

In the February 25, 1966 issue of the Outlook I wrote a letter to you in which I stated that the American people should be asked to approve or disapprove the military restraint policy being pursued by President Johnson in the Viet Nameese war. Some people have come to me and said this is a highly questionable thing to do. These people tell me that the popular opinion polls give Johnson the support of the policies he pursues in the Vietnam by the people of the United States. I would like to refer these critics of my article of February 25, 1966 to the March 21, 1966 issue of "U.S. News and World Report." This magazine presents the results of a nationwide survey taken by this magazine in February and March of 1966 in 152 communities in 33 states. The consensus of the persons polled boils down to this statement: "Now that the U.S. is committed, however, people in overwhelming numbers say the U.S. should fight to win. Most favor stepping up the war, hitting North Vietnam harder. A few would use nuclear bombs, if necessary to win."

The magazine presented some of the statements of the people polled. Here are five such statements:

- (1) "I think the general concern is that we'll end up with half of nothing, like we did in Korea."
- (2) "All we're doing is holding the line. If that's all Johnson wants, I say to heck with it - we ought to get out."
- (3) "We're in a war and we should act like we're in a war."
- (4) "If we have to fight the Red Chinese, let's fight them before they can deliver atomic bombs."
- (5) "We appear to lack the guts to finish what we undertake and do it right."

In my previous letter I stated that a national question be asked in a national election. This would give millions of people the opportunity to express their approval or disapproval. I still maintain my position on this national question. Furthermore, based on this survey and a recent Harris survey in which 73 per cent of the people favored the resumption of bombing of North Vietnam, I submit that vast numbers of the people answering this question would answer "NO".

We are in a sickening war we had no business going into in the first place. Now that we are in it we should finish it as soon as possible. When the war is over and the next one appears I suggest that the President of the United States read Henry David Thoreau's "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" and pay strict attention to the following passage from this work: "Witness the present Mexican War, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure."

Joel N. Rovick.