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# Mainly African cast presents play with a message

By BREMER HOFMEYR

A PLAY unique in authorship, aim, and actors comes to Port Elizabeth next week. It is the Dictator's Slippers.

First, the author. He is Peter Howard, once the highest-paid daily columnist in Fleet Street. He wrote for Beaverbrook's Daily Express. He wielded a powerful and bitter pen. Four million breakfast tables saw his articles every day. He was Beaverbrook's pride and prize.

Howard was out for Howard. Then something happened of supreme importance to the age in which we live. He found a new goal and aim for treading this earth—to use every ounce of his brain and brawn, his pen and personality to turn a world gone mad into channels of sanity and creativity never dreamed of before.

He is the confidant of statesmen around the world. He has written books selling five million copies and taken no cent personally for royalties. They are studied on both sides of

the Iron Curtain. He has written 15 plays. They are being produced on five continents.

A London West End theatre produces them with earphone translation in a dozen languages. His latest West End production was amongst seven longest running plays of 1963, with 176 London performances and a tour of the provinces.

The cast. All but one are African. They are leading personalities among their people. They do not feel things are right in this country. But nor do they think that bitterness and blame are right. They feel Black and White have got to get an aim far beyond Black domination or White domination or Red domination.

They are as concerned about the future of the White children as the future of the Black children. They believe that small aims divide our country and a great aim will unite it. They believe that South Africans of all backgrounds must

take on the task of developing this wonderful continent for the good of all men so that every need is met.

To speak to the country they have produced a brilliant play of Peter Howard's.

The scene is laid in world headquarters of a revolutionary movement. It could be the Kremlin.

There is a political prisoner who gives a highly unexpected turn to events.

News of this play reached some of the political prisoners in our jails. The part of the political prisoner fascinated them.

One of them, on being released, walked straight to the centre where the play was being produced in Johannesburg, his fingers still black from fingerprinting his discharge papers.

"We have all been talking about this play in prison," he said. "Tell me what it is all about." One such political prisoner ended up taking part in the play!