

TRANSCRIPT

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FACE THE NATION

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GUEST: VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NEWS CORRESPONDENTS:

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CBS News

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Transcripts of this broadcast will be distributed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where the program originates, and in Washington.

1 MR. AGRONSKY: Mr. Vice President, White House statements in-
2 dicate that the United States and the Soviet Union may soon make
3 a historic move to curb the East-West competition in offensive
4 and defensive weapons. From your knowledge, are you optimistic
5 about the chances for a genuine breakthrough?

6 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, I am. I am familiar with the
7 discussions that have taken place. In fact, President Johnson
8 started these discussions on the whole subject of arms control
9 and the reduction of weaponry in an exchange of letters back in
10 January 1964 with Mr. Khrushchev. I have been well informed
11 with the correspondence and have been informed as to the letters
12 that have taken place, the exchange between President Johnson
13 and Chairman Kosygin since 1965. I am reasonably optimistic
14 about at least the negotiations beginning.

15 ANNOUNCER: From Minneapolis, Minnesota, in color, FACE THE
16 NATION, a spontaneous and unrehearsed news interview with Vice
17 President Hubert Humphrey. Vice President Humphrey will be
18 questioned by CBS News Correspondent George Herman, Warren Weaver
19 of the Washington Bureau of The New York Times, and CBS News
20 Correspondent Martin Agronsky.

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22 MR. AGRONSKY: Mr. Vice President, is there any new development
23 that you would know about and we wouldn't in this exchange of
24 letters and in this beginning of these conversations that
25 Foreign Minister Gromyko said he was prepared to initiate?

1 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, first of all, I must say that
2 the letters have been going on, the exchange, as I indicated
3 earlier, since January 1964. I am familiar with this corres-
4 pondence, particularly since the period of 1965. President
5 Johnson has had a series of letter exchanges with the leaders of
6 the Soviet Union on all subjects of weaponry, nuclear and
7 conventional weaponry, in the hopes to slow down the weapons
8 race and to try to make some breakthroughs. Some of this has
9 already resulted in, as we know, the nonproliferation treaty
10 which will be signed this Monday in Washington, D. C., which is,
11 I think, a most important arms control measure that has been
12 achieved since World War II. And on Monday the President of the
13 United States will make another announcement which I believe
14 will have great significance in terms of arms control and the
15 control over weaponry. It would be inappropriate for me, sir,
16 to outline the details of that announcement. But I think that the
17 world will find that a very substantial breakthrough has been
18 made.

19 MR. WEAVER: Mr. Vice President, on the area of Vietnam, Richard
20 Nixon has said that if he should be elected President he would
21 stop the war in Vietnam. Can you make that statement?

22 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Every man who seeks this office
23 should want to bring that war to an end and to bring it to an
24 honorable end through a negotiated political settlement. That
25 process is already under way. It is under way in Paris. This

1 has been the objective of this administration; it surely has
2 been my objective. I have never believed that the war in
3 Vietnam, the struggle in Vietnam was subject to a military
4 solution, per se. I thought it required a political solution. I
5 thought it required a negotiated settlement. We are now in the
6 process of that negotiation. It will be difficult, there is no
7 doubt about it. It may take a great deal of time. But the
8 process has been started and I am confident that that process
9 will succeed. That is what we are both trying to seek and I
10 hope that that is what every candidate for public office will
11 back.

12 MR. HERMAN: Should that process be understood in a broader
13 frame? We have already touched on disarmament; we are now talk-
14 ing about negotiations to end Vietnam. There are some other
15 indications of relaxation of tensions between East and West. Is
16 there a new era coming? Is there a sort of detente, which used
17 to be the popular word, coming in East-West tensions?

18 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The struggle for peace, you see, is
19 not something that is quick and sudden and even dramatic. We
20 were discussing here a moment ago the exchange of letters that
21 Mr. Agronsky called to our attention and on which I commented.
22 Now, that has been going on since 1964. I was Chairman of the
23 Subcommittee on Disarmament in the United States Senate from
24 1956 on. Practically every proposal that we are talking about
25 now had its beginnings in the proposals and in the discussions

1 of that special committee or Subcommittee on Disarmament. I do
2 believe that whoever is the next President of the United States
3 must face up to the fact that this is a vastly changed world.
4 It is not the world of 1948 with the monolith of communism and
5 Joseph Stalin; it is a very different world, of Africa and Asia
6 and Europe and Eastern Europe, with the Communist monolith
7 shattered and rising nationalism even in the Socialist Communist
8 countries. I think it is a world that offers prospect for
9 peaceful settlements, for the reduction of tensions. And that
10 is what a President of the United States must seek to do. He
11 must take the initiative. There are a number of things happen-
12 ing that I think are very encouraging. For example, the United
13 Nations resolution and treaty on the prevention, the prohibiting
14 of orbiting of weapons of mass destruction in outer space. This
15 is very, very significant, in the space age. The nonprolifera-
16 tion treaty on nuclear weapons, which will be signed, as I
17 said, in Washington and in Moscow, the first signing ceremony
18 taking place in Washington this Monday. The agreement with the
19 United States with the Soviet Union on consular -- the exchange
20 of consuls, the consular agreement; the air -- the civil air
21 agreement; the exchange agreement; President Johnson's effort to
22 open up the discussions with China -- I think all of these
23 indicate that there are changes for the good.

24 MR. AGRONSKY: Mr. Vice President, you have indicated the next
25 President of the United States must take into account the

1 enormous changes in the world. Let's address ourselves to the
2 problem of Asia, specifically.

3 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

4 MR. AGRONSKY: You said recently the time had arrived for New
5 Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Japan to do
6 more for their own security. The United States couldn't, as you
7 put it, go around putting Band-Aids on all these problems. You
8 advocate a reduction, if you were to become President, in
9 present American commitments to underwrite the security of these
10 nations in Asia?

11 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I advocate a complete reassessment of
12 our national priorities abroad and at home, in light of the
13 circumstances which now prevail in this world. I do believe
14 that at the end of World War II there was a necessity, and indeed
15 there was a tendency, for the United States to take on the basic
16 commitments of the guardianship, so to speak, of freedom around
17 the world. Since that time nations have developed their own
18 strength, their own inner stability, and they must now be pre-
19 pared to stand more on their own with our encouragement, with
20 our help, but not necessarily with the design fashioned in the
21 United States, supervised from the United States, manned and
22 staffed from the United States. For example, in the area that
23 you mentioned, there is Japan and there is India and there is
24 Australia, New Zealand, and there is Indonesia, the fifth
25 largest nation in the world, the Philippines, and there are

1 others. Now, our policy should be to encourage a concert of
2 these nations in regional organization to provide for their own
3 economic development and their own defense. And we must be
4 prepared to have them take a rather aloof stand at times from
5 us, not always being in agreement with every one of our particu-
6 lar policies. But we should encourage them for their structure,
7 for their defense structure, for their economic development, for
8 their initiatives. We have some treaties, for example, with
9 Australia and New Zealand which we must keep; a treaty with the
10 Philippines and with Formosa that we must keep, as a treaty.
11 But, again, I must caution the American people, we don't want to
12 get in the position of being the world's policeman, sort of
13 roaming the precincts in our internstional squad car trying to
14 put out every little brush fire.

15 MR. AGRONSKY: Mr. Vice President, would you agree that the
16 American people never want us to get in the position again of
17 being involved in a land war in Asia? And how would you feel
18 about that?

19 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't think that any man that seeks
20 to be President of the United States ought to be making premature
21 commitments about what might happen and whether or not he ever
22 as President would advocate the use of American strength in a
23 particular area of the world. I think a man who seeks to be
24 President of the United States has a greater obligation than to
25 try to appeal to the emotions of the American public. I think

1 he ought, however, to say quite frankly, as I have said, that
2 his administration would be dedicated to the relaxation of
3 international tensions, to try to improve the peace-keeping
4 machinery of this world regionally, through the United Nations,
5 through multilateral organizations, to use whatever creativeness
6 and innovation he has to try to improve the peace machinery and
7 the development machinery of the world.

8 MR. HERMAN: Mr. Vice President, is there any significance to
9 the fact that in the list of nations in the Pacific area that
10 you mentioned you did not list South Korea, you did not list
11 Japan, you did not list India?

12 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Oh, yes, I did list India --

13 MR. HERMAN: India you mentioned earlier, that's right.

14 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: -- and Japan. Now, there is no -- I
15 didn't want to run through the catalog of nations.

16 MR. HERMAN: I just didn't want to leave you in the position of
17 omitting some.

18 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: No. Thank you. But, quite frankly,
19 what has happened in Asia in the recent decade is very encourag-
20 ing. There has been the development of regional organizations.
21 There is a rising tide of self-defense and of self-development
22 which I think is all to the good.

23 MR. WEAVER: Mr. Vice President, with all these opportunities
24 for cooperation with the Soviet Union opening up and possible
25 relaxations of tensions that might follow, do you think this is a

1 time for the United States to be led by a President whose back-
2 ground has been one of a hard-liner, of fairly strict and
3 straight opposition to communism and the Soviet Union?

4 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I don't know to whom you refer
5 except, may I say, that my experience, speaking for myself, has
6 been one of more discussions with Soviet leaders than any or all
7 of the other candidates put together, and rather successful and,
8 let me say, constructive discussions with the former Chairman,
9 Mr. Khrushchev, with the present Chairman in the Soviet Union,
10 Mr. Kosygin, serving as a delegate at the United Nations, work-
11 ing with Mr. Kuznetsov, one of the Soviet leaders in foreign
12 policy, and Mr. Gromyko. I have been one of the architects of
13 the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. I helped this past year, in April
14 a year ago, on the Nonproliferation Treaty in Western Europe.
15 One does not accept the tenets of communism nor does one accept
16 the objectives of communism in order to be capable of negotiating
17 and standing up to the Soviet -- negotiating with and standing
18 up to the Soviet leaders. I believe what the Soviet leaders
19 want is a responsible active President in the United States who
20 understands the world in which we live. If there is any one
21 thing we have learned, it is that appeasement does not bring
22 peace. We have learned, however, that a sense of firmness
23 without being bellicose, a sense of resolution without being
24 belligerent lends itself to peaceful understanding.

25 MR. AGRONSKY: Mr. Vice President, it has been remarked

1 throughout the country that you so far seem unable to convince
2 the supporters of the late Robert Kennedy and those who support
3 your only opponent now for the presidential nomination, Senator
4 Eugene McCarthy, to come to your support. Have you any plan to
5 bring them to your side?

6 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, first of all, I can't accept
7 your assumption or your analysis. As a matter of fact, I am
8 very encouraged to see the number of the supporters of the late
9 Robert Kennedy that have already come to our banner, individual
10 delegates, people who found a sense of identification with
11 Robert Kennedy coming over to the banner of Hubert Humphrey, to
12 my banner. I am happy to note, as you have noted yourself,
13 that one of the leaders and one of the architects of the Kennedy
14 politics, of the late President John Kennedy and Senator Kennedy,
15 Larry O'Brien, has not only shown again his friendship for me,
16 which is a fact and a very precious gift, but also his support
17 for me. I think you will see many more, Mr. Agronsky, and I am
18 very encouraged. I have no particular worries about it at all.

19 MR. AGRONSKY: Do you anticipate that Senator Edward Kennedy
20 will announce his support for you?

21 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I have not talked to Senator Edward
22 Kennedy. I hold him in high esteem, as you know. He is a very
23 personal friend, both he and his wife. I have not thought it
24 fitting on my part, out of respect for the Kennedy family, to
25 talk any politics with Senator Kennedy. But I have a feeling

1 that he will do what is right. And one of these days I will
2 have a chance to visit with him, as I have in the past. Our
3 relationships are cordial, warm and friendly. And, of course, I
4 would be very honored, very honored if I had his help and his
5 support. I can't speak for him. He will speak for himself.

6 MR. WEAVER: Mr. Vice President, in that regard you have always
7 maintained from your position that no man should serve in the
8 Vice Presidency who is not fully qualified to become President
9 at any time.

10 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

11 MR. WEAVER: Do you think that it can be said that Senator
12 Edward Kennedy is presently qualified to serve as President?

13 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think he is a very capable man and
14 I believe that men grow in any responsibility that is thrust
15 upon them. I think he has proven himself to be an exceedingly
16 competent United States Senator. This is not new on my part,
17 this observation, as you know. I have always held him in high
18 esteem, thinking that he did his work well. He is a young man,
19 but youth is no deterrent to responsibility.

20 MR. HERMAN: Let me go in another direction. You had lunch with
21 Senator McCarthy in Bismarck, North Dakota the other day. Did
22 you talk any politics or any future possibilities?

23 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I always have a good visit with Senator
24 McCarthy. You know of my personal friendship with him, my high
25 regard for him. The luncheon was --

1 MR. HERMAN: Social or substantive?

2 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The luncheon was hosted by the Governor
3 of North Dakota. It was essentially social. But from time to
4 time I visited with Senator McCarthy and I consider him a very
5 able man.

6 MR. AGRONSKY: You have said repeatedly, Mr. Vice President,
7 that it is unseemly for you, when you don't yet have the
8 presidential nomination, to speak of vice presidential prospects,
9 and everyone understands and accepts that. Nevertheless, these
10 are unique times; there does seem to be real division, real
11 disunity in the Democratic Party. Many people feel that either
12 Senator McCarthy or Senator Edward Kennedy, standing as your
13 vice presidential candidate, as your running mate, could end
14 those divisions and that kind of disunity. Could you turn to
15 either McCarthy or to Mr. Kennedy as your vice presidential
16 running mate under those circumstances?

17 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am convinced of one thing, that the
18 man who seeks the highest office in this land and the nomination
19 of his party for that highest office ought not to be going around
20 shopping out and jobbing out the vice presidency on a national
21 television show or in press commentary. I am not saying this in
22 disrespect; I am saying it in respect for the office. I wish to
23 add that I recognize that there has been a dialogue and debate in
24 the Democratic Party. I wish they had one in the Republican
25 Party. I believe this has all been to the good, not to the bad,

1 particularly if it can end up with a good platform and if it
2 ends up without too much divisiveness in our party. This is the
3 history of the Democratic Party. It surely has been the history
4 of the party here in my home State of Minnesota. We have a
5 good argument going on. We have new people coming into the
6 party. I think this is one of the contributions that Senator
7 McCarthy and the late Senator Robert Kennedy have made and I
8 think it is one of my contributions in politics. I want to make
9 it quite clear that I do not see any obstacle in the considera-
10 tion of the two men that you have mentioned, as well as others.
11 It may very well be that there will be considerations that de-
12 velop at the convention, prior to the convention in our national
13 scene that will require accommodation. I am a practical man, but
14 I do not tend to go around offering the vice presidency, at
15 least at this stage. We have got much more to talk about and we
16 at least have many more issues to talk about. I surely see no
17 reason to make pledges and promises on this matter.

18 MR. HERMAN: Are your aides perhaps doing you a disservice in
19 some of these conventions where they are, according to the
20 McCarthy people, steamrolling the McCarthy delegates? Are
21 they perhaps taking a harder line than you yourself would take
22 and creating possible future trouble for you at the convention?

23 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Now, the truth is that what you have
24 referred to is essentially a tactic of the opposition. There
25 hasn't been any steamrolling. You have been with me these

1 last days in several conventions where we have had the votes,
2 where if we had wished to apply the unit rule we could have done
3 it. We have not done so in North Dakota, in New Mexico, in
4 Oklahoma. I believe we could do the same thing in Iowa. We
5 have not done so and we don't intend to.

6 MR. HERMAN: How about Minnesota and New York?

7 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Nor in Minnesota. As a matter of fact,
8 in Minnesota there was an over-generosity insofar as my supporters
9 were concerned in county after county where there were disputed
10 delegations and which we readily acceded to the request of the
11 McCarthy factions.

12 MR. HERMAN: Are you saying that this is a cynical strategy on
13 their part or is this just indignation and upset by sort of
14 amateurs in politics?

15 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I say that it is a very familiar
16 tactic and strategy which is employed by those who are seeking
17 attention and seeking the nomination, particularly when they are
18 behind. It is not unusual and you know it and I know it.

19 MR. HERMAN: Do you think it stems from Senator McCarthy and
20 his leadership?

21 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't impugn other people's motives.
22 I just observe what is going on.

23 MR. WEAVER: Mr. Vice President, in the light of this kind of
24 criticism of both the state convention system of choosing dele-
25 gates and of the over-emphasis on some of the state primaries,

1 would you prefer to have a national presidential primary?

2 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think that is the only legitimate
3 primary. I believe that is so. And, by the way, some years
4 back I supported such a national primary, recognizing also the
5 difficulties in the financing of such an operation.

6 MR. WEAVER: Do you think you could win such a primary today?

7 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Oh, I am sure of it. I have great
8 confidence in it. But let me say a word about the state con-
9 vention system. It has served this country rather well since
10 the days of Andrew Jackson. This is the way Abraham Lincoln was
11 nominated. This is the way Grover Cleveland was nominated,
12 Woodrow Wilson was nominated. This was the way Dwight D.
13 Eisenhower was nominated. This is the way that Franklin
14 Roosevelt was nominated, and Harry Truman, and John Kennedy.
15 John Kennedy did not get the presidential nomination out of a
16 few primaries; he got the presidential nomination because Ohio
17 and Pennsylvania and Oregon and Illinois and New York, which
18 had strong political apparatuses, much stronger than they have
19 today, were able to give him the convention delegates. The
20 delegate operation is as normal as apple pie and the Fourth of
21 July in the United States. Now, there may be those that want to
22 change it, and, generally, when you are running behind that is
23 kind of the way you feel. I remember I had some thoughts like
24 this myself in 1960, gentlemen. You may have recalled some of
25 the statements I made at the time. It wasn't effective then and

1 I doubt that the complaints will be effective now.

2 MR. AGRONSKY: Your contention, then, Mr. Vice President, is
3 that you are in no sense attempting to steamroller the McCarthy
4 delegations, for one thing, and are you prepared to give them
5 an opportunity to be represented on the platform at the national
6 convention and to have all of the say that many people feel
7 they are entitled to?

8 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I want no steamroller. What I want is
9 a majority of the delegates at the convention justly earned
10 through the process that we have established in this country.
11 I believe in an open convention and I believe that the Platform
12 Committee should have all the open opportunity for discussion
13 and debate and for hearings. I have written a letter to the
14 Chairman of the Platform Committee asking him to take his
15 committee not only to the Chicago scene but around the country
16 to permit people to be heard, to try to develop a consensus for
17 the Democratic Party as a result of the voices of the people.

18 MR. AGRONSKY: How open can a convention be where your aides
19 say continually that you already have enough delegates to lock
20 in the nomination, and I have never heard you dissent from
21 that finding?

22 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Agronsky, CBS has said that more
23 times than we've said it. Now, if you would quit saying it
24 maybe we will quit saying it. However, I want you to know that
25 I like what you are saying and I think that you maybe have a

1 great -- your powers of projection, from what I have seen in the
2 past, are better than my powers of prophecy. So what I have
3 done is merely to follow what you and other networks have said,
4 and Newsweek and the National Observer and the Christian Science
5 Monitor, and the New York Times, if you please. You people
6 have convinced me that we are doing well.

7 MR. HERMAN: Are we right?

8 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: You are. And I want to thank you.

9 MR. HERMAN: You now have a majority?

10 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I hope we have.

11 MR. HERMAN: But we say you have.

12 MR. WEAVER: Is there any doubt in your mind, Mr. Vice
13 President, that you are going to be nominated?

14 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: It is my hope that I will have those
15 delegates in August. As it appears now I would hope to get
16 that nomination and think I shall.

17 MR. AGRONSKY: Well, then, if you think you shall and think that
18 you have it, then, certainly there is a certain amount of
19 realism in your discussing who would be your most effective
20 running mate. I regret to come back to that point, but it is a
21 fundamental point that concerns all Democrats in the country,
22 certainly, and concerns the Nation. Now, there is division,
23 there is disunity in the Democratic Party. We both know that,
24 sir.

25 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes?

1 MR. AGRONSKY: How would you deal with it in terms of the Vice
2 Presidency, in terms of a running mate?

3 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Mr. Agronsky, you are not going to
4 have the Vice President of the United States, you are not going
5 to have me, as a candidate for the nomination of the presidency,
6 discuss who will be the running mate on this ticket. That will
7 be decided by the convention. I will have my advice on it. I
8 will surely be talking to people about it. There are a number
9 of people throughout this country that are extremely well
10 qualified men. What is important is the kind of a man that we
11 have, someone that understand the times in which we live, some-
12 one that has the qualities of leadership and responsibility,
13 someone that can be loyal to the President of the United States,
14 someone that can absorb and can undertake some of the duties
15 that I would want to give to the Vice President of the United
16 States. I happen to believe that the next Vice President of
17 the United States will have more duties to perform if I am the
18 President than the present Vice President, because I think this
19 office is growing, and I believe that we need to have a person
20 in that office that can share in the responsibilities even more
21 fully with the --

22 MR. AGRONSKY: How would you expand the duties, specifically,
23 in what important areas?

24 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I have thought about this, as you can
25 imagine, because of my own experience. This office has grown,

1 particularly in the last generation, since the time of World
2 War II. It grew considerably under Mr. Eisenhower with Mr.
3 Nixon. It grew with President Kennedy and the then Vice
4 President Johnson. And President Johnson has given me great
5 opportunity to serve. Now, what would I do? I would look upon
6 the Vice President as a sort of super Cabinet officer, a
7 coordinator of a large number of the domestic programs. Other
8 Cabinet officers, being appointees of the President, have a sort
9 of balance of power, a balance of prestige. The Vice President,
10 being an elected official with the President, is in a unique
11 role where he could act as the coordinator, particular on the
12 domestic scene, and could be a very -- he could be the eyes and
13 the ears, so to speak, of the President in the country as to
14 domestic policy. He could also be a very good confidant² on
15 international affairs.

16 MR. AGRONSKY: But not involved per se?

17 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: But not involved directly in the
18 international things.

19 MR. WEAVER: Would he have more independence?

20 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think a Vice President must be a
21 member of the team, very definitely a member of the team. But
22 he must also be one who speaks up in the inner councils, that
23 really shares his concern and his views in candor and frankness.
24 That is the only way that he can be a helpful man.

25 MR. AGRONSKY: Mr. Vice President, I regret we have run out of

1 time. Thank you very much for being here to FACE THE NATION.

2 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am delighted.

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4 ANNOUNCER: Today on FACE THE NATION, Vice President Hubert

5 Humphrey was interviewed by CBS News Correspondent George Herman,

6 and Warren Weaver of the Washington Bureau for The New York

7 Times; CBS News Correspondent Martin Agronsky led the questioning.

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