

SELECTIONS
FROM THE
Smuts Papers

VOLUME I
June 1886 - May 1902

EDITED BY
W. K. HANCOCK
AND
JEAN VAN DER POEL

Cambridge University Press

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JUNE 1886—MAY 1902

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PART I
THE STUDENT YEARS
12 JUNE 1886—11 SEPTEMBER 1895

1. STELLENBOSCH

The Smuts Collection contains only two letters, both written by Smuts, which relate to the five years (July 1886 to 1891) that he spent in Stellenbosch as a student at Victoria College. There are, however, a few other personal documents of this period that compensate, to some extent, for the paucity of letters and give an insight into the mind of their author. These are note-books, essays and verses. Some of the note-books are filled with Greek vocabularies—evidence of the thoroughness and intensiveness of Smuts's methods of study. The most ambitious verses are birthday poems for Isie Krige written under the spell of Shelley. The ablest essays are *Homo Sum*—on the subject of slavery—which was published in *Het Zuid-Afrikaansche Tijdschrift*¹ for June 1889, and *South African Customs Union*, entered for a university competition in 1891.

This subject had been prescribed. It was topical, for South African politics at that time turned largely upon the conflicting customs and railway interests and policies of the two inland Boer republics and the two maritime British colonies. Smuts clearly found it congenial. He wrote at length, no doubt at too great length, but with sincerity and force. He built his whole essay upon the conviction which was also to be the foundation of his statesmanship—'the fact that South Africa is one.' The excerpt below (4) sums up the arguments for unity and shows a mature and detailed grasp of the actual political situation in 1891. The preparation and writing of this essay had been for Smuts a highly educative exercise. It had taught him, he said, how to master intellectual material and use it and, more important still, 'I owe to it the birth of my political consciousness.' (14b).

All the surviving writings of Smuts's student years except *Homo Sum* are in English. In common with all the children and young people in the Cape Colony who spoke Afrikaans at home, heard Dutch in church and read it in their Bibles and hymn-books, Smuts had his school and university education in South Africa entirely through the medium of English. Dutch was taught as a second language and Smuts learned to write it well. But English always remained the language in which he expressed himself with the greater ease and profundity.

¹ A monthly magazine published in Cape Town 1878–93.

1 To C. Murray

Vol. 1, no. 101

The earliest extant letter written by Smuts. The letter from C. Murray that follows provides an account of how it survived.

Klipfontein¹
12 June 1886

Mr C. Murray
Professor, Stellenbosch

Dear Sir, Allow me the honour of your reading and answering these few lines. I intend coming to Stellenbosch in July next, and, having heard that you take an exceptionally great interest in the youth, I trust you will favour me by keeping your eye upon me and helping me with your kindly advice. Moreover, as I shall be a perfect stranger there, and, as you know, such a place, where a large puerile element exists, affords fair scope for moral, and, what is more important, religious temptation which, if yielded to, will eclipse alike the expectations of my parents and the intentions of myself, a real friend will prove a lasting blessing for me. For of what use will a mind, enlarged and refined in all possible ways, be to me, if my religion be a deserted pilot and morality a wreck ?

To avoid temptation and to make the proper use of my precious time, I purposely refuse entering a public boarding department, as that of Mr de Kock, but shall board privately (most likely at Mr N. Ackermann's) which will, in addition, accord with my retired and reserved nature.

I shall further be much obliged to you for information on the following important points:—

First, having passed the School Honours Examination² in April last, am I to enter the Public School or the College ?³ Second, in case I am qualified for the Junior Matriculation Class, am I exempted or not from a special admission

¹ The farm in the Swartland district of the south-western Cape Province, bought by Jacobus Abraham, father of Smuts, on 30 March 1876. It lies 13 miles north-west of Riebeeck West and is now owned and farmed by Mr J. A. Smuts.

² The School Higher Examination of the University of the Cape of Good Hope.

³ Established as a high school in 1866. Named successively the Gymnasium, Stellenbosch College and, in 1887, Victoria College, it had, since 1874, prepared candidates for the certificates and degrees of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1918 it became the University of Stellenbosch.

Examination into the College having passed the aforesaid Examination in

1. Latin
2. English
3. Dutch
4. Geometry
5. Arithmetic and Algebra
6. Natural Philosophy ?

Third, the time when the College or P.S., that is, the one I am to enter, commences the next quarter.

Fourth, what are the Schoolfees to be paid ?

Fifth, how are the requisite text-books, etc. supplied, by the Committee, the students themselves, or voluntarily ?

Sincerely assuring you of my deep gratitude if I may have you for a friend, and also, if informed on these points.

I have the honour, dear Sir, of calling myself your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts

Address:— Riebeek West
Via Hermon Station

Mimi
Beach Road
Sea Point
21 July 1933

Dear General Smuts—No, this time it shall be Dear Smuts, An exhaustive clearing up of old drawers and boxes incidental to house moving, has brought to light the enclosed.

After the lapse of many years I can recollect distinctly that this letter stood out very clearly from the run of such communications—the writer knew what he wanted. And I suppose that was the reason of my putting it aside, to be forgotten till today.

I don't like destroying it, as I have ruthlessly during these past days burnt piles of old letters. And I don't think it should drift about. I think you will care to look at it, at any rate, if not to hand it to one of your children.

This letter tempts one to reminiscences and reflections. I resist the temptation. But I do take the opportunity of recording my hope that you may by God's good grace through yet many years do the work the Lord set you, and equipped you for, in the service of the world. Ever yours very truly,

Charles Murray

2 To S. M. Krige

Vol. 1, no. 101A

Riebeck West
10 December 1887

Dearest Isie,¹ When you receive this, it will be the 22 December. Need I express congratulations? Need I tell you what sympathy I feel for you on this your 17th birth-day? No, you know I have more than mere words can express. Some wishes I have expressed in verse,²—some aspirations which I know accord with your own. May I add one more? It is that we may be faithful to each other, that our mutual love may be pure and unselfish, that in whatever relation and circumstances we may be, it may grow from more to more, and, if possible, never be dissolved; that we may be bound together in soul and spirit by a holy and a true love.

People generally have but few chosen friends; so you needn't be surprised when I tell you I have only two on earth, you being one of them: and you are the only one to whom I feel myself drawn by every tie of sentiment and nature. You are the only one in whose society I feel alone, by myself, as if there is no second one, as if we two are one. I do not know whether my character and my ways accord in any way with your tastes and sympathies (I may hope they do) yet this I know,—and I not only know it, but I experience it inwardly as a part of my existence—that I sympathize with you, that I *love* you as my own soul, (to use the phrase in which Jonathan's love for David is described).

Is this the issue of mere chance? Is it chance that we lived for such a long time only a few paces from each other without getting acquainted, and that we suddenly met some time ago and that we felt a mutual liking? No, this is certainly not chance. It is our Heavenly Master who has brought this about, that we may help each other onward on the path of holiness and love, and that in loving each other we may learn to love him more intensely. Whatever the whispering tongue of the world may allege, let our love never be romantic or sentimental, but the deep love of truth, which sticketh closer than a brother, and is only purified, never dissolved, by adversity.

¹ Sybella Margaretha Krige, whom Smuts married in April 1897.

² See 3.

You remember that I told you the morning after you had sent me those lines I was quite upset at reading them. Had I no reason to be upset and unseated by such a stanza as this:—

Oft I've tried to be a Christian,
 But I *cannot, cannot* be,
 So no hope to live in heaven
 Through Eternity I see.

Now from the very first time that I began to know you I saw a Christian in you, and I still maintain that you are one; so you can understand how I felt when I read that stanza. Isie! you *are* a Christian are you not? You *are* washed in the blood of the Lamb, bought unto Life Eternal. We too *will* one day 'meet in glory yonder, (though through grace and grace alone) when we've done our work down here.' O what shall we tell our Saviour when we meet Him on that golden Shore? Everything is so extremely simple and intelligible in salvation. Don't you believe that Saviour, do you think he is a liar and deceiver when he says he died for you? I know you believe. Hear now what Jesus says: 'He that *believeth, hath* everlasting life'—John v. 24. Don't you believe Him when he says this. Does He tell a lie here? Surely not. But then you are a Christian. Does he want anything more than this? No: 'He that *believeth, hath.*'

I know where the difficulty comes in. You wish perhaps to have a *security* that you are saved. But this is just the very point. The word of Jesus: 'He that *believeth, hath*' must be security enough. You must take him just on his word. This is the new life: not to walk by sight, but by faith, to believe what he says. All who go to hell do so because they don't believe this word of the Lord, because they make Him a liar. But you surely trust Him and will never think Him guilty of a falsehood. I give myself to Him—He says He takes me—and I must believe He does so. This is salvation. You *are* a Christian.

As to the few lines of verse I have written, I can only deplore that they are not more worthy of your Birth-day. Their composition has decisively convinced me that I am no poet. I send them only to you, and would not have sent them to any other, for I know that love—or, at the very least, pity—will annihilate your critical powers in this instance. It may seem affected to

your taste that I should put my wishes (which are such as every mortal would express) into the mouth of Heaven and Earth; but I have done so in allusion to that evening when we talked in your garden of the voice of Nature. You wrote a poem for me on occasion of that talk, and I thought I might remember it in a few lines to you. For the same reason the somewhat long and irrelevant introductory part has been written: so that the whole represents a heap of dissimilar elements miserably mixed together. Yet whatever the verse, the thoughts in some cases, though not very poetic, are yet true, and that is a good thing. If the general tone seems to be too religious for this occasion, remember again that I have written for *you*, and was consequently at ease in expressing religious sentiments.

Don't study too much during the holidays. Your mind will be a hundred times stronger next quarter if it enjoys a thorough relaxation of four weeks. I for my part am not going to pay attention to book-work, though I will yet manage to study a little. *Prometheus Unbound* will be an agreeable companion in your quiet hours; it proved to be such to me, at least. But let me warn you of one thing: read the last Act most of all, for it is really the best poetry I have ever read; and I think you will to a great extent concur with me in this opinion. The various choruses seem to have something unearthly about them. They don't seem to be the product of a mortal, but of some spirit from another world. And the more you read them, the deeper this impression takes hold of you. People think Shelley was an atheist; but I have never read a poet who re-echoes so deeply the spirit of the Bible and who infuses such an ethereal spirit into me. His poetry is love, loveliness and thought. Take for instance his 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty', pp. 523. Such a tone of unearthly melancholy breathes throughout the whole, deepened by the intensity of Shelley's feeling. What do you think of the second stanza, of the third and second last? By the feelings he stirs up in your heart you can know he wishes to say a thousand times more than he does really say.

Or take the 'Stanzas written in Dejection', pp. 515. Have you ever read a piece which breathes such a mournful tone, so filled with despair? And yet one seems to fall in love with the man's despair, though one doesn't know why. Or read the few

lines 'Lament' on pp. 502—(Your 'Lines' are on pp. 503)—or the 'World's Wanderers' pp. 508 and also the exquisite 'Lines' there. All seem to be voices from another world, speaking of love, hope and purity.

Would you hear how Nature Speaks?—Read the 'Pine Forest'—pp. 496—on a quiet summer evening in your garden, just as the sun sets:—

A spirit interfused around
A *thinking silent* life.

Don't forget your promise of a Christmas piece for me. If however you find any difficulty in the way of doing so, you must not write; at least, I shall not consider it a breach of your promise. I must tell you too that I relish your poetry quite as much as Shelley's; and I suppose you will also relish mine as much or nearly as much (!).

If Minnie¹ comes to know that I have written to you, please convey my best love to her. O what pleasant moments I have spent with you and her this past term!

Wishing you happiness and joy with the coming Christmas and with New Year, I am, Very truly yours,

Jan Tot²

3 Poem [1889]

Box D

The first birthday poem to Isie Krige was written by Smuts in 1887. The second (3) is dated 22 December 1889. A third was written in September 1894, when he was in Strassburg; it is called 'Love and Life' and inscribed: 'To Mia on her 24th birthday, December 22 1894' and was published in the Stellenbosch Students' Annual for 1894-5. The MSS. of all these poems, in Smuts's handwriting, are in the Smuts Collection.

To I.M.K. on Her Nineteenth Birthday

I.

'Tis two long years since last I to thee wrote
A few short lines of love and sympathy

¹ Minnie Rust, sister of Isie Krige. Born 24 October 1872, died 1955.

² Tot or Tottie, an abbreviation of Hottentot, was the nickname of Isie's brother, P. S. Krige, because he had black hair as an infant, though later it became fair. The fair-haired Smuts seems also to have been nicknamed Tot for a while.

On thy then Birthday: but how far remote
 Down Time's dim vistas seems that day to me!—
 So varied are the scenes, such the infinity
 Of those experiences through which the soul
 In its swift voyage to eternity
 Through dismal desert wild, by flowery knoll,
 Through shallows and through deeps unceasingly did roll.

2.

Now once again I wish to talk to thee,
 Now that thy old year's past, now that a new
 Is come—of thy soul-struggle to be free,
 What time the horizon dark and darker grew,
 And gloom o'erspread the heavens, and thick dew
 Fell bitter cold, and winds and storms closed round
 Of killing doubts and questionings not a few:
 Gloom and unrest within, wild storms around
 Banished the Light divine, and Music's heavenly sound.

3.

O gloomy time before thou wert quite free,—
 When in thy soul Despair was king supreme,
 In Thy sweet soul, now shrine of Liberty,
 But then a gloomy dungeon whence no gleam
 Of Heaven's light fell; no, nor did it seem
 As if there was a Heaven, whence the Light
 Of Hope and Faith-inspiring stars might stream,
 As it has ever done, since first the Night
 Of Phantasms and Chaos went bye in hideous flight.

4.

And to that Shrine a worshipper I came,—
 At first a passerby on Life's high way,
 But soon drawn near by its reported fame—
 For in it still with undiminished ray
 Pristine Divinity did shine; 'Stay,
 Lonely traveller,' said an unknown voice,
 'Here drink sweet water, pure and fresh as day
 Here worship in its silence, far from Noise
 Where sleep the unfathomed Depths of Being's divine joys.'

5.

I paused and reverently drew near, the day
 Was sinking in the West; 'twas calm around,
 Nature was hushed, and on her sweet face lay
 Heaven's Smile ineffable, nor stir nor sound
 Of moaning wind,—but all creation wound
 In the deep silence of Eternity,—
 No sphere to sister-sphere made rhythmic sound
 Audible midst the universal Sleep
 As silent Adoration knelt o'er the vasty Deep.

6.

My soul,—it drank that liquid peace and clear
 Till sweet intoxication stilled its thirst
 And then I kneeling worshipped;—Ah me! *here*
 An Image of the Eternal I saw first
 On this wide world, where it is immersed
 And hidden deep in sham and phantom-shell
 Formed in Life's sea, and there with darkness cursed
 And deep opacity, hiding what fell
 Of Beauty and of Truth from the Eternal well.

7.

And then I rose; Heaven's lamps were shining bright
 In the far deeps of Space; dimmed were my eyes
 By some Presence felt but hid from sight;
 Dissolved in Thought I saw before me rise
 A Shape substantial, which etherialized
 My baser presence; Truth's transparency
 Shone with mild radiance in it, realized
 By Soul-communion;—glorious 'twas to see
 That Time-apprehended Form of Eternity.

8.

Then faded slow that angel form away
 And to me sense returned; I looked again
 To see the Temple in the star-light ray;
 But it was gone; first I thought to remain
 In silent Thought and Worship, but the rain
 With grim sarcasm replied, 'Get thee hence
 Thou dreamy loiterer,' I strode off amain
 Deep and long musing on this problem, 'Whence
 Come these airy shapes to this our world of sense?'

9.

And since that time I walked forth many a night
 Into Heaven's open Fore-court, worshipping
 That Presence, which in darkness as in light
 Is felt as Love; embracing in its Wing
 The seen and unseen All, impregnating
 That with its spirit, which is to mortals known
 As Goodness, Truth, Beauty perceived in Being—
 Not in the semblant but the true alone
 From highest Thought and Form even to the humblest stone.

10.

It seemed as if since I knelt at that Shrine
 The Presence which it hallowed, hallowed me,—
 A power of Love and Thought, which was not mine,
 Flowed through my soul from Being's Eternity
 Transcending far, even as infinity
 Transcends, Man's finite utterance; and yet
 'Twas mild—the mildness of Eternity;
 As when the fiery sun enters the red
 Of calm Hesperian climes before its calmer set.

11.

Once afterwards approaching that fair Home
 Of the Eternal Presence, I found 'twas dark;
 The Light had fled, mid other lights to roam.
 My heart within me sank—frail is that bark
 Of precious freight, needing no strong shark
 For sinking, but a tiny wind or breath.
 Of former beauty is no visible mark,
 No sound of joy; an Echo to me saith,
 'With Light is Life departed, here reigns gloomy Death'.

12.

And on Life's journey many a day I passed
 That Shrine deserted; Light I saw not there
 Nor joy the light of life, until at last
 I nearer drew and felt the Presence where
 I first had felt it, but I did not dare
 To nearer go; for my cold heart did ache,—
 What though I panting drank the Presence there
 That Presence could no difference for me make;
 Had not sweet Light of Life that Temple fair forsake?

13.

Thus journeyed I alone, yet not alone,
 For though the Light was gone, there still was Life;
 And in the stillness dark I heard the tone
 Of Wisdom's voice, whence I might learn that strife
 And discord could wring music from the fife
 Of human Soul, like to the harmony
 Drawn from the Soul Divine by Innate Life,
 And its sweet sister fair, Eternal Beauty,
 Which mortals faintly feel, but never here can see.

14.

Nightly I knelt under the open sky
 Before that Temple, for the Presence sure
 Was there, where'er inconstant Light might fly.
 That silent worship done, I felt me pure
 From life's daily taints, and could endure
 Life's struggle with a purer, stronger soul:
 And yet my way, behind, in front obscure
 Seemed to benighted me to miss the goal,
 Whither my soul's desire and aspirations roll.

15.

One weary day after my work was done,
 In deep reflections sunk I walked that way;
 The glorious sun beyond the West had run,
 And stardecked Night was following close on Day,—
 When lo! before me in the Evening ray
 That Temple of the Highest filled with Light!
 Calm and subdued even as mild Even's sway
 My heart sprang up, my soul bounced with the night
 Of fiery energy, seeing that glorious sight.

16.

There are who have, through Hope and through Despair,
 Clung to what was not, trusting it would be;
 Mid frowns and scorn in silence they did dare
 To defy Chance and Circumstance; nor sea
 Nor aught of trouble moved them: they were free
 With the Soul's boundless Freedom; in the dim
 Depths of Spirit their Faith's anchor be:
 Their language this—expressing no mere whim—
 'Though He slay me, yet will I ever trust in Him'.

17.

Such will know how I felt at that sweet hour
 When I saw thee, my soul's pure Temple fair,
 Shining with fuller and yet milder power
 Than in the days gone by; the Presence which ne'er
 Had left thee, streamed through thee everywhere
 With starlike radiance: I loved thee far,
 Aye, immeasurably more than ere
 That darkness came. Nought there was to mar
 That Ideal Woman, my soul's loveladen star.

18.

'Tis past; and yet, who knows how rough the wave
 Still will beat round thee in Life's tempestuous tide?
 What rocks and shoals on this side of the Grave;
 What roaring whirlwinds with black clouds shall hide
 Thy lodestars faint, which through Time's shadow wide
 Smile beckoning?—or what Siren's treacherous song
 Shall fascinate thy sense, for paths untried,
 Quiet and calm to exchange what seems long
 Dreary and dark, where perish weak and strong?

19.

If but that unseen Presence with thee go
 Whose name's Eternal Truth, whose garment Beauty,
 Thou shall victoriously make port; what though
 Wild storms beat on with soul-devouring fury,
 Rocks threaten, monsters teem, songs allure thee
 Of Siren or aught else, without avail;
 Safety and Peace shall beckon to secure thee,—
 As to the Eternal Havens thou dost sail,
 Mid thunder, Lightning, storm, mid darkness, cold, and hail.

20.

That Light—which in thy Spirit's mournful Night
 Shone out with heavenly fire on thy rough way,
 And crowned thee with fresh beauty, and the sight
 Of the Unseen, which leads by Faith to Day—
 For ever with that Presence by thee stay,
 And through Time's Sea of darkness guide thee on
 A Pillar of Fire by Night, of Cloud by Day,—
 Till on the Isles of Light, thy voyage done,
 The storms and tempests hushed, thy martyr-crown be won.

4 Essay [1891]

Box D

An excerpt (pp. 41–48) from an essay entitled *South African Customs Union*, written in 1890 for the J. B. Ebdon prize offered by the University of the Cape of Good Hope. The essay did not win the prize but was highly commended. (See 14 b.) MS. of 58 foolscap pages in Smuts's handwriting, signed *Philomesembrias*.¹

The general maxim in the particular case of South African policies and interests is this: no policy in any Colony or state is sound, which does not recognize, and frame its measures as much as possible in accordance with, the fact that South Africa is one, that consisting as it does of separate parts, it yet forms one commercial and moral unity.

This is the corner-stone of South African politics,—a broad one indeed, and admitting many sorts of superstructures and architecture; provided only it, and it alone remain the corner-stone. And though it forms the chief basis of all possible future prosperity and commercial advancement for South Africa, it is yet strange to observe how it has been a rock of offence to all the States concerned except the Orange Free State; which exception is easily accounted for. For the Free State, destitute of a seaport town and enclosed on all sides by the territories of the other States, has no alternative but that of friendship and union with its neighbours. In this policy, into which the Free State was driven by necessity, the Cape Colony has gradually come to acquiesce. We have had occasion already to notice the selfish policy already adopted by the Cape Colony. As, however, the Colonial views expanded and the commercial horizon widened and cleared, the Colony has gradually come to adopt its present policy not merely because she considers it advantageous for herself, but because it is advantageous for South Africa.

Natal, however, having her sleeve full of sinister and selfish designs and trying might and main to catch all the winds with a view to the realization of her happy destiny as a trading Colony, has not yet seen reasons sufficiently strong to induce her to leave her present penny-wise policy. She is, however, looking intently into the eyes of Transvaal to scan what she means to do; and the latter, what with her inherited disposition, what with her warcryism of Dutch inspired

¹ Lover of the South.

longbeards,¹ keeps yet pretty closely to the old lines: as the following circumstances abundantly shew, first, her obstinate resistance of the Colonial railway extension to her territories, second, her taxation of Colonial imports.

With regard to the first, it will be unnecessary for us to enter into a recommendation or consideration of the commercial efficacy of the establishment of an extended railway system for South Africa. All the countries both of the Old and of the New World that have introduced it have but one testimony to deliver in regard to it. And our Colonial experience gives the same invariable result: our railways have given an impetus to our agricultural and other Colonial industries, and a lift to the general state of Colonial commerce such as to convince the most sceptical of its usefulness and necessity. And railways are exactly the thing which Transvaal with its boundless undeveloped natural resources wants. There, as was the case in the Colony not many years ago, the farmer has still to perform a toilsome and expensive journey of many days in order to bring his produce to Kimberley or some other prominent trading-place. This, as a matter of course, limits the extent of his agricultural labours and production; for when such journeys have to be made for selling his produce, it is not very likely that the farmer will produce overmuch. And the little which he does produce he sells at such enormous prices as put him altogether beyond the necessity of producing more. The commercial impediments, therefore, to an increased application of energy to agricultural and other industrial pursuits, combine with the natural richness of the soil to make Transvaal, though naturally one of the most resourceful and fertile countries in the world, comparatively poor and undeveloped. Not only does the country suffer for this, but the Transvaal Government has also to bear its part in the unnecessary backwardness of trade; for whereas the facilities offered by the establishment of a railway system would have given such an impetus to internal trade that her revenues would have been increased tenfold and more, she seems still to be moping over this cogitation—whether a railway system will not have the effect of denationalizing and demoralizing her people. No, not the railway, but the present

¹ A reference to the Netherlands officials in the public service of the South African Republic.

stagnant and backward state of your industries will demoralize you by making your people indolent, and you rely on the broken crutches of revenues derived from gold-mining.

However, it is not perhaps against railways in general that the Transvaal Government is so opposed as against a railway combination with the Colony; for she wishes to have a railway junction with the Portuguese territories. To which we have nothing to say, so long as man still has his attribute of free will,—except this philosophic remark that, even as in transcendental philosophy, so in political society, a higher, even divine, Necessity spreads itself immeasurable over the little island-world of free will. Which necessity, in the present case, is, as we have said already, the recognition of, and co-operation with, the idea of South African unity. Besides we may bracket here another little thought. If you join the Customs Union of your neighbours¹, your whole commercial future lies clear as daylight before you. Your commerce will pass unimpeded through the secure Colonial harbours, and you may even secretly cherish the hope of one day getting possession—in what way your ingenuity will suggest and time will shew—of one of the finest natural harbours in South Africa. Have you not just been on the very borders of a dispute with Portugal about territories North of the Limpopo? And what with your trade if, after having made yourselves odious to your Colonial brethren, you are cut off from communication with the sea through a difference with Portugal? We leave these points, and many more which your ingenuity will suggest, to your silent consideration.

We come now to the second point, viz. your taxation of Colonial imports. This measure, as we have pointed out already, was the consequence of a similar offensive measure on our part, of which we have had occasion already to repent. And here we may mention what will be one of the most important points of the Customs Union contemplated, namely, that the products of the countries joining the Union will be exempted from taxation on being imported into other states of the Union. The advisability for South Africa of the introduction of this

¹ In May 1889 a Customs Convention had been concluded between the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. Neither Natal nor the South African Republic had joined it.

measure no one will for a moment doubt. As yet the different States and Colonies generally do not produce the same things, nor have they reached the same stage of internal development and foreign trade; so that an inland traffic of very considerable character may exist which will be untrammelled by taxation; and the measure will thus act very beneficially as a material approximation to the principles of free trade. Besides, we have seen already what an amount of ill-feeling this taxation of the products of sister-states has caused, and must therefore endeavour to prevent the recurrence of such an invidious measure. Why should our interests be separated by selfish policies and spiteful measures, so that each state travels its own way, regardless of the weal or woe of the rest? What God and Nature have joined, let us not try to sever: let our different territories live peacefully together, in sweet unison striving after the common good. Let our hearts be strong with the thought that brotherly love has continued pure in our mutual relations and workings.

We have so far been considering the 'Transvaal difficulties' which have hitherto prevented the establishment of a general Customs Union. We have pointed out that the ill-feeling towards the Colony existing in Transvaal and the exclusive policy of its Government, standing with the former in a causal or some collateral relation, form the chief obstacles in that territory. We have also pointed out that, both for the present, and especially with a view to the future, it will be better for Transvaal to join the Union. It remains to be briefly shewn, how we may best try to reconcile the feelings of our Transvaal brethren, and bring them into a line of policy better suited to the commercial unity and ultimate general prosperity of South Africa.

And here we had best begin by sweeping before our own doors, for we are well aware that this ill-feeling is not altogether groundless but has been fostered by our errors and the hard, unkind words we have often spoken, the equally hard things we have sometimes thought, of our Transvaal brethren. It would be well therefore, if we of the Cape Colony silently but no less firmly resolve to 'clear our minds of cant', to behave and live in future like men who know that perfection and an ideal state of benignity are not to be looked for in this world, even

on the part of our good Transvaal brethren. Let us think, and not forget audibly to speak, well of our brethren: who, of the children of men, can calculate either by ingenuity or some higher calculus, the consequences that follow the utterance of an honest word of kindness? We know that one grain of corn, if planted into good soil, will increase a hundredfold and more: who can tell us what product that higher spirit-grain will give? Will terrestrial calculuses not fail us in this case? Will the imagination not perhaps be unable to scale and climb to the height of this great problem? Great is a truly kind deed; but a truly kind word is a thing of a far higher order,—in fact, the rarest thing which this world can shew.

As the illimitable ether-oceans fill the abyss of Space, and only here and there a little point of some island-world peeps out, even so is human life: it is one vast ocean of silent, unspeakable Truth, wherein the tiny stars of articulate true words twinkle. Man can only dimly perceive and enjoy Truth; he is only inaudibly conscious of these truth-oceans: and this consciousness he acquires by *work*, by trying to act out the Truth he feels but cannot express. Sometimes, however, the consciousness rises to such a high pitch that it acquires audibility, and then the Truth is spoken out in words; which is the highest that Man is capable of.

A word, therefore, is a far higher entity or thing than a deed. And Man's supreme function is not to act but to speak, to be an embodied Truth. But as yet he is very far from having realized his highest end. What we call speech is usually no speech at all, but merely sham-speech: and it is this that has induced men to believe that a deed is more than a word. But we hold fast to this faculty, though it usually degenerates into mere sham or semblance, as the earnest of what we shall one day attain,—as shewing the destiny even of us, benighted Sons of Truth. Man was not made to work, but to speak the Truth, and bask in its light for ever.

Into this transcendental digression we have been forced in order to combat effectually that vulgar error of believing that a deed is more than a word. And our Transvaal brethren can appreciate a truly kind word. There is a rough old proverb current among our farmers, which very truly says that one dog cannot fight alone. Perhaps it is not inapplicable to the present

topic. However, in default of truly kind words, we need not rest satisfied with mere professions of kindness, which all know to be hollow enough. By conciliatory acts we can try to gain them over to our views. And just now the English Government has an opportunity to do them a deed of kindness such as will perhaps not easily occur again. We refer of course to the Swaziland affair. Should that territory with its harbour be handed over to the Republic, we will have gone far in repossessing ourselves of the goodwill of Transvaal.¹ And it is with no slight interest that we look forward to the decision that will be arrived at. The decision is certainly a moot point, for very much depends on it. Not only may it affect the future attitude of Transvaal towards the Cape Colony, but the success of Rhodes's Chartered Company² also closely depends upon it. For the Transvaal is in a position either by its goodwill and influence in those quarters to ensure the success of the Company, or—if the decision prove unfavourable to it—to work against it and frustrate the realization of its dearest objects.

A favourable decision will also have the effect of undermining the Portuguese influence in Transvaal, for Portugal and Transvaal will have to take opposite sides in that case; and the Transvaal Government will thus be prepared for the idea of South African co-operation. As far as the English Empire is concerned, three parties will determine the decision which will be arrived at,—the South African Colonies, the English public, and Downing Street. The voice of the *Cape Colony*, as indicated by the public organs and the opinion of the majority of enlightened Afrianders, has been clear in this matter. The Colony has shewn her earnest desire that Swaziland should be ceded to Transvaal. And we certainly think that the general feeling of the Colony ought to have far greater weight in this matter than any amount of noise on the part of those who, unacquainted with South African politics, and as little regardful

¹ The South African Republic had, since 1884, wished to acquire Swaziland and the adjoining territories, including a strip of coast with the harbour of Kosi Bay. Inconclusive negotiations in 1890 led to annexation of the country by Great Britain in 1894.

² The British South Africa Company secured a charter in October 1889, giving it wide control over Matabeleland and Mashonaland, now Southern Rhodesia.

of the *real* interests of the South African populations, advocate the opposite doctrines. The voice of English public opinion is rather uncertain, yet plainly leaning towards the other side. 'Honour' cry 'some, 'Convention of 1884'¹ cry others, 'Imperial Federation' shout a third party,—and the 'more part' know themselves not what they cry. The 'Honour' men need not be seriously considered; indeed, we can scarcely refrain from smiling at them. Let them know, by the way, that never was the word 'Honour' more abundantly used than by the fine Cavaliers of Charles I, by the French of the times of Louis XIV, and such of his successors as preceded the Revolution, and again by the French in the years 1870–71. 'Honour' men! blush at the discredit which the existence of such as you reflect on the British nation, and be quiet in future,—or begone with your 'Honour'!

The 'Convention' men have not yet seriously thought over the case. Let them read that Convention over again; let them read, if they can, the opinions and resolutions, which their actions have of late years branded upon the heart of all South Africa: and let them go to their slates once more, and make a juster calculation. Perhaps you will not then wish to gain a penny at present to lose a pound at last. If not, triumph over prostrate Ireland, ye Henries and ye others: but know withal that you will bite your fingers over Home Rule and even more serious problems at last!

If there is anything however which more than any other will undermine this exclusive policy of the Transvaal Government then it is the new circumstances in which Transvaal finds itself in consequence of the gold discoveries. It is curious to consider how Transvaal, the most conservative of the white communities of South Africa, has, through unavoidable and unforeseen circumstances, come in direct contact and collision with principles and notions most at variance, in fact, incompatible with her own. These old and deep-rooted notions will not, we confidently hope, be given up as useless old-fashioned lumber, unworthy of the consideration of men of these enlightened days; but they will be modified by the influence of the new

¹ The Convention of London of February 1884, which withdrew British suzerainty over the South African Republic but restricted its treaty-making powers. *See* 25.

environment: which is a very desirable thing. The Transvaal character presents to the first sight a rough exterior, but it contains the finest promises and possibilities of all that is greatest in men and nations. We hope that the result of the influences, moral and otherwise, which are now telling on Transvaal, will be the wearing down of this rough exterior, and the emancipation of the inner possibilities. Trade and commercial intercourse will free the minds of the people from crude and narrow notions they formerly clung to; education will transport them to higher fields of view, whence they will discern connections and genealogies, which will keep them from considering those who are not of themselves to be ethnic barbarians. Above all it will widen their hearts and sympathies until Transvaal "is wrought to sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not".¹ In this way many an old prejudice will of itself fall away and the Colony will be nearer to its heart than before. This effect on the general population will immediately shew itself in the disposition and policy of the Government; and the way will thus be paved for the introduction of what will only be a practical expression of a deeply cherished feeling of South African unity.

¹ Shelley, *To a Skylark*.

2. CAMBRIDGE

In 1891 Smuts graduated from Victoria College, having taken the 'mixed' degree in science and literature of the University of the Cape of Good Hope and won a scholarship. In September of that year he left for England to read law at Christ's College, Cambridge; he was there until the summer of 1894. His academic achievements are listed in 35. Only one letter written by him during this period has been traced, but it is, biographically, a gem. Fortunately some letters written to him survive, notably from Professor Marais of Stellenbosch and one from F. W. Maitland. These provide information about his financial difficulties, his quality as a student, his intellectual interests.

The best guide, however, to the growth of Smuts's mind in his Cambridge years is a bundle of essays which he wrote mostly during the long vacations, and which have nothing to do with the tasks set by his tutors. Professor Marais's dismissal of law as 'classified humbug' roused Smuts to defend it in *Law, a Liberal Study*, published in the journal of his College in 1893. His awakened political consciousness led him to consider the bearing of language on the problems of his country in *The Conditions of Future South African Literature*—a tough subject at which he made several attempts; and here again he preached the gospel of white unity. The germ of his philosophical thought appears in an essay entitled *On the application of some Physical Concepts to Biological Phenomena*. The fact that he twice began an essay on *Christ in History* and left it unfinished suggests that he was also making a reappraisal of religious ideas.

Apart from these letters and essays, the most interesting record of Cambridge is a small note-book labelled 'Chips'. It contains, among other personal notes, exacting time-tables of study and the outline of a semi-autobiographical story or novel.

5 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 54

Stellenbosch

26 January 1892

My dear Smuts, Enclosed find draft for £50 as you desire.¹

¹ A study loan to supplement his Ebdon Scholarship from the University of the Cape of Good Hope was made to Smuts by Professor Marais.

Send me an acknowledgment and let me have your signature to a document pledging your life-policy to the amount sent you. Let me also have the policy.

I am glad you have so far given me your confidence as to apply to me for assistance and to let me know what your ideas are regarding the career of life you have chosen. I am honestly sorry you have taken to Law, though I acknowledge you have chances to succeed in it. You may serve your country in Parliament or possibly on the bench, and you may certainly help your fellow countrymen in pleading for justice in their behalf. From a practical point of view, legal study opens up a vast career of usefulness. But from a purely theoretic, philosophic standpoint I consider legal study utterly useless. Law is simply classified humbug, or if you like classified injustice. Those who pore over legal tomes have a contracted view of life. Were I to begin my studies over again I would take to physical science in its widest sense. For nothing opens the mind so much as the study of Nature. And to my mind there are many many ways leading from Nature up to Nature's God.

But I shall not quarrel with you. You have chosen your branch of study. May God help you to have the single eye and to keep the pure heart and to live unspotted from the world, and to return fully equipped for your life work to God's glory alone!

You have a wrong impression of theology. The study is by no means profitless. Some of the ablest minds have found it anything but that. Some of the most consecrated minds have been lifted up by its study to purer views of life and being and destiny, and to fuller devotion to the service of God and their fellowman. But Pascal's words are true: *Il faut aimer les choses divines pour les connaitre*—Things divine must be loved in order to be known.

I do not blame you. There are alas! too many clergymen whose heart is not in their work. If you do not feel the call you had better go where God's finger pointeth. Meanwhile never forget that you have responsibilities as one whose *knowledge* of the truth is by no means small. I still remember Rev. Neethling's¹ advice given to a young man at Confirmation

¹ Johannes Henodi Neethling, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, Stellenbosch from 1858 until his death in 1904.

shortly before his departure to Europe—an advice which I fear has been forgotten by the young man—‘You have a Bible, read it. You have the Church of God, attend it. You have knees, bend them’. Think of these three in your own case. Who knows whether in God’s own wonderful Providence your steps may not be led to the gospel and the pulpit?

As a student of psychology you believe no doubt in telepathy. The very day on which I received your letter your name was on my lips in prayer. The coincidence struck me when your letter arrived. There is a clergyman of Cambridge whose work and works are well-known, the Rev. Mr [H. G. C.] Moule; perhaps you will have a chance of hearing him. May God bless you and guide you and keep you! Very truly yours,

J. I. Marais

6 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 55

Stellenbosch

8 August 1892

My dear Smuts, I have hardly time just now to write; but I shall content myself with acknowledging your interesting letters.¹

Your youthful enthusiasm, the ideals placed before you, the direction of your studies, the problems you try to solve, but which will remain unsolved in the end—these all are attractive to me. I wish you joy.

Mathilde Blind² will not point you the way: nor will George Eliot, who so flagrantly set aside the laws of common morality in her union with G. H. Lewes.

You will find all you need in the Old Book. The more you study human life through its medium, the clearer the light will be.

When I was very much younger than I now am, and was just starting on my career of practical usefulness an older friend wrote to me: ‘All your ideals will fade one after the other. But Jesus Christ is the one ideal which will never lose its power.’

¹ These letters have not been traced.

² Pseudonym of Mathilde Cohen, b. 1841, d. 1896. English writer who, from the titles of her published works, was an admirer of Charles Darwin, D. F. Strauss and George Eliot.

I have felt and experienced this. When my own youthful enthusiasms vanished, and the gloom came down as it settled on Carlyle in that awful *Teufelsdröckhian*¹ [*sic*] period, the one star that shone clear and bright amid the thickening darkness was Christ Jesus, Lord, Saviour, Friend, Helper. Carlyle emerged with some new gospel of work. Mill with some new theory of morals. He who is guided by the Star of Bethlehem has a new aim in life—‘consecration’.

This must be your way too. Find if you like: tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything. The heart unfilled will ever turn to Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

I shall always be glad to hear from you. I congratulate you on your success.² Whenever you want more money drop me a line.

That God may guide you and make you what we all desire you to be is my wish, my prayer for you. Very truly yours,

J. I. Marais

7 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 56

Stellenbosch

20 December 1892

My dear Smuts, Enclosed please find cheque for £50. I have not deducted the premium of your life-policy, because I do not wish you to be stinted in any way. If you want more money you may write. In a place like Cambridge one needs more than elsewhere.

Your letters are always pleasant reading; they bristle with young enthusiasms. You are right in taking a mental tonic occasionally. Sophocles will always do one good. The Greek tragedians have a deeper view of life than the philosophers. I hate Aristotle with his dry prosing. But Plato sometimes displays such a soul-hunger, that I feel near to a human heart, when those marvellous dialogues lie open before me. And yet what is even Plato or Sophocles as compared to Paul? Don't you think 2 Timothy a marvellously interesting letter? What a man was Paul! What a hero, what a saint!

¹ Refers to Herr Teufelsdröckh in Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*.

² Smuts was first on the list in the Intercollegiate Law Examination at Cambridge.

And so you too have been reading *Faust*! How I envy the man who reads *Faust* for the first time. My mind goes back to twenty years ago, when in the Berner Oberland with the Alps in the distance under the verandah of a Swiss villa *Faust* was read to me by a sainted friend, now long ago in glory. What talks we then had—intercourse intellectual, but more especially spiritual. We were equally enthusiastic: she was years my senior, we became quite *gemüthlich* as we read. She was like an elder sister, I but a mere boy, dreadfully in love with someone else, whom she knew. How well I remember the place, the scene, the surroundings!

But do you not find *Faust* so utterly hopeless: no answer to life's great questions? Goethe's own great heart beating against the bars like some caged eagle 'cabined, cribbed, confined'¹ in its narrow home, while all around lay Mystery. Goethe's cry was so natural:

*Ich sehe, dasz wir nichts wissen können!
Das will mir schier das Herz verbrennen.*²

Have you never read Schiller? Compare *Der Taucher* with *Faust*. Read his lyrics. Schiller's was a nobler life and a nobler heart than Goethe's. Goethe was superficial—ethically superficial—somewhat sensual. His whole view of life was 'aesthetic' not 'moral'. *αισθησις*—*Sinnlichkeit*³—prevailed. Professor Gunning of Leyden⁴ has put it beautifully: Schiller knew sin, but not the way to a Saviour: Goethe had no knowledge of sin, and therefore felt no need of a Saviour.

But *Faust* remains incomparable, peerless, unique. One has to read it again and again.

I am glad you met du Plessis [J.]. He is a fine fellow. I note what you say about our theological students.

We are nearing Christmas and the New Year. Solemn time. How little one can do at best. A dear friend sent me a booklet written by herself. She is an authoress. She quotes the words of a sainted woman: 'My life has fallen into three parts. In the

¹ Byron, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV, st. 127.

² I see that we can know nothing! This almost burns the heart out of me.

³ Sensuality.

⁴ Johannes Hermanus Gunning, born 1829, was Professor of Theology at the University of Leyden, 1889-99.

first my cry was: My soul, my soul! In the next: My soul and Thy glory. In the third: Thy glory, Thy glory!

What a lesson for both of us. Try to realize, that you are not your own; that God has a claim upon you, upon your life, your talents, your whole being—and how calm and restful and fruitful such a life will be.

God bless you abundantly and make you what I and others desire you to be. With many good wishes, Truly yours,

J. I. Marais

8 From J. Cameron

Vol. 1, no. 10A

The University of the
Cape of Good Hope¹

10 May 1893

Dear Mr Smuts, I am just in time to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th, though not in time to send a remittance. This shall follow next week. We are pleased to hear of your successful examinations, and trust the future may be as the past has been.

It is certainly unfortunate that the inevitable reduction of the value of the Ebden Scholarship² has somewhat crippled you. I think that under the circumstances the Council would be disposed to do something more for you.³ But—let me speak plainly—the probability of its doing so would in my opinion be greatly diminished if your letter to me were submitted to the Council. You speak of being ‘entitled’ to some consideration, and of being ‘unfairly treated’. I should strongly advise you to refrain from the use of such language. It is in my judgment unbecoming that you should calculate the income from the Ebden trust fund—your calculation by the way is not correct—and assume that whatever the fund yields is due to the holder of the Scholarship. You are entitled to ‘not less than £100 a

¹ Established in 1873 by statute to grant degrees in the arts, the sciences and law on the results of its examinations. It also conducted the Matriculation and School Higher examinations. It did not provide tuition.

² Established to enable a South African student to graduate at Cambridge. Its value was £200 a year for three years, but this had been reduced owing to investment losses.

³ On 27 August 1894 the Council of the University granted Smuts an additional sum of £100 ‘in consideration of his distinguished success as a student at Cambridge’. (Box Q.)

year': that is to say, should the fund not yield this amount, the University is bound to make it up. I will not, if I can help it, show your letter to any member of Council: it could only produce an unfavourable impression, and would doubtless greatly interfere with your prospect of obtaining further assistance. I strongly advise you to withdraw the letter.

I am writing this without any feeling of anger: but I think the kindest thing I can do is to speak plainly on the subject. I make allowance for the irritation natural when one has the impression that he is not being fairly treated: but he should be very sure of his facts before he speaks as you have done. The fallacy which underlies all your reasoning is that you are entitled to all that the fund brings in. *Περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτου τοῦ πράγματος τοσοῦτο εἰρήσθω.*¹ Yours very sincerely,

James Cameron
Registrar

9 To B. van der Riet

Vol. 1, no. 102

Christ's College, Cambridge
18 May 1894

My dear Berthault, Just now I was agreeably surprised to find your very welcome letter in the porter's lodge. I had not the slightest idea what had become of you. From some source or other I had heard that you had prolonged your stay on the Continent; but for what time I was not told. So I had come to think that you had gone back to the Cape already; and your note first made me realize my error.

In regard to my coming to London, you will at once understand that that is out of the question when I tell you that my second Law Tripos comes off in about ten days. This week I finished the first part; and as for the last four weeks I have been devoting my attention exclusively to the work for the first part, I must now utilize all available time to revise for the second. I hope I have done pretty well in the first part, and must make a serious effort not to do much worse in the second. The fact is, very much depends on the position I shall be lucky enough to take on the lists. Here at Cambridge there is nothing to gain

¹ About this matter let so much be said.

except a good position in the results. But I intend applying to the Cape University to give me a grant which might enable me to prolong my stay and studies in London for some time beyond next June. And the light in which they will regard my application will of course depend purely on the proof ocular of the examination list. If they award me any decent sum, I shall settle in London and devote myself for some time to the practical business of law. As soon as I shall have reached the end of my pecuniary tether, I shall pack and follow you to the South.

In regard to the other Cape fellows down here there is not much to tell. Krause [L. E.] and Malan [F. S.] are also in for the second Law Tripos; while brother Rooth [A. T.]¹ is, so far as I understand, making for that happy goal of the undergraduate—the law Special. You probably know by this time that he varied the dull monotony of Cambridge life by a prolonged stay on the Continent; at first I thought Cambridge had lost him forever; but he is back again, and bossing the show at Downing more than ever. He coached the Downing boat last term for the Lent races, and somebody told me that he used to stop the boat and to harangue the men on horse-back in real military style. No doubt he thought himself Napoleon addressing his conquering legions. But what attracted the undergraduates most to his harangues was the oaths with which he interlarded his speeches. He is more funny now than ever before.

Did you ever know Shoyer [A. F.],² formerly of the Diocessans?³ He is in this year for the second part of the Natural Science Tripos. He is in the running for a fellowship at Trinity Hall, and seems to intend staying on at Cambridge. He does not seem to relish the idea of a medical life at the Cape. He looked through your dissertation on the *Dichlorbernsteinsäure* and was pleased with it. I hope that, since last you wrote that treatise, you have been stuffing something more than mere chemistry into your cranium. I wonder whether you have not

¹ Arthur T. Rooth, a fellow student of Smuts at the South African College, Cape Town, as well as at Cambridge, was admitted as an advocate of the High Court of the South African Republic in 1896.

² Arthur Frederick Shoyer, a student at the Diocesan College, Cape Town, graduated there in 1890. Died in London 1924.

³ The Diocesan College ('Bishop's') at Rondebosch, near Cape Town. Founded by the Anglican Church in 1848, it prepared candidates for the examinations of the University of the Cape of Good Hope until 1911. It is now a school for boys.

become more reconciled to the beerpots and beer-philosophy of Deutschland. I intend visiting South Germany next June, and hope to stay there and in Switzerland for some time, and to see German life for myself. I am a pretty devoted student of German literature, of which I am a great admirer in my way.

Well, as you are on the eve of starting the business of life in a practical way, I wish you all success and prosperity—at least, so much as is good for a wise man. The crucible of life is a test to which we all are subjected; I hope and feel certain that the residue in your case will be something worth having. (Don't scorn my chemical metaphors.) When I think of you sailing over the blue waters back to the dear old Home, a deep *Heimweh* will take hold of me, a *Sehnsucht* for those sights 'which I have loved long since and lost awhile'.¹ Remember me to such friends as still take an interest in me and assure them that I am in capital health and spirits. Now, goodbye, old man. *Macte virtute*.² Yours as ever,

Smuts

Thanks for your offer to take [a] parcel; I shan't trouble you, thanks.

Can't *you* run over for a day to say good-bye to us? If your time permits, *do* come; you will be ever so welcome in every way.

10 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 57

Stellenbosch

29 May 1894

My dear Smuts, I now enclose a bank draft for £50, which I trust will reach you in safety. Please acknowledge receipt, and let me know exactly how matters stand between us financially. For your life-policy I have also paid.

By this time you will doubtless have passed your Tripos. I would advise you to back up your request for help by substantial certificates from eminent professors and tutors, if you can get these men to stand by you. Names carry weight in this world, and our University in this respect is thoroughly of the

¹ From 'Lead, Kindly Light,' always a favourite hymn of Smuts. It was sung at his funeral.

² Be strong in virtue.

world worldly. If you fail in your request it will not be through lack of energy on the part of your friends.

I am very strongly of opinion that you should stay as long as you can and make use of every opportunity for improvement. Go certainly to Holland and get your LL.D. If you do go, let me know and I shall introduce you to my friends—the Crommelins at Utrecht, who will for my sake take interest in your career. Mr Crommelins is a *rechter*¹ in Utrecht, and very rich. Two things I trust you will ever keep in mind: the need of your country, the claims of your Fathers' God. What we are as Cape Dutchmen we owe to God's providential guidance, to the sturdy, and reverent, though austere faith of the godly men, who fled before the bigot and oppressor. Too many young men fling away every vestige of religion when abroad. Disgusted with the form, the substance is sacrificed by them. A sad wreck some of them are morally as well as spiritually. I expect better things of you. There is another danger you may run: Never be ashamed of your country and your countrymen! An Anglicized Afrikaner is as disgusting a creature as an Anglicized Scotchman. Take Andrew Lang, with his English drawl, his hatred of the Covenanters, his libellous attacks on John Knox! What a poor, silly creature—Carlyle would say. You understand me. Anglophobia is a curse from which may God deliver us, but Anglomania is an evil equally great. I detest the ultra Afrikaner Bond-men:² I equally detest the Anglicized Afrikaner, whose mental state is by no means an enviable one. I pray that God may make you a large-hearted, liberal-minded, God-fearing, country-loving lawyer!

I note what you say about Schiller, and I acknowledge the justice of your criticism. Schiller is far more *Ideal* than Goethe: or rather his ideals, his aspirations, his aims were higher than Goethe's. Goethe is a genius. Schiller is not. But Goethe's moral

¹ A judge.

² The Afrikaner Bond, a political party founded by the Rev. S. J. du Toit in July 1879 to realize the nationalist aspirations of the Afrikaners throughout South Africa. After 1883, under the leadership of J. H. Hofmeyr, it became the party of the Afrikaners in the Cape Colony, its chief aim being the fusion, with equality of language rights, of English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans into one nation under the British Crown. In 1903 a parliamentary party consisting of Bond members and other anti-imperialists was formed and named the South African Party, but the Bond was not dissolved.

flabbiness casts a lurid light upon Goethe's path. Goethe's view was not the moral, but the aesthetic (*αισθησις*), the sensual. Hence the second part of *Faust* is such a failure. *Das ewig-weibliche*¹ is Goethe's watchword, at least in certain phases of his thought and life. Goethe's view of life is pagan in many respects. Schiller in *Götter Griechenland* mourns over the disappearance of the ancient divinities, because the hard dry rationalism of the day had deprived the world of a living God. He was no pagan at heart. He knew sin, struggle, despair, doubt—but knew not the way out of sin, despair and doubt. Goethe knew little of that 'ineradicable taint of sin'. He cared little for the moral sanctions. Sometimes I think that *Faust* is a rescript of Goethe's yearnings. But *Faust* is awfully unsatisfactory. With kindest wishes, Sincerely yours,

J. I. Marais

11 From F. W. Maitland

Vol. 1, no. 45

The West Lodge
Downing College
Cambridge

15 June 1894

Dear Mr Smuts, Will this do? I have seldom written a testimonial² with a better will.

I think that I shall not be indiscreet in telling you that your place in Part II was due very largely to your exceptionally good essays.

I hope to hear of you again. At the Cape you have a most interesting state of things and I think that what you have learnt here will enable you to see the interest of it. I am always hoping that some day Cambridge will turn out a great Romanist—a Ihering³ who knows English law. Germans I fancy can never put themselves quite outside the system. An English-

¹ *Das Ewig-Weibliche zieht uns hinan*. The Eternal Feminine draws us upward. *Faust*, Act ii, sc. 5.

² Not extant. See 35.

³ Rudolf von Ihering, author of *Geist des römischen Rechts auf den verschiedenen Stufen seiner Entwicklung*, published 1873-77.

man might do it—but then our own best lawyers are always immersed in practice. There is a great chance for you.

I am going to ask you to accept a copy of *Bracton's Note Book*¹ which will come to you from the Press in memory of
Yours very truly,

F. W. Maitland

12 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 58

Stellenbosch

1 August 1894

My dear Smuts, This mail will bring you the news that the University has resolved to grant you another £100. The sum might have been larger; but the University is a strange heterogeneous body of mutually repellent particles. The man who will reform that Council is yet to come. The Council itself is sublimely unconscious of its failings. However I am really thankful that the £100 were awarded to you.

Your frank letter was extremely welcome and I quite agree with you, that you should try to secure a Dutch degree. If more money is needed, you may apply to me. Make use of the time and the opportunities God has given you, and come back to serve the country which has nourished you in whatever sphere it may please God to place you.

Let me honestly say, that nothing has so pleased me of all that was said about you as a little paragraph in the *British Weekly* where you were referred to as belonging to or in attendance at the Presbyterian Church at Cambridge. Do not think that I attach any peculiar sanctity to church connection or ecclesiastical tradition; but that you have kept up the old Cape habits and have not cast your bark adrift, as so many have done, was most cheering to me.

But I am not going to preach. I say again: God bless you, and let your soul say Amen.

You mentioned a little book in one of your letters—some selection from Goethe—which you were going to send me. I

¹ Edited by Maitland in 1887.

shall be very glad to have and read it. I have lately been studying Ibsen—(*Brand* and *Peer Gynt*). With many good wishes,
Very truly yours,

J. I. Marais

13 Essay [1893]

Published in *Christ's College Magazine* 1893.

LAW, A LIBERAL STUDY

Some time ago I received a letter¹ in which the following paragraph occurred: 'I don't think highly of a legal course of study. Law is nothing but classified injustice, or classified humbug, if you will. And I have noticed that its study has a narrowing or contracting influence on the minds of those who resign themselves to the joys of legal tomes.'

If some slight allowance for over-colouring is made, this dictum may be considered as fairly expressing the popular lay opinion on the subject of law and its direct influence on the mind and character of the legal profession. At any rate, of those whose lot it has ever been to have recourse to law-courts, at least half would endorse this unequivocal condemnation without a moment's hesitation. And my own experience has uniformly tended to deepen my sorrowful conviction that Cambridge is no exception to this rule of prejudice. The Law Tripos is still considered the proper refuge for those that have failed in literature and science. However much the study of science has liberalized the views of the undergraduate world (*pax cum ceteris*),² it seems to have had as yet but little effect in piercing the accumulated hoards of prejudice, by which the fair form of jurisprudence is obscured in the popular mind.

Under such circumstances it is useless to talk of law as a liberal study. Far better is it to consider some facts, and urge some considerations, which will make the class of persons in question pause; which will make them suspect that things legal are, after all, not precisely what they seemed. After I have succeeded in producing that wholesome state of doubt, I shall return to the consideration of my subject proper.

¹ See 5.

² Peace with the rest.

The favour of three faculties has to be conciliated—classics, mathematics, and theology. The others need not be considered here because being, like law, the younger offspring of the great mother, they are under the same necessity of conciliating the favour of those three older step-sisters. Neither need Girton and Newnham be noticed; and that not only because they do not form a new category, nor because they too have the fault of youth, but simply because they are necessarily friendly to law: the weak and the outcast are as constant to law 'as winter to bad weather'.

Some classical men, more prone to copy the faults and errors than the wisdom of their great masters, are likely to be misled by the example of Socrates, who seems to have attended the law-courts on only two occasions. They should, however, consider that this was very unwise of him; and that a little more regular attendance would have prevented him from appearing there on one occasion as a very unpractical judge, and disappearing from them on the other as a condemned criminal.

Some, again, will ask: Why did Plato put the lawyers so far down in the list of classes which he drew up in the *Phaedrus*, with a view to ascertaining the degree of nobleness in the various components of Athenian society? I beg these gentlemen to consider that Plato was quite ignorant of law, and that his last treatise—on the Laws—has done more injury to his reputation than even his speculations on the Nuptial Number.¹

Others are prejudiced against law by Cicero's disparaging remarks about lawyers. But let the classical man only consider what salutary effect on his Asiatic style the practice in writing *formulae* would have had!

In this pessimistic age, however, Tacitus has probably far more votaries at this place than the foregoing authorities. And perhaps his grim statement about the code of the Twelve Tables—*duodecim tabulae fmis aequi juris*²—has done the Law Tripo

¹ Dr Eave (of Newnham and London University) positively maintains (as against Dr [J.] Adam) that the nuptial number—at least in a civilized and moral society—is one. But what about widows and widowers? [Author's note.]

² The Twelve Tables are the last word on what is fair and just.

more harm than any other single passage of classical literature. However, the legal civilization—I don't say of the Roman Empire—but of entire Europe, is a sufficient answer to that gloomy sneer.

Mathematicians and Evolutionists will understand the value of legal study if they read the following passage from Leibnitz (*Epist. ad Kestnerum*): *Digestorum opus admiror; nec quidquam vidi, sive rationum acumen, sive dicendi nervos spectes, quod magis accedat ad mathematicorum laudem. Mira est vis consequentiarum, certatque pondere subtilitas.*¹

Theologians will be reassured if they are reminded that at least one lawyer was pronounced to be very near the kingdom of heaven; and that from Moses to Paul, from Calvin to [Connop] Thirlwall, lawyers have been the great lights and ornaments of the Church.

Having thus cleared the ground, I now turn to my subject proper. And first, to prevent any misunderstanding, let me try to state what I mean by a liberal study. A liberal study is a study which liberalizes, or gives to the student that wonderful something which the moderns call culture. But what does culture mean? Culture means cultivation, or that process by which the barren soil of the individual mind is fertilized from the vast hoards of human experience. And that individual possesses the greatest culture, who has, through association with nature and the individual and collective life of past and present humanity, learned to think deepest, feel most, and see farthest. According to this view even senior wranglers may possess some culture. For what is mathematics but a colter for breaking up the soil of a mind naturally more hard and rugged than usual? I notice this interesting fact because it is but too often forgotten.

Now if the definition of culture just given is correct, it may be shewn without much difficulty that law is one of the most liberal of studies. There are two ways of getting at the outside world of nature and the experience of the race: the study of the motive and regulative *forces*, and the study of the physical and

¹ I admire the collection *Digesta*, and I have not seen anything which more closely approaches the merits of the mathematicians, whether one considers the shrewdness of argument or the force of expression. The power of the deductions is amazing, and subtlety vies with weightiness.

social *forms*, be they nature or the institutions of society. If a student wishes to know what really constitutes the world or permanent environment of his personality, he may learn that by studying the forces which have acted and still act, and the concrete results, physical or social, in which the activity of those forces has been incorporated. Some of those forces are temporary, some permanent; some of those concrete results or forms are accidental, others are permanent and universal. Now it is obvious that he who desires to have a complete knowledge of the objective world must know all those forces and all those forms. But as this is absolutely impossible, the question arises, of which of these is the knowledge most indispensable? Which of these objects of knowledge demand most imperatively the consideration of him who wishes to have the best and highest culture? Now these are obviously the *permanent* forces and forms. The others, though they are most worthy of careful study, yet, as being only temporary or accidental, are of secondary importance. That course of study therefore gives the knowledge best worth having which involves the study of these permanent forces and forms. Which faculty at Cambridge approaches nearest to this course of study? For the sake of brevity I confine my remarks to the humanitarian—as distinguished from the purely physical—courses of study.

The study of literature, ancient and modern, involves the study both of social, intellectual, spiritual forces and of the forms in which these forces have embodied the varied results of their activities. Now the weakness of literature as an instrument of culture lies in that inextricable confusion of the permanent and temporary, the universal and particular elements, which is bound up with its very existence as literature. Every great writer does, in one degree or other, represent the dynamic forces which move contemporary society; but with these general forces are inextricably mixed up those which act on him in particular and as an individual. Similarly with regard to the forms: language is indeed one of the most permanent forms of human society and activity, but the study of language as an instrument of thought and communication is not peculiar to literature, seems in fact much more germane to law. But besides the permanent form of language, there are other forms in literature, which cannot be called general, much

less permanent. Such is the form called art. Now, that literary art is not a permanent form is shewn by the diversity of opinion that still prevails in regard to its nature, and the still greater diversity in practice. In addition to this, there are still more particular and individualistic forms, such as the mannerisms of thought and expression peculiar to each writer.

This short analysis will perhaps serve to shew that in literature the elements of evanescence and permanence are so thoroughly incorporated with each other, that it is a matter of insuperable difficulty for the student to make the necessary separation between the two; and in any case, to get at the universal he has to wade through oceans of irrelevant particular, in which, unless his swimming powers are of the highest order, he is usually overwhelmed and drowned. And the result is a wonderful specimen of culture.

Want of space prevents me from entering upon a similar analysis of the various elements, and the relative importance of the various elements, in historical, economical, mental, ethical, and theological science. Suffice it to say that in all these the purity of the universal—both force and form—is vitiated by the necessary prevalence of the irrelevant particular elements, such as the isolated special, the individualistic, the subjective, and the ultra-objective (or ultra-subjective?), otherwise called the supernatural.

With law it is otherwise. He who thinks a little about the nature of the subject and the part it plays in society will easily see that along the channel of law are flowing the most permanent currents of human thought and activity. The greatest work that can be done in this world is the harmonization—in accordance with the law of freedom—of the subjective with the objective, of the unit with the whole. Now that is the function which law professes to discharge, and, considering human frailty and perversity, does fairly well discharge. It endeavours to combine the opposing forces that respectively fight for *meum* and *tuum* into a working harmony; and it endeavours to effect that harmony in accordance with the highest principles of fairness and justice that prevail at any particular epoch. And as this harmony is not static but dynamic and progressive, it follows that in law, as it develops through

the ages of human history, will be found the deepest, truest, most permanent thoughts and social achievements of progressive humanity.

Now the student who conscientiously works for the two Law Triposes cannot fail, unless his intellectual vision is dim indeed, to catch some glimpse of this vast river of permanence, winding its noiseless way through the continents of human experience. For he is supposed to study those primordial elements of law that prevailed in the embryonic stages of society, and to follow the evolution of law, as evidenced specially in that of Rome, through the various stages of Roman development down to the time of Justinian, where, before the wild war-whoop of Teutonic Europe, the echoes of the classical world finally die away. Then he is to trace the course of English legal and constitutional development through the feudal ages, through the periods of renovation of modern Europe, up to our own day. What course of study more useful and fascinating than this ?

I have no time or space to indicate some of the stages through which the *internal* evolution of law has passed, but it may not be without some interest briefly to mention some of the stages of its *external* development.

It is not easy to determine where law began. Certain it is that it did not begin at the beginning. In this it resembles philosophy. Says one of my metaphysical authorities, 'the beginning and the end coincide',—which, in the case of metaphysics, is likely enough. Law does not begin with the individual, but with the family, and in its earlier stages it only takes notice of the individual in his relation to the family. What is the nucleus, the centre of gravity or attraction of this family? Some jurists say the father, others say the mother; my friend Diggins, who is of an imaginative temperament, maintains very unacademically that it is the daughter. From regarding the family, law increased its domain until it embraced the State. In Roman law this extension can be traced more or less clearly. Then, allying itself with history, Roman law entered upon a most brilliant course of conquests, until finally under the Empire it had become the law, not of one nation, but of nations; a cosmopolitan law, whose domain was coextensive with the Roman Empire.

But in working out this harmony or uniformity, Roman law paid but too little attention to the principle of freedom—an indispensable factor in the permanence of social and national harmony. It was reserved for modern Europe to elaborate, in its international law, the equilibrium of States in accordance with the law of freedom. But neither is that the end. Already there are signs on the political horizon—very faint and small as yet—foreshadowing a transformation of Europe, if not of the world, by which the independence of the States is to be changed into interdependence; and when that is once accomplished, and civilization has spread its healing wings over all the world, even to the far-off islands of the sea, then the reign of cosmic or world law shall begin. And while law is thus steadily marching to the end, it is also developing towards the beginning. The person is recognized more and more; the rights of personality become more and more inviolable. Thus shall come to pass that consummation which Cicero foresaw, in which there would be but one law for all humanity, and that law would be identified with the highest form in which the ethical ideal of humanity has yet been embodied:—*Nec erit alia lex Romae, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes et omni tempore una Lex et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit; unusque erit quasi magister et imperator omnium—Deus.*¹

J. C. S.

14 Essay [1892]

Box D

Two excerpts (pp. 9–14 and 32–33) from a 35-page essay entitled *The Conditions of Future South African Literature*, written at Cambridge, dated July 1892 and signed *Philomesembrias*. MS. in Smuts's handwriting.

(a) Whatever the efficient causes, the fact is there that the Dutch and French² now form the most homogeneous people possible, having one uniform national character and deriving

¹ And there will not be one law at Athens, and another at Rome; one now, and a different one later; but one eternal and unchangeable Law will for ever rule all nations; and one will be as it were the master and ruler of all—God.

² Descendants of the French Huguenots who emigrated to the Cape of Good Hope in 1688–9.

from the same traditions the same national ideals. It remains now to consider the other considerable part in the old South African population, we mean the English. Both the lateness of their becoming the third foundation-stone of the Temple that is to be, and the extent to which they have coalesced with the older inhabitants at the Cape justify one devoting to them a separate notice. English influence at the Cape has been felt in two ways: the immigrants of 1820 have added a new and most permanent factor to the South African population, especially in the Eastern part of the Cape Colony, and the introduction of English officials and English social and political methods in the West or oldest part of the Cape Colony has considerably, we may safely say permanently, influenced the condition of South Africa. The latter aspect of English influence we need not consider here, as we are now concerned with the composition of the population of the Cape. We are perhaps justified in saying that the fusion of the English element with the rest has not been as complete as that of the Dutch and French. A few considerations will make this clear and at the same time dispel what may at first sight seem to be a shadow on the field of our future literature. It must be noted that the bulk of the English immigrants settled in the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony whereas the West was the principal home of the older population. The difference between the two sections is thus very often to be accounted for on purely geographical grounds. So far as our observations have gone in the West, we can safely say that, disregarding English new comers for the present, the harmonizing and complete fusion of the two elements have of late been going on very rapidly. Race-antipathy between the Franco-Dutch and the older English population there is absolutely none: nor is there any difference—barring private liberty of judgment—between their political, moral and social ideals. The same hopeful testimony is borne by many competent observers who have lived long in the Eastern Province. If, now and then, the East tries to go its own way in matters political and commercial, its action is to be accounted for on the ground of commercial competition, not surely on that of racial antipathy. The relation is not like that between England and Ireland, or Ireland and part of Ulster. On the great questions of race and state (such, for example as the Native

question) there is no fundamental difference of feeling; or at all events there is no fundamental social difference which will necessarily result in driving the population into two opposed camps on vital South African problems.

One other cause which has tended, though with rapidly decreasing force, to prolong the partial separation between the English and the Franco-Dutch is the linguistic difficulty. The general colloquial language of the latter section of the community—called Afrikaans—consists chiefly of corrupt Dutch with a strong admixture of English, French and other elements. It is exceedingly simple and flexible in structure, with even less inflectional forms than are found in English; and it is said to be very easily acquired by foreigners. It is not yet sufficiently developed and refined to express high intellectual conceptions and complex relations and may therefore not yet be called a literary medium.¹ But for expressing wit or humour as well as the primary emotions of the human heart—and in this it reveals the character of the people—it is scarcely second to any language with which we are acquainted. The difficulty which its existence creates, especially for future South African literature, may however be very easily over-estimated. All English people who have been domiciled in the country for any length of time know it sufficiently well for practical purposes, while all the Franco-Dutch who have the slightest pretension to education, know English. English and Dutch have nearly the same privileges for official purposes, though for educational purposes English is almost exclusively used.² These remarks apply *rigorously* only to the Cape Colony, but in a general sense they may be taken to apply to the whole of South Africa. It is probable that English and Afrikaans may continue to coexist for a good while yet—perhaps much longer than is generally supposed. Natural causes and the laws which regulate linguistic phenomena must ultimately decide the struggle

¹ This view was prevalent among Afrikaners until about 1920, although it was increasingly challenged by an important minority.

² Afrikaans was not at this time a recognized written language. Dutch, i.e. Nederlands, was the written language in use in South Africa, mainly in the two Republics. In the Cape Colony at this time Dutch might, by law, be used in Parliament and Magistrates' Courts but it had no status in the Civil Service. An Act of 1865 made its use and study in schools illegal. It was nevertheless taught, especially in the rural schools, but ineffectively.

for supremacy between the two. Should English ever come out victorious it is certain to be considerably modified—both in spirit and in idiom—by adaptation in harmony with the new environment. The French of Paris was spoken very indifferently at Stratford-atte-Bowe.¹

We have dilated on this topic of the composition of the old elements in the population of the Cape, because it is of the greatest importance: the social homogeneity of South Africa is the *sine qua non* of whatever future may still be in store for it; without that it can neither have a history nor a literature. And if during the uneventful history of its past that quiet work of welding and fusion and amalgamation has been going steadily forward, we need not be ashamed of its barrenness in such matters as take the imagination of the vulgar by storm. There are many who think differently; who look upon the past history of South Africa as another proof of the statement that the Anglo-Saxon race is the only really progressive race of the world; that it alone knows the secret of founding great empires on the scenes of former barbarism. The British globe-trotter, going to those southern parts, notices the antique repose of those regions where the old Franco-Dutch element predominates. He thinks of their long and unfruitful past and compares their history with that of Australia and other new homes of Saxondom. He goes to Port Elizabeth, to Kimberley, to Johannesburg, where British enterprise is stirring; he sees their immense activity and hears their maddening noise,—and feels highly comfortable and satisfied with this new verification of his belief in the destiny of the Anglo-Saxons. Returning to England he forthwith descants, in high-flown rhetoric or even dithyrambics, on the glory and energy of the British race as compared with other races of men. And much he pleases his readers, but above all himself. We do not find fault with this. That Englishman must be more than philosopher who does not feel his heart beat faster at the sight of what British enterprise has really effected on the face of the globe: and if, in the enthusiastic self-consciousness of national greatness the

¹ 'And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.'

Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Prologue*, description of the prioress.

British traveller is now and then tempted to transcend the impalpable limits of truth, he still deserves our fullest sympathy. But it may be pointed out that there is very often quite another side to the matter, and that the comparative method (we mean that of the versatile globe-trotter), however much it may increase *his* self-satisfaction and edification, is the very last to lead the world to truth. Our noble friend has probably forgotten the saying of one of England's great teachers: 'he also serves who only stands and waits'.¹ The work which a nation does in the dark, the unnoticed digging into the earth, not for gold, but the rock foundations which will ensure the internal stability and permanence of the superstructure, is as great as any that a people is called on to perform at any period of its history. And if that work takes a long time, we should not complain: rather let us rejoice, knowing what virtue there is in time and how, by moving slowly with her, our imperfect methods are gradually adjusted and assimilated to her great methods, and our development becomes founded—not on the lines indicated by some shortlived national passion, be it for gold or other—but on the eternal and immutable lines of nature and of history.

What has been the real condition of the greatness of England, the condition which has rendered her world-empire and her world-commerce possible? What is that secret power which has enabled her vessel to sail smoothly over the most dreadful internal storms and to be but propelled all the more swiftly by the tempests from without and within? The answer is important, not only in the historical development of Europe but for the light it throws on the past and future of the community at the South which we are describing. That indispensable condition is the complete equilibrium which has existed for centuries between the various strata of English society. So permanent was the basis of English society, so harmonious—in spite of superficial differences of interest—all its class-relations that even such struggles as those between Catholicism and Protestantism and between Roundhead and Cavalier have resulted in no permanent cleavage of society. The national consciousness, wrought up for the moment to the

¹ 'They also serve who only stand and wait.' Milton, 'On his Blindness'.

intensity of schism or revolt, gradually calmed down again to that normal state of lower consciousness where great differences of opinion disappear below the normal life-level. With this national equilibrium the other essential factor of self-government through all the stages of the social order co-operated to educate Englishmen to that great ruling capacity which they have always subsequently displayed. This factor is however of minor importance for our purpose, as self-government is already a distinguishing feature of all the branches of the colonial system. It is clear that if the past history of South Africa has effected this amalgamation of the fundamental factors of its white population and thus laid the basis for all enduring work on the part of coming generations, it need not be looked upon as barren and inglorious. We do not wish to institute a comparison between the histories of other great settlements and that of the Cape, and to depreciate the former for not perhaps being able to point to such a period of national quiet and laborious waiting, for their circumstances are likely to be quite different from those of South Africa. But we do wish to point out that the enthusiasm of the globe-trotter is slightly one-sided and may be very mischievous. If the peculiar conditions of South Africa justify the character of its past history, and if that past enables it to look forward with hopeful confidence to the future, the work done during the last 250 years is most worthy of admiration. Finally, it must never be forgotten that the race struggle is destined to assume a magnitude on the African continent such as the world has never seen and the Imagination shrinks from contemplating; and in that appalling struggle for existence the unity of the white camp, to which the past has so signally contributed, will not be the least necessary condition—we will not say of obtaining victory, but of warding off (the ultra pessimists say of postponing) annihilation.

(b) We shall quote from a letter sent us by one of the young writers for the last J. B. Ebden Competition:¹

I almost blush to think that my thoughts (please not my words) will find a place in the grand work on the Literature of South Africa that you are writing. As you know, I was one of the unlucky wights that

¹ Smuts seems to be quoting from a letter written by himself which is not extant.

tried their heads and hands at the grand subject of a 'Customs Union for South Africa'.¹ After my defeat I consoled myself with the Apostle's sound remark: Many there be who run the race, but one only gets the prize (pardon my ignorance of his exact words).² Yet I cannot say that I ever felt sorry for having made the attempt; so far from it, I have always been intrinsically pleased with the way in which I spent my time while writing that competition essay.

There are many students who engage in certain courses of study, prescribed by universities, without deriving the slightest intellectual or moral benefit from so doing, and who are afterwards obliged to look back to the time they have thus employed as practically mis-spent and lost. What, for instance, is the use of studying Greek as far as the Matriculation standard for the majority of students? Can the slight, almost imperceptible degree, in which their memories have been strengthened by the mastering of Greek vocables be considered as in any way an equivalent for the time and energy they have thus spent? Surely not; such work is useless.

But set any student, be his powers what they may, to write an essay on a subject which is not altogether above his comprehension, and see what the result will be on the mind of the writer. Here is no mere passive absorption of indigestible material which only brings the mental apparatus into disorder. Here you have *education*, if derivation means anything! Some virtue, however small, is drawn from the mind of the writer. The writer has made some conquest, with his own powers, over his surroundings, intellectual or other. His courage is braced, he feels more confidence in himself; and so he marches from victory to victory, from power to power! Many a fellow never knows his own power or weakness until he sits down to write an essay. His jacket goes, his waistcoat goes, his perspiration comes—yes, that's a time for him! To a few it is a revelation of their higher self. The writing of this essay (the first long one I have yet written) taught me more about myself than years of bookgrinding had done.

But there is another point which commends the Cape University to my lasting gratitude for having prescribed the subject of a Customs Union for South Africa. In trying to master the problem and its relation to other South African problems, I had to study the relations which have existed between the various territories of South Africa during the last quarter century; and to that study I owe the birth of my political consciousness. As I studied old Blue and other books, it dawned for the first time on me, that I too was a member, for better or worse, of the great South African community, and that as such I too would be called upon to contribute my drop, or fraction of a drop, of thought or action

¹ See 4.

² 'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?' *First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, ix, 24.

to the great 'river of ocean' which has still to sweep through the Augeas-stable of the South.

So far our young correspondent.

15 Essay [1892-3]

Box D

Excerpt (pp. 18-22) from a 36-page essay entitled *On the Application of some Physical Concepts to Biological Phenomena*, written at Cambridge between September 1892 and January 1893. MS. in Smuts's handwriting.

And as energy constitutes a permanent part of the universe, we may say that the creation of the worlds is still proceeding as of old, and will proceed so long as matter will remain an indestructible source of possibilities, and there will be force to regulate the struggle into existence of those possibilities.

III

(1) *Force—Life*. Before proceeding further we must now so generalize the conception of force explained before as to make it apply to phenomena which transcend the sphere of the purely physical. In view of the extension of the functions performed by force, which we have just mentioned in connection with the possibility of a continued creation of energy, we may now attempt to generalize the conception of force. Force is a (regulative) power latent in matter which becomes active when parts of matter are found in certain relations or are grouped in certain collocations. This definition being quite general, it will be found that special elements will have to be added to it, if we wish to obtain a definition of any special force. In the case of attraction, for instance, we shall have to add the special connotative differentia that the relations which are the necessary conditions for the existence of attraction have existed so far back as the human mind can think. It must be noted that the necessary condition of force is not always the *local* positions occupied by the various parts of matter, but more general *relations* existing between those parts. The fact implied in this general definition of force may be otherwise stated as follows. Disorder, anarchy, chaos is the exact opposite or contradictory of the substratum of the universe. Now as that substratum

contains in it both the elements of rest and of unrest, and this may lead to anarchy, the element of unrest or force has been constituted the harmonizing principle. Wherever, therefore, in the universe any part or parts of matter might prove unruly and this might lead to schism, the universal economy is that there home rule shall be established for the proper regulation of those parts, and that the home rule established by a special force shall be in harmony with the universal cosmic rule.

What is life? Life has been defined as the adjustment of internal relations to external relations. Against this admirable definition several objections may be brought.

(i) Life is not entirely an adjustment between external and internal relations. It usually happens that the vernal flower dies in the blindest sunshine and mid the whispering of the softest of zephyrs. Here death arises not from a disharmony between the external and the internal relations, but rather from a disharmony among the internal relations themselves. And this fact is quite general; disappearance of life is, as a general rule, due to a rupture between the internal relations that constitute any individual case of life; and even when death results from the operation of external causes, it is the introduction of disharmony among the internal factors in consequence of that external operation, rather than the destruction of the equilibrium between the external and the internal, that causes death. The definition seems to favour the view that death is the consequence of a continual struggle between life-entities and their environment, and that with the abolition of that struggle and the establishment of universal harmony death would disappear; whereas the fact is that death is due to the operation of natural forces which might last whatever Elysian happiness and concord are yet in store for the universe.

(ii) The definition seems to beat about the bush without really attempting to solve the difficulty. Life, if it is anything at all, is certainly a unity. Instead of attempting to state what this unity is, the definition only draws attention to the complex elements that enter into its constitution. The definition does indeed contain a unifying conception—that of harmony or adjustment between various relations, but we have tried to shew that it is erroneous and misleading. The centre of gravity of the conception of life must be situated in the constitutive

relations, not on the borderland between these and the external relations.

Notwithstanding these objections that may be urged against the definition, it must be frankly admitted that it contains important elements of truth and that, since its appearance, it has done good service to the cause of science. It erred through being too analytical, whereas the definition of life must give expression to an eminently synthetic conception. The idea of a 'harmony of relations' which it contains marked a long step forward in the right direction. The question only is, cannot we make a step farther? There can be no harm in trying. We have already given a definition of natural force and attempted to give a more generalized definition of force. It is evident that life corresponds exactly to the conception of force which we have tried to make clear. Life is not energy; it is not development; it is not motion; it is not an equilibrium of motions or a harmony; it is a force. Life is a regulative principle, latent in the material substratum, which rises into activity whenever, and continues to act as long as, certain parts of matter have certain relations to one another or form certain collocations. Life is not the totality or the aggregate of the constitutive particles, nor the aggregate of the relations of those material particles. It is something more, something over and above all that.

3. THE MIDDLE TEMPLE

The documents of this period show that, after taking the Law Tripos, Smuts allowed himself a busman's holiday in Strassburg. There he read law and philosophy and fed his taste for German literature. In October 1894 he entered the Middle Temple and he wrote the Honours Examination of the Inns of Court at the end of that year.

Although there are very few records of this stage of Smuts's life, one of them is of special importance, namely, the manuscript of his unpublished book, *Walt Whitman—a Study in the Evolution of Personality*. Shortly after the Anglo-Boer War this manuscript was temporarily lost; there is no record of how it was recovered. Nor is there any record of when he began to write the book. He submitted it to a London publisher not later than April 1895 and his subsequent attempts to get it published are also recorded.

Smuts himself considered that the last two chapters of *Walt Whitman . . .* were 'the most interesting generally' (20) but the editors, authoritatively advised, have decided to print the first chapter.

16 To M. J. Farrelly

Vol. 1, no. 103

Balthansgasse 6, Strassburg

27 August 1894

Dear Farrelly, I wish to trespass on your time just for a few minutes. The cause is simply this. Perhaps you are not aware that I have been prosecuting my studies at Cambridge largely through the financial help of a scholarship I obtained in the Cape University. The allowance is sent me every six months on my application (*accompanied by certificates of continued study*) for it. At Cambridge I could always get the certificate—a purely formal document—from my College tutor. In London you are about the only barrister who knows that I am continuing my studies, both theoretical and practical (by attendance at court).

Would it be too much to ask you to send me such a certificate? Of course I could have applied to Cleaver [F. R. M.]; but as he is known to the University authorities, they might

suppose that there has been collusion between us (both Cape men), and this might unduly delay the next remission.

I am enjoying my time at Strassburg very much. I study alternately Hegelian philosophy and English conveyancing (with a view to the studentship, if I find time to do all the work). Hope to be in London beginning of October.

Remember me to Cleaver, if you see him. Yours most faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

P.S. Please send here at your earliest convenience.

Draft form:—

I hereby certify that Mr J. C. Smuts, B.A., LL.B., is pursuing his professional studies both by reading and by attendance at the Law Courts.

A. B.

Barrister-at-law

Middle Temple E.C.

I sent certificates to you 1 September 1894. M. J. F.¹

17 To M. J. Farrelly

Vol. 1, no. 104

Balthansgasse 6

Strassburg

5 September 1894

My dear Farrelly, The capital certificate which you have sent me has just come. My best thanks for the same. I hope to find you in excellent form on my return early in October. Yours very faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

18 From a publisher

Vol. 1, no. 15

Chapman & Hall Limited

11 Henrietta Street

Covent Garden, W.C.

16 May 1895

Dear Sir, Your book is full of thought clearly and well expressed but at the present moment Walt Whitman is so little

¹ Farrelly returned Smuts's letter with this endorsement.

considered in this country that I fear, from a commercial point of view, we must regretfully decline your book. Had your work dealt with a topic of enduring interest it would have given me very great pleasure to have published for you.

I can assure you that anything you may offer to me in the future shall meet with full consideration from me. In the meantime allow me to express my admiration for the way you have handled a difficult [word missing] and the sound and safe teaching which your work contains. Very truly yours,

Oswald Crawford
Chairman and Manager

J. C. Smuts Esq.

19 To a publisher

Vol. 1, no. 105

Draft letter.

Common Room
Middle Temple, E.C.
18 May 1895

Dear Sirs, I have written a booklet called *A Study in the Evolution of Personality: Walt Whitman*, which I am anxious to submit to you for publication.

The idea of the work is briefly this. It is an attempt to apply the method of evolution *synthetically* to the study of man. For this purpose I introduce a new conception of 'personality' which is developed in chapter I. This 'personality' is assumed to develop like any other organism; and this assumption enables the student to state the entire mental life of an individual—including all his ideas and opinions—in terms of the evolution of this personality.

In chapter II I investigate and arrive at the particular 'form' of Whitman's personality, and in the remaining chapters I trace as rigorously as possible the development of this personality. In this connection I discuss many of the most important problems of modern thought—such as naturalism, spiritualism, mysticism; the idea of the whole, the cosmic faith, the idea of God, democracy, the future literature of democracy, etc.—as phrases and products of the evolving personality.

You will perhaps ask why I took Whitman, who is certainly not popular in this country. I took him, not only because his is perhaps the most difficult personality that could be taken and thus supplies a very severe test of my general theory, but because his life and work raise so many of the great questions which surround personal evolution. At the same time Whitman is only used as an illustrative instance, and his unpopularity cannot seriously affect the circulation of the work.

My theory claims ultimately to supply a new standpoint for psychology, ethics, religion and cognate subjects; but this larger aspect of the subject is left for a later work.

Such of my friends as have seen the MS. speak very highly of it. A gentleman of great culture and personally quite unknown to me, who has seen the MS. writes to me: 'Your work is full of thought clearly and well expressed. . . . Allow me to express my admiration for the way you have handled a difficult subject and the sound and safe teaching which your work contains.'

A short and easy section in the middle has still to be written.

The large sale of [Benjamin] Kidd's *Social Evolution* makes me hope that my book will sell too. I anticipate a good circulation in America. I am, Yours very faithfully,

J. C. Smuts, B.A., LL.B.

Messrs Longmans, Green & Co
37 Paternoster Row

20 To a publisher

Vol. 1, no. 106

Draft letter to the editor of the *Nineteenth Century*. This was apparently the last attempt made by Smuts to get his book into print. It was never published.

Board of Executors Chambers
Cape Town
11 September 1895

Dear Sir, By same Mail as this I send you a MS. on the subject of *Walt Whitman: A Study in the Evolution of Personality*. My original intention—which I have not yet quite abandoned—was to publish it in book form. But W. W.

seemed to me to be so little considered by the British public as to make it inadvisable to do so. I now wish to submit the MS. to your kind attention for the purpose of serial publication in your Review. If you are willing to insert the whole in a series of articles in the *Nineteenth Century*; or even if you are only willing to insert the last two chapters, which I consider the most interesting generally, I shall be very much obliged. I am willing to make such changes as you may deem advisable for the purpose of serial publication.

I may add a few words as to the general nature and contents of the booklet. It has been my idea for some years that philosophy, ethics and theology sadly require a new foundation—a basis which shall reconcile the imperious needs of Society and the individual with the rational intellectual activity. Miss Caillard's attempt in your Review¹ to reconcile the intellectual with the spiritual or non-rational elements in progressive revelation or evolution seems to me most unsatisfactory. I have thought that it must be possible—by a searching inquiry into the human personality and its evolution through the individual life—to see how naturalism, spiritualism, etc., etc. are all phases and stages of the evolving personality; and thus to reconcile the jarring factors in life and thought. Such an investigation would supply that basis for our higher intellectual and spiritual life which is for thinking people at least the greatest need of the times.

From the table of contents² you will see that I discuss, from my standpoint of personality and apropos of Whitman's development, many of the most perplexing problems and ideas of modern life and thought. The 'idea of the whole' which you will notice I use as a key to the vexed problems of ethics, theology, democracy etc.—seems to me to be the nucleus round which the spiritual thought of the immediate future will probably crystallize.

Incidentally my booklet may, by attracting the attention of some of your readers, serve to rehabilitate the reputation of one of the most large-minded and spiritual natures; a man withal of keen prophetic insight whose merits have been obscured by his eccentricities.

¹ No such article is listed in contemporary numbers of the *Nineteenth Century*.

² Omitted by the editors.

If you decide to reject the MS., I shall be very much obliged if you will kindly send it my friend Mr. Herman Brinckner,¹ St. John's College Cambridge. Communications you may address to me. Faithfully yours,

J. C. Smuts

P.S. As you will see, a small section in chapter 4 has still to be written. But it can be finished in a very short time.

21 MS. of book [before April 1895]

Box C1

Chapter I of *Walt Whitman—a Study in the Evolution of Personality*. The chapter, entitled *Method and Subject*, has been copied from a MS. in Isie Smuts's handwriting with emendations by Smuts. The Smuts Collection also contains the first MS. draft of the book.

Evolution is perhaps the most striking—certainly it is the most telling—instance that could be given of the dynamic force which an idea is capable of exercising over the thoughts and opinions of men. Up till the middle of this century scarcely more than a whim of the philosophers, it has since then succeeded in all but transforming our entire conception of the universe and man's relation to it. What the Copernican theory has done for astronomy; what the Newtonian dynamic has done for our knowledge of the mechanism of the physical universe; what the molecular kinetic has done for our knowledge of the constitution of matter,—that the method or idea of evolution has done and still is doing for our comprehension of the biological world. That from mightiest system to tiniest particle all matter is in eternal motion in obedience to certain supposed forces; that the phenomena of life—from its lowest to its highest manifestations—are inseparable links in a chain of individual and collective evolution,—such are the ideas that have proved fruitful in our endeavour to pierce the mystery of our surroundings. Vast and indeed revolutionary as have been the results of the idea of evolution so far, it may be confidently asserted that its greatest triumphs remain still to be won in the field of patient and unflagging research.

¹ John Augustus Herman Brinckner, educated at Victoria College, Stellenbosch and the Universities of Cambridge and London, became a medical practitioner in London and died there 16 April 1964.

It is true that some people of too weak faith or too sanguine temperaments are already beginning to experience the lassitude of reaction. And this reaction is undoubtedly accelerated by the disgust which they feel for an error just the reverse of their own. In proportion as evolution has become an idol in the Baconian—if not the Biblical—sense; in proportion as a sort of halo or sentimental haze has been gathering round the grim scientific conception of Darwin, others have begun to forswear evolution as a will-o'-the-wisp. To some it has become Talisman, to others Anathema. The latter may sometimes be overheard using such excited language as the following:

Your men of genius, your great thinkers and experimenters have been applying the evolutionary method to the elucidation of the great problems of society, ethics, religion. What has been the result of all their work? Have they been able to explain how the flower of spontaneous self-sacrifice has bloomed on the blood-stained fields of competition and the struggle to live? Have they been able to explain the nature and sanction of those impalpable sentiments which alone can cement human society? Has this precious method of evolution enabled them to hear and interpret that cry for purity and holiness which, reaching through the loud bawl of sordid interest, rises ever more audibly from the far depths of the human soul as the ages roll on? Has this new telescope focussed more successfully the uncertain rays that visit us from the surrounding and pervading spiritual world? Away with evolution and whatever else justifies selfishness, saps practical morality, drains human life of its spiritual well-springs, and calls the highest incarnations of our ideals mere illusions!

And yet it seems that the real work of evolution still remains to be done. Its real battles are still to be fought and won in those very departments of biography, society, ethics, and religion, in which it seems so far to have been conspicuously unsuccessful.

In fact, it is doubtful whether the method of evolution has ever yet been vigorously applied in the higher ranges of genius, of creative imagination, of transcendent mental and spiritual force. One need only turn to the ordinary books of literary criticism to see that their writers have not yet—except in the vaguest possible sense—apprehended the idea or the method of evolution. The method still adopted by the vast majority of critics in examining the work of great thinkers and artists produces the impression that a man's ideas and opinions

are realities separate and separable from him, to be considered as distinct entities apart from the mind that produced them. A man's work is treated—not as the vital outcome of a certain mind or personality, to be explained only by reference to that personality and its evolution—but as a congeries of opinions, views, conclusions on things in general. These opinions are then either approved or condemned according to the ethical and artistic standards which the particular critic happens to patronise. As if the product of an organic intelligence is a dogma, a system of opinions, and not rather a life! As if the mind of man is like a herbarium, filled with the dead and dried thought-specimens carefully classified, and not rather a garden in which the inner life-forces manifest themselves in varied and changing forms! So long as such utter disregard of the idea of evolution still prevails, it is perfectly idle to say that its work is done and that the time has come for it to retire gracefully from the scene.

Part of the ill success of evolution in these higher ranges of life is no doubt traceable to the wrong manner in which the idea has been too often applied there. In the first place, there has been too strong a tendency among evolutionists to state the phenomena of the highest regions of biological development in terms of the lower and even the lowest; to explain, for instance, human morality and progress by reference to the principles which seem to dominate the animal world. It is exactly parallel to the mistake, which was formerly made, of interpreting life in terms of force and energy.

Secondly, the application of the idea of evolution has hitherto been too analytic. Evolution is the process in life, both of plants and animals. Now as life is the most synthetic phenomenon we know; as indeed it is the original source of our idea of synthesis, it follows that the method which professes to explain its phenomena and laws ought to be very largely a synthetic one. The most successful anatomy of the body and the mind will not bring us nearer to the fundamental conception of the life itself which pervades the body and the products of the mind. We do not get at the whole by a careful study and summing up of the parts; for the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The true life in each individual is that unity which underlies all its manifold manifestations; it

is not the sum of those manifestations. And evolution can only become a fruitful method in the study of the higher regions of life, when its application becomes largely synthetic; when it is applied to the phenomena of life not only separately and individually, but especially as a whole.

How far has this synthetic character of evolution been recognized in its application to the study, say, of human life? The only important application, that has so far been made, occurs in the science of psychology.

Now how far has the application of the evolutionary conception in psychology been synthetic? On looking into the current textbooks on that subject, I find that psychologists first divide the mental or psychic phenomena of human life into the unconscious and the conscious. The unconscious phenomena they set aside as not properly within the scope of their subject. The conscious mental phenomena are then divided into intellect, feeling or emotion, and volition, and these are then separately anatomized in their historical development in the growing individual.

This seems all very ingenious; and the results arrived at are no doubt of greatest importance and interest. But where is the synthesis? My own reading—which I frankly admit to be very limited—has never yet brought me to any treatise which shows, or tries to show, how the mind develops and acts as a whole. In the spacious home of the mind the mistress is never to be seen, but always instead the obtrusive janitor, waiter, and butler! Surely, till some humble corner is accorded to the mind in her own house, evolution has not yet found its true application in psychology. While the analytic application of the evolutionary conception to psychology has led to very important results, far more important results may be anticipated from its synthetic application.

In order to arrive at the starting-point for this synthetic application, we must first cease to cut up the mind into intellect, feeling, and volition. We must also cease to divide its phenomena into the conscious and the unconscious. Thus we arrive at undifferentiated and unanalysed mental life. What do we gain by ignoring these distinctions? Among others we gain this: that now for the first time we shall have to study the influence of the unconscious part in our mental life along with

that of the conscious part. This unconscious part—the vast region of mental twilight in which the primordial forces of our cosmic nature disport themselves without the interference of the will or the prying of the consciousness—is undoubtedly very important, if not the most important, part of our inner life.

Thus then we arrive at the life of the individual so far as it has effects in the department of mind. By studying mental life as a whole—including both the conscious and the unconscious factors in it—we shall soon get beyond the range of the pure psychologist. It is sometimes said that the historical study of mind is either psychology or nothing. I think it is evident from what has just been said that the synthetic study of mind—involving as it does factors which psychology ignores—will expose the error lurking in this dictum.

Two questions now suggest themselves. First, what is the best or the true starting-point for the synthetic evolutionary study of mental phenomena? Second, what is the practical method to be adopted in such a study?

The general answer to the first question is evident. The mental life, considered as a whole, is the starting-point for the synthetic study of mental growth. But this answer is in itself too vague to be of any practical use. Let us therefore examine it more closely.

What is the most fundamental and characteristic property of all life—both in plants and animals? It seems to be the property of developing, growing, or evolving from within, from itself, and of reorganizing all nutritive material according to its own inner requirements. The process by which life maintains and develops itself is not merely mechanical; it is not even merely chemical. Behind the assimilative chemistry of any form of life lies that mysterious force which determines the nature of the chemical and mechanical processes by which life is nourished. And every form of life, every plant and animal, is a centre of such peculiar transforming power, in accordance with its own requirements. Every individual case of life seems to say to itself as follows:—

I am small, but I have an irrepressible desire to become great, as great as it is possible for me to become. I am going to use whatever means I am capable of using to forward this greatness of myself. But I vow that

it will be and remain in the deepest sense my own greatness. Not the material I use, nor the aids, will build up my greatness. I am going to do everything myself, and in my own way, and for my own pleasure.

This property of growing from itself, in itself, and for itself, seems to be the most fundamental of life, and is as characteristic of the highest form, man, as of the lowest forms.

Now from this fundamental property of universal life follow two conclusions of paramount importance.

1. Every individual form of life is a unity, a centre of activity dominated by one fundamental property. It is this ultimate internal unity that shapes the innumerable products of life into an orderly and harmonious whole.

2. In every individual form of life this fundamental property operates according to its own inherent laws and forms. It may be, of course, that several forms of life are similar, so similar as to be indistinguishable. But even then it is impossible for them to be the same. Plant A may be perfectly similar to plant B; but they are nevertheless two plants, each with its own fundamental laws or forms of growth. These laws or forms may be perfectly similar, but they are as perfectly distinct in the two cases. The only difference between the two perfectly similar plants will be that of being or life: the same in all other respects, they are absolutely distinct in regard to this most fundamental particular.

The foregoing remarks about life being intended to be quite general, apply to the human being. In other words, each human individual is a perfectly distinct entity, animated by a single, indivisible unity of life, which has its own distinct laws and forms of growth. This distinct, single, indivisible unity of life in each individual I call the personality of that individual.

This conception of personality must not be confused with the 'transcendental ego' or '*das intelligible Ich*' of the metaphysician, nor with the 'self-consciousness' of our friend the psychologist. I have already pointed out that this ultimate inner life is largely, if not chiefly, unconscious. And as for the transcendental ego, an obstinate and regrettable stupidity has hitherto prevented me from piercing the metaphysical haze which surrounds that mystery, and makes the literature on the subject a sealed book to me. All that I have been able to gather in a general way is that the personality is rapidly becoming one

of the points at which metaphysicians are concentrating their forces and planting their batteries. While cheerfully admitting and even ardently wishing that the metaphysical batteries may yet do serious execution, I have sometimes a suspicion that the elevation of their aim is somewhat too great, and that their projectiles may proceed clean over the mark. Nor is it likely that this regrettable result will be prevented by the lowering influence of gravity on the projectiles, for at the giddy altitude from which they are discharged the force of gravity must be practically zero. What with this difficulty, and the bewildering smoke which seems to be an inevitable accompaniment of metaphysical warfare, the personality may yet rejoice at a complete escape from the much-vaunted attack. Leaving the absolute consciousness, the transcendental ego, and similar entities *in abstracto* and *sub specie aeternitatis* to those who are competent to deal with them, I return to the physical or biological personality as above indicated.

It has been said that every individual case of life—and therefore also the personality—develops according to its own inherent and fundamental law or laws, which may or may not be similar to the corresponding law or laws of other cases of life. The term ‘law’ means in this connection principle of growth; and as in any case it is unfortunate, I shall now try to get rid of it by substituting a different conception.

There is a certain conception in philosophy which, though usually said to correspond to nothing existing, has yet had an apparently indestructible vitality which invests it with a profound significance. That conception appears in Plato as the ‘idea’, and, it seems, in a very similar form in Aristotle and his followers. It appears in Bacon—the professed enemy of Aristotelianism, and sometimes called the father of modern science—as the ‘form’. It appears also in Hegel—whose philosophical tenets seem to differ considerably from those of Plato, Aristotle or Bacon—under the guise of the *Idee*. Disguising itself in different shapes, the conception remains yet the same in substance. To the artistic Plato the ‘idea’ is that perfect type of which the things existing in the phenomenal world are but fragments or imperfect reflections. To the scientific Bacon the ‘form’ of anything is that underlying, inherent cause of it, which will account fully for its existence, properties and

activities. To the dialectic Hegel the *Idee* of a thing is that immanent activity or life-principle which, in the absence of external interference or impediments, will perfectly realize the potency or capability of that thing; and sometimes the conception shifts from this immanent activity or process to the fully evolved and perfect result. It is obvious that if the personal element is eliminated from these variations the result in all three will be the same. But the most curious thing about this protean conception—making it one of the most interesting phenomena in the history of philosophy—is the fact that such sane master-minds should have staked their philosophic reputations on something which is alleged to be non-existent. The common-sense Bacon in particular makes the existence of ‘forms’ the very basis of his theory of induction, the new organon which—in his belief—was to revolutionize knowledge.

I should submit that the thing corresponding to the conception does really exist in one case; and that the conception has been extended by analogy to other cases. *The conception is a self-intuition, is the reflection in the mind of the nature of the personality.* These profound spirits, probing their own thoughts in order to find some typical truth or idea which might assist them in compassing and co-ordinating the vast universe of phenomena, found in their consciousness the reflection of the one thing of which they and all have the deepest knowledge and experience; namely, the self. That is so far a truism. But further: they also saw (I assume and submit) in that reflection the very nature and essence of the personality. If this assumption is correct, we see that there is in the personality a characteristic activity—distinct in each individual—of the immanent life, the unrestrained and natural development of which will realise the full promise and potency of that life. This characteristic activity or capacity I shall call the *form of the personality*. The form of the personality is thus the Hegelian *Idee* inherent in the Personality; it is that special and characteristic activity of the life in each individual, which contains both the limits and capabilities of the individual growth, and whose uninterrupted operation will exhaust the capabilities of that personality. This form of the personality resembles closely the idea of fate. It is an immanent fate operating in every individual, which can be thwarted, but never

fundamentally altered, by circumstances. The form is primordial and immutable, but its full development can be retarded or stopped in some respects or other by sufficiently powerful external factors. It is also distinct and more or less different in all men.

This conception of the personality is professedly an assumption; but it cannot be considered a violent one.¹ The following chapters are written with a view principally to testing the actual working value of this conception in one particular case.

For this purpose a certain individual will be selected. An attempt will be made to arrive at the form of his personality—the fundamental characteristic of his mental constitution. Then an attempt will be made to show how this form, under the unfolding influence of his experience, and in coalescence with elements furnished by that experience, produced the ideas of his maturity. Finally the gradual modifications which these ideas underwent during the later periods of his development will be traced. This booklet is thus an attempt to arrive at the ultimate form of some individual personality, and then to deduce its entire mental evolution from, and express it in terms of, this form of the personality and its evolution.

It will thus be seen that, difficult as is my task, it is in fact merely an attempt to thoroughly test what I consider to be the fundamental conception of the personality. I cherish the hope—not without some cause—that that conception is fraught with far-reaching results for philosophy, ethics, religion, etc. But the consideration of these larger issues falls largely beyond the range of the present unpretending little work.

Such being the starting-point for a synthetic application of evolution to the study of mind, what is to be the practical method of that study? It is the objective method. The records of the individual's life and work and development are carefully examined with a due regard especially to dates; and from such evidence the general laws and results of his evolution are stated. The form of his personality furnishes the germ-plasm of the mind; its actual evolution must be traced by a full historical examination and induction. It will thus be seen that I propose to treat the subject of personality from a biological

¹ A particular proof of its correctness will be given in chapter VII. The general proof falls beyond the scope of this work. [Author's note.]

point of view, and exactly as any individual plant or animal might be treated. The method and ultimate assumptions will be practically the same, though the results may be poles asunder.

The next point is to decide on a suitable individual on whom to test the practical value of the conception. Now biological phenomena are generally best studied in the most perfect and fully developed specimens. Our patient must consequently have a well-marked personality and a striking capacity for development. Even strongly-marked personalities vary in the character and range of their development. In some the assimilative and reorganizing power of the personality is much more conspicuous than in others; in a third class the range of development is very small.

The last class includes the (perhaps) exceptional cases of arrested development or early maturity. Carlyle may be taken as a typical instance of it. He wrote *Sartor Resartus* in early manhood; he continued to write to an extreme old age. Yet one who reads through all the volumes of Carlyle ultimately comes to the conclusion that in *Sartor Resartus* his ideas had almost reached the stage of finality. In his later works he repeated those ideas; he applied them in different departments of history; he applied them in the criticism of contemporary life, thought, politics. But there was almost no observable development in them. The x's, y's, z's of the formulae, in which he summed up the results of his thinking on the great problems of life, and the tendencies of the modern world, were solved in early manhood; since then they had remained constants, invariable in form and almost invariable in meaning. His temper became a little more irritable; his attitude a little more dogmatic; perhaps he hankered, or his theories made him hanker, a little more after the 'great man'. But his fundamental ideas remained practically the same.

Of the class of imperfect assimilative capacity Tennyson may serve as a specimen. A careful perusal of his works in their chronological order certainly produces the impression that there was considerable development in his mental activity. But it is impossible to attribute the change in his work to an organic development of his mind. The changing phases of his work mark—not the growth of a personality—but the reflex of

certain phases of his times. Such development as there is in his work is not so much the outcome of an internal, organic growth of his mind, as of an infusion *ab extra* of the thoughts current in his generation. The man does not so much mould the experience, as the experience dominates the man.

Goethe is a type of the first class—of the men who have a history, not only of experience, but also of personality. In reading his works the student feels that he is in the biological world. He is not watching the changing colours of some psychological kaleidoscope; he is following the evolution of a personality. The phases are those of a growing organism; the ideas—their form and content—mark the gradations in a soul's evolution. Goethe's experience was thoroughly assimilated and transformed according to the form of his personality. His mind was organic, his work remains vital.

In order to study the evolution of the personality in the most instructive way, our subjects must be selected from the last-mentioned class; must be, like Goethe, an organic, developing personality. Besides this, the main purpose of his life must have been his own personal evolution. In men who have devoted their powers to the attainment of some other end—such as some great scientific or political achievement—the personality may be just as well-marked and evolutionary, but it cannot in their case be studied under the same favourable conditions.

Considering all these requisites, I have found my choice practically limited to two men: Goethe and Walt Whitman; and I have selected the latter. In many respects Goethe appeared to me an ideal personality for a subject; vast in range of power and development; massive; profound; while his main ideas have now for almost a century been leavening the world's thought. And Goethe has this additional advantage that his life is perhaps better known than that of any other man that ever lived. But the Goethe literature has grown to such incomparable [*sic*] dimensions that its accurate study must be the work of a laborious lifetime.

On the other hand Whitman's work is confined within narrow limits comparatively. Besides, Whitman presents enormous difficulties; and if the method of personality enables us to surmount them with more or less success, that will be the best test of its practical value. It has often been remarked

by those even who have studied Whitman most seriously and successfully that his work is confused and incapable of reduction to order or system. That his work is apparently confused, and that it is often as difficult to understand as it is important and fascinating in parts strikes every sympathetic reader at the first glance into *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman himself knew this, and has given characteristic expression to it in one of his earliest pieces:—

No dainty dolce affettuoso I,
 Bearded, sun-burnt, grey-neck'd, forbidding, I have arrived,
 To be wrestled with as I pass for the solid prizes of the Universe,
 For such I afford whoever can persevere to win them.¹

If the root conception of personality enables us to arrive at a point of view from which it will be possible to see the organic and biological, if not the logical, harmony of his work, it will have done much to recommend itself to general acceptance.

Lastly, Whitman has this supreme claim to be the subject of a sketch like this—that he has tried more carefully and persistently and perhaps successfully, and probably at a greater sacrifice than any other writer, to make his work as faithful a transcript of his own mind and growth as possible. *Leaves of Grass* and his other works exhibit to us his personality in all its extravagances, irregularities, its weakness and power; we see him in his life among men and women, and in his loneliness; in strength and maturity; in weakness and decay; his virtues and his vices are written down with the same unflinching fidelity. He enables us to enter behind the curtains of his experience. We pass the ropes and pulleys and stage-apparatus (of which there is not much in his case). We take up our position in the innermost recesses of his personality; and from there we can survey the whole stage; we can see the engines, the motive powers, the entire machinery; we can see how everything is moved; and (if we are patient) we can see the sources and purposes of the motion. The self-restraint and reticence which gave such dignity to the Olympian of Weimar are absent from Whitman's work; and while this circumstance greatly diminishes the value of his writings from an artistic point of view, it indefinitely increases their value, considered

¹ Starting from *Paumanok* 15, l. 5.

as 'human documents'. That Whitman had a vast poetic endowment has been admitted even by those who do not count themselves among his admirers. He was aware of his unique opportunities. And yet he was willing to sacrifice any possible reputation to his intense desire to be himself and reveal his real self to the world. Are we not justified, and even bound, by such invincible fidelity to truth and such an apparent sacrifice, to inquire carefully into the nature and value of his self-revelation or egotism, as the case may be ?

PART II

ENTRY INTO POLITICS

26 OCTOBER 1895—5 OCTOBER 1899

1. THE CAPE COLONY

By October 1895 Smuts was back in South Africa and in practice as an advocate in Cape Town. This decisive stage of his life lasted little longer than a year. Again it is a period for which his papers yield very few letters but, as before, a number of his writings survive to throw light on his activities. In this instance the writings are journalistic pieces. He wrote them partly, no doubt, to make a living and ward off boredom while waiting for briefs, but chiefly because politics was fast becoming a passion—so much so that he had hardly settled in Cape Town before he was making his first public speech at Kimberley.

A selection of Smuts's newspaper articles, both in English and Dutch, together with the reports of two of his public speeches, make up the first group of documents printed below. Up to the time of the Jameson Raid these utterances reflect his belief in and support of the Rhodes-Hofmeyr combination in the Cape Colony as the starting-point of an eventual federation of South Africa. But after the shock of Rhodes's betrayal his public statements were those of an impassioned Afrikaner nationalist, looking to the South African Republic to lead his country into future union.

A more personal outcome of Smuts's venture into journalism was the beginning of a life-long friendship with Olive Schreiner after he had written admiring but critical reviews of her *Stray Thoughts on South Africa*. After his marriage an even closer friendship grew up between Olive Schreiner and his wife.

Some of the letters of this period show Smuts in contact with old college friends and in a role which he was often called upon to fill—that of draftsman of public documents. Another letter (35) poses one of the more tantalizing 'if's' of South African history. And in 40 Professor Marais regrets the decision of his protégé to abandon the home Colony.

22 Article [1895]

The second part of an unsigned article published in *De Volksbode* of 23 and 26 October 1895. The identification of this and other unsigned articles of 1895-6 as the work of Smuts rests partly upon their inclusion in the volumes of press cuttings made by Isie Smuts and bequeathed

to the State Archives in Pretoria. *De Volksbode*, founded in 1887, expressed the views of the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1894 it became the organ of the Church and was called *De Kerkbode*.

EEN REISJE NAAR DE TRANSVAAL

DE SLUITING DER DRIFTEN EN ANDERE POLITIEKE VRAGEN

Tot dusver heb ik mij bepaald bij de beschrijving van de nationale ontwikkeling der Transvaal zooals ze een bezoeker treft. Nu wensch ik een woord te zeggen over de groote maatschappelijke en politieke vragen die er reeds bestaan of nu ontstaan. Behalve de vragen van inwendige politiek zijn er tevens andere met betrekking tot de verhouding der Transvaal tegenover de naburige kolonies en staten. Doch deze zijn alle zoo nauw aan elkander verbonden en vloeien zoo uit dezelfde oorzaken, dat het raadzaam is ze tezamen to bespreken.

Het belangrijkste en diepstgaande feit dat men in aanmerking moet nemen bij het bestudeeren van de Transvaalsche politiek is eenvoudig dit: het metaalrijkste land ter wereld wordt bewoond door een kleine bevolking die zich bijna uitsluitend aan de veeteelt wijdt. Dit herdersvolk verricht de roemrijkste helden-daden voor hunne vrijheid die ten laatste met volle succes bekroond worden. Daarna komen een overgrootte menigte uitlanders om de mijnen van dat land te bewerken. Nu van al de mogelijke verhoudingen die de Transvaalsche regeering had kunnen nemen tegenover deze uitlanders, heeft ze een gekozen, en die is, de lijn scherp te trekken tusschen burger en uitlander en haar best te doen het bewind uitsluitelijk in de handen der burgers te behouden. Zij hijgt naar de oude pastorale toestanden die reeds aan 't verdwijnen zijn en verzet zich hardnekkig tegen de mijn- en industriele maatschappij die zich met verbazende snelheid ontwikkelt. President Kruger is tegen Johannesburg gekant, omdat het een leven is dat hij niet begrijpt, en vreest; hij sou, indien hij het kon, de minerale krachten van zijn land te niet doen, omdat hij ziet dat hoe meer mijnen er zijn, hoe minder de toestanden

en het volk waartoe hij behoort beduiden. Zooals een hooggeplaatst ambtenaar zich naief tot mij uitdrukte: 'het mijnwezen is de ondergang van den echten Transvaalschen geest en zin'. Tegen dat mijnwezen en zijne maatschappelijke gevolgen vecht President Kruger met al zijne krachten. Zonderling verschijnsel! De regeering van een land gekant tegen al de krachten die dat land hebben groot gemaakt en nog grooter zullen maken!

Doch wij kunnen met het ideaal van den ouden veeboer-President sympathiseeren. Hij vocht voor de vrijheid van zijn land, omdat Engeland dreigde in de natuurlijke ontwikkeling van zijn herdersvolk in te grijpen. Nu vecht hij tegen de industriele maatschappij in zijn land, omdat hij ziet dat ze een nog grooter bedreiging is dier natuurlijke ontwikkeling. Immers de materialistische ontwikkeling van Johannesburg, Barberton en Zoutpansberg ondermijnt op gevaarlijker wijze dan een Engelsche overheersching ooit had kunnen doen de toestanden, waaronder het oude boeren- en burgervolk zich had kunnen handhaven en gelden laten tegenover andere volken. Als ware Afrikaners zouden wij ook wenschen de burgers een sterk en invloedrijk deel der toekomstige Transvaal te zien: en daarom hebben wij medegevoel met den ouden President.

Maar nu komt er nog een ander element in de overweging dezer vraag. Wij bedoelen het Hollander element. De vraag van den President: 'hoe zijne burgers staande te houden tegenover de uitlander bevolking' beantwoorden Dr Leyds en zijne Hollandsche ondersteuners door het classieke: '*Divide et impera*: verdeel en heersch'. Zet Natal tegen de Kaapkolonie, haal den Vrijstaat uit het Tolverbond met de Kolonie: zet Portugal tegen Engeland: zet den Transvaalschen Afrikaner tegen den kolonialen Afrikaner; zet de anderen tegen het Engelsche bestanddeel in de uitlanderbevolking; zet de kapitalisten tegen het Johannesburgsche gepeupel, en zet kapitalist tegen kapitalist door concessies en andere middelen: en terwijl de uitlanders elkander wederstaan, zullen wij heerschen en vet worden: ziedaar de Hollander politiek. De sluwe Hollander vecht met verborgen, soms zelfs met vergiftigde wapenen, en heeft zodoende het Afrikaansche ideaal van 'Eendracht maakt macht' een steek gegeven, waarvan het niet

in geslachten zal herstellen. Hij is verder gegaan. Hij heeft getracht de aloude veeten van het Europeesch vasteland op den Zuid-Afrikaanschen bodem over te planten; maar is hierin gelukkig nog niet geslaagd. En nu ligt Zuid-Afrika innerlijk verdeeld en verscheurd en om haar vertreden lichaam viert de Hollander zijn ongodisch feest. Zoo wel is deze politiek van verdeeldheid geslaagd dat het Afrikanerdom met al zijn gevoel, het kapitalistendom met al zijn geld, het uitlandergepeupel met al zijn getal niets vermogen tegen het klompje Hollanders en verhollandschte Transvalers die het bewind in dat land voeren.

Het is niet mijn plan al de gevolgen der Hollander politiek hier na te gaan. Laten wij ons slechts bij de sluiting der driften bepalen. Deze stap is een uitstekend voorbeeld van het zoevevengenoemde feit, dat de politiek van verdeeling de tegenwoordige Transvaalsche regeering in staat stelt beide de Kolonie en de uitlanderbevolking te trotseeren. Men zou denken dat een dergelijke stap fataal moest zijn voor eenig gouvernement—en zoo zou het ook, maar niet voor het tegenwoordige; en wat bekommerd de Hollander zich over de toekomst? Hij weet zeer wel dat zijn leven in de Transvaal even lang is als de macht van den tegenwoordigen President zal duren. Nu is het zijn uur en moet de Johannesburgsche koe gemelkt en de Kaapkolonie benadeeld worden ten einde de Hollandsche aandeelhouders der Nederlandsch Z. A. Spoorwegmaatschappij te bevoordeelen. De Kaapkolonie is voor het tegenwoordige machteloos, want wij gelooven dat de Conventie haar niet op dit punt helpt, en Johannesburg bepaalt zich bij remonstreerende brieven over te zenden. Tusschen Johannesburg en Springfontein zijn er thans over de 1,400 beladen trucks die niet ontladen kunnen worden omdat de N.Z.A.S.M. niet opgewassen is tegen het groote goederenvervoer door de kolonie. En waarom al deze tyrannie en dit onnatuurlijk gedrag? De Transvaalsche regeering zegt dat zij meester is binnen hare grenzen en dat is niet ver van de waarheid, oppervlakkig beschouwd. Het is hier echter niet een vraag van bloot recht, maar van internationale welvoegelijkheid en natuurlijk gedrag. En in de oogen der beschaafde wereld zal het gedrag der Transvaal tegenover de Kolonie haar niet tot eer strekken.

En wat heeft de Kolonie niet reeds direct en indirect voor de Transvaal gedaan? Was het niet de sterke zedelijke

ondersteuning van het Koloniale Afrikanerdom dat de Transvaal hare vrijheid schonk? Heeft de Kolonie niet door hare spoorweg verlenging vier jaren geleden den materialen vooruitgang van Johannesburg een grootsten stoot gegeven? Wel was de spoorwegverlenging ook tot het voordeel der Kolonie, maar de Transvaal won het meest daardoor.

Maar niet alleen hebben wij ons geld naar de Transvaalsche grenzen gezonden; ons bloed hebben wij ook gezonden. Een groot gedeelte van het opkomende geslacht van knappe jonge Afrikaners zijn naar de Transvaal gegaan en hebben daar tot haren vooruitgang aanmerkelijk bijgedragen. Ja, wij betwijfelen niet dat de Kaapkolonie in de komende jaren diep de uitputting harer jeugdige krachten zal gevoelen. En haar verlies is het gewin der Transvaal. Iemand zeide onlangs aan mij dat het jonge Stellenbosch en Paarl van zijn tijd te Pretoria en Johannesburg waren, en mijn eigen ondervinding in laatstgenoemde steden staft zijn bewering ten volste. In dit opzicht is de Transvaal feitelijk het erfdeel van Jong Zuid-Afrika geworden. De Kaapkolonie ziet naar deze hare vertrokken zoons als een kostbaar onderpand weggelegd tegen de toekomst; wanneer de dageraad van het ware Afrikanerdom te Pretoria aanbreekt zij deze jongelingschap de broederband die de Kolonie en Transvaal zal verbinden.

Nadat wij dit alles gedaan en opgeofferd hebben zouden wij een vriendelijker gedrag van de Transvaal verwachten. Maar de Hollandsche huurlingen die daar om den hoogsten loon dingen hebben geen gevoel voor Zuid-Afrika. Zoo zij eenige hartstocht toonen, dan is die het bespottelijke doel om van de Transvaal een Klein Hollandje te maken!

Groot is de Transvaal in geldelijken vooruitgang en vooruitzichten. Maar geld is niet alles. De mensch zal van brood alleen niet leven. Er is een vooruitgang die stiller en langzamer werkt, maar tegelijk dieper wortelen schiet dan een bloot stoffelijke. En het komt mij voor alsof in deze diepere ontwikkeling de oude Kolonie de Transvaal altijd vooruit zal zijn. Het geld van Zuid-Afrika moge uit de woelige Transvaal komen; maar de godsdienst, poezie, kunst, filosofie en misschien ook de staatsmanschap zullen weliger tieren in den stillen Kolonialen bodem. Daar zal men vinden het rusteloos jagen naar geldelijken rijkdom, hier het stille bepeinzen dier vragen en

onderwerpen die voor den fijneren geest een blijvend belang hebben. Wat Athene was voor Griekenland, wat Weimar was voor Duitschland, wat Boston was voor Amerika, dat worde Kaapstad voor Zuid-Afrika—het middelpunt van blijvende gedachten en kunstgevoel.

TRANSLATION: *A Trip to the Transvaal*
The Closing of the Drifts¹ and other Political Questions

So far I have confined myself to the description of the national development of the Transvaal as it strikes a visitor. Now I wish to say a word about the great social and political questions that already exist or are now arising. Besides the questions of internal policy, there are also others in connection with the relations of the Transvaal with the neighbouring colonies and states. But these are all so closely connected, and flow so much from the same causes that it is advisable to discuss them together.

The most important and radical fact that one must take into account in studying Transvaal politics is simply this: the richest mineral-producing country in the world is inhabited by a small population who are almost exclusively engaged in agriculture. This pastoral people perform the most renowned deeds of heroism for their freedom and they are at last crowned with complete success. Then overwhelming numbers of foreigners come in to work the mines of that country. Now, of all the possible attitudes which the Transvaal Government could have taken to these Uitlanders, they have chosen one, which is to draw a sharp line between burgher and Uitlander and to do their best to keep the governing-power exclusively in the hands of the burghers.² They long for the old pastoral conditions, which are already vanishing, and stubbornly resist the mining and industrial society which is developing with amazing speed.

¹ The Drifts dispute occurred in the course of the railway 'war' between the Cape Colony and the South African Republic. To counteract the exorbitant freight charges on goods using the 50-mile terminal section of the Cape-Johannesburg line, the Cape Government arranged ox-waggon transport from the Vaal River to the Rand. President Kruger thereupon closed the 'drifts' (fords) across the river as from 1 October 1895.

² The terms *burghers* (citizens) and *Uitlanders* (foreigners) have been retained, as they are commonly used by English writers on this period of South African history.

President Kruger is opposed to Johannesburg because it represents a life which he does not understand and which he fears; he would, if he could, destroy the mineral resources of his country, because he sees that, the more mines there are, the less will the conditions and the people to which he belongs signify. As a highly placed official naïvely expressed himself to me: 'The mining industry is the ruin of the true Transvaal mind and spirit.' Against that mining industry and its social consequences President Kruger fights with all his powers. Strange phenomenon! The Government of a country opposed to all the forces that have made that country great and will make it greater still!

But we can sympathize with the ideal of the old cattle-farmer President. He fought for the freedom of his country because England threatened to interfere in the natural development of his pastoral people. Now he fights against industrial society in his country, because he sees that this is a still greater threat to its natural development. Indeed, the material development of Johannesburg, Barberton and Zoutpansberg is undermining, in a more dangerous way than English supremacy would ever have been able to do, the conditions under which the old farming and burgher community were able to count, and to maintain themselves over against other peoples. As true Afrikaners we also would wish to see the burghers a strong and influential part of the future Transvaal: that is why we feel for the old President.

But now another element comes into the consideration of this matter. The President's question: 'how to maintain his burghers over against the Uitlander population' is answered by Dr Leyds and his Dutch supporters¹ with the classical: '*Divide et impera*: divide and rule'. Set Natal against the Cape Colony; take the Free State out of the Customs Union with the Colony;² set Portugal against England; set the Transvaal Afrikaner against the Cape Afrikaner; set the others against the English element in the Uitlander population; set the capitalists against the Johannesburg proletariat, and set capitalist against capitalist through concessions and other means;

¹ A reference to the Netherlands officials in the public service of the South African Republic.

² See p. 17 *supra*, note 1.

and, while the Uitlanders oppose one another, we shall rule and wax fat—there you have the Dutch policy. The sly Hollander fights with hidden, sometimes even with poisoned, weapons and has thus dealt the Afrikaans ideal of ‘unity is strength’ a blow from which it will not recover for generations. He has gone further. He has tried to transplant the age-old feuds of the European continent in South African soil, but has so far fortunately not succeeded in this. And now South Africa lies internally divided and torn and the Hollander celebrates his ungodly feast over her downtrodden body. So well has this policy of division succeeded that Afrikanerdom with all its sentiment, capital with all its money, the Uitlander mass with all its numbers, can do nothing against the little group of Hollanders and Hollandized Transvaalers who hold power in that country.

I do not intend to consider here all the consequences of the Dutch policy. Let us confine ourselves to the closing of the drifts. This step is an outstanding example of the above-mentioned fact: that the policy of division enables the existing Transvaal Government to defy both the Colony and the Uitlander population. One would think that such a step would be fatal for any government—and so it would, but not for the present one. And why should the Hollander worry about the future? He knows very well that his life in the Transvaal will last as long as the power of the existing President. Now it is his hour and the Johannesburg cow must be milked and the Cape Colony damaged in order to bring advantage to the shareholders of the Netherlands South African Railway Company.¹ For the present the Cape Colony is powerless, for we believe that the Convention² does not help her on this point, and Johannesburg confines itself to dispatching letters of protest. There are now between Johannesburg and Springfontein over 1,400 loaded trucks which cannot be unloaded

¹ In March 1887 this Company was granted a concession to build and operate a railway from the border of Portuguese East Africa to Johannesburg. The line was completed in November 1894. In 1890 the concession was extended to include other railways in the Transvaal. The Company was at first largely dependent upon the Government for financial support. In 1902 the Company lines were expropriated by the British Government for £13,000,000.

² The Cape Government regarded the closing of the drifts as a breach of the London Convention of 1884, which forbade discrimination against British goods.

because the Netherlands South African Railway Company cannot cope with the large goods-traffic through the Colony. And why all this tyranny and unnatural behaviour? The Transvaal Government says that it is master within its own borders and this, on the face of it, is not far from the truth. But here it is not a question of mere right, but of international propriety and natural behaviour. And in the eyes of the civilized world the behaviour of the Transvaal towards the Colony will not be to her credit.

And what has the Colony not already, both directly and indirectly, done for the Transvaal? Was it not the strong moral support of the Colony Afrikaners that gave the Transvaal her freedom? Did the Colony not, by its railway extension four years ago, very greatly advance the material progress of Johannesburg? The railway extension was, it is true, to the advantage of the Colony also, but the Transvaal gained most by it.

But not only have we sent our money to the Transvaal borders; we have also sent our blood. A large portion of the rising generation of able young Afrikaners has gone to the Transvaal and has there contributed notably to its progress. Yes, we do not doubt that the Cape Colony will, in the years to come, feel deeply this exhaustion of her young powers. And her loss is the Transvaal's gain. Someone recently said to me that the young Stellenbosch and Paarl of his day were in Pretoria and Johannesburg, and my own experience in these cities fully supports his declaration. In this respect the Transvaal has really become the inheritance of young South Africa. The Cape Colony looks upon these departed sons as a precious pledge laid away against the future. When the dawn of true Afrikanerdom breaks in Pretoria may this youth be the fraternal bond that will bind the Colony and the Transvaal.

Having done and sacrificed all this, we would expect more friendly behaviour from the Transvaal. But the Dutch hirelings who compete there for the highest reward have no feeling for South Africa. If they do show any passion, it is for the ridiculous aim of making the Transvaal a little Holland!

The Transvaal is great in financial progress and prospects. But money is not everything. Man does not live by bread alone. There is a progress that works more quietly and slowly, but

at the same time strikes deeper roots than the merely material. And it seems to me that in this deeper development the old Colony will always be ahead of the Transvaal. The money of South Africa may come from the busy Transvaal; but the religion, poetry, art, philosophy and perhaps also statesmanship will grow more luxuriantly in the quiet Colonial earth. There one will find the restless pursuit of monetary wealth; here the quiet reflection on those questions and subjects that have a lasting interest for the finer spirits. What Athens was to Greece, what Weimar was to Germany, what Boston was to America, may Cape Town become to South Africa—the centre of enduring thought and artistic feeling.

23 Speech [1895]

Smuts made his first appearance on a political platform at a meeting of the De Beers Consolidated Political and Debating Association in Kimberley. This verbatim report of his speech appeared in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*¹ of 30 October 1895. It was a reply to a paper written by Olive Schreiner and read at Kimberley by S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner on 20 August 1895, in which Rhodes's Native policy was attacked and he was accused of using the Afrikaner Bond in the capitalist interest and deceiving it. Cronwright-Schreiner heard Smuts speak and described the meeting in his *Life of Olive Schreiner*, pp. 275–6. His paper was published in 1896 as *The Political Situation* by Olive Schreiner and S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

When I received the invitation from the Committee of the De Beers Consolidated Political and Debating Association to address this meeting on the political situation of the Colony, it at once occurred to me that the subject was somewhat ambiguous, and did not define very narrowly the limits of my address. For the 'political situation' may mean the various debatable measures and administrative features characteristic of our party politics. If I were to address you on this side of our subject, I would have to don the garb of a professional

¹ Published in Kimberley since 1878.

party politician, which would ill suit my youth and inexperience. Besides, you are represented in Parliament by politicians of standing and ability, and to address you on current party questions would very much look like arrogating their functions to myself. But our subject is capable of another construction of which I am going to avail myself to-night. For the political situation may mean not so much the actual practical questions in issue between the various political parties, but rather the underlying principles on which those questions are founded, and by reference to which they must be answered. Construing, then, my subject in this sense, I wish to speak to you to-night upon some of the fundamental principles in Cape politics so far as they have been brought to light by our experience during the last quarter of a century. It is a subject of supreme importance and supreme interest, and I am but too conscious that it is one beyond my powers. But if, with your indulgence and favourable hearing, I succeed in roughly outlining some of these principles which lie far below the surface of current politics, I shall consider myself amply rewarded.

Let me also say in advance that I am in general agreement with the policy of our present Government, and while reviewing the principles of our politics, I shall incidentally try to show that the present Government, so far from being what its critics have called it, a mere unprincipled and even cowardly and retrogressive compromise, has a programme which is based on a consistent progressive policy of far-reaching significance. Within the last few years, while the advent of new men and new movements has swept away the old political landmarks and confused party policies, many attempts have been made to draw up paper programmes. I shall not waste your time to-night by imitating these efforts to bolster up the sinking cause of party in this country. I shall confine myself to drawing your indulgent attention to those important facts and considerations which seem to my mind to go deeper and reach farther than programmes and parties in the narrower sense.

When a few months ago I returned to this country after a stay of four years in Europe, where I had done my best to train myself in other schools of political and sociological thought; when I returned to this country, with its profound

and complex political and racial questions, and read the newspapers and speeches and pamphlets on current politics, the question started involuntarily to my mind: 'What has been the rough result of all our hard political thinking, our hard-won political experience within the last quarter of a century?' For it is evident that we have not moved in a see-saw; we have moved on; and the question is in what direction has our motion been? Have none of those debatable issues which troubled the minds of a former generation of Cape politicians been consolidated into settled facts which we can now use as a basis for further discussion? In short, have we made any real and reliable advance in political thought and experience? To answer this question, I took rapid stock of our politics since the days when Mr [W.] Porter and Mr Saul Solomon loomed large on the political canvas. I tried to see whether and where in our weltering politics any firm land appeared on which we might take up our position for the purpose of surveying the present political horizon.

Now, it seems to me that in the politics of our country, and indeed of South Africa, there are two problems vitally affecting our present, and our future, which dominate and dwarf into comparative insignificance every other political problem and issue. As in legal parlance we talk of ruling cases, so we must call these two the ruling, determining, dominating problems of South Africa; and the question of political interest is, what attitude have the conflicting parties adopted towards these problems. These two problems are the consolidation of the white race, and the relation of the white to the coloured community in South Africa, and to each of these I wish to draw your attention to-night.

Consolidation of the White Race

First, then, how can we help forward the consolidation of the two Teutonic peoples that have sought a home in this country. That fusion is necessary must be clear when you consider the position of the white race in Africa. At the southern corner of a vast continent, peopled by over 100,000,000 barbarians, about half a million whites have taken up a position, with a view not only to working out their own destiny, but also of using that position as a basis for lifting up and opening up that

vast deadweight of immemorial barbarism and animal savagery to the light and blessing of ordered civilization. Unless the white race closes its ranks in this country, its position will soon become untenable in the face of that overwhelming majority of prolific barbarism.

The question thus is raised: How are we to be consolidated and fused into a great homogeneous white race? And to this different people will return different answers. Some will say, 'Leave the railway and commercial development to do the work. The material interests of the white races will compel them to make a compromise in which they will sink their individual preferences for the common good.' Now, gentlemen, with the people who use this argument I at once join issue. While amply recognizing the fusing powers of commerce, of railways, of money, it seems to me that such a merely materialistic union will never stand the mortal strain to which it will be subjected in our history. And already you see how economic and commercial differences drive Republic and Colony asunder in South Africa. No, it is something far subtler and stronger than money that we want. We want sentiment. We want those invisible links of union which are harder than stone and tougher than the toughest metal. In one word, we want a great South African nationality, and pervading national sentiment.

Nationality

I appeal to history to prove what I am saying. It may be doubted whether, from a social and political point of view, any previous century can compare with our own in the magnitude and the significance of the ideas it has either produced or elaborated. Take, for instance, the idea of democracy, and its practical application on a vast scale in Europe and America. Or take again, and this brings us to our subject, the idea of nationality which has exercised even a mightier influence on civilization than the idea of democracy itself. The nineteenth century may be specially called the century of nationality. In the eighteenth century, with the spread of materialism, and the liberal, superficial French philosophy, the name of patriot became almost a term of reproach; nationality was erased from the vocabulary of publicists, and for it was substituted the

comfortable word cosmopolitanism. Then came the cleansing hurricane of the French Revolution. It swept away most of the shams which had weighed like a deadly incubus on the development of the peoples. It swept away also the sham of cosmopolitanism which had been found worthless as a cementing force of peoples, and dangerous in undermining the counter force of nationality. The great conquests of Napoleon were a trumpet-call to the peoples to awake, to fight for their homes, their liberties, and their national existence. And in this way the French Revolution brought back to European politics the supreme force of nationality, which has united and freed Italy, which has freed Greece, Servia, Bulgaria, etc., which has united Germany, and placed her at the head of Continental peoples, and which, in spite of the most tremendous strain known to the modern world, preserved the great American Union in the Civil War of 1861-65. The history of the nineteenth century has taught us that this cementing force of nationality is the most potent and beneficent in the sphere of politics and society. This all-pervading national consciousness is the great ultimate basis of union, it inspires deeds of national sacrifice and heroism, it inspires a great national literature and a great national politics; this sentiment is the great reservoir from which the highest ideas and the noblest principles and traditions of a people are drawn. This spirit of nationality shapes unconsciously the history of a people, binding generation to generation; it forms a hidden common purpose for all its citizens on which that people acts age after age; which moulds its character, its literature, its social and political institutions.

Is this all-embracing, all-fusing, national sentiment not the very force we want in South Africa with its diverse peoples? It cannot be doubted. The formation and consolidation of a great, compact, homogeneous South African Nationality must be the great Ideal in South African politics.

And now, I ask what has been done to foster this great national consciousness which forms our political ideal, and who has done it?

National Movement: First Stage

In his recent pamphlet, Mr Cronwright-Schreiner says that the 'Afrikander Bond banded together and aroused to healthy

interest in the affairs of the State a large body of men who, hitherto unorganized and isolated, had not taken that share in the Government of the State which their numbers would have justified, and who were therefore unduly disregarded and possibly unjustly dealt with.' But I go further, and say that this organization was the first to start the idea of nationality in Cape politics and history. It was they who introduced into our political life, deadened with apathy and civic indifference, the tiny though potent germ of nationality which has already produced such a remarkable transformation, and which is yet destined to leaven the whole lump of our South African peoples. Before the statesman's eye of Sir George Grey and others the vision of a united South Africa had flitted. But it was merely a constitutional idea to them; it had first to become a national idea before it could become practically operative. There must be a people before there can be a State; there must be a national unity before there can be a political union. This the founders of the Bond felt, and the spreading of this truth was the historical mission of the Bond. They started from the national idea and from that as their basis strove for the ideal of South African Union. They did not base their programme on inoperative abstract principles, such as so often figure on so-called progressive programmes. It was on the national sentiment—that most potent force of history—that these far-sighted political pioneers founded their hopes. And those who agree with me in holding that the spread of the South African national sentiment, which is not to be confined to any section of the white race here, but is to bind and fuse together all the portions of the white race, is the great political ideal of South Africa, will also agree with me that to the founders of the Bond belongs the honour of having initiated the most significant movement in South African history.

That this is no mere theory of my own you can see from the original Bond Programme, of which I shall read the first four paragraphs:—

Programme of Bond Principles

1. The Afrikaner Bond Party recognizes the guidance of Providence, even in the destinies of lands and peoples.
2. By the guidance of Providence is meant: the formation of

a homogeneous nationality, and the preparation of our people for the establishment of a united South Africa.

3. For the attainment of this object it is necessary:

- (a) That there be a close union of the various European peoples in South Africa;
- (b) That the individuality (*zelfstandigheid*) of South Africa be promoted.

4. The close union aforesaid ought to be based on a clear understanding of the common and mutual interests in politics, economy, agriculture, cattle-rearing, commerce, and industry, and on the recognition of individual rights as regards religion, education, and language, so that all racial ill-feeling between the various peoples here may give way to an unmistakable sentiment of nationality.

From this you will see that the Bond was not to be confined to the Dutch-speaking inhabitants of South Africa. The idea of nationality was rightly conceived as the great binding and unifying force among the white races of South Africa.

National Movement: Second Stage

While this national movement was going on and gathering force, another great factor had entered into the social and political life of South Africa. The Diamond Fields had been discovered, and the great diamond industry, which is the glory of this town, and even of our Colony, had begun. Kimberley was the first indication of our future material greatness—a greatness which will ultimately match that of Europe and America.

But now a question of the greatest interest and importance arose. What was to be the attitude of this new industrial and capitalist movement to the national Afrikaner movement? Was the relation of these two movements to be one of mutual indifference or even antagonism, or was it to be one of mutual friendship and help? That the difficulty I suggest was not imaginary, but a very real one, is shown by what is now happening in the Transvaal, and might in some way or other have happened here too. There we see on the one side a more or less isolated branch of the Franco-Dutch people wielding the Government, and on the other side a large mining

community of foreigners headed by the capitalists. Instead of harmoniously co-operating for the common good, these two parts of the population are said to be antagonistic to each other, and thus a dark cloud overhangs the future of Transvaal politics. It cannot be denied that the danger of a similar estrangement between the two parts of the white people existed in this country also. If that estrangement had really come to pass, our progress would have been retarded by ages. That fatal division of the white camp would have rendered it powerless before the millions of blacks who occupy this continent; the thin end of the white wedge would have been broken just as it was beginning to pierce the black block. Happily matters have taken a different course here. Mr Rhodes and Mr Hofmeyr have discovered a common basis of political action, and thus the widening development of political life in this Colony—represented on the one side by the national movement, and on the other by the wider commercial and territorial aspirations of Mr Rhodes—is proceeding harmoniously apace. Personally, I have no doubt that this co-operation represents a forward step in the healthy development of the national movement. Large numbers of enlightened English colonists who had regarded the Bond as a purely racial organization, have, in consequence of the action of Mr Rhodes, reconsidered the matter, and come to see that in the larger principles of its programme and its main ideas, the Bond is no racial organization and possesses a genuine South African policy. And thus the alliance between Mr Rhodes and the Bond represents, not a mere arrangement of temporary convenience, but an organic evolution of the original national idea.

National Movement: Third Stage

Let me now make a practical application of what I have just been saying. If the formation of a compact all-embracing South African nationality be the great ideal in South African politics, it at once follows that European Continental powers ought to be kept as much as possible outside the arena of South African political strife. European Continental politics would only introduce a disturbing element into our own, and retard the unification of our States and Colonies. The position of Great Britain on this point is, of course, peculiar. She has

made the greatest sacrifices on behalf of South Africa. She guards our coasts, and has an immense stake in our country, and is, on these accounts, undoubtedly entitled to a voice in our counsels. But even she is wisely leaving us more and more to ourselves. The South African protectorates are being rapidly incorporated into the States and Colonies.¹ With regard to other European Powers, I submit, without fear of contradiction, that he who attempts to introduce into our South African politics the baleful complications of European diplomacy, commits high treason against South Africa.

Now, if these remarks are true, they throw light on a point on which criticism has, with tiresome reiteration, been levelled against the Rhodes Government. I refer to the so-called dual position. It is said that his position as head of the Northern movement is incompatible with his position as Premier of the Colony, and that it is to the Colony a matter of perfect indifference by what power Rhodesia had been colonized. Some have even gone so far as to state 'that the Cape Colonists, as such, have nothing to fear from the annexations of other European Powers in Africa'.

Let us look at this matter not in a spirit of heated and passionate prejudice, but calmly, reasonably, and broadly. In judging of the value or advantage to us of any performance, we have to consider not only the benefit gained, but also the harm avoided. In regard to this matter of the Chartered Company,² the Cape Colony has first of all to ask itself this question: Has any harm been avoided by the exploration and settlement of that vast territory, in accordance with the moral support and goodwill of the Cape Colonial Government? Can there be any reasonable doubt as to this? Suppose Germany or Portugal had occupied that territory, had planted there German or Portuguese colonists and institutions. Would such an occupation not have wedged into the South African concert an element of social and political discord which would have affected prejudicially not only the Cape Colony, but also every part of South Africa. Suppose, again, it had been colonized from the Transvaal. Now, Sir, I am not going to use hard words against the Transvaal. But does the policy which the

¹ British Bechuanaland was annexed to the Cape Colony in 1895.

² The British South Africa Company.

Transvaal Government has adopted for the last three or four years not reasonably inspire us with the fear that it has departed from that moderate and prudent statesmanship which is, or ought to be, the unbroken political tradition of South Africa? Has not the pride of sudden success, has not, perhaps, the hope of European Continental support tended to alienate the Transvaal from a considerable section of South Africa? Would not an immense accession of valuable territory and resources have raised still higher the already soaring ambition of its Government, and rendered it even less considerate towards the rest of South Africa? Even then, union then might ultimately have taken place, but it would not have been the union of equals; it would have been the coercion, the inevitable subjection of the weaker to the stronger. Look at the subject as we will, we cannot but admit that the Chartered Company's occupation of Rhodesia, with the goodwill of the Cape Government, and from the Colony as a basis, has removed one of the darkest clouds from the South African political horizon. It has planted, over the length and breadth of that vast territory, our own English and Afrikander countrymen, our own laws and institutions, our own languages and customs. It has also prevented the key to the whole South African situation from gratuitously falling into the hands of the Transvaal.

The 'Little Cape' Policy

The occupation and settlement of Rhodesia, from the Colony as basis, has preserved the balance of power in South Africa—a question of the most vital importance, not only for South Africa in general, but for the Cape Colony in particular. Both from a diplomatic and commercial point of view, the 'Little Cape Colony' policy is as impossible in this country as the 'Little England' policy is in England.

Protection and Nationality

I now come to a second application of the proposition I first laid down. It is this: under certain conditions protection may be justified in the interests of South African nationality. Gentlemen, in ultimate abstract theory I am a free trader. If

all countries had attained to an equal national and industrial development, free trade would be the only rational principle of public economy. I believe that the human race is travelling towards some far-off goal of social and economic brotherhood, where free trade will reign supreme. But we have not yet arrived there; and while we are on the way to it one great practical question confronts us at every stage of the march. That question is the individual requirements of each people.

Now what is the agricultural situation in South Africa to-day? Well, it seems to me to be briefly this. From time immemorial our old colonists have been devoting themselves to agriculture. But the needs of the country were few, the demand was very limited. Consequently there was no need for a large supply. Our farmers were satisfied with earning a modest income and leading a moderately comfortable life. Then, very suddenly and unexpectedly, the immense mineral resources of the country were laid bare both here and in the Transvaal, huge industrial communities sprang up as if at the stroke of the magic wand. The demand all of a sudden became very large, and the supply did not increase proportionately. The lack of cheap railway communication between the mining and industrial centres and the chief grain districts, and many other circumstances (such as the failure of ostrich farming in the Western Province) prevented our farmers from all at once responding to the large demand. The outside world saw it and, bent upon getting control of our market, exerted their energies to the utmost to supply us with their surplus produce. Unless we had resorted to some measure of protection, agriculture and stockfarming—surprised by the new facts and the new demand of South African industry, unequipped with the weapons which alone could enable it to hold its own, overpowered by the foreign competition—would assuredly have perished in this country. Would that have been desirable—even from the point of view of the mining communities? If one may attempt to forecast what is to be, the future of Southern Africa seems likely to be this: there will be large mining and industrial centres distributed over the country, while the vast territories around will supply them with the necessaries of life. Considering how South Africa is cut off from the rest of the world, and the possibilities of future wars and commercial and hostile

blockades, is it not eminently desirable that we produce at any rate sufficient of the necessaries of life for our own needs? The question can only be answered in one way.

The present difficulties of the agricultural situation must be met, where necessary, by a little timely protection, otherwise, the price of wheat falling low, agricultural wages would fall proportionally, the agricultural labourer will desert the farm for the town, and agriculture will perish root and branch. I have no doubt that in a few years the opening up of the country by railways, both in the Colony and in the Free State, together with the rapid improvements that are being made in agriculture, will enable our farmers to supply our mining centres with wheat and other necessaries at the same price at least as Australia could do. In the few years of transition I submit that it is the duty of the prosperous mining communities, who in any case are too remote from the coast to be fed with wheat from over the seas, to stand by their depressed agricultural brethren. A little such assistance now will result in benefit to both afterwards when South Africa will be a self-sufficing country so far as the necessaries of life are concerned. When we have reached that stage of economics and national development, we shall be ripe for free trade and international reciprocity.

Corruption

I have stated at some length, considering the time at our disposal, but at insufficient length, considering the importance of the subject, what I consider to be the most healthy and significant movement in our politics; I have also considered some of its main applications. I have shown that the co-operation between Mr Rhodes and the Bond represents an organic and natural advance of that at first somewhat narrow national movement which—when it has extended to all South Africa and infused its spirit into all white men living here—will be the basis of a politically united South Africa. The great national and unionist movement in this country has passed through three stages—the first Bond period, during which it was confined chiefly to the Franco-Dutch population; the second or Bond-Rhodes period, during which the movement spread to a very large section of the English colonists; and the

third or Rhodesian period, in which this movement, by preserving the balance of power in South Africa, becomes the basis and guarantee of future South African confederation. Such promises to be the main result of that great movement and that co-operation. But, say the irresponsible critics of Mr Rhodes, 'The power of Mr Rhodes as a capitalist is corrupting political life in this country.' Sir, that is a serious charge which honourable men will bring against another only on the amplest and most conclusive evidence. But is it true? Has it been proved? Is there one single fact or fraction of a fact to show that Mr Rhodes has been abusing his position as Premier in order to legislate on behalf of himself or his own hated capitalist class? In the conduct of political controversy has he resorted to a single weapon which might not have been used by his non-capitalist predecessors and contemporaries? In what way, then, does the accident of his being a capitalist disqualify him from being a political leader? Mr Rhodes's opponents and traducers have often brought the charge of corruption against him; they have been as often challenged to mention facts; they have as often observed a discreet silence. Ah but, say these critics, Mr Rhodes is corrupting the press of the country to such an extent that there is not a single paper willing to preach the Progressive Gospel¹ undiluted! Is this charge of newspaper corruption true? Why, I believe the majority of newspapers in South Africa are anti-Rhodes! That disposes entirely of this baseless charge of newspaper corruption—the very newspaper² in which he or his party is supposed to have a predominating interest is ever foremost among the critics of his Government.

Another specific charge of corruption is that Sir Hercules Robinson—himself one of the capitalists—has been pitchforked into the supreme function of the State.³ But you will notice that that charge involves the ludicrous absurdity of Mr

¹ Refers to the anti-Bond political attitudes which, in 1896-7, were organized by the South African League into an active party.

² The *Cape Times*, established in Cape Town in March 1876.

³ In April 1895 Robinson had been, at Rhodes's request, appointed Governor of the Cape Colony in spite of his own reluctance, the doubts of the Queen and the protests of Rhodes's opponents. Robinson was a shareholder in the Chartered Company and a director of De Beers and of the Standard Bank of South Africa. He gave up the directorships on his appointment.

Rhodes having bribed and corrupted the Queen's advisers, if not the Queen herself!

The Democratic Formula

Let us now proceed to the second proposition which I consider fundamental in South African politics. It applies to our Native question, and is this: the theory of Democracy as currently understood and practised in Europe and America is inapplicable to the coloured races of South Africa. It seems to me that a clear understanding and frank recognition of this proposition is the indispensable preliminary of all progress with the Native question. You cannot safely apply to the barbarous and semi-barbarous Native the advanced political principles and practice of the foremost peoples of civilization. The African Native cannot in a day cover the distance which it took the most highly endowed white races hundreds of years to travel. How could that possibly be ?

Too often we make the mistake of looking upon Democracy as a deduction from abstract principles instead of regarding it rather as the outcome of practical politics. Now it is well recognized by the best authorities on the subject that a people is not entitled to democratic or popular self-government on abstract grounds of principle. It must first be ripe for constitutional self-government. Practical, clear, patent facts must show that it has arrived at that stage of political development when the people at large may be safely entrusted with the responsibilities of self-government. And experience has shown that many communities have proved themselves unworthy of the honour and responsibilities of a popular franchise and popular self-government.

Even England, the country which is universally admitted to have gone farthest in practical democracy and popular self-government, has not yet gone the length of universal suffrage, and still refuses to abolish its undemocratic hereditary Upper Chamber. And in countries where—as in Queensland and New Zealand—an inferior coloured race exists among a superior white race, a differential franchise has been imposed on the coloured electorate. The United States of America are only an apparent exception; for there force withholds what law has given. With the one hand an equal franchise with that of the

whites has been given to the negroes; with the other hand they are forcibly kept away from the polls.

I mention these facts simply to remind you that the question of the application of advanced political principles to any people, or part of a people, is not an abstract, but a very practical question, to be decided on the facts of each individual case.

And even in our own country, where so many well-meaning people cling religiously to the abstract doctrine of racial equality, do those people give practical expression to that doctrine in their social life? Do they give their white sons and daughters in marriage to their coloured neighbours and equals? I am afraid some do, but the obloquy that overtakes these exceptional cases only proves the depth and passion of the popular conviction that white and black stand on different footings.

Now the mistake that has been made in the past is to assume that the full and entire democratic formula applied to our South African racial conditions. Mr Saul Solomon and others looked upon the abstract political or religious formula of universal equality as a safe rule of practical politics. I am afraid they were wrong. Their theory would have been inapplicable to civilized Europe; *a fortiori*, it was inapplicable to barbarous Africa. And I think one of the most conspicuous advances we have made in Cape politics during the last decade or more consists precisely in recognizing that they were wrong. That recognition has within the last five years found expression in our statute book, notably in the Franchise¹ and Glen Grey² Acts. Some have instanced these statutes among others, as proof of our political retrogression under the baleful Bond and Rhodes regime. To me it seems rather that we have retraced our steps from a perilous position; that we have come down from the Utopian cloudland of abstract theory; and that now

¹ The Cape Colony franchise of 1853 had no colour bar but rested on property or salary qualifications. In 1892, in order to exclude 'blanket' Natives, these qualifications were raised and a low education qualification added.

² This Act of 1894 enabled Natives to hold land on quit-rent and individual title. Such holdings might not be sold or mortgaged without leave. Possession of land under the Act was ruled out as a qualification for the parliamentary franchise. The Act was first applied in the Glen Grey district of the Ciskei and later extended throughout the Transkei.

for the first time are we in a position to consider our great racial problem on its merits. We have come to recognize, and recognize rightly, that the democratic formula of equality does not apply to that racial problem. Our Franco-Dutch countrymen—who left Europe long before Rousseau's theory of equality set Europe in a blaze of revolution, long before the tides of philanthropy began to roll over that Continent—have, in perhaps extreme form, recognized this fact for a long time. And now our political leaders have come to recognize the same fact. I say political leaders without distinction of party, for every political leader of note in this Colony voted in favour of the Franchise Bill, and agreed, at least in principle, with the Glen Grey Bill.

The Native Question

Having thus tried to clear away what was believed to be a guiding principle for the solution of the great sphinx-problem of South Africa, but which our own experience, and that of many other countries, has proved to be inapplicable to that problem, we now come to consider the Native question on its merits.

Now, I am one of those who take the Native problem very seriously. Already the foremost question of the day, and largely the dividing line in our politics, this subject looms still more ominously on the dark background of our future. I for one consider the position of the white race in South Africa one of the gravest responsibility and difficulty. They must be the guardians of their own safety and development; at the same time they are the trustees for the coloured races. The situation is unique.

South of the Zambesi alone there are (exclusive of German and Portuguese territory) 4,000,000 inhabitants, of whom 650,000 only are whites. The proportion of coloured to white people in the various parts of South Africa is as follows:—Cape Colony, 4 to 1; Natal, 12 to 1; Free State, 2 to 1; Transvaal, 4 to 1; British Bechuanaland, 10 to 1; Rhodesia, 100 to 1. Such is our position and racial problem in this country.

There are those whose foolhardiness would urge them to drastic measures in the solution of this problem. I have already shown you how a former generation of South African statesmen

did not shrink from applying to the Natives the full democratic formula. And no doubt there are others who would put the Natives very much on a level with the beasts of the field.

But this is not a case for drastic measures. It is pre-eminently a case for slowly, wisely, and cautiously footing forward, tentatively feeling our way, one generation building warily on the experience, the failures and successes of a previous generation. Looking merely to the interests of the white race we see how necessary that cautious policy is. Injustice, unfairness, oppression on the part of the whites would in course of time poison the Native mind against the whites, however well-meaning they may be. The iron of oppression would enter the Native soul. Would that be a good or an honourable thing for the white race? Would the conflagration, the revolutionary explosion of the huge masses of Native combustible material not devastate what is fairest and loveliest in our white civilization?

Or look at the subject from a slightly different point of view. Suppose the Natives, instead of gradually rising, sink lower in the scale of moral and social civilization. Would that not have a ruinous effect on the white character itself? The Natives are our servants and nurses; they are to a large extent the play-mates of our childhood; they dwell among us in towns and on farms; in short, they constitute a permanent part of our moral and social environment. According to the character of that environment will be its influence on us. There are those who think that already the Native environment has had a deteriorating effect on the white character. The 'browning' of our skin has been accompanied by a 'browning' of the character. I mention these considerations to show that our white supremacy in South Africa brings grave responsibilities which, for our own sake as well as for the sake of the aborigines, we are bound to discharge faithfully.

Such being the heavy responsibilities of our position in this country, and such the principle of honour and justice alike by which we are ever bound in our conduct towards the coloured race, we come next to the particular question of what has to be done.

To this perplexing question, the past generation of optimistic politicians and philanthropists I have referred to, returned the

ready answer: 'Educate the Natives; teach them to read and think; that will be the surest means of saving them.' If that generation could rise to-night from the grave and see how little impression intellectual education has made on the Native mind, they would probably be more pessimistic than their disillusioned successors. To my mind the supreme fact of the situation is this: wherever the Native has come in contact with European civilization, there he has both physically and morally deteriorated; the closer that contact has been, the greater has been that deterioration. That this is so will be frankly admitted by all fair observers. And do not imagine that drink is the only cause of this. The aborigines possessed very powerful beverages long before they came into contact with the whites. Drink is only one element in a very complex and baffling combination of causes. Intellectual education—so far from arresting this downward tendency—seems actually to have hastened it. For are the aborigines in the towns not, as a rule, superior in intellectual development to those who are in the country or in their Native locations; and yet, are the Natives of the towns not, as a whole, much inferior both in physical and moral stamina, to those of the country? To compare the magnificent specimens of Native physical manhood often seen in the country with the stunted specimens of arrested development in the towns is enough to sadden the most light-hearted.

Differential Legislation

What negrophilists have been contending for so long is: let well alone, leave the Natives alone to work out their own destiny, with the help of missionaries and hymn books. I may here point out how inconsistent these advocates of Native rights are. They are opposed to all differential legislation, and yet they want liquor prohibition. They are against all legislation for the Natives, but demand legislation which will be more favourable to the coloured than to the whites. But that policy of let well alone, of *laissez faire*, will never do. The time has come to abandon *laissez faire*, and to commence an active policy of legislation. I am against far-reaching colour legislation, but I think we must embark upon cautious class legislation. Even Mr [J. W.] Sauer is in favour of class legislation, for in the debate on the curfew motion he said: 'He recognized that they

must have class legislation; he was prepared to accept it, he had always accepted it, but he did not say that because a man was black they must legislate against him.' And the differential Native legislation, not on the ground of colour, but *qua* class legislation seems now permissible. In petty matters of police government—such as are touched upon by the Curfew Bill—we are quite warranted in colour legislation pure and simple.

Native Education

The second conclusion I wish to draw from the phenomenon above noticed is this: our system of Native education ought to be more physical and manual than intellectual.

I may point out in passing that this question of physical education affects even the whites. Even as regards the whites our ideas of education are often very erroneous. In the ancient world, in the great societies of Greece and Rome, education was very largely physical. With those great peoples education certainly never meant stuffing the mind with abstract facts and principles, but developing a sound mental and moral nature in a healthy body—*mens sana in corpore sano*. In our later European civilization, education was for centuries almost purely physical and manual. Apprenticeship then held the place now occupied by attendance at school. Suddenly in our own century people have rushed wildly into the opposite extreme, and education has become almost purely intellectual, school learning as we know it. Already there is a feeling abroad that this was a great mistake; the elaborate sports of our own generation have come in to supplement the intellectual labours of the school, and you are aware that all over Europe there is a movement, headed by some of the wisest and best, in favour of training of the hand and the eye as opposed to mere school learning.

If this argument from experience is of any force in the case of whites, does it not apply a hundredfold more cogently to the Natives? They especially want physical and manual training. As Mr Rhodes has several times pointed out, they have still to learn the dignity of labour, the moral and social development which accrues from doing honest work.

Pure intellectual education which, in the case of the whites, is complemented and set off by the moral culture and religious

traditions of many centuries, gives in the case of the Natives unballasted by moral heredity only additional scope and stimulus to those insidious vices of our white civilization to which the Native falls such an easy and hopeless prey.

No, it is by developing his physical manhood, by bracing his moral and social stamina, that alone this great work of raising the coloured race can be done. That severe school of physical labour was the training place for the superior white races through many centuries. Still more must that be the school in which the coloured races are to be trained. In that school they must learn the same lessons of physical morality, of restraint, of the desirability of a higher social and intellectual life, which the white races have learnt in the same school. And if they are unwilling to go to that school, are we not, as their guardians and trustees, justified in passing, in their own interests, Glen Grey Acts with their gentle stimulant in the shape of a labour-tax?¹ We all recognize that something must be done and probably that is the safest way of doing it.

I put it to you as reasonable and prudent citizens of this country, is it safe, is it advisable, that huge masses of vice and indolence and ignorance should continue to exist, to flourish, aye to increase at an unheard-of rate at our very doors, in the midst of a high civilization—an inexhaustible source of future moral, social, and economic pestilences? I put it to you as thoughtful citizens, as the testators of a great legacy of civilization to the coming generations of your children and children's children, is that the legacy, the *damnosa hereditas*, which you are going to hand down to them? By God's help, no! Let us defy the ideal optimists; let us defy the sentimental cranks and well-meaning mischief-makers; let us put our shoulders to the wheel and see whether it is not possible—by persuasion first of all, by gentle compulsion, if necessary—to discipline the Native into something worthy of our civilization and his humanity. It is not blind and impotent appeals to first principles that we want in South Africa. It is statesmanship, discipline, organization that alone can solve the problems of union and race in South Africa. Political *laissez faire*, which is wrong

¹ The Acts imposed a labour-tax on all men holding land under the Acts who were not employed as labourers for three months in the year, but this provision, long a dead letter, was repealed in 1905.

anywhere, would be fatal here. In this sense the past history of Kimberley is probably a type of Africa's future. While *laissez faire* reigned, confusion reigned, and ruin followed confusion. But no sooner had the compound system been introduced and the Native labourers been rigorously subjected to its discipline and restraint, when the star of Kimberley was again in the ascendant. So it will be with our development on a larger scale. If we are entitled to generalize from facts, it seems to me that each great continent will present its own particular features and fulfil its own mission in the political development of humanity. As Asia was the home of religious despotism and Europe that of feudal monarchy; as the New World is the home of popular democracy, so the Newer World, if I may use the term, will have for its mission and destiny the development of a grand racial aristocracy. It will thus be a cross between the political civilization of the old and the new worlds, and if we are cautious and wise may combine the advantages of both. The great conservative policy of South Africa embraced by the Bond-Rhodes alliance has for its object the stimulation of those forces which make for progress and the granting of rights in proportion as duties are learned. That policy has already found expression in a number of measures which, so far from being indications of retrogression in our politics, or opportunism in Mr Rhodes, are the outcome of a great Native policy, firm, cautious, wise; are the beginnings, the humble and imperfect beginnings it may be, of a great constructive policy capable of development, improvement, and perfection at the hands of after generations of statesmen. If to abstain from misapplying abstract political principles, and to grapple with the hard and obstinate facts of political reality, be opportunism; if success in this grim grappling, and the enthusiastic approval of your countrymen be corruption—then I will admit that Mr Rhodes has been guilty of the crimes of opportunism and corruption. But it will be that opportunism and that corruption which are at once the soul and the reward of great statesmanship.

24 Article [1896]

Leading article in *Ons Land* 12 March 1896. This influential newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Afrikaner Bond, was established in Cape Town

in 1892. When Smuts's articles appeared in it, the editor was his friend F. S. Malan. It was combined with *Het Zuid-Afrikaan* (established 1830) in 1894 and ceased publication in April 1932.

AFRIKAANSCH TOENADERING

Sedert het begin van dit jaar hebben vele Afrikaners de hoofden laten hangen. Immers waren niet de dierbaarste idealen van het Afrikaner hart in den grond verbrijzeld? Wat was geworden van die gestadige samenwerking en ineen-smelting der alhier wonende blanke rassen, waarnaar wij allen hadden uitgezien als den horizon en het einddoel van al ons politiek streven? Hij, dien wij gevolgd hadden en die ons naar de overwinning zou geleiden, had ons niet alleen verlaten, hij had ons in den diepsten zin des woords verraden. Men begon weer onze geschiedenis met bloed te schrijven. Het gedrocht van het jingoïsme vertoonde weer zijn afschuwelijk gelaat in het land. De zaken van Zuid-Afrika werden weer van Downingstraat geregeld. Waarlijk het Afrikanerdom zat diep vernederd in stof en asch.

Er was een glinsterrandje aan deze donkere wolk onzer vernedering. Één deel van het Afrikanerdom had een tweede Majuba behaald, en had de adder den kop verbrijzeld. Maar zelfs dat glinsterrandje had—voor de Koloniale Afrikaners althans—dit zwarte aan zich, dat wij deze adder in onzen boezem hadden gekoesterd en groot gemaakt. En zoo was onze grootste vreugde gemengd met een nog grooter smart.

Maar die Voorzienigheid, die in ons nationaal Bondsprogramma de levende rots is waarop ons nationaal bestaan vroom en hecht gebouwd is, slaapt of sluimert niet. Achter de intriges en beginzellooze knoeierijen der politieke fortuinzoekers en vrijheidsverraders werkt die macht in het nationaal bewustzijn; en wanneer de stem van den verrader en knoeier het luidst is, zal het volk den slaap van zich afschudden en in zijne macht opstaan.

Heeft die Voorzienigheid niet de smartelijke omstandigheden van Zuid-Afrika sedert den aanvang van dit jaar tot een hooger doel overheerscht en geregeld? Wie kan dit betwijfelen? De dolksteek waarmede men het Afrikanerdom eens vooral in de Republieken wilde verlammen, heeft een electrischen schok

naar het nationale hart gezonden. Het Afrikanerdom is ontwaakt met een ernst en bewustheid die wij niet sedert den roemrijken vrijheidsoorlog van 1880 hadden bespeurd. Van de Limpopo tot aan de Kaapstad heeft het tweede Majuba een nieuwe inspiratie in ons volk, een nieuwe beweging gewekt. Door geheel Zuid-Afrika is een nieuw gevoel golvend gegaan. Het flauwe en laffe imperialisme dat reeds begonnen was ons volksbloed te verdunnen en vermageren wijkt allengs voor de varsche nieuwe lucht die ons volk bewaait. Velen die, het langzaam werken van het nationale idee moede, zich aan het imperialisme hadden overgegeven, zijn tot inkeer gekomen en hebben zich gevraagd wat het imperialisme in Zuid-Afrika heeft teweeggebracht. Verbittering en rassenhaat, voorwaar. Sedert de dagen van Sir Harry Smith en Theophilus Shepstone en Bartle Frere tot die van Leander Jameson en Cecil Rhodes gaat het imperialisme in Zuid-Afrika gepaard met een politiek van bloed en bedrog. Wat ook de goede vruchten van het imperialisme elders mogen zijn, in ons land is de gedurige strekking daarvan in al die jaren geen andere geweest dan ons volksleven en volkskarakter in vreemde groeven to dwingen; en dien dwang met bloed en tranen te bezegelen.

Tegenover dit imperialisme plaatst het Bondprogramma zoo duidelijk en treffend het ideaal van 'zelfstandigheid' op den voorgrond. Insteede van een uitheemsch politiek karakter wijst dit programma op een zuivere zelfstandigheid en nationale zelfafhankelijkheid. En hoe wordt dat Bondsbeginsel niet door de jongste gebeurtenissen gestaafd? Ze roepen ons toe met een vroeger ongekende kracht dat wij ons allen onder de banier van een zuiver Afrikanerisme moeten scharen en niet langer in onze innerlijke verdeeldheid een prooi van beginsellooze fortuinzoekers blijven. Ze roepen het Afrikanerdom toe met het oog van broederschap en staatsmanschap de staatsgrenzen te overzien en te erkennen dat in eendracht onze macht en behoud gewaarborgd zijn.

Waarlijk, het Afrikanerdom over geheel Zuid-Afrika bevindt zich thans op het kritiekste oogenblik van zijn bestaan. Nu of nooit. Nu of nooit moet het fundament van een omvattend nationalisme gelegd worden. Het ijzer is gloeiend en het smedingsuur is gekomen. Niettegenstaande zijne groote diensten voor de Kolonie is de heer Rhodes een soort van

scheidsmuur geweest tusschen de Koloniale Afrikaners en hunne broeders in de Republieken. Hij is dat geweest sedert zijn veelsbesproken verklaring te Kimberley dat zijn politiek die van Sir Bartle Frere was. Wij in de Kolonie dachten dat die verklaring slechts een woordelijke misgreep was. Zoodra het gebleken is dat de uitleg, dien men in de Transvaal en den Vrijstaat aan die verklaring hechtte, de rechte was, hebben wij hem vaarwel gezegd. De scheidsmuur is verdwenen. Laten wij nu pal bij elkander staan. Het gevaar is nog niet verdwenen; integendeel, nooit heeft het Afrikanerdom een politiek van Koloniale en Republikeinsche vereeniging meer noodig gehad. En nu het 'psychologische moment' gekomen is, nu ons volk over geheel Zuid-Afrika ontwaakt is, nu een nieuwe gloed in onze harten ontstoken is,—laten wij nu den hoeksteen van een waarlijk vereenigd Zuid-Afrika leggen op den bodem van een zuiver en omvattend nationaal gevoel.

In ons verleden althans is bloed dikker dan water geweest. Het bloed van den voortrekker is hetzelfde als dat van den achtergeblevene. Zoo lang het spoor van den voortrekker niet verdwijnt, zullen ook de banden die elk deel van ons volk aan elkaar verbinden, sterker en duurzamer zijn dan de grenzen die ons verdeelen. En zoolang onze Afrikaner staatmanschap zich aan dat spoor getrouw houdt, is het machtige voortbestaan, zoo al niet de vreedzame overwinning, van het Afrikanerdom gewaarborgd.

TRANSLATION: *Afrikaner Rapprochement*

Since the beginning of this year many Afrikaners have hung their heads. Were not the most precious ideals of the Afrikaner heart smashed to pieces? What had become of the steady co-operation and fusing of the white races living here, to which we had all looked forward as the horizon and final goal of all our political effort? He whom we had followed, and who was to lead us to victory, had not only deserted us; he had, in the deepest sense of the word, betrayed us.¹ Our history began once more to be written in blood. The monster of jingoism again showed its repulsive face in the land. The affairs of South

¹ The reference is to the Jameson Raid for which Rhodes was largely responsible.

Africa were again regulated from Downing Street. Deeply humiliated, Afrikanerdom sat indeed in dust and ashes.

There was a little gleaming edge to this dark cloud of our humiliation. One part of Afrikanerdom had gained a second Majuba¹ and had crushed the adder's head. But even that little gleaming edge had, at any rate for the Colonial Afrikaners, something black to it—that we had cherished this adder in our bosom and raised it. And so our great joy was mixed with a still greater sorrow.

But Providence, which, in our national Bond programme, is the living rock on which our national existence is piously and firmly built, does not slumber or sleep. Behind the intrigues and unprincipled plotting of the political fortune-hunters and betrayers of freedom, this power works upon the national consciousness; and when the voice of the traitor and plotter is loudest, the people will shake off sleep and arise in their might.

Has not Providence, since the beginning of this year, ruled and ordered the painful circumstances in South Africa towards a higher end? Who can doubt it? The dagger-thrust, with which Afrikanerdom was to be paralysed in the Republics once and for all, has sent an electric shock to the national heart. Afrikanerdom has awakened with an earnestness and consciousness which we have not seen since the celebrated war for freedom of 1880.² From the Limpopo to Cape Town the second Majuba has aroused a new inspiration in our people, a new movement. A new feeling has gone like a wave through all South Africa. The feeble and insipid imperialism which had already begun to dilute and emaciate our national blood, is gradually giving way before the fresh new air blowing upon our people. Many who, weary of the slow working of the national idea, had surrendered to imperialism, have repented and have asked themselves what imperialism has achieved in South Africa. Bitterness and race-hatred! From the days of Sir Harry Smith and Theophilus Shepstone and Bartle Frere to those of Leander Jameson and Cecil Rhodes imperialism in

¹ The engagement at Doornkop on 2 January 1896 where Jameson and his force surrendered to the Commandants of the South African Republic. At Majuba, in 1881, a British force was routed by the Transvaalers during the War of Independence (1880-1) following the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877.

² See note 1 above.

South Africa has been attended by a policy of blood and deceit. Whatever may be the good fruits of imperialism elsewhere, in our country its constant tendency in all these years has been no other than to force our national life and character into alien grooves, and to seal this coercion with blood and tears.

Against this imperialism the Bond programme clearly and strikingly puts the ideal of 'self-reliance' in the foreground. Instead of an alien political character, this programme points to a pure self-reliance and national independence. And how well this Bond principle is confirmed by the latest events. They call us all, with a hitherto unknown power, to range ourselves under the banner of a pure Afrikanerism and no longer to remain, in our internal division, the prey of unprincipled fortune-hunters. They call Afrikanerdom to look beyond the state boundaries with the eye of brotherhood and statesmanship, and to admit that our strength and preservation are guaranteed in unity.

Truly, Afrikanerdom throughout South Africa finds itself now at the most critical moment of its existence. Now or never. Now or never the foundation of a comprehensive nationalism must be laid. The iron is glowing and the forging hour has come. Notwithstanding his great services to the Colony, Mr Rhodes has been a sort of dividing wall between the Colonial Afrikaners and their brothers in the Republics. He has been that since his much-discussed declaration at Kimberley that his policy was that of Sir Bartle Frere.¹ We in the Colony thought that this declaration was only a verbal slip. As soon as it appeared that the interpretation given to this declaration in the Transvaal and the Free State was the right one, we bade him good-bye. The dividing wall has vanished. Let us now stand together for good. The danger has not yet disappeared; on the contrary, never has Afrikanerdom more needed a policy of Colonial and Republican unity. And now that the 'psychological moment' has come, now that our people throughout South Africa are awake, now that a new glow has been kindled in our hearts—let us lay the

¹ Speaking at Kimberley on 30 March 1891 at the annual congress of the Afrikaner Bond, Rhodes said: 'I might say here there is no difference between the policy of Sir Bartle Frere and the policy of the Afrikaner Bond.' See 'Vindex', *Cecil Rhodes: his Political Life and Speeches 1881-1900*, pp. 264-77.

corner stone of a truly united South Africa on the foundation of a pure and comprehensive national feeling.

In our past at any rate blood has been thicker than water. The blood of the Voortrekker¹ is the same as that of those who remained behind. As long as the spoor of the Voortrekker does not disappear, the bonds that bind each part of our people to each will be stronger and more durable than the boundaries that divide us. And as long as our Afrikaner statesmanship keeps faithfully to that spoor, the powerful survival, if not the peaceful victory, of Afrikanerdom is assured.

25 Article [1896]

Leading article in *Ons Land* 19 March 1896.

DE CONVENTIE VAN 1884

Sedert de troebelen in de Transvaal begonnen en de betrekking tusschen Engeland en de Transvaal weer ter sprake kwam, heeft men steeds gemeend dat de conventie van 1884 voor altoos de basis van die betrekking zou blijven vormen. Hoe meer het rumoer omliep dat de republiek met Duitschland heulde, des te hartstochtelijker hielden onze Engelsche tijdgenooten aan de conventie vast. En met die meening stemde de officieele handelwijze overeen. Zoo kabelde de hooge commissaris van Pretoria aan den heer Chamberlain dat men de conventie aldaar weer ter sprake wilde brengen, maar dat hij volstrekt geweigerd had zulks te doen; en de heer Chamberlain, in antwoord daarop, verbiedt hem te eeniger tijd de conventie aan te roeren. Verder heeft de koloniale staatssecretaris publiek verklaard dat zijne regeering besloten was de conventie te handhaven. Hieruit heeft men dan ook met reden afgeleid dat de Engelsche regeering nooit in eenigen vorm zich van de genoemde conventie zal terugtrekken.

En toch is het gerucht gedurig rondgegaan dat de Transvaalsche regeering de hoop niet heeft opgegeven de conventie veranderd te zien. Ook heeft men telkens vernomen dat President Kruger niet naar Engeland zal gaan dan in geval de

¹ The Cape Colonists who, between 1835 and 1838, left the Colony and founded independent settlements north of the Orange and Vaal Rivers.

Engelsche regeering gereed was de herziening der conventie als een open kwestie te beschouwen; en het heet nu zeker dat Zijn Hoogedele naar Engeland zal gaan. Ook heeft het *Standard and Diggers' News* agentschap herhaalde malen onlangs het gerucht verspreid dat men in Engeland gereed is de conventie te herzien. Hoewel dit alles maar geruchten zijn, lijkt het toch opmerkingswaardig dat ze alle zoo aanhoudend op hetzelfde terugkomen. Het lijkt dus geenszins onwaarschijnlijk dat, niettegenstaande de verklaringen van Sir H. Robinson en den heer Chamberlain, de Engelsche regeering toch bereid is de conventie in revisie te nemen, en dat dit vooral de oorzaak is die den President op zoo'n gevorderden leeftijd en te midden van zoo vele moeielijkheden in zijn eigen staat bewogen zal hebben de verre reis te ondernemen.

Wij wenschen thans verder te gaan en te vragen of het voor Engeland zelf niet wenschelijk is de conventie te veranderen. Zoo wij die vraag met ja moeten beantwoorden, zal het meer dan waarschijnlijk zijn dat de betrekking tusschen Engeland en de Transvaal op een veranderden voet zal geplaatst worden, en dat dit juist het doel is waarmee de President naar Engeland gaat.

Volgens de conventie van 1881, waaronder de Transvaal hare vrijheid kreeg, word Engeland als suzerein, oppermacht, of 'paramount power' erkend. De betrekking tusschen de jeugdige republiek en Engeland was dus die van een vasalstaat tot zijn opperheer onder het leenstelsel. Welke wederzijdsche rechten zulk eene betrekking aan èn vasalstaat èn oppermacht toekende is een uiterst moeilijke vraag, die de beroemdste internationale rechtsgeleerden tot hiertoe niet bevredigend beantwoord hebben. Het gewone antwoord is dat in zulk een geval er een vermoeden of presumptie bestaat dat de oppermacht de uitwendige betrekkingen van den vasalstaat beheerscht. Deze onzekerheid en onbepaaldheid van de suzeriniteits betrekking sneed echter in ons geval naar beide kanten; want zoo Engeland onder de conventie van 1881 niet juist wist welke macht zij over de Transvaal bezat, wist de Transvaal aan haren kant even min, hoever Engeland als suzerein of 'paramount power' zou kunnen gaan. Waar het recht of de interpretatie onzeker is, maakt de sterkste partij zijn eigen recht of interpretatie.

Het was wegens dit gevoel van onzekerheid aan den eenen kant en van vrees aan den anderen dat men in 1884 de conventie in revisie nam en in plaats van de suzeriniteits-betrekking een clause met de volgende strekking plaatste:

IV. De Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek zal met geen staat of volk met uitzondering van den Oranjevrijstaat eenig tractaat of verbond maken, noch met eenigen stam ten oosten of westen der republiek, totdat de Koningin hare goedkeuring daartoe heeft gegeven.

Hieruit blijkt duidelijk wat Engeland wilde. Het was gereed de suzeriniteit op te geven zoo het in plaats daarvan het beheer van de uitwendige politiek der Transvaal in handen kreeg. Hoever het dit beheer en ook andere rechten onder de oude conventie bezat was duister; en het was dus gewillig al zijn vermoede rechten daaronder op te geven, ten einde duidelijk en ontegenzeggelijk het beheer van de betrekkingen der Transvaal tot andere mogendheden te bekomen.

Maar heeft Engeland zijn doel bereikt en dat beheer bekomen? Geenszins! De conventie verbiedt slechts tractaten en verbindingen (engagements) zonder Engeland's goedkeuring gemaakt; ze verbiedt niets meer. Nu is in de diplomatische wereld een tractaat of verbinding niet noodig. Het is dikwijls genoeg dat de mogendheden tot eene verstandhouding komen. Om een in het oog vallend voorbeeld te noemen: tusschen Duitschland, Oostenrijk en Italië bestaat er een alliantie door tractaat; tusschen de opponeerende mogendheden Rusland en Frankrijk bestaat er slechts eene *entente cordiale* of goede verstandhouding. Doch geen Europeesch staatsman betwijfelt dat de band tusschen de twee laatstgenoemde mogendheden even sterk is als die tusschen de drie eerstgenoemde.

De conventie van 1884 verbiedt weliswaar een tractaat, maar waar verbiedt zij een diplomatische *entente cordiale*? De Transvaal kan dus ongetwijfeld een vormlooze alliantie met een of meer Europeesche mogendheden aangaan, zonder zoodoende de conventie te breken.

Wij gaan echter nog verder en beweren dat al zou de Transvaal de stoute schoenen aantrekken en een tractaat, zegge, met Duitschland maken waaronder Duitschland hare onafhankelijkheid waarborgt, Engeland in geen betere positie

door deze conventie geplaatst wordt. De vraag is niet welke waarde Engeland aan zulk een tractaat zal hechten, maar wel, welke waarde de contracteerende mogendheden daaraan zullen hechten. Engeland kan slechts oorlog verklaren; maar dat is juist het geval waarin het veronderstelde tractaat voorziet. De 4de clausule der conventie heeft dus niet achter zich die macht of 'sanction' die haar alleen een praktische waarde zou kunnen geven.

Engeland is dus in deze positie: het heeft een conventie opgegeven waaronder het onzekere en tevens onbepaalde rechten bezat, en in plaats daarvan eene gemaakt die het slechts een enkel, en dat een onuitvoerbaar, recht toekent. Het is niet meer suzerain of 'paramount power' en heeft dus geen *locus standi* in zake de inwendige politiek der Transvaal; en de conventie die het een beheer over de uitwendige politiek geeft is onuitvoerbaar. De heer Chamberlain, die een bezigheidsman was lang voor hij politicus werd, is zeker praktisch genoeg in te zien dat de Engelsche macht over de Transvaal slechts nominaal is; en het zal ons niet verwonderen zoo hij aan den wensch van president Kruger gehoor geeft en in plaats van de conventie van 1884 een tractaat met de Transvaal maakt waarin Engeland de onafhankelijkheid der republiek waarborgt ten einde inheemsche intriges te voorkomen, en de Transvaal zich van haren kant verbindt een Zuid-Afrikaansch tolverbond in te treden en maatregelen in overweging te nemen die de positie der nieuwe bevolking zoo kunnen wijzigen dat aan de thans bestaande klachten wordt te gemoet gekomen.

TRANSLATION: *The Convention of 1884*¹

Since the troubles in the Transvaal began and the relationship between England and the Transvaal again came under discussion, people have continued to think that the Convention of 1884 would for ever remain the basis of that relationship. The more it was rumoured that the Republic was in league with Germany, the more passionately our English contemporaries clung to the Convention. And official action accorded with this opinion. Thus the High Commissioner² cabled from

¹ See p. 21 *supra*, note 1.

² Sir Hercules Robinson, afterwards Lord Rosmead.

Pretoria to Mr [J.] Chamberlain that it was there desired to re-open discussion of the Convention, but that he had absolutely refused to do so; and Mr Chamberlain, in reply, forbade him to broach the Convention at any time. Moreover, the Secretary of State for the Colonies has publicly declared that his Government was determined to maintain the Convention. From this it has with good reason been concluded that the English Government will never in any way withdraw from the said Convention.

And yet the rumour has continued to circulate that the Transvaal Government has not given up hope of seeing the Convention altered. It has also been said over and over again that President Kruger will not go to England unless the English Government are prepared to regard the revision of the Convention as an open question, and it now seems certain that His Honour will go to England.¹ The *Standard and Diggers' News*² agency has several times recently spread the rumour that England is ready to revise the Convention. Although all these are only rumours, it is nevertheless to be noted that they all come back repeatedly to the same point. It thus seems by no means improbable that, notwithstanding the declarations of Sir Hercules Robinson and Mr Chamberlain, the English Government is nevertheless ready to consider revision of the Convention, and that this in particular is the reason that has moved the President, at such an advanced age and in the midst of so many difficulties in his own state, to undertake the distant journey.

We now wish to go further and to ask whether it is not desirable for England herself to alter the Convention. If we are to say yes in answer to this question, it will be more than probable that the relation between England and the Transvaal will be put upon a changed footing, and that this precisely is the aim with which the President is going to England.

According to the Convention of 1881, by which the Transvaal obtained its freedom, England is acknowledged as suzerain, supreme or paramount power.³ The relationship between the

¹ This projected visit did not take place.

² Founded in Johannesburg c. 1889; ceased publication in May 1900.

³ The Convention of Pretoria, which cancelled the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877.

young Republic and England was thus that of a vassal state to its overlord under the feudal system. What mutual rights such a relationship conferred on both vassal state and paramount power is an extremely difficult question, which the most celebrated international lawyers have not so far answered satisfactorily. The usual answer is that in such a case a supposition or presumption exists that the paramount power controls the external relations of the vassal state. But this uncertainty and indefiniteness about the suzerainty relationship is, in our case, two-edged; for, if England under the Convention of 1881 did not know exactly what power she possessed over the Transvaal, the Transvaal on its side knew as little how far England as suzerain or paramount power would be able to go. Where the law or the interpretation is uncertain, the stronger party makes his own law or interpretation.

It was because of this feeling of uncertainty on one side and fear on the other, that the Convention was revised in 1884 and that there was substituted for the suzerainty relationship a clause of the following purport:

IV. The South African Republic will not make any treaty or alliance with any state or people, with the exception of the Orange Free State, nor with any tribe to the east or west of the Republic, until the Queen has approved it.

From this it is quite clear what England wants. She was ready to give up suzerainty if, instead, she got the control of the external policy of the Transvaal into her hands. To what extent she possessed this control and other rights as well under the old Convention was obscure; thus she was willing to give up all her probable rights under it in order to acquire clearly and indisputably control of the relations of the Transvaal with other powers.

But has England achieved her purpose and acquired that control? Not at all! The Convention forbids only treaties and engagements made without England's approval; it forbids nothing more. Now, in the diplomatic world, a treaty or engagement is not necessary. It is often enough that the powers come to an understanding. To name one obvious example: between Germany, Austria and Italy there exists an alliance by

treaty; between the opposing powers, Russia and France, there exists only an *entente cordiale* or good understanding. Yet no European statesman doubts that the bond between the two last named powers is as strong as that between the three first named.

The Convention of 1884 certainly forbids a treaty, but where does it forbid an *entente cordiale*? The Transvaal can thus undoubtedly make a formless alliance with one or more European powers without breaking the Convention.

But we go further and state that, even if the Transvaal were to be so bold as to make a treaty, say, with Germany by which Germany guaranteed her independence, England is not placed in any better position by this Convention. The question is not what value England will attach to such a treaty, but what value the contracting powers will attach to it. England can only declare war, but that is precisely the contingency for which the hypothetical treaty provides. The fourth article of the Convention therefore has not behind it the power or sanction that alone could give it practical value.

England is therefore in this position: she has given up a Convention under which she possessed uncertain and at the same time undefined rights, and instead has made one which grants her a single right, and that an impracticable one. She is no longer suzerain or paramount power and has thus no *locus standi* as regards the internal policy of the Transvaal; and the Convention which gives her some control over external policy is impracticable. Mr Chamberlain, who was a business man long before he became a politician, is surely practical enough to realize that the English power over the Transvaal is only nominal; and it will not surprise us if he accedes to the wish of President Kruger and, instead of the Convention of 1884, makes a treaty with the Transvaal in which England guarantees the independence of the Republic in order to prevent intrigues at home, and the Transvaal on her side binds herself to enter a South African customs union and to consider measures which will modify the position of the new population in such a way as to meet existing complaints.

26 Article [1896]

Leading article in the *South African Telegraph*¹ 21 March 1896.

NATURAL PARTIES

If there was one good result which, more than any other, was expected by everybody in this Colony to follow from the recent crisis, it was the regrouping of parties along more natural lines. Many observers had animadverted upon the unnatural Bond-Rhodes alliance, which embraced pretty well every shade of political opinion, from aggressive capitalistic imperialism to moss-grown, rural particularism. That the derided parish pumpers should so complacently range themselves under the banner of an imaginative imperialist seemed to the outside world inexplicable, except on the assumption of influence undistinguishable from political corruption. Whether this assumption was correct or not—and the sudden snapping of the coalition would seem to negative it—it cannot be doubted that the combination was not a natural one, and, under certain circumstances, capable of great abuse. The Bond party was, no doubt, influenced by Mr Rhodes's eagerness—feigned or real—for protection, higher franchise, labour-tax, and his affection for old Dutch furniture. But in order to see how far it embraced conflicting elements, let us for a moment glance at the composition of the late Ministry.² That it was composed of two strongly divergent elements, which were kept together only by the authority and the prestige of the Prime Minister, is well known. On the one side were such Ministers as Messrs Laing [J.], Frost [J.], and Sprigg, on the other were Messrs Rhodes, Schreiner [W. P.] and Faure [P. H.]. That there were struggles in the Cabinet itself for the position of first lieutenant between Sir Gordon Sprigg and Mr Schreiner was not only matter of common talk and observation, but was plainly evident from the proceedings in the Assembly. In the struggle for supremacy, victory was generally accorded to Mr Schreiner, who, notwithstanding his youth and inexperience, yet added to his great natural ability a following in the Bond, and a sympathetic backing from the Premier. Besides this personal contrariety,

¹ Founded in Cape Town 1 August 1895; ceased publication 3 September 1896.

² Rhodes's second ministry (May 1893–12 January 1896).

the two sections of the Cabinet were no doubt influenced by divergent political sympathies, for the one section represented what is known as the Frontier element,¹ with the sympathies natural to such a party, while the other was influenced by a sympathy for Bond politics.

But to put the unnatural and forced character of the combination represented by the late coalition Cabinet in the strongest and most unequivocal light, we must go still further back; we have to go to the days of the Ministry of 'All the Talents', which comprised Messrs Rhodes, Sauer, Merriman [J. X.], [Sir J. R.] Innes, [Sir J.] Sivewright and [Sir P. H.] Faure.² In those days the present Premier³ was the Leader of the Opposition against Mr Rhodes's Government. How reckless, venomous, and persistent his criticism of the Government policy was in those days is still well-known to everyone. He did not spare the Government in a single particular. On great questions of legislative policy as well as on the pettiest matter of administration, in external policy no less than in purely domestic matters, he was in entire and uncompromising disagreement with the Government. Behind him he had a few frontier warriors and some nondescript guerilla fighters, who formed about the most incoherent and one of the most diminutive parties or cliques ever seen in our Legislature. If the Government had met no accidental misfortune, this puny party of Sir Gordon Sprigg would have continued to shrink and atrophy until it would have given up its little ghost, and would have been decently buried in oblivion. But this was not to be. A Ministry of 'all the talents' has seldom had a long life. Soon the rift in the lute began to shew itself. Differences arose, and the end came.⁴ With that demonstrative cynicism so peculiar to him, Mr Rhodes at once offered Sir Gordon a seat in his new Cabinet, which was thankfully accepted. Generally reticent on matters of public policy, Sir Gordon has never

¹ A reference to the political attitudes of the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony which became, after the arrival of the British settlers in 1820 and the departure of the Trekkers, mainly an English-speaking region.

² Rhodes's first ministry (July 1890–May 1893).

³ Sir J. Gordon Sprigg.

⁴ This ministry ended in 1893 when Merriman, Sauer and Innes resigned rather than connive at the dubious departmental practices of the Commissioner of Public Works, Sir James Sivewright.

been devoid of that magnanimity which frankly talks about itself. Taking his constituents into his confidence after he had accepted office under Mr Rhodes, he explained to them that he had only entered the Ministry because Mr Rhodes had yielded to his supremacy; he could select his own Ministers, dictate his own policy, and have everything his own way. His greatness and supremacy seems to have completely exhausted itself in the effort to get Messrs Laing and Frost into the Ministry. After that severe effort he cheerfully swallowed protection, labour-tax, and several other similar matters with a truly royal range of taste. When he found out that, so far from being virtual Premier, he was even relegated to a position of inferiority to Mr Schreiner, he did not resign. His mind was still haunted by the chill shadow of Opposition, which had more than once made of him 'a child crying in the night'.

This new combination not only overstepped all the limits of opportunism which obtain in our already lax politics; not only did it amalgamate with the Government a relentless Opposition, and introduce into the administration men whose political sympathies lay poles asunder; it had further the baneful effect of alienating from each other people who were really natural allies. This is a fact of capital and far-reaching importance; and the weltering chaos of our politics will not subside until its paramount importance has been fully recognized and acted upon. When it became necessary for Mr Rhodes to resign, the Governor¹ consulted him as to the choice of his successor. We have it from Sir Gordon himself that Mr Rhodes recommended him as his successor, and confusion has become worse confounded. By a series of questionable tactics, by playing fast and loose with political principles, and by intrigue, Sir Gordon has got a Ministry together. Thereby he has prevented a natural alliance from succeeding to the former unnatural governmental combination. That the real and natural allies of the party Sir Gordon now asks help from are not those who look upon Sir Gordon as their leader, and whose opinions find fit expression in the leading columns of our morning contemporary,² but rather that wider circle of true and tried South Africans who in 1880, as well as 1896, were led by men

¹ Lord Rosmead. ² *The Cape Times*.

not of the Sprigg genus, is the primary fact of and key to the present political situation in this Colony. Between these natural allies, who are in harmony on all fundamental questions of South African policy, Sir Gordon has interposed his artificial Ministry.¹

27 Article [1896]

Leading article in the *South African Telegraph* 16 April 1896.

OLIVE SCHREINER ON THE BOERS

In the brilliant article which we condense on another page, and which appears in the April number of the *Fortnightly Review*,² Olive Schreiner gives to the English reading world a description of the Boer character or type of humanity, and an analysis of the principal factors which have helped to shape its formation. While differing in details from that description and that analysis, we yet welcome this contribution on the subject, as not only very able, but more sympathetic than anything of the kind we have yet seen in the English press. The article certainly seems to breathe a different spirit from that which pervades the sketch of Boer types in the *Story of an African Farm*. Since writing that book the writer has herself discovered that behind the stupid and repellent Boer exterior there lurk many a shade of character and emotion, many a survival from an old and dead world, many an anticipation of the new, which are precious, and indeed priceless, both in the individual and the people. In this attitude of sympathetic though discriminative appreciation and study of a problem which has baffled almost every outside student, we see the surest and swiftest means of bringing together, and consolidating into a homogeneous nationality, the diverse white races of South Africa. Rightly recognising that in their migratory or trekking spirit lies one of the most remarkable instincts of the Boers, the writer seeks for the explanation of that instinct in the fact that the early settlers, of whatever race or nationality, were generally sailors or persons of an equally active temperament or disposition;

¹ Three members of the Ministry were Afrikander Bondsmen, but of these only T. N. G. Te Water was a Hofmeyr man; Sivewright and Faure supported Rhodes.

² One of a series of articles entitled 'Stray Thoughts on South Africa'. Published in book form posthumously in 1923.

men marked by 'their inborn love of a wild, roving life, leading them into the service of the Dutch East India Company'.¹ To this we may add that this trait may have been—and undoubtedly was—strengthened by the active and energetic French refugees who constituted the very flower of the French people. And, in support of this addition, we would mention the curious fact—which has often before been noticed—that the names of the early Voortrekkers were very largely French. Indeed, it is in the French blood which flows in the Boer veins that we have to look for the explanation of those great historical movements from Cape Town to the Zambesi which form perhaps the most significant feature in our past history. The French of the 17th century did for the Teutonic march of the South African race what the French of the 11th century did for the Anglo-Saxon march of that stock. They have vivified the torpid mental life of the otherwise Teutonic Boer, they have stimulated his faculties and made his blood course more rapidly in his substantial veins. And this ethnological peculiarity has been intensified by the historical and climatic accidents of his existence. If the early Boers had been ruled, both by the East India Company, and later by the British Government, in accordance with their own ideas of fairness and justice, the ultimate South African empire would still have extended from Cape L'Agulhas to the Zambesi, but the historical process of its spread and development would have been very different.

However, notwithstanding his love of trekking, the Boer is at bottom a quiet, settled and markedly conservative animal, passionately fond of his country, which he looks upon as peculiarly his own, and more or less averse to all outside influences. And the principal question which anyone who wishes to solve the problem of the Boer character has to deal with is exactly the evolution of this conservative, aristocratic, patriotic element in his constitution, which apparently overshadows all the others. And this is the principal problem with which the writer deals in this paper. She points out very truly that while the English Colonist, even he who settled in this

¹ The Company received by charter in 1602 the monopoly of Dutch trade with the Far East. In April 1652 it established a refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope which became the nucleus of white settlement in South Africa.

country as far back as 1820,¹ still continues to think fondly of, and feel sympathetically for, the country of his parents, and the great race to which he belongs, the Boer has become of the soil, soily; he has cut himself completely adrift from Europe and his progenitors, and their traditions and ideals over there; he has come to look upon South Africa, not merely as the land of his birth, but also as the source of all that is most dear and hallowed in his memory, as the object of his tenderest sympathies and aspirations. Why is the Boer in this respect so different, not only from his English fellow colonist, but also from all previous recorded types of colonist? The writer points to the following facts as furnishing some explanation of this obscure and difficult subject. In the first place, the original population of the Colony consisted almost solely of males of very mixed nationalities; and the wives which the Company sent out for them were orphans from the philanthropic institutions of the mother country. These had no hallowed and enduring memories to cherish of the land of their birth, no parents' homes to think of, with their thousand little trifling details which yet influence the hearts and thoughts of generations; this country was the first glimpse of 'Good Hope' which they ever had. No wonder, therefore, that they and their offspring cherished no sentimental regard for the mother country. In the second place, the French refugees who came to strengthen the colonial population did not bring any pleasant memories from their mother country. Separated from the bulk of the French population by great differences of religious belief and social aims, persecuted by their Government, and goaded by a nameless tyranny to rebellion and exile, they taught their children to love the land of refuge which providence had marked out for them, and themselves tried to forget the harsh stepmother of France. This is the writer's argument but as a caveat against attaching too much weight to these considerations, we may refer to what Bernardin de St Pierre says in some letters which we published a few weeks back.² Describing both

¹ Between 1820 and 1821 about 5,000 British immigrants were settled on farms in the country west of the Great Fish River, at that time the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony.

² Bernardin de St Pierre stayed briefly at the Cape in 1771 while on a government mission to Mauritius. He published a series of letters under the title *Voyage à l'Isle-de-France*. Letters xx-xxiii give a lively account of his stay at

the Dutch and the French colonists as he saw them in 1771, he says that one of the things which struck him most was their strong sentimental attachment to the mother countries. He says the French always cried when the name of France was mentioned.

Third and most important among these isolating factors the writer puts the Taal,¹ which, while binding all the Boers over the whole South Africa together in the bond of a common language spoken nowhere else on the whole earth, has further served to isolate them effectually from those influences and ideas which are and can only be represented in the developed European languages. She represents the Taal as the debris of Dutch which has resulted from the contact of the coloured races and especially the French. Competent students of philology aver, however, that this is by no means correct, and that Cape-Dutch is a lineal offspring of the Dutch spoken in the northern provinces of Holland in the 17th century, and that the known laws of philological development account fully for the suggested derivation of the Taal. However this may be, it cannot be doubted that the Taal has been one of the greatest consolidating and conserving forces in the Boer environment. It is the same from the Cape to the Zambesi, the recent date of the northern movements not yet having allowed of any important dialectic differentiations; and it conserves all that is worthiest and dearest to the Boer. The writer seems to think that the Taal is somehow the Palladium of the Boer cause, and that with the disappearance of the Taal the distinctive Boer character which has been developed apart from all those popular, scientific and humanitarian influences which have transformed Europe in the last two centuries, will disappear also. This may be so, although it is very dangerous to dogmatize on these large ethnological and historical problems. But supposing the Taal is only a temporary scaffolding in the erection of that great national structure in South Africa whose foundations alone we have so far beheld, and that it is destined to disappear when it has served its purpose, the fact will remain that in thoroughly nationalizing at least part of our population

the Cape. They were translated, probably by Smuts, for publication in the *South African Telegraph* (31 March, 3 and 10 April 1896).

¹ Afrikaans.

it will have served a great purpose in South African history. When, in the great Temple of peace and unity which is to be, the descendants of the English and the French and the Dutch of long ago shall assemble in the diviner days of our far-off future, they shall each and all recognize in the painting and sculpture which shall adorn its spacious walls the great feats and endurances, the joys and sorrows, of their various progenitors in South African history. And greater than the joy that their past contained great distinctive types shall be the joy that at last those types had coalesced into one.

28 Article [1896]

Leading article in the *South African Telegraph* 2 July 1896.

THE HALF-CASTE PROBLEM

As we have intimated, we are publishing today by arrangement with the gifted authoress extracts from the third instalment of Olive Schreiner's 'Stray Thoughts on South Africa' appearing in this month's *Fortnightly Review*. Our readers will remember that a couple of months ago we similarly published extracts from the second instalment which consisted of Olive Schreiner's remarkable delineation of the Boer character. That notable article, while not quite satisfactory from every point of view, as we pointed out at the time, yet showed conclusively that Olive Schreiner had a grasp of the deeper aspects of the South African problem, such as very few possess; and we rejoiced to think that she had directed her remarkable power of sympathetic insight to the state of the body politic in South Africa. For her voice, if not the wisest that speaks to South Africa to-day, is certainly the most gifted; and her presentation and analysis of the abiding phenomena of our social life, though appearing in an English review, are addressed primarily to those thoughtful South Africans who are profoundly interested in the present and future of their great country. Nor must it be supposed that in these interesting articles the authoress is forsaking literature for the devious tracks of social and political pamphleteering. Even from a purely and severely literary point of view she has never written anything more beautiful and more likely to last than that sketch of the South

African Boer; nor does the present article show any decline, either in social and historical insight or in literary grace. Nominally the present article deals with the native races and their relation to the whites; as a matter of fact the largest and most interesting parts of it are those which she has devoted to the forbidding problems of slavery and half-castism. In briefest summary her argument is this: the Cape natives¹ were by their unstable or intractable temperaments unfit for slaves, and these were consequently brought from oversea.² As an historical phenomenon she refuses to condemn slavery in South Africa, as she is of the opinion that the treatment of slaves at the Cape tended generally to be milder than elsewhere. But the penalty which we have had to pay for, and the legacy we have derived from, slavery is the terrible problem of the half-caste. Both the white and the various coloured races had their social level and their cohesive social traditions and habits. The half-caste, however, was an outcast—with the settled habits and social level of neither white nor black. The half-caste thus marks the introduction of an immoral and anti-social factor into the social life of South Africa which, unless held in check, will most probably ruin our civilization in the long run. And the article winds up with a characteristic and pathetic appeal to the mothers, both white and black, of South Africa to preserve as the most precious possession of our social life the purity of the races—that palladium of our civilization and continuity.

Dissenting as we do from several of her reasons, both on historical and scientific grounds, we yet endorse most fully and unreservedly her severe judgment on the half-caste, and look upon the intermixture of black and white in South Africa as in every way the darkest spot of our civilization, the cancer which, unless arrested and kept within the narrowest limits, will ultimately corrode and corrupt the very life-centres of our society. But it is when we come to the remedy she prescribes that her fatal weakness becomes evident. An appeal to mothers in a case like this means, of course, primarily an appeal to Coloured women; and in how far an appeal to them to preserve

¹ Bushmen and Hottentots.

² Slaves were first brought into the Cape of Good Hope between 1657 and 1658. They were imported chiefly from Madagascar, Delagoa Bay and the East Indies.

the purity of their race is likely to be effective, all sober men are sadly experiencing every day, almost every hour of their lives. We shall just now see whether there is not a more excellent way. Before, however, coming to that we wish to draw attention to what appears to us to be an error, and a grave error in the article. The writer quite rightly traces the half-caste problem to slavery; but she seems to err when she holds our old population primarily responsible for thrusting this problem with its daily increasing burden on South Africa. She seems to ignore what appears to us the salient fact of the matter; that is, that the old half-caste population of the Colony¹ has found its social level and forms a labouring class no whit inferior, but probably superior, to the pure native races. They have their own social life and traditions and code of honour. The difficulty comes in with the yellow element which is now being daily discharged from the social furnace. It is this element, standing half-way between the old half-caste population and the whites, which has no social level, no settled habits, no cohesive traditions, and an overdose of vanity, laziness and criminal propensity. For this not so much the old white population as the present town populations are to blame, as everybody knows.

Such is the evil, such its origin and symptoms. What is the remedy? No patent panacea will do; appeals to Coloured girls cannot arrest the everlasting march of passion or the brute cosmic process that works for progress and decay. It is here specially that we have to lay aside easy and comfortable sentiments and pierce to the very root ideas on which our civilization and our historical continuity can alone be founded safely. There are, or have been, two race ideals in South Africa. There has been what is vaguely called the negrophilist ideal, which we prefer to call the missionary ideal. That is dead. For sound logic required that it should be pressed to its practical conclusions—which certain old missionaries, and others, did when they married Native wives. Under the abhorrence which its practical conclusions called forth the ideal itself perished, and only its shade still haunts our social and political speculation. The other is the aristocratic ideal which, in spite of the

¹ The Cape Coloured people, who now number over one and a half million.

humanitarian and democratic notions which have leavened our civilization and institutions, is gradually forcing its way to the attention of all serious thinkers in South Africa. Let the potent sentiment and tradition of aristocracy leaven our white race; let it come to be considered the grossest violation of that social etiquette, which is even more powerful than the law of self-respect, for a white man to cohabit with a Coloured woman—and appeals to Coloured girls will become unnecessary, for the most powerful bulwark of racial purity will have been reared. If that end—as Olive Schreiner so powerfully argues—is the most desirable, then the means, what appears to be the only means, becomes necessary for its attainment. But from that last step she seems to shrink. And yet it seems to us—looking at the matter from a scientific historical point of view—that that aristocratic consciousness can alone secure the race purity of the whites and at the same time make them realize their terrible responsibilities to the native races entrusted to their charge.

29 Article [1896]

Leading article in the *South African Telegraph* 18 July 1896.

JUDGMENT

The momentous report of the Jameson Raid Select Committee,¹ which was yesterday laid on the table of the Legislative Assembly and appears in full on another page, may be said to have closed an epoch in the history of South Africa. There will be after consequences, evil results which will persist for many a day yet to trouble the peace of South Africa; but the epoch itself is closed. On its principal actor judgment has been passed. So far from his great career being only just beginning, it has in the truest sense closed. It may perhaps be expected that we should rejoice at the setting of what we have always denounced as an evil star in South Africa, although one of the first magnitude. For does this final and conclusive judgment on Mr Rhodes not constitute a moment of supreme triumph for those who have opposed to the best of their abilities sinister dominance in South African politics? A moment of triumph it is, but not of

¹ A6 of 1896 (Cape Parliamentary Papers).

rejoicing. For we are impelled to recognize in the fate of Mr Rhodes a sense of tears in all things mortal; we can sympathize with the fallen one there where we see him slowly descending into the pit which his inordinate ambition had dug for the supreme ideal of South African politics. What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!¹ For the fleeting day great and ambitious genius may contend successfully with fate and violate those moral laws which Providence has prescribed for emperor and clown alike; and then the short-lived triumph closes, and the poor mortal is ground to atoms in the remorseless machinery of destiny. An old Greek, who could have watched the career of the sickly lad that came to South Africa before the great diamond era with little but his brains to back him; and who could have watched him ascend one by one the rungs of fortune's ladder—till he rose to the giddy altitudes where his mighty figure loomed as the apotheosis of the Imperial Idea—would have become filled with melancholy, and would have thought of Polycrates' king.² 'Call no man happy till his final day'—such are the words which the Athenian sage used to the great Lydian king at the height of his career.³ 'Mortal as thou art, and looking forward to that last day of thine, call no man happy till he hath crossed life's last bourne without the pangs of pain': such is the lesson which the great Athenian dramatist deduced from the career of Oedipus, the tyrant.⁴

The transcendent ability and magnificent early promise of Cecil Rhodes we have never denied. He had that amplitude of mind which throws a glamour round itself and draws men and undermines their independence in spite of themselves. He alone, of all the remarkable men of his generation, could have put the copestone to the rounded arch of South African unity. But the inexorable condition was that he should observe those moral rules of conduct which have been consecrated by the

¹Edmund Burke in a speech at Bristol, 1870.

²King Amasis of Egypt advised his ally Polycrates, Tyrant of Samos *c.* 535 B.C., to appease the gods for his excessive good fortune by throwing away his most valued treasure. Polycrates did so but the treasure returned to him, whereupon Amasis, certain of Polycrates' eventual ruin, broke their alliance. (Herodotus, *Histories*, iii, 39–43.)

³Solon to Croesus. (Herodotus, *Histories*, i, 32.)

⁴The closing lines of *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles.

mature experience of mankind—that he should be honest, and patient, and willing—when the occasion arose—to sacrifice his highest personal ambition on the altar of the Common Good. That condition he did not accept. He wanted indeed a United South Africa—but one which would be the work of Cecil Rhodes; which would be the pedestal for his colossal personality. And he spurned the ethical code of humanity. He spurned the long laborious road, and took that moral short-cut which led the greatest genius of the modern world to St Helena at the prime of his life. It is ever thus. The man that defies morality defies mankind; and in that struggle with mankind not even the greatest genius can save that man, as the memorable cases of Hannibal and Napoleon shew. Brought up amid surroundings which were a living testimony to the ideals of religion and culture, the lad Cecil Rhodes perhaps started life with the best and purest intentions. But Kimberley, which made him financially, unmade him morally. Probably his Kimberley experiences first introduced that fatal twist into his moral nature, the results whereof we are now deploring. In politics too his start was fair, but his career soon became clouded morally. He made the fatal blunder of supposing that money could do the work of morality, and ‘squaring’ took the place of persuasion. It was then that certain of his friends felt themselves constrained to call halt, and to oppose the man with whom they had at first co-operated. As time went on the controversy developed: the majority in this country gradually took sides with Mr Rhodes against these opponents: and at last he seemed to be practically omnipotent. Then came the fatal *dénouement* of his complicated political knot; some of his most powerful friends came round to the side of these opponents, while many who had before opposed him now ranged themselves on his side.

That controversy has now been decided by the judgment of the most competent tribunal which South Africa could have appointed; and that judgment is in favour of those who, like Mr Sauer and Mr Merriman, had fought so persistently against Mr Rhodes. That Mr Rhodes has abused his high position and is unworthy to again lead the people or a section of the people of this Colony; that he has treacherously stabbed to the heart that Afrikaner population that loved and trusted him: such

is the judgment of this tribunal, and such will no doubt be the judgment of posterity on this remarkable man. It may be justly said that that tribunal was composed of men, the majority of whom were—if at all—prejudiced in favour of the man they were trying: it contained the three foremost lawyers of South Africa,¹ and only one member who had persistently opposed Mr Rhodes for years.² Their decision is most likely to be final. So much for the past and the present. What of the future? Mr Rhodes has maintained a masterly silence, trusting in the oblivious effects of time, but through the Press and by means of his still numerous friends his propaganda continues unabated in this Colony and in England that he contemplates an ultimate return to Cape politics; he may even hope to again lead a party and preside over a Government. But it will be a party no longer held together by faith and trust and generous belief, and it will be a Government founded on the ruin of all that is dearest and worthiest in politics. Whether the poison has already so far corrupted public life in this country as to render all this possible, we do not know. But we know that there is a Divinity that shapes national ends, rough-hew them as politicians will. For the present *exeunt*—Mr Rhodes and Sir Thomas Upington. The latter who again ‘concur’ with a lengthy, frothy, flimsy *but*, has completely stultified himself, and his minority report has lent colour to some vague rumours which have been current concerning the motives for his leaving the Bench.³

30 Article [1896]

Leading article in the *South African Telegraph* 10 August 1896.

A STATESMAN OF THE EMPIRE

Under the above heading the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* pays a just tribute to the man to whom, more perhaps than any other

¹ W. P. Schreiner, J. Rose Innes, T. Upington.

² J. X. Merriman.

³ Upington resigned his judgeship to become Attorney-General to Sir J. G. Sprigg’s third Ministry, which took office in June 1896 following the resignation of Rhodes. Sir James Rose Innes, while deprecating a return to politics by a judge, says in his *Autobiography* (pp. 129–30) that there had been no ‘negotiations with party politicians’ and that ‘Upington came to the help of his old colleague on a sudden emergency’.

in South Africa, the pacific turn which things have taken within the last few months is due. In his remarkable speech on the Jameson Raid debate Mr Schreiner referred to the 'great citizen in our midst who had deserved well of his country during the recent troubles'. We are but too apt to forget the services of that great citizen in our midst, and to give to others the credit of work which was really done by him. His nationality is a stumbling-block to many; the Bond which, even if he did not create it, was by him developed into the most powerful political association of South Africa during the past fifteen years; his active and untiring interest in the practical progress of the agricultural Dutch community—these circumstances loom so largely in the minds of some people that they have quite forgotten that from another point of view Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr is not merely the Afrikaner leader but a great statesman of the Empire, and a man to whom the English people in South Africa are far more indebted than they are at present aware. And it is well to call to mind certain facts and circumstances which shew what services he has rendered to that greater and more harmonious South Africa which is the ideal of true South African statesmanship.

In the first place we may point out a temptation, which, if he had that racial ambition which misunderstanding and calumny have attributed to him, might have led him far astray. It was during the Transvaal War of Independence¹ that Mr Hofmeyr became the recognized and undisputed leader of the Dutch Afrikaner people. That war wrought upon the feelings and the sympathies of the Cape Dutch in a way that made them very combustible material; and an unscrupulous leader who was fighting merely for personal and racial ends might have led, or have attempted to lead, the Cape Dutch along a road that would ultimately have carried them very far from the British Empire. If he had taken his stand on the republican idea, which is a very real and practical one in South Africa, he might very easily have involved the whole South Africa in a great conflict between imperialism and republicanism. When one bears in mind that at that time the proportion of Dutch to

¹ See p. 104 *supra*, note 1.

English in the Colony was 2 to 1, in the Free State 10 to 1, and the Transvaal still greater, one realizes how great must have been the temptation presented to a man of the position and ability of Mr Hofmeyr. Instead, however, of being led astray and succumbing to the Republican temptation, to the Imperial counterpart of which Mr Rhodes succumbed, Mr Hofmeyr stuck to his original idea of finding a *modus vivendi* between the two white peoples, which would be consistent with the political rights and legitimate aspirations of both. He not only himself avoided temptation, but he gave that tone of sincere and reasoned loyalty to his party which has pervaded it till this day. The question he put to himself was not, 'How can I raise the Dutch race to predominance in South Africa?' but simply and solely 'How can I help to forward the peaceful amalgamation of the two peoples?' The great question of South African politics, as he understood it, was neither imperialism nor republicanism, but the far more serious and practical question of the union of the races along lines which would be just and fair and acceptable to both. Mr Hofmeyr, as we read him, is a very practical man and has that aversion to merely abstract or theoretical ideas which is so characteristic of the English people; and his conception of the supreme question before South Africa was a very practical one. In harmony with that conception he drew up a programme of South African politics which was accepted by his party and which represented his views of a moderate, prudent public policy. For nine long years he advocated that policy and consolidated the party that was to carry it out. It was a matter of regret and sorrow to him that that party was so purely Dutch, and on one well-known occasion he made the memorable declaration that he would rather see five Englishmen than a hundred Cape Dutch join the Bond. He was however compelled to accept the fact and work steadily onward in the hope of a more propitious time to come.

That time seemed to him to have arrived at last in 1889. In that year he was strong enough to capture for the cause he had at heart the most powerful and gifted imperialist of South Africa in the person of Mr Rhodes. Mr Rhodes seems to have led Mr Hofmeyr to understand that he had at last come to recognize that the one true policy for this Colony was the *via*

media of compromise, and that a comprehensive colonialism was more suited to the conditions of this country than so-called imperialism. Up to that time the most powerful politician in this Colony, Mr Hofmeyr—with a generosity which does his private and public character the greatest credit—retired from that position; effaced himself, so to speak, in order that he might strengthen the hands of Mr Rhodes in the great work of racial unification and conciliation. The maintenance of the Republics was in his mind absolutely identified with that policy of conciliation, and Mr Rhodes's express declarations (as at the Mayoral banquet to Dr Jameson), shewed that he shared Mr Hofmeyr's views on that point. No wonder therefore that Mr Hofmeyr came to look upon Mr Rhodes as the one man to carry out his original ideas of a South African policy.

Terrible, therefore, must have been his disillusionment to find, at the beginning of this year, that Mr Rhodes had embarked on a secret policy which would absolutely wreck the great work of his heart. One can understand the bitter agony, the pangs of remorse with which the events of the new year must have filled him. And yet in that terrible muddle he was one of the very few men who kept their heads. While Dr Jameson was supposed to be marching on Pretoria with a strong army, and supported by a still stronger one from Johannesburg; while (if report speaks true) President Kruger was weeping like a child in the Executive Council, and Sir Hercules¹ was sitting helpless in Government House, and Mr Rhodes was keeping to his bed at Groote Schuur—a private citizen of this Colony, an invalid without even a seat in Parliament, was giving to President Kruger, to Sir Hercules Robinson, to Mr Rhodes, to Mr Chamberlain—aye, and to the German Emperor—the proper advice under the circumstances. The facts have only partially yet leaked out; so far as they have, they shew under what obligations the whole South Africa, Colonial and Republican, is to Mr Hofmeyr.

We have before now combated the policy of Conservatism which Mr Hofmeyr represents, and shall continue to oppose that policy in the future. But it would be ungenerous in the extreme, and it would be foolish, to ignore the debt which all

¹ Sir Hercules Robinson.

lovers of peace and international amity in South Africa owe to Mr Hofmeyr. And our sincere wish is that, notwithstanding his chronic bad health, he may yet long be spared to that cause of South African peace and conciliation, and remain one of the most powerful links between imperial and republican, between English and Dutch South Africa.

31 Speech [1896]

A report in *Ons Land* (8 September 1896) of an address given by Smuts at Paarl on 4 September at the prize-giving ceremony of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Taalbond. This body had been founded in 1890 to encourage the learning and teaching of Dutch. Its chief activity was to conduct examinations and award bursaries and prizes. Smuts was the examiner in the Higher Taalbond examination in 1896.

De voorzitter verleende daarop het woord aan advokaat Smuts, examiner in het Nederlandsch, hooger afdeeling, die de vergadering in een welsprekende en ernstige rede toesprak.

Hij achtte zich gelukkig tegenwoordig te zijn in deze groote en schitterende vergadering in verband met onze nationale taalbeweging. Waar elders in het heele Zuid-Afrika dan juist hier aan de Paarl, kon men zoo'n schitterende vergadering zien, bijeengekomen voor zoo'n nationaal doel? Onze roemrijke voorouders hebben met zich vele planten uit Holland en Frankrijk gebracht, die in ons klimaat welig hebben getierd. Maar vooral één plant hebben zij meegebracht, die weliger dan eenige ander in ons werelddeel heeft getierd; en dat is de plant der vrijheidsliefde en van den nationalen zin. Hier aan de voeten der bergen en in de eeuwige schoone valleien hebben zij zoo jaren geleden dat plantje aangekweekt, en de grootsche boom beslaat thans het geheele Zuid-Afrika van Kaappunt tot aan de Zambesi. Doch hoewel die boom nu zoo groot is vereert men terecht de Paarl nog als den oorspronkelijken tuin waar dat plantje eerst in onzen grond gelegd werd. En zoo komen wij van avond uit alle deelen des lands met afgezanten uit het Europeesch moederland en zelfs uit het verre en machtige Pretoria, naar dit Mecca van onze volksgeschiedenis en nationaal bestaan. Wij komen hier tesaam, in deze schitterende vergadering, niet om de Paarl een eer aan te doen,

maar om van haar eere te trekken; om onze harten hier aan het heilige vuur door onze voorvaderen ontstoken, te verwarmen; en ook voorbereid te worden voor het grootsche werk dat ons wacht.

Het gerucht is dezer dagen omgegaan dat het Afrikanerdom

niet meer is

wat het geweest is, dat de handen eens zoo krachtig slap hangen, ja men heeft zelfs gezegd dat dit verval, deze verslapping aan de Paarl zelf te bespeuren is. Hij zeide dat is bangmaken; dat is laster, dat deze unieke vergadering logenstraft. Wel is waar, er zijn er onder ons, wier handen slap hangen, maar zij zijn de uitzonderingen. Het groote gros van ons volk is nog bezield door dien ontombaren geest hunner voorvaderen, en zal daardoor bezield blijven totdat het grootsche werk waartoe ons volk in Zuid-Afrika gereopen is eens vervuld en afgedaan is. (Toejuicing)

En wat is dat werk?

Men was vergaderd slechts om dat werk te gedenken in zooverre als het onze taal, de taal onzer Afrikaansche voorouders, betreft. In dit opzicht is ons werk om voor de natuurlijke, redelijke, rechtmatige rechten onzer moedertaal te vechten. Wij zeggen dat die taal een rechtelijk en maatschappelijk onrecht is aangedaan, en dat het onze plicht is, de plicht dien de gedachte aan onze voorvaderen en de zorg voor hen die ons volgen zullen, op ons leggen, om dat onrecht te niet te doen. In 1806 werd deze volksplanting aan den Engelschen bevelhebber overgegeven op dien eed dat ons volk

ongestoord zou blijven

in het bezit en de uitoefening hunner taal en godsdienst. In 1829 werd die eed gebroken en de Hollansche taal als officieele taal afgeschaft. Het antwoord van ons volk op deze snoode schending hunner rechten is de groote trekken die deze Kolonie van hare beste mannen en talenten ontroofden. Sedert ons land een verantwoordelijk bestuur bekomen heeft, is onze volkspartij blijven voortvechten voor de rechten onzer taal; en wij zullen blijven voortvechten totdat wij weer staan waar de eed van sir D. Baird ons plaatste. (Toejuicing)

Recht zegeviert

Hoe dwaas, roept de tegenpartij ons toe! Wat vermag [*sic*] de kwijnende Hollandsche taal in Zuid-Afrika tegen de machtige en met een grootsche letterkunde voorziene taal van het machtigste en rijkste volk der wereld! Waarom toch uw hoofd zoo breken tegen een ijzeren muur? Hierop antwoorden wij dat onze voorvaderen ons niet geleerd hebben voor de overmacht te buigen of te breken. Aan den muur zag hij de spreuk: 'Moed overwint macht'. Dit is ook zijn leuze. En niet alleen onze voorvaderen, maar de geschiedenis der gansche wereld leert ons die groote les. Inderdaad, wat is de geschiedenis dan de kamp van het zwakke recht tegen het machtige onrecht en de overwinning van deze door gene! En die kamp is in Zuid-Afrika van den beginne voortgegaan, met welk gevolg zijn wij vanavond hier om dankbaar te getuigen. Toen het kleine Griekenland zich verzette tegen de machtige Perzische alleenheerschappij; toen het arme Zwitserland zich verzette tegen het groote Oostenrijk; toen dat kleine Holland zich verzette tegen de wereldheerschappij van Philips II; toen het kleine Hugenotendom zich verzette tegen den machtigsten koning van het 17-eeuwsche Europa, toen was het recht, hoe nietig ook, aan den eenen kant, het machtige onrecht aan den anderen; en wij weten wat het resultaat was in ieder geval. En als het Jingoisme zich ten doel stelt het opslikken onzer taal en volk, dan vouwen wij niet hulpeloos de handen, maar doen wat onze voorouders deden in Holland, in Frankrijk en in Zuid-Afrika. En als wij zoo doen, dan zal de wijsheid der geschiedenis ons streven rechtvaardigen evenals zij dat in alle andere gevallen gedaan heeft. *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*. Dan zullen onze kinderen en kindskinderen nog in lengte van dagen de taal hunner voorouders spreken, de taal waarin wij ons volksidealen formuleerden, waarin wij met onze moeders en vriendinnen spraken, waarin wij stamelend den God onzer vaders vereerden.

TRANSLATION

The Chairman then called upon Advocate Smuts, examiner in Dutch, higher division, who addressed the gathering in an eloquent and earnest speech:

He regarded himself as fortunate to be present in this large and brilliant gathering in connection with our national language movement. Where else in all South Africa but here at Paarl could one see such a brilliant gathering, met together for such a national purpose? Our renowned forefathers brought from Holland and France many plants that have thriven luxuriantly in our climate. But one plant especially they brought that has thriven more luxuriantly than any other in our part of the world, and that is the plant of love of freedom and national consciousness. Here at the foot of the mountains and in the eternally beautiful valleys they cultivated that little plant 200 years ago, and the great tree now covers the whole of South Africa from Cape Point to the Zambesi. But, although this tree is now so big, Paarl is still rightly honoured as the original garden where that little plant was first laid in our soil.¹ And so we come this evening from all parts of the country, with delegates from the European motherland and even from the distant and powerful Pretoria, to this Mecca of our national history and existence. We come together here in this brilliant gathering not to honour Paarl, but to draw honour from her; to warm our hearts here at the sacred fire kindled by our forefathers; and also to be prepared for the great work that awaits us.

The rumour has lately spread that Afrikanerdom

no longer is

what it has been; that the hands once so strong are hanging slack; yes, it has even been said that this decline, this slackening, is apparent in Paarl itself. That, he would say, is intimidation; that is a slander to which this unique gathering gives the lie. It is true that there are among us those whose hands are hanging slack, but they are the exceptions. The great majority of our people are still animated by the indomitable spirit of their forefathers, and will continue to be inspired by it until the great work to which our people in South Africa have been called has been fulfilled and accomplished. (Cheers.)

And what is that work?

¹ The reference is obscure. Paarl was not the original settlement either of the Dutch or most of the French colonists. It was, however, the birthplace of the Taalbond and also of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (1875), a national movement which first promoted the writing of Afrikaans.

We are gathered to commemorate that work in so far as it concerns our language, the language of our Afrikaner forefathers. In that respect our work is to fight for the natural, reasonable, legitimate rights of our mother tongue. We say that a legal and social injustice has been done to this language, and that it is our duty, the duty laid upon us by the memory of our forefathers and solicitude for those who will follow us, to wipe out that injustice. In 1806 this settlement was surrendered to the English commander upon oath that our people

would remain undisturbed

in the possession and exercise of their language and religion.¹ In 1829 the oath was broken and the Dutch language abolished as the official language.² The answer of our people to this base violation of their rights is the great treks that robbed this Colony of its best men and talents. Since our country has acquired responsible government,³ our national party has continued to fight for the rights of our language, and we shall continue to fight until we stand again where the oath of Sir David Baird placed us. (Cheers.)

Right is victorious

How foolish, our opponents exclaim! What can the failing Dutch language in South Africa do against the powerful language, equipped with a great literature, of the mightiest and richest people in the world? Why break your head against an iron wall? To this we answer that our forefathers have not taught us to bow or break before superior force. On the wall he saw the maxim: 'Courage overcomes might'. That was his motto too. And not only our forefathers, but the history of the entire world teaches us this great lesson. Indeed, what is history but the struggle of weak right against powerful injustice and the defeat of the latter by the former! And the

¹ The Articles of Capitulation of 10 January 1806 include the following: 'The Burghers and Inhabitants shall preserve all their Rights and Privileges which they have enjoyed hitherto; Public Worship . . . shall be maintained without alteration.' (G. W. Eybers: *Select Constitutional Documents*, p. 15.)

² English became the only official language by a proclamation of Lord Charles Somerset dated 5 July 1822. (Eybers: *Op. cit.* p. 23.)

³ Responsible government was instituted in the Cape Colony in 1872.

fight has gone on in South Africa since the beginning—with what result we are here this evening thankfully to bear witness to. When little Greece resisted the mighty Persian dictatorship; when poor Switzerland resisted great Austria; when that little Holland resisted the world domination of Philip II; when the small group of Huguenots resisted the most powerful king of 17th century Europe; then right, however puny, was on one side, and powerful injustice on the other; and we know what the result was in each case. And if Jingoism sets out to swallow up our language and people, then we do not helplessly fold our hands, but do what our forefathers did in Holland, in France and in South Africa. And if we do that, then the wisdom of history will justify our struggle, as she has done in all other cases. *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*.¹ Then our children and children's children, for many years to come, will speak the language of their forefathers—the language in which we formulated our national ideals, in which we talked with our mothers and friends,² in which, stammering, we honoured the God of our fathers.

32 From W. P. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 92

Attorney General's Office

Cape Town

31 October 1895

My dear Mr Smuts: Will you permit me to send you just a line of congratulation on your able address on political subjects at Kimberley.³ It is refreshing to find so strong a grasp and so clear an expression of truths regarding the exceptional position of South Africa and its politics, in the face of the drenching drizzle always falling from water-pots filled from ancient doctrinaire reservoirs. You evidently see that it is not a mere dictate of prejudice, either of race or colour, but a necessary axiom of political truth for the salvation of South Africa, that the old-world democratic principle of equality of all men cannot be recognized as anything but a mischievous fallacy in this young new country.

¹ World history is the world's court of judgment. Schiller, *Resignation*.

² The Dutch report has *vriendinnen*, the feminine form of *vriend*.

³ See 23.

I trust you will have every success in your career, both professional and political. Yours very truly,

W. P. Schreiner

33 To B. van der Riet

Vol. 1, no. 107

Board of Executors Chambers
[Cape Town]
28 January 1896

My dear van der Riet, Herewith I enclose the draft address to Macdonald with whose composition you charged Murray¹ and myself. I did the drafting and Murray made some verbal alterations. I hope you will be satisfied with the result. If not, we are of course prepared to listen to any suggestions from you.

You will notice that I wrote it under the impression that both present and past students were to attach their signatures. If it is to be confined to past students you can strike out the necessary words.

I hope you will begin in time with the business of sending the address round for signatures, and that the number of signatures and subscriptions will be a signal testimony to old Maccie's personal popularity. If we have unduly delayed the drafting, I hereby beg your pardon.

I had a letter from Brinckner just now. In the 2nd M.B. at Cambridge last December he headed the list with 15% above the second man. He has now joined St Mary's, Paddington, where he has gained a special exhibition.

Both De Wet [N. J.] and Theron [H. S.] are coming out by next mail steamer. Brinckner remarks wittily that De Wet has remained a *Dopper*² in his notions, but he has become an English dandy in appearance!

I am now rather busy preparing some briefs for next term which commences on Monday; shall probably not be able to come to Stellenbosch.

¹ Probably Professor Charles Murray.

² Popular name for the adherents of the Gereformeerde Kerk, one of three separate Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa. The Doppers are distinguished mainly by simplicity and fundamentalism in religious practice and belief, and by strict puritanism in conduct.

Wishing you a very happy term in spite of the heat, Ever
yours faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

ENCLOSURE

Presented at the Annual Closing of the Victoria College

June 1896

To A. Macdonald, Esq: M.A.
Professor of Classics in the Victoria College
Stellenbosch

Dear Sir, The completion of the 21st year of your connection with the Victoria College or its parent institution is an important event, not only in your own life, but also in the history of the College; and on this occasion we, your present and past students undersigned, wish to present to you our most hearty congratulations.

For 21 years now you have taken your part in the intellectual and moral education of large numbers of South African youth. With an unflinching and unobtrusive devotion which has won the admiration of us all, you have not only imparted to us a knowledge of the classical languages and literatures, but have also instilled into our minds the pervading spirit and ideas of those literatures. Some of us you have helped to academic distinction; all of us have benefited from the daily experience of your silent devotion to duty, your patience, and your fairness to all alike without distinction.

But even apart from your professorial work your personality has endeared you to generation after generation of your students; for in you the man was never merged in the professor. Among the pleasantest associations of their golden College days, they cherish the memory of you as a friend, always the same; always ready with advice and assistance; who never looked down upon a student because his knowledge of the classics was slight.

While thanking you for what you have done and been to us, we wish you long life and many more years of professional usefulness. But whatever the future may bring, you have the happy assurance that the past has already secured you a long

and distinguished connection with our *alma mater*, an honourable part in the scholastic culture of South Africa, and a warm place in the hearts of your many present and past students. We remain, Ever yours faithfully:—

34 To B. van der Riet

Vol. 1, no. 108

Board of Executors Chambers
[Cape Town]
18 February 1896

My dear Berthault, Your suggestions are all to the point and capital. I have made the changes indicated, with the exception of 'meagre or worse'. I have substituted the clause 'because his knowledge of the classics was slight'. Fact is I intended the original expression as a mild and harmless little joke which might offset the severity and formality of the rest. But perhaps it is out of place there.

I have called on Miller and handed him the final address. To-morrow he will write to get an illuminator and will then send for me in order to settle expense etc.

I am afraid I have no authority to do all this; but it seems to me that time is getting precious; so you will bear kindly with me in this invasion of your functions.

Rogers¹ is a Christ's College man of my time and we knew each other fairly well. With best wishes, *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

35 To the South African College Council Vol. 1, no. 108B

The circumstances of Smuts's unsuccessful application for the Lectureship in Law in the South African College are set out in 'The History of the Faculty of Law, University of Cape Town' by D. V. Cowen, published in *Acta Juridica* 1959.

¹ A brother-in-law of Berthault van der Riet.

Board of Executors Chambers
[Cape Town]
4 March 1896

To the Honourable Council
of the South African College¹

Gentlemen, In the *Cape Times* of March 3 appears a notice that you invite applications for the post of Law Lecturer in the South African College. To that invitation I wish hereby to respond.

I beg further to call your attention to the following facts which, among others, constitute such qualifications as I possess for the post.

1. In 1891 I went as Ebdon Scholar of the Cape University to Cambridge and was shortly thereafter elected a scholar of Christ's College. During the years 1892–1893 I headed the list of candidates for every intercollegiate examination in law; and in 1894 I was first in the first class in both parts of the Law Tripos. The George Long Prize in the University was awarded me for distinction in Roman Law and Jurisprudence.

It will appear from the published records of the University that I was the first candidate who passed both parts of the Law Tripos in the same year, and that the George Long Prize has, since it first came into existence, been awarded only four or five times.

2. In the same year the Council of the Cape University passed a resolution extending my scholarship for another year in consideration of my 'distinguished success' in Europe. In recommending that extension Professor Maitland wrote to that Council that I was not only first but brilliantly first in both parts of the Tripos and specially commended my originality. Dr Bond, the University lecturer in Roman Law, wrote that of the many hundreds of candidates for the Tripos whom he had examined, he remembered only one whose work belonged to the same class as my own. Unfortunately I found on inquiry at the University Chambers that the testimonials from these gentlemen had been destroyed, and I beg your

¹ Founded in 1829 in Cape Town as a high school, it later prepared candidates for the examinations of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. It became, in 1918, the University of Cape Town.

Honourable Council to consider that as my excuse for personally referring to their opinions.

3. In December 1894 I was a candidate for the Honours Examination of the Inns of Court—perhaps the hardest Law examination in the world. Of the twenty or thirty candidates who appeared I alone obtained the Honours Certificate, and further won two separate prizes of 50 guineas each—one awarded to all Honours men, the other for distinction in Constitutional Law and History and Legal History.

4. I have had some experience in teaching Law, as I coached several candidates successfully for the Tripos.

As soon as possible I shall send to the Secretary as many of the documents embodying the foregoing facts as I possess in South Africa. I have the honour, Gentlemen, to be your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts, B.A., LL.B.
Advocate of the Supreme Court

36 From O. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 73

The Homestead
[Kimberley]
1 July 1896

Dear Mr Smuts, Thank you heartily for the letter I got just now. I respond sincerely to its sympathetic attitude. With regard to the natives, the four later articles of the series¹ will explain it as they all deal more or less with it. All I would ask now, is, why you should think it a necessary corollary that, if the dark and light races do not cross in blood, there must of necessity be hatred and bitterness between them? I hold (of course I may be mistaken) that so unlike are the dark and white races in this country, that were they equals in education and in social rights, and were they absolutely mingled together politically, in the matter of marriage the white would still prefer the white and the black the black, and fusion would go on very slowly. It is exactly because of the terrible chasm which in the minds of many men divides them from the dark races

¹ See 28.

that the mixture of bloods in its least desirable form goes on. It was not when the *native races were free* and richly endowed with social and political rights, that the great fusion took place, and I believe that *exactly in proportion* as we raise and educate the native races and endow them with social and political rights such fusion *will become rare*. Where it does occur, it will be as the result of a vast affection and sympathy, and will so lose its worst features.

No my papers are not the result of marrying a political husband! These articles were all written exactly as they now stand four years before I met him for the first time!!!

He sends friendly greetings to you. He went to hear your lecture,¹ and his remark when he came back, was; (I unfortunately unable to go!)—‘He is very earnest and sincere, but he *doesn't know Rhodes!*’ I will also allow that when the first news of the raid reached us, one of his first remarks was,—‘What will Smuts say now!!!’ To me, the forefront of all Mr Rhodes’s offences, has been his attitude towards the Dutch who loved and trusted him. Many men are devoted to the winning of money and fame for themselves; but few have deliberately stabbed to the heart a whole people who trusted in, and followed them. The position of the Dutchmen who have changed their attitude towards Mr Rhodes during the last few months is a matter for anything but ridicule to me. It is a matter of profound shame that the action of an Englishman should have made it necessary for them so to change.

Both my husband and myself will be delighted to see you if ever you should visit Kimberley; let us know if ever you come up, please. Yours very sincerely,

Olive Schreiner

37 From O. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 74

8 August 1896

Dear Mr Smuts, I have been in bed almost the whole month or would long ago have written to thank you for your kind letter. I’m glad you liked my husband’s speech. I didn’t like

¹ See 23.

your leader in the *Telegraph* at all as you will have expected: but I like an *open* enemy (politically) as you have always been, and it will give me great pleasure if ever I have the chance of meeting you. (We can have a political fight!)

I am just starting off for the sea air at the Kowie, which I hope will pull me together and fit me for work. Yours very sincerely,

Olive Schreiner

I thought it was perfectly right for *you* as my political opponent to turn my article about as you did; but not quite generous of the Editor¹ to give it you to write on after what had passed between us. I hope you didn't mistake the distinction!

I still regard the *Telegraph* as the best paper in South Africa and should do anything I could to aid its circulation. I don't think one should ever allow any personal pains to touch one's impersonal judgement.

38 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 59

Stellenbosch

11 August 1896

My dear Smuts, Looking over the account between you and me I thought it best, in case of any unforeseen accident, to have the whole satisfactorily readjusted and simplified. We stand thus:—

1892		
	23 February	£50.10
	1 October	10.18.9
1893		
	1 October	£50. 8.
	Life policy	10.18.9
1894		
	1 June	£50. 5.
	Life policy	10.18.9
1895		
	24 August	100 --

¹ John Stuart.

Suppose you let me have an acknowledgement for the *whole* amount plus interest at 5 %.¹ I could then return any acknowledgment I have for the original amounts lent. What do you think ? Truly yours,

J. I. Marais

39 From a newspaper manager

Vol. 1, no. 12

Office of *The South African Telegraph*
 Corner Wale and Burg Streets
 Cape Town
 31 August 1896

Mr Advocate Smuts
 South African Fire Assurance Chambers
 St George's St.
 [Cape Town]

Dear Mr Smuts, For the current month I have to your credit:—

Leader 'Confidence Returning'	1.	1.	—
'A Statesman of the Empire' ²	1.	1.	—
'A Commercial Code'	1.	1.	—
'A Foreign Policy'	1.	1.	—
'Rhodesia Reconstructed'	1.	1.	—
'Africander Bond'	1.	1.	—
Occasional Notes 8/6, 3/6, 10/6, 21/-, 21/-, 21/- ³	4.	5.	6
			£10. 11. 6

In settlement of which please find cheque enclosed herewith. In case anything has been omitted be good enough to let me know. Yours truly,

Fred. J. Centlivres
Manager

¹ An annotation in Smuts's handwriting reads: 19 August 1890. Acknowledgment to Prof. Marais of £323.0.3 to be repaid at 6 p.c. from 1 September.

² See 30.

³ These were paragraphs on political matters. Smuts also wrote some book reviews for the *South African Telegraph*.

It is significant that J. I. Marais, whose earlier letters to Smuts were all written in English, wrote to him in Dutch after the Jameson Raid.

Robertson

13 October 1896

Geachte Vriend, Ik kom tot U met een verzoek. Mijn vriend Prof. Warfield van Princeton U.S.A. dringt by mij aan, dat ik een artikel schrijve voor zijn tijdschrift *The Presbyterian Review*—een van de degelijkste Amerikaansche 'Reviews'—theologisch, filosofisch, literarisch. Zijn verzoek heeft hij dezer dagen herhaald. Ik heb half beloofd twee artikelen te schrijven:

1. The Dutch Church in South Africa.
2. The Dutch Boer—a character study.

Het eerste artikel zal ik wel spoedig kunnen afmaken—vond ik er den tijd toe. Het tweede artikel kost mij niet meer moeite maar vereischt meer tijd dan ik er toe geven kan—thans.

Kunt gij niet helpen? Hier is een kans—een bezadigd, waar, weldoordacht artikel over den *Boer*: lokt U die gedachte niet aan, als Boerenzoon, als Afrikaner, als zoon des lands, als patriot die leed draagt met land en volk in deze zware tijden?

't Is een herfst die de boomen ontbladert

zong onse da Costa. Kunt gij het gedoogen dat Olive Schreiner den Boer voorstelt als een basterd ras verwekkende, een soort van hoerenjager die met zijn slavinnen omging als een oosterling met de inwoners van zijn Harem? In elk geval denk er over na. Betaling zullen wij voor onse artikelen niet krijgen. 't Is een liefdewerk dat van *ons* gevorderd wordt, een vriendschaps daad van *mij*. Ik zou dan voorstellen dat onse artikelen tegelijkertijd verschijnen en dat wij ze laten afdrucken als *separat druck*, zooals onse Duitsche vrienden het zouden noemen.

Aanst. week ben ik thuis en weldra in de stad. Dan zouden wij er over kunnen spreken.

Gaat gij werkelijk naar Tranvaal? Ik had zoo gewenscht dat gij onder ons zouden blijven. Wij hebben leidlieden noodig. Maar wie kan hinderen, als uw roeping daar is en niet hier. God ontferme zich over ons arm land! Ik treur er over! Wij

hebben geen leidlieden van *karakter*. Jan Hofmeyr—hoewel ik soms van hem verschil—is man van karakter en hij trekt zich terug. Moeten De Waal en S. J. du Toit het voortouw gaan grijpen? Zet naast elkaar J. H. Hofmeyr—onze Jan—en S. J. du Toit, wat een contrast; karakter aan den eenen, karakterloosheid aan den anderen kant. Misschien zie ik zaken te donker in. Ik treur er over. God weet het soms hoopte ik, dat gij de man van God gekozen zijt. Voor U begeer ik slechts één ding, dat gij den Christus kendet zooals ik Hem ken. Na minzame groete, in gloeiende haast, *t.t.*

J. I. Marais

TRANSLATION

Robertson

13 October 1896

Dear Friend, I come to you with a request. My friend Professor Warfield of Princeton U.S.A. urges me to write an article for his periodical *The Presbyterian Review*—one of the best American Reviews—theological, philosophical, literary. He has lately repeated his request. I have half promised to write two articles:

1. The Dutch Church in South Africa.
2. The Dutch Boer—a character study.

The first article I should be able to dispose of fairly quickly—if I could find the time for it. The second article would not cost me more trouble but demands more time than I can give it—now.

Can you not help? Here is a chance—a moderate but considered article about the *Boer*—does not the idea attract you as a young Boer, as an Afrikaner, as a son of the country, as a patriot who suffers with land and people in these difficult times?

‘It is an autumn that strips the trees’

our da Costa¹ sang. Can you tolerate it that Olive Schreiner represents the Boer as begetting a bastard race, a sort of whore-monger who consorts with his female slaves like an

¹ Isaac da Costa, b. 1798, d. 1860. Dutch Romantic poet.

oriental with the inhabitants of his harem ?¹ In any case think it over. We shall not receive payment for our articles. It is a labour of love that is required of *us*, an act of friendship from *me*. I should suggest then that our articles appear simultaneously and that we have them printed as *separat-druck*, as our German friends would call it.

Next week I shall be home and soon after in town. Then we should be able to discuss it.

Are you really going to the Transvaal ?² I had so wished that you would stay among us. We need leaders. But who can interfere if your calling is there and not here. God be merciful to our poor country! I mourn for it! We have no leaders of *character*. Jan Hofmeyr—although I sometimes differ from him—is a man of character and he withdraws himself. Must De Waal [N. F.] and S. J. du Toit seize the initiative? Set beside one another J. H. Hofmeyr—our Jan—and S. J. du Toit, what a contrast: character on the one side, characterlessness on the other. Perhaps I see things too darkly. I mourn over it. God knows I have sometimes hoped that you were the man chosen of God. For you I desire only one thing, that you should know Christ as I know Him. With affectionate greetings, in burning haste, *totus tuus*,

J. I. Marais

¹ See 27 and 28.

² Smuts visited the Transvaal in September 1896 and returned to the Cape about a month later. On 20 January 1897 he left to start his practice in Johannesburg.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The documents in this section fall into three main groups: (a) those relating to the period of Smuts's practice as an advocate in Johannesburg; (b) papers on his administration as State Attorney of the South African Republic; (c) papers relating to the dispute with the British Government, in which Smuts took a leading part.

(a) Smuts practised at the Johannesburg Bar from late January 1897 to the beginning of June 1898—a phase of his life which has hardly any record in his papers. It is clear, however, that he did some coaching in law (48) and that his interest in politics remained strong, for he kept up his connection with J. H. Hofmeyr and wrote a pamphlet called *The British Position in South Africa* (43). His views on the crucial conflict between Chief Justice Kotzé and the Government of the Republic were briefly stated in a letter to Hofmeyr (41), but there is no trace among his papers of the legal opinion on *Brown v. Leyds* which he is said to have written. He must soon have found his feet in his profession, for in April 1897 he felt confident enough to go down to Stellenbosch and marry Isie Krige. He became State Attorney on 8 June 1898. Some interesting papers survive on the circumstances of his appointment.

(b) A description of the documents dealing with Smuts's work as State Attorney is given in a separate note on p. 189.

(c) The papers in this group include an important series of letters and telegrams exchanged between Smuts and J. H. Hofmeyr. They show Smuts working hard to arrive at an 'honourable' agreement with the British Government and yet doubting their good faith and facing the prospect of war. There are also letters on the franchise issue from other correspondents, some with Smuts's replies. Notable among these writers is John X. Merriman—75 is the opening letter of an exhilarating correspondence which lasted for many years. This group also contains Smuts's notes of a conversation with the Acting British Agent, Edmund Fraser, which made a deep impression on him (72), his controversial report on his conversations with Conyngham Greene (121), and a brief but illuminating letter to his wife about the Bloemfontein Conference where he first came face to face with Milner (89). Lastly, there is a grim telegram in answer to a last-minute appeal from his old Middle Temple tutor (129).

In this strenuous and difficult period Smuts resumed in letters, most of which have not survived, a friendship formed at Cambridge with H. J.

Wolstenholme. The response was warm (79) and the friendship lasted until Wolstenholme's death in 1917.

41 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 1

Marais Chambers

Johannesburg

31 Januari 1897

Waardste Vriend, Ik was zeer blij de copie van uw Stellenbossche adres te ontvangen. Zooals ik U reeds gezegd heb, wil ik hebben dat *Ons Tijdschrift* het geheel of ten minste het historische gedeelte ervan zal herdrukken, daar de Toespraak nu misschien nog meer goed zal doen dan ze in 1889 deed. Verscheiden vrienden hebben mij gevraagd waarom de Toespraak niet weer herdrukt werd, daar ze zooveel goed kon doen. Wel, ik zal ze zoo spoedig mogelijk aan Dr Moorrees zenden. Met Viljoen heb ik reeds gesproken en hij was ook overtuigd dat het raadzaam was de Toespraak in *Ons Tijdschrift* over te nemen.

Ik weet niet of u twee pars. in het laatste *Critic* van hier hebt gezien. Van ochtend vertelde Macdermott mij ervan (ik lees het blad nooit) en ik zend u een afschrift van de twee pars. in kwestie. U zal zien dat ek beschuldigd word van 3 dingen

- (a) Ik ben met fondsen uit den geheimen dienst alhier gezonden naar de kolonie door Dr Leyds
- (b) En heb daar haren Majesteits onderdanen willen afvallig maken, ens.
- (c) *Ben vroeger in betaling van Rhodes geweest.*

Dit is in mijn opinie een 'libel' van den grofsten aard, en ek ben gedetermineerd òf civiele òf crimineeel stappen tegen Leopold Hess, de eigenaar van het *Critic*, te nemen. U zal gewis instemmen dat mijn goede naam wel degelijk op spel is wanneer ik zulken allegations ongehinderd laat blijven. Het eenigste bezwaar dat ik heb is dit: (1) ik nam een cheque van £15 aan van den secretaris der De Beers Political Association om mijn reisuittgaven te dekken, hoewel deze feitelijk groter waren; (2) Michau's briefje aan U zeggende dat ik De Beers' junior counsel zou zijn, welke brief U mij destijds toonde. Als junior counsel heb ik echter geen id. van De Beers gekregen. Zooals U weet wou ik niet eens £10 van U aannemen. Als ik

naar het Hof ga zullen alle deze dingen misschien uitkomen maar ik zie niet hoe ze Hess zullen helpen. Echter zal zoo'n actie of prosecutie de aandacht van het geheele Zuid-Afrika trekken, en ik wil niet dan na rijp beraad handelen. Stem U niet met mij zaam dat het noodlottig voor mijn reputatie, of althans uiterst ongewenscht is, dat ik Hess alleen late? Natuurlijk zal ik ook eerst het beste advies mijner confrères inwinnen. Wat U persoonlijk betreft kan er niets onteerends uitkomen, want gedurende al de onderhandelingen die mijn Kimberley adres voorafgingen handelde U zooals een trouwe vriend en weldoener van mij. Ik denk het 'libel' komt uit Kaapstad of de Paarl. Men kan *uw* eer niet aantasten maar wel die uwer handlangers. Wel, wij zullen zien. Ik ben van plan morgen met de opening van het Hooggerechtshof naar Pretoria te gaan. Ik wensch echter geheel onafhankelijk van de Regeering in deze te handelen.

Wat denkt U van Chamberlain's speech? Mijn opinie is dat Chamberlain gedetermineerd is zaken naar het uiterste te drijven—'to wipe off old scores', zooals ze zeggen. Wie weet welke leer vriend Rhodes aan hem verkondigd heeft.

Ik verwacht een gewichtige constitutioneele strijd in deze republiek over de uitspraak van Kotzé in zake *Brown v. Leyds N.O.* Volgens de uitspraak (strijdende met twee zijner gewichtigste vorige uitspraken) is de Grondwet van 1889 nul, zijn de Immigranten en Pers Wetten en vele andere allen nul. De rechters denken zeker dat de tijd nu daar is 'to strike a blow for power, England looking on' maar als jurist en politicus smart de uitspraak mij zeer. Groeten aan Phanie en aan Tielman, *t.t.*

J. C. Smuts

The following note in Smuts's handwriting is attached.

From 'The Transvaal Critic' 29 January 1897:

A 'certain section' at Pretoria is usually considered somewhat smart and clever; in fact, its leader is thought to be a man of Machiavellian rank. But this reputation will quickly be lost if it continue to make such gross tactical errors as that of openly sending emissaries to the Paarl and elsewhere for the purpose of stirring up the Dutch people in those districts. President

Kruger can take it from me that a very poor service indeed has been rendered to himself and his regime by these tactics; for while these emissaries may have succeeded here and there *in reconciling Dutch Colonists to the Transvaal policy*, they have hopelessly alienated large numbers of the Dutch whose friendship was before only questionable. The result of the foolish move is that the whole colony is ringing with indignation because of these emissaries *being sent to spread a republican propaganda*.

Surely with the unlimited Secret Service money at command better methods might have been employed to attain the ends those who control the fund have in view. Even in the choice of men no circumspection whatever was shown. One of the envoys, for instance, Mr Advocate Smuts, enjoys *anything but an 'envoy'-able reputation* in the Colony, for it is notorious that he was *on Mr Rhodes 'bounty' list* a short while ago and the *inevitable conclusion* is *drawn* that his ferocious attacks on that gentleman are due, *as much to a cessation of 'supplies'* as to the Jameson Raid. Altogether, the clever brigade at Pretoria have made a dismal mess of the whole business, and the money which has been spent on it might better have been chucked away.

TRANSLATION

Marais Chambers
Johannesburg
31 January 1897

Dear Friend, I was very glad to receive the copy of your Stellenbosch address.¹ As I have already told you, I want *Ons Tijdschrift*² to reprint the whole or at any rate the historical part of it, as the speech will perhaps do even more good now than it did in 1889. Various friends have asked me why the Speech has not been reprinted, as it could do so much good. Well, I shall send it to Dr [A.] Moorrees as soon as possible. I have already spoken to Viljoen [B. J.] and he was also

¹ On 15 June 1889 Hofmeyr gave an address to the students of Victoria College on 'Our Language and Our History'.

² A periodical established in 1896 as successor to *Het Zuid-Afrikaansche Tijdschrift* which had ceased publication in 1893. It became the organ of the Taalbond.

convinced that it was advisable to take over the *Speech in Ons Tijdschrift*.

I do not know if you have seen two paragraphs in the last *Critic*¹ from here. Macdermott [F. D.] told me about it this morning (I never read the paper) and I send you a copy of the two paragraphs in question. You will see that I am accused of three things:

- (a) I was sent to the Colony by Dr Leyds with funds from the secret service here.
- (b) And wished to make Her Majesty's subjects there disloyal, etc.
- (c) *Was previously in the pay of Rhodes.*

This is, in my opinion, a libel of the grossest sort, and I am determined to take either civil or criminal steps against Leopold Hess,² the owner of the *Critic*. You will surely agree that my good name would be at stake if I left such allegations undisturbed. The only objection I have is this: (1) I accepted a cheque of £15 from the Secretary of the De Beers Political Association to cover my travel expenses, although these were really larger; (2) Michau's [J. J.] note to you saying that I would be De Beers's³ junior counsel, which letter you showed me at the time. I have, however, not had a single penny from De Beers as junior counsel. As you know, I would not even accept £10 from you. If I go to court, all these things may perhaps come out, but I do not see how they will help Hess. However, such an action or prosecution would attract the attention of all South Africa, and I do not wish to act except after careful consideration. Do you not agree with me that it would be fatal for my reputation, or at any rate extremely undesirable if I should let Hess alone? Of course I shall also first get the advice of my *confrères*. As far as you personally are concerned, nothing dishonourable can appear, for, in all the negotiations that preceded my Kimberley address, you acted as my true friend and well-wisher. I think the libel comes from

¹ Established in Johannesburg c. 1890. It was suppressed by Government action in 1897 but reappeared as the *Transvaal Critic*. Ceased publication c. 1919.

² The owner of the *Critic* was Henry Hess.

³ De Beers Consolidated Mining Company, established by Rhodes in 1889. It had, and still has, a virtual monopoly of the diamond output of South Africa.

Cape Town or Paarl. *Your* honour cannot be assailed, but that of your humble assistants can. Well, we shall see. I intend to go to Pretoria tomorrow for the opening of the Supreme Court. I wish, however, to act quite independently of the Government in this matter.

What do you think of Chamberlain's speech?¹ My opinion is that Chamberlain is determined to drive things to extremes—'to wipe off old scores' as they say. Who knows what doctrine friend Rhodes has preached to him.

I expect a serious constitutional struggle in this Republic over [Sir J. G.] Kotzé's decision in the case of *Brown v. Leyds N.O.*² According to the decision (in conflict with two of his most important previous decisions) the Constitution of 1889 is invalid, the Immigration and Press Laws and many others are invalid. The judges no doubt think that the time has come 'to strike a blow for power, England looking on', but this decision grieves me very much, both as jurist and politician. Greetings to Phanie³ and to Tielman,⁴ *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

42 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 1, no. 27

Kaapstad, 22 Camp St
5 Februari 1897

Amice, Op den uwer van 31 l.l. heb ik gister avond getelegraafed:—

'Keep cool. Game not worth the candle. More by letter.'

Ik heb 36 jaar lang in de politiek verkeerd. Men heeft mij

¹ On 29 January, in a speech in the House of Commons, Chamberlain indicated that the coming inquiry into the Raid should be chiefly an inquiry into Uitlander grievances.

² The plaintiff, Brown, claimed large mining rights against the Government of the South African Republic. The case turned on the question of whether a resolution (*besluit*) of the Volksraad could alter existing law. Chief Justice Kotzé ruled that it could not, since such action was contrary to the provisions of the Constitution (*Grondwet*). This challenge to the supremacy of the Volksraad was met by the adoption, by *besluit*, of Law No. 1 of 1897 which denied the right of the court to interpret the Constitution, and authorized the President to dismiss judges who claimed it. Kotzé persisted in his opinion and was dismissed.

³ Probably Stephanus Hofmeyr.

⁴ Tielman Johannes Roos Hofmeyr, brother of J. H. Hofmeyr. Born 5 October 1849.

uitgemaakt voor al wat slecht is—voor 'n Judas—'n verrader van mijn koloniaal volk,—een verkooper van Transvaal aan Engeland voor eer en goud,—een verbreker van mijn eed van trouw aan de Koningin—voor een omgekocht van Rhodes—voor een verrader van Rhodes. Ik heb nimmer een actie voor libel tegen iemand gebracht. En tot vandaag heb ik niet gevonden dat ik er 'n siertje van respect door heb verloren.

Een advokaat is een even publiek persoon als 'n journalist en moet daarom niet kleinzeeriger zijn. Per slot van rekening beteekent de gemeenheid van de *Critic* niet veel. Hadt gij Rhodes door dik en dun ondersteund en hadt het blad beweerd dat gij dat deedt voor geld, dan zou men het te eerder gelooven en dan zoudt gij kunnen klagen in uw eer te hebben geleden. Maar waar en wat hebt gij nu geleden? Nergens en niets! Sivewright heeft nu openlijk erkend, dat hij van geen 'emissaries' weet en Gideon Krige heeft in de kranten verteld hoe gij op sekere meetings kwaamt te spreken. Van middag zie ik een paar Transvaalsche journalisten *Standard and Diggers' News* en beweeg hen mogelijk een paragraaf naar aanleiding van den aanval op u te plaatsen—hoewel fatsoenlijke kranten in den regel geen notitie nemen van de *Critic*. Hier heb ik niemand ontmoet die weet dat uw naam in die puinbalie is verschenen. Waarom het blad nog verder adverteeren en 't wereld ruchtbaar maken dat gij hebt zeer gekregen.

Het eenige libelleuse dat er naar mijn oordeel in het artikeltje zit, is de insinuatie dat gij Rhodes niet veroordeelt enkel uit eerlijke overtuiging, maar ook wegens financieele redenen—en zelfs dit zegt het blad niet ronduit.

Tenzij gij werkelijke schade kunt bewijzen zou ik den kerel laten loopen.

Ik sluit in 'n nieuwe libel op mij zoowel als G. Krige's brief.

Malan was zoo pas bij mij. Ik heb hem uw brief gewezen, alsook mijn antwoord erop. Hij stemt geheel met mij in.

Later. Heb juist den hr. Mendelssohn van de *Diggers' News* gesproken. Hij zendt een kort telegram over de *Critic* waarmede gij tevreden kunt zijn. Hij wil gaarne met u kennis maken. Zoek hem op. Hij zou u journalistisch zoowel als rechtsgeleerd werk kunnen bezorgen. Gegroet van, *t.t.*

J. H. Hofmeyr

TRANSLATION

22 Camp Street
Cape Town
5 February 1897

Amice, In reply to yours of 31 ultimo I telegraphed yesterday evening:—

‘Keep cool. Game not worth the candle. More by letter.’

I have been in politics for thirty-six years. People have made me out to be all that is bad—a Judas—a betrayer of my Colonial people—a seller of the Transvaal to England for fame and gold—a breaker of my oath of allegiance to the Queen—one bribed by Rhodes—a betrayer of Rhodes. I have never brought an action for libel against anyone. And until now I have not found that I have thereby lost a whit of respect.

An advocate is as public a person as a journalist and therefore must not be more touchy. After all, the meanness of the *Critic* does not signify much. If you had supported Rhodes through thick and thin and if the paper had stated that you did so for money, then people would believe it more readily and you would be able to complain of having suffered in your honour. But where and what have you now suffered? Sivewright has now admitted openly that he knows of no ‘emissaries’ and Gideon Krige has related in the newspapers how you came to speak at certain meetings. This afternoon I am seeing a few Transvaal journalists—*Standard and Diggers’ News* and may possibly persuade them to put in a paragraph with reference to the attack on you—although respectable newspapers as a rule take no notice of the *Critic*. Here I have met nobody who knows that your name has appeared in this rubbish-bin. Why advertise the paper still further and make it known to the world that you have been hurt?

The only libellous thing that, in my judgment, appears in the little article is the insinuation that you do not condemn Rhodes only out of honest conviction, but also because of financial reasons—and even this the paper does not say plainly.

Unless you can show real damage I should let the fellow go. I enclose a new libel on me as well as G. Krige’s letter.¹

¹ These enclosures are missing.

Malan [F. S.] has just been with me. I have shown him your letter, and also my answer to it. He agrees with me entirely. Later. Have just spoken to Mr Mendelssohn¹ of the *Diggers' News*. He is sending a short telegram about the *Critic* with which you may be satisfied. He would like to meet you. Look him up. He would be able to get you journalistic as well as legal work. Greetings from, *totus tuus*,

J. H. Hofmeyr

43 Article [1897]

Box D

An undated article written between March and June 1897. No evidence of its publication has been found. MS. in Smuts's handwriting.

THE BRITISH POSITION IN SOUTH AFRICA

(i) *The Parting of the Ways in Britain's South African Policy*

The Inquiry which is now being held by the South African Committee,² the causes which have led to it, and the other effects which those causes are likely to produce,—will constitute the most momentous series of events of our immediate days in South Africa. Already the political situation is vastly complicated and the confusing din of party-cries adds another element of danger and irregularity to the situation. People who have till now been able to trace the tangled skein of South African politics now begin to despair. Yet to the close observer of contemporary events in South Africa one great fundamental tendency is beginning to disclose itself; and it is my intention in this article to examine the nature and causes of that tendency. If one may judge from the etc. [*sic*] what people seem to be most deeply interested in is the clash of personalities in South Africa and the chances and fates of Companies. And yet if one is entitled to judge from the impressions produced on his mind by reading the English Press, it seems as if the far-reaching significance of these events through which we are passing is

¹ Emmanuel Mendelssohn was editor and part-owner of the *Standard and Diggers' News*, established in Johannesburg c. 1889, ceased publication in May 1900. It supported the Government against the Uitlanders.

² The British Parliamentary inquiry into the Jameson Raid and the administration of the British South Africa Company (311 of 1897).

but little if at all appreciated in England. Some seem to look upon that momentous and in a certain sense epoch-making Inquiry as a means for rehabilitating and vindicating Mr Rhodes; some again think it a favourable opportunity for inquiring into the domestic affairs of the Transvaal; and one or two seem to consider it a proper occasion for wiping off old scores against the Chartered Company and Mr Rhodes. No doubt in one sense and another these are all issues more or less material to the main objects of the Inquiry. But apart from the objects of the Commission (with which in this article I have nothing to do) the Inquiry means much more, and as an historical event it will mark the parting of the ways in the South African policy of Great Britain. Behind the trial of Mr Rhodes and of the administration of the British South Africa Company, behind the inquisition into Transvaal affairs, which form parts of the great Inquiry—lies a far deeper and more momentous issue: it is the Government and people of England in its attitude towards South Africa; it is the methods with which England has lately been trying to consolidate her South African position that seems to me to be an issue which ought to overshadow every other in the present controversy. It has been the time-honoured boast of English statesmen that since the middle of this century at any rate England has become more and more a spiritual, an ethical, a sentimental influence in the colonies, and that the ties which are binding the British Empire together are not those of material force but the ties of a community of ideas and sympathies. Alongside of that boast, how is the fact to be accounted for that in the Cape Colony today British armaments are continually increasing, and new regiments continually coming out to South Africa? Is England going to revert from the traditions of her greatest colonial statesmen and is she trying now to reintroduce into South Africa that element of material force which had been gradually receding from her colonial Empire? If this is so—and to a large extent it must be so, for no other reason than that of overawing the Dutchmen and the republicans in South Africa can account for this continual swelling of her forces in the South African Colonies—then the time has come for England to cast up a serious reckoning and to count the cost of her new South African policy. When I saw how Mr Chamberlain—in

those leading questions and that spirit of partisan animosity which have been deeply pondered by every thinking man in South Africa—continually referred to the maintenance of England's rights in South Africa *even by force*, I thought of the same phrase as it was bandied about the floor of the Houses of Parliament in the years immediately preceding the War with the American Colonies. If the application of the right to levy contributions on the pockets of the American colonists cost England her American Empire, has she considered whether the application of the similar right to wound the self-respect and entrench upon the local patriotism of South Africa (which is probably a keener passion here than anywhere else in the Colonial Empire) will not in the long run cost her the South African Colonies? The British Empire cannot be kept together by force and armaments; and if South Africa (which has been made the starting-point for this new colonial policy) were to repudiate the yoke of the oppressor, the days of the entire Empire are numbered. I do not therefore go too far when I say that we are now at the parting of the ways—and for good or ill—the effects of this momentous Inquiry will be felt by many generations of unborn Englishmen. There is another reason which induces me to address, however feebly and falteringly, the British public on this great matter. We have it from Mr Chamberlain himself that he is continually receiving letters at the Colonial Office, urging him to a more vigorous policy in South Africa. Mr Schreiner has already told him¹ that these are not men of great weight and that the preponderance of South African influence and serious conviction is on the other side. From the Colonial Secretary's further questions I gather that he received this absolutely correct advice with a great amount of incredulity. It is therefore partly with a view to reinforce the evidence of Mr Schreiner (to whom all true South Africans are deeply indebted for his fair and fearless evidence on the state of public opinion in South Africa) that I write this article. It must always be borne in mind that the largest part of our South African population is silent. Either from want of education or from depth of feeling they prefer to be silent, to be traduced and misrepresented without speaking

¹ W. P. Schreiner gave evidence before the South African Committee.

in self-defence. In the great public controversies their voice is not heard, before the tribunal of nations their cause always goes by default; and it is only in that last dread court of international appeal, the field of battle, that they put in an unflinching appearance. Meanwhile there is a small minority, largely consisting of fresh arrivals from England, accustomed to march to the public squares with music playing and banners streaming, noisy in proportion to their ignorance and shallowness and keen for England's interference in inverse proportion to their stake in the abiding welfare and repose of South Africa. What wonder if the English public—though one of the fairest and most reasonable in the world—comes to the conclusion that these lawless and flamboyant loyalists are the people, and that wisdom, in these parts of God's world, will die with them! What wonder too that a Colonial Secretary who is itching with the desire to inaugurate a new colonial policy, mistakes these effusions of ignorance and prejudice for the influential and responsible convictions of South Africa! But whatever be the views and ambitions of the Colonial Secretary, behind him stand the masses of the British population—and with them, in their sense of what is fair and reasonable to South Africa, rests the fate of the Colonial Empire in South Africa. To them, one may fondly hope, a warning springing from a passionate love for South Africa, will not be addressed in vain. For these reasons is it that I wish to weigh some of the forces that affect England's position in South Africa, to point out in what direction they are moving, and how Mr Chamberlain's so-called 'vigorous policy' is really producing a marked tendency in the same direction. All through the following discussion it has to be borne in mind, even where it is not expressly pointed out, that in some respects the whole Anglo-Dutch South Africa is a living and vital whole, and that a 'vigorous policy' pursued in regard to the Republics will not merely affect England's position in those Republics but throughout the length and breadth of South Africa.

(ii) *The London Convention as a Force making for Republicanism*

As soon as one comes to the discussion of the situation in South Africa one is confronted with a number of theories and political fictions which form a most congenial cloak for all sorts of rooted prejudices and rootless pretensions. These fictions

are taken as facts, as axioms by which and in reference to which the difficulties of the situation have to be solved. It is obviously impossible to make the least advance in this discussion unless I attempt to clear away the most obstinate and pernicious of these fictions—I mean the theory of a Paramount Power. That the present Colonial Secretary is arguing from the assumption of a Paramount Power as an immovable political bedrock is evident from the way he has recently conducted England's controversy with South Africa and appears most naïvely in his cross-examination of Mr Schreiner on the attitude of the Transvaal Government to the London Convention. When questioned by Mr Chamberlain as to the probable attitude of the Cape Dutch in the event of England forcibly coercing the Transvaal to adhere to the Convention and all the technicalities thereof, Mr Schreiner replied in substance that their attitude would probably depend on the merits of the case and that it would be sympathetic towards England—if the latter had right on her side and had exhausted all the resources of diplomacy—even arbitration—to get a peaceful settlement first. To this reply—which was rendered even more significant by the fact that Mr Rhodes had been asked the same question and had declined to answer it—the Colonial Secretary sneeringly rejoined that no responsible person had before suggested that the Paramount Power should submit to arbitration. It is not to my purpose to point out that such advice had not only been given, but even acted upon, when, some years ago, Chief Justice Melius de Villiers of the Orange Free State was appointed arbitrator in the difficulty between England and the Transvaal on some Coolie legislation of the latter power.¹ It is more material to this discussion to ask where the Colonial Secretary finds his authority—except that of superior force—for deducing such startling results from the theory of a Paramount Power. So far as I am acquainted with the theories and practice of public international law, there is not a single authority of any standing that recognizes a doctrine such as that of a Paramount Power. The very phrase is unknown to the vocabulary of international

¹The point at issue was the interpretation of Law 3 of 1885 relating to trading and residential restrictions on Asiatics. The judge gave his award in favour of the Transvaal Government in April 1895. See J. S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, pp. 181-2.

jurisprudence and was simply invented by journalists for the slipshod purposes of their craft. If here and there a stray publicist uses the phrase it is in a loose political and certainly not in a recognised legal sense. The relation of sovereign to subject, or so-called semi-sovereign, states is exhausted by the terms: suzerainty, protectorate, confederation or federation. That the relation of England to the Transvaal is not denoted by any of the last three terms is patent; nor does the term *suzerainty* properly describe that relation in the opinion of the most competent jurists and publicists. That in this respect at any rate the Colonial Secretary is in accord with juristic opinions is shown by an amusing incident which marked the advent of Mr Conyngham Greene into the firmament of South African diplomacy. That gentleman refused to receive an address from Her Majesty's loyal lieges in the Transvaal in which the new British Agent was asked to 'maintain British supremacy in this part of the world'. In high dudgeon at this signal rebuff the said loyal lieges appealed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies who, after due pondering, replied that the British Agent was correct, but that if the Mesopotamian phrase of *Paramount British Interests* had been used in the address the British Agent ought to have accepted the loyal address! Taking the term 'supremacy' as referring to the British suzerainty over the Transvaal which has admittedly ceased to exist since the London Convention, one cannot but look upon this communication of the Colonial Secretary as a catching at the straw of a mere journalistic phrase in order to secure to England a *locus standi* in the Transvaal which she would have, neither by the sacred and inviolable Convention, nor by the postulates of international law. The suzerainty thus being out of the question, the question becomes all the more serious what pretensions Mr Chamberlain cloaks under the vague phrase of a Paramount Power. This doctrine being unknown to serious international law one looks for analogies which might support the contentions of the 'vigorous' Colonial Secretary, but can find nothing except the so-called Monroe doctrine as even remotely bearing on the question. I need not here point out that the Monroe doctrine, far from being considered an accepted institute of international law, is good-humouredly smiled at by Continental publicists as a benevolent concession to the vanity of American

cousins, while the practical diplomatists look upon it as an impudent and fictitious assumption. It may be said that in the Venezuelan difficulty¹ Lord Salisbury recently recognized the *locus standi* of the United States in South America in terms of the Monroe doctrine. But what would Lord Salisbury have said if, in reply to his demand for arbitration on the matter, the United States Government had said that they were the Paramount Power in South America and that as such could not possibly allow entertain [*sic*] the idea of arbitration. Or what would be said by English or continental politicians or publicists if, in any difficulty with Brazil, the United States refused to submit the case to arbitration on the ground that they were the Paramount Power in South America! And yet this is exactly similar to the position of Great Britain in the Transvaal. The suzerainty being gone, the Transvaal is a sovereign state as much as Brazil and only hampered in respect of its treaty-making power. The utmost that Great Britain could claim in South Africa is (I don't say it exists in fact) a sort of Monroe doctrine. And to refuse to go to arbitration with the Transvaal on the construction and interpretation of the London Convention for the sole and simple reason that she is the so-called Paramount Power, seems to me a claim clearly unwarranted by international law—just as would be a similar pretension of the United States towards Brazil or Mexico. But it is not merely for the purpose of getting a *locus standi* in the domestic concerns of the South African Republic that Mr Chamberlain resorts to the fiction of a Paramount Power; his construction of that fiction is a violation of the Convention. Under the pretext and cover of this wonderful doctrine he tries to nullify and undermine most of those rights of sovereignty which the South African Republic obtained under the London Convention; and adopts menacing language to its Government even on the most indisputably domestic concerns.

The reason why I have adverted at this length to the doctrine of a Paramount Power and Mr Chamberlain's deductions from it, is simple. I imagine almost every responsible public man in South Africa agrees with Mr Schreiner that England cannot with justice, or if that be an obsolete term in South African

¹ In a long-standing boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana the United States had become the protector of Venezuela.

diplomacy, without risk refuse the claim of the Transvaal to submit the interpretation of the Convention to arbitration in any dispute thereon and if she were to do so, the majority of our South African population will *ipso facto* regard the merits of the case as being against England. Under such circumstances the application of force for the purpose of coercing the Transvaal must necessarily inflame South African feelings beyond the point of endurance. While on this topic of the London Convention I might as well mention some other points that affect the question of this article. It appears from Mr Chamberlain's questions that Mr Schreiner has advised that on no less than four points this Convention has been infringed by the Transvaal within recent years: by granting the National Bank Charter, the dynamite monopoly,¹ by handing over part of the customs rebate to the N.Z.A.S.M.² and quite recently by closing the drifts near Vereeniging. Breaches of the Convention are also alleged to have taken place by the recent Press and Aliens Acts.³ This appears undoubtedly very startling and the question arises whether this continual disregard of the Convention does not give England a good ground for resorting to force with a view to its due observance. Putting the Drifts question for a moment aside, I am very sorry to see that a man of Mr Schreiner's high political standing in the Cape Colony, so far from having read a document of far-reaching political importance with the mind and the eye of a practical statesman, should have actually approached it with the conscientious pedantry wherewith a lawyer would interpret articles of agreement between John Doe and Richard Roe. Mr Schreiner is the man who has most forcibly insisted on the doctrine that under the Convention of 1884 the South African Republic is a sovereign state; and yet when he comes to interpret the London Convention he denies to the Transvaal under it powers which

¹ In 1887 the Government of the South African Republic granted to E. A. Lippert the exclusive right to manufacture dynamite and sell it in the Republic. See also pp. 206-7 *infra*.

² Nederlandsche Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorweg Maatschappij. See p. 78 *supra*, note 1.

³ By the Aliens Expulsion Act of 1896 the Government of the South African Republic could expel aliens who were considered to be 'a danger to the public peace and order'. By the Press Act of 1896 it could prohibit publications '... dangerous to the order and peace of the Republic'. See J. S. Marais, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-7, 129-32.

would be possessed by a subject Crown or self-governing Colony! What would become of the unstable fabric of international relations if every circumstance which would be considered a breach of contract as between John Doe and Richard Roe would be considered a violation of international treaties and a *casus belli* as between two sovereign states! Clearly there is a wide distinction between the two cases, and it is mere legal pedantry to construe a great international document in the same way as an agreement between private parties would be interpreted. It follows therefore that a breach of the Convention according to Mr Schreiner may be not at all a breach in the opinion of an arbitration tribunal consisting of competent publicists and diplomats. Far less likely is it still that the sober opinion of the large body of South Africans would construe such a technical breach as a pretext for Mr Chamberlain to bring his 'vigorous policy' into operation. Fancy Mr Chamberlain's declaring war upon the unfortunate Transvaal because of the first three breaches, which the general public were never even aware of till yesterday! The troubles of the Johannesburg 'women and children' were far more of an excuse for Jameson's Raid¹ than would these technical breaches be for Chamberlain's Raid!

With regard to the closing of the drifts, that was admittedly a breach of the Convention; but it is a breach of such a kind as, supposing the Convention to last much longer, may produce far more detriment to England than to the Transvaal. For what are the facts? I have them from President Kruger personally and as the matter has already largely become public I must mention here the President's own story. The railway exigencies and public interest, he said, had rendered it advisable to close the drifts, and to have done so simply and absolutely would have been in perfect accord with the Convention. That also was the intention of the Executive; but, said the President, to that he could never agree, as the Colony, especially the Western wine-farmers, had stood by him in his day of trouble and he would not now desert them. It was said that an exception in favour of the Colony would be a breach of the Convention and he (the President) at once admitted that; but

¹ To justify the Raid Jameson had provided himself with a bogus letter saying that the women and children of Johannesburg were in danger and imploring him to come to their aid.

he felt certain that England would not object to a breach tacitly made in favour of her own colony. Ultimately he carried the Executive with him and the drifts were closed with an exception in favour of Colonial produce. Mr Schreiner, reading the proclamation as a lawyer pure and simple, advised Mr Rhodes's Government of which he was then a leading member that the London Convention had been violated and Mr Rhodes, who was then in the thick of the secret machinations which led to poor Jameson's Raid, at once called upon the Imperial Government to intervene. All this was unnecessary, said the President, as he knew perfectly well that the Proclamation was against the Convention. Instead, however, of closing the Drifts to Colonial produce and thus falling in line with the letter of the Convention, he preferred to recall the proclamation altogether. This is President Kruger's own story. As the foremost advocate and liberal politician of the Colony said to me at the time—the Transvaal need simply have deleted two lines (those in favour of the Colony) from the Proclamation to make it in perfect harmony with the sacred Convention! Suppose now that the British Government in November 1895 had been deluded enough to respond to Mr Rhodes's invitation and to have sent an army into the Transvaal, what—in view of what I have just said—would have been the attitude of the Dutch and moderate English in the Colony? Would they have quietly stood by while British legions were trying to annihilate the Transvaal because the President had fought hard to favour the interests of the Colony? The British Government no doubt then thought and Mr Chamberlain no doubt still thinks that the closing of the drifts was a sufficient *casus belli*, a sufficient repudiation of the sacred Convention on the part of Transvaal to call for a display of the 'vigorous policy'. And yet one dreads to think of how easily the whole South Africa would have been involved in war by such an ill-advised vindication of the Convention.

And this drifts incident prompts some other very serious considerations. In my humble opinion this Convention which Mr Chamberlain hugs to his bosom with such an invincible faith in its efficacy, is a document of doubtful importance to England, and of dangerous possibilities for South Africa. Indeed I make bold to say that this precious document has

done more to foster ill-feeling between England and the Transvaal and to induce a shut-in-the-shell policy of almost retrogressive conservatism in the Transvaal Government than any other single circumstance. As long as there are lawyers who construe every deviation from that document [as] a violation and breach; as long as there are 'vigorous' Colonial Secretaries but too apt to punish such deviation with force or a threat of force,—so long this Convention will be merely a red rag calculated, even if not intended, to infuriate the republican bull in South Africa. If this Convention had been replaced by a treaty under which England, while retaining command of the South African seas, had waived the Convention in consideration for liberal concessions on the other side, there would have been far less bad blood and far more permanent friendliness towards England than there happens to be today. These are facts which I think will be generally conceded and I fancy the time has come for England to ask herself whether, in consideration of the supreme interests of peaceful co-operation between the white races in South Africa, she ought not to depart from a Convention which at best can never prevent the Transvaal from intriguing with Europeans (if she be so minded) and which can only afford 'vigorous' ministers a means of exploiting poor South Africa for the sake of their own personal reputations.

And this argument in favour of a friendly departure on both sides from the London Convention can be reinforced by another even much stronger—so far as British interests are concerned. Supposing the Transvaal were to become a trifle bolder and to make concessions to the South African Colonies in violation of the Convention, would England dare to touch the Transvaal? It is easy for those who are conversant with South African affairs to foresee contingencies in which the Transvaal can, by thus favouring the Colonies in violation of the Convention, not only make light of that Convention, but even make it a deadly engine for seducing the South African Colonies from their loyalty. The drifts incident supplies one such case, and other and much stronger cases are easily conceivable. And when on the one side there is simply the sentiment of Imperial loyalty, and on the other the dictates of self-interest, of blood, and of South African patriotism, it becomes easy to foresee in what jeopardy this Convention—unless it becomes so much

waste paper—might place England's South African Empire. But to this point I wish to return at a later stage of this discussion.

(iii) The Republican Tendency in the South African Colonies

The tribute paid by Mr Schreiner to the loyalty of the Cape Dutch will be endorsed by all serious Colonial politicians; and yet one feels that what he has said is not the whole truth of the matter. Loyalty after all is a sentiment, a sentiment too which in the case of a nation can only be strong and vital as the result of a long and slow evolution of the national life. Until that sentiment has entered the national blood and incorporated itself with the modes of life and the political aspirations of the nation, it remains at best unstable and possibly evanescent. To say that the Cape Dutch have gone through such a national evolution and that the loyal sentiment has taken such deep root in their public and private life—is obviously saying too much. Nor, in the absence of such long experience and practice of loyalty, can it be fairly and conscientiously said that unparalleled benefits on the part of Great Britain have endeared the British people or Government to them. What England regards as great favours and concessions to South Africa—such as the boon of self-government in the Colonies and the grant of freedom to the Transvaal—the vast bulk of the Cape Dutch look upon, not as unparalleled favours, but as their just rights long withheld and only conceded from motives of political expediency. I do not mean to indicate that they are not duly grateful for these benefits; I only mean to point out that in their feeling of gratitude towards England there is not that glow, that enthusiastic devotion and abandon, which one rightly associates with the term loyalty as an abiding political force. In the third place, it is evident that there are no ties of blood which might counterbalance the centrifugal effects of what might be rightly or wrongly considered unjust or unfair treatment of them on the part of the English Government. It is generally admitted that in the years that have elapsed since the discovery of the Witwatersrand gold-fields till the Jameson Raid, the Transvaal Government put a very serious strain on the loyalty of their Colonial brethren towards them. But, in spite of all calculations to the contrary, the event proved again that blood was thicker

than water and that the sentiment of loyalty to own kith and kin can survive undiminished years of political estrangement and misunderstanding. These are the ties that bind all Dutch peoples in South Africa, but they do not exist as between the Dutch and the people of England. And as long as the Dutch are—whether rightly or wrongly so—the preponderant political force in South Africa, it is unwise and may be suicidal for England to forget this very important fact.

The loyalty, then, of the Cape Dutch towards England is due neither to blood-relationship nor to long political habits of thought and life nor to an overwhelming feeling of gratitude. It rests on one conviction and one conviction only. It rests on the moderate, sober and by no means unshakable conviction that after all the main political ideas of the Anglo-Saxon race are a force making for righteousness, fair play and freedom within the widest limits consistent with the public good. This conviction in them never rises to the warmth of the imperial cult of Mr [W. T.] Stead and other politico-religious enthusiasts for Anglo-Saxon imperialism. Perhaps (as I shall immediately show) it is more of a reasonable expectation based on the results of reasoning and experience than a positive conviction. This expectation or conviction it is that forms the basis of the British dominion in South Africa—and must continue to form it until either the conviction is dispelled as an illusion or the Dutch begin to lag behind in the race of races in South Africa.

One other general remark I wish to premise before I begin to examine recent tendencies among the Colonial Dutch; and that is, that, in the absence of blood-relationship, national loyalty is far more easy and stable an acquisition when it is concretely directed towards some great Individual than when it has as the abstract object of its devotion a whole nation or people. In other words Hero-worship comes both more naturally and lasts longer than nation-worship. The devotion of the Dutch to Sir George Grey in bygone days and to Mr Rhodes in our own time has done more for the consolidation of British influence in South Africa than any more abstract feeling of national loyalty could have done. And who can determine to what extent the Great Lady that sits on the throne of England has bound the Dutch race in loyal union with the rest of

her subjects? The Dutch are an old-fashioned people, and apparently, unlike the English, they prefer a ripe and venerable old age to a dashing and brilliant youth. Like the Homeric Greeks it is the old men to whose counsels they listen most reverently; and their admiration for the venerable figure of the aged Sovereign-Mother is as keen as that of the truest Englishman.

Such are the roots of loyalty in the Dutch heart or mind. And one saw how easily they could decay and shrivel up. Let England pursue for one decade a policy in South Africa which shocks the Dutch sense of what is fair and just; let a Cecil Rhodes prove false to the trust so loyally and [one illegible word] reposed in him; let the Sovereign Lady die and one follow her who at best inspires the Dutch with indifference and who is seen to consort familiarly with those whom they have come to consider their enemies and betrayers,—and this sentiment of loyalty will soon vanish into thin air. Besides these limits and conditions of Dutch loyalty at the Cape, there is another consideration which affects the matter very materially. It is a fact well known to most observant South Africans that in the South African colonies people generally refrain from openly avowing their belief in republicanism as a practical form of political government. The English masses, I need hardly mention, are nervously loyal—one may almost say ludicrously loyal, if one compares how much more violent is the expression of this sentiment in the colonies than in Great Britain itself. An Englishman who expresses himself in favour of republicanism therefore runs a very serious risk of being looked upon with suspicion by his fellow-Englishmen and may lose caste with them altogether and come to be looked upon as a 'Boer'. If he is a man of political standing he would think twice before giving utterance to any republican sentiments which he may happen to cherish privately. And if motives of expediency would restrain an English republican from avowing his real political faith, still more would the same motives operate in the Dutch Colonists as a whole. To avow themselves republicans would raise such an amount of bad blood in the Colony and affect their case in England so adversely that they prefer to take up a far more modest position,—one too which is much less open to malevolent misconstruction. Intensely practical as they

are and averse to all merely abstract positions, they prefer by a little change of phraseology to retain the substance of the thing at the sacrifice of the mere name. When originally after the Transvaal War of Independence the programme of principles of the Afrikander Bond was drawn up, a clause was prepared in favour of a united South Africa under a republican flag. It was however pointed out to the general satisfaction of the delegates that the reference to a republican flag would do more harm than good; that the question of the flag would settle itself; and that a declaration in favour of a *substantial* (*zelfstandig*) South Africa would meet the case. But that even at that date the Colonial Dutch were permeated with a sentiment almost indistinguishable from republicanism may be evidenced by a fact, which has been brought to my notice, that Mr Cecil Rhodes, who was then starting on his political career, wanted to raise a republican platform in the Colony, no doubt thinking that that would be the easiest means of securing Dutch support. A more excellent way was however pointed out and pursued successfully towards the attainment of this darling object of Mr Rhodes. Then and ever since good Dutch nationalists have gloried in the name of 'patriot', which, while expressing their attitude on local South African questions, did not imply any disloyalty to the British connection. It need scarcely be pointed out that not even the term 'republican' would in itself imply an attitude of disloyalty; but in the past and present excited condition of the public mind in South Africa it would and will infallibly be so construed. 'Patriotism' then is the colonial substitute for 'republicanism.' Not that all patriots are republicans; but the gradations by which the one shades into the other are so fine, that one may fairly say that most genuine and *consistent* patriots are at bottom republicans or favourable towards the sentiment of republicanism. The formula of patriotism—government of Africa by the Afrikanders for the Afrikanders—can only find its full application in a republican state of affairs; and so far as an Afrikander is a genuine patriot he is also either devoted or at least favourable to the republican idea. He would of course generally repudiate the suggestion that he is disloyal; but I think he could do so with equal truth and good faith even were he an avowed republican. His attitude on this matter is more positive (that is, a leaning towards

republicanism) than negative (that is, does not necessarily imply a dislike of the British connection).

We are now in a position to discuss the question whether and how far recent events have tended to weaken the sentiment of loyalty in the South African colonies and strengthen the rival sentiment of republicanism. That a great change has in recent times come and still is coming over the South African Colonies will be denied by no serious spectator of the political drama in these parts. Unfortunately the real character and significance of the change is not so apparent from public events, for the currents that are now transforming or at least tending to transform the political complexion of South Africa are not surface currents, accompanied by much froth and eddying. They are deep down, stirring and altering the silent thoughts and convictions of serious men more than the shallow passions and political whims of the street mobs, who after all act merely like dumb driven cattle. The *apparent* political movements of South Africa are rather in the opposite direction and making for a more hysterical and theatrical form of Jingoism. So that the real and silent advance of republicanism is covered by the noise and the dust of a simulated Imperialist movement in the opposite direction. This latter movement it is which is animating the South African League—a body nominally started in consequence of the legal steps taken by the Cape Government against certain dastardly ruffians who tarred and feathered an English burgher of the Transvaal because he had been in the neighbourhood of Doornkop: but really started with the object of glorifying Mr Rhodes.¹ This hysterical

¹ One Edwards, born of English parents in the Cape Colony, had become a burgher of the South African Republic and was called up on commando against the Jameson Raiders. Shortly afterwards, while on a visit to the Cape, he was, on 20 January 1896, tarred and feathered, in the presence of his two young daughters, by some ten men at Toise River, near Cathcart. He laid the matter before the authorities in Pretoria and his assailants were tried at Cathcart in April 1896. The incident was typical of the greatly heightened racial antagonism that followed the Raid. Out of the resentment that it aroused among the English of the eastern Cape came the formation of the Loyal Colonial League in March 1896. By May this had become the South African League. By August there were branches in the Transvaal and Natal and the League was organizing a Progressive Party, that is, an anti-Bond, pro-Imperialist party supporting the policy of Rhodes and Chamberlain. Sir James Rose-Innes was asked to lead the League but refused. Thus Rhodes became its President and the unofficial leader of the new party.

Jingoism again it is which collected such vast crowds at Port Elizabeth and Cape Town in honour of the Conquering Hero from Bulawayo.¹ But notwithstanding all this blare of trumpets and rhetorical rodomontade there is no heart and soul, no staying power in this movement. The men who think in terms of right and wrong stand scornfully aside. The men who think in terms of £.s.d. likewise stand aside, for they can distinguish the shrill whistle which merely lets off steam from the deep booming of the working engine. The men, the patriots, who think in terms of South Africa's soil also stand aside—for they have seen this sort of thing before and in any case cannot join hands with an organization whose President publicly and repeatedly incited the Natives to join hands with the English against the Dutch. They saw this sort of thing when Sir Bartle Frere returned from his momentous journey to the Transvaal and fabulous crowds surrounded his carriage in the principal Colonial towns and enthusiastic bands of Civil Servants drew his triumphal car along. And yet, when shortly afterwards complete disaster overtook the Transvaal policy and eclipsed the fame of the great imperial satrap, where were they? Again we saw this sort of movement when, in 1884, vast and enthusiastic crowds flocked to the standard of the Empire League² raised in Cape Town by Mr Rhodes and that heroic revolutionary, Mr J. W. Leonard, Q.C. Yet how many months had elapsed before the entire movement had collapsed and Mr Rhodes had sought refuge in the quiet bosom of the Afrikaner Bond! No wonder Mr Rhodes began to hate the Jingo mob of the streets and from this time at any rate was as crusty a conservative as has graced the ranks of the Bond. One can well imagine what must have been the thoughts and emotions of that proud spirit when twelve years afterwards these same seething masses of ill omen welcomed him at Port Elizabeth and Cape Town while those who had for so many years fought by his side and carried him to

¹ After a successful settlement of the Matabele rebellion (June 1896) Rhodes travelled through the bigger towns of the Cape Colony.

² Arising out of the conflict between the Governments of the South African Republic and Great Britain about the possession of Stellaland and Goshen in Bechuanaland, an Imperial League was founded in Cape Town in September 1884 to advance British imperialism in South Africa and oppose the Afrikaner Bond. The League collapsed after the annexation of British Bechuanaland in September 1885.

the zenith of his unrivalled renown, stood sullenly and revengefully aside. But why mention further instances of this sort of movement? It is not the outcome of any deep feeling and serious convictions (for such we must all respect); it is merely the baleful political by-product of that neurotic condition of the body politic which in its turn is the effect of the overwrought physical and mental energies of our times. It is however necessary to warn sober-minded people in England against taking these spasmodic and hysterical outbursts of Jingoism in South Africa for more or less permanent political tendencies. What has happened to the War Party of Sir Bartle Frere's time and to the Empire League of Mr Rhodes's wild-oats period, will happen again and is already happening to the South African League. Judging simply from the most ordinary canons of common sense, any sensible man in England will conclude that a movement intended to substitute for local self-government in South Africa an increased exercise of imperial authority from Downing Street is bound to miscarry fatally—so long at least as South Africa continues to be peopled by Englishmen or Dutchmen. The attempt to introduce this exotic hothouse plant in the Transvaal has already miserably miscarried. At the last meeting of League delegates in Johannesburg about a score of persons were present—not one of whom could in any sense of the term be called a representative man. And as I write these paragraphs I see a notice in the Press that this august body has delegated a representative to the South Africa Committee in order to disprove Mr Schreiner's remarks about Rand grievances! Is this the sort of tendency on which England is going to stake her colonial Empire? No, war policies, vigorous policies, Empire Leagues, South African Leagues and *hoc genus omne* are merely the dust clouds that accompany and obscure the invisible trend of the ground forces of republicanism in this country.

From this point of view it may be urged that it is unnecessary for me to devote time and attention to the analysis of a movement so unstable and impermanent as the recent Jingo movement in South Africa. But my excuse is that I don't want even a dead fly to make the ointment stink. Now and ever there is a danger that people in England may attach an exaggerated estimate to such movements. The calamitous Transvaal War

arose from the mistaken impression in England that the petitions sent by a very small 'vigorous' minority in favour of annexation, represented the real feelings and opinions of the population;¹ and it is part of my present object to warn the people of England against another such error, which must assuredly be followed by still greater consequences of a similar character.

Alongside of and partly the consequence of this Jingo movement we find an unprecedented deepening of the republican spirit in South Africa. It is simply the law of action and reaction; but who knows whether such insignificant Jingoistic matches primarily intended to inflame Jingo minds may not set fire to the Imperial stack in South Africa? As a true old Englishman, proud of his nation and its history, said to me some time ago: 'Mr Rhodes has made imperialism an impossibility in South Africa.' I believe that this is the absolute truth. And when I come now to refer at greater length to Mr Rhodes I must disclaim all intention to criticize him unfairly or spitefully. Sorely as an Afrikaner may feel tempted to kick the false idol he once worshipped, yet my subject and my object are too great than that I should stoop to such a method of criticism. It is generally known in England that Mr Rhodes formed his Ministry on the promise of the Dutch Afrikaners that they would support him; and that they stuck with unswerving fidelity to their promise. But it will never be known there to what an astonishing extent Mr Rhodes had in six or seven years become the national idol of the Dutch Afrikaners. I who had an opportunity to watch the growth of this profound devotion could find nothing comparable to it in the sphere of political relationships except the beautiful, truly religious attachment of liberals of the old school to Mr Gladstone. The Dutch are perhaps a suspicious people, but when they do come to put their trust in a man—as they all put it in Sir George Grey, as the Free State burghers put theirs in President Brand, and as conservative Transvaal today put theirs in President Kruger—then the trust becomes almost absolute and religious: such was their faith in Mr Rhodes. To say that this was the result of indirect bribery and corruption is ludicrously unjust. Some Dutch members of Parliament and some influential people may have materially benefited from Mr Rhodes's friendship; but a

¹ See p. 104 *supra*, note 1.

people cannot be bribed in the vulgar sense. It was hero-worship pure and simple. The Dutch set aside all considerations of blood and nationality and loved him and trusted him and served him because they believed that *he* was the man to carry out that great idea of an internally sovereign and united South Africa in which the white race would be supreme—which has been the cry of our forefathers even as it is our cry today. Here at last our Moses had appeared—and it made no difference that he was an Egyptian in blood and in occasional mode of expression. With the exception of a very small minority, the whole Dutch people in the Cape Colony shared this faith in and admiration for Mr Rhodes. ‘Give me a chance,’ he used to say to them; and he got his chance. And how did he use it? If there is one fact on which Colonial Afrikaners are more clear than on any other, it is this: that with the Transvaal must stand or fall the cause of the Dutch Afrikaners in South Africa. This Mr Rhodes knew perfectly well; but this knowledge prevented him as little as did his sense of loyalty to the Dutch from deserting them in the darkest and most tragic treachery which the history of the 19th century has recorded. As an English lady of uncommon intelligence and influence put it to me: ‘she had often heard of politicians who had used a people for their own ends; but this was the first historical instance within her knowledge in which a politician, while owing everything to a people, had deliberately stabbed that people to its heart’.¹ When the news of the Jameson Inroad flashed through the land the scales fell from the Dutch eyes; but the immediate result was more stupefaction than anything else. Mr Jan Hofmeyr alone kept his head and had Jameson declared an outlaw by the High Commissioner. But when Mr Rhodes went to Kimberley and there publicly boasted that his public career was only just beginning, they recovered themselves; and for their feeling of admiration was substituted another, which has been intensified and embittered tenfold by the ovations which Mr Rhodes received at Port Elizabeth, at Cape Town and elsewhere. Till those receptions they had as a bulk observed a sullen silence; but even before Mr Rhodes had left Cape Town to face the music in London, a

¹ See 36.

spontaneous outburst of popular Dutch opinion had begun at Wellington whose after-effects on South African history will far overshadow the Jameson Raid. From the staid and sober south-west the movement rolled to the republican north-west until at last over a hundred meetings had been held—many of them the greatest and most influential ever held in the Dutch centres. I happened then to be spending the Christmas vacation with my family in the Western Province and I had the privilege casually to attend some of these meetings; the impression they made on my mind will last with life.¹ I could well remember the feeling called forth in those very parts by the Transvaal War of Independence fourteen years ago²; but it was in no sense comparable with what I saw in the beginning of 1896. To my mind the die is already cast in the Colony; the Dutch are absolutely committed to the support of the Republic in South Africa, and should an ambitious Colonial Minister choose to bring his 'vigorous' policy into operation in South Africa the entire South Africa will be speedily involved in a final conflagration. I do not think it will be a war of races, for a large part of moderate Englishmen (such, for instance, as look upon Mr Rose Innes as their parliamentary leader) will either stand aside or fight on the republican side. Can anyone be certain of the issue of such a conflict—which would soon be further complicated by the attitude of the great Continental Powers? It may be a mere repetition of a great historical misfortune which English statesmen have now been bewailing for more than a century. But supposing the issue is different and that the cause of the Dutch and their Republics is finally settled in South Africa, would England derive any moral or material strength from an Ireland—peopled by a folk such as the South African Dutch are now known to be? And in any case such an exposure of the real motives actuating the rulers of the Colonial Empire in London must speedily prove fatal to the cohesion of that Empire.

I have said that till now a serious and sober loyalty has characterized Afrikaner politics. I have shown how profoundly that sentiment of loyalty has been shocked by recent events. I

¹ Smuts had spoken at some of these anti-Rhodes protest meetings in his home district. On 14 January 1897 he and Merriman appeared on the same platform at Philadelphia, near Malmesbury.

² A chronological error. In 1880-1 Smuts was 10-11 years old.

now come to consider the question: what will be the probable effect of Mr Rhodes's return to the arena of active South African politics. Mr Rhodes now stands finally and irretrievably committed to the cause of imperialism—and no Dutchman or Englishman in South Africa is ever likely to make a mistake about that. His colossal egotism must in future for ever cloak itself under a garb of imperialism. It stands to reason that Dutch feeling about the imperial cause will gradually become identified with their attitude towards Mr Rhodes—and this process will be immeasurably accelerated by the discovery that the authorities at home are countenancing Mr Rhodes and his schemes. Now what their future attitude towards Mr Rhodes will be need form no matter of doubt or speculation. From a very old and deep-rooted law of human nature we may deduce the result that a good lover is a better hater; and this is as true about the people as the individual. To suppose that after what has happened any considerable section of the Cape Dutch could ever again follow Mr Rhodes is to suppose what is chimerical. They shall hate him more and more; they shall tend to hate his imperial cause more and more; they shall tend more and more to look to republicanism and the Republics as their final destination and support. That—I submit—sums up whatever prospects Mr Rhodes may have as a serious political force in South Africa. He will be a standing argument in favour of republicanism—and an argument which will be but too persuasive. The cause of republicanism is the only one which he could seriously expect to forward in South Africa. His setting sun may still tinge the close of a great career with tragic hues and reflexes; a reddened horizon may finally become overcast with the lowering gloom of war. The day shall break forth again with great splendour but it will not be the one he longed for nor the one he fought for.

Adieu, Cecil Rhodes, South Africa will meet you at Philippi.¹

Where shall the traitor rest,
He the deceiver, etc.

SCOTT: *Marmion*²

¹ ' . . . thou shalt see me at Philippi.' Said by the ghost of Caesar to Brutus foretelling his defeat and death in that battle in 42 B.C. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, IV. iii. 282.

² Canto III, xi.

(iv) *The Newer Downing Street as a force making for Republicanism*

When Carlyle had written his famous attack on Downing Street he followed it up with a forecast of 'The New Downing Street'¹ and the grand functions it could fulfil in the evolution of the greatest Empire that has arisen since the dawn of man. His forecast was a prophecy, the details whereof have been increasingly fulfilled within the last quarter of a century. Well might it gladden the heart of the Imperial Mother to have a group of daughters each of whom is a great empress herself! On all of them she has smiled and still smiles with motherly benignity and trust—all except one. The South African Cinderella—she of the large heart and deathless hope—still sits among the ashes, bathing her open and flowing wounds with her own tears. Till now she has had deep faith in her Imperial Mother,—but now her heart is getting sick with hope deferred. The ideas and aspirations of the Anglo-Saxon race have not tended to her healing or consolation. The prophetic message of 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people'² was evidently not intended for her. She is the crucible in which crude schemes of imperial policy are continually being tried—and evaporated away. She still continues the *corpus vile* on which great colonial ministers and proconsuls perform the experiments which have to make or mar reputations for so-called statesmanship. The Norths and the Grenvilles of a past century still darken this fair country with the baleful shade of an obsolete colonial policy. But why 'obsolete'? Is it not rather the 'newer Downing Street' whose harsh hissing is making every quiet citizen pat instinctively his weapon of defence? For a time we had fitfully enjoyed the benefits of the New Downing Street and the ideal of a united South Africa under British protection or suzerainty had come to float before our vision. But the fair vision has been dispelled. Armenia and Crete cannot have been more disappointed by recent British statesmanship³

¹ Two of Carlyle's *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, published on 1 April and 15 April 1850 respectively.

² *Isaiah*, xl. 1.

³ The Turks suppressed an Armenian revolt in 1895 by a general massacre and, in September 1897, severely defeated the Greeks, who had aided a revolt in Crete. The British Government contemplated intervention but took no steps against Turkey when Germany, Russia and France opposed that policy.

than have been the States and colonies of South Africa by Mr Chamberlain's recent South African policy. This policy—which has in two short years done more harm in South Africa than the events which culminated in the freedom of the Transvaal—I call Mr Chamberlain's, for I cannot believe that it is endorsed by men of the stamp of Mr Balfour, men who have learned to submit petty personal ambitions to the larger hopes and interests of the Empire. The tremendous issues of a great Colonial Empire are staked on a mere personal or political preference for Mr Rhodes. In South Africa at present every man believes that Mr Chamberlain is behind Mr Rhodes and that the latter's policy of ill omen and disaster will therefore ultimately be supported by the weight and force of the whole British Empire. To enumerate all the causes which have produced that final impression will be mere waste of time; people in England must now generally be under a similar impression. What his motives may be—for unfortunately in the case of a politician with Mr Chamberlain's past one inevitably looks for motives—I don't pretend to know. Perhaps he thinks that he can never stand well with his present party till he has undone the deed he performed in 1886 as a leading member of another party. Perhaps he thinks that Mr Balfour is a younger man and ought to give the older parliamentary hand a chance. Who knows whether the South African Empire is not a pawn in some such petty game at home? Was not Ireland once a similar pawn in a similar game played on an historic 'Round Table'?¹

These questions the future alone can answer. In the meantime, while willing to give Mr Chamberlain the benefit of every doubt, I yet think it a duty to that South Africa which will be our grave even as it has been our cradle, and to the work of those who have sacrificed health, wealth and ambition for her dear sake, to utter a warning to the great British people. I know them at home and at their best, for during the best years of my young life I moved in and out among them and observed

¹ In 1886 Chamberlain led the secession of the Liberal Unionists from the Liberal Party in opposition to Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill providing for a separate Irish Parliament. A round table conference was held to heal the breach but it failed. Smuts apparently believed that, both in 1886 and 1897, Chamberlain was really 'playing' for the position of Prime Minister.

their habits and motives and actions. When once they understand on what side of the controversy is right, they tend to sway irresistibly in that direction; and I say this of all political parties in Great Britain. And it is because I believe that South Africa has a just cause against Mr Chamberlain and that that justness either the events of the immediate future or the verdict of humanity will finally establish that I warn them now against the 'vigorous' Colonial Secretary. I observed Mr Chamberlain closely when in England. I often listened to his speeches on the Irish and other questions; and the impression I even then carried off was that he had not sufficient detachment of mind for the greatest affairs of state. His passions were too personal and keen, his vision too intense and concentrated; while a real statesman must have a deepened and widened humanity and only such passions as will add warmth to the imperial flight of his intelligence. Often when I saw him badgering some unfortunate son of Erin, I thought to myself to how much better and more statesmanlike uses such energy could have been turned. Little did I then think that the same man who was then lacerating the wounds of Ireland would yet be appointed Physician-in-Chief to ailing South Africa. Here especially we want either a duffer or a man possessed of the highest attributes of practical statesmanship. Anything between these two extremes is dangerous and pernicious. Those especially whose nature it is to fight for victory had better have nothing to do with the affairs of South Africa, for it is only he who is great enough to be willing to suffer humiliation and defeat for the sake of South Africa that will save her—and with her his reputation for supreme statesmanship. To this last select class Mr Chamberlain does not belong, and the great Conservative Party, to whose keeping the holiest interests of the British Empire have been entrusted, must keep an eye on his South African doings.

But, it will be said, the behaviour of the Transvaal is so flagitious as to merit no other treatment but such as Mr Chamberlain is now meting out to her. To which I reply that the South Africa question is greater than the Transvaal question; that Mr Chamberlain's policy is complicating matters all over South Africa; and that a victory in his struggle for certain economic reforms may be clouded by the loss of the

whole South Africa. And in the second place I reply that we admit that the Rand has grievances, although they are largely exaggerated. But no redress can be expected so long as Mr Chamberlain is flaunting war in the face of republican South Africa—so long as, while accusing President Kruger of breaking the Convention, his entire construction of that document and his high-handed actions in South Africa constitute a far more serious breach of the Convention. And lastly, there *is* a party of reform—a band of hope—in South Africa, daily growing and one day to be in power. But they are not a party after Mr Chamberlain's heart, and they look upon him and his spurious schemes of reform as a more serious obstruction to progress than any other force in South Africa. Till he has ceased from troubling they must prefer to wait and work silently.

We were just entering upon an era of economic reform and were full of high hopes for the future, when the cable informed us of Mr Chamberlain's menacing cross-examination of Mr Schreiner and his martial posing before the House of Commons. The result must be another serious obstruction to progress. The forces of abiding progress Mr Chamberlain is bringing either to a deadlock or alienating from his ranks, while the spurious forces—which I analysed on a page—are flocking with deafening noise to his previous standard.

Is this the sort of policy on which Great Britain is staking her colonial Empire? Today is South Africa's turn—tomorrow Canada's; and in the far distance appears the great vision of Macaulay's Antipodean meditating at the worn-out heart and deadened pulse of the Empire on the decline and fall of nations.¹ Those who now sow the wind rejoicing will then have to reap the whirlwind wailing. South Africa is a land of surprises but one of the greatest surprises yet in store for the champions of Uitlander reforms no less than for the European investors will be the report of the Commission which the Government has now appointed to inquire into the various burdens and causes

¹ 'And she [the Catholic Church] may still persist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.' *Historical Essays, Von Ranke.*

of expenditure of the Mining Companies.¹ Till now the companies and mining magnates have tried to charge the Government, the dynamite concession and the railway rates with the reckless waste of money due to their own doings. The Government has till now acted upon the principle of leaving the industry to manage its own concerns as far as possible. But now that, in order to excuse their own criminal incompetence, the financiers are trying to ruin the State, the Government cannot any longer sit still. The challenge of the capitalists has been taken up by the Government and already there is quaking and dismay in the ranks of the Government opponents. When the appalling facts come before the world and the innocent European investor learns how light have been the burdens of the Government compared with the crushing burdens of their own directors and representatives on the Rand, their eyes will at last be opened. In making these remarks I don't mean to defend the dynamite monopoly or the railway rates of the Netherlands Company but I say that it is not for the capitalists, after having swallowed the camel of their own criminal wastefulness, to strain at the gnat of the Government burdens. In any case the truth will now soon be out, and everyone can then judge for himself. With regard to political grievances they are too absurd and dishonestly put forward to merit the least consideration. We have Mr Lionel Phillips's private opinion that the English Uitlanders 'don't care a fig for the franchise';² and I think that if the franchise were offered them tomorrow not ten per cent would accept it, for the burdens of citizenship in this country are great.

(v) *Reform in the Transvaal as a force making for Republicanism*

In the meantime, while Mr Chamberlain is doing his utmost to alienate the most solid and influential sections of the Colonial population no less than of the Rand Uitlander population, a cloud is appearing on the horizon—at present not larger than a man's hand, but fraught with untold possibilities for the cause of republicanism in South Africa.

¹ For the Commission and its report see J. S. Marais, *op. cit.* pp. 186 *et seq.*

² See Cape House of Assembly Paper A6 of 1896, Appendix A, p. 1.

Republicanism is a grand cause all over the world; time is on its side. But nowhere in the world has it such a chance as in South Africa. It is already a religious faith with a vast section of the South African population; and it can confidently look to even more abiding triumphs in the future. Till now the external and internal obstacles have however been so serious as in many senses to prevent republicanism from being a success in South Africa. Indeed it has never yet had a fair chance here. But its day is coming and may be nearer than many think.

In the first place, republicanism has been hampered by isolation. So long as the Dutch Afrikaners followed the obviously imperialistic lead of Mr Rhodes, the Republics looked upon them with grave suspicion. Since the Kimberley banquet where, shortly after his ascension to the premiership, Mr Rhodes openly declared in substance that his policy was that of Sir Bartle Frere, the republicans had looked upon him with distrust. And President Kruger, who had learned to know him in the Rooigrond business¹ many years before, had fully taken the measure of his opponent. Upon Mr Rhodes he began to look with instinctive insight as his most powerful and most dangerous opponent in South Africa. As long therefore as the Afrikaner party was pledged to support Mr Rhodes President Kruger pursued a relentless policy of isolationism towards the Cape Colony. In a certain sense he was in this way playing into the hands of Mr Rhodes for it was quite possible for the Transvaal even in those days to have divided the Colony by means of an enlightened and bold foreign policy. But different counsels prevailed at Pretoria and the feeling of estrangement between Republic and Colony went so far that ultimately Mr Rhodes thought that the imperialist wedge had been driven deep enough into Dutch South Africa and that the time had come for a final *coup*. With what immediate results we know; but with what ultimate results who can foretell? Among the immediate results was this: that in the complete and final repudiation of Mr Rhodes by the Colonial Afrikaners the

¹ In 1884 Kruger had moved to extend the boundary of the South African Republic westwards into Bechuanaland in the region of Rooigrond (Goshen) but had withdrawn after negotiations with Rhodes, the envoy of the British High Commissioner.

partition between republican and Colonial Afrikaner was cast down and a reunion of the two sections of the Afrikaner people took place which will have lasting results. From nothing does this utter repudiation appear more significantly than the sweeping resolution passed at the last meeting of the provincial Congress of the Afrikaner Bond held at Malmesbury in the Cape Colony this month. After having declared him unworthy of a seat in the legislature of the country, that body of representatives pledged their party to fight Mr Rhodes and his policy in all shapes and forms and at all times and places. Coming as does that motion from the very party which had raised Mr Rhodes to the zenith of his South African career, one can well imagine that it must have produced a great effect on a statesman like President Kruger. And indeed the entire Dutch population in the Colony—with a few insignificant exceptions that have picked up some of the crumbs which have fallen from the table of this most lavish of colonial premiers—have now declared themselves so unequivocally hostile to Mr Rhodes that one can well believe the rumour that at last a radical change is coming over the South African policy of President Kruger. It is the change which Mr Chamberlain has proposed in all sorts of despatches but which, under the disposal of the astute old republican leader, has come at a time when it will have the exactly opposite consequences to those which Mr Chamberlain so fondly expected. The old ship of state is at last leaving her moorings, but it is the wind of republicanism and not of imperialism that is speeding her along. At the very time when, according to the calculations of Mr Chamberlain and Mr Rhodes, the inauguration of federation in the interests of imperialism was expected, the foundation-stone of another sort of federation is laid at Bloemfontein! From this point of view the agreement drawn up between the delegates of the Free State and the Transvaal at the Bloemfontein 'Closer Union' Conference is a document of the most vital interest for all those who are interested in the political evolution of South Africa.¹ It is not true to say (as some newspapers have done) that in making this move President Kruger has taken a leaf out of Mr Rhodes's book. For this idea of a

¹ In March 1897 the two Republics renewed and extended the alliance for mutual defence made in 1889.

political union between the two Republics is a very old one with the President. But mutual jealousies have blocked the way until at last a common danger does what the common good could never effect.

Not only is this Treaty a milestone on the road to a great federal republic; it is important for another reason. The Free State, which is the most level-headed and model government in the whole South Africa, will now have, under the agreement for a common consultation board,¹ a *locus standi* in giving advice to the Transvaal; and in what direction that advice will go and what its effects will be it is easy to foresee.

Thus it has come to pass that at last, while Mr Chamberlain has been making vigorous speeches and inditing more vigorous despatches, the scene is completely changing in South Africa and President Kruger now feels strong enough in the sympathy and support of the entire Dutch and a large part of English South Africa to start upon a bold policy of internal economic reform and external South African *rapprochement*. Now at last republicanism is going to have a fair chance in South Africa, and should success in any way attend the efforts of the Pretoria Government the result will react beneficially on the forces of republicanism all over South Africa. Already the political centre of gravity in South Africa has followed the commercial centre of gravity and shifted from Cape Town to the republican capital. The Colonies will gradually have to accustom their pride and readjust their economic and political relations so as to fall in with the new disposal of political forces in South Africa. To suppose that Bulawayo will seriously affect this altered situation from a commercial point of view is nonsense. If one compares the progress made by the Rand in the first eight years of its exploitation to the progress made by Rhodesia during the same period in its history—one can see at once how widely different the prospects of the two countries are. And even if there is a commercial future before Rhodesia, Beira and Lourenço Marques are its natural ports and not Port Elizabeth which is thousands of miles off. The

¹ The alliance provided for the establishment of a Council of Deputies of the two Republics to consider and advise on matters of common interest. Steyn hoped, by this means, both to promote federation and to influence the foreign policy of the South African Republic.

Transvaal thus having the key to the political and commercial situation, a liberal internal and external South African policy on its part will react profoundly on colonial South Africa and have a disastrous effect [on] the chances of a rampant imperialism. The Dutch and even the English in the Colonies will come to look more and more to the Transvaal for material help and support. The Union Jack—which has been in South Africa, not a symbol of peace and goodwill, but of blood, force and aggression—will be more and more relegated to that limbo of innocuous fads in which ‘imperial federation’ and similar entities and nonentities flourish.

The only question then is whether this Republic is now going to modify its policy in the direction of internal form and external *rapprochement*. I can only say that all the signs are pointing that way. President Kruger feels strong in the support of the Free State and the moderate Colonial population. The Uitlander population are also now getting into a mood where mutual concessions can be amicably arranged and where, if only Mr Chamberlain will leave us alone, the policy of forgive and forget can be successfully inaugurated. I have every reason to believe that the republican leaders are fully aware of the unrivalled opportunity they have at present; and that a determined effort will be made to arrive at such a solution of our present difficulties as will make imperialism in South Africa pale before the dawn of the new republicanism.

We are weary of the past; we are weary of our own errors and the errors of Downing Street, old, new and newer; and our prayer now is that we may be left alone to redeem ourselves and the unrivalled opportunity which now presents itself.

May the eighty years’ feud between two sober and sensible peoples be at last set at rest and may Doornkop be the last of the many bloody sign-posts along a line of progress which recall the memories of the first at Slachtersnek.¹

¹ An abortive rebellion in 1815 of some Boers on the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony which ended in the execution of the leaders. The event became symbolic of Afrikaner-English conflict in South Africa.

44 From P. J. Malan

Vol. 1, no. 48

TELEGRAM

From: Malan,¹ Pretoria
To: Advocate Smuts, Marais Court, Johannesburg
Dated: 26 May 1898

Confidentieel. Om toekomst te redden voor U zal Reitz gekozen worden. Van Leeuwen wordt dan rechter en U staatsprocureur. Reitz is zwak en zal niet lang volhouden en dan jou beurt. Ben je tevreden.

TRANSLATION

Confidential. To save the future for you Reitz [F. W.] will be chosen.² Van Leeuwen [J. A. S.] then becomes judge and you state attorney.³ Reitz is weak and will not last out long and then your turn. Are you satisfied.

45 From P. J. Malan

Vol. 1, no. 49

TELEGRAM

From: Malan, Pretoria
To: Advocate Smuts, Marais Court, Johannesburg
Dated: 31 May 1898

Reitz gekozen ons kan onder omstandigheden tevrede zijn.

TRANSLATION

Reitz chosen we can under circumstances be satisfied.

46 From H. Lindsay

Vol. 1, no. 43

Green's Buildings
 Commissioner Street
 Johannesburg
 4 June 1898

My dear Smuts, I am truly glad to see you appointed to the responsible position of State Attorney and trust in your capacity as such you will ever work for the greatest good of all your South

¹ Philippus Johannes (Hans) Malan. Born 1873 near Rustenburg, Transvaal. Was Chief of Roads in the Department of Public Works of the South African Republic. Died 30 January 1932.

² As State Secretary in succession to W. J. Leyds.

³ Smuts was sworn in as State Attorney on 8 June 1898.

African brethren irrespective of nationality. I confess I should much have preferred your appointment to the Bench, as, without wishing to be flattering you, I do think your appointment to that position would have been an excellent one. I need not say that as a South African I regret, and always will, the appointment to the high office of judge [of] men who are notoriously incompetent to fill the position. With every good wish, Yours most sincerely,

Henry Lindsay

47 From M. K. de Wet

Vol. 1, no. 17

23 Strand St.

6 Juni [1898]

Waarde Vriend, Het doet mij oneindig genoegen dat de talenten en gaven U. Ed. door God geschenken in dienst van mijne broeders in de Transvaal zullen ten nutte komen. Ik wensch het gouvernement geluk met de keuse die zij deed, in uwe benoeming. Ook U. Ed. wensch ik geluk want het moet een groot geluk zijn te gevoelen dat men nut kan stichten en zijn land kan dienen.

Met verdriet zag ik U. Ed. van hier gaan—wij hebben óók eerlijke, en knappe mannen nodig—nu ben ik echter geheel verzoend met U. Eds. heen gaan, want ik bemin de Transvaal genoeg om er een kostbaar offer voor over te hebben. God sterke U in uw nieuwe loopbaan, en spare U lang tot nut van land en volk.

Groet uwe lieve vrouw voor mij; ik heb haar niet vergeten, O neen wij spreken dikwijls van U beiden, maar ik ben lang zeer zwak en ongesteld geweest, en kon naauwelijks het hoog nodige doen. Later schrijf ik haar. Ontvang ook de beste wenschen van mijne zuster en met onze hartelijke groeten aan U beiden, Geloof mij uw opregten vriendin,

Marie Koopmans de Wet

TRANSLATION

23 Strand St

[Cape Town]

6 June [1898]

Honoured Friend, It gives me the greatest satisfaction that the talents and gifts bestowed upon Your Honour by God will be

used in the service of my brothers in the Transvaal. I congratulate the Government on the choice it has made in your appointment. I also congratulate Your Honour for it must be a great happiness to feel that one can be of use and serve one's country.

It was with sorrow that I saw Your Honour leave here—we also have need of honest and able men; now, however, I am quite reconciled to Your Honour's going, because I love the Transvaal enough to spare a precious offering for it. May God strengthen you in your new career and long spare you for the good of land and people.

Greet your dear wife for me; I have not forgotten her, oh no, we often speak of you both, but I have long been very weak and unwell and could hardly do the most necessary things. Later I shall write to her. Accept also the best wishes of my sister and with our hearty greetings to you both, Believe me your sincere friend,

Marie Koopmans de Wet

48 To I. Hayman

Vol. 1, no. 108A

Pretoria

30 October 1898

My dear Hayman, You don't know how sorry I am that I have so far been prevented from congratulating you on your brilliant success in the recent *Procureurs Examen*.¹ Your marks were higher by many hundreds than those ever obtained before in this examination, and it is in my opinion not very probable that the record thus made will soon be lowered by somebody else. I feel proud to think that your beginnings in the law were watched by me with great interest and that in a certain minor way I may have contributed to your remarkable success.² However the honour is wholly yours and I therefore congratulate you most heartily.

This is however only the beginning. You are joining a profession which, among the Romans no less than among the

¹ Attorney's Examination (Dutch).

² Smuts coached pupils for law examinations up to February 1898, when they gave him a farewell dinner.

Hebrews, was looked upon as a consecrated priesthood, working in a worthy manner for the attainment of the highest ideals of humanity. Ulpian says: *Ut eleganter Celsus definit, jus est ars boni et aequi. Cuius merito quis nos sacerdotes appellet: justitiam namque colimus et boni et aequi notitiam profitemur, aequum ab iniquo separantes licitum ab illicito discernentes, bonos non solum metu poenarum, verum etiam praemiorum exhortatione quoque efficere cupientes, veram nisi fallor philosophiam, non simulatam affectantes.*¹

These proud words of Ulpian's are true, for you will find in law not only a means of livelihood but also of moral and spiritual culture; and my wish for you is that you may press on till you enter that inner shrine where the legal right is seen to be but the symbol of that deeper Right which pervades the whole world.

Wishing you as much happiness and success as it is good for a wise man to have in this world, I remain, Yours very faithfully,
J. C. Smuts

P.S. Kindly convey my very hearty congratulations also to Inckler, Raphaely [S.], Daly, McEwan [W.] and the other successful friends. J. C. S.

Mrs Smuts wishes me to add that she will be very glad if you now and then come over on Saturday afternoon to spend the Sunday with us. With which I heartily concur. J. C. S.

49 to 71 give an insight into the tasks which Smuts set himself as State Attorney and which fell to him in that office up to the outbreak of war. The Department of the *Staatsprocureur* was then important enough to warrant the appointment, in 1898, of an Assistant State Attorney at £1500 a year. This was L. J. Jacobsz. The salary of the State Attorney was £2250 a year. These documents were selected from a large number of routine papers, such as applications for naturalization. The originals are in the State Archives at Pretoria in the S.P. series. They are bound

¹ This passage, from the first title of the first book of the *Digests of the Corpus Juris Civilis*, has been translated by Monro as follows:

'According to the nice definition of Celsus, *jus* is the art of what is good and fair. Of this art we may deservedly be called the priests; we cherish justice and profess the knowledge of what is good and fair, we separate what is fair from what is unfair, we discriminate between what is allowed and what is forbidden, we desire to make men good, not only by putting them in fear of penalties, but also by appealing to them through rewards, proceeding, if I am not mistaken, on a real and not a pretended philosophy.'

in letter-books and are carbon impressions, on flimsy paper, of handwritten pieces, many of them by Smuts. In many of the documents words are illegible or have missed the carbon paper. Typed copies of a selection of S.P. papers have been filed in the Smuts Collection. In the documents printed below the first reference is to the Smuts Collection copy, the second to the State Archives original.

49 to **57** illustrate Smuts's efforts to improve administrative practice and to combat illicit gold buying and evasions of the liquor law, and his *coup* in bringing the corrupt detective service, which was involved in both these illegalities, under the control of his department. **58** to **61** are examples of legal opinions on proposed legislation, contracts, petitions, etc. on which the Government had asked his advice. **62** to **64** record brushes with the British Government, ranging from the complaints of Indian traders to the obligations of the South African Republic under the Convention of London. **65** to **68** record instances of the State Attorney's action against anti-Government activities and vice on the Rand. **69** to **71** deal with the contentious question of the dynamite monopoly.

49 To M. S. de Villiers Vol. 99, no. 277. S.P. 465, p. 5

Isten. Publieken Aanklager
Johannesburg
7 Juli 1898

Hiermede heb ik de eer UEd. op te dragen om het amalgam, dat in het bezit van Count de Sarigny en Spittle gevonden werd, aan den heer J. W. Treu te overhandigen. Ik heb de eer te zijn, Uw dienstw. dienaar,

J. C. Smuts
Staatsprocureur

TRANSLATION

First Public Prosecutor¹
Johannesburg
7 July 1898

Herewith I have the honour to instruct Your Honour to hand over the amalgam that was found in the possession of Count de

¹ Marthinus Smuts de Villiers was first Public Prosecutor (Aanklager) in the Magistrate's Court in Johannesburg and was killed in the Anglo-Boer War.

Sarigny and Spittle¹ to Mr J. W. Treu.² I have the honour to be, Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

50 To H. Birkenruth Vol. 99, no. 280. S.P. 465, p. 16

TELEGRAM

From: State Attorney
To: Birkenruth,³ Johannesburg
Dated: 29 July 1898

Ferguson seint mij dat hij 300 onzen amalgam tegen £450-17-11 ontvangen heeft van de Robinson Goudmijn Maatschappij door de heeren H. Eckstein & Co. op 14.6.98.

TRANSLATION

Ferguson telegraphs me that he has received 300 ounces of amalgam for £450.17.11⁴ from the Robinson Gold-Mining Company⁵ through Messrs. H. Eckstein & Co.⁶ on 14.6.98.

¹ Count Charles de Sarigny and James Spittle were arrested on 17 June 1898 and charged with illicit gold buying, but the State Attorney instructed the Public Prosecutor to withdraw the charges. It was alleged by critics of the Administration that official permits to buy gold were freely issued to agents of the Speurdienst (Detective Service) to enable them to trap illicit gold buyers, that many agents had consequently become gold-runners and dealers in permits, and that when arrests were made the police were powerless because the persons charged could always produce a permit (*see the Star*, 18 and 25 June 1898).

² Joshua William Treu, a member of the Detective Service of the South African Republic, was charged with conspiracy to murder the ex-chief of the Service, Robert Ferguson (*see The Standard and Diggers News*, 11 January 1899).

³ Henry Birkenruth was at this time on the staff of the Goldfields of South Africa, founded by Rhodes in 1887.

⁴ Chief Detective Robert Ferguson had bought gold amalgam and passed it to Count Sarigny and Spittle. He was dismissed by Smuts in November 1898.

⁵ Founded by Sir Joseph B. Robinson in 1887.

⁶ Hermann Eckstein & Co., established in 1888 to manage the mining enterprises of Wernher and Beit.

51 To Public Prosecutor Vol. 99, no. 281. S.P. 465, p. 23

TELEGRAM

From: State Attorney
To: Public Prosecutor, Boksburg

Undated

Confidentieel

Met referte tot uw telegram re private speurders wensch ik nog dit verder te zeggen dat er bij mij gedurige klachten komen van eene boze administratie der drankwet binnen uwe jurisdictie. Ik zag gaarne dat U met de grootste naarstigheid en stiptheid in deze zaken handelt. Waar het private speur bureau een kantien betrapt moet U uw uiterst best doen hem te hulp te komen. Daar is er b.v. het geval te [an illegible name] Kleifontein waar zij goed werk kunnen doen. Zo er geen vermindering van klachten is omtrent administratie der drankwet in Boksburg district zal ik mij verplicht gevoelen een onderzoek naar de geheele zaak in te stellen.

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Confidential

With reference to your telegram re private detectives, I wish to say further that continual complaints reach me of mal-administration of the liquor law within your jurisdiction. I should like to see you acting in these matters with the greatest diligence and promptness. If the private detective bureau traps a liquor shop, you must do your utmost to assist it. There is, for instance, the case at [an illegible name] Kleifontein where they can do good work. If there is no decrease in the complaints about the administration of the liquor law in Boksburg district, I shall be obliged to institute an inquiry into the whole matter.

J. C. Smuts

52 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 278. S.P. 528, p. 628

Staatssecretaris B. Ik baseer mijn zienswijze op Wet no. 8/87 art. 6:

‘De Staatsprocureur heeft het oppertoezicht over de gevangenen en de politie’ etc. Volgens de bestaande wet bestaat er

altijd een appel in zaken re gevangenis- of politiewegen naar den Staatsprocureur, en er bestaan sterke bezwaren tegen een verandering der wet.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

27 Juli 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. I base my view on Law no. 8 of 1887 article 6:

'The State Attorney has supreme supervision over prisoners and the police' etc. According to the existing law there is always an appeal in prison or police matters to the State Attorney, and there are strong objections to a change in the law.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

27 July 1898

53 From and to State Secretary

Vol. 99, no. 282. S.P. 528, pp. 694-5

Staats Procureur, Minute eerst aan U.E.G. voor informatie, advies en eventueel op- en aanmerkingen. Een aantal slips uit couranten omtrent deze zaak zijn bij de minute gevoegd, vertegenwoordigende de publieken opinie. Spoedige behandeling wordt beleefd verzoekt.

F. W. Reitz

[Date incorrect and partly defaced]

Staatssecretaris B. Het is mij onmogelijk op deze stukken de Regeering te adviseeren een onderzoek in te stellen naar het gedrag van Landdrost van den Berg. Te Johannesburg heb ik dikwijls de gelegenheid gehad een oordeel te vormen naar zijn werk en ik ben tot de conclusie gekomen dat hij een van de bekwaamste en getrouwste ambtenaren in 's lands dienst is. Er is slechts een sectie van het publiek die met hem ontevreden is; en die sectie wordt aangepord door de Dranksyndicate wier doel het is op de snoodste wijzen de wetten des lands te verkrachten en onduiken. Omdat hij getracht heeft zijn plicht te doen, moet hij nu in verdacht gebracht worden bij de

Regeering. Ik denk bescheiden dat het de plicht is van de Regeering om getrouw bij een ambtenaar te staan die wegens zijn onkrenkbaarheid door een deel van het publiek vervolgd word; anders zouden de gevolgen allernoodlottigst zijn voor den publieken dienst en administratie des lands.

Wat betreft de memories door burgers en andere ingezetenen geteekend, hecht ik geen de minste waarde daaraan. Ongelukkig is het maar te waar dat de macht der drankverkopers zeer aangegroeid is op de Witwatersrand, zoozeer dat zij een macht worden bij alle electies; het is voor hen makkelijk genoeg een aantal behoeftige personen te krijgen hun namen op een memorie te plaatsen van wier inhoud zij in zalige onkunde verkeeren.

Door een commissie van onderzoek in te stellen zal er noodeloos een blaam geworpen worden op een getrouwe ambtenaar. Ik been dus ertegen <en ook> tegen eenige andere stappen tegen Landdrost <van den Berg>

[Signature not carbon copied.
Minute in Smuts's handwriting.]

5 Augustus 1898

TRANSLATION

State Attorney. Minute first to Your Honour for information, advice and possible observations and remarks. A number of newspaper clippings about this matter are attached to the minute as representing public opinion. Quick action is kindly requested.

State Secretary B. On these documents it is impossible for me to advise the Government to institute an enquiry into the behaviour of Landdrost¹ van den Berg [N.]. At Johannesburg I often had the opportunity of forming an opinion about his work, and I came to the conclusion that he is one of the ablest and most faithful officers in the public service. There is only one section of the public that is dissatisfied with him; and this section is instigated by the liquor syndicates whose object it is to violate and evade the laws of the land in the most heinous fashion. Because he has tried to do his duty, he must now be brought under suspicion of the Government. I

¹ Magistrate.

think, with deference, that it is the duty of the Government loyally to support an officer who is persecuted by a section of the public because of his probity; otherwise the effects would be most fatal for the public service and the administration of the country.

As regards the petitions signed by burghers and other inhabitants, I do not attach the least value to them. Unfortunately, it is only too true that the power of the liquor purveyors on the Witwatersrand has grown very much; so much so, that they are becoming a power at all elections; it is easy enough for them to get a number of needy persons to put their names to a petition, of the contents of which they are blessedly ignorant.

By instituting a commission of inquiry blame will needlessly be cast on a loyal officer. I am therefore against it and also against any other steps against Landdrost van den Berg.

5 August 1898

54 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 284. S.P. 529, p. 240

Staatssecretaris B. Op sommige punten versta ik dat de wet veranderd zal worden, en ik heb dat ook aan de drankwet Commissie voorgesteld. Wat de administratie betreft zal ik maar liever van zwijgen.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

26 October 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. I understand that the law will be altered on some points and I have recommended this to the Liquor Law Commission.¹ As regards administration, I had better say nothing.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

26 October 1898

¹ The Commission's recommendations, including one to allow the sale of a limited amount of liquor to Natives, were never implemented.

55 To F. E. T. Krause Vol. 99, no. 289. S.P. 465, p. 61

TELEGRAM

From: State Attorney

To: First Public Prosecutor, Johannesburg

Dated: 11 January 1899

Confidentieel

In *Standard and Diggers' News* van heden 11 Januari zie ik een rapport der zaak tegen Treu waarin de getuigenis van Jacobs wordt gerapporteerd. Ik wensch van U te weten of de vragen U in den mond gelegd zoowel als de antwoorden van Jacobs substantieel correct gerapporteerd zijn. Verder wensch ik te weten of U Jacobs gesproken had alvorens hem als getuige te roepen en hem te ondervragen. Gelieve dadelijk te antwoorden.

J. C. Smuts

S.P.

TRANSLATION

Confidential

I see in today's (11 January) *Standard and Diggers' News* a report of the case against Treu in which the evidence of Jacobs¹ is reported. I wish to know from you whether the questions put into your mouth, as well as Jacobs's answers, are substantially correctly reported. Further, I wish to know whether you had spoken to Jacobs before calling him as a witness and examining him. Please answer immediately.

J. C. Smuts

State Attorney

56 To F. E. T. Krause Vol. 99, no. 290. S.P. 465, p. 62

TELEGRAM

From: State Attorney

To: First Public Prosecutor, Johannesburg

Dated: 12 January 1899

Gelieve dadelijk een definitief antwoord op mijn telegram van gister te zenden.

J. C. Smuts

S.P.

¹ Isaac Lionel Jacobs was a witness in the case against J. W. Treu. He said that he had been employed by Treu and another official 'on behalf of Mr Smuts' to shadow Ferguson, and that Smuts knew this (see *Standard and Diggers' News*, 11 January 1899).

TRANSLATION

Please send a definite answer immediately to my telegram of yesterday.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

57 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 297. S.P. 465, p. 168

19 Juni 1899

Staatssecretaris afd. B. In zijn schrijven aan de Regeering dd. [blank] vragende dat de verschillende gedeelten van den speurdienst van hem zouden worden weggenomen, gaf de Commissaris van Politie aan de hand dat verder gebruik zou worden gemaakt van de diensten van zijn geheime secretaris, den heer T. A. P. Kruger.

Dezen wenk zou ik zeer gaarne willen aannemen, nu dat de E. A. E. V. Raad besloten heeft de speurdienst direct onder mijn departement te plaatsen.

Bescheiden zou ik der H. Ed. Regeering willen voorstellen dat de heer Kruger aangesteld wordt als hoofd van de speurafdeling van mijn departement met een salaris gelijk aan dat van de andere hoofden der afdelingen op mijn departement, nl. £800 per jaar. Uw dw. dnr.

J. C. Smuts
Staatsprocureur

TRANSLATION

19 June 1899

State Secretary. Division B. In his letter to the Government dated [blank] asking that the various sections of the detective service should be taken away from him, the Commissioner of Police suggested that further use should be made of the services of his private secretary, Mr T. A. P. Kruger.¹

I should very much like to accept this suggestion, now that the Honourable First Volksraad has decided to place the detective service directly under my department.

¹ Tjaart Andries Petrus Kruger, born 9 December 1875, youngest son of President Kruger (q.v.); appointed chief of the detective service of the South African Republic, June 1899.

I would, with deference, propose to the Honourable Government that Mr Kruger be appointed as head of the detective division of my department at a salary equal to that of other heads of divisions in my department, namely, £800 a year.
Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

58 From and to State Secretary

Vol. 99, no. 273. S.P. 528, pp. 376–7

Staats Procureur, De Regeering had gaarne Uw advies in deze.
F. W. Reitz

14 Juni 1898

Staatssecretaris afd. B. Onmogelijk kan ik mij met de zienswijze en aanbeveling van het Hoofd v [an] Mijnwezen vereenigen. Het recente I.V.R.B. art. [number defaced] waarbij art. 86 der Grondwet zoo gewijzigd word dat het niet langer noodzakelijk is voor de Regeering om claims te doen verkoopen bij wanbetaling des licentie-gelden werd niet zonder heftige oppositie aangenomen. In dit geval stelt men voor veel verder te gaan, en wil men de betrokken partijen ontslaan van licentiegelden die reeds schuldig zijn of nog verschuldigd zullen worden. Hoewel zulk een stap niet buiten de bevoegdheid van de Regeering valt, ben ik bescheiden van meening dat, als een individueel geval, dit niet moet worden toegelaten; en dat als precedent het uiterst gevaarlijk is.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

15 Juni 1898

TRANSLATION

State Attorney, The Government would like your advice in this matter.¹

F. W. Reitz

14 June 1898

State Secretary, division B. It is impossible for me to agree with the view and recommendation of the Chief of Mines.² The

¹ The papers referred to would have been returned to the State Secretary; they are not in the S.P. files.

² Christiaan Johannes Joubert was Chief of Mines of the South African Republic 1895–9. He died in July 1911.

recent First Volksraad resolution, article [number defaced], by which article 86 of the Constitution was so amended that it is no longer necessary for the Government to have claims sold in cases of non-payment of licence charges, was only passed after vehement opposition. In this case it is proposed to go much further, and to excuse the parties concerned from licence charges that are already owing or will be owing. Although such a step is not beyond the competence of the Government, it is my humble opinion that, as an individual case, it should not be allowed; and that, as a precedent, it is extremely dangerous.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

15 June 1898

59 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 274. S.P. 528, p. 390

Staatssecretaris B. Ik kan mij onmogelijk met petitie vereenigen. Het wordt aan niemand in deze republiek verboden zich van kafferdienst te voorzien, en ik kan geen reden zien waarom een uitzondering moet gemaakt worden in geval van couranten-uitgevers. De klagte als zouden burgers door den bestaanden toestand benadeeld worden komt mij voor ongegrond, want ik geloof niet dat de kinderen van burgers veel doen in het verkopen van couranten; kranten 'boys' zijn gewoonlijk Engelschen zooals ik van ondervinding in Johburg weet. De wortel van het kwaad is dat burgers die op hunne plaatsen moeten blijven allen naar Johburg toekomen en in hun armoede daar zich steeds naar de regeering wenden met petitities voor staatkundige stappen.

J. C. Smuts

16 Juni 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. It is impossible for me to agree with the petition. No one in this Republic is forbidden to provide himself with the services of Natives, and I can see no reason why an exception should be made in the case of newspaper publishers. The complaint that burghers are injured by the existing conditions seems to be groundless, for I do not think that the

children of burghers do much selling of newspapers: newspaper 'boys' are usually English, as I know from experience in Johannesburg. The root of the trouble is that burghers who should stay on their farms all come to Johannesburg and in their poverty there always turn to the Government with petitions for state action.

J. C. Smuts

16 June 1898

60 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 276. S.P. 528, p. 484

Staatssecretaris B. Dit contract is goed; alleen wensch ik een art. er bij te zien waarin gezegd wordt dat de pijpen langs straten en wegen de bestaande water of gas pijpen niet zullen stooren of beschadigen.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

1 Juli 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. This contract is good; I only wish to see a clause added in which it is stated that the pipes along streets and roads must not disturb or damage the existing water or gas pipes.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

1 July 1898

61 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 279. S.P. 528, p. 633

Staatssecretaris B. Hoewel ik geen bezwaren heb tegen het concept Uitv. RB, twijfel ik echter of de EVR reeds in deze zitting zal teruggaan op deze wet, en moet ik zeggen dat volgens mijn bescheiden zienswijzen de jongste wijzigingen de perswet niet strenger maar slechts onduidelijker hebben gemaakt.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

[Undated]

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. Although I have no objections to the draft Executive Council resolution, I doubt whether the First Volksraad will, during this session, revise this law and I have to state that, in my humble opinion, the latest amendments have not made the press law stricter but merely more obscure.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

62 To W. Conyngham Greene

Vol. 99, no. 295. S.P. 465, pp. 98–101

18 April 1899

Dear Mr Greene,¹

Re Coolie Question

This matter I brought before the Executive this morning in connection with your suggestion for a further postponement of any definite settlement until you should have received instructions from your Government. In view however of the fact that the matter had been brought before your Government towards the end of last year already and of Mr [A. E.] Fraser's² promise to me (confirmed by a telegram from Sir A. Milner which he showed me) that Sir Alfred was coming out with full instructions to dispose of the whole matter of coolies and other coloured aliens, the Executive feels unable to further postpone the publication of the decision they have come to. Of course it still remains open to you to make any suggestions you wish to make. The decision of the Executive is simply to remove to the locations all Asiatics, except those who will be specially dealt with, on July 1st. The government notice will probably appear April 26 now.

Re Abraham Moussa

In this case the landdrost of Middelburg has reported that Moussa's request for a licence was refused, not because he was a Coolie but because he refused to make the affidavit required by law as to the amount of his turnover. Instead of making this affidavit and taking out a licence, he preferred to trade without

¹ British Agent in the South African Republic.

² Acting British Agent.

a licence, and was therefore rightly convicted. The Executive in consequence feel unable to grant restitution of the fine which was imposed on him.

Re Coolies on Pretoria Trams

The Government has given no notice to the Tramway Company as you mentioned this morning. What was probably referred to was the arrangement originally made between the Government and the Company that special carriages should be used for 'kleurlingen'.¹ Probably the Coolie that complained to you refused to make use of the 'kleurling' tram carriage. You can naturally understand that this arrangement was necessary in view of the strong public feeling on the subject. Yours faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

63 To W. Conyngham Greene

Vol. 99, no. 296. S.P. 465, pp. 102-3

19 April 1899

Dear Mr Greene, In answer to your letter of today and the enclosed copy of telegram from Sir A. Milner, I can only say that the Government has limited the period for the issue of hawkers' licences for administrative purposes and not in reference to law 3 of 1885² at all. I therefore think it unnecessary to discuss in how far the Government has a right under law 3 of 1885 to prohibit the issue of licences to hawkers. The limitation of the period for which the licence is issued cannot be considered, as seems to be done by Sir A. Milner, an 'interference with the free movement of hawkers', for movement is not equivalent to business, to which alone the licence refers. Nothing prevents further licences from being issued after June next. Yours faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

¹ Coloured persons.

² This law excluded Asiatics from the franchise, made their registration compulsory, empowered the Government to demarcate certain areas for Asiatic habitation, and forbade them to acquire fixed property outside these areas. By judicial interpretation Asiatic trading could also, under this law, be restricted to the demarcated areas.

64 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 283. S.P. 528, p. 886

Staatssecretaris A. Mij komt het onnoodig voor deze conventie tot kennis der Britsche Regeering te vragen [*sic*]. Zoodra de ZAR officieël zal zijn toegetreden door uitwisseling der betreffende ratificaties zal het hoofdkantoor der Post Unie te Berne officieël daarvan kennis geven aan alle partijen tot de Conventie en dus ook aan de Britsche Reg. Verder is deze conventie geen nieuwe maar slechts een wijziging van de bestaande te Weenen-gesloten; dat de ZAR hiertoe een partij was weet Engeland zeer wel, hoewel daar niet daarvan van wege de ZAR is kennis gegeven. Zij heeft dat echter geen oorzaak van klachte gemaakt in de beschuldiging onlangs tegen deze Reg. gemaakt van art. 4 herhaalde maalen te hebben verbroken. Verder is Engeland met hare koloniën partij tot deze Conventie en dus kan zij nooit zeggen dat dezelve in strijd is met hare belangen. Ik zie dus geen reden om in dit geval af te wijken van de praktijk gevolgd sedert 1891.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

2 September 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary A. It appears to me unnecessary to give notice of this convention to the British Government.¹ As soon as the South African Republic shall have officially joined it by exchanging the appropriate ratifications, the head office of the Postal Union at Berne will officially notify all the parties to the Convention, and thus also the British Government. Further, this Convention is not a new one but only a modification of the existing one concluded at Vienna. That the South African Republic was a party to this is very well known to England, although no notice of it was given by the South African

¹ In 1897 the British Colonial Secretary had made several allegations of breach of Article IV of the London Convention against the Government of the South African Republic. The making of extradition treaties with the Netherlands and Portugal and accession to the Geneva Red Cross Convention without the prior consent of the British Government were declared to be contraventions of Article IV. This had been denied by the Government of the Republic (C.8423 of 1897 pp. 40-79). In 1898 Smuts took a similar view in an analogous case.

Republic. However, she did not make that a cause of complaint in the accusation recently made against this Government of having repeatedly broken Article 4. Moreover, England with her colonies is a party to this Convention and so she can never say that it is in conflict with her interests. I therefore see no reason to depart in this case from the practice followed since 1891.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

2 September 1898

65 From and to State Secretary

Vol. 99, no. 275. S.P. 528, p. 389

Staatsprocureur. Gaarne zou ik hierover uwe opmerkingen en advies willen ontvangen s.v.p.

R. J. Fortuyn
Secretaris v/h Kabinet

2 Juni 1898

Staatssecretaris, Kabinet. Ik heb reeds stappen tegen de *Transvaal Critic* genomen en acht het onnodig zulks ook tegen de andere genoemde bladen te doen.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

17 Juni 1898

TRANSLATION

State Attorney. I should like to have your remarks and advice on this, please.

R. J. Fortuyn
Secretary of the Cabinet

2 June 1898

State Secretary, Cabinet. I have already taken steps against the *Transvaal Critic*¹ and regard it as unnecessary also to do so against the other papers mentioned.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

17 June 1898

¹ See p. 151 *supra*, note 1.

66 To Public Prosecutor Vol. 99, no. 288. S.P. 465, p. 59

TELEGRAM

From: State Attorney
To: First Public Prosecutor, Johannesburg
Dated: 5 January 1899

Confidentieel

Ik heb stukken in de agitatie re Jones' zaak nagegaan en instrueer U Clem Webb en Dodd zoo spoedig mogelijk te arresteren als aanvoerders der vergadering van 24 December. De stukken worden U vandaag teruggezonden.

J. C. Smuts
 S.P.

TRANSLATION

Confidential

I have examined the documents in the agitation about the Jones case and instruct you to arrest Clem Webb and Dodd as speedily as possible as leaders of the meeting of 24 December.¹ The documents are being returned to you today.

J. C. Smuts
 State Attorney

67 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 285. S.P. 529, p. 281

Staatssecretaris B. Hierbij zend ik concept wijziging van de Ontucht Wet (No. 2/97) volgens opdracht der Regeering door mij opgesteld. Gaarne vernam ik van U wanneer ik dezelve met de Regeering zou kunnen bespreken. In elk geval zoo spoedig mogelijk s.v.p.

J. C. Smuts
 S.P.

31 October 1898

¹ On 18 December 1899 Barend Stephanus Jones, a member of the Johannesburg police, had shot and killed an Uitlander, Tom Jackson Edgar, while trying to arrest him. Jones was arrested but released next day on bail and charged only with culpable homicide. The South African League then arranged a demonstration in contravention of the Public Meetings Law. Clement Davies Webb and Thomas Robery Dodd, Vice-President and Secretary respectively of the League, were arrested but soon released. Jones was acquitted after trial.

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. Herewith I send the draft amendment of the Immorality Act (No. 2 of 1897) drawn up by me on the instructions of the Government. I should like to know from you when I would be able to discuss this with the Government. In any case as soon as possible, please.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

31 October 1898

68 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 287. S.P. 529, p. 682

Staatssecretaris B. Ik gevoel hetzelfde bezwaren als de landdrost om deze petitie aan te bevelen. Al is de straf ietwat zwaar toch zal ze als een les aan ander hotelhouders dienen om geen dobbelen toe te laten.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

26 December 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. I feel the same difficulty as the landdrost in recommending this petition. Although the punishment is rather heavy, it will serve as a lesson to other hotel-keepers not to allow gambling.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

26 December 1898

In 1887 the sole right to make and sell explosives in the South African Republic was granted by the Government to Eduard Lippert, who made over the concession to a French company. Because the concessionaires did not manufacture explosives in the country but simply imported and re-sold them at a high profit, the concession was cancelled in 1892. A new arrangement was then made. In 1893 the manufacture and sale of explosives became, in form, a state monopoly, but the Government made a 15-year contract with an agent, L. G. Vorstman, to produce what dynamite and other explosives were needed, chiefly for mining but also for ammunition. Vorstman formed the South African Explosives Company, the exact composition and operation of which never became fully known. Lippert, the expropriated French company, Nobel's

Dynamite Trust (an Anglo-German company which produced the materials needed to manufacture the required explosives), a mysterious German lawyer, as well as Vorstman himself, all had a share in it. Of the profit, which in 1897 was about 40s. a case with a total profit of some £600,000, the State took 5s. a case. The monopoly was a reiterated grievance of the mine-owners, who said that it kept up the price of dynamite, and it also provided arguments for those who accused the Government of corruption and maladministration. Official commissions urged its cancellation and so did President Steyn; but this was not done. One difficulty may have been doubt whether cancellation would be legal. Smuts, against the opinion of several other lawyers, maintained that it would not (*see* C.9317 of 1899 pp. 10-14 and 69). Early in 1899 Chamberlain claimed that the monopoly was a breach of the London Convention. Smuts seems then to have sought another way out of the difficulty (70 and 71). But, in the end, the Government decided to allow Vorstman's contract to run its full term, after which it would not be renewed, and also gave up its share of the profit to allow a price reduction of 10s. a case to be made—a decision which did not satisfy Chamberlain or the mine-owners.

69 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 286. S.P. 529, p. 741

Staatssecretaris B. Naar aanleiding van R. 16268/98 moet ik erkennen dat de rechten der Z. A. Maatschappij voor Ontploffbare stoffen nog verder strekken dan de heer Vorstman denkt. Alle permitten door de Regeering gegeven voor het invoeren van detonators zijn sedert 25 October 1893 ongeldig. Onder de VRB van 1-5 September 1893 verkreeg de Regeering het recht van een monopolie voor het invoer van alle vuurstoffen in het leven te roepen en op 25 October 1893 werd dat monopolie aan gemelde maatschappij toegekend. Dus zijn alle permitten vóór 25 October 1893 ongeldig daarnaar.

Ik heb dus hoegenaamd geen bezwaren tegen het verzoek van den heer Vorstman.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

25 December 1898

TRANSLATION

State Secretary B. With reference to R.16268/98, I must admit that the rights of the South African Explosives Company extend still further than Mr Vorstman thinks. All permits for

the import of detonators granted by the Government are invalid since 25 October 1893. Under the Volksraad Resolution of 1-5 September 1893, the Government obtained the right to create a monopoly for the import of all explosives and on 25 October 1893 that monopoly was granted to the said Company. Thus all permits before 25 October 1893 are invalid thereafter.

I therefore have no objections whatever to Mr Vorstman's request.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

25 December 1898

70 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 292. S.P. 530, p. 107

Staatssecretaris A. De vorige Staatsprocureur was van opinie dat geen invoer van dynamiet kon plaats vinden uitgezonderd van dynamiet reeds in Swazieland gefabriceerd en dan uitgevoerd en weer ingevoerd. Zie zijn minute ged. 8 December 1897. De tegenwoordige assistent S.P. <stemd> met hem samen. Ik ben van een ander opinie; doch daar de kwestie van groot belang is wensch ik de opinie van anderen wetsgeleerden ook te nemen. Misschien kunnen <wij>den invoer geheel en al beletten en zodoende <de> concessie waardeloos maken. Als u hiermede zamenstemd, zend dan deze minute dadelijk terug <totdat> ik advies kan inwinnen.

Dan kan kwestie van permitten voorloopig overstaan.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

7 Februari 1899

TRANSLATION

State Secretary A. The former State Attorney¹ was of opinion that no importation of dynamite could take place, with the exception of dynamite already manufactured in Swaziland and then exported and again imported. See his minute dated 8 December 1897. The present assistant State Attorney² agrees with him. I am of another opinion; but, as the matter is of great

¹ R. Gregorowski.

² L. J. Jacobsz.

importance, I wish to take the opinion of other lawyers. Perhaps we can totally forbid import and thus make the concession worthless. If you agree with this, return this minute immediately until I can seek advice.

Then the question of permits can stand over for the time being.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

7 February 1899

71 To State Secretary Vol. 99, no. 293. S.P. 530, p. 194

Staatssecretaris A. Opinions van Advocaten Kotze en Wessels hierbij; beide stemmen met S.P. Gregorowski zamen. Wij moeten dus geen recht van den concessionaris kruit ens. in te voeren erkennen.

Zoals in den Uitvoerende Raad afgesproken kan een proclamatie door U worden opgetrokken waarbij bepaald wordt

- 1e Dat geen kruit, dynamiet of ander ontplofbare stoffen in Zwaziland zal worden ingevoerd zonder permit van Comdt. Genl.
- 2e Dat op alle aldus ingevoerde kruit een invoerrecht van 9 pence per pond zal worden betaald, tenzij deze kruit reeds in Zwaziland onder de concessie gefabriceerd is.

Hierop kan de Concessie [*sic*] dan actie tegen de Regeering instellen.

J. C. Smuts
S.P.

17 Februari 1899

TRANSLATION

State Secretary A. Opinions of Advocates Kotze¹ and Wessels [J. W.] herewith; both agree with State Attorney Gregorowski. We must therefore not recognize any right of the concessionaire to import gunpowder etc.

As arranged in the Executive Council, a proclamation can be drawn up by you in which it is laid down

¹ This may have been J. G. Kotzé, for he practised at the Pretoria Bar until he became Attorney-General of Rhodesia in August 1900.

- 1st That no gunpowder, dynamite or other explosives shall be imported into Swaziland without a permit from the Commandant-General.
- 2nd That on all gunpowder thus imported an import duty of ninepence per pound shall be paid, unless the gunpowder has already been manufactured in Swaziland under the concession.

Upon this the concessionaire can then institute an action against the Government.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

17 February 1899

72 Conversation with E. Fraser

Vol. XCVI, no. 5

Memorandum of a conversation between Edmund Fraser and Smuts, who recorded it immediately afterwards. See his comments to J. H. Hofmeyr in 85.

Kantoor van den Staatsprocureur
Pretoria

22 December 1898

Heden ochtend, na de beweerde mishandeling van gekleurde Britsche onderdanen met den Uitv. Raad besproken te hebben, zond ik een boodschap aan den Br. Agent den heer Fraser om mij onmiddellijk te komen zien. Hij kwam omtrent 11.15 en ik vertelde hem dat de Regeering een commissie benoemd had om de zaak dadelijk grondig te onderzoeken. Hij wou toen hebben dat ik Veldcornet Lombaard van Johannesburg tijdelijk zou schorsen op de allegaties in de verklaringen maar ik zag daar geen noodzakelijkheid voor. Na eenigen verder praten gingen wij naar de theekamer in Gouvt. gebouwen, alwaar de hr. E. Grobler O.V.S. bij ons kwam. In tegenwoordigheid van Grobler sprak Fraser over Lombaard en zei dat hij uit goeden bronnen vernomen hadden dat Lombaard £4000 per jaar maakte; en dat hij o.a. veel geld gekregen had van de 600 burgers die hij op de rol gebracht had. Grobler ging weg om 12 uur en toen begon Fraser met mij op een heel onverwachte wijze te spreken. Hij zeide dat de Br. Regeering nu 2 jaren had stil gezeten omdat hare eigen ambtenaren in de Jameson Raid haar in een valsche positie hadden geplaatst. De tijd was nu echter gekomen voor haar om handelend op te treden. Ik

vroeg hem wat hij bedoelde. Hij zeide dat Gladstone een groot fout gemaakt had door het land na Majuba terug te geven alvorens de Boeren te hebben verslagen. De Boeren over geheel Z.A. hadden een vage aspiratie naar een groot republiek over geheel Z.A. en dat Gladstone deze aspiratie in hen had aangevuurd door zijn handelwijze. De Britsche Regeering wist hiervan maar had nog altijd stil blijven zitten, maar in zijn opinie was de tijd nu gekomen een einde hieraan te maken 'by striking a blow'—door een slag te slaan. Toen hij van Londen ging werd hem geïnstrueerd dat Engeland tevreden zou zijn zoo de Z.A.R. een rijker O.V.S. werd; maar dat was niet de bedoeling van de Z.A.R. om een nederig rol te spelen. Zij wou niets met den oppervloed van Engeland te doen hebben, maar heeft steeds getracht een rol onder de volkere te spelen en heeft daartoe steeds met de Europeesche mogendheden gecoquetteerd. In zijn opinie was de tijd gekomen om een einde aan dit alles te maken door de Boeren te toonen dat Engeland baas is in Z.A. Ik vroeg hem wat dan de aanleiding hiertoe zou zijn? Hij zeide dat Engeland zeer ontevreden was over de wanadministratie en vooral de mishandeling haar onderdanen die hier grover dan elders anders was. Op dit punt zou Engeland handelend optreden. Hij wist vast dat Engeland niet zou gaan vechten over abstracte onderwerpen, zooals de suzeriniteit, die niet door het Engelsche volk en den man in de straat verstaan worden. Zij zou vechten over dingen die allen konden verstaan—dingen zooals die in de affidavits bloodgelegd. Hij wist uit het koloniale kantoor dat, zoo Engeland de Z.A.R. ooit weer zou aanvallen dat zou zijn wegens de wanadministratie hier te lande, en Engeland als paramount power had het recht op dien grond te intervenieren. Hij wist dat er sedert de aanstellingen van Reitz, Grobler en mijzelf eenigszins verbeteringen waren gekomen, maar er was nog genoeg om over te klagen. De heele kwestie van politie en speurpolitie administratie en de uitvoering der drank- en andere wetten waren een dringend gevaar. Hij wist dat deze dingen onder de ernstige consideratie van het koloniale kantoor waren.

Ik breng deze dingen in verband met de geruchten in de nieuwsbladen dat Engeland hare macht in Z.A. versterkt en dat zij ernstige representaties aan deze Regeering gaat maken.

TRANSLATION

Office of the State Attorney
 Pretoria
 22 December 1898

This morning, after having discussed with the Executive Council the alleged ill-treatment of coloured British subjects, I sent a message to the British Agent, Mr Fraser, to come and see me immediately. He came about 11.15 and I told him that the Government had nominated a commission to investigate the matter thoroughly at once. He then wanted me temporarily to suspend Field-Cornet Lombaard of Johannesburg¹ on the allegations in the declarations but I saw no necessity for that. After some further talk we went to the tea-room in the Government Buildings, where Mr E. Grobler O.F.S.² came to us. In the presence of Grobler Fraser spoke about Lombaard and said that he had heard from good sources that Lombaard made £4,000 a year; and that, among other things, he had received much money from the 600 burghers whom he had got on to the roll. Grobler went away at twelve o'clock and then Fraser began to talk to me in a most unexpected way. He said that the British Government had now sat still for two years because its own officials had put it in a false position in the Jameson Raid. The time had now, however, come for her to take action. I asked him what he meant. He said that Gladstone had made a great mistake in giving the country back after Majuba before having defeated the Boers. The Boers throughout South Africa had a vague aspiration for a great republic throughout South Africa and Gladstone had by his action encouraged this aspiration in them. The British Government knew of this but had always remained sitting still, but in his opinion the time had now come to make an end of this 'by striking a blow'. When he left London he was instructed that England would be satisfied if the South African Republic should

¹ H. S. Lombaard, Field-Cornet of Johannesburg, had been found responsible, by a Volksraad Committee, of irregularities in putting Uitlanders on the franchise list. In October 1898 he was suspended after he had allegedly led a night raid on certain Coloured people and arrested them without a warrant. After a Commission had investigated these charges, Lombaard was re-instated (see J. S. Marais: *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, pp. 134, 235-7).

² Orange Free State.

become a richer Orange Free State; but that was not the intention of the South African Republic, to play a humble role. She would have nothing to do with the paramount influence of England but had always tried to play a role among the nations and had, with a view to that, always coquetted with the European powers. In his opinion the time had come to make an end of all this by showing the Boers that England is master in South Africa. I asked him what would give occasion for this. He said that England was very dissatisfied about the maladministration and especially about ill-treatment of her subjects which was worse here than elsewhere. On this point England would take action. He knew well that England would not go fighting about abstract subjects, such as suzerainty, which are not understood by the English people and the man in the street. She would fight about things that everyone could understand, things like those revealed in the affidavits.¹ He knew from the Colonial Office that, if England were ever again to attack the South African Republic, it would be because of the maladministration here, and England as paramount power had the right to intervene on this ground. He knew that since the appointment of Reitz, Grobler [P. G. W.] and myself some improvements had appeared, but there was still enough to complain of. The whole question of the administration of police and detective police and the application of the liquor and other laws was an urgent danger. He knew that these things were under serious consideration by the Colonial Office.

I connect these things with the rumours in the newspapers that England is strengthening her forces in South Africa and that she is going to make serious representations to this Government.

73 From J. I. Marais

Vol. 1, no. 62

Stellenbosch
5 Januari 1899

Zeergeachte vriend, Met dank erken ik de ontvangst van uw wissel. Hiermede is afgesloten de rekening tusschen ons beiden.

¹ Some of the persons arrested by Lombaard had made affidavits alleging brutal treatment by the police.

Alles is nu vereffend. Vergeef het mij dat ik aan U schreef; maar de zaak is, dat het geld niet het mijne is, slechts onder mijne administratie. Ik wilde gaarne bij het einde des jaars alles afsluiten. Kwitantie wordt ingesloten.

Ik dank U zeer voor den toon van uwen brief. Houd er maar altijd aan vast *dat God regeert* en houd met de uwen altijd het oog op God en de duisternis zal wijken.

Ik heb het nooit geweten, dat de Afrikaner zoo diep zit in mijn merg en gebeente in mijn hart en hoofd, dan in de laatste jaren. Met President Kruger heb ik het diepste medegevoel. Hij heeft een worstelstijd van belang gehad. Kon hij toch maar den Afrikaner in de Kolonie meer vertrouwen schenken! Waarlijk, de Engelsman in de Transvaal doet zich voor in een alles behalve benijdenswaardigen toestand. Verwaand, trotsch, onbuigzaam, huichelachtig! Wie kan nog met zulke lui sympathie hebben?

God geve U wijsheid en voorzichtigheid, beleid in dezen kritieken tijd!

Groet mijn andere schoolvriend Reitz zeer hartelijk, wees met de uwen hartelijk gegroet. Welmeenend de uwe

J. I. Marais

TRANSLATION

Stellenbosch

5 January 1899

Most respected friend, I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your draft. With this the account between us is closed. Everything is now balanced. Forgive me for writing to you; but the fact is that the money is not mine, only under my administration. I wished very much to close everything by the end of the year. Receipt is enclosed.¹

I thank you very much for the tone of your letter. Always hold fast to this: *that God reigns* and, with your family, keep your eyes always on God and the darkness will pass away.

I never knew that the Afrikaner is so deep in my marrow and bones, in my heart and head, as in recent years. With President Kruger I have the deepest sympathy. He has had a significant struggle. If only he would put more trust in the

¹ Receipt for £210 in full settlement.

Afrikaner in the Colony! Truly, the English in the Transvaal appear in anything but an enviable light. Vain, proud, inflexible, hypocritical! Who can have sympathy with such people?

May God give you wisdom and caution and prudence in this critical time!

Greet my other school friend Reitz very heartily; hearty greetings to you and yours. Cordially yours,

J. I. Marais

74 From O. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 75

Primrose Terrace

Berea

Johannesburg

23 January 1899

Dear Mr Smuts, Some time ago my husband told me that Mr [J. de V.] Roos had mentioned to him that you regretted he had entered a lawyer's office here as you would have liked to see him in the public service, and if he were willing would be glad if he would now enter it.

I may tell you that I had one of the bitterest struggles within myself that I have ever had before I could feel that it could be right that my husband should enter the Transvaal service, whatever use I believed he might be of to South Africa by doing so. Of all the lies Rhodes and his followers have spread about me none has cut me so deeply as the lie circulated in England that I had received £4,000 from the Transvaal Government for writing *Peter Halket*.¹ *It cut straight at the use and value of what I have written and of what I may yet write.* Further the idea that an artist should for money set pen to paper and prostitute their intuitions by writing to order at all, is an accusation, in my eyes, far worse even than murder. It is a moral and spiritual murder on one's own soul which one would commit. I knew if my husband accepted your offer though at the greatest sacrifice to himself (and though I should never have touched one farthing of his salary as I support myself by my

¹ *Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland*, published 1897. It describes the cruelties of the Matabele War of 1893, by which the British South Africa Company acquired Rhodesia.

own work) that yet the Rhodes party would have made it an excuse for repeating their unholy lie and injuring the usefulness of what I may write in the future yet further. It was only after a very stiff struggle with myself that I came to the conclusion, that if my husband felt he could be of any use in the anti-capitalist fight here, nothing ought to stand in his way. Yesterday my husband showed me a letter he had received from you in which you spoke of the wish of the Transvaal Government *to help us!* My idea has always been to help the Transvaal, and not that it should help me! I feel that in the history of the world no nobler or more gallant fight has been fought than that of this little Republic with the powers which seek on every side to engulf it. But the freedom and independence of the Transvaal has for me a much more serious meaning. I look upon the Free State and the Transvaal as the last little sluice-gates we have left keeping out the flood of Capitalism which would otherwise sweep in and overwhelm South Africa. The little fight of Doornkop is to me the most memorable, not only in the history of South Africa, but of this century: there, for the first time in the history of the world, troops armed, fed, paid, and led (or rather misled!) by the capitalist horde, met the simple citizens of a state *and were defeated*. The average Boer fighting at Doornkop no doubt only thought he was fighting for his little state, just as the Dutch of Holland, when in the 16th century they fought Philip, no doubt believed they were fighting merely to free their country from a tyrant, and had no idea they were leading on humanity's great fight for freedom of thought and enlightenment! God's soldiers sometimes fight on larger battle-fields than they dream of. To me the Transvaal is now engaged in leading in a very small way in that vast battle which will during the twentieth century be fought out—probably most bitterly and successfully in America and Germany—between engorged capitalists and the citizens of different races. It is this that makes our little struggle here something almost sacred, and of world-wide importance. Doornkop was a stab in the vitals of the international capitalist horde, from Rothschild and Rosebery to Rhodes and Harris [F. R.]. No doubt for the present they may beat us; but there are more Doornkops coming in other lands and another fifty years will see the battle won. Feeling as I do

on this matter you will understand how intense is my desire to see the independence and complete autonomy of the Transvaal; (the day when federation is desirable may come, but I hope it is yet far distant)—and how glad I should be to assist the Transvaal Government in the fight; but under no circumstances and no condition could I ever consent to accept the least consideration from it. The only thing the Transvaal Government could do for *me*, would be to enfranchise all the wives and daughters of the burghers, and who constitute the real backbone of the country. But that they are not likely to do!

Please give my kind regards to your wife whom I should very much like to meet. I am sure I should sympathize with her from what I have heard of her. I am sorry my health does not allow of my going over to Pretoria. Yours faithfully,

Olive Schreiner

75 From J. X. Merriman

Vol. 1, no. 63

The opening letter of a long and notable correspondence between Merriman and Smuts.

Treasury
Cape Town
28 February 1899

Confidential

My dear Mr Smuts, I hope that you are still carrying on the good fight and having some success in putting down the criminal population.

May I bring a small matter to your notice which I am rather loath to make a subject for official communication. The township of Mafeking, as you know, derives its water supply from the Molopo River which rises in and flows through the Transvaal.

The inhabitants complain that, owing to the action of the upper proprietors in leading out the whole stream, they stand a risk of being deprived of all their water. Obviously if there is anything in the complaint it becomes a very curious and interesting question. If the complainants and the people against whose action the complaint is made were under the same government, the case would be settled in the law courts, but no such machinery exists in the present case. Can you suggest

any mode of composing the difference without going through the formality of a diplomatic correspondence. Should our conference¹ take place, which I most devoutly hope will be the case, the question of riverain rights should certainly be discussed, for sooner or later, both between ourselves and the Orange Free State and the Transvaal and Orange Free State there are bound to be questions arising. With kind regards, Believe me, Yours sincerely,

John X. Merriman

I saw your father the other day at Robertson looking very well.

76 To J. X. Merriman

Vol. 1, no. 109

Kantoor van den Staatsprocureur²
Pretoria
13 March 1899

My dear Mr Merriman, After I had received your private note re the Molopo River and water supply of Mafeking and I had proceeded to make an inquiry to discover some remedy, if possible, the State Secretary received a semi-official note from the Secretary for Agriculture on the same subject. I have consequently cancelled the inquiry I was instituting and must now leave the matter in the hands of the State Secretary.

We have had official correspondence on the question with the Imperial Government ever since 1885 but the correspondence has led to nothing, for the simple reason that the Molopo is really no perennial stream and during a dry season contains not even sufficient water for the few farmers claiming riparian rights.

I shall attend as soon as possible to the statistics you wish to have prepared.

Very serious efforts are now being made to bring about a reconciliation between the Mining Industry and the powers that be—I hope not in vain. Yours very faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

¹ Merriman tried, during the temporary absence of Milner, to arrange a Conference of the South African Governments to consider the various differences between them, but did not succeed.

² Office of the State Attorney.

77 From J. X. Merriman

Vol. 1, no. 65

Private

Treasury
Cape Town
16 March 1899

Dear Mr Smuts, I have this day addressed to the President an invitation to a joint South African Conference upon certain matters of general interest and importance. I hope that he may see fit to accept the invitation for I am convinced that as long as we go on writing and firing off newspaper articles at each other we shall never get nearer an understanding of our mutual difficulties—whereas a talk over common affairs must draw us together.

In another sense it will show everyone that here is South African sympathy and that as we have a common origin so also we have common aims and common aspirations. We might then begin to substitute sympathy for distrust.

Let us begin to settle South African affairs in South Africa—not in newspapers six thousand miles away.

What do you make of the new departure of Rhodes and Germany?¹ How and when are we to pay the Bill? For Rhodes is a sort of man who generally finds some dupe to do that part of the business. Hoping to hear from you soon, Believe me,
Yours truly,

John X. Merriman

78 To J. X. Merriman

Vol. 1, no. 110

Kantoor van den Staatsprocurer
Pretoria
29 March 1899

Dear Mr Merriman, I am very sorry to find that a letter I wrote to you more than two weeks ago had by an oversight not been sent off. I enclose it as a proof of my bona fides.

I was glad to see that after all you had taken steps to call a South African Conference on various points of common concern. I am however sorry to say that it is now very late for us

¹ In March 1899 Rhodes visited Kaiser Wilhelm II to arrange for the passage of the Trans-African telegraph through German East Africa.

to attend. The two Volksraads meet on 1 May, and we are overwhelmed with work; so that you must not be surprised if we apply for a postponement of the Conference to a later date. Probably you will find the Free State adopt the same attitude.

Some of the points you wish to put on the Agenda of such a Conference are scarcely ripe for discussion, and you know that there is always a danger that discussion, instead of leading to conciliation, will bring into prominence new points of difference. I am therefore anxious to hear first the general lines of solution you would apply to some of the suggested topics. For that I am prepared to come down personally to Cape Town. The Mint question especially seems to me one for an early discussion.

I hope that the policy of conciliation which the President has lately declared will help to strengthen your hands. Our opponents, especially abroad, are getting furious to see that after all the apple is not yet so rotten as they thought. Now however is the time for us to draw together more closely, for only the fear of a general crisis will prevent our enemies from precipitating a particular one with us. Yours very faithfully,

J. C. Smuts

79 From H. J. Wolstenholme

Vol. 1, no. 116

Oxford Road
Cambridge
10 April 1899

My dear Smuts, For nearly a year I have been constantly intending to write to you, and yet, in spite of your second letter,¹ which came to heap coals of fire on my head, my intention has hitherto failed to bridge the gulf which with me alas now so constantly separates wish and purpose from effective will and execution. The real reason is illustrated by the final word of my last sentence,—in the third syllable my pen wrote for me a third *e* instead of a *u*. I do not know the exact way in which the learned formulate the phenomenon, but it is the correlate of a physical condition which is often spoken of as being 'run down'. For eighteen months or more I have been more decidedly in this condition than ever before in all my life,

¹ Only a few of Smuts's letters to Wolstenholme are extant.

so that I have often thought I was nearing the bottom of the hill which is never re-ascended. I got through my professional work, much as usual, but often under a great sense of strain, until about six months ago, when I came to the resolve to give up, at least for the present, and probably finally, all examination work of every kind, and was only relieved from the necessity of a similar resolve to limit my teaching work by the fact that it fell off very considerably of itself, chiefly because the study of modern languages is not flourishing at Cambridge. Anything and everything that was not work that *had* to be done, has had to take its chance of finding its way to accomplishment, and its chance has generally proved = 0. During the winter months, which with their long quiet evening are generally the pleasantest to me in the whole year, I was often even unable, with ample leisure, to read a good book for more than an hour without a sense of strain, and premonitions of a restless night of dreams; often too weary to read even the lightest literature, and lay back in my chair before the fire, a most impotent mortal, sometimes reflecting on Milton's line, 'To be weak is to be miserable.' I have been perceptibly better the last few weeks, and though I cannot hope ever to be strong or even capable of the old work again, I have hopes of recovering, by careful management, sufficient vigour to make some use of the leisure which I am happily able at length to grant myself, a use which may be in some degree worthy of a thinking man, though I greatly fear it will never include what I should most desire, some *productive* effort, which might be of a little use to my fellow men in their active living of that human life which for me is now too much reduced to thought and meditation, separated from active participation in the work of human society. I have read a good deal (though I have many a time had to break off from things that caused too great a mental strain), and thought a good deal, on social subjects (in the broadest sense), and feel that in many respects I have found my way to a clearness of discrimination and an objectivity of view that were wanting at least to *my* earlier years. If I could only give form to some of these results, I should feel better satisfied with the net product of my life as a man among men, than if this should remain confined to those pedagogue labours which have often rendered to me little satisfaction indeed. You speak of my

'favourite science', 'dealing with mere words', but in fact the work I have had to do in the way of my profession has never been to me, as more happily it appears to be to you, that most congenial to my bent and tastes. I sometimes think I should have succeeded best as a determined student of philosophy and of social economics or 'sociology' in its widest sense. But that would never have served me as a *Brot-studium*.¹ And now I am afraid the world will have to lose the benefit of any wisdom or knowledge I may have gathered in a more desultory way, for I do not think I shall ever again be equal to what always has been for me a matter of great toil and strain, the putting into form, spoken or written, of what I know, think, or feel. But I always bear in mind for myself what I have sometimes insisted on for the benefit of others, that the individual, with his mite of wisdom or knowledge, is of very small importance in the evolution of the great All. Our sense of the importance of what we are doing or thinking or devising is but a beneficent illusion to make us do our best in whatever place may be given us in the human hive. But I must stop for the present, trusting to fortune for the chances of this letter being only interrupted, not broken off indefinitely, as some have been that I have begun. April 20th. It seems too late in the day to offer congratulations on your official appointment, and they might possibly be a little 'dubious', as you appear to have found my congratulations on your marriage. I do not understand how this could be, for I thought I had expressed myself almost exactly as you have done yourself—that a true, spiritual marriage was perhaps the only thing that could keep your soul quite clean and fresh amid all the sordidness of the materialized life about you. I was very sorry to hear through Maclaurin [R.] that your paternal hopes had been realized only to be at once dashed again.² But perhaps you will by this time have been indemnified for the loss; I am sure that children will be a necessity to the full realization of your domestic and human happiness. It seems a pity that your work in writing on law³ has been interrupted and set on one side, but perhaps you find a compensating gain in the prospect of an earlier attainment

¹ Subject studied in order to earn a livelihood.

² Twins, born in 1898, lived only a few weeks.

³ There are no original writings on law in the Smuts Collection.

of economic independence, which may enable you to devote yourself to the pursuits which appear to you to be in themselves most 'worth while'. I trust you may have such a store of health and vigour that your ripest powers may be at command for your chosen work. I quite understand and sympathise with your disgusted antagonism to the aggressive and unscrupulous ways of the gold-grabbers who have inundated the Transvaal. The exploiting of its treasures by an inrush of foreigners has no doubt created a situation very difficult to deal with. Yet mere repression and a policy of thwarting and hampering will hardly meet it adequately. I know too little of the complex factors of the case to have any judgment of my own, but the impression here among even the most impartial and judicial seems to be, that in some respects the policy of Ohm Paul¹ is both short-sighted and illiberal. One can hardly help thinking that a man of so little education must fail to prove equal to so difficult and delicate a task of statesmanship as that presented by the Transvaal of today.

I was greatly disappointed, though prepared for it by the news of your appointment, that your approaching visit to Europe has been indefinitely (?) deferred. I too look back often with pleasure and regret to those old times when we walked and talked together, and should greatly enjoy having a good talk with you again. That would be something quite different from concocting something in the shape of a 'letter'. I have read much that would have had an increased interest if I could have discussed it with you as of old. I have been, and am, much interested in economic and social questions, as bearing upon and pointing the way to that better civilization and higher humanity which as a potentiality gives a justification and a spring of energy to the unsatisfying present. Yet a spirit of faith and sanguineness of prophecy as to the future are necessary, which it is often no easy thing to keep up. It is 'a Pisgah sight of Palestine' at the best; if it *were* only a 'sight', and not so completely a walking by faith! I send you with this a little book which has greatly interested me, and which seems to me convincing on a point of the greatest significance for social progress,—that a more equitable division

¹ President Kruger. The writer has Germanized 'Oom (uncle) Paul'. Among Afrikaners older men are often addressed by their juniors in this way.

of the gifts of nature and the produce of labour, an increased 'power of consumption' among the great army of toilers, is absolutely essential to any real remedy of social ills, to any real progress in civilization. I commend to you, if you can get it out yonder, another book recently published by John Hobson, *John Ruskin, Social Reformer* (Nisbet, 10/6). It is an admirably written book. I must close, and go to the post. I *hope* it may not again be so long before I can write again, and something perhaps better worth writing than this poor scrawl. Ever yours sincerely,

H. J. Wolstenholme

80 To W. J. Leyds

Vol. 20, no. 60 (encl.)

In 1918, when W. J. Leyds was preparing some of his correspondence of the Anglo-Boer War period for publication, he asked leave to publish this letter from Smuts. Smuts, then a member of the British War Cabinet, refused. It was therefore not included in the first edition (1931) of *Leyds: Eenige Correspondentie uit 1899*, but appears in the second edition (1938), pp. 17-19.

Pretoria

30 April 1899

Amice, Uw brief deze week ontvangen vervulde mij met veel genoegen; alleen speet het mij dat U mij was voorgesprongen, want ik dacht dat ik eerst aan U zou schrijven. De oorzaak mijner vertraging is echter dat ik U min of meer op de hoogte van zaken wenschte te houden en wachtend was totdat zaken wat klaarder waren geworden zoodat ik met meer zekerheid kon schrijven. Mijn hoop op klaarheid is helaas verijdeld daar de positie alhier dagelijks duisterder en onrustbarendder wordt, dus zend ik U maar mijne troebele indrukken voor wat ze waard zijn.

Doch vooraf een woord in antwoord op den uwen. Hoe aangenaam en leerzaam het mij was U te ontmoeten en nader te leeren kennen zal ik U niet zeggen. Ik kijk op U min of meer als iemand die 15 jaren geleden juist stond waar ik nu sta, die mij 15 jaren vooruit is in ondervinding en rijpheid van oordeel en van wien ik gaarne nu en dan dien raad en wenken zou willen ontvangen die alleen van een zoo lange ondervinding komen kunnen. Ik stel mij derhalve voor, niettegenstaande mijne drukkende werkzaamheden, U van tijd tot

tijd mijne indrukken van de situatie toe te zenden, niet alleen voor uwe informatie maar ook om uwe wenken daarop te ontvangen.

Wat de huidige situatie betreft kan ik alleen zeggen dat onze ernstige poging om een blijvende verzoening in de hand te werken een rampzalige mislukking is geweest. De toestanden zijn hier vandaag slechter dan ze voor 15 jaren geweest zijn—dank zij onze pogingen. Ja, de algemeene positie alhier is vandaag zoo duister en raadselachtig dat ik ten minste ze niet ontcijferen kan. De perscampagne in de *Star*, de nieuwe *Transvaal Leader* en andere kapitalistische organen, is heviger dan ooit; nachtelijke vergaderingen worden over den W. W. Rand gehouden, alwaar Cornwall mijnwerkers, die wekelijks al hunne winsten 'thuis' zenden en nooit anders denken dan zoo spoedig mogelijk weer naar 'huis' terug te keeren, nacht bij nacht met hevige dreigementen om het stemrecht schreeuwen.

Een paar dagen geleden was George Albu bij mij en in hevige aandoening vroeg hij mij of ik wist dat wij voor een oorlog stonden, een oorlog waarin zou worden uitgemaakt of Engeland hare positie onder de groote mogendheden zoude behouden en of de Z.A.R. heelemaal te gronde zou gaan. "By God," zeide hij, "great powers like France quake when England frowns, and when war does break out you may be sure that you will be utterly extinguished". Ik vroeg hem welke rede Engeland had tot een oorlogsverklaring en of zij zoo doen zou om zich dienaangaande formeel in het ongelijk te stellen. Hij antwoordde dat het stemrecht hem voorkwam den *casus belli* te leveren omdat de werkmansvergaderingen, die natuurlijk de *mot d'ordre* ontvangen hadden, zoo hevig daarop aandrongen. Op mijn vraag hoe staat A bij staat B kon aandrigen dat A's onderdanen haar zouden afzweren en onderdanen van B worden, antwoordde hij dat eenig iets goed genoeg zou wezen als een excuus. Ik denk echter dat Engeland niet zoo dom zal zijn zich in het strijdperk te wagen zonder een formeel goede aanleiding en dat de onrust die kunstmatig opgestoken wordt bestemd is ons onze hoofden te doen verliezen en daardoor een verkeerden stap te doen nemen. Die kunstmatig aangewakkerde onrust is Engeland's antwoord op onze verzoeningspolitiek! Hadden wij stil gezeten, dan was Engeland ook nog stil blijven zitten in de stellige verwachting dat de appel spoedig rijp

genoeg zou zijn om in haren schoot te vallen. Tot hare verbazing zag zij echter dat de oude boom nog zeer frisch loover kon schieten, dat het programma van Heidelberg nog van den ouden President kon komen en dat verzoening en verbetering ons leus was geworden. Daarmee zag zij hare kansen verdwijnen; en van iets dat Stanhope mij zeide kon ik bemerken dat het door Regeeringsbemoeiing was dat de Londensche kapitalisten een zoo onverklaarbare houding aannamen op onze alleszins aanneembare voorstellen. Daarbij komt dan nog de groote overwinning van den Bond in de zoo even uitgevochten electies; bij plekken waar tijdens de jongste algemeene electie de Bond met moeite zijne candidaten kon doen slagen, zijn er ditmaal meerderheden van 500 tot over de 1000. Het is natuurlijk dat Chamberlain niet [dan] met leede oogen den aangroei van een voor hem en zijn politiek zoo gevaarvolle strooming kan aanzien, een strooming nog die volgens Engelsche opinie haar bron in de Z.A.R. heeft.

Met Sir Henry de Villiers die zich thans hier op een bezoek bevindt had ik gisteren een gesprek over de situatie; hij was van meening dat door het stemrecht op 5 jaren te stellen de Regeering het spel van Rhodes en Chamberlain geheel zou doen mislukken. Volgens mijne zienswijze echter heeft het stemrecht niets met de situatie te doen en zelfs al deden wij wat hij aan de hand gaf, dan nog zal Engeland in andere punten van geschil een aanleiding tot vijandelijkheden zoeken en vinden. Als er vijandelijkheden uitbreken zal Engeland in Zuid-Afrika een legermacht van minstens 150,000 noodig hebben, en dat zou dan de gelegenheid zijn voor Frankrijk en Rusland om haar elders aan te pakken en Fashoda te wreken. Ook denk ik dat er wat met het Centrum in den Reichstag uit te voeren is. Met hartelijke groeten van mij, enz.

J. C. Smuts

P.S. In de aanspraak van vandaag (1 Mei) wordt speciaal melding van uwe diensten gemaakt.

TRANSLATION

Pretoria
30 April 1899

Amice, Your letter received this week gave me much pleasure; I was only sorry you had anticipated me, for I thought of

writing to you first. The reason for my delay was that I wished to keep you more or less informed and was waiting until things were somewhat clearer so that I could write with greater certainty. My hopes of clarity have, alas, been vain as the position here becomes daily more obscure and disquieting, so I send you my cloudy impressions for what they are worth.

But first a word in answer to yours. I shall not say how pleasant and instructive it was for me to meet you and learn to know you better. I look upon you more or less as one who, fifteen years ago, stood exactly where I stand now, who is fifteen years ahead of me in experience and ripeness of judgment, and from whom I should like now and then to receive the advice and tips which can only come from such long experience. I therefore propose, in spite of my pressing work, to send you from time to time my impressions of the situation,¹ not only for your information, but also to receive your tips about them.

As regards the present situation I can only say that our earnest attempt to facilitate a lasting reconciliation has been a disastrous failure. Conditions here are today worse than they have been for fifteen years—thanks to our attempts. Yes, the general position here today is so obscure and puzzling that I at least cannot decipher it. The press campaign in the *Star*,² the new *Transvaal Leader*³ and other capitalist organs, is more violent than ever; nightly meetings are held on the Witwatersrand, where Cornish miners, who send all their earnings 'home' every week and have no other thought than to go back 'home' as soon as possible, shout for the franchise night after night with violent threats.

A few days ago George Albu was with me and with great emotion he asked me whether I knew that we were facing a war, a war in which it would be decided whether England would retain her position among the great powers and whether the South African Republic would go down altogether. 'By God', he said, 'great powers like France quake when England frowns and when war does break out you may be sure you will be

¹ This was the only letter written by Smuts to Leyds in this period.

² Established in 1871 in Grahamstown, it moved to Johannesburg in 1887. Suppressed by Government action in 1897, it reappeared as the *Comet* but soon resumed its old name.

³ First published in Johannesburg early in 1899, it was later incorporated in the *Rand Daily Mail*.

utterly extinguished.' I asked him what cause England had to declare war and if she would do so and put herself formally in the wrong in that respect. He replied that the franchise appeared to him to provide the *casus belli* because the workers' meetings, which had of course received the *mot d'ordre*, insisted upon it so vehemently. To my question how state A could insist to state B that A's subjects should withdraw allegiance from her and become subjects of B, he answered that anything would be good enough as an excuse. I think, however, that England will not be so stupid as to risk the arena without good formal cause, and that the unrest which is being artificially stoked up is meant to make us lose our heads and so make a wrong move. This artificially stimulated unrest is England's answer to our policy of reconciliation! If we had sat still, then England would also have remained sitting, in the firm expectation that the apple would soon be ripe enough to drop into her lap. To her amazement she saw that the old tree can still put forth very vigorous foliage, that the Heidelberg programme¹ could still come from the old President and that reconciliation and improvement had become our motto. With that she saw her chances disappear; and from something that Stanhope² told me I could detect that it was on Government intervention that the London capitalists took up such an inexplicable attitude to our in every way acceptable proposals. Added to that is the great victory of the Bond in the recently fought elections. In places where, at the last general election, the Bond candidates could only succeed with difficulty, there are this time majorities of 500 to over 1,000. It is natural that Chamberlain cannot watch but with envious eyes the growth of a current so dangerous to him and his policy, a current, moreover, which, according to English opinion, has its source in the South African Republic.

I had a talk yesterday about the situation with Sir Henry de Villiers, who is at present here on a visit. He thought the Government would entirely wreck the game of Rhodes and Chamberlain by fixing the franchise at five years. In my opinion,

¹ On 17 March 1899, in a speech at Heidelberg, Kruger had announced a programme of reform of which the main item was the reduction of the qualifying period for the franchise from 14 to 9 years.

² C. H. S. Stanhope, then a director of the Consolidated Goldfields Company.

however, the franchise has nothing to do with the situation and even if we did what he suggested, England would still seek and find a cause for hostilities in other points of dispute. If hostilities break out, England will need an army of at least 150,000 in South Africa, and that would provide the opportunity for France and Russia to tackle her elsewhere and revenge Fashoda.¹ I think also that something may be done with the Centre in the Reichstag. With my sincere wishes, etc.

J. C. Smuts

P.S. In today's address (1 May) your services are specially mentioned.

81 From W. P. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 95

Prime Minister's Office
Cape Town
6 May 1899

My dear Smuts: Wires from you and Reitz yesterday, acknowledged today, have been received, and I earnestly hope your expectations may be realized.

A trustworthy informant and true friend of the South African party,²—an English Liberal in whom I have great confidence, has today cabled to me that the securing of concessions from Pretoria in pending matters is of 'vital importance'. He would not wire without both reason and sound knowledge. I break no confidence in telling you this, and would send a telegram were it not that we have no confidential code of communications. I have written to our mutual friend President Steyn this afternoon, and Mr Hofmeyr knows that I am writing to you and has sent you a telegram which I saw. Do endeavour, my dear brother in the cause of Peace, to secure reasonable concessions. If you have done that it will be an immense service to South Africa. Imagine the joy with which Rhodes, Garrett [F. E.] & Co. would welcome the fact,

¹ The withdrawal of a French force from Fashoda on the White Nile in November 1898 signalized the surrender of French aspirations in the Sudan to British interests in Egypt.

² The parliamentary party was formed in 1903 (*see* p. 32 *supra*, note 2). Before that date the term would connote the anti-Rhodes, anti-imperialist attitude that developed after the Jameson Raid.

if the President and Raad¹ should be stung into an attitude of refusing to do what is reasonable,—and do not allow them that satisfaction.

I must close now, as I wish to catch the post. With kind regards, I am, Yours very truly,

W. P. Schreiner

In the course of J. H. Hofmeyr's efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement of the disputes that led to the Anglo-Boer War, a series of letters and telegrams passed between him and Smuts. A selection of these are printed below, viz. **82–86, 90–100, 105–120, 122–127.**

82 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 2

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr

To: Smuts

Dated: 6 May 1899

Friends across water consider state of affairs most serious. This is time for pouring oil on stormy waters and not on fire. Do not delay.

83 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 3

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts

To: Hofmeyr

Dated: 8 May 1899

Thanks for telegram. Your informants unnecessarily alarmist. Read letter Schreiner.²

84 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 4

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr

To: Smuts

Dated: 10 May 1899

Thanks wire. Have seen letter. I can only repeat situation is serious and time precious.

¹ Uitvoerende Raad (Executive Council).

² Not in the Smuts Collection.

85 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 5

Kantoor van den Staatsprocureur
Pretoria
10 Mei 1899

Waardste Vriend, Uw tweede telegram betreffende de ernst der situatie en kostbaarheid des tijds ontving ik gister avond en omtrent beide wensch ik wat breedvoeriger te schrijven.

Hoewel ik het voor mij onmogelijk vind om de huidige positie zoo ernstig op te vatten als U, erken ik dat de beste koppen alhier volmaakt met U zamenstemmen. De President denkt, voor zoover ik zijn gevoelen kan bespeuren, dat oorlog onvermijdelijk is of spoedig zal worden—niet omdat er eenige oorzaak is, maar omdat de vijand brutaal genoeg is niet voor een oorzaak te wachten. Maar juist hier is mijn moeilijkheid. Als men den vijand zou vragen in welke opzicht de positie vandaag slechter is dan ze een jaar, of twee jaar geleden was, dan zal hij zelf moeten erkennen dat dingen vandaag alhier duizendmaal beter zijn dan ze voor langen tijd geweest zijn. Hoe dan kan hij een ongemotiveerde of slecht gemotiveerde oorlog op de Republieken verantwoorden—niet alleen voor de publieke opinie der wereld, maar vooral van Zuid-Afrika? Als Engeland zich in het strijdperk met het Afrikanerdom zou wagen zonder een formeel goede excuus is haar zaak in Zuid-Afrika gedaan. En dan hoe gouwer hoe beter; daar wij van onzen kant helemaal bereid zijn haar te ontmoeten. Ons volk over geheel Z.A. moet nog met den doop van bloed en vuur gedoopt worden alvorens het onder de groote volkeren der wereld zal kunnen worden opgenomen. Van het resultaat heb ik geen twijfel. Of wij zullen uitgeroeid worden of wij zullen ons los vechten; en wanneer ik denk over de groote krijshoedanigheden die ons volk bezit, dan kan ik niet zien waarom wij uitgeroeid zullen worden. Dus zelfs in het uiterste geval ben ik geheel kalm en wacht de toekomst met vertrouwen af.

De positie in de Z.A.R. is veel verbeterd—dat zal ieder kapitalist of Engelschman moeten erkennen; wat dan is de geheime motief van den vijand om tot het uiterste te gaan? Ik heb reeds in mijn brief aan Schreiner medegedeeld dat dit de geheele Afrikaner situatie in Z.A. is. Dat is voor mij zoo klaar als het daglicht; maar ik heb directer bewijs hetwelk ik

wegens de belangrijkheid der zaak niet aarzel aan u mede te deelen.

Kort voor zijn vertrek van hier had ik eendag een gesprek met Fraser, wd. British Agent alhier met wie ik op zeer vertrouwelijke voet stond. Hij is een kundige man maar geneigd meer te zeggen dan discreet is voor zijne superieuren. Hij zeide mij dat hij zeer goed bekend was met 'the mind of the Colonial Office' en als hier ooit weer oorlog zou komen, zou het zijn omdat onze positie, aspiraties en handelswijze een gevaar voor Zuid Afrika zijn (let wel, het oude Sekoekoeni's argument van Shepstone). De Bond had juist zijn overwinning in de K[aap] K[olonie] behaald en dat was het onderwerp waarvan wij spraken. Hij zeide mij dat de K.K. verantwoordelijk bestuur had gekregen om 'the Dutch' tevreden te stellen; doch in stede daarvan zijn zij steeds ontevredener geworden; niettegenstaande alles wat Engeland gedaan had, waren 'the Dutch' vandaag verder van haar af dan ooit te voren; en dat was te wijten aan de positie en de invloed der Z.A.R., die alle Dutchmen met het idee vervuld had dat er een groot Afrikaner republiek in Z.A. zal gesticht worden. Hoe langer Engeland wachtte, hoe sterker zou dit separationist streven worden en hoe zwakker haar eigen positie; en het was nu een kwestie of zij langer stil zou zitten; etc. etc. U kan u verbeelden met welke ooren ik dit alles aanhoorde; zoodra hij weg was, heb ik het geheele gesprek opgeschreven en aan de Regeering medegedeeld; ik hoop hij heeft hetzelfde aan zijne Regeering gedaan! Later had hij een dergelijke gesprek met Piet Grobler. Ik deel u dit mede om aan te toonen dat de Bond overwinning de ware *causa belli* zal zijn en om u te toonen hoe groot de verantwoordelijkheid der Afrikaner partij zal zijn in de komende crisis. *Verb. sap.* Kort voor uw laatste algemeene electie zeide Fraser mij nog dat Milner naar Chamberlain had geschreven dat van Reitz en ik hier waren, de twee mogendheden op veel beter voet met elkaar stonden. Dus kan u weer zien waar het ommekeer aan te danken is.

Uit een gesprek dat ik met Sir H. de Villiers had scheen hij zeer veel van Milner te verwachten; maar met hem evenals met Bartle Frere kan men vragen: *Welken* Milner bedoelt u?

Steyn heeft onzen President gevraagd of hij bereid is naar Bloemfontein te komen om Milner te ontmoeten; wij hebben 'ja' geantwoord. De toekomst ligt op de knieën der goden.

Ik heb veel meer te zeggen maar zal maar eindigen. *t.t.*

J. C. Smuts

Note by J. H. Hofmeyr at top of letter:

Replied by wire 15 May 1899: 'Men make zich geen illusies omtrent Kolonie' and wrote same date: 'als hij Frasers praatjes gelooft zou het niet moeielijk zijn Schreiner en collegas te bewegen af te treden in 't belang van vrede wanneer Rhodes hun plaats zou innemen; threw cold water on idea that Cape Colonists would rise *en masse* etc.

TRANSLATION

Office of the State Attorney

Pretoria

10 May 1899

Dear Friend, Yesterday evening I received your second telegram saying how serious was the situation and how precious time, and I wish to write somewhat more fully about both.

Although I find it impossible to regard the present position as seriously as you do, I admit that the best minds entirely agree with you. The President thinks, so far as I can gauge his feeling, that war is unavoidable or will soon become so—not because there is any cause, but because the enemy is brazen enough not to wait for a cause. But this is exactly my difficulty. If the enemy were asked in what respect the position today is worse than it was a year or two years ago, then he would have to admit that things are a thousand times better here than they have been for a long time. How, then, could he justify an unmotivated or weakly motivated war on the Republics—not only before the public opinion of the world, but especially of South Africa? If England should venture into the ring with Afrikanerdom without a formally good excuse, her cause in South Africa would be finished. And then the sooner the better; as we for our part are quite prepared to meet her. Our people throughout South Africa must be baptized with the baptism of blood and fire before they can be admitted among the other great peoples of the world. Of the outcome I have no doubt. Either we shall be exterminated or we shall fight our way out; and when I think of the great fighting qualities that our people possess, I cannot see why we should be exterminated.

So, even if the worst happens, I am quite calm and await the future with confidence.

The position in the South African Republic is much improved—every capitalist or Englishman will have to admit that; what then is the secret motive of the enemy in going to extremes? I have already informed Schreiner in my letter that this is the whole Afrikaner situation in South Africa. That is as clear as daylight to me; but I have more direct proof which, in view of the importance of the matter, I do not hesitate to communicate to you.

Shortly before his departure from here I had a talk one day with Fraser, acting British Agent here, with whom I was on a very confidential footing.¹ He is an able man but inclined to say more than is discreet for his superiors. He told me that he was very well acquainted with 'the mind of the Colonial Office', and, if there should ever be war here again, it would be because our position, aspirations and actions are a danger to South Africa (note Shepstone's old Secoecoeni argument).² The Bond had just scored its victory in the Cape Colony,³ and that was the subject of our discussion. He told me that the Cape Colony had got responsible government to satisfy 'the Dutch'; but they had instead become more and more dissatisfied; notwithstanding all that England had done, the Dutch were today further away from her than ever before; and this was due to the position and the influence of the South African Republic, which had filled all Dutchmen with the idea that a great Afrikaner republic would be established in South Africa. The longer England waited, the stronger would this separationist aspiration become and the weaker her own position; and it was now a question whether she would sit still any longer, etc., etc. You can imagine with what ears I listened to all this; as soon as he had gone, I wrote the whole conversation down and communicated it to the Government; I hope he did the same for his Government! Later he had a similar talk with Piet Grobler. I tell you this to show that the Bond victory will be

¹ See 72.

² The British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 by Sir Theophilus Shepstone was defended partly on the grounds that clashes between the Transvaalers and the Bapedi chief, Secoecoeni, endangered Natal and Zululand.

³ In the general election of October 1898 when W. P. Schreiner became Prime Minister.

the true *causa belli* and to show you how great the responsibility of the Afrikaner party will be in the coming crisis. *Verb. sap.* Shortly before your last general election Fraser told me that Milner had written to Chamberlain that, since Reitz and I have been here, the two powers have been on a much better footing. So you can see again what the swing-over is due to.

From a talk which I had with Sir Henry de Villiers, he seemed to expect a great deal of Milner; but of him as of Bartle Frere one may ask: *which* Milner do you mean?

Steyn has asked our President if he is ready to come to Bloemfontein to meet Milner; we have answered 'yes'. The future is on the knees of the gods.

I have much more to say but shall end. *totus tuus,*

J. C. Smuts

Note by J. H. Hofmeyr at top of letter:

Replied by wire 15 May 1899: 'Do not have any illusions about the Colony' and wrote same date: 'if he believes Fraser's gossip, it would not be difficult to persuade Schreiner and colleagues to resign in the cause of peace, whereupon Rhodes would take their place'; threw cold water on idea that Cape Colonists would rise *en masse* etc.

86 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 1, no. 29

Cape Town

15 Mei 1899

Amice, Uw belangrijke brief van 10 dezer ontvangen. Dank daarvoor.

Gij schijnt het tegenwoordig gevaar van oorlog toe te schrijven aan de zoogenaamde 'Bond victories in the Cape Colony', daaromtrent Fraser als gezag aannemende. Indien gij de praatjes van dien waardigen man werkelijk gelooft, dan zal het niet moeilijk zijn het gevaar af te wenden. Schreiner en collegas zijn niet zoo verzet op hunne baantjes of zij zouden wel te bewegen zijn af te treden in het belang des vredes. Of zij zouden zulk een kabaal kunnen opschoppen met Z. Exc. dat deze Frere's voorbeeld volgde en hen afzette. Rhodes zou dan natuurlijk weer aan het roer komen, en het excuus der 'Bond-victories' weggedaan, zouden onze Transvaalsche vrienden dan weer gerust slapen?

Ik, als Koloniale Bondsman, zou liever Schreiner zien aftreden dan de verantwoordelijkheid van de Transvaalsche beroering op mij nemen. Heb ik tegenover de Transvaal gezondigd met te helpen Rhodes uit het bewind te houden, dan vraag ik excuus en zal ik mijn reeds lang opgevat plan om mijn ondermijnd senuwgestel in Europa te gaan opknappen te eerder ten uitvoer brengen.

Naar aanleiding van een privaat kabelgram uit Europa begreep ik dat men begeerig was pressie op Kruger uit te oefenen om Z. Exc. naar Pretoria te noodigen. Ik zag bezwaar daartegen en zette daarom het plan op touw van een Bloemfonteinsche ontmoeting. Wegens de vroegtijdige publicatie te Pretoria (hoe kwam dat?) is het plan niet precies zoo ontwikkeld als ik verlangde. Maar dat is niet mijn schuld.

Ik telegrafeerde U heden: 'Men make zich geen illusies omtrent Kolonie'. Ik hoop gij verstaat mijn meening, t.w., dat gij niet moet verwachten dat de Koloniale Afrikaanders in massa te wapen zullen snellen als er vijandelijkheden uitbreken — te meer daar de meesten hunner niets weten van het wapengebruik.

Ik wensch U en uwe mede-Transvalers het beste toe. Paar koelheid van hoofd aan warmte van hart. *Verb. sap.* Gegroet van, *t.t.*

J. H. Hofmeyr

TRANSLATION

Cape Town
15 May 1899

Amice, Your important letter of 10th inst. received. Thanks for it.

You seem to ascribe the present danger of war to the so-called 'Bond victories in the Cape Colony', accepting Fraser as authority for this. If you really believe the gossip of this worthy man, then it will not be difficult to avert the danger. Schreiner and his colleagues are not so madly fond of their jobs that they could not be persuaded to resign in the interests of peace. Or they would be able to kick up such a row with His Excellency¹ that he would follow Frere's example and

¹ The High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir Alfred (later Viscount) Milner.

dismiss them. Rhodes would then of course once more take the helm, and, the excuse of 'Bond victories' done away with, would our Transvaal friends then sleep peacefully again?

I, as Colony Bondsman, would rather see Schreiner resign than take upon myself the responsibility of the Transvaal commotion. If I have sinned against the Transvaal by helping to keep Rhodes out of power, then I ask pardon and shall the sooner carry out my long arranged plan to go and refresh my undermined nervous system in Europe.

From a private cablegram from Europe I realized that people were eager to put pressure on Kruger to invite His Excellency to Pretoria. I saw objections to that and therefore set the plan of a Bloemfontein meeting on foot. Because of the premature publication in Pretoria (how did that happen?) the plan has not developed exactly as I wished. But that is not my fault.

I telegraphed to you today: 'Cherish no illusions about Colony'. I hope you understand my meaning, namely, that you must not expect that the Colonial Afrikaners will rush *en masse* to arms if hostilities break out—especially as most of them know nothing about the bearing of arms.

I wish you and your fellow Transvaalers the best. Couple coolness of head with warmth of heart. *Verb. sap.* Greetings from, *totus tuus*,

J. H. Hofmeyr

87 From W. P. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 96

Lyndall
Newlands
19 May 1899

My dear Mr Smuts, I acknowledged your long and interesting letter¹ only by telegram, and have been very busy indeed. I am thoroughly convinced that your efforts will be directed, as are my hopes, steadily towards establishing a sounder basis for your constitutional system. What an enormous aid it would be to those of the South African family who dwell in this Colony to be able heartily to back the policy of our Sister State in her dealings with the new population! It seems to me that you

¹ See E. A. Walker, *W. P. Schreiner, a South African*, pp. 142-4.

folk are at times somewhat inclined to exaggerate the possible weight or influence of our poor political party, and to over-estimate the dangers caused to the Republic by the success of the Bond in the recent elections. You may, perhaps, believe me to speak with some knowledge when I say that in 1897 already I found (and then not for the first time) that there no longer existed the same almost determining power in the verdict of the Colonial constituencies in shaping the policy of the Imperial Government which used to be seen and felt. And, so far as this Colony is concerned, I am fully convinced that the Government in England and the people who count, do not by any means adopt a view at which you appear to hint—viz. that the present Ministry here and the Bond party constitute such a danger to the Imperial connection and influence in South Africa, that *therefore* a forward and pushing policy must be adopted and pressed.

You may imagine me unnecessarily anxious, but I only utter what I believe I have good ground for when I say that the present time is extremely critical. That fact should not, surely, cause you, or my dear old brother-in-law,¹ to waver from your course and fall back into that very position—*non possumus*—which the enemies of your Republic and of the natural growth and development of South Africa would delight to see taken up. Here comes now an occasion fraught inevitably with great consequences to the future of the entire country—the meeting between Sir Alfred Milner and President Kruger. The prime thing needed on both sides will be infinite patience and conciliation in the methods of negotiation. (I would personally consent to be kicked round Church Square to help on a satisfactory settlement!) I feel deeply that the future of the whole country may turn upon tact and temper between these protagonists being mutually observed and kept. But, on the merits, I do trust that constitutional concessions beyond those announced may be made by His Honour. If he concedes (subject of course to ratification) what would be more satisfactory, as sketched in your letter to me, a great step would be gained; for he would enlist many friends everywhere. At present the feeling on his announcement cannot but be one of

¹ F. W. Reitz. His sister, Frances Hester, was Schreiner's wife.

disappointment to those not reading between the lines his purpose to go further in a liberal manner. I have been informed that you will go to Bloemfontein, and I wish to urge, as I quite fairly may and should, that it seems to me that, if a more liberal measure of constitutional reform is conceded, *there might be a good chance now of gaining for the future a recognition of the big principle, for which I would think much indeed might be yielded, of arbitration in Convention¹ matters.* I mean, as I always have said, arbitration not by Powers but by Jurists—impartial and learned—not necessarily South African;—and such a forum might, I think, be the solution of much that has strained the relations between the two Governments. If a measure were questioned as a breach, the principle might be that it should be suspended pending arbitration, expedition in which could surely be safeguarded by proper stipulations. I write late at night and weary: but I feel that I should send this tomorrow. I don't ask you about the Johannesburg arrests,² but am in truth keenly curious for further revelations. We are much in the dark. Personally I have formed no theory, pending more light.

With kind regards, and earnest hope for a blessing on your work, I am, Yours very truly,

W. P. Schreiner

I wonder whether one's letters to you always reach your own hands at Pretoria safely. I wrote to you under cover to Findlay,³ but suppose the extra precaution is not necessary.

88 From O. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 78

Strictly Private

[Johannesburg]

[June 1899]

Dear Mr Smuts, (1) Do you think there would be any use in my going to see Sir Alfred Milner? I have letters of introduction

¹ The Convention of London.

² On 16 May 1899 seven persons, five of whom were said to be ex-officers of the British army, were arrested on a charge of high treason. The suspicion that they were plotting the overthrow of the Republic proved groundless and their prosecution was abandoned on 25 July.

³ Hudson Findlay, Schreiner's nephew.

to him, and many of my dearest friends in England are his. In a letter of his, which I saw the other day he said that one of the things he had most looked forward to in coming to South Africa was seeing me, etc. If I could have an hour's conversation *alone* with him I feel there are one or two points I might make clear to him. I should especially dwell on the nature of the resistance England has to expect if she tries to crush South Africa. I could also explain to him that the mass of Johannesburgers are increasingly against war. There are many Englishmen here who five years ago would have fought the Transvaal Government who would now like to shoot the Leaguers¹ for making trouble. *Even in the last six months the tone here has changed very much.* If I do go to Bloemfontein to meet him, I shall be most careful not to mention to *anyone that I am going there with the intention of meeting him*, as those about him would prevent my doing so. If you think there might be use in my trying to see him at Bloemfontein could you give me a free railway pass for the journey? If you think there would [be] no advantage in my going let me know.

(2) If the anniversary of Gladstone's birthday or death day is near, would it not be well for the President to grant any concessions he has to make *on that day, connecting them with Gladstone's memory*, sending home wires to Mrs Gladstone and the family, and, if possible, making the day a public holiday in Pretoria and Johannesburg. This would be felt very deeply by the Liberal party at home, which is not dead though out of power for the moment. What we have to convince England of is that we are not to be coerced, but that we are not unmindful of any sympathy and justice which she has shown or can show us. I do not know whether this idea is workable: the effect would be exceedingly good if it were. *We cannot* win the capitalist to our side; we can win the mass [of] the thinking English people in England and Johannesburg.

(3) Doubtless you know that the Leaguers boast that they have bought traitors in the Johannesburg fort, who will betray it to them in time of war. If war should break out would it not be well at the *last moment* to send new men there who cannot have been bribed? There were twelve apostles; but one sold his master for thirty pieces of silver.

¹ The South African League.

Don't trouble to answer this unless you think there would be any use in my going to Bloemfontein to see Milner. I know how busy you are. Yours sincerely,

Olive Schreiner

Of course you know that Wybergh [W. J.] and the Leaguers here are most anxious the franchise should *not* be granted.

89 To S. M. Smuts

Vol. 1, no. 110A

Bloemfontein

1 Juni 1899

Mijn zoetste ou Lappie, Ik was zeer verheugd uit jou telegram van gister te vernemen dat beide jij en Koosie nog zoo wel zijn; ik hoop dat wanneer ik over 3 of 4 dagen terugkom, ik beide vetter zal vinden en dat mijn groot zeun een heel eind verder zal zijn in gewicht en intelligentie.

Gister avond was er een groot soirée te President Steyn alwaar ook ik voor een uur tegenwoordig was; maar jij kan natuurlijk verstaan dat mijn gedachtes bij de conferentie en daarop besproken onderwerpen waren. Gister namiddag hadden wij een lange zitting, alles gaat vreedzaam en in goeden geest. Milner is zoo zoet als honing maar er is iets in zijn zeer intelligente oogen dat mij zegt dat hij een zeer gevaarlijk man is. Hoewel het voor ons een groote vernedering is om over onze eigen aangelegenheden met H.M. vertegenwoordiger te confereeren is en blijft het mijn ernstige wensch dat alles recht moge komen. De tegenwoordige toestand van spanning werkt zeer nadeelig op den geest van ons volk en belemmert de vooruitgang van het land. De toestand in O.V.S. is ook zeer gespanne want men gevoelt dat dingen maar zeer dringend zijn voor ons arm ou volkje.

Het is nu 10 voor 10 en dus tijd voor mij om naar de conferentie te gaan. Dus met hartelijkste groeten en beste wenschen. Uw *t.t.*

J. C. S.

TRANSLATION

Bloemfontein

1 June 1899

My sweetest Lappie, I was very glad to learn from your telegram of yesterday that both you and Koosie¹ are still so well; I hope that when I return in three or four days, I shall find you both fatter and that my big son will be a good way further on in weight and intelligence.

Last night there was a large soirée at President Steyn's where I also was present for an hour; but you can of course understand that my thoughts were on the conference² and the subjects discussed there. Yesterday afternoon we had a long session, everything goes peacefully and in a good spirit. Milner is as sweet as honey but there is something in his very intelligent eyes that tells me that he is a very dangerous man. Although it is for us a great humiliation to confer with Her Majesty's representative about our own affairs, it is and remains my earnest wish that all may come right. The present situation of tension is having a bad effect on the spirit of our people and hinders the progress of the country. The position in the Orange Free State is also very strained because people feel that things are very urgent for our poor little people.

It is now ten to ten and so time for me to go to the conference. So with the heartiest greetings and best wishes,
Your *totus tuus*,

J. C. S.

90 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 6

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr*To:* Smuts*Dated:* 7 June 1899

Ik en andere vrienden hier betreuren dat geen akkoord is getroffen. Wij meenen uw veiligste politiek is nu dadelijk

¹ Diminutive of Jacobus, born April 1899.

² The Bloemfontein Conference, held from 31 May to 5 June 1899. It was almost entirely an encounter between Kruger and Milner, though S. W. Burger and A. D. W. Wolmarans were present. Smuts was present but took no part in the discussions. As legal adviser he probably drew up the memoranda submitted by Kruger. A. Fischer acted as interpreter.

vernietiging dynamiet concessie gevolgd van andere hervormingen.

TRANSLATION

I and other friends here regret that no agreement has been reached.¹ We think your safest policy now is immediate wiping out of dynamite concession followed by other reforms.

91 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 7

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts

To: Hofmeyr

Dated: 10 June 1899

Wij nemen koers. Aller oogen zijn nu op Afrikaner Bond gevestigd. Zullen de broederbanden vaster of slapper worden? Afrikanerdom is nooit op kritieker punt geweest dan nu.

TRANSLATION

We are setting our course. All eyes are now fixed on Afrikaner Bond. Will the ties of brotherhood become closer or looser? Afrikanerdom has never been at a more critical point than now.

92 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 8

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr

To: Smuts

Dated: 12 June 1899

Wij zijn aanhoudend bezig met Transvaal kwestie die voorwaar ernstig is. Maar na uwen vorigen brief weet ik waarlijk niet wat te doen. Lees mijne opinie in Te Water's jongste telegrammen naar Bloemfontein.

TRANSLATION

We are continuously occupied with Transvaal question which is indeed serious. But after your earlier letter I really do not

¹ A reference to the abortive Bloemfontein Conference.

know what to do. Read my opinion in Te Water's¹ latest telegram to Bloemfontein.²

93 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 9

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts

To: Hofmeyr

Dated: 12 June 1899

Welken vorigen brief bedoelt U? Ik heb niet eenige telegrammen van Te Water naar Bloemfontein gezien. Situatie is zeer ernstig nog meer omdat daardoor de geheele Afrikaners positie bedreigd wordt. Mijn innige bede is dat Engeland moge zien dat Afrikaners als een man bij elkaar staan. Dat alleen kan haar tot inkeer brengen. Doe alles wat U als loyaal onderdaan kan om huidige positie te redden. Over een paar jaar zal alles recht zijn.

On reverse in handwriting of J. H. Hofmeyr:

R. 12 Juni 1899. Ik bedoel brief tien Mei Zie mijn antwoord vijftien Mei. Fischer is verzocht u telegrammen te zenden. Ik bid U overweeg die ernstig. Het prediken van aangename dingen zou misleidend zijn. Kunt gij geen vertrouwde zenden met wie wij konden spreken? Bond meeting is uitgesteld totdat wij iets meer dan melk en water voorstellen kunnen doen.

TRANSLATION

What earlier letter do you mean? I have seen no telegrams from Te Water to Bloemfontein. Situation is very serious. The more so because the whole Afrikaner position is threatened by it. My fervent prayer is that England may see that Afrikaners are standing together as one man. That alone can bring her to a realization. Do everything that you can do as a loyal subject to save the situation. After a few years all will be well.

¹ T. N. G. te Water, who was often Hofmeyr's agent.

² Some telegrams in the series went to Smuts through the Government of the Orange Free State in order to use their secret code. Hofmeyr and Smuts sent their direct telegrams *en clair*.

On reverse in handwriting of J. H. Hofmeyr:

Replied 12 June 1899. I mean letter of tenth May. See my answer fifteenth May.¹ Fischer has been requested to send you telegrams. I pray you consider these seriously. Preaching pleasant things would be misleading. Can you not send a trustworthy person with whom we could talk? Bond meeting has been postponed until we can make something more than milk and water proposals.

94 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 10

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts

To: Hofmeyr

Dated: 13 June 1899

Doe toch uw best dat geen melk en water besluit genomen wordt. Dat zou een scheuring tusschen Afrikaners op kritiekste oogenblik onzer geschiedenis te weeg brengen. Blijf liever stil dan door laauwheid tweedracht in de hand te werken. Republieken staan als een man.

TRANSLATION

Please do your best to see that no milk and water resolution is passed. That would bring about a breach between Afrikaners at the most critical moment of our history. Better keep quiet than encourage division by lukewarmness. The Republics are standing together as one man.

95 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 12

Pretoria

13 Juni 1899

Waardste Vriend, Het spijt mij dat in den laatsten tijd wij een belangrijke gedachtenwisseling per telegram hadden moeten voeren, en dat wij niet een geheime code met elkaar hadden; maar de zaak is te belangrijk dan dat wij zouden bezwaar maken over een minder veilig middel van communicatie.

¹ See 83 and 86.

Ik versta nu waarom U zegt dat mijn vorige brief uwe handen bindt: U wil niet, door te groote Bond bemoeiing in onze zaak, den schijn geven alsof de Bond in overleg zoo niet op instructie van Pretoria handelt. Ik blijf bij mijn vorige zienswijze nl. dat Engeland bang wordt dat haar prestige in Z. Afrika verloren gaat, omdat overal de partij die tegen de 'Imperial Factor' gekant is en voor een 'zelfstandig Z.A.' vecht, gestadig veld wint; en uwe schertzend brief heeft mijn niet van opinie doen veranderen. Maar het is één ding dat Engeland bang wordt voor de uitkomst van het Afrikaner streven; het is een geheel ander ding dat zij ook bang zal zijn voor een oorlog, waar het geheele Afrikaner Z.A. met eene stem spreekt. Twee dingen moeten volgens mijn bescheiden zienswijze door uwe partij in de K.K. in het oog worden gehouden: (a) dat de eischen van Afrikaner solidariteit boven alles anders in aanmerking moeten komen en (b) dat die Koloniale Afrikaners zich niet te prominent aan de republikeinsche zijde zullen scharen en daardoor zichzelf onder gegronde verdenking brengen. Zij moeten dus met groote omzichtigheid handelen. Ik zou dus denken dat uw partij een besluit kan passeeren waarin zij zich *in beginsel* uitspreekt voor het door ons gemaakte stemrecht voorstel als billijk, met den wensch dat het in detail nog moge gewijzigd worden, en verder uw opinie uitdrukt dat de geheele situatie wel degelijk op vreedzame wijze oplosbaar is, en ten slotte kan U volharden bij het reeds door uw parlement genomen besluit ten faveure van arbitrage over geschilpunten onder de Londen Conventie. Hierover kan toch niet bezwaar zijn, want U zou geenzins blindelings met ons meegaan; terzelfdertijd heeft U volmaakt recht om een sterk besluit ten faveure van vrede en vreedzame middelen te passeeren, want de K.K. heeft een even direct belang in den vrede als de Z.A.R. zelf. Een zoodanig besluit zou de Republieken bevredigen zoowel als uw eigen partij, terwijl van de anderen kant niet zou kunnen worden gezegd dat de Bond een vleugel der republikeinsche partij is. Wat het K. Parlement betreft, dat behoort volgens mijn bescheiden zienswijze weer het arbitrage voorstel van laatste jaar te passeeren met het oog op den vrede van Z. Afrika. Ik zou niet te angstig zijn om de teenen van die Hooge Com-misaris te vermijden want ik ben in mijn hart overtuigd dat hij een zeer gevaarlijk persoon is en een tweede Bartle Frere zal

worden. òf hij handelt alleen als het instrument van Chamberlain òf hij is van nature een hooghartig proconsul wien het alleen te doen is het idee van een 'zelfstandig Zuid Afrika' te doen plaats maken voor dat van het Imperialisme: in beide gevallen vind ik hem zeer gevaarlijk. De indruk van hem welke ik van Bloemfontein wegdroeg was zeer ongunstig; ik beschouw hem veel gevaarlijker dan Rhodes en bid U toch op uwe hoede te zijn met hem.

Ik zou gaarne zelf naar Kaapstad willen komen om de huidige situatie kalm en bedaard met U te bespreken, maar dingen zijn zoo slecht en mijn persoonlijke tegenwoordigheid te Pretoria wordt zoo dringend vereischt dat ik twijfel of ik weg kan gaan. Ik zal morgen naar Fischer telegrafeeren om, indien doenlijk, dadelijk naar Kaapstad te gaan, want hij verstaat onze zaken tamelijk goed en was tegenwoordig bij alle discussies te Bloemfontein.

Op sommige punten kunnen wij misschien nog een klein beetje verder gaan. Ik hoop nog de naturalisatie vastgesteld te krijgen aan einde van 7 jaren, zoodat het halve burgerschap zal vervallen. Milner's voorstel was onzin, want dan zouden wij bij den a.s. presidents verkiezing een Engelschen president hebben met een Boer Volksraad, en U weet dat dat een burgeroorlog zal betekenen en de ongergang van ons volk in dezen staat.

Engeland zal nooit naar een oorlog gaan wanneer zij weet wat de ware opinie der Koloniale Afrikaners is een al wat de Republieken van U eischen is dat die opinie op voorzichtige wijze zal worden uitgedrukt—al wordt Sir Alfred Milner daardoor prijs gegeven met al zijn Imperialisme.*

Een beetje tijd is al wat wij noodig hebben; heeft ons politiek niet al genoeg verandering in de laatste 6 maanden ondergaan? Men wil toch niet een revolutie hebben—ten minste, onze vrienden wenschen dat niet.

Het gevoelen beide hier en in de O.V.S. is zeer sterk en bitter, want wij beginnen meer en meer te zien dat Engeland gebruik maakt van hare positie om, hetzij door oorlog, hetzij door dreigementen, het Afrikanerdom de *coup de grâce* toe te

* Note in pencil in margin:
Milner ontkent niet.

deelen. U heeft in de K.K. een harden strijd gevochten voor de zelfstandigheid van ons volk over geheel Z.A. Ik bid U, laat die strijd nu niet machteloos gemaakt worden in den ure van uwe overwinning over Rhodes C. J.

Met hartelijkste groete en heilbede, *t.t.*

J. C. Smuts

Note in Smuts's handwriting:

Uwe telegrammen aan Fischer heb ik nog niet ontvangen.

Note in handwriting of J. H. Hofmeyr:

R. 17 Juni 1899. Redenen waarom wij nog geen publieke vergaderingen houden. Fischer's besoek, memorandum aan hem over wijzigingen Kruger's memo [one illegible word].

TRANSLATION

Pretoria

13 June 1899

Dear Friend, I am sorry that we have had of late to conduct an important exchange of ideas by telegram, and that we had no secret code;¹ but the matter is too important for us to have scruples about a less safe means of communication.

I now understand why you say that my previous letter binds your hands: you do not want, by too great a Bond intervention in our cause, to give the appearance that the Bond is acting in consultation with, if not on instructions from, Pretoria. I adhere to my earlier view, namely, that England is becoming afraid that her prestige in South Africa is being lost, because the party that is against the 'Imperial Factor' and fights for an 'independent South Africa' is everywhere steadily gaining ground; and your joking letter has not made me change my opinion. But it is one thing that England is becoming afraid of the outcome of Afrikaner aspirations; it is an entirely different thing that she will also be afraid of a war in which the whole of South Africa speaks with one voice. In my humble opinion two things must be kept in view by your party in the Cape Colony (*a*) that the demands of Afrikaner solidarity must be considered above everything else and (*b*) that the Colonial Afrikaners should not range themselves on the republican side too prominently and thus bring themselves

¹ See p. 244 *supra*, note 2.

under well-founded suspicion. They must therefore act with great circumspection. I should think that your party might pass a resolution in which it declares itself in favour of our franchise proposal *in principle* as reasonable, but with the wish that it may be further modified in detail; and also expresses its opinion that the whole situation can quite properly be solved in a peaceful way; and, finally, you might stand by the resolution already taken by your parliament in favour of arbitration in disputes under the London Convention. Surely there can be no objection to this, for you would not be following us blindly; at the same time you have a perfect right to pass a strong resolution in favour of peace and peaceful remedies, for the Cape Colony has as direct an interest in peace as the South African Republic itself. Such a resolution would satisfy the Republics as well as your own party, while the other side will not be able to say that the Bond is a wing of the republican party. As for the Cape Parliament, it should in my humble view pass last year's arbitration proposal again with a view to the peace of South Africa. I should not be too anxious to avoid the toes of the High Commissioner, for I am convinced in my heart that he is a very dangerous person and will become a second Bartle Frere. Either he is acting merely as the instrument of Chamberlain or he is by nature a haughty proconsul who is only concerned to make the idea of an 'independent South Africa' give way to that of imperialism: in both cases I find him very dangerous. The impression of him that I carried away from Bloemfontein was very unfavourable; I regard him as much more dangerous than Rhodes and pray you to be on your guard against him. I should like to come to Cape Town myself to discuss the present situation calmly and quietly with you, but things are so bad and my personal presence in Pretoria is so urgently demanded that I doubt if I can go away. I shall telegraph to Fischer tomorrow to go to Cape Town at once if possible, for he understands our affairs fairly well and was present at all discussions in Bloemfontein.

On some points we may perhaps be able to go a little further. I still hope to get naturalization fixed at the end of seven years, so that half-citizenship will fall away. Milner's proposal was nonsense, for then we should, at the next presidential election, have an English president with a Boer Volksraad, and you know

that that would mean a civil war and the downfall of our people in this state.

England will never go to war when she knows what the true opinion of the Colonial Afrikaners is, and all that the Republics demand of you is that this opinion should be expressed in a cautious way—even if Sir Alfred Milner and all his imperialism have to be given up in consequence.*

A little time is all we need; has our policy not already undergone enough change in the last six months? Surely a revolution is not wanted—at least, our friends do not wish that.

Feeling both here and in the Orange Free State is very strong and bitter, for we are beginning to see more and more that England is using her position, whether by war or by threats, to give Afrikanerdom the *coup de grâce*. You have fought a hard fight in the Cape Colony for the independence of our people throughout South Africa. I pray you do not let the fight be rendered powerless now in the hour of your victory over Rhodes C. J.

With heartiest greetings, *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

* Note in pencil in margin:
Milner does not deny it.

Note in Smuts's handwriting:

I have not yet received your telegrams to Fischer.

Note in handwriting of J. H. Hofmeyr:

Replied 17 June 1899. Reasons why we as yet hold no public meetings. Fischer's visit, memorandum to him about amendments Kruger's memorandum [one illegible word].

96 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 14

TELEGRAM

Dated: June 1899

To: Smuts

Dated: 14 June 1899

Hebt gij copieën ontvangen van onze telegrammen naar Bloemfontein. Zullen wij meetings houden en resoluties

passeeren als daarin aangeduid. Ik houd staande dat de wijzigingen van Kruger's Conferentie voorstellen daarin vervat Transvaal toekomst verder zal secureeren vooral met oog op verkiezing President en C. Generaal. Onze meetings zouden voorts door uwe Regeering kunnen gebesigd worden om uwe burgers tot toegeven te brengen.

TRANSLATION

Have you received copies of our telegrams to Bloemfontein. Shall we hold meetings and pass resolutions as indicated therein. I maintain that the modifications of Kruger's Conference proposals contained therein will further secure Transvaal's future especially with a view to election of President and Commandant-General. Our meetings could also be utilized by your Government to move your burghers towards concession.

97 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 15

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts
To: Hofmeyr
Dated: 15 June 1899

Wij hebben nooit copieën van telegrammen van Bloemfontein ontvangen en ik vermoed dat ze opzettelijk met een of ander doel zijn teruggehouden hetwelk Fischer U zeker zelf zal verklaren. Merk op dat contentie van mijn brief door gepubliceerd blauwboek geconstateerd wordt.

TRANSLATION

We have never received copies of telegrams from Bloemfontein and I suppose that they have for some reason or other been purposely kept back—which Fischer will probably explain to you himself. Note that contention of my letter is supported by published bluebook.

98 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 16

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts*To:* Hofmeyr*Dated:* 15 June 1899

Copieën telegrammen zoeven van Bloemfontein ontvangen.
Heb nog niets erop gedaan.

TRANSLATION

Copies of telegrams have just been received from Bloemfontein. Have not yet done anything about them.

99 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 1, no. 30

City Club

Kaapstad

17 Juni 1899

Amice, Uw schrijven van 13 gister avond ontvangen.

Fischer is nu hier. Hij vertrekt Maandag (19) naar Bloemfontein en hoopt een week later te Pretoria te zijn. Hij heeft uitvoerige gesprekken gehad met de Ministers, den Gouverneur, en mij.

Hij is volkomen op de hoogte van onze gevoelens, voornemens, en beweegredenen in het niet houden van vergaderingen en het niet nemen van ander openbare stappen. Komt hij te Pretoria, dan kan hij U en anderen vrienden alles breedvoerig vertellen.

Het zij thans genoeg U te zeggen, dat hij *nu* niet van zich kan verkrijgen, ons gedrag te veroordeelen of ons aan te raden anders te handelen dan wij tot dusver hebben gedaan.

Ik kan U verzekeren dat wij ten zeerste sympathiseeren met U en niet alleen Chamberlain en Rhodes, maar Sir Arthur, Mr Fiddes en andere meneeren goed kennen. Maar wij zijn vast gedetermineerd ons niet te laten bewegen door wrevel, verontwaardiging, hartstochten of wat ook, om de zaak des vredes, en daardoor ook uwe eigene belangen, te benadeelen. Is de tijd daar dat wij *goed* kunnen doen door meetings te houden of zeer *kwaad* kunnen *verhinderen* door meetings na te laten, dan zullen wij duidelijk worden gehoord.

Een reden waarom wij tot dusver zwegen is omdat wij meenen dat Kruger's Conferentie voorstellen, met enkele veranderingen, zeer aannemelijk kunnen worden gemaakt en wij gaarne publiek daarop willen aandringen en heel ons Koloniaal Afrikaanderdom verkrijgen om hetzelfde te doen. Maar komen wij haastig met de wijzigingen voor den dag en keurt Z. Exc. ze goed (waarop veel kans is), doch keurt Kruger ze af, dan eischt hij, zamen met heel de jingo pers, onze ondersteuning als één met hem tegenover U, en zoured wij Transvaal mooi van den wal in de sloot hebben geholpen. Daarom wachten wij tot gij Oom Paul zult hebben bewogen onze wijzigingen, of de voornaamste althans, aan te nemen.

Fischer heeft afschrift onzer aanbevelingen en zal ze U voorleggen. De voornaamste komen op het volgende neer (zoover als ik ze me uit 't hoofd kan herinneren):—

1. Verduidelijking van sommige secties in Oom Paul's Conferentie voorstellen, (zooals: die over de 6 maanden kennisgeving, ooteerende vonnissen, voortdurend verblijf, recht op burgerschap in vreemde staten enz.) waardoor Z. Ex's beoordeelingen ontzenuwd zouden worden.
2. *Tien* jaar verblijf voor *presidents* en *komdt.-generaals* kiesing—waardoor die ambten geseecureerd zouden worden voor de oude burgerij, en de burgers gemakkelijker zouden te bewegen zijn in te gaan voor.
3. Spoedige registratie van Uitlanders die *voor* 1890 in 't land waren, en registratie na een *verblijf* van *tien* jaar, of na verloop van 7 jaren, gerekend van heden (whatever date may come first) van Uitlanders die nu in het land zijn, maar zich daar vestigden *na* 1890:—doch daarbij gevoegd de bepaling dat, indien *dexe* twee klassen van Uitlanders zich begeeven naar andere distrikten dan waar zij hunne burgerrechten verkregen, zij daar niet kunnen stemmen voor den 1sten Volksraad, alvorens den qualificatie tijd bepaald in Kruger's Conferentie voorstellen bereikt te hebben (Dit om verneukery te verhinderen).
4. Eedsaflegging te geschieden òf na 2 jaar òf na 7 jaar, al naar applikanten mogen verkiezen. (Laat hen kiezen of

|| zij eerst *halve* burgers of meteen *heele* burgers willen worden).

5. Degelijke Registratie en omkooprij acten—ter verhinderen van Progressieve streken.

Ik kan U nu niet al de argumenten noemen voor deze voorstellen en andere vervat in Fischer's memorandum. Gij zult ze wel zelf vatten. Die welke hierboven gemerkt zijn met een *dubbele* streep zullen het meest in den smaak vallen van den H. Commissaris. Tegen sommige der andere *zou hij zelfs objectie kunnen maken*. Maar ik heb niet alles aan zijn smaak willen opofferen.

Handelt de Transvaal in den geest der bedoelde suggesties en maakt ze de dynamiet kwestie recht, dan kunnen en zullen de koloniale Afrikaanders openlijk van hunne sympathie blijken geven, zullen vele Uitlanders aan den Rand worden gewonnen, zal een diepe indruk worden gemaakt op de publieke opinie der beskaafde wereld, zal zij in een beter positie zijn in hare andere disputen met Chamberlain en een oorlog zoo goed als onmogelijk worden.

Ik smeed U overweeg ze ernstig.

Met hartelijke groeten en de allerbeste wenschen, Uw Vriend,
Jan Hofmeyr

P.S. Onder onze Kaapsche Afrikaanders bestaat groote verontwaardiging over Z. Excs. jongste depêches aan Chamberlain, maar het is thans goede politiek te gelooven *dat de telegraaf verkeerd is!* Zie *Ons Land* van heden an l.l. Donderdag.

TRANSLATION

City Club
Cape Town
17 June 1899

Amice, Your letter of 13th received yesterday evening.

Fischer is now here. He leaves on Monday (19th) for Bloemfontein and hopes to be in Pretoria a week later. He has had detailed discussions with the Ministers, the Governor and me.

He is fully informed of our feelings, intentions and motives in not holding meetings and not taking other public steps. If he

comes to Pretoria he can tell you and other friends everything in detail.

It is at the moment enough to say to you that he *now* cannot bring himself to condemn our conduct or to advise us to act otherwise than we have so far done.

I can assure you that we strongly sympathize with you and know well not only Chamberlain and Rhodes, but Sir Arthur [Lawley], Mr [G. V.] Fiddes and other gentlemen. But we are fully determined not to let ourselves be moved by resentment, indignation, passion, or anything else, to the disadvantage of the cause of peace and therefore also your own interests. If the time comes when we can do *good* by holding meetings or can *hinder* serious *harm* by omitting meetings, then we shall be clearly heard.

One reason why we have so far been silent is because we think that Kruger's Conference proposals can, *with some changes*, be made very acceptable and we should like to insist on that in public and get our whole Colonial Afrikanerdom to do the same. But if we come out in a hurry with the amendments and if His Excellency approves them (of which there is much chance), but Kruger disapproves them, then he, together with the whole jingo press, claims our support as at one with him against you, and we should have helped the Transvaal nicely from the frying-pan into the fire. Therefore we are waiting until you will have persuaded Oom Paul to accept our amendments, or at any rate, the most important of them.

Fischer has a copy of our recommendations and will submit them to you. The most important amount to the following (as far as I can remember them out of my head):—

1. Clarification of some sections in Oom Paul's Conference proposals (such as those on the six months notice, dishonouring sentences, continuous residence, right to citizenship in foreign states etc.) by which His Excellency's criticisms would be spiked.
2. *Ten* years residence for election of *President* and *Commandant-General* by which these offices would be secured for the old burghers, and the burghers would be more easily persuaded to go in for them.

3. Speedy registration of Uitlanders who were in the country *before* 1890, and registration after *ten years' residence*, or after the expiration of seven years, reckoned from now (whatever date may come first) of Uitlanders who are now in the country, but settled there *after* 1890: but added to this the stipulation, that if *these* two classes of Uitlanders move to other districts than where they obtained their citizen rights, they cannot vote there for the First Volksraad before having reached the qualification time stipulated in Kruger's Conference proposals. (This in order to stop cheating.)
4. The taking of the oath to occur either after two years or after seven years, according to the applicant's choice. (Let them choose whether they want to become *half* burghers at first or *whole* burghers at once.)
5. Proper registration and bribery acts—to stop Progressive tricks.

I cannot mention all the arguments for these proposals and others contained in Fischer's memorandum. You will grasp them yourself. Those which are marked above with a *double* line will be most to the taste of the High Commissioner. To some of the others *he may even object*. But I have not wished to sacrifice everything to his taste.

If the Transvaal acts in the spirit of the indicated suggestions and if she puts the dynamite question right, then the Colonial Afrikaners can and will openly show their sympathy, many Uitlanders on the Rand will be won over, a deep impression will be made on the public opinion of the civilized world, she will be in a better position in her other disputes with Chamberlain and a war will become as good as impossible.

I beg you to consider them seriously.

With hearty greetings and the very best wishes, Your friend,
Jan Hofmeyr

P.S. There is great indignation among our Cape Afrikaners about His Excellency's latest despatches to Chamberlain,¹ but it is at present good policy to believe that *the telegraph is wrong!* See *Ons Land* of today and last Thursday.

¹ After the abortive Bloemfontein Conference, Milner's despatch of 4 May 1899 was published in which he described the Uitlanders as 'helots'.

100 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 17

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts*To:* Hofmeyr*Dated:* 20 June 1899

Uw brief ontvangen. Hartelijk dank. Sommige uwer punten zijn nog misschien uitvoerbaar. Ik heb dag en nacht gewerkt reeds en heb nog goede hoop.

TRANSLATION

Your letter received. Many thanks. Some of your points may perhaps be feasible. I have already worked day and night and still have good hopes.

101 To J. X. Merriman

Vol. 1, no. 111

Pretoria

18 June 1899

My dear Mr Merriman, It is a long time since I last wrote to you, but off and on I have written to Schreiner and no doubt he has shown you my letters. Often recently I have wished to come down to Cape Town to have a personal talk with my friends there, but the position up here is so critical that it is not possible for me to be absent from Pretoria for any length of time.

The situation is surely a very puzzling one. Our franchise legislation since 1890 has taken place without the least, even unofficial, warning from Great Britain; and now all of a sudden Sir Alfred Milner finds in a popular franchise the panacea for all our ailments and promptly suggests one which will result in the swamping of the old population in a couple of years. Further, in what respect is the situation today worse than it was a year or two years ago? I had thought that of late both our administration and legislation as affecting the Uitlanders had been rapidly improving—and all at once I find that ‘the case for intervention’ has become overwhelming! I should say that the case for intervention is today weaker than it has been ever before.

But it has become perfectly plain to me that we have to do with a second Sir Bartle Frere; the situation is being forced from the outside in order, by an armed conflict, to forestall or defeat the work of time. Again, lying petitions are resorted to to simulate the true voice of the people; again a danger to Her Majesty's South African dominions ('disaffection among the Dutch Colonists') has arisen and is urged as a final excuse for intervention.

You, who stood by South Africa through good report and evil, who have done as much as any South African politician to foster a spirit of sane and healthy self-reliance among its people, will not shirk your duty now, and will not hesitate to meet the opponents of peace and gradual evolution with the tactics which succeeded in 1880.¹ I feel that no stone will be left unturned to upset your Ministry—to seduce your supporters from their party loyalty and so to get a Ministry adverse to peace with the South African Republic. I pray you therefore by all the aims you have fought for as a true South African to be exceedingly careful, to forestall the tactics of the enemy and, in time, to take such steps as will render perfectly clear to the Home Government and to the English people that there is no case for forcible intervention in South Africa, and that those that urge such an insensate course are enemies of South Africa.

Our people are gradually realizing that they are becoming a great state and that with their rapidly developing importance come more onerous duties of careful administration and statesmanlike legislation. But then there must be no despatches with threats of intervention. I have great hope that within a few years all just causes of complaint of whatever kind will have disappeared altogether and it fills me with a savage indignation to think that the work of those who are spending their substance and life-blood for South Africa is to be undone in a moment by academic nobodies who fancy themselves great imperial statesmen. Adieu, *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

¹ A reference to the attempt made by the Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, and Sir Bartle Frere to federate South Africa 'from the outside'—a policy strongly opposed by Merriman (1877–80).

102 From J. X. Merriman

Vol. 1, no. 68

Treasury
Cape Town
21 June 1899

Private

My dear Mr Smuts, I was on the point of writing to you when I got your letter. Schreiner had showed me yours to him and it rather alarmed me. I think you take rather a wrong view of our position. You must see that for us now at the present juncture to precipitate a conflict which might end as it did in 1878 would not improve but might even fatally prejudice all hope of tiding over our present difficulties. You may take it from me that all of us are working in season and out of season to avert the calamity that threatens us all and that no personal considerations will make us shrink from doing our duty. Schreiner and Hofmeyr have rendered South Africa services during this time of stress and strain which are simply inestimable and it is painful to me to think that they should not be understood or appreciated. For myself you know the principles I have always held and fought for to settle South African affairs in South Africa—and I shall do my utmost to maintain them. My earnest advice to you is to act entirely irrespective of all the wild talk and the irritating and malicious rumours that reach your ears. Go straight on and do your duty like men. That duty seems to me at the present time to maintain peace and set yourselves right with the world by granting such modifications in President Kruger's proposals—which I thankfully acknowledge to be a marvellous advance on anything previously put forward—as may commend themselves to all moderate men. I am convinced that nine out of ten men who become citizens of the Republic will be good republicans and sharing to the fullest extent your wishes to make the Transvaal a great country. I am sure that it will not become so unless it adopts the old liberal policy of Holland and England as regards the stranger within her gates. Modified as that policy may be by circumstances I beg of you therefore to strengthen our hands at this juncture and to defeat the common enemy who aims at destroying free government in South Africa by capitalist rule. *Reculer pour mieux sauter* is a good motto.

I feel much for you personally in your position. I know how much you have had to contend against and how much you have done, but keep cool and *alles zal regt komen*.¹

Do not make our task difficult by an impossible attitude!

I had a very pleasant evening at your old college the other day. I daresay you often wish you were back there a happy undergraduate. Yours truly,

John X. Merriman

My kind regards to President Kruger. Schreiner asks me to give you his kind regards; he concurs entirely in my views.

103 From F. S. Malan

Vol. 1, no. 51

Ons Land Kantoor
Kaapstad
21 Juni 1899

Mijn beste Jan, Jou brief van 17 dezer ter hand, waarvoor ik jou dank. Dat julle positie moeilijk is verstaan wij. Van de sympathie der Koloniale Afrikaanders zijt julle verzekerd—Milner, *Cape Times*, enz. beschuldigen ons integendeel van *te veel* sympathie te hebben. Wij zijn bevreesd besluiten te nemen, zonder eerst van Pretoria vernomen te hebben of onze wenken aangenomen zullen worden, want anders neemt Milner ze dadelijk tegen julle aan, en dan zijn onze handen tegen julle gebonden. Ook wachten wij op depêche van Milner, waarover U schrijft want dat wij hem zullen pakken als 't waar is, en als de crisis voorbij is, behoeft jij niet te betwijfelen. Het zou echter slechte politiek zijn hem thans te hard aan te vallen, daar hij dan desperaat kan worden en de positie kan weggeven. Eerst uit 't bosch en dan zullen wij hem pakken.

Hij is reeds zoo boos op *Ons Land* als komen kan. Hij heeft gezegd, hoor ik, dat *Ons Land* hem een leugenaar heeft genoemd, waaruit ik afleid dat Reuter-bericht aangaande despatch waar is, maar 't komt niet in mijn kraam te pas dit thans publiek te zeggen.

¹ 'Everything will come right'—a saying attributed to Jan H. Brand, President of the Orange Free State (1864–88), who had, however, added 'als iedereen zijn plicht zal doen' ('if everyone will do his duty').

Ou boet, doe toch jou best de voorgestelde veranderingen door te krijgen. Fischer heeft ze—ik heb U inhoud reeds getelegrafeerd. Neem julle die aan, dan is de zaak gevonden. Geloof mij dat wij met gevoelvolle harten julle kamp tegen tegenpartij gadeslaan. Ik ben hoopvol en vol vertrouwen—omringd van veel dat zieldoodend is.

Milner zal *moeten* tevreden zijn met de door ons voorgestelde amendaties, en ik wil hem gaarne den touw geven om bij af te klimmen—dan pakken de honden hem toch. Onze amendaties beveiligen de Transvaal meer dan 't origineele voorstel.

Nog dit—beantwoord Chamberlain's depêche *seriatim* punt voor punt—niet met generalities. Het zal groot effect maken en 't Engelsche publiek iets geven om over te denken. Vergelijking hier en daar met Rhodesia zal misschien goed doen. Jij hebt zeker op Rhodesia Council klucht spel gelet. De gekozen leden onmachtig tegen Charter en Charter tegen de bevolking. Groeten aan jou vrouwtje, Houd maar moed, Jou vriend

F. S. Malan

TRANSLATION

Ons Land Office
Cape Town
21 June 1899

My dear Jan, Your letter of 17 June to hand, for which I thank you. That your position is difficult we understand. You may be assured of the sympathy of the Colonial Afrikaners—Milner, *Cape Times* etc. accuse us on the other hand of having *too much* sympathy. We are afraid to make decisions, without first having learned from Pretoria whether our suggestions will be accepted, because otherwise Milner will at once accept them against you, and then our hands are tied against you. We are also waiting for Milner's despatch of which you write, for you need not doubt that we shall tackle him if it is true and when the crisis is past. It would, however, be bad policy to attack him too strongly now, as he may then get desperate and give the position away. Out of the wood first and then we shall tackle him.

He is already as angry with *Ons Land* as he can be.¹ He has

¹ F. S. Malan had become editor of *Ons Land* in 1896.

said, I hear, that *Ons Land* has called him a liar, from which I conclude that the Reuter report concerning the despatch is true, but it does not suit my book to say this publicly at present.

Old chap, do do your best to get the proposed changes through. Fischer has them—I have already telegraphed you the contents. If you accept these, then the thing is done. Believe me, we watch your fight against your opponent with feeling hearts. I am hopeful and full of confidence—surrounded by much that is soul-destroying.

Milner will *have* to be satisfied with the amendments proposed by us, and I should like to give him a rope to climb down by—then the dogs will in any case seize him. Our amendments safeguard the Transvaal more than the original proposal.

One thing more—answer Chamberlain's despatch¹ *seriatim*, point by point—not with generalities. It will have a great effect and give the English public something to think about. Comparison here and there with Rhodesia may perhaps do good. You have no doubt noticed the Rhodesia Council farce.² The elected members impotent against the Charter and the Charter against the population. Greetings to your little wife. Keep up your courage, Your friend,

F. S. Malan

104 From W. P. Schreiner

Vol. 1, no. 97

Prime Minister's Office
Cape Town
22 June 1899

My dear Smuts: I have your letter,³ and have also read your letters to Merriman and Hofmeyr. Merriman's letter in reply goes on lines which I quite agree with. My strong recommendation, from my heart, to you all is to endeavour to make those modifications which your friends, and that means all of us here, suggest through Fischer to render the franchise proposals of

¹ This despatch, written on 10 May 1899, was released immediately after the Bloemfontein Conference. It marked the official endorsement of Uitlander claims by the British Government.

² By Order-in-Council of November 1898, a Legislative Council had been set up in Rhodesia, the settlers being able to elect only a minority of the members.

³ See E. A. Walker, *W. P. Schreiner, a South African*, pp. 160–61.

the President what they might have been had the Conference been carried further. In this way you will unite and consolidate sympathy. Do remember that individuals vanish but Africa remains: and don't think that an attack upon any individual, however open to attack, can solve problems. Abuse by us of the plaintiff's attorney would neither help the defendant or Africa—whose enemies would delight in seeing a constitutional imbroglio in this Colony, and an uncompromising *non possumus* on the part of the Transvaal. Do Right, though the Devil jeers. I am deeply sympathetic with your troubled position, but keep very calm and move forward. Yours truly,

W. P. Schreiner

105 From T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 18

TELEGRAM

From: Te Water

To: Smuts

Dated: 30 June 1899

Friends wish Hofmeyr to meet you at Bloemfontein tomorrow evening with such Pretoria men as you wish to bring. If you are ready he will start this afternoon. Wire him sharp City Club.

106 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 19

Zorgvliet

Pretoria

9 Juli 1899

Waardste Vriend, Wanneer ik terug denk aan de bekommernisvolle dagen waardoor wij zoo ver gegaan zijn, dan kan ik niet nalaten een woord van dank uit den grond mijns harten aan U te richten voor de groote diensten die U in die dagen aan het Afrikanervolk en onze Republiek in het bijzonder verricht hebt. Dat de situatie gered is en de positie waarin de vijand ons als in de hol van zijn hand meende te houden plotseling veranderd is in de hereeniging van ons volk over geheel Zuid-Afrika is niet het minst aan U en Fischer te danken. Op dezen weg

voortgaande zal onze nationale zaak het rechte spoor nooit bijster worden.

Het was voor ons gister een bron van verheuging te zien dat Schreiner zoo spoedig zijn deel van de stilzwijgende verstandhouding was nagekomen en zijn opinie omtrent de situatie en het door ons gedane werk zoo rondborstig had uitgesproken. Mijn vurige wensch is dat het Koloniale Afrikanerdom thans het werk moge voltooien door u te Pretoria begonnen en dat zij door hun stem en daden de Transvaalsche volk overtuige van de zuiverheid hunner positie en sympathie.

Hartelijk dank voor uw brief en opmerkingen naar aanleiding van het door mijn opgetrokken concept. Vele uwer wenken heb ik aangenomen; andere weer waren overbodig; weer andere moeten overstaan voor ons registratie wet.

Fischer is gister avond vertrokken naar Bloemfontein. In den loop van den namiddag ontving hij verscheidene berichten waarin aangedrongen werd op de herstelling der 'conference spirit'. U weet wat ek daarover denk. Toen wij op het punt stonden van uit elkaar te gaan bij de Bloemfontein Conferentie gaven wij aan de hand dat de 'conference spirit' zou worden aangehouden en beide partijen hun best zouden doen om het werk der Conferentie niet nutteloos te maken. Het antwoord daarop was dat alles op een einde was, dat wij op eigen rekening konden doen wat wij wilden, doch dat *niets* zou worden gedaan als een gevolg der Conferentie. Aldus werd ons voorstel met verachting van de hand geslaan. Zullen wij Milner nu helpen uit de verwarring waarin hij door zijn eigen knoeierij is gebracht ?

Ik laat hem over aan den geest van dat Afrikanerdom dat hij tijdig en ontijdig heeft beleedigd. *t.t.*

J. C. Smuts

Note on face in pencil:

No reply by letter, ground being mostly covered by wires.

TRANSLATION

Zorgvliet¹

Pretoria

9 July 1899

Dear Friend, When I think back to the anxious days through which we have so far gone, I cannot fail to send you a word of

¹ The name of Smuts's house in Sunnyside, Pretoria.

thanks from the bottom of my heart for the great services that you have rendered in these days to the Afrikaner people and our Republic in particular. That the situation has been saved, and that the position in which the enemy thought to hold us as in the hollow of his hand, has suddenly changed into the reunion of our people throughout South Africa, is due not least to you and Fischer. Going forward on this road our national cause will never lose the right way.

It was a source of rejoicing to us yesterday to see that Schreiner had so speedily fulfilled his share of the tacit understanding, and had so roundly expressed his opinion of the situation and the work done by us. My ardent wish is that Colonial Afrikanerdom may now complete the work begun by you at Pretoria, and that they may, by their voice and deeds, convince the Transvaal people of the honesty of their position and sympathy.

Hearty thanks for your letter and remarks about the Bill drawn up by me.¹ I have accepted many of your suggestions; others were superfluous; others again must stand over for our registration law.

Fischer left yesterday evening for Bloemfontein. In the course of the afternoon he received various reports in which the recovery of the 'conference spirit' was stressed. You know what I think of that. When we were on the point of dispersing at the Bloemfontein Conference, we suggested that the 'conference spirit' should be preserved and that both parties should do their best not to render the work of the Conference useless. The answer to that was that everything was over, that we could do what we wished on our own account, but that *nothing* would be done as a result of the Conference. Thus our suggestion was contemptuously refused. Shall we now help Milner out of the confusion into which he has been brought by his own intrigues?

I leave him to the spirit of that Afrikanerdom which he has insulted in season and out of season. *Totus tuus.*

J. C. Smuts

¹ Hofmeyr's discussions with Smuts, Steyn and others, and his representations to the Executive Council and the Volksraad of the South African Republic, had resulted in the drawing up of a new Franchise Bill which was passed on 19 July 1899. See J. S. Marais, *op. cit.* pp. 295-302.

107 From T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 20

TELEGRAM

From: Te Water*To:* Smuts*Dated:* 10 July 1899

Hofmeyr wishes you when wiring text new concept¹ to Schreiner to ask him hand copy to Milner. Might do some good.

108 To T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 21

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts*To:* Te Water*Dated:* 11 July 1899

Your telegram of yesterday conveying message from Hofmeyr has been carefully considered by me. I doubt whether course proposed will do any good. There is no indication in what spirit it will be received and after what has happened I am afraid the communication through Prime Minister which is in any case informal would be resented for obvious reason. I have no other objection against informally authorizing Prime Minister to communicate copy to His Excellency.

109 From T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 22

TELEGRAM

(Draft)

From: Te Water*To:* Smuts*Dated:* 11 July 1899

Hofmeyr meent dat het zou zeer te betreuren zijn indien nieuw concept in committee ging voordat iets werd gedaan om conferentie geest met andere partij te herstellen al zou maar een kopie van het concept worden gezonden aan Greene met een paar beleefde woorden te kennen gevende dat concept werd

¹ The Franchise Bill.

gesteld meer of min naar aanleiding van Conferentie. Dring niet aan op certificaat van vier burgers. Dat word beschouwd as irritating restriction. Twee burgers moeten genoeg zijn met alternatief van zoodanig ander getuigenis als een gerechtshof zou bevredigen. Onze Afrikaander vrienden gaan nu aan het werk. De kerk begon reeds gister. Wijs dit met zijn beste groeten aan leden van Uitvoerenden Raad en Voorzitters beide raden.

TRANSLATION

Hofmeyr thinks that it would be most regrettable if new draft were to go to committee before something had been done to restore conference spirit with the other party even if only a copy of the Bill were sent to Greene with a few polite words indicating that Bill had been framed more or less on lines of Conference. Do not insist on certificate of four burghers. That is regarded as irritating restriction. Two burghers should be enough with the alternative of such other evidence as would satisfy a court of law. Our Afrikaner friends are now getting busy. The Church began yesterday. Show this with his best wishes to members of Executive Council and Chairmen of both Volksraads.

110 To T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 23

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts
To: Te Water
Dated: 12 July 1899

Er zal gehandelt worden volgens uw en Hofmeyr's wenk omtrent copie aan Britsch agent. Voor doeleinde van certificaat veranderd in twee. Verder is het ons doel geweest wet zooveel mogelijk te verbeteren. Zoo u nog eenige suggesties heeft zend toch dadelijk daar wet morgen behandeld wordt.

TRANSLATION

Action will be taken in accordance with your and Hofmeyr's suggestion about copy to British agent. For purposes of certificate changed to two. For the rest it has been our aim to

improve law as much as possible. If you have any more suggestions do send at once as law will be dealt with tomorrow.

Between 12 and 13 July 1899 further telegrams passed between Hofmeyr and Smuts in which Hofmeyr suggested various modifications of the franchise Bill to facilitate the acquisition of the vote by the Uitlanders. Smuts replied that his Government was doing its best to meet Hofmeyr's wishes.

111 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 29

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts
To: Hofmeyr
Dated: 15 July 1899

In telegram van gister door Fischer gezonden spreekt u van voornamen werk aan mij gegeven. Welken bizonderen werk bedoelt u? Ik begin hoopvoller te worden wat situatie betreft. Geest hier is niet slecht.

TRANSLATION

In telegram of yesterday sent through Fischer you speak of important work given to me. What particular work do you mean? I begin to be more hopeful about the situation. Spirit here is not bad.

112 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 30

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts
To: Hofmeyr
Dated: 17 July 1899

Heb in de laatste dagen met alle kracht gewerkt om art. 4 op zeven jaar gesteld te krijgen. Er is een kans van slagen. Zend toch onmiddellijk een zeer sterk telegram om mijne handen te sterken. Ik telegrafeer ook aan Fischer en Schreiner.

TRANSLATION

Have in the last few days worked with all my powers to get Article 4 fixed at seven years.¹ There is a chance of success. Do send a very strong telegram at once to strengthen my hands. I am also telegraphing to Fischer and Schreiner.

113 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 31

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr*To:* Smuts*Dated:* 17 July 1899

Hoewel onze schikking zedelijken steun van Afrikaanders in belang van vrede bevordert blijf de vrede zelf zeer bedenkelijk. Het is uiterst noodzakelijk dat zeven jaar retrospectief wordt gemaakt en concept vereenvoudigd indien mogelijk in verstandhouding met andere partij. Ik zend U belangrijk telegram over Bloemfontein.

TRANSLATION

Although our settlement furthers moral support of Afrikaners in interests of peace, peace itself remains very doubtful. It is highly necessary that seven years be made retrospective and the Bill simplified, if possible by understanding with other party. I am sending you important telegram via Bloemfontein.

114 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 32

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr*To:* Fischer*Dated:* 17 July 1899

Please code Smuts from me: With aid of legal friends I have drafted and am posting a simplified version of concept,

¹ The proposed period after which Uitlanders already domiciled might be enfranchised.

incorporating our agreements and subsequent amendments, which I think will go far towards removing objections and difficulties. The issue is so momentous that I think you would be justified in asking Raad to postpone further consideration of concept to give you opportunity to consider above version and modify concept in accordance therewith. As concept stands its apparent complexity tells against it even with friends such as *Daily Chronicle* and many here. Devise some plan making sure that the real Uitlander will elect the four new members¹ at ensuing election and not be swamped by old burghers—which would be fatal. Situation remains grave.

115 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 33

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts*To:* Hofmeyr*Dated:* 18 July 1899

Heb uw telegram door Bloemfontein ontvang. Spijt mij dat aan uw wenk niet kan worden voldaan daar wet vandag of morgen zal passeeren. Spijt mij erg dat U administratieve bepalingen te ingewikkeld vind. Mijns inziens zijn zij billijk en zullen zij goed werken. De seven jaren retrospectief is gepasseerd. Als uw publiek nu nog niet tevreden is dan kunnen wij het niet helpen. Wij hebben eerlijk onze plicht gedaan en kunnen onze zaak in handen der voorzienigheid laten.

TRANSLATION

Have received your telegram via Bloemfontein. I regret that your suggestion cannot be met as law will be passed today or tomorrow. I regret very much that you find the administrative provisions too complicated. In my opinion they are reasonable and will work well. The seven years retrospective [provision] has been passed. If your public is now not yet satisfied we cannot help it. We have honestly done our duty and may leave our cause in the hands of Providence.

¹ The Witwatersrand was to have four additional members in the Volksraad.

116 From T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 34

TELEGRAM

From: Te Water
To: Smuts
Dated: 19 July 1899

Hofmeyr heeft uw telegram van gister ontvangen. Hartelijk geluk met uw succes omtrent zeven jaar. Wanneer hij U lastig valt met raad en wenken dan is het niet om zijn publiek te bevredigen want dat is al lang bevredigd maar in belang van vrede en Republieken. Blijf koel. *Festina lente*. Hij bindt U zijn telegram over Bloemfontein gezonden nogmaals op het hart. Het gerevideerde concept U Maandag gepost werd niet finaal door hem nagezien. Hij zal U daarom wellicht morgen ochtend vroeg een paar verbeteringen daarin telegrafeeren. God zij met U.

TRANSLATION

Hofmeyr has received your telegram of yesterday. Hearty congratulations on your success about seven years. When he troubles you with advice and suggestions it is not to satisfy his public, for that has long been satisfied, but in the interests of peace and Republics. Keep cool. *Festina lente*. He exhorts you once more to heed his telegram via Bloemfontein. The revised Bill posted to you Monday was not finally corrected by him. He will therefore probably tomorrow morning early telegraph a few corrections to it. God be with you.

117 From J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 35

TELEGRAM

From: Hofmeyr
To: Smuts
Dated: 20 July 1899

Concept gepasseerd zijnde zal ik U nu niet lastig vallen met veranderingen erin. Bewaren die. Ik hoop het beste maar vrees wij zijn nog niet uit het bosch.

TRANSLATION

As the Bill has been passed I shall now not trouble you with changes in it. Am keeping these. I hope for the best but fear we are not yet out of the wood.

118 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 36

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts*To:* Hofmeyr*Dated:* 27 July 1899

Gisteren werd de stemrecht wet in Staatscourant gepubliceerd met instructies aan de betrokken ambtenaren omtrent de betekenis en operatie en toepassing der wet. Deze instructies, een opsomming waarvan U reeds in Reuter telegram heeft gezien, maken duidelijk de moeilijkheden die U had en maken administratie ook uiterst eenvoudig. Verder heeft Uitvoerende Raad heden ochtend besloten 4 nieuwe leden in ieder Volksraad aan den Witwatersrand te geven en de kwestie van verdeeling aan Commissie over te laten die tevens zal rapporteren over de wenschelijkheid van andere leden aan andere goudvelden te geven. Heden ochtend werd in grondwet vastgesteld dat stemrecht termijn van 7 jaren zal gehandhaafd blijven en dus op onveranderlijke basis geplaatst worden. Gelieve ook aan Schreiner en Te Water te toonen. Re dynamiet is sterke Commissie door Volksraad benoemd.

Note on face in Hofmeyr's handwriting:

Dank vir telegram. Zend zes exemplaren nieuwe wet en uwe toelichting.

TRANSLATION

Yesterday the franchise law was published in the Government Gazette with instructions to the officials concerned on the meaning and operation and application of the law. These instructions, of which you have already seen a summary in Reuter telegram, clarify the difficulties which you had and also make administration exceedingly simple. The Executive Council has also this morning decided to give the Witwatersrand

four new members in each Volksraad¹ and to leave the question of delimitation to a Commission which will at the same time report on the desirability of giving other members to other gold-fields. This morning it was laid down in constitution that franchise term of seven years shall be maintained and thus put on unalterable basis. Please show also to Schreiner and Te Water. Re dynamite strong Commission has been appointed by Volksraad.

Note on face in Hofmeyr's handwriting:

Thanks for telegram. Send six copies new law and your explanation.

119 From T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 37

TELEGRAM

From: Te Water

To: Smuts

Dated: 12 August 1899

Wat is positie nu ? Zijt gij reeds tot eenig besluit gekomen ?

TRANSLATION

What is position now ? Have you arrived at any decision yet ?²

120 To T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 38

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts

To: Te Water

Dated: 12 August 1899

Antwoord nog steeds in ernstige overweging. Wij beseffen diep de beteekenis en gevolgen ervan.

TRANSLATION

Answer still being earnestly considered. We realize profoundly the significance and consequences of it.

¹ The legislative body of the South African Republic consisted of a First Volksraad and a Second Volksraad, established in 1890.

² Refers to Chamberlain's proposal of a joint inquiry into the franchise law to be followed by a Conference between Milner and Kruger.

121 Report (14 September 1899)

This report by Smuts to his Government on his conversations with the British Agent was published in a South African Republic green-book (No. 10 of 1899). An English translation was published in the *Transvaal Leader* of 22 September 1899 and was reprinted in a British blue-book (Cd. 43 of 1900). This translation appears below.

De onderhandelingen en onderhouden die ik met den heer Conyngham Greene, Britsch-Agent te Pretoria, gehad heb over de kwestie van stemrecht en aanverwante onderwerpen zijn van belang voor deze Regeering en daar er later misverstand over zou kunnen ontstaan en reeds ontstaan schijnt te zijn, neem ik bescheiden de vrijmoedigheid een volledig rapport aan de Regeering der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek over die onderhandelingen en onderhouden te doen.

In Juli laatstleden, eenige dagen na het passeeren van Wet no. 3, 1899, over het stemrecht en naturalisatie, kwam de heer Conyngham Greene naar mij ten einde een uitleg te vragen over zekere bepalingen dier wet. Ik heb hem toen zoo volledig mogelijk ingelicht in denzelfden geest en zin als later de instructies aan de ambtenaren over de uitvoering der wet in Circulaire C.B. 32/99 werden opgesteld.

Hij sprak met mij verder over de voorgestelde vertegenwoordiging der goudvelden in den Volksraad en ik zeide hem dat de nieuwe leden voor de goudvelden bedoeld, feitelijk aan de Witwatersrand goudvelden zouden worden gegeven, en dat ik niet dacht dat deze vertegenwoordiging der Uitlanders zou worden geneutraliseerd door de aanneming van een schema van algemeene uitbreiding van den Volksraad.

Ik geloofde niet dat het besluit van den Volksraad omtrent meerdere leden voor de districten in het algemeen te ernstig moest worden opgevat en dat wel mogelijk alleen Zoutpansberg en misschien de stad Pretoria een vermeerderde vertegenwoordiging zou erlangen. Het was bekend dat ZHEd de Staatspresident steeds tegen een te groote uitbreiding van den Volksraad was geweest.

De heer Conyngham Greene vroeg mij toen of de nieuwe leden van den Volksraad toegelaten zouden worden in hun eigen taal in den Volksraad te spreken. Ik antwoordde dat die kwestie door de Volksraad zou moeten worden beslist, en dat dat een van de punten was waarmede, zooals de Hooge

Commissaris te Bloemfontein zeide, de Uitlanders zich zelve zouden kunnen helpen zoodra zij eene uitgebreide vertegenwoordiging in den Volksraad hadden bekomen. Ik voegde er bij dat, wanneer er bijvoorbeeld Uitlanders als George Albu in den Volksraad zaten, die geen Hollandsch konden spreken maar genegen waren hartelijk met de oude bevolking samen te werken, de taalkwestie zich zelve zou beslissen als eene partij kwestie. In mijne opinie zou het verkeerd zijn de kwestie van taal tusschen de Regeeringen bij de bespreking eener mogelijke regeling te opperen, daar de Regeering heel waarschijnlijk dat punt niet zou toegeven.

De heer Conyngham Greene vroeg toen of onder de Stemrechtwet No. 3, 1899, de nieuwe burgers ook voor den President en Commandant-Generaal zouden kunnen stemmen. Ik antwoordde bevestigend en zeide dat wij er op tegen waren om twee klassen van burgers in het leven te roepen. Ik zeide dat 7-jarig stemrecht zeer vrijgevig was, en dat het mij niet zou verwonderen of zelfs daaronder over 10 of 15 jaar een Engelschman als President werd gekozen. Op grond hiervan zou de wijze van Presidentsverkiezing misschien veranderd worden; misschien ook niet.

Hij vroeg toen of ik het mogelijk dacht, dat de Volksraad bereid zou zijn eene garantie dezer wet aan de Britsche Regeering te geven. Hij stelde deze vraag, omdat ik het idee had geopperd van een finale regeling (settlement) op de basis der pas aangenomen wet; en hij zeide dat die wet natuurlijk niet naar willekeur moest worden veranderd. Dit was bijvoorbeeld gebeurd in het geval van het besluit waarbij de 'Jameson burgers' hun stemrecht hadden verloren, eene zaak, die in zijne opinie ons ontzaglijk veel nadeel had berokkend.

Ik antwoordde met betrekking tot de kwestie der garantie, dat deze Regeering nooit zoo iets zou willen doen; dat ik goed verstond waarom de Britsche Regeering op zoo iets zou willen aandringen, daar het als eene erkenning der suzeriniteit zou kunnen worden beschouwd. De heer Conyngham Greene vroeg toen wat wij dan zouden willen doen om Engeland te gemoet te komen met betrekking tot deze kwestie. Ik antwoordde dat, zoo Engeland gewillig was de Conventie van 1884 te laten varen en alle beweerde perken van onze onafhankelijkheid werden weggenomen, deze Regeering als het

begin van een nieuw tijdperk misschien eene zoodanige garantie zou kunnen geven. (Mijn idee was dat wij terug zouden keeren tot den toestand onder de Zandrivier Conventie gecreëerd maar dit zeide ik niet aan den heer Greene.) Ik zeide hem dat niets deze Regeering en de burgers zoo had gegriefd als de heer Chamberlain's persistente bewering der suzeriniteit.

Ik vroeg den heer Greene toen, waarom de Hooge Commissaris dacht, dat eene regeling der stemrecht kwestie tot eene finale oplossing zou leiden; zou dan het nieuwe element onder onze burgers niet even sterk voor de onafhankelijkheid des lands zijn als het oude? Hij zeide dat het zijne overtuiging was, dat het nieuwe element meer harmonisch met Engeland zou samen werken dan de oude burgers hadden gedaan en daardoor zouden de wederzijdsche disputen allengs verdwijnen. Ik leidde hieruit af, dat het zijne zienswijze was, dat de nieuwe burgers niet de inzichten der oude burgers omtrent de onafhankelijkheid des lands zouden deelen.

Na eenige verdere woorden over de kwestie van arbitrage in den geest van de correspondentie beiderszijds, gingen wij uiteen.

Ik had hem herhaalde malen gezegd, dat ik alleen mijn persoonlijke gevoelens uitdrukte over de aangeroerde kwesties en hij zeide dat hij dat goed verstond.

Voor een geruimen tijd na deze gelegenheid, zag ik den heer Greene niet en het was eerst op Zaterdag, 12 Augustus, nadat zaken door de uitnoodiging tot een gezamenlijk onderzoek in mijne opinie een ernstiger wending hadden genomen, dat ik den heer Greene weer zag aan zijn huis. Mijn doel was om uit te vinden wat door het gezamenlijk onderzoek eigenlijk bedoeld werd, en de Regeering wist dat ik den heer Greene daarover ging zien. Na eenige opmerkingen over de situatie en andere onderwerpen kwam het gesprek op het stemrecht. Ik vroeg hem of hij niet dacht dat eene regeling kon getroffen worden door Sir A. Milner's Bloemfontein voorstel op een 7-jarige basis te brengen, daar zulks eene eervolle oplossing voor beide partijen zoude zijn. Hij zeide dat er niet de minste kans hiertoe was; dat de Britsche Regeering bij den Hoogen Commissaris zou blijven staan en zich geen 7-jarige stemrecht laten welgevalen. Wij spraken toen over het gezamenlijk onderzoek. Ik zeide dat ik persoonlijk tegen het onderzoek was

daar het klaarblijkelijk bedoeld was als eene inmenging in onze binnenlandsche aangelegenheden. De heer Greene scheen ook te denken dat het eene inmenging was en zeide, dat de duidelijke en opzettelijke bedoeling der uitnoodiging was om Johannesburg in dit aanhangige dispuut te brengen. Het voorstel door Sir A. Milner te Bloemfontein gemaakt was op zichzelf een compromis en zoo billijk voor deze Regeering dat Johannesburg er niet mede tevreden was. Wij hadden dat voorstel van de hand geslagen; de Britsche Regeering had sedert enorme uitgaven gemaakt om de situatie te influenceeren, en men kon redelijkerwijze verwachten dat die uitgaven aanleiding zouden geven om nu verdere eischen te stellen. Johannesburg zou nu in de kwestie komen en Johannesburg had al zijne getuigenis en statistiek gereed om aan te toonen, dat het voorstel van Sir A. Milner te Bloemfontein te redelijk en gering was.

Ik vroeg hem of het dan de bedoeling van de Britsche Regeering was om nu nog verder te gaan dan te Bloemfontein; hij zeide dat hij geen autoriteit had zulks te zeggen, dat hij alleen dacht dat men nu verder zou willen gaan; doch dat de Hooge Commissaris voor eene moeilijkheid zou worden geplaatst, indien wij nu nog zijn voorstel aannamen, al was het reeds teruggetrokken, en dat volgens zijne zienswijze het misschien nog de beste koers voor ons zou zijn dat voorstel nog aan te nemen. Ik zeide dat als de Britsche Regeering werkelijk nog verder dan te Bloemfontein wenschte te gaan, zij duidelijk naar een reden tot oorlog zocht, want ik kon niet inzien in welk opzicht de belangen der Uitlanders thans meer hervormingen vorderden dan toen de Conferentie te Bloemfontein zat. Op dit punt gingen wij uiteen. Hij vroeg mij of ik wenschte dat hij eenige representaties zou maken; ik zeide, neen; dat als dat zijn houding was, er niets meer te doen was, daar ons volk nooit op een 5-jarige stemrecht zonder meer zou ingaan, en dat ook geen eervolle regeling zou zijn. Ik vroeg hem ons gesprek als uitsluitelijk persoonlijk en privaat te beschouwen. Hij zeide dat hij zulks zou doen.

Op Zondagavond, 13 Augustus, kwam een vriend naar mij die bekend was met het feit dat ik met den Britschen Agent over de kwestie van stemrecht had gesproken en met de houding van den heer Greene, zooals juist uiteengezet. Hij

zeide mij dat de heer Greene hem dien dag was komen bezoeken, en hem medegedeeld had, dat het Bloemfonteinvoorstel volgens zijne beschouwing nog open was voor aannahme. Dit in verband brengende met wat de heer Greene aan mij den vorigen dag had gezegd, kwam ik tot de conclusie dat hij intusschen de conversatie met mij had geseind naar zijne principalen, en dat hij nu in antwoord daarop beter was ingelicht; beide ik en mijn informant hadden het vermoeden dat des heeren Greene's bedoeling was dat zijne mededeeling mij zou bereiken. Ik ging daarop naar hem en dien avond hadden wij een zeer belangrijk onderhoud, waaruit ons voorwaardelijk voorstel van een 5-jarig stemrecht werd geboren.

Hij vroeg mij waarom ik een sterk bezwaar had tegen een 5-jarig stemrecht. Ik antwoordde dat de aannahme van een eenvoudig 5-jarig stemrecht na het gebeurde niet alleen voor ons een eerlooze schikking zou zijn, maar dat er het grootste gevaar in stak zoolang de heer Chamberlain bleef volharden bij zijne bewering van suzereiniteit en de Britsche Regeering zich bleef inmengen in onze binnenlandsche zaken in flagranten strijd met de Londensche Conventie. Deze punten waren voor mij van even groot belang als de kwestie van arbitrage, waarvan de President zooveel had gemaakt te Bloemfontein. Hij vroeg mij toen deze punten met hem te bespreken, er bijvoegende, dat hij zulks deed uit eigen beweging en geenszins op instructie. Ik ging voort en zeide dat ik nooit heb kunnen verstaan waarom de heer Chamberlain zoo hardnekkig bleef volharden bij zijne bewering van suzereiniteit. De suzereiniteit was m.i. van geen het minste practische nut voor Engeland. Engeland beschouwde zich de 'paramount power' in Zuid-Afrika lang voor er ooit sprake was over suzereiniteit, en als zij in het algemeen de 'paramount power' in Zuid-Afrika beweerde te zijn, waarom dan nog zich beroepen op de suzereiniteit, die zoo klaar en duidelijk werd afgeschaft in 1884. De bewering van 'paramount power', hoe ongegrond ook, kon ik verstaan, daar Engeland ontegenzeggelijk groote belangen in Zuid-Afrika had, maar de suzereiniteit was pure onzin, en in strijd met de historische feiten, en de Conventie van 1884.

De heer Greene voelde geen bezwaar tegen wat ik zeide, en voegde er bij dat, als de Britsche Regeering niet gevraagd werd te erkennen dat hare contentie van suzereiniteit

gedurende de laatste 3 jaren verkeerd was (wat voor haar eene vernedering zou zijn) doch alleen om voor de toekomst niet te persisteeren bij de bewering van de suzereiniteit, en het geschil over haar bestaan te laten varen, zulks door hem zou worden aanbevolen. Die contentie was gebaseerd op den aanhef van de Pretoria Conventie van 1881 en Harer Majesteits Regeering zou niet willen erkennen dat Hare contentie al die jaren verkeerd was. Ik zeide dat ik geen opening zou willen laten voor equivocatie in de toekomst; hij antwoordde dat het meer een kwestie was voor een rechtsgeleerde, maar het kwam hem voor dat als Engeland beloofde niet te persisteeren bij de bewering der Suzereiniteit, deze stilzwijgend zou vervallen. Op het bekende Engelsche beginsel van *estoppel* kwam dit mij juist voor. Mijne beschouwing dat inmenging zich niet weer behoort te herhalen en dat de Britsche Regeering zich in de toekomst stipt aan de artikelen van de Londensche Conventie zou moeten houden, vond hij ook goed. Arbitrage was reeds in beginsel door den Hoogen Commissaris toegestemd en de heer Greene stelde voor dat de bijzonderheden daarvan zouden worden overeengekomen terwijl de Stemrechtwet onder behandeling was, omdat de tegenwoordige spanning en oorlogstoebereidselen de Britsche Regeering zeer veel geld kosten. Hiervoor zou, dacht ik, deze Regeering ondernemen om een 5-jarig stemrecht zonder ingewikkelde details aan Volksraad en Volk aan te bevelen, 8 nieuwe leden aan Witwatersrand geven en toekomstige vertegenwoordiging der goudvelden (niet uitsluitelijk Witwatersrand) $\frac{1}{4}$ van den geheelen Volksraad te doen zijn.

Ik wou eerst bij zes nieuwe leden blijven maar hij antwoordde dat $\frac{1}{4}$ van den Volksraad het minst zoude zijn waarmede Engeland tevreden zou zijn als substantieele vertegenwoordiging. Hij vroeg mij toen weer of de nieuwe burgers voor President en Commandant-Generaal zouden kunnen stemmen; ik zeide ja, maar het was niet onmogelijk dat de tegenwoordige wijze van verkiezing zou veranderd worden door eene nieuwe bepaling in de Grondwet. Ik maakte hem attent op de bepalingen aangaande verkiezing van President in de Vereenigde Staten van Amerika en in Frankrijk maar kon niet zeggen of wij een dergelijken weg zouden inslaan. Hij zeide dat hij tevreden was zoolang nieuwe burgers evenals

de oude voor President en Commandant-Generaal konden stemmen.

Hij kwam toen weer op de kwestie van taal en vroeg of nieuwe leden hun eigen taal zouden kunnen spreken. Ik zeide dat ik alleen kon blijven bij wat ik hem in Juli had gezegd. Ik voegde hierbij dat het verkeerd en onbillijk zou zijn, dit een punt in de finale regeling tusschen de Regeeringen te maken. De Engelsche taal had achter zich de invloeden van geld, getalsterkte, algemeen gebruik en kon zeer goed voor zichzelf zorgen, zonder eenige overeenkomst tusschen de Regeeringen.

Hij vroeg toen of wij bereid zouden zijn een garantie te geven over de te veranderen Stemrechtwet. Ik antwoordde dat zulks onnoodig was, daar eene schikking toch te goeder trouw door beide partijen behoort te worden nagekomen. Hiermede was hij tevreden.

Ik zei toen dat er nog een punt was waarover ik gaarne verzekering willen hebben, namelijk, dat wij niet later door Engeland aansprakelijk zouden worden gehouden voor de uitgaven door haar gemaakt, met het doel ons te bedreigen terwijl vredesonderhandelingen nog steeds voortgingen. Hij zeide dat een zoodanige eisch hoogst onwaarschijnlijk was en dan het onnoodig zou zijn er formeel bij te persisteeren.

Hij zeide mij dat hij gehoord had dat onze burgers zich voor den oorlog voorbereiden en dat sommige naar de grenzen opgetrokken waren en voegde er bij, dat dat zeer nadeelig op de situatie zou werken. Ik antwoordde dat ik niets positiefs hiervan wist, maar zou de zaak voor mijne Regeering brengen indien hij ondernam hetzelfde te doen wat betreft de Engelsche bewegingen op onze grenzen. Hij antwoordde bevestigend.

Tot dusverre was het duidelijk verstaan dat ons onderhoud van een persoonlijken aard was, daar geen van beiden eenige instructie van onze Regeering had, tenminste ik had er geen. De vraag ontstond toen hoe verder in de zaak zou gehandeld worden. De afspraak was toen dat wij beiden informeel onze Regeeringen zouden raadplegen en indien zij zich met dit plan vereenigden, zou de zaak formeel behandeld worden. Hij zeide dat hij dacht dat wij een zoodanig voorstel zouden kunnen maken als een antwoord op de uitnoodiging tot het gezamenlijk onderzoek. Ik antwoordde toen dat ik mijne Regeering eerst in algemeene termen over de zaak zou raadplegen. Toen wij

uiteengingen zeide hij dat hij sterke hoop had dat er eene schikking op de voorgestelde basis te treffen was, en dat alleen strenge geheimhouding noodig was daar er een partij was die sterk tegen eene zoodanige schikking zou zijn, indien zij er van kwam te hooren.

Toen ik te huis was gekomen van dit onderhoud, maakte ik dadelijk een memorandum van de punten tusschen den heer Conyngham Greene en mij persoonlijk overeengekomen. Dit memorandum is hieraangehecht, gemerkt A. De rubrieken (*g*) en (*h*) ervan werden later bijgevoegd, zooals ik later zal uiteenzetten.

Den volgenden (Maandag) ochtend besprak ik de zaak met den Uitvoerenden Raad, die zijne algemeene bereidwilligheid betuigde op de voorgestelde basis te onderhandelen, indien er verzekering bestond, dat de Britsche Regeering met het voorstel eens was. Ik ging nog dienzelfden voormiddag naar den heer Greene; deelde hem mede dat de Regeering niet ongenegen was over de punten te onderhandelen, en vroeg hem, om zijne Regeering te raadplegen. Ik gaf hem Mem. A als een opsomming van de tusschen ons besproken punten; hij vroeg mij dat aan hem voor te lezen en wij bespraken het weder. Hij zeide dat ik vergeten had aan te teekenen dat nieuwe burgers ook voor President en Commandant-Generaal konden stemmen, en zou gaarne zien, dat hij zijne wenken over de details der Wet zou kunnen geven. Ik voegde toen in zijn kantoor de punten (*g*) en (*h*) in dit memorandum. Hij zeide dat ik het memorandum bij hem moest laten, en dat hij er op een telegram aan zijne Regeering zou optrekken, hetwelk hij mij nog in den loop van den dag zou toonen. Hij deed zulks, en het telegram door hem verzonden werd eerst door mij gelezen en geïnitialeerd; ik hecht hieraan copie B. Hierin komt niets van de taalkwestie voor. Mijne notas gaf hij mij toen terug.

In den loop der week zeide de heer Greene mij dat hij een antwoord had ontvangen; ik vroeg hem of dat gunstig was. Hij antwoordde dat over het geheel genomen het zeer gunstig was. Hij gaf mij toen een copie er van (copie C. hier aangehecht). Ik las het herhaalde malen en kon het niet dadelijk verstaan. Hij zeide dat het hem voorkwam dat de Britsche Regeering nooit zoodanig antwoord zoude gezonden hebben, waardoor zij duidelijk een voorstel uitlokte, indien het niet hare bedoeling

was dat voorstel aan te nemen. Ik zeide dat het mij geheel niet duidelijk was wat het telegram eigenlijk bedoelde. Ik vroeg hem toen of het van den heer Chamberlain kwam; hij antwoordde dat de zaak veel te belangrijk was en hij verzekerd was dat het Kabinet er over had beslist. Zoo sterk gevoelde hij dat het voorstel zou doorgaan dat hij mij vroeg onze stemrechtwet met hem te bespreken zoodat hij nu reeds zijne persoonlijke wenken kon geven en er dus geen tijd zou verloren zijn wanneer het antwoord kwam. (Hij heeft toen eenige avonden later in tegenwoordigheid van den heer J. W. Wessels zulks gedaan.) Hij zeide toen dat, met het oog op eene spoedige beëindiging der crisis, hij zeer blij zou zijn indien ons voorstel zonder eenig verzuim werd gemaakt. Ik zeide dat ik de Regeering in kennis zou stellen van het telegram.

Hij vroeg mij toen toch zooveel mogelijk de woorden te volgen van het door hem verzonden telegram, hetwelk ik reeds had goedgevonden. Hij zeide, dat de Britische Regeering een geruimen tijd had genomen om dat telegram te overwegen en heel waarschijnlijk (zooals hij ook het antwoord verstond) tot eene conclusie daarop was gekomen en dat het aanleiding zou geven tot suspicie en tijdverlies, indien de termen van ons formeel voorstel anders gesteld waren. Verder zeide hij, dat wij toch de voorwaarden niet te hard moesten stellen, maar ons voorstel zoo formuleeren, dat de Britsche Regeering hetzelfde eenvoudig zou kunnen aannemen zonder in bijzonderheden te gaan. Als deze wenk gevolgd werd, konden wij een gunstig antwoord in den loop van omtrent twee dagen verwachten. Hij vroeg mij het formeel voorstel zonder verzuim te maken, daar de zaak zoo dringend was.

Op grond van dit telegram en de daarop aan mij gemaakte verzekering en uitleg van den Britsche Agent heeft de Regeering toen eenige dagen daarna haar voorstel, zooals vervat in depêche van 19 Augustus 1899, aan den Britsche Agent overhandigd. Het voorstel was bijna woordelijk opgetrokken in de termen van het telegram van den heer Greene aan de Britsche Regeering, omdat de heer Greene mij verzocht had toch zoo weinig mogelijk van zijn telegram af te wijken. Eenige dagen later toonde de heer Greene mij een telegram van de Britsche Regeering (gemerkt F) in antwoord op twee geheime telegrammen van hem (gemerkt D en E) waarin eene

formeele verzekering gevraagd werd van verklaringen, dien ik aan den Britschen Agent zoude hebben gemaakt. Ik zag meteen dat deze beweerde verklaringen veel verder gingen dan het vorige memorandum en de voorstellen er op gebaseerd, die door den Britschen Agent zelve waren gelezen en goedgevonden. Ik heb hem toen gezegd, dat ik mij niet kon herinneren sommige der beweerde verklaringen, bijvoorbeeld van de taal en presidentsverkiezing, aan hem te hebben gemaakt en zond hem den volgenden dag een antwoord (gemerkt G) vergezeld door eene verdere uiteenzetting (gemerkt H), waarop hij nog nooit heeft geantwoord. Hij schreef mij toen (aanhechtsel I) dat hij eene formeele verklaring van de Regeering wou hebben, maar heeft nooit daarom gevraagd. Tot mijn groote verbazing moest ik zien uit de depêche van 12 September, dat er aan den Britschen Agent de verzekering was gegeven dat de nieuwe Volksraadsleden hun eigen taal zouden kunnen spreken, terwijl de ware feiten zijn zooals hierboven uiteengezet. Ik wil ten slotte er alleen op wijzen hoe onwaarschijnlijk het is dat, indien er zoodanige belangrijke belofte door mij gemaakt is, ze niet in het telegram aan de Britsche Regeering van 14 Augustus zou zijn opgenomen.

De verstandhouding tusschen den heer Greene en mij was duidelijk dat er geen voorstel zou gemaakt worden tenzij beide partijen er mede eens waren; dat is ook duidelijk in zijn telegram aan de Britsche Regeering, zoowel als in mijn memorandum uiteengezet. Daar hij het antwoord van zijne Regeering als gunstig en een aanname aanduidende beschouwde en sterk op voorstel aandrong, twijfelde noch ik, noch mijne Regeering, dat ons voorstel zou worden aangenomen. Op die conditie was het informeel gemaakt, en onder den indruk dat die conditie was vervuld, werd het formeel gemaakt.

Eenige opmerkingen van den heer Greene over de kwestie van ontwapening onzer burgers en persoonlijke opmerkingen beiderzijds heb ik weggelaten.

J. C. Smuts
Staatsprocureur

14 September 1899

TRANSLATION

The negotiations and interviews that I had with Mr Conyngnam Greene, British Agent at Pretoria, with regard to the

question of the franchise and cognate subjects, are of importance to the Government, and as a misunderstanding might arise later, and already appears to have done so, I take the liberty of making a complete report to the Government of the South African Republic with regard to these negotiations and interviews.

In July last, some days after the passing of Law 3, 1899, franchise and naturalization, Mr Conyngham Greene came to me, in order to ask for an explanation with regard to certain stipulations of that law. I then enlightened him as fully as possible in the same spirit and sense as were embodied later in the instructions to officials with regard to the carrying out of that law in circular C.B. 32-99. He spoke to me further with regard to the proposed representation of the Goldfields in the Volksraad, and I told him that the new members intended for the Goldfields would really be given to the Witwatersrand Goldfields, and that I did not think that this representation of the Uitlanders would be neutralized by the acceptance of a scheme of general extension of the Volksraad.

I did not believe that the resolution of the Volksraad with regard to more members for the districts in general was to be taken too seriously, and possibly only Zoutpansberg, and perhaps the town of Pretoria, would require increased representation. It was known that His Honour the President had always opposed a large extension of the Volksraad.

Mr Conyngham Greene asked me then whether the new members of the Raad would be allowed to speak in the Volksraad in their own language. I answered that that question would have to be one decided by the Volksraad, and that that was one of the points wherewith, as the High Commissioner said at Bloemfontein, the Uitlanders could help themselves as soon as they had obtained an extended representation in the Volksraad. I added that whenever, for example, Uitlanders such as George Albu sat in the Raad, who could not speak Dutch, but were heartily desirous to work together with the old population, that the language question would settle itself as a party question. In my opinion it would be wrong to bring forward the language question between the Governments in discussing a possible solution, as the Government most probably would not concede that point. Mr Conyngham Greene

then asked whether, under the Franchise Law No. 3, 1899, the new burghers could also vote for the President and Commandant-General. I answered in the affirmative, and said that we were opposed to bringing two classes of burghers into existence. I said that the seven years' franchise was very liberal, and I should not be surprised to find even in 10 or 15 years an Englishman would be elected as President thereunder. On that ground perhaps the method of electing the President might be altered, perhaps not. He asked then if I thought it possible that the Volksraad would be prepared to give a guarantee of this law to the British Government. He put this question because I had expressed the idea of a final settlement on the basis of the newly accepted law, and he said of course that the law must not be arbitrarily altered. This, for instance, had happened in the case of the resolution whereby the 'Jameson burghers' had lost their franchise, a matter which, in his opinion, had caused us incalculable harm.

I answered, with reference to the question of a guarantee, that this Government would never do anything like that; that I well understood why the British Government would insist on a matter like that, as it would be considered as an acknowledgment on the suzerainty. Mr Conyngham Greene then asked me what we would be willing to do to meet England in reference to this question. I answered that if England was willing to abandon the Convention of 1884, and if all the alleged limits to our independence were taken away, this Government, as the beginning of a new period, would perhaps give such a guarantee. (My idea was that we should return to the conditions created under the Sand River Convention,¹ but I did not say so to Mr Greene.) I told him that nothing had grieved this Government or the burghers so much as Mr Chamberlain's persistent assertion of the suzerainty.

I then asked Mr Greene why the High Commissioner thought that a settlement of the franchise question would lead to a final solution: would the new element among our burghers not be as strong for the independence of the country as the old? He replied that he was convinced that the new element

¹ By this agreement, signed in 1852, the British Government recognized the complete independence of the Boer settlements north of the Vaal River.

would co-operate more harmoniously with England than the old burghers had done, and by this means the mutual disputes would gradually disappear. I assumed from this that it was his opinion that the new burghers would not share the views of the old burghers as regards the independence of the country.

After further conversation regarding the question of arbitration in the spirit of the correspondence from both sides, we parted.

I told him repeatedly that I only expressed my personal feelings on the questions touched upon, and he said that he quite understood that.

I did not see Mr Greene for a considerable time after this occasion, and it was on Saturday, August 12, after matters had, in my opinion, assumed a more serious complexion by the invitation to a Joint Enquiry, that I first saw Mr Greene again at his residence. My object was to find out what was actually meant by the Joint Enquiry, and the Government knew that I went to see Mr Greene on this matter. After some remarks regarding the situation and other subjects, the conversation turned on the franchise.

I asked him whether he did not think that a settlement could be arrived at by bringing Sir Alfred Milner's Bloemfontein proposal to a seven years' basis, as this would be an honourable solution for both parties. He said there was not the slightest chance for this; that the British Government would stand by the High Commissioner, and would not be satisfied with a seven years' franchise. We then discussed the Joint Enquiry. I said that I was personally against the enquiry, as it was clearly intended as an interference with our internal affairs. Mr Greene also seemed to think that it was an interference, and said that the clear and intended object of the invitation was to bring Johannesburg into this impending dispute. The proposal made by Sir Alfred Milner at Bloemfontein was in itself a compromise, and so fair to this Government that Johannesburg was not satisfied with it. We had rejected that proposal; the British Government had since incurred great expense to influence the situation, and it could reasonably be expected that these expenses would induce the making of further demands. Johannesburg would now come into the question, and Johannesburg had already prepared its evidence and statistics to show that

Sir Alfred Milner's Bloemfontein proposal was too reasonable and too insignificant.

I then asked him whether the British Government now intended going still further than at Bloemfontein? He said that he had no authority to say that; that he only thought that they would now wish to go further, but that the High Commissioner would be faced by a difficulty if we still accepted his proposal, although it had already been withdrawn, and that, in his opinion, the best course for us to pursue would be to still accept the proposal. I said that if the British Government really wished to go further than at Bloemfontein, it was clearly seeking a *casus belli*, because I could not see in what respect the interests of the Uitlanders demanded more reforms now than when the Conference sat at Bloemfontein. At this juncture we parted. He asked me whether I wished him to make any representations. I said no, if that was his attitude there was nothing more to be done, as our people would never agree to a five years' franchise without something else. I asked him to consider our conversation exclusively personal and private. He said he would do so.

On Sunday night, August 13, a friend¹ came to me who was acquainted with the fact that I had spoken to the British Agent about the franchise question, and with the attitude adopted by Mr Greene, as just described. He said to me that Mr Greene had paid him a visit the day before, and had told him that in his opinion the Bloemfontein proposal was still open for acceptance. Taking this in connection with what Mr Greene had told me the day before, I came to the conclusion that he had in the meantime communicated the conversation with me to his principals, and that in reply thereto he was now better informed. Both my informant and I considered that it was Mr Greene's intention that his communication should reach me. I thereupon went to him, and that night we had a most important interview, out of which our conditional proposal of a five years' franchise was born.

He asked me why I had such a strong objection to the five years' franchise. I answered that the adoption of a simple five-year franchise after what had happened would not only be a

¹ J. W. Wessels.

dishonourable settlement for us, but that the greatest danger was involved therein so long as Mr Chamberlain maintained his assertion of the suzerainty and the British Government continued to interfere with our internal affairs in flagrant conflict with the London Convention. This question was to me of equal importance as the question of arbitration of which the President had made so much at Bloemfontein. He then asked me to discuss these matters with him, adding that he did so on his own initiative and in no wise by instruction. I proceeded, and said that I could never understand why Mr Chamberlain so obstinately persisted in his assertion of the suzerainty. The suzerainty was not, in my opinion, of the least practical use for England. England considered itself the paramount Power in South Africa long before there was any talk of suzerainty, and if she in general averred to be the paramount Power in South Africa why still appeal to the suzerainty which was so plainly and clearly abolished in 1884. The assertion of paramount Power, however unfounded, I could understand, as England had unquestionably great interests in South Africa, but the suzerainty was pure nonsense, and in conflict with historical facts and the Convention of 1884.

Mr Greene felt no objection to what I said, and added that if the British Government had not been asked¹ to acknowledge that its contention of suzerainty during the past three years was wrong (which for it would be a humiliation), but only in the future not to persist in the assertion of the suzerainty, and to abandon the difference with regard to its existence, such would be recommended by him. The contention was based on the preamble of the Pretoria Convention of 1881,² and Her Majesty's Government would not acknowledge that all these years its contention had been wrong. I said that I did not wish to leave an opening for equivocation in the future; he answered that it was more a question for a lawyer, but it appeared to him that if England promised not to persist in the assertion of the suzerainty, this would tacitly lapse. On the known English principle of estoppel,³ this appeared to me

¹ The correct translation is: 'were not asked'.

² By the Convention the British Government granted self-government to the Transvaal 'subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors'.

³ In English law, a bar to a right of action arising from one's own act.

correct. My opinion that interference ought not to be repeated, and that the British Government in future should strictly abide by the articles of the London Convention, he also approved. Arbitration was already granted in principle by the High Commissioner, and Mr Greene proposed that the details thereof could be agreed to while the Franchise Law was being dealt with, because the present tension and warlike preparations were costing the British Government a large sum of money. For this, I thought this Government should¹ undertake to recommend to the Raad and people a five years' franchise without complicated details, give eight new members to the Witwatersrand, and to make the future representation of the Goldfields (not exclusively the Witwatersrand) one-quarter of the whole Volksraad.

At first I would only keep to six new members, but he answered that one-quarter of the Volksraad would be the least that England would be satisfied with as substantial representation. Then he again asked me if the new burghers would be allowed to vote for the President and Commandant-General. I said yes, but that it was not impossible that the present method of election would be altered by a new stipulation in the Grondwet.² I called his attention to the new stipulation relating to the election of the President in the United States of America and in France, but could not say whether we would adopt a similar plan. He said that he was satisfied, so long as the new burghers as the old could vote for the President and Commandant-General.

He returned again to the question of language, and asked whether new members could speak their own language. I said that I could only remain by what I had said in July. I added that it would be wrong and unfair to make this a point in the final settlement between the Governments. The English language had behind it the influence of money, numbers, general usage, and could well take care of itself without any agreements between the Governments.

He then asked me whether we would be prepared to give a guarantee for the Franchise Law which was to be altered. I replied that that was unnecessary, as an agreement should be

¹ The correct translation is: 'would'.

² Constitution.

abided by in good faith by both parties. He was satisfied with this.

I then said that there was another point on which I would very much like to have assurance, namely, that we would not later on be held responsible by England for the expenses incurred by her with the object of threatening us while peaceful negotiations were still continuing. He said such a claim was highly improbable, and that it would be unnecessary to formally persist therein.

He told me that he had heard that our burghers were preparing for war, and that some had gone to the borders, and added that that would act most detrimentally on the situation. I replied that I knew nothing positive about this, but would lay the matter before my Government if he undertook to do the same as regards the English movements on our borders. He answered in the affirmative.

Thus far it was clearly understood that our interview was of a personal nature, as neither of us had any instructions from our Government, at least I had none. The question then arose how we would act further in the matter. The agreement was then made that both of us would informally consult our Governments, and if they agreed to this scheme the matter would be formally dealt with. He said that he thought that we could make such a proposal as a reply to the invitation to the Joint Enquiry. I then replied that I would first consult my Government in general terms on the matter. When we parted he said that he entertained a strong hope that a settlement could be arrived at on the proposed basis, and that strict secrecy was alone necessary, as there was a party which would be strongly against such settlement if they came to hear of it.

When I got home from this interview I immediately made a memorandum of the points agreed upon by Mr Conyngham Greene and myself personally. This memorandum is attached hereto, marked A. The articles (*g*) and (*h*) thereof were added later, as I shall explain later.¹

The following (Monday) morning I discussed the matter with the Executive Council, who expressed its general

¹ A memorandum in Smuts's handwriting headed: 'Memo. of Points discussed with Greene' is in the Smuts Collection (Box N, no. 1). It consists of five points corresponding with the first five of annexure A but more briefly phrased.

willingness to negotiate on the proposed basis if there was an assurance that the British Government agreed to the proposal. I went the same afternoon¹ to Mr Greene, informed him that the Government was not indisposed to negotiate on the points, and asked him to consult his Government. I gave him memorandum A with a summing up of the points discussed by us; he asked me to read it to him, and we again discussed it. He said that I had forgotten to note that the new burghers could also vote for President and Commandant-General, and wished to give his suggestions regarding the details of the Law. I then added the points (*f*) and (*g*)² to this memorandum in his office. He said I must leave the memorandum with him, and he would draft a telegram to his Government from it, which he would show me in the course of the day. He did so, and the telegram sent by him was read and initialled by me: I attach copy B hereto. In this there appears nothing about the language question. He then returned me my notes.

In the course of the week Mr Greene told me that he had received a reply. I asked him if it was favourable, and he replied that, taken as a whole, it was very favourable. He then gave me a copy thereof (marked C). I read it repeatedly and could not clearly understand it. He said that it appeared to him that the British Government would never have sent such a reply, by which they clearly induced³ a proposal, unless it was its intention to accept that proposal. I said that it was in no wise clear to me what the telegram actually meant. I then asked him whether it was from Mr Chamberlain and he replied that the matter was much too important, and he had been assured that the Cabinet had decided thereon. So strongly did he feel that the proposal would go through that he asked me to discuss our Franchise Law with him so that he could already give his personal suggestions and thus no time would be lost when the reply came. (He then did so a few nights later in the presence of Mr J. W. Wessels.) He then said that, with a view to a speedy ending of the crisis, he would be very glad if our proposal were made without any delay. I said that I would acquaint the Government with the telegram.

¹ The correct translation is: 'forenoon'.

² Should read: '(*g*) and (*h*)'.

³ The correct translation is: 'invited'.

He then asked me to please as far as possible follow the words of the telegram sent by him, which I had already approved of. He said that the British Government had taken a considerable time to consider that telegram, and very probably (as he understood the reply) had come to a conclusion thereon, and that it might give rise to suspicion and loss of time if the terms of our formal proposal were worded differently. He further said that we must please not make the conditions too hard, but formulate our proposal in such a manner that the British Government could simply accept it without going into details. If this suggestion was carried out we could expect a favourable reply in the course of about two days. He asked me to make the formal proposal without delay as the matter was so urgent.

Because of that telegram and the assurance therein made to me and the explanation of the British Agent, the Government then some days thereafter handed over its proposal as contained in the despatch of 19th August, 1899, to the British Agent. The proposal was almost drawn up word for word in the terms of the telegram of Mr Greene to the British Government, because Mr Greene had requested me to depart as little as possible from his telegram. Some days thereafter Mr Greene showed me a telegram from the British Government (marked F) in answer to two private telegrams from him (marked D and E) wherein a formal assurance was asked of the statements that I was supposed to have made to the British Agent. I saw at once that these alleged statements went a great deal further than the former memorandum, and the proposals based thereon, which were read and approved by the British Agent himself. I then told him that I could not remember having made some of the alleged statements—for instance, regarding the language and President's election—and sent him the following day an answer (marked G), accompanied by a further explanation (marked H), to which he has not yet answered. He then wrote me (Appendix I) that he would like a formal statement from the Government, but he had never asked for it. To my great surprise I saw from the despatch of the 12th September that the assurance had been given to the British Agent that the new members would be allowed to speak their own language, whereas the true facts are as set forth above. In conclusion, I

will only point out how improbable it is, if such an important promise had been made by me, that it was not included in the telegram of the 14th August to the British Government.

The understanding between Mr Greene and myself was clearly that no proposal should¹ be made unless both parties agreed thereto; that is also plain from his telegram to the British Government, as also explained in my memorandum. As he considered the reply from his Government as favourable and implying an acceptance, and strongly insisted on the proposal, I never doubted, nor did my Government, that our proposal would be accepted. On that condition it was informally made, and, under the impression that the condition had been fulfilled, it was formally made.

Some remarks made by Mr Greene regarding the question of the disarmament of our burghers and personal remarks on both sides I have omitted.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

14 September 1899

ENCLOSURES

(A)

(a) Five years retrospective franchise and eight new seats for Witwatersrand. This scheme to be referred to Volk[sraad] but Government pledges itself to support it and get Volk[sraad] to adopt it. The representation of the Goldfields in future always to be one-quarter of Volksraad.

(b) British Government is willing to agree that this present business shall in no way be a precedent for the future and that in future no interference in our affairs contrary to Convention will take place.

(c) In future question of suzerainty will be dropped, Great Britain won't insist on it and it will consequently lapse.

(d) Question of arbitration on disputed points will be conceded provided foreign element is excluded. The form and scope will be decided while the franchise and redistribution scheme is being referred to Volk[sraad] so that no time will be lost.

¹ The correct translation is: 'would'.

(e) It must be tacitly understood that South African Republic Government will not in any way be held responsible for costs incurred by military preparations on the other side.

(f) The two Governments informally agreeing to these points, the South African Republic Government will make a formal proposal embodying them, and the British Government will accept, the invitation to joint commission thereby lapsing.

(g) The franchise will entitle both old and new population to the same political rights and privileges in regard to the election of President and Commandant-General.

(h) The details of the Franchise law to be discussed with the British Agent. Any other points that may arise also to be discussed in the same way.

(B)

Telegram to High Commissioner
248A

Pretoria
14 August 1899

The Government of the South African Republic will write me a note to the effect that, provided Her Majesty's Government are willing not to press the demand for the proposed joint inquiry into the political representation of the Uitlanders, they are willing to make the following proposals to Her Majesty's Government.

(1) Five years retrospective franchise. The scheme to be referred to the people immediately and the Government pledging itself to support it and get the people to adopt it. The Raad would adjourn at once for above purpose and scheme might become law within say a fortnight.

(2) Eight new seats to be given to the Witwatersrand in the First Volksraad, making with the existing members for Johannesburg and Barberton, a representation of the mining industry of 10 seats in a Raad of 36. The representation of the Goldfields in future not to fall below this proportion.

The same number of seats to be given in the Second Volksraad, if desired.

(3) This franchise will entitle both old and new population to equal rights and privileges in regard to the election of President and Commandant-General.

(4) The simplification of the details of the franchise law to be discussed with the British Agent who may have his own legal advice; and any other points which may arise to be discussed in the same way.

In putting forward the above proposals the Government of the South African Republic will assume that Her Majesty's Government will agree that their present intervention shall not form a precedent for future similar action and that in the future no interference in the internal affairs of the Republic contrary to the Convention will take place. Further that Her Majesty's Government will not further insist on the assertion of the suzerainty, the controversy on this subject being allowed tacitly to drop. Lastly, arbitration from which foreign element is excluded to be conceded as soon as the franchise scheme has become law, but in the meantime the form and scope of the proposed tribunal to be discussed and provisionally agreed upon while the franchise scheme is being referred to the people in order that no time may be lost.

The formal note embodying these proposals will be drafted today and submitted to my approval beforehand as soon as I am informed whether Her Majesty's Government will consent to my opening negotiations on the above lines.

(C)

If the Government of the South African Republic were to reply to the invitation of Her Majesty's Government to a joint enquiry by formally putting forward the proposals described in your telegram, Her Majesty's Government would not regard such a course as a refusal of their offer but would be prepared to consider the reply of the Government of the South African Republic on its merits.

(D)

Copy of telegram sent by British Agent to High Commissioner
on 14 August 1899

Following are explanations of State Attorney

(1) Arbitration

Government South African Republic are willing that we should have any four judges or lawyers, English or Colonial, to

represent us, and that the president or umpire should be equally English, Colonial or Boer.

(2) As regards future representation of the Goldfields South Africa contends that in proposed way future extension of franchise to new population will not be restricted to Witwatersrand but will be extended to such other Goldfields as are fairly entitled thereto.

(3) As regards guarantee of Her Majesty's Government, this would be covered by the formal exchange of notes between the two Governments.

(4) Respecting Election of President and Commandant-General, in the event of any change from existing scheme of election, this would have to be discussed between us, meanwhile under existing conditions new population would be on all fours with the burghers.

(5) As regards language new members of the Raad would speak in their own tongue.

(6) As regards new law it would be completely simplified.

(E)

(1) The new franchise law to be free from complicated conditions.

(2) The new Goldfields' members to be permitted to use their own language.

(3) Any future change in the election of President and Commandant-General to be discussed with British Government.

(4) The details of the new scheme to be discussed with Her Majesty's Agent who was to be assisted by adviser, and any other points arising in connection with it were to be discussed in the same way.

(5) An exchange of notes to take place between the two Governments.

(F)

TELEGRAM

24 August 1899

There are certain points of difference between the terms of the formal note of the Government of the South African Republic and the proposals made to you by the State Attorney on August 14th.

We assume that Government South African Republic adhere to State Attorney's proposals on all these points but desire an assurance to this effect by a formal note.

On receipt of this assurance a formal reply will be sent to Pretoria.

The points are as follows:—

- (1) The new law was to be free from any complicated conditions.
- (2) The new Goldfields' members were to be permitted to use their own language.
- (3) Any future change in the election of President and Commandant-General were [*sic*] to be discussed with British Government.
- (4) The details of the new scheme were to be discussed with Her Majesty's Agent who was to be assisted by adviser, and any other points arising in connection with it were to be discussed in the same way.
- (5) An exchange of formal notes was to take place between the two Governments.

(G)

Pretoria

25 August 1899

Dear Mr Conyngham Greene, I have seen Mr Reitz in reference to the wire which you received from your Government yesterday.

The terms of a settlement as contained in the formal note of this Government delivered 19 August were very carefully considered and I do not believe that there is the slightest chance that these terms will be altered or amplified. Your decision will therefore have to be arrived at on these terms as they stand. Yours very faithfully,

(s) J. C. Smuts

(H)

Private

Pretoria

25 August 1899

Dear Mr Greene, I have referred to my notes in reference to conversations we have had together over various subjects in

connection with the franchise law, and which Mr Chamberlain refers to in his telegram of yesterday.

I find that in July last you spoke to me about the language question and that I then said to you that in my opinion it would do no good to raise that point as it would probably settle itself, in case a member of the Volksraad was quite unable to speak the official language. I referred specially to Mr George Albu, as you will probably still remember.

Again on August 13 and 14 we conversed over the same subject and I again expressed my opinion that this question should not be raised, as it would be decided as a party question in the Volksraad.

Your private telegram to High Commissioner of 14th August, of which you gave me a copy last night, attributes to me the statement that Goldfields' members would be permitted to speak in their own tongue; but this obviously must be due to a misunderstanding, as it was my intention all along to convey to you my impression that it would be a mistake to make the language question a point between the two Governments.

With regard to consulting with you on future change of the mode of electing the President and Commandant-General my notes do not go further than the paragraph in your telegram of August 14 embodying the terms of a settlement. I have at various times mentioned to you possible modes of arranging these elections but I do not remember having gone farther than the statement that the new burgher population would have the same elective power as the old.

I am very sorry that this misunderstanding should have arisen and produced apparently a wrong impression on the minds of Her Majesty's Government. I never intended our conversations to be conveyed to your Government or would have spoken in such terms as to have removed all possible cause of misunderstanding from your mind. Yours very faithfully,

(s) J. C. Smuts

(I)

25 August

Dear Mr Smuts, As I do not clearly understand from your note whether you are coming up or not this afternoon, I shall be

much obliged if you would kindly return me at once, if you can do so, the telegram from the High Commissioner and other papers which I handed you yesterday, in order that I may now enclose them in an official note to the State Secretary, and receive an official reply. Yours sincerely,

(s) Conyngham Greene

The papers were

1. My telegram 248 A August 14.
2. Extracts from my telegram of same date on special points.
3. High Commissioner's telegram of August 24.

122 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 39

From Smuts to J. H. Hofmeyr. He wrote in the same strain to W. P. Schreiner. (See E. A. Walker, *W. P. Scheiner—a South African*, pp. 103-4.)

[Address deleted]

22 Augustus 1899

Waardste Vriend, Een paar regels ten einde U op de hoogte te houden zoover wij betrokken zijn. Ik heb U reeds een boodschap door T. N. de Villiers gezonden en uit het antwoord van hem blijkt het alsof U *ons* blameert voor eventualiteiten terwijl ik toch diep overtuigd ben dat de vraag niet zoo zeer is over de bijzonderheden der wet als wel over het bezit van dit goudland.

Op de uitnodiging tot een gezamenlijk onderzoek hadden wij eerst gedacht te antwoorden dat wij het beter dachten dat H.M. Regeering direct aan onze Regeering eenig kritiek op de wet zou richten; maar grootendeels op mijn aandrang (en ik wil hopen dat de toekomst zal leeren dat ik geen verkeerd advies heb gegeven) heeft de Regeering laatste Zaterdag geantwoord dat zij bereid is den Volksraad aan te bevelen aan de Witwatersrand 8 nieuwe leden te geven en in de toekomst zal de vertegenwoordiging der goudvelden nooit onder $\frac{1}{4}$ van het totale aantal leden vallen; en verder om het stemrecht op 5 jaar te brengen zooals door Milner aan de hand gegeven: een en ander echter op die voorwaarde dat Engeland niet verder zal aandringen op hare bewering van het bestaan der suzeriniteit, zich in de toekomst niet meer met onze binnenlandsche aangelegenheden zal bemoeien en arbitrage zal toestaan

waarvan buitenlandsche elementen behalve O.V.S. zullen zijn uitgesloten. Hieruit zal U zien dat het ons niet te doen is om een oorlog in elk geval uit te lokken maar dat wij alles in ons vermogen doen om nog tot een vreedzame doch eervolle schikking te geraken. Wat het antwoord op ons voorstel zal zijn weet ik niet; als het aangenomen wordt zullen wij tevreden zijn; zoo niet dan zal Engeland ontmaskerd staan voor de geheele wereld, en in beide gevallen verbeteren wij onze positie en kansen. Wij verwachtte een antwoord nog deze week. Ik twijfel of Engeland de suzereiniteit zoomar zal laat varen en zich zal verbinden om zich niet weer met onze zaken te bemoeien; ik ben derhalve niet zoo hoopvol. Maar in elk geval ben ik er beslist tegen de commissie van onderzoek aan te nemen, met of zonder de verzekering waarover de O.V.S. met u onderhandeld heeft. Tasbaarder feit van inmenging en vernedering kan nauwelijks bedacht worden en zoo Engeland niet met ons jongste voorstel zamengaat, zie ik geen uitweg dan een oorlog die een of ander der contendeerenden partijen voorgoed de nek zal breken. Per slot van rekening geloof ik dat de twee Republieken zich zullen blijven handhaven. Wij hebben omtrent een 50,000 man, wier weerga als schutters en onverschrokken krijgslieden de wereld niet kent, en volgens de berekening in Butler's *Colley* zal Engeland minstens 150,000 noodig hebben om zelfs gelijk te staan met deze republikeinsche legermacht. Wij vechten voor alles wat ons als volk heilig en dierbaar is en de werkelijkheid zal aantoonen wat ons volk in de laatste instantie zou kunnen doen. Alleen wenschen wij niet dat het tegenwoordige Bond ministerie zijn positie in gevaar zal brengen, want zoolang dat aan het roer is, zullen wij ook meer vrijmoedigheid hebben. Daarom wees maar uiterst voorzichtig.

Gaarne vernam ik van u eenige opinie omtrent de door ons voorgestelde schikking; alleen moet ze volgens afspraak met Br[itsche] Agent confidencieel worden beschouwd. Met hartelijke groeten *t.t.*

[Signature excised]

TRANSLATION

22 August 1899

Dear Friend, A few lines in order to keep you posted as far as we are concerned. I have already sent you a message by T. N.

de Villiers¹ and from his answer it appears as if you blame *us* for eventualities, whereas I am deeply convinced that the question is not so much about the details of the law as about possession of this land of gold.

At first we thought of replying to the invitation to a joint enquiry that we considered it better that Her Majesty's Government should address any criticisms of the law directly to our Government; but, largely at my insistence (and I hope the future will show that I have not given wrong advice), the Government replied last Saturday that they are prepared to recommend the Volksraad to give eight new members to the Witwatersrand, and that in future the representation of the Goldfields will never fall below one quarter of the total number of members; further to bring the franchise down to five years, as suggested by Milner: both, however, on condition that England will no longer insist upon asserting the existence of suzerainty, will not in future interfere in our internal affairs, and will allow arbitration from which external elements, except the Orange Free State, will be excluded. You will see from this that it is not our intention to provoke a war in any event, but that we are still doing everything in our power to arrive at a peaceful but honourable settlement. What the answer to our proposal will be I do not know; if it is accepted we shall be satisfied; if not, then England will stand unmasked before the whole world, and in either case we improve our position and chances. We expect an answer this week. I doubt whether England will simply let suzerainty go and bind herself not to interfere in our affairs again. I am therefore not very hopeful. But, in any case, I am decidedly against accepting the commission of enquiry, with or without the assurance about which the Orange Free State has negotiated with you. A more palpable fact of intervention and humiliation can hardly be imagined and, if England does not agree to our latest proposal, I see no way out but a war which will finally break the neck of one or other of the contending parties. On balance I believe that the two Republics will maintain themselves. We have about 50,000 men, whose equal as shots and fearless soldiers is not

¹ Tielman N. de Villiers, born in the Cape Colony, went to the Transvaal in 1868, became a member of the Volksraad in 1876 and practised as an advocate in Pretoria from 1882.

to be found in the world; and, according to the calculation in Butler's *Colley*,¹ England will need at least 150,000 even to be on an equal footing with this republican army. We fight for everything that is holy and precious to us as a people and the reality will show what our people are able in the last resort to do. We only do not wish the present Bond ministry to put itself into a dangerous position, for as long as it is at the helm we also shall be bolder. So be extremely careful.

I should like to hear your opinion about the settlement proposed by us; but it must, according to an arrangement with the British Agent, be regarded as confidential. With hearty greetings, *totus tuus*.

123 From A. Fischer

Vol. 1, no. 21

Privaat

Bloemfontein
24 Augustus 1899

Amice, De uwe van 22st. juist ter hand. Ik stem in met bijna alles wat U zegt, en indien uw aanbod geweigerd wordt vervalt mijne bezwaren. Wat ik echter tegen het voorstel had en heeft zoo als opgesteld is dat ingeval Chamberlain die *aanneemt* er, zoo als het mij schijnt, zoo vele openingen gelaten zijn voor strikvallen, latere oneenigheid en misverstand: b.v. de arbitragie conditie is niet alleen 'vague' en erg onbepaald, zoo dat praktisch het aan de genade van Chamberlain Milner en Co. wordt overgelaten op welke voorwaarden en in welke gevallen arbitragie zal worden toegestaan, maar zelfs worden de verscheidene punten, opgeving suzeriniteit, 'arbitragie', 'niet latere inmenging in binnenlandsche zaken' als eene 'pious hope' of verwachting gesteld, in stede van, zoo als ik verstaan had dat overeengekomen was, als *sine qua non*, of als *quid pro quo* voor vijf jaren terugwerkend stemrecht en $\frac{1}{4}$ vertegenwoordiging.

Wat het laatste gedeelte betreft lijkt die erg naar een 'ultimatum', maar dat is van minder belang want ik geloof niet dat het zoo opgevat zal worden. Er zijn andere punten van

¹ Sir William Francis Butler: *The Life of Sir George Pomeroy-Colley*, published 1899.

bezwaar, maar die komen allen hierop neer, dat wij met geheel vertrouweloze personen in Chamberlain en Milner te doen hebben en dat wij niet te zorgvuldig kunnen zijn in onze correspondentie en onderhandelingen met hen: als wij later eenig punt moeten verduidelijken of beweren wij hebben het 'zoo' gemeend, bestaat er dadelijk gevaar van oneerlijke beschuldiging tegen de Z.A.R. dat zij wederom(!?) haar woord of aanbod zoekt te ontduiken of te verbreken. Welke betekenis of verzekering is er in *stilzwijgend* afzien van suzeriniteit? Echter ik hoop dat ek verkeerd ben in mijne beschouwing dat er geen vrees is dat het aanbod anders zal kunnen worden uitgelegd dan bedoeld.

Het rapport der V.R. Commissie op de Dynamiet zaak heeft bij allen vrienden in de Kaap Kolonie en hier *sterke* ontevredenheid veroorzaakt, van daar de ondubbelzinnige telegrammen van onzen aan uwen President daaromtrent. Als het rapport aangenomen wordt zal de Z.A.R. veel verdenking lijden en ongetwijfeld zoude daardoor de sympathie van velen uwer goede vrienden afkoelen.

Ik zend U hierbij 'code' (Fischer's patent) voor gebruik met U en Grobler:— Met hartelijke groete voor u en hem, In der haast (als altoos) *t.t.*

A. Fischer

P.S. Na vorenstaande geschreven was heb ik eerst brief van uwen Staats Secretaris van 22st insluitende copij aanvullings brief aan Greene van 21st gezien. Daarin worden mijne bezwaren grootendeels opgelost op de punten daarin vermeld. Echter is het nu best maar antwoord op aanbod (plus aanvullings) af te wachten. A. F.

TRANSLATION

Private

Bloemfontein
24 August 1899

Amice, Yours of 22nd just to hand. I agree with almost all you say, and if your offer is refused my objections lapse. What I, however, had and have against the proposal as framed is that in case Chamberlain *accepts* it there are, it seems to me, so many openings left for traps, later dissension and misunderstanding: for example, the arbitration condition is not only

vague and most indefinite, so that in practice it is left to the mercy of Chamberlain, Milner and Company on what conditions and in what cases arbitration will be granted, but even the various points, surrender of suzerainty, 'arbitration', 'no later intervention in internal affairs' are framed as a pious hope or expectation, instead of, as I had understood that it was agreed, as *sine qua non*, or as *quid pro quo* for the five years retrospective franchise and a quarter representation.

As regards the last portion, this looks very much like an ultimatum, but that is of less importance because I do not believe that it will be taken for that. There are other points of objection, but they all amount to this, that in Chamberlain and Milner we have to do with altogether untrustworthy persons and that we cannot be too careful in our correspondence and negotiations with them: if later we must clarify any point or assert that we meant it 'thus', there is at once a danger of dishonest accusation against the South African Republic that she is again (! ?) seeking to evade or to break her word or offer. What meaning or assurance is there in *silently* surrendering suzerainty? However, I hope that I am mistaken in my view, that there is no fear that the offer be interpreted otherwise than as intended.

The report of the Volksraad Commission on the Dynamite matter has caused *strong* dissatisfaction here and to all friends in the Cape Colony, hence the plain-spoken telegrams about it from our President to yours.¹ If the report is accepted the South African Republic will suffer much suspicion and the sympathy of many of your good friends would undoubtedly cool off.

I send you herewith a 'code' (Fischer's patent) for use with you and Grobler. With hearty greetings to you and him, In haste (as always), *totus tuus*,

A. Fischer

P.S. Only after the above had been written did I see letter of your State Secretary of 22nd enclosing copy of supplementary letter to Greene. In that my objections are for the most part

¹ See pp. 206-7 *supra*. Steyn told Kruger that the recommendations of the Commission would not solve the dynamite difficulties and urged him to cancel the concession. See A. Kieser, *President Steyn in die Krisisjare 1896-99*, pp. 24-5.

resolved on the points mentioned in it. However, it is now best to await answer on offer (plus additions). A. F.

124 To J. H. Hofmeyr

Vol. 99, no. 40

From: Smuts

To: Hofmeyr

Dated: 29 August 1899

De President wenscht mij U aan uwe belofte te herinneren eenige suggesties aan ons te maken omtrent wijze van presidents verkiezing. Laat mij ze zoo spoedig mogelijk bekomen.

TRANSLATION

The President wishes me to remind you of your promise to make some suggestions to us about the method of presidential election. Let me have these as soon as possible.

125 T. te Water to A. Fischer

Vol. 99, no. 41

TELEGRAM

From: Te Water

To: Fischer

Dated: 30 August 1899

Please wire Smuts from Hofmeyr begins:—

Yours of 29th. Situation altered so much since we were at Pretoria and more particularly since Bloemfontein Conference that I fear any change in mode election will not help peace. If however I am mistaken on that point, I would suggest either of following alternatives. Firstly, let the two Volksraads hold combined meeting and elect on lines of French system, or secondly, let when vacancy occurs each electoral district nominate two or more deputies that is to say an equal number for each district to form electoral college or Board. Or thirdly, form an electoral board by combining the bodies suggested in my firstly, secondly. It might be advisable not to make any change in mode election before additional representatives of mining districts take seats in Volksraad.

22 Camp St
[Kaapstad]
30 Augustus 1899

Waarde Vriend, Uw brief van 22 ontvangen.

Gij wilt mijne opinie weten omtrent de door uwe Regering voorgestelde schikking—de 8 leden, 5 jaren enz. Wel de indruk dien het voorstel op mij maakte was dat gij *te veel gaaft* en tevens *te veel vroegt*—heet eerste door het tweede bedervende en daardoor in de hand spelende van de tegenpartij. Ik meen dat het niet noodig was de suzereiniteit in het voorstel te mengen, daar Engeland toch altoos zijn onbestemde aanspraaken als 'paramount power' zou kunnen laten gelden. Daar gij bereid waart *zooveel* weg te geven meen ik dat gij geen bangheid voor het gevraagde onderzoek hadt moeten laten gelden. U te beroepen op abstracte beginselen betrekkelijk bemoeiing met binnenlandsche aangelegenheden, gaat *nu* niet, daar gij feitelijk reeds sedert maand en dag zoodanige bemoeiing hebt gedoogd.

Ik zal U kortelijks mijn gevoelen geven:—

Ter Bloemfonteinsche Conferentie hadt gij zeven jaar retrospectief moeten aanbieden, zonder lastige bepalingen *en vooral niet de Presidents electie moeten weggeven.*

Gij hadt de haakplekken moeten wegnemen uit de acte gepasseerd na ons bezoek te Pretoria en den raad U *toen* en sedert gegeven om de 'conference spirit' te herstellen moeten aannemen. Door dat niet te doen hebt gij gedurig moeten *geven*—zonder de minste kans uwe aanbiedingen aan de Uitlanders aanbevolen te krijgen als 'real and substantial concessions'. Door het afzien van de 'conference spirit' hebben al uwe concessies den schijn verkregen van te zijn *afgeperst*. Door ze in stukken en brokken te geven hebt gij geen indruk gemaakt op het algemeene buitenlandsche publiek.

Verder, ik zou zonder morren in het onderzoek zijn gegaan, 'without prejudice'—*voordat* ik de 8 setels of 5 jaren had aangeboden. Men is in Engeland blijkbaar bang dat dat aanbod het Engelsche publiek zou imponeeren en houdt daarom de termen van uw brief aan Chamberlain (of was het aan Greene?) geheim.

Nog is het tijd het onderzoek aan te nemen *hoewel wat laat en de termen harder zullen worden*. Denk aan de sibellijnschen boeken. Met Gods besten zegen, Uw Vriend,

Jan Hofmeyr

TRANSLATION

22 Camp Street
[Cape Town]
30 August 1899

Honoured Friend, Your letter of 22nd received.

You wish to know my opinion about the settlement proposed by your Government—the eight members, five years, etc. Well, the impression that the proposal made on me was that you *gave too much* and at the same time *asked too much*—spoiling the first by the second and thereby playing into the hand of the opponent. I consider that it was not necessary to mix suzerainty with the proposal, since England would in any case always be able to assert her vague claims as ‘paramount power’. Since you were prepared to give away *so much*, I think that you should not have let any fear of the requested enquiry count. To invoke abstract principles concerning interference with internal matters will not do *now*, since you have virtually tolerated such interference for days and months.

I shall briefly give you my feeling:

At the Bloemfontein Conference you should have offered seven years retrospectively, without troublesome stipulations, and *especially not have given away the Presidential election*.

You should have removed the snags from the act passed after our visit to Pretoria and have accepted the advice *then* and since given you to restore the ‘conference spirit’. By not doing that you have constantly had to *give*—without the least chance of getting your offers recommended to the Uitlanders as ‘real and substantial concessions’. Through the absence of the ‘conference spirit’, all your concessions have acquired the appearance of being *extorted*. By giving them in bits and pieces you have made no impression on the general public abroad.

Further, I should have gone into the inquiry without grumbling, ‘without prejudice’—*before* offering the eight seats or five years. There is apparently a fear in England that that offer

would impress the English public and they are therefore keeping the terms of your letter to Chamberlain (or was it to Greene?) secret.

There is still time to accept the inquiry *although somewhat late and the terms will be harder*. Remember the sibylline books.¹ With God's best blessing, Your friend,

Jan Hofmeyr

127 To T. te Water

Vol. 99, no. 42

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts

To: Te Water

Dated: 4 September 1899

Dank voor belangrijk telegram van heden. Kwestie van suzereiniteit door ons aangevoerd niet alleen omdat het volk op geen ander voorwaarde tot 5 jaar stemrecht zou kunnen gebracht worden maar ook omdat tussen mij en Britsche Agent voorlopig was overeengekomen de suzereiniteit te laten varen en ik had niet gedacht dat zijn Gouvernement een ander houding zou aannemen door weigering. Van aanname van ons voorstel is het vervallen en zijn wij teruggekomen op de uitnoodiging tot gezamenlijk onderzoek. Wij hebben acht geslaan op den raad van u en Kaapsche vrienden en hebben onze bereidwilligheid verklaart naar een gezamenlijke onderzoek te komen ingesteld naar de vermoedelijke uitwerking der wet, de Britsche regeering de gelegenheid gevende om ons aan te toonen waar de wet niet doeltreffend zal zijn. Ik gevoel verzekerd dat als bedoeling van Britsche regeering zuiver is deze aanname genoegzaam zal zijn. Steeds is het onze vurige wensch om een weg in te slaan die tot ervolle oplossing voor beide partijen zal leiden. Liever dan een vernederende oplossing aan te nemen zal dit volk weer naar de wapens grijpen met al het gevaar daaraan verbonden. Ik ben ziek te huis maar niet te zwak om uwe correspondentie te behandelen. Ik kan alleen

¹ Three books of oracles consulted by the Roman Senate in times of emergency. Livy says that originally nine books were offered in sale by the Sibyl of Cumae to Tarquin. He rejected the offer. She then burnt three books and offered the remaining six at the same price a year later. After a second refusal she burnt three more and repeated her offer the following year, whereupon the original price was paid.

de hoop uitdrukken dat onze Kaapsche vrienden en de geheele wereld onze krachtige en verreikende pogingen waardeeren om tot vreedzame maar eervolle oplossing te geraken.

TRANSLATION

Thanks for important telegram of today. Question of suzerainty raised by us not only because the people could not be brought to [accept] five years franchise on any other condition but also because it had been provisionally agreed between myself and British Agent to relinquish suzerainty and I had not thought that his Government would take a different attitude by refusal. Since acceptance of our proposal it has lapsed and we have come back to the invitation to a joint enquiry. We have had regard to the advice of yourself and Cape friends and have expressed our readiness to come to a joint enquiry into the probable working of the law, giving the British Government the opportunity of showing us where the law is not effective. I feel sure that if the intentions of the British Government are good this acceptance will be sufficient. It remains our ardent wish to follow a road which will lead to honourable solution for both parties. Rather than accept a humiliating solution this nation will again take up arms with all the danger attaching to that. I am ill at home but not too weak to deal with your correspondence. I can only express the hope that our Cape friends and all the world value our powerful and extensive efforts to reach a peaceful but honourable solution.

128 From J. H. Roskill

Vol. 1, no. 72

TELEGRAM

From: Roskill, London
To: Smuts, Pretoria
Dated: 4 October 1899

Undoubted truth Transvaal independence guaranteed if Republic accepts British dispatch ninth September implore you impress this President and believe true your old master's word.

129 To J. H. Roskill

Vol. 1, no. 112

Draft telegram in Smuts's handwriting with his alterations as indicated.

TELEGRAM

From: Smuts
To: Roskill, Inner Temple, London
Dated: [5 October 1899]

Thanks for cable. All previous proposals have been formally withdrawn and no longer open for acceptance.¹ What more solemn guarantee independence than London Convention which is now being torn up as Sand River Convention and every other have been torn up. Lost all faith in British statesmanship which is bent on either losing South Africa or making it white man's grave.²

¹ Here Smuts had written and then scored out: 'We await promised new proposals'.

² Here Smuts had written and then scored out: 'We shall resist wrong as we have resisted it since revocation Edict Nantes'—a reference to the emigration of French Protestants to the Cape of Good Hope in 1688 after the revocation, in 1685, of the Edict of Nantes.

PART III

THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

4 SEPTEMBER 1899-4 JANUARY 1902

THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

The documents in Part III record the Anglo-Boer War as Smuts experienced it. They fall into four groups as follows:

- (a) Papers on the period from the beginning of the war until the fall of Pretoria on 5 June 1900.
- (b) Papers on the operations in the Western Transvaal (July 1900–May 1901).
- (c) Papers on the abortive peace negotiations and the Waterval Conference (May–June 1901).
- (d) Papers on the invasion of the Cape Colony (August 1901–April 1902).

(a) The first document in this group (130) is dated more than a month before the war actually began. It is a remarkable memorandum by Smuts on military and diplomatic strategy in the war which he already believed to be imminent. Smuts held no military command during the first phase of the war. It has not been possible to find documents that show what part he played in the war organization of the South African Republic while its forces were invading Natal and attacking Kimberley, Mafeking and the key points of the railways to the Cape ports, though it is clear that he paid visits to the Natal front. Nor is there much record of his activities during the early months of 1900 when the British forces drove the Boers out of the Colonies and moved strongly into the Republics. One confident letter of these months survives (132)—to Louis Botha; it is the earliest extant record of their association. From 29 May, when his Government left Pretoria for Machadodorp, until 4 June, when he joined them, Smuts was left in charge in the threatened capital. There are no contemporary documents in the Collection on this exciting week, but after the war Smuts wrote an account of it in his *Memoirs of the Boer War* (180).

The documents in groups (b), (c) and (d) are described in separate notes on p. 336, p. 389 and p. 406 *infra* respectively.

130 Memorandum (4 September 1899) Vol. XCVI, no. 95

Memorandum by Smuts for the Executive Council of the South African Republic in which he makes suggestions for the prosecution of a

possible war with Great Britain. He was ill when it was composed—which may be the reason why the original document is in Isie Smuts's handwriting. There is no extant draft.

Geheim

Daar ik wegens ongesteldheid niet in staat ben de Regeering van mondeling advies te bedienen, acht ik het mijn plicht haar in geschrift mede te deelen de gedachten die vooral in de laatste paar weken sterker en sterker bij mij zijn opgekomen. De verhouding tusschen de Z.A.R. en Engeland wordt dag bij dag meer gespannen; was er te Bloemfontein in Juni l.l. nog een hoop van een vreedzame en voor beide partijen eervolle oplossing, zoo hebben de laatste paar maanden geleerd dat die hoop ijdel is; dat de vijand vast besloten is dat dit land òf veroverd zal worden òf langs diplomatieken weg tot de positie feitelijk van een Britsche kolonie zal geraken—met bijna dit eenige onderscheid dat de gouverneur door het volk gekozen wordt in plaats van door de Kroon aangesteld. Alle toenadering van onzen kant is met hooghartigheid van de hand geslagen; ons laatste voorstel van een vijfjarig stemrecht en een vierde vertegenwoordiging voor de Goudvelden onder voorwaarden die het voor beide partijen een eervolle oplossing zou maken is ook geweigerd—ten spijte van het feit dat de Britsche Regeering wel wist dat door die weigering zij haar eigen positie voor de wereld en ook haar eigen publiek verzwakken zou. Ons jongste missieve, waarin onze Regeering het idee van een gezamenlijk onderzoek in gematigden vorm aanneemt zal evenzo haar doel missen door òf als onvoldoende van de hand te worden gewezen òf tot nog grooter verwikkelingen te leiden. De Engelsche afgevaardigden n.l. zullen waarschijnlijk rapporteeren dat er wijzigingen van een belangrijken aard in de stemrecht wet moeten worden aangebracht; de Britsche Regeering zal dan aan de hand geven dat de Volksraad binnen een zekeren korten tijd uitvoering aan deze suggesties geeft; en dan zijn wij verplicht òf hun verzoek te weigeren òf ons in de vernederende positie te plaatsen van die suggesties aan te nemen en door te voeren. Op deze redeneering afgaande kom ik tot de conclusie dat onze aanname van het gezamenlijk onderzoek het einde alleen zal uitstellen, geenszins weren; menschlijkerwijze gesproken is een oorlog tusschen de

republieken en Engeland zeker; en 't is met het oog op dat feit dat ik de Regeering de volgende wenken in zeer ernstige overweging wensch te geven. Dit memorandum heeft ten doel de vraag te beantwoorden welke stappen dienen genomen te worden om den aanstaanden krijg een voor de Republieken gunstigen uitslag te bezorgen. Het zal een lange, bloedige en uitputtende oorlog zijn en met het oog op de groote republiekeinsche belangen op spel dient deze Regeering vooraf de noodige maatregelen te nemen of ten minste goed te overwegen.

Om in dezen strijd een overwinning voor de republieken te verzekeren komen mij twee dingen als noodzakelijk voor:

- (I) De Republieken moeten van 't begin af aan de overhand over de Engelsche troepen behalen; en
 - (II) De Republieken moeten vooraf zooveel mogelijk de noodige maatregelen treffen om zich gedurende een langen en uitputtenden strijd staande te houden.
- Ik wensch nu beide punten afzonderlijk na te gaan.

(I) De Republieken moeten van 't begin af de overhand over de Engelsche troepen behalen

Ik geloof dat de Zuid-Afrikaansche Boer de beste soldaat ter wereld is en in den strijd thans voor onze deur zal hij des te heldhaftiger vechten omdat hij nu in den laatsten hoek zal zijn vastgekeerd en voor alles wat hem heilig en dierbaar is zal moeten vechten. Maar aan den anderen kant hebben onze menschen sedert Boomplaats—nu vijftig jaar geleden—geen nederlaag ondergaan. Zij hebben onder de omstandigheden steeds overwonnen; en de vraag is wat zij zullen doen zoo zij onverhoopt van 't begin af aan een paar nederlagen lijden, waarbij misschien honderden van hen het leven zullen moeten inschieten. Dat zal niet alleen onze menschen ontmoedigen maar zal ook den vijand met overmoed vervullen, en zal onze zaak voor de wereld bederven en de mogelijke kansen van een Europeesche interventie verijdelen. Ik ga zoo ver om te zeggen dat als wij de eerste paar groote slagen verliezen ons geheele zaak hopeloos zal worden.

De groote vraag dan is: op welke wijze wij de overhand van

't begin af aan zullen kunnen behalen? Mijn bescheiden antwoord is: *door aanvallender wijze op te treden, en zulks te doen vóór de Britsche legermacht thans in Zuid-Afrika aanmerkelijk versterkt is.*

De beste militaire schrijvers van deze eeuw hebben bewezen hoeveel voordeliger het is in het oorlogen om aanvallenderwijze op te treden dan om defensief te handelen. De argumenten door hen in dit verband aangevoerd zijn voornamelijk de volgende:

- (1) De offensieve methode verhoogt den zedelijken moed van het aanvallende leger.
- (2) De offensieve methode demoraliseert de verdedigende partij en vermindert zijn algemeene prestige zoowel als het vertrouwen der soldaten in hunne aanvoerders.
- (3) De aanvallende partij is altijd in een positie om zijn eigen punten van aanval te kiezen terwijl de verdedigende partij verplicht is de slagen van den vijand in een demoraliseerende spanning af te wachten.
- (4) De offensieve methode plaatst de aanvallende partij in een positie om den oorlog voort te zetten binnen het grondgebied van den vijand en op zijn middelen te leven.

Zelden in de geschiedenis der wereld zijn deze voordeelen op zoo merkwaardige wijze toepasselijk geweest als op de huidige situatie in Zuid-Afrika waar een Engelsch leger van uiterlijk 15,000 man (8,500 in Natal, 3,500 in Kaap Kolonie en omtrent 3,000 vrijwilligers in Bechuanaland en Rhodesia) tegenover een legermacht staat van ongeveer 25,000 Transvalers en 15,000 Vrijstaters zonder eenige mogelijkheid om binnen vier of vijf weken eenige versterking te krijgen.

Niet alleen zijn de boven uiteengezette voordeelen toepasselijk op de huidige situatie wat betreft de Z.A.R. en Groot Brittanje; deze voordeelen worden nog grootter wanneer men let op de buitengewone condities en omstandigheden van het Britsche rijk hetwelk binnen zijn heerschappij groote landen bevat grootelijks door vijandige volken bewoond (Kaap Kolonie, Indië, Egypte, ens.) zonder eenige voldoende militaire organisatie bestemd om den vrede in geval van oproer of aanval te bewaren. De heerschappij die het Britsche rijk uitoefent over de vele stammen en volken binnen zijn jurisdictie berust meer op prestige en zedelijke vreesaanjaging dan

op ware militaire sterkte en zoodra deze toestand verstoord wordt in eenig deel van het Britsche rijk dan kan men spoedig de gewichtigste gevolgen zelfs in andere deelen verwachten.

De inneming van Natal door een Boer legermacht tezamen met het afsnijden van de spoorweglijn tusschen de Kaap Kolonie en Rhodesia zal een onmiddellijke schudding van het Britsche rijk in zeer belangrijke deelen ervan teweeg brengen en de Britsche Regeering zou onder deze omstandigheden niet kunnen droomen van haar legermacht in Indië, Egypte of elders te verzwakken. Heel mogelijk zal het noodig zijn in zoodanig geval om haar troepemacht in deze landen te versterken. Het is onnoodig om stil te staan bij de mogelijkheid van andere internationale complicaties als een gevolg van een eerste nederlaag aan Engeland toegebracht in Zuid-Afrika. Frankrijk dorst naar wraak om Fashoda, Amerika en Duitschland zoeken een gelegenheid om de heerschappij van den Engelschen handel te verzwakken, terwijl Rusland zich gestadig voorbereidt om Engeland uit Azië (Indië en China) te verdrijven. Al deze landen zullen hun voordeel trachten te trekken uit een nederlaag aan Engeland toegebracht, maar zullen heel mogelijk stil blijven zitten indien de Boeren een nederlaag lijden.

Alle consideraties dus, niet alleen van een militairen maar ook van een politieken aard, toonen de groote wenschelijkheid aan dat de Z.A.R. aanvallenderwijze tegen Engeland zal optreden, terwijl haar legermacht in Zuid-Afrika nog zwak is en zonder groote moeite overwonnen kan worden.

Wel is waar onze menschen zijn altijd huiverig om de eerste aan te vallen of om de eerste schot te schieten, zooals zij het uitdrukken; maar wanneer wij eenmaal overtuigd zijn dat alle diplomatieke middelen te vergeefs zijn aangewend en wanneer de onmogelijkheid duidelijk is gebleken van een oplossing langs vreedzamen weg te bekomen, dan is er geen politieke meer maar alleen een krijgskwestie en dan moeten ook onze menschen den moed hebben om op zuiver militaire gronden zooals hierboven uiteengezet te handelen.

De rassenhaat is in Zuid-Afrika zoodanig dat, al kan de Z.A.R. door nu in te geven den oorlog voor het tegenwoordige afkeeren, dan toch zal het vuur blijven smoren in Zuid-Afrika en vroeger of later zal de oorlog toch uitbreken. Met de thans

bestaande militaire organisatie der Republieken en den geest die het Afrikaner volk over geheel Zuid-Afrika bezielt is er een kans dat door een oorlog het Afrikaner volk zijn positie van leiderschap zal blijven handhaven en versterken. Met de verspreiding van de industrieelen en geld geest onder ons volk zal ook onze positie verzwakt worden. Ook moet het niet uit het oog verloren worden dat, door de insluiting der twee Republieken door Britsch gebied en door hun afsluiting van de zee, hun positie als onafhankelijke staten meer en meer onuithoudbaar en zwak zal worden. Door Englands gestadige bemoeiing zal zelfs die mate van onafhankelijkheid verminderd worden die zij thans nog bezitten en de vraag mag wel zijn of deze niet de tijd is voor hen om zich een weg naar de zee te banen, de een door Delagoabaai en de ander door Durban.

Ik zou dus bescheiden in overweging willen geven of het met het oog op al deze consideraties niet het wenschelijkste zou zijn dat, zoodra de tegenwoordige onderhandelingen afspringen en een vreedzame oplossing onmogelijk wordt, de twee Republieken met al hun macht Natal aanvallen en Durban bereiken alvorens eenige versterking zou kunnen aankomen. Daardoor zou niet alleen al de artillerie en krijgsvoorraad en proviand die reeds in enorme hoeveelheden in Natal zijn in onze handen vallen; niet alleen kunnen wij Natal verplichten om beider legermacht te onderhouden en te voeden, maar er zou ook alle kans bestaan dat door zulk een handelwijze de binnendeelen der Kaap Kolonie zullen aangemoedigd worden om op te staan en zich in een derde groote republiek te vormen. Hierdoor zou Engeland niet alleen verplicht zijn om van den beginne af weer te beginnen zooals in 1806 maar heeft zij ook die diplomatieke verwickelingen te vreezen die ik reeds heb aangeduid.

Om dit doel te bereiken zal het noodig zijn dat de militaire autoriteiten der twee Republieken ten spoedigste een gemeenzame beraadslaging zullen hebben over tijd, wijze, plaats, enz. van een gecombineerde attaque op Natal.

(II) *De Republieken moeten vooraf zooveel mogelijk de noodige maatregelen treffen om zich gedurende een langen en uitputtenden strijd staande te houden*

Wanneer een zoodanig attaque op Natal geslaagd is zal de

Britsche Regeering al hare krachten inspannen ten einde hare positie te herwinnen en daardoor zou noodzakelijkerwijze een lange en bloedige oorlog ontstaan. Maar zelfs al vindt een zoodanige aanval op Natal om de eene of andere reden niet plaats dan nog kunnen wij verzekerd zijn dat de oorlog een langdurige en uitputtende zijn zal. In elk geval dienen nu reeds die maatregelen genomen te worden die de twee Republieken in een positie zullen stellen om een langen krijg door te staan. Voor dit doeleinde zijn drie dingen noodig:

(1) *Alle mogelijke pogingen moeten aangewend worden om den landbouw voort te zetten zooals in vreedstijd.* Hiertoe zullen altijd een genoegzaam getal burgers en ingezetenen op de plaatsen moeten blijven om het noodige werk te doen. Met de toestrooming van vele duizenden Afrikaners uit de Kaap Kolonie tot de republiekeinsche legers, hetwelk ik stellig te gemoet zie, zal dit nog gemakkelijker worden. In elk geval zullen desnoods de vrouwen en Kaffers dit werk moeten doen onder de noodige ondersteuning en bescherming der Regeering.

(2) *De Staatskas moet niet toegelaten worden leeg te loopen.* Deze Republiek heeft het ongeëvenaarde voordeel van in bezit te zijn van eenige der grootste en beste goudmijnen ter wereld in volle gereedheid en werkende orde en dus in staat om den Staatskas steeds in goeden toestand te houden. Een speciale oorlogsbelasting van zegge 20 per cent der bruto opbrengst behoort op de mijnen gelegd te worden en de munt te Pretoria in werking gezet te worden. In ruil daarvoor behoort speciale protectie aan de mijnen verzekerd te worden; de toevoer van Kaffer arbeiders behoort opgehouden te worden; het geheele staf der mijnmaatschappijen, beambten zoowel als gewone mijnwerkers, moeten aangemoedigd worden in het land te blijven, zelfs al zijn ze Britsche onderdanen, mits deze laatsten onder de Krijgswet geplaatst worden en waarborgen geven van loyaal gedrag. De voornaamste artikelen benoodigd voor de werking der mijnen zijn machinerie, kool, zwaar timmerhout, ontplofbare stoffen en olie. Wat het eerste betreft kan men aannemen dat er een genoegzame hoeveelheid in het land is; kool is er ook in meer dan voldoende hoeveelheid; zwaar timmerhout is hier niet, maar, daar het alleen voor het maken

van schachten gebruikt wordt, is het niet absoluut noodig. Wat betreft ontplofbare stoffen en olie is dit een veel meer ernstige kwestie. De dynamietfabriek behoort gelast te worden om een voldoende voorraad van grondstoffen voor minstens twee jaar te hebben of krijgen. Wat betreft olie, waarvan duizenden ponden maandelijks op de Witwatersrand gebruikt worden, zal de Regeering wijselijk handelen indien zij stappen nam of liet nemen om een zoo groot mogelijk voorraad in het land te verzekeren. Met betrekking tot de kwestie van ontplofbare stoffen en olie kan het ook een vraag zijn of het niet wenschelijker zal zijn om slechts de beste mijnen te verplichten te werken onder bepalingen gelijk die vervat in de Diamantwet. De moeilijkheden in verband met het verkrijgen van deskundige ambtenaren en een genoegzaam aantal arbeiders zoowel als ontplofbare stoffen en olie zouden natuurlijk in een zoodanig geval veel kleiner zijn. Misschien zal het beste van al nog zijn om een korte wet te passeeren regelende de bewerking van eenige mijnen ten behoeve van den Staat. Speciale boeken kunnen gehouden worden en voorzieningen gemaakt worden voor terugbateling van het aldus gewonnen goud na den oorlog min werkende uitgaven en belastingen. Zoodanige buitengewone wetten zijn dikwijls door andere regeeringen in buitengewone omstandigheden gemaakt, zoodat er hier niet groote bezwaren tegen behoeven te bestaan. Ik ben geïnformeerd door het Mijnwezen Departement dat er hier geen bezwaren bestaan tegen de bewerking van eenige mijnen door of ten behoeve van den Staat, zooals hier uiteengezet.

(3) *Stappen behooren genomen te worden om vuurwapenen en ammunitie in dit land te fabricceeren.* Met het oog op de zekere sluiting van alle toevoer van ammunitie en vuurwapenen naar de Republieken in oorlogstijd komt het mij voor dat stappen onmiddellijk behooren genomen te worden om een Mauserfabriek in dit land op touw te zetten. Veel van de machinerie kon hier te lande gefabriceerd worden en kon ook als mijnmachinerie ingevoerd worden; en naar ik geïnformeerd ben uit zeer goeden bron zou het niet moeilijk zijn om een aantal deskundige ambtenaren uit de Mauserfabriek in Duitschland hierheen te doen komen en een fabriek in werkende orde te hebben zegge binnen zes maanden. De dynamietfabriek behoort

gelast te worden in zoodanig geval onmiddellijk stappen te nemen om rookeloos kruid te fabricceeren voor de noodige patronen; misschien kon dit nog doelmatiger gedaan worden in verband met de Mauserfabriek. Ik geef dit aan de hand omdat het niet alleen zeker is dat in een langen oorlog in de Republieken veel meer Mausers noodig zullen zijn dan wij thans hebben, maar ook omdat het hoogst waarschijnlijk is dat wij verplicht zullen zijn om een groot deel van de Kaap Kolonie ook te wapenen in geval van een waarschijnlijk opstand daar.

(4) *Eenige militaire deskundigen van hoogen rang behooren uit Duitschland ontboden te worden*, niet om alhier bevel te voeren maar om raad te geven die onze legers van de grootste waarde kunnen zijn. Dit is vooral noodig omdat onze menschen tot hiertoe gewoon zijn geweest om in kleine getallen bij wijze van commandos te vechten en in den strijd dien wij tegemoet gaan het dikwijls noodzakelijk zal zijn om bij duizendtallen te vechten. In zoodanig geval zou het advies van bekwame officieren op punten van tactiek niet alleen wenschelijk maar hoogst noodzakelijk zijn. Ik ken een zoon van een der hoogste generaals in het Deutsche leger en heb volkomen vertrouwen in hem. Hij verzekert mij dat, als alles met absolute geheimhouding geschiedt, zijn vader bewogen zou kunnen worden ons met zijn advies op dit belangrijk punt te bedienen.

(5) *Pogingen behooren gemaakt te worden om met Russische hulp een opstand op groote schaal in Indië op touw te zetten*. Daardoor zou Engeland geen enkel soldaat uit Indië kunnen missen, doch in tegendeel verplicht zijn haar macht aldaar zoodanig versterken dat zij geene bijzondere strijdkrachten disponibel te hebben in Zuid-Afrika. Ik heb een persoon in den speurdienst die naar Indië door Rusland zou kunnen gezonden worden om dit werk te organiseeren. Een paar duizend pond op deze wijze uitgegeven zou evenveel kunnen uitrichten als millioenen ponden in Zuid-Afrika uitgegeven.

Ik geef de Regeering bescheiden deze gedachten in overweging omdat mijns inziens Zuid-Afrika staat aan den avond van een vreeslijke bloedbad waaruit ons volk zal komen òf als een uitgeputte overblijfsel, houthakkers en waterdragers voor een gehate ras, òf als overwinnaars, stichters van een Vereenigd

Zuid-Afrika, van een der groote rijken der wereld. Ik mag dwalen, maar ik ben ernstig van meening dat, zoo de programme hierboven geschetst wordt uitgevoerd, wij binnen een paar jaar, misschien binnen een jaar, een Afrikaner republiek zullen stichten in Zuid-Afrika strekkende van Tafelbaai tot aan de Zambesi.

J. C. Smuts
Staatsprocureur

Pretoria
4 September 1899

P.S. Als de Regeering denkt dat deze wenken waard zijn verder overwogen en misschien op gehandeld te worden, zou ik bescheiden aan de hand geven dat onder strenge geheimhouding een copie van dit memorandum aan den O.V.S. gezonden worden. J. C. S.

TRANSLATION

Secret

As I am not able, because of indisposition, to assist the Government with oral advice, I regard it as my duty to inform them in writing of the thoughts that have, especially in the last few weeks, occurred to me more and more strongly. The relations between the South African Republic and England become day by day more strained; if at Bloemfontein last June there still was hope of a peaceful and, for both parties, honourable solution, the last few months have taught that that hope is idle; that the enemy is quite determined that this country will either be conquered or be reduced by diplomatic means virtually to the position of a British colony—with really only this difference that the governor is chosen by the people instead of appointed by the Crown. All approaches from our side have been arrogantly rejected; our last proposal of a five-year franchise and a quarter representation for the Goldfields, under conditions which would make it an honourable solution for both parties, has also been refused—in spite of the fact that the British Government knew well that, by this refusal, she would weaken her own position before the world and also

before her own public. Our latest note, in which our Government accepts the idea of a joint inquiry in moderated form, will likewise miss its mark, either by being rejected as insufficient, or by leading to still larger developments. Thus the English representatives will probably report that amendments of an important nature must be made in the franchise law; the British Government will then propose that the Volksraad implement these suggestions within a certain short period; and then we shall be obliged either to refuse their request, or to place ourselves in the humiliating position of accepting the suggestions and putting them into effect. Proceeding by this reasoning I come to the conclusion that our acceptance of a joint inquiry will only postpone, and in no way prevent, the end; humanly speaking a war between the Republics and England is certain; and it is in view of that fact that I wish to present the following suggestions to the Government for very serious consideration.

To ensure a victory for the Republics in this struggle two things appear to me essential:

- (I) The Republics must get the better of the English troops from the start; and
- (II) The Republics must, as far as possible, take the necessary steps in advance to maintain themselves during a long and exhausting struggle.

I now wish to consider both points separately.

(I) *The Republics must get the better of the English troops from the start*

I believe that the South African Boer is the best soldier in the world and in the struggle now before us he will fight the more heroically because he will now be driven into the last corner and will have to fight for everything which is sacred and precious to him. But, on the other hand, our people have since Boomplaats¹—now fifty years ago—suffered no defeat. They have under the circumstances always been victorious; and the question is what they will do if they should unexpectedly suffer a few defeats at the start, in which perhaps hundreds of them

¹ In 1848, while establishing British control north of the Orange River, Sir Harry Smith defeated a Boer force under Andries Pretorius at Boomplaats.

would lose their lives. That will not only discourage our people but will also make the enemy over-confident, and will damage our cause before the world and frustrate the possible chances of a European intervention. I go so far as to say that if we lose the first few big battles our whole cause will become hopeless.

The great question then is: in what way we shall be able to get the upperhand from the start. My humble answer is: *by taking the offensive, and doing it before the British force now in South Africa is markedly strengthened.*

The best military writers of this century have proved how much more advantageous it is in war to take the offensive than to act defensively. The arguments advanced by them in this connection are the following:

- (1) The offensive method raises the moral courage of the attacking army.
- (2) The offensive method demoralizes the defending party and diminishes his general prestige as well as the confidence of the soldiers in their commanders.
- (3) The attacking party is always in a position to choose his own points of attack while the defending party is obliged to await the blows of the enemy in a demoralizing tension.
- (4) The offensive method places the attacking party in a position to carry on the war in the territory of the enemy and to live on his supplies.

Seldom in the history of the world have these advantages applied in such a remarkable fashion as in the present situation in South Africa where an English army of at most 15,000 men (8,500 in Natal, 3,500 in Cape Colony and about 3,000 volunteers in Bechuanaland and Rhodesia) is opposed to a force of about 25,000 Transvaalers and 15,000 Free Staters, without any possibility of getting any reinforcements within four or five weeks.

Not only are the above-mentioned advantages applicable to the present situation with regard to the South African Republic and Great Britain; these advantages become still greater when one considers the extraordinary conditions and circumstances of the British Empire, which includes in its dominion great countries largely inhabited by antagonistic peoples (Cape Colony, India, Egypt, etc.), without any adequate military organization designed to keep the peace in case of disturbance

or attack. The dominion that the British Empire exercises over the many tribes and peoples within its jurisdiction rests more upon prestige and moral intimidation than upon true military strength and as soon as this state of affairs is disturbed in any part of the British Empire then one may soon expect the most serious results even in other parts.

The capture of Natal by a Boer force, together with the cutting of the railway-line between the Cape Colony and Rhodesia, will cause an immediate shaking of the British Empire in very important parts of it: the British Government would under these circumstances not be able to dream of weakening their forces in India, Egypt or elsewhere. Quite possibly it will be necessary in such a case to strengthen their troops in these countries. It is unnecessary to consider the possibility of other international complications as a result of a first defeat inflicted on England in South Africa. France is thirsting for vengeance because of Fashoda, America and Germany seek an opportunity to weaken the dominance of English trade, while Russia is steadily preparing herself to drive England out of Asia (India and China). All these countries will try to take advantage of a defeat inflicted on England, but will quite possibly remain sitting still if the Boers suffer a defeat.

Thus all considerations, not only of a military but also of a political nature, indicate the great desirability of the South African Republic taking the offensive against England while her forces in South Africa are still weak and can be defeated without great difficulty.

It is true that our people are always loath to attack first or to fire the first shot, as they express it; but when we are once convinced that all diplomatic means have been used in vain and when the impossibility of reaching a solution in a peaceful way has become clear, then there is no longer a political question but only a military one and then our people too must have the courage to act on purely military grounds as set out above.

Race hatred is such in South Africa that, even if the South African Republic by giving in now could prevent the war for the present, the fire would still remain smouldering in South Africa and sooner or later the war would nevertheless break out. With the existing military organization of the Republics and the spirit which inspires the Afrikaner people over the

whole of South Africa, there is a chance that by a war the Afrikaner people will maintain and strengthen its position of leadership. With the spreading of the industrial and money spirit among our people our position also will be weakened. It must also not be overlooked that through the encirclement of the two Republics by British territory and through their exclusion from the sea, their position as independent states will become more and more untenable and weak. Through England's constant interference even the degree of independence that they now still possess will be diminished and the question may well be if this is not the time for them to open a way to the sea for themselves, the one through Delagoa Bay and the other through Durban.

I would therefore humbly propose for consideration whether, in view of all these calculations, it would not be the most desirable course that, as soon as the present negotiations are broken off and a peaceful solution becomes impossible, the two Republics attack Natal with all their force and reach Durban before any reinforcement would be able to arrive. In this way not only would all the artillery and war stores and supplies which are already in Natal in enormous quantities fall into our hands; not only could we force Natal to support and feed both forces, but there would also be every chance that by such action the interior districts of the Cape Colony would be encouraged to rise and to form themselves into a third great republic. In this way England would not only be forced to begin again from the beginning as in 1806,¹ but she will also have the diplomatic complications to fear which I have already indicated.

To reach this goal it will be necessary that the military authorities of the two Republics should as speedily as possible have a common consultation about time, manner, place etc. of a combined attack on Natal.

(II) *The Republics must, as far as possible, take the necessary steps in advance to maintain themselves during a long and exhausting struggle*

When such an attack on Natal has succeeded the British Government will exert all its powers to regain its position and

¹ The second, and permanent, British occupation of Cape Colony began in 1806.

thus a long and bloody war will inevitably arise. But even if for some reason or other such an attack on Natal does not take place, we can still be assured that the war will be a long and exhausting one. In any case the measures which will put the two Republics in a position to endure a long war must already be taken now. For this purpose three things are necessary:

(1) *All possible efforts must be made to continue agriculture as in peace time.* For this a sufficient number of burghers and inhabitants will always have to remain on the farms to do the necessary work. With the flocking of many thousands of Afrikaners from the Cape Colony to the republican armies, which I certainly expect, this will be even easier. In any case the women and Kaffirs will if required have to do this work with the necessary support and protection of the Government.

(2) *The Treasury must not be allowed to become empty.* This Republic has the unique advantage of being in possession of some of the biggest and best gold-mines in the world in full readiness and working order and thus able to keep the Treasury always in a good condition. A special war-tax of, say, 20 per cent of the gross output ought to be imposed on the mines and the Mint in Pretoria to be set working. In exchange for this, special protection should be ensured to the mines; the influx of Kaffir labourers should be kept up; the whole staff of the mining companies, officials as well as ordinary mine-workers must be encouraged to stay in the country, even if they are British subjects, on condition that these last are put under military law and give guarantees of loyal behaviour. The chief articles needed for the working of the mines are machinery, coal, heavy timber, explosives and oil. As regards the first, one can assume that there is an adequate quantity in the country; there is also coal in more than sufficient quantity; there is no heavy timber here, but, since it is only used for making shafts, it is not absolutely necessary. As regards explosives and oil, this is a much more serious matter. The dynamite factory should be ordered to have or obtain a sufficient supply of raw materials for at least two years. As regards oil, of which thousands of pounds are used monthly on the Witwatersrand, the Government would act wisely if it took steps or has steps taken to

ensure the biggest possible store in the country. With regard to the question of explosives and oil, it may also be a question of whether it would not be more desirable to compel only the best mines to work under regulations like those contained in the diamond law. The difficulties in connection with the obtaining of expert officials and a sufficient number of labourers as well as explosives and oil would naturally be much smaller in such a case. Perhaps it would be best of all to pass a short law regulating the working of some mines for the benefit of the State. Special books can be kept and provision made for repayment after the war of the gold thus mined less working costs and taxes. Such extraordinary laws are often made by other governments in exceptional circumstances, so that there need be no great objections to this. I am informed by the Department of Mines that there are no objections here to the working of some mines by or on behalf of the State as here set out.

(3) *Steps should be taken to manufacture fire-arms and ammunition in this country.* In view of the certain closing of all import of ammunition and fire-arms to the Republics in time of war, it appears to me that steps should be taken immediately to start a Mauser factory in this country. Much of the machinery could be manufactured here and could also be imported as mine machinery; and, according to my information from a very good source, it would not be difficult to have a number of expert officials from the Mauser factory in Germany come here and to have a factory in working order within say six months. In this case the dynamite factory should be ordered to take immediate steps to manufacture smokeless powder for the necessary cartridges; perhaps this could be done more effectively in connection with the Mauser factory. I suggest this, not only because it is certain that in a long war in the Republics many more Mausers will be needed than we now have, but also because it is highly probable that we shall be obliged to arm a large part of the Cape Colony also in case of a probable rising there.

(4) *Some military experts of high rank should be summoned from Germany,* not to have command here but to give advice which could be of the greatest value to our armies. This is specially necessary because our people have until now been used to

fighting in small numbers by means of commandos, and, in the struggle which we are approaching, it will often be essential to fight in thousands. In such a case the advice of able officers on matters of tactics would be not only desirable but highly necessary. I know a son of one of the highest generals in the German army and have full confidence in him. He assures me that, if everything is done with absolute secrecy, his father could be persuaded to help us with his advice on this important matter.

(5) *An attempt should be made to start a rising in India on a large scale with Russian help.* By this means England would not be able to spare a single soldier from India, but on the contrary be forced to strengthen her forces there to such an extent that she would have no particular fighting force available in South Africa. I have someone in the detective service who could be sent to India through Russia to organize this work. A few thousand pounds spent in this way would be able to do as much as millions of pounds spent in South Africa.

I humbly recommend these thoughts to the Government for consideration because in my opinion South Africa stands on the eve of a frightful blood-bath out of which our people will come, either as an exhausted remnant, hewers of wood and drawers of water for a hated race, or as victors, founders of a United South Africa, of one of the great empires of the world. I may be wrong, but I seriously think that, if the programme sketched above is carried out, we should, within a few years, perhaps within one year, found an Afrikaner republic in South Africa stretching from Table Bay to the Zambesi.

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

Pretoria
4 September 1899

P.S. If the Government thinks that these suggestions are worth further consideration and perhaps worth acting upon, I should humbly propose that a copy of this memorandum should be sent to the Orange Free State under strict secrecy.
J. C. S.

131 To D. J. E. Erasmus Vol. 99, no. 301 S.P. 465, p. 225

TELEGRAM

From: State Attorney

To: Assistant-General Erasmus, Ladysmith

Dated: 13 November 1899

Confidentieel

Daar ik zeer begerig ben naar Natal terug te keeren zal ik blij zijn als u de Regeering zal verzoeken mij naar Natal te zenden om u behulpzaam te zijn. Gij weet dat ik u van dienst kan zijn.

TRANSLATION

Confidential

As I wish very much to return to Natal,¹ I shall be glad if you will request the Government to send me to Natal to assist you. You know that I can be of service to you.

132 To L. Botha

Vol. 2, no. 105

This and 133 are the earliest communications between Smuts and Botha in the Smuts Collection.

Kantoor van den Staatsprocureur
Pretoria
2 April 1900

Waarde Vriend, Ingesloten vindt U een brief mij ter hand gesteld door den Hollandschen Consul, die hem weder van zijn collega te Kaapstad had ontvangen. Ik hield hem hier voor een dag, verwachtende dat U naar Pretoria zou komen om zaken te bespreken; nu echter zend ik hem aan.

De Regeering was eerst van plan U tot Wd. Comdt. Genl. voor de geheele Republiek te benoemen, en de President is zoover gegaan om zulks publiek te kennen te geven in zijn rede bij de begrafenis. Daar er echter andere kandidaten waren en wij alle najver wilden voorkomen, hebben wij het beter gedacht voorloopig zaken *in statu quo* te laten, namelijk U

¹ In the early months of the war Smuts paid frequent visits to the Natal front and brought back reports to the Government in Pretoria.

hoofdgeneraal in Natal en de la Rey in den O.V.S. De moeilijkheden in den weg van een verkiezing (met 3,000 onzen burgers op St. Helena etc.) zijn zeer groot en het is dus zeer mogelijk dat deze toestand zal blijven voortbestaan tot na den oorlog. Mijn vurige wensch is dat U zal voortgaan op den weg van Colenso en Spionkop; de Regeering zal U zeker in eenige actieve plannen ondersteunen. Wij zijn nu met het terrein en sterkte van den vijand in Natal zoo goed bekend, dat het mij niet zal verbazen zoo U erin slaagt den vijand terug te werpen op Ladysmith of over den Tugela. In elk geval uw en onze toekomst is grootendeels in uwe hand, en ik verwacht dat onze burgers onder het besef van het gevaar dat er van alle kanten dreigt niet zullen blijven stil liggen op de Biggarsbergen. Carrington komt met een divisie over Beira om Mafeking te ontzetten, en daar Roberts Baden-Powell heeft gevraagd uit te houden tot 24 Mei, is dat zeker de tijdstip waarop Carrington nabij Mafeking zal kunnen zijn. Bij dien tijd dus moeten wij weer een leger aan de Westergrens hebben om het plan van den vijand te verijdelen; en als U voor dien tijd de Engelschen zou kunnen verslaan in Natal zal er ook beter kans bestaan om den vijand op de Westergrens te keeren. Vergeet niet dat de vijand thans in denzelfden toestand als wij verkeerden, nl. al zijne troepen van eenige waarde in het veld hebben, en zoo wij er nu in slagen om hem terug te slaan op de verschillende punten dan is onze eventueele overwinning gewis. Met hartelijke groete voor uw succes,
t.t.

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Office of the State Attorney
Pretoria
2 April 1900

Honoured Friend, Enclosed you will find a letter¹ delivered to me by the Dutch Consul, who in turn had received it from his colleague in Cape Town. I held it here for a day, expecting that you would come to Pretoria to discuss matters; now, however, I send it on.

¹ Enclosure missing.

The Government at first intended to appoint you Acting Commandant-General¹ for the whole Republic, and the President went so far as to indicate this publicly in his address at the funeral.² As, however, there were other candidates and we wished to avoid all envy, we have thought it better to leave matters *in statu quo* for the time being, namely, you as chief general in Natal and de la Rey [J. H.] in the Orange Free State. The difficulties in the way of an election (with 3,000 of our burghers on St Helena etc.) are very great and it is therefore very possible that this position will remain in being until after the war. My ardent wish is that you will continue on the road of Colenso and Spionkop;³ the Government will certainly support you in any active plans. We are now so well acquainted with the terrain and strength of the enemy in Natal that it will not surprise me if you succeed in throwing the enemy back on Ladysmith or over the Tugela. In any case your and our future is largely in your hands; and I expect that our burghers, realizing the danger that threatens from all sides, will not remain lying quiet on the Biggarsbergen. [Sir F.] Carrington is arriving via Beira with a division to relieve Mafeking, and as [Lord] Roberts has asked Baden-Powell [R. S. S.] to hold out until 24 May, that is probably the time when Carrington will be able to be near Mafeking. By that time, therefore, we must again have an army on the Western border to frustrate the enemy's plan; and if you were able to defeat the English in Natal before that time, there will also be a better chance to check the enemy on the Western border. Do not forget that the enemy is at present in the same position as we, namely, with all his troops of any worth in the field, and if we were now to succeed in beating him back at the various points, our eventual victory is certain. With hearty greetings for your success, *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

¹ The Commandant-General of the South African Republic was elected by the burghers.

² Of the late Commandant-General, P. J. Joubert.

³ Boer victories over British forces under Sir Redvers Buller in Natal in December 1899 and February 1900.

133 From L. Botha

Vol. 2, no.1

This telegram was sent from Kopjes, Orange Free State

TELEGRAM

From: Acting Commandant-General

To: State Attorney Smuts

Dated: 20 May 1900

Persoonlijk

Hartelijk dank voor uwen brief. Ik ben blijde dat ik nog een brief heb kunnen ontvangen van een man met wiens zienswijzen als daarin uitgedrukt ik zoo volkomen samen ga. Wacht met uw eventueel vertrek tot U nader van mij hoort.

TRANSLATION

Personal

Hearty thanks for your letter. I am glad that I have been able to receive a letter from a man with whose views as therein expressed I so entirely agree. Postpone your final departure until you hear further from me.

134 Circular

Vol. XCVI, no. 191

Undated draft, probably of early 1900, in Smuts's handwriting.

Confidentieel. Circulaire telegram aan alle landdrosten en Wd. Spec. Comdt. Johannesburg. Copie Landdrost Pretoria.

Van alle kanten komen berichten dat vele onzer burgers in stede van op het vechterrein te zijn, thuis zitten of voor hunne boerderijen zorgen. Het gevaar hiervan is te groot en te duidelijk om door my uitvoerig te worden uiteengezet. Niet alleen kunnen wij onze onafhankelijkheid, maar ook ons volksbestaan verliezen want de vijand zal ons verwoesten en mogelijk ons en onze kinderen aan andere landen vervoeren om voor hen te vechten zooals zij met de Ieren thans doen. In die districten van den O.V.S. welker in handen van den vijand zijn gevallen wordt alles verwoest en weggevoerd en blijven de arme menschen zitten op de puinhoopen van hun vorige plaatsen; en nu worden zelfs die plaatsen beloofd aan de Australiërs, Canadezen en verengelschte Afrikaners die aan de kant van den vijand

vechten. En indien dit geschiedt in den O.V.S. wat staat de Transvalers te wachten tegen wie de vijand gedreven wordt door elke mogelijke aansporing van haat en wraakzucht. Het erfdeel onzer vaders, waarvoor reeds zooveel bloed en tranen zijn gestort, moet ongeschonden aan onze nageslacht worden overhandigd. De heilige zaak der vrijheid waarvoor wij vechten is Gods zaak en Hy sal ons niet begeven of verlaten maar in ons grootste nood zal Hy uitkomst en redding geven, zoo wij alleen ons plicht doen en zijn werk niet door onze nalatigheid en traagheid verijdelen.

De Regeering heeft er ernstig over nagedacht hoe onze menschen die het gevaar nog niet beseffen en nog thuis zitten, uit de districten naar de commandos te krijgen. Zij heeft besloten nogmaals een beroep op alle landdrosten, krijgsofficieren en wde. krijgsofficieren uit te brengen en hen in den naam van onze heilig recht te verzoeken alle mogelijke pogingen in het werk te stellen om ons volk met vereenigde kracht tegen den vijand te krijgen.

De Regeering heeft derhalve besloten de landdrosten te verzoeken en te machtigen eenige vertrouwbare, ernstige en invloedrijke mannen, zegge 5 in ieder district, aan te stellen om van plaats tot plaats te gaan, de burgers uit te woelen naar commando en de onwilligen naar den landdrost te brengen om behoorlijk gestraft te worden, des noods met eenige dagen harden arbeid, en hen dan naar hun respectieve commandos te zenden. Deze personen, door U daartoe aangesteld, moeten de ambtseed van getrouwheid afleggen en de landdrost kan voor hen de noodige vervoermiddelen des noods doen afcommanderen. Gelieve toch onmiddelijk hierin te handelen en de Regeering spoedig te rapporteren wat gij hierin gedaan hebt. Tot aanmoediging der burgers wensch ik nog te zeggen dat onze zaak thans zeer goed staat en dat, zoo wij den vijand met vereenigde krachten in den O.V.S. aanpakken, er alle kans bestaat met Gods hulp hen te verslaan. Gelieve ieder persoon, die U aldus inzweert om ieder wijk in uw districten op te nemen, te voorzien van een copie van dit telegram, hetwelk hij van plaats tot plaats moet voorlezen en aan de menschen duidelijk maken. Laat hen allen worden medegedeeld dat zij tevergeefs ploegen en arbeiden als zij niet hun best voor de onafhankelijkheid doen, want dan ploegen en arbeiden zij alleen

voor den vijand, die zal komen maaien wat zij zoo zuur thans zaaien. Mijn ewig gebed voor mijn volk is dat God de oogen van allen mogen openen die nog thuis zitten en den vijand maar laten nader en nader komen.

TRANSLATION

Confidential. Telegraphic circular to all landdrosts and the Acting Special Commandant, Johannesburg. Copy to Landdrost, Pretoria.

Reports come in from all sides that many of our burghers, instead of being at the front, are staying at home or tending their farms. The danger of this is too great and too obvious to be set out in detail by me. Not only may we lose our independence, but also our existence as a nation; for the enemy will destroy us and perhaps transport us and our children to other countries to fight for them, as they are now doing with the Irish. In the districts of the Orange Free State that have fallen into enemy hands, everything is being destroyed and carried away and the poor people remain on the ruins of their former farms. And now even these farms are being promised to the Australians, Canadians and Anglicized Afrikaners who are fighting on the enemy's side. And if that is happening in the Orange Free State, what can the Transvaalers expect, against whom the enemy is being driven by every possible incentive of hate and revenge. The heritage of our fathers, for which so much blood and tears have already been shed, must be handed down unblemished to our descendants. The sacred cause of freedom for which we fight is God's cause and He will not fail or desert us; in our greatest need He will give help and deliverance, as long as we do our duty and do not frustrate His work by our neglect and tardiness.

The Government has seriously considered how to get those of our people who do not yet realize the danger and still remain at home, out of the districts to the commandos. It has decided to make another appeal to all landdrosts, defence officers and acting defence officers and to request them in the name of our sacred and just cause, to make every possible effort to get our people in united strength against the enemy.

The Government has therefore decided to request, and to empower, the landdrosts to appoint some reliable, earnest and

influential men, say five in each district, to go from farm to farm to winkle out the burghers to commando and to take the unwilling ones to the landdrost to be properly punished, if necessary with some days of hard labour, and then to send them to their respective commandos. The persons so appointed by you must take the official oath of loyalty, and the landdrost may, if necessary, commandeer for them the necessary means of transport. Please act at once in this matter and report promptly to the Government what you have done. To encourage the burghers, I wish to say that our cause stands very well at the moment and that, if we tackle the enemy with united forces in the Orange Free State, there is every chance, with God's help, of defeating them. Please provide every person whom you swear in to take charge of each division in your district with a copy of this telegram, which he must read out from farm to farm and explain to the people. Let them all be told that they plough and labour in vain if they do not do their best for independence; for then they plough and labour only for the enemy, who will come and reap what they are now so painfully sowing. My constant prayer for my people is that God may open the eyes of all who still stay at home and let the enemy get nearer and nearer.

(b) After the fall of Pretoria and the last defensive battle at Diamond Hill (Donkerhoek) in the Magaliesberg (10 June 1900), the guerilla phase of the war began. It was decided, as part of these operations, to attempt to regain a footing in the Western Transvaal which had been virtually abandoned to the enemy, partly because its commandos had been withdrawn for concentration elsewhere, partly because of widespread desertion among the burghers. General J. H. de la Rey now assumed military control of the western districts. Expecting trouble from recalcitrant burghers, he asked for Smuts, still armed with the useful authority of the Staatsprocureur, as his assistant. An Executive Council resolution constituting them what was really a separate government for the Western Transvaal was passed, at Smuts's request, on 17 July (136).

In vivid reports to Botha, F. W. Reitz, C. R. de Wet and de la Rey Smuts described encounters with British forces and the successful re-establishment of Republican authority in the Western districts (137 and 138). De la Rey delegated the reorganization of the Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad and Bloemhof commandos to Smuts—a task which he carried out sternly and thoroughly (139–142). Engagements under his

command at Modderfontein and in the Gatsrand are described in **I44, I46 and I49.**

At the beginning of 1901 a plan to invade the Cape Colony, first made in October, 1900 at the Cyferfontein meeting of Botha, Smuts, Steyn and the members of the Orange Free State Government, was revived. Smuts was enthusiastic about it and clearly made up his mind not only to join such an expedition but, if possible, to lead it (**I43, I45, I47-I50**). But this project, as well as his work in the Western Transvaal, was interrupted early in May by a summons from his Government to join them near Ermelo in the Eastern Transvaal for discussions about the future of the war.

135 W. T. F. Davies to S. M. Smuts Vol. 2, no. 29

Springs

11 July 1900

Dear Madam, I saw your husband on Sunday last and I promised to write to you to let you know he was in good health and looking very well. Please inform Mrs de Wet¹ that her husband is also well. Yours truly,

W. T. F. Davies

*Surgeon-Major, I.L.H.*²

136 Executive Council Resolution Vol. XCVI, no. 171

BUITENGEWONE

STAATSCOURANT

ZUID-AFRIKAANSCH E REPUBLIEK

DEEL XX. MACHADODORP, Z. A. REPUBLIEK, DINSDAG,

17 JULI 1900. NO. 1134

GOUVERNEMENTS-KENNISGEVING

TER algemeene informatie wordt hiermede gepubliceerd Uitvoerende Raadsbesluit, artikel 117, dd. 16 Juli 1900.

F. W. Reitz

Staatssecretaris

Gouvernementskantoor
Machadodorp, 17 Juli 1900

¹ Wife of N. J. de Wet.

² Imperial Light Horse.

Uitvoerende Raadsbesluit art. 117, dd. Juli 1900

Aan de orde: bespreking van de noodzakelijkheid om een nadere regeling vast te stellen met betrekking tot de administratie (civiel en militair) van de westelijke districten;

de Uitvoerende Raad, in aanmerking nemende de tegenwoordige omstandigheden des lands; gelet hebbende op de machtiging aan de Regeering verleend, bij Eerste Volksraadsbesluit artikel 1416a, dd. 28 September 1899; in dezen handelende met medeweten en in overleg met den Wnd. Commandant-Generaal;

Besluit: mits dezen aan de heeren J. C. Smuts, Staatsprocureur, en Generaal De la Rey gezamenlijk op te dragen, om zooveel mogelijk in overleg met de Regeering, alle zaken in de westelijke districten (insluitende Rustenburg, Marico, Lichtenburg, Bloemhof, Wolmaransstad, Potchefstroom, Krugersdorp, en de Witwatersrand Goudvelden) te regelen, en alle maatregelen te treffen waardoor de administratie (zoowel de civiele als militaire) in voormelde districten op een geregelden voet worde gebracht, de wetten en het gezag van de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek aldaar worde gehandhaafd en de krijgsbelangen zooveel mogelijk worden bevorderd.

Verder besluit de Uitvoerende Raad, in verband met het bovenstaande, voornoemde heeren gezamenlijk hierbij te machtigen, om, waar door hen noodig geoordeeld, aanstellingen uit te reiken of ontslag te verlenen; een en ander met dien verstande, dat in elk geval waar de Regeering door voornoemde heeren niet vooraf is geraadpleegd over eenige door hen, krachtens dit besluit, genomen stappen, zij zoo spoedig mogelijk daarna de Regeering er van in kennis moeten stellen, en dat alle stappen door hen gezamenlijk te worden genomen en maatregelen door hen gezamenlijk te worden getroffen, in uitvoering van dezen opdracht, slechts tijdelijk en voorloopig zullen zijn, kunnende zoodanige stappen en maatregelen in elk geval door de Regeering worden gewijzigd en veranderd, zonder echter de wettigheid te affecteeren van eenige handeling er onder reeds verricht voor den tijd dat zoodanige wijziging of verandering bij voornoemde heeren bekend was.

TRANSLATION: *Government Gazette Extraordinary*
South African Republic

Part XX. Machadodorp, South African Republic, Tuesday,
17 July 1900. No. 1134

Government Notice

Executive Council Resolution, article 117, dated 16 July 1900, is hereby published for general information.

Government Office
 Machadodorp,¹ 17 July 1900

F. W. Reitz
State Secretary

Executive Council Resolution article 117, dated 16 July 1900

Under discussion: the necessity of making further arrangements with regard to the administration (civil and military) of the western districts;

the Executive Council, taking into account the present condition of the country; mindful of the powers conferred on the Government by the First Volksraad resolution, article 1416a, dated 28 September 1899; acting in this matter with the knowledge of, and in consultation with, the Acting Commandant General;

Hereby resolves: to instruct Mr J. C. Smuts, State Attorney, and General de la Rey jointly to regulate, as far as possible in consultation with the Government, all matters in the western districts (including Rustenburg, Marico, Lichtenburg, Bloemhof, Wolmaransstad, Potchefstroom, Krugersdorp, and the Witwatersrand Goldfields), and to take all measures by which the administration (both civil and military) in the said districts may be put upon an orderly footing, the laws and the authority of the South African Republic maintained there, and the cause of the war advanced as much as possible.

The Executive Council resolves further, in connection with the above, hereby to empower the aforesaid gentlemen, wherever they judge it necessary, jointly to make appointments or effect dismissals, on the understanding that, where the Government has not first been consulted by the aforesaid gentlemen about any steps taken by them under this resolution,

¹ The President and the members of the Government had left Pretoria on 29 May 1900 and established themselves at Machadodorp on the railway line to Lourenço Marques. Kruger lived at Waterval-Onder about 10 miles further east and milder in climate.

they must, as soon as possible afterwards, inform the Government thereof; and that all steps to be taken by them jointly in carrying out this instruction, shall be merely temporary and provisional, such steps and measures being in each case capable of being modified and changed by the Government, without however affecting the legality of any action already done under it before such modification or change was known to the aforesaid gentlemen.

137 To L. Botha

Vol. XCVI, no. 178

Olifantsnek

22 September 1900

WelEd. Gestr. Heer, Sedert ik van U vertrekken ben naar de commandos van Genl. de la Rey hebben wij nog totaal niets van U of de H. Ed. Regeering vernomen. Ik weet niet waaraan het schort maar ik kan U verzekeren dat de toestand van eenvoudige onkunde over alles betreffende U en de Regeering niet anders dan nadeelig op onze zaak in de westelijke districten kan werken. Zo b.v. hebben wij hier geruchten gehoord, eerst van een grooten slag bij Pan statie en later by Dalmanutha, dan weer wordt onze eenvoudige burgers per proclamatie door Lord Roberts diets gemaakt dat de Staatspresident formeel bedankt heeft en dat hij reeds naar Lorenzo Marques vertrokken is op weg naar Europa en dat zelfs de Staatssecretaris hem vergezelt met al de Staatssukken. Zoodanige proclamaties blijven natuurlijk niet zonder effect onder onze eenvoudige menschen, en wij hebben niets officieels om deze en dergelijke leugentaal te weerspreken. Wij hebben herhaalde malen rapportgangers naar U en de Regeering doorgezonden, maar venemen taal noch tijding in antwoord. Ik maak geen klachte tegen U of de Regeering, maar het zal U duidelijk zijn dat deze onkunde ons reeds zoo zware taak geensijns lichter maakt. Gaarne vernamen wij zoo spoedig mogelijk wat de werkelijke toestand thans ten uwent is, wat er is voorgevallen gedurende de laatste paar manden en wat uwe plannen voor de toekomst zijn. Ik heb een code met de Regeering waarvan U zich zou kunnen bedienen over punten van groot belang. Luit. Tynsma is omtrent 4 weken geleden naar de Regeering gezonden

met belangrijke rapporten, maar van hem hebben wij nog niets vernomen.

Sedert onze laatste rapporten hebben wij aanhoudend met den vijand gevochten op kleine schaal. Wij hebben nog niets groots kunnen doen maar zijn in zooverre in onze oorspronkelijk doel geslaagd dat er sedert onze aankomst in de westelijke districten hoegenaamd geen communicatie tusschen Mafeking en Pretoria of Johannesburg heeft bestaan. De communicatie zoowel van Mafeking als die over Klerksdorp en Potchefstroom is nog steeds in ons bezit gebleven, terwijl in het district Wolmaransstad ook goed werk gedaan wordt. De toestand is nu zoo dat de vijand alleen Commando en Selikatznek bezitten en van daar in een lijn naar Krugersdorp, en dan weer op de westergrens liggen; verder is hier alles schoon en verwachten wij spoedig een nog grooter gedeelte schoon te hebben.

Waar de vijand thans komt richt hij een onbeschrijfelijke verwoesting aan. Alle huizen worden afgebrand, alle landerijen en tuinen totaal vernield, alle vee en eetwaren weggevoerd en alle mannelijke personen gevangen genomen—invalieden, grijsaards van over de 70 jaar, tot zelfs kinderen van 11 jaar. In sommige gevallen waar een aanval van ons verwacht wordt, worden zelfs de vrouwen en kinderen als een beschermingsmaatregel naar hunne kampen gevoerd.

Hoewel wij in het begin met een groote verwarring en verslapping onder de burgers te kampen hadden, zijn wij er grootendeels in geslaagd een gezonden geest in hen te doen herleven, welke niet zonder vrucht zal blijven op den toekomstigen loop van den oorlog.

Van Hoofdcmd. de Wet hebben wij geen vaste berichten; de vijand zegt dat hij bij Ladybrand voorbij is in zuidwaartsche richting, terwijl andere berichten hem dichtbij de Vaalrivier plaatsen. Met de commandos onder Genl. Lemmer gaat het goed; ik wenschte dat ik hetzelfde van de Potchefstroomers onder Genl. Liebenberg en Comd. Douthwaite kon zeggen. Drie onzer krijgsgevangen burgers Hans Rickert, Theunis du Plessis, P. A. van Rustenburg en zijn broeder zijn dezen kant van Hexrivierberg van den trein gesprongen en na een reis van een maand veilig alhier aangekomen. Zij spreken in de grootste termen van de geesdrift die nog in de koloniale

Afrikaners leeft en van het groote werk dat daar nog steeds voortgaat. V. C. Piet Kruger, Comd. Caspar du Plessis en anderen zijn met den zelfden trein op weg naar Ceylon vervoerd—alsook Hoofd. Comd. Prinsloo met zijne burgers. Uw dw. dnr.

J. C. Smuts
Sts. Procureur

P.S. Genl. de la Rey is op het oogenblik naar een ander commando gegaan, maar weet dat ik aan U schrijf. J. C. S.

TRANSLATION

Olifantsnek
22 September 1900

Honoured Sir, Since I left you for the commandos of General de la Rey, we have heard nothing at all from you or the honourable Government. I do not know what is wrong, but I can assure you that the state of sheer ignorance of everything in regard to you and the Government can only have a bad effect on our cause in the western districts. For instance, we have heard rumours here first of a great battle at Pan station¹ and later at Dalmanutha;² then again Lord Roberts tries, by proclamation, to make our simple burghers believe that the State President has formally resigned and that he has already left for Lourenço Marques on his way to Europe, and even that the State Secretary is accompanying him with all the State documents.³ Such proclamations are not, of course, without effect among our simple people, and we have nothing official to contradict these and similar lies. We have repeatedly sent dispatch riders through to you and the Government, but have had no word or report in answer. I make no complaint against you or the Government, but it will be clear to you that this

¹ On 5 September this post on the Pretoria-Lourenço Marques railway line, which was held by a small British force, was attacked by the Boers who were repulsed. It was not a 'great battle'.

² On 27 August the important battle of Dalmanutha or Bergendal had ended in the defeat and retreat of the Boers from their positions along the Pretoria-Lourenço Marques railway, and the withdrawal of the Government of the South African Republic to Nelspruit.

³ Kruger had left for Lourenço Marques on 10 September but was unable to leave for Europe until 20 October.

ignorance makes our already heavy task no whit lighter. We should like to know as soon as possible what the true state of affairs with you now is, what has happened during the last few months and what your plans for the future are. I have a code with the Government which you could use for very important points. Lieutenant Tynsma¹ was sent to the Government about four weeks ago with important reports, but we have as yet heard nothing from him.

Since our last reports we have been continually fighting the enemy on a small scale. We have not yet been able to do anything big, but have so far succeeded in our original aim that, since our arrival in the western districts, no communication whatever has existed between Mafeking and Pretoria or Johannesburg. Communication from Mafeking, as well as that via Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom, has continued to remain in our possession, while good work is also being done in the Wolmaransstad district. Conditions are now so good that the enemy holds only Commando and Selikatznek and from there in a line to Krugersdorp, and after that along the western border; for the rest all is clear here and we expect soon to have a still larger area clear.

Wherever the enemy now appears, he carries out indescribable destruction. All houses are burned down, all fields and gardens utterly destroyed, all cattle and foodstuffs carried off and all males taken prisoner—invalids, greybeards of over seventy, even children of eleven. In some cases, where an attack by us is expected, even the women and children are carried off to their camps as a protective measure.

Although we had at first to contend with great confusion and slackness among the burghers, we have largely succeeded in reviving a healthy spirit among them which will not be without good effect on the future course of the war.

We have no reliable reports of Chief Commandant de Wet. The enemy says that he has passed Ladybrand in a southerly direction, while other reports put him near the Vaal River. All is well with the commandos under General [H. R.] Lemmer.

¹ This was Wybrand Elias Thuynsma, a customs official at Lourenço Marques, who joined the Orange Free State Artillery on the outbreak of the war and became its commanding officer, with the rank of Captain, shortly before he was killed at Graspan on 6 June 1901.

I wish I could say the same of the Potchefstroomers under General [P. J.] Liebenberg and Commandant [C. M.] Douthwaite. Three of our prisoner of war burghers, Hans Rieckert, Theunis du Plessis, P. A. van Rustenburg and his brother jumped out of the train this side of the Hex River Mountains¹ and arrived here safely after a journey of a month. They speak in the highest terms of the enthusiasm that still lives in the Colony Afrikaners and of the great work still going on there. Field-Cornet Piet Kruger,² Commandant Caspar du Plessis and others were transported on the same train en route to Ceylon—also Chief Commandant [M.] Prinsloo and his burghers. Yours faithfully,

J. C. Smuts
State Attorney

P.S. General de la Rey has at the moment gone to another commando, but knows that I am writing to you. J. C. S.

138 To F. W. Reitz

Vol. 2, no. 106

Hekpoort, distr. Krugersdorp
29 November 1900

Hooggeachte Vriend, Slechts het een en ander van algemeen belang om U te doen zien hoe onze zaak nog in deze geweste staat. Over Krijgsoperaties heb ik aan comd. genl. geschreven. Verder mag ik met vreugde zeggen dat ons gezag alhier nog steeds gehandhaafd en ge-eerbiedigd wordt. Ontrouwe ambtenaren worden geschorst en anderen aangesteld en alles gedaan om de burgers te doen zien dat wij de wettige Regeering zijn. Het is dan ook hartroerend te zien hoe te midden van nederlagen, algeheele verwoesting en verbranding hunner plaatsen, wegvoering hunner vrouwen en kinderen door de vijand, onze menschen steeds meer pal staan, blijmoedig alles verdurende, in het vaste vertrouwen op den God die ons een Toevlucht is geweest van geslachten tot geslachten. Waarlijk ik ben trotsch

¹ In the south-western Cape Colony.

² Pieter Gert Wessel Kruger, grandson of President Kruger (q.v.); Master of the High Court of the South African Republic.

op ons Afrikanervolk en wanneer ik zie hoe man en vrouw en kind zonder murmureeren deze felle verwoesting en vervolging doorstaan dan kan ik niet anders denken dan dat God de Heere groote dingen voor dit volkje heeft weggelegd. Ik mag zeggen dat de westelijke districten een groot puinhoop zijn. Groote gedeeltes hebben wij geheel ontruimd wegens de moorden der Kaffers die in deze de getrouwe bondgenooten der Engelschen zijn; vele vrouwe lagers zijn derhalve in veiliger deelen getrokken en van voedsel voorzien. Maar zoodra de vijand daar voorbij komt vernielt hij alles en lijden vrouwen en kinderen maar weer zoo goed als hongersnood. Ik ben dikwijls tot tranen bewogen om al deze ellende te zien. Maar niettegenstaande alles, niettegenstaande het feit dat zoovele vrouwen en kinderen zonder brood zijn en in dit regenseizoen in den open hemel wonen en de grootste ontberingen moeten uitstaan, moedigen zij ons steeds aan pal en vast te staan totdat God uitkomst geve. Natuurlijk bezwijken een zeker aantal mannen en gaan naar den vijand over, maar hieronder vindt uw nooit van de vechtende burgers waarop wij rekenen. Ik ben dan ook door den ernst onzer zaak genoodzaakt doortastende maatregelen te nemen en te handelen op het aloude beginsel dat wie niet voor ons zijn tegen ons zijn, en alle burgers en personen die niet met ons samengaan en vechten aan te zeggen naar den vijand te gaan. Alleen hierdoor kunnen wij verlost worden van de vele verraders die nog onder ons schuilen en al onze plannen en operaties bederven. Want het is maar al te waar (hoe treurig ook) dat de vijand door verraders van ons volk overal geleid wordt en daardoor meer uitvoert en verricht dan hij ooit anders had kunnen doen.

Het volk verlangt veel om informatie van S.H. Ed. Pres. Kruger en de deputatie en ik vertrouw dat de Regeering mij van tijd tot tijd op hoogte zal houden van alles van belang. Ik had eens het voornemen de Regeering een kort bezoekje te komen afleggen; maar mijn werkzaamheden zijn hier tans zoo gewichtvol en druk dat dit voor mij niet mogelijk zal zijn.

Met hartelijke groete aan S.H. Ed. Pres. Burger en U zoowel als de andere leden van de Uitv. Raad, blijf ik steeds de uwe

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Hekpoort
Krugersdorp District
29 November 1900

Most honoured Friend, Just a few points of general interest to let you see how our cause stands in these parts. About war operations I have written to the Commandant-General. Further I may say with joy that our authority here is still being maintained and respected. Disloyal officials are being dismissed and others appointed and everything is being done to let the burghers see that we are the lawful Government. It is heart-stirring to see how, in the midst of defeats, the complete destruction and burning of their farms, the carrying off of their wives and children by the enemy, our people only stand more firmly, cheerfully suffering all, in a firm faith in the God who has been for us a Refuge from generation to generation. Truly I am proud of our Afrikaner people and when I see how men and women and children endure this fierce destruction and persecution, then I can think no other than that the Lord God has destined great things for this little people. I may say that the western districts are a great heap of ruins. We have evacuated large areas because of the murders by the Kaffirs who are in this the faithful allies of the English; many women's laagers have therefore been formed in safer areas and provided with food. But as soon as the enemy passes there he destroys everything and the women and children again suffer virtual famine. I am often moved to tears to see all this misery. But notwithstanding everything, notwithstanding the fact that so many women and children are without bread and in this rainy season live under the open sky and must endure the greatest hardships, they continue to encourage us to stand firm and fast until God gives relief. Of course a certain number of men succumb and go over to the enemy, but among them one never finds any of the fighting burghers upon whom we rely. I am therefore compelled by the seriousness of our case to take drastic measures and to act on the old principle that who are not for us are against us, and to give notice to all burghers and persons who do not agree and fight with us to go to the enemy. Only thus can we be rid of the many traitors who still shelter among us and spoil all our plans and operations. For it is only

too true (however sad) that the enemy is everywhere directed by traitors among our people, and by that means accomplishes more than he could ever have done otherwise.

The people long very much for news of His Excellency President Kruger and the deputation¹ and I trust that the Government will from time to time keep me informed of everything of importance. I once had the intention of paying a short visit to the Government but my duties here are now so heavy and urgent that this will not be possible for me.

With hearty greetings to His Excellency President Burger² and to you as well as to the other members of the Executive Council. I remain, Yours ever,

J. C. Smuts

139 From J. H. de la Rey

Vol. XCVI, no. 183A

This letter of authorization was almost certainly drafted by Smuts for signature by de la Rey.

Hekpoort

1 December 1900

Zijn Edel Gestr. den Staatsprocureur der Z.A.R.

Wel Edel Gestr. Heer, Het is herhaalde malen tot mijn keenis en aandacht gebracht dat de commandos van Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad, enz. niet in een behoorlijken toestand van organisatie zijn, en dat er hierdoor veel verwarring en wanorde onder de burgers ontstaat.

Het is dringend noodig dat er zonder verder verzuim stappen genomen worden om een einde aan dezen ongewenschten toestand te maken. Voor mij is het echter onmogelijk persoonlijk de gemelde commandos te bezoeken en te regelen, en daar ik het geraden acht, in termen van Uitvoerende Raadsbesluit, Art. 117 dd. 16 Juli 1900, dat U daarheen gaat, zoo verzoek ik U Edel Gestr. in mijn plaats daarheen te gaan, met macht in termen van gemeld besluit, alle stappen te nemen en alles in uw vermogen te doen om onze zaak te bevorderen,

¹ In March 1900 a deputation consisting of A. Fischer, C. H. Wessels and A. D. W. Wolmarans went to Europe to persuade the European Powers to support the Boer cause, if possible by active intervention.

² S. W. Burger had become Acting President.

en onze commandos aldaar te bestieren en behoorlijk te organiseeren in een geregelde legermacht.

Gelieve al de betrokken officieren in kennis van dit opdracht te stellen. U Edel Gestr. Gods rijkst zegen toewenschende, Heb ik de eer te zijn, Uw dw. dienaar

J. H. de la Rey
Asst. Comdt.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Hekpoort

1 December 1900

His Honour the State Attorney of the South African Republic
Honoured Sir, It has been repeatedly brought to my notice and attention that the commandos of Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad, etc. are not in a proper state of organization and that much confusion and disorder exists among the burghers because of this.

It is urgently necessary that steps should be taken without further delay to put an end to this undesirable state of affairs. It is, however, impossible for me personally to visit and regulate the said commandos, and, as I think it advisable, in terms of the Executive Council resolution, Article 117, dated 16 July 1900, that you should go there, I request Your Honour to go there in my place, with power, in terms of the said resolution to take all steps and do everything in your power to advance our cause and to command and properly organize our commandos there into an orderly armed force.

Please inform all the officers concerned of this instruction. Wishing Your Honour God's richest blessing, I have the honour to be, Your obedient servant,

J. H. de la Rey
Assistant Commandant-General

140 To J. H. de la Rey

Vol. XCVI, no. 185

Wolvefontein

23 December 1900

Ik ben onverwachts van U vertrokken met het doel uit te vinden of de Gatsranders nog bij Genl. Beyers waren. Kort daarop volgden de trolleys van Comd. Boshoff enz. in dezelfde

richting. Sedert ben ik bij het paarden-commando van Beyers gebleven en gister heb ik gespioneren tot bij Frederickstad station. Bij mijn terugkomst laatsten nacht vond ik dat gemelde trolleys op valsche geruchten zamen met Beyers' leger hierheen waren gekomen. Ik wist niet eerder hiervan anders zou ik hun vlucht hierheen belet hebben. Uw order aan Boshoff en de verkenners om terug te keeren heb ik gezien en ondersteund. De verkenners heb ik terug georderd, maar Boshoff deelt nu mede dat zijne manschappen, die bijna allen van de Pretoria en Johannesburg commandos zijn, absoluut weigeren naar het district Rustenburg terug te keeren en liever bij Genl. Beyers willen aansluiten. Wat hij nu sal doen weet ik niet.

Ik heb eenigen van de Potchefstroom officieren reeds gezien en het is mij maar te duidelijk dat er onder de burgers van dit district een algeheele gebrek aan tucht en discipline bestaat en dat de officieren zelve geminacht worden op een wijze die het voor mij uiterst moeilijk sal maken het commando alhier op een behoorlijke voet te organiseeren. Ik ben echter vast besloten alles te beproeven en geen steen onaangeroerd te laten om uw opdracht na te komen en alhier een commando op te richten dat in geen opzicht voor die van andere districten behoeft achteruit te staan. Ik verwacht groote moeilijkheden en tegenkanting van meer dan eene zijde, maar ben besloten om wat niet in der minne kan geregeld worden streng volgens wet te behandelen. De hartelijke samenwerking die er steeds tusschen ons beiden bestaan heeft is voor mij de waarborg dat ook in deze moeilijke taak U mij met al uw kracht en gezag zal ondersteunen, daar U weet dat het mij niet om eer of naam te doen is maar alleen om onze groote zaak met al mijn kracht te helpen bevorderen. Daar uwe instructies de districten Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad enz. onder mijn bestuur stellen zal ik Genl. Liebenberg en de andere officieren in kennis stellen, dat als uw vertegenwoordiger en onder U ik de verantwoordelijkheid voor deze districten op mij neemt en dat ik van hen allen gehoorzaamheid en samenwerking verwacht. Als uw plaatsvervanger en om verwarring en misverstand omtrent de positie van Vechtgenl. Liebenberg te voorkomen, zal ik zoolang ik met deze functies bezig ben den militaire titel aannemen van Wd. Ass. Comd. Genl. om het allen duidelijk te maken dat ik

U vertegenwoordig in krijgzaken en dat allen mijne orders moeten observeeren. Om dezelfde reden verzoek ik U toch alle correspondentie aan mij te richten, want anders zal mijn gezag zoo ondermijnd worden dat ik geen goed zal kunnen uitrichten.

Mijn plan is een militaire Hof onmiddelijk op te richten, de genoemde districten op te commandeeren, de commandos ervan bij elkaar te brengen met den meest mogelijken spoed en dan uw verdere instructies af te wachten. Met uw getrouwe hulp en den zegen des Heeren hoop ik in deze taak te zullen slagen. Uw dw. dnr.

J. C. Smuts

S.P. en Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Wolvefontein

23 December 1900

I left you unexpectedly with the object of finding out if the Gatsranders¹ were still with General [C. F.] Beyers. Shortly afterwards the trolleys of Commandant [Jacobus] Boshoff etc. followed in the same direction. Since then I have remained with Beyers's horse-commando and yesterday I scouted as far as Frederickstad station. When I returned last night I found that the above-mentioned trolleys, following false rumours, had come here with Beyers's army. I did not know about this before or I should have forbidden their flight to this place. I have seen and supported your order to Boshoff and the scouts to return. I have ordered the scouts back, but Boshoff now informs me that his men, who are almost all from the Pretoria and Johannesburg commandos, absolutely refuse to return to the Rustenburg district and prefer to join General Beyers. I do not know what he will now do.

I have already seen some of the Potchefstroom officers and it is only too clear to me that there is a complete lack of control and discipline among the burghers of this district, and that the officers themselves are despised in a way that will make it extremely difficult for me to organize the commando here on a proper footing. I am, however, determined to try everything and to leave no stone unturned to fulfil your instruction and

¹ The Boer forces in the Gatsrand, a series of ridges north of the railway line between Krugersdorp and Potchefstroom.

establish a commando here that will in every respect equal those of other districts. I expect great difficulties and opposition from more than one side but am determined to handle strictly according to the law what cannot be amicably arranged. The cordial co-operation that has always existed between us is to me a surety that you will support me with all your strength and authority in this difficult task as well; for you know that I am not concerned about fame or making a name, but only to help to advance our great cause with all my strength. As your instructions put the districts of Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad, etc. under my command, I shall inform General Liebenberg and the other officers that, as your representative and subordinate, I am assuming responsibility for these districts, and that I expect obedience and co-operation from them all. As your substitute, and in order to prevent confusion and misunderstanding about the position of Combat General Liebenberg, I shall, as long as I am busy with these functions, take the military title of Acting Assistant Commandant-General in order to make it clear to everyone that I represent you in military matters and that all must observe my orders. For the same reason I request you to direct all correspondence to me, for otherwise my authority will be so much undermined that I shall not be able to do any good.

My plan is to establish a military court immediately, to call the above-named districts out on commando, to collect the commandos with the greatest possible speed and then to await your further instructions. With your faithful help and the Lord's blessing I hope to succeed in this task. Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts

State Attorney and Acting Assistant Commandant-General

141 To J. H. de la Rey

Vol. XCVI, no. 186

Blesbokfontein
25 December 1900

Ik wensch U, uwe burgers en officieren een gezegend Kerstfeest en Nieuwjaar toe en voor ons allen druk ik den wensch uit dat

wanneer deze heugelijke tijd aanstaande jaar wederkeert wij allen in vrede mogen leven, burgers van die grooter republiek en Vaderland welke onder Gods voorzienigheid de natuurlijk bestemming van ons land en volk is. Ik heb couranten van de 12 December uit de Kaap Kolonie gezien waaruit blijkt dat de toestand aldaar haast ondragelijk is geworden. Op Worcester is een groot volksvergadering gehouden van over de 10,000 vertegenwoordigers van over 120,000 ingezetenen der Kaap Kolonie. Hun eenparig besluit was dat de Republieken hun volkome onafhankelijkheid moeten behouden anders zal er nooit vrede in Zuid-Afrika komen en dat Milner teruggeroepen moet worden. Ik mag hier bijvoegen dat Dr Te Water in een toespraak te Aberdeen zeide dat Zuid-Afrika nu een tijdperk was ingegaan hetwelk maar een einde kon hebben. Wanneer ex-ministers van H. Majesteit zulke taal spreken dan wijst het dat ook in de Kaap K. de publieke opinie is rijp geworden voor grooter dingen. Ook in Engeland is er een groote reactie ontstaan door onze taaie volharding. Chamberlain heeft in een speech in het Parlement gezegd dat de Boeren een dapper volk zijn en dat zij in een geest van verzoening moeten ontmoet worden, en dat, terwijl een einde zal gemaakt worden aan de verbranding van plaatsen, de Hooge Commissaris instructie heeft om nieuwe termen aan te bieden aan de Boeren nog in het veld. Sir Alfred Milner is aangesteld tot Hooge Commissaris voor Zuid-Afrika en Gouverneur voor de Transvaal en Oranje R. Colonie (niet voor de Kaap Kolonie). De couranten bevatten ook het bericht van Pres. Krugers ontvangst in Frankryk. De Engelsche correspondenten zeggen dat hij de Fransche natie heeft dol gemaakt en dat er in het geheugen van het tegenwoordig geslacht nooit zulke populaire demonstraties van geestdrift in dat land zijn gezien. Niettegenstaande de ergernis van het Britsche Gouvernement is hij door den pres. van Frankryk officieel als hoofd der Republiek en een koning ontvangen. De toespraken door Z.H.Ed. gehouden zijn prachtig en laten niets te wenschen over. Ongelukkig zijn de couranten niet de mijne en kan ik ze U niet verzenden. Mogen de zoste eeuw voor ons diep geteisterd en gemarteld volk een nieuw tijdperk van vrede en zegen opleveren.

Het heeft mij zeer gespeten uit uw jongste rapport te moeten vernemen dat ik U groote moeite had aangedaan door

het koms van eenige burgers in deze richting. Ik heb echter reeds uitgelegd dat ik niet hiervoor te blameeren ben. Nooit was het mijne bedoeling om commandos van U weg te nemen, daar ik, zoo ik in mijne zending naar deze districten slaag, meer burgers bij elkaar zal krijgen dan ik zou kunnen bestieren. De eenigste moeilijkheid is met Comd. Boshoff. Ik weet werkelijk niet wat met hem te doen. Jaag ik hem weg, dan gaat hij eenvoudig naar Genl. Beyers en dat zou de zaak niet verbeteren, daar per slot van rekening de menschen bij mij toch nog een deel uwer commandos vormen. Ik wacht echter uwe instructies af en vertrouw alleen dat U niet het idee zal koesteren alsof ik niet met volkomen loyaliteit tegenover U handel. Ik hoop dat ik er in zal slagen de menschen alhier behoorlijk te organiseeren en te verzamelen en dan kan ik hen met de macht reeds onder U vereenigen zoodat wij in staat kunnen zijn grooter dingen uit te richten. Mijn opinie is dat, daar de vijand nu bijna al zijn macht op den Witwatersrand concentreeren, wij hetzelfde moeten doen—de kleine patrouilles van den vijand in afgelegene delen maar alleen laten en met verzameling van al onze machten van uit de gansche Republiek trachten den vijand uit den Witwatersrand zuidwaarts, zoo mogelijk tot anderkant Grootrivier, te drijven. Zoo de Republieken eenmaal schoon zijn kunnen wij den vijand tot erkenning onzer onafhankelijkheid dwingen. Indien er geen kans hiertoe bestaat en wij niet bij machte zijn de Republieken schoon te maken, dan zie ik niet in waarom wij niet liever in de Kolonies zullen gaan vechten en ons land een rust geven van den vijand. Het is immers altijd beter den oorlog in het grondgebied van den vijand te voeren. Zoodra Genl. Botha met zijne commandos op den Witwatersrand of bij Heidelberg zijn aangekomen en ik de burgers van de zuidelijke districten heb verzameld, kan Johannes Celliers met die van Lichtenburg en Marico oprukken en kunnen wij den vijand op de goudvelden aanvallen met een macht die in staat behoort te zijn hem te verdrijven van daar. Ik hoop dat U dit plan zal overwegen en met den comd. genl. er over zal correspondeeren.

Uw broeder, klein Adriaan de la Rey, is alhier aangekomen met twee memories van het district Bloemhof, vragende om afzetting van een vechtgnl. P. de Villiers. De ontevredenheid

der burgers is even groot met comd. de Beer en wil hij dat beide personen afgezet zullen worden. Hij maakt ernstige beschuldigingen; indien die gegrond zijn, moeten beide officieren afgezet worden. Hij blijft bij mij terwijl ik de Memories, alsook rapport van S. P. du Toit naar U overzend. Indien U hem persoonlijk wil zien, zal hij overkomen. Ik zelve denk dat beste oplossing zal zijn dat ik zelf de burgers van Bloemhof bezoek, de klachten tegen de officieren inga en met achterlating van een wacht voor de kaffers en een voor Schweizer-Reneke de rest der burgers hierheen breng, daar zij in het district Bloemhof toch geen werk doen. Met Wolmaransstad zou ik hetzelfde doen. Ass. Vechtgenl. de Villiers is reeds met 400 man vertrokken op een expeditie naar Griqualand en Prieska maar ik ben bevreesd dat deze onder de omstandigheden weer zal mislukken. Indien er nog kans daartoe bestaat stel ik voor dat ik hem terug roep. Het gaat niet om de Kolonies met verbrokkelde klompjes in te trekken; onze zaak wordt daardoor eer bena- dan bevoordeeld.

Laat mij weten of ik nog geweren bij U kan krijgen er vergeet toch niet mij met ammunitie te helpen.

J. C. Smuts
S.P. en Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Blesbokfontein
25 December 1900

I wish you, your burghers and officers a happy Christmas and New Year and for us all I express the wish that when this joyful time returns next year we may all live in peace, burghers of that greater republic and fatherland which, under God's providence, is the natural destination of our land and people. I have seen newspapers of 12 December from the Cape Colony from which it appears that conditions there have become almost unbearable. At Worcester a large national gathering of over 10,000 representatives of over 120,000 inhabitants of the Cape Colony has been held.¹ Their unanimous decision was that the Republics must retain their full independence, otherwise peace

¹ On 6 December 1900.

will never come in South Africa, and that Milner must be recalled. I may add that Dr Te Water said in a speech at Aberdeen¹ that South Africa had now entered upon a period which could have only one end. When ex-ministers of Her Majesty speak such a language then it shows that in the Cape Colony also public opinion has become ripe for greater things. In England also a great reaction has occurred because of our tough perseverance. Chamberlain has said in a speech in Parliament that the Boers are a brave people and that they must be met in a spirit of conciliation and that, while an end will be made of the burning of farms, the High Commissioner has instructions to offer new terms to the Boers still in the field. Sir Alfred Milner has been appointed as High Commissioner for South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony (not of the Cape Colony). The newspapers also contain the report of President Kruger's reception in France. The English correspondents say that he has made the French nation mad and that such popular demonstrations of enthusiasm have never been seen in that country in the memory of the present generation. Notwithstanding the annoyance of the British Government he has been officially received by the President of France as head of the Republic and a king. The speeches made by His Excellency are very fine and leave nothing to be desired. Unfortunately the newspapers are not mine and I cannot send them to you. May the 20th century bring forth a new period of peace and blessing for our sorely tried and martyred people.

I was very sorry to learn from your latest report that I had caused you great trouble by the moving of some burghers in this direction. I have however already explained that I am not to blame for this. It was never my intention to take commandos away from you, because, if I succeed in my mission to these districts, I shall get more burghers together than I should be able to manage. The only difficulty is with Commandant Boshoff. I really do not know what to do with him. If I drive him away, he will simply go to General Beyers and that will not improve the matter, since after all the men with me still form a part of your commandos. However, I await your

¹ Dr Te Water had, on medical advice, taken his young son to Europe.

instructions and only trust that you will not harbour the idea that I do not act with complete loyalty to you. I hope that I shall succeed in organizing and collecting the people here properly and then I can unite them with the force already under you, so that we may be in a position to achieve greater things. My opinion is that, as the enemy is now concentrating almost all his forces on the Witwatersrand, we must do the same—leave the small enemy patrols in distant areas alone, and, with a gathering together of all our forces throughout the whole Republic, try to drive the enemy out of the Witwatersrand southwards, if possible to the other side of Groot River.¹ When once the Republics are cleared, we can force the enemy to acknowledge our independence. If there is no chance of this and we are not able to clear the Republics, then I do not see why we should not rather go and fight in the Colonies and give our country a rest from the enemy. It is indeed always better to carry on the war in the territory of the enemy. As soon as General Botha with his commandos has arrived on the Witwatersrand or at Heidelberg and I have collected the burghers from the southern districts, Johannes Celliers can advance with those of Lichtenburg and Marico and we can attack the enemy on the gold-fields with a force which should be able to drive him thence. I hope that you will consider this plan and will write about it to the Commandant-General.

Your brother, klein² Adriaan de la Rey,³ has arrived here with two petitions from the Bloemhof district, asking for the dismissal of a combat-general, P. de Villiers.⁴ The burghers are equally dissatisfied with Commandant [J. M.] de Beer and he wishes that both persons should be dismissed. He makes serious accusations; if these are well-founded both officers must be dismissed. He remains with me while I send the

¹ The Orange River.

² Junior.

³ Adriaan J. G. de la Rey, brother of General J. H. de la Rey (q.v.) was known as 'Groot Adriaan' (Big Adriaan). He played a leading part in the establishment of the short-lived Boer republic of Stellaland on the western border of the Transvaal (1882-84); fought in the Anglo-Boer War under his brother and joined the rebels in the Transvaal in 1914.

⁴ General Pieter J. de Villiers fought under Smuts in the western Transvaal and commanded the Boer forces in Griqualand West and Bechuanaland in 1901.

petitions and also S. P. du Toit's¹ report to you. If you wish to see him personally, he will come over. I myself think that the best solution would be that I visit the burghers of Bloemhof myself, go into the complaints against the officers and, leaving behind a guard for the Kaffirs and one for Schweizer-Reneke, bring the rest of the burghers here, as they in any case do no work in the Bloemhof district. I should do the same with Wolmaransstad. Assistant Combat-General de Villiers has already left with 400 men on an expedition to Griqualand² and Prieska³ but I fear that, under the circumstances, these will again fail. I suggest that I recall him, if there is still a chance of that. It will not do to march into the Colonies with small broken-up groups; that is to the disadvantage rather than the advantage of our cause.

Let me know if I can get more rifles from you and do not forget to help me with ammunition.

J. C. Smuts

State Attorney and Acting Assistant Commandant-General

142 To L. Botha

Vol. XCVI, no. 298

Losberg, Dist. Potchefstroom

23 Januari 1901

Comd. Generaal Louis Botha, Ik heb de eer U Edgestr. mede te deelen dat ik mij thans met een commando van omtrent 800 paardenruiters alhier bevind onder de volgende omstandigheden. Zooals U misschien weet ben ik in de laatste maanden van 1900 werkzaam geweest als vechtgeneraal van het commando van Genl. de la Rey. De toestand van zaken in de zuidwestelijke districten was echter zoodanig dat wij beiden de noodzakelijkheid inzagen van een groote verandering in het bestuur aldaar te maken. Omstreeks het midden van December,

¹ Sarel P. du Toit, member of the Volksraad of the South African Republic from 1896; fought in the Anglo-Boer War under General P. A. Cronjé (q.v.) who made him Assistant Combat-General; and then under General J. H. de la Rey (q.v.) whom he assisted in reorganizing the commandos in the south-western Transvaal. Represented the Wolmaransstad commando at Vereeniging; helped to suppress the 1914 rebellion as Commandant in the western Transvaal.

² Griqualand West.

³ In the Cape Colony.

na den slag van Nooitgedacht en de daaropvolgende slagen met Genl. French kwam ik als Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl. in plaats van Genl. de la Rey naar de districten Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad en Bloemhof. Ik heb door een strenge optreden in deze districten meer gedaan om onze zaak te bevorderen dan ik ooit verwacht had. Het militaire Hof voor de westelijke districten zit te Wolmaransstad en heeft reeds 6 of meer tot den dood wegens hoogverraad veroordeeld. Het district Bloemhof is thans bijna schoon van den vijand. Ass. Vechtgenl. P. de Villiers is naar Griqualand met omtrent 400 man en was laatst bij Danielskuil. Comd. de Beer met de rest van het Bloemhof commando heeft instructie van mij op de Mafeking lijn te blijven en dezelve te belemmeren. Het Wolmaransstad commando, bestaande uit omtrent 400 paardenruiters heb ik naar Genl. de la Rey gezonden, daar het mij voorkomt dat zijn commando niet sterk genoeg is; van de 400 heb ik echter 100 onder Sarel du Toit achtergelaten als wachten langs de Vaal en in den O.V.S. Het Potchefstroom commando vond ik in een betreurenswaardige toestand—overal klompjes verward rondliggende, geen order, geen tucht. Ik heb toen bijna al de officieren geschorst of verplaatst en anderen aangesteld. Het district heb ik in twee commandantschappen opgesneden en heb als commandanten Jaap Breytenbach (vroeger Vechtgenl. in Griqualand) en Fred Wolmarans (zoon van de gewezen Comd.) aangesteld. Comd. Douthwaite is landdrost geworden en Voorzitter van het militaire Hof, waarvan landdrost Neethling en Comd. Boshoff de andere leden zijn. V.C. van der Berg is ontslagen, V.C. van Graan heb ik militaire commissaris gemaakt met opdracht voor duizend en een aangelegenheden te zorgen. V.C^{en} J. van der Merwe en Opperman heb ik als wijksveldcornetten naar hunne wijke gezonden om daar te zorgen en andere officieren bij het commando aangesteld. Dit district is zeer moeilijk omdat de vijand er bijna overal is—te Ventersdorp, Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom al langs de spoorlijn, 4 forten in de Gatsrand. Daardoor ben ik verplicht mijn commando in wachten te verdeelen. Ik heb omtrent 400 paardenruiters als wachten op de verschillende punten en ben alhier met omtrent 800 als een losse commando. De reorganisatie vond plaats nabij Schoonspruit, maar de vijand verzamelde daar met een groote macht en ik had gedurig schermutselingen

met hem totdat ik eindelijk besloot hem naar een beter vechterein uit te lokken en ben ik toen over de spoor hierheen gekomen, achtervolgd door twee commandos van den vijand welke thans te Potchefstroom zijn en spoedig alhier zullen opdagen. Genl. Liebenberg heb ik bij de wacht te Klerksdorp gelaten. Hier wensch ik zoo mogelijk een spoedige communicatie met U te openen. Ik mag zeggen dat ik nog niets vernomen heb van de jongste gevechten tusschen Genls. de la Rey, Beyers en den vijand, hoewel er veel gevochten is; zoodra rapporten inkomen, zal ik ze U mededeelen.

Van Schoonspruit zond ik rapporten aan Z.H.Ed. Pres. Steyn en Hoofdcomd. de Wet, die ik dacht reeds in de Kaap Kolonie waren. Ik zond ook als aanhechtsel een lang document bestemd voor de pers waarin de vernieling van eigendommen en voedsel en de behandeling van vrouwen en kinderen met bijzonderheden uiteengezet waren; ook uwe correspondentie met Lord Roberts over dezelfde zaak. Die rapporten vonden Genl. de Wet te Vredefort. Ik sluit zijne rapporten in; ik ben zelf naar Parijs gegaan om de zaak van een koloniale expeditie met hem te bespreken maar hij was toe reeds weg. Uit zijne rapporten zal U zien wat de geest in de Kaap Kolonie is; van andere kanten krijg ik ook tijding dat zaken daar zeer kritiek zijn en dat de tijd gekomen is om een groote beweging daarheen te maken. Uit een Johburg Gazette van 5 Jan. heb ik gezien dat Rechter Hertzog reeds nabij Cradock en Graaffreinet vecht en volgens zijn rapport sluiten de Afrikaners prachtig aan.

Uit uw jongste rapport heb ik gezien dat U aan de hand geeft dat Genl. Beyers daarheen met zijn commando zal gaan. Ik ben echter tegen dat idee omdat ik weet dat slechts een gedeelte zijner menschen zal willen gaan en omdat ik het wenschelijker acht alleen vrijwilligers op een zoo verren en zwaren tocht te zenden. Het plan dat ik aan Hoofdcomd. voorgesteld heb en thans aan U voorstel is dat Genl. Beyers en ik beide gaan met vrijwilligers uit onze respectieve commandos bestaande uit meestens jonge menschen met goede paarden—elke afdeeling omtrent 500 sterk; wij zullen min of meer een noordelijke route moeten nemen om zoo mogelijk door te drukken tot bij Beaufort W. en nog verder. Deze afdeelingen moeten elkaar in geval van nood ondersteunen,

zij zullen volgens verwachting spoedig tot grooter commandos kunnen aangroeien. De rest onzer burghers worden dan aan Genl. de la Rey en U afgeleverd. Mijn rapportganger deelt mij mede dat de Wet zeer opgenomen is met dit plan, maar ik zou gaarne uw opinie en instructie willen vernemen. De vijand is zeer min geworden in de Republieken; het schijnt mij of bijna al zijn macht—behalve de dorps garnizoenen, thans in de richting van de goudvelden is; en mijn verwachting en hoop is dat zoo wij ons in de bres in de Kaap K. werpen, zooveel troepen daarheen zullen moeten gaan om een opstand te dempen dat de achterblijvende commandos sterk genoeg zullen zijn den vijand geheel uit de Republieken te woelen. In elk geval ben ik zeer begeerig, al was het persoonlijk, naar de Kaap K. te gaan ten einde de Afrikaners behulpzaam te zijn in het bewerkstelligen van een algemene revolutie en onafhankelijkheidsverklaring. Brengen wij het eenmaal zoover, dan beskouw ik onze zaak voor gewonnen.

Ik ben zeer begeerig U persoonlijk te zien en wil antwoord hierop [*sic*] met den meeste spoed. Vandaag ga ik naar Vereeniging om te spionneeren of ik de brug aldaar kan bijkomen. Met hartelijke groeten aan U en al de vrienden, Uw dw. dienaar

J. C. Smuts
Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Losberg, Potchefstroom District
23 January 1901

Commandant-General Louis Botha, I have the honour to inform Your Honour that I am now here with a commando of about 800 mounted men under the following circumstances. As you perhaps know I have been active during the last months of 1900 as combat-general of General de la Rey's commando. The state of affairs in the south-western districts was however such that we both realized the necessity of making a big change in the command there. About the middle of December, after the battle of Nooitgedacht¹ and the subsequent battles with General

¹ On the night of 12 December 1900, de la Rey, Smuts and Beyers attacked General Clements's camp at Nooitgedacht near the foot of the Magaliesberg and sent him into retreat with a loss of 637 men. *See* 180, IX (pp. 653-8).

[J. D. P.] French, I came as Acting Assistant Commandant-General in place of General de la Rey to the Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad and Bloemhof districts. By taking firm action in these districts I have done more to advance our cause than I ever expected. The military court for the western districts sits at Wolmaransstad and has already condemned six or more to death for high treason. Bloemhof district is now almost clear of the enemy. Assistant Combat General P. de Villiers has gone to Griqualand with about 400 men and was last at Danielskuil. Commandant de Beer with the rest of the Bloemhof commando has instructions from me to stay on the Mafeking line and to obstruct it. I have sent the Wolmaransstad commando, consisting of about 400 mounted men, to General de la Rey, as it seems to me that his commando is not strong enough; of the 400 I have, however, left 100 under Sarel du Toit as guards along the Vaal and in the Orange Free State. I found the Potchefstroom commando in a deplorable condition—little groups lying about everywhere in a state of confusion, no order, no discipline. I therefore dismissed or replaced almost all the officers and appointed others. I divided the district into two commandoships and appointed as commandants Jaap Breytenbach (formerly combat general in Griqualand) and Fred Wolmarans (son of the former Commandant). Commandant Douthwaite has become landdrost and chairman of the military court, of which landdrost Neethling [W. H.] and Commandant Boshoff are the other members. Field-Cornet van den Berg has been dismissed, Field-Cornet van Graan¹ I have made military commissioner with orders to see to a thousand and one matters. I have sent Field-Cornets J. [L.] van der Merwe and Opperman as ward field-cornets to their wards to deal with matters there and have appointed other officers to the commando. This district is very difficult because the enemy is almost everywhere—at Ventersdorp, Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom all along the railway line, four forts in the Gatsrand. I am therefore obliged to divide my commando into guards. I have about 400 mounted men as guards at the various points and am here with about 800 as a free commando. The reorganization took place near Schoonspruit, but the

¹ D. J. van Graan was Field-Cornet for the Boven-Moorivier ward of Potchefstroom.

enemy gathered there with a large force and I constantly had skirmishes with him until I finally decided to lure him to a better fighting-ground and came here over the railway-line, followed by two enemy commandos which are now at Potchefstroom and will soon turn up here. I left General Liebenberg with the guard at Klerksdorp. Here I wish as soon as possible to open communications with you. I may say that I have as yet learnt nothing of the latest battles between Generals de la Rey and Beyers and the enemy, although there has been much fighting; as soon as reports come in, I shall inform you.

From Schoonspruit I sent reports to His Excellency President Steyn and Chief Commandant de Wet whom I thought were already in the Cape Colony.¹ I also sent, as an annexure, a long document intended for the press, in which the destruction of property and food and the treatment of women and children were set out in detail; also your correspondence with Lord Roberts about the same matter. These reports reached General de Wet at Vredefort. I enclose his reports. I went myself to Parys to discuss the question of a Colony expedition with him but he had already gone. From his reports you will see what the spirit in the Cape Colony is; from other quarters also I have news that matters are very critical there and that the time has come to make a large movement thither. In a Johannesburg Gazette of 5 January I saw that Judge Hertzog² is already fighting near Cradock and Graaff-Reinet, and according to his report the Afrikaners are joining up excellently.

I saw in your last report that you suggest that General Beyers should go there with his commando. I, however, am against that idea because I know that only a portion of his people will wish to go and because I regard it as more desirable to send only volunteers on so distant and so hard an expedition. The plan that I have proposed to the Chief Commandant and now propose to you is that General Beyers and I both go with volunteers from our respective commandos consisting mostly of young people with good horses—each section about 500 strong; we should have to take a more or less northerly route

¹ Steyn and de Wet had planned to invade the Cape Colony. On 13 November 1900 de Wet had begun his march south but had been unable to cross the flooded Orange River and had returned to the Orange Free State by mid-December.

² General J. B. M. Hertzog.

so as to push through possibly to Beaufort West or still further. These sections must, in case of need, support each other; they should, according to expectation, be able quickly to develop into bigger commandos. The rest of our burghers will then be delivered to General de la Rey and to you. My despatch-rider tells me that de Wet is very pleased with this plan, but I should very much like to have your opinion and instructions. The enemy has diminished very much in the Republics; it seems to me that almost all his strength—except the town garrisons—is now in the direction of the goldfields; and my expectation and hope is that if we throw ourselves into the breach in the Cape Colony, so many troops would have to go there to quell a rising that the remaining commandos would be strong enough to hustle the enemy altogether out of the Republics. In any case I wish very much, even if it were personally, to go to the Cape Colony to help the Afrikaners in the execution of a general revolution and declaration of independence. If once we achieve that, I regard our cause as won.

I wish very much to see you personally and [hope you] will answer this as soon as possible. Today I go to Vereeniging to reconnoitre to see whether I can reach the bridge there. With hearty greetings to you and all the friends, Yours truly,

J. C. Smuts

Acting Assistant Commandant-General

143 To N. J. de Wet¹

Vol. 2, no. 106A

Losberg

23 Januari 1901

Waarde Klasie, Hartelijk dank voor jou laatste brieven, waaruit ik veel belangrijks heb geput. Zooals jij zal zien uit mijn officieel rapport ben ik in den laatsten tijd bezig geweest den stal van Augeas in deze gewesten schoon te maken en jij kan begrijpen dat ik mij bijna dood gewerkt heb. Nu zijn zaken echter achter mekaar en hoop ik spoedig den vijand te zullen ontmoeten.

Het plan van een Z.A.R. afdeeling voor de koloniale expeditie is een zeer ernstige en ik hoop dat jullie de zaak rijpelijk zal

¹ N. J. de Wet was then military secretary to General Botha.

bedenken. Mijn persoonlijke kennis van zaken en personen in de Kolonie noodzaakt mij ook daarheen te gaan, al was het maar persoonlijk. Ik ben zeer begeerig en verlangend Comd.-Genl. en jou te zien. Heel mogelijk indien toestand zulks toelaat kom ik een dezer dagen U zien.

Van onze vrouwen heb ik niets verder vernomen; ik hoop maar dat zij naar de Kaap Kolonie is. Met hartelijke groeten, *t.t.*

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Losberg

23 January 1901

Dear Klasie,¹ Hearty thanks for your last letters, from which I have gathered much of importance. As you will see from my official report, I have of late been busy cleansing the stable of Augeas in this area and you will understand that I have worked myself almost to death. Now, however, things are in order and I hope to be able to meet the enemy soon.

The plan of a South African Republic group for the Colony expedition is a very serious one and I hope that you will consider the matter carefully. My personal knowledge of matters and persons in the Colony also necessitates my going there, even if it were only personally.

I am very desirous and eager to see the Commandant-General and you. Quite possibly I shall come and see you one of these days if conditions allow this.

I have heard nothing further about our wives; I only hope that they have gone to the Cape Colony.² With hearty greetings, *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

144 To L. Botha

Vol. XCVI, no. 301

Modderfontein

3 Februari 1901

WelEd. Gestr. Heer, In mijn laatste rapport (foutievelijk gedateerd 2 Feb in stede van 31 Jan, met terugverschuiving van

¹ Diminutive of Nicolaas.

² Isie Smuts and Ella de Wet lived, from mid-1900, in a house in Pietermaritzburg under British military surveillance.

alle datums daarin vermeld voor 2 dagen) omtrent de inname van het kamp te Jachtfontein en het terugslaan van de versterkingen van Krugersdorp, zeide ik dat nog grooter versterkingen reeds op weg waren. Gisteren (2 Feb) raakte ik slaags in den Gatsrand met deze macht, bestaande uit 1,200 tot 1,500 ruiters en voetgangers met 6 kanonnen uit Krugersdorp en 400 ruiters met 3 kanonnen uit Johannesburg—alle onder bevel van Genl. Cunningham die Genl. Clements vervangen heeft in het bevel te Krugersdorp. Ik had mijne burgers zoo moeten uitzenden op wachten daar ik in den Gatsrand tusschen in den vijand lig, dat ik schaarsch 600 man met een bom en hand maxim bij mij had. Door Gods goedheid echter strenden de burgers zoo heldhaftig dat voor zonsondergang deze groote macht van den vijand totaal verslagen en op de vlucht gejaagd was. Het gevecht begon tegen zonsopgang door de bestorming van onze centrale posities door de voetgangers en de poging van den vijand, voortgezeg gedurende den geheele dag, om mijne vleugels om te trekken. Het grootste gedeelte van het gevecht vond plaats met de leg rivier [*sic*] en daaraan is het groote verlies van den vijand te wijten; zoo diep hadden de voetgangers ingestormd dat een gedeelte in den namiddag zich moest krijgsgevangen geven. Zij stormden herhaalde malen op alle punten maar werden op alle punten teruggeslagen. Daar de vechtlinie twee uur te paard wijd was, waren mijne burgers zeer dun geplaatst, zoodat op sommige plaatsen 3 tot 6 man tegen een honderd moesten vechten. De artilleristen hebben zich ook zeer dapper gedragen en hebben de maxims met uitstekend effect op den vijand gebruikt. Tegen zonsondergang begon de vijand te retireeren en toen mijn rechter-vleugel voorwaarts rukte, veranderde dit in een vlucht. Het slagveld met over de 200 dooden en gewonden bleef in mijn bezit en de vijand trok 2 uur te paard terug naar Luipaardsvlei waar hij thans gekampeerd staat. Het getal geweren buit genomen moet aanmerkelijk over de 200 zijn; natuurlijk was er ook voldoende ammunitie bij de geweren. Aan mijn kant zijn 7 burgers gewond, 3 daarvan zwaar, maar ik hoop niet doodelijk. Een van hen is Luit. Van Deventer, die zwaar gewond werd terwijl he met de grootste onverschrokkenheid de maxims bediende. De Engelsche dokter heeft op mijn verzoek al mijne gewonden verpleegd en raad gegeven voor hun verdere behandeling.

Ik hoop dat deze voorspoedige slag een goede uitwerking zal hebben op al mijne burgers en dat in de toekomst zij niet minder heldhaftig zullen vast staan tegen nog grooter overmachten. Reeds is een groote macht van den vijand op weg van Potchefstroom naar den Gatsrand en ik verwacht dat de vijand mij nu tegelijk van verschillende punten zal willen aanvallen. Uw dw. dienaar

J. C. Smuts
Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Modderfontein
3 February 1901

Honoured Sir, In my last report (mistakenly dated 2 February instead of 31 January, and moving all dates mentioned in it back two days) about the capture of the camp at Jachtfontein and the repulse of the reinforcements from Krugersdorp,¹ I said that still bigger reinforcements were already on the way. Yesterday (2 February) I came into conflict with this force in the Gatsrand. It consisted of 1,200 to 1,500 mounted men and infantry with six cannon from Krugersdorp, and 400 mounted men with three cannon from Johannesburg—all under the command of General [G. G.] Cunningham, who has succeeded General [R. A. P.] Clements in the command at Krugersdorp. I had to send so many of my burghers out on guard (for I lay in the Gatsrand in among the enemy), that I had with me hardly 600 men with one bomb and one hand maxim. However, by the grace of God, the burghers fought so heroically that, before sundown, this large enemy force was totally defeated and put to flight. The battle began towards sunrise with the storming of our central positions by the infantry and the enemy's attempt, continued during the whole day, to turn my flanks. The greater part of the battle took place along the river²—which accounts for the heavy losses of the enemy; the infantry charged in so deep that a portion of them had to surrender in the afternoon.

¹ Between 29 and 31 January Smuts had attacked and captured Modderfontein and a convoy with a month's supplies which had just arrived there from Krugersdorp.

² Schoon River.

They charged repeatedly at all points but were repulsed at all points. As the fighting line was two hours ride wide, my burghers were very thinly placed, so that at some places three to six men had to fight a hundred. The artillerymen also fought very bravely and used the maxims with excellent effect on the enemy. Towards sundown the enemy began a retreat and when my right wing advanced, it changed into a flight. The battlefield, with over 200 dead and wounded, remained in my possession and the enemy withdrew two hours' ride to Lui-paardsvlei where he is now encamped. The number of rifles captured must be well over 200; of course there was also sufficient ammunition with the rifles. On my side seven burghers are wounded, three seriously but I hope not fatally. One of them is Lieutenant [D. J. C. B.] van Deventer who was seriously wounded while, with the greatest fearlessness, he served the maxims. At my request the English doctor has attended all my wounded and given advice for their further treatment.

I hope that this successful battle will have a good effect on my burghers and that in future they will stand fast no less heroically against even more greatly superior forces. Already a large enemy force is *en route* from Potchefstroom to the Gatsrand and I expect the enemy will now want to attack me from several points simultaneously. Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts

145 To L. Botha

Vol. XCVI, no. 302

Jachtfontein
3 Februari 1901

WelEd. Gestr. Heer, Onder het buit te Jachtfontein eergisteren genomen waren ook eenige postzakken met brieven en couranten. Ik deel eenige bijzonderheden mede. De Eng. Regeering heeft besloten een versterking van 20,000 voluntiers naar Zuid-Afrika te zenden met het oog op den zeer ernstigen toestand alhier. Het Engl. volk en ook de Regeering schijnt nu te ontwaken voor het groote gevaar dat vooral in de Kaap Kolonie dreigt. De toestand in Europa is zeer onrustbarend;

Frankrijk en Rusland worden steeds brutaler en Rusland schijnt zich alles in China te willen toe eigenen. De oorlog tusschen Engeland en de naturellen staten van Midden Afrika gaat nog steeds voort. De krijgswet is nu over de geheele Kaap Kolonie afgekondigd met uitzondering van de Kaapsche Schiereiland en Kaffraria. De Afrikanders staan overal op; de voorste commandos van den O.V.S. zijn reeds lang Willowmore, Fraserburg, Carnarvon voorbij. Zelfs te Clanwilliam en Van Rhynsdorp zijn commandos, waarschijnlijk van Koloniale Afrikaners, terwijl in de bergen van Tulbagh ook gewapende klompjes zijn en de Engelschen forten bouden te Lambertsbaai, dist. Malmesbury. Een schip dat met kanonnen naar deze forten kwam, viel om en gingen al de kanonnen verloren. De geheele Kolonie moet nu voor 3 Feb. (vandag) ontwapend worden.

Ik weet dat Hoofdcomd. de Wet aan het einde van laatste maand op weg was naar de Kaap Kolonie met zijne commandos. Ik kan niet genoeg bij u aandringen dat het nu meer dan tijd is dat wij met alle mogelijke spoed en zonder verder verzuim twee sterke commandos naar de Kolonie zenden, anders zullen wij weer zooals altoos te laat zijn en daar komen als al de koloniale vrienden ontwapend of verpletterd zijn. Door de verspreiding van de macht van den vijand over geheel Zuid-Afrika maken wij zijn taak voor hem veel moeilijker en kostbaarder en winnen wij nieuwe strijdkrachten en proviand bronnen aan. Maar hoe gauwer hoe beter.

Ik ben zeer begeerig U Ed. Gestr. over deze en ander aangelegenheden te zien, maar de omstandigheden zijn hier zoodanig dat ik verplicht zal zijn te wachten totdat U met uwe commandos hierheen komt, hetwelk ik vurig hoop nu spoedig zal gebeuren. Ik denk het behoort onze politiek te zijn den vijand uit den districten naar de goudvelden te lokken en dit kunnen wij alleen doen door met onze commandos daarheen te trekken en een dreigende houding aldaar aan te nemen. Zoo b. v. had ik voor mij te Ventersdorp een groote overmacht van den vijand. Ik liet daar een wacht van 120 man en trok met mijne commandos naar de Witwatersrand en die overmacht is thans ook weer op de goudvelden. Uw dw. dienaar

J. C. Smuts
Wd. Ass. Comd.-Generaal

TRANSLATION

Jachtfontein
3 February 1901

Honoured Sir, Among the booty taken the day before yesterday at Jachtfontein there were also some post-bags with letters and newspapers. I give some details. The English Government has decided to send reinforcements of 20,000 volunteers to South Africa in view of the very serious situation here. The English people and also the Government appear now to be waking up to the great danger which threatens, especially in the Cape Colony. The situation in Europe is very disquieting; France and Russia are becoming more and more insolent, and Russia seems to want to claim everything in China. The war between England and the Native states of Central Africa is still going on.¹ Martial law has now been proclaimed over the whole Cape Colony with the exception of the Cape Peninsula and Kaffraria.² The Afrikaners are rising everywhere; the advance commandos of the Orange Free State have already long since passed Willowmore, Fraserburg and Carnarvon.³ Even at Clanwilliam and Van Rhynsdorp there are commandos, apparently of Colonial Afrikaners, while there are also armed groups in the Tulbagh mountains; and the English are building forts at Lambert's Bay in the Malmesbury district. A ship, coming to these forts with cannon, capsized and all the cannon were lost. The whole Colony must now be disarmed before 3 February (today).

I know that Chief Commandant de Wet was en route to the Cape Colony with his commandos at the end of last month. I cannot too strongly urge upon you that it is now high time that we send two strong commandos to the Colony with all possible speed and without further delay, otherwise we shall again, as always, be too late and get there when the Colony friends are disarmed or crushed. By distributing enemy strength over the whole of South Africa we are making his task much harder and more costly for him and gaining new fighting forces and supplies. But the sooner the better.

¹ The war against the Ashantis, Gold Coast Colony.

² The proclamation of martial law of December 1900 was extended to the Cape ports in October 1901.

³ These forces, under Hertzog and Commandant P. H. Kritzinger, had crossed the Orange River between 6 and 16 December 1900.

I should very much like to see Your Honour about this and other matters, but circumstances here are such that I shall be obliged to wait until you can come here with your commandos—which I fervently hope will happen soon. I think it should be our policy to lure the enemy out of the districts to the Goldfields, and this we can only do by marching thither with our commandos and taking up a threatening attitude there. Thus, for instance, I had a large superior force of the enemy before me at Ventersdorp. I left a guard of 120 men there and marched with my commandos to the Witwatersrand and this large enemy force is also now on the Goldfields. Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts
Acting Assistant Commandant-General

146 To C. R. de Wet

Vol. XCVI, no. 304

Gatsrand

10 Februari 1901

Weledelgestr. Heer, Hiermede zend ik U eenige copieën van rapporten omtrent de jongste operaties in den Gatsrand. Ik mag U verder mededeelen dat vijand nu geheel uit den Gatsrand is verdreven of gevlucht. Verder zend ik U copie van rapport van Comd.-Genl. Botha dat zoeven mij ter hand gekomen is. Daaruit zal U zien dat Genl. Beyers en ik ieder met 1,000 man naar de Kaap K. zal aftrekken. Er was eenige moeilijkheid omtrent mij daar ik als Staatsprocureur en regeeringscommissaris en gevolmachtigde voor de westelijke districten den Z.A.R. ook alhier noodig ben. Maar ik verwacht stellig dat mijne Regeering zal inzien dat ik onze zaak van meer nut in de Kaap K. kan zijn alwaar, vooral in de westelijke districten ervan, ik goed bekend ben. Mijn plan is en blijft een constitutioneele revolutie in de Kaap Kolonie te bewerkstelligen, zoodat Koloniale Afrikanders die de wapens opnemen den status van wettige combattante in stede van rebellen kunnen erlangen. Gedeelte van mijn macht (omtrent 600 man) bevindt zich reeds in Griqualand W. onder Vechtgenl. Piet de Villiers. Met de rest zal ik zoo de Heere wil binnen 14 dagen vertrekken; mij plan is bij Prieska voorbij te trekken en dan of

naar Calvinia of naar Victoria West te trekken naardat ik van onze commandos aldaar of van U Edgestr. verneem of ik te Victoria W. noodig ben of niet. Generaal Beyers en ik zullen zooveel mogelijk in verbinding met elkaar blijven en samenwerken. Natuurlijk zullen wij waar noodig en mogelijk ook met U en uwe commandos samenwerken.

Volgens de jongste couranten zullen er 30,000 voluntiers van Engeland hierheen komen, maar zelfs de Engelsche bladen klagen erover dat de nieuwe vrijwilligers niet al te goed zijn en niet te vergelijken met de Boeren die nu de Kaap K. indringen en onder de uitgelezenste den federale machten moeten gerekend worden.

Ik hoop dat de Heere ons zoo zal regeren dat van deze groote beweging naar de Kaap K. de geboorte van een waarlijk vrij en vereenigd Zuid-Afrika moge gedagteekend worden. Ik hoop dat U mij op de hoogte zal houden van al uwe bewegingen. Zoodra ik van Potchefstroom vertrek zal ik U rapport zenden en van Prieska zal ik U ook weer rapporteeren. Indien Z.H.Ed. Pres. Steyn bij U is dan verzoek ik U hem mijn hartelijkste groeten over te brengen. Wees ook U hartelijk van mij gegroet en den Heere aanbevolen. Uw dw. dienaar en vriend

J. C. Smuts
Ass. Comd.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Gatsrand
10 February 1901

Honourable Sir, Herewith I send you some copies of reports about the latest operations in the Gatsrand. I may further inform you that the enemy has now been completely driven out of the Gatsrand or has fled. Further I send you a copy of a report from Commandant-General Botha which has just reached me. From this you will see that General Beyers and I will march down to the Cape Colony, each with 1,000 men. There was some difficulty about me because, as State Attorney and government commissioner and deputy for the western districts of the South African Republic, I am also needed here. But I fully expect that my Government will realize that I can be of more use to our cause in the Cape Colony where, especially in its western districts, I am well known. My plan

is, and remains, to bring about a constitutional revolution in the Cape Colony, so that Colonial Afrikaners who take up arms can acquire the status of legal combatants instead of rebels. A portion of my force (about 600 men) is already in Griqualand West under Combat General Piet de Villiers. With the rest I shall, if the Lord wills, leave within 14 days; my plan is to march past Prieska and then either to Calvinia or to Victoria West, after I hear from our commandos there or from Your Honour whether I am needed at Victoria West or not. General Beyers and I will as far as possible remain in touch with one another and work together. Of course we shall also, where necessary and possible, work with you and your commandos.

According to the latest newspapers 30,000 volunteers from England will arrive here, but even the English papers complain that the new volunteers are not too good and not to be compared with the Boers who are now penetrating into the Cape Colony and must be counted among the most experienced of the federal forces.

I hope that the Lord will so guide us that the birth of a truly free and united South Africa may be dated from this great movement into the Cape Colony. I hope that you will keep me informed of all your movements. As soon as I leave Potchefstroom I shall send you a report and I shall again report from Prieska. If His Excellency President Steyn is with you I ask you to give him my heartiest greetings. You also I greet sincerely and commend to the Lord. Your obedient servant and friend,

J. C. Smuts
Assistant Commandant-General

147 To J. H. de la Rey

Vol. XCVI, no. 306

Cyferfontein, nabij Losberg
16 Februari 1901

Weledgestr. Heer en Vriend, Hartelijk dank voor uw laatste rapport met de daarin vervatte welwillende felicitaties zoowel als het goede nieuws van het groote buit te Johannesburg. Het lijkt mij soms alsof uwe commandos altijd meer geluk hebben

dan de andere; in elk geval valt het niet te ontkennen dat in de westelijke districten meer degelijk werk gedaan wordt dan in eenig ander deel dezer Republiek. Heel mogelijk hebben onze ander generaalschappen met grooter moeilijkheden te kampen; maar wat onze commandos in deze deelen betreft moet ik met dankbaarheid zeggen dat, wanneer ik beschouw het werk en de vooruitgang door ons gemaakt, afgesneden als wij zijn van regeering en geld zoowel als ammunitie bronnen, ik werkelijk verbaasd sta. Ik ben blij dat U zooveel geld bij de heer Jan Kruger heeft kunnen leenen; ik zend kwitantie en eenige rapportgangers om mij een deel ervan over te brengen.

Wat betreft het vijandelijke commando dat naar Wolmaransstad optrok zijn nu Comd. de Beer en S. P. du Toit zoowel als Genl. P. de Villiers ervoor, terwijl Genl. Celliers met 600 paardenruiters is bijgekomen; dus verwacht ik dat zij den vijand spoedig zullen 'kaf loopen'. Ik zit nog de beweging van de twee commandos bij mij afkijken; zoodra ik een kans krijg hoop ik een of ander van hen aan te vallen. Gister had ik een heliogram van Veldcornet v.d. Merwe dat de groote brug te Bank nog ingestort blijft; dus schijnt het alsof vijand moeite heeft hem te herstellen.

Johannes Neethling en Tottie Krige zijn aangekomen met rapporten, welke ik op verzoek van Comd.-Genl. geopend heb. Ik wensch alleen een paar aanmerkingen omtrent den Koloniale tocht te maken en bezwaren in te brengen tegen de regeling door Genl. Botha gemaakt. Ik heb hem nooit verzocht met Genl. Beyers mede te gaan, en ik versta niet hoe hij kan zeggen dat ik onder instructie van Genl. Beyers moet staan. Een leger van 2,000 man is veels te log en zwaar, vooral wanneer in aanmerking genomen wordt dat het nog in de Kolonie veel grooter zal worden. Hoofdcomd. de Wet vroeg om twee *aparte* commandos en ik heb toen om de zaak te bespoedigen aan Comd.-Genl. voorgesteld om mij en Beyers te zenden. Ik beschouw dat er *apart* bevel moet zijn, maar dat volgens onze gewoonte en wet, deze commandos in de Kaap K. onder oppertoezicht van den Hoofdcomd. de Wet moeten staan. Wat nog meer zegt, mijne commandante zijn zeer ontevreden met de tactiek door Genl. Beyers aan den dag gelegd, toen hij in deze gewesten was, en zeggen ronduit dat zij onder U of mij naar de Kolonie zullen gaan, maar niet onder Genl. Beyers. Ik

had gedacht 500 man van Potchefstroom zamen met vrijwilligers die U mij goedgunstig zou afstaan en de manschappen onder Genl. P. de Villiers met mij mede te nemen; en dat zou de beste oplossing zijn. Ik zou zeer blij zijn als U de zaak in dit licht bij den Comd.-Genl. wil voordragen, want als ik schrijf kan hij denken dat het mij om eer te doen is, terwijl het mij alleen te doen is om onze groote zaak in de Kaap K. te bevorderen en ik overtuigd ben dat zijne regeling geheel verkeerd is. Indien U naar de Kolonie ging zou ik volgaarne onder *uwe* instructie als officier wou staan, maar ieder welkend mensch zou erkennen dat ik het niet verdiend heb onder Genl. Beyers geplaatst te worden.

Indien U met mijne rapportgangers rapport aan Genl. Botha hiervan zendt zal ik het ten spoedigste naar hem doorzenden, zoowel als rapport aan mijne Regeering omtrent verandering van Uitv. R.B. van 16 Juli 1900. Ook vertrouw ik dat U geen bezwaar tegen mijn gaan zal maken, daar ik alhier werkelijk onnoodig ben en U gemakkelijk het bestuur over onze geheele zaak op U kan nemen; en ik voel dat in vele opzichten ik meer zou kunnen uitrichten, vooral op politiek gebied, in de Kaap K. als vele andere generaals, die misschien knapper krijgsmannen dan ik zijn. Ik ben ook reeds zoo lang van mijne Regeering weg dat ik bijna niet meer Staatsprocureur ben en mijne diensten eventueel alleen bij vredesonderhandelingen noodig zullen zijn, en dan moeten toch Pres. Steyn en Hoofdcomd. de Wet ook bij zijn. Ik moet zeggen dat ik het ook noodig acht dat een van de twee generaals een persoon moet zijn door U in krijgszaken opgevoed om verschillende redenen —en van de door U opgeleide jonge officieren acht ik mijzelve met alle bescheidenheid den geschiksten om op zoo'n tocht te gaan.

Hopende dat U in deze belangrijke zaak bij mij zal staan blijf ik met hartelijke groete, Uw dw. dienaar en vriend

J. C. Smuts

Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl.

P.S. Indien U volgens mijn wensch handelt zal ik blij zijn als U den Comd.-Genl. aanbeveelt mij een aanstelling van Ass. Comd.-Genl. te geven, daar ik hier alleen uw plaatsvervanger ben. J. C. S.

TRANSLATION

Cyferfontein near Losberg
16 February 1901

Honoured Sir and Friend, Sincere thanks for your last report and the kind congratulations which it contained, as well as the good news of the large booty at Johannesburg. It sometimes seems to me as if your commandos always have more luck than the others; in any case it cannot be denied that more good work is done in the western districts than in any other part of this Republic. Quite possibly our other generalships have greater difficulties to contend with; but, as regards our commandos in these parts, I must thankfully say that, when I look at the work and the progress made by us, cut off as we are from Government and money as well as ammunition sources, I really stand amazed. I am glad that you have been able to borrow so much money from Mr Jan Kruger;¹ I send a receipt and some despatch-riders to bring me a portion of it.

As regards the enemy commando which advanced to Wolmaransstad, Commandants de Beer and S. P. du Toit, as well as General P. de Villiers are now in front of it, while General Celliers with 600 mounted men has joined them; I therefore expect that we shall soon trounce the enemy. I am still observing the movement of the two commandos near me; as soon as I get a chance I hope to attack one or other of them. Yesterday I had a heliogram from Field-Cornet van der Merwe that the big bridge at Bank is still down; so it seems that the enemy is having difficulty in repairing it.

Johannes Neethling and Tottie Krige have arrived with reports which, at the request of the Commandant-General, I have opened. I wish only to make a few remarks about the Colonial expedition and to raise objections to the arrangement made by General Botha. I have never asked to go with General Beyers, and I do not understand how he can say that I must be under General Beyers's instructions. An army of 2,000 men is much too unwieldy and heavy, especially when it is taken into consideration that it will become much bigger in the Colony. Chief Commandant de Wet asked for two *separate* commandos and I then suggested to the Commandant-General,

¹ This may have been Jan Adriaan Kruger, second son of the President.

in order to speed up the matter, to send me and Beyers. I consider that there should be *separate* commands, but that, according to our custom and law, these commandos in the Cape Colony should be under the superintendence of Chief Commandant de Wet. What is more, my commandants are most dissatisfied with the tactics displayed by General Beyers, when he was in these parts, and say roundly that they will go to the Colony under you or me, but not under General Beyers. I had thought of taking with me 500 men from Potchefstroom together with the volunteers whom you would kindly hand over to me and the men under General P. de Villiers; and that would be the best solution. I should be very glad if you would put the matter in that light to the Commandant-General, because if I write he may think that I am concerned with fame, whereas I am only concerned to advance our great cause in the Cape Colony and am convinced that his arrangements are quite wrong. If you went to the Colony I should most willingly be under *your* instructions as an officer, but every right-thinking person would admit that I have not deserved to be placed under General Beyers.

If you should send a report of this to General Botha by my despatch-riders, I shall send it through to him with all speed, as well as a report to my Government about the alteration of the Executive Council Resolution of 16 July 1900.¹ I also trust that you will make no objection to my going, as I am really unnecessary here and you can easily take over the control of our whole cause; and I feel that in many respects I should be able to achieve more in the Cape Colony, especially in the political field, than many other generals, who are perhaps more able soldiers than I. I have also been so long away from my Government that I am almost no longer State Attorney, and my services will eventually be needed only at peace negotiations, and then President Steyn and Chief Commandant de Wet must also in any case be present. I must say that I also consider it necessary that one of the two generals should, for various reasons, be a person educated in military matters by you—and of the young officers trained by you I consider myself, in all modesty, the most suitable to go on such an expedition.

¹ See 136.

Hoping that you will stand by me in this important matter, I remain with hearty greetings, Your obedient servant and friend,

J. C. Smuts
Acting Assistant Commandant-General

P.S. Should you act according to my wish, I should be glad if you would recommend to the Commandant-General that I be given an appointment as Assistant Commandant-General, as I am only your substitute here. J. C. S.

148 To J. H. de la Rey

Vol. 2, no. 107

A private letter to de la Rey, following the official letter (147).

Cyferfontein, nabij Losberg
17 Februari 1901

Lieve Oom Koos, Nadat ik den vorigen brief geschreven had, heb ik bijna den geheelen laatsten nacht erover nagedacht wat de beste oplossing zou zijn en wat onze zaak het meest zou bevorderen. Meer en meer kom ik tot de overtuiging dat U zelf naar de Kaap K. moet gaan. Uw naam is zoo groot en de geheel Kaap K. heeft een zoo groot vertrouwen in uwe bekwaamheid als krijgsman, dat uwe aankomst aldaar omtrent dezelfde uitwerking zal hebben als die van Hoofdcomd. de Wet. Indien U ging met 500 uwer beste burgers (van Rustenburg en Krugersdorp) en ik en misschien ook Celliers als uwe vecht generaals, ieder met 500 onzen manschappen, en P. de Villiers met zijn 500 bij ons aansluit, dan hebben wij een bijna onoverwinnelijk leger van 2,000 van de beste burgers der Z.A.R. Laat Beyers dan apart gaan of ook onder uwe instructie gesteld worden. Indien U hiermede accoord gaat, dan kunnen wij een voorstel aan Regering en Comd.-Generaal maken omtrent de toekomstige regeling dezer westelijke districten. Ik gevoel dat U toch vroeger of later naar de Kolonie zal georderd worden, en hoe eerder U gaat hoe beter, want zodra sake dan een loop in de Kolonie genomen hebben kan U naar de Republiek terug keeren. Ik hoop dat U zeer ernstig hierover zal denken. Indien U echter niet zelf wil gaan dan denk ik dat het best zal zijn het bevel over de westelijke burgers die naar de

Kolonie gaan maar aan mij op te dragen, zooals ik in mijn vorigen brief uiteen gezet heb. In elk geval heb ik niet genoeg vertrouwen in het beleid van Genl. Beyers om mij onder hem te stellen. Met hartelijke groeten

J. C. Smuts

P.S. Het lijkt alsof Beyers ook bij Comd.-Genl. heeft gaan klagen over de Krugersdorpers bij U. Ik kan niet verstaan waarom hij dus handelt.

TRANSLATION

Cyferfontein, near Losberg

17 February 1901

Dear Oom Koos, After I had written the previous letter, I have thought for almost the whole of last night what the best solution would be and what would best advance our cause. More and more I come to the conviction that you yourself must go to the Cape Colony. Your name is so great and the whole Cape Colony has so great a confidence in your ability as a fighting man, that your arrival there will have about the same effect as that of Chief Commandant de Wet. If you went with 500 of your best burghers (from Rustenburg and Krugersdorp) and I and perhaps also Celliers as your combat generals, each with 500 of our men, and P. de Villiers with his 500 joins us, then we shall have an almost unbeatable army of 2,000 of the best burghers of the South African Republic. Let Beyers then go separately or also be placed under your orders. If you agree with this, then we can make a proposal to the Government and the Commandant-General about the future regulation of the western districts. I feel that you will in any case sooner or later be ordered to the Colony, and the sooner you go the better, because as soon as things have got going in the Colony you can return to the Republic. I hope that you will seriously consider this. If, however, you do not want to go yourself then I think that it will be best to put me in command of the western burghers who go to the Colony, as I have explained in my previous letter. In any case I have not enough confidence in the policy of General Beyers to put myself under him. With hearty greetings,

J. C. Smuts

P.S. It looks as if Beyers has also gone complaining to the Commandant-General about the Krugersdorp men with you. I cannot understand why he acts in this way.

149 To L. Botha

Vol. XCVI, no. 308

Schoonspruit
27 Februari 1901

WelEd. Gestr. Heer, Hartelijk dank voor uw laatste schrijven en de welwillende felicitatie daarin vervat. Sedert ik laatst aan U rapport maakte heeft de vijand getracht mij in Gatsrand te omzingelen met drie verschillende afdeelingen van uit Potchefstroom, Welverdiend en Johannesburg. Om hen van doel te doen veranderen ben ik door hen getrokken in den nacht en heb ik Bankstatie achter hen aangevallen en den grooten brug over de Wonderrivier doen opblazen. Vijand is echter voort gegaan met zijne beweging en werd ik daardoor genoodzaakt mijn lagers met de helft mijner commandos over de spoor naar Schoonspruit te zenden, en bleef ik met den anderen helft voor den vijand en heb al vechtende geretireerd totdat, toen ik deze helft eenige dagen verliet om Generaal de la Rey alhier te zien, het den vijand nog niet geslaagd was de randen van Vaalrivier in te komen. Een van die lagers is in Potchefstroom ingetrokken, terwijl de twee anderen liggen ten zuiden van Potchefstroom in de richting Schoemansdrift op het gewoonlijken pad voor den vijand naar de K. Kolonie. Er vinden hier groote bewegingen onder den vijand plaats, waaraan ik geen ander redelijke uitleg kan hechten, dan dat vijand voornemens is althans met zijn grootste macht de westelijke districten te verlaten. Zoo zijn alle vrouwen reeds uit Klerksdorp gezonden; een ontzaglijk lager van 500 of 600 wagens, vermoedelijk ook met vrouwen en kinderen, is van Potchefstroom naar Johannesburg vertrokken, een commando van omtrent duizend man is uit Klerksdorp naar Venterdorp gekomen, met het mogelijk doel om de garnizoenen van Venterdorp en Lichtenburg te komen uithalen. Volgens geruchten staat het garnizoen van Lichtenburg opgepakt om weg te gaan en het zal mij niet verwonderen indien de vijand door de algemeene opstand in de K.K. gedwongen is geworden af te zien van occupatie van het grootste gedeelte dezer

Republiek. Trouwens is dit reeds in den O.V.S. geschied, welke vandaag, met uitzondering van de garnizoenen van Bloemfontein, Kroonstad en een paar ander dorpen en de uitgedunde wachten langs den spoor, geheel schoon is van de vijand. Wat de toestand in de K.K. is zal U zelf uit de Engelsche berichten gezien hebben. Ik sluit ook in de jongste berichten omtrent Hfd. Comdt. de Wet. Hij was zeer begerig U te ontmoeten voor zijn vertrek maar door de poging van den vijand om de geheele K. Kolonie te ontwapenen werd hij genoodzaakt met den meesten spoed daar heen te trekken. Volgens berichten in de Engelsche couranten is er een algemeene opstand in de K. Kolonie en is het Engelsche gezag daar totaal verdwenen, uitgezonderd langs de spoor en in de voornaamste dorpen, zoodat de toestand aldaar werkelijk dezelfde is als hier in de Z.A.R. Het is onze plicht deze beweging zoo te ondersteunen en aan te moedigen dat het voor de Imperiale Regeering duidelijk zal worden dat haar taak in Z.A.R. hoopeloos is, voor dat er een tijd van verslapping en moedeloosheid moge komen.

Zeer dankbaar ben ik daarom, dat Generaal Beyers van U opdracht heeft ontvangen met zijn commandos naar de K. Kolonie te gaan. Ik versta echter niet wat uwe bedoeling is omtrent mij persoonlijk. Het schijnt of U mij onder de instructie van Generaal Beyers wil stellen. Als Staatsprocureur kan ik echter niet onder de instructie van eenig Generaal gesteld worden, daar ik volgens mijn ambtseed alleen verantwoordelijk ben aan mijne Regeering. Als krijgsofficier sta ik onder Generaal de la Rey en wensch ik niet onder Generaal Beyers te staan en kan zulks gelijkerwijs ook niet van mij verwacht worden. Ik ben bang dat mijne plaatsing onder Generaal Beyers in de K. Kolonie zal aanleiding geven tot verwarring, en verzoek ik U zeer ernstig een ander regeling te maken. Deze verandering wordt noch meer noodzakelijk gemaakt, door de volslagene onwilligheid onzer burgers om naar de Kolonie te gaan anders dan onder het bevel van Generaal de la Rey of mij. Met het oog op de mogelijkheid waarvan ik zoeven melding maakte, dat de vijand zijn hoofdmacht uit deze districten naar de Kolonie zal zenden en dat ons Generaal de la Rey zelf eventueel naar de K. Kolonie zal moeten gaan met de meeste zijner burgers, komt het mij wenschelijk voor het bevel van de

burgers die uit de westelijke districten naar de K. Kolonie nu gaan apart te houden van Generaal Beyers, zoodat zij eventueel bij hem in de K. Kolonie zouden kunnen aansluiten. Ik versta van Generaal de la Rey dat hij zelf een voorstel aan U in deze geest zal maken. Ook drong Generaal de Wet aan op twee *aparte* commandos omdat door aangroeiing in de K. Kolonie één commando spoedig te zwaar zou worden. Ik acht het dus in belang van onze zaak op alle deze gronden, dat de instructie van Generaal Beyers met de meeste spoed veranderd worden en dat een aparte instructie gegeven wordt aan het commando dat van deze districten zal gaan. U zal natuurlijk verstaan dat deze voor mij een moeilijke zaak is waarop U raad te geven daar ik zelf daarin betrokken ben. Het is echter onnoodig voor mij te zeggen, dat ik hoegenaamd geen bezwaar heb tegen Generaal Beyers, die een oude en vertrouwde vriend van mij is en een officier van bekende dapperheid en bekwaamheid, maar de stelling van onze burgers onder hem zal het nu nagenoeg onmogelijk maken voor Generaal de la Rey om uitvoer te geven aan uwe opdracht en zal aanleiding geven tot verwarring, wanneer Generaal de la Rey eventueel naar de K. Kolonie gaat zooals het zeker zijne bedoeling is te doen. Mijne burgers zijn klaar eenige oogenblik te vertrekken; ik wacht alleen op uwe instructie, welke ik hoop spoedig zullen aankomen.

Ik ben ook zeer blijde te zien dat U nog denkt aan uw oud plan door Natal en Pondoland of Griqualand Oost naar de K. Kolonie te werken, een plan waarvan ik onder uwe aanvoering de grootste verwachting koester. Ons zaak is nu naar zoo een punt geloopt, dat het mij voorkomt alsof inspanning van al onze krachten het einde zeer nabij zal brengen. De vijand is wanhopig, zijne aanwerving van nieuwe troepen een mislukking, terwijl onze burgers bezielde zijn met een moed en opgeruimdheid, welke onze verwachtingen overtreffen.

Indien noodig (dat is zoo ik opdracht ontvang naar de K. Kolonie te gaan) wensch ik dat U de Regeering verzoekt het besluit van 16 Juli 1900 over de westelijke districten zoo te veranderen dat alle plichten en bevoegdheden daarin gezamenlijk aan Generaal de la Rey en my opgedragen in vervolg uitsluitelijk bij hem zullen berusten. Geliewe ook indien noodig de Regeering erop attent te maken dat verlot van Z. H. Ed.

den Staatspresident binnen kort zal verstreken zijn en verlengt moet worden in termen der Grondwet.

De Regeerings personen in Europa moeten ook trachten, door zending van vertrouwbare Afrikaanders, desnoods naar de Koloniale havens, onze commandos op hoogte te houden van wat in Europa omgaat. De 900 burgers, waarvan U melding maakt als in Delagoabaai zijnde, zijn reeds lang naar Portugal vervoerd, volgens couranten berichten.

Hartelijk dank voor het bericht omtrent mijn vrouw. Ik verwacht dat de vijand nog verder sal gaan en onze vrouwen en kinderen evenals de mans naar het buitenland zal doen vervoeren om daar, zooals nu onze burgers op Ceylon, zooals kraaien uit te sterven. Maar mijn vertrouwen is sterk op die Gerechtigheid die steeds getriomfeerd heeft in de worstelstrijden den menschheid en die zeker niet in ons geval het onderspit voor John Bull zal delven. Geef mijn hartelijkste groeten aan alle vrienden bij U; wees ook zelf hartelijk van mij gegroet. Uw dw. dienaar en vriend

J. C. Smuts
Wd. Ass. Comd.-Genl.

TRANSLATION

Schoonspruit
27 February 1901

Honoured Sir, Sincere thanks for your last letter and the cordial congratulations contained in it. Since I last reported to you the enemy has tried to surround me in the Gatsrand with three separate sections from Potchefstroom, Welverdiend and Johannesburg. To make them change their objective I have marched between them during the night and attacked Bank Station behind them and blown up the big bridge over the Wonder River. However, the enemy continued his movement and I was therefore forced to send my laagers with half my commandos over the railway-line to Schoonspruit, while I remained facing the enemy with the other half and have been making a fighting withdrawal until, when I left them some days ago to come and see General de la Rey here, the enemy had not yet succeeded in entering the Vaal River ridges. One of our laagers has entered Potchefstroom in the direction of Schoemansdrift on the usual road for the enemy to the Cape Colony.

Big enemy movements are taking place here, to which I can attach no other reasonable explanation than that the enemy intends leaving the western districts, at any rate with his main forces. Thus all women and children have already been sent out of Klerksdorp; a huge laager of five or six hundred wagons, apparently also of women and children, has left Potchefstroom for Johannesburg; a commando of some thousand men has come to Ventersdorp from Klerksdorp, possibly with the object of relieving the garrisons at Ventersdorp and Lichtenburg. According to reports the garrison at Lichtenburg is packed and ready to go, and I shall not be surprised if the enemy has been forced by the general rising in the Cape Colony to give up occupation of the greater part of this Republic. Indeed, this has already happened in the Orange Free State which, with the exception of the garrisons at Bloemfontein, Kroonstad and a few other towns, and the thinned-out guards along the railway-line, is quite clear of the enemy. What the situation is in the Cape Colony you will yourself have seen from the English reports. I also enclose the latest reports about Chief Commandant de Wet. He wished very much to meet you before his departure but, because of the enemy's attempt to disarm the entire Cape Colony, he was forced to march thither with the greatest possible speed. According to reports in the English newspapers there is a general rising in the Cape Colony and English authority there has completely disappeared, except along the railway-line and in the main towns; thus the situation there is really the same as here in the South African Republic. It is our duty so to support and encourage this movement that it will become clear to the Imperial Government that its task in the South African Republic is hopeless before a possible period of slackness and discouragement sets in.

I am therefore very thankful that General Beyers has been instructed by you to go to the Cape Colony with his commandos. I do not, however, understand what your intention is about me personally. It seems that you wish to put me under the orders of General Beyers. As State Attorney I cannot, however, be put under the orders of any general as I am, by my oath of office, responsible only to my Government. As military officer I am under the orders of General de la Rey

and do not wish to be under General Beyers and, likewise, this cannot be expected of me. I fear that my being put under General Beyers in the Cape Colony will lead to confusion, and request you most earnestly to make another arrangement. This change is made even more necessary by the complete unwillingness of our burghers to go to the Colony except under the command of General de la Rey or myself. In view of the possibility which I have just mentioned, that the enemy will send his main force out of these districts to the Colony, and that our General de la Rey will eventually have to go to the Cape Colony himself with most of his burghers, it appears to me desirable to keep the command of the burghers who are now going from the western districts to the Cape Colony separate from General Beyers's, so that they will eventually be able to join him [i.e. de la Rey] in the Cape Colony. I understand from General Beyers that he will himself make a proposal in this spirit to you. General de Wet also insisted upon two *separate* commandos because, by enlargement in the Cape Colony, one commando would soon become too unwieldy. On all these grounds, therefore, I consider it in the interest of our cause that the instruction to General Beyers be altered with all speed and that a separate instruction be given to the commando that will go from this district. You will, of course, understand that this is for me a difficult matter on which to advise you as I am myself concerned in it. It is, however, unnecessary for me to say that I have no objection whatever to General Beyers, who is an old and trusted friend of mine and an officer of known courage and ability; but to put our burghers under him will now make it wellnigh impossible for General de la Rey to give effect to your instruction, and will give rise to confusion when General de la Rey eventually goes to the Cape Colony as he no doubt intends to do. My burghers are ready to leave at any moment; I only await your instruction, which I hope will soon arrive.

I am also very glad to see that you are still considering your old plan of working through to the Cape Colony via Natal and Pondoland or Griqualand East—a plan of which, under your command, I cherish the greatest hopes. Our cause has now reached a point at which, it seems to me, the end may be brought very near by exerting all our powers. The enemy

despairs, his recruitment of new troops is a failure while our burghers are inspired with a courage and cheerfulness that exceed our expectations.

If necessary (that is, if I receive instructions to go to the Cape Colony) I wish that you would request the Government to alter the resolution of 16 July 1900 about the western districts in such a way that all the duties and powers conferred by it on General de la Rey and myself jointly will in future reside exclusively in him. Please also, if necessary, advise the Government that the leave of absence of His Honour the State President will soon expire and must, in terms of the Constitution, be extended.¹

The Government representatives in Europe must also try, by sending trustworthy Afrikaners, if necessary to the Colonial ports, to keep our commandos informed of what is going on in Europe. The 900 burgers whom you mention as being in Delagoa Bay have, according to newspaper reports, long since been transported to Portugal.

Sincere thanks for the news about my wife. I expect the enemy to go still further and have our women and children transported abroad to die there like crows, like our burghers in Ceylon. But my faith is strong in that Righteousness which has always triumphed in the struggles of humanity and which will not in our case be beaten by John Bull. Give my heartiest greetings to all friends with you and accept also my best wishes to yourself. Your obedient servant and friend,

J. C. Smuts
Acting Assistant Commandant-General

150 To N. J. de Wet

Vol. 2, no. 107B

Schoonspruit
28 Februari 1901

Lieve Klaasie, Hartelijk dank voor jou laatste brief, ik was zeer blij nog iets van jou te vernemen. Sedert toen is jij naar Pietersburg als rechter gegaan. Als jij echter begeerig zijt een aanstelling als rechter te bekomen dan kan ik jou alhier een zeer hooge aanbod maken—jij kan nl. griffier en wd. baljuw

¹ Kruger had been given six months' leave of absence on 10 September 1900.

worden bij het 'Hoogste Hof' voor beide Republieken thans zitting houdende in de hoofstad der Westelijke Republiek te Wolmaransstad. Daar zit een Hof bestaande uit hoofdrechtter C. M. Douthwaite en de rechters W. H. Neethling en Jacobus Boshoff dat zelfs meer beschuldigten uit den O.V.S. dan uit de Z.A.R. voor zich heeft, en zonder zich te bekreunen over moeilijkheden van jurisdictie, alle deze zaken met recht en billijkheid en spoed afhandelt, terwijl Oom Koos en ik, zonder zich over de functies van Z.H.Ed. Pres. Steyn te bekommeren of de Grondwet v/d. O.V.S. te kennen, de doodvonnisen bekrachtigen en laten uitvoeren. Waarlijk wat in vreedstijd voor de grooten en wijzen verborgen was, is nu in de laatste des dagen aan de kinderkens geopenbaard; wij zijn begonne met de Vereenigde Republieken die nog naar een Ver. Zuid-Afrika zullen leiden.

Ik heb uit opgevangen Engelsche berichten gezien dat er 12 generaalschappen achter jou en Botha zijn en ik ben niet verwonderd dat onder zoodanige omstandigheden jij de rechterschap te Pietersburg hebt aangenomen; ik verwacht echter dat zoodra er weer grooter rust en veiligheid is, jij jou post van Mil. Sec. en wd. St. Proc. zal hervatten.

Oom Koos is zeer begeerig dat ik naar de K.K. zal gaan in bevel over de menschen die van hier moeten gaan. Alle vechtgenls. in de westelijke Republiek hebben verzocht onder mij als hoofdgenl. naar de K.K. te gaan. Natuurlijk is dit vleierend voor mij, maar men weet zeker dat ik uiterst voorzichtig ben en alle aanleg heb voor een nieuwen Q. Fabius Max. Cunctator. Onder Beyers willen zij noch de burgers gaan, omdat men zeer ontevreden is over de wonderlijke combinatie van bidderij en buiterij door zijn legermacht gepraktiseerd en ook over zijn kriegsbeleid zooals dat alhier gezien is met zijn tocht in deze deelen. Hij is echter een flink officier en man van karakter en ik ben zeer blij dat hij over een der afdeelingen zal gaan. Als ik eventueel ga, zal ik zeer blij zijn jou hulp en steun te hebben en mijn bede is dat jij een plaatsvervanger bij Genl. Botha zet en zelf met Jan Borrius hierheen komt om mij bij te staan met de moeilijke kwesties welke zich in de K.K. zullen opwerpen. Ik hoop dat Louis ook de wenschelijkheid hiervan zal inzien. Wie weet wat goed werk jij nog aldaar voor jou geboorteland zal kunnen verrichten.

Arme Isie en Ella! Ik wensch liever niet over hun erbarmelijke lot te denken. Hadden zij maar destijds mijn goeden raad gevolgd en naar Europa gegaan maar dat wilden zij niet. En wie heeft ook gedacht dat deze oorlog nog zulke verwisselingen voor ons volk, onze vrouwen en kinderen zouden brengen. 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may'—is in dit geval meer bewaarheid dan ooit, en ik vertrouw alleenlijk dat voor onze verdrukte en vertrapte families er ook een verborgen leiding naar hooger onvoorziene einddoelen moge zijn in hun smartelijke toestand.

Ik heb lang geschreven, maar de invloed onzer oude vriendschap is sterk op mij, en ik hoop dat dezelfde vriendschap en vaderlandsliefde jou zal westwaarts en zuidwaarts trekken totdat wij op onzer ouden dag en met roer in de hand weer de zoete tooneelen onzer jeugd aanschouwen! Hartelijk gegroet

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Schoonspruit

28 February 1901

Dear Klaasie, Hearty thanks for your last letter; I was very glad to hear something more of you. Since then you have gone to Pietersburg as judge. If, however, you should wish for an appointment as judge, then I can make you a very high offer here—you can become registrar and acting messenger to the 'Supreme Court' for both Republics at present sitting in the capital of the Western Republic at Wolmaransstad. A court is sitting there consisting of Chief Justice C. M. Douthwaite and Judges W. H. Neethling and Jacobus Boshoff, which has before it more accused from the Orange Free State than from the South African Republic, and which, without worrying about difficulties of jurisdiction, deals with all these cases with justice, reasonableness and speed, while Oom Koos and I, without worrying about the functions of His Excellency President Steyn, or knowing the Constitution of the Orange Free State, confirm the death sentences and have them carried out. Truly, that which in peacetime was hidden from the great and the wise, is now in the latter days revealed to the babes; we have begun with the United Republics which will yet lead to a United South Africa.

I have seen from captured English reports that there are twelve generals after you and Botha, and I am not surprised that under such circumstances you have accepted the judgeship at Pietersburg; I expect, however, that, as soon as things are again more quiet and safe, you will resume your post of Military Secretary and Acting State Attorney.

Oom Koos wishes very much that I should go to the Cape Colony in command of the men who must go from here. All the combat generals in the western Republic have asked to go to the Cape Colony under me as chief general. Of course, this is flattering for me, but it is probably known that I am extremely cautious and have every capacity for a new Quintus Fabius Maximus Cunctator. Neither they nor the burghers want to go under Beyers, because there is much dissatisfaction with the wonderful combination of praying and looting practised by his forces, and also with his war policy, as that has been observed here during his expedition in these parts. He is, however, an able officer and a man of character and I am very glad that he will go at the head of one of the sections. If I eventually go, I should be very glad to have your help and support and my prayer is that you put a substitute with General Botha and yourself come here with Jan Borrius¹ to assist me with the difficult questions that will come up in the Cape Colony. I hope that Louis will also see the desirability of this. Who knows what good work you may yet be able to do there for the land of your birth.

Poor Isie and Ella! I would rather not think of their pitiful lot. If only they had at the time followed my good advice and gone to Europe; but they would not do that. And who ever thought that this war would bring such vicissitudes for our people, our wives and our children. 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may'² is in this case more verified than ever, and I only hope that there may also be a hidden guidance to higher unforeseen goals for our oppressed and downtrodden families in their state of suffering.

¹ Jan (Jack) Borrius of Potchefstroom, Transvaal, was a member of Theron's Scouts before joining Smuts in the Cape Colony. He lost an eye and a hand in 1901 but served in East Africa in the First World War.

² 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will.' Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, v. ii. 10.

I have written at length, but the influence of our old friendship is strong upon me, and I hope that the same friendship and love of country will draw you westwards and southwards until, in our old age and with rifle in hand, we look again upon the dear scenes of our youth. Hearty greetings,

J. C. Smuts

(c) In March 1901 Kitchener had offered Botha generous peace terms at their meeting at Middelburg, including eventual self-government and a virtual amnesty for the Colonial rebels. Because the British Government would not approve these terms, the Middleburg discussions came to nothing.

On 10 May 1901 the Transvaal leaders, including Smuts, met at Immigratie near Ermelo and decided, because of their difficult situation, to make contact with and seek guidance from Kruger and the members of the Boer deputation abroad through an envoy. Should Kitchener refuse permission to send him, an armistice would be sought to enable the two Governments to discuss their future course. A letter signed by F. W. Reitz as State Secretary, was sent to President Steyn informing him of this decision. His reply was a strong objection to the whole proposed course of action (*See* N. J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn*, Vol. II, pp. 72-4.) Nevertheless it was decided to communicate with the leaders abroad by telegram. Smuts was charged with this task and went to Standerton, then held by British forces under General Clements, to carry it out (152, 153). On receiving a reply from Kruger (154), the leaders of both Republics met at Waterval to consider it and then issued a public report drafted by Smuts (155).

151 From M. T. Steyn

Vol. 2, no. 104

Te velde
15 Mei 1901

Den WelEd. Heer Generaal Smuts
Te velde

Amice, Uwe brief heb ik ontvangen en het is noodeloos te zeggen dat ik het met weemoed heb gelezen. Ik kan het besluit om Kitchener te vragen om iemand te kunnen doorzenden, niet goedkeuren want daardoor wijzen wij onze hand aan de tegenpartij. Hij zal, indien zaken ten onze gunste in Europa zijn, weigeren, en als wij dan komen om wapenstilstand te vragen dan zal het hem toonen dat wij op de uiterste zijn, en

hij zal een ezel zijn indien hij dan niet op nieuw van alle kanten op ons aanstormen. Het spijt mij inderdaad dat zoodaanige besluiten worden genomen zonder ons te raadplegen. Wij zijn immers niet te ver van elkander. Ter wille van uzelve kan ik niet aanraden dat gij naar Europa gaat. De booze wereld zal zeggen dat gij het zinkende schip verlaat. Gij moet de Regeering niet verlaten. Het is nu de tijd dat er vastberadene mannen bij de Regeering blijven. Als Kitchener verlof verleend voor iemand om naar Europa te gaan en ongehinderd terug te komen en uwe Regeering en officieren u de verzekering zullen geven dat zij niet er aan zullen denken om de zaak op te geven zoolang als gij weg zijt, dan kan er natuurlijk geen bezwaar zijn dat gij zelf naar Europa gaat. Maar om in het geheim te gaan is verkeerd; doen dat niet.

Ik deel uwe zienswijze niet dat het volk weder zal opstaan. Er zal geen onderling vertrouwen zijn. Als de Z.A.R. de O.V.S. en de Koloniale thans in de steek gaan laten, dan is zulks de nekslag van den Z. Afrikaansche volk. Welk vertrouwen kunnen wij dan ooit weder in elkander hebben? De Vrystaat heeft niet alleen goed en bloed maar ook vrijheid opgeofferd voor de Z.A.R. en nu moeten wij de treurige onderfinding beleven dat wij door hen kunnen worden verlaten. Laten wij ons niet in schimmen verblijden. Als wij een volk moet worden, dan moeten wij zulks nu door onze volharding en kracht om te strijden en te *lijden* toonen.

Om nu in deze tijd te denken aan opgeven terwijl wij weten dat Tientsin kwestie ieder oogenblik een *causa belli* kan worden zou zelfmoord zijn, waaraan ik zeker niet wil deel nemen. Ik sluit mijne oogen niet voor onze omstandigheden zooals b.v. gebrek aan ammunitie, aan voedsel, en de lamlenigheid van sommige burgers en officieren, maar die wegen niet op tegen de gevaren voor ons volk die gelegen is in het opgeven van onze zaak, hetwelk gelijk staat met ondergang van het volk.

Ik heb nooit het volk doen gelooven dat wij geheimen hebben omtrent de deputatie. Zij weten dat wij nog niet van hen gehoord hebben. Het feit dat het volk zijne voormannen zal wantrouwen laat mij koud zoolang ik weet dat ik mijn plicht heb gedaan. Het verbannen van de voormannen naar Ceylon of elders boezemt mij geen vrees in, wat meer is, indien zij

den strijd om zoo'n lamledige wijze opgeven dan zou het mij spijten indien zij niet weggezonden worden. Naar mijne beschouwing zou het hel zijn voor ons om in Afrika te wonen onder de Engelschen, dus heeft verbanning voor mij geen afschrik. Staat vast man! Vertrouw op God, daar ligt ons kracht. Met achting, Uwe oprechte vriend

M. T. Steyn

TRANSLATION

In the field
15 May 1901

To the Honourable General Smuts
In the field

Amice, I have received your letter¹ and it is unnecessary to say that I have read it with sorrow. I cannot approve the decision to ask Kitchener for permission to send someone through, because we thereby show the opponent our hand. He will, if things are in our favour in Europe, refuse, and if we then come and ask for an armistice, it will show him that we are at the limit, and he would be an ass if he did not then fall upon us anew from all sides. I am indeed sorry that such decisions are taken without consulting us. We are after all not too far from one another. For your own sake I cannot recommend that you go to Europe. The evil world will say that you are deserting the sinking ship. You must not leave the Government. Now is the time that there should be resolute men with the Government. If Kitchener gives permission for someone to go to Europe and to return unhindered, and if your Government and officers will give you the assurance that they will not think of giving up the cause as long as you are away, then there can of course be no objection to your going to Europe yourself. But to go secretly is wrong; do not do that.

I do not share your view that the people will rise again. There will be no mutual trust. If the South African Republic now leaves the Orange Free State and the Colonials in the lurch, then that will be the death-blow of the South African

¹ This letter has not been found. Steyn, dictating his reminiscences of the war, said that he had received a private letter from Smuts at the same time as the official letter from Reitz and that it was among the papers captured when his camp was surprised by a British force at Reitz in July 1901. (See N. J. van der Merwe, op. cit. Vol. I, pp. iii-v, Vol. II, p. 75.)

people. What trust can we then ever again have in one another? The Free State has sacrificed not only goods and blood but also freedom for the South African Republic and now we must have the sad experience that we may be deserted by them. Do not let us comfort ourselves with illusions. If we are to become a nation, then we must show it now by our endurance and our strength to struggle and suffer.

To think of surrendering at this time, when we know that the Tientsin question¹ may at any moment become a *causa belli*, would be suicide, in which I certainly do not wish to take part. I do not shut my eyes to our circumstances such as lack of ammunition, of food, and the slackness of some burghers and officers, but these do not weigh against the dangers for our people that lie in giving up our cause, which amounts to the downfall of the people.

I have never let the people think that we have secrets about the deputation. They know that we have not yet heard from them. The fact that the people will distrust its leaders leaves me cold as long as I know that I have done my duty. Exile of the leaders to Ceylon or elsewhere does not inspire me with fear, what is more, if they give up the fight in such a slack fashion, then I should be sorry if they were not sent away. As I see it, it would be hell for us to live in Africa under the English, so exile has no terrors for me. Stand fast, man! Trust in God, there lies our strength. With respect, Your sincere friend
M. T. Steyn

152 To S. M. Smuts

Vol. 2, no. 107A

This letter was sent on by an English officer, Major A. A. Chichester. The letters exchanged between Smuts and his wife during the war were written in English to facilitate their passage through the Censor's office.

Standerton

2 June 1901

My dearest Isie, A few weeks ago I left my commandos in the western districts in order to consult with the Government which was at the time near Ermelo. There I heard for the first

¹ The dispute between the British and Russian military authorities about the ownership of a strip of land at Tientsin which was later referred to arbitration.

time from Klaas de Wet that you had been sent to Maritzburg for some reason or other and that Ella de Wet had accompanied you into exile. Klaas however told me that Lord Kitchener had consented to Ella's going to the Cape Colony to join her people and probably you are quite alone by this time. As I am staying here for a few days, I intend writing to Lord Kitchener to obtain leave for you likewise to go to your or my people in the Cape Colony.¹

I am here in Standerton (accompanied by Klaas) on political business of great importance. Lord Kitchener has consented to communications being passed between our Government and President Kruger in Holland and the Government has requested me to conduct the correspondence on their behalf. As this letter may come under other eyes than yours, I shall say nothing further about this matter. Probably you will soon see all sorts of rumours in the papers.

I wonder whether you ever hear about me? I have more than once written you a few lines and handed the same over to English ambulance officers, but I much fear that they have never reached you. Since last July General de la Rey and myself have been a sort of deputy Government for the western districts of the South African Republic; since last December however our work has been divided and the south-western districts have been allotted to me. As Assistant Commandant-General over those difficult districts my work has been very hard but I have the satisfaction of knowing that my commandos have been among the most active in the country. I hope soon to return to my work with renewed energy—unless certain developments should take place. I warn you not to be influenced by anything you may see in the papers about my being ill or wounded or dead. Should I be seriously wounded or killed, you will be officially informed of the fact. So don't worry yourself with groundless fears. I have never been in better health or spirits in my life; military life agrees wonderfully with me.

From time to time stray items of news about you have reached me. Of Kosie's² death in August I heard for the first

¹ Smuts's parents lived on the farm Klipfontein near Riebeeck West, his wife's parents on the farm Libertas in Stellenbosch.

² His infant son.

time near the end of last year; of mother's¹ death I heard last March. How deeply I have felt these losses—especially the first, I need not tell you. But more than all I have felt for you in all your sore trials and disappointments. I can fathom the depth of agony which you must have endured especially since I left Pretoria just a year ago.² But I have been cheered by the certainty that your heroic spirit would bear up against all misfortune and that in adversity no less than in prosperity you would be approved as a worthy daughter of your little people. Our future is very dark—God alone knows how dark. Perhaps it is the fate of our little race to be sacrificed on the altar of the world's Ideals; perhaps we are destined to be the martyr race which must redeem our sordid money age from the charge of absolute worldliness and selfishness. Even so we would have performed our function in the history of the world. In any case there is nothing worse awaiting us than death—death with honour. I often think of those lines of Goethe's: 'The future hides in it / Gladness and sorrow; / We press still through, / Nought that abides in it / Daunting us—forward: / And veiled the Dark Portal / Goal of all mortal' etc. Whatever awaits us either as a people or as individuals, let us bear our lot serenely and resignedly—knowing that we are borne forward on the bosom of a Destiny which we cannot fathom or control, but which makes unerringly for Truth and Justice.

I do not know how long we shall still be separated. The limit I fixed in Pretoria is long ago past, and the future is dark and uncertain. I often think of you. Sometimes in the dreams and visions of night; sometimes in overtones of melody which spontaneously rise to memory; sometimes, on the field of battle, your calm and pure spirit rises before me as an angel from a better world. And sometimes the bright little figure of Kosi rises before me—but him I shall never see again. I had a most wonderful dream of him the very night before I heard that he had died. Some day when we meet again you can remind me and I shall tell you the dream.

Naturally I am most anxious that you should go to Klipfontein, now that mother has gone and there is no lady in the house.

¹ Catharina Petronella Smuts, born de Vries.

² On the eve of the fall of Pretoria.

It will be better for you in every way. Please keep away from the slough of despond, cultivate cheerfulness and hopefulness and take good care of yourself so that I may observe no change whatever when next we meet again. Tell all my friends with whom you correspond, especially Olive Schreiner, that I am well both in spirit and body and hope yet to give a good account of myself! Do not expect a letter from me again. Farewell. Ever and only yours,

J. C. Smuts

153 To S. J. P. Kruger

Published in W. J. Leyds: *Vierde Verzameling (Correspondentie 1900-1902)*, Deel I, No. 244. See also Leyds: *Op. cit.* Deel II, Bijlagen, pp. 85 *et seq.* Original in the Leyds-Argief in the State Archives, Pretoria.

CODE-TELEGRAM

Van: Staatsprocureur J. C. Smuts

Aan: President Kruger

Standerton (Z.A.R.): 3 Juni 1901

Ik ben door mijne Regeering geïnstrueerd om aan U en de Deputatie den toestand van benardheid bloot te leggen. De Engelschen hebben toegestemd dat dit telegram en uw antwoord door den Hollandschen Consul passeert.

Onze zaak is in een zeer angstigen toestand geraakt. Sinds uw vertrek is, tengevolge van vele ernstige gevechten, de ammunitie voor de kanonnen uitgeput en voor de geweren bijna. De meeste plaatsen en het meeste voedsel zijn verwoest geworden; bijna alle families zijn gevangen in de kampen waar de behandeling niet goed is en de ellende zeer groot.

De twee Republieken zijn een woestijn, waar het voedsel voor de troepen meer en meer schaarsch is. De families die niet gevangen zijn, zijn voortvluchtig in de bosschen en bergen; verscheidene families zijn laatstelijk vermoord door de Swazie's en de Zulu's; bijna alle kafferstammen in het Noorden zijn oproerig en begaan wreedheden. Een zeker getal van onze burgers vechten tegen ons met onze vijanden. Geheel ons volk heeft buitengewoon geleden en er is geen hoop op een spoedig einde van al deze ellenden.

Is het wel verwonderlijk dat een zeker gedeelte der burgers ontmoedigd, terneergeslagen is; een zeker gedeelte houdt nog vol op de meest wonderbaarlike wijze, maar het is te vreezen dat als er niet spoedig betere hoop komt, een belangrijk aantal zich uit ontmoediging aan den vijand overgeven zal.

De President van den Oranje-Vrijstaat deelt mede dat hij vast besloten is om door te zetten en heeft voorgesteld om een bijeenkomst van de voormannen bijeen te roepen om onze geheele zaak te bespreken; deze bijeenkomst zal plaatsvinden zodra uw antwoord is aangekomen; de voormannen gevoelen zeer hunne verantwoordelijkheid en voorzien de mogelijkheid dat onze zaak tot een punt zal komen waarop het noodzakelijk is om het volk voor een beslissing te raadplegen.

Met het oog op deze beslissing wenscht de Regeering uw gevoelen te vernemen en een opgave van de redenen en feiten waarop die is gegrond. Als wij tot het laatste uiterste zijn gebracht, wat dan zou uw raad zijn met betrekking tot de te nemen stappen?

De Regeering heeft niets direct van U of de Deputatie gehoord sinds uw vertrek en verwacht een complete definitieve uiteensetting opdat wij weten waar wij staan.

Ik wacht uw antwoord bij den vijand.

Alle leden van den Uitvoerenden Raad en uw familie zijn in goede gezondheid. Hartelijke groeten.

TRANSLATION

From: State Attorney J. C. Smuts

To: President Kruger

Standerton (South African Republic): 3 June 1901

I am instructed by my Government to make the desperate situation clear to you and the Deputation. The English have agreed that this telegram and your answer should go through the Dutch consul.¹

Our cause has reached a state of great anxiety. Since your departure, as a result of many serious engagements, ammunition for the guns has been quite exhausted and for rifles almost. Most farms and most foodstuffs have been destroyed; almost

¹ F. J. Domela Nieuwenhuis, who sent the message in the code of his consulate.

all families are held in the camps where the treatment is not good and the misery very great.

The two Republics are a desert where food for the troops is more and more scarce. The families who are not captured, are refugees in the bushes and mountains; several families have in the end been murdered by the Swazis and the Zulus; almost all the Native tribes in the North are excited and commit atrocities. A certain number of our burghers are fighting against us with our enemies. Our whole people has suffered extremely and there is no hope for a speedy end to all these miseries.

Is it to be wondered at that a certain portion of the burghers are discouraged, depressed? A certain portion persevere in the most marvellous manner, but it is to be feared that if there are not better hopes soon, significant number will, out of discouragement, surrender to the enemy.

The President of the Orange Free State informs us that he is fully determined to go on and has proposed to call a meeting of the leaders to discuss our whole cause. This meeting will take place as soon as your answer has arrived. The leaders feel their responsibility very much and foresee the possibility that our cause will reach a point where it is essential to consult the people before a decision.

With a view to this decision the Government wishes to have your view and a statement of the reasons and facts on which it is based. If we are brought to the last extremity, what then would be your advice with regard to the steps to be taken?

The Government has heard nothing direct from you or the Deputation since your departure and expects a complete definitive exposition so that we know where we stand.

I await your answer while with the enemy.

All members of the Executive Council and your family are in good health. Hearty greetings.

154 From S. J. P. Kruger

Published in Leyds: *Op. cit.* No. 249. Original in the Leyds-Argief in the State Archives, Pretoria.

CODE-TELEGRAM

Van: President Kruger

Aan: Staatsprocureur J. C. Smuts te Standerton (Z.A.R.)
's-Gravenhage 11 Juni 1901

Wij erkennen de ontvangst van het telegram van Staatsprocureur Smuts namens de Regeering der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek gezonden. Onze raad zou grotendeels afhankelijk zijn van de beschouwing door de Gouvernemen ten der beide Republieken en hoofd-officieren eenparig of met groote meerderheid gevormd, na raadpleging, indien vereischt, met de burgers.

De positie hier is als volgt;

Interventie van een der Mogendheden is vooralsnog niet te verwachten; ammunitie kan niet doorgerekren worden; daartegenover staat dat de positie in de Kaap-kolonie ons niet ongunstig voorkomt volgens Engelsche berichten; dat door den vijand niet ontkend kan worden dat zijne zaak nooit slechter heeft gestaan dan thans; dat er gevolgelijk eene steeds sterker wordende omkeer van de publieke opinie in Engeland is.

Alle maatregelen zijn genomen en zullen worden volgehouden voor goede verzorging van vrouwen en kinderen in de kampen alsmede van de gevangenen buitenslands.

Herinnerende aan de zware opofferingen in goed en bloed alreeds gedaan, vertrouwen wij dat de goede zaak niet zal worden opgegeven, tenzij het absoluut onmogelijk wordt den strijd verder voort te zetten.

In geen geval behoort hierin door de vertegenwoordigers van den eenen Staat zonder toestemming van den anderen te worden gedecideerd zooals altoos verstaan; ook moeten de belangen van de Koloniale medestrijders gelijk met de onzen in het oog gehouden worden.

Wegens lange afwezigheid uit Zuid-Afrika en onvolledige gegevens omtrent de tegenwoordige omstandigheden, beschouwen wij ons thans niet bevoegd te adviseeren wat U best te doen staat, indien onverhoopt de zaak tot het laatste uiterste wordt teruggebracht en hoegenaamd geen verzet meer mogelijk is. Derhalve beschouwen wij dat alsdan de vertegenwoordigers van beide Republieken in Zuid-Afrika het eens moeten worden of gevolg moet worden gegeven al dan niet aan de afspraak

door de beide Presidenten in overleg met officieren verleden jaar gemaakt.

Ziende de groote belangrijkheid der zaak en de onmogelijkheid telegrafisch elkanderen volkomen in te lichten, geven wij aan de hand of uwerzijds niet verlof verkregen kan worden voor een of meer uit ons midden om naar U onder vrijgeleide dadelijk over te komen.

Wij hopen dat eenige der vele boodschappers van tijd tot tijd naar U verzonden U nog zullen bereiken.

Wij blijven steeds voortwerken al het mogelijke te doen om onze zaak te bevorderen en hebben nog niet de hoop verloren op uiteindelijk succes.

President en allen hier gezond. Mevrouw Botha met zoon in welstand in Engeland aangekomen; zij wordt binnen eenige dagen hier verwacht.

Wij wenschen U Gods zegen: wees gegroet.

A. Fischer
W. J. Leyds

TRANSLATION

From: President Kruger

To: State Attorney J. C. Smuts at Standerton (South African Republic)

's-Gravenhage 11 June 1901

We acknowledge the receipt of the telegram from State Attorney Smuts sent in the name of the Government of the South African Republic. Our advice would largely depend on the view formed unanimously or by a large majority by the Governments of both Republics and the chief officers, after consultation, if demanded, with the burghers.

The position here is as follows:

Intervention by one of the Powers is as yet not to be expected; ammunition cannot be got through. On the other hand, the position in the Cape Colony seems to us, according to English reports, not unfavourable; the enemy cannot deny that his cause has never been worse than now; there is consequently an ever stronger reversal of public opinion in England.

Every measure has been taken and will be maintained for good care of women and children in the camps as well as of prisoners abroad.

Mindful of the heavy sacrifices in property and blood already made, we trust that the good cause will not be given up, unless it becomes absolutely impossible to continue the struggle.

In no case should decisions in this matter be made by representatives of the one State without agreement by the other, as always understood. The interests of the Colonial co-fighters must also be kept in view equally with ours.

Because of long absence from South Africa and inadequate information about the present circumstances, we regard ourselves as not now competent to advise what is best for you to do in the event that the cause is unexpectedly brought to the last extremity and no further resistance whatever is possible. We therefore think that in that case the representatives of both Republics must agree whether or not effect must be given to the arrangement made last year by both Presidents in consultation with the officers.

In view of the great importance of the matter and the impossibility of informing one another fully by telegraph, we suggest that permission might be obtained on your side for one or more among us to come over to you at once under safe conduct.

We hope that one of the many messengers sent to you from time to time may yet reach you.

We go on working to do everything possible to advance our cause and have not yet lost hope of eventual success.

The President and all here well. Mrs Botha¹ and son arrived in good health in England; they are expected here in a few days.

We wish you God's blessing: greetings.

A. Fischer
W. J. Leyds

The original document in the Smuts Collection is a draft in an unknown hand with emendations in Smuts's handwriting.

¹ Annie Botha, born Emmett, wife of General Louis Botha.

ALGEMEENE KENNISGEVING

Waterval, Dist. Standerton
20 Juni 1901

Daar Z. H. Ed. Staatspresident Kruger en de Deputatie in Europa niets direct van onze Regeering vernomen hadden sedert de Conferentie tusschen Comdt.-Genl. Botha en Lord Kitchener te Middleburg gehouden, en de Regeering der Z.A.R. het raadzaam achtte dat zij in kennis gesteld en op hoogte gebracht worden van den toestand van zaken alhier, zoo is op versoek van den Commdt.-Generaal en met de welwillende toestemming van Lord Kitchener een geheim telegram naar hen verzonden waarin de geheele toestand onzer zaak volledig werd uiteengezet en opzettelijk in het donkerste licht werd gesteld ten einde het advies van Z. H. Ed. en de Deputatie van des te meer gewicht te doen zijn.

Hierop deelde Zijn H. Ed. ons mede dat hij en de Deputatie nog volle hoop op een goedgunstigen uitslag van onze strijd koesteren; dat, na de gedane stoffelijke en persoonlijke opofferingen, wij den strijd moesten blijven voortzetten; en dat van hun kant alle maatregelen reeds genomen waren en nog zouden worden genomen voor de goede verzorging der gevangen vrouwen en kinderen en de krijgsgevangenen in den Vreemde.

Ter bespreking en overweging van dit antwoord van Zijn Hoog Ed. werd een Conferentie van de Regeeringen der beide Republieken bepaald, waarbij ook aanwezig waren, Hoofd-comdt. C. R. de Wet, Comdt.-Genl. Louis Botha en Asst. Comdt.-Genl. J. H. de la Rey.

Na een volledige uiteenzetting van den toestand in de krijgsafdeelingen vertegenwoordigd door deze Hoofd-officieren en een grondige bespreking onzer geheele zaak door beide Regeeringen, werd, met advies der gemelde Hoofd-officieren, het volgende besluit door de beide Regeeringen genomen:—

De Regeeringen van de Z.A.R. en den O.V.S. met advies van de bovengemelde Hoofd-officieren en in aanmerking nemende het gunstige rapport van Z. H. Ed. President Kruger en de Deputatie in het buitenland; en lettende verder op den goeden vooruitgang onzer zaak in de Kolonies alwaar onze broeders zich meer en meer verzet tegen het gruwelijk onrecht dat de Republieken wordt aangedaan in het ontnemen hunner onafhankelijkheid; lettende verder op de onschatbare persoonlijke en stoffelijke opofferingen reeds gedaan voor onze zaak welke alle

waardeloos en ijdel zouden gemaakt worden door een Vrede waarbij de onafhankelijkheid der Republieken wordt prijs gegeven; lettende verder op de zekerheid dat het verlies onzer onafhankelijkheid na de reeds verrichte verwoestingen en geleden verliezen den nationalen en stoffelijken ondergang van ons geheel Volk met zich zou sleepen; en lettende vooral op den geest van onwrikbare volharding waardoor nog de overgrootte meerderheid van ons Volk, vrouwen en kinderen zoowel als mannen, nog beziel is, en waarin wij met dankbare erkenning den hand van den Almachtigen Beschermer zien, besluit; dat er geen Vrede zal gemaakt worden en geen Vredes-voorwarden aangenomen zullen worden, waarbij ons onafhankelijk en zelfstandig Volksbestaan of de belangen onzer Koloniale broeders zouden worden prijs gegeven, en dat de oorlog krachtdadig zal worden voortgezet met aanwending van alle maatregelen welke ter handhaving dier onafhankelijkheid en belangen berekend zijn.

get.....
Staatspresident, O.V.S.

get.....
Wd. Staatspresident Z.A.R.

TRANSLATION: *General Notice*

Waterval, Standerton District
 20 June 1901

As His Honour State President Kruger and the Deputation in Europe had heard nothing directly from our Government since the Conference between Commandant-General Botha and Lord Kitchener held at Middleburg,¹ and as the Government of the South African Republic considered it desirable that they should be informed of and fully acquainted with the state of affairs here, a secret telegram was sent to them, at the request of the Commandant-General and with the kind permission of Lord Kitchener, in which the whole state of our cause was fully set out and purposely painted in the darkest colours in order that the advice of His Honour and the Deputation should carry the greater weight.

In reply His Honour informed us that he and the Deputation still cherished the fullest hopes of a favourable outcome of our struggle; that, after the material and personal sacrifices

¹ On 28 February 1901.

already made, we must continue the struggle; and that on their side all measures had already been taken, and would still be taken, for the proper care of captured women and children and the prisoners-of-war abroad.

In order to discuss and consider this answer of His Honour, a Conference of the Governments of both Republics was arranged, at which were also present Chief Commandant C. R. de Wet, Commandant-General Louis Botha and Assistant Commandant-General J. H. de la Rey.

After a full exposition of the situation in the military areas represented by these chief officers, and a thorough discussion of our whole cause by both Governments, the following resolution was, on the advice of the above-named chief officers, taken by both Governments:

The Governments of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, on the advice of the above-mentioned chief officers, and taking into account the favourable report of His Honour President Kruger and the Deputation abroad; and noting further the good progress of our cause in the Colonies where our brothers are more and more opposing the atrocious wrong inflicted on the Republics in depriving them of their independence; considering further the incalculable personal and material sacrifices already made for our cause, which would all be rendered worthless and vain by a Peace in which the independence of the Republics were given up; considering further the certainty that the loss of our independence, after the destruction already accomplished and the losses already suffered, would bring in its train the national and material downfall of our whole People; and considering in particular the spirit of unshakable endurance with which the great majority of our People, women and children as well as men, are still inspired, and in which, with grateful acknowledgement, we see the hand of the Almighty Protector, resolves: that no Peace will be made and no Peace conditions accepted whereby our independent and separate national existence or the interests of our Colonial brothers will be surrendered, and that the war will be energetically continued with the adoption of all measures which are calculated to maintain that independence and those interests.

Sgd.....
State President, Orange Free State

Sgd.....
Acting State President, South African Republic

156 From S. M. Smuts

Vol. 2, no. 102A

A few days after Isie Smuts wrote this letter she and Ella de Wet were allowed to go to Standerton to see their husbands. The statement that they stayed there for two weeks (Leyds, op. cit. Bijlagen, p. 87) is inaccurate. Isie Smuts said, in conversation with the editors, that the meeting had been for one day only. That day was 14 June 1901. This appears from a dated power of attorney in his wife's favour, written and signed at Standerton by Smuts (Box Q). Smuts left Standerton on 15 June 1901.

Albert Falls,¹

11 June 1901

My dearest Jan, How glad I was to receive your letter a few days ago I can never tell you. It was the first line I had had from you in the whole year since you left and it was as refreshing to my thirsty soul as a spring in the desert. I have read and reread it so often that I know almost the whole by heart and now I shall be able to live on those loving words for many weary weeks to come. Your deep sympathy is specially cheering to me and oh, Boetie,² how I did yearn for one word of comfort from my husband when our last little treasure was taken from us and I knelt by his death-bed *alone*. How utterly alone I have felt ever since he left and how I long for his little pattering feet and his merry voice and clinging hands God only knows; but I fear it will be worse even for you to come back after these long months of absence to a quiet and empty house. But I won't grieve you by talking thus, for am I not a Boer woman and can I not bear what has been laid on my shoulders as well and as bravely as the rest? I said I was alone, but ever since the 14th August Ella de Wet and I have lived together and at present we are together here. What I should have done without her (and little Ella)³ I don't know, but though I can do nothing for her now maybe we can do something when the war is over. I sent you a wire directly after Koosie's death, but you don't seem to have received it. He was well and merry on Friday morning (10th) and on Tuesday

¹ Near Pietermaritzburg.

² Diminutive of Afrikaans *broer* (brother). The name by which Smuts was known in his wife's family.

³ Engela Dorothea Louw, born Krige, Isie's youngest sister. Born 4 August 1886. Formerly married to L. van der Spuy. Died 31 August 1964.

evening we were childless. He had cut his second eyetooth all right and was never so well in his life as he was then; but on Friday afternoon his stomach began and I sent for Doctor, who looked very serious and warned me to be very careful. Catarrh set in at once and after three days of great suffering he got convulsions. We did our best and Doctor called in a second doctor but all in vain. God took our darling home just at the time when his mother needed him more than ever. Yes, Boetie, we shall never see our little treasure again on earth; he will nevermore gladden our hearts by his sweet baby prattle or watch on the *stoep* for Pappie's return from his office, and we shall miss him everywhere and all day long. But there are others much worse off than we and if God spares you to come back to your wifie¹ safe and sound we shall have reason to be very thankful. More than once rumours of you and Tot have reached me, but thank God they were only rumours and I hope to see you both well and strong. There are so many, many things I would like to tell you and ask you, but I'm afraid to do so now. Don't worry about me, Boetie; I am quite well and my spirit is still strong as ever. In accordance with your wish we have asked permission to go through to the Colony, but have received no answer yet. If permission is granted I shall go to Klipfontein and keep Babsie² company as she finds it very lonesome since Mother died. Poor Mother suffered very much during the last 21 months when dropsy was added to all her other sufferings. She was so pleased to get the letter you wrote her on 14th August and longed so much to see you once again before her death. Your people are all well, so also mine, only very anxious to hear about you two and Johannes.³ I met the Moodies and other friends last week and they told me that they had seen you all and Klaas. Except from prisoners of war now and then I hear nothing reliable from you, and only one letter about you ever reached me and that was from our old Dr Davies of Johannesburg who was then in the English Ambulance. Your letter per Major (?) Chichester has told me all I wished to know about yourself though and I am satisfied that my husband is doing his duty bravely and

¹ Literal translation of Afrikaans *vroutjie*, the diminutive of *vrou* (wife).

² Adriana Smuts, also known as 'Bibas', Smuts's younger sister.

³ Probably Johannes Neethling.

fulfilling the difficult work allotted to him as a worthy son of our little race. Heaven grant I may do a daughter's duty as well! Take care of yourself, Boetie, and remember that your wife is with you in thought and prayer wherever you are, by day and by night, and her spirit is ever hovering around you to cheer you in danger and watch over you when the bullets fly around, or when you rest your weary limbs after a hard day's work. O that I might be beside you in very deed and share every danger with you! I hear your name mentioned often by our people and all talk of you with pride and affection, while Tot seems to have a warm place in the hearts of all with whom he comes in contact. More than all else, however, it is a joy to me to think that *my* representatives in the field are giving such good accounts of themselves and doing such excellent work. Johannes need not trouble about Em as she is all right, so also his sister Hannie and her family (W. H.) including Piet and Andries. If Johannes could write to Em she would be so pleased to get a line from him, also if Tot could send a line through to the old folks. You will be very sorry to hear that Koos Marais¹ was drowned last week at Hanglip (Somerset West). Stick K.² has his place at present. Jan K.³ is now stump orator in the U.S.A. and seems to be having a lively time there and doing good work. Jim⁴ wrote me last week that our house had been commandeered for the Yeomanry Headquarters from this week, but I have heard nothing further as yet. Your books and Koosie's photo and play-things are safe, however, so I don't very much mind what they do to the other things. And as dear old Scottie too has gone to his long rest there is no living thing to trouble about, as Roosie is in safe keeping. I enclose a photo of myself taken a short while ago though it is not very good, as also a small copy of our little one. They will keep you company when you are alone or in danger—as your photo does me in your absence. With fond love from the Ellas, Ever yours only,

Mia

(d) 157-172 illustrate Smuts's war activities in the Cape Colony. On 1 August 1901 he started on the long trek through the Orange Free

¹ Jacobus Marais, then headmaster of the Boys' School at Stellenbosch.

² Willem Adolph Krige junior, mining engineer, a cousin of Isie Smuts.

³ Not identified.

⁴ J. de V. Roos.

State. This and the arduous march through the north-eastern Cape to the north-western Cape are described in his own contemporary notes and report (157-159). The organization of the considerable forces under his command in the north-west is recorded in 160-162. He also established communication by means of messengers between the Boer leaders in South Africa and those in Europe (163-166), and wrote a number of reports on the course of the war, not only to keep the leaders in touch with one another, but also to be published abroad as propaganda. A selection of these reports is printed below (159, 167-171).

157 Notes of Cape Expedition [1901]

Box D

Contemporary notes in English in Smuts's handwriting, written in pencil on four Natal Government Railway forms. After the war, in preparation for writing a detailed account of the Cape expedition, Smuts made a neat copy in ink of these 'original notes' (Box D).

TREK THROUGH O.V.S. AUGUST 1901

20 June Meeting of Steyn, Burger, Botha, de Wet, de la Rey, B. Viljoen and self.¹ Correspondence with President Kruger submitted; resolution taken. Eloquent speeches.

1 August I start with about 100 men from Rietpoort. Meeting and address at Koppieskraaldrift.

2 August Drift crossed.²

4 August Arrived at Rechter's farm between Rhenoster and Valsch River. Address on *Lamentations* III. 27.³ Heard that eleven English columns are concentrating just before me; probably their destination is Cape Colony. Yesterday on Koot Krause's farm found a sheep kraal, filled with sheep and then blown up with dynamite, most only mangled. On Claassen's farm flocks were put in pens and grass set on fire so that poor animals were roasted alive.

5 August Wild stampede of horses last night. English Kaffirs say that columns in front of me are pursuing me because they had intelligence that I crossed Vet River three days ago. There are still five of them, others going to railway. Commandant van Niekerk found a bandolier filled with dynamite cartridges;

¹ At Waterval.

² Here, in the ink copy, is inserted: 'Sleep at Reitzburg, Aug. 3 Sleep Rhenosterrivier.'

³ 'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.'

just heard that a whole case of such cartridges found elsewhere. Women here complain of the cowardice of the Free Staters. So far almost every dam on the farms is filled with dead animals—with intent to poison water?

Boschrand

7 August Reached Valsch River evening of 5th (Tweefontein) will be at Zand River to morrow. Last night at Zandspruit. Dams everywhere full of rotting animals; water undrinkable. Veld covered with slaughtered herds of sheep and goats, cattle and horses. The horror passes description. But the saddest sight of all is the large numbers of little lambs, staggering from hunger and thirst round the corpses of their dead or mangled mothers. I have never seen anything more heartrending or heard anything more piteous than their bleating in this war of horrors. Surely such outrages on man and nature must move to a certain doom. English are probably in Bultfontein, still pursuing one of my small parties in front of them.

9 August Yesterday morning I left commandos under Dreyer¹ at Graspan (Erve's) and went in search of my other burghers to Vet River where I stayed last night and was very kindly received by Mrs Hillebrand. Tonight I have arrived near Bultfontein. On this farm (totally destroyed like all the rest) I found two kraals filled with dead and mangled sheep. I had the heads of the latter cut off. They had been in this life in death for 4 days. The exits of the kraals were blocked up with carcasses so that the wounded ones (wounded with irons from a bedstead) were enclosed to die of pain and starvation. Crueller sight I have nowhere seen in this war. The moral debasement which can inflict such horrible sufferings on innocent brutes must be something appalling. Here I received information that my burghers are 15 miles further at Kareepan, where I hope to be tomorrow. Yesterday and today are proclaimed as days of prayer and humiliation.

12 August (Monday) Verschpan (Bredekamp's). Last Thursday 200 of my advance burghers were forced over the railway near Brandfort; yesterday Commandant Dreyer arrived here with the rest. Today I go to Modder River to reconnoitre. I

¹ T. F. J. Dreyer, Commandant of the Potchefstroom burghers, accompanied Smuts on his march through the Orange Free State to the Cape Colony, was taken prisoner and sent to India.

arrived here yesterday morning. From gun firing it seems as if enemy is again pursuing—about 10 or 12 miles off.

12 August Went in advance with some scouts and slept at Bastberg south of Bulfontein.

13 August Reconnoitred drift on Modder River at Brits' farm personally.

14 August Commando arrived at Brits' farm about 10 p.m. We could hear the talk and laughter of enemy some distance down the river.

15 August Arrived at Aasvogelkop between Bloemfontein and Petrusburg far within English lines. Huge flocks of sheep and droves of cattle—which can all be easily captured. Slept at Tafelberg this night. Seen no Free Staters yet since I left Middelkop. A Cape boy¹ Frans Delport, armed scout with enemy, shot today as he refused to surrender. Camps and patrols of English all round.

16 August Came on English column some miles south of Riet River and shot three scouts, all armed Natives. Then passed over Boomplaats at night to Touwfontein.

17 August Still at Touwfontein; saw some Free Staters and sent for *Rechter Hertzog*.

18 August Still at Touwfontein; address on *Habakkuk* 1. Found here Xenophon's *Anabasis* and works of D. Erasmus in Latin.²

20 August Line of English columns drawing in around me, so I am trying to cross *spoor*³ tonight between Jagersfontein Road and Springfontein. Hertzog came last night and situation discussed. He showed me Kitchener's proclamation about banishment of leaders and officers and confiscation of property after 15 September 1901.⁴

21 August Crossed railway successfully, guards fled after firing a few shots.

22 August Arrived at Boesmansberg where lot of corn is found masoned up on farm.

23 August Sudden attack by enemy; 2 carts, many horses taken; 4 burghers missing. I retired north in direction Edenburg station.

¹ A Coloured man from Cape Colony.

² Here, in the ink copy, is inserted: '(*Encomium Moriae*)'. Smuts lost these books at Moordenaarspoort.

³ Railway line (Dutch).

⁴ The proclamation applied to those who did not surrender before that date.

- 24 August Stay in hills $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours from Edenburg.
- 25 August Found myself surrounded on all sides and driven on *spoor*. Had to flee from sun-up to sunset, when I passed east of Reddersburg, while Commandant Dreyer is driven through this village. Many horses lost and burghers captured—about 20 I think.
- 26 August Enemy still in pursuit, I passed west of De Wetsdorp in southerly direction with one part of burghers; another part passed nearer De Wetsdorp and has not yet joined me. My position is most precarious; horses entirely done up, burghers dispirited. Still I shall press on till end.
- 27 August Arrived south of De Wetsdorp.
- 28 August Arrived at O'Donnel's hospital.
- 29 August Crossed Caledon River and found my advance burghers near Vechtkop—the historical mountain.¹
- 30 August Saw Kritzinger [P. H.] and discussed matters with him. Heard that Veld Cornet van Vuuren is still at Wepener.
- 2 September Leaving today at noon for Groot River; heard that absent burghers are about an hour distant; English in Wepener; Rouxville clear.

158 Notes (continued)

Box T

Smuts's contemporary notes of his expedition to the Cape Colony were continued, in Dutch, in a pocket-book. The book is battered and water-stained but the writing, in pencil, is for the most part legible.

4 Sep. 1901 (Woensdag) Laatsten nacht ging ik naar Groot-rivier boven Kafferkop; ik vond zelf een doorgang plek omstreeks $3\frac{1}{2}$ a.m. Bij zonop vertrok ik en werd door de Fingoes van Herschel aangevallen. Twee mijner burgers licht gewond, twee gevangen en eenige paarden buitgemaakt; vond eenige couranten in Kol. waarin stond dat het nu onmogelijk was voor Boeren door rivier te komen! 18 <man zonder zadel>, aantal kaffers ontwapend.

5 Sep. Bereikte Stormbergen; menschen zeer goed, op een plaats weenden de vrouwen en kinderen van blijdschap toen zij de Boeren zagen. Voer zeer schaarsch, één Engelsch kolonne

¹ The first victory of the Voortrekkers against the Matabele was won at Vechtkop in 1836 under A. H. Potgieter.

achter en één voor. [Two effaced words] van goede slag door Myburgh.

7 Sep. Groot ongeluk in Moordenaarspoort. Ik ging een Engelsche macht spioneer met Kapt. en Corp. Adendorff en Jan Neethling. In poort werden wij door vijand op gevuld en onze paarden doodgeschoten. Ik alleen ontkwam op wonderbare wijze. Daar vijand maar 20 à 30 treden van ons was zijn alle drie waarschijnlijk gedood.

8 Sep. Toomnek.

9 Sep. Hanglip (uur van Jamestown).

10 Sep. Allemanspoort; vijand wordt teruggeslagen; 4 lagers trachten mij te omsingelen.

11 Sep. Vijand sluit mij verder in, ik retireer naar Labuschagne's nek.

12 Sep. Laatsten nacht trok ik over Gardiner's voetpad langs Jakhalskop naar Stapelberg door twee Engelsche lagers half uur van elkaar. Tegen middag haalde vijandelijke macht mij in en een slag vond plaats op Stapelberg, waarin één burger, (de la Rey) sneuveld en vijand met groot verlies teruggeslagen werd. Hun verlies omtrent 50 à 60. Met donker trok ik over Dordrecht spoor en

13 Sep. omtrent 8 uur a.m. over East London spoor te Putterskraal. Ik heb nu drie nachten nooit geslapen en steeds voortgetrokken. Menschen en dieren uitgeput. Kampen te Schoemansplaats aan Smithsrivier.

14 Sep. Vijand verschijnt; ik trek om de berg bij V.C. Esmeyer naar plaats van Grobler.

15 Sep. Vertrek naar Waterval richting Tarkastad. Vijand tracht mij in te sluiten. Vertrek in den nacht van Waterval tot v.d. Hoeven's plaats onder Hondenek. Regent verschrikkelijk — een van de zwaarste nachten van den geheele oorlog. 12 man dwalen af. Engelsche spioen in mijn kamp ontdekt. Trok 3 mijl in 6 uur in de dikke duisternis. Dag geproclameerd voor algemeene wapensaflegging.

16 Sep. Trek over Hondenek naar Fanie Venter's plaats, waar volop groenvoer. Verschrikkelijk weder duurt voort.

17 Sep. Trek vandaar naar Elandsrivierpoort, alwaar ik op vijandelijke kamp van 200 à 300 man (17th Lancers) stuit. Geef onmiddellijk order tot aanval; kamp wordt binnen uur ingenomen; hand maxim en Armstrong 12½ worden genomen.

Verlies van vijand groot; mijn verlies één dood (Tyner) 6 gewond (Cohen, Lombaard etc.). Veel ammunitie en geweren genomen 250 muilen en paarden; kanonnen vernield. Gevallen Lord Vivian, Capt. Sandeman, Lieut. Nowitt, Sheridan etc. 18 Sep. Trek naar Uijenhoek, alwaar ik Comd. Botha vind, die in berg weg kruipt met eenige manschappen. Aantal aansluitingen.

19 Sep. Trek door Vlekpoort voorbij Spitskop in richting Maraisburg; word omsingeld door aantal kolonnes, trek weer terug naar de Bamboesbergen en des nachts achter vijand om naar Doornberg; zeer interessante beweging.

20 Sep. Arriveer te Doornberg en trek af in zuidelijke richting langs Vlekpoort.

21 Sep. Tracht door Gannapoort en Leliekloof te komen maar vind beide bezet door Defence Forces; trek terug in den nacht naar Palingkloof. Paarden lijden veel, geen gras; 30 blijven in de eerste twee kloven staan.

22 Sep. Houd dienst *Habakkuk* III. 2. Trek in den namiddag langs voetpad door de bergen en slaap te Van Dyksplaats onder Zuurplaat.

23 Sep. Trek de Winterbergen over langs plaatsen van de Beer, Whitehead en Moffat naar Mangazanarivier. Deze moeilijke tocht brengt mij door lijn van vijand in grasveld. Inwoners zeggen dat vijand dacht dat lijn langs Wittebergen etc. ondoorkombaar was. Zag gister dat Mackinley dood is en Dr Kuyper premier in Holland.

24 Sep. Trok al langs Mangazana, Engelsche kolonne aan mijn rechter kant; ging Koonap bij Botha's plaats door en sliep bij H. Dreyer (Rietfontein). Prachtig gras.

25 Sep. Zond van Deventer om winkel onder Boschnek te bezoeken, veel kleeren en drank. Hier alles boschveld.

26 Sep. Daar gister namiddag twee kolonnes van vijand hun verschijning maakten ging ik in den nacht Boschnek af en door een moeilijke boschachtige nek links van Adelaide om en sliep 20 min. van A. Trok heden tot over Koonap, vijand verschijnt weder. Wacht uit Adelaide gevlucht volgens V.C. Bester. Trok [one effaced word] voorbij in den nacht.

27 Sep. Trok over Rietrivier links van Kottiskraal, over Groot Visch R. bij voetpad drift en over spoor langs van Sheldon. Nu tot bij groot pad van Somerset naar Zuurberg.

28 Sep. Trok vandaar over Modderfontein tot aan Zuurberg. Vijand schoot van spoor met kanonnen op ons laatsten nacht. Begin van mobilisatie twee jaar geleden. Geen vijand bespeurd. Hoor Defence Forces van Somerset O. tellen 400.

29 Sep. Trek Zuurberg in, tekenen dat vijand komt.

30 Sep. Vijand arriveert, ik sla hem terug en trek Zuurberg verder in. Omtrent 70 burgers met mij vergiftigd door Hottentots brood te eten.

1 Oct. Trek Zuurberg door zuidwaarts. Verschrikkelijke grammadoellas zonder spoor of voetpad. Vele paarden bezwijken. Vijand trekt links van mij de bergen door en moest het ook bitter werk gevonden hebben. Overnacht in bosch zuid van den berg.

2 Oct. Gister gingen 63 burgers naar het dorpje Bayville en namen het in en vonden 14 goede paarden. Van daar trokken zij en namen 9 boeren khakis gevangen in poort van Kl. Winterhoek en vonden 10 goede paarden; Jack Borrius gewond; een khaki dood, een gewond.

3 Oct. Trek tot bij poort (Kariega) recht over voetpad bij Krokolk's plaats met doel in den nacht daardoor naar Gr. Winterhoek te gaan. Tot mijn geluk deed ik dit niet want

4 Oct. in den ochtend was vijand vol op berg en voetpad; trek terug over Zondagsrivier voetpad nek uit over Zuurberg. In den namiddag kwam vijandelijke kolonne nek uit zonder spioeneeren; liet ze stukkend schieten; trok in den nacht tot boven op Zuurberg.

5 Oct. Trok tot bij Kabouka's poort en verdeelde macht in commandantschappen; liet twee in Zuurberg en trok met Comdt. Bouwer in richting Beenleegte.

6 Oct. Vond omtrent 60 C.D.F. te Springvale, en schoot een paar dood en maakte 10 buit—16 paarden.

7 Oct. Arriveerde te Harefield, verdreef wacht van de Hobsons, vond voedsel en voer.

8 Oct. Trok over Uitkomst (door Scheepers verbrand) en spoor nabij Marais Siding naar plaats van Marais.

9 Oct. Trek naar en langs Camdeboo.

10 Oct. Camdeboo.

11 Oct. Camdeboo, trek berg met voetpad over in richting O. van Murraysburg (van Rabies' plaats). Comdt. Bouwer

verdwaalt in dichte mist op berg en verkleumt bijna; koude nacht, overal kapok.

12 Oct. Trek verder in den berg en vind bij poort naar Murraysburg dat vijand er met groote macht ligt; trok toen met leelijke voetpad over punt van Camdeboo's berg zuidwaarts achter vijand om in richting naar Kariega en Wittebergen. Jack Baxter verdwaalt. Leelijke berg.

13 Oct. Trek tot aan Kariegarivier.

14 Oct. Bleef aan Kariega bij mooi gras totdat plotseling een uur voor zonsondergang een Engelsch commando opdaagde en zijn best deed mij te omsingelen. Niemand gevangen met mogelijke uitzondering van Fouché. 10 man die mijn rechter achterhoede vormde ging in verkeerde richting en zijn nog niet opgedaagd—waaronder Conradie. Ik trok westwaarts in den nacht over Zoutrivier.

15 Oct. Ging verder westwaarts onder de bergen tot bij plaats van de Jager.

16 Oct. Vond Comd. Pypers met Scheepers commando onder den berg op weg naar Cradock, heb ze naar Oudtshoorn teruggekeerd. Ging toen poort door en langs plaats van Hitchey tot bij Groot Zwartberg.

17 Oct. Ging Groot Zwartberg over langs voetpad van de plaats van Oosthuyzen naar die van v.d. Walt (Schoongezicht) aan Olifantsrivier.

18 Oct. Ging westwaarts langs Olifantsr. over Vlakplaats en overnachtde op de volgende plaats.

19 Oct. Zond spioenen naar Dysselsdorp die 6 scouts ontwapenden; volgde zelf door Dysselsdorp en sliep half uur Z. Oost ervan.

20 Oct. Trok al langs Kamanassiberg over plaats van Guest waar Alleman dienst houdt.

21 Oct. Bereikte Kamanassirivier waarop volop groenvoer. Hier Duncker en Swarts komen bij met bericht dat Jack Baxter door Scobell dood geschoten is omdat hij khaki baadje aanhad.

22 Oct. Trek verder langs K. rivier op.

23 Oct. Een Engelsch kolonne onder Wallace trekt langs Langkloof en een groote onder Crabbe langs Kamanassi naar mij. Ik trek in den nacht door beide terug naar Langkloof.

24 Oct. Trek W. langs Langkloof tot bij plaats van Kapt.

Taute, die zich bijna dood vlucht met zijne spioenen. Meeste boeren hier Britsch gezind; verscheiden huizen door Scheepers afgebrand. Veel gezaaide.

25 Oct. Trek W. langs Langkloof over plaatsen van Raubenheimer, Robertson etc. door Paardenpoort tot bij plaats van Raubenheimer. Colones van Crabbe and Wallace maken verschijning.

26 Oct. Trek W. over plaatsen van Raubenheimer (M.L.A.) en Heyns, alwaar twee van Taute's scouts gevangen worden en een beenaf geschoten. V.C. Ben Coetsee licht gewond door been.

27-30 Oct. Trek over Buffelsfontein, Ockerts Kraal, links van Anysberg langs Touwsrivier op door districten van Ladismith en Swellendam.

31 Oct. Trek van plaats van Kock langs voetpad door berg over Marais' plaats en over de spoor in nabijheid van Constable Stn. en voort door eerste rand.

1 Nov. Vijand maakt met dagbreek een aanval maar neemt de loop; 17 onder Luit. Heightly die zelfde nacht van Worcester met pantser trein gekomen waren worden gevangen, goede paarden worden genomen. Trek toen over Patatarivier en Roodeberg naar Muishondrivier; bietjie voer en water op de veeplaatsen. Karoopoort en Hexrivierberg aan ons linkerhand.

2 Nov. Naar Amandelboom over Oliviersberg.

3 Nov. Naar Zeekoegat aan Tangua.

4 Nov. Langs Tangua af tot bij Geldenhuys, waar wij wacht van Kirsten ontmoetten. Toen naar Driefontein (Steenkamp).

5 Nov. Naar 'De Cyfer' bij ingang van Langkloof (Karsten). Hier van Comd. Pyper gescheiden.

6 Nov. Naar Pieterse (Praanberg).

7 Nov. Naar Elandsvlei, waar wij ongeveer 20 paarden en muilen krijgen. (Houghs) Vertoeven 7-9.

10 Nov. Naar Kruidfontein.

11 Nov. Naar Achterste Fontein (Izaak Burger).

12 Nov. Naar De Hoek of Welgedacht (Ben Lubbe). Waren wegens misleiding nabij Wupperthal.

14 Nov. Naar Bidouw (Willem Lubbe).

16 Nov. Over Achtertuin, Driefontein en Onderplaats naar Uijenvlei. Toen langs Moedverloren naar Kobe (Zondag) alwaar ik 3 of 4 dagen vertoef bij Van Zyl; van daar over Kobe

naar Diepvelei (Brink) waar ik commando verdeel op de plaatsen. Volgende Zaterdag naar V. Rhynsdorp en volgende Maandag naar Nieuwoudtville. Goed onthaal te V. Rhynsdorp en Nieuwoudtville. Tijding dat Maritz en Theron naar Boland zijn, ook Smit en Jooste. Tijding van aanval door Maritz op Tontelboskolk. Tegenwoordig bij dezen aanval van Deventer en Kirsten (gewond in hand) Maritz (gewond in zijde) Botha.

TRANSLATION

4 September 1901 (Wednesday) Last night I went to Groot River above Kafferkop; I myself found a fording place at about 3.30 a.m. At sunrise I left and was attacked by the Fingoes¹ from Herschel. Two of my burghers lightly wounded, two captured and some horses taken; found some newspapers in the Colony in which it was stated that it was now impossible for Boers to come through the river! Eighteen <men without saddles>, number of Kaffirs disarmed.

5 September Reached the Stormbergen; people very kind, on one farm the women and children wept with joy when they saw the Boers. Fodder very scarce, one English column behind and one in front. [Two effaced words] of a good fight by Myburgh.²

7 September Great misfortune in Moordenaarspoort. I went to reconnoitre an English force with Captain and Corporal Adendorff³ and Jan [Johannes] Neethling. In the gorge we were fired at by the enemy and our horses shot dead. I alone escaped in miraculous fashion. As enemy was only twenty to thirty yards from us, all three are probably dead.

8 September Toomnek.

9 September Hanglip (an hour from Jamestown).

10 September Allemanspoort; enemy is beaten back; four laagers try to surround me.

11 September Enemy continues to close me in; I retire to Labuschagne's pass.

12 September Last night I marched over Gardiner's footpath along Jakhalskop to Stapelberg through two English laagers half an hour apart. Towards midday enemy force overtook me

¹ An African tribe of the north-eastern Cape Colony.

² Commandant Christoffel Petrus Hendricus Myburgh.

³ Brothers and burghers of the Orange Free State.

and a battle took place on Stapelberg in which one burgher (de la Rey) was killed and enemy was beaten back with heavy loss. Their loss about fifty to sixty. At dusk I marched over Dordrecht railway line and

13 September about 8 a.m. over East London railway line to Putterskraal. I have now not slept for three nights and have continued to march forward. Men and animals exhausted. Camp at Schoeman's farm on Smith's River.

14 September Enemy appears; I march round the mountain by Field-Cornet Esmeyer to Grobler's farm.

15 September Leave for Waterval in the direction of Tarkastad. Enemy tries to close me in. Leave in the night from Waterval to van der Hoeven's farm below Hondenek. Raining terribly—one of the hardest nights of the whole war. Twelve men lose their way. English spy discovered in my camp. Marched three miles in six hours in the thick darkness. Day proclaimed for general laying down of arms.

16 September March over Hondenek to Fanie Venter's farm, where plentiful green fodder. Terrible weather continues.

17 September March from there to Elandsrivierpoort, where I come up against enemy camp of from 200 to 300 men (17th Lancers). At once give order to attack: camp is taken within an hour; hand maxim and Armstrong 12½ are captured. Enemy losses great; my losses one dead (Tyner) six wounded (Cohen, Lombaard etc.). Much ammunition and rifles captured, 250 mules and horses, cannon destroyed. Fallen: Lord Vivian, Captain [V. S.] Sandeman, Lieutenants Nowitt, Sheridan etc.

18 September March to Uijenhoek, where I find Commandant [Christoffel Johannes] Botha who is hiding in mountain with some men. Number of recruits.

19 September March through Vlekpoort past Spitskop in direction of Maraisburg; am surrounded by a number of columns, march back again to the Bamboesbergen and by night round behind enemy to Doornberg; very interesting movement.

20 September Arrive at Doornberg and march down in southerly direction along Vlekpoort.

21 September Try to get through Gannapoort and Leliekloof but find both held by Defence Forces; withdraw in the night to Palingkloof. Horses suffering much, no grass; thirty remained standing in the first two *kloofs*.

22 September Hold service *Habakkuk* III.2.¹ March in the afternoon along footpath through the mountains and sleep at Van Dyk's farm below Zuurplaat.

23 September March over the Winterbergen past farms of de Beer, Whitehead and Moffat to Mangazana River. This difficult journey brings me through enemy line into grass veld. Inhabitants say that enemy thought line along Wittebergen etc. was impassable. Saw yesterday that McKinley [W.] is dead and Dr [A. H.] Kuyper Prime Minister in Holland.

24 September Marched all along Mangazana; English column on my right flank, crossed Koonap at Botha's farm and slept at H. Dreyer's (Rietfontein). Lovely grass.

25 September Sent van Deventer to visit store below Boschnek, much clothing and drink. Here all bush veld.

26 September As two enemy columns made their appearance yesterday afternoon, I went in the night down Boschnek and through a difficult bushy pass left of Adelaide and slept twenty minutes from Adelaide. Marched today until over the Koonap; enemy appears again. Guard fled from Adelaide according to Field-Cornet Bester. Marched past [one effaced word] in the night.

27 September Marched over Riet River to left of Kottiskraal, over the Great Fish River by footpath ford and along railway line from Sheldon. Now as far as main road from Somerset [East] to Zuurberg.

28 September Marched from there through Modderfontein as far as the Zuurberg. Enemy fired on us from railway line with cannon last night. Beginning of mobilization two years ago. No enemy observed. Hear Defence Forces of Somerset East number 400.

29 September March into the Zuurberg, signs that enemy is coming.

30 September Enemy arrives; I beat him back and march further into the Zuurberg. About seventy burghers poisoned with me through eating Hottentots' bread.²

¹ 'O Lord, I have heard thy speech and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.'

² *Encephalartos Altensteinii*, of which the large fruit is edible only at a certain time of the year.

1 October March through the Zuurberg southwards. Terribly difficult country without track or footpath. Many horses succumb. Enemy marching to my left through the mountains and must also have found it bitter work. Spend the night in bush south of the mountain.

2 October Yesterday sixty-three burghers went to the little town of Bayville and captured it and found fourteen good horses. From there they marched and took nine Boer khakis¹ prisoner in a defile of Klein Winterhoek and found ten good horses; Jack Borrius wounded; one khaki dead, one wounded.

3 October March to gorge (Kariega) right over footpath at Krokolk's farm with object of going through it in the night to Groot Winterhoek. Fortunately I did not do so because

4 October in the morning enemy was numerous on mountain and footpath; march back over Zondags River footpath to top of pass over Zuurberg. In the afternoon enemy column came over the pass without scouting; had them shot to pieces; marched in the night to top of Zuurberg.

5 October Marched to Kabouka's gorge and divided force into commandantships; left two in Zuurberg and marched with Commandant [B. D.] Bower in direction of Beenleegte.

6 October Found about sixty C.D.F.² at Springvale, and shot a few dead and took ten prisoner—sixteen horses.

7 October Arrived at Harefield, drove off guard at the Hobsons, found food and forage.

8 October Marched through Uitkomst (burned by Scheepers [G. J.]) and railway line near Marais siding to Marais's farm.

9 October March to and along Camdeboo.

10 October Camdeboo.

11 October Camdeboo, march over mountain by footpath in direction East of Murraysburg (of Rabie's farm). Commandant Bower loses his way in thick mist on mountain and almost freezes; cold night, snow everywhere.

12 October March further into the mountain and find at gorge to Murraysburg that enemy lies there with a large force; then marched by a nasty footpath over the point of Camdeboo's Berg southwards round behind enemy in direction of Kariega and Wittebergen. Jack Baxter loses his way. Ugly mountain.

¹ British soldiers were called 'khakis' by the Boers.

² Cape Defence Force troops.

- 13 October March to Kariega River.
- 14 October Stayed at Kariega with nice grass until suddenly an hour before sunset an English commando turned up and did its best to surround me. No one captured with possible exception of Fouché. Ten men who formed my right rear-guard went in wrong direction and have not yet turned up, Conradie [Willem] among them. I marched westwards in the night over Zout River.
- 15 October Went further westwards at the foot of the mountains to de Jager's farm.
- 16 October Found Commandant Pypers¹ with Scheepers's commando at the foot of the mountain on the way to Cradock, turned them back to Oudtshoorn. Then went through gorge and past Hitchey's farm to Groot Zwartberg.
- 17 October Crossed Groot Zwartberg along footpath from Oosthuyzen's farm to that of van der Walt (Schoongezicht) on the Olifants River.
- 18 October Went westwards along Olifants River via Vlak-plaats and spent night on the next farm.
- 19 October Sent spies to Dysselsdorp who disarmed six scouts; followed myself through Dysselsdorp and slept half an hour south-east of it.
- 20 October Marched all along Kamanassi mountain through Guest's farm where Alleman [F. S.] holds service.
- 21 October Reached Kamanassi River where plentiful green fodder. Here Duncker [E. G.] and Swarts² joined us with report that Jack Baxter has been shot dead by Scobell [H. J.] because he had on a khaki jacket.
- 22 October March further up along Kamanassi River.
- 23 October An English column under Wallace [R. H.] is marching along Langkloof and a large one under Crabbe [E. M. S.] along Kamanassi towards me. I march through both in the night back to Langkloof.
- 24 October March west along Langkloof to farm of Captain Taute who almost killed himself fleeing with his spies. Most farmers here British-inclined; several houses burned down by Scheepers. Lots of crops.

¹ Schalk Willem Pypers, formerly with G. J. Scheepers, joined Smuts with his commando in the Cape Colony on 16 October 1901, and was later put under the command of General W. Malan in the north-western Cape.

² Nicolaas Swarts.

25 October March west along Langkloof over farms of Raubenheimer, Robertson, etc. Through Paardenpoort to Raubenheimer's farm. Crabbe's and Wallace's columns appear.

26 October March west through farms of [H. P.] Raubenheimer, (M.L.A.)¹ and Heyns, where two of Taute's scouts are captured and one has his leg shot off. Field-Cornet Ben Coetzee² lightly wounded in leg.

27 October March over Buffelsfontein, Ockerts Kraal, left of Anysberg up along Touws River through districts of Ladismith and Swellendam.

31 October March from Kock's farm along footpath over mountain through Marais's farm and over the railway line in neighbourhood of Constable Station and on through the first ridge.

1 November Enemy makes an attack at daybreak but takes to heels; seventeen under Lieutenant Heightly, who had come the same night by armoured train from Worcester, are captured, good horses are taken. Then march over Patata River and Roodeberg to Muishond River; a little fodder and water on the cattle farms. Karroopoort and Hex River Mountains on our left.

2 November To Amandelboom over Oliviersberg.

3 November To Zeekoegat near Tangua.

4 November Down along Tangua to Geldenhuys where we met Kirsten's³ guard. Then to Driefontein (Steenkamp).

5 November To De Cyfer at entrance of Langkloof (Kirsten). Here separated from Commandant Pypers.

6 November To Pieterse (Praanberg).

7 November To Elandsvlei, where we found about twenty horses and mules. (Houghs). Remained 7-9.

10 November To Kruidfontein.

11 November To Achterste Fontein (Izaak Burger).

12 November To De Hoek or Welgedacht (Ben Lubbe). Were, owing to misdirection, near Wupperthal.

14 November To Bidouw (Willem Lubbe).

¹ Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Cape Colony.

² Ben P. Coetzee, formerly an official in the Pretoria post-office, joined Theron's Scouts on the outbreak of war, and then the commando of S. G. Maritz in the north-west Cape. He also joined Maritz in rebellion in 1914, being then a Major in the Union Defence Force, and was imprisoned.

³ Commandant Jan F. Kirsten.

16 November Through Achtertuin, Driefontein and Onderplaats to Uijenvlei. Then along Moedverloren to Kobe (Sunday) where I stay 3 or 4 days at van Zyl's; from there through Kobe to Diepvlei (Brink) where I divide commandos on the farms. Next Saturday to Van Rhynsdorp and next Monday to Nieuwoudtville. Well received at Van Rhynsdorp and Nieuwoudtville. News that Maritz [S. G.] and Theron¹ have gone to the Boland,² also Smit [Jacobus J.] and Jooste.³ News of attack by Maritz on Tontelboskolk. Present at this attack van Deventer and Kirsten (wounded in hand) Maritz (wounded in side) Botha.

159 Report (1901)

Towards the end of 1901 Smuts wrote a report of his Cape Colony expedition (159) and a second report on the situation in the Cape Colony (160). Copies of both were found by the British military authorities when Commandant Sarel Alberts's laager at Gruisfontein was captured on 5 February 1902, the despatch-rider carrying the reports having reached the laager on the previous day. Translations were sent to the Colonial Office. The first report (undated) was published in the Netherlands in 1902 and reprinted in *Ons Land* of 10 December 1902, from which the Dutch text below has been taken. It was also published in a pamphlet issued by *The New Age*—an English political review—in 1902. The translation printed below is that sent to the Colonial Office in May 1902. There are some discrepancies between the Dutch and English texts. No original draft has been found.

EXPEDITIE VAN TRANSVALERS NAAR DE KAAPKOLONIE

(Augustus–October 1901)

Confidentieel

De expeditie die onder mijn bevel aan het einde van Augustus 1901 de Z. A. Republiek verliet, bestond uit 75 man onder Comdt. van Deventer, 69 onder Comdt. Kirsten, 70 onder

¹ Jan Theron, at first a lieutenant in Daniel Theron's Scouts, joined Maritz in 1901. Died of fever 14 April 1902.

² The south-western Cape Colony.

³ J. Pieter Jooste served in the Anglo-Boer War under General S. G. Maritz in the north-west Cape Colony and in the Union Defence Force as a Major during the First World War.

Comdt. Bouwer en 100 onder Comdt. Dreyer; tezamen met mijn staf omtrent 340 man. Ik zelf ging met Comdt. Dreyer van Gatsrand, distr. Potchefstroom, op 1 Aug. weg, terwijl de anderen onder tijdelijk bevel van Comdt. van Deventer te Vetrivier, dist. Hoopstad, O. Vrijstaat, omstreeks 20 Juli zich vereenigd hadden.

De tocht door den O. Vrijstaat nam een maand, en was tamelijk moeilijk, daar de vijand met ons gaan naar de Kaapkolonie goed bekend was en alles in zijn vermogen deed om ons doel te doen mislukken. In den noordelijken Vrijstaat had ik, met het kleine aantal manschappen onder mij, te doen met niet minder dan 7 vijandelijke kolonnes, elk van 500 tot 1,000 man sterk.

Door den zuidelijken Vrijstaat ging het nog harder; vanaf de westelijke grens vond ik een rij forten en bezettingen, al langs Modderrivier, welke langs de waterwerken en Thaba 'Nchu doorging tot aan de Basuto-grens, aan het oosten van den Vrijstaat. Niet zonder groote moeite en aanmerkelijk verlies bereikten wij het district Rouxville tegen het einde van Augustus. Comdt. van Deventer was de gemelde linie bij Thaba 'Nchu doorgegaan; ik door de Modderrivier nabij Abrahamskraal. Van Springfontein werd ik weer noordwaarts gedreven tot omtrent 20 mijlen van Bloemfontein, maar slaagde er in den vijand te ontkomen. Mijn totaal verlies was als volgt: in een nachtelijken aanval aan Vetrivier werden 3 burgers gedood, 5 gewond en 7 gevangen genomen, waaronder Veldcornet Truter en Veldcornet Wolmarans; bij Comdt. van Deventer's overtocht over de spoor, bij Brandfort, werden 4 gedood en 7 gewond, waarvan 2 in handen van den vijand vielen; nabij Reddersburg werden 20 burgers gevangen door een overmacht des vijands. Totaal verlies 36.

Nabij Zastron vond ik wnd. Hoofdcomdt. Kritzinger, aan wien ik Comdt. Dreyer met diens burgers afstond, terwijl ik Comdt. P. Wessels van hem overnam. Kritzinger was aan het einde van November nog in den O.V.S. Ik zie uit Engelsche berichten, dat Comdt. Dreyer met 9 man in handen van den vijand aan Jammerbergdrift is gevallen. Groot-Oranjerivier vond ik tamelijk ledig, maar bezet door een onafgebroken keten van blokhuisen, forten, wachten en kolonnes. Na verscheiden vruchteloze pogingen dezelve in de richting van Aliwal Noord

door te komen, trok ik in den nacht van 3 op 4 September nabij de Basuto-grens over de rivier en kwam in het oostelijke gedeelte der Herschel locatie. Den geheelen nacht van 4 September moest ik mijn pad door Herschel over onbekend en zeer gevaarlijk terrein vechten en verloor daarin een burger gedood en 3 gevangen, alsmede omtrent 30 handpaarden, waarvan wij toen goed voorzien waren. Op 5 September arriveerde ik in de Wasbank-gebergten oost van de Stormbergen, en trok zuidwaarts in de richting van de Indwe kolenmijnen en Oost Londen. Ik kwam tot omtrent 20 mijl oost van Dordrecht op 7 September, toen ik alle verder poorten en passen door deze gevaarlijke gebergten in bezit van den vijand vond en verplicht was noordwaarts te zwaaien. In Moordenaarspoort had ik persoonlijke en nauwe ontkoming; ik ging met Kapt. Adendorff en diens broeder (van Wessel's Commando) en mijn adjudant Jan [Johannes] Neethling deze poort bespieden, toen wij door een groot aantal van den vijand omsingeld werden. Kapitein Adendorff werd gedood, zijn broeder en Neethling beiden zwaar gewond; deze vielen in handen van den vijand, terwijl ik alleen zonder letsel door den vijand heen uitkroop.

Ik trok toen noordwaarts met het doel om de Oost Londen spoorlijn nabij Penhoek (Cyfergat kolenmijn) over te gaan, maar vond mij al spoedig door een aantal vijandelijke kolonnes in deze zware gebergten omsingeld. Ongelukkig scheidde Comdt. Wessels alhier van mij en moest ik dus met schaars 200 man een weg door de overmacht des vijands banen. Deze deed zijn best mij terug te werpen op de gevaarlijke Groot-rivier-lijn en ik spande alle krachten in om zuidwaarts of westwaarts door te breken. Van 9 tot 13 September vocht ik 's daags aanhoudend met den vijand die mij steeds aan verschillende kanten aanviel. 's Nachts moest ik weer in de gebergten rondtrekken om aan zijn strikken te ontsnappen; op 12 September was ik totaal, ja bijna hopeloos omsingeld op Penhoek, maar ik slaagde er in na een hard gevecht dat van 11 uur voormiddags tot 10 uur 's avonds duurde, twee kolonnes terug te slaan met verlies aan hun kant van 51, aan mijn kant van 1 dood. Ik trok dien nacht over de Dordrecht en Oost Londen spoorlijnen beide (over laatste te Putterskraal) en zadelde den volgenden morgen nabij Smithrivier af, nadat

menschen en paarden een 40 uur zonder voedsel of slaap hadden gevochten en getrokken. De paarden leden nog meer dan de burgers, niet alleen van de groote kracht inspanning, maar ook van de zware koude en aanhoudende regens in deze Stormbergen welke voor ons altijd onvergetelijk zullen blijven.

Den volgenden dag trok ik in de richting van Tarkastad voort en arriveerde in de Bamboesbergen, alwaar wij zoo mogelijk een nog zwaarder tijd hadden dan in de Stormbergen; dag en nacht moesten wij, omsingeld door de overmacht des vijands, voortvechten en aansukkelen, terwijl menschen en dieren bijna bezweken van de verschrikkelijke regens en koude. In den nacht van 12 September dwaalden 12 mijner manschappen af en werden door den vijand verhinderd zich weer bij mij aan te sluiten. Onder Veldcornet Pretorius hebben zij echter een apart commando gesticht en volgens Engelsche berichten zeer goed werk gedaan. Ik verwacht hen nog hier als een talrijk commando.

Ik moest de Bamboesbergen door Elandsrivierpoort uitkomen, maar vond er op 17 September een Engelsche wacht van eenige honderden van de Seventeenth Lancers; ik viel dezen onmiddellijk aan en binnen een paar uur waren 73 gedood en gewond, omtrent 50 gevangen, de rest gevlucht, het kamp met Armstrong kanon en hand-maxim ingenomen en aan brand gestoken en vernield.

Wij reden met twee vrachten geweren en ammunitie, welke de vijand voor gewonden heeft genomen; wij namen 300 paarden en muilen buit, terwijl ons verlies slechts 1 dood en vijf gewond waren, waarvan drie later door ons werden achtergelaten. Niet alleen was dus in mijn eigen behoeften voorzien, maar ik was in staat gesteld andere behoeftige commando's te helpen. Daar ik nog steeds omsingeld was, trok ik dadelijk voort in de richting van Maraisburg, maar vond mij op 19 September aan 4 kanten ingesloten en moest toen door schijnbewegingen den vijand in de war brengen. Vandaar trok ik in zuidelijke richting met Grahamsstad als mijn doel. Ik deed mijn best door de reeks van bergen (Groot Winterberg, Wittebergen, en Baviaansrivierbergen) zuidwaarts te komen, maar slaagde hierin alleen door veel krachtinspanning en met verlies van omtrent 100 paarden; ik kwam toen door de Engelsche verdedigingslinies en viel in Bedford, Fort

Beaufort en Grahamsstad. De achtervolging van den vijand was nu echter zoo bitter geworden, dat ik verplicht was de Port Elizabethspoor en Groot-Vischrivier over te gaan naar Groot Zuurberg, welke zoowel wegens het zoete en het zure voor mij en mijn dappere bende een herinnering tot onzen doodsdag zal blijven. Op 29 September kwamen wij in Groot Zuurberg, en aten wij van een aanlokkelijke wilde vrucht welk een gevaarlijk gift was en toen ik met de helft mijner burgers met den dood lag te worstelen, viel de vijand ons aan. Wij sloegen hem gelukkig terug, maar bleven zelve voor dood op het slagveld liggen tot den volgenden morgen toen wij voortsukelden; terwijl sommige burgers nog zoo krank waren, dat wij hen op hunne paarden moesten vastmaken, om hen weg te krijgen. Wij trokken deze verschrikkelijken gebergten door, waar de vijand wegens de geaardheid van het terrein zeer goede kans had ons in te sluiten en ook alle krachten inspande zulks te doen. Achter ons waren Gorringe en de Defence Forces van Alexandria en Uitenhage, en een andere groote kolonne aan onze westzijde, terwijl aan onze linkzijde een ontoegankelijk gebergte was en bijna alle poorten en uitwegen in bezit van den vijand. Op 1 October arriveerden wij in het Addobosch van Uitenhage, zuid van Zuurberg. Op 2 October werd een der poorten geopend en van den vijand gedood 1 en gevangen 13, terwijl de dappere Veldcornet Borrius een oog verloor. Op 3 October werden wij na vergeefsche poging om in de richting Port Elizabeth te gaan, verplicht op Zuurberg terug te vallen. Wij waren den berg halfpad opgegaan, langs een gevaarlijke kloof en zadelden daar af; en tot onze niet geringe verbazing kwam de kolonne van Gorringe eenige uren later hetzelfde pad tot binnen dertig treden van ons. Zij werd dadelijk aangevallen en met groot verlies de gevaarlijke steilte afgeworpen. Menschen en dieren traptten elkaar dood, achtervogd door de verbitterde Boeren; volgens mondeling bericht van eenige leden dezer kolonne, die later gevangen werden, was hun verlies aan dooden en gewonden en bezeerden 200 men en 700 paarden. De vlucht van den vijand was een ontzettend schouwspel, het gevecht duurde voort tot laat in den nacht zonder eenig verlies aan onzen kant.

Den volgenden morgen trokken wij van den berg weer door in noordelijke richting, en werd ik verplicht door schaarsheid

van voer om Commandant Bouwer van de andere Commandantschappen af te scheiden en vooruit te doen gaan in de richting van Graaff-Reinet. Hij was pas weg of de achterblijvende officieren ontwaarden een kolonne van den vijand bij hen boven op den berg, welke den nacht van 6 October trachtte hen aan te vallen van twee kanten. Zij waren de Defences Forces van Alexandria en Grahamsstad, waarvan de laatste hun kamp boven op, en de eersten hun kamp onder Groot Zuurberg-pas hadden opgeslagen. Mijne burgers voorkwamen echter den beraamden aanval door een tegen aanval, met het gevolg dat beide kampen ingenomen werden, omtrent 10 van den vijand gedood en gewond, 30 gevangen en 70 prachtige paarden buit gemaakt werden. Beladen met ammunitie enz. gingen wij toen achter Bouwer noordwaarts. Intuschen had Commandant Bouwer denzelfden dag omtrent 100 van de Defence Forces van Somerset Oost een pak slaag te Springvale gegeven, eenigen gedood en gewond en 20 gevangen genomen; de rest was naar het dorp Somerset gejaagd. Een aanzienlijk aantal paarden werden hier buit gemaakt. Hij ging toen in de richting van Pearston en na kleine schermutselingen met vijandelijke verkenners en Defence Forces, kam hij in de Camdeboo gebergten aan (district Aberdeen). Het ongeluk bleef echter bij de Defence Forces van Somerset. Op 13 October kwamen van Deventer en Kirsten bij Doornbosch aan, alwaar gemelde Forces met een aantal C.M.R. verschanst waren. Zij vielen onze burgers aan met het noodlottig gevolg dat al hun forten ingenomen werden en 210 man gevangen werden, verscheidene gedood en gewond, terwijl er maar drie der onzen licht bezeerd werden. 220 prachtige paarden werden buitgemaakt, hier en daar. De onzen gingen toen noordwaarts en kruisden de Graaff-Reinet spoor nabij Bethesda-siding. Zij waren bij Steilhoogte aan de Zondagsrivier, op 21 October gekampeerd, toen Kol. Lukin een ochtend bij dagbreek onverwachts door middel van verraad een aanval op hen maakte. Gelukkig was ons verlies slechts 1 dood en 1 gewond (Veldcornet Smit, die in handen van den vijand viel), en tien van de zwakste burgers gevangen. Zij trokken toen westwaarts om de spoor bij Victoria West over te komen; en na verscheiden interessante bewegingen, waardoor de vijand misleid werd, slaagden zij hierin op 30 October. Zij zijn toen

langzaam en rustig noord van Fraserburg naar Calvinia getrokken, vingen 17 van de Victoria West Defence Forces (waarvan 1 dood) en 19 van de Fraserburg Defence Forces en maakten goede paarden buit. Noord van Sutherland ontmoetten zij Caldwell met de 5th Lancers, dien zij ook een goed pak slaag toebrachten te Brandkraal, 10 doodende en wondende en 30 vangende, alsook vele goede paarden. Zoo arriveerden zij in het begin van November in het district Calvinia.

Intusschen was commandant Bouwer omsingeld geworden in de Camdeboo-bergen, en zag zich verplicht zuid-westwaarts te trekken, achtervolgd door Kol. Scobell. Hij vond Comdt. S. Pypers met het commando van Scheepers (die wegens ernstige ziekte in handen van den vijand was gevallen) onder Groot Zwartberg, nam hem met zich mede en trok toen door Oudtshoorn, Ladismith, Swellendam, Worcester, Ceres en Sutherland naar het district Van Rhynsdorp, alwaar hij vroeg in November arriveerde. Hij heeft bijna dagelijks met den vijand geschermtseld en van hunne verkenners gevangen, maar belangrijke gevechten vonden niet plaats.

Tegen het einde van November maakten van Deventer en Kirsten, tezamen met eenige lokale commandanten een aanval op de forten van Tontelbosch-kolk, noord van Calvinia; en hoewel zij de forten niet konden innemen, namen zij omtrent 400 paarden van den vijand, wat de moeite wel waard was. Ik heb nu het bevel genomen over alle commando's in de westelijke districten der Kaapkolonie en ben bezig deze te organiseeren.

Zoo kwam ons commando in dit district aan, na ontzettend veel lijden, moeite en gevaar te hebben doorstaan. Van de ietwat over de 200 mannen die te Grootrivier doorgedaan waren op 4 September, waren 4 gesneuveld, 10 gewond,—waarvan 6 in handen van den vijand vielen—en 35 waren door den vijand gevangen genomen, voornamelijk wegens afdwalen van het commando; dus een totaal verlies van 45 man. Maar wat hebben zij niet uitgericht? Zij hadden 372 van den vijand gedood en gewond, 429 gevangen en ontwapend, een kanon en maxim met veel geweren en vrachten ammunitie, alsook 1,156 paarden en muilen op slagvelden buit gemaakt. Zij hebben binnen 2 maanden bijna alle districten der Kaapkolonie

doorreis, waren de gevaarlijkste bergketenen in het gezicht des vijands overgegaan en hebben mij in staat gesteld volkomen op de hoogte van den huidige militairen en politieken toestand in de Kolonie te komen.

Een ander feit van groot militair belang, hetwelk ik niet anders beschouwen kan dan als een gevolg van de wijze waarop mijn burgers overal de locale strijdmachten hebben verpletterd, is de order, van de overheid uitgegaan, dat namelijk alle 'Town Guards' en 'District Mounted Troops' in de Kaapkolonie onmiddellijk ontwapend moesten worden. In aanmerking genomen dat er volgens officieele opgaven van laatste Juni 55,000 gewapende troepen waren aangeworven in Zuid-Afrika, beschouw ik dat deze order tusschen de 20,000 en 30,000 moet affecteeren. Met alle bescheidenheid beschouw ik dat deze expeditie, tot dusverre althans, een succes is geweest hoe zwaar ook de geleden verliezen waren.

De stemming mijner burgers is prachtig. Hoewel zij misschien zwaarder geleden hebben dan eenig ander klompje burgers in dezen oorlog, zien zij vandaag met bijmoedigheid de toekomst tegemoet, overtuigd dat geen moeilijkheid of vijanderlijke overmacht, hoe groot ook, zal kunnen verhinderen dat deze strijd zal worden voortgezet tot Recht zegeviert boven Macht.

Waar allen, officieren en manschappen, zich zoo onderscheiden hebben, is het moeilijk iemand bijzonder te noemen. Maar ik wensch de groote waarde te erkennen van de hulp mij door Comdt. van Deventer verschaft in deze expeditie. Verder wensch ik te melden dat Jack Baxter, van Klerksdorp, een held zonder vrees en zonder smet, in den nacht van 12 Oct. van zijn commando afdwaalde, den volgende dag door Kol. Scobell gevangen werd en onmiddellijk op moorddadige wijze is doodgeschoten, onder zekere onwettige proclamatie van Lord Kitchener tegen het dragen van khaki-kleeren door de Boeren. Volgens getuigenis der soldaten in vele districten heeft de nobele wijze waarop deze vrijheids-martelaar den dood tegemoet ging, zelfs den barbaarschen vijand ontzag ingeboezemd en sympathie afgeperst. (Kol. Scobell was ook, naar ik meen, onze gevangene te Selikatsnek.) Ik vrees dat ook andere mijner gevangen burgers op deze wijze aan hun einde zijn gekomen. Zij droegen deze kleeren niet voor spionage-doeleinden, maar omdat zij anders naakt zouden moeten loopen.

De algemeene toestand in de Kaapkolonie is zeer gunstig.

J. C. Smuts

Assistant Commandant-Generaal

TRANSLATION: *The Expedition of Transvaalers to the Cape Colony*
(August—October 1901)

Confidential

The expedition under my command which left the South African Republic at the end of August 1901 consisted of the following: Commandant van Deventer with 75 men, Commandant Kirsten with 69 men, Commandant Boucher with 70 men, and Commandant Dreyer with 100 men, making a total of 340 men, including myself and staff. I personally left the Gatsrand with Commandant Dreyer on the 1st August, while the rest, under command of Commandant van Deventer, joined me on the Vet River (Hoopstad district), where they had concentrated on the 20th July.

The journey through the Orange Free State took about one month, and as the enemy knew our intentions, it was a most difficult task, as they tried all they could to make it a failure. Through the northern part of the Orange Free State I had to evade not less than seven columns of the enemy on account of having such a small force. These columns were each from 500 to 1,000 strong. Coming to the southern part of the Orange Free State I found it worse, as the enemy had a line of blockhouses or forts along the Modder River, which ran via the Waterworks and Thaba Nchu to the Basutoland border in the eastern part of the Orange Free State.

Not without great trouble and heavy losses we reached the Rouxville district at the end of August; Commandant van Deventer crossed the above-mentioned blockhouse line near to Thaba Nchu, while I crossed the Modder River at Abrams Kraal.

On reaching Springfontein I was driven north till about 20 miles from Bloemfontein, but succeeded in escaping capture.

My losses were as follows: in the night attack on the Vet River three men were killed, five wounded, and seven captured, including Field-Cornets Truter and Wolmarans. Commandant Van der Venter, while crossing the railway line at

Brandfort, lost four killed and seven wounded, of whom two were captured. Near to Reddersburg twenty of my men were captured by an overwhelming force of the enemy, making a total of thirty-six. Near to Zastron I met Acting Commandant-General Kritzinger, with whom I left behind Commandant Dreyer and his party, receiving in exchange Commandant P. Wessels, who accompanied me.

To my bitter disappointment, Kritzinger was still in the Orange Free State at the end of November, and consequently my men who remained with him have not rejoined me since. I am therefore altogether hopeless of their rejoining me. In an English paper I further saw that Commandant Dreyer with nine men had been captured at Jammersburg Drift. He was one of my best officers.¹

I found the Orange River low, but guarded by a line of blockhouses, besides forts guard and several columns. After several fruitless attempts to cross it in the direction of Aliwal North, I was successful on the night of the 3rd September near to the Basutoland border, and landed in the east part of the Herschel district. The whole day, the 4th September, I was forced to fight my way through Herschel in an unknown and very broken part of the country, with a loss of one killed, three captured and some thirty horses, of which we then had a good supply.

On the 30th September we reached Waschbank Hills, east of the Stormbergen; from there we travelled south in the direction of the Indwe coal mines and East London. On arriving at a place 20 miles east of Dordrecht, on the 7th September, I found all the passes through the precipitous range of mountains held by the enemy checking me. I was therefore forced to turn northwards.

In Moordenaarspoort I had personally a very narrow escape, which happened as follows: I went with Captain Adendorff, his brother, of Wessels's Commando, and my Adjutant, J[ohannes] Neethling, to scout the pass, when suddenly and unexpectedly we were surrounded by a strong force of the enemy. Captain Adendorff was killed, his brother and Neethling both dangerously wounded and fell into the enemy's

¹ The greater part of this paragraph does not appear in the Dutch document as published in *Ons Land*.

hands, while I alone escaped without a scratch by creeping through the enemy's lines.

From here I travelled in a northerly direction with the intention of crossing the East London Railway line near Penhoek (Cyfergat coal-mine), but found myself very soon surrounded by several British columns. Unfortunately, Commandant Wessels left me at this moment, and I had to fight my way through with only 200 men. The enemy did their best to force me to fall back on the Orange River line, but I did all in my power to break through either north or west. From the 9th to the 13th September fighting took place daily, as I was attacked on all sides. During those nights I had to travel mostly about the mountains in order to avoid traps which were laid for me. On the 12th September I was practically hopeless, being completely hemmed in, but I succeeded in repulsing two British columns after a severe fight which lasted from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and broke through, crossing that night both the Dordrecht and East London lines at Putterkraal. At 10 a.m. the next morning I camped near Smith River a long and tiresome trek of forty hours, during which time neither men nor beast had any rest or food. Our loss was one killed, while the enemy had fifty-one casualties.

The horses suffered even more than the men, not only because of the heavy loads they had to carry, but also on account of the cold rain, which is very bad in the Stormbergen. This storm will never be forgotten by us.

The following morning we travelled in the direction of the Tarkastad, and arrived on the Bamboo Mountains, where we had a worse time of it. We had there to fight our way slowly along day and night, and in addition our exhausted animals had to suffer much from severe cold and rain.

During the night of the 12th September twelve of my men lost their way, and owing to the enemy were prevented from joining me again, but I have since heard from English sources that they have raised a new commando under Field-Cornet Pretorius, and have done good work. I expect when they rejoin me again they will do so with this commando.

I left the Bamboo mountains through Elands River Poort, but on reaching the real pass, I found it guarded by some hundreds of the 17th Lancers. I made a frontal attack, and

within an hour seventy-three of them were killed and wounded and fifty captured, the rest escaping. The camp containing an Armstrong gun and Maxim was taken and burnt. We further captured two waggon loads of ammunition and rifles, the enemy thinking that the waggons were loaded with our dead and wounded, as well as 300 horses and mules. Our loss was one killed and five wounded. Being so successful, I could supply my own wants as well as those of other commandos.

As I was practically still surrounded, I started immediately in the direction of Maraisburg, but unfortunately found myself on all sides hemmed in and had to blind the enemy by feints, thus succeeding in getting through to the south in the direction of Grahamstown. With the greatest difficulty I passed through in a southerly direction the chain of mountains called the Wittebergen and Bavians River Bergen with the loss of at least 100 horses, thus passing through the last defending line of the British, and entering now an open country in the districts of Bedford, Fort Beaufort, and Grahamstown.

The British chase, however, became so keen that I was obliged to cross the Port Elizabeth line and the Great Fish River into Zuurberg, which after all the 'sweet and bitter' will be remembered by me and my brave little band till our dying day.

We reached Zuurberg on the 29th September, and on the 1st October came across some wild trees bearing sweet and delicious looking fruit, but in reality a deadly poison. While I and about the half of my men were lying on the ground struggling with death the enemy attacked us, but we succeeded in repulsing them. I remained lying in the jaws of death until the next morning, when I was obliged to move. Some of my men were so ill that they had to be fastened on their horses.

We slowly crossed these awful mountains while the enemy tried to close on us, having all the advantages of favourable positions.

We were followed up by Gorringe [G. F.] and the defence forces of Somerset East, while our advance was checked by the defence forces of Alexandria and Uitenhage. On our right was another column, while on our left were those awful inaccessible mountains, impassable except for the few passes which we found were held by the enemy.

On the 1st October we arrived in the Addobosch¹ of Uitenhage, south of Zuurberg. On the 2nd we took a pass after killing one and capturing thirteen of the enemy. Here the gallant Field-Cornet Borrius lost one of his eyes. On the 3rd October, after several fruitless attempts to travel in the direction of Port Elizabeth, we were obliged to retire on the Zuurberg. We went half-way up the mountain until overlooking a dangerous kloof and offsaddled. A few hours afterwards, to our greatest surprise, Gorrings's column came up the same way as we did. We allowed [them] to come within thirty paces, when we suddenly attacked them with terrible loss, pushing them right down the dangerous precipice. Animals and human beings trampled each other to death, and still on came the 'bitter Boers'. According to some of the prisoners captured the enemy lost about 200 killed, wounded and, injured, and also 700 horses. The retreat of the enemy was something terrible to see. The fight lasted till late that night, we having no casualties at all.

The following morning we again crossed the mountain in a northerly direction, and I was obliged, on account of forage being so scarce, to separate Commandant Bouwer from the other Commandants and send him ahead in the direction of Graaff-Reinet.

He had no sooner left when the remaining officers detected a column of the enemy on the mountains, who tried on the night of the 6th October to attack us from two sides.

This proved to be the defence forces of Alexandria and Grahamstown, the latter having their camp on the mountain, and the former at the entrance to the Great Zuurberg Pass. My burghers, however, made an attack on them, capturing both camps, after killing and wounding ten and taking prisoner thirty of the enemy. We also took seventy good horses.

Then loaded with ammunition, etc., we proceeded northwards after Bouwer, who on the same day met about 100 of the defence forces of Somerset East, and gave them a good hiding at Springvale, killing and wounding several and capturing twenty. The rest retired on the town of Somerset East. A good number of horses were also taken here. Bouwer then went out

¹ The Addo Forest.

in the direction of Pearston, and, after small skirmishes with the enemy's scouts and defence forces, he reached the Camdeboo Mountains, in the Aberdeen district. He met, however, with a check at the hands of the defence forces of Somerset East, consisting of the lowest class of Dutch and English Afrikanders.¹

On the 13th October van Deventer and Kirsten arrived at Doornbosch, where the above-mentioned forces and some C.M.R.² were entrenched. They attacked the Boers, with the result that they lost all their positions. We captured 210 men, besides several killed and wounded, and only had three slightly wounded. We further took 250 good and fit horses.

This force then went northwards and crossed the Graaff-Reinet line, near to Bethesda siding, and camped at Steilhoogte on the Sundays River, on the 21st October. Then Colonel [H. T.] Lukin unexpectedly, and through treason, attacked one morning before daybreak. Luckily, we lost only one killed and one wounded (Field-Cornet Smit, who fell into the enemy's hands), and ten of the worse burghers were captured.

From there Kirsten and van Deventer turned westwards to cross the line at Victoria West, and, after some interesting movements, they succeeded in crossing on the 13th October, and moved slowly and undisturbed north of Fraserburg to Calvinia, capturing seventeen of the Victoria West defence forces, killing one, and nineteen of the Fraserburg defence forces, obtaining some good horses. North of Sutherland they met Caldwell [F. C. H.] with the 5th Lancers, whom they also defeated at Brandkraal, killing and wounding ten and capturing thirty, together with many good horses. They arrived in the beginning of November in the district of Calvinia.

Meanwhile Commandant Boucher was surrounded in the Camdeboo mountains, and thus forced to travel south-west, followed by Colonel Scobell's column. Boucher met Commandant S. Pypers with his commando (late Scheepers, who, on account of severe sickness, fell into the hands of the enemy) under Great Zwartberg, joined him, and then moved through Oudtshoorn, Ladismith, Swellendam, Worcester, and Sutherland into the district of Van Rhynsdorp, where they

¹ The last phrase of this sentence is omitted in the Dutch document.

² Cape Mounted Rifles.

arrived early in November. They had almost daily small skirmishes with the enemy, but no fight of any consequence occurred.

About the end of November van Deventer and Kirsten, together with some local Commandants, made an attack on the forts at Tontelbosch Kolk, north of Calvinia, and although they could not take the posts, they, however, succeeded in capturing about 400 of the horses of the enemy, which repaid them very well for the trouble they had taken.

I have now taken command of all the commandos in the western district of the Cape Colony, and am busy reorganizing them.

So this heroic band arrived in this district after much trouble and danger. Of the band of 200 men who originally crossed the Orange River on the 4th September 4 were killed and 16 wounded (out of whom 6 fell into the enemy's hands) and 35 were captured, mostly by losing their way, thus giving a total loss of 55 men. What have they not done? They have killed and wounded 372 and captured 429 of the enemy, whom they disarmed. Besides, 4 camps were taken, 1 gun and Maxim, many rifles, loads of ammunition, and 1,136 horses and mules taken on battle-fields. In two months they have been through almost all the districts of Cape Colony, crossing the most dangerous mountains in safety in view of the enemy, and by so doing have enabled me to become acquainted with the military and political situation of the Cape Colony at the present time.

Another fact of great military importance, which I cannot ascribe otherwise than to the manner in which my burghers invariably annihilated the local forces of the enemy whenever they met, is the issue of orders by the British authorities that all town guards and district mounted troops should be at once disarmed.

So, taking into consideration, and judging from the official census of last June, that 55,000 men in South Africa have volunteered for service, I reckon that this order of disarmament must affect from at least 20,000 to 30,000 men.

With all discretion, I consider that this expedition has been a great success, however severe our losses may have been. The feeling of my burghers is strong, although they have, perhaps, suffered much heavier [*sic*] than any other commando in this

war, and they look forward hopefully to the future. They are convinced that no force of the enemy, however strong, will be able to check their progress until 'Right triumphs over Might'.

Where every one, officers as well as men, have behaved so well, it is hard to mention some and not all, but I wish especially to acknowledge the great help and good assistance of Commandant van Deventer in this expedition. I further wish to mention Jack Baxter, of Klerksdorp, a hero *sans peur, sans reproche*, who lost his way on the night of the 12th October, and wandering from his commando was captured the following day by Colonel Scobell. He was shot immediately afterwards in a murderous way, owing to some illegal Proclamation of Lord Kitchener's, for wearing khaki uniform. According to the evidence of some soldiers his martyrdom has extorted great sympathy and respect, even from the most inhuman of the enemy. (Colonel Scobell was, I think, a prisoner with us at Selikatz Nek.) I am afraid that others of my men who have been captured had the same end. They were wearing these clothes, not for spying purposes, but simply because they would otherwise have been compelled to go naked.

The general situation in Cape Colony is very promising, but about this I send you a separate Report.

J. C. Smuts
Assistant Commandant-General

160 Second report (1901)

Vol. XCVI, no. 328

The captured copy of Smuts's second report was undated. The original document, written out by his military secretary, is signed by Smuts, who also marked it: 'Niet voor publicatie' and dated it: 'Dist. Calvinia K.K. 16 December 1901.' The translation sent to the Colonial Office is not a sufficiently accurate rendering of the original, which has been re-translated below.

Niet voor publicatie

II. RAPPORT OVER TOESTAND IN DE KAAP KOLONIE

Sedert begin van September 1901 ben ik in de volgende districten der Kaap Kolonie geweest: Aliwal Noord,

Dordrecht, Queenstown, Tarkastad, Cradock, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Albany, Alexandria, Uitenhage, Somerset Oost, Jansenville, Averdeen, Graaff-Reinet, Murraysburg, Willowmore, Prins Albert, Oudtshoorn, George, Uniondale, Ladismith, Swellendam, Montagu, Worcester, Ceres, Sutherland, Van Rhynsdorp, en Calvinia. Comdt. Maritz is verder geweest in Piquetberg, Malmesbury, Namaqualand, en Kenhardt, en Comdt. van Deventer en andere mijne officiere zijn geweest in Richmond, Fraserburg en Victoria West. Dit rapport geldt dus feitelijk voor de geheele Kaap Kolonie.

(I)

De gezindheid der Afrikaners is overal zeer goed. Duizenden wenschen aan te sluiten maar hebben geene paarden, daar bijna alle districten door den vijand zijn schoon gemaakt van paarden. Waren paarden niet zoo schaarsch dan zou het mogelijk zijn binnen betrekkelijk korten tijd een algemeenen opstand in 't leven te roepen, dus is het voornamelijk aan deze moeilijkheid (de grootste waarmede wij in de Kolonie te kampen hebben) te wijten dat onze zaak maar langzaam in de Kolonie vooruitgaat.

(II)

Een ander reden waarom onze zaak niet rasser is vooruitgegaan is het gebrek aan samenwerking onder de commandos. Hierdoor is in de oostelijke districten verloren wat in de westelijke gewonnen is. Daar Asst. Hoofdcomdt. Kritzinger afwezig was in den O.V.S. en er bijna geen samenwerking bestond in de commandos onder hem, werden deze commandos het een na het ander afzonderlijk aangepakt en noordwaarts over de Grootrivier of westwaarts hierheen gedreven, terwijl het commando onder wijlen Comdt. Lötter geheel vernietigd werd. Voor zoover ik weet zijn thans alleen Comdt. P. Wessels, Myburgh en Fouché werkzaam in de oostelijke districten terwijl naar het westen zijn gegaan de commandos van Scheepers, Botha, Malan, Pypers, Lategan, en van Reenen. Volgens afspraak tusschen Genl. de la Rey en mij zouden de Transvaalsche commandos meer naar het westen inwerken, dus was het voor mij onmogelijk in het oosten te vertoeven. Het is echter hoogst noodzakelijk dat onze

zaak met allen spoed in de oostelijke districten hersteld wordt, en dat wd. Hoofdcomdt. Kritzinger of een ander bekwaam hoofd officier het bevel aldaar gaat voeren, en voor behoorlijke organisatie en samenwerking zorgen. Ik zal zoo spoedig mogelijk eenige der alhier aanwezige commandos daarheen zenden, maar hulp van de Republieken is dringend noodig.

(III)

Zooals blijkt uit mijn rapport No. I zijn er in de K.K. vele kansen om goede werk te verrichten, beter kansen denk ik dan in den Republieken. Al gaat onze zaak ook langzamer vooruit in de Kolonie dan wij zouden wenschen, toch is en blijft er alhier een groot vooruitzicht voor de toekomst en dus dring ik erop aan dat er van uit beide Republieken nog minstens een duizend man, verdeeld in kleine commandos van 50 tot 100 elk, naar de K.K. gezonden worden. Natuurlijk is het absoluut noodzakelijk voor onze zaak dat de tegenstand in de Republieken niet verslappe, maar steeds krachtdadig voortgezet worde, maar ik denk niet dat de verzending van een duizend man onze strijdkrachten in de Republieken aanmerkelijk zal verminderen terwijl zij onze zaak in de Kolonie een grooten stoot voorwaarts zal geven.

(IV)

Daar het zoo goed als onmogelijk is de K.K. oost van de spoorlijnen binnen te komen, acht ik het pad door Griqualand het geschikste. Dan kan men in de richting van Prieska of nog meer westwaarts de Grootrivier doorkomen. Van daar kan men dan oostwaarts, of westwaarts slingeren naar gelang van omstandigheden. De beste tijd voor zoodanigen intocht zal zijn de maanden Februari, Maart en April, wanneer gras overal volop zal zijn. Het commando in Griqualand kan behulpzaam zijn met den overtocht, en in de richting van Kenhardt en Upington zijn omtrent 300 gewapende burgers zuid van Grootrivier werkzaam.

(V)

Wat betreft overkomst van Genl. de la Rey om het opperbevel in de K.K. op zich te nemen ben ik er persoonlijk zeer

sterk voor. Ik acht het echter mijn plicht te melden dat sommigen mijner officieren twijfelen of hij in de Z.A.R. gespaard zou kunnen worden. Indien hij van oordeel is dat zijn werk op voldoende wijze door anderen in de Westelijken Transvaal zal worden voortgezet, dan vertrouw ik dat hij met den meesten spoed hierheen zal komen. De tijd is voorbij wanneer een groote naam de Afrikaners tot een algemeenen opstand zal brengen, maar een officier van zijn invloed en beleid zal zeker voor onze zaak alhier een groote aanwinst zijn. Ik meen dat het besluit der beide Regeringen dat hij naar de Kolonie zou komen genomen is onder de indruk dat onze zaak in de Kolonie grooter vordering gemaakt had dan volgens dit rapport zal blijken. Niettemin zie ik geen reden waarom dit besluit niet gehandhaafd zal blijven, zelfs onder de minder gunstige omstandigheden welke ik verplicht ben te rapporteeren. Indien echter Genl. de la Rey mocht besluiten niet te komen dan is het wenschelijk dat door beide Regeringen een Hoofd Officier voor de noordelijke en westelijke Kaap Kolonie benoemd worde, want het valt niet te ontkennen dat de kwesties van organisatie en samenwerking onder de commandos in de Kaap Kolonie zeer dringend en moeilijk zijn. Ik heb het opperbevel op mij genomen in termen van het Politiek Verbond, maar daar ik dit document niet voor mij heb weet ik niet of ik hierin recht gehandeld heb. Ik moet zeggen dat de andere officieren zich tot dusver zeer gehoorzaam betoond hebben; ook wensch ik speciaal te erkennen de groote diensten door Comdt. Maritz aan onze zaak verricht en is het mijn plan, indien het bevel onder mij blijft, beide aan hem en aan Comdt. van Deventer promotie te geven.

(VI)

Wegens de maatregelen door den vijand genomen zijn voer en brood beide schaarsch in de Kolonie, maar echter nog voldoende voor kleine commandos om overal rond te werken. Comdt. Maritz heeft reeds twee tochten gemaakt naar Piquetberg en Malmesbury, en in de laatste was hij vergezeld door Comdt. Theron, en zij hebben zooals de verwachting was overal alles volop gevonden. Zij hebben ook echter uitgevonden dat men zich daar alleen met aanzienlijke legermachten kan staande houden. Alhier hebben wij een tamelijke schoon wereld

achter ons tot bij het Duitsch gebied, met uitzondering van een klompje Hotnots te O'okiep en een kleine macht van den vijand te Kenhardt en Upington. Ik richt een verzoek aan Vechtgeneraal P. de Villiers van Griqualand om met een gedeelte van zijn commando de Grootrivier door te komen, en tezamen met het aldaar aanwezige commando te trachten Kenhardt en Upington schoon te maken.

Ik acht den tijd voor het optreden van een derde partij, zooals door de beide Regeeringen te Standerton besproken, nog niet gekomen. Het is een stap welke, beide om reden van de drastische militaire gevolgen die daaruit zullen vloeien en het belemmerende effect welke het op eventueele vredesbehandelingen mocht hebben, niet zonder de grootste omzichtigheid moet genomen worden.

J. C. Smuts
Asst. Comdt.-Genl.

Dist. Calvinia K.K.
16 December 1901

TRANSLATION

Not for publication

II. *Report on the Position in the Cape Colony*

Since the beginning of September 1901 I have been in the following districts of the Cape Colony: Aliwal North, Dordrecht, Queenstown, Tarkastad, Cradock, Bedford, Fort Beaufort, Albany, Alexandria, Uitenhage, Somerset East, Jansenville, Aberdeen, Graaff-Reinet, Murraysburg, Willowmore, Prince Albert, Oudtshoorn, George, Uniondale, Ladismith, Swellendam, Montagu, Worcester, Ceres, Sutherland, Van Rhynsdorp, and Calvinia. Commandant Maritz has also been in Piquetberg, Malmesbury, Namaqualand, and Kenhardt, and Commandant van Deventer and others of my officers have been in Richmond, Fraserburg and Victoria West. This report therefore applies to the whole Cape Colony.

(I)

The disposition of the Afrikaners is everywhere very good. Thousands wish to join but have no horses, as almost all the

districts have been cleared of horses by the enemy. If horses were not so scarce it would be possible to create a general rising in a comparatively short time, so it is chiefly due to this difficulty (the greatest with which we in the Colony have to contend) that our cause progresses but slowly in the Colony.

(II)

Another reason why our cause has not progressed faster is the lack of co-operation among the commandos. Because of this what has been gained in the western districts has been lost in the eastern districts. As Assistant Chief Commandant Kritzinger was absent in the Orange Free State and as there was almost no co-operation in the commandos under him, these commandos were attacked separately one after another and driven northwards over the Groot River or westwards here, while the commando under the late Commandant [J. C.] Lötter was entirely destroyed. As far as I know only Commandants P. Wessels, Myburgh and Fouché¹ are now active in the eastern districts while the commandos of Scheepers, Botha, Malan [W. C.], Pypers, Lategan² and van Reenen³ have gone to the west. By agreement between General de la Rey and myself the Transvaal Commandos were to operate more towards the west, so it was impossible for me to delay in the east. It is however highly necessary that our cause should be retrieved with all speed in the eastern districts, and that Acting Chief Commandant Kritzinger or another capable chief officer should take command there, and provide proper organization and co-operation. I shall as soon as possible send there some of the commandos present here, but help from the Republics is urgently necessary.

¹ Willem Dederik Fouché served with distinction in the Anglo-Boer War, mainly in the southern Orange Free State and north-eastern Cape Colony, reaching the rank of Commandant. He was a staff officer in South West Africa in 1915, and raised a force to police that country after its defeat by the Union.

² Hendrik Willem Lategan of Colesberg, Cape Colony. Led a 'rebel commando' in the northern Cape Colony 1900; joined the forces under Smuts who made him a combat general 1901.

³ Gert Hendrik Petrus van Reenen first served under General P. H. Kritzinger (q.v.); then joined Smuts in the north-western Cape Colony and was put under the command of General W. Malan.

(III)

As appears from my report No. I, there are in the Cape Colony many opportunities to do good work, better opportunities I think than in the Republics. Even if our cause progresses more slowly in the Colony than we would wish, nevertheless there is and remains here a great prospect for the future and therefore I urge that at least another thousand men, divided into small commandos of 50 to 100, be sent from both Republics to the Cape Colony. Of course it is absolutely essential for our cause that the resistance in the Republics does not slacken, but is always vigorously continued, but I do not think that the sending of a thousand men will noticeably diminish our fighting forces in the Republic, while they will give our cause in the Colony a big push forwards.

(IV)

As it is as good as impossible to enter the Cape Colony east of the railway lines, I consider the road through Griqualand the most suitable. Then one can cross the Groot River in the direction of Prieska or still further westwards. Thence one can swing eastwards or westwards according to circumstances. The best time for such an entry will be the months of February, March and April, when grass will be plentiful everywhere. The commando in Griqualand can be of assistance in the passage, and in the direction of Kenhardt and Upington are about 300 armed burghers who are active south of the Groot River.

(V)

As regards the coming over of General de la Rey to take upon himself the supreme command in the Cape Colony, I am personally very strongly in favour of it. I consider it my duty, however, to say that some of my officers doubt if he could be spared from the South African Republic. If he is of the opinion that his work will be carried out in a satisfactory way by others in the Western Transvaal, then I trust that he will come here with all speed. The time is past when a great name will bring the Afrikaners to a general rising, but an officer of his influence and policy will certainly be a great acquisition to our cause here.

I think that the decision of both Governments that he should come to the Colony was taken under the impression that our cause in the Colony had made greater progress than will appear from this report. Nevertheless I see no reason why this decision should not be maintained, even under the less favourable circumstances which I am obliged to report. If, however, General de la Rey should decide not to come then it is desirable that a Chief Officer for the northern and western Cape Colony should be nominated by both Governments, for there is no denying that the questions of organization and co-operation among the commandos in the Cape Colony are very urgent and difficult. I have taken the supreme command upon myself in terms of the Political Alliance,¹ but as I have not this document before me I do not know if I have acted rightly in this. I must say that the other officers have so far shown themselves very obedient; I wish also specially to acknowledge the great service rendered to our cause by Commandant Maritz and it is my plan, should the command remain with me, to give both him and Commandant van Deventer promotion.

(VI)

Because of the measures taken by the enemy both forage and bread are scarce in the Colony, but still sufficient for small commandos to be active all around. Commandant Maritz has already made two expeditions to Piquetberg and Malmesbury, and in the last he was accompanied by Commandant Theron, and they have, as was expected, found everything plentiful everywhere. They have, however, also discovered that one can only maintain oneself there with considerable forces. Here we have a fairly clear country behind us up to the German territory, with the exception of a little group of Hottentots at O'okiep and a small enemy force at Kenhardt and Upington. I send a request to Combat-General P. de Villiers of Griqualand to cross the Groot River with a part of

¹ See p. 183 *supra*, note 1. On 8 February 1902 General de Wet appointed Smuts to the command of all the Orange Free State forces in the Cape Colony in succession to Commandant Kritzinger who had been reported captured. (Royal United Services Institution. Intelligence Papers. South Africa 1902. A7.)

his commando and, together with the commando present there, to try and clear Kenhardt and Upington.

I consider the time has not yet come for action by a third party,¹ as discussed by both Governments at Standerton.² It is a step which, both because of the drastic military consequences which will flow from it and the obstructive effect which it might have on eventual peace negotiations, must not be taken without the greatest circumspection.

J. C. Smuts

Assistant Commandant-General

Calvinia District, Cape Colony

16 December 1901

161 General Instruction (1901)

Vol. XCVI, no. 330

The original document is signed by Smuts and is in the handwriting of his military secretary.

ALGEMEENE INSTRUCTIE

Daar ik als Hoogste Officier der Federale legermachten in de westelijke distrikten der Kaap Kolonie in termen van het Politiek Verbond tusschen de Z.A.R. en den O.V.S. belast ben met het opperbevel over alle aldaar aanwezige commandos, maak ik aan alle officieren en burgers de volgende instructie bekend.

De officieren worden verzocht dezelve streng en nauwkeurig uit te voeren en zullen voor de stipte nakomen ervan verantwoordelijk gehouden worden.

(1) Ieder commando zal behalve een veldcornet en waar noodig een asst. v.c. te hebben, ook verdeeld worden in corporaalschappen van min of meer 12 man elk.

De corporaals moeten zijn mannen van beproefde bekwaamheid en dapperheid en zullen verantwoordelijk zijn voor de burgers onder hen, en zullen zorgen dat hun corporaalschappen bij elkander blijven en alle ongeregeldheden onmiddellijk aan den veldcornet rapporteeren.

¹ In a letter to the Colonial Secretary enclosing Smuts's two reports, the Governor of the Cape Colony explained that the 'third party' was the Colonial Afrikaners.

² At the Waterval Conference in June 1901.

- (2) Geen burger zal zonder geschreven verlof van een zijner officieren van zijn commando afwezig zijn of op plaatsen ledig liggen. Alle zoodanige rondloopers zullen door eenig comdt. of veldc. kunnen gearresteerd worden, en zullen bij het eerste overtreden pakzadel krijgen, en bij herhaling veroordeeld worden tot geeselslagen.
- (3) De commandos zullen altijd op gegeven order gelijk opzadelen en bij elkaar in corporaalschappen blijven en rijden. De veldc. zal ongehoorzamen met pakzadel straffen. Corporaalschappen zullen ook zooveel mogelijk bij elkaar afzadelen.
- (4) Officieren moeten zooveel mogelijk bij hun burgers blijven, en in elk geval moet er bij ieder klompje burgers een verantwoordelijke persoon zijn.
- (5) Geen burger zal zijn commando mogen verlaten en bij een ander commando aansluiten zonder geschreven verlof van zijn comdt. en veldc.
- (6) Waar er binnen een streek meer dan een commando aanwezig zijn, zullen zij hun best doen steeds in onderling communicatie te blijven zoowel als met den bevelvoerenden generaal, en waar een comdt. of veldc. in staat is een ander commando of klompje burgers dat in gevaar is te hulp te komen en verzuimt zulke te doen zonder gegronde reden, zal hij onderhevig zijn aan afzetten door den generaal, en zoodanige verder straf als door een raad bestaande uit den generaal en twee andere commandanten zal worden bepaald.
- (7) Alle buit op slagvelden of elders genomen zal aan de officieren overhandigd worden, en door hen naar billijkheid onder de burgers verdeeld worden uitgezonderd geld dat aan de Regeering toekomt.
- (8) Geen schieten dan alleen op vijand is toegelaten op straffen van pakzadeldienst.
- (9) Geen prisoniers van den vijand gevangen zullen met de commandos meegevoerd worden of op boerenplaatsen gebracht worden tenzij zij zich schuldig gemaakt hebben aan eenig grove misdaad. Ook zal geen prisonier doodgeschoten worden zonder verhoor voor den comdt. en veldc. verzamelijk en dan alleen in geval van geheime spionage binnen de linies. Een openlijke verkenners moet steeds als een gewoon krijgsgevangen behandeld worden. Dit geldt voor gekleurde zoowel als voor blanke prisoniers en spionen.

(10) Geen bedwelmende drank zal door de burgers mogen genomen of gedronken worden zonder speciaal verlot van hun comdt. of veldc. Dronkenschap zal gestraft worden met pakzadel, en bij herhaling met geeselslagen.

(11) Alle inwoners moeten goed behandeld worden en geen uitzondering moet gemaakt worden in geval van gekleurden of Britschgezinden waar zij zich vreedzaam gedragen en geen dienst voor den vijand verrichten. Ons streven moet zijn om alle klassen en rangen die niet bepaalde daden van vijandschap tegen ons plegen door zachte en liefdevolle behandeling voor onze zaak te winnen. Burgers die vreedzame inwoners kwaad doen of bedreigen zullen met pakzadel of geeselslagen gestraft worden.

Vooraf moet gelet worden dat de gekleurde achterrijders zich beleefd tegen over de inwoners gedragen.

(12) Geen burger zal een huis onderzoeken of erin breken of iets eruit nemen zonder tegenwoordigheid van zijn veldc. of comdt.

(13) De commandos zullen spaarzaam werken met voer, en bij uitdeeling ervan zal steeds een officier of speciaal commissaris tegenwoordig zijn, en alle vermorsen beletten. Ook met vleesch zal spaarzaam gewerkt worden, en moeten de officieren toezien dat er niets gemorsd wordt.

(14) De officieren moeten toezien dat alle proclamaties uitgevoerd worden.

(15) Een corporaal zal geen grooter straf mogen opleggen dan dienst vermeerderen. Een veldcornet zal bovendien pakzadel kunnen geven. Geeselslagen moeten alleen toegepast worden door den officiersraad, bestaande uit comdt. en veldc. Misdaden niet hierinboven vermeld zullen gestraft worden door den gemelden officiersraad, behalve in gevallen van verraad en ander misdaden met den doodstraf bedreigt welke gebracht zullen worden voor een Krijgsraad bestaande uit een comdt., twee veldcornetten en twee burgers. In zoodanige gevallen zal de doodvonnis alleen voltrokken worden na bekrachtiging van dien bevelvoerend generaal.

(16) De officieren worden verzocht deze instructie aan hunne burgers bekend te maken.

J. C. Smuts
Asst. Comdt.-Generaal

Nieuwoudville
19 December 1901

TRANSLATION: *General Instruction*

Whereas I, as Senior Officer of the Federal Forces in the western districts of the Cape Colony in terms of the Political Alliance between the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, am charged with the supreme command of all commandos there present, I make the following instruction known to all officers and burghers.

The officers are requested to carry out the same strictly and meticulously and will be held responsible for precise obedience to it.

(1) Each commando will, besides having a field-cornet and where necessary an assistant field-cornet, also be divided into corporalships of about twelve men each. The corporals must be men of proved ability and courage and will be responsible for the burghers under them, and will see that their corporalships remain together and immediately report all irregularities to the field-cornet.

(2) No burgher shall be absent from his commando or lie idle on farms without written leave from one of his officers. All such idlers may be arrested by any commandant or field-cornet, and will for the first offence receive packsaddle, and on repetition be sentenced to lashes.

(3) The commandos will always at a given order saddle together and remain and ride together in corporalships. The field-cornet will punish disobedience with packsaddle. Corporalships will also as far as possible off-saddle together.

(4) Officers must as much as possible remain with their burghers, and in any case there must be a responsible person with each group of burghers.

(5) No burgher may leave his commando and join another commando without written leave from his commandant and field-cornet.

(6) Where, within one area, more than one commando is present, they will do their best always to remain in communication with one another as well as with the commanding general, and where a commandant or field-cornet is in a position to assist another commando or group of burghers which is in danger and neglects to do this without good reason, he will be liable to dismissal by the general and such further

punishment as shall be determined by a council consisting of the general and two other commandants.

(7) All booty taken on battlefields or elsewhere will be handed over to the officers, and fairly divided by them among the burghers with the exception of money which accrues to the Government.

(8) No shooting other than at the enemy is allowed on pain of packsaddle duty.

(9) No prisoners captured from the enemy shall be taken along with the commandos or to farms unless they have been guilty of a gross crime. Nor shall any prisoner be shot without a hearing before the commandant and field-cornet together and then only in the case of secret spying within the lines. An open scout must always be treated as an ordinary prisoner of war. This applies to coloured as well as to white prisoners and spies.

(10) No intoxicating drink may be taken or drunk by the burghers without special leave of their commandant or field-cornet. Drunkenness will be punished with packsaddle and on repetition with lashes.

(11) All inhabitants must be well treated and no exception must be made in the case of coloured or British-disposed persons where they behave peaceably and perform no service for the enemy. We must strive to win for our cause by gentle and affectionate treatment all classes and ranks who do not commit definite acts of enmity against us. Burghers who harm or threaten peaceable inhabitants will be punished with packsaddle or lashes.

(12) No burgher shall search or break into a house or take anything out of it except in the presence of his field-cornet or commandant.

(13) The commandos will be sparing with forage, and at its distribution an officer or special commissioner shall always be present and forbid all wasting. Meat must also be used sparingly and the officers must see that nothing is wasted.

(14) The officers must see that all proclamations are carried out.

(15) A corporal shall not be able to impose a heavier punishment than increased duty. A field-cornet shall be able in addition to impose packsaddle. Lashes must only be imposed

by the council of officers, consisting of the commandant and field-cornet. Crimes not mentioned above will be punished by the said council of officers, except in cases of treason and other crimes punishable with death which will be brought before a military council consisting of one commandant, two field-cornets and two burghers. In such cases the death sentence will only be carried out after confirmation by the commanding general.

(16) The officers are requested to make this instruction known to their burghers.

J. C. Smuts
Assistant Commandant-General

Nieuwoudtville
19 December 1901

162 General Order (1901)

Vol. XCVI, no. 334

The original document is in Smuts's handwriting, undated and unsigned.

ALGEMENE ORDER VAN DE LEGERMAGT
ONDER BEVEL VAN ASS. COMD. GENL.
SMUTS IN DE KAAP KOLONIE

(1) Daar het noodakelijk voor de bevordering van onze zaak in de Kaap Kol. is dat er geen onnoodige leed of overlast aan de bevolking gedaan wordt en dat de sympathie der bevolking zooveel mogelijk voor ons en onze zaak gewonnen wordt, zoo worden alle officieren en burgers vermaand door hun gedrag te toonen dat zij de sympathie en ondersteuning den Koloniale bevolking waard zijn. In het bijzonder moeten de volgende orders streng worden nagekomen:

(2) Geen verbranding of vernieling van eigendommen zal plaats vinden zonder mijn uitdrukkelijk bevel.

(3) Waar mijne legermacht op een boerenplaats of dorp komt, zal geen privaat burger in een huis gaan zonder order of verlof van zijne officieren en zal hij niets zonder zoodanige order of verlof mogen nemen of zich toeëigenen. Indien burgers iets van noode hebben, kan dat door hunne officieren gekocht of

gecommandeerd worden onder afgifte van een kwitantie aan den eigenaar. Mogelijks waar burgers bij een winkel komen zullen zij daar niet ingaan, maar al het noodige zal door de officieren onder kwitantie gekocht of gecommandeerd worden, en niets meer dan noodig is zal door de officieren genomen worden.

(4) Waar personen ons vijandig zijn of den vijand informatie verstrekken zal zulks door de burgers aan hunne officieren worden medegedeeld en ook aan mij zoodat de noodige stappen kunnen genomen worden.

(5) In een slag zal geen buit genomen worden voordat de slag afgelopen is, en dan zal hetzelfde aan de behoefte en billijkheid verdeeld worden. Eenig persoon die buit maakt voor een slag afgelopen is, zal alle recht en aanspraak erop verbeuren.

(6) Veldcornetten en corporaals moeten zorgen dat hunne manschappen steeds bij elkaar zijn en blijven, uitgezonderd waar de officier uitdrukkelijk anders beveelt.

(7) Officieren moeten toezien dat de manschappen goed voor hunne paarden zorgen en degenen die verzuimen zulks te doen ter dege straffen.

(8) Onder alle omstandigheden moeten de burgers voor dagbreek op zijn en bij dagbreek hunne paarden opgezadeld hebben. Waar paarden niet in de nacht vast staan moeten zij gespannen zijn en door de wachten bij elkaar gehouden worden. Officieren moeten toezien dat stipte uitvoering hieraan gegeven wordt.

TRANSLATION: *General Order of the Forces under command of Assistant Commandant-General Smuts in the Cape Colony*

(1) Since it is essential for the progress of our cause in the Cape Colony that no unnecessary suffering or burden be put upon the population and that the sympathy of the population should as far as possible be won for our cause, all officers and burghers are exhorted to show by their behaviour that they are worthy of the sympathy and support of the Colonial population. In particular the following orders must be strictly observed:

(2) No burning or destruction of property shall take place without my express order.

(3) When my forces arrive at a village or farm, no private burgher shall go into a house without order or leave of his officers and he shall take or appropriate nothing without such order or leave. If burghers are in need of anything, it may be bought or commandeered by their officers on delivery of a receipt to the owner. Should burghers come upon a shop they shall not go into it, but what is necessary shall be bought or commandeered by the officers for a receipt, and nothing more than is necessary shall be taken by the officers.

(4) Where persons are hostile to us or afford the enemy information, the burghers shall inform their officers and also myself of this so that the necessary steps may be taken.

(5) No booty shall be taken in a battle until the battle is over, and then it shall be divided according to need and fairness. Any person who takes booty before a battle is over, shall forfeit all right and claim to it.

(6) Field-cornets and corporals must see that their men are always together and stay together, except where the officer expressly orders otherwise.

(7) Officers must see that the men care well for their horses and punish thoroughly those who neglect to do this.

(8) Under all circumstances burghers must be up before daybreak and at daybreak have their horses saddled. If horses are not tied up at night they must be hobbled and kept together by the sentries. Officers must see that this is strictly carried out.

Nos. 163-165 are taken from documents in the Leyds-Argief, No. 94, Deel II, in the State Archives, Pretoria.

163 Report (1901)

Geheim

Niet voor publicatie

(III)

BUITENLANDSCHE COMMUNICATIE

Ik heb reeds gezegd in Rapport No. II, dat er thans vrije communicatie bestaat tusschen deze deelen en het Duitsch gebied. Ik ben thans bezig een geregelde communicatie met het buitenland te bewerkstelligen en indien de beide Regeeringen

hiervan gebruik wenschen te maken, kunnen zij de rapporten naar mij doorzenden. Zoo deze geheim zijn, moeten zij in een code gesteld worden hetwelk ik aan Vldk. Borrius, die met dit Rapport naar de Z.A.R. gaat, zal geven; deze code zend ik nog dit jaar tezamen met breedvoerige rapporten over onze zaak naar onze vrienden in Europa, zoodat ook van daar geheime rapporten aan ons kunnen komen. Hoewel ik vele couranten in de Kaap Kolonie heb gesien, heb ik erin weinig buitenlandsch nieuws gevonden dat van belang voor onze zaak is: dat Prest. McKinley vermoord is en opgevolgd is door den Boersgesinden Roosevelt, en dat Dr Kuyper Premier in Holland geworden is, is U zeker bekend. Ook is ons een uittreksel uit een buitenlandsche courant geheim toegezonden waarin beweerd wordt onder andere dat Frankrijk en Rusland de verzekering zouden gegeven hebben dat zij in de laatste instantie, al was het met de wapenen, zullen intervenieeren ter handhaving onzer onafhankelijkheid. Op welke gronden dit punt berust weet ik niet.

(Get.) J. C. Smuts
Asst. Comdt.-Genl.

Dist. Calvinia, K.K.
16 December 1901

TRANSLATION

Secret

Not for publication

(III)

Communication Abroad

I have already said, in Report No. II, that there is at present free communication between these parts and German territory. I am busy establishing regular communication with countries abroad, and should the two Governments wish to make use of this, they may send reports to me. If these are secret, they must be put into code, which I shall give to Field-cornet Borrius, who goes with this report to the South African Republic. I am (in the course of this year) sending this code, together with detailed reports, to our friends in Europe, so that secret reports from there can also reach us. Although I have seen many newspapers in the Cape Colony, I have found little foreign news in them that is important for our cause. That

President McKinley has been assassinated and succeeded by Roosevelt who is well-disposed to the Boers, and that Dr Kuyper has become Premier of Holland is probably known to you. Also, an extract from a foreign newspaper has been secretly sent to us in which, *inter alia*, it is stated that France and Russia had given the assurance that they would, in the last resort, intervene, even with arms, to maintain our independence. On what grounds this item rests I do not know.

J. C. Smuts
Assistant Commandant-General

Calvinia District, Cape Colony
16 December 1901

164 Memorandum

MEMO. VAN ONDERHOUD MET GENERAAL SMUTS TE VAN RHYNSDORP KAAP KOLONIE

20ste December 1901

Vraag

Waarom dan ik als Commandant zijnde, te worden afgevaardigd en niet rapport ridders, die voor dat doel worden aangehouden?

Antwoord

Daar U prezies de toestand van ons commandos en burgers algemeen bekend zijn, ben ik genoodzaak de lasten op uw schouders te leggen, en ook wel om de volgende redenen.

Indien geld kas het toelaat, 10,000 pakken kleeren en schoenen aan te kopen (de gewenschte qualiteit) om zoo spoedig mogelijk door te brengen, als ook indien mogelijk, (doch zeer verschigtig) wapens door te smokkellen, belovende dat uw commando op ontvangst van rapporten van uw aankomst, gestationeerd zal worden, op de grens of elders naar uw verkiezing, om U van daar behulpzaam te wezen.

Dan ook om een behoorlijke communicatie lijn van rapport ridders te stichten, en op U verzoek zal ik burgers van hier sturen, en voor dat doel benoemen. (Als ook zal ik U de sluitel [*sic*] van code geven). Als ook indien mogelijk om wat geld

mede te brengen, om in dringende gevallen alhier te worden gebruik.

En ten slotte natuurlijk rapporten terug te brengen dus in belang onzen zaak ben ik verplicht U aftevaardigen, en U verzoekende klaar te maken om in het begin Januari uw reis voortezetten. Deze opdracht zal in kort aan Z.H.Ed. den Staats President worden medegedeeld U tevens opdragende verder uiteensetting daar van te geven.

F. S. Alleman
Comd.

TRANSLATION: *Memorandum of Interview with General Smuts at Van Rhynsdorp, Cape Colony: 20 December 1901*

Question

Why I, being a Commandant, should be deputed and not despatch riders, who are kept for that purpose.

Answer

As you are familiar with the exact condition of our commandos and burghers in general, I am compelled to lay the burdens on your shoulders, and that for the following reasons.

If the Treasury allows it, to buy 10,000 suits of clothing and shoes (the desired quality), to bring them through as soon as possible; also if possible, (but very cautiously) to smuggle through weapons, promising that your commando, on receiving reports of your arrival, will be stationed on the border or elsewhere as you choose, to aid you from there.

Also to organize a proper communication line of despatch riders, and at your request I shall send burghers from here and appoint them for that purpose. (I shall also give you the code key.) Also, if possible, to bring some money with you to be used here in urgent cases.

And finally, of course, to bring back reports. Thus, in the interests of our cause I am compelled to depute you, requesting you to make ready to continue your journey at the beginning of January. His Honour the State President will be briefly informed of this mission; at the same time you are commissioned to explain it more fully.

F. S. Alleman
Commandant

165 F. S. Alleman to W. J. Leyds

Brussel
31 Maart 1902

Hoog Edele Heer: Ik heb de eer U hoog Ed. mede te delen, dat ik afgevaardigd werd door Asst. Comdt. Generaal Smuts Kaap Kolonie vergeseld met Luitenant's Malan en Steyn zoo als zal blijken uit aangehechte brief aan Z.H.Ed. den Staats President.

Ik nam afscheid van mijn Generaal en burgers op den 6de dag Januari te Nieuwenhoudsville Dist. Kalvinia, onder gejuicht van sympathie medelijdenheid, wegens mijn verre reis. Bij mijn aankomst te Oranje Rivier, had ik zeker zaken te onderzoeken volgens mijn opdracht, en was genoodzaak Luitenant Steyn naar Generaal Smuts terug te zenden, hem in kennis stellende met zekere onregelmatigheden door zekere burgers over de grens van West Africa gepleegd, hem verzoevende om strenger regels neer te leggen voor commandos gestationeerd langs den Oranje Rivier, alzoo dat ons communicatie lijn niet gestoord word, of op dat het behoorlijk gesticht kan worden.

Mijn reis van daar met Luitenant Malan voortzettende ben ik veilig hier te Brussel aangekomen en juist op den tijd door mijn Generaal uitgedacht. En verblijd zijne, mijn opgedragen lasten hiermede voorlopig te voltooien, met hier aangehechten, alle stukken rapporten door mijn Generaal aan mij overhandig.

No. 1. Z. Hoog Ed. Staats President S. J. P. Kruger.

2. " " " "

3. " " " "

4. Expeditie naar de Kaap Kolonie.

5. Brief aan H. F. Stead Esq.

Copij C. Brief van President Steyn aan Lord Kitchener

Met hoogachting, heb ik de eer te zijn, Uw Dns. Dienaar,
F. S. Alleman.
Commandant

TRANSLATION

Brussels
31 March 1902

Honoured Sir, I have the honour to inform Your Honour that I have been deputed by Assistant Commandant General Smuts, Cape Colony, accompanied by Lieutenants Malan [D.] and

Steyn [W.] as will appear from the attached letter to His Honour the State President.¹

I took leave of my General and burghers on the sixth day of January at Nieuwoudtville, Calvinia District, amid sympathetic cheers on account of my distant journey. On arriving at the Orange River, I had, according to my orders, to investigate certain matters and found it necessary to send Lieutenant Steyn back to General Smuts to inform him of certain irregularities committed by certain burghers across the border of [South] West Africa, and to request him to lay down stricter rules for the commandos stationed along the Orange River, so that our communication line will not be interrupted and so that it can be properly established.

Continuing my journey from there with Lieutenant Malan, I arrived safely here in Brussels exactly at the time calculated by my General. And I am glad to complete for the time being the tasks deputed to me by attaching to this all the documents and reports handed to me by my General.

No. 1. His Honour State President S. J. P. Kruger¹

2. His Honour State President S. J. P. Kruger²

3. His Honour State President S. J. P. Kruger³

4. Expedition to the Cape Colony⁴

5. Letter to H. F. Stead, Esq.⁵

Copy C. Letter from President Steyn to Lord Kitchener.⁶

With respect, I have the honour to be, Your obedient servant,

F. S. Alleman

Commandant

¹ 166.

² A report to Kruger entitled 'Federale Machten in de Kaap Kolonie', the substance of which was repeated in 170. Original in the Leyds-Argief, No. 94, Deel II, in the State Archives, Pretoria.

³ A long letter from Smuts to President Kruger dated January 1902 from Van Rhynsdorp. It was published in April in the Netherlands, France, Germany and Great Britain as a propaganda pamphlet. It surveys the military position and accuses the British command of using barbarous measures against the Boers and their families. The original draft in Smuts's handwriting is Vol. CII no. 5. The copy sent by Alleman is marked by Smuts 'voor publicatie' (for publication) and is in the Leyds-Argief, No. 94, Deel II, in the State Archives, Pretoria.

⁴ 159.

⁵ 168 and 169. Stead's initials were W. T.

⁶ A reply to a letter from Kitchener enclosing his proclamation of 6 August 1901. Steyn's letter, dated 15 August 1901, was published as an annexure to Smuts's report described in note 3 above.

166 To S. J. P. Kruger

Original in the Leyds-Argief, No. 94, Deel II, in the State Archives, Pretoria. Published in Leyds, op. cit. Vol. II, p. 197.

Van Rhynsdorp
4 Januari 1902

HoogEdele Staatspresident, Ik zend naar UHEd. over met rapporten Commandant F. Alleman, en Luitenanten D. Malan en Steyn. Zij zijn allen vertrouwbare personen. Ik vertrouw dat de rapporten zullen bijdragen tot bevordering van de kennis onzer zaak. Mijn opdracht aan Commandant Alleman is niet alleen deze rapporten naar UHEd. en de Deputatie door te brengen, maar ook om zoo spoedig mogelijk met rapporten en nieuws van Europa terug te keeren.

Verder heb ik hem opgedragen na te gaan en uit te vinden in hoeverre het voor ons mogelijk is eene min of meer bestendige communicatie door West-Afrika met de buitenwereld te hebben. Wij hebben groote behoefte aan kleeren, stevels, geweren en ammunitie, dijnamiet en geld, zooals hij nader aan UHEd. zal mededeelen. Hij moet uitvinden hoever UHEd. ons met deze artikelen kan voorzien en of het mogelijk is zonder te groot gevaar dezelve door te krijgen tot aan Grootrivier. Bij zijn terugkomst is het mijn plan dit werk onder zijn beheer in West-Afrika te stellen. Indien doenlijk kan hij reeds bij zijn aankomst in Europa met het werk beginnen.

Vertrouwende dat UHEd. ons behulpzaam zal zijn dit ons doel te bereiken en na hartelijke groeten en heilwenschen, Uw dienstw. dienaar

J. C. Smuts
Staatsprocureur en Asst. Comdt.-Generaal

TRANSLATION

Van Rhynsdorp
4 January 1902

Most Honoured State President, I am sending to Your Honour, with reports, Commandant F. Alleman and Lieutenants D. Malan and Steyn. They are all reliable persons. I hope that the reports will help to further knowledge of our course. My orders to Commandant Alleman are not only to

take these reports through to Your Honour and the Deputation, but also to return with reports and news from Europe as soon as possible.

I have also ordered him to enquire and find out how far it is possible for us to have more or less steady communication through West Africa with the outside world. We have great need of clothes, boots, rifles and ammunition, dynamite and money, as he will inform Your Honour in greater detail. He must find out to what extent Your Honour can provide us with these articles and whether it is possible to get them through to the Orange River without too great danger. When he returns I intend to put this work under his direction in West Africa. If feasible he can begin the work on his arrival in Europe.

Trusting that Your Honour will help us to achieve this aim and with hearty greetings and good wishes, Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts

State Attorney and Assistant Commandant-General

The originals of **167**, **168** and **169** are among the Fischer Papers in the State Archives in Bloemfontein. **167** and **168** are in Smuts's handwriting; **169** is a neat handwritten copy signed and corrected by Smuts. **168** and **169** were not sent on to Stead by Fischer, who must have received them through Alleman early in April 1902, and they remained unpublished.

167 To A. Fischer

Vol. 99, no. 43

Dist. Calvinia

4 Januari 1902

Waarde Vriend, Ik zend enige rapporten naar Europa welke ik hoop U zullen bereiken en interesseeren. Daaruit zal U genoeg zien wat de toestand van zaken in Zuid-Afrika is. Wij zullen alles in ons vermogen doen onze zaak in de K.K. vooruit te stooten, en vertrouwen dat U in Europa het uwe zal bijdragen onze zaak te bevorderen. De groote vrees is dat als de oorlog nog lang gaat aanhouden, er hongersnood in Zuid-Afrika zal komen; daarin mag ook een verborgen voordeel voor ons zijn, maar ik moet erkennen dat ik er voor bang ben. Ik weet niet of Z.A. nog veel langer den last kan dragen, daarom moeten wij een billijke schikking op de basis onzer onafhankelijkheid

niet uit het oog verliezen. De rapporten door mij gezonden kunnen alle (behalve die aan de la Rey over toestanden in de K.K. en over buitenlandsche communicatie) aan de pers worden medegedeeld, en ik hoop dat zij zullen bijdragen tot de algemeene kennis en bevordering onzer zaak.

Ik zend aan U ook een open brief welken ik aan W. T. Stead geschreven heb, en hoop dat U zal zorgen dat hij dien in hande krijg. Natuurlijk kan U erover beschikken naar goedvinden. De brief is bedoeld het Engelsche volk duidelijk te maken dat de Boeren in het veld niet roovers en bandieten zijn maar de bloem van ons volk; dat het idee van hun groote oormacht een ijdele waan is, en door op hun geweten te drukken te trachten hen tot bekeering op de Z.A. kwestie te brengen. De brief is zoo geschreven dat er geen aanstoot uit kan genomen worden en zal, hoop ik, goed werk doen. Ik heb ze aan Stead gericht als een erkenning van de groote diensten door hem in belang den rechtvaardigheid verricht. Ik sluit ook in eenige regelen aan hem persoonlijk welke U hem kan overzenden.

U moet niet vergeten dat wij allen in Zuid-Afrika smachten naar nieuws van alle soorten. Ik zal zeer dankbaar zijn indien U mij uitknipsels en stukken wil toezenden welke ons weer min of meer op hoogte van zaken in Europa kunnen brengen en zal zorgen dat dezelve dan weer verder naar de Regeeringen in de Republieken gezonden worden. Alle politieke kwesties welke de verhoudingen der verskillende Regeeringen aantoonen interesseeren ons in het bijzonder.

Ik heb geen tijd veel te schrijven; daarom wensch ik u slechts een voorspoedig Nieuw Jaar. Moge hetzelfde een einde aan onze ellende brengen. Wat ons volk vandaag uitstaat gaat werkelijk alle verstand te boven. Mijn vrouw, die thans in het kamp te Durban is maar die ek het geluk had in Standerton te zien, deelde mij mede dat een knap dokter te Maritzburg haar had gezegd dat bijna geen vrouw weer uit de kampen zouden gaan zonder permanente kwalen als een nasleepsel van de angst er door hen geleden. Maar hoe zwaarder het lijden hoe beter vechten zij; de Boeren hebben zeker nooit in den oorlog gevochten zooals in de laatsten tijd. Wat *dat* betreft heb ik geen vrees voor de toekomst, maar men moet de geheele kwestie in het oog houden.

Geef mijne hartelijke groete aan Mrs [*sic*] Fischer en geloof mij, Steeds geheel den uwen

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Calvinia District

4 January 1902

Dear Friend, I send reports to Europe which I hope will reach and interest you. From these you will see well enough what the state of affairs in South Africa is. We shall do everything in our power to advance our cause in the Cape Colony and trust that you in Europe will do your share in furthering our cause. The great fear is that, if the war still lasts a long time, there will be famine in South Africa; there may be a hidden advantage in that for us, but I must admit that I am afraid of it. I do not know if South Africa can bear the burden much longer, and so we must not lose sight of a reasonable settlement on the basis of our independence. The reports sent by me may all be communicated to the press (except that to de la Rey about conditions in the Cape Colony and about communication overseas) and I hope they will contribute to the general knowledge and furtherance of our cause.

I also send you an open letter which I have written to W. T. Stead¹ and hope you will see that he receives it. Of course you may use it as you think fit. The letter is designed to make it clear to the English people that the Boers in the field are not robbers and bandits but the flower of our people; that the idea of their greatly superior numbers is an illusion; and to try to convert them on the South African question by working on their conscience. The letter is so written that no offence can be taken at it and it will, I hope, do good work. I have addressed it to Stead as an acknowledgement of the great services done by him in the interests of justice. I also enclose a few lines to him personally which you may send him.²

You must not forget that all of us in South Africa yearn for news of all kinds. I shall be very grateful if you would send me cuttings and documents which will more or less keep us *au fait* with matters in Europe, and I shall see that they are sent

¹ 169.

² 168.

on to the Governments in the Republics. All political matters that indicate the relations between the various Governments are of particular interest to us.

I have no time to write much, so only wish you a prosperous New Year. May it bring an end to our misery. What our people are suffering today really passes all comprehension. My wife, who is now in the camp at Durban¹ but whom I had the good fortune to see in Standerton, told me that a clever doctor in Maritzburg had told her that hardly a woman would leave the camps without chronic disease as an after-effect of the anxiety they have suffered there. But, the worse the suffering the better they fight; the Boers have surely never in the war fought as of late. On *that* score I have no fear for the future, but one must keep the whole matter in view.

Give my hearty greetings to Mrs Fischer and believe me,
Yours ever,

J. C. Smuts

168 To W. T. Stead

Vol. 99, no. 44

Calvinia District
Cape Colony
4 January 1902

Dear Mr Stead, Although I have not the honour of knowing you personally, I have taken the liberty to address to you a long letter which I hope you will receive in due course. It is an attempt to discuss the main features of British military policy in South Africa with the principal consequences thereof. Many things there are which, though perfectly true, I could not say, as they would prove too unpalatable to the British Public; but I hope enough has been said to show them the true inwardness of the present situation in South Africa. I have tried to avoid saying anything which could give offence and so prevent a fair and quiet hearing. I have consequently avoided all reference to the great danger which today threatens British authority all over South Africa—a danger which is not the result of any

¹ After meeting her husband at Standerton Isie Smuts returned to live in the Pietermaritzburg house under military surveillance. She was never sent to a concentration camp.

imaginary Africander conspiracy, but of British military methods and the way the deepest feelings of the South African population have been outraged thereby.

It would be idle for me to pretend that I have any extra sympathy for the British people after the cruel wrongs and irreparable injuries which have been heaped upon my people. Still I cannot forget that I owe my education and some of the greatest pleasures of life to England, to its great literature and its profound thinkers. And it is to me saddening to think that a nation which has done so much for human liberty and thought should now turn back on all its most sacred traditions and deliberately perpetrate a crime in South Africa which has probably no parallel in the history of the world. It really seems to me as if it cannot be the same people which I learnt to know years ago, as if it is no longer itself or master of its actions, as if it is possessed by some malignant demonic influence which is impelling it ever farther under its despotic sway. My hope and prayer is that it may be rid of this demon of Jingoism or Imperialism or whatever else you call it, and that an end may be made to all those horrors and sufferings in South Africa which no one who has not seen them will ever understand. Let it however be as God wills. To my dying day I shall remain thankful that it has been permitted to me to see a picture of human constancy, of silent and uncomplaining endurance, of heroic battling for the highest and noblest ideal of man, and of perfect trust in God, such as perhaps the modern world has no parallel for. And it must be a consolation to you, Sir, that amid circumstances the most untoward and discouraging you have borne your part bravely and nobly in that heroic conflict. Man's highest boast and pride and achievement will become as dust and nothing and be blown away by the currents of History; but the work done for Righteousness and Justice and Liberty remains for ever, and becomes part of the indestructible moral Energy of our race. Nobly have you done your part in that great work; God bless you therefor.

Wishing you health and strength and success in your work,
I remain, Yours very faithfully,

J. C. Smuts
*(State Attorney and Assistant Commandant-General
of the South African Republic)*

Van Rhynsdorp, Cape Colony

4 January 1902

Dear Sir, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to thank you with all my heart for the noble and self-sacrificing work you have been doing among your countrymen in the interests of honour and justice. You have been covered with obloquy for this work; you have been represented as a pro-Boer, a Boer, an enemy of your people and abettor of its enemies. It is not your fault that the Boers stand for freedom and righteousness just as surely as the British people, under its present political leadership, stands for despotism, for [one defaced word] and for grab. You have refused to desert the cause of national honour and international justice simply because that cause happens to coincide more with the policy of the Boers than with that of your own people and Government in the present conflict; you have refused to allow your moral and political judgment to be influenced by the disturbing presence of the Boer cause; you have declined to sully your conscience simply because for the nonce the Government of your country have forgotten that in politics also 'Honesty is the best policy' and mistakenly suppose that the British Empire must take precedence of the Empire of Truth and Justice. For that noble constancy you are held in high honour and your work is watched with grateful interest by the whole Boer people. For they too have prayed and toiled to remain constant to the Right, amid disasters, hardships and discouragements, almost unparalleled in the history of the world, they too have striven to be faithful to their convictions and aspirations. With grateful recognition the Boers regard your noble work; and not only yours, but that of all our friends and sympathizers over the whole world. It is a great consolation to us that all over the world generous hearts are beating for us, and that even in Great Britain a minority comprising many that are most distinguished in politics, literature and science refuses to join in that conspiracy of silence which spells more real danger for the British people and some of its best traditions than for the cause of the Boers.

Through you I wish also to express our sincerest thanks to all those who, whether sympathizing or not with the Boer cause,

have contributed and still are contributing funds and comforts for the relief of the prisoners, women and children of our race who are pining away in the British prisons all over the world. In the spiritual order of the world even a cup of cold water counts for much; who knows how far such generous gifts may not go in ultimately redeeming the blunders of the politicians.

It may not be amiss to make a few general remarks about the present situation from the Boer point of view. So much that one reads in the English newspapers which occasionally fall into our hands is based on entire ignorance of the most elementary facts, that it may not be without its use for a Boer to put down honestly and faithfully some of the main facts of the present situation from the Boer point of view. How many of the errors so sedulously propagated and multiplied by the British press are due to actual ignorance, and how many to malice or other wrongful motives I will not undertake to say. When a member of the British Government declares officially in the House of Commons (as was done some considerable time back) that the destruction of farms in the two South African Republics was not the work of the British columns, but of the recalcitrant Boers who wished to coerce their loyally disposed fellow-burghers; when Mr Chamberlain officially declares in the House of Commons that the policy of farm-burning has been discontinued at the very moment when almost every farm in the two Republics was being burned and destroyed under directions of Lord Kitchener; when, at first, it was officially represented that the massing of the Boer women and children in the prison camps or death-traps, which go under the ridiculous misnomer of 'Refugee' camps, happened not under military compulsion but from the ardent desire of these people to enjoy the humane and beneficent protection of the British military authorities, although every British officer and private in South Africa knew that these poor non-combatants were enduring the most cruel hardships in trying to avoid capture by the British columns; when, later on, it was again officially represented that such captures, although under military compulsion, were due to the refusal of the Boers to support their women and children, although the Boers had made provision for their families by stocking every farm with food or the means

of procuring food for an indefinite period, and this very fact was given as a reason for the destruction of the farms; when finally this very fictitious refusal of theirs to support their families is officially alleged by the High Commissioner as his main reason for confiscating the movable and immovable property of those lion-hearts that still continue in the field;—one seems to hear very distinct echoes of Lord Milner's 'Carnival of Mendacity'.¹ But these misrepresentations are propagated, no doubt in good faith, by the British press and combine with the other existing misconceptions and prejudices to produce in the public mind an idea of the existing state of affairs as like the truth as night is to day. And when some generous and brave spirit rises in this wilderness of misrepresentations to state his honest convictions he is ordered or hooted down with the cry that he is encouraging the Boers to further resistance! In other words 'Speak not the truth, in order that it may not perchance prevail'. But *magna est veritas, et praevalabit*. The continued resistance of the Boers is not based on the recognition of the justice of their cause or the condemnation of the suicidal impolicy of the British Government and military authorities by this or that individual Englishman, however conspicuous or influential; it springs from quite different motives, as I shall immediately point out; and the policy of 'hush' will only serve to hasten and increase that disillusionment which is surely, however silently, coming—a disillusionment which will affect not only Great Britain, but also Greater Britain, and may have the most far-reaching consequences for the present British Empire.

Perhaps the most useful course for me to adopt would be to give a brief description of the desolate state of the two South African Republics as it was when I saw them last in September, and then to discuss some of the more important consequences of that ruin and desolation; next, to discuss some further results of the British military policy in South Africa which must have a very important bearing on the continuance and

¹ In a despatch to Chamberlain from Cape Town dated 6 February 1901, Milner wrote: 'Never in my life have I read of, much less experienced, such a carnival of mendacity as that which accompanied the pro-Boer agitation in this Colony at the end of last year. And these libels continue to make themselves felt'. See C. Headlam, *The Milner Papers*, Vol. II, p. 197.

final issue of the conflict; and finally to wind up with a suggestion and a warning. I shall not enter into any details, as that would take me too far afield, but I shall confine myself to the most important general features and forces of the present situation from the Boer point of view.

The condition of the two South African Republics in very truth baffles description. Not William the Conqueror himself created a more complete desert between the Tyne and the Humber in the eleventh century than Lord Kitchener has created in South Africa in the twentieth. Throughout both Republics all farms and the buildings thereon have been burnt down—all food-stuffs or means of obtaining food, such as farming implements of all descriptions, have been ruthlessly destroyed; the towns not occupied by the British have been burnt down, the very churches not having escaped this sacrilege. All living animals—horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, fowls, even dogs, have been killed, and generally in a manner too shocking to relate. More than once I set my commandos to kill the poor brutes which had been maimed by the British soldiery and then left by them to slow death and starvation. One would often come to a farm and find thousands of sheep in the kraals or pens with broken legs or ribs, bayonet stabs, cut off tongues, and other terrible injuries; even four or five days after atrocities had been committed one would find these poor dumb brutes writhing in pain, and struggling and bleating for water and food among the dead. And these were not isolated scenes—they could be seen on almost every farm. I have seen strong and brave men with tears in their eyes—totally overcome by the sight of this horrible suffering.

The women and children and men too old to fight have been deported to the prison camps where under the beneficent shadow of the British flag they perish in far greater numbers than combatants fall on the battle-fields of South Africa. To me the saddest sight in this war has been the sufferings which women and children have endured to escape capture by the British columns. I have found them wandering in far-away forests, seeking shelter among the barbarous Kaffirs, by whom in many cases they have been subsequently murdered; I have seen them hiding in the mountains, preferring the companionship of the beasts of the wild to immolation in the comfortable

'refugee' camps. In hidden places, in marshy pools and stagnant reed-overgrown rivers they have sought shelter with their little ones, bidding their husbands and friends fight on for freedom and leave them to the protection of God. Like wild beasts they have been everywhere hunted out with Lee-Metford and Maxim and consigned to the death-in-life of the prison camps. And why were they so afraid of capture? Some had too intense a national feeling to submit under the hated enemy before having exhausted every resource of escape; many dreaded the revolting behaviour of the soldiery, especially of the Coloured boys, who were not seldom guilty of the most shocking treatment of these poor women; most were scared by the reports of the awful death-rate among the children in the camps, and loved their little ones too dearly to let them willingly go to almost certain death. For these reasons the brave Boer women have endured hardships and undergone privations such as one only reads of in the ancient records of Christian martyrdom. 'They were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth'. (*Hebrews XI: 37, 38*).

Such is the condition of the two Republics today; a waste wilderness without living soul or beast, the primeval stillness of which is only broken by the march of Boer commandos or English columns. One has to read the unrivalled pictures of Isaiah or Jeremiah in order to get an adequate idea of this abomination of desolation. I do not ask what rules of international law sanction this rapine and ruin. I only state it as a fact—as a fact which I have seen with my own eyes and which is beyond all manner of doubt or dispute; *quaeque ipse vidi et quorum pars magna fui*.¹ I do not believe that any man who has not actually seen this awful state of affairs can have an idea, either from the above or any other description, of what the two Republics are today. No wonder that for many burghers the state of their desolate country has become a sight too painful to bear; no wonder they prefer to continue the war beyond its borders. With the sacred image of their proud and dear little

¹ All of which I myself saw and much of which I was. Vergil, *Aeneid*, Bk. ii, l. 5.

Republic enshrined in their hearts they prefer to continue elsewhere the struggle for independence; yet with their latest breath they shall lovingly think back of the land of their passionate love: 'If ever I forget thee, O Jerusalem!'¹

The British military authorities adopted the policy of devastation and of treating non-combatant women and children as prisoners of war, not from any motives of humanity, but because they expected it to lead to a speedy conclusion of the war. They expected the Boers to quail before the absolute destruction of their property and the sufferings of their women and children. This latter measure was especially expected to hit the Boers in their most vulnerable part. For it is a well-known fact that the Boers are an intensely domestic people, that husbands and wives, parents and children, are intensely attached to each other, and all to their little house on the veld—hallowed to them by long years of patient toil, of enduring affection, and of noble memories of trials and dangers overcome. The said military authorities, however, made one fatal error in their calculations—an error which they will continue to make to the very end of the war. This error was the supposition that the Boers were a cowardly and faint-hearted people—a supposition which still continues to shape their policy. A weak man is broken by adversity; the sight of the ruin of his property and family is sufficient in most cases to utterly crush his spirit. On the other hand a brave and hardy spirit is braced up by adversity—he does not sink hopelessly under calamities and wrongs; if he is really brave these will only serve to nerve him to greater efforts, to grapple with adverse fate until he wrings from it a noble crown of victorious achievement. The English might have known from South African history that the Boers are—even apart from their military qualities—a race of indomitable spirit and unbaffled persistence. They might have known, but they chose not to know. They had learnt in the case of all the savage tribes with which they had come in contact during recent generations that one big defeat, followed by the burning of their chief town or kraal and the raiding of their cattle, was sufficient to utterly cow and prostrate them. And so they expected the same from the despised Boer—

¹ 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.' *Psalms*, cxxxvii. 1.

forgetting their unique record of heroic persistence for more than two centuries. But the policy of spoliation and the infliction of suffering on non-combatants—so far from producing the expected result—had exactly the opposite effect. It raised the spirit of the Boers from the temporary stupor into which the victories of Lord Roberts had sent them; it sent the iron deeper into their soul; it produced for them those tragic sufferings which always and everywhere serve to deepen, purify and strengthen the heroic spirit; and finally it served to make clear to a strongly religious people like them that God could not be on the side of an Empire which could inflict such irreparable wrongs and cruel injuries on its prostrate enemy; that although the God of Battles might not be with them yet the Spirit that does not quench the smoking flax nor bruise the broken reed¹ was with them to strengthen and sustain. And thus the final effect of the policy that was intended to crush the spirit of the Boers and bring the war to a speedy conclusion has been to inspire new courage into their hearts, to urge them to a more dogged resistance, and to open up to them new vistas of eventual success.

A second important consequence of this policy of spoliation has been the elimination from the Boer ranks of all those elements which are useless from a military point of view. The ordeal has been too terrible for the weak and the faint. How fiery that ordeal has been the Boers alone know. How often one hears the captured British soldiers complain of their tiredness and exhaustion—and yet they do not go through a tenth part of the privations and toils which the fighting Boer has to undergo. One little Boer commando has often ten English columns, each more numerous than itself, to keep it going. These columns sometimes act simultaneously, but oftener relieve each other so that the strain does not remain unbroken. But the little Boer commando knows no rest night or day. Even the superior physical hardihood and military fitness of the Boer was in no way proportional to the greater magnitude of the work which he had to perform. The consequence was that the weaker went to the wall. First of all went the irresponsible braggarts who had clamoured for war and had called the

¹ 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.' *Isaiah* xlii. 3.

peacemakers cowards and traitors. The man enslaved to drink or other pleasant vices of civilization also dropped out early in the struggle. The man who expected to gain something from continuing in the field; the man who preferred to protect his property; the man who had lost all hope of a successful issue followed; and finally went the man who laboured under no moral, but merely a physical, disability, the man who wished sincerely to go on fighting but whom ill-health or old age separated from the Boer ranks. I do not mean to say that good men have not been captured. Many of our bravest and best are today prisoners of war; and many of our bravest and best have added their heroic dust to the blood-consecrated soil of South Africa. But what I mean to point out is that the long lists of monthly captures by Lord Kitchener comprise almost purely those elements which the Boer forces can very well miss now, and shew a diminution in our numbers which is not in any way a proportionate reduction of our fighting strength. There remain the stout-hearted and able-bodied—the men of physical courage, the men of moral endurance, whom self-respect and honour keep true to their country's cause; the men of invincible hope in the future and child-like faith in God—truly a select band, the like of whom, I fondly think, is not to be found in the wide world today. Not a numerous band, but in a different way just as dangerous as the far more numerous armies that held the Tugela and the Modder River against the flower of Britain's troops.

And these are the men whom Mr Chamberlain, standing in his place in the House of Commons, does not shrink from classifying as brigands and ruffians. These are the men against whom the High Commissioner has the infantile audacity to hurl his proclamation of permanent banishment and universal confiscation. As if the mountains will depart before mere declamation and threats! As if the chosen band of lion-hearts on whom rest the hope of a nation and the future of a continent, who have faced death, loss and sorrow in all shapes and forms, will now at last break down because an angry Minister of State in London calls them names, or his bewildered deputy at Pretoria threatens new pains and penalties!

Mr Chamberlain's language is however not a mere freak of ill-temper, but the expression of a coolly calculated policy. He

divides the history of the war up to date into the three stages of legitimate warfare, guerilla warfare, and brigandage—this last being the unhappy dispensation under which we are now living. In his mind and in that of the British War Office every successive change in war policy and every new departure on a large scale from the recognized rules of the laws of war is preceded by a fictitious new stage in the development of the war, which is alleged as an excuse for such new departure. Thus when the policy of wholesale devastation had been decided upon and only some more or less specious excuse for its application was needed, it was forthwith discovered that the Boers were no longer carrying on a legitimate warfare—that, in fact, they had degenerated into mere guerillas. What was meant thereby nobody knew or knows to this day. The Boers were lawful belligerents under the rules of international law, and were recognized as such; they were not committing any acts which rendered them liable to forfeit this character of lawful belligerents; no such acts were ever alleged against them and no denial of their belligerent character attempted; and they therefore remained entitled to the benefits of all those rules of war which are recognized among civilized peoples and to which Great Britain herself was bound in solemn conventions. They were not guerillas or illegal belligerents because of the lightness and great mobility of their commandos, for then the entire British army today in South Africa are also guerillas, as the British generals have at last learned their lesson and now fight with as light and mobile columns as the Boers themselves. They were not guerillas or disentitled to belligerency because of their alleged want of organization, for the rigorous organization of the Boer commandos was not only a fact, but was also well known to the other side who officially and otherwise kept maintaining that the continuance of the Boers in the field was due to the coercion of their leaders—a statement which clearly presupposes a remarkable degree of organization. And yet in some inexplicable mysterious way they were called guerillas, and the name immediately led to a flagrant repudiation of all the rules and usages which protect non-combatants and private (enemy's) property.

Latterly I notice another ground of justification for this procedure has been sought in the rule which allows destruction

of such property in case of imperative necessity; but unfortunately, if such necessity ever existed in the case of the two Republics, it will, by parity of reasoning, exist even more strongly in the event of a hostile invasion of Great Britain. Indeed, such a loose interpretation of the narrow rule of necessity will soon lead to an entire repudiation of the laws of war. But an even more flagrant case of this manufacture of fictitious stages in the war, intended to serve as excuses for brutal disregard of law and humanity, is afforded by the alleged existence of brigandage. We all know what brigands are: they are robbers and pirates on land, criminals who have repudiated the usages of civilized society and exist by robbery, murder, abduction and rapine, and are banded together for such nefarious ends. To apply these or similar terms to the Boers today in the field can only raise the laughter of an incredulous world, and resort is therefore had to the following mode of proof. A solemn blue-book is published containing all the evidence which has been collected up to date which goes to prove that the Boers have killed wounded soldiers on the field of battle. I understand that such atrocities are alleged to have been committed at Graspan¹ in the beginning of the war, where the Boers were, according to the official report of Lord Methuen, soon put to flight and could therefore scarcely have had wounded soldiers in their hands; and indeed no complaint to the Boer authorities was ever made by Lord Methuen at the time. Similar acts are also alleged to have been perpetrated at Vlakfontein,² although the G.O.C. never reported them and only subsequently some fussy subaltern collected a number of statements, which are partly hearsay, partly patent falsehood and possibly partly true, but immaterial to the issue. I may here say that wounded men are killed on almost every battlefield. A victorious foe arriving in the position of a vanquished party sees men lying or reclining all about and does not know who is wounded and who is simply biding his chance. I myself have been fired at and all but killed at a distance of five yards by a wounded Imperial Light Horseman, who had kept his revolver concealed. Only the throwing away of his weapons and the putting up of his hands entitles a man to mercy,—and even

¹ This battle took place on 25 November 1899.

² This battle took place on 29 May 1901.

in such cases a wounded man is sometimes mistakenly killed in the heat of action, as happened in the 'pig-sticking' of the Hollander de Jonge¹ at Elandslaagte, who, though covered with eighteen wounds and putting up his hands, was mercilessly despatched.

These allegations of atrocities committed on the field of battle remind me of what a celebrated British general² told me in regard to the far more notorious case of the abuse of the white flag. We were discussing the various cases at which this enormity was alleged to have been committed, and in conclusion he said to me: 'I have been engaged in this war from the beginning, I have fought with many Boer armies and generals, and I can honestly say that I have never observed any instance of the abuse of the white flag by the Boers, and I believe the whole matter is ridiculously exaggerated'.

All these atrocities are trumped up in order to fasten on the Boers now in the field the character of brigands—for this serves as a convenient peg to hang new proclamations on. I do not wish to deprive Lord Kitchener of any such pegs, for his proclamations are a real help and 'eye-opener' to many a perplexed Boer. But I do wish the world, which so seldom hears the other side, to know the truth, for the issues involved in the present conflict do not only concern the English and Boers, but are of world-wide importance and interest.

'How long is this war still going to last' is the question asked by almost every Englishman who meets a Boer. The English are evidently weary and tired to death of the whole business. And no wonder, for their feeling of racial revenge must be pretty well satiated after the ruin and sorrows in which the Boers have been involved. The cry of revenge for Majuba has died a natural death—which is at any rate one solid and beneficial result of this regrettable war. Again, the ardour for the glory and increase of the Empire has to all appearances cooled very considerably. For every thinking Briton, even the most hostile to the Boers, must feel in his heart of hearts, that this sorry business has added no glory and never will add any glory

¹ Cars Geert de Jonge, formerly Secretary for Education in the South African Republic, was an officer of the Nederlandse Vechtkorps and was killed at Elandslaagte on 21 October 1899.

² This may have been Brigadier-General H. C. O. Plumer, whom Smuts would have met at Standerton in May–June 1901.

to the Empire—no military glory, for the odds were too uneven; the methods resorted to by the British too shocking to the humaner feelings of mankind, and the unique tenacity of the Boers has finally come to overshadow every other feature of war; no political glory, because the issue had become one of their freedom or subjugation. And mankind reserves its lasting honour for, and awards its crown of glory only to, those who have striven for the highest ideals of humanity; who have made deathless sacrifices for liberty or justice or religion; and who by heroic self-sacrifice for the highest ends have raised and ennobled the ethical consciousness of mankind. It does not become me to say whether the Boers have done this, whether in an age devoted beyond all others to material pursuits they have given to the world a worthy example of heroic self-sacrifice for what is (to them at least) the highest abstract ideal of political existence. But this much is certain, that the issue of glory is against the British Empire, and that the world has only seen another proof of the universal moral law that they who deliberately seek glory shall not find it. And so the British people, having lost the initial motives, which gave it a delirious zest and eagerness for the struggle, is today left with the dreary reality, and feels tired and bored to death. Ministers can only reiterate for the hundredth time the ‘unalterable determination of the British Empire to see the matter through to the end’. And in the meantime, fearful of the future, they hope and pray that that end may come soon.

But that end cannot be forced—even by the determination of the British Empire. For, as sometimes happens in the history of the world, this war has been raised from the region of brute force and elevated to the higher level of ethical forces and ideals, where the might of the British Empire avails no more than that of a new-born babe. It is a French thinker that has said that, of the causes which determine the issue of a war, three-fourths are moral and only one-fourth depends on mere force. This one fourth, representing the might and determination of the British Empire, is now pitting itself against the other three-fourths; and with breathless interest mankind is awaiting the issue. In one of the most brilliant passages of *Past and Present* Carlyle describes the conflict between an apparently omnipotent Brute Force and a seemingly insignificant Spiritual

or Ethical Principle, and vividly describes the victory of the latter in the final issue. The passage has often been recalled to my mind by the successive phases of this war, for the resistance of the Boers has seemed to me a remarkable instance of the principle to which both the French and English writers refer.

What are the principal moral forces operative within the area of the war today? I ask the question here because only he who thoroughly appreciates their character will be able to understand the factors on which the continuance and issue of the present war depend. After all due allowance for the vast might and success of the British Empire has been made (and no one in South Africa is better able than myself to appreciate both the one and the other) I cannot but come to the conclusion that, after all, the issue of the present war will depend more on the Boers than on the English, more on the indestructible moral endurance and physical hardihood of the men fighting for freedom, than on the might and limitless resources of those who fight for empire.

I have not always been of this opinion; in a pamphlet written on the outbreak of the war and called *A Century of Injustice*¹ I ventured to express the fear that that might be the last word of the Boer race to the world. The Boer leaders entered the arena of the dread conflict not without fear and trembling and great apprehension about the future. They were actuated more by considerations of national honour than expectations of future success. They were absolutely convinced that their political extinction had been finally determined upon by the British Government, and they were resolved, if it came to the worst, to make their exit from history in a manner worthy of the faith, the sacrifices, and the work of their forefathers. They were persuaded that theirs was a just cause, and they preferred a glorious death for this cause to an inglorious acquiescence in wrong, coupled possibly with a miserable prolongation of their political life on foreign sufferance. Such was at any rate the expressed mind of the Boer leaders.

When I joined the commandos in Natal I found a deeper feeling prevalent among the rank and file. No doubt there were

¹ Published anonymously in 1899 but sponsored by F. W. Reitz as State Secretary. The Dutch version was entitled *Een Eeuw van Onrecht*, the English *A Century of Wrong*.

braggarts and irresponsible feather-heads, but the flower of the Boer army, the men who thought and felt deeply, the men who held the line of the Tugela, and who to a large extent still continue in the field today, were actuated by a vaguer but profounder aspiration, to which expression was sometimes given in their prayers and religious services. This aspiration, purified and deepened a hundredfold by loss and suffering and sorrow during the course of the war, remains today the most vital and vitalizing force in the Boer mind, and must be carefully studied by all who wish to understand the true conditions of the continuance and issue of the present war.

I know the difficulty for the modern man of action and intelligence, accustomed as he is to ideas of natural laws and physical or economical explanations of all phenomena, to understand or appreciate the tremendous force of faith in the affairs of the world, but unless he overcomes this difficulty the present war will, in all essential respects, remain for him an insoluble mystery. A mustard seed of real faith avails more in the affairs of the world than mountains of might or brute force—and only he who thoroughly understands this will be able to appreciate the true inwardness of the present struggle.

The Boers, as a people, have an extraordinary faith in God. Theirs is not a God of the mechanical type, who has set the universe in motion and now from the outside sits calmly contemplating this motion. Theirs is a God of the Hebrew type, or rather of the type of the Hebrew prophets—a God who lives and works and impels from within the movements of the world and especially of history; who from and with the passions and aspirations, the good and evil deeds of men, shapes the divine policy, moulding sin and sorrow, deeds of honour and of shame, like some potter at the wheel, into the divine ends of His world-government. To them the history of the Boer or Afrikaner people—from the call in Europe centuries ago to the present day, through all the vicissitudes of wandering and suffering which make it one of the most romantic and enthralling chapters in the history of the world—is not a mere record of external events, of success and failure, of peace and war, but a movement in the interior world of the soul and of God, the features of which they find fully set forth in the writings of the Hebrew prophets. The visions of the prophets

are to them, not of particular application to Israel, but illustrations of the universal divine government in the movements of humanity. Not for Israel alone was the vision of sin, the vision of utter desolation, the vision of captivity and that of the glad return, but for them too. The course of the war, its most unexpected vicissitudes, its harrowing alternations of victory and defeat, its ruthless destruction of property and desolation of homes, its unrelieved gloom of sorrow and suffering, was for them anticipated by Isaiah and Jeremiah and the other Hebrew seers. The barbarous measures of the enemy, which bring a blush of shame to the fair face of Christian civilization, were expected by them, for had not Scripture to be fulfilled? All these things, and even worse, were foretold by the prophets, and with patience and resignation they are prepared to bear the yoke which not so much the enemy as God has laid on them. Nothing in the doings of the enemy surprises them; the inhuman proclamations of Lords Kitchener and Milner were read and pondered by them in the sacred writings before they were issued in South Africa, and the remarkable resemblance in the procedure of the Nebuchadnezzar of prophecy and the Kitchener of our day is to them only another confirmation of their belief that this is God's work and that the final issue will also be His.

As the contest has deepened, and for the little Boer people deep has called unto deep, and sorrow has followed sorrow until they seemed verily to have arrived in the valley of the dark shadow, this remarkable faith in God and in their destiny has only become stronger; broken and bleeding they have clung all the more passionately to the great hope, praying indeed that the cup of agony might be taken away from them, but never dashing it down in impatience or despair. The words of hope and consolation, the far-off vision of victory recorded by prophecy, have sweetened this cup of sorrow; for the Boers feel that they are not enduring themselves, and inflicting on their loved ones, mere useless suffering, as Lord Kitchener is so fond of reminding them, but that victory will yet be theirs, and the seed now sown in sorrow and tears will be reaped by posterity as a glorious harvest in the land that is far away, even that better and nobler South Africa which shall be dominated by a passion for liberty and justice as between races and classes,

and not by the corrupting power of wealth or the enslaving influences of foreign interference and dictation.

Theirs is the faith in God, which is at the same time and necessarily a faith in their own great destiny—a faith in which the divine Ideal blends with the practical life of the race and communicates to it a new strength and a nobler self-respect. And so their love of country and of race endures in the higher love of God—who gives strength to the weak and victory to the right; so too their practical patriotism and passion for freedom is raised to a newer, wider, larger conception. In this way the man who began by fighting for his country ends by fighting for God, firmly convinced that if he deserts the cause of his country he also deserts the cause of justice and righteousness. As a Boer woman strikingly put it to me: ‘God is the King of the Boer race, and the burgher who swears allegiance to the Queen forswears his divine King and puts himself beyond the divine love and mercy’.

This view, which will seem strange and unintelligible to matter-of-fact politicians, is today held by the bulk of the Boers in the field and explains much which must otherwise forever remain inexplicable. To call them names—to call them pig-headed or obstinate or fanatical—explains nothing, and one must explore to a deeper level of their national consciousness in order to find the true cause of their unique persistence in the face of the most appalling sufferings and discouragements. The simple explanation is that these very sufferings and discouragements have given a new force of infinite strength to the Boers. Defeat, loss and sorrow have forced a deeper music from the Boer soul. Patriotism has ceased to be merely a link to country and race, and has become at the same time a divine nexus.

In short the Boer cause has become a Boer religion, adversity has converted their political creed into a religious faith; and thus hope and faith and strength have been wrung from weakness and despair itself. The Boers fight now in a spirit akin to that of the early Christian martyrs; they listen to reports of defeat or rapine, of the sufferings of their wives and children in the prison camps, with that calm resignation which springs from the assurance that such is God’s will. Threats of banishment and confiscation only raise a smile on the faces of such

men. Even the threat to shoot every Republican caught will only increase this passion of religious patriotism. With this faith and this passion growing stronger every day it will be as impossible for England to win this war as it was for the Church of Rome to crush the Waldenses in a persecution which lasted centuries. The Boers are actuated today by a spirit, by motives of patriotism and religion so high and powerful that to my mind their subjugation has become a moral impossibility.

It may be urged against this view of the present state of the Boer mind that the correspondence between Mr Reitz and President Steyn intercepted at Reitz some months ago plainly shows that at any rate the Transvaal Boer leaders were showing signs of faltering. That correspondence, however, in which my name happens to be mentioned and with which I had very much to do, had an entirely different origin.¹ The Boer leaders have to face not only the present military situation, but far larger issues, which affect the entire future of their race. They are, as that correspondence clearly shows, not reckless desperadoes, but exceedingly conscientious men, who, with much misgiving and searching of spirit and as ever before their great Taskmaster's eye, are trying to do their duty in one of the most extraordinary and trying situations in which a human being can ever be placed. Doubts and misgivings sometimes arise, and must necessarily arise, as to the best course to pursue in certain eventualities; and these can only be settled by a common discussion and resolutions solemnly taken. During the course of last winter the future appeared very dark; large surrenders of burghers were feared; and it appeared advisable for the leaders to come together once more and discuss all those issues which were causing doubt and misgiving. Even President Kruger in Europe was consulted, though it so happened that his opinion did not affect the case very materially. How far the Boer leaders were really faltering or breaking down, was shown by the solemn resolution taken by the two Governments on 20 June last, of which a copy was sent to Lord Kitchener, and in which it was laid down that no peace was ever to be

¹ This correspondence (*see* note introducing 151-155) fell into British hands when, on the night of 10 July 1901, the town of Reitz and all the members of the Orange Free State Government except Steyn and W. J. C. Brebner were captured in a surprise attack. Steyn escaped but lost his papers and his treasury.

made, nor even negotiations for peace entered into, except on the basis of the independence of the two Republics and the safeguarding of the interests of those Colonial Afrikaners who had joined their Republican brethren in this struggle. The crisis was for us a very important one, almost as grave as that which confronted us the year before at the fall of Pretoria. In both cases the same resolution was taken, and I have no doubt that, however dark the future may become, and to whatever straits we may be yet reduced, the Boer leaders and people will adhere to the above resolution through every crisis and every species of misfortune. How well the resolution taken by the leaders on the 20th accorded with the spirit of the Boer people was exclusively shown by the silent contempt with which the latter treated the High Commissioner's terrorizing proclamation about banishment and confiscation.

I cannot impress too strongly both on our friends and enemies abroad that the Boer people as a whole are absolutely and irrevocably resolved to proceed with this war to the bitter end, although such a resolution will in all probability mean years of nameless suffering for them and especially their imprisoned women and children; that this resolution is not the outcome of despair, but one of cheerful hope and faith in God and in their destiny. They fight not as desperadoes, but as men full of hope in the future, and the source of this hope is so high, and the spirit that animates them so lofty, that no amount of defeat, loss or sorrow can dishearten them or induce them to give up a cause for which so much has already been suffered. The Boers have given up everything in the world for the highest and noblest Right of Man, and they have reaped their reward. In Carlyle's language they have heard and cheerfully accepted the 'Everlasting Nay'; and they have been rewarded by hearing also the 'Everlasting Yea'.¹ Across gulfs of suffering and striving they have seen, far-off and traced with the divine finger in the noblest blood of their race, the Vision of Victory, the conquest—not of Boer over Briton, but of Right over Might—and no cloud of blackest calamities will ever avail to hide this vision from their gaze, and no might on earth will ever prevent them from following it through life and death.

¹ 'Everlasting No' is the title of Chapter 7 of *Sartor Resartus*; 'Everlasting Yea' is the title of chapter 6.

I have discussed some of the more important general effects of British military policy in South Africa; I proceed now to consider briefly another feature of this baneful policy—I mean the employment of Natives and Coloured people as armed combatants. These very words will surprise the English public, for has it not been authoritatively denied by Sir Redvers Buller, Lord Roberts, and Mr Chamberlain from his place in the House of Commons, that Natives or Coloured people are fighting with the British forces in South Africa? And yet that they are so employed, not in small insignificant numbers, but in thousands, is a solemn fact, known to every person in South Africa, who has seen an English column at all. I do not refer to the Native tribes that have been armed *en bloc*, such as the tribe of Linchwe,¹ the tribes of Waterberg and Zoutpansberg, the tribe of Sekukuni in the Lydenburg district, the Swazis, and the Zulu tribes adjacent to the Vryheid district. Indeed all the Native tribes in and around the South African Republic have been armed by the British military authorities and have committed horrible atrocities on fugitive or peaceful women and children, such as Linchwe's all through the war, the tribes of Waterberg and Zoutpansberg after the British occupation of Nylstroom and Pietersburg; and the Swazis and Zulus in February, March and April of last year. Most of these cases of murder and other crimes on Boer women and children have been collected by the Boer generals in the South African Republic, and will, I hope, be published before the 'Carnival of Mendacity' has exhausted itself; then the world will be surprised to find that almost as many women and children have perished at the hands of barbarians in this war, by the connivance or general instigation of British officers, as were done to death by Dingaan and Moselekatze at the dawn of the Republics in South Africa. That misgiving was sometimes felt about the advisability of this policy was evident from correspondence intercepted at Rustenburg in June 1900, in which the High Commissioner expressed his opinion that the time had come to disarm the notorious tribe of Linchwe, which had committed so many brutal murders and crimes on Boer women and children in the Rustenburg and Waterberg

¹ Chief of the Bakhatla tribe whose territory lay on the Transvaal-British Bechuanaland border.

districts. In reply to this, however, Major-General Baden-Powell said that he could not approve of the disarmament of a tribe which had rendered such signal services to the British cause during the course of the war. These signal services included, I must presume, the murders at Derdepoort and elsewhere which startled the world towards the end of 1899.¹ And so Linchwe retained his arms, while the noble missionaries who had vainly tried to win his tribe for Christianity, were wantonly arrested and deported by the British authorities.

But I cannot digress into particulars, and indeed I am wandering from the point under discussion. That point is the incontestable fact that, in spite of all official assurances to the British people, the fighting forces of the British army in South Africa contain a very large element of armed Natives and Coloured people. All the irregular corps and mobile columns, on which the bulk of the active warfare in South Africa has devolved, contain a very large proportion of armed Natives; indeed some of them consist almost entirely of Natives. I was surprised to find, during my march through the Orange Free State in August of last year, that in the many encounters I had with British columns, not a single dead or wounded British soldier fell into our hands, but in all cases armed Kaffirs or Coloured Cape boys. When I arrived in the Cape Colony I was—at first somewhat to my astonishment—informed by the inhabitants that all the crack columns, such as those of Gorringe, Scobell, Crabbe, Lukin, Monroe [S. C. H.], Alexander [H.], White [W. L.], etc., etc. consisted very largely of armed Natives, but I very soon found out that such was but too truly the case. If the English people care to know the truth (which I sometimes doubt) a parliamentary return could be asked; though I am afraid that such a return will not be more correct than that famous one which gave 652 houses burnt down in both Republics at a time when I counted in the single district of Potchefstroom alone a larger number of them! The fact is however too patent and the means of verifying it too simple to say anything further about it here. Its effects are probably destined to be as serious and as far-

¹ On 25 November 1899 Rhodesian troops attacked the Boer laager at Derdepoort in the north-western Transvaal. Linchwe's tribesmen took part in the attack.

reaching as the consequences of the policy of devastation already described.

I do not say that it is positively contrary to the rules of international law to employ armed barbarians under white officers in a war between two white Christian peoples. But it is certainly shocking to the moral sense of all civilized people; it is even more shocking when one considers the numerical disproportion of the two peoples engaged in this struggle; and it is most shocking of all from the point of view of South African history and public policy. I do not speak of the Boer wounded who have fallen into the hands of these armed fiends and have subsequently been found mutilated and tortured to death in the most awful forms which the insensate fury of their racial passions could suggest. I do not even speak of those poor women and children whose cruel violation has followed in the wake of the British columns. For these are but exceptions, and a policy must be judged by its natural and not by its exceptional consequences. But I refer to the way in which the public conscience of South Africa, both Boer and British, has been shocked by this enlistment of coloured combatants. The peculiar position of the small white community in the midst of the very large and rapidly increasing coloured races and the danger which in consequence threatens this small white community and with it civilization itself in South Africa, have led to the creation of a special code of morality as between the white and coloured races which forbids interbreeding, and of a special tacit understanding which forbids the white races to appeal for assistance to the coloured races in their mutual disputes. This understanding is essential to the continued existence of the white community as the ruling class in South Africa, for otherwise the coloured races must become the arbiter in disputes between the whites and in the long run the predominating political factor or 'casting vote' in South Africa. That this would soon cause South Africa to relapse into barbarism must be evident to everybody; and hence the interests of self-preservation no less than the cause of civilization in South Africa demand imperatively that blacks shall not be called in or mixed up with quarrels between the whites. This tacit understanding—the cardinal principle of South African politics—has been grossly violated by the British military

authorities in this war, and the violation has shocked the political conscience of South Africa even more than the other enormities of the war. The war between the white races will run its course and pass away and may, if followed by a statesmanlike settlement, one day only be remembered as a great thunderstorm which purified the atmosphere of the sub-continent. But the Native question will never pass away; it will become more difficult as time goes on, and the day may come when the evils and horrors of this war will appear as nothing in comparison with its after effects produced on the Native mind.

Acting on this cardinal principle of South African politics and animated by an extreme solicitude for the future, the leaders of the Boers have steadfastly refused to make use of coloured assistance in the course of the present war. Offers of such assistance were courteously refused by the Government of the South African Republic, who always tried to make it perfectly clear to the Natives that the war did not concern them and would not affect them so long as they remained quiet. The statement made by Sir R. Buller in a letter some time ago—made, no doubt, in good faith, for the Boers have always found in him an opponent as honourable as brave—to the effect that the Boers had made use of armed Kaffirs in the Natal campaign, was incorrect. The only instance in the whole war in which the Boers made use of armed Kaffirs happened at the siege of Mafeking where an incompetent Boer officer¹, without the knowledge of the Government or the Commandant-General, put a number of armed Natives into some forts. As soon as the Government became aware of his doings General de la Rey was sent to supersede him, and the Kaffirs were disarmed and sent away.

The Boers have an historical aversion to native assistance. They remember perfectly well that it was the employment of Coloured guards and police that led to the tragedy of Slachtersnek; that the trek of 1835–7 was largely due to the miserable way in which the Government of the day tried to play off Native against Boer. In fact they know that all the most serious complications which have arisen in South African history and

¹ General P. A. Cronjé.

politics are but aspects of the great Native question, the trail of whose shadow is as black over the future as over the past of this dark continent.

Dark indeed is that shadow! When armed Natives and Coloured boys, trained and commanded by English officers, tread the soil of the Republics in pursuit of the fugitive Boer and try to pay off old scores by insulting his wife and children on their farms; when the Boer women in the Cape Colony have to cook for and serve the brutal Coloured scouts, who roam about the lonely farms of the veld, and are forced to listen to their filthy talk; when they hear these Coloured soldiers of the King boast that after the war the latter will be the owners of the farms of the rebellious Boers and will marry the widows of the heroes who have gone to rest; when, to escape violation and nameless insults at the hands of their former servants, now wearing the British uniform, Boer women and girls seek refuge in the mountains of their native land, as I have seen them do—a wound is given to South Africa which Time itself will not heal.

Besides, the Boers or Africanders of the Cape Colony are not so blind that they cannot see that, if the Boer cause is lost, they will all have to bow before a Native constabulary and soldiery and an eventual *débâcle* of society. No wonder that a proud and high-mettled people like them prefer death to such a dreary prospect of life. Far better than the English people can imagine, they understand the danger that looms before South Africa, when the Frankenstein Monster which a fatuous policy has created in this war will, as it necessarily must, get out of control. To me as to them the utter desolation of South Africa and the unprecedented sufferings of the whole Boer people in field and prison camps are as nothing compared with the evils and horrors which may result from this abuse of armed Native assistance and the impression thereby made on the Native mind.

It is needless for me to say any more about British military policy in South Africa and its results, actual as well as prospective. Cognizant of English modes of thought as I fancy myself to be, I wonder what must be the effect produced on the English mind by a true picture of British military policy in South Africa. And I have rather under- than over-stated the truth; for I know that the truth, in its naked and brutal simplicity, will appear impossible to the English public. Are

such ruin and sorrow and suffering part of that great mission of Empire which the English people believe to be theirs? Does the present state of South Africa not rather show that Imperialism, as here applied, is not a mission but a madness? Every rule of international law, every principle of humanity, every precept of religion, has been wantonly and systematically violated for the greater glory of the Empire and the good of South Africa! And what is the result? The cry of glory drowned in that nobler cry for liberty which, gathering volume from the rolling tides of history and Freedom's music echoing through the world, will yet remain the final echo of this bloody tragedy. The good of South Africa—but why mock the world with such blasphemous falsehoods? Can the good of South Africa be pursued through the utter desolation of its fair face and the destruction of its people, by race and aspiration belonging to the moral aristocracy of humanity? A desolation haunted only by a disembodied cry for freedom, where every farm, every town, every hill and vale, aye almost every human heart, is a monument of sorrow and loss—ought it not to be the melancholy grave, not of the Boer Republics, but far rather of British Imperialism? I leave the answer to those Englishmen who are jealous of the true glory and honour of their country—not the false honour which comes from the plaudits of the music halls and pales and dies away before the cold scrutiny of history, but that clean honour which shines for ever in the hearts of the just and the brave.

I have finished the remarks I intended to make about the general military situation in South Africa today. I have tried to sketch as truthfully as I can the underlying forces which must have a paramount effect on the final issue of this dreadful conflict and after. I have tried to show that it is not simply a case of overpowering might on the one side and obstinate weakness on the other; far rather is it a conflict between vast physical force on the one hand and enduring moral grit and spiritual faith on the other. I have tried to write the truth, so far as I understand it, and it is for those who are capable of understanding such things to weigh carefully and dispassionately what I have written.

I had at first intended to stop here. There is however one other thought or rather suggestion which, however reluctantly,

I shall try to write down—knowing that I may be misunderstood; hoping that it may find some generous response in the heart of a nation I had once thought of very highly; and, in any case, believing that in writing what I am now going to say I am discharging a solemn duty. The vicissitudes of life under present circumstances are such that, when these lines are read, the hand that penned them may be forever still; and the fact that many hold me, to however small an intent, responsible for this war and its continuance, induces me to say what I may never again have the opportunity of saying.

When I look at South Africa today and contemplate the ruin and desolation that have overtaken; her the tears with which sorrowing and suffering women have wet her dear soil, the noble and heroic blood, not only of her Boer but also of her English sons, with which her every kopje is stained; when I hear as it were the broken voice of South Africa herself, weeping forlorn like some Rachel for her children that are not—the heroes that have fallen, the little children that have pined away, and the strong hearts of women that have broken in the prison camps; when I consider that in all probability, unless God Almighty intervenes, this ruin and desolation, this bloodshed and agony will be prolonged and perhaps intensified for an indefinite time to come,—I cannot help asking myself the question:

Are we dumb driven cattle, the sport of our passions, of our pride and hatred? Have we lost all that reason, which raises us above the level of mere brutes; have we lost all that gentleness, mercy and pity which a common Christianity had taught us; have we lost all those moral qualities and principles which are the noblest heritage of our common civilization? Are we raised above the level of mere animals only by our animal pride of empire and race? Cannot the two blood-stained races reason together; cannot their leaders, in a spirit of mutual forgiveness, try to write the word *reconciliation* over all our feuds and differences? Must the sword forever continue to flout all reason and principle, and can peace only be bought with the life of one or other of the contending parties? Has there not been enough and more than enough bloodshed, loss and suffering to atone for all faults and misunderstandings and rivalries of the past? Is there no policy in reason, no principle of law or morals, no spirit of Christian forgiveness or pity, to guide us out of this labyrinth of error into which we have strayed by the visitation of God?

In the moral world it is fatal for one to persist in wrong when once he has realized that he is wrong. To go on is to be involved in ever deeper mazes and to stray ever farther from the path of moral rectitude. The only way out is to retrace one's steps as soon as possible, to undo the wrong that has been done so far as that is still possible, and to seek the right road with all possible celerity. The South African question is a moral one—governed by the same principles of right and wrong which have been taught us by our common ethics and our common religion; the struggle arose out of great questions and charges of right and wrong, which assumed even larger proportions by the lurid blaze of our pent-up passions. It does not matter that these questions have arisen between nations instead of individuals. Just as it is a man's duty, sanctioned by the penalties of the moral law, to confess and undo any wrong which he has committed against his brother man, so too in the case of nations and empires. Otherwise the wrong-doing state, even if triumphant in the immediate issue, places itself in open antagonism to the moral forces of the world, and defies that inexorable justice which, like an avenging fury, has already pursued so many nations and empires to their grave.

Let the British Government therefore openly and manfully confess that they have been wrong and with a single eye try to undo that wrong. They owe it to South Africa, which they no doubt intended to benefit, but which they have only succeeded in converting into a hell; they owe it to their people, who have already paid such a dreadful penalty for their errors, pride and self-will; they owe it to that humanity and civilization, whose spirit their soldiery have outraged and whose most elementary principles have been wantonly defied in the course of this war, extending even into the 20th century the foulest blot on the 19th. Let them abstain from all recrimination, let them cease from bandying about charges and retorts, and honestly face the situation their errors and folly have created.

However good their original intentions might have been the British Government were wrong at the inception of this war, they were too much in a hurry and too much under the impression that 'the sands were running down in the glass.' In a panic of reform they deserted the legitimate paths of friendly diplomacy and advice and created a 'new situation', governed

by threats on the one side and fear on the other,—a situation which in its turn, under the influence of the same spirit of impatience, gave place to an acute crisis; and thus, moving along the slippery path of error and passion, we both soon found ourselves landed in a hideous war. Looking back now we can clearly see that it would have been far better to have been patient and to have quietly waited for ten, aye five-and-twenty, years longer, rather than in their impatience to have precipitated a crisis fraught with such woes for both of us. The natural evolution of South Africa was proceeding apace and would in ten years more have obliterated all traces of the then existing grounds of dispute, when, by their impatient interference, they marred everything. Let them confess that the 'sand-glass policy' does not suit South Africa, that its Gordian knots cannot be cut by some master-stroke of diplomacy or statesmanship, and that time and the free play of the social and economical forces alone can solve its racial and political problems. Just as little as a statesman could ten or twenty-five years ago have foretold what is happening in South Africa today, just as little can even the most clear-sighted of us today foresee the product of these hidden forces ten or twenty-five years hence. The more ambitious and impatient among us may try to foist some counterfeit settlement on South Africa, and may even for the moment appear to have succeeded. But on the passionate, palpitating bosom of South Africa any such artificial contrivance will soon totter to its ruin. Let us therefore try a more excellent way.

The war arose, as was admitted by Mr Chamberlain in the House of Commons at the end of 1899, from mistakes and misunderstandings; and, I may add, on grounds that are morally indefensible. It has now lasted almost two years and a half, and both its immoral inception, its barbarous character, and disastrous results are well calculated to make us pause and ask ourselves whither we are proceeding and what are our respective policies.

The Republics say that their policy is simply to go on fighting for their independence to the end, whatever and whenever that may be. Whatever mistakes they have made in the past, whatever charges the British Government have rightly or wrongly made against them in the past; today the entire

question has narrowed itself down to the one issue of independence or absolute subjection. And on that one issue they say they *must* win or die. Their errors have not been such that political extinction is the only possible punishment; for their sins they have gone through the most dreadful expiation known to modern history. If valour and endurance such as they have shown; if loss and sorrow such as they have suffered; if absolute self-surrender and self-sacrifice to the highest political ideal of humanity, does not entitle them to their liberty as independent states, then no nation ever deserved to be free, then the moral consciousness of humanity is perverted, then the entire structure of modern political society is a fraud, without any rights or obligations. If after what has happened they were voluntarily to surrender their independence they would lose all self-respect, they would prove untrue to themselves, to that which is highest in them, to God; they would degrade one of the most awful dramas of the world's history into a mere farce, and they would deserve to become hewers of wood and carriers of water to their enemy. The one path of duty for them is the path of persistence, of continuing to defend their independence to the uttermost; and in saying this they are prepared to admit that they have been wrong on many other issues, and to consider with an open mind any settlement of South Africa which leaves their independence as states intact.

On the other hand the British Government say that there is no alternative left for them but the complete annexation of the Republics and the establishment of one homogeneous political system over all South Africa. The sacrifices that the Empire has already made demand this; the South African loyalists demand this; the future peace and well-being of South Africa demand this. This policy of total disruption with the past and establishment of an entirely new order of things has, after the celebrated speech of the High Commissioner in March 1900,¹ been called the policy of 'Never Again'. Never again must South Africa be menaced by the Boer or Republican Afrikaners; never again must the British Empire be called upon to make such sacrifices by tolerating in its midst a community with aspirations and interests antagonistic to its own. This policy

¹ This speech was made on 12 April 1900. See Cecil Headlam, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 97-9.

carries with it as its necessary corollary the incorporation of the South African Republic into the British Empire, for such a drastic measure alone will cause Boer ambitions to wither and Boer resources to dry up.

'Never Again'. Ah, noble aspiration! How often have I heard the grey-headed Boer sigh for thee; how often has he said to me that the thought, the hope, the faith of that sweet 'Never Again' alone sustained him in his present trials; and that he was willing to endure anything so that his children and children's children might have rest and peace at last! But the shrewd and pious old Boer would have been astonished to hear that his becoming a British subject was the only road to that pleasant land of 'Never Again'.

The fact is (as Tacitus has already remarked) that there is a desolation which is called peace,¹ just as there is a death which is called rest—where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.² The policy which Lord Milner represents in South Africa will only lead to this sort of 'Never Again'—the peace and rest which must necessarily supervene in South Africa when the Boers have been exterminated. It is the policy of Slachtersnek writ large over all South Africa. It is as well to face this fact clearly and resolutely. To suppose that the Boers will ever become loyal, contented and peaceful British subjects is as absurd as to suppose that wrong will ever become right. The men who have given their earthly all and are now spending their life-blood in South Africa; the South African men and women who are eating their hearts away in the prison camps scattered over all the British Empire; the little children of the veld who are growing up in unnatural confinement in those camps and pine for freedom of movement and of life,—can they ever forget? Believe me, they will transmit to posterity a national tradition, a fiery passion for liberty, which will be either the most sacred treasure or the most blighting curse of the future South Africa, according to the settlement which will follow this war. Nay more, bring the two South African Republics with their indomitable little people within the circle of the British Empire, and the latter will furnish within its own area a position for that mighty lever which will yet hurl it

¹ *Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant. Agricola, 30.*

² *Job ii. 17.*

from its most steadfast foundations. Then, when in some great European upheaval the Boers will see their chance, and the horrors of this war will be as nothing to the bloody tragedy that will then be enacted in South Africa, and the desolation of today will in the general break-up of her pirate empire meet her awful curse: 'Your house is left unto you desolate',¹—then, when it will be too late, she will recognize that the statesmanship of today was only a crime, and the authors of this policy of 'Never Again' blind leaders of the blind.

Let the British Government not put the interests of empire before those of justice; let them not be unjust in deference to the opinion of South African or other loyalists whose extreme jingoism has blinded them to all moral issues; let them not attempt to build an empire on the 'shifting sands of wrong', especially in a country where political society is so volcanic as in South Africa; let them go to work on the basis that Right is Might, today, and tomorrow, and for ever. Let them for a moment try to forget the passions of the strife and rise to a level of calm thought and clear vision—to the level of that quieter and saner statesmanship which in years gone by did so much for South Africa. And then I am convinced that a way out of the present impasse will be found. If British politicians are open to reason and arguments I do not at all despair of a fair and lasting settlement of our present troubles. Indeed to the minds of those who have thought deepest and seen farthest the outlines of an equitable compromise must already have presented themselves. It would not be proper for me here to discuss any such settlement, which may satisfy the claims of justice on the one side and of honour on the other. The time may come sooner or later when the responsible leaders of the two peoples will both be glad to come together and try to discover such a settlement, and to that time, if it ever comes, must be left the discussion of all the details. I only wish to express my opinion that today is the day of salvation, and that nothing will be gained by delay.

Let the British Government approach the subject in the proper spirit. Let them retrace their steps, let them confess and undo the wrong, let them resume the discarded threads of their

¹ *St. Matthew xxiii. 38.*

former wise and prudent South African statesmanship, and let them leave to the subtle working of the forces of mutual respect and co-operation (and affection) the task for which their rifles and statutes are manifestly incompetent. The time is ripe, the occasion unrivalled. The atmosphere of South Africa has been cleared in the most thorough and indeed terrible manner. The white races in South Africa have learned what no long years of peaceful development could have taught them. They have learned what a deadly peril racial rivalry is; they have learned to know each other; they need no longer be ashamed to shake hands with each other on terms of equality; from the memory of the past, in which both white races have borne such heroic parts, will spring no new feuds, no narrow racial jealousies, but a saner and more comprehensive patriotism and a deeper and holier love of country. The Boers will have had such an experience of the power of the British Empire that they could never possibly misunderstand the motives of the British people in acquiescing in a settlement whereby they retain their independence, and otherwise in accord with the terms laid down in the resolution of the 20th June 1901.¹ England will appear to them as a power both mighty and fair-minded; their sense of justice will be satisfied and, unless I do not know the character of my own people, their everlasting respect and esteem will be secured. That, and that alone, is a basis to build commonwealths on, and not a burning sense of wrong, nor a rankling race-hatred which, being repressed by subjection, grows ever blacker in the dark. On this basis, and in a generous spirit of forgive and forget, let us try to found a stable Commonwealth in South Africa, in which Boer and Briton will both be proud to be partners; let it be clearly understood that England shall meddle as little with the internal concerns of this Commonwealth as with those of Canada or Australasia, and the best solution of the South African problem under existing circumstances will have been made, and a new Commonwealth of untold possibilities will have been launched on a joyous and prosperous career. And the wondering nations, thinking of the past, will say that England is indeed worthy to be called the Mother of free institutions. But if she fails to rise to the

¹ See 155.

occasion; if she fails to realise that, just as righteousness exalteth a nation,¹ so the mission of empire can only be a mission of justice and mercy and goodwill; if she hardens her heart against the despairing cry, I will not say of the Boers, but of South Africa,—then she will discover that the path of error and wrongful force has led her to the abyss of an awful alternative. Either, in the long years of bloody strife that are still before us, the Boers will win (and stranger things than this have happened in the history of the world), and then the British Empire will have staked and lost its very life in an unworthy and unrighteous cause. Or (what I consider very improbable) the Boers will go down, down, down until they are vanquished and crushed for ever. Then, when it is too late, England will discover that the spirit of the Boer nation was greater than the nation itself, that they represented more than they themselves were; then the ghost of the murdered Boer people will haunt the British Empire to its grave; then, across the centuries the terrible curse of Isaiah will blast the British Empire: ‘Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.’ (*Isaiah* xxxiii. 1)

In conclusion I can only express the earnest hope that our friends all over the world will not slacken their efforts to obtain a speedy peace on fair and just lines, and I pray God Almighty may bless those efforts so that an end may be made to the horrors of the present, and those still more awful horrors to come, which I have already hinted at, may be prevented from finally and irretrievably ruining all South Africa. Let us, each in his own way and according to his own conscience, strive for that Right which must in the end surely prevail. I remain,
Yours faithfully,

J. C. Smuts
(*State Attorney and Assistant Commandant-General
of the South African Republic*)

(The corrections are in my handwriting. J.C.S.)

¹ *Proverbs* xiv. 34.

170 Report to J. H. de la Rey

This report was published in Leyds, op. cit. Bijlagen, pp. 207-11. Smuts had sent a copy to the Government in exile (*see* 171). Another copy fell into the hands of the British military authorities. The translation below is not the official one, which is materially inaccurate.

Kakamas

26 Januari 1902

Weledelgestreng Heer en Vriend,—Op den 16e December 1901 verzond ik van Calvinia rapporten aan U per Commandant Kirsten welke ik hoop U veilig ter hand gekomen zijn. Sedert dien tijd had ik de gelegenheid verder werk te doen en zaken te regelen en wensch bijzonderheden thans aan U mede te deelen. Kort na den aanval op Tontelboschkolk, heeft de bezetting de plek verlaten en naar Sutherland gegaan zoodat er thans in de westelijke Kaapkolonie geen vijandelijke machten zich op buitenposten bevinden, maar zich alleen in de dorpen ophouden. Eenige dagen voor Kerstmis kwamen twee vijandelijke kolonnes (Crabbe en Wyndham) van Clanwilliam naar Calvinia. Door buitengewone snelle bewegingen slaagden zij er in Calvinia te bereiken voor ik de voornaamste commando's bijeen kon brengen. Er werd echter zwaar gevochten. Verlies van vijand was groot, en zijn tocht naar Calvinia zoowel als terug geleek meer op een wilde vlucht met achterlating van wagens en paarden op den weg. Aan onzen kant een burger gesneuveld, eenigen gewond, doch niet zwaar. Gedurende de tweede week van deze maand trek [*sic*] vijand met omtrent 700 paarden ruiters van uit Kenhardt ten einde Kakamas met de aldaar gelegen arbeidskolonie aan te vallen. Na twee dagen hard vechten werd vijand echter terug geslagen en terug gedreven naar Kenhardt.

Ik ben zeer blij over deze overwinning daar ze feitelijk de eerste is door de burgers in deze afgelegene deelen behaald en zeer zal bijdragen tot aanmoediging der burgers en bevordering onzer zaak. Zooals ik U reeds medegedeeld heb, heb ik Commandant Lategan vroeger van Colesberg over deze Commando's aangesteld en heb ik goede verwachting dat zijn werk vrucht zal dragen zooals reeds uit dit geval blijkt.

Wat de organisatie onzer operaties en commando's betreft was een verandering zoo dringend geworden dat ik niet verder

heb kunnen wachten en heb ik de volgende regeling gemaakt:

Hier waren direct onder mij 19 commandantschappen waarvan de meeste 100 tot 150 man hadden. Dat was niet alleen te veel voor deze arme streken maar door opeenstapeling van commando's in de westelijke Kaapkolonie werd onze zaak in de andere deelen niet bevorderd. Het eerst dat ik deed was 6 commandantschappen (rechter Hugo, J. H. Pypers, S. W. Pypers, van Reenen, Botha en Smit) onder bevel van Commandant Malan, dien ik tot vechtgeneraal bevorderd heb, naar de oostelijke deelen terug te zenden. Deze commando's zullen verspreid over de districten Fraserburg, Victoria W., Carnarvon, Hopetown en Philipstown trekken zoodat onze zaak ook daar op een vasten voet zal komen.

Het blijkt uit de Engelsche couranten dat Ass. Hoofd-Commandant Kritzinger gevangen is en in elk geval was een hoofdofficier over de gemelde commandos absoluut noodig. Dus bleef er voor mij niets anders over dan den besten officier onder hen tot vechtgeneraal te bevorderen. Ik heb zeer goede verwachting van deze regeling welke ook algemeen goedkeuring geeft. Generaal Malan heeft instructie steeds in communicatie met mij of mijnen opvolger te blijven zoodat onze zaak in de Kaapkolonie als een geheel en niet als verbrokkelde stukken kan ontwikkelen.

De commandantschappen van van Deventer, Louis Boshoff, Bouwer, Louw, Nesor en Jooste heb ik ook weer in een aparte afdeling geconstitueerd en Commandant van Deventer heb ik tot vechtgeneraal over hen aangesteld. Terzelfdertijd heb ik de instructie aan Generaal van Deventer gegeven de zuidelijke districten in richting Kaapstad en Worcester te bedreigen en daardoor vijand gaande te houden, totdat ik in staat gesteld zal zijn meer definitieve operaties te ondernemen, hetwelk ik hoop te doen zoo spoedig als ik van U uit de Transvaal gehoord zal hebben. De diensten van Commandant Maritz voor onze zaak in deze deelen waren zoo gewichtig dat hij reeds voor mijn aankomst tot Ass. Hoofd-Commandant door de andere officieren gekozen was als een voorlopig maatregel. Ik heb hem dus ook tot vechtgeneraal bevorderd en met eenige commandantschappen gezonden in de richting van de kopermijnen en Port Nolloth om te trachten het gebied achter mijn rug van vijand schoon te maken. Ten slotte heb ik

Commandant Lategan als zoodanig aangesteld over de commando's aan Grootrivier met opdracht dezelve te organiseeren. Vechtgeneraal P. de Villiers is noord van Grootrivier en is, zoo als U weet, nog onder uw direct bevel gebleven, zoodat ik tot hier toe geen vrijmoedigheid heb gevoeld instructies aan hem te zenden. Echter zal ik zeer blij zijn indien hij met Commandant Lategan zou samenwerken om Upington voor vijand onhoudbaar te maken, want daardoor zal de communicatie tusschen Duitsch West-Afrika en Griqualand W. zoowel als de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek geheel geopend worden, een zaak van groot belang voor ons. Voor dat doel behoeft hij niet Grootrivier door te komen. Mijne reis door de geheele Kaapkolonie heeft mij overtuigd dat ons werk in de Kaapkolonie alleen zal kunnen slagen op den grondslag door mij neergelegd, n.l. het nemen en houden van al de westelijke en noordelijke districten noord van den Kaapstad-de Aar-spoorweg en dan voortwerken van die districten als basis naar de zuidelijke en oostelijke. Deze noordelijke en westelijke districten zijn nu even goed in ons bezit als de westelijke van de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek in het uwe; mijne voorste commando's liggen vanaf Lambertsbaai achter Piquetberg door de districten Ceres en Sutherland naar het oosten en de vijand waagt niet meer achter deze linie te komen zonder groote en zware kolonnes. Ik voel verzekerd dat, indien op dezen weg volhard wordt en vooral indien er versterking van de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek komen, wij in 12 maanden tijd erin zullen slagen zaken in de Kaapkolonie tot een keerpunt te brengen. Wij zullen den vijand dwingen een 30,000 tot 50,000 man op de Kaapsche spoorwegen te werpen om die te beschermen en een zeer groot aantal kolonnes te brengen om tegen ons te vechten en zelfs dit alles zal hen niet helpen. Zooals ik reeds in mijn rapport d.d. 16 December 1901 gezegd heb, loopen zaken hier langzamer dan wij verwacht hadden, maar zij loopen in de rechte richting en gewis.

Wat Europeesch nieuws betreft zal U genoegzaam uit de couranten in bezit van Herr Caserta kunnen zien wat daar aan het einde van laatste jaar gaande was. U zal daaruit zien dat niet alleen het Engelsche volk maar ook de voormannen ervan moedeloos en verdold [*sic*] beginnen te worden over dezen eindeloozen oorlog. De volksleiders John Morley en Sir William

Harcourt geven beide aan de hand dat een nieuwe Regeering een schikking met de Boeren moet maken.

Zelfs onze oude vriend J. B. Robinson is nu tot de overtuiging gekomen dat men de zaak moet schikken door den Gouverneur der Transvaal te laten kiezen door 5 Boeren en 5 Engelschen. Het gevoel der naties wordt steeds bitterder tegen Engeland en vooral op grond van de mishandeling der vrouwen en kinderen in de kampen; hoe vreeselijk de toestand in deze kampen moet zijn zal blijken uit het feit dat volgens Engelsche officieele opgave er meer dan 2500 vrouwen en kinderen in de maand September alleen in deze kampen gestorven zijn en waarvan over de 1900 kleine kinderen onder de 12 jaar. Deze vreeselijke toestand schijnt ook het publiek geweten van het Engelsche volk te hebben aangeroerd, want de nieuwsbladen zijn vol bittere klachten van invloedrijke ondersteuners der Salisbury-regeering. Misschien gebruikt de Heer nog onze gemartelde vrouwen en kinderen om een beslissende wending aan dezen oorlog te geven. Sir W. Harcourt zegt in een brief aan de *Times* dat de gedreigde confiscatie en verbanning onwettig zijn en twijfelt of ze door het Britsche Parlement zal worden erkend.

Ik wensch U en uwe dappere officieren en burgers hartelijk geluk met de prachtige overwinning behaald welke ook onze handen versterkt hebben.

Met diep leedwezen heb ik uit uw rapport vernomen van de sneuveling van zoovele helden, de meeste waarvan mij goed bekend zijn en medevchters waren in de oude dagen; zij hebben echter een heerlijk en roemrijk graf in de dankbare herinnering van ons volk en nageslacht in het werk dat reeds zoovele dierbare offers heeft geëischt. Met hartelijke groeten,
Uw dw. Dn.

J. C. Smuts
Ass. Commandant-Generaal

TRANSLATION

Kakamas
26 January 1902

Honoured Sir and Friend, On 16 December 1901 I sent you reports from Calvinia by Commandant Kirsten which I hope have reached you safely. Since then I have had the opportunity

of doing further work and organizing matters and now wish to give you details. Shortly after the attack on Tontelboschkolk, the garrison left the place and went to Sutherland so that there are now no enemy forces in outlying posts in the western Cape Colony but only in the towns. Some days before Christmas two enemy columns (Crabbe and Wyndham [W. F. G.]) came to Calvinia from Clanwilliam. By unusually rapid movements they succeeded in reaching Clanwilliam before I could assemble the main commandos. However, there was heavy fighting. Enemy losses were large and their march to Calvinia and back looked more like a wild flight, abandoning waggons and horses on the way. On our side, one burgher killed, some wounded—but not seriously. During the second week of this month the enemy left Kenhardt with about 700 mounted men in order to attack Kakamas and the labour settlement situated there. After two days of hard fighting the enemy was, however, beaten back and driven back to Kenhardt.

I am very glad about this victory as it is practically the first gained by the burghers in these distant parts and will help to encourage the burghers and advance our cause. As I have informed you, I have placed Commandant Lategan, formerly of Colesberg, over these commandos and I have good hopes that his work will bear fruit, as already appears in this case.

As regards the organization of our operations and commandos, a change had become so urgent that I have not been able to wait longer and have made the following arrangements:

There were here directly under me nineteen commandoships, most of which had 100 to 150 men. Not only was that too many for these poor areas, but, by the heaping up of commandos in the western Cape Colony, our cause in the other parts was not being advanced. My first act was to send six commandoships (Judge Hugo,¹ J. H. Pypers,² S. W. Pypers, van Reenen, Botha and Smit) back to the eastern areas under command

¹ Henry J. Hugo became a judge of the High Court of the Orange Free State shortly before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War. He joined Theron's Scouts and then the forces under Smuts in the Cape Colony. Smuts made him a Commandant towards the close of 1901. He was mortally wounded at Brakvlei in February 1902.

² J. Hans Pypers, in company with his brother S. W. Pypers (q.v.) joined Smuts's forces in October 1901 and was later put under the command of General W. Malan in the north-western Cape Colony.

of Commandant Malan, whom I have promoted to Combat-General. These commandos will spread out over the districts of Fraserburg, Victoria West, Carnarvon, Hopetown and Philipstown, so that our cause will be put on a firm footing there also.

It appears from the English newspapers that Assistant Chief Commandant Kritzinger has been captured, and in any case a chief officer over the above-mentioned commandos was essential. There thus remained no other course for me than to promote the best officer among them to Combat-General. I have very good hopes of this arrangement which also has general approval. General Malan has instructions to remain constantly in communication with me or my successor so that our cause in the Cape Colony can develop as a whole and not in fragments.

I have also constituted the commandoships of van Deventer, Louis Boshoff, Bouwer, Louw,¹ Nesor,² and Jooste a separate section and placed Commandant van Deventer over them as Combat-General. At the same time I have instructed General van Deventer to threaten the southern districts in the direction of Cape Town and Worcester and so to keep the enemy occupied until I am in a position to undertake more definite operations, which I hope to do as soon as I have heard from you from the Transvaal. The services of Commandant Maritz for our cause in these parts were so important that already before my arrival he had, as a provisional measure, been chosen by the other officers as Assistant Chief Commandant. I have therefore promoted him to Combat-General and sent him with some commandoships in the direction of the copper mines and Port Nolloth to try to clear the region behind me of the enemy. Finally, I have appointed Commandant Lategan as such over the commandos along the Orange River with orders to organize them. Combat-General P. de Villiers is north of the Orange River and has, as you know, remained under your direct command, so that I have so far not felt free to send him orders. However, I should be very

¹ Commandant Jan Louw led a commando from Kakamas, Cape Colony.

² Commandant Jacobus P. Nesor was a Cape Colonist living at Boshof in the Orange Free State where he settled after the war. He joined the rebellion in 1914.

glad if he could co-operate with Commandant Lategan to make Upington untenable by the enemy, because in that way communication between German West Africa and Griqualand West as well as the South African Republic will be completely opened—a matter of great importance for us. For that purpose he need not cross the Orange River. My journey through the whole of the Cape Colony has convinced me that our work in the Cape Colony can only succeed on the basis I have laid down, namely, the capture and occupation of all the western and northern districts north of the Cape Town—De Aar railway and then to work forward, with these districts as base, to the southern and eastern. These northern and western districts are now as firmly in our possession as the western districts of the South African Republic are in yours; my forward commandos lie from Lambert's Bay behind Piquetberg through the Ceres and Sutherland districts to the east, and the enemy no longer dares to move behind this line except with large and heavy columns. I am sure that if this course is firmly followed, particularly if reinforcements come from the South African Republic, we shall succeed within 12 months in bringing matters in the Cape Colony to a turning point. We shall force the enemy to throw 30,000 to 50,000 men on to the Cape railway lines to protect them and to raise a very large number of columns to fight us, and even all that will not help them. As I have already said in my report dated 16 December 1901,¹ things here are moving more slowly than we expected, but they are moving in the right direction, and surely.

As regards European news, you will be able to learn enough about what was going on there at the end of last year from the newspapers in the possession of Herr Caserta. You will see from these that not only the English people but also their leading men are beginning to be discouraged and distracted by this endless war. The popular leaders, John Morley and Sir William Harcourt, both suggest that a new Government should come to an arrangement with the Boers.

Even our old friend J. B. Robinson is now convinced that the matter must be settled by letting the Governor of the

¹ 160.

Transvaal be chosen by five Boers and five Englishmen. The feeling of the nations against England becomes more and more bitter, particularly because of the ill-treatment of the women and children in the camps. How terrible conditions in these camps must be appears from the fact that, according to the official English figures, more than 2,500 women and children died in these camps in the month of September alone, and over 1,900 were little children under 12 years of age. This terrible situation seems also to have touched the public conscience of the English people, for the newspapers are full of bitter complaints from influential supporters of the Salisbury Government. Perhaps the Lord will yet use our martyred women and children to give a decisive turn to this war. Sir William Harcourt says in a letter to *The Times* that the threatened confiscation and banishment are illegal¹ and he doubts whether they will be recognized by the British Parliament.

I congratulate you and your brave burghers heartily on the fine victory gained, which has strengthened our hands also.

I was deeply sorry to learn from your report of the death in battle of so many heroes, most of whom are well-known to me and were fellow-fighters in the old days. However, they have a famous and glorious grave in the grateful remembrance of our nation and posterity and in the work that has already demanded so many precious sacrifices. With hearty greetings, Your obedient servant,

J. C. Smuts
Assistant Commandant-General

171 To W. J. Leyds

Published in Leyds, op. cit. Bijlagen, p. 207.

Van Generaal J. C. Smuts aan den Gezant

Kakamas
26 Januari 1902

Hooggeachte Vriend,—Hiermede zend ik U de copie van een rapport door mij aan Generaal de la Rey verzonden. Ik doe zulks door den Duitschen Postdienst en mijn doel is uit te

¹ Kitchener's proclamation of 6 August 1901.

vinden of U langs dezen weg mijne communicatiën zal in handen krijgen, want indien dit mocht gelukken zou ik in de toekomst er meer gebruik van maken.

Ik hoop dat de vorige rapporten door mij op 4 Januari verzonden U veilig hebben bereikt. Ik mag mededeelen dat de vage wenk aan het einde van den brief aan Stead den geest weergeeft van de voornaamste boerenleiders—behalve President Steyn met wien ik nog nooit gelegenheid had over dit onderwerp te spreken.

Gelieve in de toekomst geen uitlanders meer naar ons uit te zenden, daar ze ons van geen nut zijn en men nooit weet in hoeverre men veilig met hen is. Eenig persoon die in Europa zonder schriftelijk verlof van mij komt [moet] eenvoudig beschouwd worden als een weglooper en als zoodanig behandeld worden. Sommigen loopen van hier weg met het doel naar Europa te gaan en als afgezanten te poseeren, en ik waarschuw U tegen deze lui.

Officiël heb ik niets verder mede te deelen dan in het rapport aan de la Rey vervat is. Met den vooruitgang onzer zaak ben ik tevreden.

Met hartelijke groeten aan ZHEd. en de andere vrienden in Europa blijf ik *tt*.

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

From General J. C. Smuts to the Ambassador

Kakamas

26 January 1902

Respected Friend, Herewith I send you a copy of a report sent by me to General de la Rey. I do this through the German postal service and my object is to find out whether you will receive my communications by this means, for should this succeed, I would make more use of it in future.

I hope that the earlier reports sent by me on 4 January have reached you safely. I may inform you that the vague hint at the end of the letter to Stead reflects the mind of the most prominent Boer leaders—except President Steyn with whom I have never had the opportunity to discuss this matter.

Please do not in future send any more foreigners to us as they are of no use to us and one never knows to what extent one is safe with them. Any person who appears in Europe without my written permission must simply be regarded as a deserter and treated as such. Some run away from here with the object of going to Europe and posing as delegates and I warn you against these people.

I have nothing further to communicate officially than appears in the report to de la Rey. I am satisfied with the progress of our cause.

With hearty greetings to His Honour and the other friends in Europe, I remain, *totus tuus*,

J. C. Smuts

172 To J. A. Smuts¹

Vol. 2, no. 108

Nieuwoudtville, Calvinia

4 Januari 1902

Lieve Kosie, Het zal jou zeker verwonderen direct van mij te hooren daar het nu vele jaren is dat wij elkander gezien hebben. Maar Tottie, die ook niets van zijne familie voor jaren vernomen heeft, heeft verlof gevraagd naar Stellenbosch te gaan ten einde hen te bezoeken, en ik zend deze paar regelen met hem mede om jou te doen zien dat ik nog leef en gezond ben.

Het was voor mij zwaar nieuws laaste Maartmaand, toen ik vernam van uit Potchefstroom dat onze lieve en dierbare moeder de eeuwige rust was ingegaan. Ik had toch zoo verlnagen haar weder te zien in dit leven. Wie weet hoe spoedig ik haar in het andere leven zal ontmoeten! Alles is wisselvallig en in den oorlog nog meer dan op andere tijden. Ik heb vele nauwe ontcomingsen in deze oorlog gehad waarvoor ik zeer dankbaar ben; maar voor ieder komt naderhand zijn tijd. Tottie zal jou echter hierover veel kunnen vertellen.

Isie zag ik laaste Juniemaand in Standerton, Transvaal, zooals jij misschien ook weet. Zij zag er toen allerslechtst uit; niet zonder bittere ontroering zag ik wat een geraamte zij was

¹ Smuts's younger brother.

geworden na alles dat zij had doorgaan. Mrs de Wet zeide mij dat Isie in den laatste tijd niet meer liep maar steeds op het bed bleef liggen. Zij was altijd geplaagd met haar rug, en deze ziekte wordt al erger en zal misschien nog fataal worden. De vreeselijke hitte en andere omstandigheden te Durban zullen een spoedig einde aan haar kunnen maken. Daarom wensch ik dat jullie toch jul best zullen doen haar daar weg te krijgen. Op Klipfontein zal zij spoedig herstellen naar ik hoop. Doe toch jullie best. Het klimaat van Stellenbosch zal ook niet goed voor haar zijn maar toch beter dan Durban.

Hoe gaat het met Kitty? Ik heb van hare familie in het district Clanwilliam aangetroffen, echter niet haar vader. Geef haar mijn hartelijkste groete.

Zuster Maria hoor ik is getrouwd, dus is Bibas alleen thuis. Ik wonder of pa het eenzaam vindt na den dood van ma, dan of de oorlog zo op hem drukt dat hij alles anders vergeet. Ik wonder wat van Bool geworden is, iemand heeft mij gezegd dat hij in moeilijkheid was met de Britsche autoriteiten. Ik hoop dat hij er weer uit is.

En nu, liefste broeder, vaarwel; ik heb schaarsch eenige hoop jullie ooit weer in het leven te zien; ik vertrouw maar dat jullie jul best zal doen om Isie te helpen.

Na hartelijke groeten en U allen aan Gods vaderzorg toevertrouwende, blijf ik jou liefhebbende broeder

J. C. Smuts

TRANSLATION

Nieuwoudtville

Calvinia

4 January 1902

Dear Kosie, It will no doubt surprise you to hear direct from me as it is now many years since we saw one another. But Tottie, who also has learned nothing about his family for years, has asked for leave to go to Stellenbosch to visit them, and I send these few lines with him to let you see that I am still alive and well.

It was hard news for me last March, when I learned from Potchefstroom that our dear and precious mother had gone to her eternal rest. I had so much longed to see her again in this life. Who knows how soon I shall meet her in the other life! All

is uncertain and in war more than at other times. I have had many narrow escapes in this war for which I am very thankful; but for each his time comes at last. Tottie will, however, be able to tell you much about this.

I saw Isie last June in Standerton, Transvaal, as you perhaps know. She then looked extremely bad; not without bitter emotion I saw what a skeleton she had become after all she had been through. Mrs de Wet told me that Isie no longer walked about of late but remained lying on her bed. She was always troubled with her back, and this disease is becoming worse and will perhaps yet be fatal. The frightful heat and other conditions in Durban may put a quick end to her. For that reason I wish that you would do your best to get her away from there. At Klipfontein she would, I hope, soon recover. Do do your best. The climate of Stellenbosch would also not be good for her but at any rate better than Durban.

How is Kitty?¹ I have come across some of her family in the Clanwilliam district, but not her father. Give her my heartiest greetings.

Sister Maria² is married I hear, so Bibas³ is at home alone. I wonder whether father finds it lonely after mother's death, or whether the war oppresses him so much that he forgets everything else. I wonder what has happened to Bool,⁴ someone told me that he was in trouble with the British authorities. I hope that he is out of it again.

And now, dearest brother, farewell; I have hardly any hope of ever seeing you in this life again; I only trust that you will do your best to help Isie.

With hearty greetings and confiding you all to God's fatherly care, I remain your loving brother,

J. C. Smuts

¹ Wife of J. A. Smuts.

² Maria Magdalena Hoffman, elder sister, born 21 March 1872, died c. 1922.

³ Adriana Martha Smuts, younger sister.

⁴ B. de V. Smuts, youngest brother.

PART IV

VEREENIGING

12 MAY 1902-31 MAY 1902

VEREENIGING

The few documents in the Smuts Collection relating to the Treaty of Vereeniging do not add much to the excellent history of that essay in peace-making by J. D. Kestell and D. E. van Velden. (*The Peace Negotiations between Boer and Briton*, published in 1907.) But some of them do show more precisely what part Smuts played in the drama of May 1902. They show, for instance, that he was late on the stage and had no part in the preliminary negotiations. Others throw light on what might be called the 'Kitchener line' in the peace talks and here some entries made by Smuts in a penny note-book are of great interest (174 (b) and (d)). The personal entries, and three letters from Smuts to his wife, contain poignant biographical material.

173 To S. M. Smuts

Vol. 2, no. 109

Ermelo District
12 May 1902

My darling Isie, This letter I am trying to forward to you through the kind offices of General Clements, who was so kind to us last year. Your letter to Tottie I have seen; off and on during the last twelve months I have heard of you and was always glad to hear that you were still getting on fairly well under the circumstances. I do not know why you were under the impression that Tottie was with Botha. He accompanied me to the Cape Colony last August and has ever since acted as my secretary and has come back with me in that capacity to the conference to be held three days hence at Vereeniging. I need not tell you that he has always acquitted himself most creditably. I was very much surprised by several items in your letter. The pater's intended (and now accomplished)

marriage to a girl whom I knew well at school,¹ having been for some time in the same class with her, and Bool's marriage to some unknown girl, Ella's departure for Stellenbosch,—these and other bits of news were all surprising. Congratulate Pa and Bool on my behalf and wish them all that's good and fair; and thank little Ella very sincerely for her long stay with you. I shall always have a warm spot in my heart for my little sister. Remember me to the other kind friends mentioned in your note, especially Olive Schreiner and her husband. In other letters of yours I also saw some reference to them.

And now, dearest, how shall I sum up the past eleven months since I last saw you? No doubt it is written or rather engraved indelibly on your memory as well as mine. To me it has without doubt been the hardest year that I have gone through since the war began; and yet in many senses it has been not an unhappy one. You mention some incidents in your letter, but the whole story reads more like romance than reality. One day when we meet again I shall tell you everything and then you will have even more reasons for thankfulness than you have at present. Poor Johannes Neethling! He fell by my side that dreadful afternoon,² and my Charlie—perhaps the best horse that ever a burgher rode in this war, by him (you saw him in Standerton last year.) Kleinbooï too I shall never forget, he was one of the most faithful Natives I have ever seen. Yes, I have seen dreadful suffering, privations that I should before have thought beyond human endurance, but withal resolute determination, unselfishness and disinterested devotion such as redeems a whole world from sordidness and pettiness.

When I was recalled to the Transvaal to attend the conference referred to, I was at Concordia in Namaqualand.³ Thence I went by rail to Port Nolloth, thence by steamer to Simonstown⁴ and from there by rail, to Standerton. On the whole I enjoyed the trip very much. I was not allowed to

¹ Maria Smuts, born van der Westhuizen. Second wife of Smuts's father, Jacobus Abraham (q.v.).

² On 7 September 1901. See 158 and 159.

³ On 25 April 1902.

⁴ A naval base near Cape Town.

communicate with the outside world and saw no one that I knew. Tottie had hoped to touch at Stellenbosch!

What the upshot of the present negotiations will be I cannot say; I only hope that it won't be another twelve months before I see you again. Klaas de Wet is remarkably fortunate in seeing Ella so often, but then our cases are very different, and I and my work are regarded with much bitterness and hatred. Nothing will however deter me from doing my duty, for I do not regard the favour either of my friends or my enemies but shall ever strive to do my duty, to retain my own self-respect and sense of personal rectitude and—last not least—the goodwill and respect of her who is the last thing left me in this life. A man may lose his possessions, even his home and country, but he may yet remain a citizen of that larger and higher kingdom whose limits are the conscience and aspirations of humanity. During these last twelve months I have read much the writings of the citizens of this larger country whose foundations and codes are far beyond the imperialism of this twentieth century—citizens like Isaiah, Thomas à Kempis, Augustine, Kant and Goethe, etc. etc. belonging to all ages, but all of that higher kingdom of which Jesus Christ is the first citizen.¹ Perhaps the noblest part that man can attain to in this world is to rise above this world in serene peace of mind, rectitude of purpose, noble aspirations for the highest ends, and personal sacrifice for his fellows. If it be granted me to rise to this higher plane of life and thought, I ought not to repine at the loss of what I once considered the dearest and noblest treasures of life. I am writing coldly and frigidly, but you know me, my Mia; you know how warmly I feel and how much I long that we shall be tranquil in soul even amid the severest losses that life can bring. Who knows what is still in store for us—what losses, what disappointments, what renunciations,—but there are treasures, treasures of the soul, of love, and truth and endeavour which no man can ever rob us of; these are already partly ours, let them be ours more and more. Let us rise to this higher Stoicism and we shall have the

¹ In a notebook containing a few pages of notes for his unwritten story of the Cape Expedition, Smuts wrote: 'In the war after the fall of Pretoria I read through Uberweg's *History of Philosophy* (found at Parys), much of Kant's *Kritik* (found at Leliefontein) and quite a number of theological and critical disquisitions'.

richest compensations for losses in other directions. It is idle to say how much I am thinking of you, how much longing to see your dear form once more. By night and day you are in spirit ever present with me, and the very thought of you, mingling with my holiest recollections of life, restrains me from wrong and spurs me to what is right and noble. O Mia! But I may not write to you in this way. Some day in the future—I hope in the near future—we shall speak face to face without censors or third persons present. I wish I could write like you, but you know how to understand my poor attempts at uttering my thoughts. And now good-bye, dearest, and God be with you till we meet again. Ever yours only,

J. C. Smuts

174 Vereeniging Notes

Box T

During the period of the peace negotiations at Vereeniging, Smuts made significant entries in a small note-book. The most interesting are printed below, in sequence, as follows:

- (a) Estimates of Boer forces under his command in the Cape Colony.
- (b) Terms of peace discussed with Lord Kitchener.
- (c) Translation of (b).
- (d) Suggested conditions of peace and laying down of arms.
- (e) Translation of (d).
- (f) Shopping list.
- (g) Translation of (f).
- (h) A quotation.
- (i) Estimate of Boer forces under arms.
- (j) Translation of (i).
- (k) Main points for the speech made by Smuts at the Vereeniging meeting.
- (l) Translation of (k).
- (m) Procedure for surrender by the commandos.
- (n) List of books.

		(a)	
Schoeman ¹	120	P. de Villiers	500
Kamfer [Andries J.]	120	Louw [J.]	70
Boshoff [Louis]	120	Smit [J. J.]	130
Bouwer	140	Golding [J.]	60
Naudé [Jacobus]	100		<hr/>
Theron [Jan Louis]	220		260
L. Wessels ²	50	P. [Piet] Wessels	180
Fraser [Joseph]	50	Fouché [W. D.]	100
Neser [J. P.]	100	Odendaal [Gert]	100
Lategan [H. W.]	250		<hr/>
Conroy [E. A.]	150		380
Botha [C. J.]	40		
Pienaar [Jacobus]	50	Myburgh [C. P. H.]	100
S. Pypers	100		
J. Pypers	100		1890
v. Heerden [Carel]	120		500
v. Reenen [G. H. P.]	60		260
	<hr/>		380
	1890		<hr/>
		Totaal	3030
			<hr/>

Burgers in Kaap Kolonie

Augustus 1901	1400
Transvalers gevangen [captured] in Augustus 1901	700
Sedert aangesloten [since joined]	1400
Gevallen etc. [fallen etc.]	400
	<hr/>
Totaal	3100 [sic]
	<hr/>

(b)

4 Mei Kroonstad

1. Naturellen te worden ontwapend en geen stemrecht dan na zelfregeering.

¹ Commandant Christoffel Schoeman. He followed S. G. Maritz into rebellion in 1914 and was then commandant of the 'Vrykorps', a force of about a hundred Afrikaners living in German South West Africa.

² Louis B. Wessels first served under P. H. Kritzinger (q.v.) and joined Smuts as guide in September 1901.

2. Overgave met eer; behoud van wapens onder permitten; met betrekking tot paarden zullen burgers met 'generosity' behandeld worden.

3. Geen kans voor onmiddellijke zelfregeering: hoegenaamd geen kans.

4. Overgave zonder voorwaardes keurt Kitchener zeer sterk af daar zulks zal aantonen dat Boeren weer willen opstaan en dan zullen gevangenen niet zonder meer terug komen. Engelsche regeering prefereert onvoorwaardelijke overgave maar Kitchener als boeren vriend er sterk tegen.

5. Rebellen zullen geamnestieerd worden maar zullen tijdelijk stemrecht verliezen.

6. Indien gedelegeerdes voor vrede zijn wenscht Kitchener hun te zien om behoeften der districten te bespreken.

7. Verbanning buiten kwestie indien Kitchener's brief van Maart 1901 aangenomen wordt.

8. Indien wij voortgaan met vechten zal geen krijgsgevangen ooit terug komen tenzij hij de wapens tegen ons opneemt als bewijst zijner loyaliteit.

(c)

4 May Kroonstad¹

1. Natives to be disarmed and no franchise until after self-government.

2. Surrender with honour; retention of weapons under permits; as regards horses burghers will be treated with 'generosity'.

3. No chance of immediate self-government: no chance whatever.

4. Kitchener strongly disapproves unconditional surrender as this will indicate that Boers wish to rise again and then prisoners will not return without delay. English Government prefers unconditional surrender but Kitchener as friend of the Boers strongly against it.

5. Rebels will be amnestied but will temporarily lose franchise.

¹ When Smuts was on his way to the Transvaal by train to join his colleagues before the Conference at Vereeniging, he was met at Kroonstad station by Lord Kitchener. They discussed terms of surrender. This entry is Smuts's note of Kitchener's proposals. (See D. Reitz, *Commando*, Third Edition, pp. 315-17.)

6. In case delegates are for peace Kitchener wishes to see them to discuss needs of the districts.

7. Exile out of the question if Kitchener's letter of March 1901¹ is accepted.

8. If we go on fighting no prisoner of war will ever come back unless he takes up arms against us as proof of his loyalty.

(d)

Wat betreft wapen nederlegging

1. Wijze te worden overeengekomen met hoofdgens.
2. Geweren te worden behouden onder permit.
3. Eigendoms paarden, niet op gouvts. rekening aangekocht, te worden behouden.
4. Burgers der vorige republieken te worden vervoerd naar de plaatsen hunner keuze (des verkiezen).
Geen afrekening door officieren.

Na wapenneerlegging zal er zijn

1. Amnestie voor alle oorlogsdaden.
2. Uitbetaling van
 - (a) gouvts. noten
 - (b) kwitanties
 - (c) directe schade vergoeding.
3. Alle families worden teruggebracht.
4. Alle krijgsgevangen worden teruggebracht.
5. Geen verdere verbanning zal plaats vinden.
6. Alles zal gedaan worden om families te voorzien van benodigdheden voedsel, deksel, werktuigen etc. en dit zal van schadevergoeding afgetrokken worden.
7. Onmiddellijke ontwapening van alle naturellen en naturellen stammen behalve Basutos en Swazies.

Binnen twee jaar zal verantwoordelijke zelfbestuur zoals in de K.K. worden toegestaan met stemrecht zoals in de K.K. en kiesafdeelingen min of meer op de basis van stemgerechtigden. De limieten der beide republieken zullen niet veranderd worden voor en aler federatie voor Z.A. wordt ingevoerd.

¹ Kitchener's letter to Botha of 7 March 1901 following their peace discussions at Middelburg, printed in *The Times History of the War in South Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 188-90.

Beide talen zullen gebruikt worden, in de scholen naar verkiezing der ouders onderwezen worden, verplichtend zijn voor ambtenaren en in het parlement mogen gesproken worden.

Geen Godsdienstige diskwalificaties voor ambtenaren en parlementsleden.

Wettelijke status van naturellen zooals in de K.K.; geen stemrecht aan kleurlingen dan na verantw. zelfbestuur onder de wetten door de toekomstige parlementen te worden gemaakt.

(e)

As regards laying down of arms

1. Manner to be agreed upon with chief generals.
2. Rifles to be retained under permit.
3. Property, horses, not bought on Government's account, to be retained.
4. Burghers of the former Republics to be transported to the places of their choice.

No settling of accounts by officers.

After laying down of arms there will be

1. Amnesty for all deeds of war.
2. Paying out of
 - (a) Government notes
 - (b) receipts
 - (c) direct compensation.
3. All families to be brought back.
4. All prisoners of war to be brought back.
5. No further deportation will take place.
6. Everything will be done to provide families with necessities—food, shelter, implements etc.—and this will be deducted from compensation.
7. Immediate disarmament of all natives and native tribes except Basutos and Swazies.

Within two years responsible self-government as in the Cape Colony will be granted with franchise as in the Cape Colony and constituencies more or less on the basis of voters. The boundaries of both Republics will not be altered until federation for South Africa is introduced. Both languages will be used, will be taught in the schools according to the parents'

choice, be compulsory for officials and may be spoken in parliament.

No religious disqualifications for officials and members of parliament.

Legal status of Natives as in the Cape Colony; no franchise to Coloured people until after responsible self-government under laws to be made by the future parliaments.

(f)

2 hemden
1 pr. topboots no. 10
6 zakdoeken
6 pr. sokken
rybroek
£20

(g)

2 shirts
1 pair topboots, size 10
6 handkerchiefs
6 pairs socks
riding-breeches
£20

(h)

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the Right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the struggle, and for his widow and his children—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

Abraham Lincoln¹

(i)

In Transvaal

10,816 onder wapen
waarvan 3,296 voetgangers
gevangen ens. voor laatste 12 maanden 6,084

¹ The passage is from Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address.

O.V.S.

6,100 onder wapen

waarvan 400 noncombattant

(j)

In Transvaal

10,816 under arms

of which 3,296 infantry

captured etc. in last 12 months 6,084

O.F.S.

6,100 under arms

of which 400 non-combatants.

(k)

1. *Sep. 1889*—en heden.

Toen ook speciale opdracht. Dit nog veel belangrijker oogenblik. Hopeloos.

2. *Kolonie. Amnestie.*

3. Gevaar dat wij alleen als krijgsmannen en van *militair oogpunt* beslissen. Wij moeten over belangen van gansche volk beslissen.

4. *Interventie* en Amerika.

5. Opgeven van districten – terugkeer van krijgsgevangenen.

6. Termen, waarom.

Onze zending de verbinding van de wonden van ons volk.

7. Speciaal opdracht van onafhankelijkheid.

8. Godsdienstig. Uitroep God heeft ons verlaten. Maar niemand ziet Gods voorzienigheid. Misschien zijn wij zaadkorrel dat zal opgroeien. Misschien een der martelaars volken der geschiedenis evenals Israel. Laat ons bukken en zeggen Uw wil geschiede. Uw wil is geopenbaard in . . . [Note incomplete]

(l)

1. September 1899—and today.

Then also a special charge. This a much more important moment. Hopeless.

2. Colony. Amnesty.

3. Danger that we decide merely as fighting men and from *military standpoint*. We must decide interests of entire people.
4. Intervention and America.
5. Surrender of districts and return of prisoners of war.
6. Terms, why.
Our mission the binding up of the wounds of our people.
7. Special charge of independence.
8. Religious. Exclaim God had forsaken us. But no one sees God's providence. Perhaps we are grain of seed that will grow. Perhaps one of the martyr nations of history like Israel. Let us submit and say Thy will be done. Thy will is revealed in . . . [Note incomplete]

(m)

Instructions

Immediately on the commandos coming in to surrender

1. All firearms, ammunition and other munitions of war must be handed in. Field-cornets and higher officers who were burghers of the late Republics may retain their firearms, which shall be given free of charge.
2. Two separate rolls will then be taken by the local officer O.C. of the names of rebels and burghers of the late Republics. The rebels will then sign the declaration annexed before the local magistrate and be allowed to go to their respective homes, or be conveyed by rail in case they surrender beyond the districts of their former domicile.
3. Burghers of the late Republics may elect whether they will go to their homes in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony or whether they will remain with their families in the Cape Colony and will be conveyed without delay over the railways free of charge.
4. All personal property including horses may be retained by the possessors.
5. For the purpose of the declaration made by Her Majesty's Government about the treatment of rebels, the term *commandant* shall not include field-cornets who have simply acted as commandants or who have not received an appointment as commandant from a competent superior officer.

6. The proceedings shall be as quiet as possible and all unnecessary formalities shall be avoided.

7. The necessary food and forage shall be supplied by the local O.C. to persons surrendering.

(n)

Personality—The Beginning and End of Metaphysics

5th ed. 3/- By Rev. A. W. Momeri (Wm. Black & Sons)

Hegelianism and Personality 5/-

By Andrew Seth (Wm. Black & Sons)

C. P. Teile. *Elements of Science and Religion.*

2 vols. 7/6 each. (Wm. Black & Sons)

175 and **176** are resolutions drafted by Smuts and Hertzog at the request of the delegates at Vereeniging on 16 May 1902. The original documents are in Smuts's handwriting. **175** was adopted without amendment. There is no record that **176**, a more uncompromising alternative, was put to the meeting.

175 Vereeniging Resolution Vol. CI, no. 52. Notebook E

Deze vergadering van volksvertegenwoordigers, gelethebd op de correspondenties gewisseld en onderhandelingen gevoerd tusschen de Regeeringen der beide Republieken en Z.E. Lord Kitchener namens de Britsche Regeering; gehoord hebbende de toelichtingen der afgevaardigden van de verschillende deelen der beide Republieken; gehoord hebbende de jongste rapporten van onze vertegenwoordigers in Europa; lettende op het feit dat de Britsche Regeering geweigerd heeft vrede te sluiten op de basis onzer onafhankelijkheid en geweigerd heeft de voorstellen onzer Regeeringen op gemelde basis gemaakt aan te nemen; doch daar niettegenstaande bovengemelde weigering der Britsche Regeering deze vergadering toch wenscht gevolg te geven aan het vurige verlangen van het volk om zijne onafhankelijkheid te behouden, waarvoor reeds zoovele stoffelijke en persoonlijke opofferingen gebracht zijn

(I)

Besluit namens het volk der beide Republieken de beide Regeeringen te machtigen als volgt: nl. om een vrede te sluiten

op de volgende basis, te weten, het behoud van een beperkte onafhankelijkheid onder aanbieding, behalve wat reeds door de Regeeringen aangeboden werd in hunne depeche dd. 15 April 1902 van (*a*) afstand van alle buitenlandsche relaties en gezantschappen (*b*) aanname van het protectoraat van Groot Brittanje, (*c*) afstand van gedeelten van het grondgebied der Z.A.R., en (*d*) het aangaan van een defensief verbond met Groot Brittanje met betrekking tot Zuid-Afrika.

TRANSLATION

This meeting of representatives of the people, having noted the correspondence exchanged and the negotiations conducted between the Governments of both Republics and His Excellency Lord Kitchener in the name of the British Government; having heard the explanations of the delegates from the various parts of both Republics; having heard the latest reports of our representatives in Europe; noting the fact that the British Government has refused to conclude peace on the basis of our independence and has refused to accept the proposals made by our Governments on that basis; but since, notwithstanding the above-mentioned refusal of the British Government, this meeting nevertheless wishes to give effect to the ardent desire of the people to preserve its independence, for which so many material and personal sacrifices have already been made

(I)

Resolves in the name of the people of both Republics to empower both Governments as follows: namely, to conclude a peace on the following basis, that is, the preservation of a limited independence by offering, apart from what was already offered by the Governments in their despatch dated 15 April 1902,¹ (*a*) surrender of all foreign relations and embassies, (*b*) acceptance of the protectorate of Great Britain, (*c*) surrender of portions of the territory of the South African Republic, and (*d*) the conclusion of a defensive alliance with Great Britain with reference to South Africa.

¹ The leaders of both Republics met at Klerksdorp on 9 April 1902 and then sent a written peace offer to Kitchener which he rejected (see J. D. Kestell and D. E. van Velden: *The Peace Negotiations between the Boer and Briton in South Africa*, pp. 18-32).

(II)

Deze vergadering van Volksvertegenwoordigers uit beide Republieken, gelet hebben de op de correspondentie gewisseld en onderhandelingen gevoerd tusschen de Regeeringen der beide Republieken en Z.E. Lord Kitchener namens de Britsche Regeering, gehoord hebbende de toelichtingen der afgevaardigden van de verschillende deelen der beide Republieken; gehoord hebbende de jongste rapporten van onze vertegenwoordigers in Europa; lettende op het feit dat de Britsche Regeering geweigerd heeft vrede te sluiten op de basis onzer onafhankelijkheid, en geweigerd heeft de voorstellen onzer Regeeringen op gemelde basis aan te nemen; vurig verlangende termen van vrede te verkrijgen welke zoo na mogelijk aan onze onafhankelijkheid verwant zijn en welke den economischen en maatschappelijken ondergang van ons volk zullen afwenden, besluit namens het volk de Regeeringen der beide Republieken te machtigen met de vertegenwoordigers der Britsche Militaire Regeering te onderhandelen ten einde een vrede te verkrijgen waarbij het volk der beide Republieken binnen den kortst mogelijken tijd vertegenwoordigend zelfbestuur zal verkrijgen, staatsschulden en schade berokken door de oorlog aan particulieren zullen worden uitbetaald; de krijgsgevangenen zullen worden teruggebracht, de belangen der Hollandsche taal zullen worden gewaarborgd, en zulke andere termen zullen worden verkregen als berekend mogen blijken den stoffelijken en maatschappelijken toestand van onze volk te verbeteren; en dan het door de Regeeringen verkregen resultaat aan deze vergadering ter goedkeuring voor te leggen.

TRANSLATION

(II)

This meeting of representatives of the people from both Republics, having noted the correspondence exchanged and the negotiations conducted between the Governments of both Republics and His Excellency Lord Kitchener in the name of the British Government, having heard the explanations of the

delegates from the various parts of both Republics; having heard the latest reports of our representatives in Europe; noting the fact that the British Government has refused to conclude peace on the basis of our independence, and has refused to accept the proposals of our Governments on the said basis; ardently desiring to obtain terms of peace which are as closely related as possible to our independence and which will avert the economic and social downfall of our people, resolves in the name of the people to empower the Governments of both Republics to negotiate with the representatives of the British Military Government with a view to obtaining a peace by which the people of both Republics will obtain representative self-government within the shortest possible time, public debts and damage done by the war to private persons will be paid out; the prisoners of war will be brought back, the interests of the Dutch language will be guaranteed,¹ and such other terms will be obtained as may appear calculated to improve the material and social condition of our people; and then to lay the result obtained by the Governments before this meeting for approval.

177 Vereeniging Speech

Text of the main speech made by Smuts on 30 May 1902 at the Vereeniging meeting. Two versions are extant: (a) a document in the Smuts Collection in Smuts's handwriting (Box H no. 1), and (b) a corrected and amended version of (a) published in 1907 in J. D. Kestell and D. E. van Velden, *op. cit.* pp. 193–8, which is printed below. These authors submitted their book to Smuts and others before publishing it. Smuts then, apparently, made a copy of van Velden's report of his speech (a), and also made alterations in it for publication (b). In the case of alterations other than improvements in style and syntax, the equivalent passages of (a) are given in footnotes. The translation is reprinted from the English version of Kestell and van Velden, pp. 188–91.

Ik heb mij tot hiertoe niet in de discussie gemengd, hoewel mijne inzichten aan mijne Regeering niet onbekend zijn. Wij zijn gekomen tot een donker punt in de ontwikkeling van den

¹ See 174 (e).

oorlog en ozne zaak—voor mij des te donkerder en pijnlijker omdat ik een van die personen was die als leden van de Regeering der Z.A.R. den strijd met Engeland aanknoopten. Een mensch mag echter niet terugdeinzen voor de gevolgen zijner daden en wij moeten dus bij eene gelegenheid als deze alle privaat gevoel terug houden en alleen en uitsluitelijk beslissen met het oog op de blijvende belangen van het Afrikaansche volk. Dit is voor ons een groot oogenblik, misschien het laatste dat wij als een vrij volk en vrije Regeeringen zullen bij elkaar komen; laten wij ons dus opheffen tot de hoogte en de grootheid van deze gelegenheid en tot een beslissing komen waarvoor het Afrikaansche nageslacht ons zal zegenen en niet vervloeken.

Het groote gevaar voor deze vergadering is dat zij uit een bloot militaire oogpunt tot een besluit zal komen. Bijna alle vertegenwoordigers alhier aanwezig zijn officieren die geen vrees kennen, die nooit bang zijn geweest en ook nooit bang zullen worden voor de overmacht des vijands, en die bereid zijn hun laatste druppel bloed voor hun land en volk te geven. Nu, wanneer wij de zaak van een bloot militair oogpunt als een kriegszaak beschouwen, dan moet ik erkennen dat wij nog met den strijd kunnen voortgaan. Wij zijn nog steeds een onoverwonnen krijgsmacht, wij hebben nog omtrent 18,000 man in het veld, veteranen met wie men bijna enig werk kan doen. Onze zaak als een kriegszaak kunnen wij nog verder drijven.

Maar wij zijn niet als een legermacht, wij zijn hier als een volk; wij behartigen niet alleen een kriegszaak, maar ook een volkszaak. Niemand zit hier om zijn eigen commando te vertegenwoordigen. Ieder een vertegenwoordigt hier het Afrikaansche volk—niet alleen dat deel dat thans in het veld is, maar ook dat gedeelte dat reeds onder de aarde rust en dat deel dat nog na ons zal bestaan. Wij vertegenwoordigen niet alleen onszelven, maar ook de duizendes ontslapenen die het laatste offer gebracht hebben voor hun volk; de gevangenen verspreid over de geheele wêreld, de vrouwen en kinderen die in de gevangeniskampen van den vijand bij duizenden uitsterven; wij vertegenwoordigen het bloed en de tranen van een gansch volk. Zij roepen ons alle toe, van uit de gevangenissen, de kampen, het graf, het veld en den schoot der toekomst,

om toch wijselijk te beslissen en alle stappen te vermijden welke kunnen leiden tot den ondergang en de uitroeiing van het Afrikaansche volk en welke dus de opofferingen door hun gemaakt zouden kunnen verijdelen.

Tot dusver hebben wij den strijd niet doelloos voortgezet, wij hebben niet gevochten om doodgeschoten te worden, wij zijn den strijd begonnen en hebben hem voortgezet tot op dit oogenblik omdat wij onze onafhankelijkheid wilden behouden en bereid waren alles ervoor op te offeren. Maar wij mogen niet het Afrikaansche volk voor de onafhankelijkheid offeren. Wanneer wij overtuigd zijn dat er menschlijkerwijze gesproken geen redelijke kans is om onze onafhankelijkheid als Republieken te behouden dan wordt het ook onze duidelijke plicht den strijd te staken, opdat wij niet misschien ons volk, onze toekomst opofferen voor een bloot idee dat niet meer kan verwezenlijkt worden.

Welke redelijke kans is er nog om onze onafhankelijkheid te behouden? Wij hebben nu bijna drie jaren zonder tusschenpooze gevochten. Zonder onszelf te bedriegen kunnen wij zeggen dat wij alle krachten hebben ingespannen en aller middelen hebben aangewend om onze zaak te bevorderen. Wij hebben duizenden levens gegeven; wij hebben al onze aardse goederen opgeofferd; ons dierbaar land is een onafgebroken woestijn; meer dan 20,000 vrouwen en kinderen zijn reeds in de kampen des vijands gestorven. Heeft dit alles ons nader bij de onafhankelijkheid gebracht? Integendeel, wij geraken steeds verder van haar; en hoe langer wij zullen voortgaan, hoe grooter de verwijdering worden zal tusschen ons en het doel waarvoor wij gevochten hebben. De wijze waarop de vijand dezen oorlog heeft gevoerd en nog voert heeft ons tot een toestand van uitputting gebracht welke uiteindelijk het voortzetten van den oorlog een physische onmogelijkheid zal maken. Indien er geen redding van elders komt moeten wij gewis bezwijken.

Toen ik een jaar geleden namens mijne Regeering Z.H.Ed. Staats-president Kruger in Europa onzen toestand meedeelde, drukte hij zijn gevoelen uit dat wij, met het oog op den toestand in de Kaap Kolonie en de gevoelens van de Europeesche volkeren, met den strijd moesten voortgaan totdat het laatste middel van weerstand zou zijn uitgeput.

Wat de buitenlandsche politiek betreft wensch ik U alleen op de onbetwisbare feiten te wijzen. (Spreker besprak hier breedvoerig de politieke ontwikkelingen van Amerika en de voornaamste Europeesche mogendheden gedurende de laatste twee jaren en ging toen voort.) Voor ons is en blijft de slotsom van de buitenlandsche situatie dat wij veel sympathie krijgen —waarvoor wij natuurlijk van harte dankbaar zijn; maar meer krijgen wij niet en zullen wij voor vele jaren niet krijgen. Europa zal met ons sympathiseeren totdat de laatste Boerenheld in zijn graf ligt; totdat de laatste Boerenvrouw met gebroken hart naar het graf is gegaan; totdat ons gansche volk opgeofferd zal zijn op het altaar der geschiedenis en der menschheid.

Wat den toestand in de Kaap Kolonie betreft heb ik dien reeds breedvoerig aan U bij een vorige gelegenheid blootgelegd. Wij hebben fouten begaan, en de Kaap Kolonie was misschien ook nog niet rijp voor deze dingen; in elk geval kunnen wij geen algemeenen opstand aldaar verwachten. De 3,000 man die thans bij ons aldaar zijn aangesloten zijn helden die wij niet genoeg eeren kunnen voor hunne opoffering van alles voor ons, maar zij zullen de onafhankelijkheid voor ons niet herwinnen.¹

Wij zijn nu 12 maanden voortgegaan op advies van Pres. Kruger te handelen en hebben beide middelen door hem aangewezen beproefd. Wij zijn in beide gevallen overtuigd geworden dat indien wij nog willen vechten,² wij maar op ons zelve zullen moeten steunen. De feiten door de afgevaardigden uit beide Republieken voor deze vergadering gebracht overtuigen mij dat het voor ons een misdaad zal zijn met dezen strijd voort te gaan, zonder verzekering van hulp van elders. Ons land is reeds in den grond geruineerd. Wij zullen dan ook ons volk hopeloos ruineeren zonder eenig redelijk vooruitzicht op succes.

Nu komt de vijand naar ons met een voorstel dat, hoe onaanneembaar dan ook, toch gepaard gaat met de belofte

¹ . . . in elk geval kunnen wij geen hoop van een algemeenen opstand aldaar koesteren. De 3,000 man die thans bij ons aldaar zijn aangesloten zijn helden die allen lof verdienen, maar zij zullen niet de onafhankelijkheid voor ons herwinnen.

² . . . indien wij vrij willen blijven. . . .

van amnestie voor de Koloniale broeders die zich bij ons hebben aangesloten. Ik vrees de dag zal komen wanneer wij de zoogenaamde rebellen niet meer zullen kunnen redden en dan zal het een oorzaak van rechtvaardig verwijt zijn dat wij ook hunne belangen hebben opgeofferd voor ons reeds hopeloos geworden zaak. En ik ben bang dat het afslaan van het voorstel der Britsche Regeering ons veel sympathie in de buitenwereld zal doen verliezen—en onze positie veel zal verzwakken.

Broeders, wij hebben besloten tot het bittere einde te staan; laten wij als mannen erkennen dat dat einde voor ons gekomen is—gekomen in bitterder vorm dan wij ooit hadden gedacht. Voor een ieder van ons zou de dood een zoeter en zachter einde geweest zijn dan de stap waartoe wij nu zullen moeten overgaan. Maar wij bukken voor Gods wil.

De toekomst is duister; maar wij zullen de moed, de hoop, het vertrouwen op God niet prijsgeven. Niemand zal mij ooit overtuigen dat de ongeëvenaarde opofferingen door het Afrikaansche volk op het altaar der Vrijheid gelegd ijdel en tevergeefs zullen zijn. De vrijheidsoorlog van Zuid-Afrika is gestreden—niet alleen voor de Boeren maar voor het gansche volk van Zuid-Afrika. De uitkomst van dien strijd laten wij in Gods hand. Misschien is het Zijn wil om het volk van Zuid-Afrika door nederlaag, door vernedering, ja zelfs door het dal der schaduwe des doods te leiden tot een betere toekomst en een helderen dag.

TRANSLATION

Hitherto I have not taken part in the discussion,¹ although my views are not unknown to my Government. We have arrived at a dark stage in the development of the war, and our cause is all the darker and more painful to me because I, as a member of the Government of the South African Republic, was one of the persons who entered into the war with England. A man may, however, not shrink from the consequences of his acts, and on an occasion like this, we must restrain all private feelings and decide only and exclusively with a view to the

¹ On the point of whether the final terms offered by the British Government should be accepted or rejected. Smuts had spoken several times during the earlier proceedings.

permanent interests of the Afrikaner people. These are great moments for us, perhaps the last time when we meet as a free people, and a free Government. Let us thus rise to the magnitude of the opportunity and arrive at a decision for which the future Afrikaner generation will bless and not curse us. The great danger before this meeting is, that it will come to a decision from a purely military point of view. Almost all the representatives here are officers who do not know fear, who have never been afraid, nor will ever become afraid of the overwhelming strength of the enemy, and who are prepared to give their last drop of blood for their country and their people. Now, if we view the matter merely from a military standpoint, if we consider it only as a military matter, then I must admit that we can still go on with the struggle. We are still an unvanquished military force. We have still 18,000 men in the field, veterans, with whom you can do almost any work. We can thus push our cause, from a military point of view, still further. But we are not here as an army, but as a people; we have not only a military question, but also a national matter to deal with. No one here represents his own commando. Everyone here represents the Afrikaner people, and not only that portion which is still in the field, but also those who are already under the sod and those who will live after we have gone. We represent, not only ourselves, but also the thousands who are dead, and have made the last sacrifice for their people, the prisoners of war scattered all over the world, and the women and children who are dying out by thousands in the concentration camps of the enemy; we represent the blood and the tears of an entire nation.

They all call upon us, from the prisoner of war camps, from the concentration camps, from the grave, from the field, and from the womb of the future, to decide wisely and to avoid all measures which may lead to the decadence and extermination of the Afrikaner people, and thus frustrate the objects for which they made all their sacrifices. Hitherto we have not continued the struggle aimlessly. We did not fight merely to be shot. We commenced the struggle, and continued it to this moment, because we wished to maintain our independence, and were prepared to sacrifice everything for it. But we may not sacrifice the Afrikaner people for that in-

dependence. As soon as we are convinced that, humanly speaking, there is no reasonable chance to retain our independence as Republics, it clearly becomes our duty to stop the struggle in order that we may not perhaps sacrifice our people and our future for a mere idea, which cannot be realized. What reasonable chance is there still to retain our independence? We have now fought for almost three years without a break. Without deceiving ourselves we can say that we have exerted all our powers and employed every means to further our cause. We have given thousands of lives, we have sacrificed all our earthly goods; our cherished country is one continuous desert; more than 20,000 women and children have already died in the concentration camps of the enemy. Has all this brought us nearer to our independence? On the contrary, we are getting ever further from it, and the longer we continue, the greater will be the gap between us and the object for which we have fought. The manner in which the enemy has carried on this war and still carries it on has reduced us to a condition of exhaustion which will ultimately make the continuance of the war a physical impossibility. If no deliverance comes from elsewhere, we must certainly succumb. When a year ago I, on behalf of my Government, communicated our condition to His Honour President Kruger in Europe, he expressed the opinion that, with a view to the situation in the Cape Colony, and to the feelings of the European peoples, we should continue with the struggle till the last means of resistance was exhausted. With reference to foreign politics, I only wish to direct your attention to the indisputable facts. (The speaker here discussed fully the political developments in America and of the principal European Powers during the last two years, and then proceeded.) For us the foreign situation is and remains that we enjoy much sympathy, for which we are, of course, heartily thankful. That is all we get, nor shall we receive anything more for many years. Europe will sympathize with us till the last Boer hero lies in his last resting-place, till the last Boer woman has gone to her grave with a broken heart, till our entire nation shall have been sacrificed on the altar of history and of humanity.

With reference to the situation in the Cape Colony, I have stated fully on a former occasion what that is. We have made

mistakes, and the Cape Colony was perhaps not ripe for these events. In any case we cannot expect any general rising there. The 3,000 men who have joined us are heroes, whom we cannot sufficiently honour for having sacrificed their all for us, but they will not regain our independence.

We have now for twelve months acted on the advice of President Kruger, and have tried both the means indicated by him, and in both cases we have become convinced that, if we still wish to fight, we have only ourselves to depend upon.

The facts laid before this meeting by the delegates from both the Republics convince me that it will be a crime for us to continue this struggle without the assurance of help from elsewhere. Our country has already been ruined to its foundations, and by our continuance, without any reasonable prospect of success, we shall hopelessly ruin our people also.

Now the enemy approaches us with a proposal which, however unacceptable, is coupled with the promise of amnesty for the Colonial comrades who have joined us. I fear that the day will come when we shall no more be able to rescue the so-called rebels, and then they will have just grounds to reproach us that we have sacrificed their interests also for our already hopeless cause. And I am afraid that the rejection of the proposal of the British Government will cause us to lose much sympathy abroad and greatly weaken our position.

Comrades, we decided to stand to the bitter end. Let us now, like men, admit that that end has come for us, come in a more bitter shape than we ever thought. For each one of us death would have been a sweeter and a more welcome end than the step which we shall now have to take. But we bow to God's will. The future is dark, but we shall not relinquish courage and our hope and our faith in God. No one will ever convince me that the unparalleled sacrifices laid on the altar of freedom by the Afrikaner people will be vain and futile. The war of freedom of South Africa has been fought, not only for the Boers, but for the entire people of South Africa. The result of that struggle we leave in God's hand. Perhaps it is His will to lead the people of South Africa through defeat and humiliation, yea, even through the valley of the shadow of death, to a better future and a brighter day.

Pretoria
26 May 1902

My darling Isie, I am sorry that I have not written to you more frequently since I have been back to the Transvaal. I am however just as unwilling as yourself to write for the eye of the censor and besides I am afraid I may be led into saying things which had at present better be left unsaid. However, here goes.

I think I understand why you want to see me so badly. It must be a question of health. I know that you must be suffering horribly and that no calm of mind can make up for the ruin of the body. Still I hope you will be patient for a little longer yet. I hope to see you soon, and then I shall advise you as to the best course to pursue. I have no doubt that, once this dark business is over and we are restored to each other again, you will soon recover your lost health and spirits. At any rate I shall do everything in my power to make up for the long years of separation with their dreary heartsickness, their aching longings and their crushing disappointments. I hope and indeed expect that the happiness behind us in the far-away dead past will be as nothing compared to the happiness still in store for us. As we lose in worldly possessions, in political status and in the outward accompaniments of wealth and power and influence, we shall be thrown back all the more powerfully upon ourselves and each other. Hand in hand and soul in soul we shall go through life, and no noise of the outside world shall penetrate into our little sovereign kingdom of the soul. So wait and suffer patiently for a short while yet. The term to all your ills of the mind and body is almost reached. Without you I would not care to live, with you life's noblest treasure is still left to me. I am prepared for all losses except the loss of you, for I can conceive no life or work possible for me without the presence of that noble light of pure love, of steadfast comradeship, of noble encouragement which has attended me since I was a little boy at school. To you I owe whatever is noblest and best in my life and my work, and therefore you must cheer up and wait for the good time coming. Several times I have passed our house, where the happiest years of our life were spent; everything apparently is still in good order and

waiting for the magic of the mistress's presence to be once more an earthly paradise in the noblest sense. Do write me a few lines, addressed the same as your last, and tell me whether my surmise about your health is correct. Ever your ownest

Jan.

Tell Mrs C. R. de Wet her husband is well and in good spirits. How is she ?

179 To S. M. Smuts

Vol. 2, no. 109B

Pretoria

28 May 1902

My dearest Isie, Just a few lines in answer to your two cards of May 23 and 24.¹ Thank you for your good wishes, especially the unexpressed ones. I do hope this will be the last 24 May² we shall be from each other. Indeed I am certain there are better days in store for us than the last two years. I hope we shall be together next 22 December³ and that by that time we shall have got over some of the bitterest memories of the past.

In regard to the operation you wish to have performed as soon as possible, I can only say that on reconsideration I have thought it advisable to accede to your request. My idea was to take you to Europe immediately the war was over so as to have the best medical advice and treatment. However, if, as you say, the operation is a simple one and not at all dangerous, I have no objection to your undergoing it without delay. Get the best men as money will be no object to me in a matter of this kind. I do not want to lose you under any circumstances and consequently I rely on your discretion not to submit to the operation if it is likely to be dangerous. Do let me know as soon as possible whether you are going to undergo the operation. I shall write to you again. Ever your ownest

Jan

¹ Not extant. Very few of the many letters written by Isie Smuts to her husband are among his papers. It is probable that they were from time to time destroyed by her.

² Smuts's birthday.

³ Isie Smuts's birthday.

PART V

MEMOIRS OF THE BOER WAR

After the war Smuts began to write the story of his expedition through the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony. He called it *The Last Invasion of the Cape Colony—September 1901 to May 1902*. But of this he wrote only six quarto pages of introduction and then abandoned it in order to write a fuller story of the whole war as he had experienced it—his *Memoirs of the Boer War*. This also was never finished. A first plan of the book, made by Smuts, shows a list of twenty chapters, beginning with the 'Fall of Pretoria' (5 June 1900) when he was released from his civil duties and free to go on commando, and ending with 'Disbanding the Colonial Commandos'—his last duty as a Boer General. As he wrote, the scale of the book grew, for he needed ten chapters to bring the story up to December 1900—the point which, according to his plan, he should have reached in seven chapters. The narrative breaks off abruptly in the eleventh chapter at the point where Smuts goes to Potchefstroom in the last days of the year 1900 to reorganize the commandos in the south-western Transvaal.

It is not possible to say exactly when he began to write the *Memoirs*. He would have had more time to write in 1903 than in 1904–5, when politics increasingly absorbed him. He had certainly written no more than five chapters by the end of 1905. For on 3 June 1906 he told Margaret Clark in a letter (310) that he had written four chapters on board ship on his return to South Africa from London in February 1906 and one chapter since, 'bringing the whole down to the end of 1900' i.e. the end of chapter X. The interruption of his writing in chapter XI was probably due to the increasing pace of his political life in the course of 1906. After that he seems to have forgotten his war book, to which there is hardly any subsequent reference in his papers.

The Smuts Collection contains (a) the whole original manuscript of the *Memoirs* in Smuts's handwriting; (b) chapters I–IV hand-copied by Deneys Reitz (who lived with the Smutses from 1903 to 1905) and corrected by Smuts; (c) chapters I and II in typescript.

A note on the title page of chapter III of the original manuscript reads as follows: 'Omitted and still to be added: the operations at Witpoort, Olifantsfontein etc.'

At the end of chapter V of the manuscript Smuts made a careful sketch-map of the siege of Hore's camp.

MEMOIRS OF THE BOER WAR

'We had, I was satisfied, sacred principles to maintain and rights to defend, for which we were in duty bound to do our best, even if we perished in the endeavour.'

GENERAL LEE AT APPOMATTOX¹

I. THE FALL OF PRETORIA

The fall of Pretoria² forms in many respects a turning point in the history of the war. Since the retreat from the Modder River and Tugela, victory had but seldom and then very briefly smiled on the Boer arms. It was everlastingly retreat, retreat—wearing, dispiriting retreat. At every stage of the retreat the Boer cause became more hopeless, the Boer army smaller in numbers, and the Boer resources more exhausted. Pretoria—that holy of holies of the Republic in South Africa—was generally expected to mark a decisive stage of the war; to the British commanders the expected final Boer stand at Pretoria and its capture seemed likely to be the *coup de grâce* to the Republics; to the Boer rank and file it appeared in advance as the great Armageddon where the Boer forces, concentrated from all points of the compass in defence of their central stronghold, would deliver that final united blow from which perhaps the British forces might be sent reeling back to the coast. Perhaps—and perhaps not; at any rate the action there would be decisive, and thousands of Boers stuck to their commandos in the course of this disastrous retreat simply because they believed that the decisive battle would be fought at Pretoria, and at that battle they were determined to be present.

¹ The surrender of General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox on 9 April 1865 marked the end of the Civil War in the United States.

² Lord Roberts entered Pretoria on 5 June 1900.

They did not know that in the inner circle of their Government it had already been decided to abandon Pretoria without a serious resistance¹ and that the hope of those who saw farthest and thought deepest in the Boer cause was not in the fortified town but on the illimitable veld. Paul Kruger and his advisers saw quite clearly that a siege of Pretoria would be of but brief duration and inevitably fatal to the Boer cause. And there is no doubt that they were right; if the Boers had staked their last chance on the defence of Pretoria, the war would have been over in June or July of 1900, at any rate so far as the Transvaal was concerned. A prolongation of the war was of course undesirable, but it was a better alternative than early and final defeat at Pretoria. And so it happened that, while the Boers forces were still falling back on the forts and fortifications of Pretoria, many with a strange hope born of faith in their cause, the Republican Government had already left the place and had moved on to Middelburg on the Delagoa railway line.

This happened some days before the actual fall of Pretoria. During the day telegrams had arrived to the effect that Boksburg was threatened or taken, that Germiston had been taken, and that a large mounted body of the enemy was moving rapidly on in the direction of Pretoria. In the course of the afternoon dribbles of alarmist news came; first one and then another and then yet another station on the road to Pretoria was reported to have been reached by an advanced British force; and it was feared that a forced march would bring the enemy to Pretoria that same night. The Boer forces were still beyond Johannesburg and nothing could be heard from them. Here evidently was a case for swift decision. The President called a meeting of the Executive at his house late that afternoon where it was decided that he with the State Secretary and some other prominent officials should leave that same night for Middelburg, and to prevent the sudden departure attracting too much attention it was decided that he should go out by cart by the eastern road and take the train in the direction of Koedoespoort. It was further decided that Schalk Burger

¹ This decision had been taken at a meeting of the Executive Council on 29 May.

and myself should remain behind to represent the Government and maintain order at the capital.

As soon as the Government had left that night and while the alarmist news about the rapid advance of the British was still spreading consternation, we started to take steps to prevent the town from falling bloodlessly into their hands that night. Orders were given for the commandeering of every available burgher in the town and between 9 and 10 that night we left Pretoria with a motley crowd of about 400 or 500 men in the direction of Irene to intercept the advance of the invaders. Schalk Burger unfortunately became ill that night and could not accompany us, but we had the veteran Lukas Meyer to lead us to battle. We held the hills sloping down to Six Mile Spruit with anxious determination and were not a little relieved when morning came without the dreaded foe. We then returned to town and sent forward scouts to look for the enemy. The alarm proved to have been a false one as the British had not advanced beyond Rietfontein station and had drawn back from there towards evening. Ridiculous as the whole affair may appear, it must not be forgotten that a night march such as was over and over again performed by the British columns in the later stages of the war, would have brought them to Pretoria that night, and that but for the show of resistance which would have come from us they might have captured Pretoria without firing a shot. At that time Pretoria still held all our reserve money and all our reserve ammunition, and the ignominy of such a bloodless capture would have been only equalled by its disastrous effects. I had yet to learn, however, that one must not expect too much from the British and that anyone knowing their ways at this stage of the war might have felt perfectly certain of the safety of the capital that night.

The days that followed were a most anxious time. The Government had left Schalk Burger and myself behind to represent them but had unfortunately omitted to confer on us any special authority. My colleague immediately thereafter left Pretoria to take his family to Lydenburg and I was left behind alone with such authority as the law confers on the State Attorney in ordinary peaceful times. I had to contradict the wild rumours which the sudden disappearance of the

Government had given rise to, and I had to maintain order in a universal chaos. To add to my misfortunes, my authority did not remain unquestioned and a rival started up in the shape of a so-called 'rust en orde'¹ committee of which the burgo-master, Piet Potgieter,² and the Chief Justice, Gregorowski, formed prominent members. This committee consisted of those patriots who had during the course of the war come to conceive a horror of warfare in general and heavy artillery in particular. As they were not in the know and were under the impression that Pretoria was going to be defended with determination, their principal anxiety was to devise ways and means to prevent the bombardment of the town by an early surrender; so that they acquired the unenviable name of the 'surrender committee'. Indeed rumour had it that there was a strong rivalry in the committee between the various candidates for the honour of going out in a black coat and with a white flag in order to surrender the town to Lord Roberts.

Another trouble was the absence of the regular police and police officers, which compelled us to improvise a force for the maintenance of order. Nor were we quite successful in this, for although there was an unusual absence of crime, we could not prevent the Government stores from being broken into by the populace and looted in broad daylight. The populace at any rate saw no sense in hoarding stores for the invaders, and when the hungry Boer forces arrived at Pretoria some days afterwards, they scarcely found anything to eat and thousands passed with sad hearts and empty stomachs through the ungrateful capital. On the arrival of the Commandant-General³ military authority was at once assumed over the town, military officers appointed and intriguers and the surrender committee cowed into inactivity.

It was towards the end of that eventful week that a memorable gathering of Boer commanders took place in a room at the telegraph offices for the purpose of laying before the President by telegram the pitiful plight of the Boer cause. There were Botha, de la Rey, Tobias Smuts, Lemmer [H. R.], Ben Viljoen

¹ 'tranquillity and order'.

² Pieter J. Potgieter was Mayor of Pretoria from 29 December 1898 to 5 June 1900.

³ Louis Botha.

and most of those who had either become famous or were still to become famous in the following two years. After mature consideration that gathering submitted to the President the tentative suggestion to end the war at Pretoria. Their motives for doing so were the deplorable state of the Boer army which had melted away so that scarce 7,000 could be mustered at Pretoria; the certainty of an inglorious ending if the war was continued any longer; the strong probability of the complete devastation of the country and the utter hopelessness of achieving any success after the losses and defeats of the past.

I shall never forget the bitter humiliation and despondency of that awful moment when the stoutest hearts and strongest wills in the Transvaal army were, albeit but for a moment, to sink beneath the tide of our misfortunes. What all felt so keenly was that the fight had gone out of the Boers, that the heroes who had stood like a stone wall on the Tugela and the Modder River, who had stormed Spionkop and Ladysmith and many another forlorn hope, had lost heart and hope, had gone home and forsaken their officers. It was not Lord Roberts' army that they feared; it was the utter collapse of the Boer rank and file which staggered these great officers. And it staggered the iron-willed old President also, for his reply was that he would consult President Steyn on their suggestion.

This happened on Friday night, 1 June, and on Saturday morning a great War Council was to be held to consider what further steps were to be taken for the defence of Pretoria. In the meantime the two Presidents were communicating over the telegraph wires and the suggestion of the Transvaal officers received an answer from the Free State President which was to have momentous effects on the future not only of the war but of the Boer people. To the despairing cry of the Transvaalers Steyn replied expressing his unalterable opposition to peace, practically accused the Transvaalers of cowardice, pointed out that after they had involved the Free State and Colonial rebels in ruin they were now to conclude a selfish and disgraceful peace as soon as the war had reached their borders, and concluded with the statement that whatever the Transvaalers might do, the Free State would fight on—even if it stood alone—to the bitter end. Such in substance was the momentous answer of the great Free Stater; and who shall

say that he was wrong? His answer meant two years more of war, the utter destruction of both Republics, losses in life and treasure compared with which the appalling losses of the preceding eight months were to dwindle into utter insignificance. Aye, but it meant also that every Boer that was to survive that death struggle, every child to be born in South Africa, was to have a prouder self-respect and a more erect carriage before the nations of the world. To the Boer people, ease-loving, easy-going, the supreme choice presented itself between peace or death. The man, who now rises among the Boers as their most heroic figure, chose for them death. And they shall live.

Late that Friday night we parted only to spend the rest of the night in painful reflections. It was only natural that the spasm of despair should pass away from these brave men's minds, and the reaction was still further accentuated by the arrival next morning of Steyn's uncompromising message, which, while it probably sent a tingling sense of shame through the recipients, appealed with irresistible effect to their own deepest feelings and impulses.

It must be borne in mind that the men who wavered at this critical moment were not actuated by any vulgar sense of fear; so far the brunt of the war had largely rested on them and it was to rest on them and the survivors of them with still more crushing weight in the years that were coming, and they were never to waver again until the end came. But the responsibility for a nation's fate is sufficient to unnerve the most heroic, and it was this awful responsibility that gave them pause. Their feeling and impulse was to fight on regardless of consequences; their conscience however made a deeper appeal to them and pointed to the fatal consequences for their people of any reckless continuance of the war. It was a struggle in their minds between personal feelings and national considerations, with this novel feature that the personal feelings were among the most noble and generous in the heart of man, and the national considerations were apt to be mistaken for pusillanimity and cowardice. The appeal of Steyn cut the Gordian knot and made it clear to these leaders that the path of duty was identical with the trend of their own feelings. Thenceforth to the end of the war their minds and consciences were

clear. However dark the prospect there was a heavenly light shining along their way; the heroic impulses went hand in hand with an exalted sense of duty and these mutually supported and strengthened each other. And they were never really, despite appearances to the contrary, to waver again till they came to Vereeniging—that most tragic climax in the tragedy of the Boer race, when this terrible struggle in their own hearts had to be fought out once again and their heroic instincts finally recoiled before the abyss of the annihilation of their people.

When the War Council met in the Second Volksraad Zaal in the course of the morning, only Botha, myself and at most one or two other officers had seen Steyn's telegram. The others had not seen it and I doubt whether it was ever shown them. Among the younger officers, who were not present at the informal meeting of the previous evening, a distinctly warlike spirit prevailed, which soon showed itself in the War Council. One unlucky general officer,¹ who was still under the numbing influences of the previous evening, was bewildered at the topic of discussion, which was the details of the defence of Pretoria. He made some casual allusions in the direction of peace, whereupon the redoubtable Danie Theron rose and amid general cheers said that he who spoke of peace was a traitor and ought to be dealt with as such. He also condemned the Government in strong language for their desertion of the capital, and urged the constitution of a purely military regime under the Commandant-General. Similar speeches followed with the result that the War Council decided to defend the positions at Pretoria in the usual way—which meant that there was to be fighting and a retreat thereafter—not that final stand which Lord Roberts so anxiously longed for and so many Boers expected.

Saturday and Sunday the retreating Boer commandos kept pouring into Pretoria and disappearing there as in some quagmire. The resolution of the Government not to defend Pretoria now began to be bruited about and had the most discouraging effect. If Pretoria was not worth fighting for, what was? And what was the object of continuing the war?

¹ Tobias Smuts.

So argued the tired burghers, and too many of them clinched their argument by straightway going home in the districts or surrendering to the British forces near Pretoria. The surrender committee was said to be noiselessly pushing its peaceful propaganda by spreading surrender literature and rumours among the commandos. The Boer officers were becoming more and more disgusted at the disastrous influence of Pretoria on the morale of their men, who seemed to be drinking Circean draughts in the foul treacherous atmosphere of the capital; and their determination became more fixed to abandon the place to the enemy as soon as possible.

So dawned Monday—the eventful 4th of June. Lord Roberts had reached Six Mile Spruit with an enormous force which was more than sufficient to break the show of resistance of less than 7,000 dispirited and demoralized Boers. Between him and Pretoria there was only the low line of hills on which some of the Pretoria toy forts are situated. Meanwhile General [J. D. P.] French had kept in a northerly direction from Krugersdorp and after having crossed the Magaliesberg had turned east so that in a day's time he would be behind the Boer lines and would cut off their retreat to the north or attack Pretoria from the rear.

So far as I am aware there was nothing memorable about the fight at Pretoria and I shall therefore leave its details to be dealt with by the historians. All I need say—and really the only matter of importance in connection with the fight—was that the Boer show of resistance completely succeeded in its object, which was to keep the British out of Pretoria that day and to give the officials time to remove the money and gold belonging to the Government and the vast quantities of reserve ammunition and some guns that were still at Pretoria.

The removal of the money and gold of the Government, which was lying at the National Bank and in the Mint, was my special business. I had been in friendly negotiation for some days with the directors of the bank in order to obtain peaceable possession of the money and gold of the Government which still remained in their custody to the value of between 400,000 and 500,000 pounds sterling. When these negotiations failed, nothing remained for me but to issue a warrant for their arrest and to threaten them with criminal proceedings,

which proved effectual. On the Monday morning the directors informed me that if I employed force they would consent to hand over the gold which was the property of the Government. I therefore got a special body of about fifty police, entered the bank, and obtained delivery of all the gold in question. At the suggestion of General Botha I looked for and found further a special war fund of £25,000 standing to the credit of the Commandant-General. After suitably rewarding the officials of the Mint for their arduous work in coining money for the Government during the war, I started for the station, put all the gold on a special train in charge of a reliable force of police and had the train despatched that Monday afternoon while shells were bursting all round the station and a number of howitzers were being vainly used to wreck the railway at Sunnyside going east to Delagoa Bay. I further tried to persuade the Acting Treasurer-General, B. J. Kleynhans, who was suffering from a severe headache from the noise made by the English artillery, to take charge of the £25,000 and to devote it to the payment of the arrear salaries of the officials in Pretoria, but he pleaded his physical, and I accepted his mental, condition as an excuse for not accepting this dangerous gift. I then approached one of the Pretoria banks in order to find out whether they would be willing to accept the money on condition that it be paid out as arrear salaries to the officials on the certificate of the Treasurer-General. The bank also refused. The curious thing is that while I was taking all this trouble for the officials, a large number of them were, unknown to me, holding a meeting and excitedly deliberating in what way they could prevent the rapacious State Attorney from running away with all the money of the Government and were hurling fierce invectives at that well-meaning official, and their own Government. All these well-meant efforts of mine to assist the officials were prompted, not so much by my own feelings of consideration for them (my sympathies were with the men who stood by their Government) but by the instructions of the Government to me to do what I could for the officials. My disappointment was therefore not very keen when I could find no willing depository for the £25,000 and without any compunction I took this sum that afternoon with me when I left Pretoria, and from

Hatherley or Eerste Fabrieken¹ I sent it on per train to the Government. It has ever after been some consolation to me that this paltry sum of less than half a million in gold and coins which I succeeded in removing through shot and shell from Pretoria on that eventful occasion held its own for two years against something like 200 million sterling from the British Treasury. Nay more, after having nobly done its work during the war and as the lawyers say *usu consumptus*,² it continued thereafter to *spook* in the minds of great British statesmen and to conjure up visions of millions hidden away on the veld or secretly despatched to Europe to supply the sinews of war in the future national campaigns of the Boers.

My work in Pretoria being done I bid a sad farewell to my dear ones—to some of them for ever—and started that afternoon for Eerste Fabrieken in which direction the next Boer concentration was taking place. Our party consisted of Advocate N. J. de Wet who had been General de la Rey's secretary before and who was destined to do much important, though unobtrusive, work as secretary and adviser of the Commandant-General up to the end of the war; my brother-in-law P. S. Krige, who was to be my secretary in the later stages of the war; the brave and noble Johannes Neethling, who was to die in the Cape Colony from wounds received in the terrible affair at Moordenaarspoort;³ and two good and faithful Kaffir boys, Charlie and Kleinbooi, half brothers, the former of whom was to lose both his legs, and the other to die by my side that fearful night at Paardekop.⁴ My instructions from the Government were to remain with the Commandant General until further orders. We reached Eerste Fabrieken towards evening and slept there that night.

All that afternoon and night trains were leaving Pretoria laden with munitions of war and even British prisoners of war who were being moved to Nelspruit station. All the commandos evacuated their positions towards nightfall and moved east in the direction of Eerste Fabrieken and the Magaliesberg, but

¹ About 15 miles east of Pretoria.

² Consumed by being used.

³ See 158 (7 September).

⁴ On 20 July 1901 Smuts and some of his men slept at this place and were surprised by a British force. See J. C. Smuts, *Jan Christian Smuts*, p. 67.

Lord Roberts did not press on to Pretoria till next morning and even General Botha still remained in Pretoria that night, and left it the next morning as the British forces were entering.

Thousands of burghers, however, who had fallen under the spell of Lord Roberts's proclamations, remained behind in Pretoria with the intention of surrendering and going home to protect their families and properties. They did not dream of the bitter disillusionment in store for them. They did not yet know that the proclamations of Lord Roberts were to follow and devour each other like the kine of Joseph's dream.¹ Despised by their own fighting compatriots as hands-uppers, ground to despair beneath the upper and nether millstone of British proclamations, forced in their progressive demoralization first to give information to the enemy, then to collect loot on the profit sharing system, and finally to take up arms against their people, many of these poor deluded people lived to curse the day that they believed in the honest words of the proclamations and started on that smiling but treacherous road which was to lead them to the fate of National Scouts² and to the scorn and contempt of their fellows. At this date, however, all seemed fair and promising to them and the potential evils were still lying on the knees of the gods.

II. DONKERHOEK OR DIAMOND HILL

If Pretoria itself had seen the higher Boer officers at their lowest ebb of determination, the week that intervened between its fall and the battle of Donkerhoek or Diamond Hill saw the low-water mark of the morale of the Boer rank and file. To one who did not actually see in what a pitiable state of mind they were it would be impossible to imagine how the brave men who went to the war with such high hopes and determined resolutions could ever have become so demoralized. And yet they had gone through a terrible process of disillusionment. They had expected so much of their high officers who had acquired reputations for prowess and craft in the Kaffir wars, and they had found out that in many senses these so-called Kaffir

¹ On Roberts's numerous and conflicting proclamations see *The Times History of the War in South Africa*, Vol. IV, pp. 490-4.

² From August 1901 burghers who surrendered in the South African Republic were enlisted by Kitchener as National Scouts. Their counterparts in the Orange Free State were known as Volunteers.

generals had lost the war for them. They had had implicit faith in their own military instincts and organization, and had found that this organization was the most loose, unmilitary and inefficient imaginable, that it led to the slaughter of the brave, the skulking with impunity by those who felt so inclined, the cancer of leave of absence, and the certain failure of almost all movements which required co-operation between different commanders. They had found the Commandant-General and the big War Councils powerless to punish high officers who had committed the most criminal blunders and who continued in their commands only to commit more fatal blunders still. They had lost faith in their organization, they had lost faith in most of their officers, and—what was ugliest—they had lost faith in themselves. They had lost faith in the Government who had in their eyes miserably fled and failed to take proper measures for the defence of Pretoria. They had lost faith in their chance of beating the English because the large numbers and turning movements of the enemy made all serious fighting for them impossible, unless they wanted to share the fate of Cronjé [P. A.] and his men. Then there were the accumulated disasters from the Tugela and Modder River onwards, which were in themselves sufficient to quench the most ardent hopes. But the last straw was their brief experience of Pretoria which had stood so high in their hopes and thoughts. Not only were there no guns in the costly forts, no food for the hungry burghers in this seat of the 'Proviand Comitee',¹ but there was no Government, no loyalty to the cause of the Republic even among the sleek officials who had thrived on the fat of the land; instead there was only the surrender committee living and moving and thriving in a universal atmosphere of surrender.

The result was that the remnants of faithful burghers who had remained, hoping against hope, lost heart after their experience of Pretoria, and the commandos began to melt away rapidly. Very few expected that the war would last longer than a few weeks, a view shared by the sanguine British Commander-in-Chief. What use then to continue on commando any longer? Hundreds disappeared every night; of

¹ Commissariat.

one particular commando only seven faithful ones remained one morning—to such a pass had matters come. Men and groups of men started negotiating on their own account with the British and received promises and proclamations which were to become bitterer than Dead Sea fruit in the following years. The officers did their utmost to stop this rot which had set in among their best no less than their weakest burghers, and it was largely due to their untiring efforts that at the battle of Donkerhoek the combined Boer forces still numbered 5,000 more or less.

It is easy to see what an unrivalled opportunity this state of affairs presented to Lord Roberts to end the war, but he had deprived himself in advance by his faulty strategy of the chance of making use of this opportunity.

The history of the Boer War is in many respects the history of grave strategical blunders, which had momentous effects not only on the duration but also on the ultimate issue of the war. From the British point of view the blunder made by Lord Roberts in his march to Pretoria was probably one of the most momentous of the whole war. From the preceding chapter it has appeared how nearly the war was ended at Pretoria by the wavering of the officers. However, Lord Roberts could not be supposed to know the intentions of the Boer officers and what he did not know cannot enter into the consideration of any mistake which he did make. But how much did he know at this time and what ought he as a prudent commander to have foreseen?

He was advancing to Pretoria with an enormous army vastly outnumbering the Boer forces, he knew that the Boer force opposed to this advance was the miserably inadequate one which had been retiring before him ever since the defeat of Cronjé,¹ reduced now to a skeleton of its former self by continual defections from the commandos and by the Free State commandos remaining within their borders. The commandos operating on the western border at Fourteen Streams and Mafeking had been ordered to Pretoria, but most of them never arrived in time and besides their numbers were comparatively insignificant. The Natal commandos were

¹ He had surrendered his large force to Roberts at Paardeberg on 27 February 1900.

still on Drakensberg to block the advance of Buller [R.] and were so reduced in number that it was impossible for them to spare any reinforcements for Pretoria. Lord Roberts therefore knew that he had only to do with the miserably attenuated forces of Botha and de la Rey in front of him.

It might have been foreseen too that the Boer line of retreat, if there was to be any retreat from Pretoria, was to be towards the east so that the Boer forces might keep in touch with their Government and might continue to utilize the Delagoa Railway for supplies and communications with the outside world. To have retired north towards Pietersburg would have been an altogether foolish undertaking as the unhealthy, sparsely populated and poor Bushveld to the north of Pretoria could offer no inducement whatever for such a step. If the Boer officers who met at the telegraph office at the meeting already described knew that the communications with their Government and their line of retreat towards the east were cut off or to be cut off, and that the only alternative was a retreat to the inhospitable Bushveld of the north, that might have decided their hesitating resolution. And even if there was to be no retreat from Pretoria, Lord Roberts had quite sufficient men at his disposal both for the siege of Pretoria and for cutting off the Boer communications to the east. Springs, on the railway line east of Boksburg, had been occupied shortly after Johannesburg; and if, instead of putting French on the left wing and making him describe the useless detour north of Magaliesberg, he had placed him on his right and had sent him from Springs to Middelburg or Balmoral simultaneously with his own advance towards Pretoria, Lord Roberts would have completely upset the Boer plan—which was also the obvious plan—for the further prosecution of the war and would have dealt a staggering if not fatal blow at further resistance by the Transvaal.

If Lord Roberts found it impossible or inexpedient to adopt this strategy with his own forces, Buller, who was still below Drakensberg, should have been ordered in time to carry it out. To the Boers the inactivity of Buller in the north of Natal seemed inexplicable except on the theory, at that time generally believed by the Boers, that, owing to jealousy between the two principal officers in the British army, Buller's advance

had been artificially stayed in order to give his rival a chance of first entry into the Transvaal. This belief, if unfounded, was due to the fact that the dawdling and sulking of Buller after the capture of Ladysmith could not be explained on any other ground known to the Boers. The proper thing for Lord Roberts was to have allowed or ordered Buller to accelerate the snail-like pace of his advance, so that when Lord Roberts arrived at Pretoria, Buller might have been at or far on his way towards the Delagoa railway. The simultaneous capture of this railway either by Buller or a portion of Lord Roberts's force would have made the fall of Pretoria an event of capital if not decisive importance—as Lord Roberts intended it to be. Its capture, in the manner it was effected by Lord Roberts's short-sighted strategy, was not only an empty event for the British, but turned out to have been a blessing in disguise for the Boer forces, as the inactivity which followed it gave the Boer officers the necessary breathing space for the reorganization of their forces and consideration of their future plan of campaign.

When he discovered that Pretoria was largely an empty capture, Lord Roberts endeavoured to retrieve the effects of his faulty strategy by negotiations with which I am bound to confess his strategy compared very favourably. He seems to have been under the impression that the Boer Commandant-General was open to bargaining on the question of peace. How he came to entertain such an idea it is difficult to understand. Some of the telegraph clerks had, after the surrender of the capital, gone over to the British and supplied them with all information at their disposal, and it was commonly said, though the rumour is hardly credible, that one or two of these creatures had been formally thanked on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen for their treachery. It is possible that they knew and disclosed to Lord Roberts the details of the telegraphic communications between the Boer officers and their Government. However this be, Lord Roberts immediately set about the matter in a manner which could not fail to excite the resentment and contempt of Botha.

The *modus operandi* of the British Commander-in-Chief was the following: While the Boers were lying on Magaliesberg, persons, some of them of some local consequence, came out

from Pretoria with passes from Lord Roberts or his staff to see Botha and did their best to persuade him to end the war. Finally, when their arguments made no impression, they did not scruple to make pecuniary offers of the most tempting character. Lord Roberts probably never authorized or even knew about this but he ought to have been more scrupulous in his choice of agents in a great and delicate matter like this. It is not difficult to imagine with what profound disgust Botha regarded such advances which were an insult to him and showed him what opinion the British Commander-in-Chief had of his character. When this stage of the negotiations failed, an apparently more tactful course was adopted, the policy of which was however equally transparent. High officials of the South African Republic, such as the Railway Commissioner Smit¹ and the Inspector of Offices de Beer,² friends of the Commandant-General, and finally his wife³ were sent out under passes and escort from Lord Roberts in order to exercise the necessary persuasion. Probably the mind of Lord Roberts was not capable of seeing the insult he was offering his opponent by trying to seduce him from his plain duty through the influence of his wife, but as a man of honour Botha would, and I know did, feel this most keenly of all. Mrs Botha came out and was pleased to have the opportunity to see her husband but was, I need scarcely say, incapable even of the attempt to further the object for which she was sent. Imagine Botha's disgust when he received a communication from Lord Roberts acceding to his (Botha's) request for a conference with him, alleged to have been sent through his wife. Botha could only ridicule the idea of the request and reprobate, as he did in no uncertain manner, Lord Roberts' method of conducting negotiations. When this method also failed Lord Roberts showed another aspect of his deep knowledge of the Boer character by writing a personal letter to Botha in which a higher note was struck. He praised the Boers for their bravery against such enormous odds, expressed his deliberate opinion that the war could only

¹ Jacobus Stefanus Smit held this office from 1892 to 1899.

² Johannes Frederik de Beer was Civil Magistrate of Johannesburg, 1896-7 and Inspector of Offices, 1898-9.

³ Annie Frances Bland Botha, born Emmett.

last another couple of weeks and appealed to their horror of useless bloodshed and suffering to end the war at that stage. This pathetic appeal, although intended to be more subtle and insidious than the preceding rather gross attempts, sounded too thin and was equally unsuccessful and the net result of these crude attempts was to make it perfectly impossible for Botha, even if he were otherwise so inclined (which he was not), to listen to any overtures from Lord Roberts. One cannot but think that a very little knowledge of human nature would have saved Lord Roberts all this farce of negotiations.

All this week, while defections, exhortations, and negotiations were thus going on, the Boers were lying on the Magaliesberg—here a line of hills which, rising on the highveld north-east of Pretoria and gradually swelling into mountains, run in a westerly direction until they merge again in the plains west of Rustenburg. Some distance beyond that they rise again as broken hills under different names and continue westward over the Transvaal border and finally disappear again on the plains of the far west. This Magaliesberg was destined soon to be the scene of the biggest battle fought by the Boer forces after the great actions on the Tugela and the Modder River, and was thereafter, in consequence of the activity of de la Rey and his lieutenants, to become one of the most famous theatres of the war in South Africa.

It is impossible to contemplate this bleak and uninviting and apparently insignificant mountain range, the silent and grim spectator of so much in the history of Southern Africa, without melancholy emotion. Rising like a bastion on the lower slopes of the highveld, it looks on the south at the smiling grassy plains and uplands of the highveld and on the north at the endless dreary prospect of the lowveld bush. And with the same cold callous look which it wears to-day it has regarded the beautiful valleys north and south along its slopes occupied and cultivated by successive races of men. It saw the nation of the Magatese grow up here in comparative peace until it was the greatest Bantu people in the Transvaal and it took its name from Mamagali, Great Chief of this people. It saw the Magatese power broken and annihilated by the Zulu armies under Moselekatze who cleared the whole country north of

the Orange River in order to found on its ruins a kingdom of his own. And where the Magatese bones were bleaching in the sun it saw an endless chain of Zulu kraals and fortifications arising, stretching from a point north of Pretoria to the confines of the Kalahari desert, and which can still be seen to-day. It saw in turn the Zulu power smashed in 1837 by the emigrant Boers in the great actions at Mosega and Maricospoort and this Attila of central South Africa flee for refuge northward to the territories of the former glorious kingdom of Monomotapa, where a renewed career of conquest was only to lead to the melancholy fate of his people under his son and successor Lobengula.¹ It saw the country all around converted into one of the most beautiful and fertile parts of South Africa and Boer and Magatese enjoying the fruits of peace in a land of plenty for more than 60 years. And now it was to see the curtain rise on the most tragic spectacle of all, and a fresh tide of racial war sweep over these fair regions and convert them into ruin and desolation such as even the ruthless barbarians of Moselekatze had failed to effect. It saw the youthful Boer nation, instinct with all the virile promise of the future, clutched by one of those old-world monsters called Empires which one hopes will one day become as extinct as the cognate mastodon. It watched with cold cynicism the progress and close of this dreadful struggle. And its forbidding aspect still holds the unread secret of the future—a future fraught with more important and tremendous events in the conflict of races than any this darkest and saddest of continents has so far seen. In Magaliesberg we approach one of the most historical parts of South Africa, where one becomes conscious of the *lacrimae rerum*, where a deep pathos takes the place of either pride or regret, where the vanquished have the consolation that they were not the first, and the conquerors are warned that they will not be the last.

The Magaliesberg is pierced by a number of gorges or *poorts* which render it easily traversable from north to south. As I have said the hills start from the plains of the highveld on the east, there being only slight rises or eminences

¹ King of the Matabele from 1868 to 1893, when the military power of the Matabele was broken by the forces of the British South Africa Company.

further east. The first poort from the east after the mountain has attained some height is Donkerhoek, and behind this poort there is a smaller secondary *rand*, or plateau rather, which is called Diamond Hill; the Boers call the action which followed after the poort and the English after the plateau, although the two points thus indicated covered only a very small portion of the widely extended fight. The second poort in order is the Pienaarspoort through which the Delagoa Railway passes east; the third is Franspoort; beyond that is Derdepoort and Wonderboompoort immediately north of Pretoria; beyond these in a westerly direction there are no poorts worth mentioning, Hartebeestpoort, through which the Crocodile River passes, being an inaccessible gorge, and the gorge at Nooitgedacht, where Clements's camp was taken in December 1900, being only available for passage in single file on foot. Instead, however, of being pierced by poorts west of Wonderboom, the Magaliesberg is crossed by *neks*, which are dips of greater or lesser depth in the mountains over which roads or passes have been constructed, these neks, are in order:—Horn's Nek; Selikatznek (called after Moselikatze who, when hard pressed by the emigrant Boers, had constructed a powerful kraal just behind this nek); Commandonek, over which passes the main road from Pretoria to Rustenburg; Wagenpadnek, a dangerous and precipitous pass some six miles west of Nooitgedacht which was extensively used by both sides in the subsequent military operations; Olifantsnek on the main road from Krugersdorp to Rustenburg; Magatosnek and Boschhoeknek on the alternative main roads from Rustenburg to Zeerust, all of them connected with stirring memories of the war.

The scene of the battle of Donkerhoek did not however extend further west than Franspoort. From Franspoort a line of hills runs north to Boekenhoutskloof and forms an obtuse angle with the Magaliesberg. Among these broken hills the great Premier Diamond Mine and several other diamond mines were to be discovered after the war. In the battle of Donkerhoek this line of hills, extending for some ten or twelve miles, was held by de la Rey from Boekenhoutskloof to Franspoort, and from there Magaliesberg was held eastward by Botha until it disappeared on the plains. The

Boer position was therefore the inside of a triangle with an obtuse apex towards the enemy, favourable for the movement of forces during action by interior lines but precarious as soon as one of the sides of the triangle is pierced by the attack.

The original British plan of attack was (or seemed to us at the time to be) to break through this triangle as near as possible to the apex, which corresponded to the Boer centre at Pienaarspoort, and, by strongly threatening both Boer flanks, to weaken their resistance at the centre and to precipitate their rout as soon as the centre was taken. When it became apparent to Lord Roberts that the centre was too strongly held, the attack was shifted to both flanks, that on the Boer right very nearly ending in a great British disaster, but that on the far Boer left proving successful late in the afternoon of the second day of the fight.

The disposition of the Boer forces was as follows: General [C. M.] Douthwaite occupied the first position north of Franspoort with the Potchefstroom Commando; immediately north of him again was General [J. N. H.] Grobler with the Waterbergers; then followed the commandos of Wolmaransstad (Commandant Potgieter)¹ and Bloemhof (Commandant de Beer) under General du Toit;² then followed the Griqualand rebels under Liebenberg [P. J.] and the Lichtenburg Commando under Vermaas [H. C. W.] and last of all came the Commando of Marico (Commandant Botha)³ under General [J. P.] Snyman. This whole left wing, notwithstanding the imposing array of generals and commandants, numbered no more than 2,000 men. Small in numbers they were nevertheless a formidable force from the fact that the grim old fighter from Lichtenburg⁴ was in command. The centre was held by

¹ Ferdinandus Jacobus Potgieter, born 16 February 1857, killed at Roodewal 11 April 1902.

² Sarel P. du Toit, member of the Volksraad from 1896; served under Cronjé as Combat-General, then under de la Rey; a delegate at Vereeniging; as Commandant in the western Transvaal, helped to suppress the 1914 rebellion.

³ J. D. L. Botha, born 28 October 1837 in Oudtshoorn, Cape Colony; went to the Transvaal 1849; Field-Cornet of Klein Marico 1864; Commandant of the Marico District 1884.

⁴ J. H. de la Rey.

General [H. R.] Lemmer with the Rand Commandos (Boksburg, Germiston, Johannesburg and Krugersdorp) as far as Donkerhoek; beyond that were the Standerton and Bethal Commandos and on the eastern left flank at the terminus of the Magaliesberg was the Ermelo Commando under General Tobias Smuts. Beyond that, not in line but in a more advanced position, were portions of the Boksburg and Heidelberg Commandos under Commandant Fourie¹ and Field-Cornet Georg Meyer² respectively to prevent the enemy from working still further east round our left flank. The centre and left wing were specially under the personal command of the Commandant-General.

From the tops of the Magaliesberg the Boers saw all Sunday (10th June) how the imposing British forces were moving to their appointed places in the plan of attack over the huge front of 20 miles. The wide valley between the Magaliesberg and the low ridge of hills further south (Daspoortrand) were alive with camps and moving columns and endless trains of transport and formed a grand spectacular display which was probably intended to strike awe and terror into the hearts of the Boer spectators lining the Magaliesberg. Instead it only had the effect of hardening the hearts of these war-worn veterans. The Boers had reached Magaliesberg in a state closely bordering on collapse; as I said, they were at their low-water mark when they left their capital in the hands of the enemy. But they had also reached bedrock. The minds of brave men cannot long remain in a state bordering on desperation. At the darkest a light began to shine once more, the wells of faith in themselves, in their cause, in their sacred right began to flow once more. Their excellent positions added a more tangible ground to this fresh access of spirit, and de Wet's operations in the Free State had cheered them greatly. And so it came to pass that when the British attack opened early the morning of the 11th June, the Boers were determined once more to stand as men stand only for the greatest of all causes.

¹ C. E. Fourie, born 17 June 1858 at Lydenburg; Commandant and Native Commissioner of Olifantsrivier; promoted Combat-General 1899; captured March 1901 but escaped.

² J. Georg Meyer was Field-Cornet in the Heidelberg District and later became a Commandant.

Considering their relatively small numbers and the enormous front which had to be held by so small a force, I do not think that the Tugela or Modder River witnessed any finer defence than was made on the 11th and 12th June; and certainly those most competent to judge among the Boer officers expressed their opinion that no more determined spirit had been displayed in any previous action of the war.

The attack opened simultaneously on the morning of the 11th on the Boer centre from Franspoort to Donkerhoek which was held by General [H. R.] Lemmer, and on the Boer right flank under de la Rey. The attack on the Boer right was under the command of General French, who, despite the numerical superiority of the forces under his command, was—not for the first time—to find his impetuous onset checked by the stonewall defence of the old Lichtenburger. He had moved his force from Kameeldrift further north to Kameelfontein so as to get as near as possible to the extreme limit of the Boer right flank; the Boers occupied a very much broken and partly bush-covered ridge, while French occupied the valley below and certain transverse ridges running from the main ridge in possession of the Boers. French made furious attacks on the limit of the Boer line and put to flight the Marico Commando under Snyman and was pressing on to occupy the positions evacuated by the Boers when he found not only his advance checked but his whole attacking force in jeopardy. De la Rey, who had watched the breaking up of Snyman's defence, had hurried to the scene with reinforcements; the enemy could see the Boer retreat but could not see the gallop of the reinforcements towards the breach. And so it happened that when French's men appeared on the ridge which formed the Boer line and were pressing on to Snyman's positions they were met with a withering fire which made both advance and retreat impossible. In the meantime de la Rey had rallied the broken Marico Commando and brought them back to their old positions, and his presence alone was sufficient to inspire them with new confidence. While French's cavalry (now reduced to infantry in desperate search of cover) was thus entrapped, de la Rey's guns under Captain von Dalwigh had opened a heavy fire from an unexpectedly near and favourable position on those of French lower down the valley

at Kameelfontein. The result was that within a short time French's guns and supporting cavalry had to disappear in clouds of dust behind the kopjes at Kameelfontein. French had informed Lord Roberts rather euphemistically of his inability to press the attack further and Lord Roberts, perhaps divining what was going on, had ordered French to retreat, little knowing that retreat from his present position might be no less disastrous than an advance. Nothing was left for him but to maintain himself as best he could in front of the Boers and to await events. So matters stood on the night of the 11th. On the morning of the 12th, while the fight was resumed, de la Rey, who had formed a plan of crushing French, was unobservedly moving his men into new positions from which the counter-attack on French could be pushed home; and on the evening of the 12th he was ready to strike what he considered a great coup. This was, however, never to be carried out; the Boer left wing had by this time been broken and immediate retreat had become imperative in order to save the Boer centre. I turn now to the events on the Boer left to show how this untoward result was brought about.

The Boer centre from Pienaarspoort to Donkerhoek was opposed to a large force under [Sir R.] Pole-Carew which attacked the Boer position not only with a heavy rifle fire from time to time but also with a terrific bombardment from a number of naval and siege guns. So threatening was the position here that for a long time it was really difficult to make out whether the Boer centre was to be the principal point of attack or whether the movement in this part of the field was a mere feint to prevent reinforcements going to the left wing. Simultaneously a large movement under Ian Hamilton towards the extreme Boer left was observable. On the 11th this movement brought Hamilton into touch with the Heidelberg Commando stationed transversely in advance of the Boer left. A plucky fight was carried on most of the day by this commando, until towards nightfall its position became precarious and it had to retire further east. At the same time frontal attacks of no little daring were being made on the Boer left just east of Donkerhoek. When night came on the 11th the forces under Ian Hamilton had made very little headway and Botha was hopeful of beating back the attack on his left wing. The 12th

saw a continuation of the fight very much on the lines of the previous day. The Boer centre was heavily bombarded and threatened at the same time that the attacks on the extreme Boer left were growing in number and daring. Botha, who was the soul of the Boer defence all day long, ventured ultimately to move reinforcements from his centre to his left, although he was not blind to the danger of the operation. He could however simply not help himself as he had not sufficient men to hold the whole far-flung battle line from his centre to his left. In the afternoon of the 12th the British succeeded in mastering a kopje in immediate advance of the Boer left which afforded an advantageous position for their guns and good cover for their men in the assault on the Boer left. They followed up this advantage towards evening by a splendid attack on a position held by a portion of the Ermelo Commando. This Commando fought with its accustomed determination but sustained such heavy losses (including the brave Field-Cornet Janse van Vuuren) that they were forced to retreat. Botha had hurried to the scene of the disaster with a portion of the Krugersdorp Commando, but arrived too late and in turn found himself with his reinforcements in a position from which they extricated themselves only with the greatest difficulty that night. By these unexpected successes the British found themselves behind the Boer line of defence and nothing would have prevented their seizing Elandsriver station that very night in the rear of the Boer forces. If the Boers had to extricate themselves from their far-advanced positions at Franspoort and Pienaarspoort not a moment was to be lost. Before midnight the order for retreat was given; the forces under Botha moved to Elandsrivier station that same night, while de la Rey sadly retired towards Boekenhoutskloof that night and relaxed his hold on the astonished French.

So ended the two days' battle of Donkerhoek—in defeat for the Boers, but with an inspiring effect which could scarcely have been improved by a real victory. Greatly outnumbered they had fought as they had fought in the palmy days of victory and as, they had come to think, they never would fight again. After all the British were not so omnipotent as they had come to think in their depressing retreat from the surrender of Cronjé; and who knew but that the turn of the tide

might yet come even at this late hour and victory smile on the just and righteous cause of the Republic? With such encouraging reflections the Boers left the scene of the battle of Donkerhoek which closes an epoch of the war and opens another.

Next day Botha's commando moved to Bronkhorstspuit and from there by easy marches (the enemy not following on) to Balmoral, where several quiet weeks were spent in conference between the officers and reorganization of the forces. De la Rey's commandos had moved a little further north in the direction of Rhenosterkop.

III. REORGANIZATION

At the end of the last chapter I remarked that Donkerhoek was the close of one epoch and the opening of another in the history of the Boer War. It was the last great defensive battle fought by the Boer forces as a whole in a position selected by their commanders for a great stand. The Battle of Dalmanutha or Bergendal which followed in August was also a defensive action and was also in many respects a great action, but it was fought only by a portion of the Boer forces and the actual fighting, however severe, was confined to a very small part of the battle front. We may fitly take Donkerhoek as marking the close of the defensive stage of the Boer War. It was followed by what the English called the guerilla warfare, which was in its essence more of an offensive than defensive nature.

With rare exceptions Boer tactics had up to now been of a purely defensive character. Even during the earlier part of the war, while the Boer armies were victoriously swarming into the British colonies and Boer strategy was offensive, the Boer mode of fighting was to select a position and to hold it against the attacks of the enemy. The first great actions of the war, such as Elandslaagte,¹ Dundee,² Modderspruit,³ Colenso,⁴ Stormberg,⁵ Modder River⁶ and Magersfontein,⁷ were all

¹ Captured by the Boers on 19 October 1899.

² Occupied by the Boers on 23 October 1899.

³ Engagement during the Battle of Ladysmith on 30 October 1899.

⁴ Evacuated by the British forces on 3 November 1899.

⁵ Boers occupied Stormberg Junction on 26 November 1899.

⁶ Battle of Modder River, 28 November 1899.

⁷ Battle of Magersfontein, 11 December 1899.

fought defensively by the Boers although part of a larger offensive plan. The few exceptions such as the attack on Ladysmith (6 February 1900) and Spionkop¹ were enough to show that the Boers, especially if properly handled by competent officers, could be more terrible in offensive than defensive tactics; a conclusion which was to be far more sharply brought out by the subsequent history of the war. But however good the Boers were as raw fighting material, their organization was too loose and ineffective, and their officers too inexperienced and in many glaring cases incompetent, to make a resort to offensive tactics possible. The really capable organizers and leaders in the Boer armies were only slowly coming to the front and many of them had started from the very lowest grades in the organization and were only slowly, and then in spite of gross prejudice and conservative stupidity, moving to more responsible positions. Of the really capable officers among the Boers only Botha, de la Rey, and Christian de Wet had by the time of the battle of Donkerhoek pushed to the front rank; and by that time the golden chance of victory had slipped away. During the whole of the Natal campaign and up to the death of General [P. J.] Joubert,² Botha, although the fighting leader in every great action, was only a subordinate officer—subordinate not only to General Joubert, but also to such indifferent commanders as Lukas Meyer and Schalk Burger. Nobody who is unacquainted with the inner personal history of the Natal campaign can know of the difficulties Botha had to contend with and the rebuffs and disappointments he had to swallow in the course of that campaign. As one instance I may mention that his victorious march on Maritzburg at the head of one of the best forces that ever rode in this war, was stopped at Mooi River by the peremptory orders of General Joubert and finally by the threat of his dismissal in case he should venture a step further. And thus Maritzburg and Natal were saved for the British. When ultimately after the death of General Joubert, Botha succeeded to his position, Cronjé had surrendered, Bloemfontein had fallen,³ the entire

¹ Battle of Spionkop, 24 January 1900.

² 27 March 1900.

³ 13 March 1900.

Boer campaign had been rolled back, and the situation was already past retrieving.

Koos de la Rey had even a more saddening experience. Placed originally under the brave but incompetent Cronjé on the march to Mafeking, he was at his own urgent request sent to Kimberley by the Government,—only however to be followed in due course by his fate in the shape of Cronjé. On the Modder River, where the two great actions of Modder River and Magersfontein were his work, he had to contend less with Lord Methuen than with the arrogant stupidity of Cronjé, against which even the gods would have fought in vain. When the situation here became unbearable for him, the heroic soul was sent by the Government to Colesberg—only to be caged again under the command of the egregious Hendrik Schoeman. When he had saved Schoeman from surrender to French, and had beaten back French's successor, Clements, at Rensburg,¹ and thought he was at last free to lead a victorious invasion into the heart of the Cape Colony, he was peremptorily recalled to save his old nemesis Cronjé at Paardeberg—and thus the last great chance of winning the war was lost to the Boers. Too late to save Cronjé he could only fight the brilliant action of Abrahamskraal with his handful of Zarps.² Again recalled further, he was too late to prevent the relief of Mafeking³ and the retreat of Snyman. At the battle of Donkerhoek the failure of Tobias Smuts prevented him from striking what would really have been one of the greatest *coups* of the war. He never really got a chance until he was given a free hand over the Western Transvaal, and could communicate to half the Boer people the contagion of his own indomitable spirit, and finally fight those great battles which spread a lurid glamour over the end, but could not alter the final result, of the war.

Like the other two—only more so—Christian de Wet started and remained in a subordinate position until it was too late. A mere commandant at Modderspruit, a mere fighting-general on the Modder River, his active genius was thwarted at every stage by the stupidity of his superiors and the in-

¹ 13 February 1900.

² Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek Politie (South African Republic Police).

³ 17 May 1900.

subordination of his undisciplined men. Even after the fall of Bloemfontein and his signal victory at Sannahspost,¹ he occupied an inferior position to his brother Piet, who was soon destined to disgrace the name he bore, and, but for the clear insight of President Steyn, Christian de Wet would not have been appointed to the chief position in the Free State Army. Piet de Wet and Marthinus Prinsloo, who occupied leading positions in the Free State army, were jealous of his deserved fame and, probably from pique and chagrin at his promotion, instead of distinguishing themselves by honourable rivalry, disgraced themselves by foul treachery. Both tried to surrender the forces under their command; the blundering Piet failed and sought consolation in the infamy and pay of a National Scout;² the more subtle Prinsloo succeeded in handing over to [Lieutenant-General Sir A.] Hunter a force only smaller than Cronjé surrendered at Paardeberg.³ It was only after the Free State army had been purged by these losses and defections that the authority of Christian de Wet became undisputed. And then the Free State had already been annexed and the war carried into the heart of the Transvaal.

And where the high places in the Boer army were cleared with such heartbreaking slowness, what could one expect from the subordinate positions? No less than seven generals who took part in the battle of Donkerhoek were subsequently deposed, whereas in this action Beyers and Brits [C.] were still only assistant field-cornets, Kemp [J. C. G.] was only a field-cornet, Ben Viljoen and Gravett [G. H.]—the latter one of the finest officers in the Boer Army and soon to give his life for the Boer cause—were only commandants; Johannes Celliers, who subsequently so distinguished himself as one of de la Rey's fighting generals, was an ordinary burgher in the ranks.

With such officers as generally commanded the Boer armies up to this time it would have been impossible to adopt aggressive tactics even if the rank and file were up to the mark. But unfortunately the characters of the officers were but too

¹ 30 March 1900.

² P. D. de Wet was an active member of the 'Burgher Peace Committee' set up in Pretoria in December 1900 to persuade the Boers to stop fighting.

³ On 30 July 1900.

faithfully reflected in the general character of the rank and file. Thousands of men skulked away from commando with or without leave of absence, the great majority thought more of their farms, their families and their private affairs than of the fate of the Republics. One of the generals put to me about this time the unarguable question—‘What is the good of the independence of the land to me when I have lost my wife and children?’ And the same spirit of civil self-interest as distinguished from military self-sacrifice still pervaded the Boer rank and file at this date.

But the mills of God and of the enemy were slowly grinding these hard selfish hearts to powder—to be reshaped and remoulded by the deeper and finer genius of the Boer people. By the automatic process of the British advance, farms, cattle, families were being lost or given up for lost. The private and individual ties—so dear to the Boers’ hearts—were loosened in order that they might cling with all the more disinterested devotion to their national ideal. And as the suave promises of Lord Roberts’s proclamations more and more gave way to the severity of his actions, as the smoke of Boer homesteads began to rise to heaven, and the tramp of delicate women and the cry of little children rose and fell on the startled veld, a new spirit entered the Boer armies and made of the undisciplined levies of the veld the heroes of one of the world’s greatest tragedies.

One of the cardinal mistakes of the Boer plan of campaign was the concentration of all possible forces from all possible parts in defensive positions to stop or delay the advance of the main force of the enemy. I have just mentioned the case of de la Rey’s withdrawal from Colesberg—a fatal blunder which had momentous effects, for de la Rey in front of Lord Roberts at Abrahamskraal was bound to fail, while his operations in the northern Cape Colony against the enemy’s lines of communication would have paralysed Lord Roberts’s advance, and Cronjé at Paardeberg would, and could only, have been saved by de la Rey at De Aar. Similar withdrawals were made from every part of the theatre of operations with the exception of Drakensberg, where a large part of the Transvaal army remained in front of Buller. The results were equally ruinous. The entire Western Transvaal, denuded of organized commandos, fell like a ripe apple into the lap of Hunter, Baden-

Powell and other British Commanders; almost every burgher who had remained behind—and this class constituted the great majority—surrendered and delivered up his rifle to the enemy. Within a few weeks after the fall of Pretoria the British occupation of the western half of the Republic was complete, and only some 1,800 of the burghers from those districts were still under de la Rey's command. Of the magnificent Krugersdorp commando of about 1,200 to 1,500 men which had distinguished itself more than any other commando in the Natal campaign, only about 300 remained, the rest with their commandant (van Wyk) had surrendered. The Rustenburg Commando with its 2,000 men almost entirely disappeared; and it was a pleasant surprise to us afterwards to hear that some 130 burghers under Commandant Caspar du Plessis had refused to surrender and were marching eastward in order to effect a junction with the main Boer forces.

It was felt that unless these surrenderers were again commandeered and got under arms the war, so far as the Western Transvaal was concerned, would be over for good. Steps were therefore taken without delay to rectify the blunder which had been made and the calamity which had resulted from our denuding the whole country of organized commandos in order to stay the advance of Lord Roberts. Even before the battle of Donkerhoek Botha had sent Fighting-General Sarel Oosthuizen with a few picked companions to reorganize the Krugersdorp Commando in that district. Oosthuizen had started as field-cornet of one of the wards of this district and had brilliantly distinguished himself in Natal. When Commandant Potgieter¹ was severely wounded in one of the Tugela fights, Oosthuizen succeeded to his place temporarily and thereafter rose to be fighting general over the commando. Dashing and impetuous, he was not only brave to rashness but withal most genial, and in the hottest fight and amid the greatest hardships he would crack jokes with his men, while the contagion of his hearty laugh would send a thrill of good humour and spirits through

¹ Frederik J. Potgieter became a burgher of the South African Republic at the age of sixteen, served in all the chief campaigns and was Commandant of the Krugersdorp District in 1895; was severely wounded on the Tugela, 1899; from August 1900 served under de la Rey and was appointed Landdrost at Krugersdorp; captured in February 1902 and sent to St. Helena.

his jaded commando. With glaring red hair and a reddish tint of skin he was affectionately known among his burghers as the 'Rooi-Bul' (Red Bull). This man—one of the smartest and bravest officers in the whole Boer army—was now sent to his district in order to collect his backsliding heroes and once more lead them to victory or death. We might have known that he was being sent to certain death; but he himself was most keen to go as he felt deeply the dishonour that his famous commando had brought on itself by surrender under weak officers. I shall return to his work in the following chapter.

About the same time Field-Cornet Koos van Heerden¹ (one of the few survivors of the Rustenburg Commando) was sent back to his district with letters from Botha and myself in order to encourage the officers and men and to prevent the wholesale surrenders which according to English reports were going on. When van Heerden reached his district he found that the Rustenburg Commando was already non-existent, that almost all the forces had surrendered and that only the body of men already referred to under Caspar du Plessis had so far remained true. Thereafter van Heerden was himself captured at his farm and nothing came of his mission.

It therefore became necessary to adopt other measures; and immediately after the Battle of Donkerhoek General [H. R.] Lemmer was sent back by the Commandant-General to commandeer the burghers of Rustenburg and Marico and in every way do his best to further the Boer cause. General Lemmer had not only been known before the war as a level-headed and progressive member of the Second Volksraad, but in the war he had greatly distinguished himself not only as a strenuous fighter but as a most capable officer. Thickset, slow of speech and quiet in manner—he seemed to be one of those men on whom the peace of God had descended in their childhood, whose peace of mind nothing could disturb or ruffle; and who combined the gentleness of a child with the courage of a lion. As successor to de la Rey at Colesberg he was responsible for the masterly retreat of his commandos with their immense transport from the Orange River northwards through the Free State in the sight of Lord Roberts who was squatting

¹ Barend Izak Jacobus van Heerden.

at Bloemfontein with his legions. We have already seen that he commanded the centre at the battle of Donkerhoek and he was to distinguish himself very greatly in the prolonged duel between himself and Lord Methuen in the Western Transvaal in which he was to lose his life before the end of the year.

At Balmoral prolonged conferences took place between the Boer officers as to the best way to organize our continuance of the war. The fatal blunder of clearing the Western Transvaal of commandos became daily more patent.

The Free State had committed the same blunder, with the result that de Wet and other Free State officers were fighting with more or less 8,000 men in the Heilbron-Bethlehem districts while all the southern and western districts of the Free State were in undisturbed occupation of the enemy, and the great majority of the burghers of those districts surrendered at leisure and were living quietly on their farms as if no war existed any more. The concentration of the war into such a small area gave the enemy, with his enormous preponderance of forces, a great opportunity of surrounding and crushing the remaining commandos; and as a matter of fact before the end of July half of the Free State forces had surrendered under Prinsloo and with the other half de Wet was being chased into the Transvaal.

It was evident that some such scheme of concentration round the Transvaal commandos was in the contemplation of the British authorities. Buller had beaten back the commandos from Drakensberg and had cleared the Natal railway line¹ as far as Heidelberg, while the bulk of his force was kept along various points of this railway. That he would now move northward to the Delagoa [Bay] railway to co-operate with Lord Roberts in an attack on the Boer forces was as clear as daylight; and from the meshes of such a movement the only escape for the Boers would be to the far east or north. The dispersal of the commandos to the various parts of the Republic had therefore become a necessity, not only to avoid the British plan of operations, but also to re-establish over every part of the country our ruined military rule and organization. The

¹ The line from Johannesburg to Durban.

western commandos were also clamouring to return to their districts of which they had heard no authentic news for a considerable time with the exception of the very unwelcome and disquieting reports that the enemy was in full occupation of those parts.

The upshot of these deliberations was that it was decided that de la Rey should forthwith return to the western districts with all the western commandos and assume supreme military control over the Western Transvaal from Rustenburg and Krugersdorp inclusive. Generals Oosthuizen and Lemmer who had already preceded him were to be under his command. The northern commandos (Zoutpansberg and Waterberg) were to remain under the command of the Commandant General.

Two difficulties however arose immediately. De la Rey was unwilling to take back with him all the generals without commandos or with insufficient commandos who hailed from the Western Transvaal. Some of them were good officers, others again were at best indifferent, and the continuance of the latter in their present commands would only lead to future trouble. If he dismissed some or all of them a very bad feeling was certain to arise, which could not but be detrimental to his work in the western districts. In view of these difficulties it was finally decided that, before de la Rey's return to the Western Transvaal, Botha as Commandant-General should relieve from their commands all the officers referred to; and this was accordingly done without delay. In this way Snyman, Douthwaite, du Toit and Liebenberg lost their general commands. Douthwaite was immediately elected to the post of commandant by his burghers; Liebenberg and du Toit were both subsequently reinstated by de la Rey and Snyman became an ordinary burgher in which capacity he did his duty till the end of the war.

The second difficulty was that de la Rey, who felt the responsibility of the work he was going to do, did not wish to go alone but wanted me to be associated with him. We had been old friends; he knew that I was in favour of all measures for the energetic assertion of our authority and prosecution of the war; and my high civil authority would make the burghers acquiesce in acts and measures which, if they came

from him alone, were likely to be challenged to the detriment of the cause. I was myself willing and indeed anxious to accompany him, but required the assent of the President; and this assent I could not obtain. Finally, about a week after de la Rey had left, the President on reconsideration saw not merely the expediency but the necessity of the step suggested, and wired his permission for me to go to the western districts. This was in the second week of July. I left immediately in order if possible to overtake de la Rey who was marching very slowly. But when I reached Wagendrift on the Elands River I received an urgent message from Botha that I had to return at once as the Government wanted to see me about several important matters. Nothing was left for me but to return to Balmoral and from there to Waterval-Onder where the seat of the Government was at the time. I spent several days with the Government in confidential discussion of some questions connected with the future of the war and the Republic. A deep shadow hung over our future which even the most sanguine could not help seeing. I was going away from my Government whom I had served faithfully, whose confidence I enjoyed in every respect, and whom I might never meet again. It was therefore natural that we should wish to arrive at a common understanding about several most important points connected with the future. These have no particular reference to the present narrative and need not be referred to more particularly. I took care however that the Executive Council should pass a formal resolution constituting de la Rey and myself what really amounted to a separate Government for the western districts of the Transvaal.¹ This I thought necessary as it would be practically impossible to refer to the Government or wait for the formal ratification by the Government of acts and measures which might brook no delay. If I may digress here for a moment I may point out that, revolutionary as the resolution was from a constitutional point of view, it was a wise and beneficent one for the purpose we had in view and the work which awaited us.

This resolution was not so revolutionary as the proclamation issued by the resourceful Barend [J.] Vorster at Pietersburg

¹ See 136.

after the occupation of Pretoria. In this proclamation the Volksraad member for Zoutpansberg—hitherto known almost solely by his questionable financial methods and more especially his donation of spiders to his Volksraad colleagues in connection with the concession for the Selati railway¹—declared that Pretoria was occupied by the enemy, that all communications were interrupted, that it had therefore become advisable to establish a supreme authority for the northern districts of the Transvaal, and that he himself had graciously assumed such authority, and now called on the officials and parties interested to account to him for all Government monies in their possession. Vorster was however too well known to be taken seriously, and his financial usurpation, while it could not cause any serious disturbance to the central authority, did some useful work in raising the laughter and spirits generally of the depressed burghers. Whether the proclamation was intended to be a stroke of humour would be difficult to say. Certainly humour could not be denied to ‘Schelm² Barend’, as he was popularly known. I remember the day the Government left Pretoria in order to move to Middelburg, Vorster sent a telegram to the President from Pietersburg calling on the President ‘to keep courage as the gates of Jerusalem had not yet fallen and he was coming with reinforcements’! Fate however could also be grimly humorous, and it so happened that Vorster arrived with his considerable reinforcements (to wit, 300 men) the very morning of the 4th June when Lord Roberts’s howitzers were shaking the nerves of the citizens of Pretoria. I met him at the station as I was moving heaven and earth to get away the gold and money to the Government and I could not help smiling when I contrasted the noble inspiration of his telegram with his present agitation. When he asked me what to do I urged him to go to Quaggaspoort where the British attack was fiercest; he immediately disappeared with his reinforcements, not however for Quaggaspoort at the front, but for Pietersburg hundreds of miles to the rear where his next move was the attempted paper revolution to which I have already referred. The next stroke of Vorster was however not only more ludicrous but was

¹ For the tangled story of this concession, see J. S. Marais, *op. cit.*, pp. 41–5.

² ‘crafty’.

crowned with complete success. If he could not impose on the Boers he would at least try to outwit the witty hero of Mafeking. When Baden-Powell some months subsequently took Warmbaths and with a strong force marched to Nylstroom, Vorster, who was perfectly aware that Baden-Powell was in possession of the telegraph office at Nylstroom, despatched a wire to Nylstroom for General Grobler in which he urged him to cut off the retreat of Baden-Powell to Warmbaths and added the significant hint that he himself was moving south with a large force to complete the capture of the audacious intruder. Needless to say that Baden-Powell retreated from Nylstroom with forced marches and Vorster remained at Pietersburg to enjoy his joke. When next we heard of Vorster he had fallen on evil days and was riding escort on the trains between Pretoria and Pietersburg. Fare thee well, Barend Vorster junior, type among a people of types, Volksraad member and concession hunter, Native Commissioner and Kaffir Chief rolled into one, defender of the gates of Jerusalem and usurper of its authority, evil of reputation but good of heart, full of human nature and human kindness, with whom I at least sympathize far more than with the spotless whited sepulchres of our civilization.

To return from this digression. My business with the Government had been finished and I was on the point of returning to Balmoral in order to go to de la Rey, when a telegram—presage of the darkest aspect of the war—arrived, to the dismay of the Government. Botha had received a despatch from Lord Roberts to the effect that he was sending out to the commandos all the wives and children of burghers still in the field and that he requested Botha to appoint a place where the transfer could take place. I shall have something to say incidentally in later chapters about this policy of knocking about women and children as part and parcel of Lord Roberts's military policy and confine myself here to the facts of this particular case. The old President was in a towering rage when the telegram from Botha arrived and wanted to refuse point-blank to receive Lord Roberts's unexpected gift. The step revolted his whole nature and was in his opinion calculated, if not intended, to shift the onus of the war to helpless women and children. The whole matter was to us

one of great perplexity and it was finally resolved to give Botha a free hand to act according to circumstances. A few days thereafter the first trainloads of women and children from Pretoria were delivered to Ben Viljoen near Van der Merwe station and thence forwarded by our orders to Barberton. In the meantime I had said farewell to the Government and to the old President to whom I was bound by ties of strong personal attachment and whom I was never to see again this side of the grave.

Now happened an event of a most embarrassing nature to the Boers, which Lord Roberts's admirers will no doubt ascribe to his military genius; which scoffers are certain to ascribe to his vaunted humanity and magnanimity, but which I as an impartial narrator am content to ascribe to mere coincidence. Immediately after the Boer women and children were sent out and every commando was thrown into utter confusion by the universal eagerness to ascertain who had been sent out, a general advance was made against the Boer forces, who were, in the confusion which followed, pushed back without any signs of resistance, beyond Middelburg. In order not to be swept away by this tide of retreat I wisely stood to the north, and to show my adeptness in the arts of war and to forestall the eager enemy, I bagged at Balmoral station most of the commissariat belonging to or intended for General Botha's staff. Thus splendidly provided and safe from pursuit by friend or foe I slowly wended my way past the tortuous mazes of The Hell, past the sinuous lines of the so-called Banks, over the future tin-fields of the Transvaal at Enkeldoorn, over the northern railway at Hammanskraal station, past that yet unexplained natural wonder the Saltpan, over Sjambokzijkraal, by the orange groves now yellow with delicious fruit of my old friend Ewald Esselen at Greyling'spost, on to Selikatznek, where the first commando along my route was keeping the fruits of de la Rey's great victory on the 11th of this month of July. Nicholas de Wet had remained behind with Botha with his heart black at the havoc I had wrought in their commissariat; but besides the other members of my party already mentioned in the first chapter I had with me Willie Geringh and Bobbie Burns—the latter my faithful cook, my 'general', my doctor, my mule driver (which last capacity

earned him the useful degree of M.D.), whose remarkable fortunes in the course of my subsequent campaigning and wanderings will I hope find a place in these memories.

IV. THE OPENING OF THE WESTERN CAMPAIGN JULY 1900

The last week of July I arrived at Selikatznek and there found Commandant Coetzee in command of a force of about 300 or 400 men, with which he had to keep Horn's Nek and Selikatznek and watch Commandonek about six miles further west. This commando was something unusual at this time as it consisted of burghers not from one district or part of a district, but a motley crowd collected from the Krokodil ward of the Pretoria district, as well as from Rustenburg, Krugersdorp and Waterberg districts. Coetzee, whom I here met for the first, and alas! the last, time (he fell some months later during the advance of Baden-Powell northwards from Warmbaths), was as queer a mixture as his commando and was a puzzle to most of his burghers. Indeed some of the burghers wanted to know from me whether I did not think him a little mad and whether it was not risky leaving so important a post in the vicinity of Pretoria in charge of an officer so singular in his ways. He was however by no means mad though he was perhaps a little war-mad; that is to say, he had a burning enthusiasm for fighting, an enthusiasm which kept his whole nature at a white heat of excitement. His best horses were being galloped to death, his burghers kept in a whirl of activity in which they found neither rest nor peace; and he himself seemed to be free of the vulgar need of sleep and was night and day careering about the Magaliesbergen and the Schurverbergen near Pretoria. I thought him just the man to stir these sluggish burghers from their unwarlike slumbers and to awaken enthusiasm especially among the younger men, and when he represented to me that he had no regular appointment I gave him one. Field-Cornet Badenhorst of Schurverberg, who succeeded him as Commandant, was his right hand man and was in most respects the exact counterpart of his volatile superior.

In Coetzee's laager I found, as a prisoner under guard, a very

different type of man—General Hendrik Schoeman, who represented in his person a whole vanished or vanishing order of things, both political and military. I had last seen him on the Impati mountain in front of Dundee some days after Lucas Meyer's abortive attack on that place. I had arrived in General [D. J. E.] Erasmus's camp just after his unpardonable failure to co-operate with Meyer. The day of my arrival¹ we could see [Major-General J. H.] Yule's bewildered movements in the valley below the mountain; the next day all was quiet. Tobias Smuts was sent off with some dozen men to scout and could not find any trace of the enemy. I then suggested to General Erasmus that somebody be sent into Dundee with a flag of truce to demand the immediate surrender of the town and incidentally to ascertain the true position of affairs, as I was convinced that Yule had fled. While this flag of truce was being despatched, Schoeman, who had no military position, but had been a commandant in the War of Independence, appeared on the scene, displeased that so experienced an officer as himself had not been first consulted, and that the advice of a young civilian like myself should be followed. He pooh-poohed my advice, and when he could not get his way, he departed to Pretoria in high dudgeon, while the following of my advice led to the immediate ascertainment of the whole position in front of us. At Pretoria Schoeman persuaded the President to appoint him to the command of the force which was being collected in order to reinforce the Free Staters at Colesberg. Schoeman belonged to one of the best families in the land, had always been a staunch follower of the President and had on account of his concession-hunting proclivities acquired an unenviable reputation as one of the foremost men of the so-called 'Third Raad'.² Unfortunately for our cause, he had his way with the President, and was sent to Colesberg in command of a body of men who, but for his gross incompetence, might have changed the entire aspect of the war in the Cape Colony. From my knowledge of the Cape Colony I firmly believe that if de la Rey had been put in command of this force from the start—and not when it was

¹ About 22 October 1899.

² Derisive name for members of the First and Second Volksraads who had been, or might be, bribed by concession hunters.

too late—the situation in the Cape would have been revolutionized, and Lord Roberts, instead of outflanking the Boer commandos on Modder River, would have had to meet them in the impassable mountain ranges of southern Cape Colony—and who knows how different the issue might have been. However Fate willed that the men who had disgraced our Republic in peace, should ruin its prospects in war, and after having done their evil task, should disclose their real natures as traitors to the Republic. Schoeman returned from Colesberg to his farm carrying with him an empty lyddite shell as a trophy of his prowess. When his old opponent French met him there subsequently on the march round Pretoria, Schoeman obtained from him the necessary protection order in return for a promise or oath of neutrality. For this and his refusal to rejoin the commando Coetzee had him arrested after the fight at Selikatznek, and he was in a state of great embarrassment how to deal with his prisoner when I arrived on the scene. I solved the difficulty by despatching Schoeman to the Government to be dealt with by them. Thrown into prison at Barberton, released by the English advance thither and returning to Pretoria, he was before the end of the year recaptured by the Boers in company with some English officers whom he was initiating in the mysteries of Boer-catching. For his treachery he was in due course sentenced to death, but was again released by the English at Pietersburg before the sentence could be executed and ultimately ended an inglorious career by being accidentally blown up in his house at Pretoria by the innocent-looking shell which he had brought from Colesberg. No wonder the Boers saw in this extraordinary end the judgment of God.

Before proceeding with this narrative, let me pause to consider the state of affairs in the Western Transvaal and the events which had, just prior to my reaching Selikatznek, transformed the whole scene as if by magic. I have already pointed out that the fatal mistake of the recall of the commandos from the western border led to the peaceful occupation of all the western districts and the surrender of thousands of burghers. Indeed, so complete was the Boer breakdown in these districts that the war really seemed to be over as far as these parts were concerned. All the towns were occupied and

garrisoned; in some, civil magistrates had already been appointed, and as far as possible a peaceful system of private transport was opened. Lord Edward Cecil was ruling the tiny village of Zeerust with a power far more real than that with which his father¹ was ruling the British Empire. General Baden-Powell was writing hundreds of autograph letters in Rustenburg to thank his admirers for their congratulations on the stand at Mafeking, never anticipating that his trouble would be in vain and that scoffing Boers would make sport of his voluminous correspondence. At Lichtenburg, at Klerksdorp, at Potchefstroom and every other village of the West, ambitious young officers were bewailing the end of the war and the loss of all further chance of distinction. The Boer cause was dead, and thousands of obsequious hands-uppers were thronging the offices of the haughty conquerors for permits to come to the markets, to come to *nachtmaal*,² to get married, and for the thousand and one ends and objects of civil life.

Suddenly and unexpectedly the British occupation of the Western Transvaal ended with more dramatic rapidity than it had begun, and commandos sprang up everywhere from the treacherous veld and British garrisons were sent flying to all points of the compass.

What had wrought this great change? The obvious answer is that the occupation of the Western Transvaal never was effective and was in fact a paper occupation. That is true, but does not explain the complete transformation which took place so suddenly. The fact is, the western Boers had lost heart and had given up their cause for lost. What made matters worse was the dismal news which reached them through military channels as to the state of affairs at Pretoria. Baden-Powell did not think it beneath his dignity to issue proclamations stating as a fact that the President had fled taking with him all the gold his hands could lay hold of, leaving only his unpaid bills to his burghers; that the war was over and that the few Boers who were still in the field after the fall of Pretoria were being rapidly captured. Of any organized resistance still going on not the least mention was made, and the

¹ The Marquis of Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister of Great Britain.

² The Communion service of the Dutch Reformed Church.

absence of all authentic news from the commandos beyond Pretoria corroborated the military mendacity with overwhelming effect. When authentic news did arrive, when the western commandos reappeared from the east as from the silence of the grave, when the old trusted leaders were heard again, speaking of deathless conviction in the righteousness and triumph of our cause, tears of joy were shed by the repentant surrenderers, their deepest feelings of patriotism were stirred, and they responded to the commandeering of their officers with whole-hearted alacrity. Boundless was their admiration for those who had gone east, who had gone through the fiery furnace and had come out scatheless, who had not undergone the humiliation of oaths of neutrality¹ and similar treasonable truck with the enemy. Thousands of them had taken this odious oath with sore and divided hearts. As an old Boer at Rustenburg said to some trusted friends when he came out of the commandant's office after having signed the oath of neutrality, 'My hand has signed the accursed thing but God knows my heart is pure and that I intend tearing it up as soon as the first commando appears'. Do not call this old man Jesuitical, for his attitude was profoundly human; blame rather those British authorities who were abusing their power as conquerors and violating the rules of international morality and debauching the minds of these people by making them swear an illegal oath in conflict with their plain duty as burghers, for which they were liable to be punished by their officers, while the military authorities could not afford them any protection. These simple religious people looked upon the oath which they had taken not only as a breach of their duty to their country, but as a sin of their consciences against God, for which the only true repentance was to violate that sinful oath and to return to their allegiance and duty to the Republic.

There was a further potent cause of the change. The British officers had covered the Western Transvaal with Lord Roberts's proclamations wreathed in smiles and promises, and if the words of those proclamations had been kept, the returning

¹ A proclamation issued by Roberts on 15 March 1900 offered to burghers who surrendered and took an oath of neutrality a permit to return home and a promise that they would not be deprived of property.

Boer commandos might have had considerable difficulty in completely rehabilitating their cause among the surrenderers. Those proclamations promised to surrenderers full protection, compensation for all damage done, payment in full for all requisitions made. Every surrenderer was walking about with a pocketful of passes and a packetful of promises: the first of which chafed him by restraining his every movement, the second of which disgusted him by being kept more in the breach than in the observance.

These lords of the veld, who had hitherto known no restraint, who had been a law unto themselves, and whose simple republican laws were the expression of their own convenience, who had looked upon the officials of the Republic as their servants, now suddenly found themselves face to face with the masterful British officials, who swore at them, laughed at them, and treated them with that supercilious contempt with which the civilized decadent always treats the rough untutored humanity of nature. Every act required a pass, every pass bristled with penalties the sense and reason of which might have been clear to the military mind but remained quite dark to the Boer. Here for the first time the Boer came face to face with the British idea and practice of liberty, and found—perhaps not altogether to his surprise—that the old Republican and the British ideas of liberty were as poles asunder. National freedom, bleeding from penalties and strangled with red-tape, seemed to the Boer to be the British idea of liberty—an impression which was to be still more deeply accentuated in the black years that followed the war. And thus it was brought home to the lord of the veld with his pocketful of passes that the thing he called ‘independence’ was still worth fighting for with all his power of action and endurance, and that the British substitute was unsuited to the free spirit of the veld.

Even more effectively did the British promises of full compensation and payment pave the way for the work which awaited de la Rey. It is needless to say that these promises were never kept, that all sorts of frivolous pretexts were found for penalizing the surrenderers, for refusing to pay them for military requisitions; and where payment did take place it was in the form of cheques payable within a short time at remote stations to which the recipients could get no passes.

The whole thing was a ludicrous farce, and probably immensely tickled the fancy of the officers responsible; but it was a farce which was to cost their Government many millions of pounds and many thousands of precious lives, and was to give the British military an unenviable reputation for many a day to come. No reasonable man will find fault with the refusal to pay in part or in full for military requisitions, nor was that the gravamen of the Boer charge. It was the antecedent promise of payment wilfully broken when the promise had served its purpose, that disgraced the name of the military and disgusted the duped surrenderers.

Such was the state of affairs when the first Boer emissaries and then the commandos returned to the West after the fall of Pretoria. The Boers were disgusted with their treatment by the military, and were profoundly dissatisfied with the way in which the promises of the proclamations had been set at naught. They were kept in a continual state of irritation and alarm at charges trumped up against them, and no one knew but that the bolt might next descend on his devoted head. Their slothful and inglorious inactivity was becoming hateful while a handful of their comrades were continuing the fight, and their patriotic conscience was beginning to revolt against their desertion of the cause. After all, the bulk of them were brave men, and the example of their fighting comrades was not only an unbearable rebuke to their conduct but was appealing with irresistible effect to their own best feelings and impulses. In this way the field was prepared, the train was laid, and only the match had still to be applied.

The first to do this was the impetuous Sarel Oosthuizen. Parting from the Commandant-General at Van der Merwe station just prior to the battle of Donkerhoek, he proceeded west with some chosen companions and, remaining himself north of Magaliesberg, sent his companions with commandeering orders over the mountains into the Krugersdorp district. The commandeering had to be done with great secrecy and in consequence proceeded very slowly. The majority of the burghers were still hanging back as they were not certain that the war was not really over. Finally General [G.] Barton at Krugersdorp got wind of this commandeering which was going on in his district and took every precaution

to put a stop to it. He sent a letter to Oosthuizen calling upon him to stop his commandeering and to surrender on pain of some dire penalties. As the work was progressing far too slowly to satisfy Oosthuizen, he finally crossed the Magaliesberg himself and boldly ventured into the district to see what effect his personal presence and exertions might have. The stir in the district was perceptibly increasing and it became plain to the authorities that unless energetic steps were taken the British occupation of Krugersdorp would be in jeopardy. As Oosthuizen would not surrender at the naive demand of Barton, General [Sir H. L.] Smith-Dorrien was sent with a column to Hekpoort to put an end to his work and capture or disperse his followers. This column must have outnumbered Oosthuizen's force of exactly eighty-one men at least in the proportion of ten to one; but Oosthuizen was not the man to refuse an offer of battle however heavy the odds against him. On the eventful 11th of July 1900 the two forces met on Oosthuizen's farm Dwarsvlei near Hekpoort and the 'Red Bull' and his little following fought one of the most heroic minor actions of the war. Not only was Smith-Dorrien beaten back but he also narrowly escaped losing his guns to his opponent. The guns had been shot clear by Oosthuizen and he was waiting for nightfall in order to rush them and get them away. Then, leaving his other men in position, he put himself at the head of a small storming party and stormed the guns in the face of Smith-Dorrien's force. Unfortunately he himself was severely wounded in the leg when near the guns and all his handful of companions could do was to carry him away from the scene of battle where he had so brilliantly distinguished himself. The main artery of his leg had been severed and he was bleeding profusely, and owing to want of proper medical attendance his life was in great danger. Carried by his faithful followers over the Magaliesberg and attended to by his noble wife, he lingered on for some weeks and finally passed away early in August, to join the Commando of the 'immortal dead who live again in minds made better by their presence'. His life might have been saved by proper medical assistance and General Barton wrote him a generous note of sympathy and asked him to come to Krugersdorp and receive the best medical assistance at his disposal. But Oosthuizen thought that his

compliance would be construed by his burghers as a surrender and might have a bad effect, and preferred to run the risk of losing his life rather than injure the cause of his people. But his work was done; the battle of Dwarsvlei had a thrilling effect on the brave Krugersdorpers, and before Oosthuizen died he had the joy of knowing that they were once more one of the strongest commandos in the whole Republic. The veteran Commandant Potgieter was soon sufficiently recovered from wounds he had received at the Tugela to put himself once more at the head of this Commando, and the Krugersdorp Commando continued to take a foremost part in the war till peace was made. The British general who, although his name is not associated with great victories, in losing actions inflicted on the Boers the loss of Oosthuizen at Dwarsvlei and of Gravett near Belfast some months later, has the grim satisfaction of knowing that he deprived the Boer armies of two high officers whose place none could take again, and whose names will live as long as the story of the Boer War will continue to be told.

On this same 11th of July a more effective and far-reaching blow was struck by de la Rey at Selikatznek—a blow the effects of which were almost immediately to be felt all over the Western Transvaal. Leaving Botha on the 2nd of July at Balmoral, de la Rey had by slow marches reached the vicinity of Selikatznek on the tenth of that month. The nek was weakly held by Colonel [H. R.] Roberts who had about 300 men and two guns wherewith to guard this important pass north-west of Pretoria and within reach of the guns from one of the Pretoria forts (Zandfontein). De la Rey immediately decided to attack this place. The nek consists of a dip in the Magaliesberg, in the centre of the dip or nek being a small rocky kopje which formed an excellent position for the main portion of the defending force. The balance of the defending force was stationed on the two slopes of the nek higher up the mountain. De la Rey's plan of attack was the simple and obvious one of taking the two slopes or shoulders of the Magaliesberg which immediately looked down on the nek, and from there to direct a withering fire on the men in the nek below, and at the same time to make a frontal attack on the nek from the bush-covered terrain on the north. The British mistake was not to have

occupied and fortified the two highest points overlooking the nek whose possession by an enemy would make the position in the nek untenable.

Early in the morning of the 11th July de la Rey sent Commandant Tollie de Beer with the Bloemhof Commando and Commandant Visser with a force of Vryburg and Bechuanaland rebels to climb the Magaliesberg some distance east of the nek and to move along the top of the ridge so as to arrive just above the nek by daybreak. Commandant Coetzee with a small body of scouts under Kirsten and Koos [Jacobus] Boshoff was sent to approach the nek from the west by climbing along the slope of the mountain, the top being too precipitous for the purpose of an attack. At dawn de la Rey himself at the head of the Lichtenburgers under Vermaas attacked the nek in front, and simultaneously de Beer and Visser attacked from the mountain and drove part of the defence force, which had been stationed some distance up the mountain, into the kopje in the nek. In the course of the forenoon the British guns had been shot clear but owing to the good positions occupied by the English in the nek the risk of removing them was too great. In the meantime the English were firing from the west of the nek in such a way as to make a close approach by de la Rey's men impossible. It was not till the afternoon that Coetzee and Kirsten appeared from the west and, by driving in this wing of the defence, made it possible to attempt the removal of the guns. Even then the task was most hazardous, and de la Rey lost at this point, besides a number of wounded, two of his adjutants, Mussman and Röth, who were shot down in the act of removing the guns. It was in this part of the field that Lieutenant Thuynsma, a daring young officer belonging to the Free State Artillery and now in command of de la Rey's artillery, greatly distinguished himself. He fell in the battle of Graspan in the Free State in June 1901.

Late in the afternoon the English, who were now completely hemmed in and could not even have escaped by the southern exit from the nek towards Pretoria, surrendered after having sustained heavy casualties. The extraordinary feature of the situation was that some short distance from the nek at the bridge over the Crocodile river an English force equipped with artillery under Colonel [H.] Alexander was stationed and did

nothing all that day to relieve the pressure on Colonel Roberts in the nek; and in the evening Alexander contented himself with a rapid march to Pretoria to inform Lord Roberts of the mishap to the force in the nek. I do not say that his assistance would have made any difference to the issue of the fight, but even so, it was his duty to have done his best to render his comrades all the assistance in his power. Among the prisoners captured this day and treated with exceptional consideration was Major, afterwards Colonel, Scobell, whose shocking treatment subsequently of one of the very few Transvaalers that ever fell into his hands will be detailed in a later chapter.

The action at Selikatznek, although not very important in itself, was certain to have, and did have, the most important consequences. It was the first important success which had fallen to the Transvaalers after the loss of Pretoria, and augured well for the success of de la Rey's great undertaking in the West. It spread dismay among the English posts and garrisons all over the Western Transvaal. It so unsettled the hero of Mafeking that his bewildered movements thereafter became inexplicable to friend and foe alike. It gave immense encouragement to the Boers, and as its report spread like fire over the veld, it assumed more magnificent proportions, until the simple burghers of the West believed that one of the greatest victories of the war had been won and began to hope that the tide had at last turned.

Let me now turn to the operations of General Lemmer who had preceded de la Rey on the trek to the West. Leaving the Commandant-General immediately after the battle of Donkerhoek with instructions to re-commandeer and organize the burghers of the Rustenburg, Marico and Lichtenburg districts, Lemmer had on the trek west fallen in with the small remnant of 130 Rustenburgers under Commandant Caspar du Plessis who were marching east to join the fighting commandos. Taking them back with him to the Rustenburg district, he started immediately to collect the Rustenburgers who had taken the oath of neutrality and were sitting on their farms. All through the war the Rustenburgers had been somewhat refractory material and Lemmer found great difficulty in collecting a commando from these surrenderers. It became clear to him that unless he did something striking his efforts

might result in failure. The most striking object which he could hope to achieve was the capture of the town of Rustenburg which had till now served as Baden-Powell's headquarters. To his surprise at this juncture Baden-Powell departed from Rustenburg with a strong force in the direction of Pretoria, and left the town to a comparatively small and weak garrison under Major [A. H. C. Hanbury-]Tracy. Lemmer was not the man to miss such a chance. With his handful of Rustenburgers he prepared to attack the town in the absence of Baden-Powell and if possible to take it by storm. His plan was himself to attack the town with part of his force from the open ground to the north, and to make Commandant du Plessis attack the fortified hill to the south which overlooked the town. The plan was sound and with ordinary good luck ought to have been an easy success. But these Rustenburgers had up to this time never been in any important engagement in the whole war, and had been watching Linchwe's Kaffir raiders at Derdepoot on the Marico River. With such untried material the plan was a somewhat risky one and Commandant du Plessis pointed this out to Lemmer. Lemmer was however obdurate, and at daybreak Commandant du Plessis with great gallantry stormed the forts on the rand. Unfortunately the brave old veteran fell severely wounded close to the forts and his untried band, not knowing what to do, retired without even carrying off their wounded commandant, and the attack was over. It must be admitted that the Rustenburgers did not show up well in this their first fight. But in the coming months and years they were destined to more than redeem this failure and in the battles of Nooitgedacht,¹ Vlakfontein, Moedwil² and the other great actions in the West, these dour Doppers were to take rank with the bravest commandos of the West.

Lemmer was sorely disappointed at this first failure; but he was not the man to be daunted by any failure. His attack on Rustenburg had been followed by the precipitate return of Baden-Powell, and Lemmer promptly cut off his communications with Pretoria by taking post at Olifantsnek. Baden-Powell, who ought to have been quite able to beat off the

¹ This battle took place on 13 December 1900.

² This battle took place on 30 September 1901.

small force of Lemmer and to re-establish his communications with Pretoria, sat helpless at Rustenburg, and his position was now becoming dangerous because de la Rey was approaching with his veterans fresh from the victory of Selikatznek. In this extremity Lord Roberts was forced to send Lord Methuen with a large force against Lemmer in order to extricate Baden-Powell from his uncomfortable and dangerous position. On 18th July Methuen drove Lemmer away from his untenable position between the English forces at Olifantsnek almost without fighting, and the only circumstance that saved Lemmer from a great disaster on this day was Baden-Powell's failure to co-operate with Methuen and to attack the Boers in the rear from the direction of Rustenburg. Lemmer retired west along the Magaliesberg and next took up a position at Wysfontein on the Coster River on the road between Rustenburg and Zeerust, and here he was to inflict another humiliation on the hero of Mafeking. He was attacked on the 23rd of July by Colonel [H. P.] Airey at the head of 300 Australian Bushmen. These dashing warriors from the antipodes had been bewailing their lot that the war was over and that they were not to meet the Boers, and some of them had, with a singular lack of humour, expressed their great anxiety to have even one little tussle with the bearded warriors of the veld. That one tussle might prove one too many for them was soon to be shown at Wysfontein. In the first encounter with Lemmer's small force the Bushmen lost most of their horses, and without horses it was impossible to get away from the merciless Mausers.¹ To their urgent call for reinforcements Baden-Powell sent small dribbles which each in turn suffered the fate of the force they were sent to relieve. Lemmer's force was too small to push home the attack and capture the whole lot and the greater part of them fled at night from the field of battle and arrived hatless, breathless and with bleeding feet at Rustenburg where the civilian population was much amused to see the droll results of the long-desired encounter.

One memorable incident in this fight deserves mention. During the fight and when the Bushmen were falling right and left and Airey's ambulance could not venture into the bullet-

¹ The rifles used by the Republican forces and manufactured by the German firm of Mauser.

swept field of action, a brave young Colonial girl, Miss Emily Backe, who was a governess on one of the neighbouring farms, volunteered to go forward and attend to the wounded. This she did with the greatest sang-froid. To many of the Boers she was well-known and in any case they would not fire on a woman; she therefore came scatheless through the ordeal and continued her work of mercy all day long among the poor wounded Australians who were dying of thirst in the broiling sun. One of Baden-Powell's despatches to Lord Roberts recounted in glowing terms the heroism of this girl and recommended her for the appropriate distinctions. This recommendation I felt happy in saving from the wreck of his intercepted correspondence and in subsequently presenting to the girl who was an honour to South African womanhood. Although Lord Roberts probably never saw the despatch and the girl, like so many other South African heroines, received no distinction, the despatch might pass down in her family as an heirloom and a record of one of the bravest deeds of the war.

While Lemmer was teaching the Australians a proper appreciation of the Transvaalers, Liebenberg, who had been reappointed a fighting-general by de la Rey and had left the latter immediately after the battle of Selikatznek with the remnant of the Potchefstroom commando and a Krupp¹ and Pom-pom,² had crossed the Magaliesberg and gone to the Potchefstroom district where he was creating a pandemonium for his bewildered enemies. Near Bank station he drove with his Krupp a full khaki-laden train into headlong flight on to a sharp corner where he had broken the rail; many were killed in the catastrophe that followed and the rest were captured. From there he marched on to Potchefstroom and thence to Klerksdorp, which surrendered to him in a panic of fright, although as a matter of fact his handful of men were inferior in number to the surrendering garrison. Every part of the West was thus rapidly being cleared in order to promote the work of reorganization which had become necessary after the *débâcle* of the preceding month.

One fight more and the Western Transvaal, from Krugers-

¹ The South African Republic Artillery included eight 7.5 cm. Krupp guns.

² The Vickers-Maxim 1-pounder automatic gun was known as the 'Pom-pom.'

dorp to Mafeking, was to be clear of the enemy. That fight was however to redound more to the honour of the Briton than the Boer. It was the fight at Brakfontein on the Elands River, where the Boers were in turn taught a proper appreciation of the Australians. To come to that however I must resume the narrative of my journey to de la Rey.

V. THE OPENING OF THE WESTERN CAMPAIGN AUGUST 1900

After I had spent a couple of days with Coetzee at Selikatznek in order to rest my animals and give him such advice on the management of his commando as I thought appropriate, I left him and continued my journey westwards, taking with me Marthinus Rieckert who was to be my faithful and devoted secretary till September 1901 in the Cape Colony. Taking the road by Wolhuterskop and Ross and De Villiers Mill on Sterkstroom, I diverged from there towards the Zwartkoppin in order to see my old friend Sarel Oosthuizen, who was there dying from the wounds he had received in the fight at Dwarsvlei. The hero's death is always pathetic and in this case the pathos was, in the light of the overpowering circumstances, all the deeper. Comparatively young as he was, he had already covered himself with glory in Natal where he was one of Botha's smartest lieutenants. *He* at least had never despaired of the Republic; and now that the tide seemed to be turning and the black night of despair was lifting from half the Transvaal no man was more needed and no arm stouter for the work that had to be done. But 'God doth not need either man's work or His own gifts'.¹ Panting for the strife and with his hero soul listening to the westward tramp of the commandos, here he lay cut off, with his life blood ebbing away, typifying in his fate a greater tragedy which his sanguine nature could not foresee. Sadly and silently I shook hands with him for the last time, while his heroic wife tried in vain to repress the feelings that wracked her heart. Poor suffering soul! she little dreamt of the piled-up sufferings yet in store for her in the days to come when, alone in the world with her famishing little

¹ Milton, 'On His Blindness'.

children, she could only keep them and herself alive by vegetable leaves and pickings scraped together in the market place of Pretoria—and rich Boers looking on and pointing to her as the widow of Sarel Oosthuizen without giving her a helping hand!

From Oosthuizen I made a night march to Boschhoeknek west of Rustenburg which I reached in the morning and where I found part of the Rustenburg commando. A ride westward into Zwartruggens the same morning brought me at noon to Grootplaats where I found de la Rey with most of the commandos. The officers were just at that moment holding a war-council how best to attack [Colonel C. O.] Hore's camp at Brakfontein on the Elands River and I arrived in time to hear what plan of attack had been decided on. In the afternoon the commandos started, and marching a large part of the night, arrived near Hore's camp about 2 a.m. on the 4th August and then halted to wait for the dawn, when the attack was to be made. The position of the camp and the disposition of Hore's forces had been thoroughly reconnoitred, and every part of the attacking forces knew exactly to what positions to move at daybreak.

Colonel Hore's force consisted of about 300 Australian Bushmen and Rhodesians, with an effete 7-pounder, stationed on a remarkably well-chosen place consisting of a boulder-covered kopje, surrounded in all directions by open country, and situated about half a mile west of Elands River and half a mile from the junction of Doorn River and Elands River. An advance post was stationed on an eminence overlooking the junction of the two rivers and in such a way as to command for some distance the course of the Doorn River. Still further, beyond the Doorn River, on a small bush-covered kopje in the angle formed by the junction of the two rivers, another part of the force was posted in a high commanding position from which it was possible to protect the approaches of the camp to the Elands River, on which the camp depended for its water-supply. This whole position was situated between two parallel ridges of low hills running from east to west for a considerable distance which are pierced by the Elands River flowing from south to north, and enclosing a valley of from two to three miles broad in which the main road from Zeerust to Rustenburg

runs. The Boer plan of attack was to post their guns on three ridges which are from one and a half to two miles from the camp, and to make the men creep under cover of the banks of the Doorn River and Elands River from the south towards the camp, and in this way to cut off the water supply and force the camp to surrender. The obvious course of rushing the camp was quite out of the question because the attack had been anticipated for some considerable time and the camp had been most effectively fortified, so that a rush over the open ground by which the camp was surrounded would have meant the loss of far more men than the place was worth to the Boers. Of the only two ways of approaching the camp the Elands River was assigned to Commandant [Pieter Stephanus] Steenekamp with the Rustenburgers and the Doorn River to the Wolmaransstad Commando under Potgieter. Lemmer with the Marico Commando and a force of Griqualand and Vryburg rebels under de Villiers and two guns took the hills to the north, while de la Rey had stationed two more guns on the hills to the south east, and Steenekamp had a gun posted to the south-west of the camp.

At daybreak Steenekamp opened fire with his gun and shortly thereafter the five Boer guns were bombarding the camp at short range and converting the camp literally into a shambles. The defending force was amply protected but the thousands of animals—horses and cattle—were mercilessly shot down so that at the end of that first day very few of them could have been still alive. In the meantime the burghers were working down the beds of the two rivers and trying to cut off the defending force from the rivers. From the positions of the two advance posts near and beyond the Doorn River already referred to, this proved a task of exceptional difficulty. On the second day the post beyond the Doorn River was driven in, and Steenekamp's burghers could work down the Elands River to a point beyond the other advanced post near the junction of the two rivers. The banks of the Elands River were however so rough and rocky that unless the entire bed of the river was continuously held, there was always the possibility of the defending forces coming down to the river at night at some point or other and so replenishing their water-supply; and this they did during the days that the siege lasted. The defenders,

notwithstanding the frightful state in which their camp must have been, were keeping up a most plucky fight and preventing the burghers from approaching beyond the protection of the river beds.

Thus matters stood when on the second day of the siege a relieving column under General Carrington appeared from the direction of Zeerust. The Boer positions round the camp were very effectively held and the addition of even a thousand men to Hore's forces would have made no substantial difference to the defence, while the larger consumption of food and water might have led to an earlier surrender. This being so, de la Rey at first had the idea of offering no opposition to Carrington's approach and of allowing him to join Hore in the camp and then besieging both of them. There was however the probability that a relief column might also appear from the direction of Rustenburg strong enough to raise the siege; and it further appeared not improbable that the defeat and flight of Carrington might so dishearten the besieged that they might be induced to surrender without delay. De la Rey therefore decided to prevent a junction between the two forces; and for that purpose extended his forces westward for some considerable distance along the ridges which flank the road to Zeerust. Down this road and between the two invisible lines of Boers Carrington's column came gaily marching along, unconscious of any danger and without even a scout approaching the two rands in which the Boers were concealed. It was certainly one of the most glaring instances of bad scouting or no scouting at all in a dangerous terrain that the Boers had ever seen. When Carrington had arrived some three miles from the camp he noticed some Boers in that direction and sent a few shells flying among them, and sent forward a detachment, including some cyclists, to get into touch with Hore. These came within a hundred yards of the Elands River when the Boers who occupied the drift opened fire on them and sent them flying back to the main force. At the same time the Boer guns opened fire on the column and an artillery duel began between the two. This had not proceeded long when the unsuspecting Carrington heard rifle fire in his rear, and then for the first time became aware that he had moved far into the positions held by the Boers. He did not wait a moment longer.

With a rapidity which to some extent redeemed his indifferent scouting he extricated his force from their perilous position and made back for Zeerust as fast as his horses could carry him. Fortunately for him the road along which he was retiring could not be approached from the parallel hills with any cover and the Boers therefore had to approach him over open ground which was swept by his guns. Notwithstanding Lemmer kept hanging on to him till nightfall when he halted at Great Marico River, where another portion of his force had been left behind that day. That night Lemmer made a detour to the north with some fifty men and in the morning was in advance of Carrington in the vicinity of the Zeerust road. A little rifle fire from the Boers spread consternation among the retreating column, and for hours Carrington bombarded the dense bush which to his scoutless column appeared to be alive with Boers. Satisfied that he had cut his way through an overwhelming force of the enemy, Carrington pursued his retreat with forced marches to Zeerust. Even there he was to have no rest. Fearing that he might yet be cut off by the Boers, he set fire to the large quantities of stores collected there, and then left in a great hurry for Mafeking, while some Boer scouts who had kept in touch with his movements saved a large part of the stores from the conflagration he had started. Thus swift failure overtook the relief expedition of Carrington and he had to console himself at Mafeking with the reflection (duly communicated to Lord Roberts) that *he* was not to blame, and that Baden-Powell's faulty military arrangements and failure to apprise him of the full extent of his danger had led to his discomfiture and might—but for his rapid retreat—have led to worse.

Meanwhile the object of these animadversions had not been sitting still at Rustenburg and had also been making an effort to extricate Hore from his uncomfortable position. But the hero of Mafeking knew how to temper his daring with slow caution in the face of real danger; and on this occasion the sound of de la Rey's guns made him halt at Woodstock at a respectable distance of about twelve miles. As the gun fire seemed to recede farther and farther and die away in the far distance, his natural disinclination to approach nearer was strengthened by the brilliant idea that Carrington was carrying off Hore;

and so he returned to Rustenburg without even trying to ascertain the real position of affairs. And in the meanwhile the unhappy Hore was—what with the undue precipitancy of his one friend and the undue hesitancy of the other—in splendid isolation meditating black thoughts amid the horrors of the camp, the stench of thousands of putrifying cattle, the pangs of thirst, the boom of artillery and the endless rattle of the Mausers. Never in the course of this war did a besieged force endure worse sufferings, but they stood their ground with magnificent courage. All honour to these heroes who in the hour of trial rose nobly to the occasion, and amid retreats and flights and capitulations, shed a glory all their own on the brief comic page of Baden-Powell's occupation of the Western Transvaal. When on the fourth day of the siege (7 August) General de la Rey wrote a letter to Hore expressing his admiration of the manner [in which] the defence had been conducted and offering the besieged the honours of war on their surrender, he was not conveying a mere empty compliment; nor was his admiration made less by Hore's answer that he held the camp for his Government and would continue to hold it to the uttermost. I have heard it rumoured subsequently that this tenacity was not so much due to Hore as to some junior officer or officers. However this be, there can be only one opinion about the fine determination and pluck of these stalwart Colonials, to many of whom this terrific siege must have been their first experience of serious warfare. Deserted by their friends and then, owing to their unreasonable obstinacy, abandoned by their disappointed enemies, they simply sat tight until Kitchener's columns, who were in pursuit of de Wet, finally disinterred them from the carcass-covered kopje into which they had burrowed so effectually that it seemed unlikely that they would ever again come out of it.

To de la Rey and myself who had to consider a much more complex problem than Hore who, Micawber-like, had simply to sit tight until something should turn up, it seemed that Hore was making us waste precious time. Our duty was to reorganize our forces in the west and to strengthen our position in all the evacuated districts without delay, and not to sit round Hore until the returning English columns should find the

districts still empty of us. It was therefore necessary for me to send the faithful remnants of the commandos back to their districts to form the nucleus for all who could be got under arms again. It was necessary to establish civil control again, which, to the constitutional Boer mind, speaks far more eloquently of established authority than imposing commands. It was necessary to purge the districts of British sympathizers and as far as possible to punish the responsible ringleaders in the disgraceful surrenders which had taken place. All the considerations pointed imperatively to the impolicy of our continuing any longer squatting round Hore. It was therefore decided to slacken our grip on Hore and to send all the commandos to their districts with the exception of the Wolmaransstad Commando of about 200 men which undertook to remain in charge of Hore until further orders. It was a joyous day for the burghers when they were told that they could now go back to their districts from which many of them had been absent since the beginning of the war. They were allowed to revisit their homes to see that the farm was still in order and the family still alive—and perhaps larger; to get fresh clothes and to replenish their stock of ammunition from what was hidden before or during the war; and above all they were impressed with the duty of bringing up the laggards, and soon rejoining their commandos in better spirits and with more invincible determination than ever before.

After the dismissal of the commandos to their several districts de la Rey and myself left on 8 August on a tour of the districts of Marico and Lichtenburg. Arriving first at Zeerust on 9 August, the capital of Marico district, we found matters there in great confusion. Most of the officials had misbehaved in some way or another. One had abjectly gone out on the approach of Baden-Powell to meet him, perhaps to welcome him into town; another had spoken despairingly, if not disparagingly, of the Boer cause and the Boer Government; a third had, like [incomplete in MS.] jeered at his people and leaders in the day of humiliation and heaped contumely on those who were faithful to the cause. All these had committed unpardonable sins which had to be visited with such punishments as the cases called for. The one lost his office; the second was commandeered for active service and kept under

surveillance until he found an opportunity to desert to the enemy; the third was thrown into prison from which he was only to be released by the enemy. New officials were appointed whose national sympathies were beyond question. From Zeerust we proceeded to Lichtenburg (10 August) where a less lamentable state of affairs awaited us. Many of the old officials were reappointed, with a solemn warning, however, to be less remiss in future. Here General de la Rey was happy to meet his wife and family again. Both at Zeerust and Lichtenburg many amusing stories were told us of what happened during the British occupation. The British officers, with their thin veneer of civilization, and their thinner veneer of military art, did not know that in the stolid and quiet Boers they had both keen critics and observers with a very real sense of humour, to whom their modes of speech, their military ways, their carryings on generally, were an endless source not so much of annoyance as of quiet amusement. It must be confessed that a closer acquaintance with their conquerors had not prepossessed the Boers in their favour personally; while the circumstances of their military administration to which I have already referred in the preceding chapter tended to widen the gulf between conqueror and conquered. It would serve no useful purpose here to go into details which are better forgotten, but the faithful chronicler is bound to note the general fact, for it is part of the history of the war.

On the whole this tour through the western districts forms part of my happiest recollections of the war. Such an awakening among the people, such a rush to arms, we had never anticipated. The people awakened as if from a nightmare of despair. Our complete collapse and the unchecked occupation of the western districts, together with the false reports circulating through military channels from the east, had led to the bitter conclusion that the war was over, that all was lost, and that the yoke of the conqueror was finally forced on the land. Suddenly the commandos reappeared from the east, the British occupation tumbled to pieces like a house of cards, and in a few weeks the entire West was once more clear of the enemy and his martial law, his proclamations and his passes. The despair was followed by a reaction of joy which it was really pathetic to see. Old people wept and talked of the happy deliverance

and of the early Kaffir wars. The weak knees and weak hearts received a new access of strength and ardour and were flocking to the commandos without any efforts on the part of the officers. Even the youngsters ran away from the farms in order to join the commandos and to share in the honours of war before it was over. The women laughed, and baked and cooked for the commandos and told yarns of the British occupation. The future was hid from all of us, and on its dark background the sanguine patriotism of the people was painting visions of victory and freedom. Not lightly, not frivolously, were they looking to future success. There was no longer the raw naïveté and ignorance which had characterized their outlook on the commencement of the war. They had already gone through a school in which all the nonsense is knocked out of men, and the senses and sentiments are sobered by the deeper realities of life. They knew that suffering, loss, and hard work awaited them. But they were nerving themselves to the struggle as only brave men do, not desperately but joyously; and their joy was born not so much from the temporary success of de la Rey as from that unconquerable hope which rises ever superior to adversity in brave men's minds. With the elasticity which is always a sure indication of true vitality and greatness, not only in men but also in peoples, they were rebounding from the failures and discouragements of the past, and were rising superior, as in the later stages of the great struggle they were rising ever more nobly superior, to all defeat and despair.

De la Rey and myself did not stay long at Lichtenburg. Over the dolomite flats of the Lichtenburg district, called by the Boers 'the plains of Moab', the distant boom of artillery could be heard as Kitchener was driving northward before him all or almost all that remained of the Free State commandos under de Wet. We were anxious to meet de Wet if Lord Kitchener would kindly allow the meeting and, leaving Lichtenburg on 14 August, hurried back to the Rustenburg district in which direction the artillery fire seemed proceeding. But notwithstanding fast riding we could not overtake our Free State colleague. On 17 August we were once more in the vicinity of the beleaguered camp. As we were approaching the main road to Zeerust at Vlakplaats some four miles from the camp, we saw to our no little astonishment a column moving

from the camp in the direction of Zeerust. It was clear therefore that something must have happened in the meantime and that the siege must actually have been raised. We were next day for the first time to hear the full story of what happened in our absence. Kitchener had driven de Wet with his commandos, including the Potchefstroom Commando under Liebenberg, over the Magaliesberg in a north-eastern direction and had thereafter sent a strong force to drive away the Rustenburg and Wolmaransstad Commandos which were still continuing the siege. The garrison had been equipped with horses and all the other appurtenances of war and was on this very day moving to Zeerust. We determined, although numbering only thirty men, to give battle to the enemy. The high road is flanked by hills which are covered by the kraals and fortifications built by Moselikatze and afforded us most excellent cover; and in these rude fortifications we took position in close proximity to the road and waited for the enemy. This handful of us were in high spirits and were certain to have some good fun even if we could not quite beat the enemy back to their camp. After having waited for some considerable time and failed to see the enemy approach, we reconnoitred in their direction—only to find, however, that we must have been observed and our numbers overestimated, as the enemy was rapidly moving back to the camp. We thereupon moved on in a northerly direction, expecting to find the commandos at Brakkloof north of the camp. Before reaching there, however, we had to go over the farm Teerputsfontein belonging to the father of Field-Cornet van Tonder where we regaled ourselves with what I thought the sweetest and most delicious oranges and naartjes¹ I had ever eaten. And so I still think. In this district celebrated for its oranges we were to eat more of this delicious fruit in the month to come than any of us had probably ever eaten before, but I do not remember having found again any fruit to equal that of the unforgettable Teerputsfontein.

The farm, like most of the farms in that vicinity, had been vacated by the owner owing to the scare which Linchwe's Kaffirs had created and was now quite empty and unprotected. Linchwe's Kaffirs had been armed early in the war by the

¹ The South African name for tangerine.

British military and had in due course murdered a number of men and women (including the Volksraad member [Jan] Barnard) at Derdepoort.¹ As the Transvaal commandos retired from the western border before the advance of Hunter and Baden-Powell, the Kaffir commandos of Linchwe under command of his brother Ramma kept moving in the same direction on the left flank of the English columns until they occupied Pilansbergen near the western extremity of the Magaliesberg. From here looting and murdering expeditions were being sent in all directions and during our short absence to Zeerust and Lichtenburg several people had been murdered south of Elands River not far from Hore's camp; I suppose the idea of the Kaffirs was to create some diversion in order to ease the tension on their English allies. On 17 August we found that along the road we were going laagers had been drawn in the old Kaffir war fashion into which the women and children of the vicinity had been collected and which were guarded by patrols of the older men. General de la Rey and myself addressed the women in these laagers and urged them to be brave and to bear their burden of suffering nobly with the rest of their people. It was not so much their present lot as the dark forebodings as to the future which saddened us and them—for it was to be anticipated that the protection of their guards would not be proof against an attack by a strong force of Kaffirs. And this the event was very soon to show, for shortly after we had moved away from those parts with the commandos the Kaffirs attacked those laagers, murdered a number of the guards and scattered the laagers far and wide. So ended our first and last attempt at a stationary concentration camp. Thereafter the women and children were reduced to fleeing under the protective wings of the commandos from one part of the country to another—affording cruel sport to the enemy to whom their misfortunes and sufferings became part and parcel of the plan of campaign.

We reached the Commandos of Rustenburg and Wolmaransstad at Brakkloof on 17 August. De la Rey immediately thereafter sent the latter back to their district and moved south with the former in the direction of the town of Rustenburg.

¹ On 25 November 1899.

Rustenburg had been evacuated by Baden-Powell shortly after his failure to co-operate with Carrington in the relief of Hore, and had thereafter been for a short while in possession, first of the Boers under Liebenberg, and then of the British under Kitchener. When we reached Brakkloof it was once more vacant and we were anxious to move to it without delay—were it but only for the purpose of proving that in the kaleidoscopic plans of British occupations we Boers were always there. Rustenburg was thus occupied by us, a civil administration was appointed, extensive use being made of the local jail for the benefit of British sympathizers. Jan Brink, the former landdrost or magistrate of Rustenburg, who from being a sycophantic hanger-on of the President and a bellowing ranter in favour of war before its outbreak had suddenly, with the turn of the tide, developed a bitter hostility to his Government and people, would have graced this receptacle of the bad with peculiar fitness, but he had gone to Pretoria and was destined instead to grace the first Legislative Chamber of Lord Milner¹ with perhaps an even more peculiar appropriateness. I had therefore to content myself with appointing old Koos du Plessis, jailer of Pretoria, as his successor and making him spread terror among the smaller fry of political sinners. A local parson, again, with whom the fear of the military was evidently the beginning of wisdom, had scandalized his flock by refusing to come out of town in order to hold the customary religious services for the commandos, and scandalized us no less by a notice or proclamation which he had placarded all over the town and which the indignant burghers had to swallow when they entered Rustenburg. In this notice the trepidating parson set forth that he had been commissioned by the military authorities to protect the property of the British subjects who had left the town with the military, and that any act of looting would be visited on his devoted head. He therefore adjured all the burghers by the Almighty God not to touch or damage the said property.

¹ In May 1903 the Legislative Council of the Transvaal Colony, which had until then consisted entirely of officials, was reconstructed to include fourteen unofficial nominated members and sixteen officials. Afrikaners who accepted Milner's invitation to join it were Jan C. Brink, A. P. J. Cronjé, J. Z. de Villiers and H. P. F. Janse van Rensburg.

Needless to say, in spite of this provocative notice no damage whatever was done by the Boers and, with the exception of clothes regularly requisitioned from some shops, all private property was left untouched by them. When, however, some time afterwards an English column again entered Rustenburg and was piqued beyond measure by the prim order of the Dopper town, the adjuration of the reverend gentleman proved too much for the very human Tommy; so that, when the column left, every unoccupied house and shop had been completely looted and wrecked.

I must confess that, what with these notices and a marked absence of spirit and tone, the general atmosphere of Rustenburg proved uncongenial to us and as soon as we had put things into order, we moved out to Olifantsnek with the Rustenburg Commando. There we spent a quiet week before the next encounter with the enemy at Slypsteenkopje on 31 August.

On 29 or 30 August de la Rey received information that a column was marching along the Jameson road from Mafeking to Krugersdorp and in the afternoon of the 30th he left Olifantsnek with the Rustenburg Commando and moved south to the Jameson road. The night of 30 August witnessed the worst thunder storm within my experience accompanied by torrents of rain which kept the commando awake the whole night in a soaking wet condition. Early on the morning of the 31st de la Rey occupied a little hill called Slypsteenkopje situated close to the Jameson road and awaited the approach of the enemy—consisting of a force of Colonials and Cape police under the command of Colonel [E. H.] Dalgety. Liebenberg had a few days previously reappeared with his Potchefstroom Commando from the Bushveld whither he had been driven with de Wet. De la Rey now stationed him with the Potchefstroomers further east in the direction of Krugersdorp directly athwart the line of march of the column. The Jameson road runs across a level plateau flanked at some distance by parallel hills (on the northern one by Slypsteenkopje) and these hills converge to a point through which the road passes, and where Liebenberg was told to await their approach. De la Rey's idea was to hold Slypsteenkopje until the column had passed and then to attack them in the rear at the same time that Lieben-

berg was blocking their escape to the east. Dalgety however, as soon as he saw the Boers in Slypsteenkopje, turned to his left to attack them and the rest of that day was spent in a stubborn fight between him and de la Rey, in which both sides sustained comparatively heavy losses. At nightfall, however, the Boers were still in possession of the kopje and were making certain aggressive movements which determined Dalgety to move on without further delay and to leave his dead and wounded in the hands of de la Rey. Next morning early de la Rey followed the column. Judge of his surprise and disappointment when he saw Liebenberg give way almost without firing a shot and so allowing Dalgety to escape without further trouble to Krugersdorp. Liebenberg however redeemed his indifferent generalship by a certain humour, which among a humour-loving people like the Boers atones for much. On this occasion he did not wait for a reprimand or worse from de la Rey, but taking the bull by the horns he anticipated de la Rey's action by sending him a despatch full of feigned indignation that de la Rey should have driven the whole undivided force of the enemy on to him instead of keeping them heavily engaged in a rear-guard action. As if he did not know that a very little resistance on his part would have enabled de la Rey to come up and attack the enemy in the rear! De la Rey, sore as he felt at the escape of Dalgety, could not help laughing when he received this insolent despatch from his subordinate, and, as he did not see him again for a long time, the matter was allowed to drop.

Previous to this action we had sent reports from Rustenburg or rather from Boshhoek, describing the entire situation in the Western Transvaal and the remarkable success which had attended the return of the commandos to the West. Hard pressed against the mountain barriers of the far east as the Government and Commandant-General were by the main British armies under Roberts and General Sir Redvers Buller, and dispirited as the burghers of the Eastern Transvaal were by the continual success which was attending the British operations, it came to them as a pleasant surprise to hear that the Western Transvaal was clear of the enemy and that de la Rey's commandos were keener than ever to continue the war with unabated vigour. Apart from de la Rey's success in the West the situation in the Transvaal was black indeed; but his

success just gave to the dark cloud that silver lining to which a young and sane people like the Boers are extremely sensitive. And thus de la Rey's work in the West—as so often in the subsequent course of the war—was to give fresh hope and spirit to the entire Boer resistance in both Republics. Our work in the West had also proved that the fighting power and organizing instincts of the Boers were in no way diminished by their being cut off from their Government and that a civil government was really not necessary under the new circumstances for the prosecution of the war. It had been a fixed article of faith among the leaders that the disappearance of President Kruger would have a disastrous effect on the continuance of the Boer resistance; but our work in the West far away from all communication with the Government had effectually disproved that; and had induced the leaders in the east to come to the conclusion that it was better not to carry the aged President about with the commandos but to send him to Europe where his presence might be more useful to our cause and less embarrassing to the officers—which was accordingly done.

VI. THE MAGALIESBERG CAMPAIGN SEPTEMBER 1900

The end of August had seen practically the whole Western Transvaal cleared of the enemy and reoccupied by the Boers, and from that date onwards commenced the struggle for the mastery of this large territory between the contending forces. The Boer forces had, as I have pointed out, been divided into armies of larger or smaller size and operating mostly in separate parts of the country—though all remained under the ultimate control of de la Rey. De la Rey kept the Rustenburg and Krugersdorp Commandos under his immediate supervision, and operated in the two districts bearing those names. To Lemmer he entrusted the Marico and Lichtenburg Commandos in the west; in the south-west Commandant de Beer operated in the Bloemhof district; east of him again Commandant Potgieter commanded in the Wolmaransstad district; while further east, and linking on to de la Rey, Liebenberg was operating with the Potchefstroom Commando.

To a large extent each of these commands really had a separate history of fighting till the winter of 1901, and the story of the war in the Western Transvaal would require a separate notice of the work of each of these forces. As this is however not a history of the war, I shall here recount only the operations of the most important commandos, which did the most effective work, and with which I was personally associated; and shall refer to the work of the other forces in less minute detail. In other words, I shall deal more particularly with the Magaliesberg campaign which lasted till the end of 1900, and after that with the Potchefstroom campaign which lasted from January 1901 till the winter of 1901.

In describing the battle of Donkerhoek I referred to the wide valley to the north of the Magaliesberg in which the British army operated. This valley lies between the Magaliesberg on the north and the parallel range of hills on the south near which Pretoria is situated and which, in its westward extension, becomes more prominent and defined as the Witwatersberg and remains the southern boundary of the beautiful and fertile Magaliesberg valley or Moot as it is locally called. With beautiful soil, situated just below the high veld and watered by the Magalies River which, like Alph the sacred river of poetry,¹ gushes a complete river out of the dolomite rock formation, the Moot is one of the best cultivated parts of the whole Transvaal, and was at the time when it became the great theatre of the war in the west a picture of rural felicity and prosperity such as could probably not be seen anywhere else in the Republics. The thickly dotted farms along the valley made it really a chain of agricultural settlements and villages, and its large population gave to our Natal army one of its largest and certainly its most famous commando.

Beautiful and unspoilt as this smiling valley looked when the war-clouds burst over it in September 1900, its simple people had already suffered profoundly in the great struggle—more so indeed than any other part of the Transvaal population. I remember at this time when I first went through it I could with difficulty find a house that had not lost a member

¹ Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man . . .
S. T. Coleridge, 'Kubla Khan'.

in the Natal campaign; almost every home had sent its quota of sacrifice in the shape of a dear father or son to the far-off green hills of Natal; every home contained bleeding hearts for the loved ones who had left in September 1899¹ for the front with smiling faces never to be seen again. But a still darker fate was in store for these parts in the coming months, when the common ruin was to overtake the happy peaceful homesteads no less than the sorrowing inhabitants, when the smoke of burning farms was to rise from every part of the valley, when fresh tolls of blood were to be exacted from its brave commando, and when even the women and children would have to bid a long sad farewell to their ruined homes, and in the end contribute a larger tale of heroic dead than even the men in the field to the cause for which all suffered.

A student of history cannot but be struck by the remarkable parallel between the Magaliesberg valley in this war and the Shenandoah valley in the American Civil War. The Moot is the Shenandoah valley of the Transvaal, and de la Rey is its Stonewall Jackson.² From the beginning of September 1900 till the end of that year a furious and uninterrupted contest was waged between de la Rey and various English commanders for the possession of this most fertile valley, and the contest ended only when the complete devastation of the valley had rendered it useless as a prize to either party. Let me turn now to the narrative of events.

For about a week after the encounter with Dalgety at Slyphsteenkopje we rested in the neighbourhood of Olifantsnek waiting for the next move of the enemy. Then the report arrived that a large British force had entered the Moot valley from Krugersdorp and had camped at Scheerpoort at the foot of the Witwatersberg, some 24 miles away from where we were. This was a column under the command of General Clements, then commanding the Krugersdorp District. Collecting about 800 men from the Rustenburg and Krugersdorp Commandos, de la Rey moved west in order if possible to attack the camp at Scheerpoort before his vicinity should

¹ The Boer mobilization began on 27 September 1899.

² General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson undertook a campaign in the Shenandoah Valley during the American Civil War. He was almost trapped in it, but escaped. The valley was completely devastated by the Union forces.

be noted. It was the first time I saw the valley with its spacious wheat and oat fields, its noble gardens yellow with oranges and naartjes, its huge herds of fat cattle grazing over the swelling green *bults* or uplands and its many homesteads nestling cosily among the hillocks by the side of rivulets flowing from the parallel ridges of mountains. The whole formed a picture of delight, and combined with the exhilarating effect of the ride and the subdued excitement of going to meet the enemy to produce an electric effect on even the most phlegmatic of us. And there were the women at the various farms handing coffee to the men, and the little children staring with wide-open eyes and with no little pride at such a number of horses and men as they had never yet seen together, and at the terrible looking artillery with the artillerists in their uniform! We went that afternoon as far as Nooitgedacht, where, just three months later, Clements was to lose everything but honour, and, halting the commando there, de la Rey took some of us forward with him in order to reconnoitre Clements's camp some six miles away. It soon became but too clear that the English force was far in excess of ours and that it was pitched in the open valley at such distance from the Witwatersberg as to make an attack on it a most hazardous undertaking. If it had been closer to the mountain the latter could have been taken by storm at early dawn and the position of the camp could thus be rendered untenable and in the retreat from it the enemy could be charged with great effect. This was now, however, out of the question, and all we could do was to lie in wait for Clements in the hope that he would make some movement in our direction and then to attack him or harass his movements until suitable fighting ground was reached. It must be borne in mind that de la Rey's little army, especially the Rustenburg part of it, was as yet very far from being that consummate fighting machine which in due course it was to become, and it was part of de la Rey's plan to give it plenty of work and plenty of opportunity to improve itself by constant practice. On this principle, and largely also because of his indomitable nature, which never would leave the enemy alone even where he could not be effectively dealt with, de la Rey kept his men continually busy and polished them by constant use into that splendid body of men to whom in the later stages of the war

it was almost impossible to set too hard a task either of physical endurance or heroic attack.

The idea of an attack having been abandoned, we camped that night below Nooitgedacht at the bottom of the valley, where our presence would not be easily observed, and next day moved down the valley so as to get nearer to the camp. To our surprise we soon found that the enemy was moving in the opposite direction and by breakfast time the advanced skirmishers met at the farm of old Frederik Wolmarans, late Chairman of the first Volksraad, who, notwithstanding his 70 years of age, remained on commando till the end of the war. The spirit of the father was reflected in his family and especially a daughter of about eighteen, whose quiet strength of mind in the excitement of the enemy's approach that morning greatly struck me. Half an hour later the farm was in possession of the enemy and the fine old homestead with all its contents was disappearing in columns of fire and smoke. The idea no doubt was to strike terror into the hearts of all the spectators. But the heroic pride of this girl rose with the tide of their misfortunes and, as the flames were rising over all the cherished household gods, she called on her mother to join her in singing one of the exultant psalms of praise to the discordant accompaniment of the roaring fire, the crack of rifles and the boom of artillery. This noble girl, whose passionate love of country had consumed in her all alien elements and weaknesses, was a fine type of those thousands of heroines who emerged from this war to become the mothers of that purer and stronger manhood which (one fondly hopes) will cover the wide veld in the coming generations, when the horrors and sufferings of the war shall have become only a lofty and inspiring tradition of devotion and self-sacrifice to the highest.

It soon became clear that Clements was bent not so much on fighting de la Rey as on destroying the Moot, and it therefore became necessary for us to make a stand and prevent his movement further up the valley. It was a sad sight for these burghers to see their properties and homes—the work of a lifetime—consigned to the flames and consumed in a few minutes. They were all anxious to fight and if possible to turn back the ruthless invader. A fairly suitable place for such a stand was found in the broken ground where we had camped

the previous night and where the paucity of our numbers could be concealed behind the low kopjes which stretched athwart the valley. Here the fighting started in the early afternoon and continued desultorily till the night. We rested in our positions that night and resumed the fight next morning. The work of destruction in the valley in front of us was ever assuming more gigantic proportions. The huge herds of draught cattle used for the convoys were driven up and down the ripening crops in the fields in order to tread them down effectively. Houses, sheds, and whatever else could with the use of paraffin be induced to burn, were set on fire, and heavy clouds of smoke hung like a death-pall over the smiling valley of yesterday. And underneath the rifle fire was unintermittent [*sic*] and was punctuated by the far resounding reverberations of the artillery and especially of Clements's 4.7 naval gun. It was indeed an awful sight, and it grieved us deeply that we were too weak to hurl ourselves forward and destroy the destroyers. Truly we felt that to be weak was to be miserable. There were our women and children to be saved from who knew what danger and insults; there in front of us in the ruthless clutch of the enemy was all that men had held dear and sacrificed themselves for in all ages. I believe if de la Rey had only given the word the whole commando would have rushed forward that day and a fearful slaughter would have ensued,—but with most uncertain result. De la Rey was, however, far too prudent and experienced a commander to abandon himself to such a reckless venture under the passion of the moment, and conserved his strength for the day when greater blows could be struck with less risk. So the fighting was continued with more or less severity for that day, and at night it was de la Rey's intention to avoid the risk of being surrounded by the far larger forces of his antagonist by a retreat to another position some distance to the rear. Before doing so, however, he had a little surprise in store for Clements. Towards sunset Clements had his camp pitched on the slope of a low hill near the foot of the Witwatersberg out of range of de la Rey's guns. De la Rey however had his guns taken from their positions and, unobserved by the enemy, moved to a position whence the English camp could be effectively bombarded. He then waited till dusk when a tremendous rifle fire burst from

our positions and at the same time our guns started a furious cannonade of the camp. In the confusion of this move, which must have been very disconcerting to Clements as its purpose was not clear, Clements abandoned his camp and retired to a better position farther back, and then night settled on the weary armies and the last rifle fire died away in the darkness. Then, tired and hungry, we got on our tired and hungry ponies and retired to the new position for the next struggle.

That position was the so-called Mane Ridge or Maanhaar Rand, a sharp low ridge, affording just sufficient protection to the horses, which extends right across the valley on the farm Zandfontein. It was an ideal position for defence, and if our plan of operations still consisted in the defence to the uttermost of certain selected positions, we could no doubt have kept Clements at bay here for an indefinite time. But, as I have said in a previous chapter, this plan of warfare had been definitely abandoned by the Boers. Not only did we not have sufficient ammunition for such a defence, but it really served no further useful purpose. De la Rey's idea was rather to fight and keep in closest touch with the enemy wherever possible and always to be on the alert and to watch for an opportunity to strike an effective counter-stroke; and often months of more or less severe fighting would pass before the inexperience or the foolhardiness of his opponent would afford him an opportunity for striking such a return blow. He masked his essentially offensive plan in continual retreats until at last his unwary enemy was lulled into a false sense of security and would think he was no longer worth much care or watchfulness; and then he would pull his forces suddenly together at a suitable opportunity and like a tiger make a terrific spring on his enemy. Thus he in turn vanquished Clements, von Donop,¹ Methuen, and indeed almost every one of the numerous officers who from time to time took the field against him. The many retreats and apparently useless fighting and loss which intervened between his victories did not dishearten his officers or men, for they all knew his purpose, and had implicit faith in his unerring judgment as to when the right moment had come to strike the decisive blow. I very seldom saw de la Rey's men

¹ Colonel S. von Donop was in command of the Australian Bushmen Regiment in November 1900.

discouraged or low-spirited in a retreat; the retreats were always preceded by more or less stubborn fighting which had served the double purpose of whetting the men's appetite for grappling with the enemy and of giving the Boer officers an idea of the strength of the enemy and ability of his officers; while at the same time the retreating men knew that this movement was part of the game. And this exhilaration and good spirits which the men showed in a retreat gave rise to a comical expression which they invented for the occasion [and] which was afterwards in general use in the Republics: they called it a 'vlucht volmoed' or a 'flight in full courage'. No doubt there was always a certain danger in these strategic movements to the rear which they essentially were; men came honestly to believe the cowardly cant that 'he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day'. But this natural tendency to demoralization and disinclination to stand up to the enemy to the uttermost was counteracted in the present case by the profound faith which de la Rey's men had in his invincible courage and unerring eye for the right opportunity to strike the return blow. I have seen his army apparently in a wild flight, a general *sauve qui peut* one day, which must have rejoiced the hearts of his enemies; only to be followed next day, however, by a most determined and heroic onslaught by the same men. No wonder such tactics proved very bewildering and disconcerting to the enemy who has not yet swallowed his formulas and flights and expects his opponent to fight according to the dull mechanic routine of the text-books. But it must at the same time be admitted that such tactics are essentially dangerous and are a success only in the hands of the real master of the game who has perfect confidence in himself and in whom his men likewise have perfect confidence.

The fight which followed a couple of days afterwards along the Maanhaar Rand was unusually severe and resulted in considerable casualties, especially to the enemy. From the morning early till nightfall the enemy bombarded our position from point to point and followed up the artillery fire with daring infantry rushes so that over most of the fighting-ground the forces were quite close together. There was no scope for strategy having movement and Clements was bound to take our position by frontal attack or to fail altogether; and he did

his best during the day to storm now one and then another point in the five or six miles' front of our forces. Early in the afternoon a most painful incident happened at the scene of the hottest fighting near the bottom of the valley. The troops were lying in the long grass only a hundred yards in front of us and, as the fighting at this close range was severe, large numbers of the enemy in the grass were wounded and could not move themselves. The enemy's heavy artillery fire here set the grass on fire close to our position and, as a strong wind was blowing in the direction of the enemy, the fire almost immediately spread to the wounded in the grass, most of whom perished in this awful way. As the fighting was going on uninterruptedly all the time we could do nothing to save these wretched people, though one felt a deep pang that brave men should come to such a painful end.

It was clear that this fight would give no opportunity for a counter-movement on our part, and as the position had no further value for us, we retired at night and allowed the enemy to occupy it without opposition next day. The destruction still went on apace but, however painful and exasperating it was to behold this systematic devastation of the country from day to day, it was not in our power to stop it and so we accepted the inevitable with our usual stolid fortitude. We retired further east past Wagenpadspruit to the kopjes above Robinson's Mill, where the broken ground gave some chance of a successful operation against Clements. Chief Commandant [Lucas P.] Steenkamp had also arrived at Olifantsnek on his return journey with the bulk of de Wet's commandos who had in the previous month retired north of Magaliesberg before Kitchener's pursuing columns. De la Rey had these veterans brought into the positions where he intended to have his next fight with the enemy and, what with this addition to his forces, the balance of numbers was probably turned in our favour, and we could look forward with more cheerfulness to the next encounter. Clements had, however, most probably been informed of the large reinforcements which we had received and forbore to move further east beyond Wagenpadspruit and retired from there to his base at Krugersdorp.

Before doing so however he sent de la Rey a despatch in which he suavely invited him to an interview for the purpose

of discussing the state of the country! Considering the comparative stakes that de la Rey and Clements had in the country and the remarkable contribution of pillage and destruction which Clements was making to the state of the country, this invitation seemed to be adding insult to injury and de la Rey curtly answered that he saw no good in discussing the position with Clements. What seemed even more to annoy de la Rey at this time was a number of notices and proclamations scattered by Clements's column along their line of march in the Moot valley, in which the families of prominent officers and men in the commandos were warned that if these officers and men did not surrender within a definite time their houses and belongings would be mercilessly burnt down and destroyed. These documents were signed by officers of Clements's staff or under his command. Later on we became hardened to such threats (which were in all cases duly carried into execution) but at this date they were quite novel to us. Such barbarous and revolting methods of striking at an honourable enemy stirred feelings of the deepest reprobation and abhorrence and certainly made de la Rey more anxious to meet the officer responsible on the field of battle than in a friendly interview. I do not wish to make any personal reflection on General Clements whom we Boers always found a thoroughly able, brave and honourable enemy; but there was a limit to good temper considering the methods he was following in the prosecution of the war. Later on we found that his methods were rather more humane than those of a number of his distinguished colleagues with whom it was our misfortune to have to do.

The return of Clements to Krugersdorp was followed by a lull in the operations which lasted for several weeks. General de la Rey made use of the opportunity to go west in order to see how General Lemmer was getting on on the western border. The Krugersdorp Commando received a short holiday in order to revisit their ruined homes in the Moot and to help their wives and families to improvise new shelters against the summer storms which were now setting in. The Boer is at his best and is really a sort of lightning artist at this kind of thing and I was much astonished a few weeks later when I returned to the Moot to see what substantial shelters for the families had been made with the scanty material at their disposal. And

withal they managed to keep up remarkably good spirits in spite of their circumstances. They were oppressed but not depressed. Indeed the latent fund of humour, which is so marked a characteristic of the Boer, stood them in good stead in these most trying times. They were quick to see the ludicrous side of things, and it was often very ludicrous and even amusing to see to what shifts a well-to-do family was reduced in order to keep itself going. But they had the proud consciousness of suffering for what to them was the noblest and greatest of causes and from the bottom of their hearts they could say quite cheerfully (as I so often heard them say) that they would rather choose to suffer with good people than have care and plenty amongst the hands-uppers with the enemy.

The Rustenburgers likewise received a short furlough in order to enable them to visit and attend to their farms, but all knew that they were to be ready at a moment's notice to rejoin their commando as soon as the enemy stirred from his bases. It was possible practically in 24 hours' time to collect the whole commando at a fairly central point in the district and we knew that they were all eager to do their duty and that a notice from their officers would find very few malingerers.

I myself pitched my little camp on the farm Olifantspoort (close to the nek) belonging to the unhappy Retief family where I spent a couple of weeks of quiet rest which, after the continuous physical exertions since I had left Pretoria in June proved most pleasant and useful. The farm is situated on the Hex River in a bend of the Magaliesberg and is certainly one of the most picturesquely situated and beautiful in South Africa. It is also full of interest from the ancient copper workings found on it and to one special part of it a tragic pathos attaches. An offshoot of the Magaliesberg forms with the main mountain a large and wide ravine with, however, an entrance which is only some six to twelve yards wide. In the war of extermination which Moselekatze was waging against the Magatese tribe before the advent of the Boer voortrekkers, almost the whole tribe on occasion had to flee by this narrow entrance into this ravine in the hope of getting over the main mountains by force of climbing. They little knew that the Zulu hordes had already taken possession of the mountain all round the walls of the ravine; and when the Zulu army

appeared at the entrance the fate of the Magatese nation was sealed. They were butchered in that awful slaughter pen to a man; neither man, woman nor child is said to have escaped, and even today the precipitous slopes of the mountain bear witness in the white skulls and skeletons all round to the terrible massacre which there annihilated a whole nation. Truly the spirit that broods over Magaliesberg is one of profound pathos and melancholy. And reading there within its cool spacious shadows in those weeks of grateful rest Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*—which my thoughtful wife had put among the things I took with me from Pretoria—with its antique melancholy and vain struggle with sphinx problems that vex and baffle us to this day, I had borne in upon me as never before that haunting melancholy of nature, that subtle appeal to be at rest and cease from the futility of striving. And yet, even there in that languorous repose of melancholy, one heard the Voices calling—the Voices which had called mankind to its task of endless endeavour, and which even now were calling to the Boer people to fling itself in proud defiance against the majestic march of the British Empire. Had we to following the brooding appeal of Nature to rest, or the still small voice of conscience calling to action? Our free choice was circumscribed by the necessity of our character, and for better for worse we could but choose as God had made our ancestors choose and as our choice was now being fashioned for us in that dark, mysterious, subconscious, labyrinthine background of our nature vulgarly called Fate.

VII. THE MAGALIESBERG CAMPAIGN OCTOBER 1900

Towards the end of September our repose was suddenly disturbed by the report that the enemy was coming, and the disturbance was all the more unpleasant to me as de la Rey was still away on the western border and in his absence the direction of affairs would naturally devolve on me. What complicated the situation was that, warned by his experience last time, Clements was now not moving alone, but, simultaneously with his departure from Krugersdorp, another

strong column (under Broadwood ?)¹ moved from a new base at Rietfontein where the Crocodile River pierces the Magaliesberg, and made for Rustenburg north of Magaliesberg along the Pretoria–Rustenburg road, while Clements marched to the south of it. The effect of such a combined movement was practically to prevent all serious fighting south of Magaliesberg. For the Boers fighting with Clements on the Krugersdorp road might find that Olifantsnek had been crossed by the enemy in their rear and would thus find themselves between two fires in a place from which the nature of the ground would make escape in many ways difficult and dangerous. It thus became necessary to engage in no serious fighting until Olifantsnek was reached; beyond that point the Boers could retreat freely by Buffelshoek along the southern slopes of the mountain in a westerly direction. To add to my perplexities Clements did not descend into the eastern part of the Moot as he had done on his last march, but, avoiding the Moot, kept to the Krugersdorp–Rustenburg road, and so came to intervene between me and the Krugersdorp Commando in the Moot before it was possible to concentrate them in the direction of Olifantsnek. I had no fear for the brave Krugersdorpers thus cut off, for in Magaliesberg, Witwatersberg and Schurweberg (in the direction of Pretoria) they could elude the cleverest pursuer. But I was now left with only about 600 men of the Rustenburg Commando and with this force to oppose the advance of two columns, either of which far outnumbered ours, was simply out of the question. However, something had to be done; and I therefore divided the Rustenburgers into two portions and stationed the one under Commandant Steenkamp in the hills above Robinson's Mill, and sent the other under Commandant Rieckert² over Olifantsnek in order to intercept the enemy at night at a very favourable place along the Pretoria road. I myself remained at Olifantsnek in order to join whichever force would be first engaged with the enemy. For some reason or other Clements did not advance the following day and early in the morning I received news from Com-

¹ Brigadier-General R. G. Broadwood.

² P. J. Rieckert, Field-Cornet of Elandsrivier in the Rustenburg District, 1880–92; then Commandant of the south-western Border Police and Special Justice of the Peace.

mandant Steenkamp that no immediate fighting need be expected in his part of the country. From Rieckert I received no news although it was clear from the artillery fire that he had been engaged with the enemy. I therefore rode with my staff in his direction, leaving Field-Cornet [B. I. J.] van Heerden with a strong escort in the nek. I had not gone more than three miles from the nek when, to my great astonishment, we saw a troop of about a hundred men ride some 200 yards from us in the direction of Rustenburg. Luckily for us these troopers, who were the advanced portion of the enemy, had done no proper scouting and were not keeping their eyes open, while the presence of mimosa thorn bushes made it possible for us soon to minimize the risk of being seen. I saw then that my plan, as far as Rieckert's force was concerned, had miscarried and that he had been driven off probably in a northerly direction, towards the Zwartkoppen, leaving the route to Olifantsnek quite clear for the enemy. After carefully scrutinizing the enemy's force and movements, we made away from our dangerous position without being observed by the enemy who could, if they had noticed us, have given us at least a very uncomfortable half-hour before we could have reached Olifantsnek again.

It appeared subsequently that Rieckert, on arriving the previous night at the place where I had instructed him to attack the enemy on the march, found that he was too late and that the enemy was waiting for him in this same place, and that the best he could do under the circumstances was to hurry off to Zwartkoppen as fast as his horses could carry his force. Many amusing yarns of his encounter with the enemy enlivened the commandos later on. I ought here to state that the men I had sent with him the previous night were the Hex River field-cornetcy—a body of men who, notwithstanding a small sprinkling of really good fighters, had a sinister reputation for quarrelsomeness, indiscipline and a constitutional aversion to face the enemy. Their shyness and avoidance of the enemy earned for them the contemptuous soubriquet of *kaboutermannetjes*,¹ as the Boers call the little men of the forest who, most primitive of all races of men, are found in the back parts of the Rustenburg district and who shun and elude

¹ elves or gnomes (Dutch).

all other races with elfish cleverness. Those men had up to this date seen no serious fighting at all and, on the furthest approach of danger, they would hurry off to the forests, from which they would re-emerge after all danger had passed. In consequence they also received the name of 'bush-lancers', an appellation which they shared with others of a similar retiring disposition over other parts of the Transvaal. Excellent shots and clever hunters, and braving all dangers as such, they refused to become the hunted in turn and to be targets for the enemy. They were also curiously wanting in that instinct of cohesion and discipline which so markedly distinguishes the Boers as a people. No officer could weld them into a commando and keep them together for any length of time and in consequence they had had an unbroken record of changing officers from the beginning of the war. I believe that up to this time they had had no less than twenty-eight field-cornets or acting field-cornets, either together or in succession from the commencement of the war.

With such refractory material I sent Rieckert to face the enemy, and no wonder that he did not face the enemy at all. The old hero would afterwards laugh until the tears came into his eyes as he told how the following day they came to him in the Zwartkoppes, holding their heads in their hands and complaining of the splitting headaches which the terrible shells had given them that eventful morning. As a matter of fact, Rieckert said, the enemy had fired only six shots and the shells had fallen very far from these elusive warriors! They expressed their child-like astonishment to him how men could ever be made to stand such an ear-splitting bombardment. They evidently mistook the terror to their nerves for an undue disturbance of their sensory drums.

Subsequently I induced General de la Rey to appoint Rieckert permanently as commandant over this refractory field-cornetcy in the hope that by some means or other he would lick them into shape; but after some heroic efforts the old warrior gave up the job and would thereafter have nothing more to do with the *kaboutermannetjes*; and I believe that to the end of the war they remained comparatively useless to us. It is a curious and instructive phenomenon that most of the National Scouts that came from the Rustenburg district hailed

from among these *kaboutermannetjes*, though I doubt whether the English ever found them less useless war-material than we had found them to be.

Thus Rustenburg town once more fell into the hands of the enemy, and from this time onward it remained permanently in the occupation of the enemy. That was less of a loss to us than it was a shock to the authority of Landdrost Koos du Plessis, who now found himself deprived of the possession of a jail for the detention of the enemies of the Republic towards whom he felt an almost biblical feeling of personal animosity. He now pitched his magisterial camp in the sheltering shadows of the commandos, or rather laagers, where I was sorry to find on my periodical visits to him that his temper was getting more ferocious as his little stock of whisky became less; no wonder therefore that my visits also became less frequent.

As I found myself now between the two forces of the enemy and with only a portion of the Rustenburg Commando, and as I feared that it was the intention of the enemy to move westward from Rustenburg and so ravage the Zwartruggens in the same ruthless fashion as he had ravaged the Moot, I decided to move westward to the Selous River so as to be athwart the enemy's path should he advance either by Magatosnek or Boschhoeknek. The partial destruction of the Moot had made the scarcely less valuable Zwartruggens ward simply indispensable to us. It was, and continued for another year to be, our granary and principal source of supply both for man and beast; and if it was the intention of the enemy to ravage it, it was necessary for us to keep the area of destruction within the narrowest limits by preventing the enemy from detaching foraging or house-burning parties from his main column. For this work the force with me was ample. I accordingly moved with the burghers under Commandant Steenkamp who comprised the best part of the Rustenburg Commando, to Selous River from where we kept a sharp look-out in all directions. Here we were in due course joined by de la Rey, who approved of the steps I had taken during the anxious period of his absence. Rieckert also in due course rejoined us with the small fighting portion of his forces, and de la Rey then retired towards Coster River where there was better grazing for our horses and as good opportunity for keeping an eye on the

enemy. With the Krugersdorp Commando we remained in constant communication and we were pleased to hear that they were safe and doing good work in preventing the enemy from sending destroying parties into the Moot. The difficulty of supplies compelled us to divide the commando and station portions at various convenient points within easy reach of each other, while de la Rey and myself fixed our camp behind the burgher camps at Blinkwater, from which I subsequently moved to Woodstock on the Zeerust road and a little later to Paul Grobler's farm Cyferfontein adjoining to Woodstock; here de la Rey eventually joined me. This was a delightful camping-ground: our tents were hidden by the sweet-smelling mimosa trees now in full blossom, the grass was excellent for the animals, and all around lay a district rich in forage for the horses and oranges and naartjes for the men.

While I was camping at Cyferfontein the enemy passed out from Rustenburg in two powerful columns; one under General [A. H. F.] Paget emerged from Magatosnek and thence turned south-west to Ratsegaisstad overlooking the fertile Coster River valley and from there made predatory and destructive excursions into the valley below. The other under Lord Methuen passed through Boschhoeknek and moved westward along the northern or bushveld road to Zeerust. We did our best with our handful of men to cope with both columns but beyond stopping their marauding parties we did not find much opportunity of doing them harm; Paget's column did not press further west and returned to Rustenburg; but Methuen pushed forward along his dangerous road until he had passed Zoelani and Elands River. Here the road passes through dense bush and on the south is flanked by steep hills while on the north stretches the never-ending prospect of the bushveld. Into these hills de la Rey took the Rustenburgers and waited hawk-like for a suitable opportunity to swoop down on his prey. From Lindley's Poort I myself went back with a small scouting party and some heliographists in order to keep in touch with the Krugersdorp Commando and the movements of the enemy at Rustenburg. I returned to Cyferfontein, from where a helio communication was established with a post on Magaliesberg to which reports from that part of the country were brought by a body of scouts operating on and in the vicinity of the mountain.

After I had left de la Rey, he found an opportunity to attack Methuen while the latter, now aware of the danger of his position, was trying to move back to Rustenburg. The attack, while it probably did not do any great damage, at any rate decided Lord Methuen to move back with all possible speed, and a few days afterwards de la Rey was back at Cyferfontein.

Just at this time Lieutenant Thuynsma, of our artillery, who had been sent from Boschhoek in August with reports to the Government and with instructions to bring ammunition for us from the east, returned and made his appearance at Cyferfontein. He brought the latest news, which included the most painful item that my only child, a little boy of eighteen months, had died in Pretoria in August (14). He further reported that President Steyn with the Free State Government and a large Transvaal escort was on his way to us and would in the ordinary course reach us in a few days. We at once made arrangements for a suitable reception to our gallant and august allies, and when they arrived established them in the Coster River valley which was still a land flowing with milk and honey in spite of Paget's attempts at devastation. General Botha had unexpectedly turned up with President Steyn, having at the last moment decided that it was necessary that we should all discuss, and if possible come to some understanding, as to the general policy of our future plan of campaign. After they had spent some days in the valley our friends expressed the desire to come to my camp at Cyferfontein, which was not only very conveniently situated in a country full of forage and fruit, but also commanded a view of a tremendous sweep of country and was in helio communication with the parts from which danger might be expected. They therefore spent a couple of days at my little camp—days which to me at any rate will always remain an unforgettable memory of the war. Every morning the wagons would turn up laden with the most delicious oranges and naartjes with which the Free Staters regaled themselves to their hearts' content. Before breakfast the President, my old friend Japie [J. A. J.] de Villiers, the State Attorney, and myself would go for a bathe in a large pool of water some distance from our camp, and after breakfast we discussed the situation and future plans.

The enemy of course knew that the little camp contained the heart and brain of the Boer resistance and spies were plentifully about, and columns were rapidly converging around us from every part of the country to capture the congregated Boer leaders. But we could afford to laugh at all this bustle and excitement, for not only was our own scouting over a very large area most ceaseless and vigilant, but we were by a happy accident in possession of every bit of information that the British officers had about us, and of every detail of their elaborate schemes for our capture. President Steyn had on his staff the Postmaster-General of the Free State, Mr John Acton,¹ whose English name the Boers gave the more familiar form of Jan Eksteen, who was happily provided with an excellent vibrator. The Rustenburg-Zeerust telegraph line passed within a 100 yards of my camp, and less than a mile off at Woodstock was the old Republican telegraph office. The wire had indeed been cut at Magatosnek but that did not prevent the vibrator from putting us in possession of all the tangle of news and instructions with which Lord Roberts and his staff inundated the officer commanding at Rustenburg. Night and day Acton sat at the little office with the tell-tale little instrument to his ears. We knew what Boers and what Kaffirs appeared nightly at the Rustenburg office to give treasonable information about us; we knew what columns were converging on us and their appointed places in the mechanical arrangement of Lord Kitchener, and we knew the exact moment when it would be necessary for our little band to scatter and to avoid the meshes of the net which was being so laboriously and so uselessly drawn in our sight. We were very anxious that de Wet should be present at our deliberations and an express despatch was sent him in the Potchefstroom district where he then was, but it was not possible for him to attend before our dispersal should be necessary and thus, to our great regret, the conclusions we came to had not the benefit of his wise counsel. How far they met with his personal approval when communicated to him by President Steyn it is not possible for me to say.

¹ This was probably Richard Victor Acton, who was postmaster and telegraphist at Winburg, Orange Free State, when the Anglo-Boer War began, and later Mayor of that town. The Postmaster-General was D. G. A. Falck.

In giving a short résumé of the substance of our conversations and of our plans for the continuation of the war, it will be necessary to digress somewhat and to hark back to our original views as to the origin of the war and the best means of bringing it to a successful issue for us. It was clear to the Boers, or at least to such among them as had seriously thought over the matter, that the war, in order to be fought out to a successful issue, had to be carried on in the British Colonies. Such offensive strategy, combined with defensive tactics in the magnificent fighting areas of the Colonies, would give the Boers the advantage which the offensive always gives; would in the vast mountain ranges of the Colonies minimize the effects of the great preponderance of mere numbers which the British Empire could ultimately bring to bear on the struggle; and, perhaps most important of all, would preserve to the Republicans in their own territories one intact base. Once the war was planted in the heart of the Republics, the cohesion of the Boer forces would naturally be dissolved and guerilla warfare with its uncertain prospects would become the only alternative. It was with this idea in their heads that the Boers, once they saw that war had become inevitable, took the initiative and invaded the British Colonies; and it was solely the blindness and the blundering of the men who led them in the field that prevented them from establishing a firm grip on the coastal mountains of the Colonies and so achieving important results before the avalanche of the British Empire rolled down on them. But, however dearly bought, the Boers had at last gained their experience, and the officers who led them at the end of 1900 were [of] a very different stamp from those who led them into the war at the end of 1899. Was our original idea wrong, and if not, was it too late even at this eleventh hour to revert to it and to transplant the whole war once more into the British Colonies? On the contrary, our experience through twelve months of warfare had only made it so much the clearer to us that our original idea was right and that the war could only be won in the Colonies. And in the process of that experience factors never dreamt of by us in the original calculation had appeared to strengthen our first impressions. For it was becoming but too clear to all of us that the enemy despaired of crushing the Boers as a fighting force by direct

means, recognized as permissible by the usage of civilized warfare, and that his only hope now was to undermine and exhaust us by means which approved themselves neither to the authorities on war nor to the conscience of mankind. His methods of warfare, which one of his own most distinguished statesmen¹ was soon to characterize as methods of barbarism, were intended to strike at the Boer and undermine his tenacity through the awful privations and worse fate inflicted on his women and children, and to exhaust his means of existence by a relentless devastation of his country unparalleled in modern warfare since the admittedly barbarous destruction of the Palatinate.² Such methods of forcing the issue must, fight we ever so bravely, ultimately paralyse us, not by legitimate warfare, but by actual starvation and the dread prospect of the extinction of our race in the concentration camps. The fight might be prolonged for a longer or shorter time, but apart from an actual *volte face* of the British people or the effects of foreign intervention on which we never seriously counted, such methods were in the end bound to exhaust and break us. Was it not wise and prudent to prevent the further exhaustion and depletion of the Republics by boldly carrying the war into the enemy's own Colonies which he could scarcely venture to lay waste as a warlike measure? In that way we would give the Republics a rest and power to recuperate; we would be living on the enemy on his own ground, which would bring an additional pressure to bear on him; and there was the hope that even yet the Cape Colony could be induced to throw in their lot with the Republics and so transform the war with the Republics into a general war for the independence of South Africa. There was no doubt that our practical evacuation of the Transvaal and Orange Free State would mean the following of almost every British soldier in pursuit and the easing of the terrible pressure and tension on the rural districts of the Republics. It was true that the chances of a successful invasion of the Colonies after twelve months of warfare and especially after the mistakes we had made on our first blundering invasion were now much diminished; but even yet that seemed the best way of prosecuting the war to a successful

¹ Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

² During the Thirty Years War in Germany, 1618-48.

issue, and in any case that course was preferable to being slowly but surely bled to death in the Republics. We therefore decided, on a consideration of the pros and cons, that the commandos had again to invade the Colonies, and this time with a will and determination which should if possible carry everything before it. The blunders of the past had to be retrieved and the war conducted, even at this late stage, along the lines which had originally approved themselves to us, but from which we had been carried by our inexperience and inefficiency and an insufficient realization of the dreadful realities of the situation.

But before doing so, a staggering blow had to be struck at the root of the evil; and this brings me to consider—so far as that is necessary for the understanding of what follows—the Boer view of the origin of the war. It was the rooted conviction of the Boers generally, a conviction which was I believe shared by their responsible leaders, that the war was at bottom a mine-owners' war, that it had its origin in the Jameson Raid—in the firm resolve of the mine-owners to get the political control of the Transvaal into their hands by fair means or foul, to shape the legislation and administration of the country along lines dictated by their economic interests, and to destroy the Boer Government which had stupidly proved obdurate to their threats no less than to their seductions. It was with the mine-owners not a desire to bring the Republic under the British flag; as was conclusively proved by the fact that the Rand financiers had decided in 1895 to have a Republic of their own in the Transvaal and not to submit to Rhodes's desire to hoist the British flag in the country. There is, I believe, still extant the printed proclamation by which the great *soi disant* loyalists who now vow that they will never live or die under any other but the dear old flag, proclaimed their own Republic and appointed themselves to the great executive offices. Neither in 1895 nor in 1899 was it a question of the British flag. As the Boers read the situation the one issue was whether the mine-owners had to govern the Transvaal in their own interest; the British flag was a minor phase of that fundamental issue. Such was the view of men who knew their South Africa. But in 1895 there was a Colonial Secretary who did not know his South Africa, but who had an ambition of his own to achieve. His object was not the mine-owners' object, as

probably both parties knew. But each meant to use the other for the attainment of his own ends. It was a marriage of convenience; and of that unholy union and labour of the mountains the Jameson Raid was the still-born issue. The meanness of the result must not however blind us to its tremendous importance. The Jameson Raid was the real declaration of war in the great Anglo-Boer conflict—which dates from 31 December 1895¹ and not 11 October 1899. And that is so in spite of the four years of truce which followed, in which on the one hand the allied aggressors consolidated their alliance, found fresh tools for the execution of their South African and Transvaal policy and laid fresh schemes and beat the deafening tom-toms of Uitlander agitation, while the defenders on the other hand silently and grimly prepared for the inevitable. It is true that, once the war had actually begun, the mine-owners receded into the background, and the direction of events passed out of their hands. Still, even then they were wielding an enormous power through the backstairs influences at their command which ascended no one knew how high, and more especially through their command of the sinews of war. The cost of the war had risen far beyond the wildest anticipations and British credit had fallen proportionately. The financial pressure was indeed the severest strain of all on the British people, and if we could detach the financial allies from the combination which was ruining us and could make it clear to them that it was no longer worth their while to supply the sinews of war to an undertaking which simply meant loss and ruin to them, then peace might be secured on terms fairly favourable to us. And how could that be better done than by striking terror and despair into their caitiff hearts by a complete destruction of all the mines along the Witwatersrand and following up such a thunderstroke by transplanting the whole war once more into the British Colonies? Such a *coup* would convince these people, who cared nothing for English prestige, that, whatever the ultimate issue, the continuation of the war simply meant complete ruin to their interests; and once this conviction had sunk into their selfish minds, they would bring all their vast pressure to bear in favour of a conclusion of

¹ The Jameson Raiders crossed the Transvaal border in the early morning of 30 December 1895.

hostilities. And if, while we had paralysed or terrorized into our favour this *causa causans* of our calamities, we also had some success in the Colonies and could send into the heart of the prudent British public the sinking fear of losing all South Africa, who knew but that we might even at this late stage snatch victory from defeat and secure an honourable and lasting peace? The destruction of the mines would no doubt be an extreme measure, but it was not more so than the danger of our position justified us in resorting to. It would entail loss and suffering on thousands of innocent people, but at any rate that suffering would not be one-tenth of what the policy of farm-burning and women-driving was inflicting on the Boer people. Both ethically and legally there was indeed far more to be urged in favour of the destruction of the mines—not as a means of revenge but as a necessary measure for securing peace—than was to be said in favour of the burning of farms and consequent sufferings and indignities inflicted on our non-combatant population. It is true that, when the destruction of the mines was first urged on the Boer Government in May 1900, while the Rand was still in our possession, the Government had firmly refused to entertain such an idea, and that when Judge [A. F.] Kock made an attempt to damage some mines General Botha had him promptly arrested, but both the ethics and the policy of the situation had changed completely in the interval. The destruction of the mines in May 1900, while the Boer army was still beating its hopeless retreat, would have seemed an act of mere wanton revenge, in which the Boers themselves could never have been brought to acquiesce. But such a deliberate destruction carried out when the mines were in the safekeeping of the British army and when the wholesale devastation of the rural districts was revolting all feelings of humanity, and followed by a big forward movement into the Colonies, would have been an entirely different affair, and would have had a very different influence on the future of the war. In my mind subsequent reflection has only seemed to strengthen the impression that the plan of campaign settled upon at the Cyferfontein Conference was a sound one and that, if it had been possible to carry it out, the duration and issue of the struggle would have been materially affected.

The conclusion come to was that at some date in January or February 1901 to be later determined on, after the enemy had been duly led into the various outside districts, a Boer force of some 12,000 to 15,000 should be suddenly and unexpectedly concentrated along the whole Rand and all mines and mining property blown up with dynamite and completely destroyed, and from there Botha should proceed to Natal with 5,000 to 6,000 men and de Wet and de la Rey each with 5,000 to the Cape Colony. If Botha found Natal too narrow, he would join us in the Cape Colony through Pondoland and Griqualand East. Considering that the two Republics alone surrendered with 18,000 men in June 1902, there must have been still 30,000 fighting men at the beginning of 1901 so that at least 15,000 men would remain behind in the Republics to carry on not so much the war as rather peaceful pastoral and agricultural pursuits in a sort of armed truce.

Alas, to our bitter disappointment our grandiose plan soon came to take its place in the limbo of might-have-beens, and with that disappeared our last chance of bringing the war to a successful conclusion.

When I reflect what I was a year afterwards enabled to do with my handful of men in the Cape Colony when the situation had changed much for the worse, I have no hesitation in saying that our plans would, if carried, have meant a speedy conclusion of the war or else the total loss of South Africa to the British Empire. But misfortune upset our plans. First de Wet attempted to invade the Cape Colony on his own account in December 1900 and failed; then our scheme was somewhat altered, as I shall show later on; then de Wet made a second attempt in January and February 1901 and failed still more disastrously; then Kitchener and French swept Botha off the Eastern Transvaal in February 1901; so that we in the West were the only parties left in a position to carry out our part of the plan. Finally, at the Waterval Conference of June 1901, we tried, so far as such was still possible under the very much altered conditions, to repair the disaster and revert partially to our plan but things had then gone too far; Botha was beaten back in Zululand and my invasion of the Cape Colony in September 1901 was the only tangible result. It is however instructive from an historical point of view to bear in mind

that, notwithstanding our failures, we did not proceed aimlessly in the prosecution of the war, that we had a great plan before our minds which promised success, and that it was mainly the immense disparity of forces and resources that prevented us from carrying out that plan.

Our deliberations were finished and our vibrator was warning us that the moment for dispersion had arrived. And so, while immense forces were gathering round us like storm clouds from east and west and north and south, we quietly sent General Botha back to Nylstroom under escort of Commandant Rieckert, who led him marvellously and safely at night through the armed hordes of Linchwe, and we sent President Steyn and his party at night to the eastern highveld, where de Wet was waiting to escort them back to their own country. They passed safely through the Transvaal, only, in an unguarded moment, to be engulfed in disaster at Bothaville in the Free State.¹ And meanwhile we were left to wriggle as well as we could out of the meshes of the net in which we had been left behind. But to that I shall come in the next chapter.

VIII. THE MAGALIESBERG CAMPAIGN OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 1900

The departure of President Steyn and General Botha left us in about as tight a corner as could be imagined. The cordon had been drawn round us in Zwartruggens in such a way as apparently to make escape impossible except in one direction, and now it was rapidly drawing in on all sides. From the east several strong columns were coming along the roads from Rustenburg; on the west several others were coming from Zeerust and Mafeking; on the south a number of columns were stationed along the Jameson road to prevent escape in that direction; while on the north Linchwe's armed impis in Pilansberg linked on to a force of the enemy stationed near

¹ Steyn had met Kruger at Waterval-Onder in October 1900. On his return he joined De Wet's forces at Bothaville. Here they were surprised by a British force which captured all their transport, except the cart containing the entire Free State treasury, and took a number of prisoners including J. A. J. de Villiers. Steyn had a narrow escape.

the Elands River. Only one exit was apparently still open, and that was towards the north-west, towards the waterless desert of bushveld that slopes to the Limpopo or Crocodile River. This exit too could and ought to have been effectually blocked. Indeed it was my opinion that with the immense forces that the enemy had concentrated around us, he ought either to have captured us or to have struck a paralysing blow against us. But, as one saw so often in the course of this war, the enemy could work out a plan and make all the preparations for a great blow in the most admirable manner, but when it came to the final move, to that last desperate resolve which would clinch the whole matter, and reap the fruit of all the deep-laid planning, he hesitated and hung back just at that point when moments meant years. Indeed I came to count on the nervous shyness of the enemy at this critical moment in a great movement or action—on this aversion to the last embrace with the Boers—as a fixed factor, and often in the subsequent course of the war when to me our game seemed to be up, and the choice remained between capture or annihilation, I counted, and not in vain, on this nervous paralysis for our salvation. To this cause is primarily to be ascribed the fact that all through the war so few Boers surrendered or were captured in action. At the last moment, when the Boer saw that the game was up, he would almost invariably get away. Why was this possible? It is useless to talk of the mobility of the Boers, for from this stage of the war the mounted columns of the enemy were about as mobile as the Boer commandos. And with almost equally mobile forces on both sides and the immense superiority in numbers which the British so often had in action, the question arises how, after the Boers had been standing at bay for a day or perhaps for days, it was still possible for them at the last moment to escape? I feel certain that if the roles had been reversed not a British soldier would have escaped in these actions. The reason, or rather, what always in these cases seemed to me to be the main reason, was the hesitation of the enemy to come to the final grip with us. This I take it was due not so much to fear of us, although the Boer was probably at his best when really at bay, but was rather due to a want of confidence of the British commanders in themselves, and to the paralysing effect of that sense of

responsibility which is the heaviest strain put on a commander's nerves. How often has one seen a man who has nerves of steel and in the ranks would be a very dare-devil in action becoming, as an officer in action, with the lives of men and the issue of the whole depending on his decision, cautious and hesitating! A commander, unless he has perfect confidence in himself and his men, prefers to proceed cautiously and to keep the threads of action in his own hands and naturally shrinks from that last step when he has to stake his all and abandon the control in that dreadful embrace in which chance and nerve so often set at naught the advantage of numbers and calculation! And yet it is a step which he is often called upon to take and the taking of which is the highest test of his quality.

The perplexities of de la Rey in the present case were greatly increased by the fact that the rounding up of the British columns from all directions was concentrating not only the commandos within the narrowing ring, but also all the wagon laagers and cattle on which the surrounding districts as well as the commandos were dependent for their food. The capture of these at this stage would have inflicted on us a greater loss than the defeat of the commandos could possibly be. The cattle and laagers of Krugersdorp, Rustenburg and Marico Districts were to our dismay all included within the perimeter of the British movement and were running the most imminent risk of being captured. Not a moment was to be lost if these were to be saved; and so, while de la Rey remained with the commandos in touch with the enemy, I took command of the laagers and retired rapidly in the north-west direction which I have indicated as the only gap in the embrasure of columns round us. We escaped just in the nick of time, and the same morning when I left de la Rey he was surrounded and, but for that nervous hesitation of the enemy which I have referred to, would have been killed or captured. He was stationed with the commandos along the Woodstock-Zeerust road at the Rooisloot (Red Gully) at the centre of convergence of the hostile columns. He had sent Commandant Koos Boshoff west in order to keep in touch with the enemy coming from Mafeking. The only way of escape for de la Rey was to retire after me in a north-westerly direction. While the enemy was coming close in front of him, he saw a force of men coming from the

west and moving so as to cut off this line of retreat. Thinking that it was Boshoff retiring before the enemy, he took no further notice until at some five hundred yards fire was opened on his commando by this force, and then for the first time he saw that he was surrounded. This force was taking possession of a hill just behind de la Rey and if it had succeeded in this, the result probably would have been fatal to us. Swift as lightning de la Rey faced right-about and made a dash in a withering fire towards this hill and succeeded in taking it and arresting the progress of the enemy. He escaped this day from as dangerous a plight as he was ever in during the course of the whole war. In the meanwhile I was toiling some four or five miles further with my unwieldy laagers, but luck was with us and we made our way through the mountains that border the bushveld and pitched camp that night in comparative safety just north of these mountains at the entrance to the waterless desert referred to. In the last resort I could enter this bush region and by a wide westerly detour reach water on the Great Marico River, but I felt certain that the enemy would never dream of following me up in this direction. The enemy had indeed not the slightest intention of following me into this arid waste, and when he found that we were heading off in that direction he gave up his elaborate plan as a failure. By this time he had also learnt of Botha's safe arrival at Nylstroom and of President Steyn's escape to the Free State. But the heaviest blow of all must have been the discovery from the people living at the little telegraph office at Woodstock that we had all along been tapping their intelligence and been aware of their movements and plans. The wire was now therefore more effectually cut and whole portions removed. John Acton had however remained behind with me and we found other lines on which to use his vibrator and thus to keep in friendly touch with General [D.] Henderson's well-informed Intelligence Department.

As soon as the enemy stopped his advance and showed signs of retiring I took some scouts together with Acton and two heliographists—the brothers Mulder—with me and followed so as to see in what direction he was retiring, if at all.

The mention of the Mulders now reminds me of a very amusing incident—which yet might have been very tragic—

which I ought to tell here in parenthesis as illustrating the poor fighting quality of the bush-lancers to whom reference was made in the preceding chapter. They were out heliographing, either about this time or a little earlier, when they were attacked by a body of men of whom they found it almost impossible to catch any sight in the struggle which ensued. However they were about as tough two customers as one could have found in the Boer army, and, finding themselves entrapped in the mountains, responded with characteristic vigour to the advances of their attackers. A miniature fight ensued which lasted some hours and in which by dextrous manoeuvring they ultimately forced the aggressors to hoist the white flag. Judge of their surprise when they found that they had kept up this fight, not with a force of the enemy, but with seventeen stupid bush-lancers who had fought I believe in true English style until all their ammunition was gone! They were most indignant and wanted the bush-lancers to be duly court-martialled and punished; but it was generally recognized that ridicule, of which the seventeen heroes received their ample share from the commandos, was the only meet punishment for the occasion.

With my small scouting party I went to Vlakplaats on the Rustenburg-Zeerust road and from there sent forward two men in the direction of Tafelkop who next day brought the report that the enemy was retiring to the Jameson road on the highveld. I therefore recalled the laagers from their present position and myself went forward along the route which the enemy had taken in order to see what harm had befallen the non-combatant population. What pen could ever describe the desolation and distress which I saw.¹

As soon as everything was once more quiet General de la Rey, anticipating that the enemy would after his last great effort leave us alone for at least a couple of weeks, left for the West to visit the Lichtenburg and Marico Commandos. The Rustenburg Commando received a short furlough in order to assist their families in repairing their ruined homes or at least constructing temporary shelters that might keep off the worst

¹ At this point there is a marginal note in the MS. as follows: 'Here insert report to Steyn. No *animus*.' For this report see Vol. XCVI, no. 335 in the Smuts Collection.

of the summer rains, and to sow mealies; the Krugersdorpers returned to the Moot and to agricultural pursuits during the short interval of rest that good fortune might give us. There was left the little commando of Koos Boshoff, consisting of about a hundred brave young fellows collected mainly from the artillery, Pretoria and Johannesburg, under K. Boshoff as commandant and Alec Boshoff and Ben Boucher as lieutenants. This commando had originally accompanied de la Rey from Balmoral, but had been sent back by him as a guard to the prisoners he took at Selikatznek. It had then remained with Botha on his eastward retreat, and had finally been deputed by him to act as an escort to President Steyn on his return to the Orange Free State. Steyn was, however, provided with another escort by de la Rey until he should reach de Wet, and Boshoff's commando, whose horses were greatly worn out, remained with us and from this date permanently attached itself to me. As the force left in Rustenburg town was not large enough for a big aggressive movement, danger could only come from Krugersdorp and Pretoria south and north of the Magaliesberg and I therefore moved again to the Moot so as to be in as central a position as possible for scouting and other work, and I took Boshoff's commando and the Artillery and Thuynsma with me. There I spent a large part of November in scouting and organizing a little scouting corps for my assistance in this work.

A few words here about this important part of the Boer work and organization may not be amiss. As a rule each commando was responsible for its own scouting; that is to say from time to time the commandant would tell off a field-cornet whose duty it would be during that time to keep a certain number of his men engaged in scouting. From this time onward all our field-cornetcies were subdivided into units or corporalships of from six to fifteen men each, according as the commando was a small or large one; each such small unit would elect its own Corporal, who was as a rule the best man among them and whose duty it was to see that they kept together especially in action, to lead them in battle, to see to their food or to appoint (as was generally done) one of his men (who was less of a fighter) to attend to this, bring the legitimate complaints of his men to the notice of the field-

cornet, etc. etc. It is easy to see that the character and efficiency of a Boer commando depended in a very large sense on its corporals; and it was only after this unit had become firmly established and in smooth working order in our western commandos that they really became an admirable fighting machine. As regards scouting, the field-cornet would as a rule tell off from day to day a corporalship in rotation to see to the scouting, and the corporal would then leave the commando with his men and send in reports from time to time as news was gathered. The work was of course a very heavy strain, especially on the horses, which soon got used up in this way, and this is the reason why the work was done as a rule in rotation by the various corporalships of a field-cornetcy.

There were several weak spots in this system of scouting which led Boer commanders not to displace but to supplement it by something more effective and reliable. In the first place, although as a rule Boers have their senses of hearing and especially sight fairly highly developed, still, even among them, there is great difference in the proficiency of individuals in these respects. The one would be introspective and having eyes would see not the things of the outer world, while another who was less of a day-dreamer would be all eyes and ears for his surroundings. As all under the general system had their share of scouting, it is clear that all the work was bound to be very unequal and that sometimes the result would be somewhat unreliable. Secondly, scouting was very dangerous work and required exceptional nerve and self-confidence. The good scout was not he who at first sight of the enemy would rush off with a report to his officer, but who at the greatest personal risk would try to get into ever closer touch with him and who on a proper occasion would not shrink even from the perils of spying. We found that special sifting and training were necessary to get at the best eyes for a Boer army and that it was necessary to supply the men thus selected with extra horses. A scouting corps thus selected would have nothing to do with the ordinary commandos and would stand under the direct control and instructions of the commanding general, who had thus an independent source of information apart from the routine intelligence of the commandos. These scouts would seldom be with the commandos and in dangerous times

especially practically lived between and behind the enemy's lines and gathered the most invaluable information. Often, too, they would take very effective part in an action, not only in actual fighting but also in assisting the staff and report-riders of a general to get instructions to or information from the various parts of an extended field of action.

The most effective and famous scouting corps ever raised in the Boer War was that of Danie Theron, who was without a doubt the greatest scout that the war produced and whose services to de Wet in his famous feats of raiding and riding were simply invaluable.

The necessity for such a scouting corps I had been feeling very strongly. Commandant Moorcroft Edwards, who had done good work for General Botha in Natal at the head of a scouting corps and had subsequently helped us in the Moot, had unfortunately surrendered in a fit of despondency or illness or both in October and his corps had dispersed. The intricate movements of the enemy in the attempt to surround us in Zwarttruggens required even more efficient scouting than we did have and but for the accident of Acton's vibrator we might have been landed in a sad mess. I therefore started now with the raising and training of such a corps under my personal supervision and, though my departure at the end of the year to other fields severed my connection with these enthusiastic young veterans, I was happy to know that both before and after that departure they did splendid work for de la Rey's commandos. I used these men specially to keep a sharp look-out on Magaliesberg and along its western slopes to the English force at Rietfontein, and as a result we were enabled early in December to make a grand capture.

Towards the latter part of November I received information that Clements had again for a third time proceeded from Krugersdorp in the direction of the Moot and had pitched his camp below the Zwartkop mountain from which he might proceed either in an easterly direction and enter the Moot at Scheerpoort, as he had done on the first occasion, or in a westerly direction and enter it at Hekpoort or Waterval further west, the last being the route taken on his second march. The Krugersdorp Commando therefore moved itself near Hekpoort, which was the most central of the three, and

awaited his further movements. Just above the mountains of Hekpoort across the farm Dwarsvlei runs a low sharp ridge or *maanhaar rand* which forms an excellent position and had been the scene of Oosthuizen's memorable defeat of Smith-Dorrien on 11 July. The ridge, however, disappears on the plains some three or four miles to the west and the position could be easily turned by anyone aware of this weak spot. Commandant Potgieter of the Krugersdorp Commando suggested to me that it might be as well that this position should be occupied by his commando in order that battle might be delivered to Clements should he adopt the Hekpoort route; he however frankly pointed out to me the weak spot of the position which apparently had not been known to Smith-Dorrien, although Clements must, or at any rate ought, to know it. As times were rather quiet and dull I readily fell in with his suggestion and joined him with the artillery (three guns) and Boshoff's commando in this position. Here we waited for a day without Clements making any sign of a movement. We therefore decided to give him a gentle stirring and decided on the following plan. I would keep the central position at Dwarsvlei with part of the burghers comprising the scouts and artillery, and Boshoff's people and Potgieter would keep the eastern extension of the ridge and at night would send round an attacking force to the rear of Clements—this movement being quite possible in the mountainous territory in which Clements was camped. In the morning I would start to bombard Clements's camp and, as soon as he moved out to attack me, Potgieter's ambuscade party would attack his camp in the rear. As Clements's force outnumbered ours in the proportion of five to one, we could not hope to do any serious damage to it, but our plan was not lacking in ingenuity and with ordinary good luck we might at least expect to have some fun.

However, luck was against us and so, in the end, was the laughter. In the first place Clements had sent out a force that very night in the Scheerpoort direction with which Potgieter's ambuscade party collided, so that the latter was prevented from reaching any point near the camp from which to press the attack in the morning. And in the morning, when I began to bombard his camp, Clements moved out with his whole force to meet me and sent Colonel [C. P.] Ridley with a large

detachment to outflank my position on the plains of the west. I had not sufficient force to cope with this movement in which Clements availed himself of the weak spot in our position exactly in the manner we had feared. The result was that my position was outflanked towards noon and became untenable, and that we had to retreat early that afternoon to the more formidable position in the Hekpoort mountain. But Clements did not follow us up to this position. I was very much annoyed that no attack had all this time been made on Clements's camp and only next day heard of the *contretemps* at night which had made our plan miscarry.

The day after this encounter General de la Rey arrived from the western border, and I could lay before him the information about the movement of a large convoy which was expected on the other side of Magaliesberg within the next week. We therefore kept a sharp look-out and waited for the advance of the convoy from Rietfontein to Rustenburg.

In the meantime Clements, whose movement to the Moot might have served to protect this convoy, retired instead to Krugersdorp and so left the field quite clear to us. Clements probably and naturally thought that it was the duty of Generals Broadwood and [G. G.] Cunningham, who commanded in the Rustenburg District, to protect their own convoys north of Magaliesberg. But Broadwood was on a raiding expedition south of Magaliesberg and Cunningham helpless in Rustenburg when we raided their convoy on the north. With that we shall deal in the next chapter.

IX. THE MAGALIESBERG CAMPAIGN

DECEMBER 1900

With the exception of very short intervals we had now been operating along the Magaliesberg ever since July and though we had worked very hard and our forces had been brought to a state of great efficiency, we had won no striking success yet after the battle of Selikatznek. We had succeeded in recovering general possession of the country but we had so far failed to beat the enemy in the field; and as after all the test of efficiency is success and, for a soldier, success on the field of battle, we

were looking forward anxiously to the moment when our untiring efforts would find their proper reward. Besides, our little stock of ammunition was beginning to grow painfully smaller, and our clothes were beginning to get worn out. Our Mauser ammunition was becoming quite exhausted and the necessity was growing of arming our commandos with Lee-Metfords from the stores of our opponents. The month of December was to see the turn of the tide and henceforth the balance of victory was to incline very impartially now to the one side and then to the other. We were soon to be amply provided with Lee-Metfords and ammunition and jam and military outfits of the latest cut.

Towards the end of November my scouts on Magaliesberg reported that a huge empty convoy had passed from Rustenburg to Rietfontein with a very small escort. It was but too clear that the object of this convoy was to bring provisions for Rustenburg and the Rustenburg columns from the base at Rietfontein, and when General de la Rey reappeared from the west, we resolved at once to lie in wait for this return convoy and make a determined attempt to capture it. Christmas-time was nearing and the convoy was bound to be laden not only with military necessaries which we sorely needed, but also with those Christmas luxuries which would prove at least as grateful to us as to our friend the enemy.

On 2 December the return convoy started in two sections and we at once prepared to attack both at dawn on 3 December when they would be about half-way between Rietfontein and Rustenburg. General de la Rey was to take some 300 men from the Krugersdorp and Boshoff's Commandos and attack therewith the rear or second convoy while, with an equal number of the Rustenburg Commando, I was to attack the front one. He was to pass [during] the night of 2 December through the difficult gap or gorge at Nooitgedacht and emerge next morning on the second convoy, while I was to cross the Magaliesberg at Breedenek further west.

After our simple evening meal I started with my people between eight and nine that night and climbed the Magaliesberg and halted at one o'clock in the morning of 3 December some distance down the northern slope of the mountain, where we stopped for a couple of hours to give men and horses

a short rest. Then at 3 a.m. I moved on to the farm Buffelshoek which the Rustenburg road crossed. The route that the convoy was taking lies on a bare plain some miles north of Magaliesberg, but on this farm Buffelshoek it enters and winds among a group of small kopjes. It was my intention to seize these kopjes early in the morning and there to await the approach of the convoy. The first convoy had, however, also been moving part of the night and the escort, consisting of some 200 men with two guns under Major [J. G.] Wolrige-Gordon, had already taken possession of the position when at dawn I appeared on the scene.

Approaching the hills at a trot from the western or Rustenburg side we were met at their foot with a heavy rifle fire from the top. I saw that it would take some time to get possession of the position from the west and therefore decided to leave part of my force at that point so as to intercept the arrival of reinforcements from Rustenburg, and galloped with the major portion round to the eastern entrance. There I found de la Rey with a handful of men in one of the kopjes; the rest of his burghers were in pursuit of the second convoy which was falling back on Rietfontein and escaped capture that day. The first convoy had been stopped just at the entrance to the hills by the encounter with me, and part of the escort with the guns had taken post in one of the hills near the road, while a smaller body had been sent to occupy a higher hill on the other side of the road which overlooked the one on which the guns were; and a third force, consisting of about a hundred men, had posted themselves in a deep donga or *sloot* which ran at right-angles across the road some 300 yards in front of the entrance to the hills; between this sloot and the hills the convoy, consisting of 138 wagons, stood huddled together in hopeless confusion. De la Rey pointed out to me that the proper way to attack the convoy and its escort was first to reduce the force in the sloot, and then to storm the two hills in possession of the enemy. Entering the sloot from its southern extremity and working down towards the north, we had just as good protection as the force which was holding it, and after a gallant defence lasting some hours the whole sloot was cleared and what remained of the enemy surrendered. Then we passed the wagons, while Commandant Boshoff was ordered to move off towards

Magaliesberg, and entered the hill on which the guns were stationed and where the principal fighting took place for the rest of the day. My small body of scouts did splendid work here, and by noon we had surrounded the guns and had good hopes of capturing them. As, however, the enemy stationed on the highest *kop*¹ on the opposite side of the road looked down on us and saw us approaching the guns kept pouring a heavy fire on us, and it became necessary to reduce them first. I therefore rode back to the convoy so as to get into touch with General de la Rey and found him there, and he at once undertook to have the high kop cleared. This however did not take place till about four o'clock in the afternoon when a body of Boshoff's Commando under Lieutenant Alec Boshoff stormed the enemy in gallant style, and the white flag was hoisted.

The work of capturing the guns had now however become far more difficult, because the gunners and escort had, with the huge boulders with which the kopje was covered, constructed a rough fortification with a couple of openings through which they poured grape-shot into us, now only some 30 to 50 yards distant. The guns could therefore not be taken unless at such a cost as would more than counterbalance their value, and my idea was rather to induce the enemy to surrender by constantly drawing nearer and keeping a continuous fire on the loopholes of his fortifications. But notwithstanding great loss the defence force grimly held on till nightfall. It was now getting dark and I found that hunger and thirst had made my force melt away till only thirty-eight men were left with me. A brave young fellow whom I sent to de la Rey for reinforcements unguardedly took some beer at the convoy which, as he had been without food since the previous day, immediately upset his head so that when de la Rey saw him a little later in a ditch he had only curses for the surprised commander. No reinforcements therefore came.

It was at this stage of the fight that a remarkable incident took place showing how near one may come to death and yet escape from his embrace. I was going round towards my left to see whether there was not a more convenient position from which to get at the gunners who were covering us with grape,

¹ hill.

and found what I thought to be a likely position. I then went back and brought with me a young hero named Cilliers, a boy of 18, who belonged to the scouting corps, and pointed out to him the opening in the boulder wall through which he had to fire as soon as I told him. There was no cover for us; I was sitting on my knees [*sic*] to look for the gunners and he was lying quite flat on the ground with his rifle directed to this opening which was of considerable size. Suddenly, at a distance of no more than 25 yards I saw a man appear at this opening and aim his rifle at me. He could see me but not my companion lying in the low grass. I called on Cilliers to fire at once but my assailant was in advance of him: he missed me at whom he was aiming and put a bullet clean through Cilliers' head whom he never saw nor aimed at. The thought that he had really died for me made me feel his death all the more profoundly. I was reserved for a darker fate and was destined to pass through events which made me often wish that I had died as gloriously and painlessly as he on that memorable hill.

After dark de la Rey repeatedly sent messengers to me but we were now so near the guns that these messengers only encountered grape-shot wherever they went. No wonder that they finally took back to de la Rey the melancholy intelligence that they could not find me and that the enemy must have surrounded me, and the heavy fighting that was obviously going on must be due to my efforts to break away. Finally I saw that in such a dark night with our ammunition exhausted and without reinforcements, I could not hope to capture the guns and therefore desisted from further efforts. The fire ceased and all seemed to be over, when, to de la Rey's great joy, I appeared with the small body of men who had borne the brunt of the day's work. Together we then went to the foot of Magaliesberg and made a bonfire of the convoy, retaining only some 15 wagons full of specially selected stuff, such as clothes and boots, and slept that night with the profound pleasure which only the weary know. Major Wolrige-Gordon had made a most gallant stand and it was a great compliment to his defence that we troubled him no further and next day moved back over Magaliesberg.

A couple of days after the fall of the convoy General Broadwood, whose fate at this time it generally was to be at the

wrong place at the right time, arrived at Buffelshoek and moved up the mountain from the north. I had a body of men on the top of the mountain, but as the mountain is very precipitous on the south side and in case of a reverse on the mountain it would have been impossible to retreat, I decided not to come to blows with him and moved back into the Moot.

Here it was clear that we would very soon have our hands full. On the same day that the convoy was captured Clements had left Krugersdorp for the Moot with a force of some 1,500 men and 9 guns, including his *pièce de résistance*, the 4·7 naval gun to which many of us had a special aversion. Entering the Moot at Scheerpoort, he slowly moved up the valley to the usual accompaniment of smoke and fire and on 9 December camped at Nooitgedacht. The Magaliesberg, which is here very high and precipitous, is pierced by a very narrow gap at this point and gives a sudden twist at the gap, so that the gap forms an obtuse angle between the two converging sides of the mountain. In this angle and close under the beetling brow of the fierce-looking old mountain Clements pitched his camp by the side of a lovely little stream of water which comes down the gap or gorge. I do not think it was possible in the whole range of the Magaliesberg to have selected a more fatal spot for a camp and one which gave better scope for Boer dash and ingenuity in storming a position. De la Rey appeared so delighted with the prospect that I fear he shared Cromwell's Hebrew exultation when he said of the Scots army at Dunbar: 'The Lord hath delivered them into our hands'. The 10th of December he and I and some of the other officers spent in a careful reconnoitre of the camp from various points of vantage, and the plan of attack was decided on. Our objective being more the enemy's camp than his army which, even if captured, we would immediately have to let go again, there was no idea of surrounding the camp. Our object was rather to force the enemy to evacuate his camp and to leave it in our hands. For this purpose it was necessary, on the one hand, to drive his guards from the top of the mountain where about 300 or 400 men appeared to have put up sangars¹ and built little forts that dotted the skyline. The possession of the mountain would

¹ Anglo-Indian term meaning stone breastworks.

render retention of the camp impossible. But the enemy could by retiring some little distance from the mountain make it equally impossible for us to get to the camp which would be commanded by his own fire. It was therefore necessary to take possession of, and drive the enemy away from, the broken ground and kopjes situated some distance from the mountain and down the Moot on which his outposts were stationed. The possession of the mountain and the kopjes by us would leave the enemy no option but to make for Rietfontein down the Moot. For the attack we had about a thousand men whom we considered sufficient for the purpose of capturing both the mountain and the kopjes in the Moot. The weak spot in our plan was that Broadwood might appear on the scene from Olifantsnek, close to which position he then was, at a distance of no more than a single good march from Nooitgedacht. To have detached a force to watch Broadwood would have reduced the numbers of the attacking party too much, and we therefore decided to make no provision against Broadwood besides, of course, keeping scouts in close touch with him so as to warn us in time of his movements. Our intention was to make the attack on the night of the 11th and 12th December, and our only fear was that Clements might upset our plan by moving away from Nooitgedacht.

On the 11th however we received reports from Beyers that he was at Bethany some 12 miles north of Magaliesberg on his way from Warmbaths to us. He had a force of 1,500 men and five guns with him, which appeared to us quite sufficient to enable us to deal simultaneously with both Clements and Broadwood and to insure complete success to our plans. The attack was therefore to be postponed till his arrival which happened on the morning of the 12th. Although he moved in broad daylight over Breedenek with his immense convoy of some hundreds of wagons, Clements remained at Nooitgedacht, which was to us a clear proof of his ignorance of Beyers's arrival. On the 12th de la Rey took Beyers over the reconnoitring ground and explained to him our plan of attack and Beyers undertook to reduce the forts on the mountain while the work in the Moot should be left to us. Half his force would be moved east to Wagenpadspruit so as to be midway between Olifantsnek and Nooitgedacht and there

await the arrival of Broadwood, while with the major part of the other half he would recross the mountain that afternoon and storm the enemy's position at dawn. The work below the mountain was divided as follows: de la Rey with the Rustenburg Commando and a portion of Beyers's commando under Commandant Badenhorst¹ would attack from the west along the southern slope of the Magaliesberg and the western kopjes in the Moot, while I with the Krugersdorp and Boshoff's Commandos would attack the eastern kopjes in the Moot, and especially a large green hill which was the key to the situation, and was called by us Groenkop and by the English Yeomanry Hill. It was clear that if Clements was driven away from Magaliesberg he would have to fall back on this hill and if we could succeed in wresting this hill from him and holding it against his assaults the game would be up and he would have to surrender. If however we failed in getting Yeomanry Hill but succeeded in holding all the other kopjes, his position would still be precarious but he could save himself by making for Rietfontein along the slopes of the mountain.

As all of us had to move some considerable distances that night and it was so dark that you could scarcely see your hand, there was great danger that there might be straying and not that simultaneity of action which was so greatly to be desired. And this actually happened; Beyers's attack on the mountain did not begin till the sun was some distance up; I took possession of the kopjes but in the pitch darkness we could not make out where Groenkop was and had to wait for dawn. In the meanwhile Commandant Badenhorst, who was moving towards the camp along the slopes of the mountain, had overestimated the distance and in the darkness collided with the enemy. A stubborn and bloody conflict took place in which Colonel Legge,² commanding the enemy at this point, was killed. As Badenhorst saw that he had started the fight too soon and heard nothing from the other points of attack, he fell back for some distance to await the break of day. As soon as he had retired General de la Rey and myself

¹ Christoffel Petrus Stephanus Badenhorst, born 1870, taken prisoner in December 1901 and sent to St. Helena.

² Lieutenant-Colonel Norton Legge entered the British Army in 1882, served in Egypt and the Sudan, and was killed on 13 December 1900.

came into action against the forts on the hills into which in the dim glimmer of the first dawn the enemy could be seen pouring men as fast as possible. Our men however fought with heart-stirring dash and by eight o'clock we had all the hills except Groenkop in our possession. I made repeated efforts with my best men to capture this place, but although we succeeded in holding part of it for a short while, the enemy swept down on us in overwhelming numbers as soon as Beyers had occupied the mountain, and we were driven off. The way General Clements, after he had lost Magaliesberg, concentrated all his power of resistance on this hill and forbore from weakening himself by attempting to hold a larger area, was to me a proof of his insight and soldierly qualities of which on this day he gave the most unmistakable proof. Indeed, so far as stubborn and skilful fighting can make up for the choice of a wrong position, he did his utmost to undo the mischief of his hopelessly wrong choice of a site for his camp.

In the meantime Beyers had, in what was surely one of the finest feats of the war, overcome the desperate resistance of the Northumberland Fusiliers on the top of the mountain and had, with a slaughter that far exceeded his own, driven them out of their forts and *schanses*.¹ Wielding his mighty lash with terrific effect on the laggards, he urged his men in an irresistible torrent which soon surged round and swept over the enemy's fortifications, and by seven o'clock all was over. Only those who have been in it know what spirit and nerve are required to storm in broad daylight, albeit in superior numbers, an entrenched enemy who is waiting for you. It is the moment when the stoutest quail and the instinct to seek shelter often proves stronger than the most determined courage. And even in Beyers's army there were men whom this terrible ordeal unnerved. It is told of Kemp, who was then one of Beyers's most dashing commandants, that, retiring some little way down the mighty precipices to look for some missing burghers, he came on a small party who were holding a prayer-meeting in comfortable shelter at the hottest stage of the fight. To his indignant question what they were doing there, these wily folk replied that, like Aaron and Hur, they were holding up the

¹ entrenchments.

arms of Moses in prayer so that victory might be secured to the Lord's people! I am afraid that their comfortable praying was rudely disturbed by the swing of the sjambok. What else could you do to such canting cowards? On the whole the religious character of Beyers made his commando a unique combination of praying and fighting even for the Boers—but each at the right time and not to the detriment of the other.

As soon as the top of the mountain was in possession of Beyers the enemy's guns were trained on to it and the effect, especially of the lyddite shells of the naval gun on the precipitous walls of rock, was fine to see. Meanwhile the Boers were pouring down the gorge in the direction of the camp and were fighting with a small force here which had been sent too late to reinforce their friends on the top of the mountain; the guns were then turned on the gorge and did far more harm to the already hard-pressed soldiers than to the Boers.

At about ten o'clock de la Rey drove the enemy out of a small kopje which stood in front of the camp and from there opened fire with one of his guns on Groenkop,—with the result that a wild stampede of animals and drivers took place down the valley in the Rietfontein direction. This pleased us greatly as it would deprive Clements of the means of moving his guns away. To our disappointment however a small portion of Boshoff's commando which I had stationed lower down the valley bore down in front of these fugitives, with the result that they returned in terror to their commander and so saved Clements from a very nasty dilemma.

The whole force was now concentrating on Groenkop and as my men were all lying quite close to the enemy, they were in a dangerous position and in case of a retreat by Clements it would be impossible to move them until the rearguard had also evacuated their positions. I therefore told General de la Rey that I would require more men for the pursuit if Clements should break away. He sent to me Commandant Badenhorst who had not been in action again since his repulse in the early morning.

It was between three and four in the afternoon when Clements began his retreat. I found the greatest difficulty in getting my men to follow me in the pursuit; the camp was the great

centre of attraction; de la Rey's and Beyers's men had come to a dead halt there; most of my own men, who lay quite close to the camp, found the temptation more than they could resist, especially as they had had nothing to eat or drink since the previous evening. The enemy had a very efficient rear-guard whose guns kept the small pursuing party at a respectful distance. Finally, towards sunset, I gave up the attempt at a pursuit and returned to the camp which I reached just about sunset.

What a sight met my eyes! An indescribable pandemonium in which psalm-singing, looting and general hilarity mingled with explosions of bullets and bombs to give a tragi-comic character to the whole. Kemp had unwisely set most of the wagons on fire, and as many of them contained ammunition cases, the camp resembled more the rattling fire of an action than a quiet possession for ever. All round the camp groups of our horses were tethered together having a good time from Clements's ample commissariat. Here parties were wandering about the tents looking for rare objects in the officers' kits; there another group were discussing over a bottle of rum, with tears of enjoyment in their eyes, the incidents of the day; here some zealous young fellows were poring over the papers of General Clements for valuable information, and close to them a burning wagon resembled a blockhouse in action. On the other side of this wagon the veteran Rev. A. P. Kriel was eloquently expressing the feelings of joy and thanks of his large audience, into which a broadside or volley would from time to time be poured from the fateful ammunition wagon. My neighbour's devotions were rudely interrupted by a bullet in his leg, and in other parts of the field the devil was playing the same uncanny pranks with the devotional temper of the burghers. And there—sitting on some officer's low stool and taking in the whole scene with a smile lighting up his weary noble face—was our veteran old leader de la Rey, whose hard work had at last met its reward and whose heart was stirred by a sense of gratitude which went deeper than the eloquent words of the Rev. [A. P.] Kriel could express, and was satisfied with a silent wistful contemplation of the whole scene.

A few hundred yards away a deeper tragic note was struck by the groans of the dying and the blanched set faces of the

dead, which were enough to drive away all unwholesome feelings of exultation, and to remind one of that grim reality that war is. And even though these were the faces and the sufferings of our enemy, one had, in the deepening twilight of that beautiful summer day, a deeper sense of the common humanity which knows no racial distinctions—one felt that all heroes are of the same race and could sympathize with Walt Whitman's profound sentiment:

'The hands of the sisters Death and Night incessantly softly wash again and ever again, this soiled world:
For my enemy is dead, a man as divine as myself is dead,
I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin—I draw near,
Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin.'¹

Away west, part of Beyers's commando was still waiting for the erratic Broadwood. But in these troublous times, and probably owing to no fault of his own, Broadwood was displaying the same centrifugal tendencies which had distinguished the strategy of Baden-Powell some months earlier.

As darkness set in, we mounted our horses and went away west with mingled feelings of sadness and joy—away to Naauwpoort and to the solemn celebration of Dingaan's Day on the 16th of December.

X. THE MAGALIESBERG CAMPAIGN CONCLUDED DECEMBER 1900

The strenuous 13 December had passed. The following days we spent in quiet—in helping the enemy to bury his brave dead and to convey his wounded to Rietfontein, while on 15 December we buried our own noble dead on the slopes of the Magaliesberg at the foot of Breedt's Nek. The following day—the most solemn and glorious in Boer history—we spent on Commandant Steenkamp's farm Naauwpoort in memories of the past and in renewed resolve and dedication to the work before us. Dingaan's Day is the day of the national Covenant

¹ *Drum Taps*, 'Reconciliation'.

of the Boers—full of hallowed historical memories and of the manifestation to the devout Boer mind of Divine guidance in the affairs of the nation. It is the day when the solemn memories of the past become pregnant with the living Hope of the future and the Boer sees in the trials and triumphs of his forefathers the augury of the better and brighter future. To any one who wishes to understand the Boer mind and the historic motives which have guided Boer action, it is necessary to realize the meaning of Dingaan's Day in its rich historical associations.

At the commencement of the year 1838 the rising wave of the Great Trek had reached the western slopes of the Drakensberg; the territory of the Orange Free State had been peacefully occupied and its wandering Kaffir tribes, decimated and demoralized by the raids of Moselekatze's impis, everywhere gladly welcomed the protection of the wonderful white race. Before, however, Drakensberg was crossed and what is now called Natal entered, it was deemed necessary to obtain the permission and secure the goodwill, and perhaps rights of a more tangible character, from the dread Zulu chief Dingaan, whose name spread terror in those untamed regions.

The noble leader of the Great Trek, Piet Retief, therefore set out for the capital of Dingaan with 66 companions¹ and on 4 February 1838² obtained from him formal cession of all his rights to the territory of Natal. In the meanwhile large parties of immigrants had also crossed the mountains and had spread themselves along the Tugela and Mooi Rivers and were there confidently awaiting the report of the success of Retief's mission. Alas, on 6 February Retief and all his companions were treacherously murdered; and immediately thereafter the parties of immigrants were—in their unsuspecting confidence and the absence of all defensive measures—overwhelmed and slaughtered. Many hundreds of both sexes and all ages perished; and the land which, viewed but a short while before from the high hills of the now famous Spionkop, had appeared to their longing gaze a good and desirable land where they might live away from English interference and graze their cattle along the clear rivers, suddenly became a land of weeping

¹ Retief's party also included about thirty Coloured retainers.

² The deed of cession was signed on 6 February 1838.

and lamentation. The high hopes of peace and rest and prosperity at last after all their searchings and wanderings were rudely and suddenly dashed to the ground, and the entire movement threatened with complete ruin. It is in the face of such overwhelming disaster that the Boer mind has always shown itself at its best. And on this occasion too the immigrants, instead of prudently retiring before the deluge of destruction which had overwhelmed their advance parties, determined with matchless courage to stake their all on a great battle with the dreaded Zulu forces and spent the rest of the year in preparations for the great ordeal. The place of Retief was taken by the great Andries Wessel Pretorius,¹ who, at the head of 464 men, invaded Zululand in order to deal decisively with Dingaan. At daybreak of 16 December 1838 a vast Zulu horde of some 10,000 warriors attacked this force with their wonted dash and recklessness. But they only dashed themselves to pieces against the compact laager of the heroic white band and long before noon of that eventful Sunday the Zulu forces had fled leaving thousands of the flower of their people on the field of battle, and a victory had been gained which must ever be ranked among the greatest and most glorious ever won on this sub-continent. Such was Dingaan's Day—the day on which the whites proved incontestably their title to the hegemony of South Africa. The Trek was justified by the severest trial through which human beings could be made to pass and henceforth the history of South Africa was to become largely the consequences and developments of the Trek. The Boer, the special product of South Africa, had made his ineffaceable mark on its history, and the coming decades with their storms were simply to deepen that mark. To the simple religious Boer mind however—with its large intuitive insight—the great victory was God's work: not man's feeble efforts but the Everlasting Hand had wrought there and laid a durable foundation for the future. They had the consciousness of Destiny; they felt, as all great races and spirits in all ages have felt and confessed, that they were led, that through their humble efforts a Higher Power was shaping for ends higher than they saw or knew; and to Him they gave all

¹ His forenames were Andries Wilhelmus Jacobus.

the glory. Dingaan's Day was therefore dedicated and set aside as a great day of national commemoration and has always been religiously observed as such. It was subsequently associated with another event of far-reaching importance, for on 16 December 1880 the Boers, at the memorable Paardekraal meeting, declared their independence and raised once more the republican Vierkleur¹ and chose a republican executive—an apparently desperate step which was however abundantly justified by the victories which followed, notably that of Majuba on 27 February 1881.

Since the last war, however, a deeper significance has been given to this day. It no longer means victory merely; it now connotes defeat as well. Its observance brings to the Boer mind memories not only of the glorious victories of the past but also of their tragic passion and utter abasement in the late war. The political congress of the Boer people² has therefore fitly decided (July 1904) that it should in future be set aside for the restoration of the graves of those who fell or died in the war. And who can doubt but that the Boer mind, accustomed to great deeds, tested by great sufferings and mellowed by great disappointments in the very infancy of the people, will move to a great moral and national development and will watch from the grave of the past the resurrection of the wider, riper, and purer national ideal of the future which will be the common heritage and the common inspiration of the united Anglo-Boer nation of the future.

On Dingaan's Day of 1898 I heard a memorable address by President Kruger in the Dutch Reformed Church at Pretoria on the great events of 1838 in which he bore his part as a boy of nine years.³ He described graphically the attack which the Zulus made on the laager in which he was; luckily the laager had been forewarned by the destruction of other parties. Men fought, while of the women some loaded the rifles behind the men and some packed the spaces between the wagons with mimosa trees; the youthful Paul Kruger assisted the women in dragging these thorn bushes to the wagons.

The following Dingaan's Day we spent in Natal, in the

¹ The four-colour flag of the South African Republic.

² See Vol. II, p. 164, note 1.

³ Kruger was thirteen years old in 1838.

neighbourhood of the great events of 1838, in solemn thanksgiving for the series of glorious victories which had culminated at Colenso the day before. The Boer cause was at its highest tide and very few even of their wisest men on 16 December 1899 anticipated that the paeon of victory would yet give place to the sad dirges of defeat and that the following Dingaan's Day would see both Republics annexed, their capitals and railways in the hands of the enemy, and the Boer cause in desperate plight.

When we assembled on the 16th at Naauwpoort it was not only in the light of the victory of the 13th, but also in the shadow of the many and grievous losses we had sustained. Of the thousands of people who were present that day there was not one who had not lost one or more near relatives in the war; many families had lost besides all their worldly goods; all of us were saddened by the dark outlook of public affairs, the conviction that the war was going to last a long time and would still entail terrible losses and sufferings, and the utter uncertainty of the issue except to the eye of an ardent faith. But that word 'faith' made all the difference in the world to the Boers. Not one of the many great passages in their history could be justified on prudential grounds; time and again they had rushed 'straight at the grinning teeth of things' as the English poet has it. They had never been overawed by superior power, however apparently overwhelming; they had always been more conscious of their rights than of the obstacles and difficulties confronting them. Cautious in small things they had ever shown an extraordinary recklessness in great things. Beaten back many a time they had never turned back but ever pressed on with dauntless perseverance which to the outside world seemed mere perversity. They had with noble tenacity kept to the road of destiny—to the 'holy line' which their great mystical President was so fond of referring to; the line of their national call, apprehended more in implicit faith than in clear consciousness, but none the less imperiously compelling their activities and strivings as a people. Faith in the deepest sense was the keynote of the Boer character, not an abstract formal faith such as arises in unhealthy conditions of private or national life, but springing from the fountain undefiled of a sane, youthful nature; a faith at once religious and

secular, at once an ideal passion translating itself into healthy, outward action—a faith which is the wholesome expression of the whole nature, and not of any mere part of it.

Men, women and children had come up from all parts of the Krugersdorp and Rustenburg districts; the burghers of some parts of the Potchefstroom district were also present. The day began with religious services under the Rev. A. P. Kriel. Subsequently, in the course of the morning, the assembled multitudes were addressed by Generals de la Rey and Beyers and myself as well as some others. General de la Rey pointed out how the history of the Transvaal people had passed through the darkness and the night, but in that darkness there was ever a Power accompanying them, leading and sustaining them. Matters gradually became worse until in 1880 they seemed to have lost their independence irretrievably; their opponents were the mighty English Empire and from nowhere on earth could they expect any assistance. Yet, at that darkest hour, they had once more hoisted the Republican flag and in sublime faith in God and determination to recover their rights they had declared war, and the event had justified their action. In the sufferings and hardships which his audience had undergone and were still to undergo he encouraged them by pointing out how the character of the Africander people had been proved and strengthened by adversity and defeat and how eventually success had crowned their efforts. He was not afraid of sorrow and suffering which supplied a wholesome tonic to national character. They had come together that day to renew the covenant of Dingaan's Day, the solemn vow of national dedication and consecration which their forefathers had first made in 1838. If they were not going to keep that vow it was far better not to make it at all, for to break a promise made to the Highest was of all forms of dishonesty the very worst and blackest. A people could only finally succeed by being true to itself and to the Highest in itself, and he exhorted his audience to display that highest form of fidelity.

General Beyers, like a faithful surgeon, probed into the weaknesses of the Boer character, to those national flaws and weaknesses which accompanied and developed with its growth, and which in the future course of the war were in certain directions destined to assume such an ugly form and to injure

and wound more deeply than anything in the course of their history, the Boer reputation and sense of self-respect.

In explaining the national significance of Dingaan's Day I entered into more historical detail, quoted the great events of 1838 and the subsequent stages and developments in Boer history which had enriched the associations connected with the memory of this day. I pointed to the dauntless character of the people which made the Boer women urge the men to leave Natal after its annexation by the English Government—to leave it when they might have remained there in peace and plenty; regardless of all the terrible sacrifices they had made for it and of the terrible privations that awaited them which Sir Harry Smith had described so graphically in his *Autobiography*.¹ These heroines could brook no submission to a flag connected in their minds with injustice and oppression and rather than submit tamely to it they preferred to return barefoot over the Drakensbergen amid nameless sufferings and misery. Such a character was a precious possession, and it was their duty not to soil it in any way but to hand it down to their children as a priceless heritage.

After the speeches had ended, everyone present brought forward a stone in order to erect a monument as a memorial of the day, and in a few moments a broad-based monument four feet high was raised which is still to be seen today.

So passed the last Dingaan's Day of the century—a day never to be forgotten by the thousands of deeply moved spirits who took part in its solemn celebration. But even as we were in mingled sadness and joy lingering by the solemn and hallowed memories of the past, we could hear the distant approach of trouble—reports of the tremendous efforts which Clements was making in order to clear the Moot for good of these troublesome guerillas. That very day he had reached Scheerpoort with a force of more than 3,000 men with 15 guns. The brilliant [Lieutenant-Colonel G. E.] Benson, whose name was next year to become a terror in the eastern Transvaal until he met his fate at Bakenlaagte in September 1901, had been associated with Clements as his chief staff officer.

On the 17th we still waited for the nearer approach of the

¹ Vol. II, pp. 234-5.

enemy and on the 18th we moved forward to meet him on the historic ground below Nooitgedacht on which we had fought the first action in the Moot four months ago. The force in front of us was somewhat more than equal to our own in point of numbers and far superior in the artillery arm, and we had no reason for doubting that it was the whole of the enemy's forces opposed to us; nor had we any reason to fear the result of the encounter. Fronting each other in the Moot valley, here only some four to five miles wide, and flanked on either side by the difficult Magaliesberg and Witwatersberg, these two forces would, if left to themselves, have fought one of the most interesting and stubborn actions or series of actions of the whole war. Flushed with their recent victories and fortified with the spirit and consolation of Dingaan's Day, the Boers entered upon the duel with alacrity and with a feeling of great confidence in the issue, while the heroic defence of Clements' men at Nooitgedacht was at any rate a guarantee that—especially in view of their large reinforcements in men and artillery—they would dispute any Boer success with desperate valour. Our plan of action was to fight a stiff frontal action in the terrain below Nooitgedacht and then to lead the enemy on by falling back with part of our forces to the stronger position at the Maanhaar Rand some nine miles further west, while the rest of the forces were to secrete themselves in the flanking mountains so as to be on the flanks and rear of the enemy in the principal action at the Maanhaar Rand. If it could have been carried out—and the ground was peculiarly adapted for such strategy—it is probable that Clements would have suffered a far more crushing defeat at the Maanhaar Rand than he had sustained at Nooitgedacht. It would have been quite impossible for Clements to have taken this Maanhaar Rand by a frontal attack, while our forces could, by simply holding the base of the two flanking mountains and some kopjes in the valley below, have effectually prevented his retreat. Once involved in the net of such a position Clements would have been forced to surrender unless promptly relieved by some other force.

Our ingenious plan was however upset by the strategy of the enemy. The curious fact is that French, who was now in chief command of the operations against us, had conceived exactly the same scheme for entrapping us which we had formed for

dealing with Clements. We did not know that he was to co-operate with Clements with a large force from the direction of Krugersdorp. This force he carefully concealed in the large bluegum plantations between Krugersdorp and Blaauwbank, and his idea was by a long night march to get in our rear on the morning of the 19th and, while we were contesting the progress of Clements below Nooitgedacht, he was to take possession of the Maanhaar Rand behind us, while part of his force would hold the salient positions in the Witwatersberg on our right flank. The only exit for us from such a position would have been over the extremely difficult Magaliesberg, and it is certain that only the left flank of the Boer forces (that is, those under my command) could have escaped in this way. The rest would have had either to surrender or (what is more probable) have cut their way at ruinous loss either through French's or Clements's force. French's plan, however well-conceived, was however destined to miscarry no less than our own identical plan.

Our dispositions in front of Clements were made as follows: Beyers on our right was to hold the Witwatersberg and southern portion of the Moot; General de la Rey was to hold the central part of the Moot valley with the Rustenburg and part of the Krugersdorp Commandos, while I was posted on our left flank on the kopjes below Nooitgedacht and the slopes of the Magaliesberg with the Boshoff Commando, the Gatsrand Commando and portion of the Krugersdorp Commando. My principal position besides the slopes of Magaliesberg was to be Yeomanry Hill which the Gatsrand Commando was ordered to occupy in the early morning of the 19th. Clements had been moving forward the night of the 18th and at dawn on the 19th the enemy was seen close in front of us. As I did not see any men on Yeomanry Hill, I galloped forward with a small body of men, consisting principally of my scouts, to see whether there was not some mistake which it was yet possible to rectify. Leaving our horses at the foot of the Hill we climbed it only to find that Clements's skirmishers had reached the top before us. It appeared that the Gatsrand Commando had early that morning taken a position somewhat to the left rear in a kopje some thousand yards from Yeomanry Hill. I was extremely annoyed as our small party were placed in a most dangerous

position from which headlong flight was now the only means of escape. A heavy fusillade was directed at us from the top of Yeomanry Hill at a distance of no more than a hundred yards as we were running down the Hill towards our horses; my adjutant, Marthinus Rieckert, was shot through the foot but luckily got away with the rest of us. Our escape over the rough ground over which rapid riding was impossible was however facilitated by the Gatsrand men concentrating a heavy fire on Yeomanry Hill and so diminishing the pressure on us; otherwise very few of us would have escaped unwounded that morning. My brother-in-law, P. S. Krige, who was a noted athlete and had won many a cup for running, escaped from Yeomanry Hill in fine style that morning and was ever after chaffed by my staff who said they heard one old Tommy exclaim in wonder at his performance: 'By Jove, the Boers have sportsmen among them!'

As soon as I was clear of Yeomanry Hill I recalled the Gatsrand Commando and formed my men in a line along the kopjes west of Yeomanry Hill which had been taken by de la Rey on the morning of Nooitgedacht. Here we were subjected to a heavy raking artillery fire from the enemy's guns on the dominating position on Yeomanry Hill, but there was little possibility of dislodging us from the old Kaffir kraals and disused cattle-pens in which we had taken position. The fighting continued with great determination on both sides till about noon when I saw de la Rey's men rapidly giving way on my right in the valley below. This seemed to me quite unaccountable as I was under the impression that our forces were more than holding their own in this duel. Judge of my surprise when I saw the enemy emerging in our rear from behind the kloof or valley of Zeekoehoek and engaging Beyers's commando in the rear! It was clear now that we were in a trap and that a very large force of the enemy was in our rear, and that we would have great difficulty in extricating ourselves, or at least Beyers's commando, from the present position.

Beyers had the previous night put a body of scouts on the mountains at Hekpoort in order to keep a sharp look-out in the Krugersdorp direction, but, either from the position of these men or the difficult broken nature of the mountains, they failed to notice French's approach towards Blaauwbank in our rear,

and the actual appearance of the enemy was the first intimation we had of the extreme danger of our position. Had French marched straight to the Maanhaar Rand in front of him, his stratagem would have been complete and we would have been between the crackers of his huge force. Fortunately for us he turned, for some mistaken reason or other, from Hartley's Poort in the direction of Zeekochoek, a valley separated from the Moot by an intervening range of low hills, and so appeared directly in the right rear of Beyers. As soon as de la Rey saw this he knew that the Maanhaar Rand was the key to the new situation and that whichever side occupied that formidable position first would have an enormous advantage. He therefore at great risk and considerable loss moved his men out of their hazardous position immediately in front of the enemy and made for the Maanhaar Rand at a gallop. Although I was not in the same danger I understood the object of de la Rey's movement and similarly fell back towards Boschfontein in the neighbourhood of the Rand. Beyers on the other hand had the greatest difficulty in getting away and his men had that day to run a terrible gauntlet in their retreat past the enemy. It was one of those occasions when the temptation to surrender must be felt very strongly by the subordinate officer and men; but this was not the feeling of Beyers's heroes. At a short distance from the enemy, whose gun and rifle fire raked their retreating ranks, these brave men made their way as best they could over the bare veld and probably never even thought of surrender. Those who, like Commandant L. E. Krause's commando, were too far advanced and could not retreat, simply pressed on and got away in the opposite direction to the rear of the enemy. Krause's commando became separated from Beyers's forces for about a week and maintained itself in the Witwatersberg and Schurveberg and afterwards rejoined Beyers after having lost their commandant, who was captured in a fog in the early morning at Hartley's Poort. I have observed in a former chapter that the Boer forces often showed more real heroism in retreat than in action. This was such an occasion. Hundreds of Beyers's men would have been amply justified if they had refused to escape and had surrendered; many a British force in this war surrendered rather than make the desperate attempt to escape in much less trying circum-

stances. But the Boers generally made an effort to escape however overwhelming the risk and their efforts in this direction were as a rule crowned with success.

Early in the afternoon we reached the Maanhaar Rand position and proceeded to occupy it and await the approach of the enemy. But the enemy did not come on, partly because it was already late in the day and was beginning to rain and the troops had been engaged in marching and fighting since the previous night; partly because the new Boer position was admittedly the most formidable in that part of the country, as Clements had already found to his cost in the preceding September; and also largely because it required time for French to form a new scheme of attack. On the other hand the Boer officers did not see much advantage in fighting a purely defensive action against the enemy in this position, which, however well situated for purposes of defence, gave no scope for strategic movements on the flanks. It was therefore decided to fall back that night and retire on the Naauwpoort ridges further west where we had celebrated Dingaan's Day. When the enemy's scouts approached the position next day they must have felt very happy in observing that the Boers had vacated it the night before.

The time had also come for us to disperse our forces and terminate the concentration which was inviting ever larger forces into the field against us. Our combination had served its purpose and had inflicted on the unwary enemy the heaviest blow he had suffered since the fall of Pretoria—a blow which was all the more unwelcome as it synchronized with Lord Roberts's political declarations that, but for the depredations of small roving bands, the war was over. Besides, there was a method even more effective than stout resistance by large masses by which to injure the enemy, but that could only be utilized by the dispersal of the Boer commandos.

One of the most potent weapons with which the Boers fought their enemy in this war was flight—sheer headlong flights deliberately practised as an art of war. There is the wild rout and demoralized *sauve qui peut* of the defeated, with which the Boers were, of course, as well acquainted as any other army which has from time to time received a tremendous hammering. There is, however, another and much less

known operation which the Boers in this war continually resorted to, to the complete discomfiture of the British commanders. Owing to their greater mobile efficiency, their superior scouting, and smaller numbers, the Boers could always give their enemies long odds in the matter of covering mere distance. While the heavy English columns of mounted infantry on their clumsy horses and accompanied by their long convoys and artillery, including guns of heavy calibre, would, like a wounded snake, wind their slow length along, the agile Boer commandos were easily maintaining their start by short, rapid rides followed by rests which the slower enemy could not afford. The result was that after a so-called chase of some weeks the Boers and their horses would be comparatively fresh and fit for work while the English mounted infantry would be tired and used up and their animals either dead or fit only for the remount camps. The Boers, who were adepts in all the minor arts of warfare, were not slow to take advantage of this difference in methods and results between themselves and their opponents. Whenever a Boer concentration had inflicted some considerable damage and had thereby invited the ponderous vengeance of Lord Kitchener, the Boers would wait until their enemy was well on the way with his combined movements and concentration, and would then without much further ado give way and draw the enemy in pursuit. This so-called pursuit would enable the British officers to send flowery reports to Lord Kitchener and enable British editors to delight their nervous readers with daily accounts of the 'bags' of animals and non-combatants; but it was to the officers and troops concerned at best only a hopeless and despairing operation. It did no damage to the Boers and inflicted on their opponents incalculable loss and expense. It made up a very considerable part of the heavy financial burden of the war; it made the British troops stale, weary and homesick, and it demoralized many of their superior officers by impressing upon them the hopelessness of all legitimate means of bringing the war to an end. De Wet was the greatest adept in this peculiar mode of warfare, and his flight before the vast armies of Lord Kitchener from Bethlehem westward and then northward over Magaliesberg in August 1900, as well as his various subsequent rushes to and retreats from the Cape Colony, are

striking instances of this kind of strategy. But the history of Botha's and de la Rey's operations in the Transvaal affords equally neat instances of this deliberate retreat in order to wear out the enemy. It did not affect the Boer morale, and it must be borne in mind that many of the most brilliant *coups* of Botha (as at Bakenlaagte)¹ and de la Rey (as at Yzerspruit² and Rietspruit) were struck in the course of such retiring operations.

The present concentration of French and Clements afforded a notable opportunity for leading the English columns into a wild dance over the Western Transvaal, and the opportunity was now promptly seized by Beyers. From Naauwpoort de la Rey retired westward towards Zwartuggens while Beyers went south-west towards Potchefstroom, whither I too went to take up a new command.

XI. THE POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPAIGN

From the foregoing account of the campaign along the Magaliesberg it is clear that the commandos under the immediate supervision of de la Rey had put in a large amount of very arduous work since August of 1900. Numerous battles had been fought, in several of which the enemy had been defeated and in all of which his losses were far from insignificant; his advance over every inch of ground had been stubbornly contested, and in fact every advance had in due course been followed by a retreat. It was de la Rey's policy, as it is the policy of every great officer who studies the morale of his men, to leave the enemy alone as little as possible, for it is not so much defeat that demoralizes an army as continual evasion and shuffling and shirking of the issue. The army which is defeated in a stand-up fight at any rate does not lose its self-respect, while mere aimless skulking, even if it does not arise from cowardice, leads to cowardice and complete loss of military morale and efficiency.

But while this hard fighting was proceeding in the districts of Rustenburg and Krugersdorp, much of the rest of the Western Transvaal slumbered in undisturbed repose and

¹ On 30 October 1901.

² On 25 February 1902.

seemed to rest in an almost unbroken truce. It is true that General Lemmer was doing up to the time of his death very good work in the Marico and Lichtenburg districts and that he kept Lord Methuen very busy. But the same could not be said of the officers in the south-western districts of Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad and Bloemhof. General Liebenberg was operating in the first, Commandant Potgieter in the second and Commandant Tollie de Beer in the third. All three were good, prudent, and experienced officers. Of Commandant [Ferdinandus Jacobus] Potgieter, who fell in the disastrous action at Roodewal near the end of the war, it may even be said (and this is not only my own but also General de la Rey's opinion) that he was one of the very best commandants in the whole Boer army, tempering bravery with caution in a quite unusual degree, and possessing the unbounded respect and affection of his men. All these officers did good work, but as their forces lay scattered over a large part of the country they were not in a position to do really effective work at any point, nor were they a sufficient bait to attract large forces of the enemy to their districts. The result was that these commandos enjoyed more rest than was good for them and that in due course their slothful ease bred bickerings and disputes which still further impaired their efficiency. The fighting spirits in these commandos objected to their inglorious inactivity and drew upon themselves the wrath of the officer whose conduct was criticized with more freedom than discretion. A tendency appeared for the better men to separate themselves from the regular organization and to form themselves into smaller corps with the object of doing better work. This naturally sapped discipline and led to disorganization and in many cases to far more harm than could be compensated by the good work which these corps no doubt did. As an instance I may mention the case of the 'Mooirivier Brigade' in the Potchefstroom district. This corps comprised many of the best fighters in the district, who had been induced to leave their field cornets and band themselves together into a separate corps on account of grave dissatisfaction with the conduct of some officers in recent engagements with the enemy. They did splendid work, but their insubordinate conduct could not be connived at; and the result was that these brave men had to be courtmartialled

before officers whose remissness had led to their insubordination. Clearly this dangerous state of affairs could not be allowed to continue. Both parties appealed to headquarters, and we were not only willing but anxious to sift these disputes to the bottom and restore discipline and efficiency to the Potchefstroom commando. In the Bloemhof commando, again, there was a large section of the burghers who were dissatisfied with the work of Commandant de Beer, and as the complainants were led by klein Adriaan de la Rey, a brother of the General and a man of excellent military record, it was plain that here, too, no time was to be lost.

General de la Rey and myself intended, not only that these bickerings should cease and discipline be re-established among the commandos concerned, but that the control should become more efficient, that the various scattered sections of our forces in those districts should be welded into a large fighting force which could and should harass the enemy as persistently and effectively as was being done by the Rustenburg and Krugersdorp Commandos. We decided that I should go to the south-western districts to effect these objects. As a matter of fact it was no longer necessary that we now should remain together in the Western Transvaal. However unbroken the harmony and masterly the success with which we had worked together so far, it was clear that the cause would be best served by our dividing our sphere of work and so endeavouring to obtain efficient control of the entire work in the west. It was impossible for him to do this alone, as that would have involved continual tours of inspection among the commandos, and he was too good a leader to be wasted on this work of mere inspection. At the same time I was anxious to try my hand at reorganizing the fragments of commandos in the south-west, as my previous administrative experience to some extent qualified me for a task of that kind. The arduous fighting round the Magaliesberg during the month of December made it impossible for me to leave de la Rey, but as soon as an opportunity occurred I was determined to move towards Potchefstroom. Such an opportunity was now presented by the separation of the forces of de la Rey and Beyers just before Christmas. After our retreat from the West, de la Rey was slowly retiring westwards before one portion of the enemy and Beyers was leading the other and

larger portion southward, and I decided with my staff to accompany Beyers and so to get to my new commandos without further delay. The main object of Beyers's move was, as I stated at the end of the last chapter, to exhaust French in a wild war-dance over the West, but incidentally we had discussed the idea of attacking some part of the western stations of the enemy and we wished to test the feasibility of this idea. We therefore marched from the Magaliesberg in the direction of the upper *oog* or source of Mooi River and, leaving the commandos half-way down Mooi River at Wolvenkoppies, went on with a small body of men to reconnoitre the enemy's position at Frederikstad. The movements of the enemy, both behind us from the direction of Rustenburg and in front of us from various parts of the Krugersdorp-Klerksdorp railway, frustrated our plan. Beyers was compelled by these movements to fall back again round the flanks of the enemy to Rustenburg, while I went forward in the direction of Klerksdorp to take command of the various bodies of the Potchefstroom Commando.

PREFACE

The appearance of the first four volumes of *Selections from the Smuts Papers*, covering the period 1886–1919, completes the second part of a four-fold publication plan which began some fifteen years ago. The first part was completed when *Smuts—The Sanguine Years, 1870–1919* by Sir Keith Hancock was published in 1962. The whole programme will have been concluded when the second volume of the biography appears and is followed by further volumes of private papers covering the last thirty years of Smuts's life. Meanwhile a fifth undertaking, which is basic to all the others, has been all but accomplished—the establishment of a great Collection of Smuts Papers.

The story of the origins and course of these projects has been told in the Creighton Lecture in History entitled *The Smuts Papers*, which was delivered by Professor Hancock in 1955 and published by the Athlone Press (1956). Here only a brief account of it need be given.

Shortly after the death of General Smuts the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press sought to publish an authoritative biography of the late Chancellor of Cambridge University and invited Professor Hancock to write it. He accepted after he had had discussions with Mrs Smuts and with Mr J. C. Smuts, General Smuts's son and literary executor, and had made a first examination of his papers, then rather precariously housed in the Doornkloof farm-house where the Smuts family had lived since 1909. The collection of papers was rich, large, and in considerable disorder. Before it could be efficiently used it needed to be arranged and indexed, and this necessity led to a decision to establish the Smuts Collection.

But much more lay behind that decision than the biographer's need for orderly access to his material. In Professor Hancock's discussions with South African historians and, in particular, with two Vice-Chancellors, Dr E. G. Malherbe

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of Natal and Dr T. B. Davie of Cape Town, it became clear that the setting up of the Smuts Collection would be a permanent and valuable contribution to historical scholarship as well as a lasting memorial to an outstanding man. There also emerged at this time a suggestion that some volumes of Smuts Papers should eventually be published. The first survey of the papers had disclosed that the Collection was much richer in in-letters than in out-letters, for Smuts wrote to his friends in his own hand and kept no copies of such letters. This deficiency would have to be made good, and it was realized that owners of Smuts letters could be more confidently approached if they could be asked to donate them, or copies of them, to a properly-established permanent Collection.

It was, perhaps, to the decisive mind and will of the late Dr T. B. Davie that the establishment of the Smuts Collection was chiefly due. It was largely his drive and enthusiasm that brought into existence a properly constituted Trust to be responsible for the safe-keeping and management of the Collection and to administer its funds. It was he who persuaded a member of his staff, Dr J. van der Poel, to turn archivist and arranged for her to be seconded from the Department of History to the full-time service of the Trust for two and a half years. It was he who obtained permission from Mr J. C. Smuts temporarily to house the papers in the Jagger Library of the University of Cape Town until both the biographical and archival tasks should have been finished.

The Trust was initially endowed with a contribution of £5,000 from funds at the disposal of Mr J. C. Smuts and a grant of a like amount from the Nuffield Foundation. By January 1952 the Trust had been constituted, its members then being Sir Alfred Hennessy, Mr Gerald Orpen, Dr E. G. Malherbe, Dr Colin Steyn, Dr T. B. Davie and Mr P. C. Vellacott. Its management was undertaken, in an honorary capacity, by Messrs Syfret's Trust Company. Professor Hancock became its academic adviser. In July 1952 Dr van der Poel, with the assistance of Miss Joan Bradley, could begin the task of sorting, listing and indexing the Papers.

At the time of writing this Preface (May 1964) the indexed documents of the Collection number approximately 45,000, of which more than half—including nearly 23,000 letters—are

private papers. There are also many documents, both private and public, which are of minor importance and consequently have not been indexed. Large additions have been made to the original nucleus of the Collection at Doornkloof.

Professor Hancock and Dr van der Poel from the start exerted themselves to bring into the Collection as many out-letters as possible and many thousands of these were in fact added to it, notably the magnificent series, written to members of the Gillett and Clark families over a period of about forty years, which had been in the care of the late Mrs Margaret C. Gillett. Valuable contributions were also made by Lady Moore, by the executors of Mr and Mrs Thomas Lamont, by Mrs S. G. Millin, Mr L. S. Amery, and others. Mrs Smuts had preserved a large number of her husband's letters, although those pre-dating the Anglo-Boer War had, but for a few survivors, been destroyed as a safety measure when the British forces were about to enter Pretoria. She also gave to the Collection the volumes of press cuttings about her husband which she had begun to make even before their marriage and had continued to keep up to the time of his death. When she died, in February 1954, these *Plakboeke*, as well as all the official papers in the Collection, were, by the terms of their joint will, transferred to the State Archives at Pretoria. By that time these papers had been listed and indexed and two microfilm copies of the *Plakboeke* had been made. The private papers, bequeathed to Mr J. C. Smuts, remained in the strong-room of the Jagger Library.

It was clearly desirable that the Smuts Papers should not remain dispersed. Many of the official documents, though available elsewhere, had been annotated by Smuts; others, notably those written, usually in his own hand, during the Anglo-Boer War, are unique. To ensure the eventual reunion of all the parts of the Collection and their safe-keeping in a single repository, it was arranged that the Trustees would, on the completion of the publication and archival tasks undertaken by Professor Hancock and Dr van der Poel, transfer the documents in their charge to the South African Archives at Pretoria on conditions which would permanently safeguard the unity of the whole Collection. This was possible only because of the public spirit and generosity of Mr J. C. Smuts

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who was ready to make the magnificent gift of his father's private papers to the State Archives. Two microfilm copies of the private papers had in the meantime been begun and the indexes were prepared in triplicate. It is the intention of the Trustees to give the microfilm copies to the two universities of which Smuts was Chancellor—Cambridge and Cape Town.

Access by research students to the Collection and to the microfilm copies of it will be governed, as regards the public documents, by the rules laid down by public authority in Great Britain and South Africa: and, as regards the private documents, by definitions of 'the closed period' which the donors of some important material have stipulated as a condition of gift.

The financial resources of the Smuts Archives Trust have been relatively small and its expenditure frugal, but the sum of £10,000 with which the Trust began its activities did not suffice for the clerical assistance which has always been required, for the microfilming which has been necessary and, latterly, for academic assistance in preparing the *Selections from the Smuts Papers* for the Press. Further sustenance was needed, and was provided. A most generous additional gift of £3,500 was received from the Nuffield Foundation; the Managers of the Smuts Memorial Fund in Cambridge and the Abe Bailey Trust in Cape Town made spontaneous contributions of £4,000 and £2,000 respectively. These funds have continued to be administered, far beyond the period originally contemplated, by Syfret's Trust Company, whose always accessible officer, Mr J. A. B. Cooper, has carried the main burden of the secretarial work.

In making this first choice of something over a thousand documents out of many times that number, the editors have been guided by two main considerations: the historical importance of the selected documents, and their value as records of the life and work and thought, not only of a leading statesman, but of a man of rich and complex personality. Thus, among the papers that reflect the political issues of his times, will be found purely personal and family letters that help to depict and explain Jan Smuts. But documents of historical importance necessarily preponderate; of the many

family letters in the Collection only samples are given. It should perhaps be explained why, with one early exception, no letters from Isie Smuts appear in these volumes. Although she wrote to her husband regularly when he was away from home, she subsequently destroyed these letters. Some of her letters to other persons survive. They are lively, intelligent, humane, and they show what a loss the Smuts Papers have suffered through her self-effacement.

In selecting in-letters, the editors decided to print a relatively large number from each of a few persons, chosen because of their closeness to Smuts, or their influence on him, or their special qualities of mind or heart, or their epistolary gifts, rather than to select widely but scappily among scores of correspondents. The great bulk of the selections are from Smuts's private papers. But, at certain points in the chronological sequence, other material has been included in order to illustrate important periods of Smuts's life which are almost without record in the private papers. Some of this material has been taken from the public papers in the Smuts Collection, chiefly of the Anglo-Boer War years; some of it has been copied from documents in the State Archives at Pretoria, notably the Staatsprocureur (S.P.) series, in order to provide some idea of what Smuts did as State Attorney of the South African Republic; some of it has been taken from the Cape Town newspapers for which he wrote political articles and paragraphs in his first lean years of practice at the Bar.

The documents in these volumes have been, with two exceptions, printed without editorial excisions. The first exception is that, in some cases, only extracts have been given from Smuts's longer writings, though others, notably the *Memoirs of the Boer War*, have been printed in full. The second exception is the greater number of the letters to members of the Gillett and Clark families. These have been taken from typed copies which the late Mrs M. C. Gillett presented to the Smuts Collection. The editors are satisfied that the excisions made in the typescript by Mrs Gillett are minor ones; on the other hand her footnotes to the letters, and the background material which she compiled, are valuable additions to the Smuts Collection.

The translation of Dutch and Afrikaans originals has been

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entirely the work of Dr J. van der Poel. The annotation of all the documents has also been her work, with some valuable assistance which is acknowledged below. The biographical notes will be found, arranged in alphabetical order, at the end of Volume IV. The footnotes are explanatory, not interpretive; nor has one wished to provide in them a potted history of Smuts's times. If pedantry has been avoided and reasonable curiosity satisfied, the notes will have served their purpose.

In deciding questions of transcription the editors, in consultation with the publishers, have taken the view that intelligibility and readability should be the chief criteria. They have not reproduced oddities of writing, disturbing to the reader, which the original documents may contain. Thus, they have usually expanded abbreviations, but not when these are significant, and not in the Dutch and Afrikaans documents, which will be used by comparatively few readers. They have improved wayward punctuation. They have corrected obvious slips in spelling and syntax made by educated writers, but have not corrected the mistakes of unlettered writers nor, in the text, the misquotations of the literate. They have written all dates and addresses in a standard form and have introduced some order into the chaotic use of capitals. Dates inserted by the editors have been enclosed in square brackets and uncertain readings in angle brackets. Each document has been given a serial number and a reference to the Smuts Collection, e.g., Vol. 8, no. 118; Vol. CVI no. 20; Box C, no. 5. The volumes with arabic numbers contain the private letters, those with roman numerals the official papers; the boxes contain the private papers other than letters.

The editors have throughout the greater part of their work had the good fortune to find the best of colleagues. Miss Joan Bradley in the early years had a large share in listing and indexing the Collection. More recently, as academic assistant to the editors, she has shared the heavy task of reading the proofs of the *Selections* and the research required for making the notes. Miss Winifred Greenshields has for many years been a devoted secretary whose varied duties have gone far beyond those of a typist. Together they have, with the minimum of editorial supervision, made the index. But for their

help the prolonged and meticulous task of editing the *Selections* could not have been undertaken.

The editors are deeply grateful to the directing authorities of the libraries and other institutions which they have used in the course of their work—the State Archives at Pretoria, the South African Public Library in Cape Town, the Jagger Library of the University of Cape Town, the Library of the Royal Empire Society in London and Goldsmiths' Library of the University of London. The Trustees of the South African Public Library have allowed them to make photographic copies of the Smuts letters in the Merriman Collection and to include a large number of these in the *Selections*. The kindness of Dr J. F. Pafford, Goldsmiths' Librarian of the University of London, in providing the great boon, in a vast and crowded city, of a private study within easy reach of a splendid array of reference books is remembered with particular gratitude.

Of the six Trustees who in 1951 accepted responsibility for the linked enterprises described in this Preface only Dr E. G. Malherbe is still serving. His present co-Trustees are Dr J. P. Duminy, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, Mr C. S. Corder, of Syfret's Trust, Cape Town, and Mr H. S. Bennett, Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. The editors wish to record their deep appreciation of the support which they have received from the present Trustees as well as from their predecessors, whose names were recorded earlier in this Preface. The editors wish also to express their indebtedness to the Cambridge University Press for its invariable patience, courtesy and helpfulness, and, together with the Syndics of the Press, to acknowledge with gratitude a grant from the Smuts Memorial Fund towards the production of these volumes.

18 May 1964

JEAN VAN DER POEL
W. K. HANCOCK

