

THE VANISHING ISLAND

A Musical Play in Three Acts

by

Peter Howard and Cecil Broadhurst

Music by Will Reed and George Fraser

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Characters

IN ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

KING CAPRICORN	King of Eiluph'mei
THE HON. BENJAMIN BULLFROG	..	..	..	..	..	..	Prime Minister
EBENEZER MUDDLE	..	..	..	..	..	..	Secretary of State
MARMADUKE MALFEASANCE	..	..	..	..	..	..	Lord Chancellor
ODIOSO	..	..	..	..	..	..	Ambassador from Weiheit'tiu

TWO JOURNALISTS, HERALD, MISS AGATHA HIGHBALL, JOSHUA BIBLE,
MOTHER WITH CHILD, ISLANDERS OF EILUPH'MEI AND INHABITANTS OF WEIHEIT'TIU

The Vanishing Island takes place in two countries. One of them is called the land of Eiluph'mei and the other is called the land of Weiheit'tiu. The meaning of the words depends on which dictionary you use. If you look it up in one dictionary, Eiluph'mei (I Love Me) means the Land of Liberty. In another, it is called the Land of Licence.

Weiheit'tiu (We Hate You) in one dictionary is said to be the State of New Democracy. If you look it up in another, it means Land of Tyranny.

Nobody is quite sure of the distance between the land of Eiluph'mei and Weiheit'tiu. It depends on what map you look at. The distance, if any, seems to vary from moment to moment in time.

The time of *The Vanishing Island* is the Past and the Present, and it might even be the Future, too.

Scenes

PROLOGUE

ACT I—Courtyard of the Royal Palace in the Island of Eiluph'mei

INTERMISSION

ACT II—Courtyard of the Praesidium in the Land of Weiheit'tiu

ENTRACTE

ACT III—Courtyard of the Royal Palace in the Island of Eiluph'mei

The Story

PROLOGUE

Two journalists, Dan Doubletalk and Don Doublethink, one from the land of Eiluph'mei and the other from Weiheit'tiu, meet and discuss the news. As "brothers of the inky craft" they sing of the influence of their daily writings on their millions of readers.

ACT I

It is a festive day in the courtyard of the Royal Palace of King Capricorn, King of Eiluph'mei. The people sing of their land of riches and freedom and of their own great qualities.

After their enthusiastic welcome to the King, the Prime Minister announces the expected arrival of an ambassador from Weiheit'tiu. The King feels that the people of Eiluph'mei should change their ways and warns them that unless this happens, they may be overcome by the powerful forces of Weiheit'tiu. But the people of Eiluph'mei laugh at such a possibility as absurd and "so far away".

Odioso, the ambassador from Weiheit'tiu, arrives and demands for his people a share in the riches of Eiluph'mei. He presents the people with an ultimatum and retires, giving them fifteen minutes to decide. The King's warning against taking this threat too lightly arouses stormy opposition. A vote is taken to restore the confidence of the people in the Monarchy. It results in a dead heat. The process is repeated, with the same result. The King, however, voluntarily resigns his throne, and the Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State assume control, in spite of the protest of Miss Agatha Highball and her women supporters. Odioso returns. When his repeated demands are refused, he puts a curse on the Island. The people scoff at this and he leaves, threatening that the Island will vanish.

To preserve the reputation of Eiluph'mei it is decided that a delegation shall go to Weiheit'tiu. The Secretary of State, Agatha Highball and the Herald are chosen for the task, and the business men are represented by Joshua Bible. After praising their own great "know-how" and self-love, they depart for Weiheit'tiu.

Capricorn has grave doubts about the success of the delegation because it lacks the new type of man. The people turn away from him, convinced that Odioso's threat is "so far away".

ACT II

Odioso and the people of Weiheit'tiu prepare for the arrival of the delegation from Eiluph'mei with a marching song of hate. A mother enters with a child in her arms. She appeals to Odioso's concern for their child and his future in the song "Son of Mine".

The delegation from Eiluph'mei arrives. Their efforts end in failure, even after they extoll the charms of liberty. The Prime Minister and Lord Chancellor arrive and tell the delegation that the Island is beginning to vanish. They and the delegation are put under arrest.

The mother pleads with Odioso to renounce the power of hate for the sake of their child and of all the world's children, but to no avail. Agatha Highball sees and understands the longing in the mother for a peaceful future for her child.

ENTRACTE

The two journalists enlarge on their technique of catering to the great and gullible public. "Objectivity, that's the thing!"

ACT III

In Eiluph'mei a witch hunt is in progress to see who is the cause of all the trouble on the Island. Capricorn assumes the responsibility and apologises for his past conduct. The delegation, on parole from Weiheit'tiu, returns to tell of Odioso's impending invasion of the Island.

The Island is vanishing. The people are desperate. Capricorn explains to them the simple secret of a change of heart, of living and giving a superior ideology. It can be found through each person choosing to listen and to obey the still, small voice, the voice of the King of Kings, which speaks in the heart of every man.

The people respond. The Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State become honest. The Prime Minister doubts that Odioso will change his attitude. But Agatha Highball has seen Odioso's and the mother's love for their child as the chink in their armoury of hate.

The people of Weiheit'tiu, led by Odioso and the mother with their child, arrive to take over the Island. The people of Eiluph'mei, however, are ready to receive them with a more powerful idea.

Agatha Highball, now a woman with an answer, tells of the women of the world who in selfless pain give birth to the sons of men, yet whose true love is crushed by fears and hardness. The other women join her in telling of their past failures and of their decision now to sacrifice their selfish ways that the world can be remade. This wins the heart of the mother.

Capricorn tells Odioso honestly of the mistakes he and his people have made. The Island begins to reappear. Odioso is convinced by the change in Capricorn and the people of Eiluph'mei and accepts the superior ideology, above class, race and nation, that can give bread, work and faith for every man.

“ So far away ” becomes “ so near at hand ”, for everyone everywhere, including you.

*THE CAST OF THE PLAY
and all connected with this enterprise
are giving their services without
salaries. Many are giving their whole
lives and their possessions in a bold
determination to remake the world.*

*An opportunity is given to anyone
who may wish to help financially
according to his means and conviction.
Cheques and contributions may be
handed in at the bookstalls.*

Prologue

The courtyard of the Royal Palace in the Island of Eiluph'mei is spacious but simple. The audience looks out across a terrace to a view of the bays and promontories of the island in the far distance.

Enter in a great hurry, DAN DOUBLETALK and DON DOUBLETHINK, two journalists. They meet almost head-on in the centre of the stage.

DON AND DAN (Simultaneously) Pardon me. I'm in a hurry.

DON My eyes are going weary or they're on the blink,
But somewhere I've seen you before, I think.

DAN Don't think too much. It's really such a bore.
But I agree. We've met somewhere before.

DON Don Doublethink's my name. I'm on my way
To Weiheit'tiu, to find out what they say.

DAN And I'm Dan Doubletalk. I'm on the task
To show why Eiluph'mei won't do what we ask.
The Isle of Eiluph'mei's so full of wealth
It thinks of nobody except itself.

DON But nothing happens on Eiluph'mei that's news.

DAN Weiheit'tiu has directly different views.
They out of Eiluph'mei plan to knock the stuffing.
They think it's fat and rich and ripe for plucking.

DON A journalist!

DAN A scribe!

DON An inky brother!

DAN No wonder we so quickly knew each other.

DON AND DAN Brothers of the inky craft, setting down in black forever
All the stuff to make men think they are fools, but we are clever,
Startle, stun and disillusion, sex and violence and drink,
Feed the fools the stuff they gobble, saying what *they* think *we* think.

Black brothers, inky men,
Our strength is as the strength of ten.
Our feelings daily reach the millions,
They multiply themselves by billions.
And what *we* are and what *we* say
Is very much the world today—hurray!
Is very much the world today.

Brothers of the inky craft, we defend what we believe in.
We're against all forms of vice, and we're anti war and thievin'.
But if you all like to read unadulterated ullage
We must earn our bread—so we write nothing that will make a dull page.

Black brothers, inky men, *etc.*

DON But honesty compels me, Dan, to state
The way you put the news is what we hate.

DAN Facts, like a telescope, can be mistook.
Their shape and scope depend which end you look.
Well, I must get to work on Eiluph'mei.
I wonder if their danger clear they'll see.

DON They'll see no danger. Too rich, I suppose,
To see the thing that's underneath their nose!

Exit DON.

Act I

Enter the ISLANDERS, richly, gaily and variously garbed—shouting and cheering, as the flag of Eiluph'mei is hoisted.

PEOPLE Hurray, hurray, hurray!

FIRST MAN Long live the King!

PEOPLE Hurray!

SECOND MAN Long live Liberty!

PEOPLE Hurray!

THIRD MAN Long live Freedom!

PEOPLE Hurray! Long live us!

FIRST MAN Especially long live us!

PEOPLE Hurray!

A gale of cheers and shouts and laughter breaks out.

DAN Excuse me. What are you all shouting about?

A WOMAN Don't you know?

DAN No.

A WOMAN My poor fellow. You must be a stranger in these parts. I'm sorry for you. How sad.

DAN What on earth are you talking about? I don't feel sad at all.

A WOMAN Don't tell lies. It's unconstitutional. Of course you feel sad. Everyone feels sad who is a stranger to Eiluph'mei. Or they ought to.

DAN But I'm not a stranger.

A WOMAN Who are you?

DAN My name is Dan Doubletalk. I'm trying to earn an honest living as a newspaper man. Would you please tell me what are we all shouting about?

PEOPLE Our island holds within its veins the riches of the globe,
With oil and gold and gems untold to cheer the heart of Job.
Our banks they bulge, while we indulge our love of earthly ease.
In Eiluph'mei, this island free, the rich do as they please.
And all are rich—or nearly all—men, women, boys and girls.
The whole world is our oyster, but the people are the pearls.

Free people, decent people, people of merit and worth,
Though we love not to boast,
We will give you a toast
To the finest people on earth!
Free people, decent people, people of breeding and birth,
Though we love not to boast,
We will give you a toast
To the finest people on earth!
The cleanest, straightest,
Purest, greatest,
Noblest folk on earth.

There is a burst of cheering and laughter. Enter HERALD with two pages. They play a fanfare.

HERALD Long live Capricorn, King of Eiluph'mei, Master of the Globe!

Enter KING CAPRICORN and retinue. The people cheer wildly and bow to him.

KING CAPRICORN You say I'm the monarch of all I survey,

PEOPLE The monarch of all I survey,

KING So it's time to admit I can't see a long way.

PEOPLE He sees such a very long way.

KING In an island that's bursting with freedom and gold
Others do as they please—and I do as I'm told.

PEOPLE So being a King isn't very much fun—
He's the servant of all and the master of none.

KING My kingly robe's historical,
My powers—they're just symbolical,
My duties astronomical,
It's really diabolical
To be monarch of Eiluph'mei.

PEOPLE His kingly robe's historical,
His powers—they're just symbolical,
His duties astronomical,
It's really diabolical
To be monarch of Eiluph'mei.
We're free
On the island of Eiluph'mei.

KING I cheerfully spend twenty-four hours a day

PEOPLE A twenty-four hour working day

KING Efficiently doing what isn't the way.

PEOPLE He's doing what isn't the way.

KING But deep in my heart I just long for a change
Which this whole blessed island would soon rearrange.

PEOPLE Subversive to even suggest such a thing.
But there's no need to worry. It's only the King.

KING Our wealth super-numerical,
Our women sub-hysterical,
Our minds a zero-spherical,
We really need a miracle
On the island of Eiluph'mei.

PEOPLE Our wealth super-numerical,
Our women sub-hysterical,
Our minds a zero-spherical,
We really need a miracle
On the island of Eiluph'mei.
We're free
On the island of Eiluph'mei.

Fanfare.

HERALD Pray silence for the Right Honourable Benjamin Bullfrog,
Prime Minister.

Enter the PRIME MINISTER. The crowd cheer, a few boo.

Mr. Ebenezer Muddle, Secretary of State, and Mr. Marmaduke
Malfeasance, Lord Chancellor.

Enter the SECRETARY OF STATE and LORD CHANCELLOR. Boos.

KING Is it a piece of red-hot news you're bringing,
Or are you simply bored to hear me singing?

PRIME MINISTER Your Majesty,
Though we admire your voice
And we greatly rejoice
At the relish and rhythm and rock in it,

LORD CHANCELLOR The time has now come
For you to be dumb.
In other words, please put a sock in it.

SECRETARY OF STATE We've significant news
And we must have your views,
Though if we disagree we will can it all.

LORD CHANCELLOR According to law
We must ask you before
We decide on a definite plan at all.

PRIME MINISTER An ambassador's coming.
The whole place is humming.
The island's a-buzz with the news of it.

SECRETARY OF STATE His motives a medley,
The danger is deadly.
We must see through and master the ruse of it.

PRIME MINISTER It's the Weiheit' tiu comrades—
They're just atom-bomb lads.
They're out to subvert and enslave us.
Double-crossers, back-stabbers,
They're grafters and grabbers
Of all God and our enterprise gave us.
So Majesty, please
Put us all at our ease
And tell us we shall not receive 'em.

KING But then they will curse,
It will make it far worse,
We don't want to madden and peeve 'em.

PEOPLE Now here's a fine crew,
Here's a how d'you do.
What's our versatile Cabinet playing at?
You must settle this crisis.
If you don't, our advice is
You're fired—and it's we who are saying that!

PRIME MINISTER Oh, horrible threat!
 But you mustn't forget
 That we've nothing to fear on Eiluph'mei.
 We will give our advice. (*Going into a huddle with the SECRETARY OF STATE and the LORD CHANCELLOR*)

PEOPLE Boo!

SECRETARY OF STATE Yes, it's here in a trice.

PEOPLE Boo!

PRIME MINISTER Be quiet, we're having a Cabinet huddle.

PEOPLE Boo!

KING As a monarch I'm only
 A figurehead lonely.
 My views, you won't bother to hear 'em.
 But it seems to me plain
 We have something to gain
 If we hear what they say—and then queer 'em.

PRIME MINISTER And if worse comes to worse, we can say with a smile,
 "Why, it can't happen here on old Eiluph'mei's isle."
 No, it can't happen here.

SECRETARY OF STATE So we've nothing to fear.

LORD CHANCELLOR He can handle conspirators sinister.

PRIME MINISTER So let's all give a cheer
 Several times every day

SECRETARY OF STATE
 AND LORD CHANCELLOR For the wisdom so clear
 Of our Island's immortal Prime Minister.

PEOPLE (*To the PRIME MINISTER, who acknowledges all the cheers, leaving the KING in the background*)
 So let's all give a cheer
 For the wisdom so clear
 Of our Island's immortal Prime Minister.
 So hurrah and hurrah
 Several times every day
 For our wisdom-compelling,
 Confusion-dispelling,
 Peace, plenty-propelling Prime Minister!
They all cheer.

KING Forgive me if I seem a boil or pimple.
The answer may not turn out quite so simple.

PEOPLE Why? What's the matter? Have you got the wind-up? *etc.*

KING The people of the Outer World are strong.
Weiheit'tiu's heart has hated us for long.
We find the fact unnecessary and strange,
But truth to tell, they feel we need to change.
Perhaps we'll have to rearrange our status
Or else they may decide to eliminate us.

LORD CHANCELLOR This, with respect to all your proud position,
Is fiddlesticks—and close to plain sedition.

SECRETARY OF STATE Weiheit'tiu has a way of life that's horrid,
It needn't put new wrinkles in *our* forehead.

PRIME MINISTER It's all so far away. Destroy us? Never! (*All the people laugh*)
We'll disregard them in our isle forever.

PEOPLE So far away,
So far away,
So far that it never can reach you.
In this land of the free that we love it won't happen to us.
So far away,
So far away,
Don't try to alarm, we beseech you.
Our wealth and our strength are immense, so why kick up a fuss?
Though Envy and Hatred may gibber and scowl,
With Hunger and Hopelessness set on the prowl,
It's all, it's all
So far away,
So far away,
So far that it never can reach you,
For it can't and it shan't and it won't
Ever happen to us.

Fanfare.

HERALD Pray silence for His Excellency, Odioso, Ambassador
from Weiheit'tiu.

Enter ODIOSO.

KING Where are the rest? I see there's only one of you.

ODIOSO I came alone. Though up my sleeve's a gun or two.
 Relying on Eiluph'mei, right and free,
 Alone I come to make my people's plea.

SECRETARY OF STATE Say on. We will not give your plea a rocket,
 PRIME MINISTER Provided you don't touch our pride or pocket.

ODIOSO This spacious isle,
 This gracious isle,
 The monarch and the people smile,
 Fields flow with corn,
 Each baby born
 With gold he'll never have to pawn.
 Give us our share,
 That is our prayer.
 Just as the rivers, oceans and air,
 Just as the wind
 Is for mankind,
 So is your wealth, my people find.

But all the fatness of the land
 My people do not understand.
 In fact, we envy it and hate it—
 Our sweat and skill and work create it.
 This island has exploited us.
 Since time was born it has been thus.
 But this is where the story ends.
 Share—and your slaves can be your friends.

ODIOSO	Give us our share, That is our prayer. Just as the rivers, Oceans and air, Just as the wind Is for mankind, So is your wealth, My people find.	PEOPLE	What do you take us for? Humans or mice? What do you take us for? Lions or lice? Ruin and shame! Damned be our name! Fool to think Eiluph'mei Pays such a price.
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PRIME MINISTER (*Very pompously*) My poor dear man, forgive me if I mention
 You suffer from a grave misapprehension.
 Our wealth we did not heedlessly inherit.
 It comes to us through our own natural merit.
 This merit *can't* be shared, that is a fallacy.
 Your trouble is not poverty, but jealousy.

ODIOSO You pompous bag of wind. You bloated voice.

SECRETARY OF STATE Pray calm yourself. Now while we make our choice
Will you retire and take a breath of air?

LORD CHANCELLOR Or wander in the park? It's cooler there.

ODIOSO (*Still glaring at the PRIME MINISTER*)
Yon prancing peacock's plumes with perspiration
Are now adroop. Yes. Have your consultation.
In fifteen minutes, neither less nor more
From the exact moment when I shall withdraw,
I shall return to listen to your fate.
So talk with speed. Odioso's never late.

PRIME MINISTER *Our* fate? You mean your own?

ODIOSO I fancy not.
It's you, my futile friend, that's on the spot.
Exit ODIOSO.

PRIME MINISTER It's all bluff.

LORD CHANCELLOR Fantastic stuff.

SECRETARY OF STATE Absurd enough.

KING My own advice I dare not be concealing.
I have the strongest, strangest, surest feeling
That underneath this vague and hard request
Is something very far from just a jest.
Odioso meant those words. His people seem
Resolved to turn our kingdom from its dream
Of wealth and ease and pomp and careless hours
Into a nightmare of a tyrant's powers.

PEOPLE Boo! Sedition! Subversion! Traitor! *etc.*

KING I merely took the liberty to say
Tomorrow may be different from today.

PRIME MINISTER Intolerable to offer this suggestion.

SECRETARY OF STATE It's plain incitement to an insurrection.

KING I do not follow why you make this fuss.

LORD CHANCELLOR It undermines *their* confidence in us.

PRIME MINISTER Sound the trumpets!
Fanfare.

PRIME MINISTER In order to secure the stability and re-establish the confidence of the people in our monarchy, I exercise my constitutional right to call for a vote. Bring on the ballot boxes. (*As a bustle and hubbub breaks out, to the KING*) I assure you, your Majesty, a mere formality. Everybody in Eiluph'mei loves you. It will be a triumphant verdict.

KING My fancy is that they love me about as much as they love you.

PRIME MINISTER Exactly!

Two ballot boxes are produced.

All those in favour of the King to the left. The contrary to the right.

The people sing as they march past the ballot boxes and vote.

PEOPLE One for you
And one for me—
That's what makes democracy.
We are right
And you are wrong—
That's the spirit to keep us strong.
Vote on everything
Twice a year,
Squash the fellow you cannot smear.
Some you can smash,
Some you can square—
That's the way to clear the air.
Vote for this
And vote for that,
Voting will keep us free—and fat.
This is serious,
It's no game
To keep on keeping us just the same.

PRIME MINISTER Count the votes!

The votes are counted and the results handed to the PRIME MINISTER.

For: 2,003,321.

Those in favour of the KING cheer.

Against: 2,003,321.

Uproar.

Silence! Silence!
We'll vote all over again!

PEOPLE *(In much faster tempo)*
One for you, etc.

PRIME MINISTER Count the votes!

The votes are counted again and the results handed to the PRIME MINISTER.

For: 2,003,321.

Those in favour of the KING *cheer.*

Against: 2,003,321.

Renewed uproar.

Take 'em away.

The ballot boxes are removed. The Cabinet hurriedly gets together. The people boo.

Don't interrupt. We're having another Cabinet huddle. There, your Majesty, what did I tell you? Exactly as I said. It's a dilemma, a dead heat. In the event of a dead heat in an election, your Majesty has the casting vote. You only have to vote to stay on the throne, and all will be well. A triumph of the democratic process, I assure you.

KING But I don't want to stay on the throne.

PRIME MINISTER What?

KING I've been trying to get off it for years and years and years.

SECRETARY OF STATE Your Majesty must be feeling ill?

The HERALD *nervously sounds his trumpet.*

PRIME MINISTER What on earth did you do that for?

HERALD *(In a very English accent)* Actually, nerves, your Excellency. A mixture of nerves and wind in the tube. Wholly unintentional, my dear fellow, I do assure you, really. Pardon me, I pray.

LORD CHANCELLOR What a remarkable accent!

PRIME MINISTER He can't help it. He was born in England.

KING What makes you nervous?

HERALD My dear old Monarch, it simply can't be done.

KING What can't?

HERALD You can't just clear off the throne like that and leave Eiluph'mei in the lurch.

KING Why not?

HERALD It isn't the done thing. It never has been done. Why, it's just not cricket.

When I was born an Englishman
Each other race was an also-ran.
They did their best to play the game
But they never quite made it, just the same.
They naturally wanted to be like we,
But we kept them in their places and we ruled the sea.

Live and let live!
There's no such thing
As absolute truth for Herald or King.
Nations come and nations go,
But what happened before will ever be so—
Ever and ever be so.
Play the game, play the game, play the game,
It'll all stay exactly the same.
So live and let live and never say die.
Live and let live, or so say I.

When I was a kid, there was some poor fool
Who preached Karl Marx in the Sunday School.
But the sensible kids they left him in the lurch
By refusing as they grew up to attend a church.
They are leftist now, but at least you see
In England today we are frightfully free.

PEOPLE Live and let live, *etc.*

HERALD (*optional*) If other nations saw as clear
As we, there'd be nothing left to fear,
For we come next to the God above us—
Which is why all the Commonwealth countries love us.
It'll all work out for the best. We know
What has been and is will ever be so.

PEOPLE (*optional*) Live and let live, *etc.*

KING Live and let live—that's absolutely fine,
So you must let me happily resign.
Between ourselves, if you try out your theory
With Weiheit'tiu, you won't feel half so cheery.
To live along with Weiheit'tiu is splendid
Provided they don't want our living ended.

Lay the orb and sceptre down,
Shed the robe and cast the crown
Gladly, gladly.
Bid ambition's strain farewell,
To old duty sound the knell
Sadly, sadly.

Foolish mortals oft times sing
How they wish to be king,
King of heart, king of earth, king of rolling, heaving ocean.
I to Eiluph'mei will bring
The extraordinary thing—
Ordinary men changing men. That's my normal, natural notion.
Set the whole wide world in motion,
That's my normal notion.

Lay the orb and sceptre down, *etc.*

Everybody wants to see
Others live differently—
Different words, different ways, different in each bone and sinew.
Everybody wants to stay
Living just the same old way—
Selfish plans, selfish schemes, steely compromise continue.
I'll begin to change and win you.
That's the way to win you.

Lay the orb and sceptre down, *etc.*

Having laid aside his badges of office, the KING sits in an inconspicuous place among the people.

MISS AGATHA HIGHBALL You men are all so wonderfully clever!
You've managed to succeed in your endeavour.
The king is off the throne. Now tell me pray,
Who's going to govern us from today?

PRIME MINISTER Let's spend one minute in a Cabinet huddle.

The Cabinet confers, then steps forward.

Sound the trumpets!

Fanfare.

We three will rule:
Bullfrog, Malfeasance and old Muddle.

MISS HIGHBALL AND
WOMEN

You can't do that, *etc.*

PRIME MINISTER

Quiet! When women talk they give me indigestion.

LORD CHANCELLOR

Miss Agatha Highball, give us your suggestion.

MISS HIGHBALL AND
WOMEN

They call us the flowers of the earth
To adorn and perfume your way,
But bed-making, buying and birth
For most of us make up the day.
If you want the world running without too much fuss,
Why not turn over government of nations to us?
Why not turn it all over to us?

For women are wonderfully wise—
At the back of each head we have eyes.
From the womb to the tomb,
From the cradle to coffin
We handle the menfolk,
And, crying or quaffing,
We settle their rise and their doom.
Why not turn the world over to us?

MEN

The women are flowers—with a thorn,
Far tougher than any appear.
They rule from the time we are born
With a temper, temptation or tear.
If you want the world governed by cudgels or curls,
Why not turn over governments and nations to girls?
Why not turn the world over to girls?

For women are wonderfully wise, *etc.*

MISS HIGHBALL AND
WOMEN

To be honest, we'll follow our star.
Of new schemes we're exceedingly wary.
We get our own way as we are,

For the men nod—and do the contrary!
So all that we want, we just tell them they'll rue it—
And, feeling so big, the poor saps go and do it—
They do it and do it all day!

PEOPLE For women are wonderfully wise, *etc.*

MEN Why not turn the world over to

MISS HIGHBALL AND
WOMEN Girls!

Fanfare. Re-enter ODIOSO.

ODIOSO The time is up. Your answer now be giving,
Whether Eiluph'mei shares—and goes on living,
Or whether we of Weiheit'tiu today
Extort the price we mean to make you pay.

PRIME MINISTER (*Pompous as ever*)
My dear good sir, your manners are appalling.
Where do we get to with this bad name-calling?
In any case, you'll have to understand
We don't conduct affairs thus in this land.
When something needs a little redirection
We dignify the place with an election.
As for your claims, we've given care meticulous
To study them. They're simply too ridiculous.
I'll send you written words for your perusal.

ODIOSO You mean your final answer is refusal?

PRIME MINISTER AND
PEOPLE A positive—and absolute—and definite—and ultimate refusal!

ODIOSO Out from the bowels of Hell then flow my mystery.
Perish this isle from the records of history.

The people quail and shudder.

Cursed be this isle—the curse of vanishing,
Thy way of life forever from the earth banishing.
May devil rob you from within.
May from this day the tide begin
To roll towards you hour by hour
Until, engulfed in its power,

Eiluph'mei's history, like her gold,
Is covered by the waters cold
Of hardened hearts and sex-soft eyes,
Till corpse-bestrewn your country lies—
The tomb of Liberty that talked
A faith its people never walked.

(To the Outer World) Roll forward, Comrades—take your fill
Of all this island. May your will
Harden with hate and freeze with fears
Until Eiluph'mei disappears.
I curse you, North! I curse you, South!
I curse you, heart and hand and mouth!
Doomed by the faith which you forswore,
Eiluph'mei, vanish evermore!

PRIME MINISTER I do not fully understand his barbaric phraseology, but his sentiments appear to me unmistakable.

KING He strikes me as a very determined individual. His threat may not be so far away as you think.

PRIME MINISTER With respect, Your Majesty—or I suppose I should say, Your Former Majesty—Fiddlesticks!

KING Is it possible to say “Fiddlesticks!” with respect?

PRIME MINISTER The island of Eiluph'mei is everlasting. We are indestructible, and we deserve to be so.

PEOPLE So far away,
So far away,
So far that it never can reach you.
In this land of the free that we love it won't happen to us.
So far away,
So far away,
Don't try to alarm, we beseech you.
Our wealth and our strength are immense, so why kick up a fuss?
Though threatening envoys may try to alarm,
It's all, it's all
So far away,
So far away,
So far that it never can reach you.

ODIOSO *(Singing alternately with the PEOPLE)*
So near at hand,
So near at hand,

So near is the day we will teach you
This land that we hate shall be swallowed. I tell you the truth.
Your statesmen so clever won't keep you from harm.
It's all
So near at hand,
So near at hand.
You fools!
Will you listen to me?
For it can and it shall most remorselessly happen to you.

Exit ODIOSO.

PRIME MINISTER He really is an awful man! Unpolished!

KING It seems to me your poise he soon demolished.

MISS HIGHBALL You men all nag and nark. The point is now
What's to be done, and when, by whom, and how?

SECRETARY OF STATE In order to maintain our reputation
We'll send to Weiheit'tiu a deputation.
A sure fire way to get out of a fix
Is talk for years, but change or alter nix.

LORD CHANCELLOR A deputation! That's the very ticket.

PRIME MINISTER Provided they don't use their boots and kick it.

SECRETARY OF STATE It'll work fine. It needn't take too long.
We'll just point out we're right and they are wrong.
Eiluph'mei has not anything to fear
From slave-folk in the Outer World. That's clear.

PRIME MINISTER A perfect scheme! I vote that we pursue it—
(*To* SECRETARY OF STATE) And you're the very man to go and do it.

SECRETARY OF STATE Me? No, not me. I'm sick. I'm feeling so-so.

LORD CHANCELLOR You're feeling fine.

PRIME MINISTER You're scared of Odioso.

SECRETARY OF STATE Scared? Not at all. I have a disability
That makes my backbone quiver with debility.

PRIME MINISTER Now, Mr. Secretary, be a man. And get off my throne.

SECRETARY OF STATE I'm man enough. This takes a superman.

LORD CHANCELLOR It's only fair and right. It was your plan.

SECRETARY OF STATE If you insist, I suppose I'll have to do it.
 PRIME MINISTER And do it well. If not, I'll see you rue it.
 LORD CHANCELLOR He will need help.
 SECRETARY OF STATE Help? *Me?* Why, I resent this.
 LORD CHANCELLOR (*To PRIME MINISTER*)
 You know darned well he's hardly *compos mentis*.
 PRIME MINISTER As envoy you shall have at your command
 The wisest, bravest, bestest in the land.
 MISS HIGHBALL (*Firmly*) He needs a woman's help.
 A WOMAN And she's the lady.
 MISS HIGHBALL I'll see the men don't do a deal that's shady.
 PRIME MINISTER They need a business mind. Weiheit'tiu's stuffing
 Can be knocked out with contracts giving nothing.
 Sound the trumpets!

Fanfare.

Bring on the businessmen!

Enter JOSHUA BIBLE with BUSINESSMEN.

JOSHUA BIBLE My name is Joshua Bible, a businessman. (*cheer*) We've no time.
 It's up to you to fix Weiheit'tiu's crime.
 BUSINESSMEN We wish we had time to reply,
 But our diary is full, flowing over.
 If you ask what we're doing and why—
 We are keeping the country in clover.
 Men may plan politicking
 And griping and kicking
 At mystical schemes far away,
 But we're pinned to an office.
 Our reply to a scoff is
 The simple demand, "Does it pay?"
 No matter what others may say—
 For *Business is Backbone and Brainbox and Bread*,
 So we'll stick to our *Business* until we are dead.
 For we're busy, busy, busy, busy, busy, busy, busy,
 busy, busy, busy, busy with our *Business*,

Wracked with duodenal ulcers,
Wives who from our homes expulse us,
Plagued with liquor, overfat and dizziness.

We are scholars.
Earning dollars
Magnifies a fellow's brain.
We're no silly 'uns.
Making millions
Keeps us wise
And almost keeps us sane.

We're so busy, busy, busy, busy, busy, busy, busy, busy,
busy, busy, busy with our *Bisness*.
We're so busy, oh so busy,
Busy, busy, busy with our *Bisness*.

PEOPLE We're so busy, busy, busy, *etc.*

BUSINESSMEN *rush out, leaving* JOSHUA BIBLE.

PRIME MINISTER The deputation now is all complete.

LORD CHANCELLOR They need a herald. Then they can't be beat.

The HERALD leaves the KING and joins them. DAN DOUBLETALK also joins them.

PRIME MINISTER We hope that you'll succeed.

DEPUTATION Of course we'll succeed.

PRIME MINISTER How can you be so sure?

DEPUTATION AND
PEOPLE

It surely won't take very long
All together to show
We are right, we are right, we are right, we are right.
They are wrong.
It surely won't take very long
All together to show
We are right, we are right, we are right, we are right,
We are super-pluperfectly, wonderfully right—
We are right, we are right, we are right.
They are wrong.

DEPUTATION We're in love, in love, in love, in love,
And the love we have is love eternal.
We're in love, so we forget the uncomfortable threat
That comes from Weiheit'tiu infernal.

If you have plenty of leisure,
If you have packets of wealth,
It's natural to fall in love,
In love, in love with yourself.

PEOPLE We're in love, in love, in love, in love—and how!
We're madly, madly, madly in love with ourselves.

MEN We know how.

DEPUTATION We know how to manufacture things,
From baby cars to aircraft wings.
We know how to build skyscrapers, tunnels,
Slot machines, autos and liner funnels.

PEOPLE We know how, we know how, we know how, we know how.
And how!

DEPUTATION We're in love, in love, in love, in love,
We're in love with ourselves and with our know-how.
Weiheit'tiu needs our know-how—

PEOPLE She desperately needs our know-how—

DEPUTATION She's determined to have our know-how—

PEOPLE She'll pay through the nose for our know-how—

DEPUTATION For we're madly in love with our know-how—

PEOPLE And how! And how!
For it surely won't take very long, *etc.*

Exit DEPUTATION.

KING Don't think your former monarch's being rude.
There's one man you've forgotten to include.

PEOPLE Who is that?

KING The new type of man.
A man with a fire in his heart,
With a twinkle in his eye,
A man who can give a new start
To fellows like you and I.
He calls a spade a spade
And dirt its rightful name.

He looks right through you
And he loves you just the same.

He's the new type of man with the new type of life that's best,
The new type of man with the answer for East and West.
You can tell him the things that you longed to hide,
The dreams and fears deep down inside.
He isn't pious and he isn't proud,
He is honest as the day, and he's endowed
With a spirit of purity—
With the secret to set men free.

A man with a fire in his heart, *etc.*

He's the new type of man
With a passion and plan,
With the answer for you and me.

PEOPLE So far away, *etc.*

KING Your fine delegation may do what it can.
It still lacks the touch of the new type of man.
You'll see.

PEOPLE We'll see.

The PEOPLE begin to move off stage and leave the KING alone.

So far away, *etc.*

KING A man with a fire in his heart,
With a twinkle in his eye,
A man who can give a new start
To fellows like you and I.
He's the new type of man
With a passion and plan,
With the answer for you and me.

CURTAIN

Act II

Before the curtain rises there is a militant, menacing overture to a marching tune. The music still plays as the curtain opens. Men and women, purposeful and set, begin to move across, until finally the whole stage is filled with people. Throughout this scene humans move to a pattern. The inhabitants of Weiheit'tiu are either moving fast and firm or absolutely still and silent. They react either largely or not at all.

PEOPLE Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!
 Rise the bitter,
 Rise the hateful,
 Rise the needy to our call!
 We shall struggle,
 We shall conquer,
 One the class that rules for all!
 Pain and suffering are our weapons,
 Fear and hunger lead to hate.
 We'll divide, confuse and conquer,
 Victory is our fate!
 Marching! Marching!
 We'll set the whole world marching.
 Comrades of the underdog,
 Class and race o'erarching,
 We will join the world in hate
 And set the whole world marching.
 Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!

Enter ODIOSO.

ODIOSO Comrades! Do not cease your singing.
 News of great advance I'm bringing.
 To Eiluph'mei I made our case,
 The challenge of our class and race,
 To rise from gutter, mine and ditch,
 To end the triumph of the rich,

To revolutionise the age,
To turn a new and better page,
To stand where once the exploiters stood,
Our sweat to purchase with their blood.

PEOPLE Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!
We'll set the whole world marching.
Comrades of the underdog,
Rise to ever-growing gains!
Smash your prisons! Break your chains!
We'll set the whole world marching.

ODIOSO The poor blind fools hope to beguile
Our favour with a friendly smile,
To live along, they say, in peace,
To hope our struggle now can cease.
But neither wealth nor force we fear.
Not bloody war nor bitter tear
Shall rob us of our endless aim—
This world shall never be the same.
Eiluph'mei, vanish from the earth!
Perish the faith that gave thee birth!

PEOPLE Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!
We'll set the whole world marching.
Kill the cowards, use the fools,
Corrupt the children for our tools.
We'll set the whole world marching.

Fanfare in the distance.

ODIOSO That heralds Eiluph'mei's new delegation
To set their wisdom before our nation.
Go then and welcome them with such display
As will lull them to sleep. Our price they'll pay,
Believing we're content to leave their gains
Untouched, with half the earth in want and chains.

PEOPLE *(As they go off to meet the Eiluph'mei delegation)*
Marching! Marching!
We'll set the whole world marching.
Marching! Marching!
We'll set the whole world marching.

As the song fades into the distance, ODIOSO is left with a MOTHER, who carries a child in her arms. She moves forward and shows the child to ODIOSO.

MOTHER Look at him. Isn't he lovely?

ODIOSO He looks very much like any other baby—a few pounds of flesh, a pair of lungs, a mouth to feed, hands to work, and a heart to hate.

MOTHER He's your son.

ODIOSO Every son of the revolution is my son. He's no more mine and no less mine than a million others.

MOTHER He's yours—and he's mine. Look at him.

ODIOSO I don't want to look or need to look. Just train him, toughen him, teach him the art of hating others enough to win the world for us. That's your job.

MOTHER He was born in love, not hate.

ODIOSO He was born because children are needed for the cause.

MOTHER O, you're hateful.

ODIOSO Yes, I mean to be. It is the one force that is unyielding.

MOTHER The cause! The cause! That's all you can think about, all you can talk about.

ODIOSO It's all you should think about, or talk about. It's your cause as well as mine. It's the one hope for that son of ours—of yours. It's the future.

MOTHER Yes. I suppose you're right. (*Looking at her child*) It's when I think of him—and millions like him—that I steel myself. It's worth all this—this hard, sad, bitter drive for victory, if only our children have a better world.

Son of mine,
Son of mine,
Breath of the life of me,
Part of the heart of me,
Blood of my bone,
What can I do for thee?
How can I care for thee?
Helpless today—and tomorrow alone.
I would be glad, dear, to lay down my life for thee,
Unworthy I of the trust in your eyes.

Son of mine,
Son of mine,
How best to give to thee?
Easy to love thee—but hard to be wise.

ODIOSO Sons of the battlefield,
Sons of the factory,
Sons of the furnaces,
Sons of the mill,
Strengthen your discipline,
Heighten your sacrifice,
Bending the world to our conquering will.

MOTHER Son of mine,
Son of mine,
Lovingly, tenderly,
Part of the heart of me,
Blood of my bone,
What can I do for thee?
How can I care for thee?
Helpless today—and tomorrow alone.

ODIOSO Lonely the hearts of men
Struggling wearily,
Centuries foolishly
All on his own.
So every son of mine
March with the comradeship,
Free from his parents
But never alone.

MOTHER Son of mine,
Son of thine,
What will his future be?
Hearts that are hate-filled are deadlier than stone.
Come what may come in life—
War, death or slavery—
In mother's heart there is ever thy throne.

As the MOTHER sings and shows her child to ODIOSO, he is really moved and for a moment you feel he might even take the child in his arms. But purposefully back come the people, escorting the Eiluph'mei delegation. They march rapidly across the stage with music but no words and halt dead and still as the Eiluph'mei delegates walk restlessly in the middle. After a long pause

SECRETARY OF STATE Well, what do we do now?

MISS HIGHBALL Extraordinary people. They don't know how to behave at all.

 HERALD My dear old friends, it simply isn't done.

 ODIOSO (*Fiercely*) What isn't done?

 HERALD This, I mean. All this sort of thing.

 JOSHUA BIBLE I can't waste time. Time is money. I have to get back to my business. Tell me, my man, aren't you going to say anything to us?

 ODIOSO Aren't *you* going to say anything to *us*?

SECRETARY OF STATE You know, this is very, very awkward.

 MISS HIGHBALL I don't feel awkward. For heaven's sake, put them in their place.

SECRETARY OF STATE How?

 MISS HIGHBALL Tell them how right we are.

 JOSHUA BIBLE Tell them how wrong *they* are.

 HERALD Yes. Just put them at their ease, as any gentleman could and would.

SECRETARY OF STATE They just don't understand the charms of liberty.

 MISS HIGHBALL Well, tell them about it.

SECRETARY OF STATE We are free as the wind in our isle.
Freedom's free. You can't hire it or buy it.
You may say with a cynical smile
This and that, in attempts to decry it.
But we've freedom to spy in the press,
We are free in our homes to raise hell there.
Politicians can get in a mess
Without being purged for their welfare.

 DEPUTATION Oh, oh—
Liberty, liberty's charm
We'll clasp to our breast like a lover.
You can do as you please, and the harm
Of such licence I've yet to discover.

 PEOPLE Ha, ha—
Liberty, liberty's charm
They'll clasp to their breast like a lover.
They can do as they please, and the harm
Of such licence they'll never discover.

MISS HIGHBALL Our women are free as the birds
Who fly from one nest to a neighbour's.
When the cream in one cup turns to curds
We seek a new field for our labours.
We can lecture or flog a golf ball,
We can drink with the menfolk in parity,
Party politics we overhaul,
And boy, how we organize charity!

DEPUTATION *and* PEOPLE *repeat chorus.*

JOSHUA BIBLE Now profits and prayers are the game
To establish the wealth of a nation.
Private enterprise, ever the same,
Will perpetuate our situation.
And the workers have Cadillacs too,
With TV and dish-washing machinery.
We will stick to our profits like glue
As new plants add fresh charm to the scenery.

DEPUTATION *and* PEOPLE *repeat chorus.*

DEPUTATION You can do what you like,
When you like,
How you like—

PEOPLE And the harm they will never discover—

DEPUTATION Provided, provided,
And always provided
You're ready to stay under cover.

PEOPLE What was that?

DEPUTATION Provided you stay under cover.

PEOPLE What did you say?

DEPUTATION Provided you stay under cover.

PEOPLE Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!
Down with freedom!
Down with profit!
We shall see this business through.
You have riches,
We are needy,
Yet we would not live like you.

Hate and suffering, pain and sorrow—
Millions dead the price to pay.
We shall see our new tomorrow,
Come what must today.
Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!
We'll set the whole world marching.

HERALD My dear old friends, it simply isn't done. Decent people just don't talk that way.

ODIOSO You poor, proud, prancing worms!
(*To his people*) So blind a fool
Of every wish and fancy is the tool.
His wishes drown him in a drift of dreams
And numb his senses to our global schemes.
(*To the delegation*)
Cherish illusion. Now from bad to worse
Your fate will run. Remember how my curse
Condemns Eiluph'mei's isle to disappear.
(*The DEPUTATION grins broadly*)
You laugh?

SECRETARY OF STATE No, just a friendly sneer.

MISS HIGHBALL Your speechifying words forensical
Strike me as absolutely nonsensical.

JOSHUA BIBLE Let's talk horse-sense and quit this bluff.
D'you think we'd fall for this vanishing stuff?

Trumpet sounds off-stage. Enter hurriedly PRIME MINISTER and LORD CHANCELLOR.

PRIME MINISTER Muddle! Muddle! Confound it, where is Ebenezer Muddle?

SECRETARY OF STATE Here I am.

PRIME MINISTER Oh, there you are. I have been looking for you everywhere.
Well, you're fired.

SECRETARY OF STATE Me? Why?

PRIME MINISTER You know very well why. You did nothing to stop it.

SECRETARY OF STATE Stop what?

PRIME MINISTER It's horrible.

LORD CHANCELLOR Horrible, horrible, horrible.

PRIME MINISTER Yes, horrible is the word.

JOSHUA BIBLE It's the only word you seem to know. You've said it five times already.

MISS HIGHBALL What's horrible?

SECRETARY OF STATE Yes. What's happened? What are you doing here?

PRIME MINISTER It's hard to find words to describe it.

LORD CHANCELLOR I don't even know how to begin.

JOSHUA BIBLE It's the first time I've ever heard a politician short of something to say.

PRIME MINISTER We always thought our way of life
Would stand the tempest and the strife.
We hoped to see the world survive
By being just like us.

LORD CHANCELLOR We thought Eiluph'mei's manners fine,
On us the sun would ever shine,
A destiny was ours divine.
I guess we've missed the bus.

JOSHUA BIBLE We're glad of your erudite words, of course,
But cut the cackle and get to the horse.
Please tell us what has happened.

PRIME MINISTER We felt that if only everyone knew
What we are like they would love us too—
Oh it's a nightmare. It can't be true,
This terrible illusion.

LORD CHANCELLOR It's true enough. What a fearful fate
For political men who miscalculate
The cunning, relentless power of hate.
It leads us to confusion.

MISS HIGHBALL For heaven's sake, cease these grunts and quacks.
It's worse than the man from the income tax.

SECRETARY OF STATE Just take a deep breath, then say no more
Except to tell us the actual score.
Pray tell us what has happened.

PRIME MINISTER Eiluph'mei's begun to disappear!

PEOPLE Victory!

PRIME MINISTER The Outer World *is* drawing near.

PEOPLE Victory!

PRIME MINISTER What we didn't expect we now can hear—
The roar of revolution.

LORD CHANCELLOR And people are leaving us left and right—
They seem to have lost the will to fight.
They desert to the enemy overnight.
There must be some solution.

DEPUTATION There must be some solution.

PEOPLE Victory!

ODIOSO Roll on, thou tide of fortune, roll our way.
Sweep with remorseless power upon our prey,
So that the engulfing waters of our hate
May drown Eiluph'mei in their speed and spate.
Our children's children and their heirs shall reap
The harvest of our labours. They shall keep
A world united for the common good
And purged from selfishness by tyrants' blood.
(*Pointing to the DEPUTATION*) Put those men under arrest.

PRIME MINISTER Arrest us?

SECRETARY OF STATE Nonsense!

LORD CHANCELLOR It's a crime infernal.

ODIOSO Arrest these men.

The men of the DEPUTATION are arrested and marched off. MISS HIGHBALL remains.

ODIOSO Weary the centuries, weary through history,
Weary the workers since struggle began.
Tragical, terrible, folded in mystery
How man has preyed like a tiger on man.
Fathers and forefathers, sweating and stumbling,
Come to the end of their recordless road.
Now in the nations revolt is a-rumbling
So that our sons shall be free from the load.

PEOPLE (*offstage*) Marching! Marching! Marching! Marching!
Comrades, march! The hour is here.
The hour has struck which tyrants fear,
And blood shall pay for every tear
Of centuries the sum.

ODIOSO Comrades, no dread!
The past is dead!
The future's ours—our hour has come.

MOTHER Son of mine, son of mine,
Breath of the life of me,
Soft in my arms as I hie thee to sleep.
Son of mine, son of mine,
How can I care for thee?
Sure for the future our watch we shall keep.
But in the depths of me, deep in the heart of me,
Still do I ponder the truth of thy fate.
Shall we do more for thee, thou that art part of me,
Wielding a power that is nurtured by hate?

As the MOTHER sings, ODIOSO is torn between her and the people who have moved off stage. He hesitates, but joins the crowd as the MOTHER is left with her child.

CURTAIN

Entracte

DAN DOUBLETALK *is sitting typing.* Enter DON DOUBLETHINK.

- DON Ah ha, my inky friend, you are hard at work.
DAN A story big as this I'll never shirk.
DON How have things gone?
DAN Exactly as I said—
Eiluph'mei is done and down and nearly dead.
DON (*Cynically*) And partly due to our high-paid activity.
DAN No, Don, we give the news with objectivity.

Enter other reporters.

Objectivity, that's the thing.
If you ask us what we're meaning,
We must set before the world
Any tidbits we are gleaning,
Showing that our crowd are right
And the others are mistaken,
Skipping over awkward points
Which would leave our readers shaken.

Objectivity, that's the thing.
But remember that our readers
Are all pinheads, and we turn
Truth, so they will keep and feed us.
Much of what we write and say,
Shorn of logic—they demand it.
If we give them food for thought,
They indigest, misunderstand it.

If we were painters, we'd have to choose
Whether to paint some loathsome features

In such a way they would amuse
Or horrify all living creatures, horrify, or just amuse.
But as journalists it's easy—
Easy choice of truth or lies,
Simply paint what's bright and breezy—
Anything that will cause surprise.
Ours the task to shake and shock you,
Muckrake, yes—but never mock you,
Electrify and alarm-clock you,
Open your sleepy eyes.

Here's to the great and gorgeous public,
Master of all—and mistress too!
Paying cash for all we utter,
You're our bed and board and butter.
If we paddle and pry in the gutter
It's really up to you!

Some guy may love a girl to fury.
Some girl may, jilted, sigh and swoon
All her troubles to a jury.
Our love-tales or honeymoon
With the public we adore
Always interest, never bore,
Sometimes sorry, sometimes sore,
Always coming up for more.

Objectivity, that's the thing.
Negatives make news and headline.
Positives—who cares for that?
Takes too long to hit the deadline.
Writing so each fool can read—
Pinheads are opinionated.
So we have to put the news
Underplayed and overstated.

Dear old public! Our own public!
You we'll serve for evermore.

Act III

There are sounds of storm, as the curtain rises on Eiluph'mei. The stage is darker than in Act I. The KING sits thoughtfully, writing in a book. Suddenly, with the vehemence of panic, a CITIZEN of Eiluph'mei appears and rushes towards the audience as if to throw himself upon them. He halts and flings his arms wide and cries in a tone of mingled rage and fear:

CITIZEN Where is he?

KING (*Looking up*) Who are you looking for?

CITIZEN Is it you?

KING What am I supposed to have done?

CITIZEN Are you responsible for everything that is happening to us?
Are you the reason for the curse on the island?

KING (*Scratching his head*) I don't think so. Really I don't. I'm just an old King on the breadline and looking for work. However, I'll certainly consider the point.

CITIZEN Let's hunt that witch.

PEOPLE (*Offstage*) Witch! Witch! Witch!

CITIZEN We need a witch hunt.

PEOPLE (*Offstage*) Witch! Witch! Witch!

Moving onstage in a witch hunt dance.

Is it you?

Is it you?

Is it you?

The witch who has bewitched us—is it you?

Follow through,

Follow through,

Follow through,

The witch who has bewitched us—is it you?

We'll grind his bones to dust and powder.

We'll pulp his reputation to cold clam chowder.
Where's the witch who has bewitched us?
Where's the witch who has bewitched us?
Where's that witch?
Where's that witch?
Where's that witch?
Where's that witch?
Is it you?
Is it you?
Is it you?
The witch who has bewitched us—is it you?

The stage is gradually filled with rushing figures all frenzied in their hunt for a witch among their number, whom sometimes they think they have cornered but never find. The dance ends in a flurry of frustration and exhaustion as together they sing again "Is it you?" etc.

KING You know, on reflection, perhaps after all I *am* the man you are looking for.

Perhaps I'm the cause of your whole complaint,
For often I've pretended to be what I ain't.
If something I don't fully understand takes place
I have to prove it hasn't, just to save my face.
I've a pinhead mentality which never seems to see
Anything that's bigger than the size of me.
For pinheads opinionated are.
They banish all philosophy, and thought they bar.
They camouflage ill tidings and embellish hope
Through the minimizing end of a telescope.

And such was I till I took a look
At the thoughts I have recorded in this small black book.
And then I saw the truth, plain as plain could be,
That any worthwhile changes must begin with me,
That everybody wants to see some other fellow start,
But nobody is willing to plunge in and play their part.
It's a fact that takes an awful lot of taking
That I'm the one to pioneer this world remaking.
But it's plain as a pikestaff—so don't forget it—
It's down to earth so a pinhead like myself can get it.

Trumpet sounds offstage. Enter HERALD.

HERALD Pray silence for the Right Honourable Benjamin Bullfrog and Deputation.

Enter the PRIME MINISTER, LORD CHANCELLOR, SECRETARY OF STATE, JOSHUA BIBLE and MISS AGATHA HIGHBALL, limping and dishevelled.

KING What are you all doing here?

PRIME MINISTER It's an outrage.

SECRETARY OF STATE It's an insult.

PRIME MINISTER They kicked me.

LORD CHANCELLOR It's intolerable.

JOSHUA BIBLE It's ruinous.

KING Well, what is it?

PRIME MINISTER Odioso and his Weiheit'tiu barbarians—

SECRETARY OF STATE Savage, uncivilized totalitarians—

LORD CHANCELLOR Arrested us. Then freed us on parole

JOSHUA BIBLE To tell you all they mean to attain their goal.

MISS HIGHBALL Yes. They intend to overwhelm our nation.

HERALD (*Pompously*) It can't be done. Our age-old civilization
Will live on its tradition, sure and steady.

KING Forgive me—but it's happening already.

He points out to the far horizon as the Island begins to disappear. Panic in the populace.

MISS HIGHBALL What shall we do?

ADMIRAL We'll have to fight them sooner or later. Let's fight now.

A WOMAN No, no. We'll destroy the whole world if we go to war.

FIRST MAN Let's buy them off.

JOSHUA BIBLE No good. We've tried it.

SECOND MAN Aw heck, they're just like barking dogs.

ANOTHER WOMAN What shall we do?

SECOND MAN If you leave them alone, they'll leave you alone.

PEOPLE But what shall we do?

THIRD MAN It's all bluff.

PEOPLE But what shall we do?

PRIME MINISTER (*To the LORD CHANCELLOR*) You tell them.

LORD CHANCELLOR Me? No.

PRIME MINISTER You're fired. (*To the SECRETARY OF STATE*) You tell them.

SECRETARY OF STATE You tell them. You're the Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER You're fi—Oh, I've fired you already. (*Pause*)
Long live liberty! Hurray!

LORD CHANCELLOR Well—hurray!

SECRETARY OF STATE Hurray!

PEOPLE What shall we do?
General murmur.

A WOMAN (*To KING*) What shall we do?

KING The sound of a million voices,
The fear of atomic might,
The choice of a thousand choices
Though none of them seems quite right.
And one says, "What's it matter?
Have fun ere the whole world dies.
Live faster and freer and fatter
With liquor and lust and lies."
But there's one voice yet that the world can hear—
It's a voice of courage, it's a voice of cheer,
It's a voice in each heart, and it's ever near.

PEOPLE What is that voice?

KING It's a still, small voice.

PEOPLE A still, small voice?

KING It's the voice of the King of Kings.
It's a practical voice if you listen
At the start of each crowded day.
It shows us the road we've been missing,
An adequate, definite way.
It's the secret the statesmen are learning,
The art which confusion ends,
The art of changing each man and turning
Our enemies into friends.

It will cost us our selfishness and our pride.
It's the truth that our hard, rich hearts denied—
If we choose, then the whole world is at our side.

PEOPLE Can that be done?

KING "It's already begun,"
Says the voice of the King of Kings.

The voice will tell you a secret
Which from Eiluph'mei has been hid.
It's the need for a certain something
Which many people call an id.

PEOPLE An id?

KING It may be called an id.
It's the way we live from the time we're a kiddy
Till Kingdom come, and it's called an iddy.

PEOPLE An iddy?

KING It can be called an iddy.
It will purify the pious guy and clean up every giddy doll.
It's effective, not just preachy, and its name is an ideol.

PEOPLE An ideol?

KING It could be called an ideol.
It starts with honesty—
And sometimes apology
Marks the birth in the heart of an ideology.

PEOPLE An ideology!

KING A superior ideology.
You know, we might tear down the window dressing
And take an honest look. It's so refreshing.
In quietness comes a new illumination
To show the way through every situation.

They are all quiet for a moment.

PRIME MINISTER Strange how in quietness there come the dreams
Stealing upon my heart of how the schemes,
The petty plans and plots of men like me
Rob every nation of their destiny.
Ignoble, how ambition stunts and maims
The star-sent stature of our human aims

And cripples them to dust. How dull desire
Deadens and dampens down the heavenly fire
In human hearts like mine. Now sparks alight
Within my soul a dawning after night—
A new illumination for the earth,
And unity, the grace of our rebirth.

- SECRETARY OF STATE I've warned and given advice to every nation—
My own life needs a clean investigation.
- LORD CHANCELLOR I've tried to improve the world with brag and bellow—
In truth I'm just a frightened little fellow.
- JOSHUA BIBLE Profit's O.K. But I've made it a god—
Dollars the aim of every step I've trod.
- HERALD To all of you I've been so darned high hat—
No wonder you long to clout me with a cricket bat.
- MISS HIGBALL Yes, but what shall we do?
- KING Provided we've got the ideology to win,
Let's open up the gates and let them in.
- ALL TOGETHER It's the secret the world is waiting,
The end of our man-made schemes.
It's the answer to fear and hating
And death to our wilful dreams.
- WOMEN For the price of peace is people
- MEN Deciding to be different today.
- WOMEN So let's climb from our cloudy steeple
- MEN Down to earth, for that price we will pay.
- ALL TOGETHER It's the secret the world is waiting,
The end of our man-made schemes.
It's the answer to fear and hating
And death to our wilful dreams.
It's a humble voice
Of a nation's choice
To obey the King of Kings.
- KING No need to fear an alien creed of hate
Even when it's knocking at the very gate,
Provided we've a faith that hate to outfashion
And live and give it with an equal passion.

PRIME MINISTER But Odioso's tough. He'll *never* change.

MISS HIGHBALL You may think what I have to say is strange.
I watched the mother of his child and saw
Deep in the heart of her, and him, a flaw,
A cranny in their armoury of hate.
He, too, is anxious for his children's fate.
Leave her to me.

Enter ODIOSO and the MOTHER AND CHILD, followed by some of the Weiheit' tiu people.

ODIOSO Our hour has come, my friends.
My curse has proven. Here your journey ends
And ours begins. The sweetness of success
Lends speed, not softness, to our bitterness.
Vanish the island! With our passions wild
You'll be engulfed.

MISS HIGHBALL (*to the MOTHER*) Yours is a lovely child.

MOTHER He's all my heart. He's all I know of prayer—
And he would go to hell for all you care,
With millions like him.

ODIOSO It is for our sons
That ruin through this world and island runs.
"A lovely child"—your patronising smile
Reminds me of a crying crocodile.

MISS HIGHBALL Worthy of nothing, I, except your hate!
But still you can forgive. It's not too late
To break my will, and live for something great.

In pain the sons of men are born
As from our bodies they are torn.
Deep in the heart of womanhood
Is something good.

But fragile hopes are crushed by fears.
There comes the hardening of the years.
Our care is killed with little lies
And true love dies.

WOMEN O, we would lay down our lives, we say it.
Tell us the price and we will pay it.

Anything, anything we would give
So that these sons may live.
Yes, we would die for them. But will we live for them?
How much of comfort and ease will we give for them
So that the world may live?

MISS HIGBALL What can a woman's heart say to the world?
We who give life, in our pain we give birth.
To the millions who people the face of the earth
What can we say?

Love's in our labour in bearing each babe.
Yet from the cradle and into the grave
Women like me use our menfolk as tools,
Coax them for pleasures and curse them as fools
If they don't give us again and again
Ease, fun and luxury, price of our pain.

WOMEN What can a woman's heart say to the world? *etc.*

MISS HIGBALL Heedless of others and heartless as stone,
Golf, dogs or card games for us hold the throne.
Brittle and brassy, we never get bored
Of hunting new husbands—and praising the Lord.
What sort of world will that son of yours see
If we don't learn to deal with the women like me?

WOMEN What can a woman's heart say to the world? *etc.*

MOTHER This we can promise. Division will cease
When women like me learn the secret of peace.
Pure in our motives and pure in our ways,

SEVERAL WOMEN We can bring to the world a renaissance. Our days
From now on shall be filled with a passion and fight
To remake the whole world and turn darkness to light.

ALL THE WOMEN That's what we women can say to the world.
This we can say,
Out of the darkness will shine a great light
As the women in millions we join in the fight.
This we can say.

ODIOSO Now stabs my heart awake. If this could be,
If we could find a nobler destiny
Than harnessed hate to lend to our design—
But no, it's watery stuff.

- KING It's living wine
To set the whole world's blazing heart afire,
To melt the steel of self to God's desire.
- ODIOSO Words, words that cloak and cover empty schemes,
The puffs of sound that rob us of our dreams,
The speeches and the promises and prayers
That alter nothing, only fill the air—
The world and I are sick of them. But now
Tell me the truth. I see it on your brow.
In spite of all the past, in spite of hate,
Something within me says it's not too late.
Can these things be? Can we some course yet find
Which builds the world anew and leaves behind
The hatreds and the fears?
- KING Yes. Men like me
Have fed the hates in hungry hearts like yours.
To hope we have locked the house and barred the doors.
But men like me have changed. And men like you
Can change as well. Let's look for something new.
Together we from East and West can dare
To rebuild the world for all men everywhere.
- MISS HIGHBALL We all can change and so to make amends
That former enemies become our friends.
- MOTHER (*Looking at child*) Yes, we can shape his life to nobler range
Than hate, when those we hate begin to change.
- PRIME MINISTER And it *works*.
- The Island begins to reappear.*
- ODIOSO Our curse has broken. Can it be that hate
Carries within itself a certain fate
To destroy the men who use it?
- KING This can be—
Together we can live to set men free,
Together change and find our destiny.
- PEOPLE From cabin of log to the Cabinet room,
If you're fat and you're jolly or you're trim and full of gloom,
If you're long, if you're short, it is nothing very strange,
For the long and the short of it is change.

It's for everyone everywhere,
It's a sort of tang and tingle in the air,
It's a radar radiation
For each class and race and nation,
For you simply make the choice—and you are there.

From cabin of log to the Cabinet room, *etc.*

PRIME MINISTER,
LORD CHANCELLOR AND
SECRETARY OF STATE

When statesmen tend to affairs of state
It's the easiest thing to exaggerate
The size of the person that you are,
In general as well as in particular.
Your head gets too big for your hat
And the world is left cold and flat.

When flunkeys come hurrying at your call
You feel so big and everyone around feels small.
You think that your colleagues are apt to fumble
And you're the only man to run without a stumble.
Your feet get too big for your boots
And the world doesn't care two hoots.

But when absolute standards come before your eyes
They really trim a fellow down to honest size.
From Number One first, feeling quite a hero,
You realize your figure is really zero.
You meet with the death of your pride
And your heart comes alive inside.

You can look your neighbour in the eye unblinking
Without a single fear or hope of what he's thinking.
You can call a former enemy your friend and brother
When you realize how very much you need each other,
If to build a new world you would dare
For everyone everywhere.

PEOPLE From cabin of log to the Cabinet room, *etc.*

HERALD My dear old friends, if this can come to pass,
I see I'm just an Anglo-Saxon ass.
I miss the point that's happening, I suppose,
Beneath my upturned, God Almighty nose.

ODIOSO A man's no chance of going it alone,
From any class or race. All this I own.

(to the PRIME MINISTER)

If men like you can change, no need to hate you.
I'll learn to love and not to liquidate you.

Down through the mists and the milestones of history,
Out beyond record or memory's span,
Sages, philosophers deepen the mystery—
How meet the needs of the ordinary man,

ALL TOGETHER Bread, work and faith for each man.

MOTHER Enough in this wonderful world for each longing,
Head, hand and heart can be filled beyond need.
Selfish and foolish, each other we're wronging,
Empty our hearts and our hands with our greed,

ODIOSO Shatter the world with our greed.

ALL TOGETHER Deep in the heart of us knowledge is breaking.
God in His glory the wisdom has sown.
Normal for men to be world-remaking,
No class or race can achieve it alone,
 None can achieve it alone.
Normal for all, for colours and classes and races
United together, together an answer to find,
With a fire in our heart and a light in our faces,
Fulfilling the hunger and hope of mankind,
 The hunger and hope of mankind.

KING, PRIME MINISTER,
SECRETARY OF STATE,
LORD CHANCELLOR,
HERALD, JOSHUA BIBLE
AND ODIOSO

A man with a fire in his heart,
With a twinkle in his eye,
A man who can give a new start
To fellows like you and I.
He calls a spade a spade
And dirt its rightful name.
He looks right through you
And he loves you just the same.
He's the new type of man
With a passion and plan
With the answer for you and me.

The whole world surges forward singing triumphantly.

ALL TOGETHER So near at hand,
So near at hand,
So near as together we do it.
We'll win a new world for our sons and we'll build it today
So near at hand,
So near at hand,
So near as with faith we pursue it.
We'll drive hate and hopelessness forth and keep fear far away.
So government and people the answer will bring
As we listen to Him who of kings is the King.
It's all so near at hand,
It's all so near to you.
It will happen so normally, naturally happen to you.

CURTAIN