

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW OF VICE-PRESIDENT HUBERT H.  
HUMPHREY WITH MR. SHORYU HATA, FOREIGN EDITOR OF  
ASAHI SHIMBUN -- NOVEMBER 1, 1965

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: I am very pleased that Mr. Hata had a chance to talk with Secretary Rusk, and to get the feeling of our country -- about our relations in Viet-Nam and other parts of the world. It is very difficult to understand American foreign policy by just reading about it.

MR. HATA: Mr. Vice-President, you are an extremely busy person, and I wonder if it might be possible for you to reply to a few questions.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: Yes, I will be happy to do that, Mr. Hata. I will answer your questions, and then I want to discuss, in broader terms, relationships between the United States and Japan, and possibly to talk to you about some of the objectives that we have here in the United States in terms of our own domestic policy for our own people.

MR. HATA: Thank you, very much, Mr. Vice-President. We have heard a great deal of your political vision, and if you could also go into the last area you indicated it would be even a deeper pleasure for me.

Now, the first question: While the earlier post-war years were characterized by the "cold war," major changes have occurred in the world situation in the past several years.

In this connection, I believe, the most important problem facing the two major powers, the U. S. and the Soviet Union, and the rest of the world, now and even throughout the 1970s, is the People's Republic of China.

How do you evaluate problems that will be posed by the Communist Chinese and what kind of global policy do you have in mind for the future, and, moreover, how does the problem of the Communist Chinese fit into that policy?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: Well, that's a very broad topic. In order to respond to it, I must give you my view as to the objective of Communist China.

I think its major objective, of course, is to make itself a major world power, with all of the apparatus that comes with that -- the military, the nuclear power, the economic power, diplomatic power -- and, once having obtained that position to attempt to exert that power, to restore to Peking or to Communist China the areas that it thinks it historically possessed.

Now, we know of the maps that the Communist Chinese use. They have a number of what they call "lost provinces" for lack of a better term -- areas that are presently within the Soviet Union, areas in Southeast Asia -- where they either had direct sovereignty, or a type of colonial power. The Communist Chinese feel that this area of the world belongs under their complete control, or under their influence to a point where it would have little or no freedom of action.

Now, we believe this is part of Communist China's objective. It seeks to achieve these objectives, as I said, through power, through terror or fear, through the weight of its own massive population, and its land mass. It also seeks to promote the violent overthrow of non-Communist Governments in the immediate area, and other places, as well. It uses the race doctrine a great deal, and tries to use racism as an appeal to Africa, to Asia, and even to Latin America. It has, as its immediate objectives, Southeast Asia, to frighten India, by keeping India off balance; to reach out, if possible, into Indonesia, which is a very rich area of the world; to drive Western power out of the Indian Ocean, out of the Pacific, or at least back a long ways; and then

to take advantage of the poverty, the illiteracy, the backwardness of Africa, and to use racism, Communism, diplomacy and propaganda to obtain friendly regimes in Africa. In Latin America, it would do the same, with more emphasis, however, on cultural impact, economic infiltration, propaganda, and working with the revolutionaries in the Latin America area.

Now, we feel that in order to combat this our policy should be directed toward strengthening the security of Free World countries. This means economic help, improving the economic strength of every country that we can help, working with the democratic forces, if possible, in those countries, and making it perfectly clear -- and I think this is most important -- making it perfectly clear to Communist China that her external adventures, her desire to test her strength militarily, will not pay off, that she will get her nose bloodied, that she will have to pay a terrible price for this. I think it is absolutely essential that Communist China understand that she cannot gain any objective of hers through sheer force.

I would say that what we are compelled to do is to resist all forms of Communist Chinese aggression. And aggression

takes many forms now -- propaganda, subversion, terror, diplomatic pressure, economic pressure. We must be prepared as a major power -- we, the United States -- and we hope with our friends and allies -- to resist this Communist Chinese push; to resist this aggressive attitude. And this is one of the reasons that we seek to do what we can to prevent China from gaining respectability and acceptance.

I mean if the Chinese can frighten everybody, they will accept them -- not because they want to, but because they think they have to. But if other nations feel that they don't have to accept them, because there are other powers that will protect them, then China does not gain acceptance. Therefore, we resist her coming into the United Nations, primarily because Communist China openly repudiates the Charter; she does not believe in peaceful co-existence, she believes in violence. She believes in aggression -- she says so; her leaders say so. And, until she changes her mind, we are going to have to resist. This is why we do not recognize her, even though we have many informal contacts.

It is my personal view that the recognition of Communist China by the United States now would give incentives to many of the Southeast Asian countries to lean towards China. They

would say, "Well, after all, the United States accepts her. Why shouldn't we?" And, with millions of Chinese throughout all of Southeast Asia, in Indonesia, in Malaysia, and other places, I think it would be very injurious to peace.

Now, having said all of that, we are going to exercise considerable patience; but patience should not be mistaken for weakness. Abraham Lincoln, our great President, put it best. He said: "With firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right." He said: "With malice towards none, with charity for all." But "with firmness in the right."

And we think that firmness and patience will bring about some change in the Chinese attitude. We have found this with Russia. I think we find it with every country. I think history demonstrates this.

Now, finally, on China, one of the reasons, and one of the main reasons that we resist China in Viet-Nam, is because we think that if South Viet-Nam is made the victim of this new type of aggression -- and it is a new form of aggression -- that everyone else will tend to feel that they have to make their accommodations to the new power of China. Frankly, I think China's power is overrated. She has great numbers of people, but she doesn't have an industrial base yet. I do not

underestimate the innate brilliance and ability of the Chinese people. In fact, there is an affection for the Chinese people among Americans, a long historical feeling of friendship. But, regrettably, that feeling is being destroyed in China by the Communist leaders. However, Communists do not have immortality any more than anybody else, and soon the toll of age will take the old leaders, and a new crowd will come in.

Well, that's a long dissertation.

MR. HATA: After years of struggle in the "cold war," the U.S. and the Soviet Union have reached the stage where they can talk in a common language -- peaceful coexistence.

Is it possible, in your view, to create a similar understanding between the U.S. and the Communist Chinese and thus establish a relationship of peaceful coexistence and cooperation?

If so, what is your outlook on such possibilities and what are prerequisites, if any, that should be met before such a relationship can be established?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: Well, I have answered that somewhat.

I would say that we believe that Peking is not likely to deviate from its present course of expansionism if it feels that this course is succeeding. In other words, the best

way that we see to have a better relationship between the United States and Communist China is to make it crystal clear that the price of Chinese Communist adventures, or adventurism and expansionism, is too high a price for them to pay.

Then, we want to make it crystal clear that there are better ways of doing things; that there are ways and means and opportunities for a better relationship.

This is one of the reasons that I personally believe that our relationships with the Soviet Union are very important -- not only because we are two major powers that have a tremendous responsibility in the world for peace; but, also, we can set an example showing how different systems can work together on some things, even though we still maintain different ways of life, different political and economic systems.

I believe that it is to the advantage of every nation that the Chinese Communists' arrogance, aggressive attitudes, belligerency, and expansionism, be curtailed; that it be restricted and restrained. I think it is to the advantage of Japan, I think it is to the advantage of India, of the United States, and of all the smaller countries. Because, surely, if the smaller countries can be swallowed up, or can be consumed,

out of either fear or conquest, by Chinese Communist aggression, then there is no hope for any of the small countries in the world. Some of this conquest can be indirect. For example, a major country in Africa, that became a satellite of Communist China, could become an aggressor in its own right in Africa, while carrying out the aggressive ideology of Communist China.

So we do feel that if Chinese Communist expansionism succeeds, then there is little hope for peace anywhere, and, surely, no hope for better relationships between ourselves and them. But we also feel that times do change; and men do change. As I said earlier, when the men of the Long March have put in their time on this earth, and they are gone and a new generation comes forward, and that new generation has found out that the price of aggression is too high, conditions can improve. It will take patience and forbearance. It will also require that we have many initiatives; and, by the way, we are prepared for that. I think that it is important that people understand that we do believe that there are certain cultural exchanges that could be made. We have authorized every newsman from our country that wishes to go to China, to go, if he can get in.

As soon as we get any indication that the Chinese Communist leaders would prefer to live in a world of peace, we are prepared to walk the extra mile to seek that peace. I personally believe that we must be on the alert at all times for any indication of a more peaceful outlook.

So I believe that about answers that question.

I want to make clear that my reference to Africa should not, in any way, indicate that I think Communist Chinese policy has been successful in Africa. In fact, I think it has been quite a failure. They have made very few inroads into Africa. Africa is nationalistic, not Communistic.

MR. HATA: Regarding American global policy, I have noted reports of a "new isolationism." If they are true, do they mean that in view of the comparative importance attached to Europe and Asia in the current American policy Asia may become the first object of such consideration?

Whatever the case may be, could you explain, on that score, the future Asian policy of the United States?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: There is no real "new isolationism." This is a journalistic phrase that relates to what is an inevitable feeling on the part of some Americans that things aren't going as well as we would like in the world, so let's quit. Now, only a very small minority of Americans feel that way. They are vocal, articulate, and loud, but they do not represent American policy. In fact, American policy is today fully committed to our participation in the United Nations, more than ever, stronger than before.

We still believe in the Atlantic partnership with Europe; a renewed and strengthened effort in the Alliance for Progress in Latin America; improving and strengthening the Organization of American States; a new interest and, I think, a very healthy interest, in Africa. We had no African policy until the 1950s, but we do have a very keen interest in Africa, because Africa represents old colonies that are becoming new countries, new nations. And the American people are sympathetic to self-determination; they are even more sympathetic to self-determination than sometimes the utterances of the Government. Make no mistake about it, the American people are for independence; they are for self-determination. And one of the reasons that the American people support our effort

in South Viet-Nam is because the American people believe that what we are trying to do is to give the South Vietnamese a chance to make their own life, to be an independent, free country. Whether they will be like we are is not the question. As a matter of fact, most Americans don't expect other countries to be like we are; they just want other countries to be left alone, to be permitted to grow and to develop.

In Asia, there always has been an interest on the part of the United States, if not what I would consider a well-thought-out policy. That is now growing. For example, speaking of your own country, I believe, as a citizen and as Vice-President, that the relationships between our two countries are absolutely fundamental and basic to any successful policy for Japan, or the United States, in Asia. I believe that we need a working partnership like we have with some of our European friends -- every bit as good. I believe that we ought to be as considerate of Japan as we are of Germany; as considerate of Japan as we are of Great Britain. Because Japan represents the strongest productive power today in Asia, and because it is Asian, and we are not -- we are occidentals -- and we need Asian partners.

I believe that our policy must not be exclusive to any one country. For example, I have a very keen interest in the subcontinent, in what's going on in India, in Pakistan. We

are very disturbed over that struggle, because both of these are our friends, and we try to be friendly to both, which makes it very difficult. The Russians have an advantage; they only want to be friendly to one. But, in the long run, I think that our policy will prove sensible, in Africa and in Asia.

We must work a good deal through the United Nations -- multilaterally rather than bilaterally.

In Latin America, we work through the Organization of American States, under the terms of what we call the Rio Treaty, and the Punta del Este Charter; that is, the Alliance for Progress, and the Organization of American States.

In Europe, we work primarily through NATO and whatever revisions come through that, plus our bilateral arrangements with the major powers.

So, to simplify it, there is not new isolationism. There is a more selective application of political, economic, and diplomatic resources. And I think this is all to the good.

MR. HATA: I believe the most pressing and important item now in the field of disarmament problems is prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons. Some pessimists say that agreement on the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons or on nuclear

disarmament will be reached only after a further and increased spread of nuclear weapons. This is a dangerous possibility.

Does the United States Government believe that an effective agreement on the stoppage of nuclear proliferation between the Soviet Union and the interested countries will be made feasible before such a dangerous stage is reached?

Moreover, is the United States Government ready to take further initiatives to that end?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: I think nuclear proliferation is the most dangerous problem the world faces today. The spread of nuclear weapons can truly threaten the peace more than any other development that I see on the immediate horizon. And, therefore, every effort must be made to prevent this proliferation.

Our Government has presented to the Geneva Disarmament Conference a proposal. The Soviet Union recently has presented one at the United Nations. The British have also made a presentation. We recognize that a number of countries are at the point in their science and technology where they could develop these weapons. And it is important that a nonproliferation treaty be agreed upon before these weapons get into the hands of many other countries. It's bad enough the way it is already, and we must do everything possible to prevent this spread.

Now, how do we do it? Well, we hope for a treaty committing the nuclear powers and the potential nuclear powers, and all others, to no further nuclear proliferation. I think that such a treaty is feasible. I think that it is obtainable. It will take some time and discussion. However, just for the Soviet Union and the United States to agree upon a treaty to prohibit the spread of these weapons does not guarantee that this will happen, does not guarantee that there will be no spread of the weapons, because other countries can go ahead without our help.

I don't believe the Russians are going to help anybody to make a nuclear bomb; and I don't think we are either. But science has few secrets, if any. There sometimes is a lag, a delay, but the secrets are very few, if any; and, today several countries know how to do this. However, they cannot develop an

an effective nuclear weapon without testing. They must test. Therefore, the secret to nonproliferation is expanding the coverage of the Nuclear Test Ban, to prevent any testing underground, in the atmosphere, in space, under water, to stop all testing.

The question, and the problem, is how do you make sure that the testing has stopped. And, therefore, we come to two things: Improved technology, to ascertain or to discover any violation of a test ban, and we have made progress in that. And, second, international inspection, even though very limited.

And, I am happy to tell you, we do now have some forms of international inspection -- in the Antarctica, under the Antarctica Treaty; but, more importantly, under the International Atomic Energy Agreement for the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy.

I received a letter the other day from the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. Seaborg -- Chairman of our U. S. Commission -- and he points out the International Atomic Energy Agency is the only international organization which has been accorded and has exercised the right to send inspectors into the territory of its member states to ensure compliance with international undertakings. Dr. Seaborg points out that in the transfer of fissionable material, under the present International Atomic Energy Agreement, we must make sure that this does not go

into weapons, that the fissionable material is only for peaceful purposes. And we have an agreement, of which the Soviet Union is a party, for international inspection. So the International Agency is presently doing some inspection.

Therefore, I believe that the possibilities of a treaty, a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, are much better, that we may very well be able to get international inspection of a limited degree. And we are working towards that objective.

Now, it is our view that not to have it, not to have international inspection would actually increase the danger of war. Because it would put a premium upon cheating to get an advantage. International inspection would make sure that the treaty was being fulfilled and being respected.

Finally, it is my view that we must consider the problem of giving nonnuclear countries some protective cover. But here may be the place where the nuclear powers can come to an agreement among themselves: that, if a country has no nuclear weapons, that we -- the nuclear powers -- will guarantee them protection against any other nuclear power. I think that's

a possibility, and ought to be looked into.

MR. HATA: In 1970, the term of the current U.S.-Japan Security Treaty expires. A controversy is already afoot in Japan over a revision of the treaty.

What do you think is the most desirable future relationship between the United States and Japan?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: Well, I have explained already some of my views on this; for example, on nuclear policy. I believe that the time is arriving where the United States ought to include friendly countries in our nuclear strategy and nuclear policy. That doesn't mean you turn weapons over to them. It doesn't mean that you share the weapons. It simply means that nuclear policy is so important today that friendly nations ought to be included within the general discussion and strategy as to the use of nuclear weapons, or the potential use, or the agreement not to use them. I mean the whole nuclear question ought to be more closely-related to our general international commitments and international security policy. We are trying to work something out in Europe on this. I think that ought to be extended, as I say, to Japan -- the same kind of consideration and consultation. Japan is a major power; we look upon her as one.

I am not at all sure what the future will offer on the Japan-U.S. treaty. According to my understanding, the treaty provides that it may be terminated by either party on one year's notice, after June 1970; but, otherwise, runs indefinitely. I would imagine that after 1970 there will be discussions in both countries about this treaty. There will be thinking about it prior to 1970, I hope. I do not believe that we have any particular plans to revise the treaty. But Japan has its own rights under the treaty.

Now, it is my view that while there are limitations upon the Japanese under this treaty that the Japanese have also gained a good deal of protection under the treaty. For example, you have not had to expend large sums of money for national armament. What a blessed privilege that is!

We spend billions -- between \$50 and \$55 billion a year.

We have a Mutual Assistance Treaty. In other words, American power today is shared by Japan. We have the privilege of bases, which causes some political problems in Japan. But there is nothing that happens that doesn't cause some problem.

The matter of Okinawa. We consider Okinawa an important forward base for the United States in light of our commitments. But we, also, recognize the long-term interest of the Japanese in

Okinawa.

All of these matters are subject to a rational and reasonable approach, if men seek to be reasonable.

I must say that at this stage we need Okinawa because of our far-flung commitments. There is little good of an American commitment to a country if we cannot deliver. Okinawa is a part of the over-all international security for the Free World, with the United States paying the bill. It has a national security value to Japan. But, again, I recognize that there are political problems in Japan because of this.

All of these matters are subject to consideration and discussion amongst friendly countries. And the important thing it seems to me for the future is a healthy, friendly, frank relationship between our two countries; open talk, frank talk, between equals. We need Japan; Japan needs us.

And I think that the future of American and Japanese policy can be good, if the Japanese understand that our objectives and purposes are friendly and cooperative; and if the Americans understand that the Japanese have some problems, too, political and economic problems.

Our economic relationships are excellent and are going to improve, I am sure, because there is a growing awareness in the

United States that Japan must export. The man that buys from us is a good friend and the man that sells to us finds in us a good friend. I think a good deal of attention needs to be given to the economics of the two countries. I really believe that much more time ought to be spent by our technicians and experts and diplomats on the improvement of the economic relationships between our two great countries.

Also, Japan has real need of markets in other parts of the world. We must give consideration to all of these things.

I am an optimist about our relationships; I am not a pessimist. I think we have to keep in mind, in the United States, that one cannot move abruptly on any of these matters that there must be a good deal of preliminary talk.

And, I will just end up by saying that I don't think there has been enough of that. I think there is a greater need, on the part of my country, of very intimate, frank discussions, diplomatic, political and economic, with Japanese leaders in the Japanese Government, and in the Japanese economy. I think we ought to try to explore how we can help each other. And I truly believe that Japan can be very, very helpful to the whole Free World cause. I think there are many people in Japan who think that its future markets are in China. I wouldn't be too

sure of that. Of course, I am an American, and I am not at all a scholar of Asia. I really regret that. But China, today, is very much like the Soviet Union in the early days. It wasn't much of a customer for anybody. They are primarily for themselves for awhile. In the long run; yes. But, in the meantime, there is Africa; there is Korea and Southeast Asia; there is the subcontinent, for the exportation of goods from Japan, and the importation of raw materials. I think Japan ought to take a much more active interest in the economic development of Korea, Southeast Asia and the subcontinent. That's my view. Your country produces about \$60 billion a year gross national product; it will do much better. It ought to cooperate with the United States and other countries in developing economic aid and technical assistance in Asia, in particular. We are very grateful for Japanese participation in the early stages of the Asian Development Bank. I think this is very important. I think Japan's role in that Bank is very important.

The treaty between Korea and Japan is a good sign. There is a good deal of emotion and history involved in all of this. But time heals.

And, I will end up saying that our relationships, I think, are basic to the peace of Asia, and to the peace of the Pacific.

I just can't overemphasize it. And I regret that there hasn't been more study in my country about these things. But we are learning. We had to learn about Latin America. We have had to learn about Africa. We have had to learn about the Middle East. We have even had to learn about Europe -- in 20 years, since 1945. And, now, to learn of the ways and the cultures of Asia, the great history of Asian peoples, the history of the many nations, is a very, very heavy assignment. It is a big assignment for a people that are busy here at home. But we will do so, if we have partners that help us. And, in this instance, we need your help more than you need ours.

Now, at home here, Mr. Hata, we are trying desperately in our country to right some old wrongs, to do something about old problems that have been lingering like a sickness. On race relations in the United States, we are determined to correct this problem; and we are. The laws are clear now. The next thing is the practice under the law, and we are making progress, tremendous progress. It will take time. But we will move rapidly. We have made more progress in five years than we ~~have~~ made in a hundred. We have made more progress in 15 months, than we made in the preceding 50 years. Since the Civil Rights Act of 1964, discrimination, segregation is out--through!

Our real challenge now is the upgrading of the people, people who were the victims of segregation, people who were the victims of discrimination--the Negro. He had a low-level education, or none; he was poor, he had few skills. There were very few Negro professionals. Now, there is a great effort to lift the whole level of educational quality for the Negro, and the poor Whites; and the poor anybody--just the poor. And this is what we mean in America today by the Great Society. We want to help lift those at the bottom without pushing those at the top down. In other words, not to take from those up here (indicating) but to help these down here (indicating). And we are doing this primarily through training, education, health, for the little children particularly; through greatly-expanded education programs, manpower training for the unskilled and for those whose skills are no longer adaptable to modern industry through vocational education for our young people, colleges, higher education. We want young people to get a higher degree of education. And then we have, I think, created a new economics in this country; we are a very progressive country economically now. The Government works as a partner with business and labor. There is a much better relationship between these forces than ever before.

President Johnson is almost solely responsible for that. He works with management and labor, brings them together into conferences. And we now believe that there are common objectives, and common purposes, that we can fulfill.

This has released tremendous energy in our country.

Then, we have been reducing taxes for the purpose of investment, giving the private enterprise system the motivation, the incentive, to expand. It is not an accident that we have had 58 consecutive months of economic growth. It is the result of fiscal policy, monetary policy, Government attitudes, encouragement on the part of Government, and a new attitude on the part of management, and labor, that they can work together. And we have kept down the fires of inflation. The price rise has been very moderate for an expanding economy. That's historically true. But in the four and a half years -- since 1961, the price rise has been minimal. The wholesale price index remained almost steady and there was moderate fluctuation in consumer goods and perishables.

So, we think that we are making real progress in our country for the long term, not just temporarily. By putting more people to work that are skilled, raising the educational level of the people, improving the health of the people, and equipping our

Government to work with the private sector in order to combat depression and recession.

We have regions that we work with. For example, I just came from West Virginia this morning. This is a part of what we call Appalachia. This was a very poor part of America just a few years back. Just a year ago, we passed legislation that permitted the Federal Government to work with the State and local governments and private industry to expand the economic opportunities and it's working. There are great new improvements, new industries, new roads, new dams, new water systems, new housing; and this has produced thousands of new jobs.

With all of this, the revenues of the Government increase, even though we have reduced the tax rates very sharply. Corporate and personal income taxes have been reduced about \$17 billion; we cut off the excise taxes; we gave an investment tax credit for new investment of 7 1/2 per cent. Yet despite all of these tax rate reductions, the revenues of the Federal Government have gone up. They run at about \$7 1/2-\$8 billion a year increased revenue even though the tax rates are reduced. So that we are able to pay for many of the things that we are trying to do: the poverty program, the education programs, the health programs. All of these matters, which ordinarily would cause a very heavy financial burden on our country, are being paid for out of the

improvement of the economy. Because the economy goes faster, there are more jobs and more investment; and the Federal Government gets more revenues out of that to do the things that I am talking about for human beings.

So, we are getting first-class citizenship for every American. Improved education is on the way. We are really trying to get at these pockets of poverty, trying to find out what it is that keeps people poor, what can we do about it to get them out of this cycle of poverty; and to find ways of training and equipping these people to sustain themselves, to be "taxpayers instead of tax eaters," as we say.

Well, I think I have taken enough of Mr. Hata's time.

MR. HATA: Thank you very deeply for this extremely long period of time you have been able to spend with me, Mr. Vice-President.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mr. Hata.



# Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)