

Scholastic Opinions

By LEE COX

The week of January 21, 1968 was an ominous one for America. With the new year just three weeks old, hopes for peace in Vietnam looked slim indeed. In fact, it appeared that the hot war might soon spill over into other Asian countries thereby deepening the United States commitment to a policy that is already being severely criticized at home.

On January 23, Americans awoke to the news that one of their naval vessels, the USS Pueblo, alone and in international waters, was boarded by a detachment of North Korean sailors and the ship and crew taken captive. At about the same time, Laotian officials confirmed reports that American planes were taking part in bombing raids over Laos. It was also reported that Laotian Communists, aided by North Vietnamese troops, had won a number of significant military victories at the expense of the Royal Laotian Army. In Vietnam itself, officials expressed the fear that the biggest battle of the war was shaping up around Khe Sahn, a village in the northwest section of South Vietnam.

Again, as has been the case so often in the last fifteen months, the enemy would not be the Viet Cong but would be North Vietnamese Army troops. These and countless other reports suggest that as the intensity of the Vietnam war increases, the possibility of United States involvement in other wars increases with it.

In the opinion of this writer, arguments about the morality or justness of the war in Vietnam beg the question. The time has come to face the situation realistically. The fact is that we are involved in a war in Asia. There are strong indications that this war might soon spread to other countries forcing the commitment of thousands more combat troops by the United States. Thus, in a very real sense, America has come to

the crossroads in Asia. Are we to continue present course of meas-

taliation or are we going to do what is necessary to win in

(See OPINIONS on page 5)

Opinions

(Continued from page 4)

Vietnam? The former policy seems to have failed not only in Vietnam where the intensity of the war grows daily, it has also failed insofar as it has not prevented crises and hostilities from breaking out in other parts of Asia.

Therefore, unless the United States is prepared to wage Vietnam type wars far into the future, the present war must be brought to a swift and decisive close. If we must cross the demilitarized zone to accomplish this, then let us do so. If military men think that the bombing of heretofore restricted