

Correspondence

“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 atten-

tion. 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.

William J. Bowe

Chicago, Ill.

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

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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

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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.

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