Editorial

In a recent meeting Bishop Kleopas Dumeni, leader of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church, said that the continued bloodshed of the Namibian people is now the responsibility of two persons, Prime Minister P. W. Botha of South Africa and President Ronald Reagan of the United States. The addition of the American president's name would have been unheard of even one year ago. But the sad fact is that Namibians see the U.S. government policy of "constructive engagement" with South Africa as supporting the brutal occupation of Namibia.

And their analysis is far from wrong. The U.S. government has recently allowed the sending of electric shock batons, aircraft with military capability, sophisticated computers, military advisors and attaches — and open signs of cordial friendship to the racist government of South Africa. And now the Reagan administration has added a new condition to South African withdrawal from Namibia — the removal of Cuban troops from Angola, an independent country north of Namibia that South Africa daily invades with its troops and mercenaries.

The Namibian churches have asked for an end to bloodshed and occupation. They see independence as a God-given right. They want to choose their own government and bring human rights and justice to their daily life.

Why, then, has the United States government chosen to impose the East-West conflict on the people of Namibia?

Christians in North America want human rights and justice for their brothers and sisters in southern Africa — Namibia, Angola and South Africa itself. Though South Africa boldly proclaims it is a Christian democratic capitalistic country, it is the very antithesis of all those adjectives. Though South Africa self-righteously proclaims it is fighting godless communism, in fact its godless practices are dangerously close to terrorizing people into thinking that communism may be their only choice for freedom.

The United States government is supporting all that should be understood as intolerable and anathema to freedom-loving people. It is very understandable for Bishop Dumeni to say with great sorrow that the bloodshed of his suffering people is now the responsibility of two men, Ronald Reagan and P. W. Botha.

Church Leaders

An Interview with Bishop James Kauluma

Earlier this year, the editor of Dateline: Namibia met with the Right Reverend James Kauluma, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Namibia. Bishop Kauluma is the first Namibian to hold this position, to which he was elected following the resignation of Colin O'Brien Winter in 1981. (see Dateline: Namibia No. 2) The following is excerpted from that interview with this eloquent and forthright leader of the Anglican church.

Q: Perhaps you can tell us a little bit about Namibia and about yourself.

A: I was born in the northern region of Namibia, which is referred to as Ovamboland. I grew up looking after my father's cattle. My father was not a Christian. He was a polygamist and I grew up among many mothers as well as my brothers and sisters, about twenty-seven children of Kauluma. After looking after my father's cattle and other animals, I decided to go to the Anglican mission school. That was in 1950, and it was during that time that I decided to become a Christian. I was baptized in 1951 and confirmed in 1952.

In 1953, I left the northern region and went to work under contract in the southern part of the country where I was, well, they called me houseboy but I think I was grown up enough to be called houseman. That is the practice in Namibia — that no black will be treated as really grown up. Even a gray-haired man can be called a boy by a small white child. After I finished my first contract, I went back home until 1955, when I went to work on contract to the diamond mines.

After that, I went to Pretoria, South Africa, where I was studying in a Bible school. I completed two years of Bible studies and then I went back to the mines in Namibia. At the same time, I was also holding some religious classes for the men who work in the mine, holding Bible studies in the evening. We had a lot of blessings during that time, a lot of people who did turn to faith and to the church. Most of these people also come from the north on contract. They leave their families behind and then they come to the mines for a long period.

Q: Aren't they allowed to take their families with them?

A: At that time they were not, and even today it is nearly impossible for the workers to bring their wives to the south.
An Interview with Bishop James Kauluma

Q: The area that you came from and did your early studies in is what the South Africans like to refer to as a “homeland.” Isn’t it?

A: Yes. The whole region in the north is considered as an ethnic region of the Ovambo people. That is also where the majority of the population of Namibia lives. It’s the same region which is now covered by martial law curfew. Because of the war, people are not allowed to move outdoors after sunset until sunup again in the following day. It’s a very very unfortunate kind of difficult situation that people are placed under.

Q: What is the cause of the war?

A: The war’s going on because South Africa is not giving independence to Namibia. I believe if South Africa comes to the point where they say, “Let us settle this,” and they agree to the UN plan, a cease-fire will be signed and an election will be called and Namibia will become independent and the war will be over. Some say it’s not as simple as that, but this is the fact of the matter. This war is going on because the people of Namibia have not been given the opportunity to become independent as a nation.

Q: If South African troops would leave, would the killing stop?

A: Definitely. Yes.

Q: There’s a massive military buildup of South African soldiers in the north of Namibia and there are Namibians who are involved in an attempt to rid the country of the South African soldiers. What does the war mean to the people of the north and what does it mean to the churches?

A: The war is the source of suffering and death taking place in the country. It has brought certain laws which place the whole region of the north under curfew, which brings hardship upon the people. For instance, if one moves outdoors in the night, you will be shot if the soldiers see you. If it happens that one member of your family got seriously sick during the night, you cannot take that person to hospital because the curfew law says you should not move outdoors. These laws also empower the police or the army to act in any manner. The people have had to be subjected to individual army members who may make a decision about your life on the spot if he suspects you. Sometimes people are pushed and beaten in the process. Sometimes your home might be burnt down or your crops may be burnt down. This has happened.

Q: So if some of the independence fighters move through an area, then you are immediately suspected by the South African army of being a fighter or a helper?

A: There are individuals who have lost their homes and crops as a result of that. And also indiscriminate firing, which sometimes the army does. Firing simply in any direction on people’s homes. This is happening in the area in the north and is definitely creating hardship upon the people. It is the prayer of the Namibian people that this senseless killing should be ended.

Q: What has this done to the work of the church?

A: Not only the Anglican church but all the churches are suffering as a result of this war. Some hospitals, parishes, clinics and schools have been destroyed completely and people have had to be moved out and resettled. Also, of course, there are elements which the war itself has created. There seem to be some people who have become enemies of the church. Just a year ago, the Lutheran church in Ovamboland lost its printing press which was bombed by unknown persons. Also last year, our Anglican diocese and seminary buildings at Odibo were blown up in the same fashion. So we can say there are great effects upon the church’s work as well as the church’s property.

Q: Who would want to do this kind of thing to the church? Why would someone want to bomb a church printing press or a seminary?

A: Possibly someone who doesn’t like the position of the church and the prophetic message which the church proclaims in the midst of this difficult period. We did ask the South African authorities to conduct a thorough investigation. That didn’t happen.

Q: Have any of your church services been disrupted or the work of your priests been disrupted in any way by this war situation?

A: Definitely the church work is being hindered and affected. We are prevented in some areas from carrying out the spreading of the Gospel. One of our archdeacons, Philip Shilongo, was detained twice by the South African police and he was placed under conditions where he must report weekly to the police. And of course it is not only our church leaders. There are church leaders or clergymen within the Lutheran church who are still required to report to the police under those same conditions.

Q: What crime did the authorities charge Archdeacon Shilongo with having committed?

A: He was never required to come to court. The legal system allows people to be detained and not appear in a court.

Q: The authorities have the legal right to put a person in prison for no stated reasons at all?

A: Yes, until they are satisfied.

Q: Do you know of any crime that your archdeacon has committed?

A: No, I don’t think he’s a criminal, anyway. He’s a fine pastor. A fine leader who is simply carrying out his church work and trying to give all the pastoral care to his people. He’s no criminal.

Q: It is quite baffling to us when we hear of church leaders and pastors put in prison or restricted while South Africa tells us that they are a Christian country. Can you comment on South
African Christianity and what it is that they feel they are doing in God's will?

Q: You can be a Christian brother and you shouldn't do this, because we believe all these practices are contrary to Christian teaching and to the Gospel of Jesus Christ which calls people together; which calls for peace and justice and human respect—regardless of one's color. It is a contradiction to claim to be a Christian country and still hold to these kinds of practices, which are contrary to the Christian teaching. If we profess to be Christians, we should not only say that with our mouths, but also with our living. About seventy or eighty percent of our people are Christians. And as Christians the Namibian people believe that a system like apartheid, which divides people on the basis of color, just has no place in a Christian society.

We stand on Christian principles and the heart of the Gospel of Christ, which states that all people are children of God, regardless of their color, creed or culture. They are children of God and they believe in the universal fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood and sisterhood of man. Therefore, there should be no dividing people on the basis of their color. That is one of the problems that the people in Namibia have as we have been talking about Ovamboland being a sort of separate region in which some autonomy is given separately from the whole country.

A: Well, we hear all these allegations, but we know some of these people who are fighting the bush. We believe they are responding to an intolerable situation. They came out of Namibian society, which is a Christian society. Either they are Roman Catholics, or Lutherans, or Methodist, or Anglicans or another denomination in Namibia. We believe these people have respect for the church, and therefore we are not in agreement with those people who carry on, labeling these people as communist or Marxist. The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which is fighting against the South African army, has a chaplaincy service in the movement itself. This is something those who claim that the movement is communist or Marxist are not prepared to reveal.

Q: You mean, within the freedom movement there's a chaplaincy program?

A: There are three Anglican priests, some of whom fled with the refugees. One was sent by the movement to study and come back and serve the community. They have three or four Lutheran pastors who just finished their training in Tanzania in one of the seminaries, and these people are going back to work with the exiled community as pastors. There, baptisms are taking place, confirmations are taking place, marriages are taking place. I just don't believe that these people fit the labels of communist or Marxist. I'm not defending the movement. I'm just stating the facts. We are very much in disagreement with those who give all these labels. Furthermore, this only comes from those who are against the movement and against these people. It does not come from any other quarter. We don't understand why the world continues to drag its feet instead of helping Namibian people to gain independence. This is our prayer and hope that this should come.

Q: What can people in North America and Europe do to assist you as a church leader in Namibia, and assist peace to come?

A: There are many ways in which people can help. The people of America and any other Western countries can help by making their concern about our situation known to their governments and communicate this to those directly negotiating a settlement in Namibia. There are other areas in the process where people might help. We have many Namibians who are now scattered in different areas of the world. It would be appreciated if those who have financial means in terms of scholarship and other assistance, humanitarian assistance, can assist with these people. Many of the youngest never had the opportunity to have education. I think that will be a great help, and the churches in Namibia will be appreciative to anyone who is assisting in these areas. Also, through the Council of Churches in Namibia we have a humanitarian aid fund and a diaconal fund which enables the churches to respond to victims of the war situation. All this will be definitely contributing to the comfort of the affected people of Namibia.

Q: A final question. After all the years of oppression and domination by whites who have called themselves Christians, who have done things to the Namibians that are almost unspeakable, how is it that the Namibian people can still be Christian and feel that Jesus Christ is the object of their salvation? How can they still believe in Jesus Christ?

A: That depends very much on how seriously a person takes his confession and his faith and his belief in Jesus Christ. The Christian people of Namibia see the church and Christ as the source of life and power, strength and encouragement, especially in this difficult time facing the country and the church. You will find that on Sunday they're worshiping. One would think they would be preoccupied with their own problems created by the war, but you'll find them praying and giving thanks to God. You will find churches full of young people singing joyous and uplifting songs. The people don't seem to find any room for giving up their true commitment to Christ and to his church just because someone else is failing to live up to that kind of commitment. Therefore they continue.

Advocacy for Namibia

Your prayers and letters of support are invited for Namibian church leaders. In each issue we will invite different persons in Namibia who would be grateful to hear from North Americans who share their hope for freedom:

Bishop James Kauluma
P.O. Box 57
Windhoek, Namibia 9000
Printing Press Rededicated in Namibia

(The following article was translated from Omukwetu, the newspaper of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church. It appeared in June 1982. The original title was “The Way of the Church Goes through Gethsemane.”)

“The way of the church is through Gethsemane. The church’s destination of victory and rejoicing is preceded by difficulties, persecution, hate and carrying the yoke of pain until death. But the end of all this is victory.” That was the message of ELOC’s bishop, Dr. Kleopas Dumeni, in his opening address at the rededication of the printing press in Oniipa on June 6, 1982.

An estimated one to two thousand Christians came from different congregations in the four dioceses of ELOC, as well as from other churches in the whole country. The printing press of the church was bombed on November 19, 1980, destroying all tools and equipment. This is the second time it has been rebuilt. The first destruction was on May 11, 1973. The press reopened on May 11, 1975. The investigation of the police in both bombings did not provide any reliable evidence. During the last investigation, the Administrator General of South West Africa stated in his report that the police and defense force did not know what had happened in the area until the chance for a thorough investigation was over. A grudging spirit, anger or curiosity as to who caused this atrocity was not sensed among the members of the congregations on the day of the celebration. They only sang songs of praise. Praising God, they rejoiced to see the printing press standing once more.

Bishop Dumeni gave thanks for the unity of Christians throughout the world that enabled the printing press to be rebuilt again. ELOC members built together with other churches; and congregations and friends built together with ELOC. They were persecuted together. They carried heavy burdens of pain together with ELOC. All who helped openly or secretly to build the press, were tools in God’s hands.

...“Thanks for the unity of Christians throughout the world...”

The honorable guests from Lutheran churches and other denominations were present and gave their greetings. The Reverend Matti Koponen represented the Finnish Missionary Society. He was also one of the major speakers at the celebration. The Lutheran World Federation was represented by Mr. Olle Eriksson. The church in Cape Town, South Africa, was represented by Bishop Christoph Brandt and the secretary general of the Lutheran Church in South Africa, the Reverend Mervyn D. Assur. Representatives from the internal churches were from the Roman Catholic church, the Anglican church and the Ashocarte Baptist Church. Other churches that were not able to be present sent letters, telegrams or telexes. Many individual messages were also received. The main idea common to all the messages was that the church should continue to profess Christ without fear in using the new printing press.
argument over the proposed electoral system. All in all, the settlement is urgently needed in order to prevent further escalation of the war. Our people are yearning for peace, freedom and independence of the country of their birth.

The war situation is hindering us from carrying out our tasks and duties properly and promptly as we would like to. Nevertheless, Christians are enthusiastic and eager to serve their Lord, despite all the harassment and intimidation. Our churches are always full to their capacity—in fact, overcrowded—on Sundays. But because of the severe inflation we are living with financial problems. The worsening economic conditions make it increasingly hard for our church workers to make ends meet. Nevertheless, many of our parishes are working hard to achieve self-reliance in financial matters. Every year the number of those parishes that succeed in managing their financial obligation without any outside assistance is growing. Even in southern Angola the work of the Lord is progressing fairly well, despite the war of destruction that is being waged there.

Furthermore, we feel indebted to our Lutheran brethren and sisters all over the world for their always prompt response to our appeals for help and assistance. I have in mind, here, our printing press and recently our appeal for help in medicine supplies on behalf of the Lutheran Medical Mission. The generous response we always receive is overwhelming and, quite frankly, a very clear demonstration of our Christian love and unity—not only in words but also in concrete actions. May God bless you all very richly, for He is rich.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that even during this year of 1982 we have been and still are experiencing the biblical truth that “God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of troubles” (Psalm 46:2), as our watchword for this year states. Indeed, “If God is for us, who can be against us” (Romans 8:31-32).

Current Situation in Namibia

Lutheran Women Concerned About Daily Survival

(The following article was translated from Omukwetu, the newspaper of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church. It appeared October 30, 1982 and was titled “What Do We Do to Survive in This Economy?”)

The political situation in this country makes one think negotiations regarding independence for our country have been in vain. As the political situation deteriorates, so does the economy. More and women and losing jobs every month, the money value has gone down and essential commodities are becoming more expensive every day. The Lutheran women of Ondonga, northern Namibia, are deeply concerned. They recently came together and wrote a letter to Pastor Matias Nghipandulwa to ask for his advice. This is what he had to say:

“In a way, we the people who live in this part of the country could be considered lucky because to a certain extent we can grow our own food. Let us try not to depend too much on things (especially foodstuffs) bought from the store. Let us rear chickens, goats, pigs, and cattle as is our tradition. Let us grow corn, pumpkins, beans and other vegetables.

“It is true that we need more than growing our own food to survive. We need money, too. Already there are a number of people growing their own food and selling the surplus to their neighbors. This is indeed good. Say, for example, you have more chickens than your family needs. You can sell some of the chickens to your neighbors. The money you gain from these transactions may not be enough to open a savings account, but it would be enough to buy you a month’s supply of sugar, salt or other necessities you cannot grow on your own.

“There are those of us who think European things are always best. If you think that way you have been misinformed. Instead of going to the store to buy rice, try growing omahangu (millet). It has the same nutritional value as rice, only it is more economical because not only can you use it in the same way you use rice, you can also make drinks and bread out of it. And then if you have more than your family needs you can sell some of it.

“If there is anything you can do with your hands—for example, weaving baskets—do it and make a little money for yourself. Try to put your extra cash in the bank. It will come in handy in hard times—during times of drought, for example—when you would need the money to buy food for your family.

“Since the political situation in this country is not in our favor, it is up to us to make our lives more bearable with a little imagination and hard work.”

South African Army Again Surrounds Worship Service

Special to Dateline: Namibia

It was Mission Festival time in the Oukwanyama area of northern Namibia. Starting on Friday, September 2, and ending on Sunday, September 5, Christians from parishes all over the region came to study the Scriptures, pray and sing together the wonderful and hopeful songs of the Christian faith. On Sunday, the bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church led a large outdoor worship service with more than 1000 men, women and children sitting on the sand. Then, as so often happens in occupied Namibia, the army vehicles came. First, two of the giant armored trucks with their heavy diesel engines drove close to the worship area. Out came the South African troops with guns drawn. Following them came cars of the South African police. The troops and police, thirty to forty in all, stationed themselves around the congregation. The worshipers tried to continue through all the noise of trucks and movement of troops. The South African soldiers walked around the perimeter of the crowd, stooping as though they were searching for footprints. The Namibians wondered what special footprints the soldiers expected to find in an area where 1000 people had been walking. After about an hour of intimidating presence, the troops moved back to their trucks and drove on. It was another Sunday in Namibia.
Commentary

Support Letters Received in Namibia!

(The following article was translated from Omukwetu, the newspaper of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church. It appeared April 30, 1982, pp. 3-8. The original title was “In America They Reveal Sympathy.”)

Many churches in America and Canada are showing sympathy to the nation of Namibia which is oppressed by the yoke of war. The sympathy is revealed in the messages reaching the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church (ELOC) head office all the time. We are informing you that there are many people in America who have feelings of responsibility for those who are in torture and under oppressive governments in the world. This is revealed in one of the many letters sent to ELOC this year. Written by Trinity Lutheran Church in America, the letter was accompanied by a copy of a letter to their president, Ronald Reagan. The letter of this congregation reprimanded their government leader. They told him that his own statements and his government’s response to the Polish crisis, while at the same time keeping quiet about the atrocities done in Namibia, are hypocritical.

Some difficult questions that appeared in the letter, and called on the President to answer, are the following: Should we keep quiet while a friendly country is illegally occupying Namibia and performing notorious actions? Should we keep quiet while a single country is trampling United Nations laws and following her own policy of destroying the whole human being and that person’s dignity? The President of the United States was asked to give more information as to how he will help solve Namibia’s problem. The congregation also asked if the President is fully cooperating with the United Nations to put pressure on the South African government to accept a free and fair election. The letter was signed by 37 people, among them bishops, pastors and parishioners. From 1980 to March 1982, the ELOC office received 157 letters from churches in America, in which they show sympathy to all fellow Christians in Namibia because of the difficulties in our country.

U.S. Policy Change in South Africa’s Favor

The negotiations for Namibian independence have stalled because of the new requirement introduced this year by the United States government.

In his November, 1982, trip to Africa, Vice-President George Bush stated that Namibian independence could not come about until Cuban troops leave Angola, the country immediately to the north of Namibia. This new condition for Namibian independence was quietly added by the United States to the negotiations early in 1982 and now has been eagerly accepted by South Africa.

Since it is unlikely that Angola will ask the Cubans to leave their country, South Africa now has an easy excuse to continue its illegal occupation of Namibia. Some 18,000 Cuban troops are serving 300 miles north of the Namibian-Angolan border at the request of the Angolan government. These Cuban troops first came to Angola in 1975 to help the Angolan government respond to a South African invasion of the former Portuguese colony. They remain in Angola at Angolan government request protecting the capital and, among other things, the Gulf corporation oil fields from South African invasion.

“We cannot understand this new precondition,” said Bishop Dumeni of Namibia. “The Cubans are not in Namibia, they are in Angola, another country.” Compounding this, says Dumeni, is the reality of South Africa’s constant invasion of southern Angola.

“The South African army is in Angola. To tell Angola that the Cubans should be leaving — we do not understand. Why doesn’t the United States tell South Africa that its soldiers should leave Angola, then there is no need for Cubans.”

The pre-condition of Cuban withdrawal is the main stumbling block in the negotiations for Namibian independence. The South West Africa People’s Organization, Namibia’s independence party, has agreed to all conditions for a ceasefire. It is waiting for South Africa to choose the election process and to agree to that ceasefire so that the United Nations supervised election can take place.

“‘The Namibian people see that this Cuban issue is one the American government has handed over to South Africa,’” said Dumeni. “‘Our people believe that the U.S. government has the power to persuade the South African government to come to ceasefire and UN-supervised elections,’” he continued. “‘But we see that the U.S.-South African government relationship is very important to them, rather than the suffering people of Namibia.’”

Dumeni says that Namibians are now bitter towards the United States government. “We know who holds the keys to this matter,” he said. “It is Botha [Prime Minister of South Africa] and President Reagan. They have the power. The bloodshed of my people is now their responsibility.

“We do see the effort to solidarity and action from the Christians of North America. I have received many letters, copies of what they have written to Congress. But,” said Dumeni, “we cannot avoid what we have seen the U.S. government doing. All what we want is an end to bloodshed.”

“If I am an Angolan,” said Dumeni, “the U.S. tells me ‘Please, those that defend you, they must go away. And those that hate and kill you, they must remain.’”

Namibians and Angolans logically conclude that the United States government supports South Africa’s presence in Namibia and Angola. And that is a very difficult thing for them to understand.

“Our people are yearning for peace, freedom, and independence of the country of their birth.”

Bishop Kleopas Dumeni
Lutherans in North America
Call for Solidarity

In word and deed, 1982 has been a watershed in Lutheran witness for justice and human dignity in southern Africa. In response to the suffering of Namibian Christians and the appeals of the Namibian churches, the Lutheran Church in America, The American Lutheran Church, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches have all affirmed opposition to the brutal South African system of apartheid, issued renewed calls for solidarity with the church in South Africa and Namibia, and pledged to work for greater United States government action in achieving independence for Namibia.

Lutheran Church in America

The Lutheran Church in America, at its Eleventh Biennial Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, September 3-10, 1982, called for “the end of the occupation of Namibia by the government of South Africa in violation of international law, and of the continual and brutal suppression of human rights of Namibians.” The convention also urged “the governments of the United States and Canada to be vigorous in their pursuit of genuine political self-determination for the people of Namibia, according to the terms of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 435.”

Concerning South Africa, the convention pledged the church’s “solidarity with the churches and people of South Africa who are working to replace the system of apartheid with one responsive to justice and human rights.”

In response to the convention’s strong conviction that direct action is in order at this time, the church’s Executive Council was instructed to direct the Office of Administration and Finance “to exercise the option of divestment of securities of corporations which have direct investments in South Africa and the withdrawal of funds from banks which make direct loans to the government or para-statal agencies in South Africa.”

Concerning Zimbabwe, the convention called upon “the governments of the United States and Canada to support...the efforts of the government of Zimbabwe to recover from the long war for independence and develop fully its resources as a nation.”

The convention urged the church to “call upon the governments of the United States and Canada to implement economic and diplomatic sanctions against the Republic of South Africa, and to support, join and encourage other United Nations members also to implement these sanctions.”

The American Lutheran Church

The American Lutheran Church, meeting in San Diego at the same time that the LCA met in Louisville, reaffirmed the resolutions on southern Africa that it had passed at its 1980 convention. Concerning Namibia, the ALC condemned South Africa for having “deliberately ignored all appeal for free and open elections” in Namibia, and for subjecting the Namibian people to “continual harassment, arbitrary detention, torture, brutalities, degradations and torts, and politically motivated and protected homicide.”

The convention reaffirmed that The American Lutheran Church “1) urge the Republic of South Africa immediately to agree to the proposals of the UNSC Resolution 435, and cooperate in the organization of internationally supervised elections in Namibia; 2) urge the President and Congress of these United States of America to cooperate with the United Nations in bringing pressure to bear on the Republic of South Africa, without further delay, for compliance with UNSC Resolution 435, including the application of whatever economic or other sanctions may be necessary; and 3) urge all congregations of The American Lutheran Church, through their councils and social action committees, and by every other possible means, to sponsor and organize an intensive lobbying campaign with their congressmen and congresswomen to ‘conscientize’ both our president and our Congress on this matter.”

Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches

At its April 1978 conference, the AELC passed a “Response to Injustice and Apartheid in South Africa,” stating “1) That the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches declares its solidarity with the people and those churches of South Africa that have joined the struggle for majority rule; 2) That the... (AELC) asks it member congregations to do ongoing study and to work on issues concerning justice in South Africa and to report these efforts to the Association; 3) That the national office of the... (AELC) refuses to do business with any financial institution making loans to the private or public sector in South Africa until apartheid injustice is eliminated, and that we urge the Synods and their members to take similar action.” These actions have been reaffirmed by subsequent conventions.

The resolutions of the AELC were preceded by background material that sums up the conviction of many concerned Christians. “The central questions in South Africa today,” it states, “are...questions of injustice, racism, neocolonialism and a basic frustration of God’s intentions for all humanity, especially the way people perceive and relate to each other.” Furthermore, it goes on, “racial practices...exist today in the United States, for example, that are very similar to those in South Africa. The basis of these racial practices, which exalt whites above people of color, is racism. Racism is a denial of the created order and the incarnation.”
Addition Resources

For further information we suggest you write to the following sources:

Dr. Edward C. May
Director, Office of World Community
Lutheran World Ministries
360 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10010

Mr. William Johnston
Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa
853 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

Office of the U.N. Commissioner for Namibia
1 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

United Nations Council for Namibia
United Nations
New York, NY 10017

South West Africa People's Organization
SWAPO Observer Mission to the
United Nations
801 Second Avenue—Room 1401
New York, NY 10017

Advocacy Letters for Namibia

Letters to your political representatives in North America are extremely important. The diplomatic pressure that the United States and Canada can bring to bear, if they have the will to do so, can force South Africa to remove its occupying forces from Namibia. Write in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution 435.

United States Senate: The Honorable

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

House of Representatives: The Honorable

House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Canada

Members of Parliament: The Honourable

House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

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