

of violence ultimately required most of the U.S. Army's mobile force to patrol the Texas border region.

In spite of the stir the Plan of San Diego caused at the time, it soon was submerged into the broader concerns of the ongoing Mexican Revolution. This explains why the whole episode has slipped into obscurity and is seldom even noted by historians; but at the time it was a roiling cauldron of conflicting motives and actions. Venustiano Carranza's aggressive campaign to secure U.S. recognition for his government included the assertion that only his regime could restore peace on the border; and indeed the claim bore some truth. Ex-president Victoriano Huerta involved himself in border events, hoping to return to power. In addition, German intrigues aimed at involving Mexico and the United States in the war depended on rumors and misinformation. The followers of the Plan of San Diego on a number of occasions spared Germans while killing others, further adding to the confusion. The presence of some Japanese among them was yet another ingredient. Attempting to separate the various threads that tangled border violence and intrigue together may well be an impossible task.

Nevertheless, Sandos has made a good start at separating myth from reality by providing a clear notion of what the PSD actually did and how it operated in south Texas and northern Mexico. Clearly, it represented a transborder movement supported by borderlanders from both sides. Equally obvious is that it represented a regional, anarchist response to sociopolitical conditions. The only weakness in the work stems from the author's desire to make his point so overwhelmingly that he tends to surround the argument with excessive detail, some of which might have been better placed in the notes.

Sandos has based his work on intensive research exploring even tangential issues to make sure he has not missed an explanatory key to borderland events. He is to be congratulated for a fine piece of work. This book will interest borderlands, U.S., and Mexican specialists. It is one of a number of recent works that indicate that borderlands history needs to be recast in a broader binational fashion to make any sense. History does not stop at the border for the convenience of national-centric historians, whether Mexican or American.

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Poverty, Natural Resources, and Public Policy in Central America. By SHELDON ANNIS et al. New Brunswick: Transaction, 1992. Maps. Tables. Appendix. Notes. ix, 199 pp. Cloth, \$24.95. Paper, \$15.95.

This collection of essays proposes a series of rural development policies for Central America in the 1990s. The proposals reflect both a growing disillusionment with traditional development strategies and the increasing influence of environmental concerns on policy designers in donor nations. As Sheldon Annis explains, their

working premise is that environmental degradation and extreme rural poverty have been found to be mutually reinforcing; therefore, new public policy initiatives need to be “both pro-poor and pro-environment” to be effective. Political persecution, war, poverty, population pressure, and new land uses have uprooted many rural Central Americans, forcing them into anti-ecological or depredatory practices for short-term survival. Economic development and environmental conservation should be achieved through public policies that provide poor people with economic incentives to protect their natural surroundings. This linkage is at the core of what has come to be called “sustainable development.”

Considering the magnitude of the task, some of the proposals advanced in this volume are surprisingly modest, even timid. Oscar Arias and James D. Nations explore the potential advantages of Central American “peace parks,” protected areas along international borders; while Alvaro Umaña and Katrina Brandon chronicle Costa Rica’s efforts to create strong managing institutions for its national parks and reserves. Neither essay considers concrete issues of campesino livelihood, and both pay no more than lip service to the goal of “alleviating poverty.” John D. Strasma and Rafael Celis describe a system of land taxes and banks that would foster the sale of unproductive land to poor campesinos. In their view, a broader ownership base would in turn encourage conservation efforts for reasons of self-interest. They dismiss land redistribution as a current option, stating that Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador have already completed their reforms (p. 155).

Other proposals are more ambitious, and that brings them into conflict with the built-in constraints of development aid as a ward of U.S. foreign policy. Stephen B. Cox points out many structural flaws in the conception and implementation of international development assistance programs and proposes instead a process that rigorously incorporates citizen participation. Accordingly, Cox calls for institutional reforms in the delivery of binational aid, now largely controlled by the U.S. Agency for International Development. Likewise, Stuart K. Tucker considers the potential of nontraditional agricultural exports (such as winter vegetables, fruits, and flowers) as an economic alternative for the poor, showing that entrenched U.S. trade policies and regulations, as well as lack of access to land, credit, and competitive commercial networks, stand in the way.

Given the gross political manipulation of development assistance in Central America during the 1980s, it seems essential and rightful at least to consider the political roots of policymaking in the name of development, both in Central America and in donor nations and institutions. Unfortunately, there is little frank discussion of that in this volume. The book assumes that what happened in the past is an aberration. Still, it displays the latest trends in development thinking; and for that, some will find it useful.

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