

Reveen at the Capitol

To help them find themselves...

by Stephen R. Mills

I went to see Peter Reveen, the hypnotist, at the Capitol Theatre in Halifax Friday, Nov. 13, 1970.

I am in the audience, waiting. Music is playing — I am excited.

I hear a voice as the music dies "And now here is . . . Reveen!"

I applaud because Reveen is what I was waiting for.

The curtain opens and there he is. I see the spangles on his suit first. Then I immediately shift my attention to his face; his eyes. Clear and confident. He begins to speak in a deep, strong voice. First he will demonstrate his memory. He does so by showing how, starting anywhere, the knight can be moved to every position on the chess board. A young girl makes the moves on a hugh board, which Reveen does not see; except in his mind.

The memory demonstration concludes and he moves into the main part of the show — hypnotism —

I am on stage now. I see the faces. I see their eyes. They are waiting for me to give them something. They think I have the power. But no. The power is theirs. I must carry on hoping

they will see . . .

I am in the audience and Reveen begins his talk on hypnotism; "The discoverers of hypnotism were all competent scientists — Hypnotism is a science; an aid; no danger. You who volunteer will sleep and you will wake up feeling better than you have ever felt in your life before. You who wish to be hypnotized may come. Come now." The music plays and many go up. I don't. I want to see what happens.

I am on stage now. The people are coming up. Look at them. All searching for something which they have already. I must help a few to find it. So many will try to trick me. Why I don't know. Why can't they believe in me like I believe in them. Thank heaven some will.

The music stops and Reveen begins again "A test, a mesmeric test to pick out the best subjects. First, the gentlemen volunteers. Place your hands together and then above your head. Now concentrate on your hands and the sound of my voice. Your hands are gripping, glueing, sticking together. You cannot

pull them apart. You cannot pull them apart until I touch them!"

Now the music starts again and Reveen goes to everyone and rips their hands apart.

Some come apart easily. He sends the people back to their seats.

Some stick tight. These people remain on stage.

Some are stuck too tight. These people also are asked to leave the stage. He does a similar test with the women volunteers only eyes are to be stuck tight this time.

I am on stage now, pulling my volunteers hands apart, touching their eyes. Some come apart easily, some are open: they may make good subjects but not good enough for tonight. Back they go to watch. Some hands are gripped tight, some eyes tightly closed. These are my people! People who believe in me and in themselves. They remain to learn and to teach. Some hands are too tight, some eyes too strained. These people will not benefit. They may be harmed. Best to let them go back. Now I must talk to the audience.

"You must be absolutely silent now while the hypnotism takes

place. It will be only seven or eight minutes and I ask anyone with little children who may cause distractions to take them out for that time. I must have complete silence."

This is the hardest part for me. I must believe even harder than those sitting before me, waiting for me to free their minds — so let it begin.

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and when you wake up tomorrow morning you'll be a warm and rational human being.

Words from the wise . . .

Where has all the money gone . . .

November 12, 1970

Dear Sir:

Almost two months have gone since the present school year began and so far all that I have seen coming from the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students is a set of parties — wine and cheese parties and beer parties. While I am certainly not against the use of funds for such purposes I do think there is need for a more rational allocation of the available funds in terms of the more serious aims of the Association. This need becomes even more acute when we realize that the funds collected amount to a tax levied on all full time Graduate Students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

In this connection, as a member of the Association, I should very much like to know what basis is being used to allocate the total annual levy between current expenditure and savings. I should also like to know whether a budget for the current year's expenditure has been drawn up or not, and whether such a budget was submitted for the approval of the Association. Further, it is in the interest of the general membership to know what procedures are set up for the accounting of the money, and why no published statements of the end-of-the-year financial reports are made available to them.

With respect to the savings I believe that it is time some important questions be raised. It

was the expressed intention of the Association to use the savings for buying a Graduate House. The opening up of the SUB late last year appeared to have reduced the need for the Graduate House, but surely that should not be the end of the story. Is there no other way that the money could be used? What about living accommodations for graduate students? Is that too advanced for the Association to handle?

I am injecting a little bit of criticism into the Association not because I want to decry the present Executive or Council. In many ways the slackness demonstrated in the Association is the making of the majority of the graduate students, myself included. We have tended to treat the financial affairs of the Association much too lightly and in so doing we have left a lot to be denied in the way of responsible financial management.

My guess (and I can only guess) is that the Association should have savings in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars, and this is a lot of money according to my book. Again, if I may be allowed to guess, there must be an amount in excess of a thousand dollars per year which the Association use freely for meeting current expenditure such as wine and cheese parties, sports and the like. How come the disposition of these funds are not published for all the members to see?

I am certain that people who run the Association would accuse me of shouting without knowing the facts. They would want to know why I don't attend meetings, etc., etc. Well, all that is only remotely relevant to the issue at stake here.

The real issue is that there is a serious lack of published information concerning the management of the Association, and this is particularly marked in the case of information on financial matters. There is a failure on the part of the Executive to communicate the facts to the rank-and-file members in a manner that would ensure that the members are fully acquainted with the thoughts and actions of the leadership of the Association. If the funds are not available for printing and circulating something like an annual financial report may I suggest that we forego one of these all too sickening drinking parties and get the funds.

There are a number of other observations I should like to make particularly concerning the representative nature of the members ruling the Association at present. This is less a matter for which the present group of representatives would be held responsible. It is a matter that concerns the Constitution and the method of voting. But one thing at a time.

Sincerely yours,
Harold Harnarine

Beware Xenophobia

Sir:

Both Ottawa and Quebec are very properly debating the circumstances surrounding the War Measures Act. We should know, in so far as one can ever know, exactly what led to the imposition of the extraordinary measures under which the province is living. The established facts — the kidnappings and the murder of Pierre Laporte — are obviously not the whole answer. Nor, indeed, are the convictions among certain politicians that beyond what actually happened was a plan or a series of plans to kill and to bomb.

But equally important, in my mind, was the prevailing climate of fear enveloping Quebec. This is not something which can be put in a bottle, labelled "exhibit A" and produced for future enquiries in far off places. It existed, none the less, in an almost tangible form.

This community was frightened of both the real and the imagined, and it had every right to be. In any balance sheet of the state of civil liberties, the rights of the public to go about its lawful occasions without fear are as important, in my book, as the protection of the rights of specific individuals.

Terrorists fatten on fear — the fear they can create in others. That is part of their stock in trade. They infect a community. Whether there are two or a hundred, the chief endeavor of terrorists is to shake down the

structure of a state by spreading confusion. It may be a conspiracy, or it may be a series of individual acts. It does not matter! What matters is the overall effect.

In the postmortems which are now going on and will go on indefinitely, in the traditional role of some critics living far from the scene and following a textbook interpretation of events, this basic issue may be forgotten. "The anarchist is disappointed with the future as well as the past", (G. K. Chesterton).

This means that no matter what reforms are made, a certain small group of individuals will pursue violence in the years ahead, as they have done since 1963. I refer here, not only to the F.L.Q., but to any group set out to have change come about by violent means. I cannot go along with violence as a means to an end.

During the Quebec Teach-In at Dal, in which I participated, one man (a common labourer with no formal education) said: "What the F.L.Q.'s violence is doing is ruining it for other non-violence anti-government groups". I implore both the people in the rest of Canada and the government, not to place the blame on any of these non-violent groups, such as the majority of the Quebecois or the Parti Quebecois.

Lorne Abramson