

1928

POLIT FILE

Pc1/1/7/34/11

QUESTION OF RE-APPOINTMENT AS ADMINISTRATOR

Box 3 File 1.

From June to November 1928 Gen. Hertzog had several interviews with JHH re his taking a second term of office as Administrator or alternatively accepting the post of High Commissioner in London. Hertzog was affability itself. JHH would give no definite answer at first and asked time to consider the choice. One reason for his indecision was that he had planned to go to England in 1929 for a holiday and did not want anything to interfere with that plan. He was also anxious to have some relief from responsibility. Although he saw advantages in accepting the High Commissionership, such as gaining wider experience of men and affairs, he did not want to cut himself adrift from SA at this stage and thought it might be a case of "Out of sight, out of mind". Also he did not think it would be good for his mother's health to live in London as she felt the cold very much.

Later on JHH found out that Hertzog had actually already offered the Administratorship to Smit, who was then H.C. in London, and Smit had accepted the post, so Hertzog would have been in a spot if JHH had accepted. JHH says Mrs. H. had an idea that Hertzog wasn't being quite straight. At first she was keen that JHH accepted reappointment but later (after interview On 8/10/28) Mrs. H. told JHH that Hertzog did not want him to accept although he offered the post.

JHH also discussed the position with Smuts ~~with Smuts~~ on 2/8/28. Smuts agreed that it was a difficult problem and told him that he wanted H. in active political life so that he could later take his (Smuts's) place as leader of SAP since he wished to retire as soon as he could if he could but get a suitable successor. S. thought that time was approaching for closer cooperation of the two parties and thought that if H. kept out of next election, he could come in with clean hands and be more effective in bringing about fusion. On the other hand from the point of view of establishing himself in SAP, it would be a good thing for H. to take part in next election, thus making it easier for him to take over leadership. The matter was left undecided at that date.