

NAMIBIA STUDY/ACTION PACKET - Supplement I

- July 11, 1975 -

The Study/Action Packet as originally assembled brings the reader up to 15 May, 1975. Important developments were expected on or about 30 May, 1975, the deadline set by the Security Council of the U.N. for South Africa to respond to its Resolution 366. (See Focus, "Namibia Update," 15 March, 1975, column 1.)

South Africa's response did not meet the demands of Resolution 366, especially regarding the transfer of power. South Africa refuses to permit free elections under U.N. supervision and refuses to recognize the Southwest Africa People's Organization as the legitimate representative of the Namibia people. Moreover, it has taken no steps to release political prisoners, to extend amnesty to political exiles, to abolish laws relating to bantustans. It has taken only minimal steps to abolish a few of the dozens of laws which pertain to petty apartheid practices. It has, for instance, ordered the removal of signs identifying segregated entrances to public buildings.

The resolution presented to the Security Council by Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania, Cameroon and Tanzania reinstated the demands of the December resolution, called for free elections by 1 July, 1976, and made the judgment that non-compliance by South Africa "constitutes a threat to international peace and security" and therefore, under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, an arms embargo should be enforced against South Africa.

In the voting on June 6, for the second time in history, the United States, Great Britain and France joined in vetoing a resolution. The United States argued that South Africa was willing to discuss matters (with the President of the Council for Namibia) and therefore, its non-compliance did not constitute a "threat to international peace and security." This is obviously a victory for South Africa. It has bought the South African government more time and has prolonged the period of political repression in Namibia. South Africa is using its time for just that. Witness the events which followed:

- 11 June....A peaceful march by Namibia National Convention banned.
- 14 June....18 poster-carrying demonstrators arrested.
- 16 June....Anglican Bishop Richard Wood, an outspoken opponent of apartheid, served expulsion orders as "undesirable resident" in Namibia. Lutheran social worker Rolf Friede, a West German, also expelled. Offices ransacked and papers confiscated by police.
- 17 June....Mrs. Cathleen Wood, an American citizen, served expulsion order.
- 18 June....SWAPO political rally banned.
- 25 June....Mrs. Wood taken into custody and removed from Namibia for disobeying expulsion order.
- 26 June....Credentials of the Rev. Edward Morrow, replacement for Bishop Wood, confiscated.

4 July....United States begins celebration of bicentennial and its declaration that everyone has inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

South African Strategy

In the bantustan system, South Africa is able to manipulate elections of tribal leaders. By far the majority of blacks (maybe 98%) oppose the South African sponsored elections on principle. To elect tribal or homeland or bantustan (the words are used almost interchangeably) leaders violates the peoples' will to have "one nation, one Namibia." According to leading churchmen like Lutheran Bishops Auala and DeVries, and Anglican Bishop Wood, many who vote do so out of fear of persecution if they don't. They have sworn affidavits testifying to intimidation such as inability to get work or loss of meager pensions unless they vote. Thus the "leaders" who are elected are puppets at best, quislings at worst. South Africa, however, regards them as the legitimate spokesmen of the people and is pushing for an early constitutional conference in which they would serve as delegates. Even the Windhoek Advertiser, Namibia's leading white newspaper, recognizes that "unless the question of truly representative leadership is satisfactorily resolved, the constitutional conference will be haunted by the shadow of being a mock-up...." (4 July, 1975)

Even so, South Africa is pressing for a constitutional conference composed of such representatives in spite of world opinion and even its own conservative press. It wants to present the world with a fait accompli and pass its charade off as a valid expression of the people's will.

What Can be Done?

Write to congressional representatives and other government officials to make some of the following points.

1. Deplore U.S.A. action in Security Council. There is violence in Namibia. Peace between Namibians and South African government is threatened by continued repression. (We exercise a voluntary arms embargo against South Africa anyway.)
2. Press for an early session of Security Council to demand:
 - a) Free elections under international supervision acceptable to U.N.
 - b) A statement that any selection of delegates to constitutional conferences not approved by U.N. is unacceptable and decisions of such conferences have no standing in international community.
3. Use all bilateral influence at our nation's command to bring pressure on South Africa to conform to U.N. demands.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is having hearings on July 23 on South Africa and Namibia. The chairman of that Committee is Dick Clark, Iowa. Others on the Committee: Humphrey, Biden, Pearson, Griffin and Baker. House International Relations Committee (old Foreign Affairs Committee) Chairman is Thomas E. Morgan.

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