

editing, although some appear to be the author's responsibility. Nor is the indexing altogether satisfactory: for example, Paula Medrano de Encina is listed under neither M nor E, but D. This reviewer would have preferred, in addition, a more explicit treatment of key theoretical issues and greater integration of the various themes of the book. Nevertheless, the book was well worth writing, and it adds measurably to our knowledge of the subject with which it deals.

The general picture that emerges is of an orthodox Communist party whose membership is pathetic in its numerical insignificance, its dumb loyalty to Moscow, its harassment by the government, and the absolute ineffectualness of its political activity. Associated with the party is a profusion of less orthodox but equally committed fellow-travelers, among whom the figure of Vicente Lombardo Toledano stands out—more able, more prestigious, more skillful in working within the framework of the Mexican political system, but in the long run hardly more effective. The final element of the picture is a government which, at least until recently, has combined full toleration of deviant opinion with swift suppression of behavior threatening public order, in a manner close to the spirit of the Supreme Court's opinion in *Yates vs. U. S.*, and striking a balance between order and freedom somehow more favorable to either than the United States government has managed to achieve. Professor Schmitt concludes that the Communist movement in Mexico is likely to remain ineffectual unless a major depression occurs or the pressure of population increase becomes extreme.

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*Central America.* By MARIO RODRÍGUEZ. Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1965. Prentice-Hall, Inc. Spectrum Series. Maps. Notes. Index. Pp. 178. \$4.95.

Professor Rodríguez has chosen the interpretive essay as his method of explaining Central American history. As he well knows, the application of this method to the history of the five republics presents a risk far greater than when applied, say, to United States history. In view of this, why did he accept the risk? Probably because he believed that he could write something superior to what is now available. He has done this, but he has done it under the needless burden of trite phrases and clumsy transitions.

The opening and closing chapters are the most provocative. In each there is a tendency to ascribe to President John F. Kennedy (to

whose memory the book is dedicated) motives that may not have been his. Rodríguez seems to believe that the main purpose of the Alliance for Progress was to help Latin America. I am convinced that Kennedy was primarily concerned with national interest, which he hoped to advance through a policy which in my opinion was more naive than enlightened. In the last chapter, Rodríguez suggests that President Lyndon B. Johnson has acted toward Latin America in a way which Kennedy never intended.

In fairness Professor Rodríguez should extend to the United States the same understanding that he applies to Frederick Chatfield, the British consul (compare p. 74 with pp. 156-158). The United States did not create the circumstances; like Chatfield North Americans have only exploited them. Finally, in connection with foreign policy Professor Rodríguez believes that the United States has a "moral obligation" to help Latin Americans develop "democratic institutions." In our own way, we have accepted that obligation; yet every effort, clumsy or sophisticated, has drawn the same screech of anguish that greeted the acts of Chatfield. But the important question is: should the United States accept any such obligation? Is so, what should the United States do if, in the "breeding ground for Communism" (Latin America), the people decide for Communism?

Without a doubt the book's best section is the one dealing with the Central American Federation and the importance of Frederick Chatfield. Here Professor Rodríguez brings to the reader the wisdom he has gained from research on Chatfield. For the first time, one gets a convincing look at that dealer in nations who never missed an opportunity to push the cause of his own nation. He supported union; he opposed union; and by deceiving Palmerston, he even made foreign policy. But he did not destroy the Federation.

The weakest section, I think, deals with the coming of independence. Professor Rodríguez uses the phrase "el terror bustamantino." If only the phrase were involved, it would not merit comment. But the terror of Bustamante has been invented to give that vital period a certain interpretation, one that now appears to be patently unacceptable. Nearly every secondary source follows that line, and when challenged the authors generally cite the memorial written by Paula Vilches in connection with Bustamante's residencia. But that hopelessly slanted document must be read along with the rest of the record. Paula Vilches even admitted that there were two sides to the feud, although he carefully omitted anything in defense of Bustamante. For some reason, Bustamante's exoneration is mentioned

(not by Rodríguez) only as one more sign of the degeneracy of Spain.

A superficial but nagging defect that runs through much of the book is the promiscuous use of the words "liberal" and "conservative." As applied, they make little sense. And I doubt seriously that liberalism is a deep-rooted force in Central America, especially if the implication is that it is a strong force. Early in the book, Professor Rodríguez writes that the political community is restricted largely to white families (three percent in Guatemala) and that their purpose has been and remains that of "keeping the lower classes in their place by all forms of discrimination, some not so subtle." The least subtle tactic has been dictatorship. Writing in 1935, when hope still offset the bitterness and frustration that have blighted an excellent mind, Juan José Arévalo stated bluntly that the social structure of Central American was "primitive" (he even had the temerity to call it "retarded") and that the five republics were the most backward on the planet earth. All this is not to deny the existence of the sophisticated doctrine of liberalism. But liberalism has existed largely in fancy, and its roots will not run deep in a society that labels illiterate up to seventy percent of its members.

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LOUIS E. BUMGARTNER

*The Puerto Ricans. Strangers—Then Neighbors.* By CLARENCE SENIOR. Chicago, 1965. Quadrangle Books, Inc. Illustrations. Tables. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 128. \$3.50.

*Spanish Harlem.* By PATRICIA CAYO SEXTON. New York, 1965. Harper & Row. Map. Notes. Appendix. Index. Pp. 208. \$4.95.

Specialists in Latin America sometimes confess to acute embarrassment when called upon to deal with persons from their area of interest who have casually turned up, sometimes in great numbers, in a neighborhood just a couple of blocks away from the ivory towers of learning of Los Angeles, Houston, Miami, or New York. Here are two excellent books, each with a decidedly different approach to the same subject: the Spanish-speaking immigrant, principally in New York City. Both go a long way toward dispelling our confusion and embarrassment and even awaken a deep admiration for the Latin, who seems to lose his fascination to some people as he moves north.

Clarence Senior, whose studies on the West Indian immigrant, both Puerto Rican and Jamaican, and a Mexican agrarian reform community are fairly well known, approaches his subject in a simple, conventional manner but ends up with a provocative and profound