



If we are, as Nadine Gordimer implies, in a late bourgeois world, then the manifest tendency of American culture to solve its internal problems through an Asian war is readily explicable.

Societies faced with crises of confidence have always sought to mitigate their angst in fantasy thrusts of foreign policy. Imperial Russian history is resplendent with such examples. The most telling ironically was another confusing Asian war. That one turned out to be the catalyst for the 1905 Revolution.

America's war has all the earmarks of the kind of crusade which muffles many problems under one blanket. Perhaps its cruelest play is its intent of solving America's viciousness toward the Negro by other viciousness in Southeast Asia.

If we are in a late bourgeois world, then the motivations for America's Asian crusade are at least comprehensible in terms of simple historical logic. If on the other hand there is a sinister, crusade-planning cabal in Washington which dictates to network television, the wire services and the major newspapers that all combat photographs from Vietnam must include at least one Negro -- preferably one helping a wounded white buddy from the battlefield, then the moral implications of the whole morass are chillingly more explicit.

But whether or not such directives insisting on multiracial anti-Communism actually exist, it is still very clear that the US Government is taking the pressure off at home by applying it militarily in Asia. It is tiring and depressing to realize that

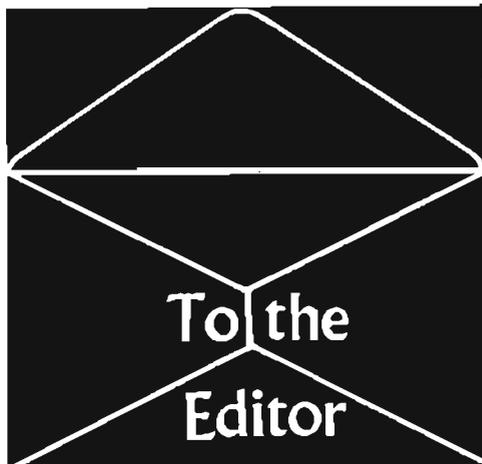
Stokeley Carmichael and the other Black Power advocates miss the point of the racial aspects of the Vietnam War. It is true, as they say, that once again America is fighting a constantly updated version of that old shibboleth 'the Yellow Peril'. But when they claim that a disproportionate number of Negroes are being sent to Vietnam their credibility is under cut each time President Johnson decorates another Negro war hero at the White House.

Violence begets violence and undoubtedly there is an echo effect that bounces the bloodlust back and forth from the napalm raids in Vietnam to the fire tactics in the American ghettos. The whole of America is caught up in it, an orgy of conscious and unconscious 007ism.

It may be that domestic frustrations will indeed be alleviated over the bodies of hundreds of thousands of Asians. If that is so, then in American terms the current crusade in Asia will have been successful.

But it is just as bad when domestic considerations force nations to abnegate their international obligations as has been the case with Britain in Rhodesia, and as it is with all the major Western powers in South Africa.

Perhaps it is just as well to remember that always nations have acted first in terms of their own self-interest and that any country's body politic is made up of nine-tenths domestic policy and one-tenth foreign policy. Seemingly as long as abandonment of moral principles pays off, moral principles will continue to be abandoned in this world of mach politik.



The African Communist

SIR, L. Bloom's defence of the African Communist "line" on the P A C is understandable, so is Martin Legassick's swiping at Nkoana in the same (December) issue of The New African. The passing of the A N C as an effective force in the South African Liberation Struggle has naturally left its white friends feeling isolated, frustrated and bitter. Gone are their chances of climbing to power in a free South Africa over A N C backs. All that is left is a vituperative campaign against the real militants and activists of the P A C - led Azanian Revolution, waged through the King Street based African Communist

The kidnapping of Pokela, mass-arrests of P A C personnel in South Africa, and other current developments show who is actively engaged in the home field. If Vorster, Jonathan and the enemy leaders take P A C seriously, there is hardly any need to wait for recognition from the disgruntled white emigre 'left' fringe. Let Bloom and the others accept the facts of the real situation and join the struggle for a free South Africa

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