

"PRESS CONFERENCE"

WITH

HUBERT H. HUMPHREY,

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

at KABC Studios, Hollywood, California

11:20 A.M., July 29, 1968

REPORTED BY ROBERT H. CLARK, CSR

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P A N E L

Carl George

Moderator

Julian Dixon

Law Student

Michael Klein

Harvard University

Michael Levitt

Editor,
UCLA Daily Bruin

Stanley Metzler

Editor,
USC Daily Trojan

Dennis Michaud

Statewide Chairman,
Students for RFK

Alice Sandoval

Garfield High School
Teacher

1 THE ANNOUNCER: KABC now presents a special "Press
2 Conference" program. Here is your moderator, Carl George.

3 CARL GEORGE: Good afternoon. I am Carl George.
4 This is "Press Conference." We have a different format
5 today than usual. Our special guest, as you know, is the
6 Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Hubert Humphrey,
7 and our panelists are six young people, each one involved
8 in their own way in the current affairs of the times. I
9 would like to ask each of our young people to introduce
10 themselves and give the Vice-President an indication of
11 what most concerns them.

12 ALICE SANDOVAL: Mr. Vice-President, I am Alice
13 Sandoval, and I will be a teacher at UCLA in English.
14 I have been very active in Mexican-American affairs here
15 in California, and I would like to ask you some questions
16 about education.

17 MICHAEL LEVITT: Mr. Vice-President, my name is
18 Michael Levitt. I am editor of the UCLA Daily Bruin. I
19 would like to ask about your concept of democracy and open
20 primaries.

21 DENNIS MICHAUD: Mr. Vice-President, my name is
22 Dennis Michaud. I am a former State Chairman of the
23 Students for Kennedy, and I am also one of the 12 student
24 delegates on the California delegation. I would like to
25 ask you about the need for the present Administration to
26 do certain things in order to re-establish confidence among

1 the young people.

2 MR. MICHAEL KLEIN: My name is Michael Klein. I am a
3 senior at Harvard University, and I would like to discuss
4 war and peace in Vietnam with you.

5 MR. STANLEY METZLER: Mr. Vice-President, I am Stan
6 Metzler, editor of the Daily Trojan at USC. I would like to
7 discuss a few of the problems of national unity.

8 MR. JULIAN DIXON: Mr. Vice-President, I am Julian
9 Dixon. I am chairman of a new Democratic club and
10 administrative assistant to Senator Dymally. I would like
11 to ask you about the militant movement in the United States.

12 CARL GEORGE: Well, Mr. Vice-President, as you can see,
13 a variety of issues. I hope we can get them all covered
14 in the short time that we have.

15 We will return with those questions and the
16 Vice-President after this message.

17 (Commercial)

18 CARL GEORGE: Our guest today, excuse me, Alice, is
19 our Vice-President of the United States, Hubert Humphrey.

20 Alice, your question?

21 ALICE SANDOVAL: Mr. Vice-President, to resume my
22 question, in particular, what would your Marshall Plan
23 do to help the Mexican-American in California, and Mexican-
24 American students throughout the Southwest? We do have the
25 highest dropout rate in schools and colleges.

26 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, the concept of the

1 Marshall Plan for the cities, Alice, relates primarily to
2 the physical limitation of the city as well as the human
3 rehabilitation.

4 The reason I use that phrase, which I think is
5 somewhat outdated, but it has a historical significance.
6 The Marshall Plan after World War II required a total
7 commitment on the part of our nation with vast sums of money,
8 with planned use of that money; also with the recipients
9 planning how the money would be used.

10 Too much of our Federal grants, Federal funds
11 come in with the Federal Government planning for the
12 local community. I don't think this is working. I think
13 what is absolutely necessary is what we might call "localism,"
14 where the plans come from the people, and particularly from
15 those who would be benefited. For example, in education,
16 if we were to really improve the educational structure, we
17 would have to bring in the planning of the school curriculum,
18 as well as the school facilities for the people who are to
19 be the beneficiaries of this educational program.

20 I happen to think, for example, that we need
21 better than just equal opportunity in education for people
22 that long have been denied an equal opportunity. I think
23 you need "catch up." You need remedial education. I think
24 you need centers of excellence, to train the best teachers
25 that you can find.

26 I will simplify it by saying that you need the

1 best schools in the poorest neighborhoods. You need the
2 best teachers where the children have had the least
3 opportunity for a good education; the best libraries; the
4 most modern teaching methods and teaching facilities. Now,
5 until we do that, we are never going to catch up on our
6 educational program.

7 MICHAEL LEVITT: Mr. Vice-President, if democracy means
8 that the majority not only chooses between two people, but
9 the majority chooses who those two people should be, would
10 your nomination be a democratic choice; and could you be a
11 democratic choice without a national primary?

12 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, if you want to say
13 should we have a national primary, I think there is good
14 argument for it. The late Senator Estes Kefauver, who
15 offered a resolution in Congress for a national primary.
16 I voted for that. But these State primaries exist only in
17 about one-fourth of the States of the Union. And each
18 State law is different than the other. Some primaries
19 control the selection of delegates. Some are what we
20 call preferential primaries. Some are popularity contests.
21 They really have very little relationship to the ultimate
22 designation of delegates, except in a few States. For
23 example, the State of California, the State of Wisconsin,
24 and the State of Indiana. But you can go into some of the
25 other States where they have primaries, such as the State of
26 Pennsylvania, and even in the State of New York. Many of

1 the primaries do not have a relationship to the actual
2 selection of delegates.

3 Now, I think we can improve our selection system.
4 A national primary could be very helpful in that. In the
5 meantime, let's not downgrade what really happens in the
6 State political party operation. For example, in my own
7 State of Minnesota, we had over 175,000 people who
8 participated in the party caucus. Now, that's no small
9 turn-out. Those are people who picked with a real interest
10 as to who was to be the delegate, and whom those delegates
11 were going to vote for. So you have got a pretty good
12 cross-section of a representation of the public.

13 This convention system, with all of its limita-
14 tions, did select John Kennedy. John Kennedy did become the
15 Presidential nominee because of the primaries. As a matter
16 of fact, I got a pretty good vote in those primaries, but
17 didn't get many delegates. And I didn't really complain
18 about it either.

19 Andrew Jackson, Grover Cleveland, Woodrow Wilson,
20 Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Adlai Stevenson, Dwight
21 Eisenhower, John Kennedy, these were all people that were
22 selected by their respective political parties at national
23 political conventions and out of State conventions.

24 MICHAEL LEVITT: It is your feeling then, that perhaps
25 a national primary, as such, is not a panacean answer.

26 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think it would be helpful.

1 I think the best panacea is interest on the part of the
2 citizenry; real interest on the part of the citizenry;
3 not only in the primary, but in their political party. The
4 political party is essential for the operation of this
5 Government. And if you are going to leave political parties
6 to those who just sort of manage them, you are going to
7 find out that they are pretty old-fashioned.

8 DENNIS MICHAUD: That is very interesting, because it
9 leads right into the question that I had, Carl, on the
10 students and youth. You say for people to maintain a real
11 interest, the students have, essentially, at least the
12 ones that I was involved with since Bob Kennedy's death
13 have dropped out, and are sitting back and waiting. And
14 one of the main reasons that they sit back and wait, and
15 they are not sure of themselves, and are not sure of our
16 political profits, is that they see people using apolitical
17 conscience to make decisions. In other words, to most of
18 the students that I have worked with, it would take your
19 resignation to really show them that you were thinking with
20 an apolitical conscience, and because things like the
21 Vietnam thing, the conscience of the world has slowly
22 awakened to our wrong-doing there. Also the Kerner Report,
23 with the selective silence of some of our administrators.

24 CARL GEORGE: Are you saying, or are you suggesting,
25 or are you asking the Vice-President whether or not the
26 values involving his resignation at this moment --

1 DENNIS MICHAUD: Yes, I am.

2 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am not going to resign. I
3 was elected Vice-President of the United States. I have an
4 obligation to the people that elected me. Who would succeed
5 to the Presidency if anything should happen to him? One of
6 the great problems that we faced with the death of President
7 Kennedy, and coming into the office of the then Vice-
8 President, Lyndon Johnson, was the problem of succession.
9 We passed a Constitutional amendment in a hurry to do some-
10 thing about it. I have an obligation. As a matter of fact,
11 the Vice-Presidency really restricts my political activities
12 a great deal, but I do accept an obligation by the people
13 of the United States. You talk about the people participating
14 in politics. More people participated in politics in the
15 election of 1964 than in any other election of our history,
16 and I was one of the candidates, and received a rather
17 large vote.

18 Now, might I say that other members, there is a
19 Senator running for President. He is not resigning. There
20 are two Governors, that I can think of, who are running,
21 and they are not resigning. The only one who wouldn't have
22 to resign is Mr. Nixon. I hope that doesn't qualify him
23 automatically to be President of the United States.

24 CARL GEORGE: Julian?

25 JULIAN DIXON: Mr. Vice-President, I think that we
26 can all agree that the militant movement is on an upsurge

1 in the United States. I think that one of the key issues
2 is national unity. No program thus far has been able to
3 satisfy the militant movement as far as bringing them into
4 the American scene. Do you have a proposal that will bring
5 the militant into the American scene?

6 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, the first thing I want
7 to say is that many people feel that if you are a militant,
8 then something is wrong. I do not think so. I think a
9 degree of militancy is very vital at this time in our
10 democracy if we are going to overcome some of our ingrained
11 problems that beset us, that are continually hanging on
12 and have literally been set in steel and concrete.

13 By "militancy," I do not mean violence. I mean
14 determination. I mean activation. Yes, one of the things
15 I have in mind, and which I think makes some sense is,
16 that if we believe in self-determination overseas, then we
17 can believe in self-determination here at home.

18 Let's take the black community for a minute. The
19 black community needs black entrepreneurship. It needs
20 jobs. It doesn't need just welfare. It doesn't need the
21 white man coming in and saying, "I hope we can do something
22 for you."

23 I happen to believe, for example, if you can have
24 opportunity for a job, and the chance to upgrade yourself
25 in that job, on the basis of merit, you will take care of
26 most of your own problems in your neighborhood.

1 I also think that militancy can mean that the
2 political institutions of the country can be filled by
3 members of the black community. There are a number of these
4 black legislators, councilmen, and representatives, and
5 senators now, that are serving in key positions.

6 Militancy means that the school board ought to
7 have representation on it that comes out of the militant
8 pursuit of the political process by the black community,
9 or any other community, the Mexican-American community,
10 or any other ethnic group.

11 I think that jobs and housing -- for example,
12 why shouldn't the black man be an owner or a manager of a
13 bank? Why shouldn't black people go to a bank that is
14 owned by black people, an owner of a drugstore, an owner of
15 a department store, an owner of a filling station? I have
16 some some of this in Watts that I just visited. It's just
17 the beginning. When you have a piece of the action, when
18 you have a piece of the ownership, you have a concern for
19 the community. And that's what I think militancy means today.

20 JULIAN DIXON: Sir, you have seen, since your visit
21 here in Los Angeles, a certain characteristic of certain
22 kinds of militancy, which, in fact, made it difficult for
23 you to speak the other night.

24 Now, where do you draw the line in terms of
25 constructive militancy and destructive militancy?

26 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The first thing I draw the

1 line on is whether or not you are going to abuse the right
2 of free speech. Now, I think that a man can be a militant
3 and be a democrat, with a small d, believing in every
4 process of democracy.

5 I believe that censorship in any form is in
6 opposition to an expression of freedom; and you can be
7 censored by heckling. You can be censored by wild picketing.
8 You can be censored by violence, violent activity. This is
9 what has destroyed many a great country and many a good
10 people. That kind of militancy is not what I call for
11 social purposes.

12 I believe that a man ought to be able to say
13 foolish things. It isn't a matter of what he says, but
14 he should have the right to say what he says. You don't
15 have to take him seriously, but he ought to have the right
16 to be heard.

17 JULIAN DIXON: How can that be controlled, sir?

18 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: This is going to require more
19 from the young people than any other movement. I believe
20 that the young people are essentially fair. We have been
21 talking here about young men and women in politics. Let's
22 establish some ground rules. Let's establish the ground
23 rule, first of all, that you have a right to be heard.
24 You don't necessarily have the right to be taken seriously,
25 but you have the right to be heard; that you have the right
26 to express your point of view.

1 Now, when somebody gets up and starts to shut
2 the other fellow up, just remember that's what happened in
3 Germany under Hitler. That's the beginning of the
4 totalitarian mentality. No one has a monopoly on wisdom
5 and virtue.

6 JULIAN DIXON: You approve of Mr. Reagan then. He
7 has made some of these comments.

8 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Let me say that I agree with
9 the right of Mr. Wallace, who came to my city in Minneapolis
10 to speak, and a group of people went into his meeting, and
11 there were fist fights and violence, and they broke up that
12 meeting. Now, who do you think that helped? It helped
13 Mr. Wallace. Now, I don't want to see American political
14 activity based on who can shout the loudest, and I think
15 that the students have understood this. And I hope that
16 you will kind of draw the line and set the ground rules.

17 CARL GEORGE: On that point, sir, we will have to
18 pause for just a moment and return for more questions to
19 the Vice-President after this message.

20 (Commercial)

21 CARL GEORGE: Our next question for the Vice-
22 President is from Stan Metzler, Editor of the USC Daily
23 Trojan.

24 STANLEY METZLER: Mr. Vice-President, perhaps a major
25 problem of President Johnson's Administration has been his
26 inability to relate his program to the majority of the

1 American citizens. He can't communicate with them. He
2 can't unite them behind him.

3 Now, you have fallen heir, like it or not, to his
4 mantle of leadership in the public eye for most of his
5 programs. How do you expect to be able to unite the
6 country behind you?

7 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I believe that there
8 is a basic sense of goodness in this country, and I believe
9 that there is a desire of the vast majority of the American
10 people to do what is right.

11 Let me put it this way, I think there is a great
12 silent majority that isn't demonstrating, that isn't
13 talking, that's listening and thinking. I think this silent
14 majority, Stan, has a desire to make this country move, and
15 move forward. I don't believe it's filled with hate. I
16 believe it wants progress, but I believe it wants it through
17 peaceful processes.

18 I intend to be the spokesman for that group as
19 much as I can. Now, you have mentioned some of the programs
20 of the Administration. I think there may be merit in the
21 fact that we haven't been able to communicate well. I
22 believe that part of that has been due, a large part of it
23 due to the great dissention in this country over the war in
24 Vietnam. I think that has tended to cloud the entire
25 atmosphere, regretably, because I don't believe that this
26 is a one-issue country. I think there are desperate needs

1 in this country; desperate needs in the Mexican-American
2 community; in the black community; in the community of the
3 poor, rural and urban, and we ought to be thinking about
4 those needs and do something. And we have.

5 Now, take for example, one of the things that I
6 am proud of in this Administration is our effort in the
7 field of education. We have increased Federal resources
8 to education 300 per cent in the last four years. We have
9 done some things in education that have needed to be done
10 under Title 1 and Title 3 of the Elementary and Secondary
11 Education Act:

12 Providing for experimentation;

13 Providing for new techniques in education;

14 The Manpower Training Program, which has finally
15 reached down into the hard core unemployed -- not as deeply
16 as I would like, but they have reached in. Presently we
17 have about 1,700,000 people in training. Now, we have put
18 over 6,000,000 people on what you call the employment rolls
19 as a result of training programs, on-the-job training
20 programs, and, of course, the expansion of the economy.

21 I don't think this message has gotten through.
22 I don't think the message of Head Start has really gotten
23 through to the people. By going out, as I am right now, and
24 talking about it, and representing it, because I go directly
25 to the people, because my whole life has been identified
26 with the liberal cause, with the liberal persuasion -- you

1 know, that most of the things that my young friends talk
2 about are things that we have been working on, and have in
3 many instances brought into culmination and realty.

4 MICHAEL KLEIN: Do you still identify with the liberal
5 cause and liberal situation?

6 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I sure do. I consider myself
7 a regular liberal, and a liberal that speaks with a liberal
8 voice, looking to the future and not to the past. I look
9 to the past only as a way to give some impetus to what I
10 want to do tomorrow, learning from experience in the past.

11 I happen to believe that this world of ours has
12 fundamentally changed.

13 I happen to believe that the situation in America
14 has fundamentally changed.

15 The race relations in our country is changing,
16 and changing dynamically and dramatically.

17 The whole desire of the people in America, who
18 have been long deprived, want to come into their own, be
19 in the decision-making processes of political institutions,
20 social and political of this country, represents that
21 kind of a change.

22 The upsurge, and what we call rising expectations
23 in this country, that represents change. I understand it.
24 I have been a part of it. I led it. And I am still
25 with it.

26 In other words, I am telling you that I am ready

1 for the future, and the future is ready for me.

2 MICHAEL LEVITT: Mr. Vice-President, you talk about
3 change, and you talk about the young people, be them silent,
4 or overt. I happen to be very proud of my colleagues who
5 have been overt, and who have spoken out, and who have taken
6 a position. I think you have got a generation now who
7 really represent the change that maybe you are talking
8 about. But we want to look to a man now who really will
9 illuminate the policies of peace that we are looking for.
10 We are looking for a world that is obviously better. We
11 don't see it as a great world today. We want to look to a
12 man now who can show us, and who can prove it to us, and
13 tell us, that there will be a definite attempt to make those
14 changes in our foreign policies to eliminate, and to very
15 well prevent the type of situations that have occurred in
16 Vietnam and in Korea. That is what we are looking for.

17 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir. And we must
18 look that way. We are at an end of an era, so to speak,
19 in the established foreign policies of our country. Those
20 policies were established in 1948, at the end of World War
21 II, with the Marshall Plan, for example, the first economic
22 aid program, and with NATO -- policies of containment
23 facing up to Stalinism, facing up to the monolith of
24 communism.

25 There isn't any monolith of communism any more.
26 First of all, you have got the Russian type, and then you

1 have the Chinese type, and within each, you have all kinds
2 of fractional groups. Take Eastern Europe today.
3 Czechoslovakia, Rumania. Just take a look at two. Hungary.
4 There isn't any monolith there. There is a desire for
5 autonomy, a degree of independence.

6 Now, we have to relate our policies to that current
7 situation. What is more important is, this is something
8 that young people I do believe, and we can spend a little
9 time on, the great threat to world peace is not Vietnam.
10 The great threat to world peace is nuclear competition and
11 nuclear confrontation. I haven't had a young man or a
12 young woman in a long time really sit down and talk in depth
13 and in detail about the nuclear confrontation that could
14 take place -- the arms race, the nuclear weapon race that
15 permits, and may I say with any irrational act, would
16 trigger a total catastrophe, a world-wide catastrophe.

17 Now, the next President of the United States must
18 be a man that is able to talk with, and work with, and
19 seek some kind of understanding with the Soviet Union. The
20 two super powers, the United States of America and the
21 Soviet Union, can destroy each other, and can destroy the
22 world with one miscalculation.

23 Now, to be sure, Vietnam is a tragic thing. To
24 be sure, it is a cruel war. But the major issue of foreign
25 policy in the year 2000 is whether or not the leaders of
26 this world will be able to prevent a nuclear holocaust, and

1 whether we will be able to stop the arms race.

2 CARL GEORGE: We will have to stop for just a few
3 moments. We will be back after this message.

4 (Commercial)

5 CARL GEORGE: Mr. Vice-President, just a few moments
6 left. There is just time for a few questions. Mr. Dennis
7 Michaud.

8 DENNIS MICHAUD: Before, in my very expansive question
9 that I asked you, I talked about silence on certain issues.
10 The Kerner Report -- the Kerner Commission's anniversary
11 is today. The selective silence in both the black community
12 and among the student population, we don't hear anything
13 from Washington about the Kerner Report other than, yes,
14 it was done. Why wasn't more said?

15 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I suppose there are those
16 that don't hear. That doesn't mean that some of us haven't
17 said. I support the Kerner Report.

18 The co-chairman of my campaign for the United
19 Democrats for Humphrey, Senator Fred Harrison of the Kerner
20 Report Commission.

21 The co-chairman of my Citizens for Humphrey is
22 David Ginsburg, the counsel for the Kerner Commission Report,
23 the Riot Commission Report. I am one of those people in
24 public life, and I think the only candidate, by the way,
25 the only candidate that has supported the recommendations
26 of the Kerner Report and asked for their implementation.

1 No other candidate has done so.

2 JULIAN DIXON: Mr. Vice-President, I heard you openly
3 criticize the Selective Service system, as it is today.
4 What would be your modifications to it?

5 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think the present system is
6 filled with inequities and troubles. I believe a random
7 system, a lottery system, is much more preferable. And
8 we are going to outline a very detailed report on it; but
9 I support the lottery system.

10 ALICE SANDOVAL: What would you do if you are elected
11 President as to how the minority groups get into the main
12 stream politically? For instance, here in California we
13 have one representative of Mexican-American descent in
14 Congress, no City Councilman in L. A., no member of the
15 State Legislature, neither Senator nor Assemblyman, who is
16 of Mexican-American descent, to represent the largest minority
17 in the State, nor have we had any for a long time.

18 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Alice, let me say, there
19 isn't any President that can come out and select your people
20 for you. But he can encourage. He can see, for example,
21 through the instrumentalities of the Federal Government,
22 the advisory commissions, the boards, the committees, and
23 so forth, that representation does come from the Mexican-
24 American community. So that people are surfaced, so that
25 people are given a chance for exposure; so that they become
26 a part of the advisory and governing groups, at least at the

1 Federal level.

2 MICHAEL KLEIN: The President didn't recognize the
3 Kerner Commission Report very much. Is the Vice-President
4 responsible to the President of the United States, or the
5 people of the United States?

6 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The Vice-President is
7 responsible to the people of the United States, and the
8 Vice-President has recognized the Kerner Report.

9 The President has asked his cabinet, every one of
10 them, to implement as much of the Kerner Report as they
11 could under existing legislation, and he is drawing on a
12 task force providing new legislation to carry out the
13 Kerner Report.

14 CARL GEORGE: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

15 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Time really flies by, doesn't
16 it?

17 CARL GEORGE: Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

18 We hope that you will all be back next week for
19 "Press Conference," so until then, this is Carl George.

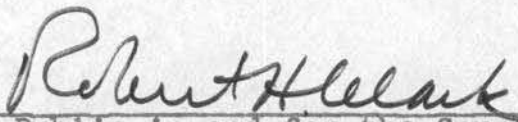
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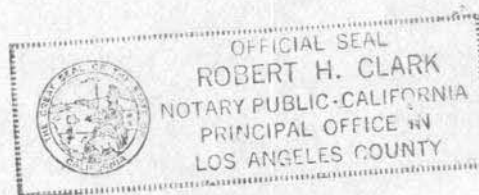
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11 WITNESS my hand and seal this 7th day of August,
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