

# CURRENT BOOKS

## FELLOWS' CHOICE

*Recent titles selected and reviewed by Fellows of the Wilson Center*

**MALNUTRITION AND  
POVERTY: Magnitude and  
Policy Options**

by Shlomo Reutlinger and  
Marcelo Sclowisky  
Johns Hopkins, 1976  
96 pp. \$4.75 (paper only)  
L of C 76-17240  
ISBN 0-8018-1868-0

The debate on world food policy has centered on lagging production and protein deficiencies. In this important little book, two World Bank economists shift the focus to malnutrition among low-income people in poor countries. Noting that simple country-wide averages of calorie intake conceal the impact of highly uneven income distribution, they say that about two-thirds of the people in these countries do not have enough money to purchase adequate food for themselves and their families. The authors agree with other researchers that world food production should be stepped up. But they argue that neither bigger crops nor an increase in per capita incomes at present economic growth rates in developing countries will quickly solve food calorie deficits. They describe ways to measure the cost effectiveness of alternative programs (government food shops, special food supplements for infants) to help poor people achieve minimum standards of nutrition. Their views should stimulate other economists to move beyond looking at nutrition and health simply as welfare problems and examine the interrelationships among food, consumption, income distribution, nutrition, health, and family planning.

—Carl K. Eicher

**THE NATIONALIZATION  
OF CULTURE: The Development of State Subsidies  
to the Arts in Great Britain**

by Janet Minihan  
New York Univ., 1977  
276 pp. \$15  
L of C 76-20372  
ISBN 0-8147-5413-9

State-supported museums blossomed in Britain during the last century, but Parliament did not give financial aid to other cultural institutions and activities. Janet Minihan, a historian at American University, notes that, as recently as the 1920s, Britain had no real national opera company, ballet, or theater. The documentary film movement got some government financial backing in the '30s, but the performing arts did not obtain public

subsidies until after World War II, when major government support began. This careful study of the British experience with tax-supported culture shows that, even when London developed a clear sense of the needs and desires of the country at large, the arts bureaucracy failed to communicate its vision to local authorities for fear of seeming to impose an *Art Officiel*. Minihan never quite comes to grips with another touchy issue, which today bedevils U.S. officials: Should the State underwrite "mass" (popular) culture or only the "high" (traditional) arts?

—David Culbert

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S  
INTERRUPTED  
REVOLUTION**

by H. Gordon Skilling  
Princeton, 1976, 924 pp.  
\$45 cloth, \$15 paper  
L of C 75-30209  
ISBN 0-691-05234-4  
ISBN 0-691-10040-3 pbk

The 1967-68 Czechoslovak reform movement ("a revolt without theory," one observer termed it) burgeoned as a reaction against stifling bureaucratic rule and economic decline. Once in power, the reformers never agreed among themselves on means of improving the situation or on exactly what their ultimate goal was. "Socialism with a human face," Alexander Dubcek called it. But he did not use that celebrated phrase until July 1968, fully six months after he had become first secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and only a month before the Soviet military intervention. Professor Skilling of the University of Toronto, a long-time specialist on Czechoslovak politics, traces the gradual accumulation of frustrations during 20 years of communist rule up to the ultimate explosion of the "Prague spring." His sympathies are pro-Czech and pro-reform. He hopes that the revolution is not dead, only "interrupted." What might it have become—if anything? The Soviet troops have robbed us of the answer. The Czechs' internecine debates about "democratic socialism" and a "planned market economy," described in detail by Skilling, do not give us a clear picture of what might have happened. And the ability of a ruling communist party to abide by democratic traditions in a pluralistic society has yet to be demonstrated in historical experience.

—F. Gregory Campbell '77