

Letters to the Editor

Strategy in Viet-Nam

Walter Lippmann proposes that we negotiate an armistice in Viet-Nam. The Communists in the north would have to cease belligerency in return for the neutralism of all Viet-Nam. At first glance neutralism would seem to unite Viet-Nam, allow us to sell our ideas to the people of North Viet-Nam, and keep our foreign aid from going down the drain in faraway jungles. But upon examination, we find this theory to be erroneous.

The Communists are eager to neutralize Viet-Nam, just as they were in Laos. In 1962 a treaty was executed which neutralized Laos and formed a coalition government. The Reds, who are steadily gaining control of the government, have yet to abide by the treaty. In short, they cannot be trusted. Yet we are still financing the Laotian government, which amounts to arming the enemy.

It would be better to prolong the war. But this is not necessary. The reason we have not been getting results in Viet-Nam is because we are fighting a defensive, rather than offensive war. Since North Viet-Nam is sending troops over the border, we should train and equip the South Vietnamese to retaliate on Communist soil.

Ho Chi-minh, Red boss of North Viet-Nam, admits that he fears most of all an attack on his industry. Here lies the bloodstream of any Communist country, and here is where continuous air strikes should be directed. If we are to save South Viet-Nam for democracy, and possibly win North Viet-Nam back, we must knock the breath out of the Communist regime, and not allow it to regain strength.

An armistice on Communist terms cannot be tolerated if we are to maintain our dignity in the face of aggression. Let us not make Viet-Nam the Munich of Southeast Asia.

PHILIP S. BROWN.

Kettering, Ohio.

I am sure there are many, many Americans who would like to know precisely how the contemplated bombing of North Viet-Nam will prevent the Viet Cong from continuing to be supplied by the capture of U.S.-produced material.

How will the proposed intensification of slaughter and terrorization gain popular support for any compliant South Vietnamese regime? How can any constructive end be achieved by more pervasive and thorough destruction? How long, how long must this horrible madness continue unrelieved by reason or human sympathy?

THOMAS ANDREAS.

Lexington, Va.

Good Neighbors

It is most difficult to understand, or even guess, as to what prompted Joseph Alsop to write his startling column of Jan. 22, which was published in your very distinguished newspaper. In this article, Mr. Alsop took liberty with facts in that he named me as one of "two well known Communists" who as legal advisers to Panama's Foreign Office influenced President Roberto F. Chiari to take a stern position against the United States in the recent canal crisis.

It does not serve the American public, nor the friends of

America in Central and South America to make a McCarthy-type charge that when someone may disagree with American Foreign Policy, the person necessarily is advancing a Communist position. One need only recall that the struggle of Panama for a repeal or change in the treaty started the very day after it was signed in Washington by a French adventurer in behalf of Panama.

The objection of Panamanians loyal to the democratic system has nothing to do with communism and, indeed, this position precedes that of Lenin's Russia. The position was motivated by Panamanians loyal to their country and anxious for the establishment of a proper inter-American system wherein respect for all governments and all peoples is fully observed.

It is to this end that Panama and Panamanians believe that the solution to the present crisis lies in the negotiation of a new treaty which would eliminate the roots of the trouble. For a Panamanian to take this position should not open him to unfounded charges that he is a Communist. Certainly, under the good neighbor policy instituted by Franklin Roosevelt and in accordance with the Alliance for Progress pursued by Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, good friends may disagree without being subjected to a McCarthy-type name calling.

I am certain that it can be appreciated that President Chiari and other Panamanian officials, who have been working on this matter, are not involved in taking a stern position against the United States but rather are taking a strong position designed to bring about better recognition for Panama's rights in this modern age. No one had to advise President Chiari or other Panamanian officials to take this position; rather history has dictated it.

My own position is that for the benefit of the relations between both countries, the Panama Canal Treaty should be renegotiated. My position in this respect accords with that discussed by President Kennedy and President Chiari in June of 1962. I prefer to be classified with these two leaders of democracy and to this end must categorically deny Mr. Alsop's unwarranted charges.

ELOY BENEDETTI,
 Ministry of Foreign Relations,
 Republic of Panama,
 Washington.

Existing Monument

President Johnson overstepped the bounds of church-state separation when he suggested a memorial to God be erected in the Nation's Capital. Might I ask to what god? No two persons agree on a definition of the terms "good" and it means many different things to many people.

The nature of the supreme intelligence (if there be such) is completely incomprehensible, even to the so-called bearers of the truth, the men of the cloth. The erection of such a monument would be but a step backward again into darkness and superstition. The universe as we see it all around us is monument enough to the greatness of the Supreme Intelligence.

LAWRENCE C. ROUSH.
 Fayetteville, N.C.

"Civic Offense"

Most people do not pretend to be experts on whether we should have Nike X or some other type of Nike defense around our cities for purposes of defense. Yet most people including the editors of *The Washington Post*, seem to consider themselves experts on the subject of Civil Defense. Why is it on this subject alone that they insist on setting themselves up as knowing what is good for the country (in this case Maryland) better than the experts in the Department of Defense?

How did it happen that a committee of the House of Representatives that started out being in the majority against the Shelter Program changed its mind and voted for it after listening to the facts both for and against it, and then the rest of the House followed suit? Are we to believe that all of these people are knaves and fools?

Since you obviously will not listen to such arguments yourself, don't you think it would be a better service to the people of the State of Maryland if their elected representatives would be able to listen to the arguments both pro and con as free from emotionalism as possible and make up their own minds?

ELAINE JACOBY.

Bethesda.

It would appear that your editorial writer (Feb. 19) could well be used by the Pentagon to replace a large number of highly trained personnel and expensive computer equipment.

My reason for saying this is that he evidently knows exactly how many missiles the Russians have and that it is a number in excess of the number of our cities, allowing for aborts and targeting errors. He also appears to know which targets they have selected for a probably quite limited number of missiles; and is confident that their accuracy is such that none would miss a target city.

He also discounts completely the effectiveness of any counteraction, such as Nike X, (which together with fallout shelters are a part of the Continental Defense package postulated by the Secretary of Defense.)

Unless the above assumptions as to his knowledge and thinking are true, his conclusion about the worthlessness of fallout shelters is obviously a poor one, as cities not directly hit would suffer needless death without them.

A. S. C. WADSWORTH.

Bethesda.

Mistaken Identity

The reference to "anti-Semites like Austen Chamberlain, the British statesman who contended Jesus was Arayan," attributed to Prof. Frederick C. Grant in your report on Feb. 18 of his address at the Washington Hebrew Congregation, indicated a regrettable confusion in somebody's mind between Austen Chamberlain and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, an entirely different person.

Professor Grant authorizes me to say that it was in fact Houston Stewart Chamberlain, and not Austen, whom he mentioned in his address.

ALLAN G. B. FISHER.
 Washington.