**Events**

**WORKER KILLED**

Jesaja Lukas, a worker at the Lutheran Hospital at Nkurenkuru, Namibia was killed by South African led troops on the night of May 18. Indiscriminate firing by occupation forces into the village where Mr. Lukas lived caused his death.

Lukas had been eating dinner with his wife and five of their children when the shooting started. Since the sound of gunfire is an everynight occurrence, the family did little at first to protect themselves. When the firing drew near to the Lukas kraal, Lukas ordered his children to enter their huts, while he and his wife put out the fire. Then the bullets penetrated the stick fence around the kraal, and Mrs. Lukas heard her husband cry out, “Mother, I am dying!” A shell had entered through Lukas’ back causing massive exit wounds in his stomach. Lukas was quickly taken to the Lutheran hospital where nurses worked to save him, but the wounds were so extensive that he died within thirty minutes.

Pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church were present at the hospital and prayed with Mr. Lukas as he was dying. They tried to console the family. “Their grief was so great,” reported one pastor, “the crying by the wife, the sister, the children.” “Murder had taken place.”

The pastors and the others went back to the village after Lukas died. The next morning South African special constables came, trying to claim that an East European weapon from the South West Africa People’s Organization had killed Lukas. Reports indicate that the villagers surrounded the police, shouting, “You have killed the man!” “You are killing the people! We don’t want you to change the truth, we have seen you destroying the people! You have done it!” The villagers continued to stay at the kraal, and wept with the family.

**Editorial**

**SOUTH AFRICANS ENLISTING CHILDREN AS SPIES**

In a tactic reminiscent of Nazi Germany and George Orwell’s chilling totalitarian classic 1984, South Africa is reportedly trying to recruit Namibian children to spy on their parents. Sources inside Namibia indicate that children in the northeastern region, known as Kavangoland, are being paid to report to teachers and the police their parents’ contacts with strangers, in an effort to prevent the people from aiding guerrillas of the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO.

The authorities are particularly anxious to prevent the residents of Kavangoland from feeding the guerrillas, and civilians are routinely arrested, imprisoned and tortured for this offense. In the past, the South Africans have employed black agents and Angolan troops from their heavily-subsidized UNITA allies, disguised as SWAPO fighters, to try and trick the people into supplying them with food. According to local churchmen, South African agents engaged in the “entrapment” campaign usually end up harming the people regardless of their response.

If the “terrorists” are given food, the offending family is beaten, women are raped, and their home, or “Kraal” is burned to the ground in a display of summary “justice.” If the family refuses to give the agents food, they are often subjected to the same treatment in the guise of SWAPO exacting retribution. Either way the South African terror continues.

Moreover, since hospitality to strangers is a cherished tradition among Namibians in the rural areas, and since feeding their brothers and sisters who have taken up arms against the enemy is almost universally considered an act of patriotism among black Namibians, the government campaign is likely to fail, and the bloodshed to continue indefinitely.

By using children in the practice of official terror, South Africa has entered a new phase of evil—one that will lead to suspicion among family members, and greater fear in innocent hearts. This is the terror of South African rule. And this is why Christians throughout the world are raising their voices against support for South Africa, against their governments’ political, economic and moral support for the apartheid government.
Security Council Ponders Namibia

Over a decade after the World Court declared South Africa's occupation of Namibia illegal, the crisis surrounding the apartheid government's continuing hold over the territory, and the sufferings of the Namibian people under South African rule, were again the subject of a United Nations debate. The Security Council meeting, which opened on May 23 at the request of the African countries and the "non-aligned" nations, was ostensibly called to review the status of the drawn-out negotiations over Namibian independence under the terms of the internationally accepted plan for Namibian freedom, UN Resolution 435.

But the real purpose of the council meeting, as speaker after speaker revealed, was to underscore growing African and Third World impatience with the stalling tactics employed by South Africa, and to condemn Western collusion with South Africa's continuing presence in Namibia—particularly with the U.S. demand that Cuban troops in neighboring Angola be withdrawn as part of a Namibia settlement.

The remarks of P.V. Narasimha Rao, Minister of External Affairs of India, the world's largest democracy, represent the sentiments expressed by dozens of world leaders. Minister Rao reaffirmed his country's support for the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO and condemned South African "aggression, intimidation, destabilization and depredations" against its neighbors.

"Can the international community afford to allow South Africa to continue to flout all norms of civilized conduct in this fashion?" he asked the world body. "For how much longer must the Namibian people endure untold sufferings? What else must be allowed to happen, and at what price to the Namibian patriots, for the United Nations to bring the full weight of its legal, moral and political authority to bear on the racist, illegal regime of South Africa in order to obtain full independence for Namibia?"

Rao's questions have profound and troubling relevance to Christians in the United States, for it is their government, by introducing the concept of "linkage" of Cuban troops in Angola to Namibian independence—in effect holding the Namibian people hostage to Washington's unrelated global political objectives—which has given South Africa an excuse to remain in Namibia. And it is the United States, through the abuse of its veto powers in the Security Council which has protected South Africa from the wrath of international opinion.

Another speaker, Jamaican Foreign Affairs Minister Shearer, also criticized "linkage" and Washington's "constructive engagement" policy towards South Africa, saying "the prospect of a solution to the Namibia issue has receded" as a result. The five member Western Contact Group had failed to bring about Namibian independence, he noted, "and has therefore outlived its usefulness."

Even the Kenyan government, normally one of America's closest allies in Africa, said that South Africa had never seriously contemplated leaving Namibia, and that the world had been misled about South African intentions "by those negotiating for South Africa, namely the Western Contact Group."

The Indonesian representative, Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, focused his remarks on the "insidious" policies of the South African government in Namibia. The apartheid government, he said "has used every dilatory maneuver to obstruct and thwart progress" towards peace in Namibia. "The situation in Namibia today," he observed, "is significantly more oppressive and volatile than it was five years ago" when the contact group first formed. He concluded that the situation in Namibia now constituted a threat to international peace, and demanded that the Security Council resume its central role "in the negotiations."

And what was the South African reply to the deliberations of the Security Council? One of scorn, contempt—and terror. Addressing the council on May 24, the South African representative, Kurt Von Schirnding dismissed the world body's "spurious claims" to jurisdiction over Namibia: "The time has come to remind the United Nations that South Africa has never accepted the United Nations' view that South Africa's presence in the territory is illegal."

Speaking on behalf of a country whose soldiers operate openly in neighboring countries, Von Schirnding cynically told the council that his country stood for "peaceful co-existence with all our neighbors"—this just 24 hours after South African jets attacked the Mozambique capital of Maputo, killing six people, including two young children.

Von Schirnding was defiant, and finally threatening: "The world must understand that the South African government will not bow to threats. We shall not be bound by deadlines or held hostage by intimidation. We shall make our own decisions according to our perceptions of our responsibilities and interests ... I trust that the Security Council will not consider any action or set any deadlines which might force southern Africa in the direction of confrontation and an escalation of conflict."

"The Council should be under no illusions as to who would suffer most. It would not be the Super powers or the United Nations which would have to pay the price for loosing the dogs of war upon our region. It would be all the peoples of southern Africa, of all the countries of our region."

Christians everywhere stand opposed to terror and evil, and in southern Africa, the horrors of war—and deliberate attempts to prolong war and suffering—are the result of the injustices and evils of apartheid. As Christians, how shall we reply to the pleas of the Namibian people? How shall we respond to the growing international demand that our elected officials end their support for South Africa and join in bringing free elections, independence and peace to that injured land. We must soon decide, for by unanimous vote, the Security Council has instructed the Secretary General to return on August 31 with a full report on the effort to bring Namibia to genuine freedom.
An Interview with Präses Hendrik Frederik

Since its first issue in late 1981, Dateline: Namibia’s purpose has been to acquaint Christians in North America with their brothers and sisters in Namibia. In keeping with this purpose, the interview that follows with Präses (President) Hendrik Frederik. The interview that follows once again permits us to meet one of the leading churchmen of Namibia, and glimpse through his words the anguish of life under apartheid.

Frederik: I was born in Bethanien, a very small town in the south of Namibia. My father was an evangelist, not a pastor, but an evangelist who was visiting congregations around Bethanien when he preached. At that time, the evangelists were not allowed to baptize for instance, or conduct Holy Communion. I went to school in Bethanien and then in 1951, I went to Okahandja to learn to become a teacher. But after two years, there was a strike of students and I joined them.

Ed: What was the strike about?

Frederik: It was because the teachers at that time were, of course, whites and they punished us with sticks. And we complained about the hitting. I was seventeen at the time of the strike.

Ed: What did you do following this strike?

Frederik: I then went back to my home and worked until 1957. In 1958 I went to the theological seminary for one and a half years. Then I went back and served in Bethanien as evangelist till 1962. I returned again to the seminary, spent two years working in the church printing press and then finished my studies in 1968. At the end of 1972 I was elected as a national secretary of the church. I went to Windhoek and was secretary of the church until 1979. And the end of 1979, I was elected president of the church.

Ed: How many congregations are there in the ELC?

Frederik: We have 45 independent congregations. By independent I mean that these congregations are independent with their administration, salaries, etc. And these congregations are divided into circuits. Every circuit has a moderator, or supervisor.

Ed: The circuits, now, they’re divided geographically?

Frederik: That’s right. Bethanien, the town I grew up in, is in the Keetmanshoop circuit. But the area near the congregation lacks work possibilities. The people must go out to the farms to get work where they are looking after cattle or sheep or goat.

Ed: Do Black Namibians own any of these farms?

Frederik: They can make their living as farmers, but they cannot be the owners of the farm. The farms are in the so-called “homelands” and belong to the government. You know, we are still under the government of South Africa. Namibia does not have its own government and it is divided into eleven (tribal) homelands. The homeland called Namaland is around the town of Bethanien, where the congregation is.

Ed: There are white people who live in Bethanien and control it?

Frederik: Yes.

Ed: And there’s a township or place where blacks can live there?

Frederik: Yes, there are two—one for the various groups, Nama, Herrero, Damara, etc. and one for the “coloured” [people of mixed descent]. And of course there is the white area, as they call it.

Ed: So which government would own the land?

Frederik: In Bethanien it’s the town municipality. There is a commissioner living in the homeland and he is the one who will say whether you can have a place to live.

Ed: What about the congregation? What people does it serve?

Frederik: There is just one congregation. We are trying, from the side of the church, to unite people. “Coloured,” Nama, Damara, all together belong to one congregation, served by one pastor.

Ed: But South Africa keeps telling North Americans that it’s very important that the different tribal groups be allowed to remain separate and have their own identity. And that they really want to be separate, both from each other and from the whites. Is this true?

Frederik: I don’t agree that we blacks like to live separately and that we don’t want others to join us. We haven’t had a chance to show them because all the time, we are just divided. But in the church we are together. We have congregations where we can accommodate different language groups. Where needed we translate a sermon, in order that all who are there should understand what the preacher is saying. It is not for political reasons that we unite people. For the church it is important because Christ has commanded us to do that.

Ed: Which ethnic background do you come from?

Frederik: My ethnic group is Nama. But maybe I should mention here that in Namibia, some people don’t like to mention their particular language group. If you ask them who they are, then the answer is, “I’m a Namibian.” They don’t like to mention it, although they know what background they are from.
Interview Cont.

Ed: South Africa continually says that the Namas will fight the Herreros, that in fact the different tribal groups can't get along.

Frederik: I would reject that very sharply because we have another experience in the church where these people are together. I might also mention that in everyday life the people are not separated. They may be Herrero-speakers and Nama-speakers and Afrikaans-speakers, even “coloureds” and others who work for the same firm. There is no quarrel in their workshop where they are working together. But from there everyone has to go to his own home in his own township. That’s where they are divided.

Ed: One of the other things we hear from South Africa is that most of the other peoples, say the Namas and Damaras, are fearful of “one person-one vote” because they are fearful that the Ovambo majority will rule Namibia. Is there a lot of tribal hatred that exists from days past?

Frederik: I don’t think it is true that there is fear of the majority. Today we are under the control of the white minority. And they are trying to rule us. But if it happens that the Ovambo-speaking people are the majority, maybe then we will be under a government which is acceptable for others. Besides the Southwest Africa People’s Organization [SWAPO] consists of different ethnic groups, not only Ovambos as we hear every day.

Ed: I’ve asked this question of other Namibian church leaders, so I feel it’s also important to ask it of you. The South African government charges that the Southwest Africa People’s Organization is a Communist organization; that it is ruled by Russia and that they are godless people, terrorists. What does a person from the south of Namibia say to those statements?

Frederik: I don’t think it is true that this independent political party is governed by another country or another political party. That’s the first point to me. I know that the people of SWAPO are members of different churches, Lutheran, Anglicans, Roman Catholic. They are people who are responsible to their churches and they don’t know what “Communist” is. As for the Namibians living outside their country, and especially maybe the leaders of that party who have contact with the Communist countries, I’m not sure that they can be influenced very much by the Communists to take that policy to their country after independence. I heard from some SWAPO leaders that they went first to the Western countries in order to get support and help for independence. And they didn’t get it. They were forced by the situation to go to the Communist countries because they offered that help. That’s why I don’t think they are Communists. The other thing I want to mention here is that in the refugee camps there are services—there are pastors and priests who are responsible for the spiritual life of the people. They baptize children. There are Holy Communion services. And although I don’t know a Communist very well, I think if SWAPO was a Communist party, they wouldn’t allow pastors and priests to serve their people spiritually.

Ed: South Africa also says that Africans do not know how to rule themselves. That it’s only because of South Africa that there is food and railroads. They say people in America should recognize that if South Africa is forced to leave Namibia, Namibia will be one of the poorest countries in southern Africa.

Frederik: This is propaganda. If somebody has been deprived of his humanity, then it’s different even to know that he is a human being. It will be difficult after independence, but then, it’s our chance to show what we can do. And if we have a good leadership, I think we can manage it. Just here let me refer to SWAPO and the leadership of SWAPO. They left the country because they couldn’t stay in the country, and they are trying to educate the people, to help the people. And it can be done in the future. You know, I remember when I was young I saw my father and other men make shoes for themselves and for their wives. They were already on the way to development. We have knowledge, and we are not lazy. If that day comes and South Africa leaves us, we will be ready. From the side of the church, we will work together with the political leaders to build up the country. Unfortunately, South Africa failed to develop the country.

Ed: What do you think is the greatest need of your particular church right now? What is the greatest difficulty you face?

Frederik: That sounds like a simple question, but it’s difficult to answer. I will say this. We are struggling not only with the church work, but with the community, we are responsible for social (diaconical) work for the people without looking to whether someone belongs to the Lutheran Church or the Anglican or Roman Catholic Church.
One big task we have is to look after old people who do not have relatives. In Windhoek, for instance, the old people are put together in a building. But it's not really an old age home.

Ed: Is the place in Windhoek or in Katutura, the black township?

Frederik: It's in Katutura, and there we have somebody we call a diaconia, like a deacon, to help the old people. And not just help them live in a clean place and have food to eat, but also to read them the Bible, tell them about Christ, to sing together and practice songs.

Ed: Since serving the aged is one of the works of a deacon, then training people to deal with aging could be a useful service.

Frederik: Yes. We don't have someone who can guide these people. Fortunately, the pastor I mentioned, Pastor Nakanmela, got his training in the Netherlands. But he didn't finish his training, he had to go back before he fulfilled his studies. Unfortunately, at the moment he is serving at a congregation because of a shortage of pastors. But personally, I wish he'd get a chance to go out again for one or two years to finish his training. As you said, it can be one way of cooperation. And that will be great if in the future we can send maybe one or two to you in the U.S. for further studies in social diaconal work.

And we really need the support of our Christian friends overseas. I have heard from the people in Canada and the USA, who have seen the film "A Cry for Freedom." We have received letters from youth groups, from congregation members, from individuals, and from pastors and their families. In these letters, they tell us that they are praying for us after they have seen that film and have heard what our situation is. They go and talk to with their families or their governments. I should say it is a very encouraging message carried by these letters.

Maybe I should also mention that we forward these messages to our congregations, telling them they have Christian friends overseas. Listen to what they are saying for us. And to us. Let us continue to pray and let us thank God because of this. And let us continue to stay together. Maybe it's not the biggest and the greatest need, but it's so important that we know that we have Christian friends in the United States and we appreciate it very much. We have requested them to be with us during this time we are going through. Afterwards we should go together hand in hand into the future.

Ed: Before you mentioned that your father was an evangelist and couldn't baptize or serve Holy Communion. Why was that?

Frederik: At that time, (under the German mission) qualified men were not sent for further theological studies. They were not ordained because of their color.

Ed: When you think of all the lives that have been wasted because of apartheid, the men and women who have not had a chance to be what God made them to be, it's very tragic.

Frederik: It's true, it's very tragic and hard and painful to even say. I compare it with the richness of Namibia which is covered, the minerals under the ground. There are so many intelligent people, but because they didn't get the chance to be educated, they are not in the position even to help themselves. They are deprived.

Ed: Is that why it's so important that Namibia be free?

Frederik: Yes, it is. One of the purposes of the church should be, and is, the proclaiming of the Gospel, which is the main purpose. The church should also continue to open up the way for the people so that they could realize that they are human beings created by God as everybody and anybody. And that they can be educated people, they can do things, they themselves. It's a great job for the church to do that.

Ed: And the church has done this in spite of apartheid?

Frederik: Yes. Although it is not easy for the church to go this way, the church should be ready to suffer for its own people.

Advocacy for Namibia

Your prayers and letters of support are invited for Namibian church leaders. They appreciate your messages and share them with congregations all over Namibia.

Präses Hendrik Frederik
Evangelical Lutheran Church in SWA
Box 5069
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Dr. Abisai Shejavali, Namibian educator and churchman, has been elected General Secretary of the Council of Churches in Namibia. He succeeds Dr. Albertus Maasdorp who has left Namibia and is serving a Lutheran parish in the Netherlands.

Repression and Human Rights Violations in Namibia

Statement by Dr. Abisai Shejavali

Despite all propagandistic indications to the contrary, repression and violation of human rights in Namibia today are as bad, if not worse, than it has ever been in our country.

For the past five years the world has been led to believe that petty apartheid had been done away with and that Namibia was being governed, on the 1st and 2nd tiers, (a reference to the local and territorial tribal legislatures elected in discredited South African elections in 1980) by democratically elected Black leaders.

Right now, South Africa, by its most recent actions, has indicated beyond any doubt that it is not only unwilling to release Namibia into independence, but apart from a total military rule, it is at present working towards another so-called (internal) "democratic election" to postpone if not scrap Resolution 435. (UN Resolution 435 is the internationally accepted plan for Namibian independence.)

Repression in the economic sector

The economic situation in Namibia today is worse than it has ever been. Unemployment, especially among the Blacks, is extremely high. Vacant positions are not being filled, both in the public and private sector, and people are sacked daily. The percentage of unemployed people would be very much higher if it were not for conscription which provides "employment" if one can call it that, to all men and boys between the ages of 16 and 25.

Corruption, nepotism and intimidation, especially in the so-called second tier (ethnic) governments, resulted in people being sacked from the civil service and being replaced by foreigners, in most cases South Africans. While there has been a relative increase in salaries for people in white and blue collar jobs, the rise in the cost of living has been much higher than the salary increases.

Black workers working on farms are paid between $18 and $36 per month. In mine categories 9-12, workers receive from 95 cents to $1.79 per hour. Mine categories 3-17 receive 54 to 79 cents per hour. Consolidated Diamond Mine Company (CDM) wages are from $2.30 to $7.36 per hour.

Education

Out of 1,376 students who passed the matriculation examination (graduated from high school) in 1982, about 1,000 were whites. Four hundred of 1,376 students will enter university, of which only twenty were Black. Nothing can illustrate better the crisis in Black education today. Only 16 percent of the potential white primary school population are not at school, whereas only 14 percent of the potential Black school-going population is attending school.

The central government provides all ethnic governments with $207 per child per year for education. AG8 of 1980, a proclamation of the South African-appointed Administrator-General to create these authorities, does not make it compulsory for the whole amount to be spent for the purpose. The result is that in many cases the Black ethnic authorities spent less per child, whereas the white ethnic authority, with money from a special fund, spends $1,624 per child per year.

May I also say here that there are South African white soldiers who work as teachers in Black state secondary schools. When they are there they are in the uniforms and carrying guns. This causes psychological effect on students—unrest, fear, and confusion about what education is about.

As far as health is concerned, the situation is even more critical. Whereas the central government spends $34 per person per year (on health), the white ethnic authority spends $211 per person per year.

Medical care is unavailable to most Blacks living in the rural areas; and in the capital (Windhoek) the intensive care unit was removed from the Black Katutura hospital to the white Windhoek state hospital—along with almost all the highest qualified Black nursing staff, since there is a shortage of qualified white nurses. It is therefore not surprising that the per capita death rate of Blacks in comparison to whites is very high. Blacks have to wait hours to get emergency medical treatment in state hospitals. At times there are no doctors available.

Laws

With the promulgation and existence of draconian laws like Section Six of the Terrorism Act, which empowers any security officer to arrest, torture and detain anybody for as long as they want, without ever being held responsible for their action, legal repression and legal violation of human rights...
Current Situation in Namibia

knows no bounds in Namibia. People have died within hours of their arrests; some were "fortunate" enough to end up in hospital and many have disappeared without a trace.

Apart from this, legal cases take years and hundreds of rand before judgement is given. Blacks are imprisoned on trumped-up charges or sentenced to long prison terms for petty offenses only because they cannot afford legal representation.

Cheap (prison) labor is provided to farmers and prisoners . . . instead of having the protection of the state are exposed to sadistic, racist acts by the white farmers. Recently one young prisoner was slowly tortured to death over three days by one such farmer. The farmer was sentenced to six months in jail, whereas Ida Jimmy (a Black woman) was jailed for seven years because she stated at a public meeting that she would give food to a guerrilla who happens to be her blood brother.

A law prohibiting public gatherings prevents any group of more than twenty people to get together without the permission of a magistrate. Political parties have to denounce the armed struggle in their constitution in order for them to be granted this permission. It goes without saying that SWAPO, which is fighting a war of liberation, need not even take the trouble to apply. Yet white racist parties can publicly proclaim to fight for retention of their rights with any means at their disposal without any repercussion, despite the fact that the law explicitly prohibits this.

Military Repression

The acts of criminal violence which are perpetrated in the north of Namibia every day cannot be adequately described. Intimidation, torture, rape, kidnapping, murder, arson and common theft are the order of the day. Almost always, SWAPO is being blamed. But whenever evidence clearly shows that SWAPO is not involved, the verdict is always that criminal liability cannot be proved. SWAPO is a liberation movement committed to liberation of people of Namibia. It cannot turn against its people.

A special section of the South African army, called "Koevoet" or "One Way" is carrying out a literal reign of terror. This detachment is made up of mercenaries from Angola, South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe and from Western countries, and they are responsible for evil actions against Blacks in the northern part of Namibia, disguised as SWAPO soldiers. They kill, wound people, commit robbery and commit wanton shootings.

The majority of Namibians first and foremost want peace and a chance to participate in a free and just election to choose their leaders. The free election will open the door towards our inalienable right to independence and self-determination. The international community must understand that Namibians are weeping and crying out to their God and to the international body to put out the flames in our country, restore peace, justice, and order. How long must Namibians suffer before the United Nations can act effectively to make South Africa's government withdraw from our country?
In 1966, the United Nations revoked the trusteeship mandate of South Africa over Namibia because of the continued violation of human rights imposed by apartheid, government enforced racial discrimination. In 1971 the World Court ruled that South Africa must leave Namibia. South Africa refused, and by 1977 the nations of the world were prepared to call for severe economic and political sanctions against South Africa.

To prevent those sanctions, and thus preserve their strong economic ties with South Africa, the United States, with Great Britain, France, West Germany and Canada, proposed to the United Nations Security Council that they are given time to negotiate a settlement to the Namibian question. The five, who came to be known as the Western Contact Group, have been negotiating with South Africa for six years, and state in speeches and press releases that few obstacles remain to independence. In the last analysis, however, there has only been one obstacle to independence, and that is South Africa’s refusal to quit its illegal occupation of Namibia.

In 1982, the United States introduced a new condition to South African withdrawal, the removal of Cuban troops in the country north of Namibia, Angola. The Angolan government invited the Cubans to their country in 1976 because of a South African invasion and have repeatedly stated that when South Africa quits its occupation of southern Angola and Namibia itself, the Cuban troops will be sent home.

The churches in Namibia, who first welcomed the good offices of the Contact group in negotiating an independence, have lived through six more years of bloodshed and terror. The following letter to the United States and the others in the group has been received with scorn by the United States State Department, which sent a staff member to Windhoek to protest its content. In one insulting sentence, the U.S. official dismissed the church leaders as not representing the wishes of the Namibian people.

Since the church leaders assembled were all elected, and represent the only viable institutions in Namibia not controlled by South Africa, this biased statement revealed the ignorance of our public servants as to the true wishes of the Namibian people, and a lack of understanding of the democracy that the churches alone have preserved inside Namibia.

Advocacy Letters for Namibia

Letters to your political representatives in North America are important. The diplomatic and economic pressure that your government can exert, if it follows its moral words against apartheid with action, can be a positive force for peaceful change. Consider writing in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution 435, which will bring about a UN peacekeeping force in Namibia and UN supervised elections. Namibian Christians would also ask you to protest any other preconditions to their country’s independence.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE WESTERN FIVE CONTACT GROUP

Your Excellencies,

As we continue to hear and experience further wanton acts of destruction of life and property in our country, we, the Executive Committee of the Council of Churches in Namibia, representing 81% of Namibian Christians, meeting in Windhoek on the 28th January 1983, would like to state that, because of our commitment to reconciliation, justice, peace and the preservation of human life, we remain resolved that independence under United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 is the only just and concrete solution to our country’s plight.

Having supported your initiatives, we view with mounting concern the developing stalemate of non-existent progress in regard to the negotiations on the implementation of the said Resolution which are now impeded by the irrelevant linkage of Cubans to the historical colonial problem of our country.

We wish to state also that the Cuban presence in the sovereign state of Angola is not a threat to the Namibian people. The historical priority is South Africa’s continued occupation of Namibia without the consent and mandate from the majority of the people. We are disturbed that certain members of your group are obstructing and undermining the negotiations by trying to make their own domestic political capital from this irrelevant linkage, and by so doing, prolonging suffering and bloodshed in our country. We reject such obstruction, and consequently are beginning to question the authenticity and sincerity of the motives of your group.

The destructive effect of the status quo continues to escalate, and we urgently appeal to you to heed the will and rights of the Namibian people and in their interests alone, do everything in your power to remove the obstacles hindering the immediate implementation of Resolution 435.

We urge you to act promptly in order to restore the diminishing hope and expectations that we originally had in your initiative.

Yours sincerely,

The Executive Committee of the Council of Churches in Namibia

Dateline: Namibia is published by the Division for Mission in North America, Lutheran Church in America, in cooperation with the Division for World Mission and Inter-Church Cooperation and the Office of Church in Society, The American Lutheran Church. Editor: John A. Evenson. Associate Editor: Anne Leo Ellis. Mailing address: 231 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Telephone: 212-696-6841. © 1983 DMNA/LCA.