totalitarianism, and I want to say the CIA has not said it is eliminating Communism. What CIA has said in carrying out Government policy is that we shall help those who seek to prevent the onrush of Communist success, to put it in a very generous term.

MR. DAY: May we move on to the subject of Vietnam, which I know is in many of your minds. This gentleman there, with the brown shirt, yes.

QUESTION: Mr. Humphrey, when your government started the bombing of North Vietnam, you said that the force of this activity was to force Hanoi to the conference table, which you claimed Hanoi wasn't willing to go to at that time. Since then Hanoi has said that it is willing to come to the conference table if the bombing stops, and yet the bombing continues and America makes further conditions. Aren't you asking Hanoi to accept your right to commit unilateral acts of escalation whenever you feel like it?

THE VICE PRESIDENT. Well, now, I can understand

why you asked the question, because the premise on which you asked it is not the premise of our government's policy. We did not say that we started the bombing to bring Vietnam to the conference table. We said that we were hopeful that the bombing would make it more difficult for the infiltration of personnel and manpower into South Vietnam, that the price of that infiltration would be substantially higher. We did not ever assume that the bombing would ever bring Vietnam to its knees. I think that the British know better than anybody else in the world, because German bombing of Vietnam -- German bombing of Britain surely did not destroy Britain and anybody that has lived through that period knows better than to assume that bombing alone can do anything except to make a heavier price for whatever you seek to do.

So, we feel that, we are prepared to stop the bombing, we are prepared to stop the bombing when we can get one act of mutual reciprocity or reciprocity from North Vietnam of military value.

MR. DAY: Mr. Vice President, what would be the minimum act of reciprocity from North Vietnam which would enable America to stop the bombing?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the Vice President of the United States does not outline American Government policies on a television network. I might add that the British have always had a great respect for what they call private diplomacy, quiet

talk. Your government -- my government's policy is this: That we would like very much to have an opportunity to engage in conversation with representatives of Hanoi on a cease fire, on a form of deescalation, either massive deescalation or limited deescalation, or what procedures could we arrive at and under what form to bring about a conference to seek a peaceful settlement.

Let me make it clear, we do not ask, we do not lay down as a possibility a military solution in Vietnam. We think that there must be a political solution in Vietnam and therefore, we seek to bring this conference from the battlefield to the conference table but it takes two to either dance or to make a settlement and we prefer not to dance, we want the settlement.

MR. DAY: Gentlemen --

QUESTION: There are now, I understand, 400,000 troops in Vietnam. Together with allies it is estimated that they outnumber the Vietcong by three to one or perhaps four to one. Under these circumstances with every promise of a long, drawn-out war, isn't this an indication that there is a considerable native support for the Vietcong, and isn't it also an indication of the fact that increased American troop commitments in Vietnam would not assist their military efforts in the war?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, we have been somewhat in a quandary about the number of forces that were necessary because the British experience in Malaya indicated that you ought to have a ratio of about 10 to one. We have not thought, however, that

that kind of manpower was required. We are seeking to bring to Vietnam only that amount of American power which will achieve one objective, to permit South Vietnam to be able to work its own will and its own destiny for its own institutions. In other words, to prevent the aggression from the north and to permit the south to work out its destiny in the south.

Now, there are Vietcong forces and I would -- you know candor and frankness about these things is what you want and I want -- in the Vietcong there are some Nationalists. The Vietcong, however, is Communist-dominated. It receives its directions by the open admission of Ho Chi Minh himself, from Hanoi. There isn't a government in the world that disputes that, may I say even Communist governments because when we finally get around to talking about the settlement in Vietnam we talk about the settlement between the United States and North Vietnam which indicates, I think, even from some of the great countries of the world, that North Vietnam has considerable control over the developments of the Vietcong.

MR. DAY: Just a minute, just one minute.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, isn't that simply because your government has always refused to negotiate directly with the Vietcong?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My government --

QUESTION: -- Hanoi preferring to do --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My government has never --

QUESTION: -- there never has been a North Vietnam delegation but you are not prepared to deal directly with them.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My government has said repeatedly that there were no insurmountable obstacles to having their government represented at any negotiations. My government has said that we are primarily concerned about the aggression from the North, -just as we were concerned about aggression in other parts of human history, as we were concerned about aggression in Korea, just as we were concerned about the Soviet attempt to take over Berlin and to modify the agreements there.

The policy of my government is one that has been followed since 1945, in Iran, in Turkey, in Greece, in Berlin, in Korea, in Cuba and now in Vietnam.

MR. DAY: The gentleman in the corner, a question on Vietnam, one more question on Vietnam.

QUESTION: Surely Mr. Vice President, if you really want peace you should recognize the government in North Vietnam and you should bring North and South Vietnam into the United Nations where you have a conference table already, or haven't you confidence in the United Nations?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We have great faith in the United Nations but the North Vietnamese have said repeatedly and only within the past week that the United Nations has no business sticking its nose into Vietnamese affairs. That has been the position of North Vietnam. Now, we are perfectly willing to

recognize the fact of the regime of North Vietnam, because we are in communication with Ho Chi Minh. President Johnson has sent letters direct to Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam and he has received a reply which is of public notice and not a reply that said maybe we could talk, maybe there is some way that men of reason and compassion could sit down and end this carnage. He received a reply that was filled with vituperation, that was filled with dramatic language, as contrasted, may I say, to other letters that Ho Chi Minh has received.

MR. DAY: I think we must move on if we are to get on other subjects, into questions dealing with European policy.

QUESTION: Does the Administration support the Atlantic free trade areas or alternative to Britain, should she fail to enter the European Common Market?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is our very sincere hope that the British, in cooperation with their friends on the Continent, will be able to work out the entrance into the Common Market. We do not believe that American sponsorship of these efforts is either helpful to Britain or the Common Market. We have a feeling that the Europeans, British and on the Continent, are perfectly capable of working out their own destinies and I think that the Government of the United States should best express its policy by saying we are friendly to your efforts, we hope you are successful, but it is up to you to work them out.

QUESTION: Yes, but if they fail what do you suggest



as an alternative policy approach?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would suggest that prudence and wisdom would wait and see what happens.

(Laughter)

MR. DAY: Has anyone not had a question so far, still on this subject? The lady over there.

QUESTION: Sir, what is your attitude to what seems to be De Gaulle's nation-state feud on the future of Europe?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is our attitude that the welfare of Europe is best served by increasing European unity, and the coordination of the national-state efforts in Europe for common purposes and common goals. We believe that a strong Europe, a united, free and independent Europe, is better for all of the world and indeed, better for all of the Europeans.

MR. DAY: The gentleman there with the glasses.

QUESTION: How determined is the United States Government to see the reunification of Germany?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We consider it a matter of firm policy. How it shall be accomplished peacefully is a matter of people within Europe in cooperation with the United States to obtain it. We believe that time and patience and perseverance, the relaxation of the tensions between the West and the East will promote that day which I think inevitably will come of some form of reunification of Germany.

QUESTION: The American Government has a policy on

a non-proliferation treaty --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes.

QUESTION: -- and the Soviet Union is exceedingly concerned about Germany gaining control of nuclear weapons and very recently the West German Government reiterated its wish to have some control over these weapons. What is the American Government's attitude going to be under these circumstances?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The same that it has been, namely that the nuclear weapons which we have shall remain in our control, in other words, there are enough fingers on the nuclear trigger without adding any more.

QUESTION: (Indistinguishable)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the MLF is no longer a policy with us.

MR. DAY: Could I have one final question from somebody who hasn't -- a brief one from somebody who hasn't asked one, a brief one from somebody who hasn't asked anything yet? The gentleman there.

QUESTION: In view of the Americans fostering MLF and ENF surely in the present situation it is a trifle unrealistic for Americans to advocate a non-nuclear proliferation treaty.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, if it seems unrealistic now, just let me say that it will be very realistic in days ahead, as you look at the danger of nuclear proliferation, first of all the Government of the United States has never taken a firm

stand on the matter of MLF, it has been exploratory. What we are taking a stand on is the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons, and we consider the non-proliferation treaty a vital step in the path of peace. We consider it one of the building blocks of peace. We consider it one of the ways to minimize the danger of nuclear conflagration. We are wholeheartedly committed to it and we are working with the Soviet Union and with our allies in Western Europe to try to attain it.

MR. DAY: Mr. Vice President, thank you.

Incidentally, do you want to ask them --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Is it over?

MR. DAY: Do you want to ask them anything? Are you satisfied?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I think I have had a very wonderful exchange here, and I am sure that after we are through here we will have a chance for a little more privacy.

MR. DAY: Thank you very much.

(The broadcast was concluded)



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