

in the manner in which both men have dealt with the issues they raise. Both books do more than enable readers to keep up with the news; they also contain enough to hold the interest of the already well-informed citizen. It is this level of writing that may well be decisive in the question of whether an in-

formed citizenry and a significant level of democratic participation in decision-making can be preserved in the midst of a complex technological and managerial society that must, by the very nature of its power, work out its destiny among the imponderables of world history.

FORCE, STATECRAFT, AND AFRICA

Dean Acheson

Ernest Lefever has given us, as we have learned to expect, a knowledgeable and perceptive study into the interrelation between political leaders and those who control the use of force in three states in tropical Africa—Ghana, the Congo, and Ethiopia. Despite many unique aspects of their condition and experience, his book should stimulate some thinking about the relationship as it exists in Asia and our own hemisphere. Indeed, reading his book, as I have just done, in conjunction with *Khrushchev Remembers*, Newhouse's *De Gaulle and the Anglo Saxons*, and Hill's *God's Englishman* (Oliver Cromwell) carries parallels even further.

Spear and Scepter—Army, Police and Politics in Tropical Africa, by Ernest W. Lefever. The Brookings Institution. 250 pp. \$6.50.

Since the eighteenth century, liberal thought here and in Europe, in the intervals between appearances of frightening foreign menace, has regarded the military as an instrument of domestic oppression. A recent military hero of our own has warned us against the dangers of "the military-industrial complex." Today, liberals inveigh against "police brutality," as in my youth state police were called "Cossacks" by striking coal miners. Force has acquired a bad name as the ultimate instrument for preserving the status quo; and crises of liberalism arise when public force is called upon to protect the state (or the status quo) against those charged with seeking to overthrow it "by force and violence." Then only the "clear and present danger" of such an

attempt occurring is thought justification for the use of state-controlled force to prevent it—a condition that a resident of Ghana, the Congo, or Ethiopia might have believed endemic in his own country during the past decade.

We are surprised when Chief H. O. Davies of Nigeria writes, "A large and efficiently equipped army constitutes an alternative ruling elite to the politicians, and the army is as much interested in stable government as any political party," or when the late President Olympio of Togo said, "We cannot be an independent nation without an army of some sort," or President Diiori of Niger called his army "the visible sign of our political independence" in the eyes of the world and "all our people." Surprise may come from the conception of political and military leaders as alternative elites to operate the state, equally interested in stable government and equally essential to both independence and sovereignty. These are the realities. The long anguish of making with inadequate straw the bricks for the formulation of states are the lessons of Dr. Lefever's meticulous and documented study.

This is not to say that the architects of these states had no help at all. It came from much maligned sources, the colonial powers. The British in Ghana (and Nigeria, too) had established excellent imitations of Whitehall, Westminster, and Wellington Barracks. Even the law courts were reproduced and peopled with robed and bewigged judges and barristers, many of them black. Oxford and Cambridge also made contributions. The Belgians, too, despite being called for their pains "the fatted swine of Europe," by Henry Nevinson, the liberal British journalist and war correspondent of the turn of the century, created an excellent Congolese army, though all its officers

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and almost all its noncoms, even by the time of independence (1960), were Belgian.

Only in Ethiopia the wily old Lion of Judah, Emperor Haile Selassie, had had no help from a European colonial power in creating the institutions of a modern state and the elite to operate it. On the contrary, the Ethiopian prelude to independence was conquest by Mussolini and the destruction of what little had been achieved locally since the Queen of Sheba's time. So, though the best equipped and most experienced ruler to emerge in the three countries and unhampered by notions of democracy, he started with the greatest handicap of all—if between handicaps which are almost total one can make comparisons.

In all three countries the mass of the people were not far removed from the iron age culture and, hence, largely illiterate. The latter, I suppose, is a handicap, though one can doubt whether the printing press and television have been unmixed blessings. Their peoples had no idea—and still have little—of territorial loyalty. Their cohesive idea was not “my country, 'tis of thee,” but “my tribe, 'tis of thee.” In the effort to create a modern territorial state, tribalism is as destructive and centrifugal a force as two dozen loyalties to different varieties of black power, each bent on extermination of the others.

Then among emerging African leaders the perverse stimulation of personal ambition operating in areas of almost total ignorance contributed to a full measure of confusion. A bright child at the controls of a car on a major throughway could produce comparable disaster. Trouble began through over-hasty Africanization of the civil and military services. Ghana began moderately enough, but the Congo under Lumumba's schizophrenic leadership jumped to instant Africanization of the army's officer corps. The result was a shambles at home with the total collapse of all discipline and competence, while abroad humanitarian concern competed with worry about Great Power rivalry to intervene. Well-meaning Belgian offers to help were repulsed as evidence of revived imperialism. The result was a United Nations decision to intervene on the ground that the unhappy and quite powerless Congo constituted a threat to international peace and security, which it certainly did not. Neither did Belgium or any other state.

Thus the old lady of Turtle Bay for the first time created a jurisdiction to intervene in the internal affairs of a state (later repeated in the case of Rhodesia), a jurisdiction expressly denied to it in its own Charter. Four years later the United Nations

forces were withdrawn, having crushed Tshombe's secession movement in Katanga province, with the curious result that the rebel leader soon became prime minister of the Congo. However, the country was as far as ever from establishing a government capable of governing it or an army capable of maintaining order. Once it got rid of the U.N. force—as dangerous as a loose cannon in a rolling 18th century ship-of-the-line—progress on serious state-building began with Belgian and American help.

As the Congo slowly began to emerge from the chaos engendered by an incapable government and undisciplined and uncontrollable army, the other two countries began to slide into it. Ghana suffered from Nkrumah's vanity, corruption, absolutism and inability to manage. His fatal error was to forget his dependence upon the army and mistreat it until it turned upon him and threw him out, while he was on a “peace mission” to Peking. Indeed, both Haile Selassie and Kwame Nkrumah made the same mistake as the later Roman emperors—creating a Praetorian Guard, which alienated the army and, when it turned against the ruler, pre-empted its choice of action. This is the problem that the Long Parliament maneuvered itself into with the New Model Army after the first phase of the Civil War in 1647.

Haile Selassie's mistake was, like Prince Sihanouk's, leaving his realm at a highly critical moment in the relations between the ruler and his soldiers. Sihanouk was in far-off Moscow when his army displaced him. The Emperor was equally far from home when, on Dec. 13, 1960, the Commander of the Imperial Guard, the head of the Internal Security Service, and the Chief of Police, all Amharas, took over in Addis Ababa. The next day the Crown Prince on the radio appeared to join them, but later he said he did this with a gun at his head. This time the coup failed because the army failed to follow the Guard, and the Emperor arrived home in time to finish the fighting and punish the plotters. But, as the Iron Duke said of Waterloo, “It was a damn near-run thing.”

For a reviewer to go further into these three fascinating stories would be as unconscionable as to give away the plot of mystery stories. For all three are thrillers, packed with suspense, human folly, and scholarly wisdom. The end of the stories is not yet. In all three, disaster has been narrowly averted. In all three, the pilots—the Emperor in Ethiopia, General Mobutu in the Congo, and Kofi A. Busia in Ghana—have worked off the lee shores into navigable waters, set their courses, and trained crews with some knowl-

edge of their duties and some basic discipline—for instance, who is pilot and who is crew.

As we read this excellent book—almost a primer in government—and think of our own situation, we should yearn for a little of the discipline in duties and training in performing them, the importance of which it stresses. Since Mr. Lefever is not only a Doctor of Philosophy but also a Bachelor of Divinity (both from Yale, I might add), we might think of him as

suggesting two new beatitudes:

Blessed are the disciplined; for by minding their own business they permit others to mind theirs.

Blessed are the informed who are also modest; for they tread warily.

Perhaps we would add clarification to an older one:

Blessed are the peacemakers, if they are successful and if the price paid is right.

correspondence

"THE BETRAYAL OF LANGUAGE" CONT'D.

Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir: I wish to respond at some length to Paul Ramsey's article, "The Betrayal of Language" (*worldview*, February, 1971).

First, Ramsey's condemnation of both the term "systemic violence" and those who use it is based on a very labored argument, the purpose of which seems to be to portray all those who seek systemic change as "holy war" advocates of revolutionary violence. His explanations of why the term is used could be applied just as readily to the use of his own suggested alternative phrase, "the system is gravely unjust," and possibly even with more justification if, as he correctly says, "injustice is a far worse thing than violence." Violence in reaction to injustice runs the same risk of taking on a "crusading mentality" as does violence in reaction to any other perceived wrong. The word used is not the determining factor; moral limits are neither fixed nor removed on the basis of a term.

Furthermore, there are many who with Ramsey are concerned for "ordered liberty, for democratic processes, and for law," and who, far from considering these concerns as "Agnewisms," react *against* Agnewistic suggestions (such as peremptorily removing certain segments of our population from society) precisely *because* of these concerns. While I have no particular attachment to the term "systemic violence," it does serve as a meaningful symbol to many in our society, particularly those in the ghettos who know first hand the lack of ordered liberty and the sense of "caughtness" which middle-class America can only imagine.

Second, I find it difficult to follow the logic of Ramsey's insistence that foreign policy and domestic policy must be considered independently of each other. His point is well taken that the security of the nation, like the health of the individual, is a conditional value, i.e., a pre-condition for the pursuit of any other purposes

or policies or values. But neither security nor health can be arbitrarily subdivided into independent components. Physical health and mental health are part of a psychosomatic whole. External security and internal security are likewise interrelated, charges of "category-mistakes" to the contrary notwithstanding. Furthermore, good health does not result from taking more pills, doing more exercises, visiting more doctors, taking more x-rays, than anyone else. Such indiscriminate pursuit of health can only endanger health, thereby defeating the purpose of the pursuit. The same is true of the pursuit of security. If such pursuit causes neglect at home because of the lack of resources, particularly when those suffering the consequences at home believe their deprivation is compounded by the pursuit of wasteful and unnecessary policies abroad, the security of the nation can only decline.

In concrete terms, is the conditional value being sought one of keeping U.S. cities from being blown up by the USSR, or keeping U.S. cities from being blown up, period? I believe it is the latter, and therefore find it self-defeating to make such arbitrary distinctions regarding the cause of the problem. It is true that "priority on a scale of excellence . . . cannot displace fundamental challenges to any life at all or to national security," but those challenges can come from more than one source. There are basic values conditional to more excellent values both at home and abroad, and neither set of basic values is independent of the other. One does not starve himself and his family (health) in order to put all his money into life insurance (security), no matter how dangerous his environment.

Third, Ramsey unfairly implies that all those he is arguing against are saying that the "nation's policy is too outgoing and should be more ingrown." This is of course a gross oversimplification which I am sure Ramsey knows is misleading. There is a great difference between an outgoing nation and an overbearing one. Many of those Ramsey is speaking of would, for example, like to see much more than 3/10 of 1% of our G.N.P. applied to