

P. O. ANERLEY,
South Coast,
Natal,
South Africa.

1st August, 1952.



Dear Dr. van der Poel,

You probably know by this time that I had the opportunity of meeting Professor Hancock and I made an arrangement with him whereby we would exchange information. I am at present half way through the Hofmeyr papers and am making a note of all Smuts references. I may say that I do not expect anything of the same kind from you for two reasons, (1) that I think it would be asking too much, and (2) that by the time it was complete it would be too late to be of any use. But there is one thing I would very much like to have, and that is the opinion of Smuts in regard to certain of Mr. Hofmeyr's actions, for example, his opposition to the Native Bills of April 1936, his resignation from the Cabinet in 1938, his resignation from the Caucus in May 1939.

Such opinions you might find reasonably easily in letters Smuts wrote about that time.

There is another point, although it would probably be very difficult to discover anything so long afterwards. It is clear that when Hofmeyr was Principal of Wits University, Smuts had already singled him out and intended to use him. He said to Sir Herbert Stanley in 1923, referring to Mr. Hofmeyr, "There goes the future Transvaal. Soon after that he made him Administrator of the Transvaal. But the interesting question is whether he knew, or if he knew, whether he thought it unimportant, that Hofmeyr was having considerable staff trouble at the University, which, had it come to a head, had it threatened to do, it would have done great damage to Hofmeyr's reputation and his future career. It may be of course that such information is impossible to obtain easily in which case I shall just have to do without it. But I shall be glad to know if there is any hope at all of obtaining it. Naturally it is important to me to know what Smuts thought of Hofmeyr and of some of his more important actions.

In the meantime I wish you all success with your own work.

Yours sincerely,