

EXCURSUS I

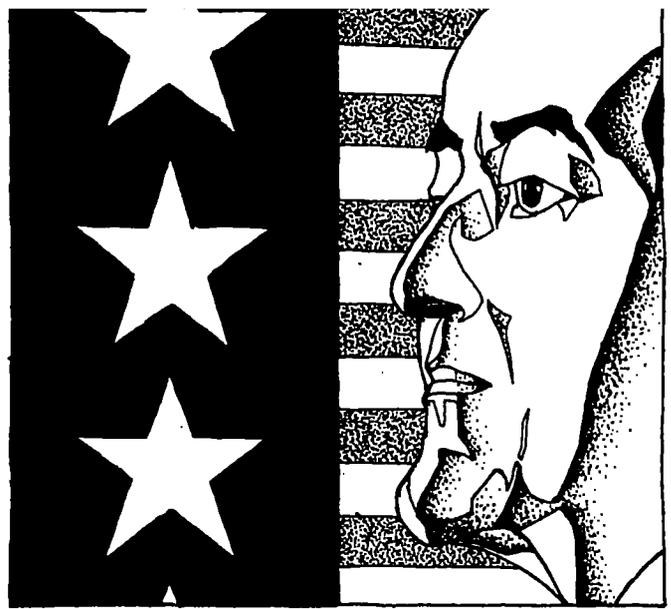
Wilson Carey McWilliams on The Humphrey Not Everybody Loved

Sometimes it seems that only fond remembrances survived Hubert Humphrey. "He did his best," proclaimed a memorial advertisement in the *New York Times*, "and everyone loved him." Well intended, such sentiments do a disservice to the senator and his vocation. We did *not* all love Hubert Humphrey, and certainly not all the time. For more than thirty years Humphrey was in the broil of public life, at or near the center of political controversy—talking, taking sides, advocating, often passionate, always intelligent, invariably didactic. He inspired the gamut of feelings: He was admired, disliked, revered, condemned, lauded, and loathed. He was, in short, a thoroughly political man, surrounded and swirled by strong emotions and intense conflicts, able to abide anything except public indifference.

I grew up detesting Humphrey. On the left, people of my generation recognized him as the chief architect of liberal McCarthyism, perfervidly anti-Communist at home and abroad. He was suspected of hypocrisy and widely regarded as a tool of the bosses, economic and political. After all, the muscle behind his celebrated defense of civil rights in 1948—as Humphrey always acknowledged—came from Ed Flynn and the old machines. Humphrey, moreover, was terribly corny. His much-praised oratory was homiletic, the echo of Protestant pulpits, antedating both Roosevelt and radio. He was mawkish and incurably optimistic, a liberal Babbitt urging us to boost rather than knock, incredibly capable of proclaiming the "politics of joy" amid the torment of 1968.

In later years I grew more fond of Humphrey. I worked in his campaign in 1968 and I wanted him to run in 1976. An opponent like Nixon, of course, enhanced Humphrey's charm and highlighted his propriety. As any politician must, Humphrey had an eye for the main chance; his debates with George McGovern before the California primary in 1972 were a masterpiece of opportunism and sophistry. But there were things that Hubert Humphrey would *not* do or say to further his ambition. In 1968 he would not attack LBJ in order to conciliate his erstwhile liberal admirers, but he also would not take a "hard line" to prove to more conservative Democrats that he would be a "strong" leader. (Media myths aside, he probably lost the election because he was perceived as too dovish and too sympathetic to blacks.) In fact, Humphrey was most remarkable because his views were so little altered by time and circumstance, and his relative lack of movement made him curiously appealing. Many Americans, I think, had the same experience. Humphrey came to seem comfortable and reliable, a soft cushion after a long fall. He recognized the feeling; the voters, he sometimes remarked, "know I'm here."

Humphrey came to symbolize the old days, the



political past. His opinions were cast in a rigid framework by the late New Deal and the Second World War. He was a zealot for Labor, capital L, and reminded us of the days when the "Labor Movement" was believed to promise a national renaissance. He was a dedicated internationalist and, to the end, a supporter of the U.N. He urged democracy everywhere and saw a worldwide conflict between freedom and totalitarianism. He invoked, then, the spirit of the Four Freedoms, the Atlantic Charter and Tehran, the days of victory and hope. And in recent times those older values and times past have seemed terribly attractive. Even Humphrey's small-town decencies and pieties towered, fortresslike, in a world of outrage and indifference.

Always somehow wanting as a liberal champion of progress, Humphrey was a success as a tory, defending a traditional, more confident, and more generous America against the crabbed timidity of the up-to-date. There was, of course, an element of naiveté in Humphrey's views, as there was in the America for which he spoke. But Humphrey had his own kind of wisdom. A champion of the positive state, he knew that as individuals we are weak and alone in a massified world, and we need government and public life to be freed from impotence and indignity. Humphrey upheld the old democratic faith, that a people can shape its own destiny in terms of the common good. Its champion fallen, the democratic creed will be hard pressed in this narrow time to find so loving a defender.

EXCURSUS II

G. McLeod Bryan on Conscience in South Africa

In banning Christian Frederic Beyers Naude on October 19 (and those with him in the Christian Institute of Southern Africa and others connected with the journal *Pro Veritate*, both of which Naude founded) South Africa may have overstepped the bounds of hubris and become the victim of nemesis.

The Christian Institute has long had support groups in Germany, England, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Finland, Canada, Holland, and the USA. More pertinent to the tragic analogy, no people can go against their conscience, and Beyers Naude is the voice of conscience of South Africa. To renounce his conscience is to court self-destruction.

South Africa cannot forget that Beyers Naude issues from the heart of Afrikanerdom. He emerges from its religious and patriotic best. Naude was born in a Dutch Reformed pastorium and named after his father's favorite general in the Boer War. (His father was the first dominee to use the Afrikaans language in the pulpit instead of Dutch.) Beyers Naude received two degrees from the intellectual center of Afrikaans, Stellenbosch University. He served as student pastor at the University of Pretoria, and then at the most conservative of all Afrikaans universities, Potchefstroom.

If anybody is the proper child of Afrikanerdom it is Naude. From his birth he was favored to rise to the top when the wheel of fortune granted the old Boer tradition its opportunity to seize power from the British. By the time he was forty-five he was moderator of the Transvaal Synod and chairman of the Broederbond in Johannesburg, the twin pinnacles of Boer power.

At the very moment this pinnacle was reached the English-speaking liberals within the Church had been silenced: Father Trevor Huddleston (*Naught for Your Comfort*) in 1955, the Reverend Mr. Michael Scott (*A Time to Speak*) in 1957, Bishop Ambrose Reeves in 1960, all were ousted from the country. Alan Paton (*Cry, the Beloved Country*) had his passport seized in 1960. Black leadership from the African nationalist parties was also squelched. Leaders were either in prison on Robben Island or, like Chief Albert Luthuli, the second black to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, under house arrest.

About that time Alan Paton and I had tea at his home outside Durban. On one particular Sunday, Professor Arthur Keppel-Jones, the historian who had just prophesied South Africa's dismal future in his book *When Smuts Goes*, had chosen to defect to Canada. He was already on the high seas that day when the newspaper ran his full-page rationale, "Why I'm Leaving South Africa." I asked Paton if Jones were a prophet. He parried by asking for a definition of a prophet. Hard pressed, I could think only of the biblical criterion: A prophet stays by God's people to suffer the doom he predicts.

During later years of our correspondence Paton cited Naude as the man marked for prophecy. He also wrote this in an American magazine: "I, and many others, would take Beyers Naude as the prototype of those white South Africans who when they take Christ as the Lord of life experience an immense emancipation. Naude was a militant Afrikaner, a Protestant, a dominee, a powerful moderator, and, most remarkable of all, a member of that exclusive organization the 'Broederbond,' which stood for white supremacy and for the overlordship

of the Afrikaner in every department of South African life....As far as one can see, the liberation is complete. One is forced to conclude—because one does not reach such a conclusion lightly—that this is the work of the Holy Spirit and that Beyers Naude was struck down on some Damascus road."

What is crucial in Paton's appraisal is the messianism involved in Naude's radical turnabout. Messianism lies at the very heart of Afrikaner ideology: God has assigned His people a task. Naude took his new theology from his Afrikaner tradition and is prepared to carry it "nigh unto death." Thus Naude is an Afrikaner who challenges Afrikanerdom where it hurts the most.

For this "betrayal" of reinterpreting the divine mission Naude became a very particular target of the leaders of South Africa. They attacked him in the Nationalist party, in the Dutch Reformed Church (the prime minister's brother, the Reverend Dr. J.D. Vorster, is Naude's bitterest enemy there), and in the Broederbond (which he publicly renounced in 1964). In its cat-and-mouse game the leadership delayed its killing blow, likely for fear of making a martyr and of world reaction.

One can hardly imagine the pressures to conform exerted by the Afrikaner culture upon one of its members showing signs of rebellion. This may help explain the government's strangely prolonged toleration of Naude. The most fanatical of the Afrikaners cannot believe a true child of the faith would ever turn traitor. For a long time they entertained the hope that Naude would eventually return to the fold.

But what if God laughs in derision at the foolishness of nations? What if He weighs the nations and finds South Africa wanting? That is the insecurity that Naude's witness plants in the mind of the sincere Afrikaner Nationalist. And that explains more than anything else why their leaders hate him so, why they hesitate to take the final step against him, lest they find themselves acting against God.

Immediately following Naude's conversion to his new role, the attacks began. A theological professor, in a series of articles, accused him of being a Communist. Naude sued and won. Subsequently peripheral members of his cause were either deported or banned. Then came Naude's defiance of the parliamentary committee assigned to investigate his organization and a student protest organization. In August, 1972, five members of his staff were photographed together in their public act of defiance. They simultaneously published a document in the classic mode of conscientious dissent, "Divine or Civil Disobedience?" (As of this writing, all five are now silenced.) The transcript of the celebrated trial, published in book form in Britain and edited by the International Commission of Jurists, became a further embarrassment to the South African Government.

Meanwhile Naude and his organizations were giving support and publicity to the black consciousness and the black theology movements. One such

group was the South African Student Organization, headed by a medical student named Steve Biko. Biko's chapter, "Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity," was published in a book, *The Challenge of Black Theology in South Africa*, which was immediately banned. In December, 1974, Dr. Manas Buthelezi, Naude's assistant, who had received a Ph.D. from Drew University and was to be the first black Lutheran bishop in South Africa, was issued a banning order. Although it was later lifted for unknown reasons, the writing was on the wall.

By the time of the Soweto protests on June 16, 1976, Horst Kleinschmidt, another of Naude's assistants, had been detained, but he fled to Holland to head the Christian Institute "in exile." The February, 1977, issue of *Pro Veritate* was banned. On March 16 Oshadi Phakathi, Naude's Transvaal assistant, who was the only black in the 1972 photo, was banned for five years. In September, at the time of Biko's arrest and death under questionable circumstances, Phakathi too fled to Holland. When the government's big roundup of black leaders occurred on October 19, it was not surprising therefore that the one white person caught up in the same net was Naude.

The Afrikaner leaders of South Africa are afraid. Naude is the voice of conscience from within Afrikanerdom. Within this clime of fear and hubris he extends the hand of brotherhood, he proposes the positive methods of nonviolence. Thus Naude would release the creative potential of this richly endowed country. Today Naude appears as the victim; but he is also the symbol of Afrikaner victory over its hubris. In this sense Beyers Naude is a harbinger of what all South Africans could become.

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EXCURSUS III

Wendy Moge on

A Practical Guide to Ethics and Public Policy

An invisible participant currently sits at the world's negotiating tables, exerting a powerful influence on haves and have-nots, wheat exporters and hungry nations, bank presidents and corporate executives.

Sometimes disguised as "political will," occasionally used, or misused, by fellow negotiators, this nonpartisan force wields a double-edged sword,

sometimes making, sometimes breaking progress toward a world grain reserve, or an agreement on poor-country debt, or a common fund for stabilization of commodity prices. Ironically the potency of this participant often springs from the unwillingness of other negotiators to grant it "diplomatic recognition." But it does have a name. It's called ethics.

The crises we face demand that we recognize and implement our ethics—our ideals. The alternative is to accept a chaotic, unfair world. But the urgency of such crises as hunger and poverty and nuclear overkill also leads to frustration at philosophizing. How can we sit in conferences and debate what we *should* do? "What *can* we do?" was the impatient question of many who attended recent briefings on "Who Shall Eat?" a series sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and designed to examine the ethical assumptions underlying U.S. food-policy choices. In response to the frustration behind this search for "cookbook answers to complex questions" (in the words of one conference attendee) I offer a practical person's guide to ethics and public policy.

First, recognize that behind the most devout realist lurks an ethical perspective. We may not overtly proclaim our values, but we all make decisions that are at least partly colored by our beliefs. Even the data on which we base our policy decisions are selected under the influence of a particular ethical perspective. For example, listen carefully for phrases like "the most efficient" (as in "food aid program") or "the most effective" (as in "global trade agreement"). As economist Ronald Müller stated at a recent forum on ethics and multinational cooperation: "Economics is not a value-free science...efficiency itself is a value."

Another example. The lack of political will, which has been thwarting agreements between rich and poor nations, is often rooted in the conflict between moral perspectives expressed by these countries. To paraphrase Lehman Brothers chairman Peter G. Peterson: A reading of the declaration for a new international economic order looks like "they" (the poor) get all the rights, while "we" (the rich) have all the duties. So it's not simply a question of how much money there is to go around: Rights and duties are moral issues.

Second, the ethical dilemmas we face are complex, frustrating, and not easily resolved. What is the good life? What is the relationship between goods and the good life? Such questions deserve more than cookbook answers. Harder still is the problem of reconciling conflicting values. The practical person can recognize that realism often masks an unwillingness to make difficult, conscious choices between precious values. A realist may claim to be acting "in the national interest." But how can national interest be defined without making deliberate choices about which of our societal values we want to preserve?

A third caution for the practical person is to beware of overdosing on idealism. We all tend to set