

"NEWSMAKERS"

With HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
(CBS Television)

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REPORTED BY Robert H. Clark, CSR

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1  
2 PANEL: Grant Holcomb - News Director  
3 Bill Ames - Political Editor  
4 Maury Green - Anchor Man

5 \* \* \*

6 "There is a way to conduct a convention respect-  
7 fully, responsibly and within the rules, and that's the way  
8 that conventions ought to be conducted, state conventions  
9 and national conventions. Merely because somebody cries  
10 'Wolf, wolf, wolf,' doesn't necessarily mean that there is a  
11 wolf there; and because somebody cries 'Foul, foul, foul,'  
12 doesn't mean that there has been foul play."

13 THE ANNOUNCER: Those are the words of this Sunday's  
14 Newsmaker, the Vice-President of the United States, Hubert  
15 H. Humphrey.

16 Mr. Humphrey will be questioned in this unrehearsed  
17 program by KNXT newsmen Maury Green, Grant Holcomb, and  
18 Bill Ames on Newsmakers.

19 (Commercial.)

20 MAURY GREEN: Mr. Vice-President, you have said that  
21 the Democratic National Convention will be an open conven-  
22 tion. What are you specifically doing to insure that it  
23 will be?

24 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, as far as my own  
25 activities are concerned, I have urged that there be open  
26 platform hearings, not only in Chicago, but around the

1 country. I have seen to it that a number of areas of the  
2 country where we have delegates, that those delegates solicit  
3 material and information from the people of the area. I have  
4 recommended that there be the fullest opportunity of any  
5 candidate, or anyone that wants to be a candidate, to speak  
6 to the convention. We are doing all we can to assure that  
7 the rules of the convention will permit the widest possible  
8 discussion and participation on the part of all duly elected  
9 delegates. I think that is about as much as you can do for  
10 an open convention.

11 GRANT HOLCOMB: Have any of your suggestions been  
12 accepted by the chairman, Mr. Bailey?

13 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think the convention is  
14 going to be very open. I think it will be very spirited.  
15 I don't think there will be any effort made to try to manage  
16 or control it. If so, I think it would be a mistake.  
17 Insofar as the hearings on platform, Congressman Hale Boggs,  
18 a liberal congressman from New Orleans, will be conducting  
19 hearings with the committee and the subcommittee of the  
20 platform committee, both in Washington, D. C. and Chicago.  
21 I would hope that they might do so in several other places.  
22 I thought it would be desirable, Insofar as the right of the  
23 candidate to speak at the convention, that has been assured.  
24 Anyone that is a delegate can speak, and I feel that they  
25 should. I also feel that those of us who are seeking  
26 delegates should have a chance to speak before the respective



1 delegations, so that no delegation is locked up, per se, so  
2 that you can go and present your case to that delegation,  
3 and I am sure we will have that chance.

4 BILL AMES: Mr. Vice-President, do you plan, therefore,  
5 to speak before the delegates at the convention prior to the  
6 nomination?

7 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I haven't made any decision  
8 on that yet. But I think it is perfectly all right for  
9 whomever wishes to speak. I don't think there is any  
10 compulsion that you do speak. If you want to, I think you  
11 should have that opportunity. I haven't crossed that bridge  
12 yet. If I feel a good speech coming on the way, I may very  
13 well want to give it just before the nominations take place.

14 GRANT HOLCOMB: Mr. Vice-President, when you talk about  
15 an open convention, do you mean that you would leave it up  
16 to the convention to select your vice-presidential running  
17 mate, if you are the presidential nominee?

18 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I would imagine that we will  
19 have to ultimately leave it up to the convention, but I  
20 would surely like to have my point of view considered. In  
21 other words, if I am the nominee of the Democratic party, I  
22 would very candidly want to suggest to the convention  
23 leaders and to the delegates the person that I believe  
24 would be the best and most suitable running mate. But I  
25 have seen conventions where that happened, where there wasn't  
26 quick acquiescence on the part of the delegates. So we will

1 just have to wait and see what happens.

2 BILL AMES: You would not go so far, Mr. Vice-President,  
3 as Governor Stevenson did in 1956?

4 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: At this time I doubt that.  
5 I had some doubts about that then, and afterwards, and I am  
6 not so sure that that is the best way. But I wouldn't want  
7 to rule it out positively. There may be developments between  
8 now and Chicago, the time of the convention, that would  
9 necessitate that, but I don't see that at the moment.

10 MAURY GREEN: Governor Connally of Texas has said that  
11 your vice-presidential running mate should be a man that is  
12 more moderate than yourself, and I have seen news reports  
13 to the effect that you tend to agree to that statement.

14 First of all, do you agree with it, and do you  
15 think that this would be a proper description of your  
16 potential running mate, a man more moderate than yourself?

17 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I appreciate the counsel and  
18 advice of any of my fellow Democrats' advice as to my  
19 running mate. I always have considered myself a moderate  
20 person within the liberal tradition. I believe that the  
21 most important thing about a vice-presidential candidate is  
22 his experience, his capability, whether or not he would have  
23 the qualities that would be required to take over the  
24 position of President in case/<sup>of</sup> anything happening to the  
25 President. In other words, qualifications. I would also  
26 like to see the vice-presidential nominee be at least within

1 the spectrum of what we might call the political philosophy  
2 of the head of the ticket.

3 I don't believe it is necessary these days to try  
4 to balance off the ticket these days as we have in bygone  
5 days. The television, the radio, the printed material, the  
6 media that we have has done much to bring this country  
7 closer together in terms of understanding on political  
8 issues. Therefore, some of the old standards that you had  
9 to have a presidential nominee from the East and a vice-  
10 presidential nominee from the West, and if the presidential  
11 nominee was a conservative man, you would have to have a  
12 liberal, or if he was a liberal man like myself, you would  
13 have to have a conservative, I don't think that really makes  
14 that much difference.

15 GRANT HOLCOMB: Mr. Vice-President, could I ask you two  
16 questions? First of all, your list of qualifications for  
17 Vice-President. In your opinion, would Senator Kennedy fit  
18 those qualifications?

19 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, the Senator has removed  
20 himself --

21 GRANT HOLCOMB: Yes, I know, but I just wondered if he  
22 fits those qualifications.

23 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't believe that it helps  
24 him or helps me to try to answer a rather iffy question,  
25 since he has made it almost in a, as we call it, a Sherman-  
26 istic manner that he will not run, and that he is not a



1 candidate. I have said a number of times that I consider  
2 him a very able man. I feel that he is a talented public  
3 servant. He is a good senator, and he is my friend.

4 MAURY GREEN: Mr. Vice-President, are you disappointed  
5 that he has removed himself as vice-presidential nominee?

6 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think that the Senator has  
7 made his statement very clear, and he said to you and he said  
8 to me that he is doing it for very personal reasons. Can't  
9 we all understand why he would make that statement? He has  
10 suffered greatly, and I just don't believe I ought to make  
11 any political comment about the matter that he has predicated  
12 on the basis of personal reasons.

13 MAURY GREEN: He said it was a final, firm decision  
14 not subject to further consideration. Do you agree?

15 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, I do. I feel he means  
16 what he says.

17 MAURY GREEN: Mr. Vice-President, I would like to go  
18 back to this convention matter.

19 As you know, there is great disagreement as to  
20 whether or not this convention really is open. There is even  
21 some threat of a fourth party being formed if you are  
22 nominated. Would you accept the nomination if that risk  
23 appeared very strong?

24 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Of course I would, but I am  
25 not at all sure that that possibility will materialize.

26 But let me say a word again about the open

1 convention. Just because somebody charges that an open  
2 convention is closed, whatever that means, without defining  
3 it, it doesn't mean that it is closed. Now, the two  
4 contestants for this nomination of the Democratic party have  
5 both been to a number of Democratic conventions. We are not  
6 just youngsters coming in out of the rain, so to speak,  
7 getting our first little bath of morning dew. We have been  
8 around a bit, and we have attended conventions for some 20  
9 years, and we know what it is to participate in a convention,  
10 and how the nominees for the office of President and Vice-  
11 President are selected. This convention is going to be just  
12 as open as the convention in 1960 and 1964, just as open as  
13 the convention in 1956 and '52, just as open as the one we  
14 both attended in 1948. Now, I mention all of those because  
15 the Senator from Minnesota has been to every one of those  
16 conventions, and neither one of us have complained that they  
17 were rigged. Might I say that there were a couple of times  
18 that I was a mighty active participant, and I never thought  
19 they were closed.

20 One thing you can be sure of in a Democratic  
21 convention, there is plenty of time and room to say whatever  
22 you want to say and cause as much commotion as you want to.  
23 I have never seen a Democratic convention that didn't look  
24 like a three-ring circus, and it's plenty open. The hopeful  
25 thing is that we will be able to come out of -- what I hope  
26 is that we will be able to come out of it after all of the



1 commotion with a sense of unity, and I believe we can.

2 MAURY GREEN: You don't see any need, I take it, for a  
3 change in which the candidates are selected, any change in  
4 the convention system itself?

5 For instance, most of the delegates are selected  
6 by state conventions, whose members are chosen by county  
7 conventions. They are pretty far removed from the people.  
8 I think that is the complaint that is being made at this  
9 particular point.

10 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: As a matter of fact, the  
11 delegates are generally chosen by caucuses that start out  
12 at about unit level, which is about as small as you can  
13 think of. They start at a ward level, or township level, or  
14 at a precinct level. Actually, most of them are at a  
15 precinct level. That is a very small area. These precinct  
16 levels have been very active this year. There has been no  
17 foreclosing the opportunity to be heard or to attend. The  
18 convention system has been activated this year about as much  
19 as any time that I can recall, and this, I think, is very  
20 wholesome and very helpful.

21 I just call to your attention that this old  
22 convention system that people seem to downgrade now, it has  
23 done pretty well for us in the past. It gave us Andrew  
24 Jackson, and it gave us Abraham Lincoln, and Grover Cleveland,  
25 and Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt, and Harry Truman,  
26 and Dwight Eisenhower, and John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson,

1 and it has given us all the other candidates we have had.  
2 It isn't a bad system. It is always subject to some  
3 improvement, and when you improve it, you participate in the  
4 party and participate -- for example, I recall in my own  
5 state we had about five or six times as many participants  
6 in our caucuses this year, long before we ever got to county  
7 conventions; we had them in our precinct caucuses, five to  
8 six times as many as we ever had before. Now, that is what  
9 you call popular participation. Now, you can have the  
10 primary situation. One of the things you can have is the  
11 national primary. I think there is some merit to that. I  
12 supported the late Estes Kefauver for the nomination of the  
13 candidate of President.

14 GRANT HOLCOMB: Mr. Vice-President, a few moments ago,  
15 I told you I wanted to ask you a couple of questions. I am  
16 sure you anticipated the second one. Does Senator McCarthy  
17 fulfill your list of qualifications for a vice-presidential  
18 candidate as you enumerated them for us?

19 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think he is a very talented  
20 man. He is a very close friend of mine, in spite of our  
21 differences in politics. I might say that having enjoyed  
22 the comfort and pleasure of his friendship for over 20 years,  
23 I don't intend to let it be destroyed and end on politics,  
24 I really don't. I seldom have ever become bitter in politics.  
25 I don't remember any time that I have. I think that Senator  
26 McCarthy has qualifications that merit the very high

1 consideration for any office. Obviously he has qualified  
2 himself in the eyes of many people for the highest office  
3 of the land. So let me just answer you by saying that I  
4 think very well of him.

5 GRANT HOLCOMB: Newmakers will continue in just a  
6 moment.

7 (Commercial.)

8 BILL AMES: Mr. Vice-President, are you irked that  
9 Senator McCarthy has refused to say flatly that he would  
10 support you if you were to be the nominee for the Democratic  
11 party?

12 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: No, I am not irked. I think  
13 it would be better for him if he would say so. We are both  
14 Democrats. We are both seeking the nomination of the  
15 Democratic party, and I think that because we are both  
16 looking to the Democratic party for our support, at least  
17 for the nomination, that might be well that both of us  
18 indicate that we would support the choice of the convention.  
19 I place my trust in <sup>the</sup> basic judgment and wisdom in the majority  
20 over a long period of time. I think it was Theodore  
21 Roosevelt that once said that he found more basic good  
22 judgment and wisdom in the majority than any selected  
23 minority. I think Theodore Roosevelt was quite right, and  
24 I am going to support the nominee of my party. I believe  
25 that my party will select a responsible, good person to  
26 carry the banner of the Democratic party. I see nothing that



1 would indicate that I could not support that nominee. I  
2 hope to be the nominee myself, but if it is not, I am not  
3 the one -- I do not take a walk. I have lived within the  
4 Democratic party in my political life. It has been good to  
5 me. I have helped build it and shape it. I hope to improve  
6 it. I am going to stick with it.

7 BILL AMES: Speaking about taking a walk, Mr. Vice-  
8 President, there has been a lot of talk recently about the  
9 strong possibility that McCarthy's supporters, the McCarthy  
10 delegates at the convention, might indeed take a walk. Are  
11 you doing anything specific and concrete to guard against  
12 the possibility that that might happen, to keep them there?

13 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am doing everything I can  
14 to be a gentleman. I try to be one. I believe that the  
15 first rule of politics is good manners. I believe that you  
16 should always have a tolerance for the other man's point of  
17 view. I never thought that I had a monopoly on virtue and  
18 wisdom. I have never been quite sure that everything I  
19 thought was absolutely, positively right. I always believe  
20 that there may be something new that could come about and be  
21 brought to my attention that could alter my decision or my  
22 view. In other words, I am not a dogmatic, doctrinaire  
23 person. Because I am not, I do not treat the opposition as  
24 if they were positively, unqualifiedly wrong, and try to be  
25 unkind or inconsiderate or mean towards them. I think that  
26 answers your question.

1           What I am trying to do is speak in terms of  
2   debate and discussion. We are intelligent people, at least  
3   persons that are inclined to act intelligently, seek to  
4   discuss the issues, and once we have discussed them the  
5   best we can and have talked to our people the best we can,  
6   we let the people come to a judgment.

7           Now, there may be some McCarthy followers that  
8   will walk out of the convention. If they do, that is their  
9   mistake. I don't think they help the Senator if they do  
10   that. As a matter of fact, I really feel sorry at times for  
11   my friend Senator McCarthy because of the conduct of some of  
12   his followers. It is only a small little fringe, I might  
13   add. It is really not playing within the rules and not  
14   working within the confines of what we call the political  
15   processes; but they are very, very limited. But every time  
16   they act up, every time they act too boisterous, every time  
17   they picket and overholler, it hurts a man who is a gentle-  
18   man, and their candidate is a gentleman. So I advise them  
19   to take it a little easy.

20          GRANT HOLCOMB: Mr. Vice-President, Senator McCarthy  
21   recently said, on the subject of South Vietnam, that he  
22   thought you were adopting a more progressive and objective  
23   approach to a solution in the war than he thinks the  
24   administration has been recommending. Would you agree with  
25   that appraisal of your position in Vietnam?

26          VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I can state my position

1 regarding Vietnam and then the Senator can reappraise it  
2 again if he so desires.

3 First of all, I think it ought to be clear that  
4 both senators, Senator McCarthy and myself, voted for the  
5 SEATO treaty, the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization, which  
6 treaty gives us some responsibilities and commitments in  
7 Southeast Asia relating to Vietnam. We both voted for that  
8 as senators.

9 Secondly, we both voted for the resolution known  
10 as the Tonkin resolution, which authorized the President to  
11 take whatever measures are necessary, including armed force,  
12 to repel aggression. Now, we both voted for that.

13 Thirdly, the Senator has never voted against an  
14 appropriation to carry on this war, even supplemental  
15 appropriations or special appropriations not tied into  
16 anything else relating to our economy or defense.

17 So when it came to all of the authorizations, all  
18 of the directives to the President on the part of the  
19 Congress, Senator McCarthy has voted for every single one  
20 of them. In fact, he has voted for more than I have,  
21 because I haven't been in a position to vote for appropria-  
22 tions. I would have. Our votes would not have been any  
23 different.

24 Now, what is my idea about how this war should be  
25 settled? A negotiated settlement, a political settlement.  
26 Is this new to me? Not at all. I have said this for years,



1 ever since the time of John Kennedy's administration when we  
2 started to put in what we call special forces. Prior to  
3 that, President Eisenhower's administration. I have always  
4 looked to great concern about overinvolvement of American  
5 forces, that is, military forces, in Southeast Asia. That  
6 is a fact of Congressional Record, and a political record.  
7 I have never believed that the problems of Vietnam were  
8 subject to a strict military solution. I have opposed, for  
9 example, invasion of the north, as some would have  
10 recommended, and some people have recommended in Congress,  
11 and out of Congress, even out here in California. I have  
12 felt that the best way to settle this problem would be at  
13 the conference table, to take the struggle of Vietnam out  
14 of the battlefield and to the conference table.

15 Now, we have been able to do that, and the  
16 difference primarily between the Senator and myself is that  
17 the Senator has suggested nuances that the American people  
18 were ready for unilateral withdrawal. He didn't say he was,  
19 and he didn't say he was not. He just said that he had  
20 indicated that the American people, he felt, were ready for  
21 unilateral withdrawal. I don't think they are. I don't  
22 think that the American people are going to just run out and  
23 leave twenty-five to twenty-six thousand dead and run away  
24 from a commitment that has been made and the sacrifices that  
25 have been made in South Vietnam. That is one difference.

26 Secondly, he believes that we should impose a

1 coalition government. He believes that. Now, others have  
2 believed it, too. That is his right, namely, that the Viet  
3 Cong or the NLF should be brought into the government in  
4 Vietnam so that there could be a peaceful solution, as he  
5 puts it, on that new government.

6 I do not believe in a government, a coalition  
7 government to be imposed on the South Vietnamese government.  
8 I believe that the South Vietnamese should select their own  
9 government, in free and open elections, in which no group  
10 is excluded, and that the results of those elections should  
11 be accepted by us, by North Vietnam, and by South Vietnam.  
12 If in that government there should come some elements that  
13 you and I do not like, that's not our business. The right  
14 of self-determination is the right of people to elect and  
15 select a kind of government that they want. I want the  
16 South Vietnamese to have a free choice. That is what we  
17 went there for, to give them a chance for self-determination.

18 I believe in a political solution. We are now on  
19 the verge -- or now I should say we have taken the first  
20 steps toward that political solution. That first step is  
21 the Paris conference. I believe that that conference has  
22 built in it the same kind of momentum that will lead to a  
23 peaceful solution of the struggle that a war has built into  
24 it in terms of escalation. I want to see us have a cease-  
25 fire in Vietnam, a total cease-fire, so that the climate for  
26 the talks in Paris can be better. The enemy wants to fight

1 and talk. I say let's talk and let's stop the killing.  
2 Let's stop the shooting. Let's have a cease-fire. That  
3 means you stop all violence and all killing, and that we  
4 step down and try to negotiate our settlement that will not  
5 represent a surrender on the part of the enemy, and it will  
6 not represent a surrender on the part of ourselves and the  
7 South Vietnamese. It represents a combination, I believe it  
8 can be done.

9 As a matter of fact, just before I came to this  
10 program, I found a letter that had been sent to me from a  
11 committee known as the National Committee for Settlement in  
12 Vietnam. They addressed this letter on the date of July 28  
13 to every one of the candidates, the presidential candidates.  
14 It's a query to presidential candidates, and it is an eight-  
15 point program. I won't take time to go through the eight  
16 points, because I am sure it will be on your news shows, and  
17 it will be in the media. But here is what I said -- and by  
18 the way, it was addressed to the president of the great  
19 University of California, Dr. Clark Kerr:

20 "I am happy to respond to your request that I  
21 reply to your program for peace in Vietnam. I wholeheartedly  
22 endorse all eight points of your program, with one measure  
23 of elaboration. Under item No. 1 --" which item, by the way,  
24 related to an immediate standstill cease-fire by all sides,  
25 starting with an end of the bombing in North Vietnam.

26 I said, "Under item No. 1, I believe that the



1 present limited bombing of military targets in the north  
2 should be terminated as reciprocity is obtained from North  
3 Vietnam. The seeking of such reciprocity, thus making  
4 possible an immediate end to the bombing, should be and is  
5 a prime objective of our negotiators in Paris. I regard  
6 your eight-point program as a significant contribution  
7 toward national understanding of the South Vietnam issue.  
8 If put into action, I am quite sure that the long-term  
9 prospect for peace in Southeast Asia would be strengthened  
10 immeasurably.

11 "With best wishes, Hubert H. Humphrey."

12 So I think that gives you a pretty good description  
13 of my position on peace negotiations and the Vietnam issue.

14 MAURY GREEN: Mr. Humphrey, how does that Point 1 of  
15 that Kerr-Cousens group, how does that differ from President  
16 Johnson's position? I don't see any difference. On that  
17 point?

18 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: On that point, no; but I  
19 think the other seven points go a little bit further and  
20 maybe somewhat further than the present administration.

21 Also, I believe that the cease-fire proposal  
22 which this particular program sets out is a more positive  
23 and more precise cease-fire proposal than has been enunciated  
24 in the past.

25 MAURY GREEN: Then how do we get them to stop fighting  
26 and talk, other than by stopping the bombing?

1 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: May I say, asking and  
2 insisting upon some modicum of reciprocity? And I believe  
3 if we stick with it, we can get it. That is my viewpoint.

4 BILL AMES: Mr. Vice-President, this position on  
5 Vietnam which you have just outlined and amplified by this  
6 response to Dr. Kerr, does this anticipate in substantial  
7 degree the position paper on Vietnam which has been promised  
8 for some time early in this next week?

9 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I didn't make a promise  
10 on the timetable, but I said before this convention, and I  
11 hope that I could do it within the next ten days, that I  
12 would have a more detailed statement on what I said about  
13 Vietnam. The truth is that I have made many statements on  
14 Vietnam, all of them consistent, and I thought it would be  
15 well if we could pull them together so that we could have one  
16 paper, so that if anybody wanted to pick at it or wanted to  
17 discuss it or wanted to endorse it or whatever they wanted  
18 to do with it, that it would be there. I find that Dr.  
19 Kerr's group, this National Committee for a Political  
20 Settlement, has in a sense sort of got the jump on me. I  
21 say that most respectfully, because the points that are  
22 there are essentially the points that I find myself agreeing--  
23 and are the points that I find myself in agreement with,  
24 and are the sort of things that I have been working on as a  
25 part of the general position paper.

26 I would go just a little bit further, I might say,

1 and carry out some of the lessons that we have learned in  
2 Vietnam, and the future policy of the United States with  
3 Southeast Asia, and then subsequently a paper on the whole  
4 matter of the United States' role with Asia. I think they  
5 are tied in. I don't think you can look on Vietnam as a  
6 separate and distinct problem. It's tied in with all of  
7 Southeast Asia, and all of Southeast Asia with all of the  
8 great continent of Asia, and when you talk of the continent  
9 of Asia, you must also tie it in with the whole power  
10 structure of the world.

11 MAURY GREEN: Time doesn't wait for us. It is all over.  
12 Thank you very much for being with us.

13 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you, sir.  
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1  
2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
3 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ) SS.  
4

5 I, Robert H. Clark, CSR, a Notary Public in and  
6 for the State of California, do hereby certify:

7 That the foregoing, consisting of 20 pages, is a  
8 full, true and correct transcript of proceedings taken before  
9 me at the time and place therein set forth, and was taken  
10 down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to typewriting  
11 under my direction.

12 WITNESS my hand and seal this 5<sup>th</sup> day of August,  
13 1968.  
14

15 *Robert H. Clark*  
16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 Notary Public in and for the County  
18 of Los Angeles, State of California





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