

The Western History Association

Review

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benign policy. He contends that self determination is really a policy of "participation," little more than a born-again termination policy designed to rid government of its trust responsibilities. Esber suggests that the Self Determination Act should more properly be called the Indian Participation Act.

One could fault the editors for not including a chapter describing the number and types of reservations that exist in the United States, and how the Indian population is today divided between reservations and urban residences. (Those interested should see C. Matthew Snipp's *American Indians: The First of This Land*, 1989.) But the selected case studies included do give the reader a balanced view of the variety of problems associated with the identity and character of Indian reservations and other forms of Indian settlement.

University of Washington

FREMONT JAMES LYDEN

From Wooden Ploughs to Welfare: Why Indian Policy Failed in the Prairie Provinces. By Helen Buckley. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992. 209 pp. Map, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

This is advocacy history written by an economist who has served in Canada's Department of Indian Affairs bureaucracy. On the basis of her study, Buckley offers a plan for "correct" intervention into the lives of Canada's reserve societies. The author's advocacy shapes her history.

Chapters two and three are brief but effective survey histories of Canada's Indian policy. Reflecting the most recent and well received literature on the subject, Buckley's focus is governmental policy and its expression rather than the Indian peoples themselves and their neighbors.

Some errors in the text suggest that the author was not comfortable with the historical material. She has the buffalo disappearing from the Bow River Valley in 1876, one year before the signing of Treaty Seven, rather than two years after in 1879 (p. 31). On the next page the author designates the Red River "Disturbance" or "Rising" a "Rebellion" in contrast to most recent scholarly usage. As well, she has the Reverend Henry Steinhauer assigned to the Roman Catholic mission at *Lac Ste-Anne* rather than the Methodist mission eventually located at Goodfish Lake. Interestingly, Steinhauer is identified as hailing from Ontario rather than Canada West, as it was known at the time of his journey westward.

The presentist perspective suggested in Buckley's historical analysis is underlined in her history of victims and perpetrators. The racism of civil servants and the parsimony of governments establishes the historical context in which reserve societies evolved. The nastiness of the historical picture that emerges suggests Stalinist images. With the authority to intervene in what most Canadians, Indians, and non-Indians, would have deemed a highly arbitrary manner, the policies and the actions of the department shifted from a focus on their charges to a concern with the personal and departmental convenience of officialdom.

To a useful extent, the author traces the origins of some of the major features

of the welfare way of life that dominates the lives of many of Canada's Indian peoples. As the author demonstrates, recent attempts to alter this reality have not succeeded. Her solution of Canadian citizen-funded, Indian-controlled economic development may not be the panacea she envisages. Had she cast a wider historical net, her analysis would have included the Indian peoples and their neighbors. Among these neighbors were eastern and southern European peasants moving onto homestead and other lands in the opening quarter of this century. Governments did intervene in their lives, but in a far more selective and limited manner. Within three generations, their descendants were finding access to the opportunities available to members of the dominant community. A careful comparison of the two historical experiences could well have offered explanative insights not found in Buckley's more limited study.

This study, in spite of the historical errors, does provide a useful survey. But has Buckley's advocacy denied her an appreciation of other historical factors bearing on her analysis?

University of Alberta

JOHN E. FOSTER

Thomas Crosby and the Tsimshian: Small Shoes for Feet Too Large. By Clarence Bolt. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1992. xiv + 163 pp. Illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.95.)

This slightly revised dissertation discusses the Methodist mission of Thomas Crosby among the Tsimshian of northern British Columbia. While it does an admirable job of summarizing the historical literature on missionaries, it is disappointing for this Native Tsimshian context. Over the past twenty years, our knowledge of the complex chiefdom of the Tsimshian has improved considerably, but Bolt does not recognize these advances.

Chapter one, "The Original People," treats only three of the four Tsimshian divisions, ignoring recent work that explores the role of the Southern Tsimshian in the interaction of Coast and Interior peoples. Similarly, the discussion is garbled in terms of the matrilineal basis of society along the north coast, with inheritance from mother's brothers to sister's sons associated with the female descent line. While historians are not anthropologists, native societies should, at the very least, be described in their own cultural terms.

Bolt does better when discussing the household, expressing as it does the concept of a noble house, and the potlatch, that much-abused and misunderstood mechanism for sharing among Northwest Coast societies.

Chapter two covers early contacts and the fur trade's role in the rise of Legex (or Legaic) as high chief of the Coast Tsimshian tribes. The conversion program of William Duncan, an Evangelical Anglican who established a model cooperative and capitalist community at Metlakatla, is detailed to provide background for the mission of Crosby.

Chapter three discusses the early life and class background of Crosby, along