

# Books

OPERATION SPLINTER  
The untold story of America's  
Cold War intelligence  
by Stewart St  
Lippincott, Phila., 24

## CIA dirty work and revisionism in Eastern Europe

In the period 1949-1952, the equivalent of the purges  
swept over the Communist parties of  
done, hundreds of party and state officials  
and some of the most devoted and pro-  
Slansky of Czechoslovakia, Laszlo I  
Kostov of Bulgaria—had been executed.

Some years afterwards, Nikita Khrushchev  
miscarriages of socialist justice as  
proletarian revolutionary line that had characterized  
under the leadership of both Lenin and Stalin. In the guise of  
"correcting" the crimes of the Stalin era, Khrushchev set the Soviet  
state on its modern revisionist course. Ironically, while reversing  
the revolutionary line of the USSR, the revisionists made no  
appreciable changes in the very area they had complained so  
vociferously about—the area of democratic rights, restoration  
of party norms, etc.

The 1949-1952 period continues to hold our attention, however.  
How did it all happen? It simply will not do, as some less critical  
defenders of Stalin have done, to assert that the Eastern European  
witch-hunts really did extirpate CIA agents from the governments  
in question. There have been too many confirmed accounts of  
plotting, counter-plotting, torture and forced confessions for any  
but the most wilfully blind to swallow that nonsense.

On the other hand, the view that sees Stalin as some kind of "red  
Hitler," a blood-thirsty paranoiac who saw enemy agents lurking  
behind every party card, is the gravest distortion of reality and  
usually masks a position that has never accepted the  
Marxist-Leninist principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Where is the truth?

A new book, "Operation Splinter Factor," written by a British  
journalist with close connections to both British and U.S.  
intelligence agencies, helps to shed some light on this whole period.

The author, Stewart Steven, is hardly a Marxist. He is in fact, a  
staunch anti-communist. But he is convinced that the policies  
pursued by the U.S. during the cold war years were inherently  
counter-productive. It is out of this criticism that Steven has laid  
out the story of the CIA's involvement in the Eastern European  
terror. It is a remarkable story—and a convincing one, the more so  
that so many elements of it correspond both with what was known at  
the time and what has since been learned.

Steven's thesis is this: under the leadership of super-spy Allen  
Dulles, the CIA in the late 1940s hatched a conspiracy designed to  
entrap some of the leading Communists in Eastern  
Europe—particularly those who showed any signs of political  
independence. Utilizing a one-time State Department employe  
named Noel Field, Dulles worked out a complex web of seemingly  
inadvertent U.S. intelligence slip-ups in order to arouse the  
suspicions of the Soviet authorities in Eastern Europe.

Then, a combination of planted evidence, "confessions" by  
minor figures, who implicated leading Communists and carefully  
timed maneuvers by Radio Free Europe and other  
counter-insurgency institutions were all manipulated to implicate  
these leaders as CIA agents. Dulles counted on both the normal  
suspicion of Soviet leaders and the careerist strivings of at least  
some in the Eastern European bureaucracy to further the scheme.

Dulles' political rationale for all this, asserts Steven, was to  
create a situation in Eastern Europe that would be so intolerable  
that the masses would rise up in revolt. In order to accomplish this  
end, it became necessary to remove as many potential  
"national-minded" leaders as possible from these countries.

It is Steven's contention that while the actual operation  
succeeded, the long-range political strategy was doomed from the  
outset. In classical imperialist fashion, Dulles had no conception of  
the genuine pro-Soviet and socialist sentiments of the Eastern  
European masses. "The peoples of Eastern Europe welcomed the  
Red Army as liberators," writes Steven. "Politically—whatever  
the result—had to the  
contrary—the war had cauterized their politics; they were ready for