

## THE SINGLE STANDARD

DR. VERWOERD has won his referendum, and South Africa is to become a republic. Though the white opposition parties worked themselves up into a strange delirium of hope just before the voting, the result was never reasonably in doubt. Dr. Verwoerd has the bulk of the new eighteen-year-old white voters with him for the same reason that he finds more and more of the English-speaking whites falling in behind his banners at each fresh shriek of his sirens. Apartheid is not so much a disfigurement as a disease, corrupting the reason of all those who do not strenuously resist its contagion. There is no need any longer for the Nationalist Government to manipulate parliamentary majorities, though doubtless it will go on doing so from sheer habit; it has a popular white majority at the polls, and one that is likely to fatten fast on the appetite of dominion.

That the whites should have lost so many of their own civil rights in the process of stripping the non-whites bare of theirs was, of course, to be expected. Had they surrendered these rights deliberately, fully conscious of the sacrifice they were making, it would be bad enough. What is far worse is that so many of them do not know that they have surrendered anything at all, while so many of those who know, do not think of their surrender as a sacrifice.

There are few white South Africans left who are willing to withstand the will of their ruler. And how should it be otherwise? Domination is a drug requiring ever larger doses to satisfy, till the demand itself reduces ruled and rulers alike to absolute servitude. Irresistibly the process of subjection spreads, consuming antagonists, the uneasy, the uncommitted, and at last all those associates who refuse submission to the single appetite. A Verwoerd is the ultimate towards which white supremacy would carry South Africa, a world of mirrors where the only true prophet of apartheid will see only the image of his own will infinitely multiplied. Domination admits of no commands but its own; it creates a hierarchy of servants below the master, having mastered from the very beginning the master himself.

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On November 1, 1960, the Algerian war entered its seventh year. The figures for its victims, whether issuing from F.L.N. or French Army sources, agree alone in provoking fury and

disgust. The war has ceased to command compassion; it has advanced to a degree of destruction that denies humanity. It is difficult to believe that men have fought and are still fighting a war in which almost two million, over a fifth of the Algerian people, have been driven from their homes, and some half-a-million more killed in battle.

It needs an effort of the will to see these casualties as people, not the many dead but the many dying. Yet the effort must be made if our own humanity is to survive. A war is fought and suffered by human beings; and at the same moment that we cease profoundly to feel this, we cease to be human ourselves.

It needs an even greater effort of the will to feel compassion for France. France is fighting and killing not for the right to govern herself but for the power to govern others, not to release the personality of a people but to arrest it. Yet France is also a victim of the war. And though hers is not an Algerian desolation and dying, it is a desolation and a dying all the same. Her people have surrendered their own liberties in the very process of stripping the Algerians of theirs. In their frenzy to win the war and retain their possessions, they have even countenanced the practice of torture by their soldiers and police. How much of free France is left?

The political parties of the fourth republic assaulted democracy in France at the same time as they promoted its denial in Algeria. By supporting the policy of pacification in Algeria, they ensured that a policy of pacification would be directed against them from the moment that they clashed with those in power. They were unable to defend their own rights effectively because they were never prepared effectively to protect the rights of the Algerians. Requiring submission to their own desire for domination, they inevitably fell victim to the desire of others.

The Algerian war destroyed the fourth republic. It now threatens to destroy even the dusk democracy that is the fifth. Those who put General de Gaulle in power to stop the drift towards a settlement of the war by a weak-willed parliament are now plotting to replace him before he drifts towards a settlement himself. And so no one in France seems to possess the power or the will to compel a conclusion to the war that is destroying France herself. Parliament is unable or unwilling to act without the President, the President is unable or unwilling to act without the Army, and the Army has joined settler sentiment in captivity to the demands of domination. The

Algerians, in their refugee camps and guerilla bands, are finally free. The French, in the strength of their army and the abundance of their resources, are absolutely subject to their own appetite to subject. The parallel with South Africa is patent.

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The West would do well to brood upon the lessons of South Africa and France. Washington and London may turn their eyes squeamishly away, but the Arabs in Algiers and the Africans in Luanda, together with their neighbours, can hardly be expected to follow the example. The military and economic aid that France and Portugal receive from the West through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is not being used to protect democracy from Soviet attack. It is freely being used in Algeria and Angola to secure repression. Can the Government of the United States reasonably believe for a moment that those whom Salazar oppresses in Angola will judge Portugal by one standard because she employs arms against them, and the United States by another because she merely supplies the arms that Portugal employs? Will the Africans in Johannesburg condemn the Nationalist Government without condemning too a Britain that supplies the Nationalist Government with arms and the international prop of Commonwealth association? The platitudes about 'the free world' may stir billows of applause in Brussels. They are far more likely to rouse loud derision in Constantine. The devastation of dominion rises steadily and inescapably, till it submerges not only all those who first released it, but all those as well who assisted in the release. The Algerian war is the clearest illustration of this, but only in time. Angola and the Union of South Africa are unlikely to lag far behind the example.

The West cannot paddle about in the Algerian conflict. If it enters the water at all, it must sooner or later find itself swimming for its life. The F.L.N. has already decided to accept the aid that China has offered it. And even such friends of the West as the current Governments of Tunisia and Morocco find themselves forced by French intransigence to connive at, even to facilitate such aid. The peoples of the Maghreb will do all that they can to prevent the defeat of Algerian aspirations, and if Chinese intervention can alone promote the accomplishment of these, then Chinese intervention will be welcomed as the lesser of the evils. France will doubtless go far to prevent a Chinese presence in Algeria. Will she permit Tunisia and

Morocco to ease or even allow the passage of Chinese aid through their territories? The war may yet spill over the borders of Algeria, and then beyond the borders of North Africa. Can the Soviet Union afford to fold its arms while China and France are involved in a North African conflict? Will Britain and the United States—will the whole North Atlantic Treaty Organization—watch an embattled France without intervening on her behalf?

What began as violence and repression in Algeria has already become violence and repression in France. Is it only to end in a violence and a repression that destroy us all? The Algerian war is no longer 'they', if it ever really was. It has become 'we'. Our liberties and our lives are hostages to its evolution every bit as much as are the liberties and lives of those in the shattered villages and rebel encampments of North Africa. If we continue to sacrifice humanity in Algeria—and in Mozambique and Angola and the Union of South Africa—we will sacrifice sooner or later, beyond the recapturing, our own.

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*Just before going to press with this issue, we learned from our agents in Cape Town that 600 copies of the magazine, shipped to South Africa for public sale, were confiscated by the Authorities. We shall, of course, continue to get copies of 'Africa South in Exile' into South Africa, one way or another.*

*Meanwhile we have registered our strongest protest at this further attempt by the Nationalist Government to deny to the people of South Africa free access to facts and ideas. The most constructive protest that our readers can make is to contribute generously towards the costs of the magazine, so as to enable us to distribute even more copies in the Union than we are attempting to do at the moment without any hope of payment. Those who cannot send us donations will assist the magazine to survive and continue its work by finding new subscribers and purchasers for it.*