Beth and John Cawkins and Elizabeth Liggett, students at Wartburg Seminary’s Denver House of Studies, join with 75 other demonstrators in downtown Denver to protest the apartheid policies of South Africa.

Kameeta: ‘As surely as the sun will rise...’

“Will Namibia be free in the foreseeable future?”

When a black American brother in the audience asked this question, Zephaniah Kameeta, Namibian theologian twice imprisoned for his outspoken opposition to apartheid in Namibia, replied, “I am no prophet. Humanly speaking there is little hope. But I always answer this question by asking, ‘Will the sun rise tomorrow?’ The answer is clear. As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, Namibia will be free.”

Kameeta, vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in SouthWest Africa/Namibia, spent three days in Denver as a guest of National Namibia Concerns and the Wartburg Seminary Denver House of Studies. He arrived Oct. 1 after a week of lectures at Holden Village in the state of Washington and a weekend in San Francisco.

His visit included a dialogue with representatives of the Denver community who have expressed concern about Namibia and interest in its future. The group of 15 included two Lutheran bishops, three key leaders from Iliff Seminary, two professors from Denver University who teach courses on Southern Africa, a representative from American Friends Service Committee, a top staff person from the office of U.S. Representative Pat Schroeder, the pastor of an African Methodist Episcopal church, and representatives from National Namibia Concerns and the Steering Committee of the Denver House of Studies.

At the luncheon Kameeta emphasized again that the immediate prospects for free elections in Namibia look grim.

He expressed particular concern that the Reagan administration’s policy of “constructive engagement” with South Africa has strengthened rather than weakened its policy of apartheid.

The U.S. government’s insistence that free elections in Namibia must be preceded by withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola has actually strengthened South Africa’s power in Namibia.

An evening lecture at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church was co-sponsored by the Denver House of Studies Continuing Education Program and National Namibia Concerns.

(Continued on page 2, col. 1)
Kameeta sees hope (Continued from page 1)

In the lecture, Kameeta traced the history of South Africa's relation to Namibia. He explained the theological system which the Dutch Reformed community uses to justify apartheid.

"Apartheid is a theological problem, a spiritual problem. It is carried out in the name of Christianity. It has been correctly called a heresy."

Approximately 85 people attended the lecture, which included a free will offering that Kameeta asked be used for a program in his church to train evangelists to work in the atmosphere of conflict and violence.

The South African Council of Churches will work with 15 evangelists in this program for three months, at a cost of $2,000. National Namibia Concerns is collecting the money for the project.

Before leaving for visits to Luther-Northwestern and Wartburg seminaries, Kameeta shared realistic, but hopeful, words.

"At present there is no light at the end of the tunnel of colonialism for the people of Namibia. Some of us, many of us, will die in the struggle. We do not ask you to die for our freedom. That is our privilege. But we ask you to stand with us in the years ahead, for as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, Namibia will one day be free."

Dear Friends,

Once more we celebrate the season of Advent. The hymns we sing are special ones, full of expectation and promise. Children eagerly open the windows of their Advent calendars, peeking to see what lies behind them. In many homes an Advent wreath has once again been built, and Advent candles are lit each evening.

As we look at the flickering light of these candles, we are reminded that these tiny lights symbolize the promise that the child whose birth we are to celebrate has indeed brought hope to the world.

When Zephaniah Kameeta was here this fall, he said that in his language there is only one word used to express the idea of waiting and hoping: To wait is to hope.

The Namibian people have waited for more than a hundred years — waited and hoped for their freedom, waited and hoped for an end to their suffering.

What has given them courage to continue their struggle against the power, the cruelty, the injustice of their oppressors? They tell us it is the promise that this world indeed belongs to God, that God will one day rule in justice and righteousness. As Kameeta said, "It is the liberating presence of our Lord Jesus Christ which compels me to talk as I have been talking, which gives me the courage to say things which I really fear to say."

Kameeta objected to being called a courageous man. He is afraid. He knows that continuing to speak against apartheid means harassment, mistreatment for himself, his wife and for their children. He knows that perhaps one day he will pay with his life for the words he has spoken. Yet he continues to speak the truth — to insist that apartheid is evil, that it is contrary to the will of God.

With the Namibian people, we too are called to wait and hope. We, too, are called to lives of risk as we stand beside victims of injustice. But we, too, are called to rejoice in the promise that God is indeed at work in this world, actively bringing about a kingdom of justice and righteousness.

As we sing our hymns and light our candles, let us pray for strength to join our Namibian friends in their struggle, and celebrate with them the fulfillment of the Advent promises.

Solveig Kjesth
for National Namibia Concerns
Action Alert -
Rev. Allen Boesak
To Be Investigated

The Reverend Allen Boesak, world-renowned critic of South Africa's racist apartheid system, is one of the latest targets of the South African regime's current crackdown.

Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and co-patron of the United Democratic Front, will be the subject of a full-scale investigation. In a televised speech on Nov. 15, South African Minister of Law and Order Louis LeGrange denounced Boesak as a "liar and slanderer" and called for the investigation, leading to prosecution under Section 27 of the Police Act of 1957 (amended in 1980).

During a recent visit to Australia, Boesak had said that the South African police had committed "the most unbelievable atrocities" against South African blacks in the current unrest.

Section 27 of the Police Act makes it illegal to comment on the activities of the South African police. If charged, Boesak will face up to five years in prison and/or a fine of up to $5700.

Roman Catholic Archbishop of Durban, Denis Hurley, has already been charged under section 27, and will be tried beginning Feb. 8, 1985. Those charges stem from Bishop Hurley's statements that South African forces in Namibia have committed numerous atrocities against Namibian civilians.


State President P.W. Botha
Union Buildings
Pretoria 0001
SOUTH AFRICA

Minister of Law and Order
Union Buildings
Pretoria 0001
SOUTH AFRICA

B.G. Fourie, Ambassador
Embassy of South Africa
3051 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20008

2. Write letters of support to:

Rev. Dr. Allen Boesak
6 Hoek Street
Glenhaven
Belleville
Cape 7530
SOUTH AFRICA

and

Archbishop Denis Hurley, President
Southern Africa Catholic Bishop's Conference
P.O. Box 941
Pretoria 0001
SOUTH AFRICA

"To preach the word of God relevantly in South Africa is to walk through a minefield — blindfolded."
Pastor Allen Boesak

Action Alert -
Forced Military Service
In Namibia

All Namibian men between the ages of 17 and 55 are being required to register for service in the SouthWest Africa Territory Force, a move which will force Namibians to fight against their sons or brothers. Enforcement of this conscription is harsh, with registration forms being administered by school principals, and employers threatening to fire employees if they refuse to register.

The board of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in SouthWest Africa/Namibia has issued a strong protest against this conscription. Members unanimously stated that "the introduction of compulsory military service is in direct conflict with, and blocks the much desired settlement and peace through the U.N. Security Council Resolution 435. It is a massive oppression of the whole nation with military might, and will create a situation of total civil war..."

Since South Africa's occupation of Namibia is illegal, it has no right to introduce its conscription laws into that territory. Please write to Secretary of State George Shultz or to the assistant in charge of African policy, Chester Crocker, asking that our government put pressure on South Africa to rescind its action.

The Honorable George M. Shultz
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Mr. Chester A. Crocker
Assistant Secretary for African Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

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National Board Meets To Chart Course Of Action

"The growing momentum among groups advocating freedom for the majority populations of Namibia and South Africa gives us a renewed sense of hope," says the Rev. Sue Wolfe, newly elected president of the Board of Directors of National Namibia Concerns.

"The growing anti-apartheid movement throughout the world is sounding the death-knell for South Africa's brutal system of legalized racism. It is imperative at this time that we commit ourselves even more diligently to this struggle."

Wolfe, a Lutheran pastor from Santa Ana, Calif., spoke at the Dec. 4-6 board meeting in Denver, Colo. At that time the board resolved to give top priority to initiating and coordinating programs of vocational training and advanced education for Namibians as their nation prepares for independence.

Other projects of education, advocacy and material aid will continue.

Wolfe said National Namibia Concerns has only recently been incorporated on the national level, but it has a 10-year history of education and advocacy work. During this time, Namibia Concerns of Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, has become the largest grass-roots group in the U.S. working on Namibian independence.

Wolfe emphasized that the work at Wartburg will continue, although the headquarters of National Namibia Concerns will be in Denver. The organization is committed to broadening its base of operation to work with a variety of church bodies, labor organizations and advocacy networks across the country.

Solveig Kjeseth, who has guided the work of Namibia Concerns for the past eight years, will serve as executive director of National Namibia Concerns.

At the meeting, National Namibia Concerns strongly urged the early implementation of U.N. Security Resolution 435, which calls for free, U.N.-supervised elections in Namibia.

At the instruction of the board, Wolfe sent President Reagan and U.S. legislators an official letter voicing support for the demonstrations currently taking place at the South African Embassy and consulates. The letter called for an end to the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement."

Elected to serve with Wolfe as officers of National Namibia Concerns were Barbara Fullerton of Columbiana, Ohio, vice president; Donna Grabenstein of Devils Lake, N.D., secretary; and Dan Heath of Denver, treasurer.
New Resources
For Education

The opinions of Bishop Desmond Tutu, winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize, and Dr. Allen Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, are featured on a new videotape resource called "Winds of Change." The Southern Africa Advocacy Program of Lutheran World Ministries has announced that copies of this video will be placed in all Lutheran audiovisual resource centers. Included will be a reflection/action guide for discussing the program. For more information, contact your nearest resource center, or Lutheran World Ministries, (212) 532-8360.

The Southern Africa Media Center, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94108 has announced the release of a new film entitled: "Allen Boesak: Choosing for Justice." This film deals with one pastor's response to the question, "how should a Christian deal with institutionalized social violence and injustice?"

For Boesak, a pastor in the Dutch Reformed Church, which has long provided "theological" justification for the racism of apartheid, the question is more than theoretical. As a so-called "coloured" South African, Boesak sees clearly the destruction and terror that result from this system. As an outspoken foe of apartheid and an influential churchman (in 1982, Boesak was chosen to head the 70 million member World Alliance of Reformed Churches), he is in a unique position of leadership — and therefore seen as a threat by South Africa. For information, contact the Southern Africa Media Center (415) 621-6196 or National Namibia Concerns, 860 Emerson, Denver, CO 80218. (303) 832-3229.

Project Highlight:
Training For Evangelists

The Board of National Namibia Concerns emphasized that education for Namibians is a top priority. One specific way in which we can help is in training of Namibian evangelists. Dr. Zephaniah Kameeta, vice-president of the Evangelical Church in SWA/Namibia, told of a new program of continuing education to help evangelists teach and preach to a people forced to live under the uncertainties of war and oppression. For this year, 1984-85, two thousand dollars are needed to provide this training for 15 evangelists. Can you help with this?
What's Happening...

"Christians in Namibia and South Africa: the story of suffering and hope" will be the theme of two educational seminars sponsored by the American Lutheran Church Women of the Central District.

ALCW officers from Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma will meet at Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kan., on Feb. 13 and 14, to learn about the situation on southern Africa and to be trained as "ministers of advocacy" for their home congregations. Resource people will include Pastor Ndanganeni Phaswana from South Africa, currently serving as a missionary in campus ministry at St. Olaf College In Northfield, Minn., and Frieda and Usko Shivate, from Namibia, who are studying at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and at the University of Minnesota.

On Feb. 15 and 16 a similar event will be held at American Lutheran Memorial Church, Denver, with cooperation and participation from the Lutheran Church in America and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. In addition to the Shivute and Pastor Phaswana, Dr. Jean Sindab, Executive Director of the Washington Office on Africa, will be a banquet speaker. These are excellent resource people, so get your reservations in early.

For information about these events, write or call Nancy Knoll, 6532 Vance St., Littleton, CO 80123, (303) 972-9609.

The town of Stuttgart, Kan., may be small, but the response of the people there to the needs of their counterparts in Namibia was very large indeed. After seeing the film "Cry for Freedom" and hearing a presentation about the persecution and suffering of the Namibian people, members of Pastor Duane Levin's Emmanuel Lutheran Church collected more than $900 for Namibia Concerns.

What's Happening...

Pastor James Hill highlighted the plight of Namibian Christians in a worship service at Grace Lutheran in Dodgeville, Wis. Instead of wearing his pectoral cross, Hill wore a Namibia button which shows the cross of Christ breaking the chains of apartheid. The church in Namibia was also lifted up in prayers of the day.

In our October Newsletter, we rejoiced that the Windhoek Observer, until this summer the only secular newspaper that was not controlled by the government, had apparently survived a "banning order." Unfortunately, the price of survival was high. Gwen Lister was suspended as political correspondent. She and virtually the entire staff of the paper resigned in protest. The Windhoek Observer continues to be published, but it focuses on traffic accidents and reports of petty crime. It is no longer free to comment on the larger evils of racism and governmental repression.

Dateline: Namibia (No. 5, 1983), an information newsletter put out by the Lutheran Church of America and the American Lutheran Church, has recently been declared an undesirable publication by the South African government and banned.

The newsletter includes among other articles an interview with President Hendrik Frederik of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South-West Africa/Namibia, an excerpt from an address given by Dr. Abisaal Shejavali, general secretary of the Council of Churches in Namibia, regarding repression and human rights violations in Namibia and an open letter from the CCN concerning the blocking of international discussions about Namibia's independence.