

Vietnam, and possibly he is not in a position to do that. This again is my own observation. If the people who are enthusiastically clamoring for his candidacy attach the condition that he must be a dove in the traditional sense of the word, and he isn't able to do that, I can understand that he may be reluctant at this point to enter the race. He has indicated that he will state his positions as a noncandidate. Possibly, when those positions have been expressed there will be a better chance to analyze and evaluate whether his support is a genuine support of himself as a person most able to solve the problems facing the country, or whether it's simply a yearning for an alternative to the war support that's been enunciated by Mr. Nixon. Whatever the case may be, I haven't changed my position about the Governor. I think he is clearly the best possible candidate the Republican Party could offer to the electorate in November. I want to be again most candid in stating that I think the chances of his becoming that candidate in the general election are diminished by what has taken place since the withdrawal of Mr. Romney. And I question the ability of the volunteer groups to hold the enthusiasm that's pouring out all over the country in the face of his announcement today. We're going to talk with our people, meaning the volunteer leadership over the country. I can't speak for what they're going to want to do, but we'll have a statement, I am sure, to make on the posture of the loose amalgam of volunteer organizations that has crystallized over the past week.

Q. Governor, will you dismantle the Maryland volunteer organization?

A. Not until I talk with the organization, and actually it won't be up to me to dismantle or continue it. It'll be up to Mr. Smith, the chairman of the group, and the members of that committee as to what course they want to take.

Q. How do you feel? What will you recommend?

A. Again I think it's a matter of getting the opinion of everybody involved because this is a committee and would have to be carried by the will of the majority.

Q. Will you personally continue to work for Governor Rockefeller?

A. I'm just as convinced as I ever was that he is the best possible candidate. I want to talk with the Governor personally about the situation as soon as I can. I don't think there's any question but that he has left himself available for the nomination if it's offered to him. More than that he really hasn't said today.