

# Cynicism amidst a revolution

By ANDRAS UNGAR

In an age of realpolitik when we see China withholding needed arms from the Cambodian insurgents, the USSR recognizing Lon Noit and staging showtrials of dissidents in Moscow and the Americans in the expensive process of underwriting a tier of proto-fascist states from Rio de Janeiro to Teheran, the mask most often assumed by people who still care is the slighting sneer of world-wise cynicism.

This, more or less, is the fixed expression on the face of Gavin Cartwright, the foreign correspondent of a New York daily assigned to cover the Hungarian Uprising who is the hero of Vincent Brome's book, *The Revolution*.

In his youth Cartwright had devoted all his energies to the hastening of a humanistic society only to discover that the information he thought he was gathering to make the propaganda of the American Communist Party more effective was in fact being forwarded to Moscow, and in his heady idealism, he was nothing more than the pawn of the Kremlin's espionage operations. Once bitten, twice shy; he sees the tumult engulfing Budapest with the jaded eyes of a true initiate. He is shackled to a nerotic wife in New York who bombards him with missives, now cajoling, now threatening outright suicide.

## REVELATION THROUGH DIARY

Ever on the heel of newsworthy events, he discovers he no longer has any idea of who he is, or what he wants; he starts a diary to dredge his past for lost meanings. The fever raging in the streets intrudes. He cannot remain professionally aloof from the tempest. Past and present become fused in his writings. To recover his identity, he must salvage the ideals from the mangled heap of his youth.

The presentation of events through the medium of the diary is admirable. As a journalist, Cartwright attempts to straddle the pinnacles around which the warring forces comprising a nation in revolution seek to anchor themselves against the shifting tides of events.

Cardinal Mindszenty, released from imprisonment offers to take the nation's political leaders under his feudal tutelage. The industrial workers of Csepel take to the barricades to resuscitate anew the anarcho-syndicalist democracies the Bolsheviks strangled in Russia at Kronstadt (1921) and in Spain at Barcelona (1936).

Diverse neo-fascist cliques attempt to force a return to the reactionary pre-war era from universal demand for national self-determination. The Nagy government scrambles, paradoxically, to contain and yet express the inchoate ferment around it so as to maintain power and stave off action by the Soviet armies posed on the frontier. Elements of the old order take meticulous notes for the retribution to follow. Things move too fast; the acts of the government are pale shadows cast by the firestorm raging through the capital.

From the kaleidoscope of confused claims and personalities the interpretations imposed on the Hungarian Revolution are as much at odds with each other as the conflicting meanings invited by the blank shibboleth, 'freedom'.

## BOTH VERSIONS VALID

Moscow has decreed that it was a counter-revolution fostered by fascist elements. Washington Cold Warriors have covered the slain freedom fighters in garlands of effusive prose, purporting to detect in their deaths the unquenchable determination to enthrone the benefits of free enterprise over the destinies of eastern

Europe.

Brome rightly sees both these versions as equally peripheral to the mainstream of events. Of fascist agents, supplied by emigré groups and the CIA, there were plenty in Hungary, but these never came close to controlling events. The contribution of the United States was confined to broadcasting spurious promises of imminent aid over Radio Free Europe in order to maximize the Soviet Union's embarrassment by prolonging the Revolt. The fighters, expecting U.S. aid, continued, dying needlessly.

The barricades in the streets were manned by complements of the Hungarian Army, by rag-tag volunteers from all walks of life but overwhelmingly by members of the industrial working class. These men, though communism had been imposed on their homeland at the point of Russian bayonets, did not bleed to see the social gains made by the Rakosi regime vapourized into the specter of unemployment and social insecurity.

The leaders of the uprising agreed on the aims of the revolution. National Independence must be secured, the Party democratized, the workplace revolutionized, the multi-party system instituted. In short, 'socialism with a human face' was to be inaugurated a dozen years before the world had

heard of Alexander Dubcek.

But at once the question of 'How' asserts itself and the quivocations and hairline cracks appear, marring the smiling face of Socialist Man. The interminable wrangle over means and ends, the pale shadow of prisons, concentration camps... Gavin Cartwright prefers not to look too close and leaps back into the streets to sooth his anxieties with the heady clash of events.

## A HOBbled HERO

Brome should have concentrated on mapping the intricate web of events

for which his loose-ranging style is excellent. But he felt impelled to create in Cartwright a hobbled hero to match the truncated march of the times. There is ample justification for such a step; for a well-drawn instance, see the character Nerzhim in Solzhenitsyn's *First Circle*.

Nevertheless, reading *The Revolution* is a healthy antidote to the usual editorial pap served up to commemorate the seventeenth anniversary of the aborted Hungarian Revolution.

## Policy discussion

# Campus groups meet

There will be an important meeting of all campus organizations, Monday, November 26, at 5 p.m.

The meeting will take place at the Excalibur offices, Room 111, Central Square.

The purpose of the meeting is to establish policy recommendations to be presented to the CYSF executive sometime early in December. Please arrive prepared to submit your own group's desires and complaints towards present CYSF club policy.

Whether you are a group funded by council, or one that presently is not, or even if you refuse council funding, your attendance at the meeting is most imperative.

Due to space limitations, a maximum of three representatives would be welcomed. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us.

# Women's Press takes first step in liberating children from sexism

By ROSEMARY McCracken

Women's Press feels the publication of children's literature depicting women in strong and challenging roles is a first step in liberating children from sexism.

*Mandy and the Flying Map* (27 pages) by Beverly Allinson, illustrated by Ann Powell, and *Fresh Fish and Chips* (24 pages) by Jan Andrews, illustrated by Linda Donnelly, are two such experiments into the education of liberation.

Both books, which are available at the York Bookstore, at \$1.50 paperback, and \$3.50 hardcover, are handsomely illustrated by large black and white drawings, occasionally relieved by spot colouring. They may well double as children's colouring-books.

*Mandy and the Flying Map* depicts a small girl and her adventures on a flying map. The men in the town are afraid for her safety, but the women in the illustrations all wear pleased grins on their faces, applauding the fact that a sister can enjoy herself in this fashion. When told by a man that he would set her free, Mandy replies, "I'm as free as I am."

At the end of the trip, Mandy folds her map and puts it away, saying, "Next time, there'll be room for two." This, I presume, is supposed to show that Mandy is not a loner, but a socially well-adjusted girl.

*Fresh Fish and Chips* is the story of a mother who goes out to catch fish for her family's dinner, leaving her husband at home with the children. Mother catches an octopus, a snail, a hermit crab, five herring, a squid, an eel, a clam, a lobster, and a whale—symbols of her power as a liberated woman.

The narrative is written with some attention given to rhythm and rhyme. This "poetical" form is cute in some places, but frequently bogs down when the authoress is at a loss for a rhyming word—"She played her catch with skill/She badly wanted nice fresh fish/Her family to fill."

Penny Goldsmith, from Women's Press, stressed the importance of presenting literature which is free from sexual discrimination to young children. "By the age of 3, a boy in our society will already be geared to know that mothers don't go fishing while fathers stay at home."

Another publication recently issued by Women's Press is *Herstory*, a 1974 Canadian Women's Calendar, with each day of the year complete with an entry commemorating an incident in the history of Canadian women. The calendar is illustrated with black and white photographs of women from Canadian history. The cost of *Herstory*, also on sale at the York Bookstore, is \$3.00.

The aim of Women's Press is to re-educate both men and women about women's role in society and potential as individuals.

Women's Press started out in 1971 with the help of a LIP grant. The grant was not renewed in May, '73, and since that time all 15 women involved work on a voluntary basis, doing their own layout for their publications. The organization is a non-profit collective, with any proceeds going back into the Press.

Books from Women's Press are on sale at York, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12-2 p.m., at the book table in Central Square.

# Policy called anti-gay

HALIFAX (CUP)—The Halifax Gay Alliance for Equality (GATE) has accused St. Mary's University of discriminating against homosexuals.

In a letter to *The Journal*, SMU's student newspaper, Charles Richardson, of the GATE legal reform committee, asked if the newly-implemented entertainment policy is the "reflected official policy of discrimination by St. Mary's against persons of homosexual orientation."

St. Mary's entertainment policy says "all guests must be signed in and accompanied by a St. Mary's student of the opposite sex."

Student council president Mack Thompson said the statement of policy was "probably just an oversight and not an intentional thing... We'll let them in if they hold hands."

Entertainment committee member Chris Garner said he didn't think the policy needed changing because he didn't "see any self-proclaimed homosexuals on campus."

# Police and professors — a journalist's life

It's 3:15 a.m. I should be home asleep like other sane students. How did I ever get into this? The damn editor keeps peering over my shoulder to see what I've written. I'm down to my last cigarette. Why doesn't he just let me type it out and then show him the whole thing? We'd all get out of here a lot faster.

Things got pretty tense at the occupation—I was sure I was going to get busted. Glad the cops believed me when I told them I was a reporter covering the event. Wonder why they decided to clean the place out at two in the morning? Guess they figured they'd catch everyone by surprise. Sure worked on me.

Half an hour till the copy goes to the printer. All those guys waiting up there for me to finish my story. I don't know if I should feel like an idiot or a dictator. Let's see, have I got everything I need in the lead: the good old five Ws? Yeah, that should do it. Now let me get my facts organized. What are the most important things that happened?

One nice thing about this place is that you can pick your own assignments—that way I get to cover the stuff I want. I don't know what Cindy sees in covering student council meetings, but to each their own. I prefer a little more excitement. Sure did get some tonight.

That story on the prof who wouldn't let course evaluation people in his class turned out ok too. I thought the guy was going to loosen my teeth when he came storming in here. It's nice to have protective editors.

Have to remember to keep the night of the staff Christmas party open, too. After all I've put into this place I deserve a party. Even if I do have to have it at my apartment.

I never realized I'd get into all this when I went to that staff meeting last month. "Room 111, Central Square today at 2 p.m." Never really paid much attention to those ads till someone suggested I come in and see how I like journalism. I thought you had to have experience, but this is the place where you get it. Good to know there's someplace to start.

