

tigated and (one hopes) resolved by researchers. But they will inevitably have to begin from this splendid pioneering work.

GEORGE KATKOV  
*St. Antony's College, Oxford*

CIVIL WAR IN SOUTH RUSSIA, 1918: THE FIRST YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER ARMY. By *Peter Kenez*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1971. vii, 351 pp. \$10.00.

The old adage that no one is interested in losers certainly does not apply to the Russian Civil War. While Western scholars and observers have written little about the winning Soviet side in that struggle, they have devoted considerable attention to the Allied and White Russian forces whom the Bolsheviks defeated. This is in part because extensive printed and unpublished sources for the anti-Soviet side are available in the West, primarily in the United States. Nevertheless, one wonders if this topic is not pretty well exhausted. This book, for example, is thorough and well written, but it has a narrow focus and offers little that is new.

Although Kenez provides a clear and interesting account of one year in the history of one anti-Bolshevik force in one region of Russia, the larger import of his work, if any, remains obscure. In his introduction he asserts, concerning the situation in south Russia, that "modern European history provides no better example of anarchy and its effects," but he never develops this intriguing hypothesis in the body of the book. The author also suggests that the Civil War, rather than the events of 1917, shaped the Soviet system, and that the struggle in south Russia was a microcosm of the whole Civil War. Yet the self-imposed limitations of the work make it impossible for Kenez to support either of these claims. By his own design he barely mentions the Bolshevik forces, or the role of the Volunteer Army in the Ukraine and the Crimea, and he treats only tangentially the German and Allied interventions. Thus his study can reveal little about the impact of the conflict on Soviet society or about the larger struggle in Russia between 1918 and 1921.

The author relies heavily on unpublished materials at Columbia University and the Hoover Institution. Despite this diligent "panning" of archival streams and lodes, precious few nuggets appear. We learn almost nothing novel about the Volunteer Army, the Cossacks, or the leaders of both. Such important issues as the original decision to turn south to the Kuban, the refusal to attack Tsaritsyn, and the stupid blunders of Denikin's relations with the Georgians are reviewed with precision and fairness, but no fresh insights or judgments are presented. Almost all of Kenez's findings have emerged in earlier memoir and secondary literature on the Russian Civil War. Moreover, because of its narrow focus, this study is probably less valuable than George Brinkley's *Volunteer Army and Allied Intervention in South Russia, 1917-1921*, or even such earlier general works as Chamberlin's *Russian Revolution* and Stewart's *White Armies of Russia*.

Yet this is a good monograph, with important uses. It is certainly the best study of the subject, and future writers on the Civil War will have to turn to it. Kenez makes a few minor mistakes, the maps are quite inadequate, and the book contains annoying typographical errors, but on its own terms the study cannot be faulted. It is well organized, impressively supported, and carefully presented. Helpful analysis and speculation are always prudently linked to a firm factual foundation. The author's conclusions are balanced and unobjectionable on the whole. He is

perhaps too critical of Denikin's stiff anti-German stance, failing to take sufficient account of the emotion and experience which lay behind it. Like others, Kenez believes that the White Russian forces were doomed to fail for two basic reasons: first, because their leaders, basically apolitical men, were unable to develop a program that might appeal to the masses; second, because their Russian nationalism blinded them to the reality of imperial disintegration, thus making them unable to cooperate with the other major non-Bolshevik force, the national minorities. The virtues of the book make one impatient for the author to try his skills on a larger theme.

JOHN M. THOMPSON  
*Indiana University*

THE DIARY OF A DIPLOMAT IN RUSSIA, 1917-1918. By *Louis de Robien*.  
Translated from the French by *Camilla Sykes*. New York and Washington:  
Praeger Publishers, 1970. 319 pp. \$8.50.

Count Louis de Robien was appointed a minor official in the French embassy in St. Petersburg in 1914 at the age of twenty-six. His diary, first published in French in 1967, is an entertaining, highly personal record of his opinions about and experiences in revolutionary Russia, beginning with the March days and ending with his transfer to Prague in November 1918.

Unabashedly aristocratic, and overwhelmingly disdainful of Russians in general and the bourgeoisie in particular, Robien viewed the overthrow of the Romanov dynasty and its replacement by a liberal-democratic regime as an unmitigated disaster. A few quotations best convey the spirit and flavor of his lively commentaries. "One thing alone can still save the cause of the war and the allies, drastic repression, and we are hoping for it wholeheartedly," he noted during the peak of the insurrection which led to the abdication of Nicholas II. "Now one can see why the Tsars always had to govern with Balts and Germans," he observed in late April as the revolutionary crisis in the Russian Empire deepened. "The real Russians, they only know how to destroy." Speculating about the qualities to be desired in a new French ambassador after Paléologue's recall in May, Robien wrote: "What is needed here, unless they want to send a general with a dog whip (which would be best in a country where all backs are still waiting for the knout), is a very shrewd and very crafty career diplomat, who would know how to compromise the Russian leaders." After an especially enjoyable dinner party at Tsarskoe Selo, he wrote wistfully, "The whole thing was delightful, and that evening spent so far away from the revolution did me good. . . . How pleasant life could still be if only men were sensible."

In his official capacity Robien came into occasional contact with leaders of the Provisional Government and Soviet. Following a visit with Kerensky in mid-April he complained, "Kerensky was dressed in a kind of coat buttoned up to the neck, without hard collar or tie: neither bourgeois, nor workman, nor soldier . . . he noticeably makes an exhibition of himself . . . his emaciated face, his glance, his sickly aspect give him the appearance of a hysteric." So great was Robien's contempt for the liberals and moderate socialists that for some time the Bolsheviks appeared more attractive to him. "Met Kerensky again today . . . installed like the Emperor in the Imperial Rolls Royce," he noted in a diary entry of late July. "I don't call these people revolutionaries, but just 'you clear out and make room for me' people, and I much prefer Lenin . . . at least he is an honest and sincere man."