would actually occur. And if one of these undesirable outcomes does occur, its effects will be minimized only if the Japanese people and government have previously made plans and preparations to counter them. A reckless optimism here would lead to the most pervasive and corrosive disillusion.

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EXCURSUS III

Ross Snyder
To Friends in South Africa

As a boy growing up at the turn of the century on my grandfather’s farm in Ohio, I read again and again The Rise of the Dutch Republic. How it happened that the volumes on Dutch civilization were in the library of a Midwest farmer who owned, at most, fifty books, I do not know, nor could I now find out. I am different because of my early knowledge of the beginnings of the Dutch Republic. And to my horror, you in South Africa are also different because of that history.

Years later I came to learn about the English Pilgrims who landed in America at Plymouth and to own them as one source of myself as spirit. The story of the Pilgrims’ prior refuge among the liberty-loving Dutch connected the best of my American heritage with the best of the English and Dutch heritage. At the time of the Pilgrims’ sojourn Holland was the place where the persecuted from all over Europe fled for freedom of conscience, intellect, and history-making. In England the Pilgrims were in the struggle to establish that the human spirit and its rights were a gift from God, not a permission from a political/religious/economic complex.

Your present government actions and public silence cannot be a project of this Dutch-English heritage. You profane your heritage—both national and religious. You are trying to exist outside the basic covenant of human being into which we are all born, the covenant we must affirm for ourselves if we are to be whole and not fibrous shreds.

Some of your sensitive Christians (whom I honor) have said that your major concern is for “order,” rather than for justice. That is a misleading distinction. There is great disorder within yourselves and within those you would teach to call you “boss.” Both of you are, as one American philosopher said in another connection, “estranged actors condemned in hatefulness to walk a common stage and admit there is no authority beyond the authority which force exerts or fear allows.” Societal order can come about only when there is communication, communion, inward allegiance to the rightness of the order. That happens when people can stand in each other’s presence related to each other in the dignity of being persons, when the one wielding power is seen as a human dignity—who honors rights in others, who has a principled originality. In these respects you have become deficient.

Order does not consist in apparent power to shut people up or to force obedience. Nor is order to be found in police and government empowered to imprison indefinitely adults who ask for nothing more than face-to-face talk and consultation, and to repress young people who can no longer believe in a South Africa whose future would be determined by its present leaders.

You must not pretend that there is order when the whites of South Africa have forsaken the covenants.

I write this not only out of a concern for order—a justice order—and for your traditions in the long reaches of history. I write out of a love and regard for the children, both black and white. Over the years I have devoted much time to the children of the nursery school at our seminary whose parents are in theological studies. Their eyes and faces, their exceptional minds and outstretched arms often rushed to embrace me—and an unknown future. What is the future you are preparing your children for? My wife and I remember the children of the Center at Soweto and outside Cape Town whom we visited some ten years ago. Is there any expectancy left in their faces now—or in yours?

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history."

Ross Snyder is Professor of Religious Education at the Chicago Theological Seminary.

EXCURSUS IV

Mark A. Bruzonsky on What to Do About the Middle East

When the political niceties of this election year fade, the future President must confront the new Middle East stalemate.

He will do so amidst the widespread conclusion that the U.S. should not return to step-by-step diplomacy but should urgently pursue an overall Middle East settlement and even consider imposing it. When spelled out, such a comprehensive, possibly imposed, settlement will include Israeli withdrawal from nearly all occupied territories, creation of a Palestinian “entity” or state, a novel arrangement for a united but dually administered Jerusalem, and various forms of security arrangements and “guarantees” for Israel. For many, the tragic and shocking events in Lebanon have even exacerbated