

This book will be extremely useful for anyone interested in the violent transformation of El Salvador and Central America. It might perhaps have received a larger audience had Father Brockman gone more deeply into the complicated psychology of his subject. He might also have given us more information about the political situation in El Salvador and the social and economic causes behind it. A person coming to the book without some prior knowledge of this subject might find it hard to follow all the ins and outs of Salvadorean politics. On the whole, however, the author has achieved what he intended, a thorough exposition of the stormy three years that Romero spent as archbishop.

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Desafío y solidaridad: Breve historia del movimiento obrero puertorriqueño. By GERVASIO L. GARCÍA and A. G. QUINTERO RIVERA. Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1982. Illustrations. Tables. Notes. Chronology. Bibliography. Pp. 172. Paper.

The Puerto Rican labor movement has recently been the subject of several studies. Gonzalo Córdova and Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán have written on the life and struggles of Santiago Iglesias, the island's best known labor leader. North American historian William G. Whitaker has delved into the movement's relations with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The present book offers a different approach. It emphasizes the class struggle and its aims are educational: to acquaint the workers "with the best chapters of the struggles of the Puerto Rican proletariat and the future perspectives of our working class" (p. 12). As Quintero Rivera stated in his 1980 essay on social classes and political conflicts, the hope is that the workers will develop a consciousness leading to the formation of a working-class force "that will again seek the transformation of society in terms of the proletariat's concept of solidarity" (p. 236).

García, meanwhile, has stressed the role of artisans' organizations before 1898, as forerunners of the labor movement. He is critical of the creole leadership for their support of autonomy, as well as of the workers' inability to challenge the North American occupation of the island.

Two important aspects of the early movement are downplayed; Iglesias's forceful leadership and the AFL's role. The authors claim that initially the AFL showed "great indifference" (p. 37) to the workers' efforts. This is simply not so. Whitaker has amply documented Samuel Gompers's concern and intervention and the strong support he gave Iglesias. The Gompers papers and the AFL's publications have not been used by the

authors; nor has the archival material on Iglesias and his relations with the Taft and Wilson administrations. These are important lacunae.

The authors are on firmer ground concerning the era's socioeconomic factors and the significance of the strikes. They have gathered abundant statistics on labor employment and wages. In line with their ideological bent, they have highlighted the activities of the more radical splinter groups, the role played by the minuscule Communist party, as well as by the General Confederation of Workers. The recent period is treated very schematically.

Non-Marxist Puerto Rican historians would challenge the book's interpretation of the crucial 1940 election that brought the Partido Popular Democrático (PPD) to power. According to Quintero, this party was led by a professional sector of the ruined hacendados and farmers, which mixed cultural elements of a "moribund" class with modernizing radicalism. He adds: "The linkages of forms of a relative overpopulation had created a 'populace' which supported this type of politics" (p. 123). Whatever this jargon means, there is in it an inherent, if not snobbish, contempt for the crucial electoral role played by the aroused peasantry. Turning it into a "populace" belittles history to serve ideology.

Many of the measures taken after 1940 to ameliorate social conditions are sharply criticized. The rise in real wages is seen as a PPD move "really aimed at reducing the workers to passivity" (p. 133). The Minimum Wage Board turns into a government control instrument, and the educational effort of the 1950s, which prompted great social mobility, is simply dismissed as "the opium of the working classes" (p. 134).

All measures that do not emanate from a direct workers' movement are, therefore, highly suspect, for the authors hope that a radicalized labor force, anchored in the class struggle, will be the decisive element in leading the fight for independence and socialism. The reader should bear in mind that this compact book has been written to advance that cause.

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The Peruvian Revolution and the Officers in Power, 1967-1976. By LIISA NORTH and TANYA KOROVKIN. Montreal: Centre for Developing-Area Studies, McGill University, 1981. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. iii, 136. Paper. \$5.00.

This useful but too brief monograph on the reformist phase of the twelve-year military government in Peru (1968-80) persuasively discusses