

however, record in detail the loss of Chiapas to Mexico in 1824, the occupation of Soconusco by Santa Anna in 1842, subsequent negotiations, the treaty of September 27, 1882, whereby Justo Rufino Barrios gave up the Guatemalan claim to the two provinces, and the prolonged efforts of a joint commission to establish a Mexican-Guatemalan boundary. This task was complicated by mutual distrust, border incidents, imprecise geographic data, and granting of wood-cutting contracts to competing private companies.

In *Límites* the first part consists of an essay written in Mexico by Andrés Dardón in 1875 tracing the history of the dispute since 1823. The second part presents a series of undated, unsigned editorials from *El Mensajero* in 1895 which supplement Dardón by commenting on developments since 1875. The *Memoria* of 1900 reexamines the whole question in greater detail from its inception in 1823 until the boundary settlement of April 1895. The author, Claudio Urrutia, was a member and later head of the Guatemalan commission of engineers appointed in 1883 under Miles Rock to work with the Mexican commission of Manuel E. Pastrana in laying out a definite boundary between their respective nations.

Basically these works resemble a legal brief designed to demonstrate that Mexico acted in bad faith. All three studies are the product of men party to the dispute which they are examining. The "scissors-and-paste" technique of the amateur historian is very evident. Long quotations from uncited documents are strung together on a narrative thread. Occasional vague references are made to authors like Domingo Juarros, Alejandro Marure, and Lorenzo Montúfar. No maps are included. Persuasion relies largely on deductive reasoning, argumentative debate, and moral conviction. The two volumes present the Guatemalan case well. One will have to go elsewhere for the rest of the story.

Fairleigh Dickinson University

ROBERT A. NAYLOR

*El periodismo en El Salvador. Bosquejo histórico-documental, precedido de apuntes sobre la prensa colonial hispanoamericana.* By ITALO LÓPEZ VALLECILLOS. San Salvador, 1964. Editorial Universitaria. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Pp. 478. Paper.

El Salvador commands little attention as a source of Latin America's outstanding periodicals or writers, though within Central America itself the Salvadoran daily *Prensa Gráfica* does rate—along with Costa Rican dailies, *La Prensa* of Managua, and *Imparcial* of Guatemala City—among the few reliable newspapers in the area. Contrasting

with most newspapers and broadcasting stations in Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, the Salvadoran mass media do take on a considerable importance as sources of information about the Central American Common Market, along with the free press of Costa Rica. This volume traces Salvadoran journalism from the *folletos* of the 1740s through the radio broadcasts of the 1960s. López Vallecillos makes good use of the historiography of José Toribio Medina, distinguished chronicler of the press of colonial and early independence periods in Latin America.

The struggle of Salvadorans to report candidly the activities of governmental officials becomes an indicator by which we can measure the changing degrees of political freedom in this republic's history more accurately than through the grandiose claims of presidents who quote constitutional guarantees often ignored or suspended. The actual conditions of press-government relations reveal themselves to anyone who reads carefully certain passages of this volume.

Illustrations are especially helpful in capturing the flavor of the press during the last century and the earlier part of this century. Clear reproductions of provocative front pages from *El País* of 1892, *El Porvenir* of 1895, *La Quincena* of 1903, *Cactus* of 1933, and *El Gráfico* of 1939 reveal political struggles with the same impact which they may have exerted on their original readers. Reproductions of front pages of *La Tribuna* and *Tribuna Libre* of the 1940s tell of the determination of Salvadorans to end the thirteen-year rule of Maximiliano Hernández Martínez. In 1944, even with the army's guns pointing at them and with hundreds of political prisoners in jail, Salvadorans took to the printing presses. They churned out pamphlets describing the virtues of Gandhi's passive resistance in India. Students walked out of classrooms; merchants closed their stores; nurses and doctors left the hospitals. There was no electricity, no water service, no garbage collection. The power of the press caused general strikes which brought everything in El Salvador to a halt. The despot resigned.

Not enough space is devoted to Salvador's most respected daily, *La Prensa Gráfica*, which in the 1950s and 1960s has been a major source of political and economic news. In the appendix, however, a biographical sketch of leading newspaper, magazine, and broadcasting editors and writers gives special emphasis to the key men of *Prensa Gráfica*, giving some data which should be in the main body of the book. The chapter on broadcasting is inadequate, considering the importance of radio throughout El Salvador. The few paragraphs on newcasts should have been expanded into an analysis of group listening

and of the impact made by such broadcasts on Salvadorans in rural areas of meager literacy. Perhaps modesty prevented the author from giving himself more than one sentence as a broadcast pioneer, but in 1959 he established the first real video news reports, using newsreels, still pictures, and weather maps. Before this, from 1956 to 1959, TV news consisted of an announcer in front of the camera reading a few headlines.

The biographical sketches of leading journalists at the end of the book will prove especially helpful to Latin Americanists attempting to make contact with Salvadoran intellectuals and men in public life. The compilation was made in late 1964 and is already out of date; for example several of the men listed have died. But this list remains the best available at the present time.

Arizona State University

MARVIN ÁLISKY

*France in Central America. Félix Belly and the Nicaraguan Canal.*

By CYRIL ALLEN. New York, 1966. Pageant Press. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. 163. \$4.00.

Central Americans first learned of Félix Belly in 1856 upon reading an article in which he urged them to unite against the United States. Capitalizing on his popularity, this prominent French journalist of Napoleon III's Empire was instrumental in negotiating the Cañas-Jerez treaty (1858), a commendable adjustment of the troublesome boundary dispute between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. These two countries, in turn, rewarded Belly with a special convention which gave him the right to construct an interoceanic canal, following essentially the conditions set down in the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850. The nature of Belly's negotiations, the inclusion of a clause permitting French ships to patrol Lake Nicaragua during the construction of the passageway, and the transit treaty of April 1, 1859, between France and Nicaragua all seemed to indicate that the French Emperor had chosen to challenge United States interests in Central America. And although Napoleon III did not recognize Belly as his official agent, the principals concerned assumed that the writer's mission was authorized. After all in an earlier day Louis Napoleon had flirted with the notion of a Nicaraguan canal.

Despite his initial success, Belly failed no less than seven times in the next twenty-one years to realize his dream of an interoceanic communication system. His foremost obstacle was the United States government, for at every turn American agents thwarted and discredited the Frenchman. As a result Belly was unable to get financial