



Cast:

The Rt Hon George Venables, MP, the PM - John Fenner
Rodney Campbell, the Prime Minister's PPS - Jimmy Proctor
Miss Frobisher, Chancellor's secretary - Karen Brooks
The Rt Hon. Hector Cramond, the Chancellor - John Nichols
Sybil Venables, the Prime Minister's wife - Linda Connor
Shirley Springer - Isabella Nash
Jane Rotherbrook - Lyndsey Gallagher
Dora Springer, Shirley's mother - Dawn Gazey-Lewis
A man - Simon Richards

Director - David Draper

Designer - Paul Chokran

Steamy goings-on at Kenilworth theatre in elegant farce

You'll know the secret of good comedy. And the Talisman's timing is up there with the best in this fast-paced and elegant farce. Pardon Me, Prime Minister exploits the oft-documented gap of politicians between what they say and what they do.

The main protagonists are the Chancellor, Hector Cramond (John Nichols) - a puritanical, pleasure-hating, scary and spluttering Scot determined to tax Britain out of its hedonistic tendencies, and the cowed Prime Minister-with-a-past George Venables (John Fenner), unable to stand up to him. Until, that is, things take an unexpected turn.

To try to explain the complexities of the plot would take hours: I would have left out the Arab trade delegation and the pickled onions, Suffice it to say, the PM and Mrs Sybil Venables (Linda Connor) are visited by his hitherto undiscovered daughter Shirley (Isabella Nash), who works at Libido, a lap-dancing club in Brighton, her mother Dora (Dawn Gazey-Lewis) - a fling from 22 years before, and high-placed journalist Jane Rotherbrook (Lyndsey Gallagher), intent on the scoop of the century. Able side-kicks Miss Frobisher (Karen Brooks) and Rodney 'Don't ramble' Campbell (the very watchable Jimmy Proctor) made up the cast. A monosyllabic Simon Richards provided the denouement. The set kept a few secrets as stern portraits of Gladstone and Disraeli stared down; but Gladstone's hid the oft-used drinks cabinet! And one little red dress put in an appearance to cover just about everyone's embarrassment.

In the furnace that was the Talisman auditorium on opening night, it's a wonder more of us weren't down to their underwear! Hot stuff.

Jane Howard





