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LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE



Kirnon's Kingdom

David Edgecombe

A Thesis

ſ'n

The Department

 of

English

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Master of Arts at

Concordia University

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ABSTRACT

KIRNON'S KINGDOM

DAVID EDGECOMBE

Kirnon's Kingdom is a play in two Acts. It traces the rise of Harold Kirnon from a peasant farmer to political head of state. It examines the effect of power on him in his effort to pass the mantle of power to his son, despite the objections of his wife. The play further attempts to explore the balance between political ideology and the practical realities of government.

It is also, on another level, an allegory of the Caribbean region in light of the political, social and economic choices that it faces.

CHARACTERS

- 1. *HAROLD KIRNON
- 2. MARTHA (his wife)
- 3. CALVIN (his son)
- 4. JOURNALIST
- 5. AL MAJORS (an American businessman)
- 6. MAN I (Obediah)
 POLICEMAN
 OPPOSITION IV
 MINISTER I
- 7. MAN II
 ARNOLD
 READER
 OPPOSITION II
 MINISTER III (Herman Matthew)
- 8. MAN III
 MAGISTRATE
 OPPOSITION I
 MINISTER II
- 9. WOMAN (Miss Dee-dee Farell)
 OPPOSITION III
 CHAIRMAN

NOTE: All characters, with the exception of Harold and journalist, become part of the crowd throughout the play.

The action occurs on Paran, an imaginary Caribbean island.

The setting is composite: The interview area, down stage right; the hut, down stage left; the White House, up stage off centre left; the podium, up stage right. There are no walls.

THE INTERVIEW AREA: This is perhaps the most realistic area of the set. Two comfortable chairs on either side of a small table represent a part of Harold's present, home. It could be his den or part of a patio.

THE HUT: Two wooden chairs, a wooden stool and a square wooden table represent the hux. In Act I, the chairs and table may be moved up stage right to become the Chief Minister's office.

THE WHITE HOUSE: A raised platform painted white. On it a round patio table with three matching chairs and a love seat. In front of the platform is a step with plants on either side. An exit, up stage left leads to the interior of the house, which is not shown.

THE PODIUM remains up stage right throughout the play, except for the scene in the Chief Minister's office when it is taken off. It is from here that the speeches are made, directed towards the right wing where the crowd is (unseen except where indicated).

CHARACTERS

- 1. HAROLD KIRNON
- 2. MARTHA (his wife)
- 3. CALVIN (his son)
- 4. JOURNALIST (female)
- 5. AL MAJORS (an American businessman)
- 6. MAN I (Obediah)
 POLICEMAN
 OPPOSITION IV
 MINISTER I
- 7. MAN II
 ARNOLD
 READER
 OPPOSITION II
 MINISTER III (Herman Matthew)
- 8. MAN III

 MAGISTRATE

 OPPOSITION I

 MINISTER II
- 9. WOMAN (Miss Dee-dee Farell)
 OPPOSITION III
 CHAIRMAN

NOTE: All characters, with the exception of Harold and Journalist, become part of the crowd throughout the play.

- ACT I -

(Lights up on interview area. Enter Harold, followed by

JOURNALIST: I'm not keeping you from anything, am I?

HAROLD: No, no. If I have anything these days, it's time. (They sit.)

JOURNALIST: Have you decided how you're going to spend it?

HAROLD: . My wife thinks I need a long rest.

JOURNALIST: ## wbe she's right.

HAROLD: She likes to think so.

JOURNALIST: Would you do it all over again, if you had the chance?

HAROLD: Do what?

(2)

JOURNALIST: If you could live your life over again, would you go back into politics?

HAROLD: (Pause) No. Not if I could help it.

JOURNALIST: Why not?

HAROLD: People are too fickle. They hate you for no reason and they can't be trusted. No matter how much love they show you, they always

harbor in their hearts a secret hatred. That's why they could put you on a pinnacle in one moment, and completely discard you in the next.

JOURNALIST: You see yourself as a Christ figure?

HAROLD: (Laughing) Hardly. (slight pause) No tape recorder? No notebook? Nothing?

JOURNALIST: No, no. I want us to talk, and a tape recorder sometimes gets in the way.

HAROLD: You're the expert.

JOURNALIST: You see, Mr. Kirnon, dozens of feature
articles have already been written on Harold
Kirnon, the politician. What I want is a
glimpse of Harry Kirnon, the man, the husband,
the father. The essence of Harry Kirnon.

HAROLD: Well, all I can say is good luck.

JOURNALIST: I wonder if Mrs. Kirnon would mind sitting
in?

HAROLD: She doesn't like this kind of thing.

JOURNALIST: She must have some brilliant insights.

HAROLD:

Of course. But she also thinks my time, right now, would be better spent resting in bed of tending the garden.

JOURNALIST: Then, let's leave well enough alone.

HAROLD:

Smart girl.

JOURNALIST: You said if you could live your life

over, you wouldn't go into politics. Not if

you could help it. Does that mean you

couldn't help becoming a politician?

HAROLD:

Well...I suppose...in a way. I could've chosen to remain a peasant farmer all my life. But one of the things I have learned is the incredible power of the moment, the solitary incident that could alter the course of history.

JOURNALIST: How does this apply to your getting into politics?

HAROLD:

To tell you the truth, until I was 40, I never even dreamed of going into politics. I didn't own any land so I couldn't vote, far less run for office. I lived a simple life with my family in a little hut with a table and some

peasant farmer, a share-cropper. And we were struggling to put our boy through grammar school. (As he speaks, lights come up on a small table, two chairs and a stool, down stage left. They represent the interior of Harold's home as a peasant farmer. Calvin sits at table studying. Enter Martha.)

MARTHA:

You don't want to come to church with me tonight, Calvin?

CALVIN:

I can't, Mama. Too much homework.

MARTHA:

I'm sure you can't remember the last time you went to church.

CALVIN:

I have exams in two weeks. Remember?

MARTHA:

Example, exams. Where you expect to get strength to study and pass your exams if you don't go to church?

CALVIN:

With you and the whole church praying for me, God will give me more than strength.

MARTHA:

So that's what you're banking on, eh?

CALVIN:

That, the work I'm doing here, my own prayers

naturally, and...how Daddy makes out with Mas' James.

MARTHA:

Yes. There's that too...of course. (Enter Harold. Martha and Calvin look at him expectantly. Silence.) Well, what did Mas' James have to say?

HAROLD:

Nothing doing. He wouldn't go for it.

MARTHA:

Did you explain to him how important it is?

HAROLD:

less of the cotton for a few months. But he not listening, Martha. He not concern with poor people. (Pause)

MARTHA:

Finish your homework, Calvin. We'll just have to find some other way to pay for your exams, that's all. (To Harold) We'll talk after church. (Exit Martha. Silence.)

HAROLD:

Is a hard struggle, Calwin. You been out there in that cotton ground with me. You know how much work it is. Me and my father, since before you were born, clear that land with our bare hands and then, year after year, the two of us would work it. After he died,

me alone, or me and your mother, and sometimes you. We must find the money to buy cotton seeds to plant. Then we must weed the cotton, take care of it and pray to God nutt'n destroy the fruit of our labour. And if rain or disease or animals should destroy it, we count our losses, bury them and hope for better next year. And in good year or bad, half of everything that come out of that land must go to Mas' James. And what work he do? What risk he take? Except sit down on his ass and stretch out his han' for his half when time come. Then now Ah'm down and out, desperate, and run to ask him a small favour, he turn his back on me? That can't be right!

CALVIN:

Me and you should go down there right now and pick some of that cotton.

HAROLD:

Me and you, eh?

CALVIN:

Yes, the two of us.

HAROLD:

You know how much trouble that could get us in?

CALVIN

Is worth the risk.

HAROLD:

Calvin, from time to time I do things that...

well, your mother doan like. Things that can put me in a lot of serious trouble. But you know, sometimes in the dead of night, I can't sleep. I just lie there asking myself what legacy Ah'm going to leave you. A hoe for you and your son after you to continue working James Hamsey land from generation to generation?

CALVIN:

It wouldn't be stealing, Daddy. We would only be reaping what we sow. Taking up what we put down.

HAROLD:

Ah see you been listening to what Ah trying to show your mother.

CALVIN:

Is a good point, Daddy.

HAROLD:

And what bout your mother point?

CALVIN:

Well, is a good point too...if you want to go to heaven.

HAROLD:

And you doan want to go to heaven?

CALVIN:

Well...yes...but I down want to have to work
Mas' James land either.

HAROLD:

(Laughing loudly) Boy, God knows Ah'm a tough

old bastard, but Ah think you worse than me. Go put something on your foot if is adventure you looking. Now, when we get to the cotton ground we will split up. I will pick from on the level. You will pick from in the gully round by the sil' cotton tree. We will meet by the old shed in one hour and a half, hide the cotton, and hurry home before your mother come back from church. You understand?

CALVIN:

Yes, Daddy.

HAROLD:

Good. Come we go. Moon bright as day. Is a good night to pick cotton.

(Music. Blackout. Lights come up on Harold centre stage as he mimes the picking of cotton.)

· CALVIN:

Off) Hey! Ley me go! Ley me go Ah say, man!

MAN I:

Less you noise! You damn louse you.

MAN II:

A who he be?

MAN I:

Shine de light 'na he face, ley me see a who.

MAN TIT.

Oh-Gad-oh-Gad! A Calvin for Harry Kirnon!
(Calvin is dragged on stage.)

MAN T.

Boy, weh you father?

g

CALVIN: Me say ley me go, man! Ley me go!

MAN I: Behave yourself. Mine me no ha' foo lick een you ass tonight, eh boy.

HAROLD: (Coming out of hiding) Obediah, wha' you want to lick een me son for now?

MAN I: Oh, so is you? Wha' de hell you and your boy doing in Mas' James land this hour o' night?

Tiefing de man cotton?

HAROLD: Tiefing wha' cotton, man. Is go we going to meet Martha at church and de boy just run down by the sil' cotton tree to ease heself.

MAN I: You think is a fool you dealing wid, Harry

Kirnon? This is me evidence. Nearly a whole
half bag o' cotton. Wha' dat to do? Wipe 'e

arse when 'e done ease heself? (The two other
men laugh.) Red-handed in de act. And me
have witness. Witness and evidence.

HAROLD: 'Alright, so wha' you going do? Lock up de boy for a little half bag o' cotton?

MAN I: My duty is to take him to Mas' James. He will decide what de punishment will be.

HAROLD:

Obediah man, let off de boy this time, nuh?

Me and you is two poor people together. You know how hard it is to make ends meet.

MAN I:

So you is poor people too? Is now you know you is poor people? Well, wha' odder poor people you see a tief cotton so dem pickney could go a rich people school?

HAROLD:

Dat is wha' eating you all these years,

Obediah? You have me in you craw because Ah

send me son to grammar school?

MAN I:

As foreman of the Hamsey Estate, my duty is to take him in and nutt'n stopping me.

HAROLD:

Take me instead, then. Leggo Calvin and take me.

MAN I:

You damn lucky. Ah know you was tiefing too, but Ah doan have no evidence so you get 'way. But wid him, is witness and evidence. And you could say wha' you like, I ain't leying him go. (To men) Come on, we wasting too much time. Get moving. (They start out.)

HAROLD:

Obediah! This ain't going end here, you know.

MAN T:

Wey it going end, Harry Kirnon?

HAROLD:

When you rest you head a' night and when you stan' up a' morning, just keep in mind that it ain't going end here.

MAN I:

De two all you hold de boy good. (Approaching Harold menacingly) Why you doan fey we end it right now and done, if is bad you feel you bad? (He confronts Harold and they crouch to a fighting position.)

MAN III:

Oh-Gad, Obediah. No bodder wid dat, man.
Look we done ha' de boy a'ready.

MAN II:

Is true, Obediah. No get youself in a no trouble.

MAN 1:

(Backing off) You doan know who you messin' wid, Harry Kirnon. Is know you doan know.

HAROLD:

No, Obediah. Is you doan know who you messin' wid. But say me tell you, you going find out.

MAN I:

Tell dat to de magistrate, man. Dat's what you must do. (To Calvin) Come we go. Ah going see to it dat Mas' James loss you son arse in jail.

HAROLD:

(Calling out as they leave down stage right.)
No frighten, Calvin. No frighten for nutt'n.

You no have no frighten blood in a you!

(Lights fade out on cotton field. Magistrate in gown walks into solitary spot of light just left of centre stage.)

MÁGISTRATE:

Before I pass sentence, is there anyone here who wishes to say something on the boy's behalf? (Enter Harold stage right, wearing an old jacket. He too is spotlighted.)

, HAROLD:

I would, m'Lord. Thank you. For close to 28 years, m' Lord, my family worked the plot of ground on Mr. James Hamsey's land that they accuse my son Calvin Kirnon of stealing cotton from. In all this time, Sir, never once was there any kind of restriction as to when me or my family could come or go from said plot of land.

MAGISTRATE: Get to the point, Mr. Kirnon. Get to the point.

HAROLD:

Very well, Sir. Well, one of the things Calvin must do to help make ends meet is to pick cotton, and this he sometimes do at night. Well, I know that you might say, 'But that is strange', and to tell you the truth, that is exactly how I felt the first time I saw him

dding it. So I ask him why is it he should be picking cotton at night. And he said to me, 'Daddy, the moonlight is bright. I could see to pick as good as in the daytime and it is not nearly as hot'. That sounded to me like a good reason so I never queried it further. So I will not deny that the defendant was found picking cotton at night, or that he did indeed pick that half bag of cotton. But I defy any man to prove that he was stealing or had any intention whatsoever of stealing cotton. he was doing was picking cotton on land which his family has worked for nearly 28 years, at a time which was most convenient for him. Your Honour, I am standing here before you today because I'm a man who believe in law and order and justice. So I'm asking you today, not to heap injustice upon injustice. I'm beseeching you to look at the facts and see that the prosecution has not proven beyond all reasonable doubt that the defendant was stealing cotton. And finally, I beg you not only to let justice be done today, but let it be seen to be done. I thank you, Sir.

MAGISTRATE: 'I agree with the prosecution that this is a

wholesome society founded on trust and honesty which none of us would like to see eroded.

But I must also agree that the prosecution has not proven beyond all reasonable doubt that the boy is guilty of stealing cotton. His Majesty's Court finds Harold Calvin Kirnon Jr. not guilty as charged. (Blackout. Jubilation breaks out off stage and continues until Harold is back in the present with journalist.)

CROWD:

(Off stage) Let's hear it for Harry Kirnon!

Hip-hip-hip Hooray! (Three times, then crowd breaks out in song.)

Harry Kirnon is a great man

Hip-hip-hooray

He go a court and he free he son
Hip-hip-hooray

(Repeat)

Hip-hip-hooray

Hip-hip-hooray

Hip-hip-hooray

Hooray for Harry Kirnon

(Lights come up on Harold and Journalist in interview area.)

JOURNALIST: I take it that up to that point in time you

were still a long way from being in politics.

HAROLD:

Oh, yes. A long way. And I suppose that I could have walked out of that courtroom and gone back to being a share-cropper for the rest of my life. But I was now more than that. People came to me from all over the island with their problems. And their problems were, my problems. Because all of us amounted to just one thing - cheap labour to fill the pockets of the estate owners. Well, pretty soon I started a trade union and it became... well...my religion

JOURNALIST:

And I suppose as with so many other trade unionists, politics was just a hop, skip and a jump away?

HAROLD:

Quite so. It followed naturally and I don't see how it could have been avoided.

(Lights up on hut. Calvin sits at table writing. Martha enters wearing a hat and holding another in her hand. Lights fade on interview area.)

MARTHA:

Look here a minute, Calvin. Give me your opinion. Which of these hats you prefer?

CALVIN:

(Looking at one and then the other.) Put on the other one, Let me see. (She does so.)
The first one.

MARTHA:

(Indicating the hat in her hand) This one?

CALVIN:

Yeah, that one.

MARTHA:

Sure?

CALVIN:

Put It back on. (She obeys.) Yeah. It suits you better. (He goes back to his writing.)

MARTHA:

Take a little time and help me decide, nuh.

CALVIN:

But I told you.

MARTHA:

Try and imagine how this (The one he rejects) will look with another dress. Come on, Calvin, man. Loosen up. Take a break from whatever you're doing. (Enter Harold.)

'HAROLD:

Hello, there.

CALVIN:

Hi, Daddy.

MARTHA:

Had a good day?

HAROLD:

Good as could be expected. Better, in fact.

I think we could win.

CALVIN: Sure, we could win.

MARTHA: Which of these hats you prefer?

HAROLD: Whichever one you prefer.

MARTHA: Be more helpful than that, man.

HAROLD: Is you going to wear it, you know.

MARTHA: Not if you don't like it.

HAROLD: (Looking at hats) Where they come from any-

way?

MARTHA: England. My cousin Fred sent them: Said I

should choose the one I want and give the

other one to his mother. So, which one you

like?

HAROLD: That one.

MARTHA: Calvin likes the other one.

HAROLD: Good. I'll vote the same as Calvin.

MARTHA: Vote the same as Calvin. That's all you think

of these days. Vote, vote, vote.

HAROLD: And more votes. Because that's the only way

I could win the election, right? Right, Calvin?

CALVIN: Right!

HAROLD: (To Calvin) What you have for me?

CALVIN: Lots of notes. We could flesh them out with some pretty nice speeches, I think.

HAROLD: Great. Ley me look at them.

MARTHA: By the way, Fred also said that Calvin could stay with him in England. I'm writing to him tonight to let him know that Calvin will be on the next boat.

HAROLD: Wait a minute...wait a minute. What's the hurry?

MARTHA: No hurry, We have discussed it, the three of us, and agreed.

HAROLD: Yes, yes. But why the next boat?

MARTHA: Because if he stays here with you and this election and politics and union and all of it, he will never leave.

HAROLD: Let me ask you something, Martha. You believe

I'm going to win the election?

MARTHA: I believe you could do just about anything,

once you put your mind to it.

HAROLD: What would I do without you, eh woman? Come here. (He hugs her. She returns hug warmly.)

I'm going to make you the first-lady of this land if it's the last thing I do.

MARTHA: The next boat, Harold.

HAROLD: Take it easy, num. What's wrong with you?

One more question. When I win the election and form the next government, who will run the union?

MAMHA: Definitely not Calvin.

HAROLD: But Calvin is the best person, Martha. You know that yourself. The boy is bright, he has the flair, the experience...

MARTHA: What experience?

HAROLD: That's my right-hand man you talking about,

Martha.

MARTHA: Experience in the union perhaps, but what experience of life? Is the union to be his life?

HAROLD: Think of it, Martha. Nobody worked harder

than me to make that union what it is today.

But I could never have managed without you.

Now isn't it right and fitting that our son should fill my shoes?

MARTHA: Calvin is going to England and that's that.

HAROLD: England, what England?

MARTHA:

You could study to be anything you want,

Calvin, and you could work for more money there
than you could ever hope to get here. Just
don't let your father change your mind with his
sweet mouth. (Enter Arnold)

ARNOLD: Cousin Harold!

HAROLD: Eh-eh, Arnold?

ARNOLD: How all-you do?

HAROLD: Good as ever.

MARTHA: Put your vote here, Arnold. Which hat you prefer?

ARNOLD: All two nice.

MARTHA: I give up.

HAROLD: So, what's happening?

ARNOLD: It ain't happening, Cous. It ain't happening at all.

HAROLD: It going happen, man. Good things going happen.

ARNOLD: Me no see it at all.

HAROLD: Give it time, man.

ARNOLD: Time is what I doan have.

HAROLD: Alright, what eating you, now?

Well, to put de cards on de table straight
without beating 'round de bush, Ah decide dat
Ah going to England too, like everybody else.
Things just a get harder and harder every day
till it reach a point now that Ah just have
to pick up and go.

HAROLD: You believe England street pave wid gold?

ARNOLD: Is not a matter of dat. But enough future not here. Not so much for me because me could always mek out, but for me children.

HAROLD: Look at that piece of land the two of us fight so hard to buy. We could make a decent living from it. And above everything else, it belong to us. No more share-cropping.

ARNOLD:

I agree wid all dat, Cous. I agree wid all dat. But Ah still think England have more to offer.

HAROLD:

And what will happen to the land? -

ARNOLD:

Dat is what Ah want to talk to you 'bout.

(Pause)

HAROLD:

Talk.

~ARNOLD:

Well, you see...to get de passage money, Ahabave to sell my portion of it.

HAROLD:

Sell? People doan sell land, Arnold! You live and die for land. You kill for land. You doan sell it!

ARNOLD:

Ah have to, Cousin Harold.

HAROLD:

Look, wha' wrong wid you, man? This is 1952, the year of universal adult sufferage. You know what that mean? It mean that you and me and all the other poor people over Paran will get a chance to vote for the first time in history. For the first time we getting a chance to determine the destiny of this island and is now you want to leave?

ARNOLD:

Is not a matter of want to. Is a matter of have to.

HAROLD:

What could be so urgent? (Pause) Doan sell you land, Arnold. That's de best advice Ah could give you. You have children. It will always be here for you or them to come back to when you ready.

ARNOLD:

Is not dat Ah not greatful for you advice,
Cous, but de God truth is, Ah prefer to sell
it off and done. (Long gause)

HAROLD:

Well, the most I could do is give you my advice. I can't force you to take it.

ARNOLD:

Ah have to sell, Cous. But we is partners, so the Ah offering it to you first.

HAROLD:

Where I going get that kind of money?

MARTHA':

Borrow it. Use the land as collateral and borrow it.

HARQLD:

Borrowing is one thing. Paying back is another.

MARTHA:

Then, let Arnold borrow it. (To Arnold) When you go to England, you can pay it back.

ARNOLD:

(To Harold) What you think 'bout dat?

HAROLD: It could work. If you going pay back.

ARNOLD: Sure, me will pay back. But who will see 'bout'
de borrowing and all dat?

HAROLD: Calvin will look after it.

ARNOLD: ... Well...you never put me wrong yet, Cous. So me will give it a try. (They shake hands.)

HAROLD: Is the best thing you could do, Arnold. If you have to go, you have to go, but at least you will have your piece of the rock waiting for you when you get back.

ARNOLD: That's right. May God continue to bless allyou. Good night.

MARTHA: Wait for me, Arnold. Since none of you will help me, I'm going to let Tantie choose the hat she wants. (They leave.)

HAROLD: It's not good, Calvin. Not good at all. This wanting to sell land...imagine that!.... This picking up and leaving at such an important time. It's madness!

CALVIN: That's a great topic for a speech.

HAROLD: You think so?

CALVIN:

Definitely.

HAROLD:

Let's work on it.

CALVIN:

Might as well. Let me see....

HAROLD:

You going to listen to your mother with this

England business?

CALVIN:

You really dont want me to go, eh, Daddy?

HAROLD:

Well, I would never want to stand in the way

of what's best for you.

CALVIN:

I wouldn't be gone forever.

HAROLD:

I hope so.

HAROLD:

Do what you have to do and hurry and some back.

The two of us working together...plus Martha...

could do wonders.

CALVIN:

Let's see what wonders we could do with this

speech.

HAROLD:

Right. How we going tackle it?

CALVIN:

Alright! Let's face it. England has opened

her doors, and through sheer economic necessi-

ty, people are going to go.

HAROLD:

Keep going.

CALVIN:

(As Calvin continues, Harold walks to podium up stage right and is spot-lighted.) Take it from that angle and paint a picture of people forced to flee their homeland because of bad government.

HAROLD;

My friends, England has opened her doors, and out of sheer economic necessity, our people are going. Let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, it is madness! But what choice does our so-called government leave us? A few weeks ago, my cousin, Arnold Kirnon who most of you know well, came over to my house and said to me, 'Cousin Harold, I'm going to sell my land and go to England'. And I said to him, Why would you want to do such a thing?' And he said to me, 'Because there has never been a future in Paran for me, and I see no future here for my children'. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I want to say to you tonight that a place without a future for its people is a sorry place to be. It is a dark and dismal place to be living in. It is a place that is worse than hell itself. In a few hours'

time, a ship will sail from here to England, loaded with our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, our mothers and fathers who are fleeing Paran because they can see no future here! And the reason for that is, for too long, Paran has been run by men like Mas' James Hamsey, who have no interest, no regard and no concern whatsoever for the future of poor people. Well, I want to let you know tonight, that there is a future. There is a future but it is up to you all to decide. The destiny of this island is in your hands. It is for you to decide whether heartless men like James Hamsey will continue to run-it, in which case I assure you, they will run it ashore, or whether you are going to put it in the capable hands of Harry Kirnon and the other stalwart members of the Paran Labour Party, who will ensure that there is prosperity, progress, dignity and a glorious future for all the people of Paran. So, you decide now and let me know what you want: James Hamsey or Harold Calvin Kirnon? Let me hear you. Hamsey or Harry Kirnon?

CROWD:

Harry Kirnon!

HAROLD:

Ah can't hear you!

CROWD:

Harry Kirnon!

HAROLD:

"Ah still can't hear you!

CROWD:

We want Harry Kirnon! Harry Kirnon forever!

HAROLD:

Now Ah hear you. And Ah thank you. So let us make our way down to the wharf with our loved ones who are leaving for England tonight, to assure them of the future of Paran and to let them know that when-they grow weary and tired from their sojourn in strange cold lands, they have a home. They have a home to which they can return to share in the many blessings waiting for them right here in Paran. (Lights up - Calvin joins him.)

CALVIN:

Great speech.

HAROLD:

You heard it?

· CALVIN:

Every word. You win already.

HAROLD:

You think so?

CALVIN:

No question.

HAROLD:

Well, if you're right, will make this island

a wonderful place to be.

CALVIN:

It's a pity I'm not going to be here to help you.

HAROLD:

Yes, it's a pity. But Calvin, doan stay up there in nobody land knocking dog. You're a man with family and land and substance. Come home.

CALVIN:

Right, Daddy.

HAROLD:

Keep out of trouble. But never back away from what you know is right in the sight of Almighty God and in your own heart of hearts, because you doan have no frighten blood in you. You understand?

CALVIN:

I understand. (Enter Martha.)

MARTHA:

Come on, you two. We have to hurry. (They exit. Crowd, off, breaks into song.)

Tell me who you voting for Harry Kirnon!

Who ah-we no want no more

-James Hamsey!

Tell me who you want for chief Harry Kirnon!

Tell me who is a big thief

James Hamsey!

(Repeat)

(During the song there is a set change. The furniture representing the hut is removed along with the podium. A desk and two chairs, placed right of centre stage, become the Chief Minister's office. Al takes his seat in the dark and waits for his up-coming scene. As the song fades, lights come up on Harold and Journalist.)

HAROLD:

I won the election and although the first five years were rough, I didn't have much trouble winning a second term. In '60 Britain introduced the Westminister model and I became Paran's first Chief Minister. By then, even the poorest families owned some kind of land and of course everybody over 21 could vote. This was the dream of my father and his generation. But now it was a reality, people didn't care. The boats kept leaving, and later the planes. People by the thousands were on their way to England and America and Curação and later to Canada.

JOURNALIST: You must have felt like a shepherd watching his flock dwindle to nothing.

VOICE:

(Woman - off stage - in Harold's mind)

Harry Kirnon! Oh, Harry Kirnon!

HAROLD:

What did you say?

JOURNALIST:

I said, you must have felt like a shepherd

watching his flock dwindle to nothing.

HAROLD:

You see, cotton was no longer king, so there was no money to be made in farming. But I kept looking for something to replace cotton and keep people on the land.

(Lights up on Chief Minister's office. As

Harold picks up briefcase and moves towards

office woman's voice is heard again. It stops

him briefly.)

VOICE:

(Off stage - in Harold's mind) Harry Kirnon!

You is a damn no-good louse!

HAROLD:

(Joining Al in office) Sorry to keep you

waiting, Mr. Majors.

AT.

Call me Al.

HAROLD:

Very nice of you to come at such short notice.

AL:

The Chief Minister of Paran? Couldn't think of refusing. It's almost like being asked by the President of the United States'himself.

HAROLD:

I know you're a busy man, so let me get straight to the point. By now I imagine you are familiar with our tomato project?

AL:

Who isn't? The whole island's under tomatoes.
You can't help but notice subm's going on.

HAROLD:

Yes, almost the whole island, indeed. Except for the Ramsey Estate which you now own. I'm wondering if I can interest you in growing some tomatoes for next season?

AL:

You can sure try.

-HAROLD:

The farmers are now reaping the first crop and the new factory is buying every available pound to turn into tomato paste and ketchup.

It's a 100% guaranteed market which I'm sure must interest you.

AL:

What're they paying?

HARCLD:

Well, that's not completely settled.

AL:

Rumour has it that it's one cent a pound.

HAROLD:

Well, let me put it this way. They're guaranteeing that, but we're in negotiations with them to raise it up a bit more.

AL: 🖵

One cent a pound? C'mon, say you're kidd'n me.

HAROLD:

Of course, you would not be affected by that price. The next crop....

AL:

If there's a next crop, you mean.

HAROLD:

I agree it sounds like a small figure, but the company, Sodders Inc. of Canada, is introducing a new variety known as the Roma Tomato which is incredibly high yielding. Plus, revolutionary methods of agriculture to bring about even greater yields. And remember, every pound grown is guaranteed a market. So because of the large amounts which can be sold, it would be possible to make money.

AL:

I'm telling you, I've seen some pretty slick ones in my time; but now I know I've seen it all.

HAROLD:

I take it you don't see much good coming out

to the project, then?

AL:

Oh, for the Canadians, absolutely, if they can pull it off. But if you pardon my bluntness, the famers are a bunch of suckers. No, you couldn't get me to grow tomatoes. Not even if you held a gun to my head. But what I would like to do is make a counter proposal. One that would be of great benefit to the island as a whole, and naturally, there'd be something in it for you.

HAROLD: I don't understand.

AL: You know, you'd be well taken care of.

HAROLD: What do you mean?

AL: This tomato scheme, surely you're getting some of the action there.

HAROLD: People get work. That's enough action for me.

AL: Are you serious?

HAROLD: Do I seem to be joking? Now, if you'll excuse me....

AL: C'mon, don't get sore. What's the job worth, anyway?

HAROLD: What job?

AL:

This one. (Taps Chief Minister's desk.)

HAROLD:

Oh. A lot less than yours, I'm sure.

AL:

I'm sure, too. Fringe benefits? Transportation, entertainment allowance, pension?

HAROLD:

Now really, Mr. Majors....

AL:

Call me Al.

HAROLD:

Well, Al, thanks very much....

AL:

No, no. Pension is not a thing to be shoved aside. Even when you're sure of it, a man's got to put aside a little extra to see him through his winter years. And I'm not kidd'n you. As a matter of fact, I'm even going to give you, free of charge, a million dollars worth of advice in two simple words: real estate.

HAROLD:

Thank you very much, Al. It was nice of you...

AL:

Real estate could be the saving grace of this place! (Pause) You can't lose by listening.

HAROLD:

Okay. You have something to say, say it.

AL:

Let's forget all personal motives and look

just at the benefits for the island. Right now there are thousands, millions of rich Americans who would give anything for a nice little cottage in the sunshine where they can retire. So all you need do is sell them some land.

HAROLD:

Here in Paran, we like to think of our land as belonging to our children and grand-children.

AL:

I'm not talking about your good lands, now. I'm talking about the hills and mountains. Useless land that nobody wants. They'll grab And then they'll start to build houses, so merchants will make money and builders will get work. Once the houses are built, these rich Americans will need maids and gardeners and fellows to look after their swimming pools. More work. Work will be springing up all over the island and there will be an abundance of good dependable Uncle Sam green with which to Believe me, if handled well, real pay for it. · estate could pump more money into this economy in six months than that wretched tomato scheme could ever hope to do in sixty years.

about it.

HAROLD:

Very well. Let me do that and get back to you.

AL:

Believe me, my friend, what I'm showing you is ≺

the road to progress.

HAROLD:

As I said, I'll think about it and contact you.

Now I must attend to some pressing matters.

(He attends to matters at his desk.)

I'm looking forward to doing business with you.

texit Al

HAROLD:

These fast-talking Americans always trying to

pull something.

WOMAN:

(Coming through audience) Harry Kirnon!

Harry Kirnon! Come out ya and answer to me!.

(Lights fade on office and come up on woman

and gathering crowd.)

WOMAN:

Harry Kirnon! Me say come out ley me expose

you, man!

ONLOOKER:

Look 'e dey! Look 'e a come! (Enter Harold)

WOMAN:

Yesman, a right out ya me want you.

HAROLD:

Alright, Miss Dee-dee, wha' wrong now?

WOMAN:

Wha' wrong now? A dat a wha' you come ask me? Well, me want to know wha' me suppose to feed me five pickney dem wid, now? Dat a wha' me want to know.

HAROLD:

Wha' you talking 'bout?

WOMAN:

Go on lek you no know. You is a damm murderer.

Look, somebody, read out this. (She offers

letter to crowd. One or two decline.)

READER:

Me will read it.

WOMAN:

Read um out loud, ley everybody see what a wicked man Harry Kirnon be.

READER:

Dear Miss Farell, please find enclosed, a cheque for fourteen dollars for the fourteen hundred pounds of tomatoes which you supplied Sodders Incorporated. We look forward to doing business with you again soon.

WOMAN:

You hear dat? Fourteen dollars, you know. Read de odder one now. (Offering second letter. Enter policeman.) A wey you a go?

Anybody call you?

POLICE:

(Saluting Harold) Everything alright, Chief?

HAROLD:

So far, officer.

WOMAN:

Read de thing, man. No fraghten for no police-

READER:

Oh-Gad-oh! Is a bill from de tomato factory!

WOMAN:

Read it out.

READER:

Total....\$16.0

WOMAN:

So me end up owing dem. No so?

READER:

You owe dem two dollars.

WOMAN:

And dat could be right? After me work lek a slave and sell dem fourteen hundred pounds, me still en' up owing dem two dollars? And me no me mean to plant no tomato at all, you know. A Harry Kirnon come quite a me yard and beg me to grow some. And me say to 'e, ' But Chief, one cent a pound no sound right to me', an' 'e say, 'Go ahead and grow dem. You would get a chance to mek plenty money'. (Turning her, attention directly to Harold) Dis a de plenty

money? Well, Ah want you to tell me now, wha!

Ah must give me pickney dem to eat after dis?

HAROLD:

This is a very serious matter, but here is not the place to discuss it. Come with me to my office....

WOMAN:

Me nar go in-a no office, man. Me nar go in-a no damn office.

AHAROLD:

Well, there's nutt'n Ah could do for you out here.

WOMAN:

Me want me money, Harry Kirnon! Gee-me me money!

HAROLD:

So, go to the factory, then. Why is me you come running to?

WOMAN:

A you responsible, man. A you mek so.

HAROLD:

Come back and see me when you have yourself under better control.

WOMAN:

(Holding him back) You not moving from here till you settle wid me.

HAROLD:

Officer.

WOMAN:

(To policeman who is coming towards her) No put you han' pan me! (He wrestles with her

left and begins speech.)

and starts to drag her off.) Me a go do foo you, Harry Kirnon!

(Lights fade and there is a brief blackout.

Opposition I walks into spotlight down stage

OPPOSITION I: One cent a pound, you know, ladies and gentle-All this time farmers getting eight to ten cents a pound in our market, and fifteen to twenty cents a pound in Antigua. But in all fairness, ley me ask all you this: What more could you expect from a man who only reach third standard in school? What more could you resonably expect from a duncie-head idiot like Harry Kirnon?) (Opposition II walks into spotlight down stage right and picks up speech immediately from Opposition I who is now in ' This pattern will continue until the black. end of the segment with each actor picking up speech immediately from the other, and the lights changing accordingly.)

OPPOSITION II: I'm telling you, my friends. It is unfair to expect more from a man than he is capable of giving. And our honourable Chief Minister,

Mr. Harold C. Kirnon, does not have any more to give. This is why we have to get rid of him.

- He no ha' nutt'n foo gee, but yet 'e a tek bread out 'o poor people mouth.
- OPPOSITION I: Next time you see him, ask him why is it that
 a strong hard-working man like Obediah can't
 get any work at all with government.
- OPPOSITION II: Ask him how often he does just pick up his telephone and call his son Calvin all the way up in England at taxpayers' expense.
- OPPOSITION I: Ask him how many more of us he going make his policeman drag off to jail like Miss Dee-dee Farell, when we stand up for our God-given rights in Paran.
- OPPOSITION II: Ladies and gentlemen, the long and short of the matter is that Harry Kirnon is costing us much more than he is worth.
- OPPOSITION I: We cannot afford to let him take us through
 another blunder like his notorious tomato debacle.
- OPPOSITION II: And the white elephant of a tomato factory that is now sitting idle.
- OPPOSITION I: Once and for all we going kick him out of the
 White House and put him where he'll-be more at

home, in a pig pen!

OPPOSITION II: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm telling you tonight,
that it is time for a change! Harry Kirnon
and the Labour Party must go! (Enter Opposition III with placard which reads "Down with
Harry Kirnon".)

OPPOSITION III: They have to go! (Enter Opposition IV, stage left.)

OPPOSITION IV: Down with Harry Kirnon!

ALL:

Down with Harry Kirnon! (They march around the stage several times repeating this. As they exit, the Chief Minister's office is taken off and the podium replaced. Lights fade out and come up on White House. Enter Harold and Martha.)

HAROLD:

Wretches! That's what they all are. Spite-ful, covetous and ungrateful wretches!

MARTHA:

All these years you giving them your soul and all they ever do is spit on it!

HAROLD:

Politics? Man, I tell you.

MARTHA:

All these years, and what we have to show

for it? When they kick us out of here tomorrow, where do we go? Back to the old hut?
Back to planting cotton?

HAROLD:

You think I'm going to let any of them kick me out of here, just like that?

MARTHA:

If we only had a house and a little money put aside, we could walk away from it right now. Let those who so anxious to get rid of you, see if it's any joke.

HAROLD:

Well, I'm not walking away from it, and none of them going to kick me out. This is a new era, Martha, and the big problem so far is that I've fefused to come to grips with that fact. Well, not anymore. When that American fellow, Al Majors paid \$75,000. for the Hamsey Estate, what you thought of the price?

MARTHA:

Well, same as everybody else, I suppose. it sounded like a fortune.

HAROLD:

Could I have stopped Hamsey from selling at that price?

MARTHA:

I guess not.

HAROLD:

For that matter, could I have stopped anybody

from selling, who felt they wanted to sell.

MARTHA:

Why are you asking me all this?

HAROLD:

Could I?

MARTHA:

I suppose not.

HAROLD:

Well, what this Majors man has done is to chop up the estate into about fifty or sixty lots and is selling those lots for US\$3,000. each. If he gets them all sold, he will gross nearly \$200,000.! U.S. dollars! Close to half a million of our dollars. And that's not all. A few of those Americans have started to build houses. Labourers are getting \$5.00 and \$6.00 per day, more than twice as much as they would get from working the fields.

MARTHA:

My God!

_HAROLD:

A new era, Martha. Real estate and construction, that's the drift. And to continue swimming against the tide is to drown. (Pause) Well, I'm not going to drown, Martha. And I'm sure as hell not going to let anybody put you back in any hut.

MARTHA.

Just...do...whatever-you feel is right.

HAROLD:

Real estate is going to change the picture for us both financially and politically. And then when it gets closer to elections, I'm going to pull the big ace out of my sleeve.

MARTHA:

What ace?

HAROLD:

Ah, that's going to be a surprise.

MARTHA:

Even for me?

HAROLD:

Yes: A delightful surprise.

MARTHA:

Tell me what it is, man.

HAROLD:

I'm going to bring Calvin home, so we could win the election together.

MARTHA:

But...you wouldn't need to do that. Not if this real estate thing is what you say it is.

HAROLD:

Ah, but it's not just a matter of winning the election, Martha. It's true that I'm a strong and healthy man, but I'm getting old. It's high time for Calvin to come home.

MARTHA:

Please, do-God-bless-you, keep Calvin out of politics.

HAROLD:

Stop talking foolishness, Martha. The boy will

win his seat, he'll become a minister and in a few years, I'll name him my deputy. Eventually, he will run the whole show.

MARTHA:

No, Harold! A thousand times, no! I'm not in favour at all.

HAROLD:

Well, get in favour, because the boy is coming home where he belongs and the three of us working together will whip the world.

MARTHA:

No, Harold. I will never support that. I've been every step of the way with you. I know the life and I could never wish it for Calvin. Look at how they harass you for this, that, and the other. If they ask you for a favour and you can't do it, you become their biggest enemy. And even when you stick your neck out for them, more often than not they still turn around and stab you in the back. Well, not Calvin.

HAROLD:

All that might be so. But I'm doing what is right. What is natural.

MARTHA:

No! And I'm going to write to Calvin and tell him how I feel.

HAROLD:

That's not going to change anything.

MARTHA:

Then I will get him on the phone: beg him not to come back down here to get mixed up in politics. (Exit Martha)

HAROLD:

(Following her) Come on, Martha...be reasonable....

(Lights fade and come up on podium.)

CHAIRMAN:

And now, ladies and gentlemen, without any further ado, I give to you a man among men! true champion of the people. The man whose wisdom and foresight brought work into the island when there was none. The man who has taken us from the backwardness and oppression of yesterday to the enlightenment and prosperity of today. No more horse and donkey cart and wowla house and pit latrine. lovely brick houses with running pipe water. Some with hot and cold, and all with flush. toilets. Cars like ants on good paved roads. Oh yes, ladies and gentlemen, I give you the greatest leader Paran has ever seen, our Honourable Chief Minister, Mr. Harold Calvin Kirnon Sr. (Cheers and applause - off.)

HAROLD:

Thank you, thank you. Ladies and gentlemen,

this is an important moment in our history. is a time in which, whenever we look into the future, for as far as the eye could see, there is nothing but progress and prosperity in store And that is because the Paran Labour for us. Party has charted a good course for this island. I know that those conniving and deceitful scums of the Conservative Party have been trying to I know that they have been. tell you otherwise. running from pillar to post saying how they goin' crush my Labour Government, how they goin' kick me out of the White House that you, the people, put me in and throw me behind bars. But let them know for me that Harry Kirnon goin' be at the helm of this island for a long time to come. Tell them for me that Harry Kirnon is a man of steel. They might bend him but they could never break him! Yes, brothers and sisters, let them know that I'm a man of steel. They could bend me, but they could never break And tonight I want to present to you the man who would be running for the first time in the central district. A man after my own heart, a chip off the old block, flesh of my flesh and blood of my blood, Harold Calvin Kirnon Jr.!

(Loud applause and cheering)

CALVIN:

Brothers and sisters, tonight I'm not going to be long. I only wish to say that my father is a great man. Over and over again he has proven himself to be a man of the people, a real champion for the rights of the oppressed. And I pledge to you tonight, that if you should elect me to office, my central ambition would be to continue in the path of this great man. To continue at all cost to stand up for justice and fair-play and to see to it that the inalienable rights of all our people to a more meaningful existence never become threatened. And I thank you.

CROWD:

(Off) We want Calvin Kirnon! Harold Kirnon and Calvin Kirnon! (Repeat)

(Enter Man I and Man II. They lift Calvin on their shoulders and take him off. Lights fade out and come up on Harold with Journalist.)

HAROLD:

You're sure you'll remember all this?

JOURNALIST:

Absolutely. It's facinating. Far more vividenthan if I 'd had my tape recorder.

HAROLD:

Facts! That's what I want you to print.

Not fiction. History has always been more

appealing to me than fiction,

JOURNALIST:

Are you worried about your place in history?

(pause)

HAROLD:

Well, let me put it this way. I'm sure you know the kinds of things they have been writing about me. I agreed to speak with you because you are the only one who seem to appreciate the contribution I have made to this country and who didn't attempt to crucify me with your pen.

JOURNALIST: How would you like history to remember you?

HAROLD:

Truthfully. I give whatever I do my best shot.

That's the most a man can do. How about a

drink? Talking makes me thirsty.

JOURNALIST: I'll have something soft, thank you.

HAROLD: Fine. I'll be right back. (Starts to go then

I'm a politician, don't expect me to supply drinks for everybody. But do feel free to get your own.

- ACT II -

- 1914

(Harold returns with drinks.)

HAROLD:

(Offering drink) Here you go.

JOURNALIST:

Thank you.

HAROLD:

Can I get you anything else?

JOURNALIST:

No, thanks. I'd like us to continue, if it's

okay.

HAROLD:

Where were we, again?

JOURNALIST:

Calvin plunges into politics.

HAROLD:

Oh, yes.

JOURNALIST:

After you succeeded in bringing him into

government, were you giving any thoughts to

retiring?

HAROLD:

No. Not at all. you don't just take a man off the street, put him behind the controls of a plane and say, 'fly'. And believe me, running a country is a far more complicated business. Calvin had to learn the ropes before he could hope to take over. Many evenings, after a hard day, we'd sit on the patio exchanging ideas.

(Lights come up on Calvin at White house.

Harold joins him.)

HAROLD: How's my Minister of Education?

CALVIN: . Couldn't be better, really. How're you doing?

HAROLD: If I told you, you'd say I'm bragging.

CALVIN: Sounds good.

HAROLD: Oh, having you on my team has taken a weight off my shoulders, Calvin, I'm telling you.

Where's your mother?

CALVIN: Fixing supper.

HAROLD: Look at that, eh. She can have as many maids
as she wants to fix supper, but she still insists on doing it herself. (Calling inside)
I'm home, Martha.

'MARTHA: Good! Is Calvin out there with you?

HAROLD: Yes.

MARTHA: Supper will soon be ready.

HA ROLD: No hurry. (To Calvin) I had quite a big
lunch with that guy from Madison Avenue I was
telling you about. A real advertising expert!

CALVIN:

I was hoping you'd come to the launching of the hot lunch program for schools.

HAROLD:

Didn't need to. It was in good hands. How did it go?

CALVIN:

Very well.

HAROLD:

See? Another minister now, and I would have had a headache. With you in charge, I was able to spend a very productive day with the Madison Avenue man. Our tourism figures should triple this year. To say nothing of real estate and construction.

CALVIN:

You know, Dad, this real estate business is beginning to bother me.

HAROLD:

Nothing to worry about, son. It's all bread and butter. Look at the state of the economy today. Healthier than it's ever been.

CALVIN:

Perhaps, but look at the state of agriculture.

HAROLD:

This is a new era, Calvin. You have to come to grips with that.

CALVIN:

There's no such thing as an era in which we can afford to neglect agriculture.

HAROLD: I quite agree. Don't get me wrong.

CALVIN: Besides, what's wrong with agriculture flourishing along with the rest of the economy?

HAROLD: That I'll buy. The problem is, how do we get people to work the land?

CALVIN: I've given it some thought and I think I have a few ideas which might work. (Enter Martha with Arnold.)

MARTHA: Gentlemen, your cousin. I've asked him to stay and have supper with us. (Exit Martha)

ARNOLD: Well, God bless me eyesight!

HAROLD: Arnold! My God, is you this, fella?

ARNOLD: Me, self! Me, self! (They embrace each other)

HAROLD: What a surprise! Not a soul told me you were expected.

ARNOLD: Ah wanted to surprise everybody. Lord, is good to see you, Cousin Harold. (He and Calvin embace) And you too, Calvin.

CALVIN: Welcome. It's good to see you took my advice and came back home.

ARNOLD: England is no place to be getting old in,

Calvin. You would know that.

CALVIN: England, if you ask me, is no place to be in,

period.

HAROLD: Sit down, sit down So this is not just a

little vacation, then?

ARNOLD: No, Ah'm home for good. Done wid all that

coldness up there.

HAROLD: And wha' 'bout your boys?

ARNOLD:

ARNOLD: Big men, now. Big enough to fend for them-

selves and doing well.

HAROLD: And what you planning to do with yourself?

many times Ah say thank God for you wisdom and

foresight in not letting me sell that land be-

Oh, Cousin Harold, you would not believe the

fore Ah did go to England. Well, Ah has a

little pension, not much. And to tell you de .

truth, Ah hit de pools a little blow, not hard,

but enough to put down a little house on that

land, with a little flowers garden in front.

And in de back, Ah want to run a little farm.

Nutt'n big. Raise a couple fowl and some small

stock, plant a few vegetables. Sell what Ah can't eat; eat and give 'way what Ah can't sell, and just live out the rest of me life in peace.

HAROLD: Sounds very interesting.

ARNOLD: And Ah have one small favour to ask you, Cous...
but maybe now is not de time.

HAROLD: Any time is good time for you, where I'm concerned.

ARNOLD: Man, sometimes Ah so proud o' you, Ah feel
Ah goin' bus'. And Ah doan want to insult you
because Ah know you is a man, never believe in
selling land. But Ah wonder if you would at
least consider selling your share to me. That
is if you doan particular need it for something special yourself.

HAROLD: It's not that I'm unwilling to sell you the land, Arnold. It's just that, that whole Lincoln area is earmarked for a new housing development project and a farm would not fit in too well. We can't have cattle and goats running all over people's nice lawns. That's already a big problem.

ARNOLD:

So, wha' you telling me then, Cous?

HAROLD:

Look, what I could do is sell you a different piece where you could farm to your heart's content without getting in anybody's way.

ARNOLD:

But, that is some of the best farmland on de island. You always used to say so yourself.

HAROLD: _

Lots of other good farmland available, Arnold.

ARNOLD:

But Cous, that is de piece me have me heart set on.

HAROLD:

I'M find you another piece, just as good or even better.

ARNOLD:

It wouldn't mean the same to me, Cous. Man, it has been a source of strength to me in some of the darkest moments. Just to know it was there. My own little spot on me own homeland, whey nobody could ever run me from. Look, Cous, Ah will put up a good fence. Ah would see to it....

HAROLD:

I'm sorry, Arnold. Fence or no fence, a farm at Lincoln's is totally out of the question.

ARNOLD:

But....

HAROLD:

Believe me, it's too late to do anything about it now. Cabinet has already ruled. It's out of my hands.

ARNOLD

Well...well...

CALVIN:

Let me get you a drink; Arnold.

ARNOLD:

No, no. Ah better be running along.

CALVIN:

What about supper?

ARNOLD:

Not anymore.

CALVIN:

Come on, man.

(ARNOLD:

No, Calvin. Another time...maybe. But not tonight.

CALVIN:

Take care. (Exit Arnold)

HAROLD:

What madness is 'this now? He doesn't seriously think he could walk back in here after all these years and reclaim land just so? (Pause) It is true he did send me back a few pounds, but nothing close to what his passage to England cost me.

CALVIN:

Another residential area?

HAROLD:

That's what the land is earmarked for.

CALVIN:

More land to be chopped up and sold to foreigners?

HAROLD:

You shouldn't look at it that way, Calvin.

CALVIN:

That's the only way I could look at it. Where is all this selling out of our land going to lead?

HAROLD:

You were not around for some of the hardest years we saw on Paran, thank God. If it wasn't for relatives abroad who sent home something, I hate to think what would have happened. There was simply no money to be made in working the land, so people were vintually giving it away. Al Majors and a few other Americans got land for next to nothing and there was nothing that I or anybody elsecould do to stop them. So, you know what I did?

CALVIN:

What?

HAROLD:

I joined them.

CALVIN:

You joined them?

HAROLD:

Yes, I joined them. I teamed up with Al Majors and went into real estate because the

alternative was to get pushed out of the way.

Run over. And I'll tell you even more. I

have done well by it. For you, me, and Martha
as a family. But also for the whole island.

Even a blind man could look around and see

that: (Pause)

CALVIN:

You know, Dad, when I first came back from England, what struck me most was how barren the island had become. The new houses and cars were all lovely, but what was happening with the land? Nothing seemed to be growing anymore. I remember when we used to sell food to all of the neighboring islands. Now, we sell our land and import our food. Something must be fundamentally wrong with that.

HAROLD:

I quite understand your sentiments. Don't forget I actually lived through the dilemma and had to make some tough decisions. And I made some bad ones too, like that whole tomato affair. Well, I finally got wise and asked myself, why should they come here and get rich while we who belong here get left out in the cold?

CALVIN:

What land will be left for our children?

HAROLD: There's more than enough land for everybody.

CALVII: No, Daddy' (Pause) I seriously think we should consider restricting the sale of lands.

HAROLD: The economy would come to a standstill!

CALVIN: Not necessarily. Enough lots have already been sold to keep construction going for at least ten years.

HAROLD: If people build. But there's no guarantee of that.

CALVIN: So, we stop selling land and concentrate on getting the people to build houses or plant food.

HAROLD: How you propose to do that?

CALVIN: Well, for a start, we could tax all idle lands heavily, which would encourage the owners to do something.

HAROLD: Some strong-arm tactics, right?

CALVIN: More a question of gentle coercion.

HAROLD: However you term it, I don't think it's a good idea to try and dictate to people what they

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should do with their private lands.

CALVIN:

We are the government. We should do what is in the best interest of the country.

HAROLD:

Quite true. And as Caribbean politicians, we should always remember Toussaint L'Overture. He did a wonderful thing revolting against the French and establishing a black government long before slavery was even abolished. But then, look at Haiti today.

CALVIN:

You're not blaming the state of Haiti today on Toussaint L'Overture?

HAROLD:

I'm not blaming anybody. Just making the point that in this politics business it is not so much the show of force which matters, but the prudent exercise of cunning and guile. Believe me, it is best to leave the economy as it is. When a car is running well you don't want any mechanic tampering with it.

CALVIN:

Okay, let me put it another way. If history has taught us anything - anything at all - it is that white people cannot be trusted. Particularly by black people and particularly where land is concerned.

You let me down, Calvin. If you're going to object, object on firmer ground than that!

CALVIN:

Who is this Al Majors fellow? Who are all these wealthy Americans the two of you are so busy selling land to? What happens to our society when they come here to live with all their money?

HAROLD:

You should not try to use your personal dislike or distrust of white people to reverse good policy. We have to rise above the past, Calvin. That is what is important. The past must not be allowed to stunt our growth and development. And that is all I'm saying. (Enter Martha)

MARTHA:

Supper time: Come carve the meat for me,

Calvin. You have a good arm. (She and Calvin
start to exit inside as Harold crosses to
journalist.) Where's Arnold?

CALVIN:

Oh, he had to rush off. Some important appointment he forgot about.

MARTHA:

He could have told me.

CALVIN:

He asked me to tell you.

Well...let's go eat.

(Exit Martha and Calvin. Lights fade on White House and some up on Harold-and journalist.)

HAROLD:

We discussed the real estate issue many times. But instead of resolving the matter, it became a sort of running sore between us. He wanted to extend the discussions to the other ministers but I knew that was a waste of time, so I kept putting him off. And then, one day I got home to meet him and the other ministers waiting for me. (Lights come up on Calvin and three ministers.) Gentlemen, what's the occasion?

MINISTER I: Hi, Chief.

MINISTER II: How are you, Chief?

MINISTER III: Good afternoon, Chief.

CALVIN: (Holding chair for Harold) Please, join us.

HAROLD: What's this all about?

CALVIN: It's very important, and it shouldn't be long.

(Indicating chair) Please.

HAROLD: (Reluctantly taking chark) As you wish.

CALVIN:

Let me start by thanking all of you for being here. I want you to become part of a discussion which has been going on between me and my...between the Chief Minister and myself for some time, now.

MINISTER I: Excuse me, Calvin, but does the C.M. want the rest of us to be in on this discussion?

CALVIN: , Ask him.

MINISTER I: What you say, Chief?

HAROLD: We're here already, I suppose.

CALVIN:

Thank you. It is no secret that the C.M. and I hold very different views about Government's policy on real estate development. I believe we can all benefit from an open discussion of these differences and the alternatives I'll ask you to consider. Please feel free to voice your own opinions on the subject. My own position is very simple. I think we ought to discontinue the arbitrary selling out of our land and place more emphasis on making the land more productive. Already, enough lands have been sold to keep the building boom going for

ten years. So, restricting the sale of lands does not necessarily mean that the economy will stagnate. What it does mean is that we will be taking an important step to ensure that some land will be available to our children at a price they could afford. The Chief Minister, on the other hand, feels....

HAROLD: Wait a minute. Spend the rest of the year, if you like, saying what you feel. But don't presume to become my mouth-piece.

CALVIN: Very well. The Chief Minister's policy speaks for itself.

HAROLD: Damn right, it does! Loud and clear! (To other ministers) Isn't that so?

MINISTER I: Loud and clear, Chief.

MINISTER II: Clearer than any bell, Chief.

HAROLD: Isn't that so, Mr. Matthew?

MINISTER III: Yes, Sir. But maybe we should also hear what Calvin has to say.

HAROLD: I see. Well, Mr. Calvin, maybe you can tell us what is so wrong with the fact that in all

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respects, this island has never seen a brighter day.

CALVIN:

Given, in a number of ways, things are rosy.

But for how long? What I'm saying is that
the present development policy is shortsighted.

HAROLD:

Try telling that to the man on the street who now has no problem finding money to feed and clothe his wife and family and send his children to school. Maybe even take his children to school in his own motor car.

CALVIN:

There's a lot of money in the economy, I agree, but who's making it? Compared to the inordinate profits being made by a company like the Paran Real Estate Company, the man on the street is getting shafted.

HAROLD:

You begrudge the company its profits? Of course it makes a profit, or it wouldn't be in business. But I can assure you, the profits are reasonable.

CALVIN:

All of you, I'm sure, know of my father's involvement with the company. HAROLD: Sure, they know. I have nothing to hide.

CALVIN: Well, if everything is so...normal, I don't suppose you would mind if this group took

a look at the company's books.

MAROLD: Don't be ridiculous!

CALVIN: I'm quite serious. I'm sure it will help better than anything else to illustrate my point.

HAROLD: What is this exactly? You have invited these men here so you could question my integrity?

CALVIN: I've invited our colleagues here for free and open discussions on a matter which affects the whole country.

HAROLD: So you could question my integrity?

CALVIN: Please, Daddy. Don't get....

CALVIN:

HARGED: That's what it seems like to me and I resent it!

Maybe you do, but then again, maybe you're just blowing this whole thing out of proportion to divert our attention from the books.

Because, you see, I have this feeling that
The Paran Real Estate Company is very lacking
in integrity. I mean, where is the integrity
in getting land for peanuts from peasant
farmers and selling it in America for blood?

HAROLD:

That's enough!

CALVIN:

Well, there's no integrity in that. None at all!

HAROLD:

I said, that's enough!

CALVIN:

However much you want to deceive yourself, it is exploitation, plain and simple....

HAROLD:

(Slapping Calvin) When I say enough, man, I mean enough! Now, sit down and shut up!
(Stunned silence. Harold collects himself before continuing.) Gentlemen, please regard this...incident as confidential, just as you do most of what business occurs among us.

Good. Make no mistake about it. Real Estate is the bread and butter of each and every one of us on Paran. It has given us a higher standard of living than any of us thought possible. And that is the moral of the story.

Now, the question as I understand it, is whether we want to interfere with things and invite joblessness and poverty to take charge again, or leave things as they are. You want to try and get anybody to plant tomatoes again, Mr. Barzey?

MINISTER I: Good God! Not at all, Chief!

HAROLD: How 'bout cotton, Mr. Browne?

MINISTER II: Ten times worse!

HAROLD:

Anyway, so as not to be charged with lack of democracy as well, let's put the matter to the vote. Those in favour of our current real estate program raise your hands. (All raise hands except Calvin and Minister III.) Mr. Matthew? (Minister III hesitates then raises hand reluctantly.) Good. Four to one. The will of the majority will stand. It has been a long day, gentlemen, so don't let me detain you further. (They all rise to leave except Calvin.)

CALVIN:

Matthew, wait for me.

HAROLD:

Let me have a word with you, Calvin. In private.

CALVIN;

(To Minister III), I'll meet you in the car. (Exit Minister III)

HAROLD:

Calvin...Calvin...this whole thing had no right to happen. We are the last two people on earth who should fight each other. So why are we fighting?

CALVIN:

You really want me to answer that? ..

HAROLD:

How could we let things get this far? You could have told me about the meeting in advance. You could have asked for a formal discussion in executive council. You shouldn't purl something like that on me.

CALVIN:

You're joking, of course. I've been asking for such a meeting for close to a year, now. I even wrote to you making the reguest. What is happening to you, Daddy?

HAROLD:

I never got any such letter: And in any case,
I don't expect to walk in here and find that
you have called a secret meeting behind my
back.

CALVIN:

What secret meeting? Just stop looking at the Yankee dollar for a while and the truth of

what's happening to this country and to ou, might no longer be such a secret.

HAROLD:

I'm not arguing with you anymore, Calvin. Say whatever the hell/you like, my record is out there for the world to see and I'm not ashamed of it! Paran is the envy of the region today because of me! Once my eyes are shut you can do what you want with it. Not before!

CALVIN: It's impossible to talk to you, Daddy. (Exit)

HAROLD: Talvin.,.Calvin!

(Harold sits and broods. Enter Al Majors)

Hello, there. Harry...Harry! (Harold now responds). Well, how's the weather in dream-land?

HAROLD: Oh, Al. I wasn't expecting to see you.

AL: (So I notice.

HAROLD: Well, it's a pleasant surprise. Sit down and we relax.

Surprising things are happening. My phone has never been so busy.

A wheeler-dealer like you? What's the surprise?

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Rumour has it there's trouble in your camp.

HAROLD:

Nonsense!

AL:

Problem is, your friends and clients, these little old contented Americans who have been doing such wonders for our economy, don't think so. The rumour that Calvin is breaking with you to form his own party has taken over the hills like a brush fire.

HAROLD:

Ahhh, that's ridiculous!

AT.

Maybe, but they're starting to panic, and that's not good for business. That's what matters.

HAROLD:

To be honest with you, Al, I am having a little trouble but nothing even remotely resembling what you suggest. That fellow there...Matthew, is beginning to get a little too big for his breeches, but that is hardly a matter I can't handle.

AL:

That!s it?

That's it. So you could tell your friends there's absolutely nothing to worry about.

AL:

That's one thing I've always admired about you, Harry, your confidence. You always have a lot of confidence. (Pause) Even when you're wrong.

HAROLD:

The boy isn't going to start any party, Al.

AL:

Well, you can't say I didn't warn you way back with that tomato scheme of yours. And I'm here to warn you again.

HAROLD:

Believe me, Al. There's nothing to worry about.

AT.

Did Calvin ever discuss with you the details of his stay in England?

HAROLD:

· From time to time, sure.

AL:

Not all of it, I'm sure.

HAROLD:

What ware you driving at?

AL:

Details you might find useful, if by chance the rumoured split should materialize.

HAROLD:

What could you know about Calvin in England?

AL:

I'm a prudent businessman, Harry. We have a good thing going here, you and I, but it depends on political stability to stay good.

So when a member of Government starts saying irresponsible things which threaten that stability, it becomes my duty, in the interest of good business, to find out all there is to know about him. You know what I mean?

HAROLD:

Well, just to show you how far-fetched the idea of a split is, I'm not even going to ask you what you know.

AL:

Confidence! That my buddy. You're alright,
Harry. Because I know what torture it must be
to deny your curious political brain such
loaded information. And believe me, the emphasis is on loaded.

HAROLD:

Nice try, Al, but I still don't want to know.

My brain is too old now to store useless in
formation. Just tell whoever is worried that

everything is alright.

AL:

Whatever you say, Harry. You're the Chief.
There's one other matter that's causing some concern, though.

What's that?

A1.:

Those damn animals! They have no regard for people's private property.

HAROLD:

Animals again?

AL:

Just this morning I saw Joe McGinley chasing a big cow out of his yard. For ten minutes he forgot to close his gate and in that time the cow had eaten all of his anthuriums, plus half of the white carnations he just brought in from Puerto Rico.

HAROLD:

I've spoken to the police, the Permanent' Secretary, the Director of Agriculture... everybody!

AL:

And that's not all. Right now there's another cow on that property I'm showing to the couple from California. A thing like that could make all the difference as to whether or not I close the deal today.

HAROLD:

The cattle is there now?

AL:

It sure is. I saw it there myself on the way over here.

I'll get somebody from the Stray Animal Patrol

to deal with it right now. Coming?

AL:

Sure thing. Tell you what. I'll buy you lunch

after.

HAROLD:

Sounds good. (They start off)

AL:

That way I might get you to listen to the

information I came to give you.

HAROLD

Come, let's go see about this cattle. (They

exit. Blackout. Music. Lights up on Martha

and Calvin.)

MARTHA:

That can't be true, Calvin. You must have

meard wrong.

CALVIN:

In town, Mama, in the country. Everywhere I

go people are talking about nothing else.

MARTHA:

Well, don't be too quick to believe every bad

thing you heav about your father.

CALVIN:

Where is he, anyway? (Enter Harold)

HAROLD:

Right here.

CALVIN:

What's this about shooting Jim Sweeney's

cattle, Daddy?

What you mean? You know the kind of problems we're having with live-stock.

CALVIN:

The problems who is having? Your friends on` the hill?

HAROLD:

Don't turn this into a black/white issue,

Calvin. You know damn well the Agricultural

Department as well as the small farmers are

always complaining about live-stock. Well,

Lym tired of talking. People must have regard for other people's private property.

This is not Cuba.

CALVIN:

I agree that live-stock shouldn't be allowed to destroy people's crops....

HAROLD:

Then what you coming to ask me about cattle for?

CALVIN:

You can't be serious?

HAROLD:

In future, the law will be: 'All live-stock found trespassing on private property will be shot'. That is how'l intend to deal with the problem.

CALVIN:

I don't believe this! If you go and sell all the land where people used to graze their

stock, what you expect them to do? If most of the land was even cultivated I wouldn't mind so much, but what was on the land where you shot the cattle except a few peas trees?

HAROLD:

The cattle was not just on that spot of land, you know. You should see the mess it made of Mr. McGinley's garden. Every single rose tree....

CALVIN:

Ahhh! So you shot the cattle because it was in Mr. McGinley's garden, right?

HAROLD:

So because Mr. McGinley is a white man, his land should be a thoroughfare? Everybody should bring their cattle and run regatta over it?

CALVIN:

Don't come with that cheap line of argument, ...

Daddy. You know you had no justification for shooting the cattle, whether it was on your land or McGinley's. You don't agree, Mama?

MARTHA:

I have nothing to say in you or your father's politics.

CALVIN:

So you're just going to sit on the fence looking at the mess he's getting himself into?

Stop harassing her!

MARTHA:

(Getting up) I don't even want to listen to this. (Exit Martha)

HAROLD:

What you have to understand, Calvin, is that as long as I'm Chief Minister of this island, I will do everything in my power to ensure that people's right to own and enjoy private property is upheld and respected.

CALVIN:

And as long as this is how you propose to do it, you could forget about me being part of your team.

HAROLD:

So, this is what it has come to?

CALVIN:

This is exactly what it has come to.

HAROLD:

In the country, old people love to tell a story about a little pig that said to it's mother one day, 'Mama, wha' mek you mouth so long?'. The mother replied, 'Tek you time, you would see'. Running a country is not easy, Calvin. It's not an easy task at all. So, tek you time. I'm advising you for your own good. Take your cime.

all that, but I also have some advice of my own for you. Basically, it has to do with four things. One, I do not like the way you're constantly harassing Herman Matthew so I want you to stop it. Two, I want Arnold to be given his land, not only with permission to farm it, but with all support and encouragement to do so. Three, I would like to implement a policy review of agriculture, real estate and construction.

And four, I want you to pay Jim Sweeney fully for the cattle you had shot today.

HAROLD: And if not?

CALVIN: You could have my resignation.

HAROLD: And after that?

CALVIN: After that?

HAROLD: "Yes, after that.

CALVIN: Me against you out there in the political arena.

HAROLD: Ha, ha, ha! No, Calvin. You're not going to

come up against me in any political arena. I

didn't get to be Chief Minister of Paran by being

a fool. And nobody, not even you will move

me from here before my time! So whenever you're ready, go ahead and form your own party And then, come ahead into the political arena with me so that I could expose you and your stinking life in England across the length and breadth of this island. How you like the sound of that? (Calvin sits involuntarily.) Not good, I see: Oh yes, Mr. Calvin, I will get up on that platform and tell the people, 'He was my son, yes, but just as God repented for making Adam and Eve, so Frepent for making him. Because he went up to England to live with his cousin Fred, and for two months Fred gave him a bed, put food in his mouth, kept a roof over his head...and yet, in spite, of all Fred's kindness, the only woman Calvin could find to sleep with in the whole of England was Fred's wife. Even after Fred found out and asked him to leave his house, he still would not leave the man's wife alone'. How you think an audience would like it so far? Then I will tell them, 'Time after time Fred begged Calvin to leave his wife alone and time after time Calvin refused, until one day, knowing Calvin was at home locking limbs with

his wife, that poor man reached a point where he could take it no more. So he drank a fatal dose of quicksilver and telephoned Calvin just before he died'.

CALVIN:

That's a lie! Whoever told you that is a liar!

HAROLD:

What did he say to you? What were the last words of that dying man? Did he ask God to curse you, so that it is now possible for you to rise up against me, your father, who has never done you a wrong thing in life?

CALVIN:

Daddy...please....

HAROLD:

And then, I will go on to describe the dead body in detail, bloated and disfigured by the quicksilver. Murdered by you as surely as if you had put a gun to his head and blown his brains out. So, if is me you want to get into the political arena with, come ahead. For I promise you that as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, I, Harold Calvin Kirnon Sr., will destroy you! (He turns and walks back to interview area as lights very slowly fade out on Calvin who cries. Lights up on Journalist and

Harold who is badly shaken.)

JOURNALIST: Mr. Kirnon! Are you alright, Mr. Kirnon?

HAROLD: I don't know if I can relive any more of this.

JOURNALIST: It's alright. "I quite understand.

HAROLD: You don't understand. You can never begin to understand. (Pause) Think of what it was 'like hearing that loudspeaker, over and over again. (The following could be a tape or shouted by one of the other actors off stage.)

LOUDSPEAKER: Tonight, tonight, brothers and sisters! At
the War Memorial! Come one, come all to this
historical political meeting. The first, but
certainly not the last, of the newly formed
Progressive National Party. Come and hear our
great leader, Calvin Kirnon tell you why he
had to split with his father and the corrupt
Labour Party Government. Come and listen to
Herman Matthew and the other great speakers...
(Lights up on Harold and Martha at White House)

MARTHA: All day, over and over again. It's driving me crazy!

HAROLD: Who would ever dream it would come to this?

(Pause) I mean, Martha, we were always sociose, as father and son, as family, Is it possible these things don't matter to Calvin anymore?

MARTHA:

The last thing I ever wanted was for Calvin, to get into politics.

HAROLD:

I know. I know. Don't keep harping on it.

MARTHA:

When do I ever harp on it?

HAROLD:

Go on, have your last laugh. Tell the world you warned me.

MARTHA:

You think it's any more painful for you than it is for me? It's hell, Harold. Hell!

That's why I'm begging you to back down. Get out of it. We're old people now. What we need with politics?

HAROLD:

There's no backing down, Martha.

MARTHA:

You-have done more than your share, Harold.
What is so bad about resigning?

HAROLD:

Could you have lived with me all these years and understand me so little?

MARTHA:

What you always wanted was for Calvin to

continue after you....

HA'ROLD

After me. After me. When I'm good and ready and not a minute before.

MARTHA:

So, resigning is out of the question?

HAROLD:

Absolutely and totally!

MARTHA:

Then, this is all I have to say. If you or any member of your party should so much as mention that incident in England, I will leave you.

HAROLD:

Leave me? No, Martha. You're not going to

leave me. 🕶 📝

MARTHA:

No?

HAROLD: .

No!

MARTHA:

Not only will I leave you, Harold. I will side with Galvin and get on his platform with him to denounce you!

HAROLD:

You will side with Calvin against me?

MARTHA:

Even the scum of the earth will be better than you, then.

HAROLD:

Well, don't wait until then to leave me. Leave

me now! Pick yourself up and leave me now!

MARTHA:

I'm warning you, Harold, that's all. And—please don't make the mistake to think that

I'm joking!

(Enter Calvin)

CALVIN:

Hey, what's going on here?

MARTHA:

Hi, Calvin.

CALVIN:

What's the matter, Mama?

MARTHA:

Nothing.

HAROLD:

What do you want?

CALVIN:

I have come one last time to try and avert a full-scale political war between us...

HAROLD:

Starting to get frightened, Mr. Calvin?

CALVIN:

For heaven's sake, be realistic. The island is up in arms against you. Nobody wants to hear from you.

HAROLD:

You would like to believe that, wouldn't you?

CALVIN:

Walk away from it now, Daddy, with your head high. That's the sensible thing to do.

You are the one who must come to your senses about where your loyalties should be. Drag yourself away from the influence of Herman Matthew and those other cut-throats.

CALVIN:

Read this. (Handing him sheet of paper.)

HAROLD:

What is it?

CALVIN:

My speech for tonight. I don't want to make it unless I have to.

HAROLD:

Get away from me!

CALVIN:

Read it. It might help. (Harold takes speech and starts to read aloud. After the first few words, Calvin continues speech and is high-, lighted.)

CALVIN:

Brothers and sisters, thank you for turning out in such large numbers. I did not come here tonight to denounce my father, but rather in an effort to save him from himself, and this country from what he has become. Make no mistake about it. The Honourable Chief Minister, Mr. Harold C. Kirnon used to be a true champion of the people. But the Harry Kirnon of today, who is able to shoot down a

poor man's cattle for straying onto his land is not the same Harry Kirnon of yesterday. The Harry Kirnon of today is a desperate man, surrounded by yes-men who shudder at the thought of opposing him on any issue, in spite of how wrong they know him to be. A ruthless man who has come to put his own personal interests and greed ahead of common human decency and justice. Such a man is dangerous and should forthwith be removed from public office. By far the most striking example of my father's decadence and decline is the scandalous land policy now being pursued by his government. It is largely because of this that Mr. Herman Matthew and I have seen fit to separate from the Labour Party and create the Progressive National Party which will forever uphold the goals forsaken by the Harry Kirnon of old, whom we all loved and respected. A party which will steer clear of the shortsighted policy of becoming too dependent on a super-power which does not have the slightest bit of sensitivity to our needs for growth and development as a people. A party which recognizes that the only meaningful existence

is-one of dignity and pride, firmly rooted in the good soil of self-reliance. Paran must never become another Virgin Island. Some of you would remember that as a boy I was arrested and tried in a case which eventually led to the end of the inequitable practice of share-cropping. That was truly a victory for the people, well fought and won by my father. It is most heart-rending that this same man who yesterday battled the great land-owners on Paran in the interest of poor people, should today be greedily amassing a fortune by selling off the people's land to foreigners for so many thirty-pieces-of-silver! I thank you.

(Long pause - Lights return to normal)

HAROLD:

Go ahead, Mr. Calvin. Go ahead and drag me through the mud. That is what you will have to do because I will never walk away and give you license to destroy what I have done for this island. (He crumples speech and throws it away as he starts off.)

MARTHA:

Wait here, Calvin. (She silently comforts Harold as they both exit. Calvin picks up speech. Martha returns.)

Why, Calvin? Why are you so hell-bent on destroying your father?

CALVIN: .

Destroying him?

MARTHA:

For God's sake, can't you see that is what you're doing?

CALVIN:

He put you up to this?

MARTHA:

He didn't put me up to anything.

CALVIN:

Well, whether he did or not, it's not going to work.

MARTHA:

I left your father crying, Calvin, crying!
You know the only other time I ever saw him/
cry? Long ago when they stopped you from
writing those exams. Could you imagine him
crying?

CALVIN:

He's doing a lot of things lately which 'I couldn't imagine him doing five years ago.

MARTHA:

But even if you think he's doing wrong things, are you the one to tear him down in public?

CALVIN:

I should just leave him to destroy himself and the country from whatever good he has done?

Talk to him.

CALVIN:

You know better than anyone else how much I've tried to talk to him. It 's impossible to talk to him.

MARTHA:

So instead, you set about to save us all from his tyranny? Is that it?

CALVIN:

If that's how you want to put it.

MARTHA:

No, Calvin, tell that to the public. You could never fool me with that. Power. That is what you crave. Power! He's an old man, Calvin. He can't go on forever. The least you can do is wait. And now you want to get up on your platform and blow off about common human decency?

CALVIN:

All your life you have supported him....

MARTHA:

But what is a family for, if not to support each other?

CALVIN:

It would surprise me more....

MARTHA:

Shield each other.....

CALVIN:

If you were to turn around now ...

Protect each other....

CALVIN:

... And stop supporting him.

MARTHA:

From all of life's pitfalls.

CALVIN:

I understand your position and concern, Mama, but there really is no turning back for me now. Goodnight.

MARTHA:

But can't you see it's impossible to destroy him without at the same time sowing the seeds of your own destruction? Can't you see that if they reject him, they must also turn around and reject you too?

CALVIN:

If I should ever become like him, I would hope that they won't hesitate to reject me!

MARTHA:

What has he done that is so wicked? Tell me that. Whom has he murdered? What political prisoner is he holding without trial? Name me one woman who had to sleep with him before getting a job. Which election did he rig? Answer me that!

CALVIN:

He's a paragon of virtue, Mama.

MARTHA:

Don't be sarcastic with me, Calvin. You know

I don't like it at all. Look at the kind of poverty we knew before you went to England.

Afterwards, it got even worse. God alone knows what would have become of us if not for the real estate and construction business.

CALVIN:

All founded on the Esau principle, Mama. And I will never agree that a little bit of hunger is enough justification for selling out your birthright to become a nation of servants.

MARTHA:

Rhetoric, Calvin! And the people can dance and shout to it because their bellies are fully. But what happens when you get into power and that same rhetoric brings the economy to a halt? What you going to tell the people when they start to get hungry again? Believe me, Calvin, when it finally comes to a choice between full belly and ideology, a full belly always wins. No, Calvin, your father is not a paragon of virtue but he has done wonders for this island with real estate. Don't ask us to bite the hand that is feeding us.

CALVIN:

But that is precisely what we must do, Mama. Begin to bite the hand that is feeding us.
Bite it! Bite it! Bite it clean off if

necessary! Because until we are prepared to do that, we will never be able to see what the other hand is doing. And when we allow that benevolent hand to manipulate us into a position where our very existence depends on being fed, that's when you're dead! Never mind hungry.

MARTHA:

I can't argue with you, Calvin. All I can do is give you the benefit of my experience and hope you would learn from it.

CALVIN:

It's not in anybody's best interest, not yours, not mine mor the country's, for Daddy to serve a next term. If you open your eyes you will see that.

MARTHA:

What you're doing is wrong, Calvin. If you open your eyes you will see that. Because you can't win. Even if you win, you loose.

CALVIN:

Then, so be it.

MARTHA:

God have mercy on you.

(Lights fade out and come up on Harold attempting to hold a public meeting.)

HAROLD.

Ladies and gentlemen...(Crowd boos throughout speech.) Listen to me, ladies and gentlemen.

1

Many years ago the great William Shakespare wrote, 'How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child', and take it from me, he knew what he was saying. Let there be no mistake about it; it is a sad, sad day for any place when a son should see fit to rise up against his father! The good book itself warns us of such a day. Communism will not be far behind. Let me assure you my friends, that if I am as bad as Calvin says I am, then he must be worse, because the apple never falls far from the tree. Before this night is out I will tell you truths about Calvin which will make your stomachs turn. I'll tell you....

CROWD:

Boo! Boo! Go 'way! Ah we no want to hear you...

HAROLD:

Ladies and gentlemen... (Crowd boos) ...listen to me....

CROWD:

Boo! Go 'way! Boo! Boo!

HAROLD:

Communism....

CROWD:

Boo! Old man!_Boo!

HAROLD: Ladies and gentlemen, I am a man of steel!

CROWD: Boo! Ah we no want you, Harry Kirnon!

HAROLD: Do you hear me...a man of steel...a man of

steel....

CROWD: Boo!

HAROLD: A man of steel!

(They mock him, their voices drowning him out.)
He leaves the podium and makes his way to the
White House, muttering to himself, 'A man of
steel'.)

HAROLD: / (At White House) I am a man of steel!

(This may be on tape or said by one of the other actors, off stage.) And so, ladies and gentlemen, these are the final results from all polling stations. Calvin Kirnon's newly formed Progressive National Party has scored a resounding victory over the Paran Labour Party, leading....

HAROLD: (A primordial scream) No! Turn it off! Turn off that goddamn radio! (Radio is turned off.

Silence. Enter Martha.)

MARTHA: (They embrace each other) Just hold me.

(Lights fade slowly to black. When they come up again, it is the Journalist who embraces Harold, slightly left of interview area.)

JOURNALIST: My God! (She could just as easily be relating to the actors' performance as to Harold's plight.) Come, sit down and rest. Should I get you some water or something?

(Enter Martha)

MARTHA: Is something wrong? Harold, are you alright?

HAROLD: I'm alright...I'm alright.

JOURNALIST: Well, what can I say? I'm completely out of words.

MARTHA: He tires easily. You should let him rest, now.

HAROLD: I said I'm okay! (Pause) You know, when

Columbus returned from the new world, the queen
held a great feast for him. Columbus presented
an egg and asked all the great barons and lords
if any of them could make the egg stand upright. The egg was passed around but nobody
could make it stand up-right. When it came
back to Columbus, he gently cracked one end
and put the egg to stand up. Everybody cheered

and said, 'Oh, that was easy'.

JOURNALIST: It's a fascinating story, Mr. Kirnon, from beginning to end.

HAROLD: End? This is not the end. Far from it!

JOURNALIST: I'd like to propose a toast. Mrs. Kirnon?

MARTHA: Go ahead, make your toast. Never mind me.

HAROLD: Oh, come on Martha. Have something. (pours'

drink for her.),

MARTHA: Thank you, Harold.

HAROLD: (To Journalist) Go right ahead.

JOURNALIST: To new beginnings.

MARTHA: New beginnings?

HAROLD: Yes, Martha. To new peginnings! (They touch glasses and drink. Lights fade out.)