

# Correspondence

## “Jehovah’s Witnesses in Cuba”

To the Editors: I want to thank you and Frank Calzon for publishing the recent report on “Jehovah’s Witnesses in Cuba” (*Worldview*, December, 1976). It is terrible that people are still being mercilessly persecuted because, as Mr. Calzon wrote, “they preached the Bible.” We might add too that they live by Bible principles: What many people don’t know or remember is that this course of biblical conduct has caused Jehovah’s Witnesses to be proscribed and even violently persecuted by most countries of the world when it was deemed necessary.

For example, even in the United States, during World War I, seven directors of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society were sentenced to the U.S. Penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, for eighty years imprisonment, twenty years each on four different counts of causing insubordination, disloyalty, and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States of America. After World War I ended and the war hysteria died down, these men were released and completely exonerated of these false charges. Yet, once again, during World War II, the persecution of Jehovah’s Witnesses, for preaching and living by Bible principles, became so intense that United States Solicitor General Francis Biddle and Mrs. Roosevelt felt called upon to make public appeals for a discontinuance of such practices. The Solicitor General in a broadcast over a coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company on June 16, 1940, said:

“Jehovah’s Witnesses have been repeatedly set upon and beaten. They had committed no crime; but the mob had adjudged they had, and meted out mob punishment. The Attorney General has ordered an immediate investigation of these outrages.”

Unfortunately, such mob action continued until the war fever slowly died. Also, over four thousand men were imprisoned by the Government for consci-

entiously refusing military service. The situation was worse for Jehovah’s Witnesses who refused to participate in the military service of Germany and the other countries involved in World War II.

Today, Jehovah’s Witnesses have the freedom to worship and live without molestation in many countries of the world. Yet, it may shock and surprise many to learn that Jehovah’s Witnesses are being violently persecuted or proscribed in more than forty countries besides Cuba. In addition to the Communist bloc of countries that are opposed to the Bible in general, there are Malawi, Argentina, Indonesia, and the Congo, to name just a few of the modern, progressive governments that have felt it necessary to take this action against Jehovah’s Witnesses. It reminds us of the religious and governmental violent persecution of Jesus Christ and the first-century Christians for the same reason: preaching and living by Bible principles.

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## Correction

In William Barnds’s article, “United States Foreign Policy: The Legacy and the Challenge,” which appeared in the January/February issue of *Worldview*, some sentences suffered between typescript and print. These sentences should read:

•*Second*, many of those observers who disagree, or who deemphasize this point [that the nation counts for less and less in international affairs], assert that the United States role will continue to decline because the United States will be unable to devise and carry out a successful foreign policy.

•Much more difficult to correct, and therefore a more serious failure, has been the neglect of the poorer countries during all but the last of the eight years of the Nixon-Ford Administration.

•Containing Soviet and Chinese power involves America’s relations with other non-Communist industrial societies, and aiding the less-developed countries is a task for the industrial nations as a whole—and for the newly

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# WORLDVIEW

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of *Worldview* is to place public policies, particularly in international affairs, under close ethical scrutiny. The Council on Religion and International Affairs, which sponsors the journal, was founded in 1914 by religious and civic leaders brought together by Andrew Carnegie. It was mandated to work toward ending the barbarity of war, to encourage international cooperation, and to promote justice. The Council is independent and nonsectarian. *Worldview* is an important part of the Council’s wide-ranging program in pursuit of these goals.

*Worldview* is open to diverse viewpoints and encourages dialogue and debate on issues of public significance. It is edited in the belief that large political questions cannot be considered adequately apart from ethical and religious reflection. The opinions expressed in *Worldview* do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Council. Through *Worldview* the Council aims to advance the national and international exchange without which our understanding will be dangerously limited.

Philip A. Johnson, *Publisher*

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timism is, by and large, a consequence of the Social Democrats' ascent to power and the ensuing change of atmosphere.

—Wolfgang J. Koschnick

## The New Religious Consciousness

edited by Charles Y. Glock  
and Robert N. Bellah

(University of California Press; 391 pp.; \$14.95)

One suspects that in editing these sixteen chapters Glock and Bellah frequently switched the present tense to the past. That is, in the late 1960's—when much of this research was done—it was perhaps possible, at least in the San Francisco area, to believe in the dawning of the countercultural revolutions this book describes. Since such credulity is now embarrassing, the volume is edited into a "what might have been" nostalgia trip, although still limping toward the conclusion that the processes manifest in the sixties are continuing, albeit perhaps unseen. The selection of subject matter is curious in the extreme. The essays, many of which emerge from class assignments with the editors, leave one to infer that the charismatic movement among Roman Catholics, involving hundreds of thousands of people, is somehow on a par with the Church of Satan or the Healthy-Happy-Holy Organization when it comes to understanding "the new religious consciousness." The result is disjointed and unconvincing; indeed, it is not clear of what the authors would convince us, except that the times they are a'changing. To judge from this book, in the last ten years they have changed less in the Bay Area than out here in the America of the 1970's.

## A History of Christianity by Paul Johnson

(Atheneum; 556 pp.; \$13.95)

In attempting a volume history of two thousand years of Christianity the chances of success are slim indeed. Paul Johnson, a British editor and historian, has succeeded. The literate reader will groan from time to time at what seem outrageous omissions. Johnson's

scheme, which pits Augustine as the hero (with Saint Paul on the side of Erasmus) seems a bit simplistic, but perhaps that is the price paid for a device that holds the story together. The uncomplimentary portrayal of Judaism, especially in the first centuries, will no doubt offend some sensibilities. But, then, Johnson is extremely chary when it comes to compliments. His confidence is that, if Christianity is right, the truth should be followed where ever it leads—even when it leads to a rigorous critique of Christianity. Throughout, the style is eminently engaging, which, together with its other virtues, makes this about the best brief introduction to Christian history available today.

## The Enlightenment in America by Henry F. May

(Oxford; 419 pp.; \$15.00)

Professor May of the University of California, Berkeley, has produced an original and graciously written argument for making some important distinctions when speaking of "The Enlightenment." One can, he contends, actually distinguish at least four Enlightenments and their quite different influences in American politics and thought. Of course the strands overlap, but "The Moderate Enlightenment" (1688-1787) neatly put together reason and revelation, nature and grace in a way that was thoroughly implausible to "The Skeptical Enlightenment" (1750-89). And both those Enlightenments seemed much too pale and deduced by security for "The Revolutionary Enlightenment" (1776-1800), which reached its bloody climax in France, but also influenced more than a few Americans in their understanding of the New World's version of revolution. Finally, there is "The Didactic Enlightenment" (1800-15), which is, May says, the distinctive form American culture took in the nineteenth century. This last Enlightenment—much influenced by the Scottish philosophers such as Thomas Reid—is also the most elusive of May's four ideal types. Toward the end of his tale May notes that American intellectuals have almost always subscribed to some kind of Enlightenment. They have not, however, always been

very discriminating in this subscription and have seldom tried to understand those who opposed the several Enlightenments. May concludes on the note that "Neither the Enlightenment nor any other set of ideas has much of a future unless it can find its place in mass society, among human beings as they are."

## The Day Is Born of Darkness

by Mikhail Dyomin

(Knopf; 368 pp.; \$10.95)

In recent times books such as those by Hedrick Smith and Robert Kaiser have told us a great deal about the underworlds of criminality in the Soviet Union. Here the tale is told by a veteran of fifteen years as a professional thief, and of six years in Siberian prison camps. Smugglers, prostitutes, nationalist terrorists, and thoroughly corrupted officials all come alive in this extraordinary story narrated with very little bitterness and an abundance of humor and irony. Dyomin (the real name is Georgy Trifonov) notes the organizational parallels between the thieves' guild and the Communist Party, but his point is not essentially political. His aim would seem to be to illuminate the humanity of a very large number of people who live on the wrong side of the law in the worker's paradise. At that he succeeds admirably. After release from prison camp Dyomin became a published writer in the Soviet Union and then, in 1971, quietly defected while on a visit to Paris, where he now lives.

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*(from p. 2)*

rich oil states, whose command of financial resources requires giving them a greater voice in international monetary affairs.

•Yet given its preponderant size, this slow process of coordinating decisions in Western Europe, the even slower process of reaching a consensus in Japan, and the diversity within the Third World, it is far simpler for the United States to act first and then to inform other countries—even though the United States wants to be consulted before other countries make decisions that affect it.