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DUNELLEN, N. J.



February 5, 1969

Mr. Alan Paton  
23 Lynton Road  
Kloof  
Natal

Dear Mr. Paton:

Your work and witness have meant so much to me, as to many others, that I am sending you this excerpt from a sermon on "Trusting God." And I wish to thank you for your books, especially "Instrument Of Thy Peace" and "The Long View."

Sincerely yours,

*Roland Bahnsen*

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Trust in God's providence begets and sustains patience. And how we need patience in this time of revolts and confusions.

The late Justice Frank Murphy commended the Irish way of settling disputes in an address on St. Patrick: "You will agree with me that it is not the Irish way to be patient in the face of calamity and let things take their course." And it is not the Christian way "to be patient in the face of calamity and let things take their course." The patience which comes from trusting God is an active patience. Some folks think they are patient when they are not. They think they are patient when they are really lazy. They think they are patient when they have a distaste for risk and adventure, or even for exertion. Christian patience is not an aversion to forthright action with a pious sigh attached. Christian patience is marked by perseverance and persistence. It is the art of "keeing on keeping on." The man who really trusts God attempts, adventures and accomplishes vastly more than he could on his own.

A part of my summer reading was Alan Paton's book, "The Long View," in which he tells some of what he has said, written and done for justice and decency in South Africa during the last ten years. Alan Paton is an authentic saint. He is patient and persistent in striving for what he believes to be true and right. He endures

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Intimidation and frustrations with non-violence and undefeatable good will. Against terrific odds he speaks and writes and acts, expressing richly his fine mind and generous heart. He knows that the struggle for righteousness and justice in the land of Apartheid will be a long one. Three years ago he said: "At the moment it is possible to believe that nothing will change, that the government will never consent to any change that threatens its own position of power, however remote that threat may be. . . For how long will this future last? My answer is, 'I do not know'. To me there is another question, 'How long can I last?' And there is still another question, 'Is it worth trying to last?' I think it it worth trying to last."

How can Alan Paton be so patient and persistent? The answer is not far to seek. He believes greatly in God. . . . He can take a long view, and can be patient and persistent, because he knows that God is in control, and will prevail.