

*A History of the Bolivian Labour Movement, 1848–1971.* By GUILLERMO LORA. Edited by LAURENCE WHITEHEAD. Translated by CHRISTINE WHITEHEAD. New York, 1977. Cambridge University Press. Notes. Index. Pp. x, 408. Cloth. \$24.95.

This is a very important book for anyone interested in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century history of Bolivia. It not only deals with a subject which is merely treated tangentially by others who have surveyed that country's history, but it also has interesting reinterpretations of a number of events. One of the more interesting bits of historical revisionism by Guillermo Lora is his reinterpretation of the government of General Manuel Isidoro Belzu in the 1850s. He pictures Belzu not only as a nationalist interested in propping up the country's artisan industries, but also as a protector of the artisan working class of the time. He discusses at length the resurgence of artisan guilds during that era, and their rapid disintegration after Belzu's period in power.

Lora also traces the importance of the alliance of the Liberal party with the urban craftsmen and their organizations just before the Liberals seized power at the turn of the century, and for a decade or more thereafter. He also stresses the importance of the Liberals' alienation of this group in paving the way for their fall in the republican revolution of 1920.

Guillermo Lora writes history from his own particular point of view. He is his country's leading Trotskyist, and perhaps the outstanding representative of that political current in Latin America. Since the 1940s, he has had close personal contact with the organized labor movement, and, although not himself a worker, he has from time to time played a leading role in its affairs, particularly in those of the Miners' Federation. His late brother, César Lora, was one of the principal leaders of that federation in the 1950s and early 1960s. The author sees the labor movement as the vanguard of "the revolution" in Bolivia. Within the working class, he sees the miners as having a special role. As Lora comments in discussing the famous Pulacayo thesis, the Trotskyist declaration of principles of the Miners' Federation (which he reveals that he wrote), "the mine workers were therefore defined as the vanguard of the whole country."

As a result of this orientation, the latter part of this book is more a history of the Miners' Federation and its role in the general labor movement and in national politics than a history of the labor movement as a whole. From the 1940s on, Lora largely ignores the activities of the urban workers of La Paz and other cities, except as they impinge on what is happening to the miners.

The weakness of Lora's Trotskyist view of the history of the labor movement and of Bolivian history in general is particularly evident in his discussion of the revolutionary decade of the 1950s, after the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR) seized power in April 1952. He starts out with the proposition that "the ideology of the Fourth International was widely accepted by those who had made the April revolution." However, this was certainly not the case with Juan Lechín and Mario Torres of the Miners' Federation, Germán Buitrón of the factory workers, Juan Sanjines of the railroaders. Lora vastly underestimates the MNR party loyalty of these and other trade union leaders as an explanation of their willingness to have a showdown with the Trotskyists if the latter challenged the MNR's hegemony of the revolution.

Lora is on more solid ground when he gets to the period after the overthrow of the MNR in November 1964. He graphically details the struggles of the miners against the efforts of successive military regimes to crush their organizations and undermine their already deplorable living standards.

There is also much to be said for his interpretation of the personality and political behavior of Juan Lechín, to whom he devotes much space. His view of Lechín as a man who liked power without responsibility, and who was constantly engaged in playing off one group against another to maintain his own position, is largely correct.

Lora's book is based on the assiduous collecting of original materials, often of a fleeting nature, and on interviews with many of those who participated in the events he describes. His research was helped by his having been a bookdealer for a number of years, but it has suffered much from the fact that the police on several occasions seized the materials which Lora had so carefully collected. The volume is a monument to the persistence of its author.

Some parts of this book appeared as a three-volume work published in La Paz a decade ago. Other parts are taken from more recent published works of Lora, and some apparently have never been published before. The editors are to be congratulated on their job of abridging the original study, which often went off on tangents which were in themselves interesting but did not contribute to, and sometimes interfered with, the smooth historical narrative. The translation is good, and useful footnotes have been added by the editors to explain references which Lora does not think need further elaboration.

This book is an important contribution to an understanding of modern Bolivia. It is also a useful addition to the history of the inter-

national labor movement, and even to the history of international Trotskyism.

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*The Diplomacy of Modernization: Colombian–American Relations, 1920–1940.* By STEPHEN J. RANDALL. Buffalo, 1977. University of Toronto Press. Tables. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 239. Cloth. \$15.00.

Historical coverage of relations between the United States and Latin America in the interwar period (1920–1940) are still somewhat characterized by broad trends. This period was in reality a quite complex era, marked by extensive expansion of U.S. ties within the Western Hemisphere. This short monograph of U.S.–Colombian relations mainly explores the years 1928–1936.

It is well researched on the U.S. side from archives and libraries. It is less thoroughly investigated on the Colombian side; access to Colombian records is more challenging, and the author has thus focused mostly upon newspapers. A fine bibliographic essay is provided. The period is often portrayed as a significant change to the earlier diplomacy of the United States, the Good Neighbor Policy replacing U.S. interventionism under the Monroe Doctrine. The author concurs with others who perceive little modification to the main thrust of American diplomacy, which was governed by economic and strategic interests.

The author places his study in the context of modernization, which leads to two problems. The first is that the theme of modernization is treated only marginally in the pages of the publication. The second is that this era witnessed the early gropings of Latin American states for such economic measures as natural resource control and stimulation of infant industry. This may be more properly termed premodernization. The real quest for modernization occurred after World War II and sharply flavored U.S.–Latin American relations in the 1950s and 1960s.

The question of modernization aside, this publication successfully captures the many currents, and sometimes crosscurrents, which typify diplomacy between nations and which characterized the relations between the United States and Colombia between the world wars.

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