BOOK NOTICES


Despite its title, this volume is aimed less at presenting "the truth" and more at debating proposed revisions in relations between the United States and Panama. Given the author's experience as general director of the Goldwater political campaigns in 1963-1964 and the political inclinations of the publisher, it is no surprise that the argument is against the September 1977 treaties.

To support this position, Kitchel offers several subjective assessments of past and present isthmian affairs: that the treaty of 1903 was right and just given conditions when signed; that Communists organized and directed the 1964 Flag War; that United States negotiators, after 1964, agreed to yield on most basic issues before bargaining really commenced; that the Torrijos regime is Communist-oriented; and, that the canal remains extremely vital to United States security. Still, not totally insensitive to the legitimacy of some Panamanian demands, he admits that Panama deserves both more money and a clearer recognition of her sovereignty over the zone.

The author is no doubt sincere when he calls for a new treaty which is both in the "highest interest of the United States" and "fair and just to Panama." What he fails to realize is that the highest interest of the United States, as he defines it, can never be consistent with equity and justice as apparently perceived by the majority of Panamanians. Such remains the dilemma of those North Americans who suggest changes in U.S.-Panamanian relations on terms even less conciliatory than those of the compromise pacts of 1977.

Although Kitchel has consulted a variety of materials, including published government documents, his references are relatively limited; this is neither an historical treatise nor a scholarly essay. As such, to the expert it offers nothing new and to the layman only a partial picture.

Clemson University

Joseph L. Arrieta


Campos has collected his Mexican Folk Tales in southern California from an informant who moved there from Santa Maria, Jalisco, Mexico. The primary function of the stories is simply to entertain. Obviously this was their role in Santa Maria where they circulated orally. Campos' translation is smooth and harmonizes with the local background. The twenty-seven texts are preceded by Jay Martin's foreword and the collector's statement concerning the source and function of the narratives which are genuine representatives of the folk tradition of northeastern Jalisco.

Martin and Campos have arranged the material thematically. "Legends of the Devil," "The Strange Doings of the Saints," and "The Foibles of Man and Beast." Despite the book's title, it contains fewer standard folktales than migratory and regional legends. The latter are on religious themes or reflect the regional belief system. No notes are provided for the narratives. There is no attempt to relate