

tested antiwar posters on the streets of Petrograd (see V. Zenzinov, "Fevral'skie dni," *Novyi zhurnal*, vol. 34 [New York, 1953], pp. 200–203, among others). (3) After returning to Russia in April 1917, Lenin had to restore the antiwar slogans among his party (see V. Katkov, *Russia in 1917* [New York, 1967], p. 261). (4) In February 1917, the Petrograd Bolshevik group suffered from steady repressions and "because of that it could not completely master the mass movement which achieved an unusually broad character" (see *Istoriia rabochikh Leningrada*, vol. 1 [Leningrad, 1972], p. 521 and A. Shliapnikov, *Nakanune 1917 goda* [Moscow, 1920]). The second problem is that of "overthrow" versus "collapse." Here one must point out that, in spite of his commitment to the idea of overthrow, Bazylow himself has formulated a certain caveat on page 445: "looking for elements of directed planning in every detail really is without purpose." But the question has a broader dimension. The Revolution certainly had "far-reaching backward causes," but was it inevitable? There is a tendency, a natural human tendency, to consider *retrospectively* all major historical events as "inevitable," but there is more than *one* possible line of development in the historical process. Only *one* of these lines comes to fruition, because of favorable, but often adventitious, events. This, however, does not mean that, with even slightly different circumstances, another line could not have come to the fore! Fateful conditions accumulated in war-stricken Russia from the summer of 1915 onward, and they greatly aggravated the "far-reaching backward causes," setting the stage for the *possibility*—but not the inevitability—of a revolution. Evidence of the growth of a revolutionary movement among the masses during the months preceding February 1917 is artificial at best; on the whole, the country—including peasants, students, the army, and even the workers—was quiet. A very sharp crisis existed within the educated society and in the government. And the country at large, especially the army, was economically and psychologically exhausted from the war. These two factors combined to produce the Revolution. As far as the Bolshevik leadership is concerned, prior to February 1917, it does not seem to have directed the workers' movement, which was primarily aimed at resolving economic problems, and it certainly did not direct the soldiers' mutiny in February 1917 which triggered the Revolution. It is true that these soldiers rose against the war and that the Bolsheviks were also against the war, but there seems to have been no decisive organizational connection. The soldiers' mutiny was a spontaneous response to other stimuli. Under the special circumstances which existed, this lonely unplanned incident led to the rapid *collapse* of a centuries-old system.

One can learn very much from Bazylow's distinguished study, even if one rejects, as one should, his conclusions. With all its limitations, it is a notable contribution to our knowledge of this important period.

MARC SZEFTTEL

University of Washington (Emeritus)

CIVIL WAR IN SOUTH RUSSIA, 1919–1920: THE DEFEAT OF THE WHITES. By *Peter Kenez*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977. xviii, 348 pp. Illus. Maps. \$17.50.

The title of this book is misleading. Its geographical and chronological limitations are indicated, as is the focus on the White side of the struggle, but the reader is not prepared to see military operations and the Allied intervention discussed only in the briefest of surveys. Kenez's book is, therefore, not a real history of the civil war, but rather an examination of the political and social causes behind the defeat of the Whites. Although the decision to leave treatment of intervention to George A. Brinkley may only be welcome, Kenez's synopsis is a bit too brief. For example, the Franco-British agreement of December 1918, dividing stricken Russia into spheres of influence, should not be thrown at the reader. A few sentences of explanation

would have been in order on this act of infamy. On the other hand, the summary of military events, though broken up and interspersed with other matters, is concise and readable, and says enough about the course of the struggle to render the author's major field of interest intelligible.

Intelligible, but not acceptable. Mr. Kenez attributes the Whites' failure first, to an ill-defined and unarticulated ideology, and second, to the inability to develop a "functioning administration," particularly at the local level (see pp. 311–12 and passim). And yet this is followed immediately by the opinion that, although the leaders never articulated their program, the "Russian people understood what it was: a call for the return of the past." They did indeed understand, and here is the source of the trouble, both for the Whites and for Mr. Kenez: the facts overwhelm his contentions. If the Whites had formulated an official program with philosophical trimmings to please intellectuals, they would only have harmed themselves. They were well advised not to be too specific, in order not to narrow even further their base of support. The explanation for their failure, of course, was the all too obvious objective of restoring the estates, which lost them the peasantry, and the equally obvious intention of resuming Russification in a "motherland" where nearly half the population had some other "mother."

No feature of the book under review is more characteristic than its failure to mention even once the word Russification or the phrase *tretii snop*. It may be claimed that the "third sheaf" is alluded to in the mention of regulations that allowed the peasant to retain two-thirds of the grain harvested from land seized during the Revolution (p. 92), but the effect is lost—or rather buried—in the telling. As a result, the author has signally failed to point up a matter of capital significance that neither administrative ability nor false ideology could have rendered palatable to the largest class in Russian society. The author may be right in suggesting that the Bolsheviks won without peasant support. It would be far better history, however, to say that they won because the peasants withheld support from the Whites. Unable to deny a basic lack of enthusiasm for either side in the civil war, the author hastens to assure the reader that the people nevertheless had to choose between the Reds and the Whites. Kenez has neither the knowledge nor the open-mindedness to envisage the Greens as a third force in the Revolution. They were obscurantist, they could not organize, they could not set up an administration, and so forth. But these charges are totally disproved by the Tambov uprising, led by a man who was not hostile to the urban workers, who was an organizer of the first magnitude, as acknowledged by the enemy, and whose administration was so good that protecting it tied him down and deprived him of the freedom of movement that compensated Makhno for the lack of a comparable system. Mr. Kenez does not even realize that the Green movement in Great Russia occurred late in order not to help the Whites; he has never heard of the formidable insurrection in western Siberia that, more than any other single event, brought about Lenin's capitulation of March 10, 1921—a Green achievement unequaled by the counterrevolution in all of its manifestations. The NEP did not hold, but the Greens secured seven and a half good years for the peasants—more than twice as long as the three years of oppression accorded them by the Whites.

Equally unsatisfactory is Kenez's treatment of the role of non-Russians in bringing down the White regime. Occasionally, he mentions the deflection of strength from the main front in pursuit of the policy of "Russia One and Indivisible," yet he never examines the cumulative effect of this fatuousness. By projection, it appears that not less than thirty thousand of one hundred and fifty thousand troops were tied up in this way, and the actual figure could be even higher. We are told that Pilsudski's Poland "was only waiting for a favorable moment to attack" Soviet Russia (p. 16), but we are not told why Pilsudski did not choose October of 1919, when Denikin's

front line was less than a day's drive from Moscow. The only explanation offered for Pilsudski's lack of cooperation with Russian generals is that the Polish leader "remained true to his socialist background" (p. 301), which again illustrates the author's obsession with ideology and is even worse than his description of Savinkov as a "veteran Socialist Revolutionary." Savinkov, a precursor of fascism, had been expelled from the PSR in 1917, and Pilsudski by 1920 was no longer a socialist but a confirmed Russophobe, a primary product of the policy of Russification about which not one word is said in a book purporting to explain the White defeat in the civil war.

In his sustained effort to make minor factors major and major factors minor, the author stresses, in addition to ideology, the administrative failure of the Whites, in contrast to the relatively effective administration of the Reds. Let us examine this claim, advanced without proof or analysis. The author states that only about one-sixth of Whites in uniform engaged in combat (p. 264), and that is all. What about the other side? Trotsky is my source for saying that for every "fighter" in the Red Army there were ten "eaters." And a recent Soviet source (1972) barely narrows the ratio: six to seven hundred thousand soldiers out of five million men. In the supreme administrative test of getting cannon fodder to where it could be eaten, what becomes of the claim of Red superiority?

To deal with the errors, oversights, and contradictions in this book would require the reviewer to exceed his space limitation three to five times. Small errors will creep into any book, but the garbling of three well-known place names in one line (p. 165) is too much. The name of a distinguished American scholar in the field of Russian history, son of a renowned scientist, should be rendered correctly: G. V. Vernadsky, not G. G. (p. 278). A historian of the civil war should know that, although Samara upstream from Saratov and Tsaritsyn downstream did fall to an enemy at one time or another, Saratov itself remained steadily in Soviet hands and was never occupied by the Whites (p. 61). Azerbaidzhan is described as a mountainous country, even though much of it is lowland. Dagestan, which is mountainous, is said to be inhabited by "a Muslim people" (p. 210); actually, it is inhabited by a mixture of Muslims belonging to three different families of mankind, and by some non-Muslims as well. And so it goes. Of the contradictions (and errors) one of the least excusable is the assertion on page 320 that the Whites, "as conservative populists," idealized the "unspoiled country folk." Yet, throughout the book, the author points out that the Whites distrusted the peasants and allowed them to be plundered, and also that the leaders, especially Denikin, felt that the movement could only be based on the Cossacks, not on the peasants (pp. 60, 65, 78, 111, 141, 313). A major result of the Revolution of 1905 had been to kill conservative populism in the breasts of the nobility, opening the way both for Stolypin's assault on communal tenure and for the abuse of the peasantry during the civil war.

The author has conducted extensive archival and periodical research dealing with the White movement. He has, however, utilized Trotsky only slightly, Lenin not at all (one citation from his collected works!), and has passed over with a single perfunctory citation the *Zelenaiia kniga*, a source that could have shed some light on the real mood of the peasantry in the northern Caucasus. He has presented a good deal of interesting information, but nothing that is particularly novel. The information, however, must struggle for a place in the sun. In order to come into its own, it must break through the false overlay of ideological and institutional commitment, after which it is up to the reader to have the experience and the knowledge required to sweep away the debris. The preeminence of W. H. Chamberlain's treatment of the civil war is not disturbed by the book under review.

OLIVER H. RADKEY
University of Texas, Austin