



The FBI in Latin America: The Ecuador Files

Jeremy Kuzmarov

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This reviewer finds few weaknesses with the work. Ortlepp briefly discusses the work in Memphis of civil rights lawyer H. T. Lockard (whose name is spelled incorrectly in the book, as it often is elsewhere) and gives the incorrect information that he may have gone on to practice civil rights law in Kentucky. It would have been good if she had researched him more; a quick call, for instance, to the Memphis Public Library and Information Center likely could have helped her clarify this information. Lockard operated as a civil rights lawyer and NAACP official out of Memphis and, then, in the late 1960s, became the first black cabinet member in Tennessee. He was the subject of a *Southern Cultures* profile in the fall of 2008.

That said, the strengths of Ortlepp's work far exceed the weaknesses. She is to be commended for producing such a fine, unique study that makes a major contribution to scholarship by focusing on airport segregation and desegregation in the United States.

ELIZABETH GRITTER
Indiana University Southeast
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Becker, Marc
The FBI in Latin America: The Ecuador Files
Durham, NC: Duke University Press
336 pp., \$26.95,
ISBN 978-0822369080
Publication Date: August 2017

Historian Marc Becker uncovered a treasure trove at the US National Archives of FBI documents, which derive from an extensive surveillance network primarily targeting leftist social movements, rather than Fascists, in Ecuador during the mid-1940s. Becker uses the files to record the history of popular movements in Ecuador that strove to "create a more

just and equal society" (viii). The documents, he says, allow for a "more complete and deeper" understanding of the Ecuadorian left before, during, and after the so-called Glorious Revolution of 1944, which resulted in the overthrow of dictator Alberto Carlos Arroyo del Rio, who had been supported by the United States (6, 257).

Driven by an eclectic mix of activists who withstood extensive state repression, La Glorioso introduced a period of high expectations for deep change and a flourishing of popular organizing. According to Becker, the Communists were "most dedicated to imagining another world that would include the most marginalized peoples and create a society without racial discrimination, sexual violence and economic exploitation" (viii). Their platform included calls for the industrial development of the country's economy, the termination of commercial speculation, improvements in health care and housing, the expansion of education and literacy campaigns, and an increase in workers' salaries.

The social activism of La Glorioso was eventually coopted by Valesco Ibarra, a charismatic populist caudillo who came to exclude leftists from his administration and enabled the oligarchy to re-establish its financial and political control. The FBI reports were frequently inaccurate and biased but nevertheless shed important light on lost debates about organizing strategies, participation in electoral campaigns, and divisions between reformist, revolutionary, pro-American, and pro-Soviet factions. The reports contain summaries of speeches offering "wild denunciation" of capitalist exploitation and imperialism and portraits of Communist and leftist figures who were secretly spied on (69). These figures include Pedro Saad, a "tireless, modest, energetic fighter, standing firm to . . . the great masses of the people and all progressive forces" (102); Enrique Gilbert, a prizewinning novelist who worked as the secretary-general of the Communist party's coastal branch; Neptali Leon, one of Ecuador's most important peasant

leaders; and Nela Martinez, a writer and intellectual dedicated to "solidarity with humble people, with the workers, Indians and women" (72).

The FBI in Latin America is a very interesting study that effectively uses FBI surveillance reports to help unearth the hidden story of Ecuador's political left in the age of La Glorioso. At one point, we even get a description of the visit to Ecuador of Vice President Henry Wallace, who, according to a British diplomat "dressed and acted like a farmer rather than a vice president and devoted more time to reaching out to the working class than to the wealthy governing class" (114). My only criticism of the book is that more information could have been provided on the background of FBI agents stationed in Ecuador in order to better understand how their worldview may have developed. Becker might also have addressed in more depth how the FBI got its information and speculated as to who its informants may have been. Latin Americanists and other foreign area study specialists should generally follow Becker's example and study the FBI's files as a means of uncovering new information on social movements. They will then be better able to record their history of triumph and tragedy.

JEREMY KUZMAROV
University of Tulsa
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Bosworth, R. J. B.
Claretta: Mussolini's Last Lover
New Haven, CT: Yale University Press
320 pp., \$28.00,
ISBN 978030021427
Publication Date: February 2017

Richard Bosworth's masterly new study of the life of Claretta Petacci opens with her body in Piazzale Loreto, on April 29, 1954, strung upside