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R H O D E S I A

by

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JAN SMUTS HOUSE
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R H O D E S I A
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Confusion worse confounded

I. It is ten months since I last talked about Rhodesia and I then concluded -

- selective
1. that/economic and financial sanctions had failed but that in spite of the steady growth of Rhodesia's GNP, they had hit the tobacco farmers and would hurt them more. They had also hurt the Africans by reducing the number of jobs for them, both on farms and in industry. By compelling the diversification of agriculture, the development of mining, and the extension of local manufacture, they would, however, enable Rhodesia to make rapid strides when they were ended,
 2. that Rhodesia was hacking out its own solution to its constitutional problems; that no constitution providing for future majority African rule was likely to be accepted; and that the constitutional commission had therefore sought to seek agreement on future parity between Europeans and Africans. This the moderates on both sides might be ready to accept. The position of the Crown had become incidental and would be dependent on whether or not an agreement had been reached with Britain before other considerations led to a republic,
 3. that the initial guerrilla attacks had failed and had brought military and police help from South Africa and that the danger was that the failure of economic sanctions and stresses within Zambia might lead to future incursions motivated by frustration which would bring drastic counter-action either by Rhodesia, South Africa, or just possibly by a mercenary force. The danger of a Vietcong developing in Central Africa had consolidated South African support for Rhodesia and indirectly for Portugal, and the southern African states would probably face the risks of action rather than the dangers of inaction, and
 4. that there was no prospect of any negotiations between the Rhodesian Government and the British Labour Government being successful. The possibility of a negotiated settlement would depend therefore on Mr Wilson's Government being defeated before Rhodesia became a republic. Thereafter, the negotiations would primarily be concerned with a commercial treaty.

In considering what has happened during the past ten months it may be convenient to take these four problems, but in a different order, first sanctions, then the Rhodesian-British negotiations, thirdly the constitutional problem, and finally terrorism. This sequence represents, very roughly, their order of importance.

II. SANCTIONS

(a) The UN's attempt to enforce general compulsory sanctions

At the beginning of May last year Rhodesia had managed more or less successfully to deal with the first two stages of sanctions. The first stage had been the introduction by the British Government, through Orders-in-Council, and backed to some extent by the voluntary efforts of several other countries, to cut off Rhodesian exports, such as tobacco. The effect of these measures was already wearing off when the second stage of sanctions had been invoked at the end of 1966. This second stage had been initiated by the Security Council making binding on UN member-countries the sanctions which had previously been imposed by several of them on a voluntary basis. Imports, particularly petrol, got a bit dearer and exports earned less than they might have done, but by 1968 it was clear that these mandatory but selective sanctions were also not going to be successful.

In April 1968, therefore, the Afro-Asian member-countries represented on the Security Council tabled a resolution calling for compulsory military sanctions, including the use of force by Britain, and censuring South Africa and Portugal for defying the selective economic sanctions previously in force. The United Kingdom representative countered this proposal with a separate resolution which called for sweeping economic and other sanctions, but omitted the use of force and any censure of the South African and Portuguese Governments. On the 29th May the Security Council unanimously approved a compromise resolution calling upon UN member-countries to cut off all trade with Rhodesia, to impose a ban on travel to any country by Rhodesian citizens (i.e. not to admit persons travelling on Rhodesian passports), and to end all airline services to and from Rhodesia, and all investment by their nationals within Rhodesia. It recommended, but did not require the severance of diplomatic (i.e. consular) relations. France and Russia both agreed to this resolution although they had abstained on all previous resolutions about Rhodesia on the ground that the Rhodesian problem was a British domestic problem. The resolution did not mention South Africa or Portugal by name, but reminded all member states of their obligation under the Charter to abide by the decisions of the Security Council and "in particular those states which have persisted in trading with Rhodesia." The resolution took account of Zambia's special difficulties and requested all states and UN organisations to extend assistance to Zambia as a matter of priority. Lord Caradon said: "we have to convince those in the Rhodesian Government that the course on which they embarked on November 11th 1965 is hopeless." The resolution concluded by barring any settlement between the U.K. and Rhodesia "without taking into account the views of the people there, in particular the political parties favouring majority rule."

The reception accorded to the resolution was mixed. Some countries took action immediately as requested by the Security Council. In Britain a Southern Rhodesia, UN Sanctions Order, 1968, was issued on the 11th June which

1. announced that Rhodesian passports, either pre- or post-UDI, would no longer be valid for entry to the U.K., and that Rhodesians holding British passports would not be admitted if they fell within the category of sanctions-breakers or active supporters of Mr Smith's Government;
2. prohibited all trade with Rhodesia;
3. prohibited British aircraft from flying to Rhodesia; and
4. prohibited the export to Rhodesia of British cinema and TV films, though news and educational films might continue to be sent with special permission (this cut off the 'Pinky and Perky' puppet piglet series),

On the 29th June the Commonwealth Secretary, Mr Thomson, defined the categories of persons supporting the illegal régime as being:

- (i) those claiming to hold office as Officer Administering the Government, Prime Minister, or Minister under the so-called 1965 Constitution;
- (ii) the Speaker and the Rhodesia Front members of the Rhodesian Legislature;
- (iii) leading officials of the Rhodesia Front;
- (iv) members of the Advisory Committee of the Economic Council of the Rhodesian Cabinet;
- (v) members of the Board of the Reserve Bank of Rhodesia who had continued to act in this role;
- (vi) the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Senior Executives of the RBC and RTV;
- (vii) persons purporting to represent the independent state of Rhodesia in foreign countries;
- (viii) the Senior Executive Staff of Air Rhodesia;
- (ix) the Officers and Senior officials of the National Export Council of Rhodesia;
- (x) Officers and Senior officials of the Tobacco Export Promotion Council and Tobacco Corporation of Rhodesia.

Other officers and holders of other positions might be added to this list as circumstances might require.

The Sanctions Order was not approved by Parliament without strong opposition. It was resisted in the House of Commons by the Conservative Party, but carried by the majority vote of the Labour and Liberal parties. In the House of Lords Lord Carrington, the leader of the Conservative majority, announced that the Order would be opposed regardless of the possible effect on the House of Lords of opposition to a Government measure of such importance. Lord Caradon was brought back by the Government from New York to appeal to peers to approve the Order, the Archbishop of Canterbury led seventeen bishops in support, and their joint efforts reduced the size of the majority against the order to nine.

Nonetheless on the following day, the 20th June, Mr Wilson announced that he would introduce radical legislation to reduce the power of the House of Lords. You will be aware of what the legislation has brought about. It is ironical that the first casualty of compulsory sanctions was the British House of Lords, as it had existed for over six hundred years.

Other countries to take action quickly were Japan, which recalled the remaining two members of the Japanese consulate in Salisbury; the three Scandinavian countries which announced that they were determined to enforce all points of the sanctions resolutions and, in particular, that persons holding Rhodesian passports would be refused entry to all three countries. President Johnson, by executive order, cut off all films and TV material (Rhodesia had never been one of Hollywood's major markets); and a number of African countries led by Tanzania, which also sought, successfully, to prevent Rhodesians from taking part in the Olympic Games. The representative of Guinea at the UN, who was also head of the UN's Apartheid Committee, put the tendentious interpretation on the recommendation in the Security Council resolution which urged UN members to give moral and material assistance to the Rhodesian people's "struggle to achieve freedom and independence," that for the first time the Security Council had approved a guerrilla struggle in Rhodesia as well as assistance by individual states to "freedom fighters" should the new sanctions fail.

Some countries, but not many, indicated just as promptly that they would not impose sanctions: Malawi, in a note to the Secretary-General, stated that it could only implement the new sanctions "at the cost of severely imperilling its own economy, if not breaking it;" Botswana indicated that it could not sever trade with Rhodesia because of the disastrous effects on its own economy, and both sought special help from the Security Council because of the adverse effects which sanctions had had and would continue to have on them; South Africa and Portugal, because of their opposition to sanctions in general, as previously notified to the Council, replied that they would continue normal relations and trade with Rhodesia. TAP, the Portuguese national airline, chose this moment to announce that it planned a second weekly flight from Rhodesia to Lisbon.

Most countries metaphorically shrugged their shoulders and either fell in with the Security Council's recommendations, or quietly refrained from doing so.

There were some notable critics of sanctions. Dean Acheson, Mr Truman's Secretary of State, said, in an address to the American Bar Association, that "the highly theoretical and imaginative threat to peace was not posed by Rhodesia, but against her. From this premise only the most humpty dumpty reasoning could move to the conclusion that Rhodesia should be punished by international action ... What we have here is the idea that law is only a mirror of the beholder's emotional condition at the moment ... One of the troubles of the troubled age in which we live is that too many people are trying to

achieve harmony of interest by forcing everyone to harmonise with them." He concluded that sanctions against Rhodesia were "bare-faced aggression, unprovoked, and unjustified by a single legal or moral principle." In Australia it was some months before action was taken and opinion was divided whether it should be taken at all. Mr Bower, the Attorney-General, addressing the Conference of the Liberal Party at the end of October, said that many backbenchers and most ministers disliked sanctions but "feel they were necessary if Australia was not to stand badly with other countries, especially those in Asia." In Britain Mr Enoch Powell said in October that the blunder which Britain had made over Rhodesia for the last three years was typical of the nation's failure to face reality: "we must act in the light of reality and not of some imaginary world in which perhaps the British Empire still exists, and colonial governors with their plumed hats are to be found all over Asia and Africa."

By the 6th September less than half of the 124 members of the United Nations had informed the Secretariat of the UN of the steps which they had taken to comply with the resolution. U Thant reported that only 60 governments, including four which were not members of the UN, had supplied him with the required information. Among countries not replying were South Africa, Portugal, France and Zambia. U Thant continued that "not content with flouting the authority of the United Kingdom Government by proceeding with the execution of a number of African nationalists, the illegal régime has with South Africa's assistance, resorted to suppressive military operations, and has pursued the application of policies of separate racial development, including plans for creating a façade of African participation in its activities." Dr Kaunda followed this up by accusing Britain of being "more concerned about keeping Nigeria one than about putting Rhodesia on the right course to justice and genuine peace."

The Assembly, when it met, tried to ginger up the application of sanctions. On the 25th October the Trusteeship Committee of the Assembly approved by 87 to 2 (South Africa and Portugal), but with 16 abstentions, a resolution calling on Britain "not to grant Rhodesia independence unless it is preceded by the establishment of a government based on free elections by universal adult suffrage and majority rule." The UN Assembly approved the recommendation of the Committee by 92 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions; Britain abstained on the ground that the resolution infringed the responsibility of the British Parliament, but Canada voted for it. The resolution was hurried through in order to prevent, if possible, any agreement being reached between Britain and Rhodesia, on the basis of the 'Fearless' proposals, which might lead to a request for the withdrawal of sanctions.

That the sanctions recommendations were not believed to be being effectively implemented was indicated by a decision of the Security Council's Supervisory Committee on Sanctions to invite representatives of certain governments to attend its sessions to answer charges that their nationals were breaking them. The

countries in question included Japan, West Germany, Italy, France and Belgium. Italy and France were believed to have supplied kits for the assembly of cars in the Ford and BMC assembly plants in Rhodesia, which the Government of Rhodesia had announced would be restarted. It was not the Belgian practice to require certificates of origin and it was believed that Rhodesian copper, asbestos (particularly long-fibred asbestos) and pig-iron were being cleared through Belgium to Germany and other countries. Chrome was still being carried in ships chartered from member countries of the UN, and destined for Malaysia, Japan and the Philippines. It was not until September that France officially ceased trading with Rhodesia and Greece ten days later.

Sanctions, as might be expected, did not feature in the issues debated during the American Presidential Elections, though Mr Wallace promised to end sanctions against both Rhodesia and South Africa if he was elected, but Dean Acheson returned to the charge by appealing to President Johnson, before he left office, to reverse his support of them. He suggested that "it would be wise to clear out rubbish, failures and broken down contraptions rather than leave them to embarrass the new tenant (of the White House). There is no better place to start than with the Rhodesian policy, bought by the present occupant in an absent-minded moment from a smart salesman (Mr Wilson). It never did work - the salesman is trying desperately to escape from all connections with it - and to leave the old non-starter to clutter up the garage would be a scurvy trick."

Many Commonwealth Prime Ministers, at their meeting in January of this year, also clearly thought that Mr Wilson was preparing to do a deal with Mr Smith, as a result of which he would pledge himself to end sanctions. The communiqué issued at the end of their meeting stated that after some governments had called again for the use of force (presumably Zambia and Tanzania) Britain had said that it thought this wrong and impracticable. "Mr Wilson's position was that, if it proved possible, the people of Rhodesia should have the opportunity of deciding for themselves whether they wanted a settlement on the six principles laid down by successive British governments. If the Rhodesian people showed they wanted such a settlement, Mr Wilson would consult the Commonwealth on the Nibmar commitment." Press reports stated that Australia, New Zealand, Malta and Malawi had supported Mr Wilson, the implication being that the remaining 23 Commonwealth countries, including Canada, had not.

The conclusion would seem to be that, however conspicuous the lack of enthusiasm for sanctions in some of the more sophisticated countries, others, such as Canada, Norway, Sweden and Denmark have supported sanctions wholeheartedly, and the Asian and African countries have been almost unanimous in their support. South American states are divided - Brazil is less than lukewarm - but will probably continue to go along with the majority. Even therefore if Britain itself should ask, as the result of an Anglo-Rhodesia agreement, for the withdrawal of sanctions, the majority of the Commonwealth countries would probably not

support the request, and the majority of members of the UN would certainly oppose it. If the situation were reversed, and a majority of both were to support withdrawal, it is too often forgotten that just as sanctions could not have been imposed had one of the permanent members of the Security Council voted against, so they cannot be raised if any one of them should vote against their being raised. It is a near certainty that Russia for one would veto any proposal to withdraw sanctions, particularly a proposal opposed by majorities of the non-permanent members of the Security Council and of the Assembly, and a possibility that Nationalist China, as an Asian state, might also do so.

What then might happen? Britain might decide to cease to apply sanctions herself, and this would destroy such effectiveness as they have possessed (it is the tobacco sanction which really hurts), but could any British Government, and particularly a Labour Government, risk driving a coach and horses through the sanctions procedure of the UN Charter, so destroying such remaining authority as the UN possesses? And, if she were prepared to do so, would many other countries support her, influenced as they would be by this same consideration? The conclusion must, I think, be that they would not, and that sanctions will therefore remain in being for the foreseeable future. The implication of this is, to put it bluntly, that, so far as raising sanctions is concerned, Mr Wilson simply cannot deliver the goods.

(b) Rhodesia

The question is therefore: can Rhodesia continue to resist the general and compulsory sanctions imposed last May, for however long they may continue to be imposed?

Publication of information about the effect of sanctions and the success or otherwise of the steps taken by the Rhodesian Government to defeat them is restricted in Rhodesia, as being likely to assist the UN in imposing sanctions, and the attempt which follows to estimate Rhodesia's success or otherwise in opposing them is based on such information as has been given in statements by Rhodesian minister, and on calculations which have appeared in the press and which I happen to have seen.

The Government's Economic Survey for 1967 reported only a small drop of £3 million that year in exports to a total of £100 million compared with 1966. The Survey showed an average annual rise since 1965 of 4.9% in the Gross Domestic Product, little above the 4.6% in consumer prices. It also showed that the 1967 tobacco crop of 18.6 million lbs. had realised £21.7 million, 14% less than the larger 1966 crop of 250 million lbs. which had realised £25.3 million. In July the Minister of Mines was able to announce that mineral production had reached a new record of £33.3 million in 1967. Rhodesia was therefore just managing to keep in balance before general and compulsory sanctions were applied. Mr Smith put on a brave face in May: "the United Nations," he said, "can make resolutions until they are blue in the face: this will have no effect and will only make us more determined." The new sanctions would only "delay the inevitable for a short time. They will never stop us from arriving at our

destination." Rhodesian businessmen were not so confident. Those concerned with trade and commerce knew how hard it had been to keep going and to maintain employment, and they had just been faced with further cuts in import quotas. Manufacturers and industrialists generally had prospered, improvising to meet new needs and even building up new export markets, but they too felt a cold wind of change blowing, for after nearly three years there seemed to be little more which they could do. At the annual congress of Rhodesian industrialists, Mr Denis Berens, a manufacturer of pharmaceuticals, said that "any form of worth-while sustained economic growth can only come to Rhodesia through a settlement with Britain in the political sphere." Mr Colthard of the Metal Box Company said "that view should have been expressed by us a long time ago." In October Mr Ray Wells, past president of Accor, said that "even if we hope for better times, for us today is normal but normality in today's terms is like plodding through sand." The failure of the 'Fearless' talks produced the most serious reaction so far from a number of Rhodesian businessmen who saw the prospect of the termination of sanctions receding indefinitely. Mr Bob Newson, Chairman of the Rhodesian Iron and Steel Corporation, said in November that continued sanctions would in a few years "ruin the country's chrome, asbestos and ferro-alloy industries, and ensure that the promising nickel industry was stillborn." In December Mr Evan Campbell, Chairman of the Standard Bank, said that "there is no doubt whatsoever that sanctions have damaged our economy far more than many people are willing to accept." The business community had "kept this country going in a miraculous albeit declining manner since November 1965" but "with the tightening of the sanctions noose we are finding our task increasingly difficult and more costly every day." While the mining industry had surged forward it had, like the tobacco industry, produced vast and ever-growing stockpiles." Well-established markets to the north had largely fallen away. There was growing African unemployment and if no political settlement was reached, Rhodesia would become an almost bankrupt country, dependent on the charity of our friendly neighbours - our only friends in the whole world - whose friendliness was wearing thin as years of UDI passed by."

It probably counted far more with the ordinary man and woman that they could no longer travel outside Southern Africa unless they were entitled to, and were prepared to apply for British passports; that Colin Bland was turned back on his way to a Festival crick match; that the Rhodesian team could not compete in the Olympic Games, and that Rhodesia's only living holder of the V.C. was unable to attend the world gathering of V.C.'s at Windsor Castle. There was even a mild outbreak of spy fever. British spies were said to be trying to find out how the R.R.A.F. kept its planes in the air and to trace the routes through which exports and imports were kept going. Later a member of the British Residual Mission was sent home after a complaint by a country club that he had been taking notes of remarks made at the bar! A general mood of despondency was indeed inevitable when it began to percolate that, after three difficult years fighting selective sanctions applied by some countries, Rhodesia now had to fight comprehensive sanctions, to which all members of the UN were required to give effect, and to fight them for an indefinite number of years to come.

The economy continued however to remain in balance. Mr Wrathall's budget imposed no tax increases and even made a few concessions. Revenue was expected to increase from £82 million to £89 million; an additional £5 million was drawn from Accumulated Reserves to write down the value of the £34 million tobacco stockpile to a more realistic level. Total expenditure was expected to reach £95.4 million. The budget also was therefore in balance. The Railways had incurred a deficit of about £2 million - rather less than expected after the separation from Zambia Railways - and Air Rhodesia had made a profit of £75,000. The "Financial Mail" calculated that Rhodesia had been successful by mid-year in selling well over half of the estimated 480 million lbs. of flue-cured Virginia tobacco produced in the previous two seasons, and concluded that the difficulty was not in selling the tobacco but in selling it at a realistic price, i.e. buyers were ready and able to break sanctions if it paid them. Three-quarters of the Rhodesian coffee crop was being successfully exported, and the development of tea production had not only met Rhodesia's own needs but had ensured that Rhodesia would become one of the lowest-cost producers of high quality teas in future years. Rhodesian industrial production and electricity distribution had reached record levels. The value of building plans passed in the first half of 1968 had been just short of the value of all plans passed in 1967. Visitors had increased from 53,000 in the second quarter of 1967 to 57,000 in the first quarter of 1968, and 70,000 in the second quarter, and tourism was making a very useful contribution to the balance of payments.

Professor R.B. Harris, Head of the Political Science Department of the University College of Rhodesia pointed out at the end of the year that the Rhodesian economy had proved to be the graveyard of countless economic predictions. Sanctions had not brought the Rhodesian Government to its knees; the Rhodesian £ had not been devalued; Rhodesia had not yet become an economic satellite of South Africa; Rhodesia had not felt obliged to apply counter-measures against Zambia, and Rhodesian goods would continue to be sold to the outside world even though export prices might have to be lowered. Tobacco exports had taken a sad knock, but that was to be expected. The real problem for 1969 was that the balance of payments position was becoming critical and that Rhodesia would no longer be able to afford the luxury of allowing imports to rise in order to help industry to continue to expand. There was also the danger that the Government's ability to mop up excess liquidity through loan stock issues would begin to reach saturation point. The choice of either reducing payouts to tobacco farmers still further, or paying the price in the form of inflation, was very real.

therefore
Mr Smith was able in his New Year's message, to tell Rhodesians that "as far as the overall sanctions war is concerned, we have emerged stronger than we were at the beginning of the year." He pointed out that

- i) building industry plans approved were up 100%,
- ii) the inflow of Europeans in the first ten months was 6,231, more than double 1967.

- iii) the manufacturing production index was 120.6 vs. 112.9,
- iv) unprecedented interest had been shown in mineral exploration in Rhodesia by most of the big mining houses in Southern Africa,
- v) the gold producers had received a boost from the two-tier gold price, and
- vi) the tourist industry had^{had}/a very good year indeed.

He could have added that the Government had raised new money internally, totalling over £16 million, and that the loans had all been over-subscribed.

Later, in January, the Minister of Agriculture (David Smith) was able to say that Rhodesia would soon be close to self-sufficiency in wheat production through development of the lowveld, and that 28,000 acres of tobacco were being replaced by about 100,000 acres of other crops. Prospects for maize, cotton and livestock were, as the result of the good rains which ended 1967's disastrous drought, excellent. In February cotton production, which had risen from 13.3 million lbs in 1964 to approximately 100 million lbs in 1968, was forecast to yield 200 million lbs in the current 1968/9 season. The maize yield would be the highest on record, and, fortunately for South Africa, there would also be a record surplus for export. Sugar producers may be able to take advantage of the nearly three-fold increase in the world price of sugar to sell to overseas importers in spite of sanctions. To keep the picture in balance it is necessary to remember that for 1968/9 the tobacco target has had to be set at 132 million lbs of flue-cured at a governmental price of 25d. The assured return to growers from this is about £14½ million, £18 million less than in 1964. To replace this total loss with maize at £2 a bag, or seed cotton at 8d a lb. would require 9 million bags of maize which, at the best estimate, would need another 800,000 acres, and 540 million lbs of cotton which would require 270,000 acres. To obtain and cultivate this additional acreage would be impossible under present conditions. There will be increased production, especially of nickel and copper in 1969, and probably a major increase in 1970. Provided markets can be secured, in spite of sanctions, this will provide the best hope of getting the economy moving again.

Meanwhile the problem of the balance of payments remains. The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Mr Mussett) announced this week reductions of import quotas for the four months from 1st April in respect of less essential imports which have not yet been specified. The Minister also stated that except in special circumstances, the Government would not make available the foreign exchange needed to finance the import content of buildings costing more than R100,000. With the additional income from wheat, cotton and livestock, the savings so effected may avoid for Rhodesia the necessity for coming cap-in-hand to South Africa for the sum which would have been needed to meet the expected deficit. Since South Africa may be assumed to have

surplus gold for sale any sum still required by Rhodesia may then be met as a reasonable commercial transaction not likely to lead to further criticism of South Africa's role in defeating sanctions against Rhodesia.

In this connection it should be stressed once again that Rhodesia is fighting South Africa's battle in resisting sanctions, since, were present sanctions against Rhodesia successful, it is a near certainty that they would be invoked against South Africa either over South-West Africa or over apartheid. When complaints are made of the inroads which Rhodesian exports have been making into South Africa's textile, footwear, radio and furniture trades it should be borne in mind that the loss of a fraction of the internal market to Rhodesia is a small price for South Africans to pay. Those in South Africa concerned with these trades may have a legitimate claim vis-a-vis other trades in South Africa, possibly through the South African Treasury, but not a grievance against Rhodesia.

To sum up:

There is little doubt that Rhodesia has weathered nearly a year of compulsory general sanctions better than the pessimists in Rhodesia feared, or than the United Nations hoped when the sanctions were imposed. They have compelled further belt-tightening but have been no more decisive than the earlier sanctions which Mr Wilson had forecast would bring Rhodesia to her knees in a few weeks. It must however remain the first objective of the Rhodesian Government either to get them raised, at any rate by Britain, or alternatively to widen the holes in the sanctions' net. If the former is not possible then the only course is keep on toiling at the latter.

III, NEGOTIATIONS WITH BRITAIN

The imposition of compulsory sanctions, at Britain's request, made further negotiations impossible for a few months, and it was not until the Labour Party Conference at the end of September began to loom large that Mr Wilson, who realised that the Conference might well take the bit between its teeth if he could not hold on to the initiative, cautiously indicated his readiness to reopen negotiations. He began by permitting or encouraging Sir Max Aiken, the son of the late Lord Beaverbrook of the 'Daily Express', and Lord Goodman, a solicitor who was their mutual friend and adviser, to visit Salisbury. Sir Max and Lord Goodman took back a detailed memorandum of their talks with Mr Smith to Mr Wilson and Mr Heath jogged Mr Wilson's elbow by saying in Australia that a Conservative Government would compromise with Mr Smith and "we are prepared to go to the negotiating table." Meanwhile, Mr Smith, for his part, had been mending his fences by visiting Mr Vorster in Pretoria and seeing Dr Muller in Salisbury. Dr Muller and Mr Thomson, the Commonwealth Secretary, met in London as Dr Muller passed through on his way to the UN Assembly and it was announced that they had "discussed matters of common concern, including Rhodesia."

The next step was for Mr Wilson to send Mr James Bottomley, an official of the Commonwealth Office (not Mr Arthur Bottomley, the former Commonwealth Secretary) to Salisbury. Mr Smith was reported to have emphasised that if negotiations were to be reopened he would be influenced, not by any desire to get British approval for the draft constitution then under discussion, but to try to get out of sanctions which were to the detriment of Rhodesia in so many ways. He followed this up by saying, in a TV interview for British viewers, that "if the British Government wanted to start negotiations again with the Tiger proposals as a starting point he would start there." Sir Alec Douglas-Home commented helpfully that "I think they have gone a very long way to bridge the differences there are now between the Government of this country and Rhodesia, and a negotiated settlement ought to be possible in a comparatively short time ... I hope Mr Wilson will feel able to reopen negotiations." The "Economist" saw opinion in Britain becoming more realistic: "the Rhodesian problem now seems to be partly a matter of facing beastly reality, and partly a matter of saving devious face. It is not going to end with real copper-bottomed safeguards for African rights ... The tragic fact (is) that time is no longer on liberalism's side in the sanctions confrontation ... This is partly because of the huge breach in the sanctions dyke which allows everything vital to flow into and out of Rhodesia through South Africa ... and partly because other countries are not following the sanctions rules anything like as conscientiously as Britain is." The "Economist" was not uninfluenced by the admission by the Government in July that selective sanctions had cost the U.K. £34½ million.

How wise Mr Wilson had been in starting talks to start talks was seen when the Labour Party Conference met at the beginning of October. In spite of his trying to out-Herod-Herod by telling the delegates that it was still the Government's policy that the use

of force could not be ruled out in Rhodesia if there was a breakdown of law and order and an appeal from the Governor, the draft resolution submitted by the National Executive more or less supporting the Government's policy was defeated by 463,000 votes and a resolution passed asking the Government to prepare a new constitution for Rhodesia which should not be subject to negotiation with the rebels. It also called for "moral and practical assistance" for freedom fighters and instructed the Executive to start a national campaign to raise funds to assist Rhodesian Africans.

Mr Wilson does not take rebuffs kindly; the next day he reaffirmed his hope for a reasonable settlement in Rhodesia and complimented Mr Smith on his courage in dealing with White extremists. Within five days not only had it been announced that discussions would take place on H.M.S. "Fearless" at Gibraltar, and special envoys sent to various African states in an attempt to reassure them - Mr Foley, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, to Zambia, Mr Malcolm Macdonald to Kenya and Tanzania, Mr David Scott to Uganda (characteristically it was not thought necessary to send anyone to see Dr Banda) - but Mr Wilson was on his way to Gibraltar. Mr Obote, the President of Uganda, commented sceptically that he did not see how Salisbury could compromise or drop its basic principles. On TV Mr Wilson had sought to justify his action by arguing that "Rhodesia might lurch into apartheid, perhaps even a blood bath" if negotiations collapsed, and, harking back to the 'Tiger', he announced before leaving that "we require that there must be no fiddling afterwards from any settlement."

It was probably this and his experience on the "Tiger" which led Mr Smith on arrival at Gibraltar to state bluntly that he would want to return to Salisbury for more consultations before setting his seal to an agreement if one was reached. The "Economist" in an article supposed to have been written on board 'H.M.S. Cheerless' pointed out that Mr Wilson was really being kind to the UN: "it would not be a liberal or magnanimous policy for Britain to land the UN with a problem that would brutally show it to be as impotent as Britain is." But the 'Economist' need not have worried about the UN. Mr Smith said, on the second day: "there has not, by any stretch of the imagination, been anything like a breakthrough. Some things in the British policy document are not acceptable. We do not deviate. I would not say that we've gone into reverse but I can't honestly say we've made progress."

It was no surprise therefore when the final communiqué announced that "in the course of over 30 hours of discussions some progress was made, but disagreement on fundamental issues still remains. Mr Wilson gave to Mr Smith a document setting out a basis on which, subject to the approval of the British Cabinet, a Rhodesian independence settlement would be introduced in Parliament. Mr Smith and his colleagues have taken this away for consideration with their colleagues in Salisbury. It was agreed that adequate time

should be allowed for this consideration. The Prime Minister said that the Commonwealth Secretary would be available to fly out to Salisbury if it was felt by Mr Smith and his colleagues that this would assist them in their consideration of the document."

After an all-day meeting of the Rhodesian Cabinet Mr Smith told reporters that "if we are any nearer a settlement it's barely noticeable." However, in a later radio and TV address to the people of Rhodesia, he said that "there was a distinct possibility that the two countries could reach a settlement if the British Prime Minister would remove the appeal system (to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council) from the terms ... There were some people who point to the fact that this clause was part of the constitution which was agreed on the 'Tiger', and therefore ask why it has suddenly become so unacceptable. I would say two things in reply. Firstly, much water has passed under the bridge during the 22 months since 'Tiger'. For example, the Rhodesian Appellate Division has recognised the de jure status of our government, and, moreover, when Mr Wilson took the Rhodesian case to the United Nations he withdrew the offer made on 'Tiger'. Secondly, and equally pertinently this particular clause in fact was never subjected to detailed examination on 'Tiger' before being incorporated in the rushed draft which the British then prepared and presented to us. Very soon thereafter we became aware of certain inaccuracies and when Mr Thomson, the Commonwealth Secretary of State visited Salisbury last November, this was pointed out to him. We explained that in our view this was a misrepresentation of what was agreed on the 'Tiger' and it was unacceptable to the Rhodesian Government. This was also pointed out to Mr Bottomley when he came out recently and was the constant stand in the discussions which have just taken place in Gibraltar." Mr Smith went on to add: "we believe the chiefs must play a part in the blocking quarter. We have been consistent all along as far as this is concerned ... As I have stated on many occasions this is one of the things on which I have consulted with the chiefs and it will be my intention to go on consulting with them. I believe it is perfectly safe for me to say that as far as the question of a broad-based government is concerned, we have made it clear that, as long as this is part of any return to legality, this is obnoxious to us and something we are not prepared to accept." He did not think the terms now offered were the best or the last. There were therefore several objections to the 'Fearless' proposals. Sir Roy Welensky said: "I just don't understand why we cannot be trusted. I am willing to accept either a blocking quarter or an appeal to the Privy Council, but I think it is a slight on Rhodesians that we should have both." The "Spectator" concluded that the best hope was that the gap between Mr Smith and Mr Wilson would prove as unbridgeable as it looked, and that eventually a British government would come to accept that the course of future events in Rhodesia was beyond their control and no longer their business.

At this point Mr Brand Fourie, the Secretary of the Foreign Ministry at Pretoria, paid a very unpublicised visit to Salisbury; it was "not known" whether he saw Mr Smith. Mr Thomson quickly followed in November. Mr Wilson, in announcing his departure described the differences as "narrow in content but very deep." Mr Thomson met, in addition to Ministers and some chiefs, Mr Nkomo and Mr Sithole who were released from detention for the meeting.

He said on his return that the British Government were prepared to consider any equally effective alternative to the Judicial Committee but that Mr Smith "showed no interest in other forms of judicial safeguard mentioned by the Prime Minister. I asked him whether he had any proposals of his own for a second guarantee. But Mr Smith had none to offer ... Other major disagreements also remained -

First - the regime wished to extend the period under the 1961 Constitution for which the legislature could approve the proclamation of a state of emergency for a period of three months.

Second - The regime wished to alter the composition of the legislature as proposed in the 'Fearless' document. They wanted either fewer elected Africans or else more A roll seats in the Lower House and more European seats in the Senate. We could not agree this.

Third - The regime wished to balance an extension, as in both the 'Tiger' and 'Fearless' proposals, of the B roll franchise by an alteration of the present arrangements for cross-voting.

Fourth - The regime wished to eliminate the delimitation formula which was included in the 'Tiger' and 'Fearless' proposals. This provided that as the number of Africans on the A roll increased, the Africans' chances of capturing A roll seats should increase proportionately.

Fifth - The regime wished to extend the criteria which the Judicial Tribunal should apply when considering whether detainees and restrictees should be released to take part in the test of acceptability.

Sixth - There were important differences between us over the treatment of those Rhodesian public servants who since UDI have felt bound to leave Rhodesia in order to remain loyal to the Crown. Mr Smith said that he could not possibly agree to their reinstatement, though compensation was another matter."

Mr Thomson added sadly: "the truth in Rhodesia - and it is an old truth although it was concealed from us for forty years - is that Britain had responsibility without power." It is difficult to understand how it was concealed from anybody, since it would have been apparent to anyone who had bothered to make even a cursory study of Rhodesia's history since 1923, but members of the Labour Party were never conspicuous for their attendance at House of Commons debates on Commonwealth subjects.

Mr Smith's answer to Mr Thomson was that he had agreed to two of the three non-negotiable points - the blocking quarter and the broad-based government during the transition period. Now the British had, during their stay in Salisbury, managed to contrive a total of eight so-called major obstacles of principle. "Is this some devious game they are playing?" In his New Year message for 1969 he went into somewhat greater detail. The Rhodesian Government were preparing a case which would be sent to the British Government and "these things are not done in five minutes." The Rhodesian Government had never objected to a second safeguard as such. The objection was to any safeguard outside Rhodesia or to any condition which derogated from the sovereignty of the Rhodesian

Parliament. "The Rhodesians did not think a second safeguard necessary. We believe that if the British wish a second safeguard it is up to them to make the running." What Rhodesia wanted was an agreement which would bring sanctions to an end. Asked if some sort of trade agreement was sought, Mr Smith replied: "I think perhaps you can interpret it that way." He forecast that 1969 would be "the turning point in Rhodesian affairs ... early in this year we could well see the playing of what could be the last hand in this Rhodesia/British drama."

Mr Wilson, in his turn, on the 10th January, spelt out the course which would have to be followed if there was to be a settlement:

1. there would have to be a preliminary agreement with whoever was exercising power in Rhodesia - in the present circumstance Mr Ian Smith. This would be ad referendum the Rhodesian people and subject to the test of acceptability,
2. the next stage would be for the British Government to appoint a Royal Commission to carry out a test of acceptability, and
3. if the people of Rhodesia demonstrated their acceptance of the terms then at that stage Britain would feel it right to consult with her Commonwealth colleagues about the question of the commitment to Nibmar.

He added that the use of force in Rhodesia would lead inevitably to a blood bath in Southern Africa and no British Government could entertain such a proposal. Mr Wilson conceded that his offer to Mr Smith abroad the 'Fearless' in October had contradicted his personal pledge to the Commonwealth two years previously that legal independence would be withheld from Rhodesia until the country was ruled by its 4,000,000 Africans. But, as Dr Banda said, on his return from the Commonwealth Conference, "you cannot topple Smith by shouting Nibmar from Dar-es-Salaam, Lusaka or London."

In fact Mr Thomson's visit and the subsequent arrangement for the Rhodesian Government to submit its case on the 'Fearless' proposals had served their purpose. They had enabled Mr Wilson to steer his way through the opposition of the great majority of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers by pleading that negotiations were still proceeding and that the result must not be pre-judged. The communique of the Conference in January recorded that "Mr Wilson's position was that, if it proved possible, the people of Rhodesia should have the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they wanted a settlement on the six principles laid down by successive British Governments. If the Rhodesian people showed that they wanted this settlement Mr Wilson would consult the Commonwealth on the Nibmar commitment. The Commonwealth Prime Ministers noted the British Prime Minister's statement that it would be open to the proposal Royal Commission to say that, in the circumstances prevailing in Rhodesia, no genuine assessment was possible of acceptability to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. Further, if the Royal Commission felt unable to adjudicate on the acceptability or otherwise of the proposals to the people of Rhodesia as a whole they would be free to recommend any alternative method including a referendum which in their view would adequately test Rhodesian opinion. Many heads of government suggested that the test could

only be carried through by the process of a referendum." They were trying to tie Mr Wilson down.

Before the end of the month Mr Thomson had ceased to be Commonwealth Secretary or to have any responsibility for negotiations with Rhodesia. He had served his purpose and was but the most recent of the casualties of the negotiations - Arthur Bottomley and Herbert Bowden had previously paid the price of failure. Mr Wilson may be more cautious about the next round, if there is one, since Mr Foley is too junior a minister to bear the burden, and he may himself have to take the responsibility. Mr Wilson's ingenuity is infinite, but his penchant for resuscitating more or less moribund institutions, such as the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, to fulfil a role for which they were never intended, has again led him astray - in his latest interchange with General de Gaulle over Western Union, and he may be more cautious about employing this tactic in the near future. It is difficult at this stage to see what could be substituted for the Judicial Committee.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that during the past year both Mr Wilson and Mr Smith have used their negotiations to gain time; Mr Wilson to see him through the party, Commonwealth and UN pressures which his Rhodesian policy had created for him, Mr Smith to delay negotiations until he could play from greater strength and might indeed be able to deal with a Conservative Government which he could reasonably hope would agree to a settlement more or less on his own terms. For both time is running out. It became increasingly apparent during last year that Mr Wilson could not bring sanctions to an end, only offer to breach them if his suggestion that they should be made were rejected: his bargaining position is weaker. Rhodesia has held out for another year, even if it has suffered setbacks during the year, and to this extent Mr Smith's position is stronger, but he cannot delay much longer a vote on a new constitution, and, once the new constitution comes into effect he will not be in a position to make even those concessions which he might have made last year.

IV. THE CONSTITUTION

It is characteristic of revolutions that the constitutions they produce are many and ephemeral; the situation is fluid by definition and as it changes, changes in the constitution are felt to be necessary. During the fifteen years of the French Revolution there were eight, a number which has been surpassed by Rhodesia in just over three years, viz.

1. The 1961 Constitution which the British Government maintain is the only legal one.
2. The 1965 Constitution.
3. The 'Tiger' Constitution.
4. The proposals for the modification of the 'Tiger' submitted by Mr Smith to Mr Thomson and rejected.
5. The modifications of (4) discussed by Mr Smith with Sir Alec Douglas-Home and rejected by Mr Wilson.
6. The Whaley Commission's Constitution.
7. The Rhodesia Front Party's amendments of (6).
8. The proposals of Mr Harper and Lord Graham.
9. The 'Fearless' plan.
10. Mr Thomson's modifications of the 'Fearless', and
11. The Constitution subsequently discussed by Mr Smith with the six regional divisions of the Rhodesia Front party and of which a summary was given to the press at Cape Town on Saturday.

All the constitutions of the French Revolution were drafted in whole or in part, by the Abbe Siéyès, who, when asked what he had done during the Revolution, replied contentedly that he had survived. I do not know who has been the Abbe Siéyès of the Rhodesian Revolution, but I suspect that, twentieth century fashion, there is a committee to which he is attached as secretary or legal adviser. It can only be hoped that his assiduity will not have reduced the Rhodesian electorate to such understandable confusion that it will eventually decide to carry on without a constitution at all!

Here it may be enough to say, of the first ten constitutions,

- a) that it was the eventual prospect of parity of African and European representatives in Parliament, provided for by the Whaley Constitution, which caused opposition to develop within the Rhodesian Front Party to that constitution;
- b) that the Graham/Harper proposals were designed to hasten the establishment of provincial legislatures on a racial basis and to phase out African representation in the existing Parliament;
- c) that Mr Smith found it necessary in 1968 to delay the adoption of any constitution, such as the Graham/Harper proposals, which would have prevented the continuation of negotiations with the British Government. In order to give himself as free a hand as possible in these negotiations he refused to be

hurried into submitting any draft constitution to the electorate. As recently as December last he said that a referendum on the Constitution would not be held "no matter what urgency I put on my target, before one year from now";

- d) that the ruling of the Appellate Division of the High Court, in August, that the Government had achieved internal de jure status, and was certain to survive made it less urgent to replace the 1965 Constitution, whose legality had been questioned. Sir Hugh Beadle's words may be read in a double sense: "if it is impossible to see any circumstance which is likely to bring about any change, then it is possible to predict with certainty that a change will not occur.";
- e) that the passage this year of the Constitution (1965) Amendment Bill, permitting a state of emergency to be declared for a period of a year instead of three months, was in deliberate opposition to the wishes of the British Government, so far as possible amendment of the constitution was concerned.

So far as the eleventh Constitution is concerned the "Cape Town Summary" of the draft which Mr Smith proposes to put before the Rhodesian Parliament in April, with a view to a referendum in May, states that "the new constitution will keep Government in the hands of responsible Rhodesians, both European and African." It envisages a Senate of 23, of whom 10 will be African chiefs elected by all the chiefs sitting as electoral colleges, and 10 will be Europeans elected by the Lower House. There will also be three senators of any race appointed by the Head of State. The Senate will also fulfil the functions of the Constitutional Council, the present watch-dog of the Declaration of Rights. The Lower House will consist of 66 members, 60 elected by European, Asian and Coloured voters, and 16 by African voters. Of the 16 African elected members, 8 will be elected by electoral colleges of chiefs, headmen and representatives of African Councils. The remaining 8 will be elected by African roll voters, none of whom will be included on the European, Asian or Coloured voters roll. As contributions to the National Exchequer made by the African people as a whole increase the number of African seats will increase until they number 50, which will bring about parity in Parliament between the two races. On 14th February the Government had announced a 10% increase in the monetary qualifications for a vote since a Commission had reported a 20% decline in the purchasing power of the Rhodesian £. The minimum requirement for a vote would in future be £288 a year or property worth £540. In 1967 the average earnings of an African were £138 per annum. The rate of increase of African voters, if this requirement is retained, will be slow, and until individual African wages greatly increase, of which there is little sign, the contribution of the Africans in taxes is unlikely to increase sufficiently to require additional African representation. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for Mr Wilson to secure the approval of the British Parliament for such an arrangement. The Chairman of the Centre Party said immediately that the new proposals were in his view a complete ban to any settlement of the dispute with the U.K. and pleaded: "even if you are not happy about every detail of 'Fearless,' why burn your boats?" Mr Smith said, before coming to South Africa on Saturday, that the constitution would be submitted to Parliament early in April, and he put forward the referendum from the end of the year to May. This could have been an attempt to

stimulate Mr Wilson to start another round of talks (the last chance mentioned by Mr Smith in his New Year message,) but, since he has come to South Africa for a month's holiday this time-table left scant opportunity for another round of discussions with the United Kingdom, although Mr Smith might have been persuaded to extend the time-table a little if pressed. After talks with Mr Vorster this morning Mr Smith admitted that if Rhodesia implemented the new constitution there could be no settlement with Britain, because, if there were a settlement with Britain it would be bound to be on a basis "which won't be our idea of our ideal constitution." He went on to explain that "this is our own constitution which we concede will in no way resemble any negotiated constitution. If we bring in our own constitution it means that we don't have a settlement but we get the constitution which we believe is the right one for Rhodesia. If we have a settlement then the price we must pay is that we have a constitution which won't be our idea of our ideal constitution." After seeing Mr Vorster again Mr Smith went further; before the new constitution was laid before Parliament "probably in May" he was willing to have talks with "anyone who wants to talk to me... there is plenty of time. There is no rush or panic." Mr Smith denied reports that Mr Vorster had exerted pressure on Rhodesia to come to an agreement with Britain. It is difficult to believe that the change of time-table, which offers the possibility of a resumption of negotiations, may not have been the result of Mr Vorster drawing attention to the implication of the original time-table that Rhodesia was no longer prepared to negotiate with Britain. For South Africa as well as Rhodesia there are considerable risks in any action which might finally destroy the credibility of the possibility of negotiation, and therefore lead inevitably to immediate discussion at the United Nations and elsewhere of what additional steps should be taken to bring Rhodesia to her knees. The caution which is a characteristic of South African foreign policy may prove to have helped Mr Smith in the long run, but it is equally difficult to resist the conclusion that Mr Smith's patience is very nearly at an end.

V. THE TERRORISTS

Here it is possible to be more optimistic. Last year saw only one serious terrorist infiltration which was obviously planned to occur just before the annual meeting of the O.A.U. in order to encourage African states to continue their subscriptions to the terrorist organisations. It was a complete failure: 29 terrorists were killed and large numbers taken prisoner. What was perhaps ominous for the future was the very high quality of the automatic and other weapons with which the terrorists had been equipped, which have been said to have been superior to those of the Rhodesian forces. It was the lack of air support for the terrorists and the effectiveness of the R.R.A.F.'s spotting and air attack which was decisive. Mr Smith said at Cape Town that "things have been quiet for about eight months though it could start up again tonight or at any time." The assurances which have been given of South African support to the extent necessary to enable Rhodesia to cut off incursions whose ultimate objective is South Africa have been and will continue to be the greatest encouragement to Rhodesians and the principal deterrent to the terrorists.

VI. CONCLUSION

For the reasons indicated above Rhodesia should continue to be able to resist sanctions, there seems to be little prospect of any agreement with Britain, and still less of a decision by the Security Council, if an agreement were reached, to raise sanctions. What looks more likely at the present moment is another round of talks with Britain, another failure to reach agreement, the introduction of the new constitution and its acceptance by the Rhodesian electorate, and their realisation concurrently that there is nothing to do but tighten their belts and resign themselves to a slow improvement in very difficult economic conditions. Eventually de facto recognition of UDI may be given by Britain as part of a package commercial agreement which will provide for the suspension of sanctions by Britain in return for the reopening of the Rhodesian market and the improved prospects for British trade in a southern Africa which would feel less isolated and become more receptive to improved relations, including trade relations, with the outside world.

ANNEXURE

Extract from 'Rhodesia Herald,' 13th March, 1969

For the next few weeks the clubs and bars of Southern Africa are going to be full of businessmen recounting what Mr Smith and Mr Vorster said to each other. In this connection an astonishing document has been sent anonymously to BFR. It purports to be the transcript of the conversation between the two Prime Ministers. Its authenticity in the circumstances cannot be vouched for 100 per cent. But it seems to ring true to the skilled observers who have had the opportunity of reading it. Judge for yourself.

Mr Smith: Good Morning.

Mr Vorster: Hoe gaan dit, meneer.

Mr Smith: I beg your pardon.

Mr Vorster: Good morning.

Mr Smith: Good morning. Janet and I are down here on holiday so I thought I would drop in and see you.

Mr Vorster: Yes, Montgomery told me you were coming. Well, how are things up your way? Have you had much rain?

Mr Smith: Quite a bit in some places. Not so much in others.

Mr Vorster: Yes.

Mr Smith: Well, I went to Fearless as you suggested. But nothing much came of it.

Mr Vorster: What went wrong?

Mr Smith: There was this business about the Privy Council which we didn't like, but there were other difficulties.

Mr Vorster: No, Muller and I did not think much of the Privy Council idea either. So what happens now?

Mr Smith: Well, I'm still willing to negotiate with Wilson. But I am also going ahead with our plans for our new constitution.

Mr Vorster: You don't think you should just carry on as you are for the time being and see what happens over there.

Mr Smith: I don't know. I have got my problems. How do you cope with your verkramptes?

Mr Vorster: I sacked mine.

Mr Smith: That's interesting (long pause). By the way, we're coping all right with the terrorist problem but we might need a bit more help.

Mr Vorster: We could probably send you a few more police - keep in touch on that one.

Mr Smith: Er ... Noel Bruce tells me that your reserves in Pretoria now total more than £500 m.

Mr Vorster: That's right.

Mr Smith: That's a lot of money. We have got nothing like that. I was wondering whether you could maybe see your way ...

Private Secretary: Excuse me, Prime Minister, your next appointment has arrived.

Mr Vorster: Well, Ian, it's been good to see you. When do you expect to be down this way again? You came and saw the Lions last year. Come and see the Wallabies in July. We should beat them.

Mr Smith: Thanks. I might. About the reserves, though ...

Mr Vorster: Oh don't worry about the reserves. Danie Craven says they're also strong enough to beat the Wallabies. Totsiens.

Mr Smith: Bye bye.