Soldiers have taken up positions at dozens of farms. Long stretches of tarred highways are now deserted at night.

The war in Namibia is now costing the South African government $1.25 million per day.

Up to 2400 people were arrested in June [1979] in a large scale police and security force operation in Windhoek's black township of Katutura.

Recently, reports like these could have been coming from Zimbabwe, where a war against white minority colonialism was being fought. Today, Zimbabwe is independent and Africans there know freedom for the first time in their lives. But today in Namibia, Africans are still fighting against white minority rule.

Namibia is the next link in the struggle against colonialism in southern Africa—the last link before South Africa itself.
South Africa’s Brutal Mandate

While the struggle in Namibia is for the universally-recognized right to self-determination, it is also unique. Namibia is the only country in the world that the International Court of Justice has ruled to be illegally occupied by a foreign power.

How did South Africa come to occupy Namibia? South Africa invaded Namibia, then a German colony called South West Africa, during World War I in the name of the Allies. The colonial history of Namibia had been a vicious one. In one of the worst cases of genocide ever, German colonizers killed more than three-quarters of the Herero and Nama people at the turn of the century.

The League of Nations took responsibility for the “well-being and social progress” of the people of Namibia in 1920, and gave a mandate to fulfill this trust to South Africa, which was then still part of the British Empire. All other mandated territories were later given their independence, but South Africa repeatedly flaunted United Nations’ demands to withdraw and instead tightened its grip on the territory.

“We are Namibians and not South Africans. We do not now, and will not in the future recognize your right to govern us; . . . to treat our country as if it were your property and us as if you were our masters. We have always regarded South Africa as an intruder in our country.”

Herman Ja Toivo
founding member of SWAPO
at Terrorism Act trial, 1967

South Africa’s occupation of Namibia has been brutal. Thousands of Namibians were forced to move from their home to make way for white “development.” The Hereros were forced into the desert, where their chief protested “no human being ever lived before; it is a country only for wild beasts.” The Namas too were forced off their hunting grounds to make way for white farmers and to provide them with black laborers. In Ovamboland, whole villages were bombed to force the people to move and to become migrant workers in the mines and on the railroads. Western mining companies came to Namibia to benefit from its natural wealth and cheap labor (see Namibia’s Mines, page 4).

When the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, it extended the inequality and inhumanity of apartheid to the one million Africans of Namibia. Its exploitation of Namibia became more systematic.

In response to this oppression, SWAPO (South West Africa People’s Organization) was formed in 1960. When the United Nations General Assembly voted in 1966 to terminate South Africa’s mandate over Namibia and South Africa refused to withdraw, SWAPO decided that armed struggle would be necessary to force South Africa out.
South Africa's efforts to fashion an "internal settlement" have failed. South Africa has attempted to create political alternatives to the SWAPO liberation movement. It has given overwhelming financial and political support to the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), an ethnically-based party, which it established in bogus elections. It has handed over increasing local administrative power to the DTA through a national assembly. South Africa has attempted to create political and administrative power to the DTA through a national assembly. However, as Nthato Motlana, a Soweto leader, pointed out, "The big lesson of Zimbabwe is that anybody in Southern Africa who gets white patronage is finished." The more support South Africa gives them, the more they are tainted in the eyes of the people. In February 1982, the DTA was dealt a further setback by the withdrawal from the alliance of its President, Peter Kalumula, and his party. He withdrew after the DTA refused to become a single non-ethnic party instead of remaining separated into different ethnic groups. He argued that the DTA's present structure tied it too closely to South Africa's apartheid system and would cost it votes in an election with SWAPO. With Kalumula's withdrawal, the legitimacy and viability of the DTA is even more compromised.

The Reagan Administration encourages South African intransigence. The focus of the Reagan Administration's Africa policy has been on Namibia. The administration has articulated a policy of "constructive engagement" toward South Africa. This policy has meant giving Pretoria diplomatic "carrots" and closer relations with Washington, and refusing to criticize South African apartheid, in the hope that South Africa will agree to an internationally-acceptable settlement for Namibia. As a further inducement, the administration has altered U.N. Resolution 435 by drawing up "constitutional principles" to be agreed upon before instead of after the elections. Reagan's proposals have succeeded only in delaying independence for Namibia and encouraging South African intransigence.

This intransigence has meant increased suffering for the Namibian people. South African military attacks against Angola, a constant reality, have caused heavy loss of life and property for the people of Angola and Namibia. Refugee camps have been forced to move further north, making it increasingly difficult to provide the people with food and water. The Reagan policy has led to an escalation of the war in Namibia, and away from a peaceful settlement.

What You Can Do

• Call for U.N. Sanctions against South Africa. The 1980s Namibia will be a highly-visible symbolic issue by which African nations will judge American policy toward Southern Africa, as the Rhodesian sanctions issue was in the late 1970's. Urge U.S. support in the Security Council for concrete measures against South Africa as long as it illegally occupies Namibia. Write to President Reagan (The White House, Wash., D.C. 20500) and Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick (US Mission to the UN, United Nations, New York, NY 10017).

• Write to your Representative. Congressional conservatives are attacking US contributions to United Nations programs that benefit Namibia, especially the Institute for Namibia in Lusaka, Zambia. The Institute is training several hundred Namibian exiles in administrative and development-related skills.

• Call for the release of political prisoners and detainees. Make special appeals for Namibians held in prisons in South Africa and for the 223 people who were taken from the Cassinga refugee camp in Angola and have been held incommunicado for two years. Call for an immediate end to torture of all prisoners. Write to South African Ambassador Donald Soile (3051 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Wash., D.C. 20008). For more information, contact Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa or Amnesty International (see addresses in Resources, page 6).

• Give material support to Namibian refugees. Some 60,000 Namibians are refugees in Angola and Zambia. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees and SWAPO operate camps for them, but supplies are very limited. They need educational materials, clothing, medical supplies and transportation vehicles. For more information, contact the SWAPO office in New York or the Africa Fund.

• Support South African military resisters. A growing number of young men are leaving South Africa rather than fight in Namibia. Some are arriving in the United States needing legal and other kinds of assistance. For more information, contact Southern Africa Military Refugee Aid Fund.

• Keep informed. This is a critical year in the struggle for Namibia. For up-to-date information about political developments and how you can respond, write to the Washington Office on Africa.

Namibian refugees in Angola
Namibia's Mines: Digging Out Her Wealth

Deposits of diamonds, copper, uranium, lead, tin and other minerals are Namibia's greatest source of wealth. But their development has been carried out at the expense of the African population. German colonists imposed virtual slavery on Africans who picked diamonds by hand from Namibia's coastal sands. Today, the contract labor system forces thousands of men to live apart from their families. In addition to this cruel heritage, South African, American, British and other European-owned companies will have extracted much of Namibia's mineral wealth by the time liberation comes.

Namibia is the world's largest producer of gem diamonds, at mines owned by South Africa's Anglo-American Corporation. The Tsumeb copper mine, controlled by the American companies Newmont Mining and American Metal Climax, is the largest private employer and user of contract labor in Namibia. In the 1970's Rio Tinto Zinc of Britain made a major investment in the world's largest uranium mine at Rossing, where fast extraction of uranium in the 1980's is planned to fill contracts with Britain, France and Japan. One-sixth of the western world's uranium ore is being produced at Rossing.

All told, extraction of minerals provides about one-third of Namibia's gross domestic product, two-thirds of its exports, and more than half of its tax revenues. One-third of the income from the mines is paid to foreigners, as profits to parent companies and dividends to shareholders. So much of the income is never seen by Namibians. During the 1970s, African wages almost doubled because of workers' protests. However, the inflation rate also doubled eating up these gains and maintaining Africans in abject poverty. In addition, cash wages are still kept low by the provision of non-cash supplements in the form of room and board, both of which are often of poor quality.

Exploitation by Contract

Unequal division of land and the contract labor system are two reasons why Namibia's mines have been so profitable for foreign investors. As in South Africa, Africans in Namibia were relegated to Bantustans, where less than 40 percent of the poorest land is set aside for more than 85 percent of the people. The semi-desert conditions in much of the country means Africans frequently can't subsist there. For the mining companies this is a bonus. A South African official in Windhoek was quoted in the Financial Mail as saying:

You are making a mistake if you think the Ovambos come here because they like it . . . It is economic factors that force them to come and work here . . . They have had a very poor rainy season so far . . . This means that we are going to have a heavy supply of labor this year again.

Migrant workers number 50,000 out of the total African workforce of 70,000 in the monetary economy. Until 1972, mining companies recruited labor through state-run labor bureaus. Africans had no say over where they would work or what pay they would receive. Men came to the mines and farms for 11 months while their families were forced to stay behind. Breaking the contract without proper cause was a criminal offense.

Workers' Grievances Spark Strikes

In December, 1971 the Tsumeb manager told a reporter, "All our Ovambos are working and there is no sign of unrest." Three days later, 4000 workers at the mine went out on strike, along with 16,000 others from all over the country. At Tsumeb, the workers demanded:

We do not want the contract system merely to be improved and that it be given another name . . . Any method of selling people meets with our disapproval.

The 1971 general strike was the first one ever to force labor concessions from the South African government, but the basic structure of the contract system was not changed. The criminal penalty for breaking contract was revoked, but employers could still keep an African worker indefinitely by refusing to sign the pass saying that his employment had legally ended.

Other strikes followed, at the Rossing uranium mine in 1976 and again in 1978. The workers' grievances included health hazards as well as unequal wages, inhospitable single living quarters, and the company's refusal to allow a representative trade union. A workers' representative described the dangers of radiation exposure:

Working in open air, under hot sun, in the uranium dust produced by grinding machines we are also exposed to the ever-present cyclonic wind which is blowing in this desert . . . Our bodies are covered with dust and one can hardly

(continued on page 6)
The last 22 years of Namibia's history has been a story of South Africa's continued illegal occupation, frequent but often ineffective international responses, and growing popular resistance. Here are some highlights of that struggle:

**Dec. 10, 1959.** South African police kill 11 people, wound 54 during protest following removal of Africans to reserves.

**1960.** SWAPO formed as national anti-colonial movement.

**Sept. 27, 1966.** SWAPO begins armed struggle.

**1967.** 37 SWAPO members tried in Pretoria under Terrorism Act.

**Aug. 12, 1969.** UN Security Council endorses termination of South Africa's mandate over Namibia.

**June 21, 1971.** South African rule in Namibia declared illegal by International Court of Justice.

**Dec. 13, 1971.** 20,000 workers stage two-month strike to protest contract labor system.

**1972.** Ovamboland State of Emergency declared.

**Dec. 11, 1973.** Security Council votes to end year-long dialogue with South Africa over Namibia, since South Africa was not acting in good faith.

**Dec. 12, 1974.** SWAPO recognized as "sole legitimate representative" of Namibia by UN General Assembly.

**April, 1974.** Coup in Portugal. South Africa loses ally in Angola, on Namibia's northern border.

**Dec. 13, 1974.** General Assembly establishes UN Decree No. 1 making extraction of minerals or other resources illegal without UN consent.

**June 6, 1975.** US, Britain, France veto Security Council resolution on arms embargo against South Africa because of its occupation of Namibia.

**Sept. 1975.** South Africa sets up Turnhalle Conference in Windhoek; SWAPO is excluded.

**Sept. 1975.** South Africa invades Angola from Namibia in collaboration with US CIA. South Africa does not withdraw for six months.

**Jan. 1976.** Security Council passes Resolution 435 calling for the holding of elections "under UN supervision and control."

**April, 1977.** Five western countries, the U.S., Canada, Great Britain, France, and West Germany form Contact Group, launching negotiations with South Africa to plan internationally-acceptable elections.

**Aug., 1977.** South Africa appoints an Administrator-General to Namibia as part of strategy to establish autonomy for Namibia under South African domination.

**April 10, 1978.** Western plan for Namibia presented calling for:
   a) UN Special Representative to insure conditions for free and fair elections;
   b) release of all political prisoners;
   c) end to all hostilities;
   d) restriction to base of South African and SWAPO armed forces.

**April 25.** South Africa accepts western plan.

**May 4.** Cassinga Massacre in Angola; 750 Namibians, mostly women and children, killed.

**July 12.** SWAPO agrees to western plan.


**Sept. 20.** South Africa rejects western plan, announces its own elections in Namibia.

**Sept. 29.** Security Council passes Resolution 435 to implement western plan.

**Dec. 4-8.** South Africa holds Namibian elections for constituent assembly to write new constitution. Widespread intimidation charged; UN declares election illegal.

**April, 1979.** South Africa arrests virtually all SWAPO leaders inside Namibia.

**May.** South Africa launches military offensive, extends martial law to cover 80% of population.

**May 12, 1980.** South Africa demands concessions on issues of demilitarized border zone and UN impartiality.

**June 7.** South Africa launches major invasion of Angola with 4,000 troops.


**March 31.** Reagan Administration proposes modifications of UN Res. 435: constitution before, instead of after, elections.

**April 30.** US, Britain, France cast vetoes in UN Security Council to defeat four resolutions for sanctions against South Africa because of intransigence on Namibia.

**Aug. 24.** South Africa launches major invasion of Angola, occupying the southern part of that country, seeking to destroy SWAPO militarily.

**October.** Contact Group submits revised plan for electoral process in Namibia.

**November.** South Africa launches another major attack into Angola.
recognize us. We are inhaling this uranium dust into our lungs and many of us have already suffered the effect. We are not provided with remedies and there is no hospital to treat us.

The mining companies' exploitation of Namibian workers and of the mineral wealth of their homeland is not only cruel but also illegal. In 1974 the United Nations General Assembly passed UN Decree No. 1 making the exploitation of natural resources illegal without UN consent, and establishing that any company which continues to operate under the authority of the South African government would be liable for damages to be paid to the future independent government. But all the mining companies continue to mine and to pay millions of dollars in taxes to the South African government.

Even more importantly, the mining companies are raping Namibia of its wealth. A South African government commission reported in 1964 that Namibia's mineral wealth would be mostly exhausted in the 1980's. The owners of the Consolidated Diamond Mines and Tsumeb copper mine said in 1971 that they expected their mines to dry up in 12 to 15 years.

The extraction of these minerals makes the liberation of Namibia all the more urgent. Theo Ben Gurirab, SWAPO Representative to the United Nations, said in 1976:

After the liberation of Namibia, perhaps we will be left with a country without any natural resources... This is precisely the South African strategy—to deplete the country of its natural resources in order to make us dependent on South Africa after we achieve our independence.

(Much of the information in this section is based on research by Barbara Rogers, Roger Murray, Tami Hultman and Reed Kramer.)

Resources on Namibia

Films, Records and Photos

Two films from California Newsreel: Free Namibia! narrated by Ossie David, portrays exploitation and the struggle to end it. 27 minutes, 1978. $40 rental.

Namibia: A Case Study in Colonialism shows colonial domination and mineral exploitation. 18 minutes. $25. Both films produced by the United Nations.

One Namibia, One Nation. SWAPO Freedom Songs by the SWAPO Singers. Produced by Holland Southern Africa Committee. Available from New World Resource Center, 1476 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, IL 60613.

Namibia in Struggle, Portable Exhibition of Photographs, 1979. 18 sheets with photos and text. $12.25 from International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa.

A Cry for Freedom, produced by the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), 1981, 22 min. Available from John Evenson, LCA, 231 Madison Avenue, New York, NY.

Pamphlets


Namibia, American Friends Service Committee, 1981, 44 pp., $1.50 (lower bulk rates). Good handbook on Namibia.

Remember Kassina, International Defense and Aid Fund (IDAF), 1981, 52 pp. on political prisoners, etc. in Namibia.


Groups with Resources on Namibia

Africa Fund
198 Broadway
New York, N.Y. 10038
(212) 962-1210

Amnesty International
South Africa Coordination Group
9007 Garland Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20901

California Newsreel
630 Natoma St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 621-6196

Commissioner for Namibia
D.C. 328
United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017

Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa
853 Broadway, Room 1005
New York, N.Y. 10003
(212) 477-0066

International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa
P.O. Box 17
Cambridge, MA 02138

American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

SWAPO Observer Mission to the U.N.
Theo Ben Gurirab
801 Second Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10017
(212) 986-7863

Southern Africa Military Refugee Aid Fund
29 Seventh Ave.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217
(212) 638-0417

Additional copies of this leaflet are available for:
15¢ each for 1-10; 12¢ for 11-50; 10¢ each for over 50 copies. (Add 35¢ for postage.)

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