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Anthony James Joes. *America and Guerrilla Warfare.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000. 418pp. $30.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8131-2181-9.

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A Selective Survey of Guerrilla Warfare

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The American military has always had a problem determining which enemy it was supposed to fight. On one hand, the potential of other armies and navies has forced it to prepare for the large-scale war. Especially in the post World War I era, the failure to measure up in a conflict with Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, Soviet Russia or Maoist China could have seriously jeopardized national survival. The time needed to prepare the nation's forces materially and intellectual for such a conflict is extensive. Thus, preparing for large-scale war has been the primary focus of military planners, at least since the Armistice in 1918. The reality of the American experience is war is much different. >From the first day Europeans arrived in the Western Hemisphere, they found themselves involved in small wars with both the native inhabitants and their European sponsors. From the Spanish arrival in the early 1500s until 1891, guerrilla, war was the experience of most Americans called to arms. Of course, that experience was not limited to domestic conflict. In 1934 Marine Captain Harry A. Ellsworth, published a small pamphlet describing the corps's *One Hundred Eighty Landings.*<1> Certainly, the pace of such involvement has increased since then with American troops finding themselves participating in conflicts of various sizes and intensity around the world. With peace keeping an increasing role of the United Nations, the United States will have the opportunity to participate in many more of these conflicts in the post-Cold War era. The journey from peace keeping to small war is a very short one.

Anthony James Joes, the director of the international relations program at St. Joseph's University argues that the United States is destined to become involved in more guerilla wars in the future. The effect that television has in motivating the typical American to participate in the world's problems, our natural inclination to spread democracy, and our increasing participation in United Nation's operations are some of the reasons Joes lists in support of his prediction. His concern is that the United States is not prepared politically, militarily, or emotionally, to participate in such conflicts. The premise of the book is that "Americans need to deepen and sharpen their understanding of what guerrilla war has meant and will mean."(3) To accomplish this end, the author chronologically presents case studies that can be topically characterized as belonging to one of four groups: those in which Americans were the guerrillas (Revolutionary and Civil War), those where U.S. forces engaged guerrillas on foreign soil (Philippines 1896, Nicaragua 1925, and Vietnam), foreign confrontations that did not involve American combat troops (Philippines 1946, Greece and El Salvador), and one instance where the American government aided a guerrilla movement overseas (Afghanistan).

Professor Joes has chosen to ignore America's most pronounced experience with guerrilla war, its conflict with the native tribes of the continent. Certainly combat against the Seminoles, Sioux, Apaches and Nez Perce are worthy examples for the points he wishes to make. Second, with the exception of Vietnam, each case study is an American, or its surrogate's, victory. Certainly, such success has not always been the case. The Seminole War, mentioned above, Nicaragua in the 1980s, and Somalia in 1994 are examples of American failure that deserve investigation.

The case studies themselves are rather uneven in quality. For example, although we like to think of the American Revolution as full of big battles, most of the conflict was of the guerrilla variety. Joes begins with a good discussion of British strategic problems in subduing the Americans and the nature of irregular war during the conflict. However, he then digresses into discussions of General Burgoyne's campaign in New York, Cornwallis' campaign in the Carolinas, and patriotic presentations on Francis Marion and Thomas Sumter. However, this kind of fighting was much more important than these

two individuals, as guerrilla war was the primary method of combat during the conflict, and continuing well after Yorktown. I believe he would have been better served by sticking to an explanation of the nature of American guerrilla war and how it thwarted British objectives in the colonies. His discussion of the American Civil War is also a weak explanation of the conduct of partisan war. Professor Joes essentially confines his relevant comments to discussions of famous figures such as John S. Mosby and William C. Quantrill. He then digresses into a short history of the war culled from a number of general histories of the conflict. Given how concerned Union commanders were about threats to their supply lines, much more effort could have been focused on explaining the kinds of partisan warfare used and how they fit into overall Confederate strategy. In both of these studies, he uses an uneven array of general secondary sources, most which do not provide the detailed evidence he needs to discuss the guerrilla phenomena.

Professor Joes is at his best when discussing the Greek Civil War. I found his explanation compelling, as he introduced the participants, explained the background to the war, their causes, and the nature of the conflict. He describes the role of the United States, both as part of the Truman Doctrine and the role of American aid. Most importantly, he clearly explains how the government, outside support, the role of the citizen, and the tactics of the individual participants contributed to the outcome of the insurgency. He supports this case with a wide-range of sources that support his message of what a guerrilla war has and will mean to its participants.

By far, readers will find Joes' most controversial chapter on Vietnam. His statements the French could have won in Vietnam in the 1950s (218) ignores the effects of anti-colonialism, regional nationalism, the establishment of a friendly government in China, and France's own political situation. His argument that Ngo Dinh Diem's Strategic Hamlet Program was a "fundamentally sound plan" flies in the face of most of the evidence. As others have pointed out, "the assumption that the Viet Cong guerrilla could somehow be separated from the people was . . .a misperception."<2> Continuing throughout this chapter, Joes makes statements that fly in the face of the contemporary evidence. For example, he argues that Buddhist monks who ultimately led to Diem's demise were "thoroughly infiltrated by Communist agents," (221) ignoring the fundamental problems between the Buddhist society and the Catholic government. Joes spends great effort in defending the fighting efficiency of the South Vietnamese military and argues that with better organization and equipment they could have won the conflict. He further argues that "by 1973 South Vietnam was becoming what the Americans always said they wanted it to be, a country with a stable government and at least some of the external trappings of democracy."(249) Finally, Professor Joes analyzes American mistakes and provides a prescription for "winning" in Vietnam. This reviewer was unconvinced by his arguments. Ultimately, Joes arrives at some sound conclusions about guerrilla war. He believes that when confronted with a choice for such a conflict, policy makers should resist the tendency to introduce American troops. Washington should focus support on helping decent governments, be convinced of our national interest in the region, and ensure that interest is presented to the American public. Citing Samuel Griffith, one of Sun Tzu's many translators and a historian of Asian war, he affirms that "military measures alone will not suffice."<328>

While this book reads well, it suffers from too many unintroduced quotations that find themselves in the middle of most paragraphs. I spend a great deal of time referring to the notes in order to determine exactly who had made that statement. Overall, it is an ambitious work that will benefit from revision and refinement. Its value is that it provides the reader with a broad summation of many of America's hidden conflicts. Unfortunately, its unevenness in presentation limits its value as a summary of American participation in guerrilla war.

Notes:

1. Captain Harry Allanson Ellsworth, *One Hundred Eighty Landings of United States Marines, 1800-1934* (1934:reprint, Washington, D. C.: HQ, U. S. Marine Corps, 1974).

2.Jeffrey J. Clarke, *Advice and Support: The Final Years, The U.S. Army in Vietnam* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1988), 15. hdiplo

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