

KEITH WINDSCHUTTLE AND THE KHMER ROUGE



KEITH WINDSCHUTTLE writes in the April 2006 *Quadrant* that I am “the most brazen” of all “the inventors” of his past. The claim rests on one sentence I wrote in the introduction to *Whitewash*, republished in the collection of my essays *Left Right Left*. In the introduction I informed readers that Windschuttle was formerly an “obscure, retired Sydney academic”, who had once been “an ultra-radical leftist”, but who had travelled very rapidly, during the nineties, to the right. The offending sentence followed: “By the late 1990s, Windschuttle’s journey from Pol Pot enthusiast to apologist for the British Empire was complete.”

So far as I recall the first person to take offence at this comment was Peter Coleman. He informed readers of the *Australian* (September 13, 2003) that as Windschuttle “was well known as an enemy of Pol Pot and his abominations”, my “gibe” was particularly “nasty”. Three days later the *Australian* published a letter on the matter of my Pol Pot slur from Windschuttle himself. In it he made a series of claims. He had never been a supporter of the Khmer Rouge regime. As a consequence of the murder of his friend, Malcolm Caldwell, in Phnom Penh in 1978, he had “abandon[ed] not Pol Pot but Marxism”. His pre-1978 Marxism had more to do with “historical theory” than with “political activism”. He was no communist; the only party he had ever joined was the ALP. A friend’s political description of him, as “a civilised Whitlamite”, was “patronising but accurate enough”.

Windschuttle’s attack on me for the Pol Pot remark, and his accompanying self-description as a civilised Whitlamite, has apparently satisfied his faithful flock. In *Washout*, John Dawson reproduced Windschuttle’s letter to the *Australian*; referred to my Pol Pot remark as a “smear”; and informed his readers that Windschuttle’s “Marxism had more to do with historiography than with politics”. In his *Quadrant* review of *Left Right Left*, Peter Coleman elevated his description

of my Pol Pot remark from “nasty” to “preposterous”. And, in a recent *Sydney Morning Herald* column (April 15), Michael Duffy flatly claimed that my anti-Windschuttle Pol Pot “smears” were entirely “invented”. It is clearly time to answer the challenge put to me by Windschuttle in the April 2006 *Quadrant* and to set the record straight.

The original evidence on which my three words—“Pol Pot enthusiast”—were based came from a passage in a *Good Weekend* portrait of Windschuttle (May 17, 2003) written by Jane Cadzow. Windschuttle told Cadzow that by 1984 “he had disavowed Marxism”. The short passage that followed needs to be reproduced in full.

Looking back, he says his disillusionment was triggered by the death during a pilgrimage to Cambodia in 1978 of a friend, Scottish Marxist academic Malcolm Caldwell. The day before he was scheduled to leave Phnom Penh, Caldwell was granted an interview with the Communist leader Pol Pot. “That night, two of Pol Pot’s henchmen came to his hotel and shot him,” says Windschuttle, who was profoundly shaken by the news of the murder. “That was a moment of growing up, in a way.” Renouncing the Khmer Rouge is one thing, but in recent years Windschuttle has come out against everything from socialism (“a terrible failure”) to feminism (likewise), environmentalism (“their global warming thesis is a demonstrable myth”) and the Aboriginal land rights movement ...

Before reading this article I was aware, mainly through discussions with those who knew him at the time, that during his years at Sydney University Windschuttle was generally considered, even according to the standards of the revolutionary New Left to which he belonged, as unusually dogmatic and extreme. I now discovered something I had not previ-

ARGUMENT

KEITH WINDSCHUTTLE AND THE KHMER ROUGE

ously known—that Windschuttle had been a close political friend of Malcolm Caldwell. This seemed significant. Malcolm Caldwell was no mere Scottish Marxist. He vigorously denied all accusations concerning the massive criminality of the Pol Pot regime. He regarded the Khmer Rouge revolution not merely as benign but as a world transformative event. He was, in the words of an excellent American thesis on the pro-Pol Pot-ism of the Western left, by Sophal Ear, “the leading academic supporter of the Khmer Rouge”.

Given that Windschuttle remained until 1978 a close political friend of Caldwell, the leading academic apologist for Pol Pot in the Western world, and was himself an ultra-leftist at the time; given that the Australian Left almost universally supported the Khmer Rouge regime between their arrival in Phnom Penh in April 1975 and the Vietnamese invasion of late 1978 (as outlined in my *Quadrant* piece of 1979, reprinted in *Left Right Left*); given that Windschuttle told Cadzow that the murder of his friend by Pol Pot forces had re-shaped his political worldview; that Windschuttle would have once been a Pol Pot enthusiast did not seem an heroic assumption to make. Yet Windschuttle’s friendship with Caldwell was not for me the crucial evidence on this point.

According to Cadzow, it was only after the murder of his friend that Windschuttle had “renounced” the Khmer Rouge. A person can only renounce what he has previously supported. The Khmer Rouge had created one of the most evil regimes in the history of humanity. If Cadzow had misrepresented Windschuttle on this matter, surely, I reasoned, he would have let us know. Windschuttle did not publicly contest Cadzow’s account of his relation to the Khmer Rouge. It was on this basis, then, that, in the introduction to *Whitewash*, I described Windschuttle as a Pol Pot enthusiast.

My comment was neither a “brazen invention” (Windschuttle) nor a “smear” (Dawson and Duffy). Moreover, the only genuinely “preposterous” element in this controversy was Peter Coleman’s implied but unsubstantiated suggestion that, at the only relevant time, between 1975 and 1978 (after 1978 virtually everyone was an enemy of Pol Pot), Windschuttle was simultaneously a close political friend of the most important academic apologist for the Khmer Rouge, Malcolm Caldwell, and virtually the only Australian leftist who recognised and opposed Pol Pot’s crimes.

Recently, after reading the fervent denials by Windschuttle and his supporters, that he had ever been a supporter of the Khmer Rouge, I began to wonder whether Jane Cadzow’s claim that Windschuttle had renounced an earlier support for the Khmer Rouge after the murder of his friend might have been based on a misunderstanding of what he had actually said. I rang her to see if I could find out. I asked first if

Windschuttle had privately complained to her about the renunciation remark. She assured me he had not. Had she kept the transcript of what he had said? She told me that she had. Could I see the relevant section? After brief consideration, she agreed.

After outlining the circumstances surrounding Malcolm Caldwell’s murder in Phnom Penh, Windschuttle, according to the transcript, explained its significance in the evolution of his political identity in the following words:

Malcolm’s death really kind of connected me to all the people who have died for political views. Someone I knew pretty well. When he came to Australia he used to stay at my place. So that was a moment of growing up in a way ... That really turned me against any romanticism about the Third World and about communist regimes that I might have had at the time. Even though I was never a communist. Nonetheless I did think it was great that the Khmer Rouge took over Phnom Penh when they originally did ... The experience with Malcolm shattered that illusion immediately.

To readers of the *Australian*, Windschuttle claimed on September 16, 2003: “I had no need to give up Pol Pot since I never supported his regime in the first place.” A few months earlier he told Jane Cadzow that he regarded the Khmer Rouge’s victory and arrival in Phnom Penh (which involved an immediate, brutal and tragic evacuation to the countryside of its entire population) as “great”. To readers of the *Australian* Windschuttle claimed that “Pol Pot’s murder of my friend Malcolm Caldwell was a catalyst that led me to abandon not Pol Pot but Marxism.” A few months earlier, in the interview with Jane Cadzow, he had suggested something rather different, namely that the death of Malcolm Caldwell had liberated him from the kind of romanticism that, until that time, he had embraced with regard to Third World communist regimes.

Given that these comments were made in the context of the delight he had taken in the Khmer Rouge’s victory in Cambodia, Jane Cadzow’s claim that Caldwell’s murder had led to his renunciation of the Khmer Rouge regime was an inference of an entirely reasonable kind. It was, as I have explained, Jane Cadzow’s words about Windschuttle and the renunciation of the Khmer Rouge, in combination with Windschuttle’s close political friendship with the Western world’s most significant academic defender of the Khmer Rouge regime, that led me to the sentence about Keith Windschuttle’s strange political trajectory—from Pol Pot enthusiast to apologist for the British empire.

IS THERE ANY additional evidence bearing on Keith Windschuttle and the Khmer Rouge? Indeed there is. In August 2003 a controversy erupted on a media website (Indymedia) about the Australian Left and Pol Pot. The author who began the controversy was very well-informed. He knew about the role of Noam Chomsky, Gareth Porter and George Hildebrand in pro-Pol Pot apologetics. He pointed out that no one on the Left in Australia had criticised the Killing Fields until the regime had been overthrown, a point I made in my *Quadrant* article of 1979. He claimed that over the next twenty-five years the Left lied through its teeth about what had been said between 1975 and 1978. He remembered Jim Cairns' welcome of the Khmer Rouge victory. He understood the significance of the most important Australian defender of Pol Pot at that time, the young Ben Kiernan. And he recalled the role of "the then-left Keith Windschuttle" who "joined in the fray, belittling refugee accounts ..."

Was this a misremembrance or a malicious invention? I decided to check as best I could by looking at the magazine, *New Journalist*, with which Windschuttle was deeply involved during the critical Khmer Rouge years (1975 to 1978). The central political issue at that time, in the argument over the character of the Pol Pot regime, was the reliability of refugee testimony. A particular dispute arose over the authenticity of a set of photographs, supposedly smuggled out of Cambodia, which purported to show an horrific execution (of a naked man being axed to death) and a Khmer Rouge slave labour battalion at work. It became a standard dimension of the pro-Pol Pot case to claim that these photographs were nothing more than politically-inspired fakes.

In the November 1978 issue of *New Journalist*, a reprint of an article from the *Columbia Journalism Review* appeared. It was given the title "Cambodian Horror Pics—Real or Fake?" The author of the article claimed that "the problem" with the photos "which the Western press seems to have depended on entirely ... for visual evidence of widely rumoured mass executions" was that most likely they were "faked". The article was introduced by the *New Journalist* editors with the following words:

The atrocities allegedly committed by the Khmer Rouge have been accepted as true by the western media, particularly since photographs have been produced of forced labour and executions. These photographs, however, have extremely dubious credentials.

The edition appeared a few days before Malcolm Caldwell's murder. Keith Windschuttle was not merely one of *New Journalist's* editors. As he explained to

Jane Cadzow, he and his wife largely financed and managed the magazine. Windschuttle seems to have been intimately involved in the production of this particular issue. The pro-Pol Pot fake photo piece was wedged between two different articles penned by him.

The reason I described Keith Windschuttle's political trajectory from Pol Pot enthusiast to apologist for the British empire was not to make a claim about his sympathy for the Khmer Rouge. I assumed that in his interview with Jane Cadzow he had made this point himself. I was merely trying to demonstrate Windschuttle's natural attraction to the extremities of politics—in the 1970s on the Left, in the 1990s on the Right. Because Windschuttle is so sensitive to this characterisation of his tendency to gravitate towards political extremism, he is very keen to pretend to a past of political moderation, as a member of the ALP since 1969, and as a "civilised Whitlamite" throughout the 1970s.

Those who knew him in the past can readily see through the pretence. (According to Humphrey McQueen he was a fellow traveller of the Maoists and "a jolly comrade".) Those who didn't know him then could do no better than to read his contributions to the revolutionary newspaper he was associated with in Sydney in 1970 and 1971, *The Old Mole*, which is available in several university libraries, including the Borchardt Library of La Trobe.

In one article Windschuttle attacked the Beatles as "reactionary" and "counter-revolutionary":

Can the Beatles ultimately resolve the question of what to think about Chairman Mao? It is doubtful ... It is no longer a matter of music but one of betrayal. They come off with a whining affirmation of their own values—all you need is love or Mother Mary or Instant Karma—while the kids build barricades in the street.

In another he described the conclusion of the second Sydney Vietnam Moratorium like this:

Back at Victoria Barrack at 7.00 pm everyone was tired and sore but for some reason happy ... Although from the pig point of view, it had been a massacre, the victims felt they were the winners for they were left with a tremendous camaraderie ... No one listened too closely to the speeches that followed. The only ones that made any point at that stage were those that spoke emotionally of "solidarity" or those that urged us to "kill those fucking pigs". The latter expletive was like music to the ears of the crowd, particularly as we knew that the PA system was carrying the words out to the blue-clad monsters that ringed the darkness of our circle of light.

Thus spake the elegant Whitlamite, the man whose Marxism concerned historiography rather than political activism. During the Cold War days, anti-totalitarians used often to say that “les extremes se touchent” (roughly speaking, the extremes of politics meet each other). In the

strange career of Keith Windschuttle they have. Which is all my offending sentence was meant to convey.

Robert Manne is Professor of Politics at La Trobe University.

KEITH WINDSCHUTTLE

WHY I LEFT THE LEFT

~

SO THIS IS WHAT it has come down to. The great debate of the History Wars is no longer about whether Australia was invaded or settled, whether the Aborigines resisted or acquiesced, whether they died from guns or germs, whether academic historians made inadvertent errors or deliberate fabrications, nor about the character of the nation or the corruption of the humanities.

Robert Manne’s response to my critique in the April *Quadrant* of historians who persist in supporting theories of genocide, stolen children and postmodernism ignores all of this to focus on my political views of thirty years ago.

Having failed in his collection *Whitewash* to find the evidence needed to demolish my counter interpretation—a failure for which he has just been publicly rebuked by another defender of the prevailing historical faith, Bain Attwood—Manne has retreated to a little Manichean drama that casts me as the personification of evil. What else can the term “Pol Pot enthusiast” mean? It is like calling someone an enthusiast for Hitler. It says I not only knew about the mass homicide of the Cambodian people but approved of it.

In trying to make this charge stick, Manne must harbour serious doubts about it himself. His recent collection *Left Right Left* reproduces an essay he wrote for *Quadrant* in 1979 entitled “Pol Pot and the Intellectuals”. This targeted a number of Western intellectuals, led by Noam Chomsky and Gareth Porter, who defended Pol Pot between 1975 and 1978 from what turned out to be accurate reports by Cambodian refugees

of mass murder. In researching that article, Manne kept a watching brief on the small pro-Khmer Rouge section of the Australian Left, collecting their newsheets and articles and making notes on their public appearances.

Manne knows that my name never appeared in any of this, and that none of it contains any comment of mine about the Pol Pot regime. Still determined to demonise me but lacking any evidence, he set about teasing it out of a magazine interview I gave in 2003. I had known Malcolm Caldwell, a British academic who had taken a line similar to Chomsky and Porter, so that condemned me. I will respond to him point by point.

Malcolm Caldwell: Manne claims that Caldwell was a “close political friend” of mine in the years from 1975 to 1978. That connection, according to Manne, made me a Pol Pot enthusiast in those years. Manne’s description of the relationship is entirely his invention and is completely inaccurate.

I met Caldwell in 1971 when he came out from London to speak at a conference at the University of Sydney, and we billeted him at our house. He returned for another visit a year or so later and we put him up again. Caldwell was a charismatic man, and many of his ideas were then new and intriguing. He was a political economist who had what seemed persuasive statistics to show the world’s oil would run out in the 1990s. He thought the West had entered a long period of economic recession. We corresponded after he went home and he sent me some of his articles. At the time, I was a post-graduate student doing Australian labour history, a topic

WHY I LEFT THE LEFT

of little interest to him, so the correspondence soon petered out.

I had not heard from him for several years when I learnt in 1978 that he had been shot dead in Phnom Penh. I mentioned him to Jane Cadzow because she asked when and why I had given up the Left. Caldwell was the first person I knew who had been killed for his politics. This brought home to me how sheltered was the Australian Left from the consequences of its opinions, and how juvenile it was to play with political ideas that elsewhere were life and death matters.

Caldwell was a revolutionary socialist but not a member of any party when I knew him. He thought the future of humanity lay in the Third World because the standard of living in industrial society was ecologically unsustainable. When the oil ran out, Western living standards would plummet to those of the peasants of Asia. He thought the Viet Cong and the Khmer Rouge would be the first to transform his vision of the future into reality. Hence his adage: "I have seen the past, and it works."

By the time he died, his thesis about oil supplies had been adopted by the Club of Rome but had also been badly mauled by critics. I thought his futuristic scenario eccentric and fanciful. I have been a sceptic about environmental doomsday predictions ever since.

As most adults learn, it is quite possible to have people as friends even while disagreeing with ideas they think important. Manne's claims about Caldwell and me are guilt by association, the lowest breed of political debate, and the last refuge of the desperate.

The fall of Phnom Penh: In the April *Quadrant* I described my political views in the early 1970s and have never tried to conceal them. I was a member of the Australian Labor Party but was most involved with the university-based New Left.

The big issue at the time was the campaign against the war in Vietnam. Like almost everyone in the New Left I thought the conflict pitted a genuinely nationalist movement of the Vietnamese people against French and American imperialism. We thought the guerrilla fighters of South Vietnam, who had the support of many Buddhist clergy and even some members of the Vietnamese royal family, deserved to liberate their country. Although the origins of the Khmer Rouge were almost unknown, it appeared to be a similar nationalist movement with popular support in the countryside. Even the majority of American congressmen who voted in 1973 to stop bombing the Khmer Rouge—thereby allowing them to advance on the capital unimpeded—believed much the same. So when Saigon and Phnom Penh both fell in 1975 we thought justice in the region had been done.

This is the context of what I said to Jane Cadzow: I

was never a communist but I did support the national liberation movements of South-East Asia up to the time they got into power. My point in mentioning this to her was to illustrate, in the light of what everyone now knows came later, the ignorance and gullibility of what was once a common political position on the Left.

None of this made me a Pol Pot enthusiast. In 1975 I had never heard of Pol Pot. Nor, indeed, had anyone else in the West, because he kept his identity secret until after his victory that year. I made no comment of any kind about Cambodia between 1975 and 1978. I did not follow the debate about the refugee testimony. I only took an interest in the country after Caldwell's death, which occurred shortly before the Vietnamese invasion. Only after that did the world discover what really happened.

The revelations about the Pol Pot regime were for my generation what the Moscow trials of the 1930s had been for the Depression generation. The conclusion I drew was the obvious one: all communist regimes were inherently the same. Those in Asia were no different from their counterparts in Eastern Europe and could only survive by terrorising their own populations into submission.

Most people I knew on the Left agreed and abandoned international protest to take the long march through the domestic institutions. Many retreated into French theory and identity-group politics. I took up lecturing in social policy and consulting on employment and unemployment policy for federal and state Labor governments. Call me a slow learner, but it took another decade for me to realise that the traditional Labor response of state intervention was not the solution but the problem.

New Journalist: Manne's other attempt to paint me a Pol Pot enthusiast is his potted history of *New Journalist* magazine. He gets this wrong too.

My wife and I did not finance and manage the magazine from 1975 to 1978. In those years I wrote for it regularly but the collective who actually ran it was a shifting one comprised mainly of Michael Symons, David Dale, Peter Manning, Lindsay Foyle and Malcolm Long. The dispute over the publication of a book of articles from the journal, which Jane Cadzow reported, occurred in 1981, which was when my wife and I were largely running it.

In any case, Manne's complaint about the article on Cambodia in the November 1978 edition is unwarranted. It was republished from the *Columbia Journalism Review* and, looking it up now, is still quite a good piece. Several leading Western publications, including *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Paris Match*, *Der Stern* and the *Washington Post*, from 1976 to 1978 had all published the same photographs of Khmer Rouge soldiers

WHY I LEFT THE LEFT

supervising forced labour and executing a man. The article reprinted in *New Journalist* argued that the photographs were faked.

They had been posed by a Thai intelligence officer and were originally intended to influence the 1976 elections in Thailand. Their authenticity was first questioned in April 1976 by the *Bangkok Post*. On Manne's logic this would make the *Bangkok Post* a Pol Pot enthusiast, but that newspaper was one of his regime's major detractors.

For a media critic like *New Journalist* to report this was perfectly proper, whatever the political consequence. True, the original article did give comfort to some Western leftists who defended Pol Pot. In 2003, when analysing Chomsky's career I found he seized upon the story to help discredit refugee testimony from Cambodia. But the real culprits were those who faked the photographs in the first place, who only proved yet again the perils of using a political lie to advance a good cause.

Manne's tactic here is another attempt at guilt by association: *New Journalist* had published an article which, although true in itself, was of political utility to pro-Pol Pot intellectuals; ergo, the *New Journalist* collective was pro-Pol Pot too. Equally shabby is Manne's cheap rhetorical shot that the story was "wedged" between two articles of mine. The fifth article in that edition is by me, the sixth article is the one on Cambodia, then there are another three articles and the letters page before my second piece. Even on such a minor detail he cannot tell the truth.

Maoism: The claim I was once a Maoist fellow traveller is a lie, either by Manne or Humphrey McQueen. I was an initial enthusiast for McQueen's 1970 history of Australia, *A New Britannia*, especially for his swingeing attack on Old Left historians. I knew him fairly well in 1970 and 1971 but backed off when he later became publicly identified with Maoist politics.

To almost everyone in the Sydney Left, the Melbourne Maoists, with their jungle greens and loud denunciations of everyone else, were either an irritation or a joke. After the Maoist-controlled national Builders Labourers Federation expelled the Sydney BLF leaders Jack Munday and Joe Owens, both heroes to us inner-urban gentrifiers, we regarded the Maoists as enemies.

The police as pigs: The article I wrote in 1970 for the radical student newspaper *Old Mole* about the second Sydney Moratorium was my first attempt at the participant-observer journalism recommended by Tom Wolfe in his book *The New Journalism*. I was trying to both report and recreate the mood of the crowd, many of whom were roughed up by the police that day.

I apologise for both the awful prose and the insult to

the police. I never attempted that style again. The use of the term "pigs" to describe the police was one of the many borrowed Americanisms to which the Australian anti-American Left was addicted, and which I later found embarrassing.

Robert Manne's new friends: If I really am the demonic figure Manne wants to portray, there are some awkward questions he needs to answer about the company he now keeps. For quite a few of the friends and allies he has acquired since his shift back to the Left come from the same generation as me and were significantly more radical than I was in my youth.

For instance, Manne has written a long and flattering endorsement for UTS lecturer David McKnight's 2005 book *Beyond Left and Right*: "one of the most attractive and fruitful books I have read in recent years". McKnight's title is misleading. As he told the Sydney Institute last December, the book is not really about transcending current divisions but aims "to point to ways in which the Left might revive and renew itself".

I have known McKnight on and off for thirty-five years but there was one thing I never understood: how could anyone have joined the Communist Party when he did, that is, after Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin, after Hungary 1956, and especially after Czechoslovakia 1968? Manne obviously has no problems with this, since the two have recently worked together on another project, the anthology of media criticism *Do Not Disturb*.

Anyone who accepts Manne's invitation to see how terrible I once was by checking out the 1970 newspaper *Old Mole* will find its editorial collective included the name David McKnight—the same person who today is Manne's friend. In other words, Manne now pardons some people's political past when convenient, but, for those who disagree with him, the same past will demonise them forever.

The example is not isolated. Most of Manne's current friends in the debate over Aboriginal history have much the same background. There is no need to repeat the list I gave in the April *Quadrant* which showed the leading historians came from the leftist end of the Left spectrum. Most of the contributors to Manne's anthology *Whitewash* came from this group, although this is not always obvious. While the backgrounds of authors such as Henry Reynolds and Lyndall Ryan are fairly well publicised, either in their own writings or in Stuart Macintyre's history of the Communist Party *The Reds*, others are more difficult to discern.

For instance, the biographical note in *Whitewash* for contributor Ian McFarlane makes him look like a young, recent PhD graduate rather than the late-middle-aged man he is, who spent most of his career as a Communist Party official in control of the maritime unions of northern Tasmania.

WHY I LEFT THE LEFT

Moreover, the politics of these writers largely determined the historical interpretation that Manne now passionately defends. As *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* demonstrates, their model of indigenes resisting imperialists came not from the Australian frontier but the battlefields of South-East Asia. Henry Reynolds once wrote that the tactics the Aborigines used against the British “could have come from the manuals of guerilla warfare which proliferated in the 1960s”. In short, the models for their interpretation of Aboriginal history were the Viet Cong and the Khmer Rouge.

This inventory would be incomplete without Ben Kiernan, the Australian expatriate now Professor of History and head of the Genocide Studies Project at Yale University. From this position, Kiernan denounces Australia’s alleged crimes against the Aborigines. In one piece entitled “Australia’s Aboriginal Genocides”, written for the international press as a curtain-raiser to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, he said Australian settlers had committed “hundreds of massacres” and the Aborigines “were hunted like wild beasts, having lived for years in a state of absolute terror of white

predators”.

Manne has known his work for a long time. In his 1979 article “Pol Pot and the Intellectuals”, the Australian who Manne singles out for defending Pol Pot against refugee testimony was the then Melbourne postgraduate student Ben Kiernan. Such has been the success of the academic Left in their long march through the institutions that by 1995 Kiernan’s research into Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge had elevated him to his present position at Yale.

In other words, when Manne defends the prevailing invasion/genocide interpretation of Aboriginal history, he is reciting from a script written by authors who originally got their inspiration from the Viet Cong and the Khmer Rouge, including one who really was an enthusiast for Pol Pot. Manne is well aware of this himself and must have hoped no one else would notice. His vilification of me is sheer hypocrisy.

*Keith Windschuttle is currently preparing the second volume of **The Fabrication of Aboriginal History**. His website is www.sydneyline.com.*

SEVEN CROWDED ACRES

Today I am moving to my daughter’s room
and my son is moving to my writing room.
The creative dandruff I sloughed makes him sneeze.
We pass on the lawn exchanging cleaning tips.
“If you empty the Hoover it has much more suck.”
I take a break and ring a friend. He has had an offer
for his property and now what shall he do with all
the stuff in the Big Shed? And what about the piano?
As I am moving the big old sea chest I look down
and remember arriving in Australia back in 1972.
Everything we owned was in this old sea chest.
And now we have seven crowded acres of stuff.
We should have spent our money on good wine
great books, which we then abandoned to their fate.
Tomorrow, April Fools’ Day, the burning season starts.

THIRSTY

I must have water. I must have water.
I crave coffee! O coffee! You do not do
any more! You do not do it for me! Is
this sad, so sad? I drink water. Cool.
Cool me. This heat this heat! From the
inside out. I burn it. My choice to burn.
It seems. I imagine Rome. I shall take
my menopause to Rome and burn it
there. I shall take my heat to Rome.
When it is done I shall be empty, cool.

Jennifer Compton