

**Question** — As an outsider here when the Smith Government announced its agreement, you couldn't help thinking that the last 12 1/2 years had been a blind alley, that Mr. Smith from the very beginning was like the Anglo-Saxon king who tried to stop the tide coming in.

**Mr. Holland** — I couldn't disagree more. If we had the same decision to make, we would make the same decision as we made 12 years ago.

**Mr. Mew** — I think it's frightening to hear Mr. Holland say that they'd do it all again. What we, the liberal whites, have been concerned about over the last decade or so is that the Government never appeared to learn any lessons. It has been said that Mr. Smith seemed to be out of touch with the outside world. I think he is out of touch with the realities inside, never mind outside. He has dragged us over a decade into a worsening racial situation, into an economic disaster and now into a full-scale war which is absorbing a major part of our national income. Mr. Smith has finally produced a half-baked agreement which only has perhaps a 50-50 chance of forming a basis for a true settlement.

**Mrs. Mitchell** — I tend to spend less of my energy on how wrong Smith has been and look at what chances there are of him getting it right while there is still time. Unless the man is capable of changing completely, and he has shown himself to be unable to project into the future since 1965, why should he change now? Can he see for instance that his alliance with internal blacks is actually going to be counterproductive to the objective which he seeks, and the objectives which probably unite each one of us four here, and that is to keep international Communism from getting a foothold in southern Africa? It can't come off because the international community sees the futility of excluding the Patriotic Front. They realize that the moment they recognize this internal settlement they will launch an ideological war, East versus West, with the Russians supplying the Patriotic Front and the South Africans and anybody else who cares keeping the war going indefinitely on the other side. We simply become a battleground.

**Q** — Would you not agree now finally that it has been a mistake to try and uphold white control in Rhodesia?

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — No, I think the decision to assume sovereign independence was a correct one. Where I believe we went wrong was in chasing after a settlement with the British Government and with other forces in the world on their terms. I believe we should have decided right from the word go that we were going to tailor-make a solution which was ideal for the Rhodesian situation — which drew upon the experience that we had gained from events in Africa and created something which gave every community here a chance of establishing themselves in a permanent sense and believing that they had a long-term future.

**Mr. Mew** — I would like to know what makes you believe, Ted (Sutton-Pryce), that some alternative solution is possible? What makes you believe that African nationalists are totally different in Rhodesia to any other African nationalists? Why should they accept that the rules should be suddenly changed at the last minute?

**Mrs. Mitchell** — Ted, don't you see that we are prisoners and victims of our own history here? We came here with our Westminster kind of government, we set up an example of British institutions of democracy and we boasted to the black people of those traditions. We gave false promises to blacks that if they rose to a condition of equality with us and our institutions that all would be given to them. You cannot educate blacks in those hopes and then tell them that they are different and that you must now withdraw your promises because they see this as a continuation of the same kind of discriminatory practice that you have perpetrated in the past. You are telling them virtually that you are a superior breed and that they are inferior.

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — You overstate the case. I am not a racist in any sense as an individual. I am, I hope, a political realist. I look at the history of Africa and particularly the history over the last 30 years and see a number of things that have happened in the postwar rush of granting independence.

In every single case, particularly in the former British colonial territories, they have implanted a constitution based on the Western democratic formula of a unitary parliament and opportunity for opposition and government parties to contest the election and so on, and where there have been minority communities of one sort or another, and not solely white, they have tried to build into that constitution some sort of parliamentary representation for those groups. And in every single case that particular formula has failed. One dominant, normally tribal clique seizes power and holds it until it is overthrown by a military coup. There is no constitutional way in which these governments can be changed. Now it appears to me that in perpetuating a formula that has failed dismally in similar circumstances you are barking up the wrong tree. One should now look for a formula which takes account of these facts.

**Mr. Holland** — You say you are a realist. Wouldn't your future government require a white hierarchy to run it?

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — Not because it's white. But I believe for reasons of security as far as our present situation is concerned and for economic reasons it is necessary to have more white faces than black.

**Mr. Mew** — I was interested to find Ted relating the situation in historical terms because there is another aspect of the history of Africa which is important to look at and that is the history of those territories where, like Rhodesia, there has been a fairly large and significant white population — Algeria, Angola, Mozambique. Historically in every case the whites have steadfastly refused to recognize the rumblings of discontent for what they were for 10, 15, 20 years. In this sense I believe that the white Government and Mr. Smith in particular have done precisely the same. They perpetrated a fraud — the fraud of meritocracy. It's a living fraud because no matter what an African did, no matter what he became, professionally, intellectually, even if he became a millionaire businessman, he was — and is still — discriminated against. In the end people will rebel against it. This is what historically is happening in Africa.

**Q** — There certainly is a strongly held view in the Western world that Mr. Smith's stand from 1965 on until very recently had a strongly racial connotation to it: the white man over the black man at whatever cost. Would you accept that?

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — No, no, definitely not.

**Mr. Holland** — No. Ninety percent of Europeans in Rhodesia are defending their cause for purely selfish reasons. I am 61 years old. Everything I own, probably the same as Ted, is in this country. And I don't intend becoming a third-class citizen anywhere else in the world. So if I say I am going to die here willy-nilly that is the actual fact, and if they force us, then that's exactly what we'll do. I am a salesman and a salesman has to adapt and has to understand the other man's point of view. I mix with Africans a great deal and I think I understand them and I know they understand me. I will make every effort to see the new regime in and to live with it. So will everybody in this room because they damn well have to.

**Q** — Mr. Sutton-Pryce is arguing that everywhere else in Africa majority rule has proven to be a disaster. What makes you, Ken (Mew), think that it won't be here — that a multiracial democracy can evolve here?

**Mr. Mew** — Because for the first thing, what we've achieved in education. Let's face it, the Europeans have a lot to be proud of in this country. They have built up a state which hardly has a parallel elsewhere, except perhaps South Africa. In almost any terms you like — in education enrollments, in graduates, in the strength of the economy, in the breadth of the economy — we have produced a state which is strong. Also, there has been a fairly broad band of white-black contact over the years, for 20 years anyway, which augurs well.

**Mrs. Mitchell** — Well I would differ a little from Ken not so much in the spirit of what he says but I don't believe now that we will evolve a multiracial democracy, a totally free-enterprise society here. I think we have lost that time. We should have started a few years ago.

**Q** — It was too late in 1965 also?

**Mrs. Mitchell** — I think the blacks have learned something by being the last in the decolonization queue. They have learned something of the errors in the countries to the north and they would like to build something unique. That is their hope and that is mine.

**Q** — Are you convinced that the people who will run this country, whoever they may eventually be, will run it in a way that will persuade a significant number, perhaps even a majority, of white people to remain in this country?

**Mrs. Mitchell** — If they are not purely the greedy, quick-buck-making entrepreneurial international exploiter of cheap labor and all the rest. If they want to live here because it is a beautiful country and accept that it will go at a very much slower pace, with no quick profits, I think they'll stay.

**Mr. Mew** — The majority of us whites will stay provided

# The World

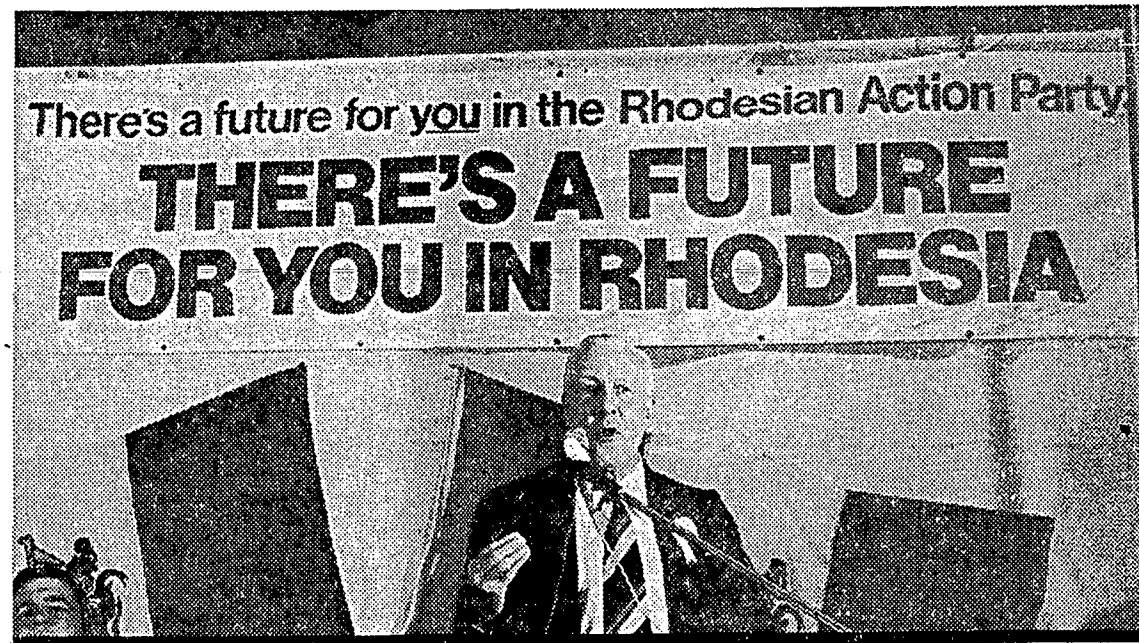
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## Four White Rhodesians Talk About The Future

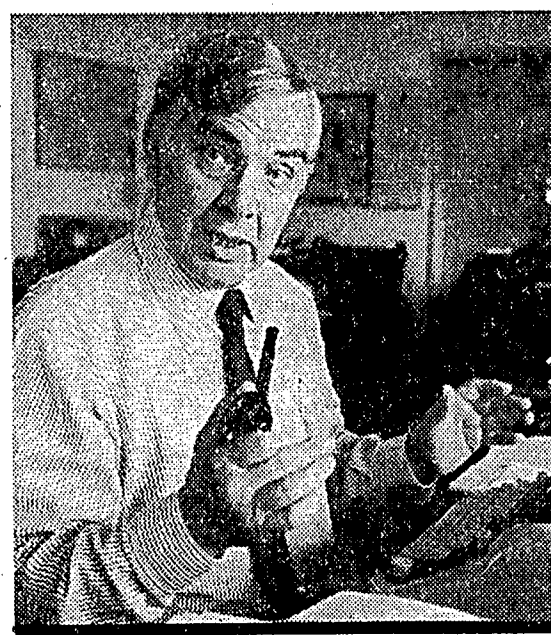
Four Rhodesian whites of varying political views recently spoke with John F. Burns, The New York Times correspondent in southern Africa, about their fears and hopes for themselves and the country in light of the "internal" settlement reached by Prime Minister Ian D. Smith and three black leaders this month. The four were Edward Sutton-Pryce, a member of the right-wing Rhodesian Action Party; Kenneth Mew, principal of Rancho House College, a multiracial adult education center in Salisbury; Leslie Holland, marketing manager for the Salisbury Bottling Company, and Diana Mitchell, a principal figure in the National Unifying Force, a liberal group that is urging inclusion of the Patriotic Front, a guerrilla organization, in a Rhodesian settlement. On this page are excerpts of the conversation, which took place at Melkies Hotel in Salisbury.



Leslie Holland: I will make every effort to see the new regime in and to live with it. So will everybody in this room; they damn well have to.



Edward Sutton-Pryce: I am not a racist in any sense as an individual. I am, I hope, a political realist. It appears to me that in perpetuating a formula that has failed dismally in similar circumstances you are barking up the wrong tree.



Kenneth Mew: The Europeans have a lot to be proud of in this country. They have built up a state which hardly has a parallel elsewhere. Also, there has been a fairly broad band of white-black contact over the years which augurs well.



Diana Mitchell: I'm not stupid enough to say we can all put on woolly wigs and Afro clothing and pretend to be Africans. But I will conform to the building of this completely new society. I have every intention of staying and enjoying the process.

Photographs for The New York Times by Louise Gubb

the society is one in which one could live. In other words, I believe that whites will stay if we get change by peaceful means, and it seemed to organize growth. If this peace initiative falls through and change eventually comes by intensified violence, then I would envisage a fairly large exit of the white people.

**Q** — You have spoken of the discrimination against the African in this country over 50 years. Is it not then inevitable that when finally he gains powers he will exact a certain price for this?

**Mr. Mew** — It depends on who assumes power. I think unavoidably in the early days there will be incidents, not very pleasant incidents, between white and black. But the leaders — I am not talking now about the political leaders, but African leaders in business, in the professions and so on — they will do their utmost to bring about as rapidly as possible a stable situation because I think they all accept the whites have a place here. And certainly the political leaders do.

**Mr. Holland** — Ken, they need us, they need us to hold the thing together, if only for the next 10 years.

**Mr. Mew** — But the qualification to be made there is that they need us on their terms, not on ours.

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — This is the significant difference. The first problem that I see is despite the fact that there is some recognition amongst the leaders of the importance of the white community, they will be under enormous pressure from the rank and file of their followers to fulfill a lot of the promises that were made down the line. There will be a large

program of Africanization for its own sake, regardless of merit or any individual case. So that a lot of people who don't belong to the dominant group, or have an affinity to that government group will have their economic base removed.

Secondly, I think it is inevitable that the black majority government will integrate all the presently segregated educational, health and residential facilities, which I think will alter the standards which the white community has come to expect. But I think the biggest worry of all is the existence of these intertribal rivalries. You have got two terrorist armies waiting to get at each other's throats, let alone to try and topple the present administration, and the stabilizing element that keeps these warring factions apart is the presence of the white community in substantial numbers in the security forces. You remove that stabilizing element and I don't believe any black administration will have the ability to resist the physical pressures of the Patriotic Front. Into that pool of intertribal war the whole nation will drag down and there will be chaos.

**Q** — I want to ask Mr. Holland what kind of a country you'd expect to be living in in 1990? What kind of future do you foresee for your children and grandchildren?

**Mr. Holland** — Let's face it, unless the West wakes up, it is quite obvious that the Russians have decided that Rhodesia will not have a democratic form of government because Rhodesia is the jumping-off place for defeating South Africa.

**Mr. Mew** — We've never had a democratic form of government really.

**Mrs. Mitchell** — I get Les's (Holland) point. He is saying that the Russians are hell bent to prevent any kind of settlement. But I don't think that that detracts from our argument that by providing a marvelous arena for future racial hatred and clashing here, we are giving the Russians every kind of entrée.

**Q** — Let's talk about the agreement made March 3. Ken, you speak of your suspicions. What do you think Mr. Smith was trying to do if not to transfer power to the black community on terms that will maintain the white presence here, which you yourself say is essential?

**Mr. Mew** — I don't know what Mr. Smith is trying to do. All I do know is that the actions of Mr. Smith since he accepted majority rule in September 1976 have not been the actions and the statements of a person who was ready to relinquish power. And this document leaves an awful lot to be desired. No one calls it a settlement, it's an agreement. The Patriotic Front has some profound arguments to put forward. They argue that Mr. Smith is negotiating only because of them, the war, and to some extent this is true. His arm was twisted, he had no options but to accept majority rule.

**Q** — Let me ask you, are you prepared to live in an integrated community? I mean, are you prepared to share all your facilities with black people, are you prepared to have black people living next door to you?

**Mr. Holland** — Yes.

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — No, I think there are certain problems that flow from this that have nothing directly to do with race. Perhaps I'm overstating it by saying nothing to do with race, but where the racial issue is exaggerated, shall I say. The fact is that people generally prefer to live with their own kind. This is a human requirement, if you like. For the average man, the investment he makes in his home is the biggest investment he makes in his life. He commits himself to paying 25 percent of his income for 25 years. Now again one has seen elsewhere that where you change the content of a particular residential community it does have a bearing on the maintenance of those values, so you're putting at risk the investment that the individual has made.

**Mr. Mew** — By saying let's keep this area white and this school white, you are removing from the African his claim to any kind of freedom to make a decision for himself. Smith never realized that, that this was a hypothetical problem, because for years Asians have been free to buy in European areas and how many are living in European areas? Six? Five? People will naturally flow to where their cultural and other interests are met. But we never gave the African the freedom to make his own decisions. The government failed because underlying all the issues — the war, the economic issue, education — was discrimination.

Now the classic example was the 7 o'clock bar closing. It came about because you said the Africans, no matter what their calibre was, doctors, surgeons, university lecturers, could only drink up to 7 o'clock in white bars. Right? That's only two years ago. Now, I went to see the Minister of Internal Affairs and I said, "You're making it bloody hard for us to try and bring about some kind of decent society here." And he said "But you don't understand. Do you know how much money is being spent in European bars by Africans? Something like \$40,000 in Salisbury alone per week."

"That's a lot of money," I said. And he said, "Well don't you see, we want them to spend it in the hotels in the black townships." I said, "Has anybody ever thought of asking Africans where they want to spend it?" And a hotel manager friend of mine said he only realized what kind of an impact this has when three Africans sitting at the next table — two doctors and one university lecturer — called for a drink and the chap said, sorry, 7 o'clock, out.

**Q** — Mr. Holland, are you prepared to live in an integrated society?

**Mr. Holland** — You know what we've just been discussing boils down to the almighty dollar. The legislation was passed that an African will not live in Greystone Park (a Salisbury suburb), that legislation was brought to Parliament by the guy with the money. In two years time, Greystone Park will still be inhabited, basically, by the people with money, be they white, brown, green or yellow.

On Sept. 24, 1976, when the old man [Mr. Smith] made his speech accepting majority rule, I immediately said: "Leslie, here it is, in two years' time, if you want to go to the Andrew Fleming [Salisbury's leading hospital for whites], you will have an Asian on this side, and an African on that side, and God help me, if you've got children, and you want them educated, you will have to educate them with people who may be twice their age." And I had to reconcile this.

**Q** — So you're going to stay?

**Mr. Holland** — I wouldn't want to become a third-class citizen in Britain. I have relatives there who I haven't seen for 40 years, who wouldn't like to see me under these circumstances, and vice-versa. And I don't want to face the same situation in five years' time in South Africa. So I have to stay here. In three or four years' time I have to resign from my present company anyway, and my plans are quite simple. I've bought this 30-acre farm, and it's a glorious place in the middle of the highlands. We have 7,000 pine trees there, a little apple orchard, a little plum orchard, a running stream, water all the year around. I have three little dams, two of them are stocked with trout. Once I go up there I intend to run sheep and a limited number of cattle, pigs etc., and be as far as possible self-sufficient. And this is the sort of immediate future that I've got and I can't see at this stage, unless it's a radical change, a normal change of government from black to white affecting that.

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — I'm not going. I've made no plans to go at the moment because I'm not prepared to accept that majority rule with all the pitfalls must happen. If I find that life becomes for me intolerable, then I'll have to make that decision, but I'm not making it now.

**Mr. Mew** — I've no plans. Perhaps I have an advantage over the other people present here. I spent the first 17 years of my life in a slum in Liverpool. So this question of freedom of movement is a very powerful one with me. Shortly after I left the U.K., the Beatles became famous. And they lived more or less round the corner from me. And that's when I realized what real freedom means, it's the freedom to make your own choices. And I realized how stupid we've been here by keeping the lid on the kettle, as it were, because the Beatles, once they'd made it, and they made a million very quickly, they could go and buy a house in Regent's Park. And next to buying Buckingham Palace, this is the greatest thing you could do. But it made me think about the essence of our problem here, and this is the essence: that we have been denying the people here their freedom. Smith set himself up as God, and inevitably catastrophe followed.

**Mr. Sutton-Pryce** — Now you're going to have a black god, and you won't be free to make your decisions either.

**Mr. Mew** — The circumstances under which we've been forced — forced — to make changes here have made it essential to face the fact that all is not going to be well here. You see, I've no illusions about the changes that are taking place, I've no illusions about the problems we're likely to face, including a continuing conflict of some sort. But I do believe that there's a paradox here: the more Europeans stay and help through this period, in other words, commit themselves to Zimbabwe — it's going to be called Zimbabwe, there's no argument about that, no matter how much we like or dislike it — and the more whites who commit themselves now to working it through and say, well, we've made a bit of a ruddy mess, the better it will be.

**Q** — And you, Diana?

**Mrs. Mitchell** — Yes, certainly I am staying. I am probably the only one of the four of us who was born here, my husband likewise, which is very rare in this country, and having been born here we'd like to die here, under whatever conditions are brought about. The only thing that would get me out would be to be marched to the border at the point of a gun.

My husband is a very private person, and I don't know how well he will adapt to an African culture. I have already adapted over the last 10 years. I am beginning to realize that I could enjoy changing the speed at which I think things always have to be done. I think things will slow down, I don't know if this is a particularly bad thing. I've regretted that we have had a transplantation of a sort of an English way of life, with all its institutions intact, in this country, when there's so much richness and so much to be gained from some kind of merging of the cultures. I'm not stupid enough to say we can all put on woolly wigs and put on Afro clothing and pretend to be Africans. I think we are uniquely European because of our institutions. But I will conform to the building of this completely new society. I believe it's going to be difficult, that it may even be stillborn in the face of the terrible dangers that lie ahead in the immediate future. But if it should come about I have every intention of staying, not only helping to make it work, but enjoying the process.