no new light on them. His analysis of Britain in China also fails to satisfy. Both his emphasis and the strength of his book lie with Japan, particularly the chapters on the Imperial and Washington Conferences and on the 1930s. In "The Manchurian Crisis," the best section, he dramatizes the divergent views of Britain's diplomats in China and Japan and of the Foreign Office (sympathetic to Japan) and its League of Nations delegates (hostile to Japan's Manchurian policy).

The evaluation of appeasement is an important contribution to the revisionist literature, although other students of the same documents might dispute Louis's views. He asserts that British conciliation of Japan is a different phenomenon from appeasement in Europe and was a more rational policy. Moreover, the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office developed this approach with little interference by higher officials.

Although Louis has fallen prey to the difficulties of a brief, continuous interpretation of complicated events, he has surmounted them in his better sections. The book may be disputed by monographic studies now in progress, but it is a worthwhile account of British policy in Asia as well as the first analysis of the primary documents.

JIM MEGGINSON

Report from Peking: Observations of a Western Diplomat on the Cultural Revolution. By D. W. FOKKEMA. [London: C. Hurst and Company, 1972. 174 pp. £2·75.]

Douwe W. Fokkema, an expert on Communist Chinese literature, has written a brief but vivid account of the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1969. He sees China mostly from Peking, as Embassy Secretary and then Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim* of the Office of the Netherlands Chargé d'Affaires, and takes trips to Shansi, Hangchow, Haipeitao and Shanghai. The narrative runs up to the Ninth Party Congress, a year after Fokkema had left China.

He provides few footnotes – apparently much information came from talks with other western diplomats – and little new information. Instead, this remarkably sensitive, Chinese-speaking envoy concentrates on tracing the shifts in mood of the citizenry as the political turbulence rises and falls. In a pleasant English style, his own translation from an original Dutch edition, he paints a brightly coloured portrait of the changing face of China during the Cultural Revolution:

> By early March 1967 the Cultural Revolution seemed to have burnt itself out. . . . Many shop windows, which had been covered with hundreds of yards of propaganda, were scraped clean. Little boys collected the scraps of paper in large baskets, which they pushed ahead of them on small carts mounted on roller-skate wheels. Now pushing, now coasting, they swarmed like water fleas over the streets and squares. It was only slightly above freezing point, but many passers-by did not wear socks and walked barefooted in shoes that were too large for them. The people laughed again. It was springtime and young couples dared to walk hand in hand (p. 79).

From the beginning Fokkema confesses his lack of sympathy for Maoist justifications of the Cultural Revolution:

> As I left the Embassy, the demonstrators could not be avoided. Their drums sounded through the night and were followed by endless columns of people. . . . I was tempted to jump out of my car and to tell them that so many people had already paid their tribute to this kind of quixotism, and that the ideology of Mao Tse-tung would not be the last. I drove home, knowing that my convictions were fanatically negated by millions of individuals around me (p. 39).

In several cases Fokkema offers explanations for events which are, at best, debatable, although to his credit he puts them forward gingerly, warning of the dangers of instant history. He perhaps overemphasizes the seriousness of the industrial lag during the Cultural Revolution, and underestimates that long-standing problem – the shortage of openings for trained personnel. Although he mostly hedges his bets on the future of Chinese foreign relations, he does contend at one point that "Chinese foreign policy is directed more towards spiritual conversion to Maoism than towards pragmatic protection of interest." This conclusion, drawn by many during the Cultural Revolution, seems a bit tarnished now in the light of most recent events.

Equally hasty judgments appear elsewhere in the book. Fokkema describes as "courageous" what was actually a very tentative compromise decision on Szechwan in mid-1967 and he belittles as Mao's refusal "to face reality" what others have seen as a halfhearted but necessary attempt to reconcile warring factions in September 1967.

Fokkema makes no secret of his strong commitment to aesthetic and academic traditions and he often worries over the fate of Chinese intellectuals, particularly in the iconoclastic, anti-classic phases of the Cultural Revolution. He becomes particularly indignant at the new Maoist educational dogma – that individual merit be judged by revolutionary fervour, not intellect.

But if the analyses sometimes fail, the vignettes succeed. No one has yet looked at the Cultural Revolution from so many intriguing angles: a Hangchow Red Guard talks about his hopes of becoming a Party member as he rows across the Western Lake; a colonel from Szechwan sitting beside the author listens without expression as Yang Ch'eng-wu delivers a fiery speech at an Army Day banquet. Liu Hao, Shansi's leading Red Guard, falls asleep on the shoulder of a western diplomat at the end of a long bus tour. Fokkema is a charming writer: too charming to waste on political analysis. The Cultural Revolution cries out for a great novel; perhaps he is the man to write it.

JAY MATHEWS