

REMARKS OF VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY
TELEVISION INTERVIEW
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1968

question: Mr. Vice-President, we are very happy that you have agreed to appear on Newsroom. Welcome to Newsroom.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you, sir.

QUESTION: I want to start out with something that came over the wire today. Mr. Nixon has, according to the wires, accused the Johnson administration of considering a bombing halt and a cease-fire primarily to help your campaign. What is your response to that?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I think that is a very callous statement, a very irresponsible statement. We don't play politics with the issue of peace and war. The President has been searching for a way for a long time to obtain a political settlement, a negotiated settlement of this war. I hope he can get it any day. I want it this afternoon. If he can get it tomorrow, I hope he can. If he has to, I want him to struggle with it up until the very last day of his term, if that need be.

I do -- I really must say that Mr. Nixon ought to apologize to the President, and I think to the country.

I am not familiar with all the details of these matters. I haven't tried to keep up with them. But I do know that the American people want this war settled, and if the President can find an end to it, the sooner the better.

QUESTION: Mr. Nixon has presumably been briefed on these things -- to make a statement like that it would either seem he would be playing crass politics or that the initiative came from the U.S. rather than any movement from Hanoi.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I hope the initiative is from our country. This country ought to be a country that searches for peace at all times, and it has. I have been fully aware in the past of the many efforts which the administration has made to try to find some way to make progress in the negotiations, and earlier than that some way to get to negotiations.

We have been searching for peace very day that I can recall since I have been Vice-President of the United States.

But Mr. Nixon knows what the facts are. He gets the same briefings now that I get, and he knows full well that the President of the United States has informed him and he has informed me that for a long period of time we have been trying with every means at our command to open a dialogue with Hanoi, to try to get some way of coming to some understanding, of making progress in these negotiations. And the man that is desperate in this seems to be Mr. Nixon.

QUESTION: Well, continuing with the war in Vietnam, the New Republic last week decided not to endorse you or endorse anybody, in fact, and they said one of the problems was that neither you nor Mr. Nixon really differed in any substantial way on the war in particular in saying that the war was wrong in the first place.

Do you still believe that the war in Vietnam was a good war to get into, to fight?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I never thought that wars are particularly good. I am essentially a man who believes that wars ought to be unpopular. But there are times that man's reasons or man's rationality is incapable of meeting some of the problems that beset a modern society.

We didn't seek this war -- and by the way, the first commitment in this war was made, not by the Johnson-Humphrey administration; it was made back in 1954, in the Eisenhower Administration.

I don't lay any blame on anybody. But as far as the New Republic is concerned, about as to differences between myself and Mr. Nixon, I am rather surprised at the New Republic. They used to herald me as a man of peace. They used to champion my causes, such as the nuclear test ban treaty, the Peace Corps, the Disarmament Agency, and a host of other things that I have done for the matter of peace.

The only issue in this world is not Vietnam; there are other things that go on and you don't judge a man by just one matter. You judge a man's -- on the basis of his total record.

QUESTION: In other words, can I understand you to say that you still think that it was right to go in, it was right to fight as far as we have fought? A number of people have changed their minds on that and say it really was a civil war and really was a fight the United States had no business in.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't think it was just a civil war. I don't believe anybody could have contemplated that our involvement would be this deep. But for anyone to say that it is a civil war is to ignore the fact that aggression from the north -- the north doesn't say it is a civil war any more. They recognize that they are involved in a struggle with the south -- that is North and South Vietnam.

Now, as to whether or not we ought to have been as deeply committed, that is always a matter of honest difference and honest argument. The tactics that we have used are open to honest difference and honest argument. But we are there, and I don't think it does any good to sit around and stand back, a Monday morning quarterback, and wonder why we got there or whether we should have been there.

The point is to try to bring an end to it.

QUESTION: I think the reason some people think that is because they are afraid of future Vietnams, and the kind of thinking that gets us into Vietnams, in later wars, and particularly what some McCarthy people are saying -- if you had that position on Vietnam now, then you could easily get into another one.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, we learn lessons out of these struggles.

QUESTION: What kind of a lesson, would you say?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I have outlined -- I have outlined rather in a detailed manner and I hope rather concisely and yet fully the lessons that we have learned out of Vietnam. One of them is that we should surely promote regional cooperation in these areas. Secondly, we should be very selective in terms of American assistance. Thirdly, that we should try to encourage political development far more than we have in the countries in which -- with which we have arrangements, with which we have mutual security arrangements.

Also we should be more selective in terms of those countries with which we make mutual security arrangements.

But I don't think that a man that seeks to be President should ever say that there are no circumstances in which American power would not be used, because to say that would be to open the floodgates to Communist aggression.

We have seen what the Soviet Union did in Czechoslovakia.

Now, I would hope that we would not want to just put a sign up that says no matter what you want to do, go anyplace you want to go, we will never be there.

We have a commitment to Berlin, for example, and I know that

the New Republic doesn't think we ought to abandon that commitment. But that is a very big commitment. That is a total American commitment. That is a nuclear commitment.

QUESTION: In view of these commitments, I would like your view on perhaps, on a post-Vietnam look.

A number of people have been under the impression if the war ends, there will be a tremendous amount of money that can be taken from defense spending now and put into other purposes. And there are also a number of other articles that have come out this year that say perhaps there will be very little cut-back in money spending if you were elected. How much of a cut-back would you say -- \$20 billion?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: There has been a study made of this. There is a Vietnam task force headed by Walter Heller and a number of other economists that have looked at what our post-Vietnam savings would be.

Let's suppose we would get an immediate cease-fire and we would be able to start an immediate demobilization. We would have a good deal of it done, let's say, by the middle of the summer, July of 1969 -- we would be able to have a peace dividend in the first year of around \$4 billion that would be about the first savings that we would get. But it would grow each year until it would run up in terms of savings, up to \$20 billion, \$22 billion, \$24 billion. But your immediate savings would not be too much.

The big question before the country is what are we going to do in terms of new weaponry. And that is where we come into the whole matter of arms control, because --

QUESTION: Mr. Nixon also said last night, as you know, the security gap has developed, and we need quite a few more arms. What is your response to that?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I made a response to that. I do not think there is any security gap. I think Mr. Nixon's figures were wrong. I think he was playing a numbers game. I don't know where he got his information. He surely could not have gotten it from the official sources. And I do believe that the information that is made available to the Congress of the United States by the Department of Defense is a -- is responsible and is honest information.

I gave out what I thought -- what I know to be the facts as compared to what Mr. Nixon said he thought to be the facts.

QUESTION: One point. During the campaign, before the convention, Senator McCarthy suggested that after the war in Vietnam you might be asked to offer amnesty to draft resisters both those that went to Canada and those who went to jail. What would your position be?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I haven't really given that all the thought that I would like. I think the Selective Service law needs to be changed to the lottery system, to what we call the random selection system. I don't believe it is a good idea to let people decide which laws they want to obey and which ones they do not.

I think -- I don't think it is good for George Wallace, I don't think it is good for young people. I think the laws are there and if you don't like them, you ought to seek a change. I think we can change the draft law, and we may very well be able to change it to include some degree of amnesty. But we ought not to go around and say we are going to do it unless we are willing to take that chance of seeking change through the democratic process.

QUESTION: I would like to switch to a domestic question.

Ralph Abernathy was on our show last night, and he said one of the things bothering him was the federal government system

where someone like Senator Eastland would get hundreds of thousands of dollars not to grow a crop, when sharecroppers on his plantation were getting nine dollars a month or something like that for welfare.

Do you have any specific proposals to change that, or would you leave the crop commodity and soil bank about the way it is?

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: No. I think our farm program needs very serious re-examination. I have always felt there ought to be some limitation upon the payments that were made. As a Senator, I proposed that. I didn't succeed, but I shall continue to try.

One of the lessons you learn in government is you don't always get your way. You have to fight for it. And I do believe that we can change that, and do a great deal better job.

QUESTION: On that same line, the late Senator Kennedy suggested there ought to be also a minimum on a tax that people should pay. I think he suggested a minimum of 20 per cent -- if they were getting all the benefits of depletion and capital gains.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Our party platform has already taken a stand on that and said there ought to be a minimum tax.

QUESTION: I thank you very much.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

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INTERVIEW WITH DICK MINER (prior to speech)
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA
OCTOBER 25, 1968

MR. MINER: The essence of the whole speech is not really to welcome the Vice President to this campus but to challenge him in front of, you know, 5,000, 7,000 people to become the kind of man that he once was ten years ago, four years ago, the kind of man who fought for Medicare, the kind of man who fought for the Peace Corps, not the kind of man that makes excuses for another man's administration, not the kind of man who talks about the Republicans and the Democrats; the kind of man that talks to the hearts of people because he knows what the people feel in his own heart, and that is the essence of it.

QUESTION: What would you like to see him discuss.

MR. MINER: I would like to see him throw, if he has got a prepared text, throw his prepared text, you know, right in the waste basket and just talk to the people here today about what is really in his heart, not what -- not what is wise for the campaign, because he is talking to college students here, he is talking to people who were supporting and working for Bobby Kennedy and Gene McCarthy, people that were working for Bobby or Gene, either Bobby or Gene, but because they were telling Americans things that Americans needed to hear, not things that Americans wanted to hear, but things that Americans need to hear, the fact that things were screwed up and things were going to have to change.

QUESTION: Are you going to ask him in your introduction of Vice President Humphrey to throw away his text, his printed speech?

MR. MINER: I think it will be implied. I am not going to ask him directly to do that. But I am going to ask him to talk to the hearts of the people here.

QUESTION: As things stand at the moment, Dick, who is your candidate, if there is one?

MR. MINER: I didn't have one. I really haven't seen a candidate that I can call my candidate. Maybe I will see one here today, I hope so.

(subsequent to speech)

MR. MINER: I think I was right in doing that, but I think a change in heart has to begin in each one of us, and that is where I am going to begin; if I can help the Vice President, I will.

QUESTION: You think he has started his change of heart.

MR. MINER: I think so.

QUESTION: Dick, can I ask you a couple of questions. I know you must have answered it by now. Dick, what is your reaction to the Vice President? Do you think he answered your question or do you think he spoke the way you would like to have had him speak?

MR. MINER: I don't think he could answer my question because the answer to that question has to come from within me, too, as well as from within him. But he began to answer it, and I will begin to help him, and I think that is the only way, the answer for all America is going to come if each of us within our own hearts begins to answer those questions.

QUESTION: So you are endorsing the Vice President now for the presidency.

MR. MINER: I will help him however he wants.

QUESTION: Are you going to ask the student body to support the Vice President?

MR. MINER: I will help any way I can. If it means that I will.

SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE
Thursday, OCTOBER 24, 1968

MR. MINER: Could I ask the newsmen to be as courteous to our audience as possible. There are a lot of people here today.

(Applause)

For those of you who are holding banners up, if you would put them down for a moment, please.

(Applause)

Mr. Humphrey, the scheme of your campaign is to unite this country. But did you really know what its going to take to get this country behind you? Do you really know what it is going to take to get these people moving?

Let's put it this way, Mr. Vice-President. Why is it that many of us here today are on the verge of supporting you despite the fact that bombs are still falling in Vietnam, despite the fact that if war continues, that rat-infested ghettos or barrios still shackle our poor, that black and brown are still denied their freedom, and that tens of thousands of people still break their backs in the fields and factories of our country for indecent wages.

Why is it, Mr. Vice-President, that even today many people across this land are only on the bring of voting for you as the lesser of three evils, when they know damned well -- (Applause) -- when they know damned well that somewhere there is a Hubert H. Humphrey, the authentic and effective liberal, the humanitarian, the man who worked hard and long to begin to achieve equality and freedom for all Americans, medicare for the aged, arms control and a nuclear non-proliferation treaty, the Food for Peace program, and the Peace Corps -- the Peace Corps, Mr. Vice-President.

Why is it that Richard Nixon, a man who has constantly and consistently refused to debate the issues is ahead in the poll? Why is it that a demagogue like George Wallace has attracted the following of millions. And why is that you, Mr. Humphrey, a man who was once one of the most sensitive, vigorous, progressive and far-sighted Senators, seems to have been unable to capture the imagination of the very people who supported you most enthusiastically just four years ago.

Mr. Humphrey, we are not here to listen today about partisan politics. We are not here to listen to platitudes and promises.

We seek here today a leader, a man of strength, dignity and purpose.

Just a few years ago it was we walked the same street and fought the same battle for the same people who rallied to Robert F. Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy.

(Applause)

I challenge you to give those same peaceful armies of enthusiastic Americans a reason to remobilize for a two week blitz on into November.

Mr. Vice-President, we know where Richard Nixon is.

(Laughter)

We know where George Wallace is. We know where Robert Kennedy and Gene McCarthy were because they showed us where they were.

(Applause)

And if you can't show us what is truly in your heart today, because to do so would tend to damage your existing popularity or the reputation of the Johnson Administration, then for any of us, for many of us, you are no different than any other candidate.

(Applause)

W_e knew where you were four years ago. The question is where are you now.

May I present the Vice-President of the United States.
(Applause)

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Ladies and gentlemen, the poet has said it. He has told us all of the inequities, all of the inhumanities, all of the injustices. He has borne his heart in open to us, and yet he has a faith that it can be changed.

Now, my friends, I lived all of my life in this period of change, as you have. Some people talk change; other people cause it. And I happen to believe that this generation can cause the changes that are needed if you stay within the democratic process of changing things the way it ought to be done. And I want the chance to work with you, and I pledge that as your President, the White House will not be a historical monument, but it will be a house of welcome. It will be a place where there is a man that will seek to understand the voices of those who have been unheard and listen to those that have never been listened to. And it will be a place where there is a President that will listen to the voice of young men and women, not always agreeing with it, not always saying that it is right, but being willing to learn and to listen.

The White House belongs to the people, and the President is the only national officer that is the lobbyist for the people.

I seek not to serve just some people; I seek not to serve just the black or the white or the rich or the poor. I seek to serve those whom I have served all of my life.

And now the moment comes when I can do great service to serve all of our people, and in serving them, if you please, all of humanity, because, make no mistake about it, the foreign policy of this country will be no better than its domestic morality.

The foreign policy of this nation will be determined by the way we treat each other. And if this country is to be torn and divided by doubt and fear and suspicion; if our cities are to be communities of animosity and enemies rather than friends and neighbors, there is no hope, then the last best hope is gone.

But if we work together, if we try to be tolerant of one another for dialogue, for talk, to listen, to dissent with reason and with respect, there is nothing that we cannot do.

I am convinced that the unfinished business of America: is our business, and I am convinced that the best days of this country are yet to be lived. And I am convinced that there are voices in America that if listened to can help us. And I am convinced that the human resources of America are yet to be touched. The great potential of the poor, the great possibilities of the children of the slums and of rural poverty.

That great potential can be brought forth, and I want to be a man that helps his country call forth its goodness, not its evil; to call forth its greatness, not its pettiness; and I would like to have young Americans stand up now and give us a chance to do what this nation needs to be done, to bind up its wounds, to bring justice to our laws, to help people make something out of their lives, to give them the chance that you have and that I have had. And there are millions that don't have it -- to reach out; not to help somebody by relief, not to give them a hand-out, but rather to stretch the hand of fellowship in assistance, to help somebody stand on his own feet.

America will be no better abroad than it is at home, and the way that you bring peace to this world is to bring harmony and peace to our own country. And if we do it here, then maybe we have a moral right to talk about it elsewhere.

If we cannot do it here, God only knows, we will be an utter failure anyplace else.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)



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