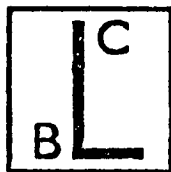


# WHEN SMUTS GOES

by

ARTHUR KEPPEL-JONES



**LEFT BOOK CLUB EDITION**  
**NOT FOR SALE TO THE PUBLIC**

**WHEN SMUTS GOES**

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A History of South Africa from 1952 to 2010  
First Published in 2015

by

**ARTHUR KEPPEL-JONES**

Senior Lecturer in History, University of the Witwatersrand

LONDON  
VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD

1947

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All the characters in this book are fictitious, and are not intended to represent any living persons.

## NOTE

For their valuable help and advice I wish to thank my wife, my colleagues Paul Guénault and Julius Lewin, and Kenneth Kirkwood, who suggested the title.

*Published in the Union of South Africa by the African Bookman  
of Capetown.*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY RICHARD CLAY AND COMPANY, LTD.,  
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

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## INTRODUCTION

**P**OLITICAL DISCUSSION in South Africa is distinguished from the polemics of most countries by its unreality. With us conventional jargon, childish pretences and a tacit agreement to ignore certain categories of facts take the place of an objective handling of the actual situation. We speak of politics, of race relations and nationality in words which have little if any relation to our real sentiments. We cry "Peace!" where there is no peace. We speak incessantly of goodwill and co-operation and getting together as though the lack of these things were due to an oversight and could be remedied by words. We almost succeed in deceiving ourselves into the belief that the jargon must be the reality and the motives that really actuate us only an hallucination. The stranger who tries to understand our proceedings is accordingly bewildered and must give up the attempt.

One aspect of this unreality is the irresponsible optimism about the future of the country which is very generally expressed. We cling to such comforting thoughts as *Môre is nog 'n dag*, *Alles sal regkom* and *It can't happen here*. We tell ourselves *ad nauseam* that "South Africa has a great future": but we have not troubled to discover whether the ingredients we have put into the dish have, in fact, ever turned out very well on other occasions. The objective student of South African and world history, on hearing this hopeful talk, rubs his eyes and wonders if he is dreaming. Or is it the optimists who are dreaming?

This dreaming is an expensive luxury. Reformers who see the necessity of drastic measures beat helplessly against a wall of apathy built of the bricks of optimism. People will not be receptive of constructive ideas till they are brought down to earth, with an unpleasant bump, from the Cloud-Cuckoo-Land in which they are still floating.

Some people have tried to perform this service by a frank consideration of the future of the gold industry; others have done it in terms of soil erosion. This book attempts it by working out

the next half-century of South African history as it is likely to be shaped by the political forces which at present dominate the scene.

Everyone must hope that it will not work out that way. If there were no grounds for such hope it would have been a waste of time to write this book. But let the reader think well before saying "It can't happen here". Let him ask himself whether such a judgment is based on reason or on misplaced faith. One purpose of the book is to convince him that the salvation of the country can lie only in a reversal of historic tendencies, a reversal so thorough as to constitute a revolution. But if South Africa is to continue moving along the same tracks as in the past and the present, then, it is submitted, the future can be fairly easily predicted; it will be found in the following pages.

As the title suggests, the book deals with the period after the retirement of General Smuts. That event is generally expected to divide the immediate future from the era that is to follow it. But no attention is paid here to the problem of party leadership or to the parts which the present politicians may be expected to play. Even the circumstances of the present Prime Minister's retirement are omitted. General forces and tendencies, not personalities, form the subject-matter. None of the characters is intended to represent any person now living, and it would be unprofitable to try to identify them. It is naturally assumed that the events described here would lead to radical changes in the personnel of politics, business and the professions.

Certain assumptions have been made in writing this history. First, no remarkable change in international relations has been foreseen. That game has been allowed to go on according to the well-known rules. What if this assumption is wrong? It may err in one of two directions: it may be too optimistic or too pessimistic. If the former—if the nations are really heading for World War III—then the future of South Africa is a thing of small account anyway. If, on the other hand, the nations were to set up some kind of world government, it could be argued that the Republic whose history is told here would fare even worse than has been suggested.

The second assumption is that no scientific or military developments occur which have any effect on war or politics. This assumption is certainly wrong; but it would be difficult to imagine any such developments that would give our ox-wagon Republic an easier passage than it has had in this history. Their effect would almost certainly be the opposite.

The reader will notice that the ~~element~~ West Africa is entirely omitted from the story. No map is made of it. This is because at the time of writing the future of that territory is about to be considered by the United Nations. A decision may have been arrived at before the book is published, but what the decision will be is still anybody's guess.

The great and fundamental assumption, however, is that the Nationalist Party will come into power. In this connection it must be remembered that the Nationalists are the principal opposition party, and that it is an essential characteristic of the parliamentary system that a party in that position will sooner or later take office. This history tells the consequence of that accession to power.

It must not be thought that these revelations concern merely the Nationalist Party. They concern deep-rooted tendencies in South African politics and thought, tendencies which merely happen at present to find their most unequivocal expression in that party. But, as that is so, the Nationalists must not complain if they have the highest priority on the black list which enlightened and humane South Africans are forced to compile.

They cherish the vision of a Republic. May they derive instruction, if not pleasure, from a perusal of its history.