

## "ON SOUTH AFRICA"

Waterford, Conn.

Dear Sir: After reviewing "The Darkening Clouds of Africa" (*worldview*, September 1964) and the exchange in the same issue between Thomas Molnar and Messrs. Ferwerda, Reissig and Houser, I am all with Dr. Molnar. Your editorial writer, and Dr. Molnar's critics, appear indifferent to several factors profoundly basic to any discussion of white attitudes, either in South Africa or in Africa as a whole. Apartheid's dreary outrages and redneck rationalizing are revolting, but beneath them flows a stubborn vitality. I offer some considerations:

1. Comparisons (a) of South Africa with Mississippi, and (b) of African nationalist movements with our own struggle for independence, are attractive but superficial.

a. Though Negroes outnumber whites in parts of Mississippi, they are only a tenth of the U.S. population. This will safely backstop whatever they accomplish in Mississippi, a fact which Negroes and whites know and depend on. South Africa has no backstop.

b. Our War of Independence transferred power from one group of mature, sophisticated, Protestant Englishmen to another group of mature, sophisticated, Protestant Englishmen. When the dust settled the undergirding assumptions of government had shifted hardly at all. Contrast this with, say, Ghana.

2. Under a government of "one man, one vote," how long would today's South Africa be safe for European property or even life? White experience under a number of African governments—and in U.S. cities of late—has not been encouraging. In fact, how long would South Africa itself stay viable as a growing, prosperous, producing contributor to the West's economy?

3. With acknowledged exceptions, the prevalent attitude of new African governments toward European-owned property, from Algeria southward, has been "This ours. We take. You go." No matter that the property owes its value to a dozen colonial generations who hacked it out of a no-man's wilderness and poured into it three hundred years of blood, sweat, tears, hope and love—this counts for nothing with the expropriators. No amount of sloganeering about anti-colonialism or self-determination can whitewash this banditry or compensate its victims. Does property belong, morally, to those who have

earned it by faith, by risk and by sacrifice—or is this assumption outdated?

4. By what logic should all sub-Saharan Africa descend "by right" to people who, until Europeans opened the country, had sparsely inhabited some disjunct areas, and whose lives, unless colonial governments had ordered them, would to this day be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short"? The territory of South Africa itself was settled by Europeans as early as by any others; Mr. Ferwerda to the contrary, no one was there "since time began." The African nations owe their boundaries, their identities, their national wealth, all they know of economics and politics and progress, to those they now dispossess.

Shall we coldly tell white people, who have known no home but Africa for generations, that the above considerations are "irrelevant," that "today we accommodate today's realities, not yesterday's values," that "great changes sweep aside the old order's hold-outs"? Nonsense. Brutality and looting are brutality and looting, whatever sheep's clothing they wear and however massively they are perpetrated. They can be considered normal only in an atmosphere where envy, avarice and hatred are somehow validated as grounds for nationhood by the fact that ten million people share them.

White South Africans have not far to look for their destiny under any equal franchise in the near term. Their Gordian knot cannot be cut because (to stretch the metaphor) it is all that holds them to their moorings. Both whites and responsible Negroes know at bottom that any instant "solution" will bring blood and ruin. The knot can however be slowly and painfully untied: a gradual loss of fear and change of heart by the whites, a change of leadership in Cape Town, a long, trying, complex growing-up by both sides until "one man, one vote" becomes "one mind, one vote." This is distant; few adults living today will see the outcome, but if the parties cannot muster patience for it, they and we shall suffer. Boycotts, threats, fist-shaking, from inside or outside Africa, can only deepen fears, stiffen resistance and heighten the mounting danger. Yet South Africa has the resources and skills to become the alabaster temple of racial harmony for generations now unborn.

ARCH LINSEY CROSSLEY

# "MORALS AND STRATEGY"

New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir: To my surprise, I find that I have been employed as a stalking-horse in Bernard Brodie's otherwise common-sense article "Morals and Strategy" (*worldview*, September 1964). He makes me stand for the "class" of *faincant* intellectuals who fastidiously disdain the mathematical and "games-theory" approaches to national planning while enjoying the national security shored up by same. This is unfair. There is no distaste either in my writings about or my feelings for the RAND Corporation or Dr. Brodie. Nor do I disdain professional soldiers or the Commander-in-Chief. Instead, I hope they are supplied with the most expert possible advisers in every department. But I tried to make an entirely different point.

What I tried to say was that history shows innumerable gifted men who have made complex (and often just) analyses of society, have extrapolated in time forwards and backwards with great accuracy, and then have attempted to communicate their insights to the kings and viziers who steer the real-life ships of state. Failure, frustration, and muddle are their invariable lot. One thinks of Plato, Campanella, Machiavelli, and a hundred others. One thinks of Strafford—formidable man of affairs in himself, with his grand scheme for emancipating the king from the harassments of Parliament—running aground on the incomprehension and conservatism of the very personage he strove to serve. Systematic, scientific thought demands not only intellectuality but, far more important, a special kind of intellectual

coherence which is far to seek in the realm of politics.

Now we all know that RAND and Dr. Brodie and Mr. Kahn do fascinating work on the incredibly vexed problems posed by the technologies of modern war. But to what extent can their methods pervade the mental processes of President Johnson, President de Gaulle, Mr. Suslov, Mr. Chou En-Lai, Dr. Duvalier of Haiti, or the editor of *The New York Times*? How often can Dr. Brodie's counsel be usefully weighed, let alone followed, when inevitably it will be so rarely understood? This question is what I was implying in my little note.

PETER V. RITNER

## The Author Replies:

Santa Monica, California

Dear Sir: I am surprised at Mr. Ritner's protest. After all, I taxed him with nothing more than "distaste" for the work of a certain group of men associated with RAND, of whom I happen to be one. To have distaste for that kind of work is not a sin, nor even blameworthy. As for the accuracy of my observation concerning the feelings he previously expressed, it seems to me the paragraph-long quotation from Mr. Ritner in my article speaks for itself.

BERNARD BRODIE

[Editors note: *Through a typographical error in Mr. Brodie's article, the number of deaths resulting from the fire raids on Tokyo was given as 1,000,000. The correct figure, of course, is 100,000.*]

*"The self-deceptions of national pride continually need to be deflated and the temptations of nations to abuse power need to be exposed. In an open society in which freedom to criticize is safeguarded and in which institutions that are independent of the state are encouraged to be themselves, this type of national self-criticism should be expected. One of the effects of the separation of Church and State should be the preservation of the Church's freedom to criticize the state from its own vantage point as the interpreter of the transcendent will of God and as itself a universal community that includes people on the other side of every international conflict."*

from

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by John C. Bennett

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