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TELEVISION TRANSCRIPT

Representative George Grider (D., Tenn.) with
Vice President Hubert Humphrey

GRIDER: This is Congressman George Grider speaking to you from Washington. I have a particular honor for myself and all of the members of my district in Memphis and Shelby County today in having as my guest the Vice President of the United States.

Mr. Vice President, we are delighted to have you.

HUMPHREY: Thank you very much, Congressman. I must say I am delighted to be back with you again. I remember our very pleasant visit to Memphis and the weekend we spent with you and Mrs. Grider and how well we were received. I just want to be able to say hello once again to your good people of that wonderful city and to thank each and every one of them. I remember our visit to the church, the Methodist church and visiting with the friends as they came away from the services. It was such a pleasant day. I hope everything's as nice now.

GRIDER: Well, it is.

Mr. Vice President, one of the great concerns in our city, and indeed all over the country these days, is the situation in the Dominican Republic. We had it brought home to us this past week, when a young man named Bobby Walker from Memphis received a head wound in Santo Domingo. I'd appreciate it if you'd give us your appraisal of the situation down there, what you think the outcome is going to be.

HUMPHREY: The Dominican Republic, Congressman Grider, has been a very sore spot for a long time in the Caribbean. There was a period of dictatorship for many years by Trujillo. That dictatorship corrupted literally the entire island. The people were impoverished in many areas. Then, there was the overthrow of the dictatorship and council of state, a temporary provisional government that did

quite well. But unemployment kept plaguing the people. And then there was the election of Juan Bosch. This government lasted a few months. Mr. Bosch, I might say, so that we have no doubt about it - I do not think that Mr. Bosch is a communist or a Castroite, but Juan Bosch had difficulty governing his island and subsequently was overthrown. He went to Puerto Rico. Following that, there was a junta established, a three-man temporary government, or you could really say a three-man dictatorship, and this dictatorship did not get at the problems of the people.

I heard the other day that approximately one-third of the eligible work force in the Dominican Republic has been unemployed for an average of four years. Well, now, when you have conditions like that, you're bound to have revolutionary circumstances and social forces that are violent and disorderly. So, we saw this happening and there was an attack. The junta, the three-man government of recent days, was overthrown. The Juan Bosch forces attempted to regain control and then it just became utterly confused. I am sure that what happened was a handful of trained communists and subversives and actionists trained in Czechoslovakia, as we know, some of them were trained in Cuba, took over the rebel - or at least attempted to take over - the rebel forces. I say this because it's so confusing. All of the rebels by a long shot, in fact the vast majority of them, are not communists. We've learned that it doesn't take very many trained communists, actionists or saboteurs to take over a whole movement. And we know now that better than 50 trained communists, terrorists, and trained communist agents, were attempting to take over parts of the so-called rebel movement. So there was shooting in the streets, there was violence and disorder. The government that was there said that they couldn't protect our nationals. And finally, President Johnson simply had to make sure of two things. First, that American people, American citizens, were not slaughtered, and they were being attacked. Homes were being fired on. Our embassy was being fired upon. The Ambassador cabled and said, "We cannot protect the American citizenry."

Secondly, and this I am sure that your constituents will applaud and agree to, we just have to be sure that there is not another Castro regime in the Caribbean or Latin America. We watched Castro come with just a handful of men a few years back in Cuba, just a half dozen of them, or about a dozen of them -- that's all. They took over a whole movement, they captured the country and now look what we have in Cuba. This same thing could happen in the Dominican Republic. We don't want that to happen. I must say that the President's prompt action in seeing to it that the forces did not gain control is to be applauded. It's something that I think you and I can say was done right, even though it was very unfortunate that we had to intervene. We do not like to intervene. It's contrary to our desire.

GRIDER: I certainly am hopeful, and I'm sure that you are, too, that our friends in South America will understand our purposes just as you have explained them.

HUMPHREY: Well, there is a deliberate attempt, Congressman, to confuse our purposes. The communists are on the move in every country in Latin America. They're stoning our embassies. They're demonstrating in the streets. They're highly organized. But we just have to put up with that. We mustn't run because of that kind of commotion. Now the Organization of American States which is the great organization of inter-American, of the inter-American system, the Organization of American States has voted now to put into the Dominican Republic contingents of troops from their respective countries, to keep the peace. So, we'll have some help now, we'll be able to phase out some of our marines and soldiers. I'm surely sorry to hear about Bobby Walker, but I thought just this past week, what tragedy it is when our young men, at the very prime of life, are called upon to defend freedom and to see to it that there is stability and order, and then they lose their lives. It's a heart-breaking thing.

GRIDER: Well, I agree with you. Of course, Bobby did not lose his life ...

HUMPHREY: And thank goodness.

GRIDER: ...and I think he is going to make a complete recovery. I think it also important that the young people fighting in these wars understand that their presence in the line of fire is just as important today as it was in Korea, or as it was in World War II.

HUMPHREY: I'm so glad that you brought that up, Congressman, because I'm afraid that the civilian population sometimes at home tends to take these things as just ordinary happenings everyday because we've lived in this cold war period of almost twenty tyears. America has suffered 167,000 casualties in the cause of freedom since World War II. The men who fought and died in Korea were heroes. They fought for freedom and they did their job, and this is true all over where our men have been on the front line, so to speak, as you said, fighting and working for freedom.

GRIDER: And while we're on this rather grim subject - of equal importance in the minds of Americans and people from Memphis and Shelby County, is the situation in Viet Nam.

HUMPHREY: Yes, that's a long way away. But it is very important. We're not only defending South Viet Nam, which surely has the right to live as a free country, but we are actually defending ourselves. Not only there, but all over the world. I want to say that if we were to get out of there, as some people advocate, it would mean that the American commitment is meaningless. It would mean that you couldn't be, that people would say, well if the United States leaves South Viet Nam because of a little difficulty, they'll leave Berlin too. And we'll be accused of leaving other places. The price of world leadership is sacrifice. World leadership is not a luxury, it is a burden. We're going to be called upon to assume these burdens for a long time. If we were to be driven out of Viet Nam or to leave communist China would, without a doubt, claim a major world-wide victory. And propaganda-wise, she would have one. India would be threatened, Malaysia would be threatened; the Phillipines would be threatened. And this kind of world, we cannot tolerate. The place to meet aggression is before it becomes full-blown. I'm sure that if we look back over history, that had the French met Hitler on the Rhine when he sought to refortify the Rhine, there may have been no Hitler, and there may have been no World War II. The aggressor never gets enough to eat, you know. He can gobble up one little country after another. I've heard some people say what difference would it make if South Viet Nam were lost to China or to North Viet Nam, it's just a little country. The trouble is that just whets the appetite; there's another country to be gained by the

same aggressor. So, we're doing what we have to do. We do not want an expanded war, and we have no desire to accelerate this war. But we're looking for opportunity to find honorable peace. Our President has said that he is prepared to sit down and negotiate at any time, any place, and go anywhere without pre-condition, provided that we have an honorable negotiation and provided that we can find somebody to negotiate with. Thus far, the North Vietnamese won't even talk, all they want to do is to continue to infiltrate and to subvert. I must say on this point, that the most barbaric type of aggression is taking place. Slaughtering of the mayors of villages, of the elders of the villages, terrorism all over the country-side. We're going to meet that, and we are. Right now the situation at least momentarily is somewhat better, the morale in South Viet Nam is better and the government in South Viet Nam shows signs of stability.

GRIDER: I agree with everything you've said, Mr. Vice President, and I was very proud last Wednesday to be a member of the House of Representatives, when in record time, we appropriated \$700 million for the furtherance of these causes. I was impressed by the fact that even a violent dictatorship could not have gotten the speed that a democracy can get when our freedom is challenged.

HUMPHREY: How right, and I am sure that this message of the action that you took in the House and of your own leadership in this matter and of the action taken in the Senate, that message has gotten to the world. It's a way of telling the world that the American people through their Congress - the representatives of the people - are backing what we're doing, are willing to make these sacrifices, and are willing to take our stand. We're not about ready to run and call it quits.

GRIDER: One other subject that I would like to pleasantly refer to, and I'm sure that as a great leader of our nation, you're proud of the record that the 89th Congress is making.

HUMPHREY: I'm proud of what you are doing, Congressman Grider and your colleagues. It's a wonderful record. If we did nothing else than the passage of that elementary and secondary education bill, the greatest education bill in our history, it would have been a good Record. And the expansion of the anti-poverty program, and the

Appalachia program. All of these programs, George, are designed for one purpose, to help people help themselves. The theme of this Administration is opportunity, and equal opportunity for everyone, to get everyone to be a participant in the American life, in the American scene, to give everyone a chance to develop his potentialities and his talents and to put those potentialities and talents to use. I said the other day to a question, a man said, "Well apparently, you're advocating a welfare state", and I said, "Not on your life."

We're not talking about a welfare state. We do not want to embrace any philosophy that says that government owes everybody a living. But we do believe in a state of opportunity where people can make something out of their own lives, with education, with training and good health, with no discrimination -- that they can move ahead and do the best that their talents will permit them to do. America will be richer, and it'll be the better, and it'll be the stronger, if we can follow that course.

GRIDER: Mr. Vice President, I want to tell you again how honored I am and my people in Memphis and Shelby County are to have had you on this program.

This is Congressman George Grider speaking to you from Washington.

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