

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.

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