

Pc1/1/2/25/242

Smuts and Hofmeyr

1. Smuts made Hofmeyr Administrator in March, 1924. What plan did Smuts have for the younger man? Did he see Hofmeyr as his successor, and did his view change over the years?
2. Hofmeyr went off to England in 1929, just before Smuts was to fight an election. He returned to Pretoria the day before the election. Hofmeyr resisted every attempt of Smuts to get him to stand. Mrs Smuts says her husband was peeved. Is anything more known about this?
3. It was Hofmeyr who first conveyed to Smuts the astonishing news that Hertzog would consider coalition. You will receive an account of this interview and perhaps will be able to add to it.
4. In 1936, Smuts came back from his triumphal visit to Britain to vote for the "inglorious Native Bills". He said it was better to compromise than to die in a ditch, but was not Pirow right -- that he did not much care about the African vote but he did care about keeping the United Party together especially if there was to be a war? Did he leave any record of what he thought about Hofmeyr's stand at the time? Did he say anything to anyone? Did he ever sum up Hofmeyr's character?
5. In 1937 Smuts virtually withdrew from the Mixed Marriages controversy. Was it for the same reason given by Pirow? Did he ever express any opinion on Mixed Marriages? In these and other controversial matters was Smuts disturbed to think that many people could not reconcile what he said abroad and what he did at home?
6. In August, 1937, Hofmeyr made a speech on Native Policy at a Toc H function. He was summoned to a cabinet meeting where he gave an acceptable explanation. Did Smuts intervene on his behalf? Did he say anything to Hofmeyr?
7. In 1938 was Smuts indifferent when the Prime Minister made Fourie a senator to get him back into the cabinet? What did he say to Hofmeyr when the latter told him he would resign? Hofmeyr wrote to Sarah Millin that Smuts was Hertzog's prisoner. In a sense he may have been ~~right~~, but not in the extreme sense in which Hofmeyr meant it. Surely Hofmeyr must have been drifting away from Smuts to make such an observation? Is there any record that Smuts knew or felt this? Do you know to whom Smuts said, "I cannot afford the luxury of resignation? When you receive the typescript you will be amused to learn that Smuts was afraid to go and see Mrs Hofmeyr and sent Mrs Smuts

in his place. Mrs Smuts reported that Mrs Hofmeyr gave her the worst hour of her life.

8. Mrs Hofmeyr, and other people, held that Smuts killed Hofmeyr by overworking him, during the war; also that he was not generous in his thanks to Hofmeyr for his great services during the war. Did Smuts leave records of generous appreciation of Hofmeyr ?

9. Did Smuts leave on record any opinions on the Voortrekker Celebrations of 1938 ?

10. While still a young student, Hofmeyr resisted Smuts. He admired Botha, but thought Smuts too clever. Smuts made him Administrator, but Hofmeyr resisted him thereafter. Eventually Hofmeyr stood for Johannesburg North and Smuts became his leader. There can be no doubt he fell under the great man's spell. From 1936 to 1939 he was ~~greatly~~ extremely critical of Smuts. When Smuts won the war debate, Hofmeyr fell under the spell again as though it had never been broken, but after a few years the spell ~~again~~ again weakened and of course Hofmeyr was now no longer a contender for the premiership because of his grave physical condition. Was Smuts aware of these shifts in attitude ? Did he say anything about them ?