

nation. This account is generally oversimplified, superficial, and misleading, even in its broad outlines, careless of chronology, and filled with gross factual errors. Only the most glancing attention is paid to the political, social, and ideological conditions affecting events. These chapters are by far the least authentic section of the book. The relatively short narrative of the event itself is closely observed and captures some of the tense atmosphere of the period.

The author does make a few interesting points, but he tends to spoil their effect with propaganda, sweeping generalizations, and unrelated sidelines. The volume reveals nothing new. It merely corroborates the known, and facts are presented at second hand. Moreover, there is no unity to the text, since the author has chosen to interlard the main theme with an account of his own life in the years from 1938 to 1945.

The book suffers from significant omissions that prevent its meeting the standards of a historical work: it has almost no references to sources, no bibliography, and no index, although the text is well illustrated. In short, the effect is, appropriately, journalistic and of some interest to the general reader. However, the student seeking a careful factual history will not find it in these pages.

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THE MASARYK CASE. By *Claire Sterling*. New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, 1970. xvii, 366 pp. \$7.95.

The argument of this book is that Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, whose body was found in a courtyard of Czernin Palace in the early morning of March 10, 1948, was probably murdered by agents of the Soviet security police in order to prevent him from escaping to the West.

From the scholar's point of view the presentation of this thesis is somewhat involved and digressive. Mrs. Sterling is a journalist composing a "whodunit," albeit with far-reaching political overtones, for a popular audience. She undertakes long excursions into Czech history, dealing with Hussitism, Schweikism, and Masarykism, as well as with the events leading up to the coup d'état of February 1948. While these asides no doubt have value to the audience Mrs. Sterling has in mind, readers of this *Review* will tend to find them superficial and sentimental, inclined to sensationalism, and sometimes misleading. For example, Jan Kozak, author of *How Parliament Can Play a Revolutionary Part in the Transition to Socialism* (London, 1961), is presented as an early Palmiro Togliatti, advocating the use of parliamentary organs, together with the threat of overwhelming force, to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. But Togliatti's aim was to convince the Italian public that the PCI had abandoned violence, or the threat thereof, and had accepted the principle of loyal opposition, and therefore should be permitted participation in a coalition government.

For all this, the patient reader will still emerge from Mrs. Sterling's 366 pages with three indisputable facts in mind, each pointing inexorably to assassination rather than suicide: the disarray in Masaryk's Czernin Palace apartment, which bespoke violent struggle; the minister's loss of sphincter control, which, in the opinion of non-Czech experts in forensic medicine, is never associated with suicide and usually occurs only in the final stages of suffocation; and the large number of persons with direct knowledge of the case (more than a dozen) who

met violent deaths (whether by execution, suicide, or murder). There is a good deal of other circumstantial evidence that leads the reader down the same road—for example, the testimony of the dead man's doctor, and of his mistress, that he intended to escape abroad on March 10, and the irregular character of the autopsy—but the three facts listed above will, I think, be conclusive for most readers.

Scholars will perhaps find the book's greatest value in Mrs. Sterling's twenty interviews with persons involved in the incident who were still alive in 1968. These interviews took place mainly in Prague, but also in London and Glasgow. The subjects interviewed ranged from Masaryk's butler and his purser, and his three foreign service secretaries, to the director of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Office of Prosecutor General, charged by the Dubček leadership with conducting a formal inquiry into Masaryk's death. The usefulness of these interviews is reduced, however, by the author's failure to indicate in most instances whether they took place before or after the Soviet occupation of August 21, 1968. The work is without footnotes but is provided with a brief bibliography.

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WINTER IN PRAGUE: DOCUMENTS ON CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNISM IN CRISIS. Edited by *Robin Alison Remington*. With an introduction by *William E. Griffith*. Czech and Slovak translations revised by *Michael Berman*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: M.I.T. Press, 1969. xxviii, 473 pp. \$12.50.

INTERVENTION. By *Isaac Don Levine*. New York: David McKay Co., 1969. vii, 152 pp. \$4.95.

REPORT ON MY HUSBAND. By *Josefa Slánská*. Translated from the Czech and with an introduction by *Edith Pargeter*. New York: Atheneum, 1969. xviii, 208 pp. \$5.95.

Each in its own way, these three books deal with the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Remington work, like most documentary collections, has a lasting value, and its importance is likely to increase if new evidence should come to light, for example, a report on the Dubček-Brezhnev conversations, that would enable us to re-evaluate the events of 1968. The stated purpose of the collection is to document the experiment of Prague's attempt "to sweep the ashes of Stalinism from the Czechoslovak road to Socialism" (p. xi); and this attempt to prove a thesis might have been a cause of editorial analyses whose validity has already become dubious and the omission of documents pertaining to the May 1968 plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, at which Alexander Dubček warned against "the most serious danger" of "the emergence of antiparty and anti-socialist forces that might launch a struggle for power."

The role played by Dubček in the Czechoslovak events in 1968 has been as much misunderstood as was that of Władysław Gomułka in the "Polish revolution" of 1956. It seems that many journalists and observers have been either unaware of, or unable to comprehend, the nature of "political manipulation" that has characterized modern politics, according to a Czech philosopher, Karel Kosík (pp. 395–98 in Remington). Politics, Kosík says, which is characterized by "the manipulation of masses in an atmosphere of fear and hysteria," can exist "in a system where