**OVIDIO LAGOS, ARANA BOOK AUTHOR, EMAILS 2005**

Dear Ovidio,

Reading your email I had a very strong sense of the Colm Toibin novel set in Argentina. The story of the night. He has written on Casement as well.

Your Arana information was very welcome and intriguing. I tried to get my Los Angeles chum to send you some of his Arana transcripts but I suspect he did not. Very grumpy of late.

The 1911 Hobson and Horner project is detailed in Angus Mitchell's latest book. I don't have a copy unfortunately. I was interested for a while (but got nowhere) as there was a Hobson and a Horner amongst Casement's Belfast friends. But I think they were not the same people.

I've often been interested to know how the various South American countries came to create their national identities and how real the differences are.

Best wishes

Jeff.

Dear Jeff,

I’m disappointed with Argentina and my

previous books –novels, biographies- had an argentine

setting. Although I don’t have any English or Irish

blood, I was educated in an English school in Buenos

Aires. Now I’m living in the pampas –in an estancia

that belonged to my mother- so I’m happily far away

from argentine politics and poverty. I happen to own

–let’s call it a style- that is more alike with

European or American standards, so I decided to leave

Argentinian problems and focus, for the time being, in

nineteenth century South America. There is, however,

an exception: at the end of this year, Planeta Chile

is publishing my travel book on Chiloe, a beautiful

island on Chile´s southern tip, with its own culture

and identity. Nevertheless, there were a few

commodities barons I was interested in, but none had

the operatic, tragic and fabulous plot as Arana´s

story. Besides, being a Latin-American, believe me I

do understand all about corruption and violence.

Concerning Arana´s fortune, when rubber markets

plummeted after World War One, Putumayo’s rubber was

worthless. In 1921, for instance, Iquitos was reduced

to poverty. After Peru transferred the Putumayo to

Colombia, in 1934, Arana only owned the strip between

the Putumayo and the Napo rivers and few Indians, and,

as I told you before, rubber was worthless. Anyhow,

Colombia agreed to pay the Arana family 200.000

dollars for the Putumayo estate. During the 1930´s,

the family collected 40.000 dollars, that were

divided among Arana, his son and daughters. The other

160.000 dollars were collected by Victor Israel in the

1940´s, and Arana didn’t collect a dime. He had debts

and, from mid 1930´s onwards, he was penniless.

The Salomon-Lozano Treaty began in 1922 as a secret

protocol between Colombia & Peru, and Arana, being a

senator, raised a fierce opposition. However, in

1927-28 it was approved by the Peruvian parliament,

partly due to USA pressure. Peru, in compensation,

received some territories in northern Amazon, close to

Ecuador´s border, and, besides, the Putumayo,

historically, belonged to Colombia.

There is, however, something I would like to ask you.

I was reading your book on Casement’s Black Diaries,

and on page 295 you wrote:

“Wednesday 26 July. Telegram Cadbury and Horner (J.

Stuart Horner of Birch & Co, 2 London Wall Bldgs). Saw

beautiful type Oxford Circus and some huge ones. In

City with Horner, Laidlaw and there Van Oppel. No go!

(The proposal that Horner and Hobson were putting

together involved Mrs Julio Arana…”

I know all about de 60.000 mortgage on Mrs Arana´s

behalf, but I would like to know who were Horner and

Hobson and which was the proposal.

Thanks Jeff for your cooperation.

Best

Ovidio Lagos

28 April 2005

Ovidio, thanks for your last email – a couple more questions: what brought you an Argentine to researching Arana’s life in the first instance? (I’m probably pleased that you are not a defender of his). And where did all his money go?

What obliged Peru to sign the 1927 treaty? (By the way, Victor Israel crops up in the Casement investigation in 1910.)

Unfortunately I don’t read Spanish but email me any English language reviews – especially in the Washington Post. I’ll await contacting Marie Arana until you get your review there. I don’t want to queer your pitch.

It is very pleasing when your researches uncover something remarkable and you then have to protect the discovery from academic predators until publication. I had a few items like that.

Jeff.

Dear Jeff, how kind of you to reply my email, something that is not usually done among Latin-Americans. I´m afraid I made, as you well state, a freudian slip mentioning Angus Wilson, instead of Mitchell, probably because “Anglo-Saxon Attitudes” fascinated me many years ago.

You are intrigued to know if I have a sympathetic view for Julio Cesar Arana. In fact, I think he was more of a murderer than a patriot, an absolute scoundrel, as Casement puts it in his White Diaries. He was definitely not a patriot. He only cared about rubber, power and profits. Amazingly, when I traveled to Peru, last year, nobody knew he ever existed, including an old friend of mine, editor of Lima’s main weekly magazine. In Iquitos, it’s another story.

Arana, after 1916, became a senator for the Department of Loreto (1922-26) and as a result of the Salomon-Lozano Treaty, signed in Lima in 1927, Peru transferred his properties in the Putumayo to Colombia. In 1932 Arana´s son, Luis (who committed suicide in 1968 being major of Iquitos) took possession by force of Leticia, now a Colombian city.

Anyhow this war was lost and Arana also lost his fortune. Victor Israel, a close friend and businessman, collected thousand of dollars given by the Colombian government to the Arana family.

Julio Cesar Arana died at 88 in Lima, in 1952, penniless, in a small house in Magdalena del Mar, near Lima. That house no longer exists, but I discovered its address and could reconstruct it thanks to an old lady that happened to be, during her childhood, his neighbor. I also found his tomb. Nobody knew where it was. Not even a beggar can have such a lousy tomb. But that´s my little secret: it took me a lot of time to find it and I’ll have to keep that secret until the book is published in the next few months. You will be the first to know.

Concerning Casement, such a fascinating personality, there is a whole chapter (40 pages of approximately 300 hundred pages which is the book’s length), and I have to be very careful that he doesn’t steal the show. It is about the Putumayo Journal, and what he saw and heard over there. I´ve met Marie Arana through the Internet, that descends from a brother of Julio Cesar Arana´s grandfather. She was very helpful, gave me contacts in Iquitos and has written a lovely book, “American Chica”. She was born in Peru from a Peruvian father and an American mother and lives in America. Last not least, she happens to be Book Editor of The Washington Post. I highly recommend you to contact her and also

send her your superb book. Her email is: aranam@washpost.com

Jeff, thanks for your information. I don’t know if you read Spanish, but if you do, let me know so I can send you my book on Arana.

Best

Ovidio Lagos

24 April 2005

Dear Ovidio,

Thank you for your email and the kind remarks about my book. You will have noticed that I did not go into great detail about Casement's investigations in Peru as I was concentrating on his family background, Ireland and his sexuality. So the diaries are more abridged in that department. Also I do not speak Spanish or Portuguese unlike Angus who has lived in Brazil.

I noticed your Freudian slip in relation to Angus - Mitchell not Wilson! - He was a gay English novelist. Angus is known in Casement circles as 'the floppy haired one' and has I believe taken up a job in north America. You know he has a work out on 1911 - very expensive and extensive? I am attaching an updated Casement bibliography for your information.

I know next to nothing about Julio Arana after 1916 except I believe he became a senator and was obviously not permanently damaged by the Casement report. I am intrigued to know if you are taking a sympathetic view of his life and career. He was obviously important in Peruvian history in so far as he may have gained more territory for that country - though it may have been lost later. I'm not sure.

I have felt that the case against King Leopold was somewhat exaggerated though I had not notioned the same about the Aranas. I'd be interested to read something of your work. Does Casement figure for long in your manuscript?

The Furneaux remarks are obvious nonsense and totally unevidenced. Casement had no interest in the older gentleman. O'Donnell was given a certain kindness only because of his Irish ancestry. There is no evidence of any sexual interest, in the diary or the correspondence and notes I have read, in anyone other than those I have noted in the book.

There is an American whose email address I could give you who has thousands of Casement documents on computer. He could search out Arana transcript mentions. Hopefully he would respond though we have had a falling out and communication has ceased. He is somewhat secretive.

I am also attaching an email correspondence I had with a Spanish speaker (not sure where from but probably Peru) who was writing a thesis on the Putumayo. He was fairly sharp in his criticism of my efforts calling me 'obsessive'. A friend of mine then took up the discussion.

Did you come across any of those Indian peoples on your visit to the Putumayo and what is Iquitos like now? I think it was like a frontier town then but Angus kept saying it was too small for Casement to have gone around unnoticed. Pleased to hear it confirmed that the BA Zoo is or was notorious.

Best

Jeff Dudgeon

20 April

Ovidio Lagos <pincen@yahoo.com2005 02:34:12

Julio Cesar Arana

My name is Ovidio Lagos, and I´m an argentine writer.

My publishing house is Planeta, based in Spain, but also has an argentine branch. I’m finishing a biography on Julio Cesar Arana, and traveled last year to Lima, Iquitos and the Putumayo, and I must admit that I made quite a good research. I´m reading your book, “Roger Casement and The Black Diaries”, which is a superb work and has a fabulous investigation. I had read Angus Wilson´s “The Putumayo Journal”, but I don´t agree with him that the Black Diaries were forged. That´s absolutely impossible. Being an argentinian and knowing certain things, how could a forger know that the Buenos Aires´zoo was a cruising spot? However, I do have a problem. Reading Robin Furneaux´s “The Amazon”, he states (page 193):

“In his journey up the Amazon (Casement) he left a long trail of male conquests behind him, black and brown from Para to Andokes. His own account shows him having affairs with Sealey and Leavine among the Barbadians and, more discreditably, with O´Donnell, the rubber collector”.

I feel that when Roger Casement made an entry in his “white” diary on October 25th, and wrote:

“Still here I am staying with O´Donnell rather than with Montt and I feel a sort of kindly feeling for the man, and a belief that under other direction he would have done well even.”

Could Casement have had sexual intercourse with O´Donnell, Sealey and Levine? Why Robin Furneaux says “His own account shows him…” Did Casement write it in his Black Diary? Maybe you can help me with this issue. I wouldn´t like to assert things that have not happened at all.

By the way, if you need information on Julio Cesar Arana, please let me know.

Yours

Ovidio Lagos

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