“The Yellow Uniforms of Cuba”

To the Editors: During a period when the question of a resumption of relations between Cuba and the United States is under fresh discussion, Theodore Jacqueney's recent article, "The Yellow Uniforms of Cuba" (Worldview, January/February), is timely indeed. It reminds us that we can ill afford to be critical of Soviet persecution of Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov without raising a collective voice of indignation over Cuba's persecution of Huber Matos and the many other Cuban citizens who languish in secret and silent incarceration for the "crime" of being critical of their government. There can be no moral double-bookkeeping where human rights are concerned.

While I accompanied Mr. Jacqueney to Cuba last October, I was not privy at the time to his extensive conversations with those familiar with the status of Cuban political prisoners. Therefore, it was rather a shock for me to learn that the Cuban dissidents he talked to wanted the U.S. trade embargo lifted and diplomatic and trade relations normalized between the U.S. and Cuba—albeit for different reasons than their government. It seems to me that great weight should be given to the opinion of these critics of the Castro government that normalization of relations can only work to diminish repressive actions.

My own view is that the rigid posture of the Castro government to date with respect to its political prisoners is a curious mixture of genuine insecurity over the stability of the Revolution (they haven't forgotten the Bay of Pigs or the exiles) and a cynical manipulation of the issue for external political benefit (if those who are truly political prisoners were freed and permitted to leave Cuba now, what would the government do for an encore when a bargaining chip might be needed in normalization talks with the United States?).

You and Mr. Jacqueney have done a great service by bringing the issue of political prisoners in Cuba to our attention. It is now incumbent on those of us interested in human rights to see that our Congressional representatives are equally well informed on the question as they come to consider normalization of trade questions in the future.

Chicago, Ill.

William J. Bowe

To the Editors: The article about political prisoners in Cuba by Theodore Jacqueney was of particular interest to me. I respect him as an able and honest journalist and admire him for the lengths he went in his Cuba visit to get at the truth in this sensitive matter. It is one thing to sit at home and be a righteous critic, but quite another to press firmly for the truth on a scene loaded with personal risk. His story of what he found out deserved to be the lead article in this issue.

I hope that others will follow you in heeding that poignantly moving plea from Huber Matos inside his La Cabaña cell to denounce the "coward that under the cover of apostle enjoys himself tormenting the lives of helpless men and women inside these putrefiers called prison cells." I feel that revealing the truth to a wide readership is a striking denunciation in itself. As an American, I am grateful that you did so, and hope that you will continue your interest in this tragedy existing so close to our shores. Our dedication against tyranny should always be held as one of our strongest inheritances.

E.G. Lansdale

McLean, Va.

To the Editors: People and countries tend to treat free expression as a luxury, as something you do or give only when you have a margin of safety, stability, economic security, or some other such contrivance. Ideas, growth, change all flourish in charged atmospheres, whether they be charged with hope or with adversity. Solutions, improvements, and various other kinds of answers lie hidden within all of us, I think, awaiting only the proper atmosphere.

Mr. Jacqueney knows this, and his probing, his tremendous focus, results in a moving yet rational advocacy for those people among us who give their

(Continued on page 57)
Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life
by Bruce C. Birch
and Larry R. Rasmussen
(Augsburg: 221 pp.; $4.95 [paper])
An intelligent and necessary, if somewhat pedantic, argument for bringing together biblical studies and ethical reflection, which the authors believe have operated in separate worlds for too long.

The Socialist Decision by Paul Tillich
(Harper & Row: 185 pp.; $10.95)
Billed as Tillich's "longest connected work in the field of social ethics," this book was published in 1933 and now, well translated by Franklin Sherman, makes its first appearance in English. It places Tillich solidly in the Frankfurt School, which was to be developed by Horkheimer, Lowe, Mannheim, Habermas, and others. Opposed to dogmatic Marxism, the focus is on the young ("the real") Marx. Although it will no doubt be picked up by current groups intrigued by the possibilities of democratic socialism, it will be of chief benefit to those interested in the development of Tillich's thought but who have not facility in German.

The History of the German Resistance 1933-1945
by Peter Hoffmann
(MIT Press: 847 pp.; $19.95)
Five hundred thirty-four pages of text and more than three hundred pages of notes witness to the exhaustive nature of this study. There is very little padding, and, surprisingly, the story does read like a story and not merely a catalogue of data. Among many interesting points the author reports that Churchill, a few years after the war, privately expressed regret that England had not taken more seriously the approaches from Dietrich Bonhoeffer and other resistance participants who wanted assurances that a coup against Hitler would be rewarded by more moderate peace terms from the Allies.

Announcement
Black Philosophers. A study is being conducted on the history of blacks in philosophy between 1700 and 1970. The research includes writings by such authors as Anton Wilhelm Amo, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Paulin J. Hountondji, Jerome R. Riley, Alain LeRoy Locke, and William Thomas Fontaine. Works by black lay and professional philosophers are included. Any information on published articles, books, unpublished manuscripts, and bibliographic data on philosophic works by these and other black authors would be appreciated.
Please forward information and inquiries to Leonard Harris, Ph.D., Moton Center for Independent Studies, 3508 Science Center, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Correspondence (from p. 2)
freedom, their comfort, even their lives to charge our atmosphere. He helped me see that, and I appreciate it.
Jerry Roback
Gig Harbor, Wash.

Update
The son of Cuba's most celebrated dissident, Huber Matos, was shot up in Costa Rica on December 27, 1976. Huber Matos, Jr., 32, had been traveling around Latin America, calling on prominent politicians, clergies, and journalists to publicize the cause of his father's release.
Chile had proposed the release of two prisoners in Chilean jails in exchange for imprisoned Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky and Cuban prisoner Huber Matos. When Bukovsky was released, the hopes of the Matos family were raised.
Young Matos telephoned Bukovsky in Switzerland immediately after the Russian was freed. Bukovsky responded with appeals to Cuba to accept the second exchange, appeals that were widely publicized in Latin American press and broadcast media.

Food Aid
To the Editors: I read with interest the article by Kai Bird and Susan Goldmark on food aid to Bangladesh ("Food Aid vs. Development") in your January/February issue.
I must, however, take issue with the statement in paragraph two that "food aid generally does not reach the poor..." which is certainly not true as far as the World Food Programme (WFP) is concerned. This Programme, which handles about one-sixth of all international food aid, is providing very considerable assistance to Bangladesh.
in support of the Government's food-for-work programme launched in January, 1975. WFP's aid in Bangladesh is reaching only the very poorest sections of the community.

This aid is largely being used to re-excavate large stretches of canal and for the creation of embankments to contain floods with the object of assisting the production of an additional 200,000 tons of rice annually. During the first year (1975) some 200,000 workers turned out to work on this project in return for food rations, while in April, 1976, about 2 million were at work on some 1,500 sites. To date WFP has delivered 164,000 tons of wheat to this project and expects to deliver a further 65,000 in the course of 1977.

By May, 1976, about 2,500 kilometers of canals and 3,000 kilometers of embankments had been completed, and it is estimated that workers had moved more earth than was excavated for digging the Panama Canal.

I feel sure you will concede that such work is carried out only by the poorest of the poor, who are thus, in return for food aid, revolutionizing agricultural possibilities in Bangladesh. We are satisfied from our field officers in Bangladesh and from evaluation missions that 100 per cent of the Programme's aid is going to the poorest sector and not to subsidize the Government's ration system for the middle classes.

Thomas C.M. Robinson
Executive Director ad interim
World Food Programme

Kai Bird and Sue Goldmark Respond: Mr. Thomas Robinson is quite correct to point out that not all food aid to Bangladesh benefits only the urban middle class. Food-for-work projects are sponsored by both the WFP and the U.S. Government through a CARE contract. Both programs have a good reputation among development experts in Dacca. Food-for-work projects do attract the very poorest unemployed agricultural day laborers.

But as we stated in our recent article, only an average of 5 per cent of all food aid to Bangladesh is allocated to food-for-work projects. And while we agree that current food-for-work projects can assist in stimulating domestic food production, there are limits to this type of assistance. Most observers agree that food-for-work projects cannot expand much beyond current levels without dislocating labor supplies needed for normal agricultural work.

At the high point of the WFP's food-for-work project, in April, 1976, many recipients were taking their wheat payments and selling them on the open market in return for rice. This phenomenon contributed in part to the low disincentive price paid to local wheat farmers.

Another limitation on food-for-work projects is that most of the excavation of canals and drainage ditches must be completed during the dry season—exactly the time of year when seasonally unemployed day laborers are most likely to find work. During the long monsoon season, when there is very little food or agricultural work available, food-for-work projects grind to a halt.

Food aid—such as the WFP's food-for-work projects—can play a limited role in Bangladesh's development. But food for work is a secondary development tool and cannot substitute for the necessary reorientation of political and economic priorities away from the cities and into the countryside.

The Conservative Menu

To the Editors: I don't know who A. James McAdams is or where you found him, but it wasn't along Publishers' Row. He describes Arlington House as "unnatural in that many of its books are not spontaneously submitted but are commissioned" (see his review of Thomas Molnar's "Authority and Its Enemies" in the March issue of Worldview). Editors at the other publishing houses will be disappointed to see their best efforts thus scanted. In point of fact, the most creative part of any editor's job is precisely the ability to dream up book ideas, then match them with appropriate authors. Arlington House does it—and so does every other publisher worthy of the name.

Mr. McAdams, noting that our sister company is the Conservative Book Club, remarks that Arlington House books go to a "captive audience." In certain moods, I wish it were so. But alas, the thirty or so books we publish annually must make their way in the marketplace in competition with the other forty thousand that America turns out every year. They do find a ready audience among members of the Conservative Book Club; but a captive audience? Well over half the members pass up even our most popular selections. And if we offer too many books a member doesn't like, he simply quits, just like his cousin in Book of the Month Club.

Does Arlington House "too often" fail to get conservative authors at their best? We do have our lemon quota. It runs about the same as at Macmillan and Doubleday, where I worked before. Is our "captive" audience "fed the same old arguments over and over again"?

They do get ideas that express a broadly conservative position, even as readers of The New York Times enjoy their daily ration of liberalism. But if Mr. McAdams visits again and stays awhile, he will notice that the conservative menu is adding new dishes all the time.

Nowhere is Mr. McAdams less accurate (or generous) than when he labels Thomas Molnar a "hanger-on" of Arlington House. Dr. Molnar, a prodigious producer, is the author of over a dozen books in English alone. Apart from the book under review, Authority and Its Enemies, the only other time Dr. Molnar was lured by the Arlington House siren song was for a reprint of The Decline of the Intellectual. I hope the appearance of this book under the Arlington House imprint will not force Mr. McAdams to reconsider his tribute to it.

Neil McCaffrey
President
Arlington House
New Rochelle, N.Y.

A. James McAdams Responds: Mr. McCaffrey is right. I am not a book publisher. However, I am a book reader, and that fact alone should cause him some concern over my less than laudatory estimation of Arlington House.

It remains my impression that AH gets far fewer unsolicited manuscripts than other firms. From the many discussions I have had with conservative intellectuals, it has struck me that the best of these scholars tend to submit their independently written works (often their best works) to other houses. To the extent, however, that such scholars are
attracted to AH, it would seem to be through solicitation—solicitation that, for one reason or another, generally fails to get them at their best. Furthermore, it appears to me that of the scholars AH does succeed in acquiring, many do not remain long within the fold. Of the three AH authors with whom I have discussed the pros and cons of AH, all three have expressed their intention never again to seek the house’s services, citing as reasons for their lack of confidence the firm’s poor reputation, its failure to market books to a wide audience, and its unwillingness to print paperbacks. On the other hand, I categorize as “hangers-on” those who continue their attachment with AH and those as well who seek its services simply because of its conservative orientation.

While the conservative élite, as far as I can discern, does not seem to take AH very seriously, I would say that the house’s Conservative Book Club does reach a fairly sizable middle-brow audience. Although I refuse to argue semantics with Mr. McCaffrey, I am sure he will admit that there are quite a number of individuals who would jump at the chance of buying a “conservative” selection from AH but never even consider subscribing to the Book of the Month Club. As a conservative, Mr. McCaffrey is no doubt familiar with the laws of the market. After all, if AH did not have a reasonably stable and reliable audience, one would be forced to wonder how the house could survive while publishing only “thirty or so” books a year. Naturally, I am not arguing that every Club member purchases every book offered. But if AH manages to sell ten thousand, even fifty thousand, of its books (at hardcover prices) every month, I’d say it wasn’t doing badly at all.

Since I did not know that The Decline of the Intellectual was an AH reprint, I stand corrected. Does this fact, as Mr. McCaffrey suggests, alter my impression of the book? Of course not. It is a fine work, and I would even go so far as to say that AH is to be commended for reprinting it.

Mr. McCaffrey may be interested in knowing that I write not from the perspective of a leftist or radical liberal, but rather from the standpoint of one not too out of sympathy with many of the chief tenets of American conservatism. I do not criticize AH because I hate conservatives, but because I expect—and I think I can get—from them. When Mr. McCaffrey tells me that I should “visit again and stay awhile” at AH, he should be informed that I have “visited” his house with some regularity over the years. Alas, I have been almost consistently disappointed with the ostensibly “new dishes” that have been offered. This disappointment is, by the way, one that is shared by my friends and colleagues and, I imagine, countless others of like disposition.

As Mr. McCaffrey surely knows, conservatives spend a great deal of their time lamenting the fact that they are not taken seriously in American intellectual circles. To the extent that AH is not a cause of this regrettable situation, its publications nevertheless do not seem to go very far toward providing a solution to the dilemma. This is unfortunate because AH is one of the few outlets for conservative opinion in this country. But the situation is not hopeless, for the house can still choose to mend its ways and print better, more thoughtful, and thought-provoking books. If that should indeed prove to be the case, Mr. McCaffrey can be assured I will be behind him all of the way.