

MEET THE PRESS

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MEET THE PRESS

America's Press Conference of the Star

Produced by LAWRENCE E. SPIVAK

*Guest: THE HONORABLE DEAN RUSK
The Secretary of State*

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PHILIP POTTER, *Baltimore Sun*
RAY SCHERER, *NBC News*
LAWRENCE E. SPIVAK, *Permanent Panel Member*

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M E E T T H E P R E S S

MR. NEWMAN: Our guest today on MEET THE PRESS is the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk. Secretary Rusk returned yesterday from the Latin American Summit Conference at Punta del Este, Uruguay. We will have the first questions now from Lawrence E. Spivak, permanent member of the MEET THE PRESS Panel.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary, the history of Latin America is full of pacts and promises to bring social and economic reform or change. Why do you think this latest agreement at Punta del Este will succeed where the others have fallen so far short in the past?

SECRETARY RUSK: I think in the first place at Punta del Este the Presidents of Latin America committed themselves to move toward a common market for Latin America. This is a major decision, perhaps the most important decision they will have made since they became independent states, and I was impressed with the seriousness of their determination on this point.

Further, I think that there are solid accomplishments, already, in the Alliance for Progress, but everyone, I think, recognizes that time is running short, that this total effort must be stepped up, and I think our Latin American friends understood that on their side, as well as we did on our side.

The notion that this next ten years must be a decade of

urgency is one that was generally accepted and came out in the speeches of the Latin American Presidents.

I was impressed with the fact that there was so little empty rhetoric. There was some very serious discussion on some very important practical problems.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary, What relevance does a common market that isn't started until 1970 and isn't going to be in real operation until 1985 have to the very serious and immediate problems of Latin America: poverty, illiteracy, over-population, lack of liberties?

SECRETARY RUSK: There are two different parts of it. One has to do with the development that goes on in each country. I have no doubt that this great development effort will be stepped up, but as far as the common market is concerned, there are certain things that they will begin doing immediately.

For example, they have agreed that they will not interpose any additional restrictions on trade among themselves. That is a negative decision but it is an important one.

Secondly, between now and 1970 they will begin to create some margins of preference within the inter-American countries in their own tariff structure. But I would like to emphasize that this is an extremely complex problem, putting together the economies of some 19 or 20 countries.

MR. SPIVAK: What do you consider are some of the major problems they face in bringing the common market into execution?

SECRETARY RUSK: One of the problems is that there are countries in the common market at different stages of development. Even within South America alone there are three that are relatively underdeveloped, Paraguay, for example, Ecuador. There are others who are called countries of limited markets, countries like Colombia, Venezuela, Uruguay, Chile, and there are the three advanced countries of Brazil, Argentina and Mexico.

It isn't easy to mesh countries together into a single economy that are on different stages of development, and so they will be taking some time between now and 1970 to put together the machinery of the common market. My guess is that if they will work very hard, they can just about make it, but it is not the kind of decision that can be made overnight.

* * *
(announcements)

MR. HIGHTOWER: Mr. Secretary, so many of the Latin American countries have been unable to solve their individual problems. Is there any reason to think they can solve their joint problems by going into a continentwide market? Are you merging strength, or are you merging weakness?

SECRETARY RUSK: I think the key point to bear in mind is that economic integration in Latin America will surely contribute to a rapid industrial development, based upon the prospect of a market that now would compose some 250 million people, and by another 30 years might be a market of 500 million people. That makes it possible for industries to establish themselves with quite different opportunities than they would now face with more limited national markets, if they are contemplating investment in Latin America. This would apply also to the mobilization of their local resources.

I think also that the Latin American countries are getting into a position to help each other more. Mexico, for example, is contributing very strongly in the economic, in the technical and scientific field to other countries in Latin America. Chile is training economists; Brazil is training doctors. Mexico and Colombia are providing improved seed, and I think that as they move toward economic coalition there will be many more opportunities opening up for them and for outsiders than would be true if they remained, say, as 20 national markets.

MR. HIGHTOWER: The next question relates to how the United States may be able to assist in this process. Does the President intend to go through with his plan of asking Congress for additional funds for assistance to Latin America, and if so, how much?

SECRETARY RUSK: We have indicated we would hope this year to replenish the Special Fund for Operations of the Inter-American Bank at a somewhat higher level, the range of \$300 million instead of \$250 million, in order that that additional money can be used in these multi-national projects such as connecting highways and telecommunications systems and projects of that sort, to provide some of the physical basis for economic integration.

Then we will be asking for an increased appropriation this year to the Alliance for Progress.

The third principal source of possible aid would come in 1969 to 1970 in connection with the possibility of some fund in support of the Common Market itself, but that is a long time off yet.

MR. HIGHTOWER: Our present aid is running at the rate of about \$1 billion a year to Latin America.

SECRETARY RUSK: Just over a billion dollars from all sources.

MR. HIGHTOWER: Is the idea that in the next year or so this might go up to a billion three or a billion and a half?

SECRETARY RUSK: The President has indicated to the Congress that this year we will expect to increase our appropriation to the Alliance for Progress by a hundred million and next year by 200 million.

MR. POTTER: Before going to that summit conference you tried to get a resolution through Congress of support for our position there, and it was amended to the point where Administration spokesmen said it was worse than useless. How, in view of that, do you anticipate getting more money out of Congress for increased spending that the President has promised?

SECRETARY RUSK: I think in the first place this question of a resolution in the Congresses got caught up in a procedural debate as to how the President and the Congress should consult each other and whether the Congress itself ought to come up with a resolution in advance of a commitment of this sort.

As you may recall, when President Johnson was Majority Leader, he helped President Eisenhower get an almost immediate resolution in the Congress in support of a \$500 million additional Latin American effort that was agreed to at Bogota in 1960. And the President felt that it would be important for him to know what the Congress had to say on this matter before he went to the Conference, and the House of Representatives expressed itself. The resolution in the Senate more or less left the situation as it would have been had the President simply gone on his own without consulting the Congress.

But in that discussion a number of the Senators who had apparently some doubts about the procedure expressed their support for an increased effort in Latin America, and more or less encouraged us to go ahead in the confidence that the Congress would probably back us up after we heard from the Latin Americans as to what they wanted to do.

MR. POTTER: Mr. Secretary, you mentioned Mr. Eisenhower. When he went to India in 1959, a million people turned out to greet him. Down here in Punta del Este you had such tight security that nobody could turn out to greet President Johnson. Why was that?

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SECRETARY RUSK: It was not intended that this be a visit to a country where popular response would be appropriate. As you know, Punta del Este is in a little peninsula there, and when you have 20 Presidents of the hemisphere together, security was an important matter, not just because of the United States, but because of a number of the others. So it was not anticipated there would be much contact between the Presidents at this meeting and the population of the country in which they were visiting. That probably would have been true in any country.

MR. POTTER: Why didn't the population explosion, which is the world's worst, figure in the context of the Conference there?

SECRETARY RUSK: Quite frankly, Mr. Potter, I think that these countries could do more about it if we talked as little about it as possible. Some of them are taking steps in that direction, but they prefer to take them quietly rather than create a great national debate, as we would have in our own country, say 25 or 30 years ago.

MR. SCHERER: Mr. Secretary, again on the question of the resolution, some observers have made the point that perhaps it was an unintended blessing that the Senate did not give the President that resolution, that it tended to put the emphasis at the conference on self-help. Could you go along with that view?

SECRETARY RUSK: I don't want to go through a post mortem now on the resolution, because we know where we are now; we go on from here and get our job done. But I think the notion that development turns critically upon self-help has been getting around the hemisphere in a very realistic fashion for a period of some months. The Latin American press has reflected that in relation to this particular meeting, and this is understandable. External assistance to Latin America will be in the order of perhaps up to two percent of their gross national product. What they do with the 98 percent of their gross national product will determine their success or failure in development, and this is beginning to get across in Latin America. So I was very pleased there was such strong insistence by the Latin Americans themselves on self-help and a recognition that this is a necessary preliminary to anything that external aid could do.

MR. SCHERER: President Gestido of Uruguay said that the conference turned out better than he expected. What do you suppose he meant by that?

SECRETARY RUSK: I have participated in the preliminary

meetings of the Foreign Ministers on at least two occasions and we did not know to what extent the different countries would be willing to put aside their bilateral problems or the smaller technical problems in order to come together on the great strategic issues of the hemisphere in the economic and social field. I was pleased that at the meeting of the Presidents, the Presidents gave their attention to those things which were genuinely of presidential importance, and they did not pursue some of the technical details which have been raised in the Foreign Ministers meeting. I think if you look at the connection between the advance preparations on the one side and the results of the meeting on the other, you would see what President Gestido had in mind.

MR. SCHERRER: Mr. Secretary, everybody is calling this conference a success. How many years will it be before we know it really was the success it seemed to be; when will progress toward a common market be measurable?

SECRETARY RUSK: I think we can see some beginning of that now, but I think we would not know until about 1969 or 1970 whether they will be able to agree on the machinery and the basic principles of the common market that would be necessary for it to get started. This involves marrying the LAFTA common market in South America with the Central American Common Market without having one get in the way of the other. As I say, this is a very complicated matter, and it will take a lot of work, but it will be about 1969 or '70 before we can see the major decisions reached, which will put the Common Market into business.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary, I'd like to take you to Vietnam for a question or two. We had huge demonstrations again yesterday. Do you think these demonstrations are having an effect in North Vietnam? Do you think that they are prolonging the war in any way?

SECRETARY RUSK: These have been called "huge." I suppose that they are large, but remember, we have a population of almost 200 million people, and those who speak for the 200 million Americans are the President and the Congress on such issues. We have in our constitutional system an opportunity for lawful and peaceful expression of opinion. I am concerned, Mr. Spivak, that the authorities in Hanoi may misunderstand this sort of thing and that the net effect of these demonstrations will be to prolong the war and not to shorten it. You see, if we heard that 100,000 people were marching in Hanoi for peace, we would draw very important conclusions from it. We don't know whether Hanoi is

sufficiently sophisticated to understand that this is not the way the American people come to their decisions and that these demonstrations will not affect the conduct of the war.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary, we have had these divisions of opinion before, and we have had wars before, but I think you must agree that these demonstrations—the opposition is much greater than it has been in the past. What is your explanation for these demonstrations in this country and in other areas of the world?

SECRETARY RUSK: I am not sure that, in terms of numbers, these expressions of dissent are larger than we have had in other wars. That is a matter that the historians can check up on some day. But I would think that part of it is that half the American people can now no longer remember World War II or the events that led up to it, and the great central question of our day, how do you organize a durable peace, is slipping into the background. If we get our eyes off of that question, I don't know where the human race comes out, because it is important to us in organizing a durable peace in the Pacific that the commitments of the United States be respected by us and by others, and if we once start down the trail that we started down in the thirties, if you try to get a little peace by giving away one little country at a time and giving the aggressors the idea that they can get away with aggression with impunity, then there is going to be no peace.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary, I think the historians were right that we had nothing like this either in the First World War or in the Second World War. Do you think, as some people think, that these are Communist-inspired, that these demonstrations—

SECRETARY RUSK: I have no doubt at all that the Communist apparatus is very busy indeed in these operations all over the world and in our own country, but I do not mean to say by that that all those who have objections to the war in Vietnam are Communists. But the worldwide Communist movement is working very hard on this.

MR. SPIVAK: Do we have evidence of that?

SECRETARY RUSK: I am giving you my responsible personal view that the Communist apparatus is working very hard on it.

MR. HIGHTOWER: Mr. Secretary, the United States now for a year and a half has brought enormous military power to bear against Communist forces in South Vietnam. Are these forces now getting weaker or stronger or holding their own?

SECRETARY RUSK: We have a good deal of evidence from prisoners and from documents and from what we know of their deployments, that the other side is having considerable difficulty in maintaining their forces, in giving them supply, keeping up their morale. They have encountered real problems in dealing with such things as the mobility of our own forces through helicopters and the massive firepower which we can bring to bear if necessary.

That does not mean, however, in a guerrilla situation that the matter can be wound up quickly, overnight, just through military means. It does indicate, however, that the kind of war that involves large units in fixed battle clearly is not on as far as the other side is concerned.

No, I think we have seen some very favorable signs that we are making headway on the military side, but that does not mean that the war is just about over.

MR. HIGHTOWER: Can you say more specifically what you mean, sir, when you say this kind of large unit war is not on? Is it not possible, for example, to have a major engagement of large units somewhere south of the demilitarized zone?

SECRETARY RUSK: It is possible. This is particularly true in the very north where some three or four divisions of North Vietnamese forces are in the vicinity of the demilitarized zone, but the massed firepower that can be brought to bear by the allied forces would make this, I think, a very unremunerative undertaking for the other side, and there is some reason to think from the captured documents that we have seen that they also agree that this is not their best way of fighting.

MR. HIGHTOWER: If you treat the conflict as having a conventional warfare element and a guerrilla warfare element and keep these two very distinct, are you suggesting it would be possible, as I think Ambassador Lodge has suggested, to win and conclude the conventional warfare aspect of this conflict this year?

SECRETARY RUSK: I am reluctant to put dates on, but I would think we made very, very substantial headway during 1966 on the conventional type of warfare. The pacification effort against the guerrillas is almost by nature a slower task because it means winking out these people in the countryside and in the mountains under conditions where it is very hard to find them, quite apart from dealing with them. But that is beginning to move now, and I think that behind the cover of the military success against the large units can come an increased pace against

the guerrillas. I must say I have been impressed by the doubling of the rate of defectors from the other side. Thus far in 1967 that is double 1966, which in turn had doubled over 1965, and I think that is a very important indicator of what is happening on the other side.

MR. POTTER: Mr. Rusk, the Reverend Martin Luther King said yesterday at this anti-war rally in New York City that the Vietnam conflict is bringing us into increasing scorn around the globe. Is that your reading? Is there validity to that statement?

SECRETARY RUSK: No, that is not my understanding, and I doubt that other people around the globe have elected anyone here as their particular spokesman on that.

We have no doubt about the attitude of the free nations of Asia on this point, for example. We know that there are demonstrations in Europe, but I think our friends in Europe know that from their own point of view the integrity of the United States in a security treaty is very important for Europe, and the governments there understand that, and they also understand that the United States inescapably must be deeply concerned about the organization of peace in the Pacific. We are not a one-ocean country. We look upon our commitments in the North Atlantic as very fundamental, but we also are concerned with our allies in the Pacific, and I think there is broad understanding for this point of view. I would hope that people here would let these other nations and other people speak for themselves and not come to too rapid a conclusion about what they might think about this situation.

MR. POTTER: Do you think that a trip by the President to Europe might be advisable to kill this idea that we are not acceptable over there?

SECRETARY RUSK: I wouldn't want to go into that. The Vice President has had a very successful visit there recently, and I wouldn't want to pick up the question as to whether there should be an immediate sequel.

MR. SCHERRER: Mr. Secretary, how disturbed is this government over the mounting indications that Peking and Moscow have put aside their differences to assure a flow of arms to Hanoi?

SECRETARY RUSK: The political differences between Moscow and Peking continue to be very deep and very serious. We do not yet know to what extent there is any practical effect over the rumored adjustments of arrangements about transporting arms through China to Hanoi. That has been going on all along, with

occasional interruptions for one reason or another, but I wouldn't think this, itself, changes the basic situation very much.

MR. SCHERRER: Your view is that this is just a rumor?

SECRETARY RUSK: No, I am just saying that we have not confirmed just what it means, and therefore I am referring to it as a report.

MR. NEWMAN: We have about three minutes left.

MR. SCHERRER: Mr. Secretary, up until the end of the year casualties were running about a hundred a week. Now, rather suddenly, they have almost doubled that. What is the meaning of this? Isn't Hanoi hardening its attitude?

SECRETARY RUSK: I don't think that is reflected—that the casualties have to do with Hanoi's attitude so much as the fact that the pace of the fighting is increased, and the casualties on the other side have gone up much faster than our own casualties.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Secretary, Secretary General U Thant said again recently that he was convinced that if bombing of North Vietnam ceased there would be talks within a few weeks. If he gave us his assurance of that, would we stop the bombing on his assurance—or Ho Chi Minh's assurance that there would be talks?

SECRETARY RUSK: I think we need to know, for example, what those three divisions that are poised in the demilitarized zone are going to do if we stop the bombing. Are they going to attack our Marines that are six miles away? No one has been able to give us the slightest whisper that if we had stopped the bombing those divisions would not move against our Marines.

MR. SPIVAK: Are you saying then that we will not stop the bombing even for an assurance of talks by anybody; that it isn't talks we are seeking—

SECRETARY RUSK: We have asked for some reciprocal action by the other side of a military character. Let me take just a moment here on this point. If we were to propose today that we would negotiate only if they stopped all the violence in South Vietnam while we continued bombing the North, everybody would say we are crazy. Why is it, if it is crazy for us, why is it reasonable for Hanoi to put forward exactly the same proposition and have it embraced by a good many people in different parts of the world? We are prepared to talk today without conditions;

we are prepared to talk about conditions if they want to talk about arrangements that might lead to talks—

MR. SPIVAK: Isn't that a condition, though? Aren't you making a condition?

SECRETARY RUSK: No, this is a major condition which Hanoi has raised, that there can be no talks unless we stop the bombing. All right, we will talk with them about conditions. What should they do in relation to our stopping the bombing, or we will talk with them today without conditions of any sort.

MR. SPIVAK: If they now say they will talk if you stop the bombing?

SECRETARY RUSK: That is a major condition they raised. We need something from them by way of reciprocity.

MR. HIGHTOWER: On another aspect of this issue, Mr. Secretary, do you feel that Communist forces are now being hurt badly enough, or may in the near future be hurt badly enough so that they would have to resort to negotiation on some acceptable terms in order to open another front in this conflict, to offset the military force.

SECRETARY RUSK: I don't know, Mr. Hightower, quite frankly, whether they would at some point bring this matter to a conclusion through negotiations or whether they would simply let the matter dribble away, wither away and disappear.

There are some very difficult problems for them in negotiations. In the first place, they would have to recognize in negotiations that they have been doing what they have been doing, which they have not publicly done before. So I can't really tell yet just how this is going to wind up.

MR. NEWMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Rusk. I have to interrupt here because our time is up. Thank you for being with us today on MEET THE PRESS.