

periment might have been saved. Some commentators have suggested, for example, that the Allende government did not do enough to co-opt and circumscribe the Army. Others have pointed out that such efforts might well have alarmed anti-leftist elements in the Army and triggered an even earlier reaction. In this, as in other aspects of the situation, they seem to feel they were damned if they did and equally damned if they did not. Apparently at a loss for a precise answer as to what might have been done, one Soviet commentator is reported to have noted (rather sadly, one might imagine) that “under conditions of the peaceful development of revolution, it is probably easier to seize power than to hold it” (p. 117).

Turning to the hemisphere as a whole, the authors conclude that the basic Soviet objective is not to establish new communist states; rather it is to undercut U.S. influence in the area (see p. vi). How meaningful that approach may be is something else again. The Soviets may, for example, champion the nationalization of the Panama Canal all they wish (see p. vii); they nonetheless remain outside the equation. The canal issue would exist even if Moscow did not and its solution (or absence of one) depends upon the actions and decisions of the U.S. and Panamanian governments, not upon anything the Soviets say or do. Quite rightly, then, the authors stress (and it is perhaps their most important conclusion) that despite its relatively increased presence and influence, the Soviet Union is still a minor factor in hemispheric affairs (see p. 199).

Department of State

WAYNE S. SMITH

COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

Race, Class and Politics in Colonial Mexico, 1610–1670. By J. I. ISRAEL. New York, 1975. Oxford University Press. Table. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiii, 305. Cloth.

J. I. Israel presents a study of the stresses and their effect on Mexican society in the mid-colonial period. Allan Nevins wrote that “every generation has to have history rewritten for it.” This book does not fulfill that prescription. The material has long been known. J. Lloyd Mecham and Charles Gibson have reported on the Church in New Spain and its internecine struggles, and François Chevalier on life in the colony, to name but a few of the well-known sources. Israel evidences a greater perception of the divergent, heterogeneous population and psyches of the various groups than other English

writers. He is one of the miniscule few English Hispanists who not only acknowledges the presence in Mexico of Jews as an ethnic group but also credits them with an important role in the commercial activities.

He deprecates Woodrow W. Borah's theory accounting for Mexico's decline from 1580 onward and the adoption of the theory, in modified form, by Pierre and Huguette Chaunu. Israel fails to ascribe sufficient weight to Spain's practice of feudal mercantilism, the *alcabala*, smuggling, and the use of secret Mexican ports by the *contrabandistas* and for illegal immigration.

The book's greatest vulnerability to criticism lies in the bibliography. The Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid (AHN) is not included although it appears in a few footnotes. The AHN has sixteen libros of *cartas* covering 1572–1697 and, of great value to the period, legajos 1732–1738 which contain the visita of Pedro de Medina Rico and the bankruptcy proceedings of Simón Vázquez de Sevilla. The bibliography includes many books and articles not germane or even peripheral to the author's themes. Mindful of his prerogative to include what he desires in a "Select Bibliography," we still question the omission of Pierre Chaunu's "Inquisition et Vie Quotidienne dans l'Amérique Espagnole" . . . (*Annales*); Richard E. Greenleaf's *Zumárraga and the Mexican Inquisition*; Richard G. Keith's "New World Interlopers" . . . (*The Americas*); and several others.

The account of the reign of the viceroy Marquis de Escalona would have profited by recourse to Luis González Obregón's *Rebeliones Indígenas y Precursores de la Independencia Mexicana*. Many footnotes are excellent but many, such as citing Lucía Garcé de Proodian's *Los Judíos en América* (pertaining only to Peru and criticized in *HAHR* and in *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 33, Jan. 1971) are superfluous.

Despite the flaws and deficiencies, the book is a good study for use by graduate students and scholars lacking expertise in phases of Mexico's seventeenth-century history.

Miami, Florida

SEYMOUR B. LIEBMAN

Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century Mexico: A Study of the Tribunal of the Acordada. By COLIN M. MACLACHLAN. Berkeley, 1974. University of California Press. Appendix. Tables. Index. Pp. viii, 141. Cloth. \$9.00.

This book adds a good chapter to attempts by the Bourbons to strengthen Spanish colonial government and administration. The