

NAMIBIA AND THE STRUGGLE FOR ITS LIBERATION (REVIEW)

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I am not sure whether the theme of my talk... is the hackneyed one of the "eternal triangle", two suitors claiming the hand of one fair lady, whether it is the oft-told tale of the stern guardian refusing the hand of his own ward in marriage to her persistent wooer, with whom in this case she has been living for the last fifty years.¹

The above statement puts in a nutshell the position of Namibia in its relation to South Africa and the United Nations. However, Namibia is not cherished because of its beauty, or for that matter its wealth; rather, it is the occupation of this territory by South Africa with its obnoxious policy of apartheid that has intrigued the whole world for many years. A quick review of its history, physical characteristics and resources, and its people and their government will serve as a background to the struggle for the liberation of this territory by the people of Namibia.

Namibia is a vast and almost empty space. Almost half the size of Kenya, nine times the size of Ghana, slightly smaller in size than Nigeria and Tanzania, Namibia has a population of less than half a million people, with a density of one to two people per square mile.² It is bounded by Angola to the north and the Union of South Africa to the south, while to the west there lies the Pacific Ocean. The coastal strip to the west, sometimes referred to as the "skeleton coast", is a desert, the Namib, varying in width from fifty to eighty miles, almost uninhabitable except for the diamond workings near the mouth of the Orange River, and the two ports of Lüderitz and Walvis Bay. To the east lies the sandy, scrubland of the Kalahari desert, sharing a common border four to five hundred miles along with Botswana. Most of the people occupy the central plateau of the country, two to six thousand feet above sea level, between the Namib and Kalahari deserts.³

The population of the country is divided into three categories: the Africans, numbering from 447,000 to 572,000; 73,000 Europeans (Germans and South Africans of English or Dutch origin); and 22,000 Coloureds.⁴ The country itself is divided into two areas: the police zone, reserved for the white settlement, including a third of other non-whites, while the northern Bantu areas are occupied exclusively by the other two-thirds of the African people, the only exception being white officials and missionaries.⁵ The Bantu lived in four indigenous areas until the creation of the Bantustans in the late 1960's, the Ovambos being the most numerous, comprising 45.5

per cent of the total population. Each Bantustan area has its own government, headed by a council of chiefs who in most cases have no say in matters affecting their own people, as they are puppets of the South African government. The other groups include the Hereros (6.7 per cent), the Hottentots or Nama (6.6 per cent), the Bergdamara (8.4 per cent), the Bushmen (2.2 per cent), and the Coloureds (2.4 per cent).⁶ Each of these groups is dispersed in the police zone but restricted to certain areas in the reserves. The Bushmen have no permanent settlement even today, as a result of their mode of subsistence. The Rehebothers (2.1 per cent), coloured persons of mixed origin whose forebears emigrated from Cape Colony in the late nineteenth century, occupy the best land in the centre of the police zone.⁷

When Namibia was picked up by the Germans during the scramble for Africa, it was because Bismarck hoped to use it for diplomatic manoeuvres aimed at maintaining Germany's predominance in Europe rather than for economic motives. During the German occupation which lasted till World War I, Namibia almost became desolate. The period was coloured with brutality, entailing mass executions that within a short period decimated the Hereros from 80,000 to 15,000 men, women and children. In the process most of the best land was appropriated for the Europeans, thus depriving the people of their most cherished property. The First World War came as a blessing to the people of what was then known as Tanganyika (now Tanzania), itself a German possession, in that it later became a mandated territory and subsequently attained independence in 1961. But for Namibia the story was different. Namibia was conquered by General Botha of South Africa in a crushing defeat of the Germans in 1915. This right of conquest became null and void when Namibia became a mandate in 1919, but South still defies international law by maintaining the right of conquest at the expense of the mandate system. The attainment of mandate status by Namibia is the turning point in the history of that country in terms of its relation with South Africa.

At the peace conference in 1919, under article 119 of the Treaty of Versailles, the future of Namibia was determined by the principal allied and associate powers. The principle of non-annexation and self-determination was upheld. In this context, in article 22 of the Covenant Germany as a defeated power was stripped of all its colonies; those territories whose inhabitants were not yet able to stand on their own feet were to be under the tutelage of more advanced nations, which would serve as "a sacred trust of civilization". Accordingly, the territories were classed as A, B, or C mandates, according to their level of development in a descending order.

Namibia fell into the C category and, since it was contiguous to South Africa, the latter assumed responsibility as a mandatory power in 1920. The main obligation of the mandatory power were to develop the territories so acquired politically, economically, and socially. However, enlightened statesmen have realized that this was nothing other than idealism as

contained in the Fourteen Points of Woodrow Wilson, with his colleagues Clemenceau and Lloyd George.⁸

In assuming the responsibility of a mandatory power over Namibia, both Botha and Field Marshal Jan Smuts of South Africa knew that it was a pious gesture on the part of the League of Nations to put Namibia under the tutelage of South Africa. In reality this was the annexation of Namibia to South Africa. This is understandable in the light of Botha's statement to the effect that "He would support the Covenant because he knew that the League of Nations would consist mostly of the same people who were present on that day, who understood the position and who would not make it impossible for any mandatory to govern the area".⁹ Further, Smuts himself revealed South Africa's intention of annexation when he indicated that Namibia was a state "inhabited by barbarians, who not only cannot possibly govern themselves, but to whom it would be impracticable to apply any ideas of political self-determination in the European sense".¹⁰

The Covenant itself could not have been much more outspoken when it laid down that territories such as Namibia, "owing to the sparseness of their population...or their geographical contiguity to the territory of the mandatory...can best be administered (under the laws of the mandatory) as integral portions of its territory, subject to the safeguards above mentioned in the interests of the indigenous population".¹¹

The period after World War I reveals clearly that the Union of South Africa had no qualms about governing Namibia as an integral part of South Africa. Smuts himself revealed to a German deputation at Windhoek that "the mandate over South West Africa was nothing else but annexation". In 1925 he further confirmed the position of South Africa when he delivered a speech in Parliament:

I do not think that it is necessary for us to annex South West Africa to the Union. The mandate for me is enough, and it should be enough for the Union. It gives the Union such complete sovereignty, not only administrative, but legislative, that we need not ask for anything more.¹²

Whatever may have been the ideals which motivated the statesmen who conceived the framework of the mandate system, the particular time following the First World War was by no means a time favourable to the cause of the people of Namibia. For this was the era following the Boer War when Britain was imbued with the sense of appeasing the white settlers in the Union of South Africa. It was a period when the British-Boer struggle for racial supremacy in South Africa had resulted in the Act of Union of 1910, depriving the Africans of any political rights. There is no doubt that the British government was set on the road of winning over the confidence of the Boers at whatever cost.

The strategic importance and the newly discovered riches of Namibia

were very tempting to Boers. Thus, a bargain was struck between the British and Boers in which South Africa would agree to stay in the Commonwealth in return to being allowed to assume political control over Namibia. In theory Britain would be the overseer, since South Africa was obliged to exercise this right on her behalf; but in fact South Africa was given a free hand to extend its racial policy of apartheid over the people of Namibia.

In the 1920's there was friction between the Permanent Mandates Commission to which the mandatory power was supposed to render its account vis-à-vis its mandate as the South African government stepped up its policy of annexation of the territory with the intent of incorporating it into the Union. It was to be done through the settlement of whites of South African stock into Namibia in order to swamp the German settlers who had acquired land during the period of their occupation. The South African government crowned its policy by appointing a governor-general to rule over the area.¹³

Moving to the situation after World War II, when the victorious Allies were building the United Nations over the ruins and ashes of the defunct League of Nations, we find that one of their responsibilities was the replacement of the mandate system by a new system of international trusteeship, which was more in keeping with the charter of the United Nations.

The trusteeship scheme is delineated in Article 77 of the Charter, the text of which is as follows:

1. The Trusteeship system shall apply to such territories in the following category as may be placed there-under by means of trusteeship agreements:
 - (a) territories now held under mandate;
 - (b) territories which may be detached from enemy states as a result of the Second World War; and
 - (c) territories voluntarily placed under the system of States responsible for their administration.
2. It will be a matter of subsequent agreements as to which territories in the foregoing categories will be brought under the trusteeship system and upon what terms.¹⁴

All the mandatories except South Africa agreed. In fact, South Africa was under no obligation to abide by the resolution; there is no provision in the resolution that can compel any mandatory power to submit its mandated territory to the trusteeship system.

Smuts, who was then Prime Minister of South Africa, saw the loopholes in the text as adumbrated by the United Nations and declined to respect the decision of world opinion. If he had done so he would have jeopardized his cherished ideas of annexing Namibia to the Union of South Africa. He indicated that it would be convenient administratively as well as economically to amalgamate Namibia with South Africa. Smuts was shrewd enough to continue to submit to the United Nations the reports that the

mandatory power was expected to render to that body. Shortly after that, in 1948, Smuts lost power to the Nationalist Party, which continued the traditional South African attitude, but did so much more openly and directly. They soon stopped sending reports to the U.N. on the pretext that the mandate had terminated with the demise of the League of Nations. They took drastic measures to change the mode of government in Namibia by establishing representative bodies camouflaged under public opinion of both races. They established their position by asserting that it was within their purview to decide what was good for the people of Namibia. In its confused state the General Assembly hoped to bring South Africa to its senses by submitting the matter to one of its bodies: the International Court of Justice at the Hague. In one of its resolutions the Court declared that South Africa was under no obligation to place Namibia under trusteeship. The General Assembly has already passed about seventy-four resolutions calling upon South Africa to abide by the letter of the United Nations, but South Africa has stubbornly rejected all such resolutions. We could summarize the substance of the accusations in the International Court as follows: First, that despite the events that had happened the mandate was still in force, that the mandate agreement which had been entered into after 1919 had not expired. Second, that South Africa was under no obligation to transfer the mandated territories to the new trusteeship system. Third, however, that the U.N. did stand in the shoes of the League of Nations in respect to the mandated territories. Further—following from the above decisions—that it was still an obligation of the mandatory to render reports of the kind that it had to render in the days of the League, and also to forward to the United Nations petitions by people within the territory who felt themselves aggrieved.¹⁵ The South African government shielded itself by total suppression of any information regarding its policy of apartheid in Namibia by even refusing United Nations representatives to carry out any substantial investigation. The U.N. reacted by setting up a special committee to deal with the situation, though its progress was blocked by the South African government. However, it was at this time that the people of Namibia were allowed to present their case to the committee through an intermediary, Mr. Scott. The Namibians themselves were not allowed to present their grievances to the committee directly and as a body. At any rate, the result was much publicity of the South African activities in Namibia contrary to the official reports from the South African government itself.¹⁶

The failure of the United Nations to resolve the problem of annexation of Namibia prompted the independent African states at their second conference at Addis Ababa in June 1960 to appoint a committee to determine the status of Namibia. Ethiopia and Liberia, as former members of the League of Nations, were called upon to present this matter to the

International Court of Justice. The gist of the whole matter is presented as follows:

The subject of the dispute is the continued existence of the Mandate of South West Africa and the duties and the performance of the Union, as mandatory, thereunder. Liberia still insists that the Mandate is still in force; that the union continues duties thereunder, that the United Nations is the proper supervisory organ to which annual reports and petitions should be submitted by the Union, and whose consent is a legal pre-requisite and condition precedent to modification of the terms of the mandate; and that the Union has violated and is violating Article 32 of the Covenant of the League of Nations and Articles 2, 4, 6, and 7 of the Mandate.¹⁷

The ruling which was finally delivered in 1966 alarmed the whole world. As usual there was convincing evidence in favour of Namibia, but the judges "decided not to decide". The matter was that those who were pro-South Africa on the court would not have given judgment without alienating South Africa. Moreover, they would have been contradicting themselves in the light of past resolutions in support of South Africa. The question arises: Did the African Committee of Independent States hope to influence world opinion by sidestepping the United Nations as a forum of world opinion? Perhaps not, but the organization of African Unity had acted in a desperate effort in order to secure a final judgment from the International Court.¹⁸

Behind the whole matter of South Africa's annexation of Namibia lurks the policy of apartheid. What, of course, puzzles world opinion is whether this extension of apartheid policy by South Africa beyond its border to Namibia is contrary to the mandate. This raises the moral and political issues in international law, since the charter of the United Nations does not cover such matters.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The administration of Namibia is basically an extension of South Africa's policy of apartheid there. South Africa's acceptance of an adverse judgment would be tantamount to reversing the mandate, but, much more than this, it would mean that South Africa would be denying its own existence by condemning apartheid. Apartheid for South Africa is a way of life. In practical terms, apartheid has meant white domination of blacks and other minority groups by denying them equal rights in all spheres of life. The Africans have no political rights from the top to the bottom of the administrative strata. There are local boards in the Reserve composed of African chiefs and local councillors. However, the whole structure is directly under the control of the Europeans, who have the power to veto any resolutions passed by the boards.

The Africans are humiliated by being required to carry "reference books" or "passes", a situation almost similar to that prevailing in South

Africa. In this context the African is required to carry his pass at all times. The purpose of the pass law is to keep under control the movement of the Africans; even a permit is a prerequisite for residence in the reserves. There is no freedom of movement from one location of the reserve to another, let alone banishment from one's area of domicile, without any chance to trial. The creation of the reserves, amongst other things, was dictated by the law of supply and demand in terms of labour. It has been stipulated that should population in the reserve exceed demand then "surplus Africans may be removed to some other locations". Likewise, anyone unemployed for more than a month, or any newcomer without a job for fourteen days, is summarily prevailed upon to leave. Certain mechanisms have been set up for labour recruitment, which is tantamount to forced labour. Normally the contracts last up to two years for unmarried men, and more often than not there are 40,000 to 45,000 men away in the police zone working for the Europeans at any one time. The debilitating effect of this drain of manpower on the families is incredible. Young men who are married are not allowed to move to their respective areas with their families. Although the contract system does not affect those within the zone, the drain of labour supply from there is equally tremendous.¹⁹

THE BANTUSTANS

Turning to the issue of the Bantustans,²⁰ the decision of the International Court of Justice not to settle the dispute between the two contestants in July 1966 paved the way for South Africa to implement its policies of apartheid in Namibia at an unprecedented rate. South Africa, having been assured of international support in its refusal to grant self-determination to the people of Namibia, now decided to make the territory a "fifth province" of the Republic.

This policy involves the propagation of South Africa's racist policies of "separate development", geared towards the creation of Bantustans, which are supposed to be independent but in practice are not. The system of Bantustans started within South Africa itself with the creation of the Transkei in 1963. It was this system that was now introduced into Namibia in 1968, enunciated by South Africa's Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, Michael C. Botha, in his address at the opening session of the Ovamboland Legislative Council, thus launching the first Bantustan in Namibia. The viability of Bantustans is shown to be a farce when the relationship between population and land distribution is examined.²¹

Contrary to the South African view that the Bantustans are viable political entities, the Bantustans cannot stand on their own feet. Similarly, they are not economically independent on the grounds that they serve as a reservoir for labour in the mines. Without economic independence political independence is meaningless, for the latter depends upon the former. The Bantustans themselves were initiated in Namibia by South Africa as a

TABLE I

Allocation for:	Land Area (Sq. Km.)	Population in 1960	Sq. Km. per Capita
Natives	312,433	424,047	0.74
Coloureds	14,785	23,965	0.62
Europeans, excluding Government lands	360,480	73,464	4.92
Europeans, including Government lands	495,927	73,464	6.76
Totals	823,145	521,476	1.58

TABLE II

Proposed Bantustans	Land Area (Sq. Km.)	Population in 1960	Sq. Km. per Capita
Ovamboland	56,072	239,363	0.23
Tawanaland	1,554	9,992	0.59
Namaland	21,677	34,806	0.62
Eastern Caprivi	11,534	15,840	0.72
Damaraland	47,990	44,353	1.08
Rehoboth Gebiet	13,860	11,257	1.23
Okavangoland	41,701	27,871	1.50
Hereroland	58,997	35,354	1.67
Bushmanland	48,982	9,234	5.30
Totals	326,294	439,832	0.74

result of world pressure to grant autonomy to the Africans. The fear of the South African government hinges upon the threat of Communism; thus political independence for the Namibians, in the eyes of South Africa, would be tantamount to creating another Cuba next door.²²

To talk in terms of "political or economic independence" as distinct from "multi-racial development" is absurd, since South Africa itself has failed to delineate the implication of these slogans. In the light of our present knowledge, the definitions cover a wide range of issues encompassing self-government culminating in "a free association of states similar to that of a commonwealth".²³

In fact, self-determination is a farce, since all the evidence negates such a principle. A correlation between population and land distribution among Africans and whites reveals that the Africans are in a very disadvantaged position. The populations of Africans, whites and coloureds are divided into the proportions of 18:3:1, but land distribution is not proportional to population figures; hence percentages of 0.74, 6.74, and 0.62 average square kilometers correspond to the population figures as shown. In fact, the Europeans occupy 13/22 of the land, comprising a population of 3/22 of the total.²⁴

The South African government does not harbor any inhibitions of what self-determination implies for the Africans within South Africa itself. Thus Dr. Verwoerd's parliamentary answer in 1951 in relation to self-determination for the Africans is self-explanatory:

Now a Senator wants to know whether the series of self-governing areas would be sovereign. The answer is obvious. It stands to reason that white South Africa must remain their guardian. We are spending all the money on these developments. How could small scattered states arise? The areas will be economically dependent on the Union. It stands to reason that when we talk of the Natives' right of self-determination and self-government in those areas we cannot mean that we intend by that to cut large slices of South Africa and turn them into independent states.²⁵

Nevertheless, South Africa still speaks in the context of self-determination, but in reality the policies reveal that independence is a thing of the past as the case for Ovamboland reveals: "The progress achieved to date is obviously due in large measure to Owambo's special relationship with South Africa. . . . In many ways South Africa's contribution is irreplaceable and Owambo's progress on the road to self-determination is dependent on her present natural relationship remaining undisturbed."²⁶

In 1964 Mr. Van der Merwe in the House of Assembly spoke of the "normal evolution of centuries" during which the Bantustans would achieve their independence. Further, in 1966 a Nationalist member of Parliament made a pledge to his constituents that self-determination for the Bantustans would not be realized within the next two hundred years.²⁷

LAND

The question of land is very much connected with the Bantustan policy of the South African government in Namibia. As of 1962, when the Odendaal Report²⁸ on Bantustans was delivered, the government has decided to establish ten district homelands for the Africans, including one for the Rehoboth Basters, a coloured group. In addition, it has been proposed that three townships for the coloured people were to be established within Windhoek, Walvis Bay, and Luderitz. As the figures in the tables show, the land area covered by the nine Bantustans and the coloured townships leaves 495,927 square kilometers of land in the rest of Namibia for the Europeans.²⁹ However, the Southern African government maintains that some of this land is covered by the Namib desert, diamond areas (135,447 square kilometers), game reserves, and other unspecified land tracts which obviously are at the disposal of the Europeans.

The South African government deceives the whole world by asserting that there is equal distribution of land between Europeans and non-Europeans, but per capita figures contradict this statement, as Table 2 reveals. The average land area is approximately 0.23 square kilometers per capita. To elaborate further on the quality and desirability of the allocated lands, the South African government has insisted at the international level that the Africans are in possession of the biggest share of the agricultural resources. It is argued that, in fact, 70 per cent of the non-whites, in comparison to 20 per cent of the white population, occupy the areas with favourable rainfall. This overlooks the fact that the Bantustans support a larger population density than the areas occupied by the Europeans. In the final analysis the Europeans are in a better position in terms of rainfall, more so when their farms are developed on a wider scale using artificial irrigation. The Bantustans lack all these assets. Furthermore, the Europeans have acquired most of the loamy soils in comparison to the sandy soils occupied by the non-whites.³⁰ Although we cannot measure objectively the quality and quantity of land in order to arrive at as fair a distribution as possible, the South African case in Namibia with regard to the land question has gone beyond any reasonable doubt that the non-whites have been deprived of 61 per cent of their land by the South African government.

As if this were not burden enough for the Africans, taxation falls heavily upon their shoulders, especially when their incomes are very meagre. The Africans pay a dog tax, a wheel tax, a stock fee, and indirect taxes on cigarettes, tobacco, and a catalogue of other items. The whites are exempt from such crushing taxes. The less with less incomes (Africans) therefore support those with higher incomes (Europeans).³¹

ECONOMIC SITUATION

Namibia is on "the lips of the politicians, in the hands of farmers, and in the pocket of great mining and finance corporations".³² At first

sight Namibia may look like a desolate desert covered by scrubland, but in fact it is one of the richest countries in Africa. The country is very rich in minerals; other industries such as agriculture and fishing are flourishing. These form the major exports of Namibia. It is the first in Africa in the production of lead, sixth in the world in the production of copper, greatly endowed with deposits of diamonds, uranium, zinc, silver, cadmium and vanadium.³³ Most of these minerals are exploited by two giant companies: De Beers Consolidated Mines of South Africa Ltd., which controls about 90 per cent of the diamond production (diamonds form more than one-half of mineral production); and the American-Tsumeb Corporation, which control 80 per cent of other mineral production. Both of these companies control 90 per cent of the mineral wealth of Namibia. They both support apartheid. The economy of the country is under the control of the Europeans, who amass a lot of profit by "strict control of labour by the contract system, low taxation and generous concession grants", inducements for high investments in the country. Without the African labour the European economy would crumble to its knees.

The fishing industry, though recent, produces about 90 per cent of the total fish of Namibia and South Africa combined. It is centered around Walvis Bay, basically under the control of the Afrikaners. Together with the farming industry it forms a high percentage of the gross domestic product. Namibia is the world's largest producer of black sheep (karakul) of Persian stock, being concentrated in the arid police zone. In agriculture the Africans have been relegated to the status of subsistence farmers, but also as labourers on the European farms. Thus, the Africans have been denied the opportunity of exploiting the resources of their homeland. This is further substantiated by the denial to the Africans of any participation in mining, let alone being allowed to hold any responsible jobs in such business concerns. It is not surprising that most Africans live under the subsistence level.³⁴ Concern over the exploitation of the people of Namibia was expressed succinctly at the Namibia International Conference held at Brussels in May 1972: "South African legislation in Namibia represents the extreme example of the use of natural resources for the benefit of a closed social group with a monopoly of economic and political power."³⁵ The whole issue of South Africa's presence in Namibia is aggravated by the support given to South Africa by the Western powers, namely America, Britain, Canada and German mining companies.

Recent investigation has established conclusively that per capita income of the white workers is much higher than that of the Africans even when the workers have the same skills and experience. Thus, the per capita annual income of Namibia has risen from £59.6 in 1951 to £82.4 in 1952; but while the per capita income of the whites in police zone was £176.1, outside the police zone, particularly in Ovamboland, it was only £8.5, one of the lowest in Africa. The sharing of wealth in Namibia can further be

clarified by the following figures: in 1957-58 expenditures for the territory were £44 million; African homelands were granted £27,000, dropping to £20,000 in 1961-62. The explanation advanced by South Africa revolves around the notion that the Africans must learn to be self-sufficient. In any case, it is asserted that a rapid pace of industrialization would disrupt their society. This is very interesting, as the Africans are denied education, medical services, and good wages, although both Africans and Europeans live under the same economic system.³⁶

EDUCATION

The official policy of the South African government hinges on the principle that Europeans cannot be taxed in order to support education for the non-whites. Since the Africans cannot manage to pay for these services, it implies that they cannot receive the necessary education to qualify them for certain jobs. In fact, the only educational and health services available to the Namibians were provided by the missionaries. In 1960 the Bantu Education Act was promulgated, based on separate educational facilities for the whites and non-whites, whose objective was (a) to indoctrinate African children from childhood that Africans are inferior to Europeans, and (b) that inferiority is a status created by God which no man has a right to change. This policy is spelled out clearly by Dr. Verwoerd in his book, *Bantu Education Policy* (1954), as follows:

By blindly producing pupils trained on a European model, the vain hope was created among natives that they could occupy posts within the European community despite the country's policy of apartheid. This is what is meant by the creation of unhealthy white colour ideals and creative of widespread frustration among the so-called educated natives.³⁷

Further, when he introduced the Bantu Education Bill in the House of Assembly in 1953, Dr. Verwoerd made it clear that the Africans should not dream of ever being equal to Europeans.³⁸

In 1959 there were 15,500 European pupils in school out of a total European population of 69,000, compared with 32,000 African children out of a total African population of 464,000. In terms of percentages, this represents a school attendance by European children of about 22 per cent of the whole European population, whereas school attendance by African children represents only 7 per cent of the total African population. The Africans have no opportunities for higher learning; there are only two high schools and no university at all. Again, this is a deliberate policy of the government, as the Minister for Bantu Education laid it down in 1960 that higher education for Africans would "only cause frustration since there would be no jobs for them after they graduate".³⁹

Further, education for the Europeans is compulsory in comparison to that of the non-whites. Moreover, more money is allocated for the education of Europeans in comparison to that set aside for Africans. For instance,

the average figures for 1954-55 expenditures for African and European children attending school were £4.4 and £63.5, respectively! In terms of population figures for the whites and non-whites, the percentage of the white children attending school is far greater than that for the non-whites,⁴⁰ yet the non-whites outnumber the whites in total population figures. This is obviously consistent with the South African policy of apartheid, geared towards ensuring labour reserves for their industries and maintaining a high standard of living (one of the highest in the world) at the expense of the Africans.

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION BEGINS

The first political organization to emerge in Namibia was the Ovambo-land People's Congress (OPC) in 1957, to be changed the following year into Ovamboland People's Organisation (OPO). Its immediate objective was to abolish the contract labour system that affected the lives of thousands of Namibians, including those working in the European mines in the Cape province of South Africa. Its founder was Hermann Toi jo Toivo, who was then a migrant worker in Cape Town. In early 1962 the organization took another name, South West African People's Organisation to replace OPO, which was limited in scope and organization. The struggle was now intensified from the abolition of the contract labour system to total independence for Namibia.

The resistance movements against alien rule started in the nineteenth century against the Germans, culminating in the 1904 Herero massacre by the Germans. The political developments between the two world wars were essentially dominated by the chiefs, some of whom served as government avenues for silencing the people of Namibia. However, Chief Hosea Kutako's career is particularly significant as a leader of the Herero people. It was mainly due to his courageous leadership that the spirit of petitioning at the U.N. was kept alive, especially under the guidance of the Reverend Michael Scott. Petitioning the United Nations began in 1946. In addition, Clemens Kapuuu and the Nama leader, Samuel Witbooi, in collaboration with the other leadership mentioned, championed the right of self-determination for the people of Namibia at this early stage. The Herero people, more than anyone else, became the vanguard of the nation, to be joined later by the Ovambo people. The people hoped that the U.N. would at least wrest the control of the territory from the South African tentacles, which would give them the hope of independence at some future date. Duly, they formed the South West African Progressive Party in 1952, a movement that was aimed at consolidating world opinion against South Africa at the United Nations. The early leadership of the party was in the hands of U. Kaukuetu, now the vice-president of SWANU. It was soon accorded support by the Council of Chiefs led by Hosea Kutako. Subsequently, in 1960-61, the South West African National Union (SWANU),

mainly a Herero party, was duly constituted to wage the battle against South Africa, side by side with SWAPO.

In the early stages of their development the liberation movements were torn apart by ethnic and group leadership squabbles, but these were minor impediments in comparison to the progress made by the freedom fighters as a whole. However, in 1963, after the emergence of the organization of African unity, SWAPO tended to be in the ascendancy as it gained recognition and financial support from the OAU, SWANU was denied these privileges. Earlier SWANU leadership had criticized SWAPO on the grounds that the latter's strategy of petitioning the U.N. by allying itself to the Herero Chiefs' Council was not likely to lead to independence for the people of Namibia. Thus, SWANU insisted that the struggle for the independence of Namibia could only be achieved by the people of Namibia themselves. As one commentator put it: "What is done by the outside must be supplementary to what is done here. The other policy spreads an illusion that we will get freedom from abroad. United Nations' promises cool the courage and spirit of the people, and they do not realise that they must do something themselves to attain their freedom."⁴¹

Further, SWANU rejects what one leader designates as "the reformist approach in the struggle for liberation":

...reformism has its time—fifteen years of petitioning, of "Native Conferences" with native Commissioners, of deputations to the Secretary of Namibia, of appeals to Macmillan.... We also reject the idea that our differences should rest entirely with the Big Powers. We appeal to all states of the United Nations and particularly our brother states in Africa to "act" against South Africa but the right to "decide" remains vested in the people of Namibia. It is for us to find the most effective methods to liberate ourselves.⁴²

On the other hand, SWAPO's official view maintains that SWANU has never been a genuine liberation movement because its leadership has no direct contract with the people of Namibia, with its centres in Stockholm, New York, and London. Ideologically, SWAPO asserts that SWANU is "pro-Chinese", while SWAPO itself maintains good relations with both the socialist and capitalist countries of the world. SWAPO resolves this anomaly in ideology between the West and the East by pursuing the policy of non-alignment.⁴³

They both, however, agree on the most essential goal: total independence for Namibia. This can be achieved through a series of stages: immediate termination of the mandate system, transfer of the territory to U.N. supervision, release of all political prisoners, immediate elections, and technical assistance—all these in preparation for self-dependency.⁴⁴

The test case for these liberation-movement organizations manifested itself after 1966, when the International Court of Justice delivered its decision over the case of Namibia. The veneer of non-violence was thrown

overboard in favour of armed struggle. An official of SWAPO stated that the court's failure to deliver a judgment left the people of Namibia "no alternative but to rise in arms and bring about our own liberation. The supreme test must be faced and we must at once begin to cross the many rivers of blood on our march towards freedom. And as sure as night follows day, victory will be ours".⁴⁵

At the trial of 37 Namibians in Pretoria in February 1968, Herman Ja Toivo, a founder of SWAPO, addressed the court thus:

"...it is the deep feeling of all of us that we should not be tried here in Pretoria.... The South African government has again shown its strength... by passing an act especially for us and having made it retroactive. Your government undertook a special responsibility when awarded the mandate over us. We believe that South Africa has abused that trust because of its belief in racial superiority.... Is it surprising that my countrymen have taken up arms? Violence is truly fearsome, but who would not defend his property and himself against a robber? And we believe that South Africa has robbed us of our country."⁴⁶

Ja Toivo ended his heroic defense by exhorting everyone to take up arms and defend his motherland Namibia unless South Africa relinquished her position over Namibia:

"... We believe that South Africa has a choice—either to live at peace with us or to subdue us by force. If you choose to crush us and impose your will on us then you not only betray your trust, but you will live in security for only as long as your power is greater than ours. No South African will live at peace in South West Africa, for each will know that his security is based on force and that without force he will face rejection by the people of South West Africa. ... We believe that human suffering has its effect on those who impose it. We hope that what has happened will persuade the whites of South Africa that we and the world may be right and they may be wrong. Only when white South Africans realise this and act on it will it be possible for us to stop our struggle for freedom and justice in the land of our birth."⁴⁷

Despite this setback, guerrilla activity increased after 1968, especially in the Caprivi strip, "situated between the Zambezi in the east and the Okovango River to the west and south".⁴⁸ It was used to support an African population of 19,000, but now it is almost desolate, most of the land having been transformed into South African military bases. Sam Nujoma, who is president of SWAPO abroad, has realized the futility of penetrating a large number of freedom fighters through the Caprivi strip, as the corridor is heavily patrolled by South African forces. Given this situation, SWAPO has trained its freedom fighters within Namibia, itself a difficult task, since South African police surveillance is likely to detect and launch counter measures against the freedom fighters. Apart from the problem of geography, Nujoma reveals that the Ovambo chiefs' accept-

ance of self-rule from the South African government in the form of Bantustans is a betrayal of their own people. Today, SWAPO has established its headquarters in Dar es Salaam and London, a situation that removes the main leadership from gaining contact with their countrymen.

Within Namibia the chiefs do not seem to tolerate the torrent of criticism directed against them by SWAPO. In fact, the chiefs are a thorn in the flesh of the freedom fighters, since they have been appealed to by South Africa to suppress the movements fighting for independence. Chief Councillor Shiimi at the opening of Legco called upon the South African government to "please try to uncover and uproot the terrorists, mischief-makers and crooks in our midst".⁴⁹

Although the South African government does not publicize most of the victories inflicted on her by the freedom fighters, occasionally she finds it politically convenient to release the news in order to mobilize white supporters in both Namibia and South Africa against the liberation movements. Thus, in 1971, *Die Vaderland*, a government newspaper, revealed that:

The death of two South African policemen on the border between Caprivi and Zambia must bring to every thinking person in this economically prosperous country the shocking realisation that the Republic is involved in a titanic struggle. The next few years may prove to be decisive for our country's future.⁵⁰

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This essay began with the general examination of Namibia. The story begins from the time of the German takeover, through the life of the League of Nations, and now under the United Nations. The policy of apartheid in Namibia was intensified with the coming into power of the Nationalist government in South Africa in 1948. The political situation of Namibia has been examined in Section II of this paper, leading to the establishment of the Bantustans dealt with in Section III. As the question of land is bound to the issue of the Bantustans, it has been reviewed in Section IV, by pointing out the inadequacy and poverty of lands allocated to the Africans. The resources of the country, surveyed in Section V, show that Namibia is by no means a poor country. The economy, however, is basically exploited to the advantage of the white minority, supported by the South African regime, while the intensification of apartheid is very evident in the field of education, covered in Section VI. Finally, Section VII looks at the emergence of liberation movements, SWAPO, and SWANU, and their differences, weaknesses and strengths.

The dispute over the future of Namibia is complicated by the involvement of Western powers in the economy of Namibia. Most outspoken in this matter is the United States of America, Britain, France and West Germany, who continue to supply arms to the South African government,

plus a continued flow of investments into the economy of the same. This complicates the problem even at the international level, since these countries have shown their tendency not to vote against South Africa. Since the dispute involves a contest between the U.N. and the South African government, it remains to be seen whether the issue of self-determination can be resolved by the U.N. It seems that the only solution is the intensification of armed struggle by the people of Namibia against the South African regime.

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