Two reviews by Carroll Quigley in Xxxxxx Vol. --, No. -- (1975).

REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR: The Elements of Victory and Defeat,
by David Wilkinson.

and ARMIES IN REVOLUTION
by John Ellis.

"Wilkinson and Ellis Review"

REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR: THE ELEMENTS OF VICTORY AND DEFEAT
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New York: Oxford University Press, 1973, 278

In recent years, there has been a drastic improvement in the study of organized violence, both wars between states and revolutions within states. This change has appeared in two ways: (1) increased emphasis on the holistic relationships between armed forces and their society and the dependence of military success on the non-military aspects of social life; and (2) increased use of comparative methods in the study of different societies. One evidence of these new interests is the international periodical ARMED FORCES AND SOCIETY (Vol. 1, Nov. 1974-August 1975).

David Wilkinson of IS CSC has examined the elements needed for success in revolutionary civil war in eight cases, of which three are in China in 1926-28, 1930-34, and 1946-49, while the others are Rome 83-82 BC., England 1642-46, Mexico 1914-15, Russia 1918-20, and Spain 1936-39. The 129 pages of text are followed by 80 pages of appendices, notes, and bibliography. The text is rather bald but shows considerable acumen on the numerous ramifications of the subject. After a preliminary chapter describing the eight cases, two chapters deal with the political and the military factors, and a final chapter offers a model which sums up the characteristics of the Loser and the Victor. Valuable insights are scattered throughout. The chief reservation I have is the lack of precision in establishing the real relationship between the political and the military factors. This is a common weakness in works on this subject and is of increasing interest today, marked by a growing consensus that military men have consistently misunderstood Clausewitz on this subject and that civilian control of military actions is not merely a constitutional arrangement found in some countries but is essential for victory in any sustained warfare from the very natures of the two aspects. On this matter, see Raymond Aron's "Clausewitz’s Conceptual
System" in the first issue of ARMED FORCES AND SOCIETY, Louis Morton's review of Bernard Brodie's WAR AND POLITICS (1973) in the same journal (1,514-22), and Brodie's identification of the reason for the consistent misunderstanding of Clausewitz (Brodie, 11n.).

Wilkinson's notes and bibliography are valuable, the one full of interesting points, with references to the literature, while the bibliography shows wide familiarity with that literature.

John Ellis's ARMIES IN REVOLUTION covers much the same ground as Wilkinson except that each case is considered in a separate chapter with the comparative considerations in a brief final chapter. The cases examined are the English 1642-49, the American Revolution 1775-83, the French 1789-94, the Prussian Army reforms 1806-15, the Paris Commune 1870-71, the Russian 1917-20, and the Chinese 1926-49. The final chapter considers the comparative materials in only two categories, ideological and organizational, which is too coarse a screen to handle the evidence adequately, but many other comparative factors emerge throughout the volume from the author's good understanding of the complex relationships involved in the vital problem of political stability within any state. One point which intrigued me was the suggestion that the American revolutionary army copied a Prussian model, rather than the much more appropriate, more economical, less elaborate militia model, mostly because the Founding Fathers were fearful that the resort to violence against England might go on to violent attacks on the inequitable economic and social arrangements in America unless a disciplined national army was available to resist any popular uprisings by local militias. In all successful revolutions, Ellis sees religious feelings contributing much to the cohesive organization of the victors. Both these books and the articles in ARMED FORCES & SOCIETY would have benefited greatly by use of Quigley's paradigm for analysing historical change, especially the theory that control of human behavior moves down the levels to force, but victory depends on ability to move up the levels from force to ideology.

CQ

Please email the editors (editors@carrollquigley.net) with corrections, questions, or if you have other works by Professor Quigley you would like to see posted.

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