



Alec Smith . . . waved to the Queen.
Picture by SELWYN TAIT

By RIC WILSON

WHEN Smith of Rhodesia bows out of politics, there's a Smith of Zimbabwe ready to step in.

He is Alec Smith (28), youngest son of the Rhodesian Prime Minister.

In Johannesburg yesterday, Alec revealed he is already playing a background role in his country's delicate political situation.

"I have acted as an intermediary, talking to both Black and White groups in Rhodesia," he said. "I cannot go into details because of the delicacy of the situation at the moment.

"People are trying to talk to each other but every time a Black group gets involved in negotiations they are immediately branded as sellouts by their rivals."

Alec, who is employed fulltime by Moral Re-Armament in Rhodesia, said he would consider standing for Parliament in a majority-ruled Zimbabwe if he thought he could play a constructive role.

"I will stay in Rhodesia — the only way anyone will get me out is by physically carrying me to the border and throwing me out," he said.

Alec and his father agree politically, but they didn't always. "He has changed realistically. But then any politician who is not prepared to adapt to

After Smith of Rhodesia; Smith of Zimbabwe

changing circumstances is not doing his job.

"It is inability to change that caused the split in the Rhodesian Front. My father has no more political ambition. He wants to see the settlement issue through, then retire. He is not angling for any political post under a Black government," he said.

Alec, who flies home to Salisbury today, has been in South Africa since Monday, taking part in a film being made on the American gospel group The Living Sound, currently touring the country.

Last month he was in London for a Moral Re-Armament conference. "The British Government gave me special permission to enter the country because I was invited to the conference by the British MRA," he explained.

At the same time as he was in London, Commonwealth leaders were holding their annual conference and talking mainly about his father.

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