

tional politics are well grounded. At the end of each volume appear brief summaries in which the author assesses the year's record of the Frei administration, and in these chapters (I, 421-425; II, 383-389; III, 339-342), he gives credit where due.

The volumes should still be useful to those who seek an understanding of recent Chilean national politics and the position of the Christian Democrats as an administration party, if they bear the above-noted objections in mind. But even when extended to the contemplated six volumes, Olavarría's study will not be definitive. Quantity, alas, is not quality.

Portland State College

FREDERICK M. NUNN

*El plan económico del grupo Rivadaviano (1811-1827). Su sentido y sus contradicciones, sus proyecciones sociales, sus enemigos.* By SERGIO BAGÚ. Argentina, 1966. Universidad Nacional del Litoral. Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas. Colección de Textos y Documentos. Notes. Indices. Pp. 564. Paper.

This book reminds us that the age-old Unitary-Federalist debate is still alive in Argentine historiography. Bagú analyzes the bold but fruitless effort to construct a viable economic structure in Argentina immediately following independence. This undertaking formed an integral part of a wider political plan for national organization—the first attempted anywhere in Latin America. An essay of 110 pages is focused on the economic program conceived and applied by zealous disciples of the Enlightenment, activists committed to sweeping change who participated in the political life of the country from 1811 to 1827. Among them the most prominent were especially Bernardino Rivadavia and also Julián Segundo de Agüero, about whom we know little. Bagú's essay is supported by 165 documents: decrees, laws, reports, parliamentary debates, speeches, correspondence, and newspaper articles, all carefully selected, indexed, and relevant to this controversial topic.

The author's original plan was to produce a two-volume study of about a thousand pages containing an elaborate array of documents heretofore unpublished. The untimely demise of Editorial Raigal over a decade ago made this impossible. What he presents here is an abbreviation of that ambitious design, doubtless valuable for its lucid interpretation, but in some respects regrettably brief and unbalanced. Its chief service is to distill the complex issues of the post-revolutionary era and to define aptly the proposals of the Rivadavia

Group, who championed the Unitary cause. Unfortunately the political aspects of the subject are scantily treated. They deserve far more copious study, for it is impossible to estimate the validity of an economic program apart from the political context in which it was born and died.

This capable historian is a sanguine advocate of the *Unitarios*. He does not question their wisdom, honor, or motives—at any rate not according to the standards which he reserves for their enemies. His partisanship is thorough and candid. In eloquently defending the program of the Rivadavia Group, Bagú judges most of it sound in theory *and* practice. He admits that blunders were made along the way, but insists that none of them was serious enough to blemish a worthy record. He insists, as have others before him, that the culprits responsible for the failure of the Rivadavia economic program were recruited among porteño estancieros led—inevitably—by the bogeyman Rosas. He also indicts “nefarious” Britons who subverted a number of financial schemes critical to the success of the Group’s efforts. The opponents of the Group, seeing their interests undermined, set out to sabotage the program and ultimately displaced the innovators.

The author is at loggerheads with many scholars, among them Miron Burgin and F. S. Ferns, who deal sternly with the Unitarios, Rivadavia in particular, for having defeated their own program through untimely, contradictory, and unrealistic measures. The intellectuals who composed the Group lacked a political base—as their enemies did not—and this helps explain their failure. Some of their specific proposals were aimed at the development of industries, agriculture, and transportation, at immigration, land distribution, and taxation, and at the federalization of Buenos Aires and its customs house. All of these had merit and seemed advantageous to the formation of a united republic destined for stability and prosperity. Bagú justifies the Group’s program in that eventually much of it was carried out. Had it taken root before 1852, he seems to imply, a generation of repression and stagnation could have been avoided. Not everyone can agree with this judgment, but it is worthy of debate.

California State College  
Long Beach

WILLIAM R. SVEC

*Estanislao López. El patriarca de la federación.* By JORGE NEWTON. Buenos Aires, 1967. Editorial Plus Ultra. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. 192. Paper. \$850.00 (Arg.).