

Gómez “did not become an instrument of the oil companies . . . and, that considerable protection was extended to the workers in the industry” (p. 214).

Although this book is apparently a revised version of McBeth’s 1980 Oxford doctoral dissertation, it is not particularly well written. There are too many irrelevant trivia, and many of the relevant data are poorly digested. It is often hard to see the forest because of the trees.

And yet, this work has considerable merit. No one has done such exhaustive research on this subject. Herein is contained the best available information on the financial relations between the companies and the Venezuelan government. Finally, the author’s treatment of the impact of the oil industry upon the Venezuelan economy and society has never been presented so expertly.

University of New Mexico

EDWIN LIEUWEN

The Nationalization of the Venezuelan Oil Industry: From Technocratic Success to Political Failure. By GUSTAVO CORONEL. Lexington, MA.: D.C. Heath, 1983. Notes. Figures. Tables. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 292. Cloth. \$26.95.

“This is not an academic work. It is more a personal testimony” (p. xiii), says the author. As a United States-trained Venezuelan geologist with twenty years’ field experience, he was appointed a member of the board of directors of the newly nationalized oil industry (Petróleos de Venezuela—PETROVEN) in 1976 by Acción Democrática President Carlos Andrés Pérez. Coronel was not reappointed by COPEI President Luis Herrera Campins when his four-year term ended in 1980, but instead was made executive vice-president of MENEVEN, one of the four nationalized subsidiaries of PETROVEN. When Energy Minister Calderón Berti decided, in August 1981, to move the headquarters of MENEVEN from Caracas to Puerto La Cruz, the author resigned, hinting darkly that “real estate interests” were involved in the decision, and during 1982 he became a fellow at Harvard’s Center for International Affairs, where he wrote this book.

It is the author’s view that PETROVEN was run in a businesslike, apolitical manner under the Pérez administration from 1976 to 1979, that during this period the energy ministry kept its hands off the industry, and that, as a result, PETROVEN achieved its objectives of keeping the industry running smoothly, modernizing its plant and equipment, generating new reserves, and developing indigenous technical expertise.

The honeymoon ended, he says, when COPEI took over the government in March 1979. Thereupon the Herrera administration began to intervene politically in the PETROVEN operation. The entering wedge was the August 1979 amendment to the nationalization law, which henceforth required energy ministry approval of PETROVEN budgets and reduced PETROVEN directors’ terms to two years. Coronel interprets this as a power play by Calderón Berti, who now began

to criticize PETROVEN's costs and development plans, and in August 1981 proceeded to make "political appointments" to the PETROVEN board. Though the administration defended its moves as a "deepening of nationalization," the effect was to lower the morale of PETROVEN executives. As the government's financial problems mounted in 1981 when world oil prices declined, President Herrera began to eye the \$8 billion PETROVEN development fund. On September 28, 1982, he ordered the Central Bank to take it over—a clear violation of the 1975 nationalization act, according to Coronel, for PETROVEN now lost jurisdiction over its investments. Two billion dollars of the fund were used to bail out the corrupt Workers Bank, and work was frozen on PETROVEN's long-range development project in the Orinoco. Coronel predicted that as COPEI's prospects for winning the December 1983 elections dimmed, Calderón Berti, a future COPEI presidential aspirant, would find refuge in PETROVEN—a prediction that came true on August 31, 1983, as President Herrera appointed him to succeed Alfonso Ravard as head of PETROVEN for the period 1983–85. Hence, PETROVEN and the Venezuelan government are now headed by rival politicians, a situation that bodes ill for the orderly, efficient functioning of the nationalized oil industry.

University of New Mexico

Edwin Lieuwen

The Murder of Chile: Eyewitness Accounts of the Coup, the Terror, and the Resistance Today. By SAMUEL CHAVKIN. New York: Everest House, 1982. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 286. Cloth. \$13.95.

The monthly protests in Chile, leading up to the tenth anniversary of the September 1973 coup that overthrew the leftist government of Salvador Allende—and continuing thereafter—have once again focused world attention on Chile. This book, the latest in the enormous literature on the Allende experiment, is a collection of rather freely transcribed interviews with members and supporters of the Allende government in exile, which attempts to reproduce eyewitness accounts of what took place in 1973 and immediately thereafter, and to make the world aware—as it was not at the time the book was written in early 1982—of the continuing opposition within Chile to the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. That opposition now extends over a broad spectrum of Chilean opinion, not just the left, including many former rightist supporters of the regime who feel that it is time to return to Chile's long tradition of civilian rule, and to abandon the doctrinaire ideological approach of the Chicago-school free enterprise economic policymakers who have plunged Chile into the deepest economic depression of any country in the world (a 14 percent drop in GNP in 1982).

We do not hear about the right in this book—except for references to the "Fascistic" National party and the well-manicured and chauffeured ladies who participated in the March of Empty Pots against Allende—and there is hardly any