

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
TAPED PROGRAM WITH A GROUP OF
PITTSBURGH AREA COLLEGE NEWSPAPER
EDITORS OF CHANNEL WTAE-TV

- - -

Friday, September 13, 1968

WARD & PAUL
OFFICIAL REPORTERS
25 K STREET, N. E.
Washington, D. C. 20002

(202) 628-4266

Taylor
mbh/1

Phone (Area 202) 628-4000

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Friday, September 13, 1968 - 9:20 p.m.
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VOICE: This is a special edition of Viewpoint, a conversation with the Vice President, the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey. Now, here is the moderator, Dick Ford.

MR. FORD: Excuse me, Mr. Vice President, for just a moment. Good evening. This is a special edition of Viewpoint, with a very special guest, Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, who is in Psttsburgh this weekend, of course, campaigning for the presidency of the United States.

Since this is a special edition of this program, we have altered the usual format. Instead of having newsmen converse with the Vice President, we have asked college newsmen from our City of Pittsburgh, the various colleges, to participate in the show and ask the questions. They are Miss Cheryl Olkes, Editor of Chatham College; Don Marbury, Feature Editor, Pitt News, University of Pittsburgh; George Heidekat, Editor, Duquesne Duke; Duquesne University; David Kamon, Carnegie-Mellon; and Paul Stoller, Editor, Pitt News, University of Pittsburgh. And this young lady will be called upon for the first question.

MISS OLKES: Thank you.

Many young adults become alienated in their dissent following the events in the Chicago convention. What constructive program would you offer to renew their faith in the American political system and how would you use the resources of youth in this country?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, Cheryl, that is a big question. Before we go to that, I am going to correct Dick over there. I think that is David Kamon.

MR. FORD: I am sorry, David.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Now, a number of our young people have been very disappointed in some of the activities that took place at Chicago, both in the convention and outside. May I direct my attention to the convention first, because that is where I was putting most of my attention.

The fact is that the average age of the delegate to this Democratic National Convention was about 11 years, I believe, younger, between ten and 11 years younger than at a previous convention. There was a large influx of young people in a convention and I believe, I would have to check the

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1 facts on this, but I read where it was substantially younger
2 than our opposite party in the Republican Convention. There was
3 a good deal of youthful participation or young people's parti-
4 cipation as delegates, as alternates.

5 Now, some of those young people felt that because
6 they didn't win on some issues that it wasn't participation,
7 but can I say as one who has gone through at least being young
8 and still feels somewhat young at heart, I have been in many
9 contests that I didn't win. I didn't like, I don't want to be
10 misunderstood, but winning is not always participation. I
11 mean, participation comes with both victory and defeat.

12 There were many advances made in this convention
13 that young people ought to feel very good about. We revised
14 the whole body of rules of the Democratic Party. Never again
15 will, for example, a Governor or a state chairman be able to
16 appoint delegates. They have to be elected through the caucus
17 system or through the primary system. That within itself, I
18 think is very, very important.

19 Now, you asked about the alienation. I would hope
20 that young people would understand that the political process
21 requires stick-to-it-tiveness, perseverance. I used to
22 tell my students when I was teaching that if you think politics
23 is bad and corrupt and unclean, get yourself your own bar of
24 Ivory soap -- I hate to put in that commercial now -- but go
25 on in there and clean it up. Don't stay on the outside and
say, I don't like it, I won't participate. And, I think young
people are doing that now.

I had many people -- and by the way, the average
age of my campaign staff is 26. Now, some people say that is
too young. You had better not say that. I was cautioned the
other day after a show like this saying you shouldn't mention
that but I do mention it because young men and women today are
very, very politically sensitive, very politically alert.

What do I want to do to involve them? I want them
to feel that I need their counsel, that I need their advice,
that I welcome their suggestions.

If I become President of the United States, I will
establish within the office of the White House a special office
to deal with problems of youth so that there are ways and
means to contact the center of the Executive Branch of the
Government. Not relying just upon each department.

I have been Chairman of the President's Youth
Opportunity Council that has dealt primarily with the problems
of deprived youth, I mean, of the needy in the ghetto and the
rural -- urban rural slums, but I think we need in government
today a much better inflow of ideas from the college campuses,
from the young people who are at work as well, not just those
that are students, all the way across the board and I would

1 hope I could get them.

2 MR. FORD: Don Marbury of the Pitt News, University
of Pittsburgh.

3 MR. MARBURY: Thank you.

4 Mr. Vice President, when a black American serviceman
returns home, he in most cases finds that the very rights he has
been fighting for are really denied him at home.

5 What are your views on this and what do you feel can
be done about it?

6 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, my view is that if
7 a black serviceman, that is, an American who is black, served
his country and returns home, he deserves every consideration
8 that this country can give him, white or black. I mean, there
must be, absolutely must be equality of treatment, and in some
9 areas where there has been long sustained prejudice, I think
you have to walk the extra mile to make sure that that man gets
a fair break.

10 Now, we have established a system in the government
where the man that is coming home is interviewed on his moment
11 of arrival and we try to match the man with the job opportunity,
and I can tell you that the matching thus far has been in the
12 main quite successful.

13 I think we just have to start teaching our fellow
Americans that you can't ask a man to serve his country in
14 war or in the military, war or no war, to take on those sacrifices
and those responsibilities, and then treat him when he comes
out as if he was an unwanted American.

15 Our military, by the way, is very democratic when it
comes to race relations. We have sort of got democracy upside
16 down around here, you know. The military you ordinarily think
of as authoritarian without too much individual rights but the
17 military has insisted upon total integration, not only in the
non-commissioned and the private and sargeant, corporal, and
18 so on, but right up the line, the highest officers in the
commissioned officer group now. Barracks are integrated, the
19 feeding is integrated. The hospitals are integrated. Same
mud, same blood, I think you remember.

20 Now, you can't ask a man to fight in an integrated
bunker at Khe Sanh and send him back to a segregated neighbor-
21 hood. You just can't do it. What do I intend to do about
it? Enforce the law. What else do I intend to do about it?
22 See that people are brought to understand that it is good for
this country for the people to be treated on the basis of
23 measurement, not on the basis of how you look, how you spell
your name, black or white, rather on the basis of your measure-
24 ments.

25 We have all kinds of civil rights legislation. What
we need to do is get people to practice this, practice
humanity, human respect and human decency and I think this is

1 the central issue, may I say, in this election year.

2 I think we are going to make a great decision here as
3 to whether or not this is really going to be one nation in
4 which we have respect for each other, in which we live as
5 neighbors, in which we live as fellow citizens, or whether it
6 is going to be a nation partite, divided, whether we are going
7 to have separatism or whether we are going to have unity. I
8 really believe that.

9 Now, we have one candidate in this country that
10 talks very openly on the basis of race. We have another who
11 surely is not a racist but very frankly, I think he has made
12 an unholy alliance when he joined up with Strom Thurmond, who
13 represents the most conservative and reactionary elements of
14 Republicanism in the south. I think that was a very costly
15 and unfortunate alliance. And I think we are beginning to
16 pay for it.

17 I noticed, for example, Mr. Nixon said he supported
18 the 1954 Supreme Court decision, but he thought the methods of
19 enforcing it were wrong. Now, well, you know, this is like
20 saying you like your wife, but you really don't think she
21 ought to buy a new dress, she ought not to have money for
22 groceries and really ought not to have a chance to join the
23 club and so on.

24 Now, you can't have it, I favor this, but. That
25 kind of politics gets you no place. That is the politics of
26 confusion.

27 I favor the decision, but. I favor Mr. Fortas, but.
28 I favor the nonproliferation treaty, but.

29 Now, people are going to start asking after a while,
30 but what? And I think I know, but what it is all about and
31 so do you.

32 MR. FORD: George Heidekat, Duquesne University,
33 Duquesne Duke.

34 MR. HEIDEKAT: Mr. Humphrey, today Mr. Nixon referred
35 to your stand on "law and order" as naive.

36 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes.

37 MR. HEIDEKAT: Now, I have heard reference to this
38 election as being an election for a sheriff. Now, exactly how
39 do you feel the President of the United States should stand on
40 law and order in an individual city?

41 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, the first thing that
42 the President of the United States ought to exemplify is respect
43 for the law in his actions, in his words and in his deeds. He
44 also ought to exemplify respect for the institutions of law,
45 like the courts, for example.

46 I must speak very frankly about this. When candidates
47 for the highest office within the gift of the American people
48 start condemning the courts because of their decisions, then I
49 begin to wonder just what is happening around here. We have

1 separation of powers. I would never want a President to be able
2 to control the courts, and the American people spoke of this
3 once before. When Franklin Roosevelt -- I bring in my own
4 party now -- when he tried to, they called it pack the courts,
5 the people turned him down in the election of 1938 and the
6 Congress turned him down and I think Mr. Roosevelt realized
7 that was one of his serious mistakes.

8 Now, Mr. Nixon is condemning the Supreme Court and its
9 decisions. Mr. Nixon is condemning the Attorney General, who is
10 the chief law enforcement officer of this country.

11 Now, how do you engender respect for law amongst any
12 people if you first of all take the highest court of the land
13 and say that it is not doing right, you disagree with it, and
14 not only disagree, that you demean it? And how do you engender
15 respect for the law when you take the top law enforcement
16 officer of your country and say that he is soft on this or
17 that and doesn't seem to be willing to really crack down on
18 lawlessness even though the record shows to the contrary.

19 Mr. Nixon said to me that I was naive -- I believe
20 that was the word you used -- on law enforcement. Well, let
21 me tell you. I was the Mayor of a city about the size of
22 Pittsburgh and I was in charge of the Police Department. I
23 appointed the Chief and could remove him. I appointed all the
24 captains and could remove them. And all the top officers.

25 Now, my city was known as a city that had been
infected by organized crime for some time. The way I became
Mayor as a very young man was to tell the people of that city
if you give me a chance I will break the back of organized
crime in this city. We used to have riots on our streets,
violence between labor and management. I said, I am not going to
let either labor or management set the pattern of conduct in
this city when it comes to lawlessness.

I reorganized the Police Department. I brought in
trained experts. I received the FBI award for outstanding
Police Department. I trained my police department or had
that Police Department trained in law enforcement procedures,
in community relations, in human relations.

I increased the size of the Police Department. I
doubled the salary of the police officers. I reduced their work
week from 52 hours to 40 and said to them that it was their
job to enforce the law. And I believe that Mr. Nixon owes me
an apology. There has been one apology come from the Vice
President on the Republican ticket for which I am grateful.

Any man that will go back and examine the record of
the Humphrey Administration as the Mayor of the City of
Minneapolis, will come away with the unmistakable conclusion
that law and order was the rule of the day, that law enforce-
ment was the program that we gave to that city. I don't want
to accuse anybody else of being naive about it but you don't

1 get law enforcement by just saying you are for it. I will tell
2 you how you get it, by backing up your police, by training
3 them, by having experienced, professional police officers.

4 We don't recruit police in most cities on the basis
5 of professionalism. We recruit them on the basis of their
6 height, their weight, their age and their physical fitness.

7 In one large city in this country that I can speak
8 of there are 5,000 police officers and 800 of them have less
9 than an 8th grade education.

10 Now, I think our police officers deserve public
11 support but they deserve something else. They deserve a
12 training program. They are going to have one here in Allegheny
13 County, a training institute.

14 I was in New Jersey where they have what they call
15 Operation Combine, extensive training in race relations, human
16 relations, community relations.

17 What are the rights of a police officer and what are
18 the rights of the citizen? Many people say today, well, the
19 courts have denied the police officer a chance to do his job.
20 Not at all. You are a citizen, you are entitled to certain
21 rights, and so is the police officer entitled.

22 Now, I proposed a program of law enforcement out-
23 lining how the Federal Government can strengthen our police
24 departments and, by the way, if you want good law enforcement
25 you have got to pay for it. Mr. Nixon didn't remind you of
that. He apparently thinks you can get law and order by just
calling for it.

Finally, the President is not the man with the police
power in this country and you can be thankful for that. The
governors have it. The mayors have it. The legislatures have
it. Law and order is essentially a local proposition. I don't
want a federal police force. We have got enough federal
officers roaming this country already. And, I think that with
a powerful Executive, if that Executive was to have a federal
police force, that many of your liberties might very well be
in jeopardy.

So, Mr. Nixon doesn't seem to understand very well
the whole process of law and order. He seems to feel that if
you just say you want it that it will happen.

Now, I might remind him, and this is really rather
irrelevant but it is at least a factor, that of all the
states, and the states have primary responsibility for law and
order, police power rests in the states under the Tenth Amendment
to the Constitution, as you all know. Of all the states those
states that have Republican governors seem to have more crime
than those states that have Democratic governors. What does
that prove? I don't think it proves much, but if you want to
throw things, maybe Mr. Nixon would like to talk to some of
his own.

1 I don't think there is a single governor in the United
2 States that doesn't want law enforcement, law and order. I
3 pay my respects to them. They have got a tough job. I know
4 of no mayor that doesn't believe that there ought to be law and
5 order but then I went on to say that it isn't just necessary
6 to have more jails and more police even though that is necessary
7 to have adequate police. You have got to get at some of the
8 root causes, too.

9 Now, there isn't always a direct relationship between
10 poverty and lawlessness but the fact is that more crimes are
11 committed in the ghettos than any place else. The fact is
12 that more poor people are the victims of crime than anybody else.
13 There is a causal relationship between poverty, deprivation,
14 and all that comes with that, and crime. There isn't any
15 doubt about it. And Mr. Nixon can pretend, can say all I wanted
16 to do was double the poverty program. I guess that is what he
17 said I wanted to do.

18 I wouldn't mind doing that if I thought I could help
19 somebody get a productive job. I think that is good. If I
20 can help build neighborhoods, decent neighborhoods, I think
21 that would be good.

22 I think this country needs more decent neighborhoods
23 than it needs new penitentiaries. I think some of the old
24 penitentiaries need to have some revision in them of their
25 correctional habits. We do a poor job of rehabilitation of the
criminal. Four out of five criminals are repeaters. Four out
of five.

If you really want to talk about law and order and not
be naive, you had better talk about how you are going to improve
your police departments, the kind of training you are going to
have, what you are going to do in these correctional institutions,
how you are going to strengthen your narcotics enforcement
service, how you bring together Federal, state and local coopera-
tion. Then, you start to understand what law and order is
all about and law enforcement is all about, but to call a
person naive particularly when you haven't even played marshal
on a television show, I think is ridiculous.

MR. FORD: David Kamon, Carnegie-Mellon.

MR. KAMON: Mr. Humphrey, you were in Chicago when
a great deal of trouble erupted, confrontations between people
claiming the right of free speech and dissent, people claiming
the duty of enforcing law and order.

Now, I would like you to comment on perhaps the
limitations of free speech and open dissent on which the nation
was virtually founded and the need for law and order which
has been tossed around so frequently.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I can give you a
short answer that crystalizes my view. Dissent, yes. Disorder,
no.

1 There is a great deal of difference between a man
2 getting up and making a speech, peaceful picketing, non-violent
3 demonstrations. That is within the democratic process.
4 That is the right of assembly, the right of petition, the right
5 of free speech, the right of free press. And none of those
6 rights ought to ever be abridged. That is, ever denied either
7 by government or by a mob, or by government or by a handful of
8 people who decide to take things into their own hands.

9 I saw, for example, where one young man that was,
10 I guess he said he was a militant, said that we can expect
11 trouble at the ballot boxes, that they, some of them would
12 come in and sit down at the voting booths and they would have
13 to be dragged out.

14 Now, when you start to interfere with the election
15 processes you are getting right at the heart of the whole
16 democratic process.

17 Now, I don't think there is any doubt but when you
18 get a confrontation between groups of people milling around
19 that people get hurt. The tragedy of the Chicago affair was
20 that some of the people that got hurt were really just students
21 that were there that got caught up. The people that were really
22 planning the provocation, the people that really were behind
23 it, they were way behind the scenes, sort of like a staff
24 officer in a war. They didn't get up there where the land
25 mines were and where the trouble was. They were way back.
And many a young person got caught in and caught up.

 Somebody asked me, what do you do in a riot like that?
My answer, get away. When things start to move like that, get
away.

 I do not really believe that you can hold the Mayor
of Chicago responsible for the individual acts of a police officer
any more than you can hold Mayor Lindsay responsible for the
riots at Columbia University. I am sure he has nothing to do
with them and I am sure that he doesn't can't be held responsible
every day for what every police officer does today at Columbia
and what they did yesterday, and I saw clubs being wielded
left and right and people dragged out.

 All I can say is that we need to train our police so
that they don't overreact. That is what I was trying to get at
here a moment ago. Stern discipline on the one hand, and we
need to have it clearly understood also that the processes of
dissent do not include disorder to the point of combat or dis-
order to the point of open violation of the laws of civil
peace.

 Now, finally, may I just add that it is very important
for us to know that the people of Chicago did not get involved
really in this. Most all the trouble that we had around there
in Chicago -- and I didn't see too much of it, I read mostly
about it, I was kind of busy on some other matters -- most all

1 of it took place in front of the Conrad Hilton and that park.
2 You can go a block or two away and it was as peaceful as could
3 be.

4 Now, why was it all there? Well, because this was the
5 action headquarters of the political convention. What had
6 been said about that? Some people had openly stated that they
7 were going to break it up, that they were going to crash the
8 convention, that they were going to move in and break things
9 up in the hotel, and those were open statements.

10 I have said before and I must say to you again that
11 two or three of us that were candidates were threatened with
12 assassination. Now, we have had a couple of assassinations,
13 one at Dallas, one at Memphis, one at Los Angeles. And let me
14 tell you, if you are the mayor of a city when the shame of
15 assassination hits your city, when a President, and a
16 distinguished churchman like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and
17 a Presidential candidate and a Senator like Robert Kennedy
18 are killed, you get worried when people say that you are going
19 to have assassinations, and your government knew and the
20 Chicago Police Department knew that two or three people had
21 been threatened, and their families, with assassination.

22 I hate to say that on a TV show, but it is a fact and,
23 therefore, the police were very nervous, very edgy, and I
24 noticed the first couple of days that things were pretty good
25 and then it got -- you know, the temperature got hotter and
a great regrettable tragedy took place and all I can say is
I was a man of sorrow.

MR. FORD: Another question from the man bringing
up the anchor spot, Paul Stoller, Editor, Pitt News, University
of Pittsburgh.

MR. STOLLER: Mr. Humphrey, you just mentioned that
no government should forbid democratic rights to its people.
Well, I wonder if I might refer to Vietnam and go into the
situation of the Saigon Government.

I think it is common knowledge that in South Vietnam
many of the freedoms are not practiced and I would like to know
how you or any American can reconcile our support of South
Vietnam with this knowledge.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, we did not commit
ourselves to South Vietnam, which by the way, was not done
by President Johnson or even by Vice President Humphrey.
That was made a long time ago and one of the troubles with
some of these commitments is that when they come due, you are
not quite sure what the bill is going to be.

No one ever dreamed when we made the commitments that
we did back in 1954 and later on again in 1956 and later on
again in 1960, no one ever dreamed that those commitments would
result in the involvement that we now find ourselves in, but
nevertheless, that is what happened. And that is the danger of

1 commitments. Or at least, that is what I should say, if not
2 the danger, that is the -- that is the unpredictability of
3 commitments.

4 Now, the Saigon Government is not the epitomy of
5 democratic institutions. I agree with you on that. But, it
6 has been an elected government with a large percentage of the
7 electorate participating. It is a minority government and I know
8 that you recognize that it has about 35 per cent of the vote,
9 I think, and now with the new Prime Minister in, it has about
10 50 per cent of the vote. But the minority governments -- we had
11 11 of those in the United States. John Kennedy was a minority
12 President. I mean, he didn't get 50 per cent of the vote.
13 We have had 11 Presidents that had anywhere from 38 per cent to
14 49 per cent of the vote.

15 Abraham LOncoln was not a majority President. He
16 was a minority President. So that we -- when we say that they
17 didn't have a full base of support, I don't applaud that,
18 but I say that it is not unusual.

19 Now, the other thing I must tell you is they haven't
20 had much experience in democracy, but let's consider what they
21 have done. They did write a Constitution. First, they did
22 elect a national assembly to write a Constitution. We never
23 did. Our assembly was appointed.

24 They did write a Constitution and they wrote it in
25 the full view of television and newspaper and radio people.
Our Constitution was written behind closed doors. Not a single
reporter was ever permitted.

They did prepare a Constitution and it was ratified
by the people, and it was accepted by the then what they
called directors, the military directors. Many of our people
said that wouldn't happen. Then, there were free elections
with the exception of the Communists that were not permitted
in that election because they were in open war any more than
in the election of -- in the period of time between the war
between the states that the votes of the southern Confederacy
were permitted in the election. There was open war.

Now, that election was participated in by over 80
per cent of the electorate. Niw, if we can get 80 per cent
of the American electorate to participate in this general
election it will be the greatest victory for democracy that the
world has ever known. We generally get about, oh, between 50
and 60 per cent, maybe a few more, but let's give it between
50 and 65 per cent of our total electorate that participates.

Now, that government is far from being what I
would like it to be. There is corruption. That is not unusual
in many countries. It has exercised poor judgment on many a
case. For example, one of the leaders was arrested recently
there. I think that -- I condemn that. I think that was most
unfortunate that that should happen and he ought to be released

1 and our government has said so, but it is a government that is
2 growing in democratic procedure.

3 Let me give you an example. The National Assembly
4 elected Senators and delegates, still meets. They did pass
5 major law, mobilization law, inflation control act. They
6 passed a -- set up a separate director for the prosecution of
7 corruption. 26 Province Governors have been removed, six
8 District Governors have been removed, hundreds of military
9 officers have been removed and prosecuted for corruption.

10 So, the government in South Vietnam is better. It
11 isn't what I would like but let's take a look at its enemy,
12 North Vietnam. They never had an election. They just plain
13 shot their way into power. They had bullets, not ballots.
14 They have never had a free press and they have incarcerated, I
15 don't know how many people who have ever -- who have spoken
16 out against the state.

17 Now, two wrongs don't make a right. But, what we are
18 really trying to do in Vietnam, and I hope and pray that we can
19 succeed at it, is to give them a shield of protection in South
20 Vietnam so that they can have self-determination.

21 I happen to believe that we ought to insist upon
22 totally free elections for the election of the next government
23 of South Vietnam with everybody being able to participate who
24 is willing to accept the peaceful processes of democracy.

25 MR. STOLLER: If that is the case, would you support
or recognize diplomatically the NLF if it won a majority in the
free election?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Oh, listen. That is self-
determination. That is one of the risks that you have to take,
who they elect. I have never known a Communist to win a free
election. I am not really worried about that. That is sort
of like having an old spavine horse in the Kentucky Derby.
They generally don't win. But, if it should happen you would
have to accept that result if you believe in free elections.

Now, I believe in one man, one vote, and more than
that I believe all persons who are willing to accept the
peaceful processes ought to be able to participate -- Communist,
non-Communist, nationalist, the different religious groups --
and let the people of South Vietnam select their government.

Now, that is my position and I believe that that is our
Government's position, by the way, and that is what I believe
will ultimately lead to a better situation in Southeast Asia.

MR. FORD: Mr. Vice President and panel, would you
believe we are out of time, a very interesting and enlightening
half hour. Special edition of Viewpoint. Our guest has been
the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey, Vice President and Democratic
candidate for President of the United States.

Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 9:50 o'clock p.m., the taping session
was concluded.)



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