

CN 217

US -- DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION OPENS TOMORROW

CHICAGO, AUG. 25 (AGENCIES/CNR) THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OPENS ITS CONVENTION HERE TOMORROW TO CHOOSE ITS CANDIDATE FOR THE U.S. PRESIDENCY, WITH VICE-PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY WIDELY EXPECTED TO WIN THE NOMINATION ON WEDNESDAY.

MONDAY AND TUESDAY CONVENTION SESSIONS WILL TAKE UP PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND ADOPT THE PARTY PLATFORM OR POLICY STATEMENT.

A BITTER FIGHT IS EXPECTED OVER THE PLANK (STATEMENT) ON VIETNAM POLICY. A MINORITY OF DELEGATES, LED BY PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS SENATOR EUGENE MCCARTHY AND GOVERNOR GEORGE MCGOVERN, SAY THEY WILL INSIST ON A PLANK CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE HALT TO THE BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM. THEY ARE BACKED IN THIS BY SUPPORTERS OF THE LATE SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY.

BUT THE MOST DELEGATES APPEAR TO FAVOR A CONTINUATION OF JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION POLICY THAT A BOMBING HALT CAN COME ABOUT ONLY IF NORTH VIETNAM EXHIBITS MILITARY RESTRAINT.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY SAID IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW SUNDAY THAT IF ELECTED PRESIDENT HE WILL NOT SOFTEN U.S. POLICY ON VIETNAM. ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD SUPPORT A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN SAIGON INCLUDING THE VIET CONG, THE VICE-PRESIDENT SAID THE RIGHT TO VOTE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ALL "WHO ARE WILLING TO ENGAGE IN THE PEACEFUL POLITICAL PROCESS OF AN ELECTION AND ACCEPT ITS RESULTS."

THAT WOULD MEAN THAT THOSE TAKING PART WOULD HAVE TO RENOUNCE THE USE OF FORCE TO GAIN THEIR OBJECTIVES, HE ADDED.

BACKERS OF SENATOR MCCARTHY AND GOVERNOR MCGOVERN ARE MAKING LAST MINUTE EFFORTS TO GAIN ADDITIONAL DELEGATE SUPPORT FOR THEIR MEN TOWARD THE PRESIDENTIAL NIMINATION, BUT PRE-CONVENTION POLLS INDICATE VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY HAS MORE THAN THE 1,312 VOTES HE WILL NEED TO GAIN THE CANDIDACY ON THE FIRST ABLLLOT.

(MORE)

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