

21 IN HOUSE OFFER TONKIN REPEALER

Would Void War Resolution
to Assert a Policy Role

WASHINGTON, March 28 (AP) — Repeal of the Tonkin Gulf resolution, cited by the Johnson Administration as the basis of America's full-scale entry into the Vietnam war, was urged today by 21 House members.

But one of the Representatives, Lester L. Wolff, Democrat of Nassau, cautioned against interpreting the proposal as an attempt to repudiate Administration policy.

The Tonkin Gulf resolution sped through Congress Aug. 7, 1964, after reports of North Vietnamese attacks on two American destroyers. Questions have been raised by critics of Administration war policy as to whether the destroyers were really attacked.

"By repealing the Tonkin Gulf resolution we do not commit ourselves to any specific alternative to present policy," Mr. Wolff told a news conference. "Rather, repeal of the resolution will make it clear that Congress wants a national debate in the formulation of future policy and, further, Congress wants to play a major role in the determination of that policy."

The resolution gave President Johnson authority "to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force," to repel Asian aggression.

Aim Is to Define Role

Asked whether he would consider defeat of the repealer an affirmation of administration policy, Mr. Wolff said "not at all."

He said the intent was to see to it that Congress had a proper role. Defeat, he said, would mean Congress doesn't want such a role.

Representative Benjamin S. Rosenthal, Democrat of Queens, another of the sponsors, predicted that there would not be hearings on the proposal because "those in power won't permit." But, he said, if it came to a House vote "we would come very, very close" to passage.

Meanwhile, Senator Russell B. Long, Democrat of Louisiana, said a Democratic Presidential candidate running on an anti-war platform would be overwhelmingly defeated.

While expressing confidence President Johnson would be re-nominated, Mr. Long said:

"If the Democratic party chooses a course of retreat and defeat and weakness in the face of the Communists, a candidate running on that platform would be ignominiously defeated."