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CENTRE  
UNP.NOTES ON FORMATION OF COALITION GOVT.Box 3, File 5

It was on Wednesday 22nd February on telling me of the success of the Coalition agreement that General Smuts first said to me that he wanted me in the Cabinet. I at once said that it seemed to me to be impossible, and that there were others, including Reitz, who must have preference. He said he wanted both Reitz and myself. I said that would mean four from the Transvaal which was impossible (at that time I did not contemplate the possibility of more than 5 S.A.P. Ministers and I think it was only on the next day that Smuts asked for six). I also said he must not bother about me, as I had lots of time and could afford to wait.

It was on the 23rd March in Johannesburg between S.A.P. Club and ? Buildings that he once again spoke to me definitely about the Cabinet. He said definitely I was to be in with himself, Duncan and Stuttaford and a Natal man; for the remaining place the choice lay between a Cape man and Reitz. I again urged that Reitz's claim should have precedence to mine but he would not hear about this.

On Sunday 26th March at Irene he told me that he must now come to a decision. He thought Clarkson would be the safest choice for Natal, but had not decided as between Malan, Reitz, and Conroy. I urged strongly the necessity of a Cape man, and this seemed to influence him. He was against the idea of appointing Malan, but eventually seemed to be disposed to decide on Conroy.

Next morning Esselen told me that it was settled - the two C's were to be nominated. Reitz was being sent for that morning to be told, the Chief was to see the PM, and Esselen was to wire Conroy to come up.

That afternoon Esselen told me that as a result of Hertzog's representations (this was later confirmed by the Chief to me) it had been decided to replace Conroy by Reitz. Reitz who had already been told of the previous decision was advised that afternoon and the telegram to Conroy (I believe already drafted) was not despatched.

I gather that H. had urged that Conroy's temperament would make for trouble - and in particular there would be quarrels between him and Kemp.