

Even Lord Casey, it seems, was not reactionary enough to suit Menzies. In 1954 Casey opposed US plans to intervene in Vietnam and, says Watt, "one is tempted to speculate whether a contributing cause of (Casey's retirement as external affairs minister in 1960) was the belief that Australian foreign policy by this time had become too rigid to meet the challenge of a rapidly changing Commonwealth of Nations and world at large."

Still too much the diplomat to call anyone a fool, Sir Alan says that Menzies "could not cast an active, fertile and imaginative mind towards the future." Perhaps his readers will be content to leave it at that.

All the more disappointing is Sir Alan's concluding chapter, called *A Re-Appraisal*, in which he comes out for those very Australian policies which the ultra-reactionary, too rigid, force-loving Sir Robert was most instrumental in framing and imposing on the Australian Government and people.

He barracks for the American war alliance directed against Asian progressives; he recites, with scarcely a glance at the opposition's case, the Johnson-Rusk-McNamara line on Vietnam. Yet he objects to Holt's All the Way statement and says Australia must not only have, but appear to have, a foreign policy of its own.

Seeking a solution of the dilemma which he apparently recognises, Sir Alan claims that "foreign policy is plural not singular. A country has many objectives and it is usually possible to pursue several of these at the one time." His contention, in line with this, that Australia can have "both friendly relations with Asia as well as an alliance including the United States" is unconvincing in the

context of today. Can anyone really think that a few Colombo Plan crumbs for the "good" Asians will undo the effect of all the bombs on the "bad" ones?

Sir Alan notes that as long ago as 1937 the Australian Prime Minister, J. A. Lyons, proposed a Pacific security pact to include the U.S., the USSR, China and Japan, as well as others. His readers may be inclined to think that what has happened to Australian foreign policy, mainly under Menzies' influence, since then has been not "evolution" but regression.

W. A. WOOD

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF WILLIAM BUCKLEY, by John Morgan, Ed. by C. E. Sayers, Sketches by J. H. Wedge, Heineman, 116 pp, \$4.50.

MOST PEOPLE will vaguely recall from school history books the story of the wild white man who burst into Batman's camp on Port Phillip in 1835 with a cry of "Don't shoot, I'm a British object!" Some may associate this wild white man with the proverbial phrase "Buckley's chance". Very few will know that Buckley dictated his memoirs to John Morgan, a Vandemonian journalist, or that these were ever printed. Well, here are the memoirs, and they are fascinating.

William Buckley was born in Cheshire in 1780, served in the infantry in the Netherlands, and while on furlough was arrested on a charge of receiving stolen goods, and transported. He was selected to go with Lt. Col. Collins' party in the first abortive attempt in 1803 to found a settlement on Port Phillip. He absconded, and fell in with Aborigines who, instead of spearing him, adopted him. He lived

with these and other blacks for thirty-two years.

Buckley was no anthropologist, but he was observant, tactful and adaptable. Few members of the "educated classes" could have got on so well with the aborigines as he did. He observed and recorded the habits, arts and customs of his hosts in an admirably unprejudiced way: exogamy, ritual cannibalism, basket-weaving, cookery, hut-making, burial-customs, weapons, tactics in hunting and warfare. No one else ever got so close to the Victorian tribes and their distinctive culture as he did.

Some of his innocent statements will make people's hair stand up. He caught glimpses of what his hosts called a Bunyip; he even went hunting it, though without success. He describes the Pallidurgbarrans, the copper-coloured man-eaters of the Otway—who have long been set down as a myth—and tells how neighbouring tribes tried to wipe them out. Modern anthropologists are less sweepingly sceptical than their predecessors, and I expect that more than one, reading Buckley's account, will murmur, "Negritos?"

(I treat with silence and contempt the alternative theory, circulated by certain malicious newcomers to the Western District, that the Pallidurgbarrans were ancestral Manifolds.)

It will shock many readers, particularly those accustomed to regard war as a product of imperialism, to find how constant and destructive a state of warfare existed among the Port Phillip tribes. Buckley's wife and in-laws, his adopted son, and most others of the tribe he first lived with, were speared; several were roasted and eaten. But he himself, being regarded with some religious awe as the reincarnation of an ancestor, managed to survive. As his influence spread,

he was able to prevent fights. In particular he was able to dissuade his tribe and its allies from making a concerted attack on Batman's settlement.

Then he took his longest chance. Fully aware that he might be treated as an absconder, he joined Batman's party. But he was pardoned. He wanted to stay on as a kind of liaison-officer between whites and blacks, but Fawcner distrusted him and sent him back to Van Diemen's Land, where he became gate-keeper at the Female Nursery! He died in 1854, having spent half his life in an Australia that no other white man ever could know.

Mr. Sayers has done a fine job of editing. His notes are brief and highly informative, particularly as regards the identification of place-names. This is an admirable little book, though expensive. If you do not buy it yourself, you should at least see that your local library gets a copy.

When you finish reading, it is hard to resist the temptation to speculate on what might have happened if "Buckley's chance" had not come off—even if it had come off only once, not twice. Suppose there had been no one to dissuade the Putnaroo and the Wainwarras from attacking the settlement. Or suppose that Buckley had been re-arrested as a bolter, and that his friends had tried to rescue him. Governor Bourke, jealous and jittery, would have been glad of the pretext for cancelling the articles of the Port Phillip Association. Official settlement would have been held up for years, while unofficial, antiofficial, settlers continued to slip in through Point Henry and New Belfast and Portland just as before.

Why, Western Victoria would have been a Transvaal full of *voortrekkers*! The Flag of Stars would have been run up at Portland in the '40s, rather

than at Ballarat ten years later, and run up by Edward Henty and William Learmonth rather than by Lalor and Raffaello. When the diggers decided to fight at Eureka, there would have been cavalry to guard their flanks, and Eureka might have been our Majuba!

Oh, well, better luck next time. No wonder the Victorian government gave Buckley a pension in the end. If they had had an inkling of the amount of trouble he had saved them, they would have knighted him.

JOHN MANIFOLD

CHINA — THE OTHER COMMUNISM,
by K. S. Karol, Heinemann,
\$8.15.

THIS IS a book which no professional or amateur "China-watcher" should miss. It was written on the basis of an extensive four months tour during 1965.

The book is particularly noteworthy because of Karol's personal and political background. Now residing in Paris, and Polish by birth, he spent seven years in the Soviet Union, serving in the Red Army during the war and leaving the Soviet Union after the conclusion of the war.

A severe opponent of the Stalinist period in the Soviet Union and of the Communist movement, and a critic of many contemporary Communist and Soviet policies, Karol is no enemy of socialism. He has written widely on the Soviet Union, Poland and the Communist movement, having been Paris correspondent for the *New Statesman* and a contributor to the annual *Socialist Register*. He is currently writing for *Nouvel Observateur*.

The book is no mere travelogue. It is chock-full of history, commentary

on political, theoretical and ideological attitudes, interviews with top men in the regime and obviously faithful records of enlightening conversations with peasants, Commune leaders, workers, artists, students.

Correctly Karol dwells upon the fantastic achievements of the new China. He indicates that before visiting China he was personally convinced that the old regime was morally and politically indefensible but it was an abstract conviction. He had no real conception of the hell which was the daily life of millions of Chinese peasants. "It is often said", writes Karol, "that the Maoists are more the continuers of certain Chinese traditions than they are disciples of Marx. And, indeed, it would be absurd to deny that a traditionalist element informs their methods. But what other country in the world has known such a radical break with the past? The Russian rural areas were profoundly changed by the October Revolution, then by collectivisation. But in the time of the Czars the peasants did not sell their children or wives and did not live in a permanent state of near-famine.

"The Chinese revolution has advanced the peasantry—that means the vast majority of the population—more than 'twenty years in a day'. At one swoop it abolished hateful centuries-old customs. It has made an unprecedented break with the past, and to the new generation of Chinese that past will be (it already is) as incomprehensible as it is to us. I even ask myself if, for example, the young people who have grown up since the revolution fully understand why Article 3 of the 1950 marriage law states that the sale of children is vigorously forbidden in China."

Karol briefly discusses the Chinese army and soldiers. He points out that