

Mount Saint Vincent University

The Panthers Are Coming: A Two-Act Play about the October, 1968 Visit of the Black Panthers to Halifax, and its Impact on African Nova Scotian Activism for Social Justice and Equality.

By:

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION.

APRIL, 2014

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Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of the 1968 visit of the Black Panthers to Halifax on African Nova Scotian activism for social justice and equality. The study uses an arts informed research approach with a stage play as the process and representation of the inquiry. The 1960s were turbulent times for Black people all over the world, and the radical activism that had erupted in the US and Africa had infected African Nova Scotians too. Blacks in Nova Scotia were undergoing racism in education, employment and housing, and the impending Panther visit, coupled with growing resentment among younger African Nova Scotians created a potentially explosive social crisis in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The African Nova Scotian leaders, coming from disparate ideological stands were able to put their differences behind them, uniting to prevent any violence, winning socio-economic concessions for Blacks in Nova Scotia, and bringing African Nova Scotia's existence into national and international lime light. Such unity, which I argue, was based on a strategic essentialism of Blackness has many implications for present day African Nova Scotians in their continued activism for social justice.

To

Burnley *Rocky* Jones

Who inspired this study and the stage play to come after.

You still are with us!

Acknowledgements

Many people, too numerous to name, have helped in shaping this thesis and the play, and I am grateful to them for their input and the enlightenment into African Nova Scotian affairs that they have provided me. Special thanks to the late Rocky Jones, at whose feet, I got my immersion into this particular history of African Nova Scotians. Thanks to Joan Jones for agreeing to educate me on the matters of the time in that long discussion at her dinner table. Folami Jones deserves a lot of gratitude because, in a way, this rendition of the Panther story is also her story. Much appreciation is given to Jules Oliver who taught me to see the Panther visit not as an isolated act of radicalism but as the spark which unleashed the pent up fury of African Nova Scotians after centuries of deprivation.

My supervisory team of Dr. Susie Brigham and Dr. Ardra Cole have inspired me in different ways. I thank Dr. Brigham, my supervisor, for her encouragement and great attention to detail and correctness that have pushed me to greater awareness of scholarly writing and research. Dr. Cole's work on arts informed research have been very valuable, an anchor from which I have explored the yet untapped possibilities of the arts as a legitimate and very powerful mode of research.

Lastly, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Karan Whiteman who has been patient in acknowledging the priority of my thesis, and has constantly facilitated my focus on this study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In October of 1968, four members of the Black Panther Party (BPP), an organization that epitomized the birth of Black Power, in the tradition of United States Black radicalism, visited Halifax, Nova Scotia. Included in the Panther delegation was Stokely Carmichael – later known as Kwame Ture - the Panthers’ “Prime Minister”, a fiery orator and socialist advocate (Personal communication with Burnley “Rocky” Jones, October 12, 2011). According to newspaper accounts and informal conversations I have had with people who lived in Halifax at the time, the visit of the Panthers, an organization that then Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director had called "the greatest threat to the internal security of the [United States]" (PBS website), polarized the White and Black communities, and the so-called moderates and radicals within the Black community in Halifax. My intention in this research is to explore how the arrival of the Black Panthers in Halifax in October, 1968 impacted the African Nova Scotians’ struggle for social justice and equal opportunity. It would be appropriate to provide a background to the visit and then explore other pertinent questions arising out of the Panthers’ visit and its impact on African Nova Scotians.

1:1 - Background to the Panthers' visit

The Panthers had been invited by Burnley “Rocky” Jones, a young African Nova Scotian activist, who aimed to infuse the same urgency and militancy within African Nova Scotians as the Panthers had done in the US struggle for equality and justice. At the same time, he wanted the international community to witness the unjust state of race relations in Nova Scotia. “Jones

shook up [W]hites in Canada in 1968 when he brought Carmichael...” and the Black Panthers to Halifax (Mitchell, 2009, p.4).

Fearing Black rioting and demonstrations, Halifax City officials and indeed the general White community reacted to the visit as if the city were under imminent military attack from within and without. There was a heavy police presence at the Halifax airport awaiting the arrival of the Panthers, and snipers were positioned on the rooftops directly across from the Arrow Club where the Panthers had dinner that evening with Rocky Jones and wife, Joan (Personal communication with Burnley “Rocky” Jones, October 12, 2011).

1:2 - Research Themes

The Black United Front (BUF), a province wide umbrella organization of African Nova Scotians formed in the aftermath of the Panthers’ visit published two newspapers, *The Grasp* (1970-1979) and *The Rap* (1986-1987). Both newspapers had columns in each edition establishing solidarity with the struggles against colonization, racism and economic exploitation in Africa and her diaspora. This solidarity with other Black people, an Afrocentric solidarity can be regarded as an example of what Spivak (1993) has called “strategic essentialism”, which can be described as “mobilizing around a singular, fixed and essentialised notion of identity, that is both unified and coherent across all other forms of social difference for particular collective political purposes” (Spivak, 1993, as cited in Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011, p.12). They state that, “Under unequal conditions of power and overt forms of oppression, the idea of the singular, fixed Black identity maybe a useful and

necessary political strategy” (Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011, p. 12). Robinson (1983), who takes a Marxist perspective, agrees that “... misfortune can bring about the brotherhood of the unfortunate” (Robinson, 1983, p. 210). An important and relevant point of analysis would be to determine how the arrival of the Black Panthers in Halifax impacted African Nova Scotians’ sense of identity and solidarity with other Black peoples outside of Nova Scotia.

It will be an injustice to a holistic ethos if the story of the Panthers’ arrival in Halifax is told without including the effect it had on White society. Contrary to being a deviation from my central thesis of the invigoration of African Nova Scotian activism for social justice and equality, a reflection upon the reverberation of this visit on White people in Halifax would be, in algebraic terms, an important variable in the equation of social justice and equal opportunity. Henry Louis Gates (1997) writes that “... the destinies of Black America and White were profoundly and irreversibly intertwined. Each created the other, each defined itself in relation to the other, and each would destroy the other” (Gates, 1997, p.10). This description of James Baldwin’s central political argument, encapsulates the intertwined consciousness of Blacks and Whites in many diasporan African spaces. The dialectic of an intertwined consciousness, at once antagonistic and dependent, to a great extent, characterizes the relationship between African Nova Scotians and their White counterparts. Incidentally, the Halifax Police Chief at the time of the Panthers’ visit, Verdun Mitchell, a White man described by Burnley “Rocky” Jones as “smart”, committed suicide a week after the Panthers visit (Ashe, 2005, p.41). It has been difficult to find literature on this incident but informal conversations I have had with a few people in Halifax community suggest his suicide may have had something to do with a paradoxical alternation of hubris and a deep pathos borne out

of events that had been unfolding in the city including the razing of Africville and the so-called “Black problem” in a city where Blacks were clearly treated as second class citizens. How then did the arrival of the Panthers impact White people in general in Halifax?

1:3 - Purpose of research and implications for lifelong learning

An immediate impact of the Panther’s visit was the formation of the Black United Front (BUF) (1968-1996), an umbrella organization “with a mandate to seek and expose instances of racism, to unite the people of all Nova Scotia’s Black settlements into a conscious community of action, and to conduct programmes for Black education, employment and cultural awareness” (Walker, 1985, p.19). Even though there have been accusations of government interference in the funding and composition of the BUF, and a Black conservative takeover, thus watering down its radicalism (Clarke, 2000), the BUF spawned reforms that have led to significant Black organizations like the Black Educators Association (BEA), and the Black Learners’ Advocacy Council (BLAC) Report that created the Council for African Canadian Education (CACE) to advise the government on issues pertaining to African Canadian learners (BLAC Report, 1994, p. 17). The report also recommended the formation of an African Canadian Services Division of the Department of Education charged with matters of appropriate curricula and pedagogies for African Nova Scotian learners (p. 17).

It is my hope that the lessons gleaned from this research, of the learning that occurred during a clash of Whites and Blacks at the personal and institutional levels will be applicable to the ongoing struggle by African Nova Scotians for social justice and equity. In many ways it will be a means “to re-ground ourselves to face the challenges of the present and the future”

(Marable, 2011, p. 5). My overall goal is to understand how the sense of solidarity that underpinned the urgency for change, which I believe the Panthers' arrival in 1968 brought to African Nova Scotian activism can be harnessed to advance current African Nova Scotian struggle for social justice.

Having established my research questions and the circumstances that surrounded this historical event, it would be appropriate to provide a historical context for the Black situation in Nova Scotia, the Black Power Movement and Black Panther party before establishing the theoretical framework and methodologies that I intend to utilize.

Chapter 2: History of Black Settlement in Nova Scotia, Black Power, the Black Panthers and Stokely Carmichael

2:1 - History of Black Settlement in Nova Scotia

Black people arrived in Nova Scotia in three broad phases. The first phase, from 1782 –1785, included some 3000 ex-slaves who, having fought on the side of Britain during the American Revolution, arrived with British promises of liberty, land and equality. Once in Atlantic Canada, they were again denied their liberty and land (Nova Scotia Museum 2001; Walker, 1985, pp.8-9). Many were forced to work on public works and infrastructure. Seven years later in 1792, almost half of them, disillusioned with the broken promises by the British, and driven by destitution, left to settle in Sierra Leone in continental Africa (Nova Scotia Museum, 2001). The second wave of some 500 Maroon exiles from Jamaica arrived in Nova Scotia in 1796 through a compromise deal with the British authorities who were bearing the brunt of Maroon anti-slavery rebellions in Jamaica. Just like their earlier counterparts, the Maroons unwilling to bear the bleak conditions and the cold weather of Nova Scotia left en-masse, with a few exceptions, to Sierra Leone (Nova Scotia Museum, 2001). The third wave of Blacks appeared after the war of 1812 when some 2000 escaped slaves fought on the side of the British. Again they met with broken promises. Those who got land grants were settled on swampy or barren land and left to fend for themselves (Nova Scotia Museum, 2001). Once in Nova Scotia, Blacks were settled in tiny isolated communities on the outskirts of the cities and larger towns (Walker, 1985, p. 9) where through racial spatial management, they could be easily monitored, controlled and impoverished (Nelson, Jennifer, 2008, p. 41). All this formed part of an

extended geography of destruction in the context of spatial analysis that ...illuminate how White dominance and subjectivity are secured through the incitement to place, replace and displace people in particular spaces as well as to make and remake the spaces themselves (p. 21).

The mass migrations of Blacks to Nova Scotia throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries resulted in the establishment of very distinct communities throughout what is now called the Halifax Regional Municipality. They settled at Africville/ North End Halifax, Beecheville, Hammonds Plains, Cobequid/ Maroon Hill/Sackville, Lucasville and Preston (North Preston, East Preston, Lake Loon and Cherrybrook) (Nova Scotia Museum, 2001). From the early years of their settlement in Nova Scotia, Blacks have faced marginalization, “land misappropriations” and a host of deprivations in education and employment and have had to find ways to thrive in an oppressive society. Walker writes that, “From the late nineteenth century until the middle twentieth century, racism infused Canadian institutions, government policies and public behaviour” (Walker, 1985, p.16).

Yet Blacks found ways to thrive, turning out their own academics and political and religious leaders who have articulated their struggle for social justice. World War II, where Blacks had fought alongside Whites for country and empire, coupled with the growth of a Black working class, especially during the war’s labor shortages had infused new and militant forms into Black protest in Nova Scotia. Further, the independence struggles on the African continent and the radicalization of Black protest in the United States would bring a new urgency to the Black struggle in Nova Scotia (Walker, 1985, pp.18-19). Analyzing African Nova Scotian

protest in the 1940s to the early 1960s, Walker states that the type of confrontation chosen by Black Canadians was towards

specific areas of complaint: a skating rink or swimming pool would be forced to admit Blacks, a theatre required to stop segregating Blacks in the balcony, a hospital induced to accept Blacks for nurse's training or an educational facility might be established in a Black community. (Walker, 1985, p. 18)

What Walker hints at is that there was not a concerted Black effort across the province or the country against systemic and institutionalized racism. By the latter part of the 1960s, this would change.

Reviewing the political atmosphere within the African Nova Scotia communities at the time of the Panthers' visit, Pachai (2006) states that,

There were emerging precedents for action that could bring about changes, including strikes, boycotts, dialogue, coalitions and cooperation. Older people influenced by years of experience rubbed shoulders with younger people with urgency and militancy in their minds and on their agendas. It was a time for change. (Pachai, 2006, p. 5)

Commenting on the impact of the Panther's visit, Dr. Carrie Best, an African Nova Scotian credited with founding *The Clarion*, the first Black owned and published newspaper in Nova Scotia, wrote in August, 1970, two years after the Panthers' visit,

I saw a new awareness on the part of many Black people.... that there is definitely a new breed of Black youth who cannot be denied. Their goals are well defined - dignity, self determination and respect. They are not in the majority but their ranks are growing (Pictou Advocate, August 27, 1970).

The arrival of the Panthers in Halifax was therefore a seminal event that catalysed the revolutionary situation described by Pachai above.

The evidence currently suggests that in educational achievement in elementary and junior high schools, Blacks lag far behind Whites, Acadians and Natives in the province (Thiessen, 2009, p.1). Also, it is a fact that African Nova Scotians are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system, compared to other racialized groups, (Tanovich, 2008. p.657) and further, African Nova Scotians, as a result of systemic racism, face hurdles in obtaining employment (James et al, 2010, pp. 102-108).

2:2 - Black Power, the Black Panther Party and Stokely Carmichael

Peniel Joseph, an African American historian and expert in the Black Power movement, defines Black Power as "... [trumpeting] a militant new race consciousness that placed Black identity as the soul of a new radicalism" (Joseph, 2006, p. 3). Angelo concurs that Black Power activists "argued for a fundamental alteration of society, rather than reform. ...the politics of Black Power appealed to a broad range of people and organizations including Black nationalists, Marxists, pan-Africanists, and trade unionists (Angelo, 2009, p. 19). Obviously then, the Black Power era represents a very important phase in the Black struggle for equality,

not only in the US but in other diaspora communities such as Britain (Angelo, 2009, p. 19), and continental Africa, whose political struggles were affected by, and in turn, affected the African American struggles (Joseph, 2009, p. 754). Summing up the impact of Black Power politics in the US, Joseph again states,

The Black Power era (1954–1975) remains a controversial and understudied period in American history, yet it is undoubtedly one of the richest periods for historical research. America's Black Power years paralleled the golden age of modern civil rights activism, a period that witnessed the rise of iconic political leaders, broadcast enduring debates over race, violence, war, and democracy, saw the publication of seminal intellectual works, and heralded the evolution of radical social movements that took place against a backdrop of epic historic events. (Joseph, 2009, p.1004)

Between 1966 and 1968, Stokely Carmichael, though not the only leader of the Black Panther movement, had emerged as the “most important” (Joseph, 2009, p. 1008). He had openly acknowledged violence as a tactic in Black activism and was under surveillance from all levels of the US government including the White House and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) who have over 20,000 documents on Stokely Carmichael alone (FBI declassified files, n.d.). Next to Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael is the most chronicled of the Black Power leaders (Joseph, 2009, p. 1008). Carmichael himself was an imposing figure, and had become a global icon during the 1960s and early 1970s.

Carmichael was tall, handsome, intellectually agile, and equal parts angry and gregarious, carrying himself — whether in sharecropper's overalls, business suits,

or leather jackets — with an air of unadorned dignity and grace that helped turn him into an international icon: Black power's rock star. (Joseph, 2006, para. 8)

A year before his Halifax visit, pending a visit to Washington DC, Carmichael had promised that Blacks were going to take over the city, lock stock and barrel, prompting the FBI to be apprehensive of impending Black rule in the capital. The *Wall Street Journal* had a caption, “Stokely Carmichael says he's coming, and the nation's capital is in a sweat” (Joseph, 2006, para. 15). It is not difficult then to imagine the consternation of Halifax City officials and the sensibilities of White folk being rattled at his visit.

These were heady days of Black protest against racism in Nova Scotia, manifested at the time in the razing of Africville, a once thriving Black community on the shores of Bedford Basin. In 1960 Halifax City had approved of the demolition and carried it out from 1962. By 1970, Africville had been turned into a public park “for young and old, a place to dream their dreams” as was declared by the mayor (Nelson, 2008, p.23). In reality it has become a dog park where many White denizens of Halifax exercise their dogs.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

For a historical account of Black settlement in Nova Scotia, I have utilized James Walker's *Racial Discrimination in Canada: the Black Experience*, (1985) and Harvey Amani Whitfield's *The Development of Black Refugee Identity in Nova Scotia, 1813-1850* (2005). In these books, they explore the different waves of Black migrations into Nova Scotia and the racist deprivations they faced that led to many of these migrants relocating to Sierra Leone in continental Africa. The archives of the Nova Scotia Museum have also been a valuable source of information about Blacks' settlement in Nova Scotia.

Pachai and Bishop's, *Historic Black Nova Scotia*, (2006) while providing a historical account of the Black migrations into Nova Scotia, also deal with the political and social currents in Nova Scotia around the time of the Panthers' visit in 1968. Further they showcase the various African Nova Scotian personalities who had loomed large on the historical stage.

For the activities of the Black Power movement and Stokely Carmichael, I have found the works of Peniel Roberts, an African American historian specializing in the Black Power movement, very useful and engaging. Three journal articles on his website, *Black Power's powerful legacy* (2006), *The Black Power movement, democracy: America in the King years* (2009) and *The Black Power movement: a state of the field* (2009) have been very helpful in understanding the full impact of the Black power movement during the US civil rights era, and its influence on Black radicalism in North America. Similarly, unclassified FBI documents detailing US government surveillance of Stokely Carmichael have helped to provide a fuller picture of his stature as a Black Panther leader.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

Any analysis of the impact of the BPP will be incomplete without a framework of the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the party. The party's articulation of Black radicalism through the lens of a Marxism fortified by the pre-eminence of race therefore becomes the foundation of the theoretical framework of my research. Huey Newton, the "leading and founding" member of the BPP states in *War against the Panthers: a study of repression in America* (1980):

two of the most crucial problems which have hindered the development of truly democratic government in America are...:

1. class and racial cleavages, which have historically been the source of division and bitter antagonism between sectors of American society, and
2. the inherent and longstanding distrust held by the American ruling class of any institutionalized democracy involving the mass population. (Newton, 1980, p. 3)

Newton's words ring true for African Nova Scotians, who through their settlements as slaves and then as Refugees, Loyalists and Maroons in Nova Scotia have faced the twin oppressions of race and class.

Being a revolutionary organization armed with revolutionary ideologies, the Panther's praxis for change injected critical hope and agency into the Black American and diasporic struggles. This ideology had no illusions about the "limited" nature of the democracy espoused by the founding fathers of United States society. In

an assertion that rings true of Canada's treatment of its natives and Black population, and brimming with hope and agency, Newton states,

African Americans, Native Americans, and, to a lesser extent, women were never presumed to be within the pale of either hopes or guarantees related to the practice of democracy. This marked exclusion in the idealism of America's founders might well be regarded as the original wellspring of dissent in America, for what is all too apparent is the fact that democracy is a dynamic and infectious idea. It is an idea which inspires the hope of universal inclusion. Thus, it may subsequently have been predicted that the arbitrary, capricious, and sinister exclusion of large sectors of the American population from the hopes inspired by the rhetoric of a fledgling democracy would give rise to the most determined forms of human struggle imaginable, including those which resort to force of arms, and resolve to face death before capitulation. (Newton, 1980, p. 4)

For oppressed people then, hope becomes the springboard from which great sacrifices required of humans are effortlessly given. Such hope, which Freire (1992) calls critical hope, is essential in the fight for social justice. Critical hope begets critical agency, when the oppressed engage in active pursuit of justice. In their "police patrols" and community building initiatives that included breakfast clubs for Black and poor school children, the promotion of Black entrepreneurship and the efforts to keep drugs out of Black neighborhoods, all of which were duplicated in various forms by Burnley "Rocky" Jones and others in Halifax, Nova

Scotia, there was a clear call for the Black person to take control of his/her destiny (Personal communication with Burnley “Rocky” Jones, October 12, 2011).

Being a part of the Black radical tradition, the BPP was also influenced by linkages with the African continent promoted by the likes of Marcus Garvey and formalized by Du Bois, which had by this time, become a “major theme in African –American politics and social thought” (Marable, 2011, p. 7). As stated earlier, the BUF’s solidarity with continental Africa and the Caribbean’s struggle shows a solidarity that establishes the primacy of Africans and Black people’s solidarity against the domination of Whiteness.

Continuing in this evolving Black radical tradition then, I have chosen to examine the impact of the Panthers’ arrival in Halifax through a bricolage of Afrocentricity, Marxism, critical race theory (CRT) and critical hope. I should point out that within this broad framework, the Black radical tradition’s interpretation of Marxism – what Cedric Robinson (1983) calls “Black Marxism” – will play the pre-eminent role. I would like to state that Asante’s (2003) postulation of an Afrocentric-Marxist binary, coupled with his assertion of the primacy of culture over race and economics, represents an unfortunate essentialist interpretation of CRT and Marxism. Engels, in a letter to J. Bloch rejects this essentialism when he asserts,

According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life... [I]f somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. (Marx, Engels and Lenin, 1890, p. 294)

Engels goes on to explain that economic production only forms the basis, but the superstructure of the relations of production, reflected in politics, religion, culture, judiciary etc., all influence historical struggles and “in many cases preponderate in determining their form” (Marx, Engels, Lenin, 1890, p. 294). Indeed as Schreiber writes, “... the greatest weakness of the Afrocentric paradigm is its failure to acknowledge its connection to Western – and Eastern I would add – intellectual traditions” (Appiah, 1993; Cobb, 1997; Dickerson, 1995; McPhail, 1998; and Schlesinger, 1998 as cited by Schreiber, 2000, p. 658). Drawing on McPhail (1998), she continues that because of this, “a false dichotomy is created whereby Afrocentricity and Eurocentric (standpoint) are presented as competing and mutually exclusive paradigms rather than as interdependent, interrelated and complimentary approaches (Schreiber, 2000, p. 659). As such within this bricolage there exist intersectionalities of the disparate frameworks that explain phenomena more holistically than the separate frameworks can on their own. This in itself is a repudiation of the Eurocentric academy framework where specialization often compartmentalizes knowledge into silos each rigidly defending itself against the other, and if there is enough division “within a discipline about how to simplify reality,... the discipline simply subdivides: for example, linguistics divides into psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics” (Donmoyer, 2012, p. 803). Blackness, in its radical tradition, is more of a unity that exists across all forms of diversity- geographic, historical, even ideological, and ultimately, continental and diasporic.

4:1 - Afrocentricity

Molefi Asante in *Afrocentricity: The theory of social change* (2003), argues that, “An ideology of social change must find its existence in ourselves; it cannot be external to us, and it cannot be imposed by those other than ourselves; it must be derived from our particular historical and cultural experience” (Asante, 2003, p. 41).

Afrocentricity is a creation of many scholars, past and present but Molefi Asante is regarded as the one who coined the term Afrocentricity and established its philosophical and theoretical underpinnings in *Afrocentricity* (1988), *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), and *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge* (1990). He defines Afrocentricity as “a mode of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values, and perspectives predominate. In regards to theory, it is the placing of African people in the centre of any analysis of African phenomena” (Asante, 2003, p. 2).

Asante uses African to refer to all people of African descent whether they are on the continent or in the diaspora. He posits that all Africans share a common African Cultural System (ACS) even if it is rendered along continental or intercontinental and intergenerational lines. Thus Akans, Yorubas, Zulus, African Canadians or African Americans all practice the beliefs and hold their values all derived from the same African Cultural System (Asante, 2003, p. 6). It is only when Africans are “off centre, mis-educated, decentred or culturally insane” that they do not participate in this ACS (Asante, 2003, p. 7). According to Afrocentrists, the crisis in educational achievement among Black learners in the public school system, for example, is largely a crisis of such cultural loss (Shockley, 2009, p. 169).

According to Hunn (2004), who draws on Carruthers (1999); Colin & Guy (1998); Flannery (1994); Karenga (1995); Schiele (1994); Sheared (1996); Warfield-Coppock (1995, Afrocentrists label the Eurocentric cultural ethos as “controlling, materialistic, individualistic, competitive, fragmented, conflictual, emotionally distant, rational and linear”, while the Africentric world view emphasizes interdependency, interconnectedness, spirituality, human centredness, holism and harmony (p.67). It is only when Africans recapture the African ethos that we will achieve “victory”. To this end, Afrocentricity must be seen not just as a tool for improving educational standards but as a “mechanism for holistic community change” (Shockley, 2009, p. 169). Afrocentricity empowers Africans for liberation by giving them a sense of community agency (James et al, 2010, p. 24).

African Nova Scotians are therefore linked to a global African struggle through their shared oppression and culture. Being a racial minority in the province – 2% according to the 2006 Canadian census – this solidarity with a global African struggle, coupled with social activism can help build a confident critical mass in the struggle against marginalization and injustice. Research and social activism then must have as one of its immediate aims, the promotion of the African Cultural System among African Nova Scotians.

4:2 - Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Central to CRT is the assertion that “race matters” (West, 1992) thus providing us with a lens to theorize, examine and challenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact on social structures, practices and discourses “(Yosso, 2005, p.73). In this way CRT permits

“...a critical look at the liberal notions of colorblindness, equal opportunity and merit in order to reveal how these neutral ideals serve to justify racial exclusion” (James, 2010, p. 24).

CRT accepts the notion that there is no biological or scientific basis for race; race like a large part of reality is a social construct (Delgado, 1989, as cited by Ladson- Billings, 1998, p. 15).

Even without any biological basis, Ginsberg (1996) argues that there are such material benefits, deprivations and other consequences that accrue to people living under different racial designations (Ginsberg, 1996, as cited in Dei, p. 20). As a result, race as a social reality “overpowers the lack of a biological foundation which renders the lack of a scientific foundation...a mere theoretical truth. (Zack, 1997 as cited in Dei, 1997, p.22). Dei takes it further arguing that though neo-liberalism argues there is no scientific basis to race, the empirical manifestations of race in economics and society make it more empirical than science itself (p. 22).

Under conditions of racism, the “dominant group maintains and rationalizes its power with its stories, stock explanations” that shape reality in ways that ensure the maintenance of their privileges (Delgado, 1989, as cited in Ladson Billings, 1998, p.16). CRT maintains that members of marginalized groups “internalize the negative and alienating images” that members of the dominant class have erected to maintain power and privilege (p. 16). For their “psychic preservation” then, the marginalized must also name their own reality (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 16). Anzaldua (1990) points out, “If we have been gagged and disempowered by theories, we can also be loosened and empowered by theories” (Anzaldua, 1990, p. xxvi). As a result CRT asserts the centrality of the experiential knowledge of people of color as legitimate and appropriate (Yosso, 1995, p. 74). Storytelling or the counter story becomes a way that marginalized people express and name their reality, a significant step in

exposing the complex nature of racism, and beginning the process of institutional redress (p. 14).

Nova Scotia with her dominant White and minority Black population is one such racialized society. What is missing from the accounts of the impact of the Panthers' visit, outside the official stories, outside even of the accounts by the principal Black Nova Scotians involved in organizing the visit are the myriads of stories that give material and spiritual fullness to the significance of the event. In the case of the Panthers' visit, the dominant discourse presents them as a bunch of violent trouble makers who had come up to Halifax in an attempt to stir up a docile and nominally satisfied Black population. And even among some of the Black leaders, there was much apprehension of the negative publicity that the Panthers' presence might bring to the African Nova Scotian struggle. Interviewed after the departure of Carmichael and his entourage, Gus Wedderburn, president of the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NSAACP), waxed pathetically apologetic about not wanting or condoning any violence in Nova Scotia while acknowledging the inequities and injustices within the system (Chronicle Herald, 18th October, 1968, p. 8).

A counter discursive model of the Panthers visit, constructed with the voices of African Nova Scotians, will provide holistic credence to the visit and provide useful lessons for current activism. As Barbara A. Love (2004) states,

counter-storytelling provides a means for members of subordinated groups to address those circumstances where the prevailing conception of justice provides no language or means by which the marginalized person can express how he or

she has been injured or wronged in terms that the system will understand.

(Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, cited by Love, 2004, p. 233)

For my purposes here, counter story telling is also addressed to the White community in Halifax to challenge what has been presented and consumed by them as nominal truths. In one way I hope this will have cathartic value when they see a “view of the world denied to them by White privilege and White domination” (Love, 2004, p. 233).

4:3 - Black Marxism

Cedric Robinson, an eloquent proponent of Black radicalism, in *Black Marxism* (1983), provides a rather apt description of the general situation of Black people the world over. With ominous finality that strikes like a bush fire cutting across a compliant African savannah, he writes that,

in our time with the development of corporate structures and the myth of the intensively rational society, Blacks become the irrational, the violent, criminal caged beast. The cage was civilization and western culture, obviously available to Blacks but inexplicably beyond their grasp. (Robinson, 1983, p. 260)

Robinson’s brand of Marxism is unique because of his insertion of the centrality of race within Marxian analysis and his negation of a significant portion of Marx’s historical materialism. He asserts that Marx’s clear cut stages of human history from communalism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism to socialism was “unsupported by historical evidence” (p. 19). At every point in European civilization, he argues, forced servitude akin to slavery has been

the means of primitive accumulation a European bourgeoisie that has existed all through the Marxian stages of Western civilization (Robinson, 1983, p. 24).

Employing Marxian dialectics, he places historical materialism on a sounder footing arguing that what really transformed the European bourgeoisie was the prodigious growth of capital and productive forces from the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, slavery and colonization, all of which ushered in the era of industrial capital.

Continuing the dialectic he posits that Black oppression is a result of capitalist exploitation and racism. More emphatically than Marx's admission that slavery was as fundamental to industrial capitalism as machinery credit, etc., he again asserts that,

Without slavery, no cotton; without cotton, no modern industry. Slavery has given value to the colonies ; the colonies have created world trade; world trade is the necessary condition of large scale machine industry... Slavery is an economic category of the highest importance. (Robinson, 1983, p. 105)

Black radicalism then is specifically an African response to modern European development. It is a reaction against a development that has been expedited by human economic exploitation, a phenomenon woven into European social life since the beginning of Western civilization (Robinson, 1983, p. 97). The fight against racism, for Blacks must then continue into a fight against world capitalism, a sort of "permanent revolution", similar in its global progression to that advocated by the Russian Marxist, Leon Trotsky. Otherwise, why bother to fight against racism only to remain still in an exploitative capitalist society? Carl James, a critical race theorist arrives at a similar conclusion in his research into educational conditions and

aspirations of Black people living in the Jane and Finch intersection of Toronto. Commenting on residents' vision of education as a "way out" he asks,

Why do they think that things will be different because of their efforts, when, like their friends, family and community members, they are receiving their education in an institutional context that has created the situation in which they find themselves. Why do they think that a system that has helped to shape and maintain the structures that marginalize them will provide space for them ... to learn on the basis of their needs, interests and aspirations. (James, 2012, p. 75)

And, as Shockley, observes, "... it is difficult to find meaning in something that excluded you in the first place and now sees you as an addendum" (Shockley, 2009, p. 174).

Incidentally, such a short-sightedness in the permanence of Black activism may have occurred in Nova Scotia. Reading through the BUF newspapers, *The Grasp* and *The Rap*, one comes across many Black figures who were a part of the radical activism at the time, some of whom, it seems, have been pacified into all manner of high government positions, in the process compromising, in degrees, their abilities to actively and purposefully represent the Black community's agenda for social justice and equality on the community's own terms. For some of them, the anti-racist struggle did not translate into the anti-capitalist struggle. Some of the activists who came of age during this visit and the early years of the existence of the BUF, names like Percy Paris, Walter Borden, Sylvia Hamilton, Delvina Bernard, Wayn Hamilton and George Elliot Clarke, to name a few, have gone on to successful careers within government, academe and the arts. For example, Percy Paris was the Nova Scotian Minister of

African Nova Scotian Affairs until May 2013, Delvina Bernard is the Executive Director of CACE, and Wayn Hamilton is CEO of African Nova Scotian Affairs, a government organization. One wonders how often their positions within a government that presides over the unequal status quo brings them into conflict with the Black communities. A case in point is the recent confusion over the naming, and control, of the Africentric Learning Institute (ALI), one of the recommendations of the BLAC Report (BLAC Report, 1994, p17). The Black Community led by Burnley “Rocky” Jones, Lynn Jones and the North Preston Rate Payers Association (NPRPA) accused the government of trying to control the ALI by among other things, forcing the new ALI board to accept the name Delmore “Buddy” Daye Africentric Learning Institute. The government position is articulated by the Minister of Education and the African Canadian Services Division of the Department of Education (ACSD), pitting Black government officials against the Black community. At the time of writing, two boards exists, one which has accepted the government position and name, and the old board still clinging to what it believes is “the community” position (“Open letter to African Nova Scotia community” sent by NPRPA to the community, January 18, 2013). This kind of conflict within the community detract from the actual mandate of the ALI – to research into curricula and pedagogies for the African Nova Scotian learner (BLAC Report, 1994, p. 18). It is hoped that the lessons of solidarity gleaned from the impact of the Panthers’ visit can inform such cleavages within the community.

Weighing in on the dislocation of the post-civil rights Black scholar – activists from Marxism, Marable (2011) laments the loss of,

the important connections between theory and practice that were central to the work of earlier Black radicals including those from the Black power era. This

often has led to a rupture from the problems and concerns of the Black working class, and a style of analysis that is excessively abstract. (p. 15)

Singling out Afrocentricity, Manning (1995) again charges,

Vulgar Afrocentrists deliberately ignored or obscured the historical reality of social classification within the African diaspora... Populist Afrocentrism was the perfect social theory for the upwardly mobile petty bourgeoisie. It gave them a vague sense of ethnic superiority and cultural originality, without requiring the hard, critical study of historical realities. It provided a philosophical blueprint to avoid concrete struggle within the real world, since potential White ‘allies’ certainly were non-existent and all cultural change began within. How do we transcend the theoretical limitations and social contradictions of the politics of racial identity? (Marable, 1995, pp. 193-194)

Manning also criticizes the post-civil rights Black leadership of paying eloquent lip-service to the insights of Black scholars like W.E.B. Du Bois – himself a Marxist - as pillars of their own perspective without also acknowledging that Du Bois’s philosophy of culture and history conflicted sharply with their own (p.193). He was referring specifically to Du Bois’s concept of a “double consciousness” that plagues African Americans. In *Souls of Black folk* Du Bois writes,

this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,--an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one

dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (Du Bois, 1903, p. 3)

African Nova Scotians in many ways are afflicted with this double consciousness, in their case, their two-ness lies in their African and Canadian identities. Like African Americans, the history of the African Nova Scotian is precisely the history of these contending consciousnesses. The struggle for African Nova Scotians, as it is for African Americans, is to merge these two selves into a “truer self” without giving up any of those identities (Du Bois, 1903, p. 3). To succeed in that they have to overcome a double oppression – capitalist and racist, both of which relegate the majority into second class, poor citizens.

The African Nova Scotian struggle for equal opportunity and social justice is in need of renewal and it is my hope that this research will contribute to the re-ignition of that activism that went into the formation of the BUF by re-establishing the anti-racist and anti-capitalist nexus.

4:4 - Critical Hope

Paulo Freire in his “opening words” to *Pedagogy of hope* (1992) writes that “I do not understand human existence and the struggle needed to improve it apart from hope and dream” (Freire, 1992, p. 2). At first glance this may sound delusive and even fatalistic, but coming from one who has done so much work among the Brazilian poor, who recognizes the sheer immensity of the world capitalist imperative, it becomes a statement that warrants further examination. Against hope, he juxtaposes hopelessness, a normal condition of oppressed peoples, which he defines as “hope that has lost its bearings...” (Freire, 1992, p. 2).

Freire's analysis may have dealt with the situation of Brazil's oppressed, yet his Marxist framework allows for an extrapolation of his theories to analyse the situation of Black people under slavery, colonization and racism.

He writes that, "when it becomes a program, hopelessness paralyzes us, immobilizes us. We succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for fierce struggle that will create the world" (Freire, 1992, p. 2). Hope, Freire argues, is an "ontological need" but he is quick to warn that hope alone is not enough to alter the realities of oppression without considering the concrete and material realities of the struggle. He asserts that "No, my hope is necessary, ... Alone it does not win. But without it, my struggle will be weak and wobbly. We need critical hope the way a fish needs unpolluted water" (p. 2).

James et al, concur, that critical hope is inherent in Afrocentricity and CRT because they both "empower us to confront racism and violence in our communities" (James et al, 2010. p.27). Critical hope can also be discerned in what Yosso (2005) calls "aspirational capital" a form cultural capital that refers to the racially oppressed individual or the community's ability to keep alive their hopes, aspirations and dreams in the face of unyielding barriers, "real or perceived" even when those who harbor these aspirations do not have the means to achieve them (Yosso, 2005, p. 78).

Critical hope within the framework of Marxism takes on the form of critical agency because Marxism is a revolutionary, anti-capitalist theory that calls on the working classes of the world to unite and overthrow the predatory capitalist system. The closing lines of Marx and Engel's

Manifesto of the Communist Party unequivocally evinces this critical agency of the oppressed in the chilling words,

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to gain. (Marx and Engels, 1848, p. 34)

Critical hope, according to James et al, is what has empowered African Nova Scotians and indeed all Black people to meet the injustices that have been visited on them throughout history with “the endurance, persistence and tenacity to continue pushing forward despite great obstacles” (James et al, 2010, p. 12).

They continue,

It is what has pushed African Canadians to struggle with the daily indignities of life and to challenge the system that supports and encourages this treatment. It is what continues to push ordinary African Canadians to sacrifice their time and energy to work towards a better future: enhancing not only their own lives but also the lives of other individuals, families and ultimately the entire community. A sense of hope, rooted in an understanding of the history of Black people, continues to sustain those who are Black and offers a buffer against the wounds of racism and pain”. (James et al., 2010, p. 28)

One objective in this research is to assist in opening up ever new more opportunities of critical hope and action among African Nova Scotians.

Chapter 5: Methodology

I have chosen a qualitative approach to this research in order to “circumvent the sort of simplification that characterizes so much of social science” (Donmoyer, 2012, p. 799). As Geertz (2000) writes, human beings are “suspended in webs of significance . . . [they themselves] have spun” (Geertz, 2000, as cited in Donmoyer, 2012, p. 802). To explain this complexity of the human condition, qualitative research sees the process not as an “experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning” (Geertz, 2000, as cited in Donmoyer, 2012, p. 802). An important advantage of the qualitative approach is that it “complicates and thereby unfreezes the idea of evidence, foregrounds the politics in definitions of evidence, and precludes a priori prejudices against certain types of evidence” (Sandeloswki, 2004, as cited in Xu & Storr, 2012, p. 2). Further they state,

To become a qualitative researcher requires a whole new way of thinking about what counts as evidence. Unlike in the natural sciences, where an Archimedean point is prized for its vantage point of total objectivity of the researcher in relation to the object of study, qualitative researchers accept that evidence is not a given, fixed reality. (Xu & Storr, 2012, p. 2)

The impact of the 1968 Panthers’ visit to Halifax on African Nova Scotian activism for social justice does not lend itself to a simple cause and effect analysis. Within those turbulent times, the visit meant different things to different segments of the population and even to different individuals. Only a qualitative analysis can attempt to capture the complexities of this impact. Within this broad methodological framework, I have also used an Afrocentric approach, which rejects the objective positivist approach to research. As Reviere (2001) notes, in Afrocentric inquiries,

The researcher is expected to examine and to place in the foreground of the inquiry any and all subjectivities or societal baggage that would otherwise remain hidden and, hence, covertly influence the research activity. (Reviere, 2001, p. 710)

At the same time Afrocentrism entreats the researcher not to distance him/herself from the subjects to be studied. Afrocentricity posits that there should be very little distance between the researcher and subject and assumes that the researcher should participate in the research in a dialogical way (Schreiber, 2000, p. 661). In order to locate him or herself into the research, the researcher must be reflective of his/her own life experiences, and become, at first, students of the subjects they wish to study. An Afrocentric methodology also discourages a reductionist approach to research and encourages the researcher to think holistically so that the “properties of the part can be understood from the dynamics of the whole” (Schreiber, 2000, p. 662). In a sense the relationship between researcher and participants in emancipatory research is similar to that between what Freire has called the bourgeois leaders or teachers and the oppressed (Freire, 2005, p. 164). Freire warns that although leaders should not impose their ideas on the oppressed, they should not take a “liberalist” approach which might encourage licence among the oppressed. The dialogical approach is against authoritarianism and licence but affirmative of authority and freedom. “Freedom and authority cannot be isolated but must be considered in relationship to each other” (Freire, 2005, p. 178). In the same way, just as a researcher should not objectify his or her subjects and keep scientific distance from them, he or she brings into the work “conscious and concrete knowledge” in order to actively help in the transformation towards social justice (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p. 65).

5:1 - Arts Informed Research

Starting in the early 1990's a range of methodological innovations began to appear within the broad framework of qualitative methodologies. These innovations were especially rife within the field of educational research maybe "because of its broad intellectual heritage or because of its interdisciplinary nature, or its broader commitment to...practical application of research" (Cole and Knowles, 2008, pp. 58-59). At the same time these innovations were a response to the many ways of knowing and understanding that encompass the human condition and development (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p 59). Citing Eisner, Cole and Knowles write that artistic and literary images can give insights into the human condition and inform us in ways that only the artist and his or her creations can make possible (Cole and Knowles, 2008. p. 58). I have chosen this approach by using a full length stage play to study the impact of the Panthers' visit, thereby combining the scholarly rigour of an aspiring academic, and the creativity and licence of an artist in an attempt to contribute to transformative learning among African Nova Scotians. I have chosen this art-informed research route because, "Even challenging conventions of positivism and following qualitative methods [have] resulted in research representations wrung dry of life –of emotion, of sensuality of physicality" (Coles and Knowles, 2008, p. 57). There are many ways of knowing and the artistic and the aesthetic, as epistemological pathways, are as valid as the so called scientific and the positivist.

Arts informed research, as defined by Cole and Knowles "is a mode and form of qualitative research in the social sciences that is influenced by, but not based on the arts broadly conceived" (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p. 59). One of its main purposes is to bridge the gap between research, the academy and the community, by making "scholarship more accessible".

As a research method it is “designed to enhance meaning, to broaden and deepen on-going conversations about educational policy and practice” (Barone & Eisner, 1997, p. 102).

Brigham states that approaches in arts informed research can “inspire, motivate, provoke, challenge, engage, develop skills, and reduce stress” (Brigham, 2011, p 57). Arts informed approaches may be utilized either in the human interviewing part of the research, as Brigham did in her study of internationally educated immigrant female teachers where she employed “flow writing, storytelling; and art making with materials such as water colours, coloured pencils, pastels, fabric, and clay” (Brigham 2011, p.44-45), or through the whole process including, for example, a full length stage play, as in this thesis. In this instance, the play itself, or the process of writing the play is the inquiry, involves the whole process of interviewing and discourse analysis. The play cannot be separated from the process of inquiry. Where an arts informed approach is applied to the whole process of the research then there exists a dialectical relationship between process and representation - the artist-researcher must approach the process of enquiry with his/her art as both the driver and the driven. Art becomes research, and research becomes art.

In the end,

The transformative potential of arts informed research speaks to the need for developing representations that address audiences in ways that do not pacify or indulge the senses but arouse them and the intellect to new heights of response and action. In essence, and ideally, the educative possibilities of arts-informed work are foremost in the heart, soul, and mind of the researcher from the onset of an inquiry. The possibilities of such educative endeavors, broadly defined, are

near limitless; their power to inform and provoke action are only constrained by the human spirit and its energies. (Cole and Knowles, 2008 p. 68)

This approach is in consonance with CRT's counterstory method and Afrocentricity's emancipatory approach to research. CRT supports the play or drama tradition as part of its counter story paradigm. Interviewing in the community was a way of releasing the linguistic capital of the community into a stage play. The community's store house of storytelling skills that include 'memorization, attention to detail, dramatic pauses, comedic timing, facial affect, vocal tone, volume, rhythm and rhyme' have informed the dialogue and style of the play (Yosso, 2012, p. 79). Love (2004) employs the play format as a counter story in "Brown plus 50 counter-storytelling: a critical race theory analysis of the 'majoritarian achievement gap'". In her contrived playlet, she brings together Thurgood Marshall, the first Black US Supreme Court judge, Zora Neal Hurston, the anthropologist and novelist, Richard Wright, the novelist, US Representative, Maxine Waters, educational researcher, Asa Hillard, and Derek Bell, the founder of CRT. In one room, with others, they discuss the so called "achievement gap" between Black learners and their White counterparts (Love, 2004, pp. 233-243).

Both C.L.R. James and Aime Cesaire of the Black Marxist tradition were artists and cultural workers who understood that plays, poetry and prose were effective means of transforming the imaginations of the oppressed. Du Bois, was "one of the greatest artists of his generation whose creativity challenged racism" (Marable, 2011, p.14).

I have therefore chosen an arts-informed approach to my research within a methodological paradigm of Afrocentricity and CRT, both of which exist as philosophical and methodological constructs.

5:2 - Researcher Reflexivity

I was born and raised in Ghana from what would be considered a middle class family. I grew up with a “double consciousness”, in a binary world of my native, post-slave trade traditional cosmos, and a colonial, western, capitalist, imposition. Traditionally, both my father’s and mother’s lineages are “Adehye” meaning they belong to the ruling families in their respective states. At the same time, they both worked in the real world of the colonized economy and government. My father was a merchant with interests in jewelry and rental properties, and my mother a social worker, when she did work outside the home.

I was sent to a boarding school at the age of five. It was a school that was very British in its orientation, where our traditional languages could not be spoken, and attended by children of some of the wealthiest people in the country including government ministers and functionaries. For about eight months of the year, I was immersed in this pseudo British world, speaking the Whiteman’s language, and then for the other four months, back in my traditional world, with its own ethos of traditional languages, foods, and culture. I was to live this dual existence for the next seventeen years until I completed university. And even so, after a two year hiatus living a hermit’s life in the ancient forests of Kwaebibirem, I returned to the boarding school, this time as a teacher, living on campus and again straddling the two worlds. At the age of 27, I married a White Canadian woman and immigrated to Canada where I have been living for the past 25 years.

I believe the double consciousness of my existence in Ghana has shaped my world view a lot.

The very location of my home was symbolic of this double consciousness. Kwahu

Twenedurase House, as my father's house was called, was bordered by the king's palace, the Roman Catholic Church, and the social welfare building. Presiding over all three was the mighty rock Oboatabiri, a densely forested mountain filled with stories, myths and legends of the past. It was as if my existence at home was bounded by a dying traditionalism, a predatory religion and a parasitic colonized state. It was no wonder that between the King's house and mine, and between my house and the Social welfare building sat two open pit public latrines, the stench from which would blight the neighborhood through all the years I grew up in Koforidua – for that was the name of my town, one filled with a rich historical past.

The alienation imposed by a boarding school, away from home, nestled in a forest seven miles outside the city, where we were filled, like empty jars, with a Eurocentric curriculum and culture aimed at stamping out any traces of indigeniety in us and, in the process, produce second rate Englishmen and women, fresh, as from a press, must have been frightening for a five year old torn from his parents, all in the name of education and progress. But the 4 months I spent at home had its own alienating influences. First my neighborhood – and it was a very dense one with narrow lanes between whole blocks of housing instead of side roads – thought my siblings and I, by virtue of attending Achimota School, and speaking English all the time, were putting on airs and therefore shied away from us. As a result of this, except for my siblings, I had only one friend in the town, an old school mate in the local public school where I attended for a term before making the pilgrimage to Achimota School.

Further, being a middle child of a large family, I was not favored in the natural clusters of siblings that form, and became more of a loner with my sister as my confidante. I found myself many times with a lot of time on my hands. It was to the foothills of the mighty rock Obuotabiri that I would flee most days while at home during the school breaks. On those days,

I would finish my daily chores which included working on mathematical problems and writing an essay in English, under the supervision of my father, who almost fanatically, but in a well-meaning way, combined with a philosophy that did not spare the rod, would ardently contribute his share to the “Britishing” of his children. Embalmed by this forest, with the abandon of an infertile mind, sometimes with aid of a storybook and later a novel, I would journey into a surreal world of imagined realities, sordid and pleasant, of livable fantasies, played out on imagined magnificent theatre stages, and mixed with an exciting fear of the spirits and dwarfs that we had been told as children, inhabited the rock.

And on good days when I returned home from the forest in the evenings, I would be lucky if my father did not have a guest, for I would again be commanded to write another essay in English, one of hundreds he had made me memorize; but in front of the guest, he would drop the topic like he just picked it out of a hat – all of this so he could impress the guest with his son’s prowess in the Whiteman’s language. By the time I left the clutches of my father at 16, I had written many an essay in English. Yet I credit all this for being the source of my interests in the performing arts, writing, and more specifically, drama and the stage. Throughout my life, I have taken part in many amateur productions and even written and performed my own shows when I was in Ghana. It should not come too much as a surprise, after this perennial preoccupation with theatre, writing and the stage that I intend to use an arts informed methodology for my thesis.

5:3 - Data Collection

Two main data sources were used for this research: archival material, including newspapers, magazines, declassified RCMP files; and the individual qualitative interviewing of folks who lived particularly in Halifax at the time of the Panthers' visit.

5:3:1 - Discourse Analysis

Soon after my interest in this project began, I visited the Halifax library and went through all issues of the 1968 *Chronicle Herald*, hoping to get a feel of the build up to, and aftermath of the Panther's visit. I found to my surprise, and later consternation that there was hardly any mention of African Nova Scotians' existence. It was like they did not exist. There was more news, surprisingly, of continental African problems like the war in Biafra than of African Nova Scotians. But at the same time, Black newspapers like *The People* were hotly debating and exposing issues of Black deprivation and activism. In the *Chronicle Herald* there was no mention of the Panthers' visit until the day after their arrival when there was a little blurb that could have been easily missed by the reader, titled, "Carmichael in Halifax". And all that was written was, "Stokely Carmichael, the militant Black Power advocate spent Wednesday evening in Halifax.

Carmichael refused to talk to newsmen other than to he would be in Halifax a few days" (*Chronicle Herald*, 17th, October, 1968, p. 6). A day after Carmichael and his entourage left town, there was yet another small innocuous blurb titled, "Militant leader leaves" (*Chronicle Herald*, October, 1968, p. 8). The *Herald's* omission was clearly part of the attitude of the White establishment to present a public illusion of the non-existence of a Black problem in Halifax. This goes to show that even with a lack of discourse, notions of power and

domination can be evinced, and I have employed a critical discourse analysis in my study of archival documents to unearth the politics of power, domination and emancipation within the documents I encounter in the research.

Defining critical discourse analysis Fairclough (1993) says it is simply,

discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (p. 135)

The Public Archives of Nova Scotia and the North branch library on Gottingen Street, Halifax have been invaluable sources of documents pertaining to 1968 Halifax and Nova Scotia, the situation of Blacks in Nova Scotia and the Panthers' visit.

5:3:2 - Individual Qualitative Narrative Interview

The in-depth individual qualitative interview is the most common qualitative research methods because it “elicits a vivid picture of the participant’s perspective on the research topic” (Mack et al., 2005, p. 29). I find the narrative approach very useful because with short leading questions, participants were free to speak at length in answer. At the same time, the

participant's answers led to more questions from the researcher and drove the research into even deeper insights. The in-depth interview also puts the participant in the driver's seat of the research; He/she becomes the expert, and the researcher, the student, empowering the participant to greater sharing of their lived experiences (p. 29). Mack et al. argue that researchers should not "lead participants according to any pre-conceived notions" (p. 29), but artistic license in my research representation, the play, allows me a little more room to shape my questions according to the plot of the play, which plot shall at the same time be further determined by the participants' responses. In any case, I have, as much as possible allowed the entire dialogue of the play be determined by the participants' voices and the speeches and writings of the principal people involved in the actual historical drama.

5:4 - Research Participants

My interest in this project began after an informal conversation with Burnley "Rocky Jones" and Joan Jones for a project in this master's program. Rocky Jones, who inspired this whole thesis, passed away in July, 2014, while I was on a visit to Ghana. But my prior informal conversations with him led to a cascading effect of people whom he had suggested I interview for this thesis. These include people who were part of the inner circle of the revolutionary faction of the burgeoning Black radical movement in Halifax. Some public figures who were part of the historical drama, like Jules Oliver, who later became the President of BUF, also provided me with a list of possible participants. Twenty people in total were formally interviewed for this study. They included principal participants in the Black leadership of the times, journalists at the time, and ordinary citizens going about their business at the time.

From my initial informal interviews, I had found the impact of the visit varies depending on whether the interviewee was supportive of Dr. Jones, Delmore “Buddy” Daye”, another African Nova Scotian social activist, or Rev. W.B. Oliver, a moderate Black who was apparently bitterly opposed to the Panthers’ visit (Personal communication with Burnley “Rocky” Jones, October 12, 2011). Also responses varied based on educational achievement, socio-economic status and race of the interviewee. Care was taken then to make sure that many shades of Black opinion are represented in the research. With respect to interviewing White participants my aim has been twofold; to ascertain how the Panthers’ visit changed their perception of Black people and to find out possible causes for the suicide of the police chief, Verdun Mitchell. At the time of writing the play, I have been unable to unearth any information on this subject from any sources, and my depiction of him in the drama has been based on a promiscuous latitude of artistic license.

Having a skeleton plot of the play from historical facts gathered from newspapers, journals and archived reports, I combined these with participant responses to formulate the dialogue of the play. For example in an informal conversation I had with an 80 year old friend who lived in Halifax at the time, his response was that he was not involved in any social activism because being a foreign Black man he was busy chasing a career as a school principal. Upon further prodding, he remembered his children coming home from school very excited and the following conversation ensued.

Children: Daddy, the panthers are coming; our teacher told us, the panthers are coming.

Father: Really? Who are the panthers?

Children: Daddy, they are these huge, big Black animals! And they are all coming to cause havoc in Halifax?

As funny as this is and its potential for comic relief on stage when woven into the play, it reflects the ignorance rife in Halifax White society about the situation of Black people (the teacher was White) and about the Black Power movement. At the same time it shows the position of certain Black people within the community during a time of social strife and flux. In similar fashion, the voices of the participants have composed the dialogue of the play.

Representing my research with a play that I hope to publish and produce on stage possesses the advantage of bridging the gap between academic research and the community. It makes research accessible to the public. More often than not research, written in the language of academe sits in shelves accessible to only academics, but the play written in the language of the participants will go a long way in involving the community in research in emancipatory ways. Also a play reflects the theory of CRT and Afrocentricity because the community will be able to tell its own stories of this particular historical event while at the same time centering the voices of African Nova Scotians and other participants. The play, as it is represented here in this study, is by no means a finished product. The drama is a synthesis of historical fact and artistic license, and I believe its impact will, to a large extent, be dependent on optimizing the synthesis between history and art, between fact and a fiction by creatively reflecting the historical event for the purposes of galvanizing united action on pertinent socio-economic issues affecting African Nova Scotians. As a result, I find 20 participants too few for this optimization. More people come out of the woodwork in my daily encounters with Nova

Scotians to present interesting perspectives of the visit. I feel duty bound, if I must represent this story, to interview more people as I embark on presenting this work on the stage in the near future. The play, in the current state, represents what Shakespeare would call “the swelling act of the imperial theme,” wherein the issues and personalities involved in the historic event are presented in their elemental states awaiting the finer tuning of the artist to fully jump into life.

Chapter 6: *The Panthers Are Coming*

List of Characters

Josiah Marsh – *A young revolutionary African Nova Scotian leader*

Rev Donald Beals – *Baptist church minister and President of the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NSAACP).*

Oliver Downey – *A moderate African Nova Scotian leader.*

Nzinga - *A bi-racial child adopted at birth from Nova Scotia by a White family in Montreal.*

Mama Julia Fraser - *A North Preston midwife.*

Timer - *Mama Julia's brother.*

Kimberly - *Teacher from Africville.*

Lamont – *Mama Julia's young nephew.*

Inspector George MacDonald - *Head of the Halifax Police Department.*

Mrs. Janet MacDonald – *Inspector MacDonald's wife.*

Lisa MacDonald – *Inspector MacDonald's daughter.*

Stokely Carmichael – *Prime Minister of the Black Panther Party*

Miriam Makeba – *South African world class singer and entertainer. Wife of Carmichael.*

Buddy Daye – *A well loved African Nova Scotian activist and former boxer.*

Cannibal – *A Panther who accompanies Carmichael to Halifax.*

City governor of Halifax

White Child.

Black Police woman.

Two White Policemen

First White Industrialist

Second White Industrialist

Preface – Fact and Fiction

Prior to this study, I had thought of writing a play about the Panthers' 1968 visit to Halifax after a series of informal conversations with Burnley "Rocky" Jones. Subsequently, upon researching arts informed research as a methodology, the decision was taken to use the play for the process and representation of my research. What this decision did was to elevate the research focus of the play. After much study and interviews, formal and informal, I have come to the realization that had I stuck to my earlier decision, the play would have been guilty of insufficient research and may not have captured the full essence of the Panther's visit and the impact it had on Black activism in Nova Scotia. This decision is reminiscent of Bernard Shaw's criticism of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, which led to Shaw's writing of *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Shaw critiqued *Julius Caesar* for only focussing on the weaknesses of the historical Caesar – his baldness, his dabbling in superstition, and his ambition. His great generalship was taken for granted. In the end what emerges in *Julius Caesar* is a pitiable Caesar. Shaw wrote,

In *Caesar*, I have used another character with which Shakespeare has been beforehand. But Shakespeare who knew human weakness so well, never knew human strength of the Caesarian type. His *Caesar* is an admitted failure: his *Lear* is a masterpiece. The tragedy of disillusion and doubt, of the agonized struggle for a foothold on the quicksand made by an acute observation striving to verify its vain attribution of morality and respectability to Nature, of the faithless will and the keen eyes that the faithless will is too weak to blind: all this will give you a *Hamlet* or a *Macbeth* and win you great applause from literary gentlemen but it

will not give you a Julius Caesar, Caesar was not in Shakespeare...(Shaw, 1946, p. 31)

The Caesar that emerges in *Caesar and Cleopatra* is replete with all the strengths and weaknesses of the historical Caesar, a great general who happens to be bald, superstitious, half deaf, and ambitious -but certainly, not a pitiable figure as he dives into the sea from high up in the Library of Alexandria to escape capture from approaching Egyptian soldiers. It is this Shavian attitude of completeness that has guided this research and the search for both historical and artistic verisimilitude.

Initially I approached the research with a skeletal plot that has since undergone many changes driven by discourse analysis and human interviewing. Two intertwined story lines emerged for the plot of the play. The first, based on actual events, is the story of the arrival of the Panthers in Halifax, and how moderate and radical Blacks, the city and its White folk responded to the visit. I have tried to keep this plot line as factual as possible. The second plot line, that of Nzinga returning to Nova Scotia in search of her roots and identity are my creations but driven especially, by my interviews.

I have taken some liberties with the timelines in the play and much of the dialogue and action emanates from two actual Panther visits to Nova Scotia, the first in October 1968 by Stokely Carmichael and Miriam Makeba, and the second, a month later during the human rights conference in Halifax. For example, the speech given by Stokely Carmichael in the play to have a Black family meeting was actually by P.D. Pawley, another Panther during the human rights conference in November 1968.

The characters whose real names are not used are also composites of various real life players in the saga of the Panthers visit. The voices of the African Nova Scotian radicals of the time are represented in the play by Josiah Marsh whose character is based on Burnley “Rocky” Jones who initially invited Carmichael and Makeba to relax in Halifax. Rev. Donald Beals represents the voice of the moderates and his character is based on Rev. W.P. Oliver, a moderate Black leader of the time. Mama Julia is a fictional character based on my interviews. Nzinga is an entirely fictional character whose story, in part, mimics the life and search of one of the participants in this research.

Many attempts were made to research Verdun Mitchell, the Halifax Police Chief at the time of the Panthers’ visit, who committed suicide a week after the Panthers left town in 1968, but to no avail. I was informed by Dr. Steven Kimber, a professor of Journalism at University of King’s College, a journalist at the time, that the suicide was not even made public until 5 years later. These events influenced the play, but the police Inspector Macdonald in this play is an entirely fictitious character bearing absolutely no resemblance to Police Chief Verdun Mitchell.

Timer is also another fictitious character who often times represents my participation and voice in the research. His diatribes on Africans and culpability for, and complicity in the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, for example, are entirely mine. All the other characters are fictitious renditions that speak to the historical events of the time.

Despite the mix of fact and fiction, of history and artistic license, I have endeavoured to keep the actual dialogue as factual as possible. Most of all that was said by Rev. Beals are actual speeches or writings by moderates of the time, just as Josiah Marsh’s dialogue is made up

mainly of actual speeches and writings of Rocky Jones and the radicals of the time. Just as in the actual events of the time, after a while, the line of separation between voices of the moderate and radical activists become blurred as they all put their differences behind them and unite for a common cause - the elevation of the African Nova Scotian from poverty and deprivation.

Prologue – *The Calling*¹

Outside the US embassy in Toronto, 1965. All White protesters are demonstrating against the FBI's refusal to use its powers of arrest in the murders of 3 civil rights activists in Selma, Mississippi. It is a sedate demonstration with demonstrators carrying placards and chanting, "Arrest the police murderers in Selma". A journalist covers the demonstrations.

Enter Josiah Marsh obviously on his way to work at the Treasury Department He is dressed in a tailored gray double breasted suit and holding on to an expensive leather bag. He walks with an air of confidence of a young Black man who knows what he wants in life. He stops to observe the protesters.

JOURNALIST: [*Elated and excited to see a Black person at an all White demonstration*]

Good day sir. What do you think of the current tense situation in Selma, Mississippi?

MARSH: [*Imperiously*] When three civil rights activists are released from police custody into the hands of the Ku Klux Klan and are later found murdered, it does not take any stretch of the imagination to speculate that the local police were complicit in the murders of the activists.

JOURNALIST: Do you believe the FBI should have used their powers of arrest?

MARSH: [*His voice is building steam; he seems to be enjoying the interview*] This is a case where the FBI went in to investigate the complicity of the local police in three

¹ The Calling is a re-enactment of Burnley Rocky Jones's entry into the political arena of

murders. There was enough evidence of such complicity and they definitely should have arrested and charged the perpetrators involved. Is that not what the much vaunted American justice system dictates. Or are Black people considered so much like property that their disposal in the middle of the night does not merit any culprits? By their actions the FBI has given every indication of aiding and abetting the systemic abuse of Black people and those who seek to confront the injustices of the oppressive racial system.

JOURNALIST: But wait Mr...

MARSH: [*Peremptorily*] Marsh, Josiah, Stony Marsh.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Marsh, you are obviously very passionate about the Negro cause -

MARSH: [*Interrupting harshly*] Black cause, Sir. And why shouldn't I be passionate about causes that affect my very being? In Nova Scotia, where I come from, the situation of Blacks is not much different than that in the US south.

JOURNALIST: Pardon me, the Black cause. But Mr. Marsh, or can I call you Josiah?

MARSH: Stony, Stony will be fine.

JOURNALIST: Stony, the FBI director, Edgar Hoover, is himself right now in Selma to lead the investigation into the murders. Does this not speak to the gravity of the situation, and does that not imply a full and thorough investigation is going on, and that people must not hastily accuse the FBI of inaction?

MARSH: Murder is murder - the unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought.

It should not take the head of the FBI to decide if murder has taken place.

JOURNALIST: Stony, do you think the same situation could happen in Canada?

MARSH: Which situation?

JOURNALIST: [*Tentatively, without conviction*] I mean - Canada does not have the same racial divide and tensions that characterize the US South.

MARSH: [*Posing like he is addressing a huge audience*] Let me say this. Humanity possesses an instinctive love of justice.² What is happening in America, the continued resistance of Black people and the new phase of militancy are responses to centuries of oppression of Black people. Canadians, like the proverbial ostrich with its head in the sand, deludes itself if we think we have no racial problems. Slavery did exist in Canada. I am from Nova Scotia where Blacks are as oppressed as our brothers and sisters in the American South. Even as we speak, the once thriving Black community of Africville is being razed to the ground through racial spatial management, a form of control that the White establishment has always used against their undesirable populations.

JOURNALIST: [*Excitedly*] You sound like Stokely Carmichael, the Black Panther.

MARSH: I would not say I subscribe completely to the politics of Mr. Carmichael but I can understand that, given the conditions of slavery and the subsequent Jim Crow

² In July, 1989, Stokely Carmichael, then Kwame Toure, on a speaking tour of Canada, stayed at my apartment in the University of Waterloo where I was secretary to the African Students Union. This line is taken from a speech he delivered to faculty and students.

years, Blacks in the US have been given no options but to use any means necessary to achieve justice. [*Pauses for thought. It seems there are new revelations appearing in his mind – of truths long hidden in his head and being, that he had until now, never articulated*]

And come to think of it, Blacks in Nova Scotia and Canada are being driven slowly but steadily towards the same tight corner that leaves no options but violence.

JOURNALIST: I do not know about Nova Scotia, but Negros, sorry Blacks in Toronto seem more content, and concentrate on trying to earn a living to raise their families.

MARSH: What contentment?

JOURNALIST: Like you, for instance; it is obvious you have a decent job from the way you are dressed. And as you can see from these protesters, White Canadians seem to care a great deal about the racial problems of the US.

MARSH: What contentment when Black folk have been relegated to labourers, porters and factory workers with unequal access to education? And even when they enrol in the education, are saddled with a curriculum that does no justice to our culture, our resistance and our histories. What contentment can one have? Black people in Canada are awakening to the reality of our condition. Even though it has never been in our general nature, as African people, to harbor malice,³ we are beginning

³ This line was part of the speech delivered to the UN General Assembly in 1961 by Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana

to lose patience, and like our brothers and sisters in the United States, are beginning to embrace the necessity for violent struggle. It is only a matter of time that this new awakening shall be felt in Canada.

JOURNALIST: Are you implying that the Black power movement will come to Canada?

MARSH: Only a matter of time.

JOURNALIST: [*Triumphant that she has stumbled on a sensational story*] Thank you, Mr. Josiah Stony Marsh for your time. (*She begins to leave the stage*)

MARSH: [*Doubts himself but is impressed he has been able to speak eloquently about the subject of Black politics*] Only a matter of time!

[*With childlike excitement*] Ermm... By the way, will this interview be broadcast on radio and television?

JOURNALIST: Definitely Mr. Marsh, definitely.

Exit Journalist

MARSH: [*Posing in front of his image in an imaginary mirror*] God I look good!⁴

[*Addressing an imaginary crowd*] Humanity has an instinctive love of justice and we Nova Scotian Black people will fight for our rights.

Marsh makes to continue on his way to work then stops and turns around. He is astounded by his own knowledge and analysis of the situation in Selma and the US South. This revelation fills him with guilt because of the sudden realization that he has deliberately obscured the

⁴ Source: Informal interview with Rocky Jones and Joan Jones. They both agreed that pre-revolutionary Rocky had a little obsession with clothes and looks.

truth about the Black condition in Nova Scotia and Canada. Overwhelmed by guilt, he argues with himself sounding as if he were two personas.

MARSH: Who am I kidding? With knowledge of the conditions of my people in Nova Scotia, how can I pretend that I am not affected by events swirling around me. Are Black people to leave their battles for White people to solve? Shall we remain always the hapless people who must take handouts from White missionaries and do-gooders? I cannot sit on the fence any longer.

Hey man, Dubois himself said, we must have our talented tenth who will be capable of leading the masses. I have a chance to better myself and be of real service to my people while at the same time raising my stature. We are outnumbered anyway. This ain't the States. Blacks make up a small percentage of the population, and in Nova Scotia, they are so isolated.

I must better myself.

Coward! Go earn some dollars and buy yourself some new jackets and shoes. The Black struggle ain't for the faint hearted. The dream keepers are those whose commitment to the struggle is unwavering and steadfast, not house Niggers whose sole commitment is a yearning to be like the White man.

Hey I never said I wanna be like some Whiteman. I got my own dignity, and if the labor of my ancestors is what helped the Whiteman create these good things of life them I sure am going to enjoy them.

Then why can't all Black people enjoy them too? Why can't that be your fight?
That you will struggle to help more Black people enjoy some of the fruits of their
own labor.

Everybody for himself, God for us all

Collective security will guarantee us surety.

Government job, Treasury department!

Nova Scotia

[Lights dim. After a while, the clock ticks to show it is almost Six o'clock pm, time for the CBC evening news].

A CBC radio announcer reads the hourly news

RADIO ANNOUNCER: In today's news, demonstrators at the US embassy spent their second day at a vigil to protest the FBI's refusal to use its power of arrest over three local policemen who are accused of the murder of three civil rights activists in Selma, Mississippi. At the demonstration was a young Black activist Josiah Marsh, who is very much Canada's version of Stokely Carmichael, the so called prime minister of the US based Black Panther Party. Mr. Marsh predicted the same level of violence in the States could spread to the Black communities of Canada, particularly Nova Scotia. With Josiah Marsh, Canada's Stokely Carmichael, is the CBC's Linda Coffin.

VOICE OF LINDA COFFIN: Mr. Carmichael, are you implying that the Black power movement will come to Canada?

VOICE OF MARSH: Only a matter of time!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: In other news, the Federal government of Nigeria...

MARSH: [*Realizing the extent and intent of the editing of his interview. He is also shocked his five minutes of fame amounted to a gross misrepresentation of his words*].

Noooooooooooooooooooooo! [*Leaves stage. As he walks out his wife enters from one end of the stage carrying their little baby*].

Enter Mrs. Marsh carrying a baby.

MARSH: Let's get the baby and all our stuff packed. We are moving back to Nova Scotia.

Exeunt

Act 1

Scene I

Outside the St Thomas Baptist Church in North Preston. An older man, Timer, in his sixties with matted dreadlocks is sitting under a tree playing James Brown's "Say it Loud, I'm Black and proud" on his guitar. As he sings along, his demeanor is that of someone one might describe as not all there. Timer was brought up in both Africville, an African community on the shores of the Bedford basin in Halifax, and North Preston where his grandparents had resided. From 1962, Africville was being razed to the ground for reasons the city gave as urban renewal,

Timer is someone people like to leave alone because his appearance and demeanor make people think he is crazy, but his words always spoke what lay deep in the thoughts and hearts of people. He was not shunned by the community; he was left alone. In a way, he was feared and tolerated. When he spoke at community meetings, people held their breaths, listened, or rather heard him out, and then resumed the meeting from wherever they had left off.

Observing Timer from a distance is Nzinga, a young bi-racial African Canadian woman dressed in an African 'babariga' robe. She has a huge afro, and moves to the rhythm of the song. After the song, Timer stops, then grabs a newspaper next to him and starts reading, bursting into laughter after a while. He notices Nzinga watching him.

TIMER: Hey, African sister.

NZINGA: [*Approaching Timer*] You play that song real cool, my African brother.

[*Timer scrutinizes Nzinga*]

TIMER: You not from around here, are you? Nobody calls anyone by African Brother here.

We are just Negroes in Nova Scotia.

I ain't seen you before, and I been here for a long time. You got people here, or you just visiting?

NZINGA: What were you laughing at a moment ago? From the newspaper. What caused that funny laugh?

TIMER: [*laughing*] Oh that? A 17 year old White boy sniffs Vicks and dies, and he makes the newspaper front, centre and back.⁵ Us Negroes, they don't mention us at all. We been sniffing dirt and poverty for centuries, and nobody gives a damn. Is like we don't exist here in Nova Scotia at all.

NZINGA: Hey we ain't Negroes. The White man calls us Negroes. We can name ourselves. We are Black African people.

TIMER: Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, Nigger, Colored, Negro, Black, African. It don't matter. We still the same, and our situation ain't changed nothing. The newspapers talk about Blacks in Africa, in the US and elsewhere, but nobody mentions us Negroes in Nova Scotia.

NZINGA: Heal my brother, we are African people. We come from kings and queens.

TIMER: Yeah right, kings and queens, and we allowed the White man to come and buy and sell us like we were just bags of weed. Didn't those kings and queens have armies to fight for them? We wouldn't be here now. And you know why we are here?

⁵ *Fouth Estate*, May 15th 1969, p. 1

‘Coz those African motherfuckers did not care to sell their own people. If only they knew what was going to happen to them once they got into the United States of America.

NZINGA: You got that all wrong, brother. The White man - Portuguese, British, French and Dutch came and conquered our people and marched them into slavery. They were not slaves; they were conquered people, prisoners of war.

TIMER: Then the White man must be smarter than all we African people, as you call us, if he can march onto a whole continent and carry millions of people away. What them kings and queens doing at that time? The White men gave them booze and they got drunk and gave the White man human beings.

I seen them African boys drink. They can drink, boy!

NZINGA: It is because the White man had the gun.

TIMER: Then he sold the guns to Africans so they could fight each other, and bring the White man – what you call them – prisoners of war. [*Nzinga nods vigorously*] That’s why I carry my own gun. Right now, it is just for the rats, but you never know. There are different kinds of rats out there. One thing I say is, always be on your guard.

NZINGA: We did not have guns because African societies were communal and not built on greed and acquisition of material property. Why would there be a need for guns when land was so plentiful and you were your neighbour’s keeper? Even war,

when it happened was designed for a minimum of casualties,⁶ unlike the White man's wars where thousands were massacred.

TIMER: No wars? What about Shaka the Zulu and those cats who were doing that voodoo fighting?

NZINGA: Shaka was fighting the White men who were trying to take his land. He fought with spears and swords, and bows and arrows.

TIMER: That's why the White man massacred them all. He knows. He *been* through swords before. He knows swords and bows and arrows don't mean shit like *Ka boom!* And the White man knows if you promise niggers money, they gonna start fighting themselves for it. That's why it is so easy for the White man to get the African niggers fighting among themselves to sell slaves to him. You know the difference between we niggers and the Indians here. Niggers like to fight before they get their money. Them Indians, they fight after they get the money. Them Indians, what they call themselves now? Aborigines. They smart though.

You ever heard of the Ashanti kingdom?⁷

NZINGA: Yes, they were a rich and powerful kingdom. They gave the world the *kente*⁸ cloth.

⁶ This line was part of the speech delivered to the UN General Assembly in 1961 by Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana.

⁷ A West African Kingdom that rose from 1670 to their final defeat by British forces in 1901. At the apogee of the kingdom's existence, they ruled over a geographical space that covered both modern day Ghana and La Cote d'Ivoire. The source of the kingdom's wealth was gold and slaves.

⁸ The legend surrounding *Kente* Cloth was that during the Trans Atlantic trade when Britain became masters of the cotton trade, the local cotton industry in West Africa was swamped by European made goods. Ashanti cotton weavers mixed Indian silk with cotton to weave a

TIMER: What that?

NZINGA: [*Showing him the Kente cloth*]. This here, this weave is the *Kente* cloth. Beautiful eh? By the Ashanti.

TIMER: Yeah, I seen a lot of cats wearing that cloth with their *dashikis* and their *afros*.
That make them African?

NZINGA: You got to celebrate your heritage, my brother!

TIMER: My heritage is Africville, and the White man breaking it down right now as we speak
[*sighing*] I wish a few cats had guns like me.

But let me tell you about the Ashanti Kingdom, where your *kente* cloth comes from. [*Timer seems to enjoy the telling of the story, getting more animated in its telling*] You know what their biggest export was?

NZINGA: Gold!

TIMER: That too. But their biggest export was dem things that you call prisoners of war.

And when the White man banned the slave trade, the King of Ashanti had 8000 slaves ready for sale. He was begging the British to continue with the trade. Why?
[*Nzinga shakes her head after which Tyler laughs hysterically*]

So he could buy more guns. Make more wars. Get more prisoners, Sell more slaves.

brightly colored cloth with geometrical patterns on small looms with narrow wafts. *Kente* was the result. *Kente* was, and still is, worn by Kings and rich folk, and was never duplicated by modern looms, until recently when print forms of *Kente* patterns proliferate.

[*Obviously relishing the shock factor*]. Oh let me tell you a better one. One Ashanti King was chasing down two sub-kings who had insulted him. Them African Kings are like that eh? When you say shit about one of them, they swear an oath to their voodoo ancestors and they come after you. Anyway, this king went after these two men and chased them down to the coast to the White man's castle. The people from all the surrounding towns and villages run into the castle for protection, 'coz everybody fear the Ashanti. When they come down for war, man, they cutting the head of anything that is living – chicken, goat, human – if you in the Ashanti king's way, you gone [*Gesturing like he is slashing someone's throat*]⁹

NZINGA: [*Confused and very much in doubt. Timer's words are against all she has learnt about African history and the slave trade, but he speaks with a mischievous but steady conviction that scares her*] Where did you get all this information from, brother? You been reading the false history by the White man.

TIMER: I don't read no African history written by White people. The Africans themselves wrote this. They said, the White man met the Ashanti king at the castle gate and said to him. Hey African King, me and you ain't got no beef. There's easily 12,000 people within the gates. Why don't we share them and sell them? Story goes, the White man sold his share and the Asante King took the men to breed his women at home, but you never know. You know, them Ashantis are short people,

⁹ Africanus B. Horton. *Letters on the Political Condition of the Gold Coast* (Since the Exchange of Territory between the English and Dutch Governments on January 1, 1868).

and they needed bigger men to mate their women to grow their kingdom. Them Africans.... They crazy!

Pause

TIMER: You speak White.

NZINGA: [*Angrily retorting*] I was brought up White.

TIMER: Wow! African Queen relax, I am not your enemy here.

NZINGA: I was adopted at birth from Nova Scotia by a White family and raised in Montreal.¹⁰

TIMER: Holy Shit! You must have had a good life. Better than the shit the brothers and sisters got to go through here.

NZINGA: Well if you want to put it that way, then I will not say better, but different shit. But over the years, through bits and pieces of information that I have picked up from my adopted parents, my birth parents, or at least one of them, comes from North Preston.

TIMER: [*Looking at her curiously, with an added stare that hints at momentary recognition*]
So you coming here to find your real mama and papa?

NZINGA: My birth mother and father, eventually and ultimately yes, but before that my roots are what I am searching for. My consciousness has been growing and I have a big

¹⁰ The story of Nzinga's adoption and her search for her roots is the actual story of one of the participants in the research who was adopted in the early 1960s.

need to reconnect somehow with my roots in Nova Scotia, and the motherland Africa.

TIMER: There you go with your king-queen-motherland shit again. What the cats in Montreal like?

NZINGA: Cats?

TIMER: The brothers, Black cats.

NZINGA: What about the sisters too? African sisters and mamas. brothers, papas. It was them that helped me connect with my Black roots.

My parents resisted taking me into Montreal's Black community for the longest time. I remember some of their friends insisting that they introduce me to Black people, but they insisted that there was no need for that. All the time I would wonder what that Black community was like. They had some Black friends who were high up in the University, and they came for dinner every now and then but I never got to know them at the beginning. I think they were sorry for me but I am not sure. But my parents may have lived in a state of some fear. It was okay for them to adopt a Black baby, support equality, and they were also draft dodgers but they never wanted to deal with the Black thing. It was too embarrassing for them. Adoption must have been their atonement for this lack of engagement with Black folk but only within the privacy of their lives.

TIMER: Why did they adopt a cat if they are embarrassed? White folk too are crazy sometimes you know.

[*Whispering, as if they are engaged in a conspiracy*] Your folks – the White ones, you know what I mean? They got dough?

NZINGA: Oh, they are pretty well off and they were very caring. My mother could not have children, and being well-meaning caring liberals, they sincerely believed they were giving me a better opportunity, and at the same time satisfying their conscience on the establishment's treatment of Black people. Adapting Black children in those days was very radical for White people.

TIMER: At the beginning, did you think you was White, or you knew you was a cat right away?

You can pass you know. Your skin so high *yaller*.

NZINGA: I think it was about the age of ten that I became conscious of being treated differently. People would come to my parents and ask them, who is this girl? My parents would always assure me that they never saw me as Black, just as their daughter but that did not answer that question, who is this girl? Luckily, I was enrolled in these Saturday classes, which were taught by a bunch of Black professors at McGill University. A couple of these professors were friends with my parents and that's how come I was allowed to attend their classes. The program was geared to helping Black kids get a sense of their identity. It is these professors that made me what I am today. Their message was simple. You have to tie kids to their culture. Give Black kids a way to connect to their heritage.

TIMER: So people call you nigger and shit like that in school?

NZINGA: Yeah, it happened...., but the person always got a beating and eventually it stopped.

At least not to my face or in my presence. I was a scrapper in school you know. A few guys kicked the crap out of me but many girls and a few boys got beaten up by me too.

TIMER: [*Laughing mockingly*] Maybe you got some of that African Queen, Shaka blood in you after all.

NZINGA: You may laugh now, but I know that it runs through me, I know it. I can feel it. I know a lot of other adopted Blacks who got fucked up by the system, and I am grateful for surviving this far. I was lucky to be smart in school and have very little recollection of being treated bad by teachers. I was always expected to be an "A" student and that was not a problem for me. I was opposite to what happened to most Black students. One Black kid in our super White suburb, was selling heroin in school at Grade 7.

TIMER: Welcome to the hood, Voodoo Queen. It happens here all the time among Black kids.

When did you begin to feel you were a real mama cat?

NZINGA: Oh! When I was seventeen or eighteen or so. I got heavily into jazz, blues, Malcolm X and Billy Holiday.

TIMER: Real cats!

NZINGA: Yes, brother, real cats.

TIMER: Call me Timer, everybody calls me Timer. [*Pronounced like an afterthought*] Papa
Timer to you.

NZINGA: Why?

TIMER: 'Coz I'm the *baddest* cat around.

[*They laugh together*]

NZINGA: You know, I don't know why I am telling you all this, but I kinda like you, Papa
Timer.

TIMER: [*Takes a nice stroll around her*]. I'm *baaaaaaaaaaad*.

But you too young for me. I like them older, and bigger.

NZINGA: I didn't mean in that way. You old enough to be my father.

TIMER: [*Laughing hysterically*]. Maybe I am.

NZINGA: [*Not sure if she should take him seriously*]. Did you ever give up a child for
adoption?

TIMER: Myself, I never did. [*Sounding serious*]. But many children have been given up for
adoption in Nova Scotia. Black kids. Even now I hear they are packing a bunch of
Black kids to the States for adoption.

NZINGA: That is so wrong. Are there no Black families here to adopt them.

TIMER: We is trying. You know Josiah Marsh? [*Nzinga nods*]. Him and his wife adopting 4
of them kids.

NZINGA: Did you go to school, Timer ...?

TIMER: I told you my name's Papa Timer to you. Don't be impertinent. Like I said, you never know.

NZINGA: [*Bowing in exaggerated supplication*] Did you go to school Papa Timer?

TIMER: Yeah, I went some, but the teachers didn't learn me anything. They figured I was slow or something, and I wasn't about to do their work for them. You see I grew up on Maynard Street and there was always rats in the house. As soon the lights went off at night, the rats would pop up, and me and my brother would be so terrified we could not sleep. So everyday, I tired at school and could not concentrate.¹¹ So I took off and stayed with my *pappi*, who cut and sold firewood in North Preston.

Yap! That's what I done most of my life. I cut firewood. Pappy, he learn me how to read, and me and him just cut the firewood, read and eat every day. You see how I walk? [*Demonstrates his walk. He is bent sideways favoring one side of the body*].

See, how crooked I walk. I cut so much firewood that the doctor told me my centre bolt is out of gear [*He sits for a bit, totally out of breath*].

That's when I became a bad cat.

¹¹ *Winnipeg Free Press*, Feb 22, 1969, p.2.

So where be your White parents now?

NZINGA: Oh they moved to Winnipeg, but I refused to go with them. I had it out with them in a dramatic fashion.

I told them they had fucked me up. In a way I regret doing that because, in their own way, they were very caring and thought they were shielding me from what's out there. You know the most hateful thing you can ever say to adopted parents.

TIMER: No, but I was adopted by everybody.

NZINGA: You tell them, "you are not my real parents", and I did a lot of that just to hurt them. [*Pauses in contemplation and then seeks to rouse herself*].

But I'm not looking back. My blood boils for my roots, my identity, and that's why I am here. At first one part of me didn't want to dishonor my White parents by looking for my birth parents, but now, the urge has become so strong, and I know I will remain restless until I find out. Who knows, they may still be alive, and I have another chance at family and relatives.

TIMER: You don't know which of your parents was Black?

NZINGA: No but I find out some information tomorrow. The hospital will let me know which woman delivered me.

Enter Mama Julia carrying a packed bag of canned groceries. She is a dark complexioned Black mid wife in her early forties. She is a very beautiful youthful woman with a set determined look.

MAMA JULIA: What a nice beautiful lady like you doing with this good for nothing man?

Timer, you bothering the poor lady?

TIMER: [*Laughing*] No, she looking for her mummy.

NZINGA: And my Daddy.

MAMA JULIA: [*In mock amusement*] Who your mummy and daddy?

TIMER: She don't know. She was adopted at birth from Nova Scotia, and now she come to
even the score [*laughs hysterically*]

What you got in the box?

MAMA JULIA: Just a little something that Rev. Beals asked us to bring to the meeting, so we
could send some food to those starving children in the war in Africa.

TIMER: Which war? The Biafran War?

MAMA JULIA: I don't know. Some war in Nigeria somewhere.

TIMER: Yap. That be the Biafran War. Two crazy African friends killing their own people
and watching their own people die because each one thinks he better than the
other. Them Africans are crazy, I say.

NZINGA: Timer, it's not the Africans. It is the imperialists who are causing the war.

TIMER: There you go blaming the White man for everything again.

NZINGA: It is the British who are supplying the weapons to General Gowon's federal armies.

TIMER: And the same British giving food to the starving children of Biafra after General Gowon has used the British weapons to bomb the Biafrans. The White man is damn smart. He make a profit anyway he can. Our people here need food too. And we going to give it to those crazy African cats.

You know, Biafra is as bad as the Nazi gas chambers. They are shot by British guns and bombed by Russian jets. The federal army has starved them, driven them of their farmlands, and blockaded them by land, sea and air.

MAMA JULIA: [*Impatiently*] I ain't going to listen to your foolishness, Timer. I got to prepare the church for the meeting.

TIMER: Hey wait for me. I'm coming to the meeting too. Hey African Queen, you want to come to the meeting? Big meeting. They say Stokely Carmichael coming to town tomorrow night. The revolution is about to begin.

NZINGA: I'll be there in a moment. I have to meet up with Josiah.

TIMER: Josiah Marsh?

NZINGA: Yeah. Know him?

TIMER: Stony Marsh?

NZINGA: Yeah.

TIMER: He is a cool cat, the real shit. You his girl?

NZINGA: No, I'm no one's girl. He married, but him and his wife are good friends of mine. Anyway I'll see you later at the meeting.

TIMER: You got a man?

MAMA JULIA: And if she ain't got one, you want to apply? Hurry up now, Timer.

Exeunt

Scene II

St Thomas Baptist Church - North Preston in October 1968. A meeting of the North Preston Ratepayers Association. The meeting is chaired by the Reverend Donald Beals. A palpable air of militant anticipation hangs in the room. Among the youth, there is an added cloak of impatience. It almost feels like everyone is expecting something to happen. The Ratepayers Association has been a traditional champion of Black activism in North Preston and Halifax. Rev. Donald Beals has been at the forefront of African Nova Scotian activism for the past 20 years. In the last 5 years, with the growing militancy in Black activism spreading from Africa's colonial struggle and US, his moderate style has come under fire from rising disaffection, and calls for militant action, among Black youth.

REV. BEALS: Brothers and Sisters, first of all, I would like y'all to stand in prayer with me
and ask God for guidance in these troubled times.

MEMBERS: Amen, Amen.

REV. BEALS: Our father in heaven, Look on thy people and hear our prayer. The threat of
violence hangs upon us and we call on you to intercede on the whole community's

behalf that we may tread peacefully to build better lives for us, our children and their children to come. Help our angry young folk that they may realize that though their anger be just, they must have patience lest we destroy the many gains we have made in this land where we were once promised freedom.

A FEW VOICES: Amen, Praise the lord for that

REV. BEALS: We pray that this meeting proceeds with all our hearts committed to peace and non-violence in Jesus's name.

MEMBERS: Amen

REV. BEALS: Let us ask Mama Julia to give us a song. Let her lovely voice warm us before and during our proceedings. We know you like to sing, Mama Julia.

MAMA JULIA: The good Lord gave me a voice and I ain't afraid to use it.

[Members cheer for Mama Julia]

Mama Julia sings a Negro Spiritual.

Crowd cheers in approval.

REV. BEALS: Thank you, *Mama Julia*.

I have called this meeting to discuss two concerns that plague our Negro community today.

YOUTHFUL MEMBER: Black...our Black community. Say it loud I'm Black and I am proud.

REV. BEALS: True, our Black community. I guess we must follow the times. The two issues are the new zoning laws passed by the City of Halifax, which we all know will divide the three Black communities of North Preston, East Preston, Cherrybrook¹² and Lake Loon into different political ridings.

MAMA JULIA: They want to split us so our vote does not count. Not that our vote ever counted anyway.

YOUTHFUL MEMBER: Black power, that's what the city needs. We are fed up, man.

MAMA JULIA: Nova Scotia don't have men. Black men. You supposed to protect us but the White men just pushing us all around. Today them destroying Africville, who's next, Preston? And we always talking about negotiating with the city. The city don't give a damn. The brothers in the United States ... they taking the matter into their own hands.

REV. BEALS: Yes Mama Julia, that is yet another subject we have to discuss. A disease is fast infecting our younger brothers in Halifax. Violence is the name of this disease. Our community is at a crossroad. Are we going to be like the US south where innocent blood is shed in the name of freedom by our brethren who call themselves radicals and revolutionaries?

Crowd torn between yeahs and nos

¹² Personal communication with Burnley "Rocky" Jones, October 12, 2011.

MAMA JULIA: Ra-di-cals and Re-vo-lu-tion-a-ries. That's what we need here. Where that man? Josiah Marsh? Why he not here at the meeting today? That man, he be radical. He bringing some fighting spirit into our young men and women.

REV. BEALS: I heard disturbing news today. Josiah Marsh, the man they call *Stony Marsh* is *bringing* some young men and women from Toronto, Montreal and the United States to disturb the peace. They come with preconceived notions of solving the problem of Blacks with their own brand of what they call Black Power.¹³ Included in this delegation is Stokely Carmichael, the so-called leader of the Black Panther Party, a man ...

Loud Cheers from some young men and women

MAMA JULIA: Lord Jesus, Nova Scotia going to see some action now. Sto-ke-ly Car-mi-chael. Mmmh! That cat so cool, they say when he standing still, he be like he still strutting along. That man is a re-vo-lu-tion-ary! They said when he was going to Wa-shing-ton,¹⁴ he said Negroes were going to take over the whole city lock, stock and barrel. The FBI were shitting their pants, Lord Jesus excuse my language. They thought there was going to be Black majority rule in Washington. You know what the newspapers said? I mean the *Wall Street Jour-nal* said? They said, "Stokely Carmichael says he is coming, and the nation's capital is in a sweat".
[*dancing and humming*]. That man is a soul brother and he ain't even dancing yet.

¹³ These words were spoken by Rev. W.P. Oliver in 1965 when Rocky Jones and Gary Perly of the Student Non-Violence Co-ordinating Committee announced a fact finding mission of Nova Scotia from Toronto. (Pachai, 1989, p. 11).

¹⁴ Peniel Joseph, 2006, Para. 1.

Men are coming to Nova Scotia. Men!

REV. BEALS: Yes, Mama Julia. They say they are on a fact finding mission, like we here are not capable of knowing what goes on here, and indeed they possess a savior complex.¹⁵ The city officials are very concerned that they might incite violence among the community and are preparing the police force to answer violence with violence. We all know what happens.

MAMA JULIA: We fight back, violence for violence. I got me my little shotgun here. I'm ready.

REV. BEALS: Be careful with that thing there, Mama Julia. We don't want you shooting someone like you did your brother Timer, last year.¹⁶

MAMA JULIA: That was an accident.

TIMER: I got me a little gun here too sister. No more accidents. Mine just for the rats though.

Mama Julia: Stop your foolishness Timer. Which rats?

TIMER: [*laughing, faking shooting rats*] Boom! Boom! Boom!

He is cheered by other youthful members.

REV. BEALS: No, young men and women. In our situation an eye for an eye will only lead to our extermination. Then we become the rats, to use Timer's words. Just like was done to the natives of this land. Today the Afro Canadian Liberation Group led by

¹⁵ Pachai, 1989, p. 11.

¹⁶ Mama Julia is based on the grandma of one of the participants. She was a gun-toting cigar-smoking midwife who had accidentally shot her husband.

Josiah Marsh, have put together these rough and tough hoodlums on Creighton and Maynard Streets, calling them a police force. Is that not a recipe for violence?

Enter Stony, Nzinga, and some young fellows. The excitement at the meeting is palpable.

NZINGA: Black Power!

CROWD: Black Power!

MARSH: Let Halifax city police disarm and stop harassing our peoples, then we can negotiate with them. Until then we intend to arm and police our own communities.

REV. BEALS: And to negotiate, according to your philosophy is to threaten White store owners with breaking their store windows...¹⁷

MARSH: In order to have change, Rev. Beals, contradictions must be heightened after which there will be confrontation. The threat of violence got the White store owners so scared, Scotia Square is now hiring Black workers.

REV. BEALS: Solutions should be found peacefully not with the use or threat of violence.

Violence will destroy us Negros.¹⁸

CROWD: Blacks!

MARSH: For too long Blacks in Halifax have undergone a lot of harassment – from police and the White establishment. Black people are now going to hand out the treatment they have received. Blacks are not going to be subject to police

¹⁷ Personal communication with Burnley “Rocky” Jones, October 12, 2011.

¹⁸ Gus Wedderburn, *The Dartmouth Free Press*, October 18th, 1968 ,

surveillance, photographs and so forth. This is against the dignity of Blacks in Halifax¹⁹.

OLIVER DOWNEY: I don't understand violence. And I don't understand why people want to go out and burn and loot and scare.

MARSH: I believe the whole idea of collective Black violence is a lie that has been perpetrated by White liberals. Black power does not mean and has never meant violence. It is about time Black people made up their minds as to what this slogan means²⁰.

REV. BEALS: The Negro's struggle...

MAMA JULIA: Blacks, we not Negros or colored anymore.

TIMER: As far as I am concerned, it don't matter. Colored, Negro, Black. We still niggers, and we can't change a damn thing.

REV. BEALS: The Black man's struggle cannot be answered by Black racism, and those who use Black power as a new kind of racism must be disavowed²¹. I believe the aftermath of the Rev. Martin Luther King's death and the legacy he has left behind, speaks volumes on the possibilities that exist for Black people when we choose a path that is not littered with blood, bones and hatred. The achievements speak for themselves. Lyndon Johnson just signed an anti- discrimination law in

¹⁹ January 6th, 1969 report by Toronto Security and Intelligence branch on rally in support of Huey Newton at Ontario College of Education.

²⁰ Rocky Jones, *The Fourth Estate*, November 21, 1968, *Second Section*, p. 4

²¹ Howard McCurdy, *The Fourth Estate*, November 21, 1968

housing²² which, allows Blacks, if you will, to reside anywhere they choose, including the suburbs. He did not have to incite anyone to violence.

TIMER: It mean the big Black Niggers will abandon the ghettos and slums and go live with the White folk. That's real house nigger shit. I say we Black folk in Nova Scotia, we go join the nation of Songhai²³

MAMA JULIA: What foolishness is that Timer? Nation of Songhai?

TIMER: Black folk in the states, *dem* planning to form a separatist state. Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. They gonna become a new nation. Black nation, cat nation. We going to acquire our own land mass, over which we will have complete control. And we going to support it with appropriate military action. Our own government, our own law, everything man. Cats out there mean business. I think we should go join them. Get out of this shit where we are a minority so White folk can trample on us anytime they want. Let's go join the brothers and the sisters in the state of Songhai. I'm going to start training folks here to be ready. I got to get the young brothers into an army.

REV. BEALS: Timer we are going to stay right here and we will be fine.

TIMER: Many of the Loyalists left, the Maroons left, some Refugees bolted, what we staying here for?

²² *Chronicle Herald*, June 7th 1968.

²³ "Envision separate nation. *Chronicle Herald*, April 1st, 1968, p. 15. At a Black nationalist convention in Detroit, delegates voted to secede from the US and establish a Black state to be defended by force of arms, if necessary.

REV. BEALS: Anyway I was talking about the Rev. Martin Luther King and his legacy. The greatness of the man and his message were such that he was even mourned all over the world much bigger than Kennedy. All of professional sports was shut down to allow Blacks, Whites and all to reflect.

MARSH: Reverend Beals, don't forget that the aftermath of Rev. King's death was filled with some of the most explosive acts of violence. Riots in Washington after the death of King became the most serious disorder in the city since the British burnt the White House in 1814. And before he died, Reverend King had reached a glass ceiling with his tactics of non-violence. It was his dilemma that while he "threatened to paralyze the big cities to stir the White conscience, he didn't know how to do it without evoking the violence on both sides against which his heart was set".²⁴

These feelings exist within many Blacks today. King's assassination opened the top of the bottle for a moment. Black power seeks to channel these pent up feelings into productive courses.

REV. BEALS: Black power connotes violence and I am against violence in all forms, shapes and guise. I believe Nova Scotia has enough right thinking people willing to help solve the problems of Black people. I believe Negro extremists like Stokely Carmichael are pleased with the results because King worked with all people

²⁴ Max Lerner, *Death in Memphis: sickness in the heart. Chronicle Herald*, April 5, 1968.

White and Black. All official American flags lowered for Dr. King. First time for a private person?

NZINGA: Reverend Beals, looks like you are thinking of your own legacy? [There's an immediate hush in the church after this challenge from a stranger]

REV. BEALS: [*Startled, and then calmly regains his composure*] And who may you be?

MARSH: Oh, I'm sorry, I should have introduced her...

Rev: Beals: Josiah, I believe the lady is capable of speaking for herself.

NZINGA: My name is Nzinga, I'm Stony, I mean, Josiah's friend, and I am from...I guess Montreal?, but I'm here to find my birth parents and enjoy my heritage of Nova Scotia.

REV. BEALS: I take it you were adopted at birth.

NZINGA: Yeah!

NZINGA: I wish you luck with your search. We are all your fathers and mothers. Young lady, I do not seek a legacy. The legacy of the NSAACP is quite outstanding. Without violence, our achievements have been won with corporation from the White folks of this city and province. If Halifax Negros are to improve, they need help from outside. We cannot do it by ourselves. The community lacks the financial resources required for the needed improvement. We lack numbers necessary to exert pressure on the general community and we lack well developed leadership

except within the religious field²⁵. That is why the NSAACP has teamed with well-meaning Whites to advance the welfare of Negroes or Black people.

NZINGA: True integration, Reverend Beals is the meeting of equally proud partners, each able to give as well as to receive²⁶. Black power recognizes that until the Black man or woman is able to fend for themselves and build a Black economic and social base; Black business, Black culture and Black theatre, we will go nowhere. What Blacks are saying is we have to get off this integration kick. When we spoke of integration five years ago, we meant social economic and political improvement of our race within this society. Whites thought we meant dance partners.²⁷

REV. BEALS: What Black Power says is that if the Black man wants a break, he must go out and shed blood for it, White blood as well as Black.²⁸ Violence escalates. It does not achieve the desired goal. This type of violence will destroy the Negro, his body, but even worse it will destroy his mind and his soul and the White man's as well.²⁹

²⁵ *Halifax report on Negro need*. By Dalhousie University Institute of Public Affairs.

²⁶ James Farmer. *The Dartmouth Free Press*. March 28th, 1968, p. 4.

²⁷ Don Oliver. In the Panthers wake. *Globe Magazine*, February 15th, 1969.

²⁸ These words spoken by Gus Wedderburn, president of the NSAACP, as cited by Wayne Adams. (1968). Profile of a Negro Leader (*Dartmouth Free Press*, Third Section, p. 2)

²⁹ *ibid.*

MARSH: The only violence I see is the violence of the White man to the Black people of Halifax. Right in front of our eyes, the community of Africville has been razed to the ground, our young people cannot get jobs or housing; crime, drugs and prostitution are threatening the communities. Tell me if anything could be more violent than that?

REV. BEALS: Why is Stokely Carmichael coming to Halifax?

MARSH: Is there a law barring him from Nova Scotia?

REV. BEALS: Don't patronize me. Halifax police are armed to the teeth and have snipers all over the roof tops around Maynard and Creighton streets; there is fear and excitement among the community. Shops are boarding up and people are stocking up like a disaster is about to happen. The City of Halifax is in a state of siege and you are asking if there is a law barring him from Nova Scotia?

MARSH: Stokely Carmichael was invited to Nova Scotia to experience the socio-economic situation of Black people in Nova Scotia and build solidarity with our struggle and that of Blacks in the US and in Africa.

NZINGA: Actually he just wanted a place to relax, see the city and go hunting with Josiah.

REV. BEALS: Only last week the man was in Montreal urging Negroes to get all the guns they can and be prepared to kill for their people,³⁰ and now he is coming sightseeing in Nova Scotia. Don't you realize what an explosive situation that is?

³⁰ *Chronicle Herald*. October 18th, 1968.

MARSH: Stokely is thought of to be “very dangerous radical Black fanatic racist”. For many years, unnoticed by the press, he marched up and down the highways in the deep south singing “we shall overcome” meaning it and believing it, doing day by day precisely what the Christian is supposed to do, to walk from door to door, to feed the hungry, to speak to those who are oppressed, to try to open the gates of prison for all those who are imprisoned. He was beaten and thrown into jail. Then he grew weary of petitioning the White people. Stokely is only insisting that he is present for only one time on this earth as a man, not as a creature of the Christian conscience, not as a fantasy in the Christian charity, not as something to be manipulated or defined by others – but as a man himself, on this earth, under the sky, on the same lonely journey we all must make³¹

REV. BEALS: Not a creature of the Christian conscience? What is he then?

MARSH: A man, like I said.

MAMA JULIA: Yes, a man.

MARSH: Christian evangelists have consistently condemned violence as pathological and the work of sick men. The irony of the matter is that the Christians themselves have continually generated violence with profound vehemence. Earlier civilizations

³¹ James Baldwin’s speech to World Council of Churches, Uppsala, Sweden. *Dartmouth Free Press*. August 28, 1968, Second Section, p. 4.

³² Bern Nkedrim, *Leaders must face the problems; something rotten in X’tian world. The Fourth Estate*. November 27th, 1969, p. 10.

were destroyed by barbarian invasions. Ours will be destroyed by the barbarians, which Christian society breeds³².

REV. BEALS: I have never heard such blasphemy. All in the cause of violence to others?

NZINGA: Brothers and sisters all we are saying is that “when people ask to persuade themselves that another group or breed of men are less than men, they make themselves less than men and have made it almost impossible for themselves to confront reality and change it”³³.

MAMA JULIA: You go girl, your mama must have given you your own fire.

TIMER: How you know her mama is Negro? Maybe the father is the Negro.

MAMA JULIA: Stop your foolishness. Her mama is the Negro.

Enter a White police Inspector followed by two constables. At the sight of the two policemen, the crowd especially, the young ones seem to get more boisterous and listless. Timer meets the police at the door.

INSPECTOR: Good evening, Rev. Beals. Everything alright?

³³ James Baldwin speech to World Council of Churches, Uppsala, Sweden. *Dartmouth Free Press*. August 28, 1968, Second Section, p. 4.

³⁴ Austin Scott. *Variety of views on racial action in the US*. *Chronicle Herald*, October 18, 1968.

TIMER: [*To police Inspector*] Sorry man, we was having a family meeting right now. From now on whenever you see a Black cat with a gun, he's going to be a Panther. There be two kinds of people in this world – “beautiful Black brothers” and “crackers”. All Whites are crackers and Negros should have the right to keep them out of Black neighbourhoods³⁴.

There is a little scuffle between Timer and the constables but Rev. Beals intercedes and calm returns.

REV. BEALS: My oh my! Everybody seems to be on edge of late.

INSPECTOR : Can't blame my men. T'is the sign of the times.

Exit MacDonald and his men.

MARSH: The Black Church has become schizophrenic.³⁵

REV. BEALS: The Church is, has been, and will be the pillar of our community...

MARSH: Not anymore. For a long time, its role has been to protect its flock and to distribute patronage jobs and status – to the community. Hence the church has negotiated with outside threats. The elders realizing they lacked power in the large community have had to beg, bow or scrape concessions but within our community, they command and lead because they were in a position as mediators

³⁵ Rocky Jones, as cited by Allan Jeffries (1994). *Black Activism terrified RCMP*. Daily News. April 11th, 1994

–to dispense jobs and titles.³⁶ The government has taken over the Black community. Department of Social services took over and subverted the traditional church centred leadership. Hence those who formerly controlled values, dispensed knowledge and protected the community have been neutralized and now the Black community is indebted to the government. To say I’m Black and proud is not saying I’m Black and I have power and can exercise it. Self-awareness without political consciousness is nothing.³⁷

TIMER: Yeah, Brother Stone. Yeah. After they have used us, they don’t want us anymore.

Like old machines, new technology renders us obsolete.

REV. BEALS: We do not want Stokely Carmichael in Halifax!

TIMER: This is ridiculous. Black folks been shooting at each other since the Chinese discovered gunpowder, but all of a sudden, nobody shoots but the Panthers.³⁸

MARSH: The Blackman must run his own show. Once we desegregated the restaurants, the Black man could not afford a burger. The American Revolution had the slogan, “Give me liberty or give me a death.” It was beautiful then. But now when Black power advocates use this slogan, it is called violence.³⁹

REV. BEALS: We do not want Black power in Nova Scotia!

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ Chronicle Herald. *Carmichael leaves SNCC to join Panthers*. Chronicle Herald. September 18th, 1968.

³⁹ Rocky Jones as cited by *Question Time at Human Rights Commission*. *The Fourth Estate*, September 19th, 1968.

About six bangs like gunshots are heard in the immediate distance. There is panic in the church. Stony, Timer and a few young men run out. Nzinga and Mama Julia try to secure the church and keep things calm.

REV. BEALS: [*Yelling fervently in prayer*] Our Father in heaven, we, your unworthy servants humbly ask for your protection in this our hour of need. We pray even for those who wish to thrust violence on our people. Lord, help us forgive them for we know they have all the best of intentions. Help them to see the path of righteousness...

Marsh and Timer returning

MARSH: It was just Papa Downey's ol' chevy truck back firing.

Sighs of relief all around.

MAMA JULIA: That man better get a new truck. When he coming up my hill there, he sound like a whole army is shooting its way up the hill.

[There is a bit of chatter as people settle in their seats. The tension of the argument between Rev. Beals and Josiah has died down but still simmers below the surface]

OLIVER DOWNEY: Rev Beals, Josiah, I think you both have strong passions for the community and I believe there is room for both your opinions.

We have a situation coming up. The Panthers are coming to town and many people have their backs up against the wall, White and Black. I believe it is not necessarily a bad thing. The point is how do we use this to our advantage?

[The crowd murmurs in approval. Downey's words sound like a comfortably compromise for all the disparate temperaments gathered in the church.]

TIMER: There is room for my opinion too. I'm recruiting for the Nation of Songhai.

[He is smarting from the physical treatment meted out to him by the policemen].

Did you see how I handled them po-lice men?

OLIVER DOWNEY: Timer, I think the police handled you, but yes there is room even for complete Black segregation but I do not think we should walk away from what has been built for four centuries over our backs with our blood, sweat and tears. "We are not ready but should be to face the obstacles and challenges with which we are confronted. We accept whatever comes our way but, our problem is, don't expect us to inconvenience ourselves or to interrupt our daily routine in an attempt to work together in order that we might attain what we want for our common good⁴⁰". Rev. Beals, I have known Stony and his family from Truro for a long time. His father is a celebrated war veteran. All that talk of violence is not what he is about. If Stony got guns, then he using them to shoot ducks and deer, not humans.

Enter Buddy Daye, a young Black Nova Scotian and boxer. He is greeted effusively by everyone. It is obvious that he is a very well loved man.

MAMA JULIA: Hey Buddy. We was all worried for you. We heard you was in jail in South Africa. What them White people do to you?

⁴⁰ Wayne Adams, *The Fourth Estate*, June 6, 1968, p. 6.

BUDDY: I survived because I am Canadian. They could not treat me like the way they treat their Negros. And they treat them some bad.

Crowd: Blacks.

Buddy: I just been gone 3 months and we ain't Negros no more? Things are changing some fast, man

MAMA JULIA: What they put you in jail for?

BUDDY: I beat up a White policeman.⁴¹

ALL: What?

MAMA JULIA. You crazy? You not a boxer any more you know? Why you *bet* him up?

BUDDY: He pinched a Black woman's breast and then started laughing at her when she got mad.

MAMA JULIA: So you beat him up. You got to stop fighting everybody's battle, Buddy.

BUDDY: Us Black folks got to hang together and stand up for each other because anywhere in this world where Black folk live with White folk, we get treated bad. But I came to the meeting as soon as I heard about it when I got off the ship. They say Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panthers coming into town.

MAMA JULIA: Oh yes they are.

⁴¹ *Winnipeg Free Press*. February 22nd 1969, p. 3. Buddy Daye spent 37 days in jail in South Africa for beating up a white policeman who had pinched a Black woman's bottom and laughed about it.

BUDDY: That's why all them policemen on the streets?

NZINGA: Black Power!

CROWD: Black Power!

BUDDY: Man, things happening in Nova Scotia. [*He sees Josiah Marsh*]. Stony, this your doing?

MARSH: [*Laughing*] The doing of the people Buddy. The people.

REV. BEALS: Buddy, you will be happy to know that while you were away, we have succeeded in getting barber shops desegregated. No more problems with where to get a haircut now.⁴²

BUDDY: So now I don't have to visit 26 barber shops before I get one who does not believe he would break his scissors or barber's chair, his business or himself by cutting my hair.⁴³

Marsh: That's what I like about White Nova Scotians. They're so fucking racist but they are so nice about it, they just won't cut your hair.⁴⁴

BUDDY: When the Panthers coming into town?

Marsh: Tomorrow night.

BUDDY: Wow! That is heavy!

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ Rocky Jones. *Daily News*, March 5th, 1989.

OLIVER DOWNEY: Yes Buddy, we were just wrapping up that business here. Rev. Beals, I believe, Josiah's concept of the threat of violence has very good merits. The White folk are terrified by this Panther visit. They have invited us, as leaders of the community to meet up with them tomorrow afternoon.

MAMA JULIA: Why, they scared. Now they will feel what we always have felt.

OLIVER DOWNEY: They are scared of the potential violence of the Panther visit, and at the same time this visit has put Nova Scotia in the national and international limelight. We could use this to force more concessions from the city regarding the education of our kids, the housing and unemployment situation. Currently, City Governor O'Malley has appointed Jules Oliver to investigate unfair hiring practices. Jules is a militant who gets the ears of moderate Blacks too. This threat of violence and unrest could help our cause.⁴⁵

MARSH: Their time is running out. If we don't let them see we are serious and ready for violence they will not make any changes, and will remain complacent in their oppression of our peoples. You know what one White man said to me? He said, my folks came over here about three generations ago penniless and illiterate, and by sheer hard work and thrift my family was able to make something of itself. You then, as Negroes, must pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.⁴⁶

What people don't realize is if you have no boots how do you pull up your straps?

⁴⁵ Jules Oliver confirmed this strategy during an interview with me.

⁴⁶ Adams, Wayne. *HAI Wedderburn – a finger in many pies*. These lines were actually spoken by Gus Wedderburn in an interview with Wayne Adams. *Dartmouth Free Press*, February 15th, 1969.

[The crowd bursts out laughing]

REV. BEALS: That is a cop out I am not ready to deal with. The threat of violence never a willing consenter makes.

BUDDY: Rev. Beals, if we have to go to the devil to win housing, inclusive education and employment for our people, I think we must. Our situation as Blacks in Nova Scotia may have improved very little over the years but the same cannot be said about the level of the level of consciousness and awareness, which is rising and expanding every day. Black men all over the world are rising. In Africa, South Africa, America and Britain, Black people are on the march and can't be stopped. We have to evaluate our status as citizens in this country. *[Cheering from the crowd]*

MARSH: How the hell can we expect our kids to dream about flying a plane when they know bloody well that they can't get a job driving taxi in this town? There are people in this poverty stricken place who are paying as much as \$300 per room per month; the rats are free.⁴⁷

DOWNEY: It is true that the Panthers have really stirred the young men and women. Suddenly the kids are taking a second look at their Blackness and finding their skin increasingly beautiful.⁴⁸ It's the old Black folks who are worried. Older folk are wondering, "What's happening to our young folks? One older man in a tavern said to me, the Panthers will set the Black cause in Canada back 50 years.

⁴⁷ Buddy Daye. *Winnipeg Free Press*, Vol. 19, #8. February 22, 1969, p. 2.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6

But the Black Panthers have taught Blacks in Halifax that there are three ways to get something, “First you ask for it, then you beg for it and if that does not work, you take it⁴⁹.”

MARSH: What we want is freedom and equality now, not in the nearest possible future. We have to get off this kick of human rights conferences and brotherhood weeks. If we spend all our time on these, we get only tokenism, gradualism and hypocrisy. The only alternative is to get among ourselves, unify, organize. We must get an identity. “Tension is a creative force. With this kind of force much can and will happen here.⁵⁰” Politics is war without the bloodshed, and war is politics with bloodshed⁵¹.

I believe we should honor the invitation of the City’s big wigs. And I agree we should hang the threat of violence in a strategic way. Hell, no one is inciting violence. It is just what the youth naturally feel.

They all rise to leave.

TIMER: [*To Mama Julia*] You see I handled those police like a soldier?

MAMA JULIA: Stop your foolishness. Where your gun? They took that away from you and you did not even notice. And you say you are a soldier.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ These words spoken by Martin Luther King Jnr. Quoted by Howard McCurdy at Human Rights conference in November 1968. *Dartmouth Daily News*, November 21, 1968.

⁵¹ Don Oliver. *In the Panthers’ wake*. *Globe Magazine*, February 15th, 1969, p. 21.

TIMER: I am a Black Cat and even without a gun, I am still a Panther.

MAMA JULIA: [*noticing Nzinga following her*]. Girl, where you going? You coming with us?

NZINGA: *Erm...* No... I got to catch up with Stony.

Exeunt

Scene III

Police Inspector's house. A White girl about 18 years of age is standing in front of a mirror dressed in khaki pants, white shirt, dark sunglasses and a Black beret. She is gesticulating wildly, obviously acting out a memorized speech.

LISA: We have taken all the myths of this country and we've found them to be nothing but downright lies. This country told us that if we worked hard we would succeed, and if that were true we would own this country lock, stock, and barrel –lock, stock, and barrel–lock, stock, and barrel. It is we who have picked the cotton for nothing. It is we who are the maids in the kitchens of liberal White people. It is we who are the janitors, the porters, the elevator men. It is we who sweep up your college floors. Yes, it is we who are the hardest workers and the lowest paid, and the lowest paid.⁵²

⁵² Stokely Carmichael's "Black Power," Speech. It was in this speech that Carmichael first introduced the term "Black Power."

Black Power is what is needed. Black Power!

Enter Lisa's mother, Janet Macdonald and her sister, Kelly.

MRS. JANET MACDONALD: The fingers must face out. Like you're punching the air. [*She demonstrates, as she hands LISA: a black leather jacket*] Here I found this for you at the Salvation Army.

LISA: Awesome mum. Thank you. [*She puts on the jacket and goes back to the mirror*].

JANET: Your father home?

LISA: No.

JANET: You better keep things down. Things are pretty tense in the city tonight. He'll have a fit if he sees you dressed like that.

KELLY: Where's Edna?

LISA: She was here a minute ago. I think she was helping Auntie Mama in the kitchen.

[*Calling out*] Edna! Edna!

CHILD'S VOICE: [*From a distance*] Coming.

KELLY: Thanks for baby sitting [*Hands her some money*].

LISA: Thanks, Auntie Kelly.

LISA: [*Hyper excitedly*] Mom, Stokely Carmichael is really cool. He real cool. And I hear he is bringing his wife, Miriam Makeba, a real pop star, a diva. Oh Halifax, we are sooo, sooo, sooo...

JANET: Lucky?

LISA: Yeah, sooo lucky! [*Dancing , then going back to the mirror to rehearse her lines. She is completely immersed in creating the Panther look*]

Auntie Kelly, are you coming out tonight. There's supposed to be some big rally on Gottingen Street tonight.

Christine: No!

LISA: Why not?

Christine: You know where I stand on that Lisa, I ain't prejudiced or anything like that, but I believe Blacks and Whites should not mix, you know. They know their place, and we know ours. So long as everybody knows that, I'm okay,

JANET: Yeah, Kelly, so what's our place?

Enter Edna, Kelly's child who Lisa baby sits.

Edna: Hey mummy, the Panthers are coming! Our teacher told us! The Panthers are coming to wreak havoc and mayhem in Halifax.

JANET: Who are the Panthers, Edna?

EDNA: Our teacher says they are these big black wild animals and they are here to cause *de-sta-bi-li-za-tion*. What's *de-sta-bi-li-za-tion*, Auntie Janet?

LISA: [*Leaving the mirror to educate the little girl!*] It means they are here to change the *status quo*.

EDNA: What's *status quo*, Lisa?

JANET: Honey, it just means they want everybody to have a better life, that's all.

EDNA: Is that havoc?

JANET: Honey, I guess in some people's eyes, that is havoc.

Enter Police Inspector. He surveys the scene, takes a hard look at Lisa who is not a bit perturbed.

INSPECTOR: Janet, can I have a word with you?

Exit Kelly and Edna to pick up Edna's stuff

[*Aside to Janet*] I am having some important people dropping by this afternoon, so I ask that you and your daughter ...

JANET: Our daughter, don't forget she is yours too...

INSPECTOR: [*Looking tenderly at his daughter*] Yes, my Negro lover child, thanks to Auntie Mama. Lisa tone down a bit while they are here. Just for about an hour or so. You know, the whole city is jittery about this Black Panther visit and all.

LISA: [*Raising her fist to her daddy*] What we want is Black power. [*To her mother*] Did I get the fist right this time? [*Mother laughs, while Lisa leaves the room*]

JANET: Who are these important men and what do they want?

INSPECTOR: Well, there is the City Governor, Secret Service chief, and some local industrialists and politicians. They just want to be sure that enough precautions have been taken to forestall and quell any violence that may occur tonight.

JANET: So now they are scared. They come running to you to do their dirty work. Just as they did to you in the Gottingen Street demonstration last year. They could help these poor Negroes by giving them proper housing and giving them jobs in their businesses, yet they refuse, and now the Negroes are angry, they are looking to save their skins.

INSPECTOR: Janet, I don't make the laws, I just get paid to enforce them.

JANET: Come on, George, you know better than that. I married you because you had balls. By all means do your job, but remember you have a conscience too.

INSPECTOR: Janet, you know where I stand on the issue of Black people. So long as they are using legitimate means of protest, I am sworn to protect them. But I also joined the police force because I think our system is based on the rule of law, which has law and order...

JANET: Don't preach to the choir George, I know why you joined the force. You have written the book on civil law and order. What do they expect of you? To set the police against the Black Community?

INSPECTOR: Actually, in this case, I see my job as protecting the Black community.

JANET: How? By containing their justifiable expressions of unrest?

INSPECTOR: Janet, when Black people express their justifiable unrest, as you call it, the target has been their own people. If there is violence here in Nova Scotia it is Blacks who are going to suffer most because they visit the violence on their own people even as the White establishment visits their violence on them. It is the same story every where in the world, where Blacks face oppression. More of them get killed. Take Kenya for instance, the Mau Mau Black revolutionary group killed 28 British settlers, and in return, 1000 Kenyans were shot by the British colonial government, like they were fowl.⁵³ Again in Africa, Portuguese brutality in Angola is a tale of White hysteria, terror, thirst for African blood and unspeakable brutality where thousands of innocent Africans have died most of them by torture.⁵⁴ Closer to home, more Blacks have died than Whites during the rioting and unrest that followed Martin Luther King's assassination. [*Janet is nodding with approval*].

INSPECTOR: Trust me Janet. We know that Blacks are a miniscule minority and do not pose a threat to the establishment. I am trying to prevent the spectacle that the establishment expects. The Black man can sometimes be his own worst enemy.

JANET: You always have a clever way of explaining your actions. I trust and hope you know what you are doing but allow the Negroes to fight their struggle their way...
[Relaxing].

⁵³ *Dartmouth Free Press*. February 8th 1968, p. 1.

⁵⁴ *Dartmouth Free Press*. March 28th 1968, p. 9.

INSPECTOR: It boils down to working a tight rope around everybody and soothing egos all around. Gets tiring sometimes though because there is such a fear – unjustified, of course - of Black people by the White establishment and citizens [*Turns to leave*]

JANET: You want to know what I did in school, today?

INSPECTOR: [*Turning back*] Don't tell me you had your students all dressed up like the Black Panthers like our renegade daughter there?

JANET: No, but...

Enter Lisa and Auntie Nana, a Black maid in the employ of the Macdonalds.

LISA: Mum, which pants go better with the beret? Auntie Mama thinks the darker ones are better. These ones or those darker one... [*noticing her father*]

Hey Daddy. Black or brown? [*Inspector looks at her quizzically*]

INSPECTOR: Auntie Mama, you better make sure she stays out of sight tonight.

Exit Lisa

Enter Kelly and Edna all packed up ready to leave.

EDNA: Auntie Mama, I made a pretend carrot cake today. Mmmmm, it was yummy, just like the one you made the other time.

AUNTIE MAMA: I'll make you another one next time you come here with your mummy. Or you can make one in your house and invite me.

EDNA: Oh no, Auntie Nana. We have to make it here. We do not like coloured people coming into our house. My daddy says they have a bad body *odo* and the women are too pro – fic.⁵⁵

KELLY: Come on Edna, let's get going. Or you will be eating your supper at midnight.

EDNA: What's a body *odo*, Auntie Mama?

AUNTIE MAMA: Body odor, my love. It means a bad smell.

EDNA: But you don't smell, Auntie Nana. Are you profi-fic?

AUNTIE MAMA: Prolific? Well, I guess I am. I have 12 children.

EDNA: I want to have lots of children when I grow up.

KELLY: Come on Edna. Okay George, Lisa, and Janet, see you guys.

They leave

INSPECTOR: Auntie Nana, make sure you keep everyone out of the living room. I'm having an important meeting here soon.

AUNTIE MAMA: Yes, Inspector.

Exit Auntie Mama

INSPECTOR: You were going to tell me what happened in school today.

⁵⁵ RCMP reports on the Black Community. In June, 1994, the RCMP apologized to the African Nova Scotian community for "racist reports filed by officers who spied on local activists" during the late 1960s. This report was filed by Barry Dorey, crime reporter for The Mail-Star titled "Apology too little, too late: RCMP sorry for 60's snooping, but Blacks want explanation", p. A1.

JANET: Oh yes! You remember the experiment I was doing with my Grade 3 class? I divided them into two groups, those who had blue eyes and those that didn't⁵⁶.

INSPECTOR: Em... vaguely, you gave the blue eyed ones privileges and the other group no privileges. I thought that was a while back.

JANET: Yeah, six months ago. The results have been amazing. A lot of the non-blue eyed kids are now performing poorly in class, and some of them have stated they hate not having blue eyes. It is really interesting. The blue-eyed kids have developed a sense of entitlement that is quite outrageous.

George, imagine how Negro kids must feel with all they have to go through in the school system.

INSPECTOR: Janet, you take these things so personally. Allow the law to work. We have no discriminatory laws in Nova Scotia. We banned segregated schools more than 14 years ago. Canada is not as bad as the United States. Negroes have always found refuge in this great country. Loyalists, Maroons, Refugees, we have welcomed all of them. Is this not where the Underground Railway ended?

JANET: And how do we treat them now? We gave the Negroes rocks to subsist on. And you wonder why the Negroes are excited about the Black Panthers coming to town.

INSPECTOR: Change will come, but it must be done under the rule of law and order. Negroes have it better here than in South Africa. Pietermarisburg⁵⁷ is going to be

⁵⁶ This was an experiment by Mrs. Elliott, a White public school teacher, intended to show her students the effects of racial discrimination. *The Daily News*. September 5, 1968.

proclaimed the South Africa's first White city. Africans will be barred from town at night either as residents or as visitors.

Negros are not restricted here.

JANET: George, no Canadian can honestly cast the first stone.⁵⁷ In Nova Scotia, we can't even bury Blacks in 'White cemeteries'. Native Indians are being prescribed drugs by White people after a crash course in pharmaceutical and medical knowhow. In one case, a White woman with a grade one education was doing the prescribing. Indian reservation systems are no better than Rhodesia or South Africa. White Canadians have supported that for more than a century.

None of us are guiltless in these instances of national shame. We are not in a position to condemn the actions of other governments when our personal linen is soiled by discrimination and abuse, rejection, and exploitation of minorities. No Canadian can, with honesty, cast the first stone.

Doorbell rings

INSPECTOR: Let's continue this later. [In jest] Keep that daughter of yours from the living room.

Enter City Governor

⁵⁷ No Canadian can honestly cast the first stone. Editorial. *The Daily News*, October 17, 1968.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

CITY GOVERNOR: Hello Inspector; Mrs. Macdonald. All is well, I take it?

JANET: No Governor, all is not well when the city is in panic and the threat of violence looms large, especially, when the situation is not helped given the city's preparation for an unlikely siege. "The Negroes have suffered for 300 years; they won't take it much longer.⁵⁹ And it's a situation that is becoming more and more dangerous because fear is beginning to move in. White people are now afraid that Black people will take charge and treat Whites as Whites have treated them. It's the same fear that a man who has continually tormented and beaten an animal has. It's just a matter of time before the animal will retaliate".

But what do I know? I shall leave you men to ponder the defense of this embattled city.

CITY GOVERNOR: Mrs. Macdonald, as I see it, Negroes here seem to think that all their problems can be traced to the White man at one point or another in their history.⁶⁰ Those of us in the White establishment would like to hear more from the Black community about what it is they specifically feel ought to be done by Whites, and recognizing the many important things that need to be done by Black people themselves.⁶¹ For example, the Negro employment committee should get Blacks to take some responsibility to educate their own people about work habits and so on.

⁵⁹ *Dartmouth Free Press* – April 10, 1968, p.12. Dartmouth Diary: White man's terrible guilt.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ Interview with Mayor O'Brien. *Fourth Estate*, June 12th, 1969, p. 8.

JANET: I am White and all Whites will claim (for the benefit of Negroes) that they hold no grudge. But Negroes know such expressions of favor are hollow indeed. White men are notorious for their snobbishness, bland assumption of superiority and prejudice. And when it comes to the latter the White man can be despicable.⁶² What White people can do is tell White people what White people have done to Black people and what our White responsibility is.

CITY GOVERNOR: Janet, I have not been around for 300 years and I personally bear no responsibility for the treatment meted out to Negroes from some distant ancestors of mine.

JANET: Yet you enjoy the privilege that has been bestowed on you by the oppression of the Negroes? [*City Governor backs away in confused misunderstanding*]

CITY GOVERNOR: I guess we are all entitled to our opinions. [*Turns to the Inspector, assuming an official demeanor*] Anyway Inspector MacDonald, why don't we get to the business at hand?

Exit Janet.

How do you manage to coexist with a tiger in your house?

INSPECTOR: Tigress actually. She speaks much truth though.

CITY GOVERNOR: What preparations are in place to forestall, and curtail any violent outbreaks? The publicity surrounding the Africville urban renewal project has

⁶² *Dartmouth Free Press*. April 10, 1968. p. 12. Dartmouth Diary: White man's terrible guilt

been bad enough for the city; we don't want this Panther visit to wreck the city's image any further.

INSPECTOR: [*In a mock conspiratorial tone*] I always ask, why don't we just prevent the Negroes from coming here? Stop them at the airport and find an excuse to deport them back to the States? Or better still, the RCMP should request Immigration to stop all Black people crossing the border into Canada.⁶³ That way we completely erase the fear of a Panther Negro invasion. [*Enjoying his sarcasm*]. Even better, why don't we deport all Negroes to Australia, if they don't want to go to Africa?

CITY GOVERNOR: [*Earnestly, without catching the Inspector's sarcasm. The Inspector's words have sent him pacing and deep in thought. He seems to be talking to himself. The Inspector watches him as if enjoying the seeds of confusion and possibility in the City Governor's head*]. That will be difficult. Australia is not taking any colored immigrants anyway. Their Minister of Immigration insists on a predominantly White immigration policy. He says it could amount to social masochism if a multicultural policy were forced on Australia. You know, Australia is smart in avoiding the problems of multi racial societies. A homogeneous policy is preferable to a multiracial one. There are too many problems with some people because they are different in background.⁶⁴

⁶³The RCMP did make a request to Immigration Canada to stop all Black people crossing the border from the US into Canada for fear of Panther invasion. *In the Panther's wake*. Globe magazine, February 15th, 1969, p. 21.

⁶⁴ *The Chronicle Herald*, Australia rejects multiracial policy. Friday Oct 4, 1968:

INSPECTOR: It used to quite easy to achieve that in Canada. Actually we started along the same route. We polished of the Aborigines, but now we got some Negroes and others coming in.

CITY GOVERNOR: Closing the border would result in bad publicity because no country has as yet banned Stokely Carmichael. He is riding with that singer wife of his and goes where he pleases. No, we will let him come, but as much as possible, we must give him a guided tour and neutralize him. We must prevent Negroes like Josiah Marsh and Rocky Jones from making any political capital out of this visit to incite violence.

Enter two White industrialists

INSPECTOR: [*Shouting*] Auntie Mama! Some refreshments please.

CITY GOVERNOR: Gentlemen, The Inspector and I were just discussing his plans for protecting citizens and property in the event of any rioting or unrest in Halifax tonight.

1ST INDUSTRIALIST: Hear, hear, we can't have this Stokely Carmichael guy inciting these docile⁶⁵, colored people into violence. Not good for business.

INSPECTOR: [*Again sliding into that confusing, sarcastic role. This time he is mocking his audience by playing on their fear*] US Black Panther members have been actively engaged in attempts to gain control of the civil rights leadership in the Halifax and area Negro community. Because of the potentially explosive

⁶⁵ RCMP reports on Blacks in Nova Scotia. *The Daily News*, July 21st, 1994, p. 4.

situation with respect to Negroes in Halifax, we are undertaking a complete survey of the concentrations of Negroes in this division.⁶⁶

CITY GOVERNOR: What about the immediate plans for tonight?

INSPECTOR: Patience! Governor, gentlemen, I want you to understand the full dimensions of the problem.

The outside influence and support by US Black nationalists and military support from organizations in Canada sympathetic to the Negro cause, could very well result in racial violence in Halifax and other centres in Canada having Negro communities.⁶⁷

2ND INDUSTRIALIST: I hear talk of American Negroes in North Preston and Pockwock areas.

INSPECTOR: Yes and young Negroes are being trained in the use of Molotov cocktails and free sex.

CITY GOVERNOR: Free sex?

⁶⁶ April 18, 1968. Report to the RCMP commissioner's office from Supt. G.H. Miller, commander of Halifax detachment.

⁶⁷ December 1968 report to government from W.L. Higgit assistant RCMP commissioner and director of security and intelligence. *The Daily News*, April 11th, 1994, p. 3.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

INSPECTOR: Yes, free sex... Gentlemen, free sex... And the Black Power movement has a list of moderate Blacks who are slotted for harassment and maybe assassination?⁶⁸

1ST INDUSTRIALIST: Christ the invasion has already begun. How safe are we?

INSPECTOR: Well, the Negroes in Halifax are concentrated around Gottingen, Maynard and Creighton Streets.

2ND INDUSTRIALIST: There's a high concentration of businesses in that area. I have some investments in there.

INSPECTOR: That's where we can expect violence if any. [*Waits for his words to sink in*]
 Lucasville, Hammonds Plains tend to have more conservative Blacks, you know, the ones that the City Governor referred to as docile. Just like last year's demonstrations, we can shut off the Gottingen, Maynard and the Creighton corridor within half an hour. Uniacke Square can be surrounded in quarter of an hour. We have police snipers all around the Gottingen area, and a heavy concentration around the Arrows Club where our intelligence tells us Mr. Carmichael will be meeting with the Black community.

The Inspector's audience nods in approval

1ST INDUSTRIALIST: What about those rough Negroes from North Preston?

INSPECTOR: All movements from Preston, Cherrybrook and Lake Loon are carefully being monitored. Carmichael, Josiah Marsh and Rocky Jones will be under police surveillance at all times. All members of the Afro-Canadian Liberation Movement

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

and the Gottingen street Black police are being watched. Rest assured gentlemen, the situation is under control.

The Inspector's audience seem to relax, as it begins to appear all is under control.

IST INDUSTRIALIST: I don't understand these Black Panthers. No wonder J. Edgar Hoover calls them the greatest threat to the security of America.⁶⁹ Last week, it was reported that 3 of them who had been holed up in the Cuban mission in Miami tried to smuggle out some package. They were accosted by the police and then they bolted back into the Cuban mission with the full protection of Cuban military. I mean these Negros could easily start a war between Russia and the US.⁷⁰

INSPECTOR: Gentleman, before we get ahead of ourselves, let us be clear about one thing.

The colored people of Nova Scotia don't pose much of a threat to peace and security. They are completely outnumbered and have no leaders except their religious ministers. The Panther movement may be gaining ground but their disciples consist mainly of the illiterate, the semi-literate and hoodlums.⁷¹ "There are a few colored youths in this area who like to think of themselves as Black Panthers. This group at the most 10 people occasionally roll a drunk" or

⁶⁹ FBI unclassified files.

⁷⁰ H. Rap Brown, a Black Panther activist was holed up in the Cuban embassy and is the subject of this conversation. *The Chronicle Herald*. April 1st 1968.

⁷¹ RCMP files. Constable K.J Good. *The Mail Star*, April 17, 1994.

⁷² *Ibid.*

something crazy. I suppose it is more flattering to be referred to as drunks than thieves.⁷²

They all pause to let the Inspectors words sink in.

1ST INDUST: You know what it is? The danger is with the extremely high Negro birth rate.

Negros breed like rabbits. One day Whites will be a minority in this country.

But seriously, Negro settlements in Halifax County could become headaches in the space of a few months with the influence of capable radical Negro organizers.

And that will be bad for business... oh, and the image of the city.

2ND INDUST: They are trying to hold the White establishment to ransom. How can I be expected to accept a new style of life, that is accepting Negroes to work. Do you feel that is right? 1% of our staff is Negro. I feel that's enough.⁷³

1ST INDUST: "Colored people have never done anything. Look at history. It has always been the White people that have made discoveries and inventions.⁷⁴ And I don't want to lose business. White workers just don't like to work with Blacks! And that's all there is to it.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ A White employer's attitude towards employing Blacks in his establishment. In the Panther's wake, *Globe Magazine*, February 15th, 1969.

⁷⁴ *The Mail Star*, Tuesday, May 5th 1970. p. 21.

2nd INDUST: Negroes don't like to work much anyway. Their women work steadily to support the family which usually numbers quite a few small children, while the men work long enough to make money for another liquor binge.⁷⁵

INSPECTOR: [*In mock exultation*]. Exactly, then there is not much to panic about the Black Panthers coming tonight.

CITY GOVERNOR: I have spoken with many highly educated people who believe that Blacks are infinitely inferior ... Any reproduction of species between him and a member of another group, particularly the White race would mean hampering the innate abilities that a child might normally have otherwise.

1ST INDUST: Yet Negroes get their nose out of joint when we try to discourage interracial dating. My neighbour, a school principal had problems with Black students because they were involved with interracial dating. Teachers informed students that this was not a good thing to do" And now the students are giving them a hostile attitude.⁷⁶

Loud voice from outside

VOICE: Macdonald, Macdonald, your time will come one day. You can always run but you can't hide. You are a cracker and you going to pay... You going to paaa----yyy.
Mad laughter follows.

MacDonald! MacDonald!

⁷⁵ RCMP files. Cpl. RZ Izsak, *The Mail Star*, July 2nd, 1994.

⁷⁶ Jules Oliver, *The Chronicle Herald*, July 10th, 1968, p. 5

The women of the house rush into the living room in different stages of Panther costumes..

LISA: Daddy it is that crazy guy again. He came right to the window this time.

INSPECTOR: [*Ushering the women back inside.* Nothing to it gentlemen, just a riff raff who occasionally picks on this house.

Inspector leaves the room

VOICE: MacDonald, MacDonald. One day your cup will be full and you will be exposed.

Exposed. Macdonald, exposed!

CITY GOVERNOR: Did you gentlemen see what I just saw?

IST INDUST: Yes, Governor. Are you sure about whose side this guy is on?

CITY GOVERNOR: His loyalty is unquestionable and he is professional through and through. Last year he proved himself and prevented what could have been catastrophic violence when the Negroes took to the streets. But, I know there are questions, and if I may say, rumours about his personal life.

IST INDUST: It is said he fathered a Negro child in his youth, a secret that is well guarded by his family. It is said to be the reason he does not take to the bottle. In his youth he was a formidable drinker and that got him into a lot of trouble. But he seems to have the situation well under control. He makes me feel a little better.

Re-enter Inspector.

2ND INDUST: Why don't you throw the bugger in jail if he has been harassing you that much?

INSPECTOR: He is harmless and besides he has mental issues. Jail won't do him any good.

Doorbell rings

INSPECTOR: That must be the Negro leaders. Gentlemen, the safety of the city now rests in how you deal with these men.

Enter Rev Beals and Josiah Marsh.

CITY GOVERNOR: Gentlemen, the city is facing an unprecedented situation and we need your assistance in keeping the lid down on it. We do not want any violence breaking out in Nova Scotia.

MARSH: Governor, "it is my opinion and the opinion of many solid community leaders that there is no longer any assurance that serious trouble may not break out unless the roots of the problem are remedied. Blacks are facing a serious shortage of jobs, standard housing, and rec-facilities.

REV. BEALS: "The White element and the more secure element must open the doors of our community and social structure and let the disadvantaged people in".⁷⁷ The Negroes' problems were created and even today are being propagated by the White majority. A peaceful remedy can be found only through the actions of a White liberal majority, which is willing to support Negro organizations and individuals

⁷⁷ These words were spoken by Ed Newell, a White man, Halifax member of the Human Rights Committee. *The Chronicle Herald*, April 15th, 1968.

who are willing and capable of acting as vehicles for the restructuring of the Negro Community.⁷⁸

MARSH: “The ranks of the malcontents are swelling, racial tensions are on the increase, and it is only a matter of time before the violence in the US spills into Canada and the Maritimes”. Time is running out.⁷⁹ The danger of violence is so evident that to head off an explosive situation, I urge the government to accept the responsibility for leadership in social change.

CITY GOVERNOR: Rev. Beals, Mr. Marsh. You are leaders in your community and your people listen to you. We have to avert a very dangerous situation. We have put forward initiatives to alleviate the suffering of Negroes in this province, but these things take time. I have instructed the Department of Manpower to set up an office up in Preston. Manpower has even set up in the asylum Nova Scotia hospital.⁸⁰ We want to reach all your people and get them jobs.

IST INDUST: We are working with employers in the area to guarantee employment for all the Negro high school graduates.

MARSH: There’s not many of them, but that is much appreciated. Without jobs many will end up within the criminal justice system.

⁷⁸ Words spoken by Gus Wedderburn. *The Chronicle Herald*. 18th September, 1968.

⁷⁹ These words were spoken by Gus Wedderburn, after a meeting of the NSAACP and Halifax mayor, O’Brien, a couple of weeks after the Panthers, had left town. *The Daily News*, October 31st, 1968.

⁸⁰ *Dartmouth Free Press*, June, 20th, 1969, p. 5.

2ND INDUST: We are not all bad people you know, Mr. Marsh. I donate to the poor starving Biafran children in Africa.

REV. BEALS: There should be more pre-kindergarten classes in the poorer communities and there should be specially structured schools with special curricula and specially trained staff to provide the uplift and leadership needed in the ghettos⁸¹. The alternative is the new militant leadership will resort to the type of violence taking place in the US.

MARSH: There is a lot of uneasiness among the youth in Dartmouth, Preston, and Cherrybrook.

Blacks should receive not merely equal but special educational resources for among us the obstacles to effective education imposed by poverty and oppression are greater. Thus specially trained teachers and special tutors are imperative.

REV. BEALS: There's a lack of constructive literature in school system. And White teachers should not teach Black history and heritage. It is the responsibility of Black peoples to teach Black history and Black heritage to Black people in the way necessary to motivate them. This is something you cannot ask White people to do...

MARSH: Gentlemen, need I remind you again, the moods and feelings in the Halifax ghettos are getting dangerous. Time is running out!

1ST INDUST: Inspector, you aware of these dangerous moods and feelings and uneasiness?

⁸¹ *Dartmouth Free Press*, Third Section, February 29, 1969, p. 2.

INSPECTOR: As I said gentlemen, the situation is under control, fully under control.

REV. BEALS: Governor, a lot of discrimination exists in the real estate and housing industry and I would like to take this opportunity to bring up the issue of the Negroes in Beechville. But I guess this is not the time and place for that. What with the Black Panthers coming and all.

CITY GOVERNOR: Yes. Yes. Beechville. The Negroes of Beechville. What can the city do for the Negroes of Beechville?

REV. BEALS: Governor. In my opinion, there is no point of giving people in Beechville over \$100,000 to build homes if they don't know how to spend it. You set them up to fail.

1ST INDUST: [*To Marsh and the Inspector*] Would you two stop pacing all over the place like some caged animals?

MARSH: [*Menacingly approaching the industrialists*]. Make you nervous? [*Industrialist squirms away*].

REV. BEALS: Governor, the city's housing commission is made up of retired military personnel and salesmen who don't necessarily know anything about building homes. Beechville Negro residents are living in fire hazard/traps. While there are some people who can manage on their own to build homes, there are many others who are not capable and need help, especially in the initial stages. People in Beechville fall into this category. They don't know who to approach, where to go and how to tackle the job.

2ND INDUST: [*Exasperated*] Why in God's name are we talking about housing when we have a looming crisis on our hands?

MARSH: The Black man's lack of adequate secure housing is a part of this looming crisis.

What would you rather talk about? Stokely Carmichael? He talks about the housing crises of Blacks in the United States too. We have tried to get across the fact that the ranks of the militants in this area are increasing, and what is happening in the US can happen here. Does Nova Scotia have to wait until someone says "Burn, baby, burn for justice to be given to the Black man?"⁸²

Mrs. MacDonald and Lisa march out dressed in full Black Panther gear. They throw a Black Panther salute at Josiah. Their faces of the White folk are filled with consternation.

INSPECTOR: Oh, that is just entertainment.

1ST INDUST: Entertainment?

INSPECTOR: Oh yes, just entertainment.

Everyone bursts out laughing knowingly.

1ST INDUST: Do they sometimes paint their faces too?

INSPECTOR: No, absolutely not! They never paint their faces. [*He hurriedly tries to bring the meeting to a close*].

⁸² Words spoken by Joe King, a White Halifax broadcaster at the First Nova Scotian Human Rights Conference *The Globe and Mail*. December 9th, 1968, p. 7.

Gentlemen. The city police has offered to welcome Mr. Carmichael and his entourage, and even escort them wherever they may decide to go. I think if they so choose, we can be good hosts and show them around the town ourselves. They arrive in a few hours at the airport, and my men and I should be headed there right now to oversee the safe arrival of Mr. Carmichael.

They start to troop out

2ND INDUST: You are a very efficient man Inspector, very well thought out.

REV. BEALS: Emm..., Governor, one last thing; the White community can help by assisting and supporting the leaders the Negros themselves select, and where there are no such leaders, we must find an appropriate individual chosen by the people and equip him or her to provide leadership.

MARSH: Yes, indigenous leaders are lacking for African Nova Scotians? When the Black man needs something he feels the Black leaders can't help him. Better to go the White man. "It is a most negative and damaging attitude for a race to have towards itself".⁸³

They all leave, except for the Inspector.

INSPECTOR: Fate brings us often times into a vortex.

Where we are blinded by the swirl of events of which we have no control,

Into events that are devoid of our active agency.

⁸³ Gus Wedderburn. *Dartmouth Free Press*. February 29th, 1968, Third Section, p. 2

Yet for those events that were our doing, and, which will yet be our undoing,
Dubious agency still ensures the loss of control.

The Negroes have suffered a long history of injustice

At the hands of the White man.

Of that I accept the fact.

For that I sympathize with their cries for justice.

But how I am to blame for the sins committed by some ancestors long gone.

Why do I, and others like me, have to suffer the excesses of Negro activism.

I am a policeman sworn to the security of life and property of all citizens.

I have supported the Negro call for equal opportunity

I have raised my children liberally, very liberally.

Why do I still cringe in panic when I think of the deed

That keeps me awake all night burning slowly

But spreading in me, gnawing at my entrails for decades.

VOICE: MacDonald! Your time will come one day. Time is running out.

INSPECTOR: That voice terrifies me.

That voice portends impending doom,

For it strikes deep into matters long forgotten,

Bringing memories that would tear

My well crafted existence into shreds

Leaving only a bruised naked soul.

VOICE: MacDonald! Crackers will pay. You will *payyyy...yyy!*

Enter two policemen

POLICEMAN: The men are ready to move Inspector.

Exeunt

Scene IV

In the soup kitchen of Mama Julia's house in North Preston. Being a midwife and healer, Mama Julia's house is like a drop-in centre for Prestoners who come to seek health advice, or just to socialize. She is also part of the North Preston informal economy, selling food and beer in her house. Sometimes her house seems like a small community centre. Timer is seated at a far end of the room hidden from view. He is playing Louis Armstrong and whistling to the melody. Enter Mama Julia. She has just returned from a baby delivery, and is smoking a pipe with a shotgun slung on her shoulders. She is singing to herself and seems to be in a light, chipper mood. Timer pauses, watching Mama Julia who is totally oblivious to his presence.

MAMA JULIA: [*Washing hands*] These hands, these hands.

The hands have caught thousands of babies, given new life,

But my bosom has never felt the joy of embracing one

That I could call my own. These hands, these hands...

Lord Jesus free me from my huge burden

And take my guilt away. Free me, free me, Lord Jesus

For I have made atonements for my sin.

Let me see his face or her face before I pass.

Grant me that Lord Jesus. I gave my hands to all for that wish.

TIMER: You know she your baby?

MAMA JULIA: [*Startled*] Good lord, Timer. Why you like doing that foolishness? You is
always hiding and frightening people.

TIMER: The African Queen there, she looking for her mama.

MAMA JULIA: Stop your foolishness. You think every adopted child that comes in here is
my baby?

TIMER: She your baby. You seen her face? She even talk like you.

MAMA JULIA: [*Emphatically, but with a pinch of doubt*] She not my baby!

Timer laughs hysterically as he continues to play his guitar and sing. A child rushes in.

LAMONT: Mama Julia, Uncle Toby says to tell you there are two parcels to be picked up at the station.⁸⁴

MAMA JULIA: OK, thank you Lamont. [*Child exits*]. What you doing back so early from school?

LAMONT: The teacher and the principal kicked me out.

MAMA JULIA: Why they kick you out? You always doing foolishness instead of learning?

LAMONT: No Mama Julia, *dem* White kids making fun of me and calling me names.

MAMA JULIA: So what did you do them.

LAMONT: I *peed* on Victor McKenzie.

MAMA JULIA: You what?

LAMONT: Well he calling me Nigger and Sam all the time and so I *bet* him up and *peed* on him.

MAMA JULIA: You lucky he did not bite off your little thing there. We will see what your principal or teacher says. [Lamont exits]

Timer, do something useful for once in this house. Could you get two rooms ready upstairs?

⁸⁴ Informal conversation with Rocky and Joan Jones revealed that they sheltered Black activists from the states. Their home became part of an Underground Railway for Blacks activists fleeing FBI harassment.

TIMER: Hey sister, all this shit going on in Halifax and you bringing in crazy cats from the States. That police cracker is going to jail your ass one day.

MAMA JULIA: He can't do worse than he done already. And if he put my ass in jail, he gonna hear it from me. *No - holds - barred*. Somehow, I ain't afraid of him anymore.

TIMER: He is a cracker, and he knows his time is coming.

MAMA JULIA: Timer, go get the rooms ready. You know the train comes in at 6 o'clock.

TIMER: At least we going to get some good company around this house. Hey, maybe we going to get some more news on the Republic of Songhai.

MAMA JULIA: Stop your foolishness, Timer.

Timer leaves.

MAMA JULIA: What if it's her? Maybe it is not her. Oh Lord Jesus do not tease me so, for I have suffered so much. Timer is right, for I felt it too. And oh, she so beautiful. What if it's her?

Enter Clara Smith, a Black woman from Windsor, Nova Scotia, whose dead baby has been refused burial in a Whites only cemetery.

CLARA: Mama Julia?

MAMA JULIA: [*Startled*] Clara, Oh Clara. [*Goes to hug her*]. Oh my sister, I heard. My sympathies. God take that child from you too early.

CLARA: They refused to bury my baby in the cemetery, Mama Julia.

MAMA JULIA: Who? Where? Where they want you to bury your baby at? They want you take him directly to heaven?

CLARA: No Mama. Them White people at St Croix cemetery have a rule that say no Negro or colored person, and no Indian can be buried at St Croix cemetery.⁸⁵

MAMA JULIA: [With rising frustration and anger] Even when us Black folk die, we are still unequal.⁸⁶

CLARA: The town clerk, he say that Black folk, we too poor to pay 35 dollar annual fee for perpetual care.

MADAM JULIA: Now our dead bodies are gonna make the cemetery broke.

Enter 3 women carrying bags of household stuff. They have been evicted from Africville, a Black community on the shores of the Bedford basin that the City, since 1962, has been razing to the ground in order to build a dog park. Kimberly, about seven months pregnant, and her sisters are seeking temporary shelter with Mama Julia in North Preston. Her sisters are coughing and wheezing persistently.

MAMA JULIA: Kimberly, where all this stuff from?

KIMBERLY: The garbage trucks came this morning.

⁸⁵ There was an antiquated by law in Nova Scotia that prohibited a Black child from being buried in a White cemetery. *Dartmouth Free Press*, October 17th, 1968.

⁸⁶ The St Croix cemetery in Windsor, N.S. had a policy of not allowing the burial of non White people. After the refusal to bury a black child in 1968, and gaining national notoriety for racism, the Directors of the cemetery indicated they plan to change the by-law. Gus Wedderburn's response is cited here from *Chronicle Herald*. April 15th, 1968.

MAMA JULIA: [*perplexed*] You picking garbage into my house. What's this foolishness?

KIMBERLY: No, Mama. The garbage trucks came with the bulldozers. The City officials forced us to load what we could of our things into the trucks and said they will drive us wherever we wanted to go. Then the bulldozers went to work. Mama Julia, they destroyed our homes⁸⁷ In a few days Africville will be no more.

They break out into sobbing and wailing, and a lot of coughing and wheezing can be heard from Kimberly's sisters.

MAMA JULIA: These people ain't got no soul. You girls catching something? You look like you got the fever.

KIMBERLY: No, Mama Julia, they been sick for the last two months. Other folk getting sick too. They say it is something in the water. It's been happening since they put that hospital for infectious diseases, the garbage dump, and the human parts factory up on the hill. They say poison leaking into the water.

MAMA JULIA: Where Erna at?

KIMBERLY: Erna in the hospital. She got hit by a train when she playing by the new tracks they put behind Nana Deborah's house.

MAMA JULIA: She going to be alright?

KIMBERLY: She lost both of her legs. But they say she going to be alright.

⁸⁷ The Black community of Africville was being razed to the ground, and the residents forcibly located, from 1962-1970, a racial spatial management control mechanism performed in the name of urban renewal by the City of Halifax.

It's a shame, Mama Julia, when you think that you're born, and you have just as much right to live here in Nova Scotia as anybody else, but then just because your skin is Black, they're treating you that way. I think if we were a White community, they wouldn't have did that, but it was because we was Blacks, they thought the land was too good for us, living on the waterfront, and it was a lovely space ... we can never go home, that's sad.⁸⁸

Enter child

KIMBERLY: Hi Lamont.

LAMONT: Hi, Auntie Kimberley.

LAMONT: Why your stomach big like that for?

KIMBERLY: I'm having a baby. So you going to get a brand new cousin.

LAMONT: A boy or a girl?

KIMBERLY: I don't know that yet, Lamont.

LAMONT: That's alright, Auntie Kimberley. Just make sure you get a White baby this time.

We don't want no more colored children running around here.⁸⁹

Lamont runs off towards the door.

⁸⁸ Dr. Ruth Johnson, personal interview, March 13, 1998.

⁸⁹ Can racial attitudes change? By Catherine Verral and Ronald Crooks. *Dartmouth Free Press*, March 28, 1968.

MAMA JULIA: [*Lunging at him*]. Somebody need to put soap in that boys mouth for that kind of foolishness.

Enter Miss Timothy, Lamont's teacher.

MISS. TIMOTHY: Hi *Sa*... Lamont.

LAMONT: Hi Miss. Timothy.

MAMA JULIA: You Lamont's teacher?

MISS. TIMOTHY: Yes, Are you his guardian, Madam Fraser?

MAMA JULIA: They call me Mama Julia over here.

MISS. TIMOTHY: Hi Mama Julia, good to meet you.

MAMA JULIA: Why you kick my nephew out of school today? He doing a lot of foolishness in school?

LAMONT: No, Mama Julia. I told you them White kids calling me Sam and making fun of me.

MAMA JULIA: Shut your mouth boy! Nobody asked you for your opinion.

MISS. TIMOTHY: It was all in good fun, Mama Julia. We were reading a book, *Little Black Sambo*, and the other kids were just playfully calling him Sam, because Little Black Sambo, in the story, is a colored fellow.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Jules Oliver. Blacks benefit through teaching of history. *The Fourth Estate*. January 15th 1969.

MAMA JULIA: That why you kick Lamont out of school? His name ain't Sam. And his name ain't *Tar baby*, and his name ain't *Black Cloud*. Listen, Mr. Timothy, if I read some crazy book about a foolish White man called Little White Bastard, and I start to call you Bas, you going to be happy?

MISS. TIMOTHY: Little Black Sambo is just a kids' play book.

MAMA JULIA: Why you take away Lamont's brown crayons?

MISS. TIMOTHY: Oh. That. In art class, Sam...er...Lamont always draws people with brown crayons.

MAMA JULIA: That the people he know! What color crayon them White children in your school use to draw people?

MISS. TIMOTHY: Most kids use orange.

MAMA JULIA: Look here, Miss... what your name again?

MISS. TIMOTHY: Timothy, call me Carol.

MAMA JULIA: Miss. Timothy, top of the morning to you. If Lamont don't come back home from school tomorrow with his brown crayons, then I am coming to that school to get them myself. And believe you me, you don't want me come to that school by myself.

Teacher makes to leave

TIMER: [*from Upstairs*] Cracker....er...er...er...er!

MAMA JULIA: They shouldn't let them White teachers teach our children. We got to have our own teachers. Where that man member of parliament who come here to collect our votes? He doing nothing for us. Next time when he bring the rum and silk to get our votes. We going to tell him, "You can keep all those things. Give us jobs, train more black teachers, and give us dignity".⁹¹

TIMER: Black people said they wanted integration. Now they got it, it causing more problems for us.

MAMA JULIA: Kim, why you stopped teaching?

Kimberly: After they closed the segregated schools, they asked us to reapply to the integrated schools. But Mama Julia, them teacher application forms asking for your race, religion, creed, ethnic origin. They *wanna* know every *damm* thing about you...⁹²

TIMER: They might as well say, "No niggers allowed to come and teach White children".⁹³

CLARA: [*In complete panic, like a raving lunatic*]. Hey Mama Julia... They going to kill us all. They going to hunt down all the Negroes on Saturday night. It says here right in the papers. Coon Hunt on Saturday Night [*Mama Julia and Kimberly running to*

⁹¹ *Chronicle Herald*. Friday June 7th 1968.

⁹² Schiff letter to School board: Racism hidden in the forms. *Chronicle Herald*, May 1st 1969. Schiff was the first Commissioner of the Nova Scotian Human Rights Commission.

⁹³ *Ibid*.

see the paper] I knew the Black Panthers coming here will only bring trouble for colored folk.

MAMA JULIA: [*Reading*] The Nova Scotia Cat and Coon Hunters Association will stage a racoon hunt....⁹⁴

[*Everybody heaves a sigh of relief*]. Clara, what you scaring us all for?

CLARA: In Windsor, that's what *dem* White folks call us Negroes – coons. I thought they coming to kill us all.

Enter two Black men dressed in African robes.

TIMER: *A salam aleikum*, Brother cats. Welcome to Canada. The struggle is just beginning here, but I hope someday soon, you will be welcoming me to the Republic of Songhai, down in Mississippi.

MAMA JULIA: Stop your foolishness, Timer. Did you get their rooms ready?

PANTHER: Thank you for welcoming us to your home, Mama. We'll keep a low profile here. Stokely, coming here tonight?

MAMA JULIA: He sure coming tonight, and we all going to be there.

Timer help the gentlemen get their bags to their room. I'll fix you something to eat.

PANTHER: Thank you Mama. Make sure it ain't pork. That animal unclean.

⁹⁴ Coon hunt on Saturday night. *Chronicle Herald*. April 16th, 1968.

Panthers leave.

MAMA JULIA: God himself make that animal and I'm going eat what I damm well please in this house.

Kimberly, get paper and pencil. We going to write to that *damm* human rights commission. We going to tell them what we colored folk think. We going to tell them we can't take this foolishness no longer. Grab a pen and paper, Kimberly. They going to take it from me today. Kim you ready?

KIMBERLY: Yeah, Mama.

Okay, start, Dear... Who they got at the human rights commission there? A chairman, director, what, Kim?

KIMBERLY: Commissioner.

MAMA JULIA: Okay, Dear Commisioner? He the commissioner of the commission? What kind of foolishness is that? No wonder he up to no good. Okay, Dear Commissioner... No, he ain't no dear to me. Black folk got problems and they bring us a White Human Rights Commissioner.

KIMBERLY: What about, To the Human Rights Commissioner?

MAMA JULIA: Good, I like that. Make it, To the Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission. [*Pleased with her construction*] Kim, ask him this for me. Do we as a race or group work for our own improvement or do we accept these

discriminations as being inevitable? I like that word. Ine-vi-ta-ble [*Clapping for herself*] You got that down Kim?

Kim: Yes, Mama.

MAMA JULIA: Good, you tell him that we Black folk must teach ourselves and our children not to feel inferior. We must admit that it lies within ourselves to improve in great part the opportunities for available employment if only we are given the chance. Tell him, Kim. Tell him. Tell him that one of the greatest virtues we must cultivate is patience. We must never stop trying, both individually as a group. Minority groups do not have the same opportunities for advancement as do majority groups. Therefore we must work that much harder to create opportunities for ourselves and our children? And it is harder knowing that as African-Nova Scotian and as women, the availability of jobs is doubly limited.⁹⁵ You got all that down, Kim?

KIMBERLY: Em... Mama, I guess I was listening to you and not writing.

Knocking on the door.

Enter a Black Police woman.

MAMA JULIA: Hey Beverly. Hey girl!

You my hero. [*Admiring her police uniform*] I like this uniform, especially, when it's us colored folk wearing them. She, the first Black person and woman to join

⁹⁵ Clarion Wenta, Visiting Editor' The *Clarion* vol.II., no.7, 15 April, 1947, p.6.

the Dartmouth Police. [*Clapping in pride*]⁹⁶

TIMER: You charge any White people yet? I would charge them every day.

Timer mockingly makes an imaginary arrest

MAMA JULIA: Timer, stop your foolishness.

POLICE WOMAN: Mama Julia, what's this I hear...?

MAMA JULIA: What you heard?

POLICE WOMAN: They say you got some long lost daughter who just come to town to look for her mama.

MAMA JULIA: Who told you that? Timer you been running your mouth?

POLICE WOMAN: No, I didn't hear it from Timer. It's all over town. Everybody saying how this girl look and behave just like you.

CLARA: [*Serving food*] Mama, you got a long lost daughter? You never said so. I thought you ain't got no children.

MAMA JULIA: [*confused, holding her bosom*]. Every woman got a little *something something* that she keeps to herself. [*To Police woman*] You seen her?

POLICE WOMAN: No.

MAMA JULIA: I don't know girl, I don't know... You going to the Arrows club tonight?

POLICE WOMAN: Yes Mama.

⁹⁶ *Dartmouth Free Press*. August 22nd, 1968.

MAMA JULIA: You not going in that uniform are you?

POLICE WOMAN: Hey, you kidding me? [*Slapping her bag*] I'm going fully decked out in my Sunday Panther best.

MAMA JULIA: I'm going too. It's about time we Black folk show that we can't take any more foolishness. Kimberly let's continue with the letter. Beverly we writing to the Commissioner of the human rights...

Enter Nzinga. Her eyes dart around for Mama Julia. When their eyes meet, they stare at each other for a long time. They walk towards each other.

NZINGA: Mama Julia, is your last name Fraser?

MAMA JULIA: Yes. Yes. [*Ecstatically*] My last name is Fraser, and I prayed to the Lord Jesus that I will see your face one day.

She rushes to embrace Nzinga, who stands still, overtaken by events and not knowing how to react.

NZINGA: Well here I am. At least I know where I got my hips and my singing from.

They continue to stare at each other.

CLARA: Well my goodness, don't you two look like twins. Mama Julia, she *some* pretty.

NZINGA: [*Looking around and noticing Timer*] Hey Papa Timer.

TIMER: Uncle Timer now to you African Queen. Should have told you that when I first heard
your story.

NZINGA: You knew?

TIMER: This cat knows everything.

NZINGA: Hi, Uncle Timer. Feels good. Never called anyone uncle before. Uncle Timer,
Uncle Timer...

TIMER: That enough cat. The name going to get finished if you continue like that. That name
runs on time.

*Mama Julia goes to embrace her again. She is emotional and in tears. Again Nzinga does not
respond enthusiastically to her embraces.*

NZINGA: You know I have a lot of questions to ask, Mama Julia?

MAMA JULIA: All your questions will be answered child. [sobbing] Every single one of
them.

NZINGA: Do you know who my biological father is?

MAMA JULIA: [*Staring hard at her for a while*] Yes.

NZINGA: Is he still alive?

MAMA JULIA: [*Reluctantly*] Yes.

TIMER: Yeah, you wanna know who your biological father is?

MAMA JULIA: Hush Timer, stop your foolishness. The girl just come, let her have something to eat. Girl you look like you could use some food. You too skinny. Take your jacket off. Sit down for a while.

Begins to sing joyfully.

NZINGA: [Defiantly]. I'm vegetarian.

MAMA JULIA: [*Starting to scold her and then changing her mind*]. Since when a Black woman don't eat chicken... Sure, I can fix you something. [*Heading to prepare food*]

I know you got a lot of questions, and I can help you with answers. [*Getting on her knees*]. But thank you Lord Jesus for giving me this joy, for letting me see my babies face. And forgive me Lord Jesus for all my sins.

Heavy knocking on the door

MAMA JULIA: Who is it?

GRUFF VOICE: Open up. It's the police.

Mama Julia signals Timer to keep the guys upstairs silent. Clara sits still terrified. Beverley, the Black police woman motions all to be relaxed and calm. Then she goes to open the door. Enter two White policemen.

POLICEMAN: [*Surprised at the sight of another police officer*]. Good afternoon, constable.

BEVERLEY: Good Afternoon.

We have orders to pick up Madam Julia Fraser for questioning. I believe this is her residence.

Yes it is. [*Motions to Mama Julia to come to her. Mama Julia gets up and walks to Beverly*] Officer, do you mind me asking what this is all about?

MAMA JULIA: What I done this time?

POLICEMAN: Did you deliver a baby on 16 Main Street?

MAMA JULIA: I caught 10 babies from that address alone in the last 15 years. Which one you talking about?

POLICEMAN: Did you deliver a baby boy three days ago from that address?

MAMA JULIA: I sure did, and I warned that woman not to have another baby last year, and she sure as hell gone and had another one.

POLICEMAN: Can you come with us please?

MAMA JULIA: What happened to the baby? Is he okay? Is he alive?

POLICEMAN: [*Looking at Beverly*] We have to take her in for questioning. The baby she delivered died.

MAMA JULIA: [*With quiet confidence*] I had bad feeling for that baby. That woman should never have had that baby. She not taking care of herself good enough.

BEVERLY: Mama, don't say no more. Just grab your coat and go with the officers. [*To the policemen*] Has she been charged with anything?

NZINGA: [*Defiantly*]. Wait a minute... Is she under arrest?

POLICEMAN: Our orders are just to bring her in for questioning.

BEVERLY: Mama, go with them. I'll be following right behind you.

They turn to leave

Enter Timer at the top of the stairs. He sees the policemen and Mama Julia.

TIMER: Crackers, where the fuck you taking my sister?

POLICE: Let's get her away quickly before that crazy Negro creates a scene.

MAMA JULIA: [*Trying hard to stay strong for Nzinga's sake*] Nzinga. I ain't done nothing wrong. I'll be back to answer your questions.

[They hurriedly take Mama Julia away. Beverly exits to follow the cops. Timer races after them].

NZINGA: To meet she who gave me life, and then lose her again all in one instant,

Such seems to be the story of my life. I must step away

Once more from the threshold of self-discovery, but this time only for a moment.

I yearned for the story of my birth and now one truth has surfaced,

The fires that drive me burn even fiercer for more truth, the other truth,

The one I fear more, now I know the identity of one. She is a fierce woman,
Magnificent in her ease of living. What fires burn in her, what burdens does she
carry? What memories motivate her continued existence?

And still, the one answered question that gnaw deep into the physicality of
My womanhood, myself, my permanent entanglement with being unwanted.

My journey is not done. Great spirits, mother spirit, carry me on.

Enter Timer

TIMER: What they arrest her for?

NZINGA: I think the baby she delivered died.

Has this happened before, Uncle Timer. I mean the police...

TIMER: Yeah! Some folks think Black midwives are not clean and should not be allowed to
deliver babies. Julia, she been doing this for more than 20 years. Our mama taught
her, and her mama before that. But sometimes the babies die and if you are a
Black midwife, then they going to start believing you killed the baby. But she
going to be okay, cat.

NZINGA: Do you know who my father?

TIMER: [*Angrily retorting*]. I don't know if you going to call him your father... [*Realizing
what he is saying*] but if you mean do I know whose sperm made you... I don't
know.

NZINGA: [*Pleading*] Uncle Timer... you do know.

TIMER: Hey cat, I don't know. Let Mama Julia tell you herself, if she want to. [*In deep thought*]. I'll tell you what, I'm going to see that cracker police Inspector to see what going on with Julia. [*Smiling deviously*]. You go to the Arrows Club, African Queen. Go meet the Panthers. Tell the crowd, that the crackers have arrested Julia Fraser, a Black midwife. Go do your African Queen thing. Mama Julia will be alright. Trust me, cat. I know a lot.

NZINGA: Come on Uncle Timer, tell me who he is.

TIMER: [*Laughing insanely*] *Crackeeeee...eeers!* Here I come!

Exit.

Act 2**Scene I**

The Arrows Club on Gottingen Street. Seated around a table, having dinner are Josiah Marsh, Nzinga, Miriam Makeba, Stokely Carmichael and Cannibal, a Panther from the US. Parading around the Club is two policemen. Police snipers can be seen on the roof top across the buildings from the Club.

MARSH: Man, that was some hustle at the airport.

CARMICHAEL: That`s the Police for you. Masters at overkill.

MAKEBA: I never knew there was such a Black community in Canada. In Africa we always think of Canada as this cold place full of Eskimos and good White people. Not like the States. “In Africa, Canada has a very good reputation because the people think Canada is a quite different country from the US. And now I see that this is an exaggeration”⁹⁷

Anywhere the Black man or woman is they`re in trouble.

MARSH: Miriam, Stokely, this is Canada`s best kept secret. Underneath that veil of internationalism, and now multiculturalism that Trudeau is espousing, this is still the state that perfected the art of racial segregation. Miriam, where do you think the founders of apartheid in South Africa got their lesson from? Right here in Canada.

⁹⁷ These words were spoken by Mrs. Ludo Atricht of the University of New Brunswick Human Rights group. The *Chronicle Herald*, September 18, 1968.

MAKEBA: Apartheid was originated in Canada? The modern system of apartheid?

MARSH: Yes. Canada and the USA. However, Canada, as a result of its huge geographical area and small populations was able to perfect the system of seclusion, segregation and disempowerment. Then they sold the idea to the South Africans. Why do you think South Africa is the top African exporter to Canada?⁹⁸

CARMICHAEL: This is not adding up.

MARSH: What, Stoke?

CARMICHAEL: Where are the Blacks in the city? You said there were whole Black communities, Josiah?

MARSH: There are. That's what I mean by Nova Scotia's apartheid. Blacks are scattered over many small communities many of them harboring a hundred to a couple of hundred people. The largest and oldest Black community is in Preston.

MAKEBA: Why don't we go there?

MARSH: The Preston Tax Payers association has said publicly that they don't want you coming there. Man, it's a bunch of conservative Black people influencing public opinion in Preston, but the youth are no more listening to their natural leaders. They are getting restless and inflamed.

CARMICHAEL: Well your good police are escorting us everywhere. We might as well get them to escort us to Preston and meet the brothers and sisters over there. Hey, but

⁹⁸ S. Africa top African exporter to Canada. *Chronicle Herald*, 23rd September, 1968, p.14.

you promised a vacation. Josiah, when are you going to take me hunting? We got only 18 hours to spend in Halifax.

MARSH: When do you fly out?

CARMICHAEL: Tomorrow afternoon.

MAKEBA: 2:17 tomorrow afternoon. [*To Nzinga*] Sister, why are you so sad? Cheer up. The Panthers *have* come!

MARSH: Yeah cheer up, Nzinga. What's up?

NZINGA: I found out who my birth mother is, and then she got arrested by the police immediately.

MARSH: Arrested? For what? Who is she?

NZINGA: You wouldn't believe it but it is Mama Julia. Julia Fraser of North Preston.

MARSH: Mama Julia?

[*Whispering to Stokely and Miriam*]. She's the lady that gives shelter to the parcels you guys send from the States].

NZINGA: Yes. Mama Julia is my birth mother, and no sooner do I confront her with my news than she gets taken away by the police for a birth that ended up with the child dying three days later.

MARSH: Has she been charged with anything?

NZINGA: No.

MARSH: After the meeting tonight, let's all go to the police station and check on why she has been arrested. We 'll take the community with us if need be. Mama Julia and her work are well known and respected within the community.

[*To Nzinga*] Mama Julia, Oh my God, Should have known it earlier. You are a spitting image of her. You smile alike, you walk alike and you both got the fire in you.

CARMICHAEL: The revolutionary's blood runs in your family, Nzinga.

NZINGA: Yeah, I see where I got it from. Now to find my birth father.

MARSH: The hospital gave you no records of that?

NZINGA: No, they only record the birth mother's name. "Baby Fraser born to Julia Fraser of North Preston". I kind of thought it would be the other way round. Black father, White mother. You know, you Black brothers and the forbidden fruit.

Cannibal: [*In a haze*] Have you guys ever eaten White flesh? Like I mean really barbecuing the meat and then chewing it with some spicy sauces. Mmmh..., you got to try it one day.

CARMICHAEL: [*laughing because he has heard Cannibal's craziness before*] Cannibal, don't get started and carried away. This is just Nova Scotia.

NZINGA: I would have rejected the Fraser name. That don't define me. Hey Stokely, what's up with the Carmichael bit? And Josiah, what's up with Marsh?

MARSH: Marsh because I am from the Marsh in Truro. That's another pocket of unusable land that Nova Scotian Government used to resettle Black people from the US.

CARMICHAEL: I'm thinking of changing my name to honor two great African Kings. Kwame Nkrumah, former leader of Ghana, and Sekou Toure, President of Guinea. The *Osagyefo* and Toure have really influenced my political thought on what it means to be African.

NZINGA: What's it going to be? Sekou Nkrumah

MAKEBA: That's what he wants but I told him Kwame Toure.

CARMICHAEL: I'm tossing both names in my head.

MARSH: When the African Queen talks, you better listen.

Enter Rev. Beals

MARSH: [*Rising respectfully*]. Reverend Beals. Welcome. Stokely, this is Reverend Beals of the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Rev. Beals, Stokely Carmichael... and...Miriam Makeba.

REV BEALS: [*To Makeba*] I love your songs and your performances. We are fortunate in Halifax to have you in our midst.

MAKEBA: Thank you Rev. Beals.

REV. BEALS: [*He is in a very subdued mood as he sizes up Carmichael*] Stokely Carmichael. It is wishful thinking to even suggest that young people who are educated, who read and who are continually exposed to global communications

media are going to accept the lifestyles of their parents. New knowledge and ideas result in unrest, and it is part of change.⁹⁹ But as leaders of people, it is what we do with the unrest that gives us the direction of change. Black people, especially, the youth, listen to you. I hope you intend to use this gift responsibly in Nova Scotia.

CARMICHAEL: I have always endeavoured to use that power responsibly, Rev. Beals, I can assure you. If unrest is the basis of change, then sometimes what you fear the most - violence can be the midwife of change, purely from a tactical perspective that is. But violence is not the reason we are here. Apart from a hunting vacation, our major objective is the internationalization of Black Power.

REV. BEALS: I cringe at the expression for it seems to challenge the ideals for which I have fought all my years, but it is the sign of the times and I must submit to it.

CARMICHAEL: "We recognize all the problems of Halifax that Black people have and we want to begin some coordination so that we can move against racism and capitalism"¹⁰⁰. Ordinarily White and Black working classes should be together against the capitalist exploiters, but because of racism, that cannot happen and a wedge has been driven between the White working classes and Black people. Rev. Beals, what Halifax needs is an all Black family meeting to decide on strategies that we ourselves draw up towards our own liberation. Only Blacks can decide on their own liberation.

⁹⁹ This response is that of Reverend Oliver, in a post-mortem of the Panthers' visit. The speech was reported by Bridgal Pachai, in his bibliography of Rev. W. P. Oliver.

¹⁰⁰ Interview given by Stokely Carmichael to newsmen during the 1968 visit to Halifax. The *Chronicle Herald*. October, 18th, 1968.

MARSH: We recognize, Rev. Beals, that it is a problem of leadership – natural indigenous leaders are lacking for ANS. When the Negro needs something he feels the Negro leaders can't help him. Better to go the White man. "It is a most negative and damaging attitude for a race to have towards itself."¹⁰¹

REV: BEALS: I accept and hope you are right.

Exit Rev. Oliver

CARMICHAEL: He sounds like such a tired man. The struggle can beat the living daylights out of an activist.

MARSH: There is a melancholy to him... the melancholy of a man caught in the crosswinds of change. The youth think he is not aggressive enough and is far removed from the masses.¹⁰² Some said he is a divider not a uniter. Others say he is trying to run the show by himself. But in his own way, according to his own beliefs he has done a yeoman's work for the Black community and earned his place in history.

Enter a bunch of White people including the Police Inspector's's wife and daughter. They are all dressed in panther uniform. They take their seats].

LISA: [*Doing the Black power salute*] Black power! Welcome to Halifax, Mr. Carmichael.

We all support Black power. What can we do to help the struggle?

¹⁰¹ Gus Wedderburn. Feb 29th 1968. *Dartmouth Free Press*. Third Section, p. 2.

¹⁰² Criticism levelled at W.P. Oliver. Pachai, 1989, p.12.

CARMICHAEL: Educate White people about their own racism. That's what you can do.

Outside a chorus of "We Shall Over Come" is slowly approaching the Arrows Club.

Enter an excited Timer

TIMER: Josiah, Stokely, George Sams¹⁰³ has been arrested by the Police in your car, Josiah.

They found him with three rifles. Rosie Douglas has also been arrested for walking while Black. The rumor is that the police are searching The Square, Maynard and Creighton areas for guns and ammunition. Man they say the Negroes are rebelling; the uprising has begun. Long live the revolution! Long live the Republic of Songhai.

CARMICHAEL: Calm down brother.

TIMER: If the revolution don't hit the streets of Halifax by next summer, I'm packing my bags and leaving for the States.

MARSH: Calm down, Timer!

TIMER: Man, which side of the fence are you standing? You are part of the problem or part of the solution?

Crack...ers.....ers, here we come!

Dashes out.

MARSH: That's Timer. He's there, but not always there.

¹⁰³ George Sams and T. D. Pawley were American Panthers who lived with Rocky and Joan Jones at the time (Informal conversation with Rocky Jones).

Those are my three hunting rifles. The police know that already. They are all registered. I went out hunting with George this morning and the RCMP followed us all day. They pull this shit when I am out of the car. This could be a pretext for a clamp down. Let's hope the situation is not out of control.

CARMICHAEL: [Calmy] We must stand resolute. Cannibal, get in touch with Black Panthers in Boston and New York and ask 'em to rally as quickly as they can to Halifax. Tell Eldridge that we want international coverage of this rally in Halifax. You got that?

Cannibal rushes off, as crowd of Black people decked out in similar Panther uniforms march into the Arrows Club and sit and stand in confrontation to the small crowd of White patrons.

JANET MACDONALD: [Approaching Carmichael's table] Miriam, we love you, could you please give us a song? We need to defuse the tensions here.

Miriam looks at Stokely and they both nod in affirmation. Miriam Makeba walks to the stage of the Arrows club and amid cheers begins to sing, Pata, Pata. The crowd bursts into dancing with mixed dancing partners by the end of the song. After she finishes her singing, the crowd asks for an encore. Enter Cannibal, excited.

Cannibal: [Aside to Carmichael] I talked to Eldridge. George Sams had called them earlier and they had already started rallying Panthers to come to Halifax but it seems the Canadian RCMP has ordered the Canada's borders closed to Black folk coming into Canada.

Carmichael *consults with Marsh.*

CARMICHAEL: [*Addressing the crowd*] “I am here to walk and talk with you and I am telling you that I love you because you are Black and because you are my brothers and you are my sisters and I think you, and only you, should sit down and let’s have a family meeting and talk.”¹⁰⁴

Disapproval from White crowd, approval from Black crowd.

JANET: Why now Josiah? We’ve struggled with you all along. Does our support not count anymore because the Panthers are in town? Or Mr. Carmichael is it that the only thing women are good for is lying on their backs?¹⁰⁵

CARMICHAEL: If I am concerned with the advancement of Black people, I want to hear what Black people think, not what White people think. In an integrated organization, self interests prohibit people from getting at the basic issues.

More approval from Black crowd. Cannibal shoes the White crowd out.

JANET: Josiah, don’t fall into the trap of reverse discrimination.

White people exit.

Makeba rushes towards a Black woman and pulls of her wig yelling.

¹⁰⁴ This speech made by P.D Pawley, a US Panther at a meeting of the NSAACP was what actually led to the Black family meeting that set up the BUF. In the Panthers wake: *Globe Magazine*. February 15th, 1969.

¹⁰⁵ In 1964 Carmichael, in response to a question on the role of women in the SNCC said, “The only position for women in the SNCC is prone.” This has been interpreted to mean he was sexist, but many women activists who knew him say it was an unfortunate remark, because he was known to support women’s involvement in the Black political struggle.

MAKEBA: Be natural, be proud of your own Black heritage and beauty. Don't fall for some concept of beauty that tells you must have straight hair.

Lights fade

Scene II

On a deserted Gottingen Street, Nzinga is putting up posters, one of a Black power salute and the other, a free Julia Fraser sign. She is accosted by two policemen.

POLICEMAN: What do you think you are doing, Negro? Or do you call yourself Black now?

NZINGA: [defiantly] I am seeking justice for my mother Julia Fraser.

POLICEMAN: And where is your momma Julia Fraser?

NZINGA: In your jail.

POLICEMAN: Negro, do you have any identification on you?

Policeman checks ID and radios in to the office.

POLICEMAN: Madam, you are under arrest for loitering, and defamation of public property. You have a right to remain...

NZINGA: Oh spare me the bull shit. I know my rights.

She is hand cuffed and taken away by one of the policemen. The second policeman is on the radio.

VOICE FROM POLICE RADIO: Constable, can you report on the Arrows Club?

POLICEMAN: Yes, Inspector, all is quiet here.

VOICE OF INSPECTOR: Has everyone been accounted for? Over.

POLICEMAN: Yeah, except for Josiah Marsh. He is still downstairs where they had the all-
Black meeting.

VOICE OF INSPECTOR: Don't let him out of your site. Over and out. What about
Carmichael?

POLICEMAN: He and the wife, the singer lady are at Josiah's house with Joan Jones. There
comes Marsh. Over and out

Enter Rocky

MARSH: Hey, Buddy: you want some soul food?

Policeman hesitates.

POLICEMAN: Stony, it's not that spicy gumbo is it?

Marsh: Yeah men, the real jerk chicken.

POLICEMAN: [*Taking the food*]. Hey, don't tell the other guy eh? Normally, I mind my own
business, but no offence, this is my job.

MARSH: No sweat constable. No one will know. Hey what about giving me a ride home?

POLICEMAN: You know I can't do that.

MARSH: You've been assigned to watch and spy on me. If you gave me a ride, then I am in your sights and do not have to fear I'll get lost on you.

POLICEMAN: Okay, I'll give you a ride. Hey can you drive? I want to finish off this jerk stuff.

MARSH: Okay.

Exeunt

Scene III

In the female section of the Halifax Police cells. Mama Julia sits in one cell. She is highly composed and determined. Her face is a resolute mask of determination. She sings quietly to herself. A policeman brings Nzinga into the cell area.

MAMA JULIA: [*Rushing to her cell door*] Nzinga?

NZINGA: Mama...Julia.

MAMA JULIA: [*To the police officer*]. What my baby done to you? What she done officer?

Policeman: Let's see...public loitering, vagrancy, defamation of public property, resisting arrest.

NZINGA: Pigs!

Policeman locks Nzinga in the next cell and leaves

MAMA JULIA: What you done?

NZINGA: I was putting up posters for Black Power and for them to release you from custody.

MAMA JULIA: Oh, Child, don't worry about me. Black midwives face that kind of trouble all the time. But I know I done tell that woman not to have a baby. She has had 10 children, and the uterus gone so weak I surprised she carried the baby to term.

NZINGA: So what you gonna do?

MAMA JULIA: Oh, they will release me soon as they know the baby didn't die because of me.

NZINGA: You trust these people?

MAMA JULIA: No, I don't, but they will. I will make them.

NZINGA: You and Timer are so sure that nothing will happen to you. Like you both have some trump card. You guys know something that you ain't telling me... Mama...?

MAMA JULIA: I know, I know, and we got a lot of time to kill, so let me tell you some of the answers you seek. [Pauses and takes a deep breath]

You want to know who your birth father is? Child, I can assure you, by the end of the day you will not only know but meet your father. I ain't afraid anymore, now you are here, and I shall speak my truth no matter the consequences.

NZINGA: Mama Julia, I just want to know the story of my birth and adoption. All my life I have had this innate feeling of being unwanted. As hard as my adoptive parents tried to make me feel welcome and loved, the feeling of being unwanted has always haunted my existence. It is not for the lack of love that I feel unwanted but

that lingering thought way down in the bottom of my belly, that someone gave birth to me and for some reason did not want me. If I get nothing in this life but even a hint of an explanation why, it would mean so much to me.

MAMA JULIA: Child, it's not because nobody wanted you. I have lived my whole life till now with one thought ruling my existence that I had given away, without a fight, the one thing that was dearest to me at the time. As atonement, I have never had another child because I didn't think I deserved one. I became a midwife just like my mother before me and the one before her and delivered many, many babies. Every time I deliver a baby and hold them in my hands, my guilt takes over me even as I see the joy on their faces. A deep melancholy takes over me and I pray to the Lord Jesus to let me see your face just once. You see, I didn't even know you were a boy or a girl. They took you away so quickly.

NZINGA: Who took me away from you? You mean you had no say? Who was the man who did that to you? It's got to be a man, wasn't it? A woman won't do such a thing.

MAMA JULIA: Listen to my story Nzinga and then you be the judge. I hope I don't bring any more complications into your life than there is already. But the truth has got to be told.

NZINGA: You making me nervous mama.

MAMA JULIA: You want to know the story of your birth and adoption don't you?

NZINGA: [*hesitating*] Yes, Yes! It can't cause me any more pain and anguish that I bare already.

MAMA JULIA: Twenty three years ago, just before you were born, I was a maid in the house of a very wealthy man in Truro, Nova Scotia.

NZINGA: Truro, I thought you were born and raised in Preston?

MAMA JULIA: Yes I was, but one of the ministers of the church was approached by this White rich man. He wanted a live-in nanny to help raise his young daughter, and he let my parents feel honored that I was going to be given this great opportunity because, he was going to pay me well, and hire a private teacher for me and the girl I was to be companion to.

NZINGA: Why did he hire a Black woman?

MAMA JULIA: I have never understood that. My parents were struggling. I was 19 years old and saw a good opportunity to contribute to the upkeep of my brothers and sisters.

NZINGA: Uncle Timer one of them.

MAMA JULIA: Yes, he had a mental condition when he was young. He really is smart but then sometimes he gets off and says the weirdest things and acts in the weirdest way, but he is alright. I know he will give his life for me if it ever came to that. Don't let him fool you with his foolishness.

NZINGA: So you were hired as a nanny. I think I know where this is going. Is this rich White man responsible for my birth?

MAMA JULIA: No, Nzinga. He was very kind and considerate and very decent. My first few days he treated me as a man would treat a long lost daughter, always checking on me and making sure I was comfortable. But his 19 year old son was the problem.

NZINGA: Is that who my birth father is?

MAMA JULIA: Yes.

NZINGA: Did he rape you?

MAMA JULIA: No, Nzinga. I don't know if I would call it rape. Let me say, he didn't force me to do something against my will.

He was a shy introverted teenager and didn't have many friends. Nzinga, he was always giving me presents of cash and jewellery, I used to wonder where he got the money from. But then he was a rich man's son. And girl, he never gave any of these things to me directly. I would find them under my pillow or on the dresser in my room, accompanied by some love note. We both knew what was happening and it just remained a secret between us. In secret he would call me *Juuu-liiie* but when anybody was around it was back to Julia. I kinda liked him and any time the cook allowed me to, I would make some of my mama's pastries for the family and make him a special one. I knew nothing was going to happen. Him a White boy and me a colored girl, but for a while it was okay to pretend.

NZINGA: How did he come to... You know...?

MAMA JULIA: On his graduation, his friends came up and the chauffer took them all to the prom. His father was away and the mother and Doreen, that the baby I took care off, were away visiting her sister for the weekend. I was alone in the house.

NZINGA: What happened next? He came back home?

MAMA JULIA: Yes, he came back alone and said he was going to have his prom with me.

Well, I was not going to say no, since I had never been to a prom all my life and was not likely to attend one. He took a lot of his father's whiskey and then drove me to the ocean side. God strike me dead if I am lying, but all I know is I got very drunk and the next morning I woke up feeling very sick to my stomach and bleeding. Before then I had never been with a man. That's how I got pregnant I guess, because a few weeks later I started getting sick with the morning sickness and my Mama, when I went to visit, knew right away.

NZINGA: Did you tell him?

MAMA JULIA: Yes, that's when lover, shy boy change on me. He started to treat me in the house like his dog, and order me around to do the worst chores, when his dad and mum were not at home. Sometimes he mess the bedroom so bad and then call me to clean it. Anyway I thought, nobody gonna treat me like shit, so I went straight up and tell his daddy all that had happened.

NZINGA: What did the daddy say?

MAMA JULIA: He was nice about it. He assured me they will look after me until the baby was born. From that day this boy just pretended that I did not exist. He never

talked to me again, and avoided conversation with me. A couple months later, he was gone.

NZINGA: He left the house?

MAMA JULIA: Yes, the parents sent him to university in Europe, and I continued to stay in that house. To make a long story short they took care of me until I had you.

NZINGA: What happened then?

MAMA JULIA: I was in labor for three days until I finally delivered you. They took you away to clean you up as soon as you came put, and that was the last I seen of you. I never even got to hold you. Later I learn that it was for my own good because touching you will mean I will develop *ma-ter-nal a-ttach-ment*. [Sobbing] My mama was there and she tried to assure me that you had been given to a good family to raise and I was going to go to Boston to finish my education. Nobody, not even she would tell me if I had a boy or girl. I have cried every day since then.

NZINGA: What did you do in Boston?

MAMA JULIA: I finished school, and then I began to work as a midwife, but that is another story. Midwifery runs in the family so it was not hard to find work with the grannies in Boston. Five years ago, my mama passed away and I came back home. I did not want to go back to Boston, because this here is where my heart is. The most painful thing is I see this boy, guess now he is a man, on television and sometimes in town, but I was too scared to say anything.

NZINGA: He does not know you came back?

MAMA JULIA: No! I don't think he will recognize me if he seen me.

NZINGA: Men never forget. Have you tried to approach him?

MAMA JULIA: No I was too scared because he is a powerful man now, but now I ain't scared anymore. Now you are here I'm going to face him and tell him how he and his family rob me off my life. Now I know they paid my mama off, because if they didn't want you, my mama would have said, hey I'll take care of the baby myself. But no, she agreed to let them take my baby from me.

A crowd can be heard outside chanting "Release Nzinga, Release Mama Julia!"

NZINGA: They did not forget us. I knew Josiah will come to the rescue.

Footsteps approaching. Enter Police Inspector MacDonald.

INSPECTOR: It looks like you women have a lot of supporters outside who do not want you in jail. Today may be your lucky day. [*An aide hands him a charge sheet*]. Which of you is Julia Fra... [*Suddenly recognizes the name and the person*].

MAMA JULIA: Me.

INSPECTOR: Oh Ye Gods! [*Reads from the sheet mechanically*]. The coroner's report just came up, and the baby's death had nothing to do with the delivery process, so I guess you are free to go.

MAMA JULIA: But *Juu-liee* will not go anywhere without her daughter.

You know, your old *Juuu-liee* that you would hide money and candy under her pillow?

INSPECTOR: Oh my God! [*opening cell door*].

Did you say your daughter?

MAMA JULIA: I guess the right thing to say will be our daughter.

He rushes over to the other cell to see Nzinga.

NZINGA: [*Calm, but obviously overtaken by events*] You wouldn't want your child languishing in jail would you? Daddy?

Inspector in zombie like fashion opens the cell door. Nzinga walks past him. She stares from one to the other not knowing what to do.

MAMA JULIA: Well Georgie boy, your daughter has come to town, and she is a re-vo-lu-tion-nary. So you probably going to see lots of her in these cells, and you can get a lot of catching up done with her.

They leave to join the crowd leaving the Inspector sitting in the cell. He gets out and goes to his office, bringing a bottle of whiskey and a glass. He comes back to the cell, removes his gun belt and gun onto the table and sits. Louis Armstrong's "What a wonderful world" can be heard coming from one of the offices as he devours the whiskey at a fast pace. As the lights fade there is a loud gunshot noise.

The End

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The family meeting in Act 2, Scene I, led to the formation of the BUF, the first all Black political organization in Canada. Jules Oliver, one of the major Black players in the whole Panther saga is quick to point out that Black activism did not begin with the visit of the Panthers in 1968. He uses the metaphor of a wheel and its spokes to symbolize the different currents of protest that existed among African Nova Scotians to illustrate the point. The arrival of the Panthers was, according to him, the spark that got all the spokes aligned and began to turn the wheels. The fact that the visit was able to bring the Black question out into the open was through the concerted efforts of African Nova Scotians leaders, moderates and radicals alike, who were acting on the impulses of a marginalized population. They united, and using the perceived threat of violence to their advantage, secured concessions for African Nova Scotians' well being.

What this play has attempted to do is to crystalize many of the impulses that were rife within the African Nova Scotian community, at a time of great global changes, and show how a leadership composed of disparate ideological stands was able to work towards a common cause in the face of adversity even if such adversity existed only in the minds of a few. The next stage of this play is more research to include more of those impulses, and then present the play on stage to Nova Scotian audiences and to society at large. The themes that are explored in the *The Panthers Are Coming* have much relevance for the African Nova Scotian society today as they continue to fight for social justice. Themes such as uniting in the face of crises, solving disputes, and acting with one voice are strategies or tactics that African Nova Scotians and other groups could learn from. At the time of writing this conclusion, a dispute between

the ALI of Nova Scotia and the “official” (government approved) Delmore ‘Buddy’ Daye ALI has been taken to the courts, clearly showing cracks in the unity of these leaders. At the face of it, the dispute seems trivial – a judicial review of whether the DBDALI can use “Afrientric Learning Institute” in its official name, but to some in the ANS community, the dispute has been interpreted as government control in the affairs of the ALI and the ANS community. At another level it has pit certain ANS families against each other and the ACSD against certain members of the community. A rapture in the Black community has spilled over into the court system with questions about who is actually funding the bills of the parties involved. What is needed is the kind of consensus after-a-hard-battle attitude of the African Nova Scotian leadership at the time of the Panthers’ visit.

The attitude of Rev. W.P. Oliver, arguably the most important leader prior to the rise of militancy and Rocky Jones must be an example to the leadership in the community at this present time. Despite his almost aristocratic pre-disposition to his “refined” politics and activism, he graciously capitulated to the historical forces swirling among Black youth all over the world. His capitulation is filled with a gallant realization that, just as he must bow to the will of God as a minister, so must he bow to the will of the people as a political leader. In the play, Rev. Beals says to Stokely Carmichael, “It is wishful thinking to even suggest that young people who are educated, who read and who are continually exposed to global communications media are going to accept the lifestyle of their parents. New knowledge and ideas result in unrest, it is part of change”.

Dr. Burnley “Rocky” Jones, who inspired this thesis passed away at the age of 71 in July of 2013. Performing the libation at his memorial, I screamed to the wild approval of the audience

that the spirit of Rocky should send the Black Panthers one more time to Halifax to heal the divisions within the African Nova Scotian community. This is what the play is intended to do, to galvanise African Nova Scotians into unified action for change and progress.

In informal conversations with Rocky Jones, one of his lifelong regrets was not to have chronicled the events of his youthful radical days. He always looked forward with pleasure to this artistic recreation of the Panthers visit, especially, after he watched a recreation by our Master's of Education cohort, of Kwacha House, a youth retreat organization he founded in the mid-1960s. There is as such a clear need for chronicling Nova Scotian activism from the 1960s.

The transformational potential of *The Panthers Are Coming* can also be realized through the educational value of the play. In informal talks with an official of the African Canadian Services division of the Nova Scotia Department of Education, the play may be considered for African Nova Scotian schools, which can facilitate the understanding and combating of racism by White and Black students, and teachers alike. Even though Blacks at the time of the Panthers' visit were totally outnumbered by Whites and the White establishment, and their situation seemingly hopeless, the strategies taken as a result of the Panthers' visit could only have been based on a great conviction mounted on critical hope that they would succeed in bettering the situation of ANS, no matter what. This the critical hope and critical agency that the play is intended to promote and consolidate.

In *Reality Check*, Enid Lee and Clem Marshall conclude that despite some progress made in the implementation of the BLAC Report to mitigate the inequities within the education of

African Nova Scotians, a lot still needs to be done to improve their education (Lee & Marshall, 2009). As the Thiessen report of 2009 states, Blacks still lag behind Whites, Acadians, and Natives in educational achievement. Similarly the fact that Blacks are overrepresented within the criminal justice system and face hurdles in employment all mean that the struggle for equality and social justice is still essential to the African Nova Scotian community members.

Despite the media and scholarship's portrayal of the Black Power era "as unabashedly violent, gratuitously misogynistic, politically ineffectual, and mercifully short-lived", the movement offered Black people much more than that (Joseph, 2006, paragraph 4). In Stokely Carmichael's words Black Power was "...a call for Black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, to build a sense of community. It is a call for Black people to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations" (paragraph 10). This was precisely the urgency that the US Black Power movement brought to the African Nova Scotian struggle. As stated earlier a lot of the firebrands of that bygone era in Nova Scotia have been absorbed into government and the academy, making the current African Nova Scotian struggle in much need of renewal. My hope is that this research, which primarily aims at a reintroduction of the ethos of the Black Power era into current times will help invigorate the African Nova Scotian struggle and infuse it once more with the same urgency and unity that the 1968 arrival of Carmichael and the Panthers brought to it.

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