

sorbing the cultural history of Mayans, such as the Mam, the Ixil, and the Quichean people. Little by little the reader finds that he or she has absorbed a comprehensive history of Guatemala, the complete picture of its agriculture, its intricate social pattern, and the richness of its political culture. As we proceed through the book what at first seemed strange becomes normal; the exotic becomes real, but we remain aware that we have learned another order of ideas, a political world governed by different dimensions, and are left somewhat embarrassed by the incursions of western civilization that turned conquest and exploitation against a superior cultural landscape.

One of the qualities of the book and one of the reasons for its great readability is the skillful way in which the chapters have been woven, an agreeable bit at a time, into the whole, so that the resolution of many of the apparently disparate subject headings is reached in the conclusion. The subjects are not taken up one-by-one and exhausted before a new one is introduced. The book is not conceived that way, nor is it presented in simple chronological order. Yet we feel so much closer to Guatemala's unique past when we have read the book from cover to cover.

Since the Spanish swept down over the Cuchumatanes in 1525, Guatemala has been overrun by dictators and insurgents, all trying to resurrect an ancient ideal of living that once characterized the ethereal splendor of the region. George Lovell set out to explore this country with all its paradoxes, pathos and potential. Lovell shows us Guatemala through the eyes of a foreigner but also through the eyes of its people, and his own scintillating, subtle point of view. His work is an important contribution not only to Guatemalan, but to world history.

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*Jim Guy is Chairman of the Department of Social Sciences at the University College of Cape Breton in Sydney, Nova Scotia.*

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## Formulating foreign policy

by Alexander Craig

***Groups and Governments in Canadian Foreign Policy*** edited by Don Munton. Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1985, 115 pages, \$7.00

***Mackenzie King to Philosopher King: Canadian Foreign Policy in the Modern Age*** edited by Peter St. John et al. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1984, 472 pages, \$27.50.

***The Domestic Mosaic. Domestic Groups and Canadian Foreign Policy*** by Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon. Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1985, 120 pages, \$7.00.

These are all rather different books, but they do focus on the same topic: Canadian foreign policy and its formulation. Only one of them is a book in the conventional sense — in some ways it is also the best, so we shall come to it last.

The papers which make up the conference report *Groups and Governments* were presented in Ottawa in June 1982. They range far and wide, but not deep. They are so brief, in fact, that the ones by academics in particular shy away from specifics and examples. Non- and ex-academics are more helpful to the general reader by providing illustrations of the cases they are seeking to make: Don Page of External's Historical Division, for instance, gives a good synopsis of the chronology and politics of Canada's recognition of the People's Republic of China.

A number of activists in environment, disarmament and other areas, give papers, but their presentations lean too much to the descriptive and idealistic rather than to the analytical. They concentrate too much on the goals of the groups, and pay little or no attention to the means of pressure.

Nonetheless this was, as the editor says in his short and helpful preface, a first attempt to survey a complex topic. Some themes do emerge: the ever-increasing inter-relatedness of issues, and the possible disappearance of boundaries between domestic and foreign policy; the relative insignificance of elected representatives and thus their inability to do much about these matters.

As with practically every academic effort, the inevitable conclusion is that further study is required. Some help in this respect might come from the second item under review here — *Mackenzie King to Philosopher King*. Again it is not what most people would recognize straightaway as a book. Its punched pages are held together in laminated cardboard covers by a plastic spine. Similar to a previous collection of essays, called *Fireproof House*, this too seems "aimed at the third-year student in university." The essays, most of them not previously published, are by "a happy blend of six academics, eight diplomats, seven other professionals, and five students still involved in graduate work."

A large range of matters is covered. The editor provides brief introductions to sectors such as Canada and the international economic system, Canada's defence, Canada and the search for counterweights, and Canada and the Third World.

This is another collection very much for the specialist. Yet it will be worth dipping into for readers wanting to brush up their knowledge on quite a number of issues, such as Canada and the Commonwealth, non-proliferation and nuclear sales, the middle power idea. The essays are uneven, of course, but many are interesting and well-documented. There is also a provocative essay by John Holmes on "The World According to Ottawa."

Ms. Riddell-Dixon's book is the most modest but possibly the most immediately useful, and of the widest general interest. The author, who did her Ph.D. under the supervision of John Holmes and who contributed to each of the other two books under review, provides a survey and a practical guide to the ever-growing number of organizations which want some kind of say. She notes at the start that "As interest in foreign affairs grows, so does the potential for a greater divergence of opinions on what Canada's foreign policies should be."

The book distinguishes between economic and non-economic groups, and then outlines the goals and methods of a wide range of types of organization within each of these broad categories. She makes some interesting points: that, for instance, there are some bona fide chambers of com-