

# The Mouse That Roared

*Comedy. Adapted by Christopher Sergel. Based on the book by Leonard Wibberley.*

*Cast: 14m., 16w., extras if desired (doubling possible).* "Hilarious, rib-tickling comedy," wrote one leading critic, adding that he considers it "the funniest on record." The wonderful audience response to this show has been shared in the enthusiastic reaction of the critics who admire not only its sharp wit but also its wisdom. A pretty girl of 22 happens to be the present Duchess Gloriana, sovereign of a microscopic country in the Alps founded centuries ago by a roving band of English bowmen. Gloriana's unique solution to the near bankruptcy of her tiny domain is to declare war on the United States! There's some method to her madness, however, for her study of recent history suggests that the surest way to wealth today is to lose a war with the U.S., for that country's odd reaction is to pour aid, relief and rehabilitation on the vanquished. When her "declaration" is considered a prank, Gloriana decides to escalate! Tully Bascomb, presently in charge of the bowmen, is to launch an attack so they can surrender and reap the rewards. Serious-minded Tully, however, upsets all calculations when he and his bowmen do the last thing expected—they win! You'll find comment in the comedy crescendo that follows including some pointed kind words for America. This rare comedy uses the magic of the theatre to invite your audience to enjoy the delight of the "impossible." *Area staging.*

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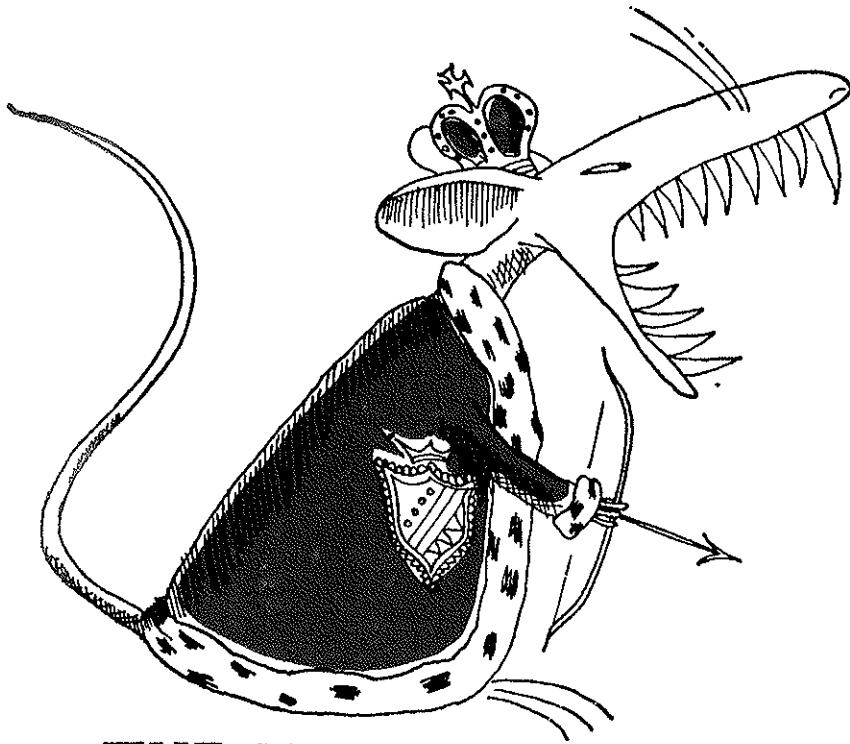


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# THE MOUSE THAT **ROARED**



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

The Rose Theater

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A FULL-LENGTH COMEDY

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# The Mouse That Roared

adapted by

CHRISTOPHER SERGEL

from the book by

LEONARD WIBBERLEY



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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### THE MOUSE THAT ROARED

*A Comedy in Two Acts*

For thirteen men, sixteen women. Smaller with doubling. Extras as desired.

### CHARACTERS

Female:

GLORIANA THE TWELFTH. *twenty-two-year-old sovereign of Grand Fenwick*  
MARY, JANE, FRAN, PAM. .... *attractive American tourists*  
ANN. .... *peasant girl of Grand Fenwick, who treads on grapes*  
NORMA and HELEN. .... *two girls of Grand Fenwick*  
PAGE ..... *a young girl who is Court Page*  
MISS JOHNSON. .... *secretary to Secretary of State of the United States*  
MISS WILKINS. .... *secretary to the President of the United States*  
MRS. REINER. .... *housekeeper for Professor Kokintz*  
JILL, DEBBIE. .... *two Army officers, daughters of General Snippet*  
MRS. BASCOM. .... *Tully Bascom's mother*  
PROFESSOR SMITH. .... *a young female professor at Columbia University*  
GIRL SIGHT-SEER. .... *extra*

Male:

TULLY BASCOM. .... *a forest ranger and, later, High Constable of Grand Fenwick*

COUNT MOUNTJOY...*an aristocrat, and leader of Grand Fenwick's Anti-Dilutionist Party*  
DAVID BENTER.....*a Man-of-People leader of Grand Fenwick's Dilutionist Party*  
MR. BESTON.....*Secretary of State of the United States*  
PROFESSOR KOKINTZ.....*a brilliant nuclear physicist*  
ASSISTANT.....*to Professor Kokintz*  
PRESIDENT...*chief executive of the United States*  
GENERAL SNIPPET.....*in charge of Security,*  
WILL TATUM.....*First Army District standard-bearer for*  
FOUR SOLDIERS.....*Grand Fenwick*  
STUDENTS, SIGHT-SEER.....*men of Grand Fenwick*  
*extras*

Extra soldiers and citizens of Grand Fenwick may be added at director's option, as desired, along with some optional "students."

NOTE: Radio voices may be spoken by any off-stage actors.

A number of roles may be doubled and the cast thereby reduced.

## ACT ONE

THE HOUSELIGHTS DIM, and after the house is dark, there are about five seconds of silence. Then suddenly there is a tremendous roaring for several seconds. As the roaring subsides, the lights come up immediately in front of the curtain, and at the same time a few gentle bird calls are heard.)

(TULLY BASCOM, a very pleasant mild-mannered young man, comes on L. He appears to be looking down [with disapproval] at a very small animal that is presumably scurrying away to R from him.)

TULLY (following, as he addresses the imaginary creature). Shameful little mouse--you scared those ladies! (Reproving.) The first visitors to our National Forest this month! (Grimly.) Some day you'll meet a cat who's lost her hearing, and that'll be the end of you.

(Four camera and kit-bag laden American girl tourists--JANE, MARY, FRAN and PAM-- are coming on L.)

JANE (meanwhile speaking to the other girls). What was the big roar?  
MARY. Someone gunning the engine of a truck.  
FRAN (nervously). Otherwise there's a lion on the

loose!

PAM. Don't be crazy--we're in Europe. (Concerned.) Somewhere.

TULLY (aside to mouse). Keep it quiet, you loud mouth rodent!

JANE (approaching TULLY, hesitantly). Sir--monsieur--nous sommes avec American Express, mais--mais----

PAM. Mais nous sommes perdus.

FRAN (as TULLY looks puzzled). I bet we crossed into Italy. *Signor, cerco la via.* (TULLY shakes his head, bewildered.)

MARY. Could be Switzerland. *Ich weis nicht wo ist der Amerikanischer Express Haus? Wo ist*----

TULLY (cutting in, pleasantly). I speak English. (There is a general sigh of relief.)

JANE (admiring). You Europeans speak so many languages.

TULLY. I'm afraid I speak only English.

JANE. You're a tourist, too?

TULLY. No, no--I live here.

PAM. But this is----

TULLY. Fenwick. (With pride.) The Duchy of Grand Fenwick. Our sovereign is the Duchess Gloriana--the Twelfth.

FRAN. We're really lost! We rented a car this morning in Nice--which is in France.

MARY. We left the car to do a little birdwatching--but----

TULLY. You've come to the right place. I've written a book about our birds. (Hopefully.) Perhaps you've heard of it--"Migratory Birds of Grand Fenwick"?

JANE. I've never heard of Fenwick.

TULLY. You're in Grand Fenwick. (Indicating.) This is our National Forest. I'm the chief ranger--(Presenting himself.) Tully Bascom.

PAM. Please--which way is the road?

TULLY. But wouldn't you like to see our forest?

It has a variety of trees, a waterfall twenty feet high, and a haunted oak where a mad huntsman is supposed to have hanged himself.

MARY. So does the park in Peoria, Illinois.

FRAN (politely). We've hardly time for the major sights.

TULLY. I could take you on a quick tour. (Almost a plea.) Don't pass up a country just because it's small.

PAM. How small?

TULLY. Five miles long by three miles wide.

MARY. I suppose it's one of these tax haven places.

TULLY (stung). Grand Fenwick was founded by a roving band of English bowmen before the discovery of America.

JANE. That's very interesting, but----

TULLY (wound up). The father of our country, Sir Roger Fenwick, came to France with Edward the Third, and he stayed on to form a free company of his own, with which he won his duchy. Our flag was first raised in the year 1370!

PAM (suspiciously). What does your flag look like?

TULLY. A double-headed eagle. From one beak the eagle is saying--"yea." And from the other--"Nay."

FRAN. But why would the king of France----

TULLY. Charles the Wise.

FRAN. Why would he let Fenwick get away with it?

TULLY. Twice Charles sent expeditions, and twice they were repulsed--thanks to the power of the English longbow.

MARY. But after that?

TULLY. Sir Roger had the good fortune to establish this duchy in an extraordinary location, and as a result----

PAM (cutting in). What's so extraordinary about it?  
 TULLY. No coal, no iron, no oil, no precious metals. No harbors or waterways.  
 FRAN. No wonder you're left alone.  
 TULLY (still hopeful). It wouldn't take me long to point out some of our native birds.  
 PAM. How can a nation five miles by three claim native birds?  
 TULLY. How can your village of Baltimore claim an oriole? The only being who could really pass on the nationality of a bird--is the bird.  
 JANE. Okay, you've got birds. Anything else?  
 TULLY. An excellent wine with an unusual bouquet. It's our only export. Pinot Grand Fenwick.  
 MARY (to TULLY). We must get back to the road.  
 JANE. Yea or Nay?  
 TULLY (gesturing back L). That way--just walk straight.  
 PAM. I'm sorry we can't take time for your country, too. (The girls are going L.)  
 TULLY (after them). We also have an unusual variety of field mouse, and it's tiny--like our country, but---  
 JANE. Good-by.  
 MARY. If you're ever in Peoria----(They complete exit L. TULLY turns quickly DC.)  
 TULLY (encouraging the mouse). Go ahead! Give them a scare! (From off R someone calls.)  
 VOICE. Tully! Tully Bascom!  
 TULLY (calling back R). Yes--here! (Back to the mouse, disgusted.) The one time I ask you!

(ANN, a barefoot peasant girl, comes on R.)

ANN. Tully----  
 TULLY. What is it?  
 ANN. You're wanted at the castle.

TULLY (surprised). Me?  
 ANN. There's an emergency meeting of the Privy Council--called by Gloriana!  
 TULLY. But why would they want me?  
 ANN (shrugging). It really must be an emergency!  
 TULLY. When your sovereign is a twenty-two-year-old girl, you never know what to expect! (Remembering, wryly.) I used to see her a lot. Now it takes an emergency.  
 ANN. Tully--if the meeting should be about wine production, could you put in a word for modern methods? This tramping on grapes---(Holds up a grape-stained foot.) It's so hard to get off, I go around with purple feet! (There is a trumpet fanfare in the distance.)  
 TULLY (looking R, impressed). Say--it is an emergency. (Starting R.) Come on. (As they go off R, there is another fanfare, this one much closer.)

SCENE: The curtain rises to reveal a nearly bare stage that is divided into three sections. At R there is a platform approximately a foot and a half high that extends in from the right side to about one-quarter of the way across the stage. A similar platform extends in a similar distance from the left. [NOTE: If the platforms are not practical for your stage, some sort of neutral room-divider, or a low section of screen, can be set up approximately one-quarter of the distance in from each side. The important thing is to suggest the separation of these three stage areas from each other.] The only furniture on stage at rise of curtain is in the center section. UC is a high-backed chair that should be as splendid as possible, for it is the throne of Grand Fenwick. Near the throne

is a small table with a bowl of fruit on it. The throne is flanked by two small stools. A bit downstage and to the side of the center group are two more modest chairs, one facing in from the right and one from the left. If desired, a colorful touch can be added by making a large flag of Grand Fenwick, which should have the double-headed eagle with one beak saying "Yea" and the other 'Nay" as described by Tully Bascom. If used, the flag should be hanging above and behind the throne.)

**AT RISE OF CURTAIN:** COUNT MOUNTJOY strides on L, and crosses to the right chair, in which he seats himself. His clothes suggest the aristocracy. At the same time, DAVID BENTER comes on R, and crosses to the left chair, in which he seats himself. He is obviously a "man of the people," and he wears a rumpled suit. The two men glare across at each other.)

BENTER. Our people expect us to do something.  
MOUNTJOY. Our people should leave these questions to their hereditary leaders.

BENTER. You're finding the constitution inconvenient again?

MOUNTJOY (sighing). I just say it's too bad the twelfth Count of Mountjoy has to debate policy with Mister Benter, descendant of a simple yeoman.

BENTER. A yeoman who accompanied Sir Roger Fenwick when he stormed the castle in which you're now standing.

(A PAGE, a petite girl, wearing a page-boy outfit, has entered L and is crossing to throne. There

is another fanfare.)

MOUNTJOY. Your family has managed to mention that fact at every parliamentary election since the Fifteenth Century.

PAGE. The Duchess Gloriana the Twelfth. (BENTER and MOUNTJOY come to attention.)

(GLORIANA, a stunning girl, comes on. PAGE exits.)

GLORIANA. Pray be seated. (As they seat themselves.) We have called this emergency meeting to allow both leaders to speak before we reach our decision.

MOUNTJOY. Yes, your Highness.

GLORIANA (noticing fruit bowl and taking piece as she seats herself). Before we became your duchess, we were limited to one pomegranate at Christmas. If neither party can solve the financial crisis, we may have to go back to that--perhaps give them up entirely.

MOUNTJOY (amused). But, my lady----

GLORIANA (continuing, artlessly). We'll also have to devalue the Fenwick florin, lower wages and cancel all benefits--(She smiles.)--along with pomegranates.

BENTER. Never!

GLORIANA. We appreciate your concern. (She sits back.) Since the market for our wine has been stolen by a cheap imitation being manufactured now in California, we no longer have enough foreign exchange to pay for the import of necessities. We recognize David Benter, Esquire.

BENTER. I say, add a little water to the fermentation vats, lower our prices, and try to compete with the imitation.

MOUNTJOY. Dilutionist! (Urbaneously.) My lady, those who would add water to Pinot Grand Fenwick would debase any work of art. They'd put the DaVinci portrait of Gloriana the Sixth on a postage stamp and use the words of our immortal bard, Horace Bentshield, to sell trifles. No, no--there's a better way to raise funds.

GLORIANA. Which is?

MOUNTJOY. What every country does--Get it from America.

BENTER. America won't even answer our protests.

MOUNTJOY. Instead of demanding justice, let's try asking for money.

GLORIANA (doubtfully). I don't think it's so easy getting money from America any more.

MOUNTJOY. Wait till you hear my scheme.

GLORIANA. It's not enough these days just to say you're threatened by subversives.

MOUNTJOY (at the same time). We'll say we're threatened by subversives.

GLORIANA (pained). Uncle.

MOUNTJOY. Maoists? Right Wing extremists? Students?

BENTER (nervously). Students!

GLORIANA. That's your plan?

MOUNTJOY (indignantly defensive). We'll set up a real party, stage demonstrations, appeal publicly to China--or Rhodesia!

BENTER. I don't like it. Suppose, by some wild chance, they do take over.

MOUNTJOY. I've solved that, too. For the leader of this temporary movement, I've picked a simple-minded non-political backwoodsman.

(PAGE enters.)

GLORIANA. You're sure he'd be safe?

MOUNTJOY. I've already sent for him, and you can judge for yourself.

PAGE. Your Highness, Tully Bascom is outside claiming he'd been summoned to this meeting.

GLORIANA. Tully Bascom?

MOUNTJOY. That's our man. His main interest is birds.

GLORIANA. I know. (Answering their surprise.) When my father was still alive, I used to climb trees in the National Forest. I even built a birdhouse for some swallows.

MOUNTJOY. If you don't think he's the right man for the job----

GLORIANA. Oh, he's the right man.

(TULLY enters.)

PAGE (as TULLY enters). Tully Bascom. (TULLY and GLORIANA regard each other. The PAGE exits.)

TULLY. Hello, Glory. (Remembering.) Your Highness.

GLORIANA. We--we haven't seen you in some time.

TULLY (lightly). Not since you started calling yourself "we."

BENTER. Be respectful, sir.

GLORIANA. We--I--I only do it sometimes.

TULLY. You've always known where to find me. The National Forest needs constant attention. (Proudly.) We had four visitors today!

MOUNTJOY (irked). Her Highness has more to do these days than build bird houses.

GLORIANA. I don't suppose it's still around?

TULLY. There's a colony of Scissor-Tail Swallows from Sicily in it now. I've kept it repaired.

GLORIANA (feeling she'd better get to business). The reason you were called--could you take time from your work to form a new political party--of Communists?

TULLY. I'd rather not, thank you. Their philosophy doesn't seem to work out very well--especially in agricultural regions.

MOUNTJOY. We wouldn't want the party to be successful, just appear successful.

BENTER. So the Americans will loan us some money.

TULLY. To save us from the Communists? (They nod. He shakes his head.) It's a trick, and even if the trick were successful, we wouldn't be saved. We'd have sold our honor. We'd have deliberately defrauded another nation.

GLORIANA. Your principles are magnificent. Meanwhile, I've got to save the Duchy.

TULLY. Save it from what?

GLORIANA. Bankruptcy.

TULLY. If you can't do it honorably, it isn't worth saving.

MOUNTJOY. Oh, no!

GLORIANA. Tully--what am I to do?

TULLY. Why don't we just raise the price of Pinot Grand Fenwick? There's a big demand for it.

BENTER. Not any more. An American vintner in a place called California is using our label, the picture of our castle, and selling at half our price.

MOUNTJOY. They call it Pinot Grand Enwick. They've ruined our economy.

GLORIANA. What's the honorable course now?

TULLY (indignant). An official letter demanding an end to this fraud and prompt reparations.

GLORIANA. We've sent such letters. They're

ignored.

TULLY. In that case--our demands being just--we'll have to enforce them.

GLORIANA. How?

TULLY. We can't let them ruin us. If they won't respond to our protests, we'll have to declare war.

BENTER. What?

MOUNTJOY. A declaration----

TULLY (nodding). I don't hold with surprise attacks.

GLORIANA. Against the United States of America!

TULLY. And to make certain there's no misunderstanding, send it registered mail, return receipt requested.

GLORIANA (incredulous). Tully--we've no weapons, no factories, no resources--and only six thousand people.

TULLY. But we're in the right.

GLORIANA. Stop being so simple-minded and consider the consequences.

TULLY. If they won't negotiate honorably, we'll have to fight regardless of the consequences.

GLORIANA. Which are that we'd lose. If you'd study recent history, you'd realize that the consequences of losing a war to the United States would mean---(Struck by a new thought, she hesitates.) History shows---(Stops herself. Thoughtfully.) This has to be considered.

MOUNTJOY. Considered! What are you----

GLORIANA (stopping him by offering bowl). Pomegranate, Uncle? (He takes a bit of fruit.)

TULLY. If there's anything to heredity, you'll reach the right decision--and I offer myself as the first volunteer.

GLORIANA (filled with a new thought). You may have solved our problem, Tully. You really

nave! You're excused to your duties with our--with my thanks.

TULLY. Good to see you, Glory. (MOUNTJOY starts to speak but GLORIANA stops him with a gesture.)

GLORIANA (continuing, warmly, to TULLY).

Good to remember how life used to be. (TULLY gives a bow and goes.)

MOUNTJOY (a hushed explosion). He must be mad. Completely bereft of his senses. He should be locked up as a raving lunatic!

GLORIANA. I wouldn't say that. (Casually.) In fact, perhaps we will declare war.

MOUNTJOY. Don't even joke about----

GLORIANA (smiling as she cuts in). I'm not joking. BENTER (perplexed). It's hardly necessary to say we'd lose.

GLORIANA. Of course, we'd lose.

BENTER. And think of the consequences!

GLORIANA. We have to fight regardless of the consequences. Mr. Bascom has convinced me.

MOUNTJOY (sputtering). Stop this irresponsible nonsense! These matters are----

GLORIANA (cutting in; lightly). Much too important to be left to a girl whose main interest is pomegranates? But they are left to me, Uncle.

MOUNTJOY (accusing). You've been reading romantic accounts of military geniuses who defy all odds.

GLORIANA (strong). I've been studying the Medici, Metternich, Disraeli--politicians who had to live by their wits--because we haven't much else, have we?

MOUNTJOY. I don't care whom you've been reading! I can't let you jeopardize----

GLORIANA (going right on). And a marvelous little handbook on government written by some Italian.

MOUNTJOY (hesitating). Italian?

GLORIANA (pleasantly). Full of practical suggestions. A little drastic, perhaps, but as a last resort----

MOUNTJOY. Machiavelli?

GLORIANA. That's the one. I also came across a girl who had a way with difficult associates--Lucrezia Borgia. (Teasing.) Does the pomegranate taste bitter, Uncle?

MOUNTJOY (shocked, dropping the fruit back into bowl). Your Highness!

BENTER (confused and worried). I don't understand. You were saying about--about the United States?

GLORIANA. If I remember my history books correctly, there are few more profitable undertakings than to declare war on the United States.

BENTER (protesting). But, Highness----

GLORIANA (continuing). And to be defeated.

MOUNTJOY (trying to sort this out). Profitable? To be defeated?

GLORIANA. The ink is no sooner dry on the surrender document than the United States is rushing food, machinery, money, and technical aid to the former foe.

MOUNTJOY. Yes! It never occurred to me! That's what they do!

GLORIANA. To avoid wrecking the former adversary's economy, they extend generous credits and the most favorable trade agreements. And that's just the beginning!

BENTER. You're sure about this?

GLORIANA. Don't you remember after World War Two? All they did for Germany and Japan?

Now their economies are booming.

MOUNTJOY. She's right! (Envisioning this Utopia.) We'd declare war on Monday, be

vanquished Tuesday, and rehabilitated beyond our wildest dreams by Friday night. I confess, when you were discussing this with Tully, you had me a little confused.

BENTER. Actually, he was making a good suggestion.

MOUNTJOY. Without realizing it. The man's even more idiotic than I thought.

GLORIANA (nodding, but with an undercurrent of admiration). He's so unsophisticated he still believes that right can prevail against any odds. It's an attitude that served us well in the 14th Century when the French tried to invade. (Pointedly.) An attitude we'll have to assume, too--with Bascom and everyone else.

MOUNTJOY (realizing). Yes. Quite right.

BENTER. If anyone knew our real intention----

MOUNTJOY (cutting him off). Exactly.

GLORIANA (formally). Our next step will be to dispatch our declaration. (She stands up, and they spring to attention.) For the duration of the emergency, I'm dissolving parliament. For our battle cry, I suggest the appropriate slogan: "Forward--regardless of the consequences." (She starts R, calling back over her shoulder.) Attend me while I draw up the documents.

(MOUNTJOY and BENTER hurry off R after her. There is another fanfare of trumpets.)

(As the fanfare fades, CHET BESTON, Secretary of State of the United States, comes on L onto the left platform--or if platform is not used, into the playing area that has been separated to the left. He is carrying a brief case and a small waterproof container for shaving things, etc. MR. BESTON is looking for someone.)

MR. BESTON (calling). Miss Johnson----(Looking about; a bit sharp.) Miss Johnson, I'm in a hurry!

VOICE (from off L). Right with you, sir. (MR. BESTON nods with relief at this, puts down his brief case, and unzippers his waterproof container to check the contents.)

(MISS JOHNSON, an efficient government secretary, hurries onto the same playing area L. She is carrying a batch of mail and has a memo book in her hand.)

MISS JOHNSON. Sir, I checked, and you can get on any of the shuttle flights between Washington and New York City. But why don't you go with the President on his plane?

MR. BESTON (a bit short). It attracts enough attention when the President of the United States suddenly flies to New York. If the Secretary of State goes with him--not to mention the general in charge of security on weapons research--the newspapers will know something's up.

MISS JOHNSON. General Snippet already left. He took a military plane.

MR. BESTON. We go separately and don't meet till we reach Professor Kokintz's laboratory at Columbia University. (Wryly.) That's how times have changed----An eccentric physicist who refuses to work anywhere but at Columbia University can summon the President.

MISS JOHNSON (dubiously). But aren't there thousands of these weapons research projects?

MR. BESTON. That's what it said on a placard a student was carrying. I happened to notice because he hit me with it. (Dropping his voice.) Looks like this one has really come up with

something. Professor Kokintz called the President on the private line at three this morning. All he actually said--(Quoting.) "I have completed the experiment, Mr. President!" MISS JOHNSON (dropping her voice). You think-- worse than the H-bomb?

MR. BESTON (hushed). Don't even talk about it to me! (Finally getting to check contents of his container.) Aspirin, bicarbonate, buffering, and three kinds of tranquilizers.

MISS JOHNSON. For you or for the President?

MR. BESTON. He could use a little tranquilizing. You don't happen to have something particularly cheerful in this mail--something I could mention to the President?

MISS JOHNSON. No, but the boys in the press room are up to their tricks. They managed to get another one of those crazy communications from the mythical European kingdom onto the mail desk again--(She smiles.)--one of those with the double-headed eagle saying "Yea" and "Nay."

MR. BESTON (half smiling as he recalls). Oh, yes--protests, and then a warning.

MISS JOHNSON. This one might amuse the President. (Smiling broadly, she hands him a rolled-up scroll.) This one's a declaration of war!

(The PAGE is coming on R carrying a similar scroll, crossing to C and facing front.)

MR. BESTON (shaking his head and smiling as he unrolls scroll). Those press room characters go to a lot of trouble for a little fun. (At approximately the same moment that MR. BESTON pulls open the scroll he has been handed, the PAGE pulls open the scroll she carries. [NOTE:

This should be carefully rehearsed so that there is no delay.] As MR. BESTON completes this comment to MISS JOHNSON and starts reading the scroll to himself, the PAGE reads her copy aloud. MR. BESTON's eyes follow the text at the same pace it is being read by the PAGE. He is smiling and shaking his head with amusement at the contents.)

PAGE (in a high voice). To the President, Congress and People of the United States of America-- Greetings.

WHEREAS, the Duchy of Grand Fenwick has been a sovereign and independent nation since its founding in 1370 A.D.; and

WHEREAS, the principal support of the Duchy of Grand Fenwick has been, during all these years, the production of the excellent and unique wine known to the world as Pinot Grand Fenwick; and

WHEREAS, an ignoble imitation of this superior wine is being produced in quantity and sold at half of the cost by certain wineries in the city of San Rafael in the State of California, which is part of the geographical territory of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the sale of this spurious product threatens the livelihood of the independent Duchy of Grand Fenwick; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Duchy of Grand Fenwick holds the sale of this wine an unwarranted and unjust and persistent and planned action of aggression against the Duchy; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Duchy of Grand Fenwick, having taken all steps it can to remedy the matter peaceably, does here and now, and by these presents, declare that a state of war exists between itself and the United States of America.

(She gasps another breath before concluding.) The signatures follow. (At this point the PAGE freezes, and MR. BESTON, who has been chortling through the document, takes over.)

MR. BESTON (to MISS JOHNSON, reading from the bottom of the scroll). The signatures follow. Gloriana the Twelfth, Duchess of Grand Fenwick. (A baffled aside.) I can see a reporter dreaming up a name like Gloriana, but I don't understand the other two signatures---(Reads.) D. Benter, Leader, Dilutionist Party. And Mountjoy, Leader, Anti-Dilutionist Party. (At this, the PAGE rolls up her scroll, turns, and goes back off R.)

MISS JOHNSON. Do you think the President might get a kick out of it?

MR. BESTON (handing scroll back to her). He's a little edgy right now.

MISS JOHNSON (being humorous, holding scroll). I don't know whether to frame this, file it, or send it to *The New Yorker*.

MR. BESTON (picking up his brief case). To tell the truth, I'm a little edgy myself.

MISS JOHNSON. Sir, when you reach Columbia-- be careful.

MR. BESTON. I'll try, but I'm not as fast as I was. (As he starts off L; fervently.) How I hope the students aren't restless tonight!

(At this point the lights black out. There is a beating of drums and the shouts of protesting students. If desired--this is optional--there may be a flickering light with students carrying humorously outrageous protest placards parading across the front of the stage. However, this should be brief and as the light comes up again, it is seen that a large covered blackboard and a few chairs have

been brought onto the playing area at R. There is also a box which suggests a computer at which a research ASSISTANT is apparently working. PROFESSOR KOKINTZ bustles in R. He has a mass of hair and wears rumpled clothes full of bulging pockets. He is more preoccupied, however, than comic.)

KOKINTZ. Close it up. Knock it off. I'm having visitors.

ASSISTANT (nervously). Students?

KOKINTZ. No, no. Nothing so unpredictable. Take a little walk.

ASSISTANT. Professor Kokintz--do you know what's going on out there?

KOKINTZ (cheerfully). They're finally taking an interest in what they think we're doing. I'm thrilled. It excites me. That's why working here is so stimulating. (Waves him along.) I'll put you in for a Silver Star.

(MRS. REINER, a womanly housekeeper, is coming on R.)

ASSISTANT (as he goes R; muttering). I already have a Silver Star. Hello, Mrs. Reiner. (He goes out. PROFESSOR KOKINTZ has crossed to blackboard and is peering under the cloth.)

MRS. REINER. Is everything all right?

KOKINTZ (meaning what he sees on blackboard). Exactly.

MRS. REINER. A call came while I was straightening the usual mess in your quarters. They're on their way in now. Three of them.

KOKINTZ (concerned and critical). You're not supposed to know. You're a very snoopy housekeeper.

MRS. REINER (waving her hand). If I ever went over to the Russians! (Hands him small wrapped package.) Your sandwich from the delicatessen. (Her voice suddenly quite confidential.) Thinking about who all is coming-- I could pick up some cold cuts, potato salad, and a few dill pickles.

KOKINTZ. They're not expecting a smorgasbord. (Holding up wrapped sandwich.) Pastrami?

MRS. REINER. With--if you'll excuse the expression--Russian dressing. (PROFESSOR KOKINTZ's look of pleasure is interrupted by a voice calling from off R.)

VOICE (off R). Professor Kokintz?

KOKINTZ (guiltily stuffing sandwich into pocket and bowing off R). Yes--yes----Please, come.

(GENERAL SNIPPET, a watchful officer who somehow radiates suspicion, comes on R, followed by two young but stern-faced WACS.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (introducing himself). General Snippet--in charge of security. (Nods toward them.) Two members of my staff.

KOKINTZ (to the WACS, pleasantly). So glad you could come.

GENERAL SNIPPET (gesturing over shoulder). The person who just left--who was it?

KOKINTZ. John Wayne. (With asperity as GENERAL SNIPPET starts.) When my assistant and I aren't going through security checks, we supervise a team of scientists who've just made you obsolete.

GENERAL SNIPPET (regarding MRS. REINER). What about--who is----

KOKINTZ. Mrs. Reiner? (Making a joke.) Ah! If she ever went over to the Russians!

GENERAL SNIPPET (hushed). What? (MRS. REINER

is shaking her head at PROFESSOR KOKINTZ.) KOKINTZ. I'm not serious. She'd never leave the Bronx. (As the GENERAL still doesn't seem satisfied, he improvises.) She's a member of my staff. (As they look at her, MRS. REINER gives PROFESSOR KOKINTZ a hesitant military salute, then starts R. However, she sees someone coming and bows with great respect.)

MRS. REINER. Your Honor.

(The PRESIDENT, an imposing man in a conservative business suit, comes on R.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (respectfully). Afternoon, sir. (Correcting MRS. REINER.) The correct salutation is "Mr. President."

MRS. REINER (correcting). Mr. President . . . excuse. (She rushes off R.)

PRESIDENT (regarding the GENERAL). Why don't you put out a press release? (Turning to PROFESSOR KOKINTZ, warmly.) Good to see you again, Professor.

KOKINTZ (apologetically). When I called on the special line this morning, I didn't realize it was so early.

PRESIDENT. I told you to call the moment you had something.

GENERAL SNIPPET (trying to speak just for the President's ear). Sir--anyone could walk in here. It isn't just that the university is in the middle of New York City, but the only security is a student monitor in the hall.

PRESIDENT (faintly perplexed). Professor Kokintz finds the atmosphere conducive to research.

KOKINTZ. Ah! (Speaking with pride as he turns to blackboard and starts taking out the remaining tacks holding cloth to the bottom edge.) With

results to prove it!

PRESIDENT (with KOKINTZ busy, turning to the GENERAL). General--these two Wacs are always with you?

WAC JILL (introducing herself). My name's Jill.

WAC DEBBIE (smiling). I'm Debbie.

PRESIDENT (to GENERAL, shortly). Daughters of some influential senator and you're seeing they have a soft assignment?

GENERAL SNIPPET. Certainly not! I don't believe in that sort of thing! They're my daughters.

PRESIDENT (to the WACS). Perhaps you'd stand outside the door--if you wouldn't mind sentry duty.

WAC DEBBIE (sincerely). We'd love sentry duty. (Gestures toward GENERAL.) He never lets us do anything. (They start off R.)

WAC JILL (as they go). We keep applying for transfers. (They go off R.)

KOKINTZ. If you'll take your seats----(One of the WACS is heard from just off R.)

WAC'S VOICE (sharply). Halt!

MAN'S VOICE. Don't be silly.

(MR. BESTON enters R.)

MR. BESTON (calling back as he comes on). I'm Secretary of State. (Turning to the others apologetically, brushing debris off his clothes.) Almost made it without being recognized.

PRESIDENT. Let's proceed.

KOKINTZ. It's done. The new computer the Navy loaned me was a great help. With the others, it would have taken two years. As it was--only a month. Of course, I was a year setting up the problem for the machine to solve. And I had to work in the hope that a machine capable of solving

them would be invented. But that's water under the bridge. (Pulls cloth up over top of blackboard, revealing an extremely long and complex formula.) Here it is! (While KOKINTZ beams, the others squirm a bit uncomfortably, making noncommittal "hmms.") Beautiful, eh? (Indicating point in formula.) The mass difference of the nucleus is the greatest yet achieved.

PRESIDENT. Mass difference?

MR. BESTON (trying to seem intelligent). Having to do with the amount of power released when the nucleus is split?

KOKINTZ (doubtfully). If we get into details, you'll either be confused or get the wrong impression.

PRESIDENT. In simple terms--what is it?

KOKINTZ. Quadium.

GENERAL SNIPPET (half to himself). They'll call it the Q-Bomb.

KOKINTZ (ignoring the GENERAL). Quadium is a form of hydrogen which has not existed in the universe for a billion years. (With apologetic smiles.) When I say "a form of hydrogen," you realize--I speak for the layman.

PRESIDENT. Still speaking for the layman, what is its particular effect?

KOKINTZ (as though approving a bright student).

Ah--that's the point! Quadium is probably the substance that first made the earth a flaming planet. You understand--the earth still flamed for millions of years after the quadium was exhausted--converted into denser nuclei, that is. Of course, the quadium on the sun was burned up eons ago.

MR. BESTON. But what does it do?

KOKINTZ (struggling for a way to explain). Let me put it this way--you could say quadium started those stupendous fires! (Fumbling to find

something in his jacket.) However, to the best of our knowledge, no quadium still survives anywhere in the whole of space----

GENERAL SNIPPET (impatiently). Then what's the point?

KOKINTZ. Except--(Finding what he's looking for, he holds up a small metal cylinder.)--except in this cylinder! (KOKINTZ hands cylinder to the PRESIDENT, who handles it gingerly.)

PRESIDENT (it seems so small). This is all?

KOKINTZ. Perhaps in the universe.

PRESIDENT (holding it up between thumb and finger, disappointed). Bit it's only----(Smiles.) What could you do with such a tiny--I mean, as a practical matter?

KOKINTZ. Incinerate an area of two thousand square miles. Perhaps more. (His apologetic smile again.) You know how we scientists are. We can never be sure without trying.

PRESIDENT (holding cylinder now with horrified care). Two thousand!

KOKINTZ. It's no danger now. Completely harmless--till I fit it into a little detonating device I have to design especially.

GENERAL SNIPPET (uneasily). He should be sent a safe distance before he starts fooling around with detonating devices.

KOKINTZ (sharply). I've told you--I will not leave Columbia.

PRESIDENT. No reason why you should. (To GENERAL, wryly.) What's the difference? . . . There's no such thing now as a safe distance.

KOKINTZ (holding out hand). The quadium, please. (The PRESIDENT hands it to him carefully.) I've told you all you have to know. Now I get back to work.

PRESIDENT (deeply disturbed). Professor--just so

I'm completely clear----The actual effect if--if----

KOKINTZ (pausing). If someone was so insane as to detonate quadium? The effect? (The PRESIDENT nods.) About what you'd expect if the sun were placed in contact with that part of the earth's surface for the space of, say, a hundred billionth of a second. Well--back to the detonator. (KOKINTZ goes off R. The PRESIDENT is in shock. GENERAL SNIPPET gets up and starts recovering the blackboard.)

GENERAL SNIPPET. I better stay right here and start setting up some temporary security.

MR. BESTON. Better prepare some escape arrangement--in case the protest outside suddenly turns into a rampage. If it does, bring out the professor whether he likes it or not. And the quadium.

PRESIDENT (stunned with horror, shaking his head). There won't be any old-fashioned declarations of war after this. Anyone with a--a Q-Bomb fires one shot--and it's over.

MR. BESTON (trying to cheer the shaken PRESIDENT). Chief--talking about declarations of war--a funny thing happened at the State Department. (Smiling.) This declaration--absolutely hilarious----(Laughs.) It had a double-headed eagle that's----(Stopped cold by the PRESIDENT'S grim expression.) Yes--well, maybe some other time. (Fast dim to black, as they go out R and the props are removed.)

(During this and from off L there is a sudden bing-bing-bing of a triangle being struck repeatedly. COUNT MOUNTJOY hurries on from UL. He is holding the triangle and striking it as he comes. [NOTE: A bell or a hand-held gong will serve

the same purpose.]

MOUNTJOY (looking anxiously at the sky as he sounds his alarm). Air raid! Take cover! Air raid!

(The peasant girl ANN races on from DL and then stops, nervous and uncertain.)

MOUNTJOY. It's the Americans! Air raid! ANN (shaking fist at sky). Pick on someone your size! (Frightened by her own defiance, ANN races out UL.)

(Two girls, NORMA and HELEN, are hurrying in UR.)

NORMA. Have they come? Are we under attack? HELEN. Do you think they'll bomb the castle?

MOUNTJOY (still sounding alarm). Take to open fields! Take to the cellar!

HELEN (freezing). Which?

NORMA. Either one!

HELEN (desperate). I can't decide!

NORMA (jerking HELEN's arm). Come on---- (Girls run off L. The sound of a plane is heard coming overhead. COUNT MOUNTJOY looks up, and starts sounding the alarm more urgently.) MOUNTJOY. Air attack! They've come! They're here! (He crouches protectively on one knee, still sounding his alarm.)

(GLORIANA is coming on L, followed by BENTER.)

BENTER. Your Highness, please--take to the cellar!

GLORIANA. No.

BENTER. If you won't think of yourself, think of us! Think of me!

GLORIANA. You?

BENTER (half frantic). If you stay up here, how can I go down there? (Indignantly.) And I might get killed up here!

GLORIANA (to the still clanging MOUNTJOY). Count Mountjoy--stop that.

MOUNTJOY (rising). But, Highness----(Pointing up.) The United States Strategic Air Command!

GLORIANA. I wish it was. Then we'd know they were aware of us. (The sound of the plane is fading.)

BENTER. But they might start dropping----

GLORIANA (interrupting). All they could drop is tourists. That's Pan-American--the flight between Paris and Rome.

MOUNTJOY. It couldn't possibly----(Glancing after plane, almost disappointed.) Well--possibly.

BENTER (realizing). Of course----(Looks at watch.) Right on time, too.

MOUNTJOY. I thought once we declared war, they'd do something--then we could just surrender. This waiting drives me crazy.

BENTER (critically). You're driving everyone crazy.

GLORIANA. Perhaps we haven't quite risen to the occasion.

MOUNTJOY. If they won't pay the slightest attention to us, what can we do?

GLORIANA. Escalate.

MOUNTJOY (amused at her joke). Escalate!

BENTER (also smiling). Serve them right, too.

GLORIANA (lightly). That's why I've decided on it. We're going to invade.

BENTER (his smile fading). Invade--the United

States?

GLORIANA. Itself!

MOUNTJOY. Hold on. A thing like that would make them very annoyed.

GLORIANA. Even a microscopic invasion would give them such a shock they'd assemble overwhelming power against us. Then they'll start feeling embarrassed. They may even be more generous than usual.

BENTER. But suppose we really make them mad?

MOUNTJOY. And suppose the leader of this--this demonstration--gives the plan away? Once he's captured, they'll get the truth out of him.

GLORIANA. That's why the leader has to be someone so sincere--so simple-minded--he truly believes he's out to defeat the United States.

MOUNTJOY. No one could be that simple. You couldn't find anyone who'd----

(MOUNTJOY stops himself as TULLY is seen coming on L, his manner purposeful but disturbed.)

MOUNTJOY (continuing). --except----

GLORIANA. Tully Bascom--can you report any progress?

TULLY (not happy about this). I've assembled the volunteers. And I have a plan--of sorts. (Anxious to clarify this insanity.) But, Glory----

GLORIANA. I've appointed Tully Bascom high constable of our expeditionary forces.

MOUNTJOY. The obvious choice, your Highness.

TULLY (respectfully pressing her). You do know-- the United States spends billions every year on ballistic missiles, atomic submarines, jet fighters----

GLORIANA (with a touch of severity). I did not say

I thought it would be easy.

TULLY. But----

GLORIANA. If you'd rather I turned to someone else----

TULLY. No, no--I'll do it! Count on me. If that's what you want, that's what I'll do. I'll drive the war home to the enemy. There's just one point to be settled.

GLORIANA. What point?

TULLY (embarrassed). How do we get there?

MOUNTJOY. Select a tourist liner belonging to a neutral nation.

BENTER. Third class. (Justifying economy.) After all, they're soldiers!

TULLY. Then what do we do on arrival? Go through customs, and present ourselves to the Immigration Department?

GLORIANA. We'll charter a small boat. Something can be found in Marseilles.

TULLY. An ordinary Marseilles fishing boat fits right in with my plan.

MOUNTJOY (amused). Tell us how you'll prevail.

TULLY (all business). The situation suggests a commando operation with light automatic weapons. We'll infiltrate Washington, D. C. either at night or in disguise. Their capital is full of dignitaries, and we'll seize the highest we can find as hostages--then retire with them to our boat and demand an investigation of our grievance.

MOUNTJOY. I'm not sure I like this plan.

GLORIANA. It's a wonderful plan. I only want to make a few changes.

MOUNTJOY. Let's discuss this privately.

GLORIANA. That's unnecessary. Instead of Washington with all those dignitaries, a more worthy object is their largest city--New York.

TULLY. New York City.

GLORIANA. And no disguises. We're not thieves. The boat should display the colors of Grand Fenwick and so should the men--as you march ashore proudly--in broad daylight.

TULLY (a veiled protest). That doesn't leave much chance for surprise.

MOUNTJOY. You question your sovereign?

GLORIANA. One thing more. We can't afford automatic rifles. We'll depend instead on our traditional weapon.

TULLY (openly dismayed). The long bow? Now, wait a minute----

MOUNTJOY. It was good enough for your ancestors.

BENTER. The job too much for you?

TULLY. I just want to be clear--we're to show the colors of Grand Fenwick as we go ashore in broad daylight and attack New York City with bows and arrows?

GLORIANA (quietly). That's right, Tully.

TULLY (swallowing and then replying manfully). Very well, your Highness. We'll do our best. (Something in TULLY'S quiet courage makes GLORIANA bite her lip. She scarcely hears the compliments that follow from MOUNTJOY and BENTER.)

MOUNTJOY (to GLORIANA, delighted with the outcome). If I had reservations concerning the plan, you've completely removed them!

BENTER. What a strategist! (A crowd is heard, apparently from the courtyard. It's an excited crowd, and they can be cheering. This sound effect should be played at a relatively low level at this point.)

TULLY (to GLORIANA). The first volunteers are still waiting for you to show yourself. (With a wry smile.) They'll need all the inspiration they can get.

MOUNTJOY. Sounds like half the population is out there, too!

(NOTE: If desired, and if a choir or glee club is available, they could begin singing softly off-stage. The song, which with minor revisions could well express the ancient spirit of Grand Fenwick, is the old Welsh battle song "Men of Harlech." The revision would make it "Men of Fenwick." See page 100. They sing only one chorus. If the singing is to be used, Gloriana should identify it with the following speech inserted at this point: "They're singing our national anthem!" The song should be sung softly at first and then with increasing volume toward the end of the scene. The timing of the song, if used, should be carefully rehearsed. It can, if necessary, conclude in the darkness following the blackout that ends the scene. If the singing is not used, the sound effect of a cheering crowd should be kept at a low level till the end of the scene, at which point the volume should be loud for a few seconds.)

TULLY (his manner suddenly personal). I expect I'll need inspiration, too, Glory. Would you give me your favor to carry?

GLORIANA (coming forward to him, deeply touched). Of course--anything.

TULLY. Your scarf----(With warmth.) So that every moment of the expedition, you'll be with me! (Afraid he has said too much, recovering.) I'd wear it with honor in your service.

GLORIANA (with answering warmth). Oh, I want you to wear it! (As she gives it to him, wanting to explain what she can't explain.) Tully--we have to serve our country, but--but people serve in different ways. I want you to remember that

no matter how things turn out, it's for Grand Fenwick!

TULLY (touching scarf to his lips). And Gloriana! We'll do our best. Come----(He leads her forward DC, flanked by MOUNTJOY and BENTER. As they raise their hands to the crowd apparently below, the cheers [and song, if used] climax. The lights dim to black.)

(The moment the stage is dark and the voices of Grand Fenwick have faded, there is the sudden jarring sound of some particularly low-brow popular music. It continues for about ten seconds, and then the volume is reduced to where it can scarcely be heard. At this point an announcer begins talking over it. [NOTE: The ANNOUNCER can talk through a sound system or simply speak with his own voice from just offstage.]

ANNOUNCER (cheerfully). This is your music and news, news and music station broadcasting from the Empire State Building, New York City. A new wave of demonstrations at Columbia University seems to be reaching a new climax as students protest what they claim is a secret weapons research project being carried out for the Defense Department. The university administration would neither confirm nor deny the charge. Meanwhile, the protest demonstration appears to be growing. Before we go back to the music, here's an oddity from our news desk. The ocean liner "The United States" reported that shortly after clearing New York Harbor this morning, they sighted what looked like a small French fishing vessel flying a peculiar and unknown flag. They called on the loud hailer asking her to identify herself and were

answered by a flight of arrows! Repeat--a flight of arrows! (Laughing.) And I was worried about those new orbital bombs! (The music comes up to the high level at which it began, continues for a few seconds and then cuts out.)

(The shouts of protest come up again in the darkness, continue for about ten seconds, and as the light comes up they diminish. The ASSISTANT to Professor Kokintz is coming on R escorting a female colleague, PROFESSOR ANN SMITH.)

ASSISTANT. Professor, please--I think we'd better hurry.

PROFESSOR SMITH. It's good of you to see me to the subway, but certainly there's no cause for concern.

ASSISTANT. When I was a student, I had to study all the time. These upsets--I get feelings of hostility. They don't appreciate the genius of Professor Kokintz, and if they broke into his lab----

PROFESSOR SMITH. Now, now--hostility is one thing, but this is anxiety. You're giving way to irrational fears. Actually, these students--(Stops short as she looks back R.)--these students--look at them!

ASSISTANT (also looking R). They're coming up on us. And they're marching.

PROFESSOR SMITH. What kind of crazy outfits. They--it looks like they're wearing armor.

ASSISTANT. Nobody wears----(If possible there is a whoosh sound. In any case, they both look up.) You're right about me, Professor. I'm filled with anxieties. Let's get out of here.

PROFESSOR SMITH (as they start L). I seem to

have a hang-up, too. My hang-up is paranoia. (If possible, there's another whoosh.) I have this feeling I'm being shot at--by bows and arrows.

ASSISTANT (an arm around her). Come on--let's make for the subway. (As they dash off L, TULLY'S voice is heard calling a march step off R.)

TULLY (from off R). One two--one two--one two--one two---

(This continues as the expeditionary force of Grand Fenwick marches on R in single file. In addition to Tully and his standard bearer, Will Tatum, who have not come on yet, there should be at least four of these soldiers. Probably the maximum number should not exceed ten, but this is optional, depending on the availability of male extras and the size of the stage. As soon as all soldiers are lined up on stage, they start marking time where they stand. WILL TATUM, carrying the flag of Grand Fenwick, strides on R and crosses to the left of the soldiers. TULLY, dressed like the others but without a helmet or weapons, comes on R. He wears Gloriana's scarf diagonally across his chest, and his manner is all purpose.)

TULLY. Halt. (They halt. He barks.) Right face. (They turn to face the audience.) At ease. (They assume the "at ease" position. WILL, with the flagstaff butted by his left foot, holds it out to the side. The men's eyes bulge as they look up over the audience, apparently at this tremendous city.) Men of Grand Fenwick--I've led you to the heartland of the enemy. We're in New York. So far as I can tell, our exact location is the

intersection of the roads Broadway and number one hundred sixty-one.

FIRST SOLDIER (it's utterly incredible). A hundred and sixty-one roads!

(Two STUDENTS hurry on L.)

WILL (nodding to L). There's even more! TULLY. Silence in the ranks!

FIRST STUDENT. Hey, guys--the target is the new lab--Professor Kokintz. Pass it along.

SECOND STUDENT (pausing in front of them). Chain mail--great idea! (They race off R.)

WILL. Tully, sir--the enemy doesn't seem to be taking us seriously. I mean, telling us about a target. And where we docked--the people giving us flowers--crazy-looking people with long hair and beads. Must've been some kind of druids.

TULLY. We'll give them a bellyful of war just as soon as we--(Perplexed.)--as soon as we find their army.

THIRD SOLDIER. Instead of warning shots, I should've winged those two just now.

FOURTH SOLDIER. Look at the castles!

FIFTH SOLDIER. All those castles, Tully--they'll take a lot of storming.

TULLY (scornfully). Anyone too fainthearted for the service of Gloriana can return now to the river and wait with the guard on the boat.

FIFTH SOLDIER (unhappily). All I said--they'll take a lot of storming.

WILL. Tully--a vehicle coming up this road. It looks military.

TULLY. Form up here. (The soldiers, enthusiastic now, scramble into a cluster, preparing for action. The sound of the approaching car can be heard.)

WILL. Army car.

TULLY. Steady, men!

WILL. The driver's definitely a soldier.

TULLY. You two bowmen--shoot out their front tires. We'll cover with supporting fire if necessary, but we want them alive. (As two men prepare.) Forward for Fenwick! (The two soldiers scurry off L.)

THIRD SOLDIER. Why don't they shoot?

WILL. Those tires don't offer much target.

TULLY. Fire! (From off L there is a loud "pop-pop!") Got them! (The car is heard skidding to a stop, then a furious voice is heard shouting.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (off L). What've you crazy students done to my jeep? If you fancy-dress dropouts think you can take on the United States Army, you're in for a big----

TULLY (at the same time). He lacks respect.

Shoot off his cap!

GENERAL SNIPPET. --surprise. Hey!

WILL. Beautiful shot!

TULLY. Bring them here.

WILL. This is more like it.

(GENERAL SNIPPET, carrying his hat which is pierced by an arrow, comes on, his expression total disbelief. With him are a U.S. SOLDIER, the two WACS and PROFESSOR KOKINTZ, who carries a small box. They are prodded forward by a Grand Fenwick soldier who is holding a small mace.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (incredulous). You're maniacs! Psychopaths!

FIRST SOLDIER. Tully, sir. These two are girls.

WAC JILL. Don't touch me!

WAC DEBBIE. Gangsters!

GENERAL SNIPPET (almost incoherent). You'll get twenty years! With hard labor! In solitary confinement.

TULLY. Why?

GENERAL SNIPPET. Why? You're interfering with an army general on active---You almost caused a crash that would have blown up---(Horrified at the realization.) Oh, my heaven!

WAC JILL (warning). Careful----

WAC DEBBIE. Dad----

KOKINTZ (to TULLY). Let me guess--you're filming a scene from William Tell.

TULLY. Actually we're commencing hostilities with the United States. You're our first prisoners of war.

KOKINTZ. Commencing hostilities?

GENERAL SNIPPET. Boys--protest all you want. And dissent--I believe in dissent. But you're not commencing hostilities. It's not war!

TULLY. It's war! You'll be treated in accord with the Geneva Convention.

GENERAL SNIPPET (struggling to keep "reasonable"). You don't understand. This is serious. It affects the security of our country. It's vital that . . .

TULLY. The security of the United States?

WAC JILL (sharply). Don't say any more!

TULLY (to JILL). About what?

WAC JILL (firmly). My name is Jill Snippet. My serial number is 65543.

WAC DEBBIE (as TULLY looks at her). My number is 76621.

GENERAL SNIPPET (frantic with impatience).

Don't be silly, girls. I'm just trying to make these cut-ups realize this is serious business. There's a helicopter waiting. I have to get the professor to a safe . . .

TULLY. A general escorting a professor--the

security of the United States?

GENERAL SNIPPET (beginning to realize). You're not students?

TULLY. If your vehicle had crashed, what would have blown up?

GENERAL SNIPPET. Who are you? I demand----

TULLY. Tully Bascom, high constable of the expeditionary forces of Grand Fenwick.

KOKINTZ. I don't keep up with these things. I don't even have time for the papers. Was there a reason for declaring war?

FIRST SOLDIER. Over wine.

SECOND SOLDIER. What better reason?

KOKINTZ (incredulous). Over wine--what better reason?

TULLY. Sir, are you carrying explosives?

KOKINTZ. This--it's an experiment.

GENERAL SNIPPET. Keep your distance.

TULLY (reaching for box). I'm afraid I'll have to----

KOKINTZ (protectively). No, no--don't touch!

TULLY. Sorry, but----

KOKINTZ (gasping as TULLY takes it). Careful!

TULLY. Prize of war.

KOKINTZ. Hold it gently.

TULLY. Is it a weapon?

GENERAL SNIPPET. It's--chemicals.

TULLY (pretending to throw it away). If it's just chemicals----

KOKINTZ. Stop!

GENERAL SNIPPET. No!

KOKINTZ. All right--it's a bomb.

TULLY. You should've said so.

WILL (unimpressed). Such a small bomb.

KOKINTZ. That small bomb--if it explodes--will blow up all of New York. Also Philadelphia and Boston.

WILL. Even if it was filled with gunpowder it couldn't wreck one building.

FIRST SOLDIER. He's lying, Tully.

TULLY. I don't think so. (To PROFESSOR. Curiously.) But why would you build such a bomb?

KOKINTZ. It's so powerful, it makes war out of the question. It's a peace weapon.

TULLY. I see. Well, Grand Fenwick is so small we could use a peace weapon. (Coming to a decision. All business.) Fall in. We're marching back to the river. (At this, the U. S. SOLDIER breaks free.)

GENERAL SNIPPET. Run! (To TULLY, as SOLDIER escapes R.) He made it. He'll turn in an alarm. You'll never get away with this now!

TULLY (unperturbed). Perhaps. Meanwhile--in line.

SECOND SOLDIER (prodding with mace). Move, prisoner.

(A gum-chewing "sight-seeing" COUPLE strolls on.)

KOKINTZ (anxiously). Keep your mind on the bomb, please.

GENERAL SNIPPET. But you can't----(Calling urgently.) People--help us! Stop them!

SECOND SOLDIER (prodding with mace again). You were told--in line.

GENERAL SNIPPET (helplessly getting in line).

Listen--they're foreign invaders! We're being abducted! I'm a general in the United States Army!

TULLY (matter-of-factly). Attention. Right face.

(The GENERAL automatically goes along with the others, but continues to plead with the impulsive, gum-chewing COUPLE.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (his voice rising). They're taking us to a boat--probably in the Hudson River. Phone the Sixth Army District and ask for--tell them General Snippet . . .

TULLY. One two--one two--one two--one two--one two--one

GENERAL SNIPPET (marking time with the others in spite of himself). Do something! Citizens--it's for your country!

TULLY. Forward, march. (They start marching off R.) One two--one two--one two--one two--one

GENERAL SNIPPET (over his shoulder). I beg you--desperately important---(Prodded again by mace.

As he goes off.) Help us! Help! (From off R.)

Get involved! (The COUPLE stares after them.)

MAN (stops chewing). How about that?

GIRL (admiring). You said it'd be worth coming up here.

MAN (strolling along again). Get involved--(Too smart for that.)--with a lawsuit. (As the lights dim. Amused at the idiotic suggestion.) Call the Sixth Army!

(There is a sudden loud blare of a military marching band, the tramp of marching feet, and the rumble of heavy military equipment on parade. The sound continues at a fairly high level for about ten seconds. At this point the PRESIDENT comes on R into the playing area that is separated to the right, where there is now a small desk with telephones [one red] on it and a chair behind it. He is disturbed. He stops and turns to call.)

PRESIDENT (calling off R). Miss Wilkins, please shut the window. It sounds like the parade's coming right into the White House.

VOICE (from off R). Yes, Mr. President. (The PRESIDENT goes behind his desk and sits. The band music is suddenly cut to a very low level.)

PRESIDENT (calling off R again). Thank you. (The

PRESIDENT reaches over to the red telephone, picks it up, and apparently pushes a button on it several times. He waits impatiently and then hangs up. He stares at the telephone, then talks uneasily to himself.) Still no answer.

(MISS WILKINS, a sensible-looking secretary, comes on R.)

MISS WILKINS. Sir, they're waiting for you at the reviewing stand. If you don't go soon, you'll miss all of it.

PRESIDENT (indicating telephone). My tamper-proof line direct to Professor Kokintz's quarters isn't doing a bit of good. He hasn't answered all day.

MISS WILKINS. Probably spending all his time in the laboratory. Shall I put through a regular call to him there?

PRESIDENT. I don't want to go through the campus switchboard. (Concerned.) I put through a call to General Snippet and he doesn't answer, either. His staff hasn't seen him since the campus demonstrations.

MISS WILKINS. Really getting out of hand this time. (Smiles.) There was even a report some students were wearing armor.

PRESIDENT. It was a mistake to let Professor Kokintz continue such sensitive work at Columbia.

MISS WILKINS. You should make an appearance at the reviewing stand. The military is putting on the greatest Armed Forces Day parade ever! (Confidentially.) It helps restore confidence.

PRESIDENT. I can't leave yet. The Secretary of State is on his way over.

MISS WILKINS. I've a good mind to open the window again--so you'll hear the tremendous display

you're missing.

PRESIDENT. Sure--military hardware worth billions! (Indicating half his little finger.) But it isn't as powerful as that much of a--a certain form of hydrogen. (Clears his throat.) When I say--"a form of hydrogen," you understand I speak for the layman. (There is a buzz from off R, and MISS WILKINS starts R.) If that's Beston, send him right in. (As she goes off, the PRESIDENT turns to the telephone again, presses the button several times, and then listens anxiously. He sighs at the lack of answer and hangs up again.)

(MR. BESTON comes on R and pauses.)

MR. BESTON. Mr. President?

PRESIDENT. I've been hiding out in this side office because it has the direct line to Kokintz. Been trying to reach him since this morning.

MR. BESTON. Probably holed up in his laboratory. Have the FBI look in and see. (Urgently.) Chief, I've got something incredible to tell you.

PRESIDENT (unable to think about anything else). I brought in the FBI about four hours ago, but they're under wraps. It's not only security--it's that temperamental professor.

MR. BESTON. The professor's under a strain. Maybe he went away for a few days' rest.

PRESIDENT. That might explain General Snippet. He'd have gone along to keep an eye on things.

MR. BESTON (relieved). If he's missing, too, then I'm sure they're together. (Down to business.) Chief, the reason I asked to see you--- It's unbelievable!

PRESIDENT (still worrying). I've already had a preliminary report from the FBI, but it's just

trifles--vandalism at Columbia during the protest, a peculiar flag run up the flagpole, some ridiculous report from a soldier--that sort of thing.

MR. BESTON. I wanted to see you about a peculiar flag myself.

PRESIDENT (apologetic). I keep interrupting.

MR. BESTON (smiling helplessly). This is so ridiculous, I don't know how to begin. A small shield was found in the street after the demonstration in New York. It was turned over to the museum but they couldn't identify the crest. They thought the State Department might recognize it.

PRESIDENT (impatiently). I've so much on my mind----

MR. BESTON. Please! A middle European specialist identified it as the crest of Grand Fenwick--a tiny duchy founded in the fourteenth century.

PRESIDENT. That's interesting, but----

MR. BESTON (demanding). You have to hear the rest! You see, then I remembered where I'd heard the name before, and----

PRESIDENT (interrupting, sharply). Never mind, Beston. I'm much too busy to----

MR. BESTON (so anxious he cuts in). Mr. President--we are at war with Grand Fenwick! We've been at war with them for weeks! Furthermore, there's evidence we've been invaded by a force from that country, which apparently landed in New York and then withdrew during the upset at Columbia.

PRESIDENT. You're out of your mind!

MR. BESTON. I was beginning to think so, too, but not now. (Challenging.) What did the peculiar flag look like--the one on the university flagpole?

PRESIDENT (shrugging). A bird with two heads.

MR. BESTON. The flag of Grand Fenwick!

PRESIDENT. No!

MR. BESTON. My secretary's trying to locate their declaration of war. It had the identical crest.

PRESIDENT. You've seen such a document?

MR. BESTON (unhappily). I thought it was a joke! The boys in the press room!

PRESIDENT (frankly). So would I. Are these people crazy, or have they got some reason?

MR. BESTON. Apparently we've threatened their livelihood.

PRESIDENT (indignant). We did?

MR. BESTON. I've had a crash investigation under way since this morning. We find this country depends on the export of a particular wine, and an outfit in California put out a cheap imitation--stole their label and everything. They have a point, all right.

PRESIDENT. But we're a reasonable nation. Why didn't they try a sensible approach?

MR. BESTON. They did. I find they sent several perfectly valid protests.

PRESIDENT. What happened?

MR. BESTON. Someone sent them on to those California winemakers for comment.

PRESIDENT (sharply). And?

MR. BESTON (wincing). The winemakers used the protests--in a series of advertisements of questionable taste claiming their product was so similar it brought an official protest.

PRESIDENT (disgusted). Oh, no.

MR. BESTON. We don't look very good this time, Chief. (Shaking his head with wonder.) A little country with military equipment out of the fourteenth century!

PRESIDENT (shouting off R). Miss Wilkins--open

the window again! (Back to BESTON.) It just isn't possible for this country to be invaded by fourteenth-century Europeans! (The sound of a military band is suddenly heard again, playing another lively march. There can also be the sound of heavy vehicles passing and crowd noises.)

MR. BESTON (looking off R, impressed; having to talk louder to be heard). It's tremendous! The most powerful military display I've ever seen.

PRESIDENT (also having to talk louder). That Fenwick country--they could send protests and mail over a few knickknacks, but they'd never get away with even a token invasion. I tell you----

(He stops as MISS WILKINS hurries in R carrying a cardboard box.)

MISS WILKINS. Sorry, sir, but an FBI messenger just brought this from New York. He said it's the first definite clue concerning General Snippet.

PRESIDENT (taking box). I wonder what on earth----(As he opens it.) But as soon as we locate Snippet, we'll know where Kokintz----(He stops short, staring with shock at the contents of the box.)

MR. BESTON. What is it? (The stunned PRESIDENT lifts out General Snippet's hat, which is still pierced by the brightly feathered arrow.)

PRESIDENT (swallowing with difficulty). Where--where was this found?

MISS WILKINS. It was picked up by a groundskeeper at Columbia University.

PRESIDENT (nodding R). Thank you. (As MISS WILKINS goes off R, he holds up the arrow to BESTON.) Would you say this arrow looks fourteenth-century European?

MR. BESTON (without humor, grimly). It doesn't

look twentieth-century Sears and Roebuck!  
(Urgently.) Chief, I'm trying to make you  
realize what's happened!

PRESIDENT (struggling to accept the impossible).  
We've been invaded by men with bows and ar-  
rows--they either captured or killed General  
Snippet. (With a sudden new worry, shouting  
off R.) Miss Wilkins--did he say where this  
was found at Columbia?

MISS WILKINS (off R, calling back loudly over  
military noise). He said in a bush beside one  
of the laboratory buildings.

PRESIDENT. Laboratory----(Turning to BESTON  
with growing horror.) You don't suppose . . .  
If anything happened to Kokintz--if he'd finished  
the--the work, and they got to him--and with  
Snippet out of the way! (There is a sudden sharp  
ringing of the telephone.)

MR. BESTON (pointing to it). Chief--the direct line  
to Kokintz.

PRESIDENT. Thank Heaven! (Picking up the tele-  
phone.) Hello, Kokintz--you'll have to talk loud,  
there's so much noise here. (Listens, then,  
startled.) Who's this? Who is it? (Repeating  
answer.) Mrs. Reiner! What are you doing on  
this telephone? Answer me! This is the Presi-  
dent! (Calming a little at her answer.) Oh,  
yes--his housekeeper. (Trying to sound casual.)  
Well, how is the professor? (With a sigh of  
despair.) He's disappeared. Could you tell me  
when he disappeared? (Winces at her answer.)  
During the demonstration. (Crushed.) Thank  
you for calling. (Kept from hanging up by a  
further comment by her; suddenly irritated.)  
How do I know what you should do with his sand-  
wiches? Eat them yourself! (He hangs up.)

(MISS WILKINS comes on R.)

MISS WILKINS. Should I shut the window? The jet  
bomber formations will be coming over.

PRESIDENT (waving her away listlessly). What's  
the difference? (As she goes out R, he turns to  
MR. BESTON.) If they captured Kokintz and  
the Q-bomb--and if it's fitted with the detonator  
--that little duchy is the most powerful nation  
in the world.

MR. BESTON (hushed). Grand Fenwick! (The  
roar of planes overhead is growing very loud.)

PRESIDENT. They declared war on us--they in-  
vaded us--(He looks at the arrow he's still hold-  
ing in his hand, then he looks up at the thunder-  
ing sound of the plane formations and then he  
looks front. The curtain starts to fall. The  
PRESIDENT'S voice is almost drowned out by  
the planes.) And they've--beaten us!

THE CURTAIN IS DOWN

## ACT TWO

THE HOUSELIGHTS DIM and after the house is dark there are about five seconds of silence. Then suddenly, as at the start of the first act, a tremendous roaring is heard and it continues for several seconds. As the roaring subsides, the lights come up immediately in front of the curtain. From off R, TULLY'S voice is heard calling a military march step.)

TULLY. One two--One two--One two--One two--  
One two--One two--One two--

(During this WILL strides on R, dressed as for battle and carrying the banner. The FIRST SOLDIER comes next, followed by the two WACS who are swinging along in step. Their glowering father, GENERAL SNIPPET, comes on after them, and he's constantly having to hop back into step. He is followed closely by the SECOND SOLDIER, who hops in and out of step right along with the GENERAL. The THIRD and FOURTH SOLDIERS come on next and between them they're clutching the "bomb." PROFESSOR KOKINTZ follows anxiously after them. KOKINTZ is almost a nervous wreck as he flutters about the bomb bearers, biting his nails between pleas for care. [NOTE: If additional soldiers are used, they should follow Kokintz.]

KOKINTZ (pleading anxiously). Please----Care--  
ful! Don't stumble! Easy with it! Gently!

TULLY (off R). Halt.

KOKINTZ (amending). Halt gently! (They all stop.)  
THIRD SOLDIER (to KOKINTZ, seething). Will you  
stop it?

FOURTH SOLDIER (also to KOKINTZ, angrily). I'd  
like to throw it at you!

KOKINTZ (closing eyes and clenching fists). Don't  
even say such a thing!

GENERAL SNIPPET (turning to talk to "bomb bearers"). Let the Professor fix the bomb so it won't  
be so dangerous. It won't take him a minute.

KOKINTZ (opening eyes). I beg you again.

THIRD SOLDIER (as he and FOURTH SOLDIER  
cling to it more protectively). Tully's told you--  
no!

FOURTH SOLDIER. No, no, no! (The SECOND  
SOLDIER has kept between the GENERAL and the  
bomb bearers, his face just a few inches from  
the GENERAL'S face.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (to SECOND SOLDIER, exas-  
perated). Must you guard me so closely?

SECOND SOLDIER. Isn't this right? I never  
guarded a general before.

WAC JILL (calling back). Stop complaining, Dad.  
It's embarrassing.

WAC DEBBIE (also reprimanding him). Face it--  
we're prisoners of war.

(TULLY strides on R.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (snorting). You call this  
"happening" a war?

TULLY. Silence in the ranks! (Pauses to administer  
a general rebuke.) I did not say "at ease." I  
said "halt." (They freeze. He relaxes.) All



AT RISE OF CURTAIN: GLORIANA is seated on the throne holding a letter, and BENTER and MOUNTJOY are seated in their respective chairs.)

GLORIANA (reading letter). "After slipping out a river named for the explorer Henry Hudson, we headed north till we reached the prevailing west-erlies and then made a fast Atlantic crossing. Altering course to south southeast we made good time through variable winds to Gibraltar. A member of the crew will row ashore here to mail this letter. Inform families that all are well." (With baffled shrug.) "Your obedient servant, Tully Bascom."

BENTER (dismayed). The whole letter? That's all? MOUNTJOY (as GLORIANA nods, testily.) Sounds like an entry in a ship's log.

GLORIANA (examining postmark). Mailed at Gibraltar nine days ago.

BENTER. But he doesn't say what happened!

MOUNTJOY (scornfully). Probably too ashamed--the coward!

GLORIANA (defensively). We don't know he's a coward.

MOUNTJOY. How else could all of them be well--and coming back almost as fast as they got there?

BENTER (worried). Maybe the Americans just won't go to war with us.

MOUNTJOY. Because Tully did nothing. I always knew he was an idiot, but I thought at least he'd make some sort of simple-minded effort.

BENTER. If we had a radio we could listen for news. (Earnestly.) Maybe we should invest in a radio--I mean, we're at war!

MOUNTJOY. If we were at war--if Tully'd done his job--we'd have heard something from the

American consulate over in France. GLORIANA (an unhappy concession). Apparently Tully wasn't entirely successful.

(A tall, simply dressed woman, MRS. BASCOM, is coming on D.L.)

MOUNTJOY (exclaiming sarcastically). Wasn't entirely successful! He didn't even get captured. He didn't even get arrested! (The woman pauses and curtseys to GLORIANA.)

MRS. BASCOM. Your Highness.

GLORIANA (recognizing her). Mrs. Bascom--I haven't seen you since--since long ago.

MOUNTJOY (a gentle suggestion that she is intruding). This is a meeting of the Privy Council.

BENTER. But nothing said concerning your son reflects on you, Mrs. Bascom.

MRS. BASCOM (speaking only to GLORIANA). I was admitted at once because I've just heard our men returning. They're coming up through the National Forest right now.

GLORIANA (in her eagerness, standing up). You think it's your son? (MOUNTJOY and BENTER also rise.)

MRS. BASCOM. And the others. As if our history had come to life again. . . . Their voices are just as legend describes the first sounds of our men returning victorious from the battle with the French.

MOUNTJOY. Don't talk blasphemy, madam!

MRS. BASCOM. Blasphemy, sir?

MOUNTJOY. Comparing our brave ancestors with these craven bunglers.

(ANN, the barefoot peasant girl, rushes on L.)

ANN. They're coming! They're here!

GLORIANA (a new worry). You're certain they're our men? (From off L, the singing can begin again, the song being their anthem--"Men of Fenwick." If the song is not used, a cheering crowd can be heard instead, though the sound should begin at a reasonable level.)

ANN. Can't you hear?

(NORMA and HELEN are coming on UL. The PAGE is coming on DR.)

HELEN (to GLORIANA). The colors of Grand Fenwick! I saw them myself! (If the song is being sung, the sound of a cheering crowd should also be heard now, but kept low enough so it will not interfere with the song. If the song is not used, the crowd noises should grow louder now.)

PAGE. Oh, they look so brave!

NORMA. Listen to the excitement!

GLORIANA. They must be at the castle!

MRS. BASCOM (excited). My son----

MOUNTJOY (muttering). They'll tear him limb from limb--after the court martial.

MRS. BASCOM (startled). Court martial?

GLORIANA. Really, Uncle!

MOUNTJOY (sharply). He failed in his duty.

BENTER (agreeing). I'm afraid it's self-evident. (There is a fanfare. ANN, NORMA and HELEN watch from beside the throne.)

MRS. BASCOM (anxiously). He would not fail in his duty, your Grace.

GLORIANA (unhappily). I'm sure we'll find extenuating circumstances.

MOUNTJOY (contemptuous). We'll find excuses, that's all!

GLORIANA (angry at MOUNTJOY). At least, let's hear the excuses, Uncle! (There is another and louder fanfare. GLORIANA calls off L.) Let them approach the throne!

(WILL strides on DL, bearing the banner of Grand Fenwick, followed by TULLY. WILL stops DR of the throne and TULLY, DL. WILL salutes by bringing banner down so the head of the staff touches the floor before GLORIANA, and then raises it again. TULLY goes down on one knee facing GLORIANA. The singing and/or cheering should either end here or grow soft.)

TULLY. I beg permission to report on our war with the United States.

BENTER. War?

MOUNTJOY. Brazen effrontery!

TULLY (ignoring them). Your Highness?

MRS. BASCOM (concerned). Won't you hear him?

GLORIANA (seating herself on throne, and gesturing to TULLY). We'll hear your report. (TULLY stands.)

TULLY. Thank you, Mother. (To GLORIANA.) Thank you, your Grace.

MOUNTJOY. Well?

BENTER. What happened?

MOUNTJOY. Briefly?

TULLY (continuing to ignore everyone but GLORIANA). Briefly, your Highness--we won! (The surprise of his statement brings GLORIANA back to her feet, and gasps from the others.)

GLORIANA. You what?

TULLY. The forces of Grand Fenwick return as always--victorious!

GLORIANA (angry because she thinks he is insincere). Let's get to the facts. Did you follow



slightly.)

THIRD SOLDIER (under his breath, to KOKINTZ).

If you say that once more----

KOKINTZ. You must have heard of nuclear weapons!

BENTER. When I was in France, I heard something--over the radio.

GLORIANA. What?

BENTER (admitting). They're powerful.

KOKINTZ (with dire warning). This little box is the most powerful. The only one of its kind. (A whisper of horror.) The Q-bomb. (They retreat even further.)

MOUNTJOY (anxiously). The United States will want it back.

BENTER (more frightened). What will they do to us?

GENERAL SNIPPET. Oh, you've asked for it!

WAC JILL. Quiet, Dad.

MOUNTJOY (demanding). Asked for what, General?

WAC DEBBIE (quickly). His name is General Snippet. Serial number 44461, and that's it.

MOUNTJOY (shouting). What will they do to us, General?

GENERAL SNIPPET (furious with frustration). What can they do? You've got the Q-bomb!

GLORIANA (hushed). Then--then we did win?

GENERAL SNIPPET (angrily). By a ridiculous fluke!

MOUNTJOY (to the GENERAL, sharply). Pull yourself together, man!

GENERAL SNIPPET (equally sharp in reply). What do you mean?

MOUNTJOY. Don't you realize what you're saying?

GENERAL. I said you won by a ridiculous fluke!

BENTER (an incredulous half-whisper). He doesn't realize!

GLORIANA (nervously). About their Q-bomb----

TULLY (a respectful correction). Our Q-bomb. GLORIANA. Yes--I want it carried to the deep dungeon.

KOKINTZ. Please--could I make it safer? So it won't be so dangerous?

GENERAL SNIPPET. If you'd let him adjust it, there wouldn't be anything to worry about.

TULLY. There wouldn't be any Q-bomb, either.

(To GLORIANA.) He's not to be allowed near it.

MOUNTJOY. Suppose it goes off accidentally?

TULLY. We'll have to risk it.

BENTER (to TULLY). Are you giving the orders? GLORIANA. I haven't abdicated to you, Tully--or to anyone else. (To SOLDIERS.) I said to take their--our Q-bomb to the deep dungeon.

KOKINTZ. You must let me go along and----

TULLY. Silence. (The THIRD and FOURTH SOLDIERS bow their heads briefly to GLORIANA, wheel with the plank, and start off UR--being given ample room by everyone. The PAGE follows them off.)

GLORIANA (as they are going). Place it carefully on a bed of straw. (To the prisoners.) Will you give your parole not to escape? The deep dungeon is so uncomfortable.

GENERAL SNIPPET (conceding). Oh, all right.

(The two WACS nod, and KOKINTZ shrugs.)

GLORIANA (to SOLDIERS). Take the General and Professor to the guest wing. (The FIRST and SECOND SOLDIERS indicate UL, and they go off in that direction with their charges.)

MOUNTJOY (ingratiating). We'll see you're quite comfortable.

GLORIANA (turning and calling to the two girls). Ladies--show the Army ladies to the vacant room near mine.

HELEN (gesturing UR). This way----

GLORIANA. Ann--help them get settled.

WAC JILL (to GLORIANA). Thank you.

WAC DEBBIE (to ANN, as they go). I wouldn't mind going barefoot like you.

WAC JILL. These shoes are terrible.

ANN (as they go UR). I'm only occupationally barefoot.

WAC DEBBIE (as they go off UR). What occupation is that? (They are gone.)

TULLY (turning). Will--see to the posting of border guards.

MOUNTJOY (reprimanding). Without asking permission?

TULLY (correcting himself). With your permission, Highness.

GLORIANA. Granted. (WILL bows to GLORIANA, then strides off DL.)

BENTER (to GLORIANA, nervously). I wonder if we should put straw on the roads running past the castle--to deaden any vibrations that might reach the deep dungeon.

GLORIANA. We'll consider it.

MOUNTJOY (to TULLY, bitterly). You've certainly put us in a fine fix.

TULLY. Fix?

MOUNTJOY. You might as well import an active volcano and put it in the middle of our valley.

BENTER. The Americans will never buy our wines now! Not after this!

TULLY. But we're at war.

BENTER. Yes, but--but----

MOUNTJOY. We didn't expect you to--well----

TULLY (bewildered). What are you trying to say?

GLORIANA. They're concerned about the Q-bomb.

MRS. BASCOM (calling). Your Highness--I thought their concern was that my son might not do his duty.

GLORIANA (wryly). There doesn't seem to be any question on that, Mrs. Bascom.

TULLY. Exactly what is the question?

MOUNTJOY. Don't take that tone with us.

TULLY. I don't understand your concern.

MOUNTJOY. Our concern? You've placed us at the mercy of that frightful little box!

BENTER. Why don't we send it back?

TULLY. And give up our victory?

MOUNTJOY. If that Q-bomb should blow up, it would not only destroy our country, but also the Swiss, the French, the Dutch, the Germans and the Italians--indeed, the whole of Europe, which is the cradle of Western civilization. (Furious.) You deserve the most severe reprimand. Impeachment! Exile!

TULLY. Didn't you want me to win? (As they glance nervously at each other.) What was I supposed to do--lose?

GLORIANA (uneasily). You keep questioning us. The Privy Council will have to consider the situation. (A dismissal.) Perhaps you'll want to escort your mother home.

TULLY. Thank you. But before I go, I must return your favor. (Taking off scarf, his voice now personal.) It was a comfort and an inspiration, Glory. (Handing it to her gravely.) If you'll remember when you gave it to me, I said that I'd do my best. (He bows, formally.) By your leave, Highness. (TULLY crosses to his mother.)

MRS. BASCOM (as she takes his arm). A proud day, my son. (GLORIANA looks after them as they start off DR. Almost unaware of what she is doing, she brings up the scarf and touches it lightly to her lips as Tully did when it was given to him. MOUNTJOY and BENTER are staring

after the departing Tully.)  
MOUNTJOY (muttering). Outrageous upstart!  
BENTER. Getting too big for his boots--because he won a war!  
MOUNTJOY (to GLORIANA). He was expressly to lose that war!  
GLORIANA. Yes, but he didn't know it!  
BENTER (wistfully). I used to dream we'd lost, and all that aid was pouring in from America.  
MOUNTJOY (pointedly). What are we to do now? Rehabilitate the United States?  
BENTER. Oh, dear!  
GLORIANA. I never thought of that!

(HELEN and NORMA come in UR.)

HELEN. Your Highness----  
NORMA. One of the Army ladies was carrying a tiny radio in her bag.  
HELEN (holding up a small transistor set). She said it has a short wave band--which means you can hear a long distance. (She shrugs her confusion.)  
BENTER. I think I could handle it. (Taking it from HELEN.) Maybe I could tune in the United States.  
MOUNTJOY. If there's any truth to this nightmare, we'd certainly hear some reference to it.  
BENTER (setting radio on stool beside throne and fiddling with it). We'd have a better chance of reaching the United States up on the roof.  
GLORIANA (to HELEN and NORMA). You're to keep an eye on the Army ladies.  
NORMA (irked, but obedient). Yes, your Highness.  
HELEN (shortly). We're going. (As they go out UR, BENTER suddenly takes his hand from the radio.)  
BENTER. I've got something. (A radio voice is heard. It can be someone standing offstage and

just speaking the lines, or it can come through a sound system. The group around the radio freezes as the voice comes on.)  
ANNOUNCER (speaking with a slight British accent). We will conclude this special BBC news summary with a direct quotation of the question put to the Foreign Secretary today in the House of Commons, and his reply. The honorable member for North Westhampton rose to ask, "Is her Majesty's Government aware of the reports that the Duchy of Grand Fenwick has declared war on the United States, invaded New York City, and seized a bomb which, according to report, is capable of destroying an enormous area?"

GLORIANA (a statement of fact). Tully told the truth!

ANNOUNCER (continuing). The Foreign Secretary rose, and I quote his reply. "Her Majesty's Government is looking into the facts of the case. Meanwhile, we point out that those intrepid men from Grand Fenwick are of English extraction." There were cheers from both sides of the house. Now, for another example of enlightened non-commercial radio--a recorded discussion of sheep ailments in Western Australia.

MOUNTJOY. Try for the United States.

GLORIANA (as BENTER fiddles with radio tuning). Are they so far away?

BENTER. Here's some station--but I don't know where.

ANNOUNCER (speaking with a slight Slavic accent; the program is picked up in mid-sentence). . . . historical significance of the event. We continue our commentary in English.

MOUNTJOY (a puzzled interjection). Would America put it that way?

ANNOUNCER (going right on). The proletariat of the independent state known as Grand Fenwick has been subjected to intolerable economic warfare by the imperialists of San Rafael, California. BENTER. It doesn't sound like America!

ANNOUNCER (continuing). Placing themselves in the vanguard of the proletariat everywhere, they have invaded New York and captured the Q-bomb, with which the barbarous money-worshippers sought to destroy civilization.

GLORIANA. If it's America, they certainly have freedom of speech.

ANNOUNCER. This Q-bomb is one which we, as a civilized people, refrained from making ourselves, although it is well within the skill of our comrade scientists. Now, for another example of superior socialist radio--a symposium on the diseases of sheep in the western Kazakh.

BENTER (switching off). We'll have to go up to the roof to reach America.

GLORIANA (impatiently). Come! (GLORIANA leads the way as they hurry off UR.)

(As they go off UR, the four American girl tourists seen during the early portion of Act One--MARY, JANE, FRAN and PAM--start coming onto the platform L [or the playing area to the left]. They are dressed primly for the occasion. There is a bit of subdued giggling as they seat themselves in the four chairs.)

PAM (looking front and smiling brightly, talking through her smile to JANE at her left). Has the program started yet?

JANE (also talking through an idiotically bright smile). How should I know?

(The ANNOUNCER\* enters from UR.)

ANNOUNCER (speaking with a slight New York accent). Now--live from New York, the combined television networks bring you an eyewitness account of that tiny country which is now--in a sense--the most powerful nation in the world! This program is also being carried by short wave radio overseas.

FRAN (during the above, nudging the solemn MARY, talking through her smile, too). The man told us to smile.

MARY (instantly breaking into wide grin). I'm smiling.

ANNOUNCER (continuing, importantly). We bring you--"Inside Grand Fenwick!" (All of the girls draw in a sharp, gasping breath and freeze. The ANNOUNCER turns to the girls and speaks encouragingly.) What was your first impression of Grand Fenwick? (JANE gives PAM a sharp nudge.)

PAM (talking front). It's small--but one shouldn't pass up a country just because it's small.

FRAN. We particularly wanted to see Grand Fenwick.

ANNOUNCER. How long were you there?

FRAN (uneasily). How long?

PAM. I'll put it this way--our stay was all too short.

ANNOUNCER. What brought you there?

JANE. A Volkswagen.

ANNOUNCER. No, no--the reason?

JANE. Birdwatching. They have many national birds.

\*The Announcer does not have to appear. His lines may be read over the loudspeaker.

ANNOUNCER. A country that small?

JANE (coldly). The only being who could really pass on the nationality of a bird--is the bird.

ANNOUNCER. Well, did you notice anything?

MARY. Their National Forest has a variety of trees, a waterfall twenty feet high, and a haunted oak.

ANNOUNCER (disappointed). So does the park in Paterson, New Jersey.

MARY. One other thing--as we came to the forest, there was a tremendous roaring.

ANNOUNCER (eagerly). Roaring--that's better.

MARY. We rushed to where it had come from, but there was nothing!

ANNOUNCER. Let me add that there is already speculation on the possibility of a Fenwickian secret weapon. A transcript of the interview will be turned over to the Pentagon. (The four girls continue to face front, smiling broadly.) Stay tuned for our public service feature--Round Table. The topic today--sheep hygiene in west Texas. (As the speech begins, the girls cut the broad smiles, and start getting up from their chairs.)

FRAN. A transcript to the Pentagon!

MARY (defensively). Maybe it was a secret weapon. Where next?

PAM. The woman's club, the Y, two high school auditoriums, and the B. P. O. E. (They are going off L.)

JANE (as she follows them off). Light schedule today.

(On the other side of the stage, the PRESIDENT comes onto the right platform [or into the playing area R], followed by the Secretary of State, MR. BESTON. The PRESIDENT seats himself

at his desk, drumming nervously on it with the fingers of one hand. He opens his shirt collar to get more air. MR. BESTON betrays his agitation by pacing.)

PRESIDENT (suddenly throwing up hands with disgust). I've never seen the military so sensitive.

MR. BESTON. Wouldn't you be?

PRESIDENT. But such silly suggestions----

(Pounds on desk in front of him and imitates hoarse-voiced officer.) Give me one plane with some paratroopers, Mr. President, and I'll get the bomb back in ten hours.

MR. BESTON. Technically we're at war. We'd be within our rights.

PRESIDENT. Do you want to deal with world opinion? (Frankly.) Our own people wouldn't stand for it. More than a million of them are already wearing big buttons that read "Friend of Fenwick." When I think of the shabby way we treated that country, I'm tempted to wear one myself.

MR. BESTON (stubbornly). We can't allow the center of the world military power to shift from here to there.

PRESIDENT. Let's have your suggestions.

MR. BESTON. Retrieve the bomb with secret agents.

PRESIDENT (shaking his head). Everybody knows everybody in that country. A secret agent wouldn't have a chance.

MR. BESTON. Then ignore public opinion! Overwhelm them with a lightning military thrust!

PRESIDENT. We couldn't move faster than they could touch off the bomb.

MR. BESTON (shocked at thought). You don't believe they'd explode it?

PRESIDENT. Would you believe a small band of men carrying bows and arrows could come over

on a chartered sailboat and invade the United States?

MR. BESTON. Chief--the thought of that crazy little country with the Q-bomb gives me the willies! (Struck by a terrible new thought.) What's to keep them from a military alliance with----(He shudders.)

PRESIDENT. I've been listening to the Soviet broadcasts. They're beaming more transmitters at Grand Fenwick than at North and South America combined.

MR. BESTON (urgently). We have to stop the war before anything like that could happen!

PRESIDENT. I'm still open for suggestions.

MR. BESTON. You've eliminated the only alternatives yourself.

PRESIDENT. There's still one alternative.

MR. BESTON. What?

PRESIDENT. Sue for peace.

MR. BESTON (immediately rejecting the idea). Why should they sue for peace? They've got the Q-bomb.

PRESIDENT. Exactly.

MR. BESTON (bewildered). Then I don't see----

PRESIDENT (cutting in, shortly). Get this the first

time--they don't sue for peace, we do!

MR. BESTON (shocked). We! The United States!

PRESIDENT. What else can we do?

MR. BESTON (his voice rising). Sue for terms from a nation whose total population wouldn't make a good gate at a football game? There must be any number of better alternatives! (The PRESIDENT rises, his eyes fixed on MR. BESTON.)

PRESIDENT (with blazing determination). Time could be running out while we're talking. Tell me one better alternative right now, or get

aboard a jet for the landing field nearest Grand Fenwick.

MR. BESTON (taking a quick breath as though to say something forceful, then expelling breath as he can't think what; with quiet acceptance). What terms are authorized?

PRESIDENT. Anything within reason. Tell them the San Rafael Pinot has already been withdrawn from the market. (He comes around desk.) If there's the slightest chance they'll trade for Kokintz and the bomb, go the limit. If that's impossible, do whatever is necessary to keep the bomb from falling into the wrong hands--that's the main thing.

MR. BESTON. Got the picture.

PRESIDENT (smiling). Oh--if they'll throw in General Snippet and his daughters, might as well get them back, too.

MR. BESTON (smiling back as he waves and goes off R). Sure, Chief. (The PRESIDENT pauses, and the momentary smile is gone. He takes a breath, shakes his head to clear it, and then goes off R.)

(The PAGE enters UL and starts to cross. However, she is stopped by a sharp call from MOUNTJOY from off L.)

MOUNTJOY (off L). Page--wait!

PAGE (turning and calling back). Yes, Count Mountjoy.

(MOUNTJOY hurries on UL, glancing about as he comes.)

MOUNTJOY. Don't shout my name. Have you seen Mr. Benter?

PAGE (nodding). He's looking for you. I didn't think the throne room was to be open today. MOUNTJOY. The best time for the real business of state. Find her Highness and present my request for an audience. PAGE. Yes, Count.

(BENTER is hurrying in UL.)

BENTER (as he crosses). I was so upset by your message I came early. (MOUNTJOY looks over at the PAGE, who suddenly feels accused of eavesdropping.)

PAGE (hurrying off UR). I'll present your request. BENTER (dropping his voice, to MOUNTJOY). You said the Duchy's in danger.

MOUNTJOY. A passing danger--thanks to us.

BENTER (hopefully). We'll get rid of that bomb?

MOUNTJOY. Undoubtedly--and solve the one other danger at the same time.

BENTER. What other danger?

MOUNTJOY. Can't you recognize the first signs of a coming grab for power?

BENTER (shocked). In Grand Fenwick?

MOUNTJOY. The best way to deal with these things is never the obvious. (Noticing off R.) She's coming.

BENTER. Deal with what? You haven't told me anything.

(GLORIANA is coming on UR.)

MOUNTJOY. Remember the motto of the Mountjoy family.

BENTER (recalling). Defend the Duchy through Statecraft.

MOUNTJOY. Precisely.

GLORIANA (as she crosses). What about your family?

MOUNTJOY. My dearest wish is that we should continue to serve for all time. But this may not come to pass.

GLORIANA. You're going away?

MOUNTJOY. No, your Grace. I refer to the possibility there may be no descendants to serve.

GLORIANA. Why not?

MOUNTJOY. To come directly to the point, your Grace is unmarried.

BENTER (smiling). She's much too young to start worrying about----

MOUNTJOY (cutting off BENTER). Please. (Warning GLORIANA.) The royal line of Fenwick is in danger of extinction.

GLORIANA. I can't be thinking of marriage in a time of crisis.

MOUNTJOY. That's the time you should think of it.

GLORIANA (smiling uneasily as she touches the scarf which she's wearing again). I'm not sure I'd want to marry. Certainly I won't marry someone just because you feel it has political advantages.

MOUNTJOY. You hold the destiny of a people in your hands, Gloriana. Your marriage has to serve their interests.

GLORIANA (clutching the scarf now). That's old-fashioned nonsense. I don't care to discuss it further.

MOUNTJOY. The matter is much too vital for anything as unpredictable as personal affection.

GLORIANA. I won't go into this, Uncle.

MOUNTJOY (pressing). It may affect the internal security of the realm!

GLORIANA (puzzled). How could marrying some bloodline affect our security?

MOUNTJOY. The matter is much more urgent than you realize. (In her agitation, GLORIANA has removed her scarf and is holding it in her hands.)

GLORIANA (emphatic in reply). I'll tell you the man who could protect our internal security---- (An involuntary whipping motion has spread scarf to her side.) Aye, and external security as well.

MOUNTJOY (topping her). You'll accept whatever disappointment and heartache attend the relationship, whatever frustration of your logical hopes for a more appropriate match, and you'll endure this marriage for the sake of your country!

GLORIANA. Meaning?

MOUNTJOY. For compelling reasons you must marry Tully Bascom.

GLORIANA (gasping with shock). What?

BENTER (as stunned as GLORIANA). Tully Bascom!

MOUNTJOY (pouring out his contrition to GLORIANA). I realize the terrible blow--his boorish characteristics, manners learned in the National Forest, and so stubborn!

GLORIANA (beginning to recover). What compelling reasons, Uncle?

MOUNTJOY. When the most popular man in the Duchy is also the most ambitious, it's a dangerous situation.

GLORIANA. You're confusing me!

MOUNTJOY. You've seen how our people feel about him. They'd probably do anything he suggested.

GLORIANA. That doesn't mean he's unreasonably ambitious.

MOUNTJOY (emphatically). A young man who--contrary to the intention of his ruler--wins a war against the United States, is not to be trusted where ambition is concerned.

BENTER. He's practically taken personal charge of that terrible bomb and he won't listen to anyone.

MOUNTJOY. You must have noticed his constant insubordination. (An awful thought.) Suppose he decided now to form a subversive party?

GLORIANA. Marriage would solve all this?

MOUNTJOY. United to your Grace in matrimony, his popularity would be directed to the throne. By the same step, his ambition would automatically be gratified. (A smile at the thought.) Then perhaps he'd leave matters such as getting rid of the bomb to trusted ministers.

GLORIANA (as though he's winning her over). I confess you're persuasive, Uncle. (With this, she begins thoughtfully adjusting the scarf about herself again.)

MOUNTJOY (warmly approving). There's a patriot!

BENTER. It's country first with that girl!

GLORIANA (embarrassed). Uncle--it's far from settled.

MOUNTJOY. Oh?

GLORIANA (her embarrassment growing). We don't know how he feels. I mean, he may not want to marry me.

BENTER. Of course, he will.

GLORIANA (more insecure every moment). He may not like me at all any more. (Her feminine concern growing.) I know he'd never like me enough to bother with things that--that show someone cares about you. (Half indignant.) All he ever talks about now is--duty.

MOUNTJOY (unruffled). That's what we're talking about. In view of the uncertain times, you should get the matter settled immediately! This afternoon!

GLORIANA. That's absolutely impossible. His mind is on other things entirely. There's no way in the world of getting him to ask.

MOUNTJOY. It's not his place to ask.

GLORIANA (puzzled). Not his place?

MOUNTJOY. As ruler of Grand Fenwick, the proposal must come from you.

GLORIANA (dismayed). Me?

MOUNTJOY (faintly exasperated). Why can't you regard the matter as completely impersonal?

GLORIANA (frankly). I just don't know, Uncle.

BENTER. There's no harm in a walk through the National Forest. Perhaps you'll meet and get to talking.

MOUNTJOY. Nonsense. Locate the man at once and tell him he's getting married.

GLORIANA. Must I do it that way, Uncle?

MOUNTJOY (in a more reasonable tone). You're our sovereign, Gloriana. I can only urge the custom and example of your ancestors.

GLORIANA. I think I'll go out for a while.

MOUNTJOY (keeping his suggestion casual). It's a lovely day for a walk.

GLORIANA. The way Tully is now, this isn't such an easy walk. (Starting L.) You'll excuse me----  
(As she goes off UL, BENTER and MOUNTJOY turn toward each other. They both let out the breath they were holding.)

BENTER (hopefully). If this marriage should take place, you think Tully will let us send back the bomb?

MOUNTJOY (nodding). It's psychology.

BENTER. Because the marriage would take his mind off the bomb?

MOUNTJOY. Because the marriage would make him feel important. (A confidential explanation.) The reason he's so protective about the Q-bomb now--

it's his status symbol. (At this point there is the sudden sound of a door being slammed hard off R. Then several people are heard running and shouting.)

WAC JILL and WAC DEBBIE (from off R, shouting). Come back! Don't you dare! Stop! Shame on you!

GENERAL SNIPPET (off R, at the same time). Leave me alone! Mind your own business!

(As BENTER and MOUNTJOY watch with open-mouthed surprise, GENERAL SNIPPET races on UR and heads DL, closely pursued by his daughters.)

WAC JILL. No, you don't----

WAC DEBBIE. Please, Dad--stop!

GENERAL SNIPPET (over his shoulder). Get away from me! (The girls either tackle him or grab hold of him so that he is finally brought to a standstill.)

WAC JILL. We can't let you do it.

GENERAL SNIPPET. Do what?

WAC JILL. Break your parole.

WAC DEBBIE. You gave your word--as an officer and a gentleman.

GENERAL SNIPPET (furious). I was not trying to escape.

WAC DEBBIE. Then where were you going?

GENERAL SNIPPET. To find Count Mountjoy. He said he'd teach me to play whist.

MOUNTJOY (calling to them). That's true.

WAC JILL. Then why were you sneaking?

WAC DEBBIE. You were tiptoeing.

GENERAL SNIPPET (bitterly). Professor Kokintz warned us to walk softly when we cross over that dungeon.

WAC JILL (with chagrin). Of course----

GENERAL SNIPPET. When you idiots slammed

the door you took ten years off my life.

(PROFESSOR KOKINTZ is hurrying in UR.)

KOKINTZ (frightened and angry). Are you out of your minds? Are you trying to explode this part of the world?

WAC DEBBIE. Sorry.

KOKINTZ. After risking the total destruction of Europe, you say--"Sorry."

WAC DEBBIE (defensively). What should I say?

GENERAL SNIPPET (to KOKINTZ). You've got to do something about the bomb. We can't live like this.

KOKINTZ (indicating MOUNTJOY and BENTER). The men of Fenwick enjoy playing with fire-- the kind of fire you'll find on the face of the sun.

BENTER (frightened). No----

MOUNTJOY (disclaiming). Please----

GENERAL SNIPPET (to his daughters). Care to try slamming the door again?

WAC JILL. We promised to help with some work. (To her sister.) Come on.

GENERAL SNIPPET. What work?

WAC DEBBIE. Vital work--for this country. (Starting off UR.) We're late for it now.

KOKINTZ (wryly). In fact, you almost didn't make it.

GENERAL SNIPPET (calling after them as they go off UR). Collaborationists!

MOUNTJOY (to KOKINTZ). I'm sure the bomb couldn't really be set off by distant vibration.

KOKINTZ (with sarcasm). You have some reassuring information about the trigger mechanism of the Quadium bomb?

GENERAL SNIPPET. Let him make it safer!

BENTER. We can't.

MOUNTJOY. If he disarmed it completely, we'd have nothing--not even for bargaining purposes.

KOKINTZ. You could watch closely. It wouldn't

take me thirty seconds, and I'll only remove one tiny part.

BENTER. How tiny?

KOKINTZ (indicating tip of little finger). A cylinder no bigger than this.

MOUNTJOY. What's in it?

KOKINTZ (shrugging). A form of hydrogen.

BENTER (aside to MOUNTJOY). Tully gave definite orders.

MOUNTJOY (aside to BENTER in reply). Tully will have other things on his mind. (To KOKINTZ, sharply.) Would removing such a small piece really make it safer?

KOKINTZ. You've no idea!

BENTER (aside to MOUNTJOY again). We don't have authority to----

MOUNTJOY (repeating KOKINTZ'S gesture as he interrupts). He said--no bigger than this.

KOKINTZ. You have my word--absolutely!

MOUNTJOY (to BENTER). Take the General along to the library. I'm assuming full responsibility.

GENERAL SNIPPET. That's the spirit.

BENTER (gesturing to GENERAL). This way.

(Starting off UL, to MOUNTJOY.) I hope we know what we're doing. (As they are going, the GENERAL winks back at KOKINTZ, who winces with distaste at anyone's being so obvious.)

MOUNTJOY (to KOKINTZ). I'll have to see you past the sentry. (They start off UR.) If you try to do anything more than you said, I'll have your head on a pike. And when we talk that way in Grand Fenwick, we're talking literally!

(GLORIANA comes on DL as MOUNTJOY and KOKINTZ go off UR. She comes in a short distance and then stops.)

GLORIANA (drawing herself up, addressing an imaginary person royally). We command you as a loyal subject to marry us. (This doesn't sound right and she shakes her head. As she starts R again, the curtains close on the upstage side of her. After taking a few steps, she pauses and tries a more reasonable approach to the imaginary person.) We suggest you marry us--marry me.

(MRS. BASCOM is coming in DL behind GLORIANA.)

GLORIANA (trying an almost abject approach). Will you please, please, marry me?

MRS. BASCOM (calling). Your Highness----

GLORIANA (spinning around, her hand to her mouth). Yes?

MRS. BASCOM. I thought it might be you.

GLORIANA (nervously). Mrs. Bascom--I was expecting to see Tully.

MRS. BASCOM. He'll be along soon--or would you like to leave a message?

GLORIANA (hesitating). No--I'd better speak to him myself. (She takes a quick breath.) I have something to say to him.

MRS. BASCOM. About spending all his time guarding our frontiers instead of looking after the National Forest?

GLORIANA (curiously). Have you noticed a change in him, too?

MRS. BASCOM (nodding). All he seems to think about now is the international situation. I pity the girl that marries him.

GLORIANA (unhappily). So do I--more and more.

MRS. BASCOM. Why don't you just leave a message, and I'll pass it along?

GLORIANA (embarrassed). It's--well--personal.

MRS. BASCOM (raising her eyebrows slightly).

Would you like me to leave when he gets here? GLORIANA (shaking her head, smiling). In a way, it concerns you, too.

MRS. BASCOM. Oh?

GLORIANA (bursting out). Please don't think me rude, Mrs. Bascom, but how did Mr. Bascom go about proposing?

MRS. BASCOM (smiling). To tell the truth, I did most of the proposing--through my father. GLORIANA (eagerly). How? Tell me!

MRS. BASCOM. I had my father take him aside and say something to the effect that he'd been asked by his daughter whether he would consent to being Mr. Bascom's father-in-law. By the time my husband-to-be caught the meaning, he was so surprised he kissed my father and shook hands with me. (TULLY'S voice is heard off L, apparently calling to someone in the distance.)

TULLY (calling). Tell Will Tatum to report to me as soon as he knows who it is--on the double!

(TULLY comes on DL.)

TULLY (as he comes on). Mother, there's someone at the border---(He stops as he sees GLORIANA. Both TULLY and GLORIANA are downstage as far as possible, while MRS. BASCOM is between them but upstage, forming the apex of a small triangle.)

MRS. BASCOM. Gloriana would like to speak with you.

TULLY (nodding L). There's a big black car at our border. Will Tatum's seeing about it.

MRS. BASCOM. I think she wanted to speak of something else.

TULLY (to GLORIANA). Is there any way I can be

of service?

GLORIANA (speaking with difficulty). I have a matter to discuss. It's a matter of state--but it's something personal, too. It's more personal, really, than a matter of state.

TULLY. I'll do all in my power to help.

GLORIANA (her difficulty increasing). It's not really a matter of helping. It's a matter of co-operating--of working with me.

TULLY (trying to understand). Working with you?

GLORIANA. Yes--well, not exactly. (To MRS. BASCOM.) Please, you say it.

MRS. BASCOM. Me?

GLORIANA (a plea). Say it the way it was said for you.

MRS. BASCOM (regarding GLORIANA for an instant, then giving a brief nod--turning to her son).

Tully--Gloriana wants me to become her mother-in-law. (Back to GLORIANA.) That's it, isn't it?

GLORIANA (nodding, a whisper). Yes.

TULLY (bewildered). She wants you to become her what?

MRS. BASCOM (almost casual now). Her mother-in-law.

TULLY. Mother-in-law! But you're my mother.

MRS. BASCOM. Precisely.

TULLY. But, Mother---

MRS. BASCOM. And you're my only son. (TULLY looks from his mother to GLORIANA and back to his mother again.)

TULLY (with a sudden happy gasp). Mother! (He grabs his mother and kisses her on the cheek. Then he crosses to GLORIANA; soberly.) Glory, my mother accepts proudly--her son, humbly. (With this, TULLY reaches out, seizes GLORIANA'S limp hand, and shakes it vigorously.)

GLORIANA (weak with relief). Oh, Tully! (Smiles

happily.) Now maybe we'll have a chance to discuss---(She is interrupted by WILL TATUM, who calls from off L.)

WILL (from off L). Tully--I've got a message.

TULLY (calling back). Let's have it.

WILL (off L, closer). From the United States!

TULLY (dropping GLORIANA'S hand). Good!

(WILL hurries on L.)

WILL (as he comes). It's their Secretary of State--the name's Beston. I treated him just as you said---(Suddenly noticing.) Oh--your Highness!

TULLY (all business). Go on.

GLORIANA (as WILL looks to her). Please.

WILL. I said we'd only admit him if he'd come to parley under a flag of truce. He whipped out his handkerchief and started waving it. (A bit uncertain.) Well, now what?

TULLY. Escort him to the castle. We'll assemble for him there.

WILL. Right. (With brisk bow.) Your Highness--Mrs. Bascom---(As WILL turns and rushes out L, TULLY starts hustling his mother and GLORIANA across the stage to R.)

TULLY. We'll take the short cut.

GLORIANA. While we're walking, could we discuss our plans?

TULLY. We have to hurry!

MRS. BASCOM. She said--while we're walking.

TULLY (anxiously). There isn't time!

GLORIANA (half to herself). Will there ever be?

(They complete their exit off R.)

(There is a moment of silence after their exit, which is then broken by a prolonged trumpet fanfare. As the last notes of the fanfare fade, the curtain

rises again to reveal the stage, which may now be devoted entirely to Grand Fenwick. The furniture that was on the right and left platforms [or in those respective playing areas] has been removed while the curtain was down. During this period the director may, if desired, bring on whatever additional decorations seem appropriate to this climactic moment in the history of Grand Fenwick. Banners, pennants, spears, etc., may be arranged quickly on stage while the curtain is down, and extras in Grand Fenwick attire may also be placed on stage. [It should be emphasized strongly, however, that this additional color is entirely optional, and under no circumstances should it be allowed to delay the rise of curtain.] GLORIANA is revealed seated on her throne, with TULLY standint to her right and MRS. BASCOM seated on a stool to her left. MOUNTJOY and BENTER are sitting in their chairs, but these have been pulled back so that they are just a bit downstage of the throne, well out on either side. On the right platform [or in the playing area to the right] KOKINTZ and GENERAL SNIPPET are seated on two chairs. Behind them is a line of the four soldiers. On the left platform [or in the playing area to the left] HELEN and NORMA are seated on two small stools and ANN is standing a bit to the side. Any other extras, such as soldiers or townspeople, may be used to fill out the crowd further. The moment this scene has registered, there is another fanfare. Then the PAGE hurries in DL, crosses to DC, turns, and back to audience, calls to GLORIANA.)

PAGE (in a high, formal voice). The honorable

Chester Beston, Secretary of State of the United States of America, seeks parley under flag of truce with Gloriana the Twelfth, Sovereign of the Independent Duchy of Grand Fenwick.

GLORIANA (rising). Let him approach the throne. PAGE (turning L, and calling). The Duchess Gloriana grants protection. Let him approach.

(MR. BESTON, holding a white handkerchief high with his right hand, strides in, followed by WILL. They stop LC. MR. BESTON hesitates, then, still holding his handkerchief aloft, he bows to GLORIANA.)

GLORIANA (speaking proudly). You sought this parley, not us. State your purpose.

MR. BESTON (impressed). Peace, restitution, and friendship. I'd also like to inquire concerning the prisoners you captured.

GLORIANA (gesturing toward them). Over there-- captured by our expeditionary force after formal declaration of war.

GENERAL SNIPPET (an embarrassed protest from where he sits). It was a fluke.

TULLY (sternly). Silence.

MR. BESTON. There were also two Wacs. What about them? (There are two loud female screams from off R. MR. BESTON is disturbed.) Oh, no!

(The screams come again as WAC JILL and WAC DEBBIE scurry on from UR, and pause at C to look back.)

GENERAL SNIPPET (calling sharply). What is it? WAC JILL. A mouse!

MOUNTJOY. Impossible!

WAC DEBBIE. It started chasing us.

TULLY (half to himself). One got into the castle----  
WAC JILL. And we're barefoot!

MR. BESTON (shocked as he looks at their feet).  
Have you girls been tortured?

WAC DEBBIE. Tortured?

MR. BESTON (pointing with horror). What have  
they done to your feet? (The bare feet of the  
Wacs have the same purple stain as did Ann's  
feet earlier.)

WAC JILL. This is from helping. It's fun. (Takes  
flatfooted step with each word.) Treading-on-  
grapes.

WAC DEBBIE (with slight grimace). Of course I  
wouldn't want to drink the stuff.

GLORIANA (to MR. BESTON). Any further com-  
ments on our treatment of prisoners?

MR. BESTON. Your behavior in all matters re-  
lating to this unfortunate war has been exem-  
plary. The United States wishes to terminate  
hostilities and accordingly sues for peace.

GLORIANA. Then hear our terms. First, unlike  
most victorious nations, we are to be under no  
obligation to rehabilitate the United States.

MR. BESTON (dumbfounded). What?

GLORIANA. Yes or no?

MR. BESTON (quickly). Yes--oh, yes!

GLORIANA. The imitation pinot of San Rafael,  
California is to be prohibited.

MR. BESTON. That company was violating our  
own laws, and the imitation has already been  
withdrawn.

GLORIANA. Now for the indemnity.

MR. BESTON (bracing himself). All right--how  
much?

GLORIANA. One million dollars.

MR. BESTON. Did you say billion? "B" for  
billion?

GLORIANA. I said "M" for million.

MR. BESTON (bothered). Only one million! We've  
spent more than that rehabilitating a single small  
town in Germany or Japan.

GLORIANA. But there's an importand difference--  
you see, they lost!

MR. BESTON (ruefully). You've got a point. How-  
ever, we'd like to do much more--we could send  
machinery, technical assistance, more money as  
required. (Clears his throat.) All we'd like in  
return is the Q bomb.

MOUNTJOY. I'm sure we can work out an equit-  
able exchange.

BENTER. No problem there.

GLORIANA. Gentlemen----(With quiet force.) All  
matters relating to captured enemy weapons are  
entrusted to our victorious high constable, Tully  
Bascom.

MOUNTJOY (hushed). But the Q bomb?

GLORIANA. Our decision is irrevocable!

TULLY. Your Grace----(Deeply moved.) Glory!

MOUNTJOY (urgently). Be reasonable, Tully.

BENTER. We can drive such a bargain.

MR. BESTON. You name it!

TULLY (in charge). I don't bargain. I levy tribute.

MR. BESTON (apprehensively). Tribute? (There's  
an uneasy stir. Perhaps TULLY is going too  
far.)

TULLY. Agree or face the consequences. The  
United States pays the indemnity. California  
must pay tribute--an annual tribute of twelve  
dozen pomegranates!

MR. BESTON (bewildered). Pomegranates!

TULLY. For Gloriana.

GLORIANA (softly). You do think of me!

TULLY. Of course. You've always come first.  
(Reaching out his hand to her.) And I do have an

off-hand reaction----(He nods "yes" and happily she takes his hand.)

MR. BESTON (half frantic). Look--we'll pay the pomegranates! The pomegranate growers will bless you. You're making pomegranates the "in" thing. As for the million dollars, I happen to have it on me. (Urgently.) Now, let's talk about the bomb!

GENERAL SNIPPET. There's nothing to talk about! The bomb is--Professor Kokintz----

WILL (sharply). You were told--silence!

TULLY. I have plans for the bomb.

MR. BESTON (nervously). Plans?

BENTER. Please, Tully!

MOUNTJOY. Get rid of it!

TULLY. We'll form a new group to keep a sharp eye on the "big three" and all such mighty powers. We'll organize the "tiny twenty."

MR. BESTON. Tiny Twenty.

GENERAL SNIPPET. Insanity.

KOKINTZ (curiously). Assuming the bomb is as powerful as ever, what would you do with it?

TULLY (to KOKINTZ). You called it a peace weapon, and that's what I'd make it. I don't know if we could deter some power-mad aggressor, but we can give him one more thing to worry about, one more reason to hesitate.

KOKINTZ. What reason?

TULLY. I'm serving notice that Grand Fenwick will not allow any more aggression.

KOKINTZ. But you haven't said what you'd do.

TULLY. The power trying to take over will face a determined task force that will transport our mighty bomb to within their border where I'll strike it with my mace.

MR. BESTON. You wouldn't! You'd be killed!

TULLY. The country starting a war will have to

consider the possibility that we mean what we say. (With quiet determination.) I'd strike it with my mace.

GENERAL SNIPPET. It doesn't matter! There's no more bomb.

GLORIANA. That's not true.

TULLY. Of course there's a bomb.

GENERAL SNIPPET. Professor Kokintz got to it! I know he did!

MOUNTJOY. He was just going to take out a tiny cylinder.

TULLY (horrified). He was going to what?

BENTER. Make it safer, that's all.

GENERAL SNIPPET. You idiots! He disarmed it!

MR. BESTON (tensely). Did you extract the quadium? KOKINTZ (coming forward, regarding TULLY). In

spite of this man's insane refusal to let me near the bomb, I got there anyway.

MR. BESTON (anxiously). And?

KOKINTZ (as he continues to regard TULLY, he suddenly gives a nod of decision; turning to the others). And I couldn't do a thing. Warn the world--they must not do anything to bring down the wrath of Grand Fenwick. You see, this peace weapon may be even more powerful than I first thought.

MR. BESTON (with a sigh; turning to GLORIANA). Highness, the only question remaining--does he have your authority? (Music of "Men of Fenwick" may begin again here.)

GLORIANA. He's our high constable--(Reaching out and taking his hand.)--and soon to be our husband----

MR. BESTON (half to himself). And able to tell the rest of the world--no war! (Incredulous.) This microscopic little mouse of a country. (At this there's another mighty roar from the "mouse.")

If the song is being sung, it climaxes, and . . .

THE CURTAIN FALLS

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NOTES ON CHARACTERS  
AND COSTUMES

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**TULLY BASCOM:** He is a very pleasant, mild-mannered young man. His costume should be a bit colorful but not absurd--it is meant to represent a sort of middle European forest ranger outfit. If desired, he can be wearing horn-rimmed glasses, as did Peter Sellers when he played this role in the motion picture version. When in the uniform of the expeditionary force, he should be dressed as the other soldiers but without a helmet or weapons. He wears Gloriana's scarf diagonally across his chest.

**JANE, MARY, FRAN and PAM:** The girls are four typical young American tourists laden with cameras and kit-bags. In Act Two they are dressed primly for their appearance on television.

**ANN:** Ann is a young peasant girl with purple-stained feet--evidence of her "barefoot grape-tramping" profession in a winery.

**COUNT MOUNTJOY:** His clothes can suggest medieval aristocracy, or they can just be a semi-formal outfit decorated with a diagonal of red ribbon across the shirt front, and a row of medals on the coat.

**DAVID BENTER:** He is obviously a "man of the people," and he wears a rumpled suit.

**PAGE:** The page is a petite girl, wearing an attractive page-boy outfit, which can consist of a leotard, slippers and a short jacket.

**GLORIANA:** Gloriana the Twelfth is a stunning girl of twenty-two who walks with a stately air. If desired, Gloriana can be wearing a high-bodiced gown of the middle ages, but a formal or semi-formal dress will serve. If modern clothes are used,

her position can be suggested by the addition of a bright sash held in place by a large brooch. She should also wear a ducal coronet prettily upon her head. (Any sort of costume jewelry tiara will serve.)

HELEN and NORMA: They are well-dressed young ladies of Grand Fenwick.

CHESTER BESTON: He is Secretary of State of the United States. He is conservatively dressed in a typically American business suit.

MISS JOHNSON: She is an efficient government secretary, wearing a conservative blouse and skirt.

STUDENTS: The college students may be male or female. Their manner and dress suggest that they are seniors.

PROFESSOR KOKINTZ: He has a mass of hair and wears thick glasses. His rumpled clothes are full of little pockets which contain a variety of items. The side pockets to his jacket bulge like saddlebags. While the effect of this should be that of a man who is preoccupied and eccentric, it should not be comic.

MRS. REINER: Professor Kokintz's housekeeper is a matronly woman. She wears a neat house dress, with or without an apron.

GENERAL SNIPPET: He is a watchful U.S. Army officer who somehow radiates suspicion. He is in uniform.

DEBBIE and JILL: The General's daughters are young, but stern-faced, Wacs. They, too, are in uniform.

THE PRESIDENT: He is an imposing man in a conservative business suit. It is suggested that no attempt be made to imitate the present occupant of that office.

ASSISTANT: He wears a white laboratory coat over street clothes when first seen. Later he just wears street clothes.

PROFESSOR SMITH: She is a serious-minded young female professor, who wears serious, conservative clothes.

SOLDIERS: The costumes worn by these men can be extremely simple, but they also offer the opportunity for as much colorful medieval military display as may seem desirable. They should all wear some sort of metallic pot helmet. (These can be fashioned, if necessary, by covering hats with aluminum foil--the heavy duty type will serve very well.) They can carry small shields on their left arms--at least one soldier should carry such a shield decorated with the Grand Fenwick crest. A colorful, but entirely optional, addition to their costume would be white surcoats apparently worn over their armor, blazoned with the bright red double-headed eagle. Otherwise, any sort of plain surcoat will do. At least some of them should carry longbows across their backs and quivers with arrows. (NOTE: While these costumes present an interesting opportunity for display, it should also be remembered that even the most makeshift simplicity would be quite appropriate for this makeshift force--which hasn't fought in five hundred years.)

WILL TATUM: Will is Tully's aide and standard bearer. He is dressed like the other soldiers, but perhaps more elaborately.

MRS. BASCOM: Tully's mother is a tall, simply dressed woman.

ANNOUNCER: He wears a business suit.

MISS WILKINS: The President's secretary wears clothes suitable for a business office.

COUPLE: They are sight-seers, dressed in typical tourist fashion. They are chewing gum.

PROPERTIES

GENERAL: High-backed chair (throne), two small stools, low table with bowl of pomegranates on it, two chairs, flag of Grand Fenwick (optional); blackboard covered by cloth, thumbtacks, three chairs, computer (simulated); small desk, two telephones (one red) on desk, chair; desk or table; four chairs; banners, pennants, spears and other decorations (optional).

JANE, MARY, FRAN and PAM: Cameras, kit bags.

PAGE: Rolled-up scroll similar to one sent to the U.S.

TULLY: Gloriana's scarf, pad and pencil.

BESTON: Brief case, toilet kit, white handkerchief.

MISS JOHNSON: Batch of mail, memo book, rolled-up scroll.

KOKINTZ: Small cylinder, small box.

MRS. REINER: Small wrapped package (containing sandwich).

MOUNTJOY: Triangle (bell or hand-held gong will serve).

HELEN: Transistor radio.

BENTER: Wrist watch.

GLORIANA: Neck scarf, letter.

SOLDIERS: Small shields decorated with Grand Fenwick crest, longbows, quivers with arrows, small mace for one of the soldiers, plank with Q-bomb on it.

WILL TATUM: Flag of Grand Fenwick.

GENERAL SNIPPER: Army hat (his own) pierced with arrow.

MISS WILKINS: Cardboard box containing General Snippet's arrow-pierced hat.

**Men of Fenwick**

Old Welsh

In fiam march time.

Men of Fenwick in the hollow, Do ye hear, like rushing billow

Wave on wave that surging fol-low Battle's dis-tant sound?

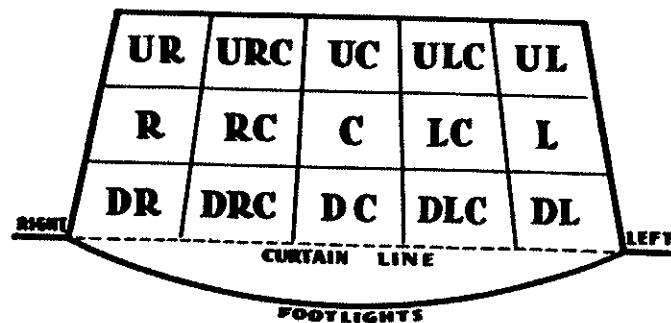
Tis the tramp of the French fo-men, France's spearmen, Frances bowmen,

If they knights, or hinds or yeo-men, They shall bite the ground!

Sheet music for a four-part vocal piece. The lyrics are as follows:

Loose the cords a-sunder, Flag we conquer un-der! The  
 pla-cid sky now bright on high Shall launch its bolt of thunder.  
 Men of Fenwick, young and hoary, Would you win a name in sto-ry,  
 strike for home, Pi-not, and glo-ry, Freedom, God and Right!

### CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



### STAGE POSITIONS

*Upstage* means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. *R* means *right*, *L* means *left*, *U* means *up*, *D* means *down*, *C* means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: *UR* for *up right*, *RC* for *right center*, *DLC* for *down left center*; etc. A territory designated on the stage refers to a general area, rather than to a given point.

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

**"Enchanting."**

TRIBUNE

**"Funny, charming, perspicacious."**

NEW YORK TIMES

**"Uproarious farce."**

SATURDAY REVIEW

**"Mad yarn, needle sharp ironic jabs!"**

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

**Critics applaud this comedy  
as enthusiastically as do  
audiences everywhere.**

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING about *The Mouse That Roared*...

"Good, fast-paced romantic comedy that provides many opportunities for actors to experiment with character."

*Rob Crymble, Pitt Meadows Secondary School,  
Pitt Meadows, British Columbia*

"[The] *Mouse That Roared* is a fun play ideal for amateurs at any level. It also has a delightful political edge to it that creates interesting dialogue regarding the past relationships of 'The Superpowers.' "

*Lisa Jensen-Hengstler,  
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Alberta*

"Excellent for high school actors and audiences. While some of the 'cold war' overtones are less current—many of the political comments remain as true today as when written."

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