

# *Change Viet War opinion by combining body counts*

To the Editor:

I have been pondering over different means that could be employed to change the apparent majority of public opinion against the war in Vietnam.

First it seems that the pentagon has convinced us that the United States is winning the war and we only have to wait a little longer for victory. The main proof that has been given us to support that statement is the weekly battle score or what is called the body count. On any given Sunday we may tune in our televisions to hear: "1,000 communists were killed this week, 300 South Vietnamese, and only 50 Americans." Much relieved by this figure we go back to sleep.

By these figures we have been assuming for six years that we must be winning since we kill five of them to one of us. The ultimate logic in this type of thinking would deduce that our victory would come when we have killed all the communists available. The only discrepancy here is that there are about ten communists to every one of our people and we would therefore have to use even more drastic means than we are now using to kill them all. Of course certain enlightened men like Melvin Laird have not ruled this possibility out.

I would suggest that we let the body count in Vietnam each week have a new meaning to the American people. Instead of separating the counts of dead into classes like species of animals, let the total number of dead in Vietnam be released each week as one number. That

is you would not be told that 50 Americans, 300 South Vietnamese, and 1,000 Viet Cong were killed. You would only be told that 1,350 people were killed in Vietnam this week. If the American people could realize what this number is

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saying I think we all would soon realize what a waste of everything this war or any war produces. Does not a Viet Cong

feel the same pain as a G.I. of a bullet whizzing through his body?

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