

Followed to its logical conclusion, this program would not only make America a leading bulwark of tyranny, but would stimulate misuse on the part of the protected governments. In a non-democratic system a cycle seems to develop, in which a regime rules well for a time, but then gradually becomes arbitrary and corrupt, until eventually it is so discredited that it is overthrown. If an authoritarian regime has an inclination toward corruption and repressiveness, the only natural check on this tendency will be the fear of being overthrown; and if its ascendancy is guaranteed by foreign troops, its rule will grow steadily more oppressive. This may, in fact, be what has happened in South Vietnam in recent years. . . .

A policy of simply suppressing revolutions in allied nations by force, therefore, would in the end be the worst kind of interventionism, and would tend to impose upon the recipient peoples a more oppressive tyranny than the U.S. would ever have imposed upon its own colonies. This problem could be alleviated only by adopting the third possible course, which was particularly associated with certain advisors of the Kennedy Administration. According to this concept, the U.S. would balance its counterinsurgency warfare programs with political pressures designed to make each protected government either take action to satisfy the needs and wishes of its people, or establish democratic institutions by which the people themselves could make their government responsive to their aspirations. Obviously, this program would entail immense difficulty, and would no doubt fail in many cases; but unless the U.S. is to withdraw from Vietnam and renounce irrevocably any further Vietnam-type interventions (even when they seem to offer much better chances of success than the prototype) it may be the only acceptable alternative.

Robert Banville

"CAN THE VIOLENT BEAR IT AWAY?"

Amherst, Mass.

Dear Sir: It is rare that a writer succeeds in befuddling an issue as thoroughly as Arthur J. Moore managed to do in his guest editorial, "Can the Violent Bear It Away?" (*Worldview*, May, 1970). In introductory political science courses we teach our students the difference between "force" or "coercion" (used by the state) and "violence" (committed by individuals). Surely Mr. Moore, if only he made the effort, could grasp that distinction. I don't mean to be nasty, but when someone tells us in all seriousness that "the Chicago Police and the Weathermen, the F.B.I. and the Black Panthers are morally in the same boat" for they are all violent, one truly despairs of the fate of rationality and the meaningful use of language.

Must one remind Mr. Moore that the Chicago Police not only beat up demonstrators; they also maintain, however imperfectly, the city's peace against crooks, thieves, and murderers. The F.B.I. not only snoops around political

dissenters; its agents also catch spies, bomb throwers, bank robbers and kidnapers of innocent children. Is Mr. Moore prepared to do without these services to society? Does he really see no moral gain in these actions? If not, he has no right to argue that resort to force by law-enforcement agencies is "morally in the same boat" with the acts of violence committed by those breaking the law. One need postulate neither the divine origin or character of the state in order to conclude that the use of coercion by agencies of government is necessary not only for the existence of government but, until the coming of the millennium, for the maintenance of the fabric of organized society as well. Some policemen here or there may act like "fascist pigs," but by and large the police's use of force against the violent acts of persons who attack other persons or the government is essential in order to protect the possibility (and no more than the possibility) of individuals leading a life of peace and morality. This fudging, I would insist, is more than just a "prudential judgment."

I agree with Mr. Moore's aim of seeking "to produce a society based as little as possible on coercion." Few men, not even the pessimistic St. Augustine, ever saw merit in coercion per se. But nothing will be gained by regarding the state, contemporary or ancient, as the work of the devil. Unless Mr. Moore is prepared to follow the logic of his arguments and opt for anarchism, i.e., a stateless society, he should concede the moral difference between force and coercion and violence. Needless to say, even democratic states do not always use force for moral ends, and individuals on rare occasions may advance morality through their violent actions, but these exceptions to the rule do not negate the basic distinction we are talking about. One should add that deflation of the moral authority of government and loose talk about "the sheer violence of our society" are unlikely to help keep the actions of the state on a moral keel.

Gunter Lewy

Berkeley, Calif.

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