

SOUTH AFRICA

The prediction made in certain quarters early in the British program of economic sanctions against Rhodesia is coming to fulfillment. It was feared that South Africa might come to the rescue of the run-away British colony. Well, that fear is no longer speculation. It is fact.

South Africa has been supplying oil to neighboring Rhodesia in quantities sufficient to blunt the edge of the British embargo.

Johannesburg is not likely to limit the flow of this vital fuel unless the drain causes an internal shortage. This conclusion is based on a statement by Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd outlining the South Africa government's policy on the white-ruled colony of Rhodesia.

In a speech opening his ruling Party's campaign for South Africa's elections on March 30, Verwoerd denied reports that the increasing

flow of oil from South Africa to Rhodesia had caused ill - feelings between his government and Britain.

He also denied that Britain had threatened South Africa with sanctions if the flow did not stop. At the same time he agreed that the flow of oil and other goods was benefitting Rhodesia and would continue to do so.

"We do not believe in sanctions, and if any commodity available in this country is traded with Rhodesia — whether it be groceries, steel, machinery or oil or petrol — the government would be taking part in a boycott if it were to impede such trade," he declared.

In London, the British government expressed its concern to Portugal about the flow of oil from Portuguese Mozambique to Rhodesia despite the sanctions against the rebel colony. Though it has twice expressed itself to South Africa, Britain does not appear to be fretted over South Africa's assistance to Rhodesia. This is rather puzzling. Britain's Prime Minister Harold Wilson is stronger today politically than he was at the beginning of the African crisis. His firm stand against the rebel colony and his efforts to bring peace to Southeast Asia have created a climate of opinion surprisingly favorable to him. Apparently, he is unwilling or unprepared to toss more fat into the fire by bringing South Africa into the focus of the Rhodesia crisis.

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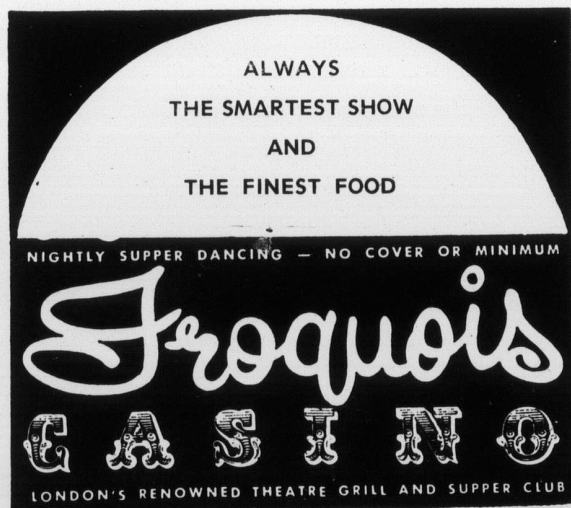


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