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Date

PRETORIA NEWS

Smith's prepared to step down—son

LONDON. — Mr Ian Smith would be quite prepared to stand down if that were in the best interests of obtaining a settlement in Rhodesia, says his son, Alec Smith.

In London for a Moral Rearmament conference, Mr Alec Smith said the Rhodesian premier, who is regarded by black nationalists as a stumbling block to a settlement, had told him he was "quite prepared to leave office for the sake of a settlement." He could not recall whether his father had ever made this statement in public.

On the question of the Prime Minister being able to carry through changes with the consent of all members of the Rhodesian Front, Alec Smith said there were a group of 12 who were against fundamental government changes, which was a problem.

Confident

He believed the government had to be prepared to change although Ian Smith had previously

always insisted he could never envisage majority rule in his lifetime.

Alec Smith says he is confident about the future for white Rhodesians although some Rhodesians feared a black government, particularly when they looked at countries like Mozambique and Uganda.

"For my part, I am dedicated to Rhodesia. In five or 10 years whatever government we have I still hope to live there.

I hope to be able to work towards good government whether it is white, black or multi-racial."

Capitalists

Good government, however, would not be "communist orientated" as Rhodesia was a capitalist country and part of the Western system.

Asked if he was associated with Moral Rearmament because he was anti-communist, Alec Smith said: "I am not anti or pro-communist. I believe communism and capitalism can together find a new system for the world."

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