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COMMENTS OF SENATOR BOGGS AT DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

SENATOR HALE BOGGS: Ladies and gentlemen, I thank all of you for your time and your patience, your attention. I think that all of you must agree, and I am certain that the American people must agree, that we have debated here fully, openly, without bias, this issue before this convention.

I have reserved only a minute or two for myself, in conclusion. I would like to make the observation that try as we may, hope as we work as we must, that the world is indeed one world, that what happens everywhere in the world affects all of us. I would call to your respectful attention the language in the platform which says this: The tragic events in Czechoslovakia are shocking reminders that we live in a dangerous and unpredictable world. The Soviet attack, an invasion of a small country that only yesterday was Moscow's peaceful ally, is an ominous reversal of the slow trend toward greater freedom and independence in Eastern Europe.

And then I would turn to -- I would turn to another area on God's earth, the Middle East, the Middle East, my friends, and we spelled out in this platform, referring to the Middle East as strong as we could, and there was no disagreement. The Middle East remains a powder keg. We must do all in our power to prevent a recurrence of war in this area. A large Soviet fleet has been deployed to the Mediterrean, preferring short-term political advantage to long-range stability and peace. The Soviet Union has rushed arms to certain Arab states to replace those lost in the Arab-Israel war of 1967.

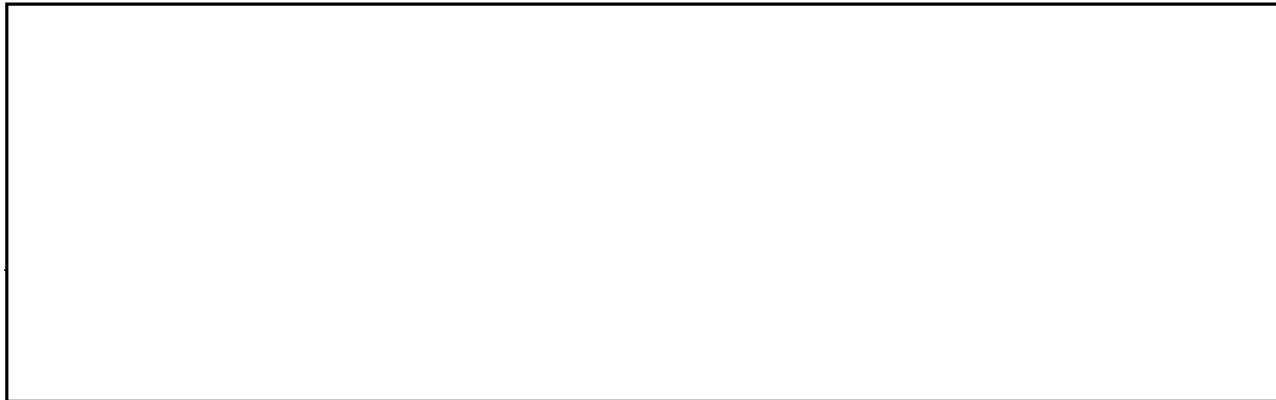So we cannot, hope as we may, disassociate what happens all over the world.

And now, one final statement, and I will then ask the distinguished Chairman, my Majority Leader, of whom I am so proud, and who presides as a permanent Chairman of this great convention then to put the question.

I would say that I wish, I profoundly wish from the depth of my heart, with every ounce of conviction that I may have, that I could agree with my friend, Ted Sorensen from New York, when he said that there's nothing in the minority that would endanger our troops or that would not support our negotiators in Paris. I beg to take exception. I beg to take exception.

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Now what do we say about bombing -- bombing -- listen to me, please -- those who agree and those who disagree. That is, indeed, the Democratic procedure. Bombing, stop all bombing of North Vietnam when this action would not endanger.... (Technical difficulties) ... Well, I along with others, representing both political parties, representing Americans let us -- me be certain about, representing every shade of opinion, including the Chairman of the distinguished Foreign Relations Committee in the Senate, was briefed on Czechoslovakia, and I ask the question, I ask the question, can General Abrams supply an answer to me of this question, and I pose the question. Is there any possibility of your providing even an approximate estimate of the additional casualties we would face if we stopped the bombing of North Vietnam unilaterally and unconditionally.

And the answer came back, and here I read it to you. These are not my words. These are the words of General Abrams. "If the bombing in North Vietnam now authorized were to be suspended unilaterally, the enemy in ten days to two weeks could develop a capability in the DMZ area in terms of scale, intensity and duration of combat on the order of five times what he now has. I cannot agree -- I cannot agree to place our forces at the risk which the enemy's capability would then pose." (!)

That -- that, my friends -- that, my friends, concludes our debate. Thank you very much.

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