Members of the Southern Wisconsin District Task Force on Namibia hold the beginnings of a paper chain which has grown to be several blocks long. Jubie Whitford explains: "The strips, which say 'I support implementation of U.N. Resolution #435' are a symbolic, visual sign that we wish to see that Resolution put into action. The colors (black, white, and red) stand for the racial conflict and the bloodshed in the Namibian quest for independence. The paper chain itself is a reminder that perhaps the chains of oppression could be broken by another kind of paper—a massive letter writing campaign to government officials."


Namibians protest new government through day of prayer [June 16]
by Bill Johnston, Episcopal Church People for South Africa
On June 17, South Africa installed an 'interim government' in Namibia, in defiance of the United Nations and the major Western powers (including the United States).

On the day before, thousands of Christians gathered in open air meetings and rural churches praying for deliverance from the suffering they have endured under South African rule. The largest gathering took place in Katutura, the black township outside Windhoek. Here, more than 3,500 Christians (including a number of whites from the German Lutheran Church) prayed and sang for four and a half hours despite the warnings and patrol of South African security forces.

The service was peaceful, but the mood of the prayers was a defiant lament at the long suffering condition of Namibia's black majority. Dr. Abisai Shejavali, general secretary of the Council of Churches in Namibia, told the crowd that the Christians in Namibia 'condemned strongly the move taken by the illegal occupationist forces to install in our country a government that has no support from the majority of the Namibian suffering people'.

In a prayer that was used by many congregations around the Territory, the people asked, 'Will You allow, O Lord, our children to live under the destructive burden of colonialism into the coming century?'

Dr. Zephaniah Kameeta, Lutheran Church vice president, told the crowd that 'God is our source of strength and hope in this dark moment of our history.' 'We believe,' said Kameeta, 'that Jesus triumphed over death and so we will triumph over the injustice in our land.'

continued on page 4...
WHAT KEEPS US GOING IN ADVOCACY WORK

By Solveig Kjeseth

Recently, when I telephoned one of the most faithful workers in our network, she was discouraged. "It seems like the issue of Namibia is already being forgotten around here. People don't seem to want to be reminded that the suffering and the struggle still go on."

Certainly we all have times of discouragement when it would be easy to give up and turn our energies in another direction. We can't point to many large victories. The "odds" in this battle aren't good. South Africa has money and resources and power, almost beyond what we can imagine.

What keeps the movement going?

First, we encourage and support one another. As the Namibia Concerns network grows we discover new friends who bring energy and commitment to our task. We are something of a rag-tag army, fighting in the trenches from Devils Lake, North Dakota, to Santa Ana, California; from New York, across Ohio to the little towns of southern Wisconsin... through the "heartland" of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas, and up into the Pacific Northwest.

From all these places reports of "what we are doing" come trickling in to our National Namibia Concerns office in Denver. They are a tremendous morale boost... they keep us going! In this issue of the Newsletter we share some of these reports with you.

Second, we are led and inspired by our Namibian friends. Their faith and courage teach us the meaning of "steadfast".

As we read the prayers of Pastor Kameeta, as we remember the works of Bishop Dumeni, as we see the willingness of the Namibian people to risk all, we are given strength to continue.

Yesterday we received word that only hours earlier Abisai Shejavali had been summoned to the office of the head of the Southwest Africa Police Force and given a stern warning. The church was ordered to remain silent about the new puppet government being installed today in Namibia.

Once again, Shejavali must decide whether to be obedient to the authorities and betray his people, or to remain a faithful witness to his Lord. We pray that he, and others like him, will be given the courage to persevere.

A favorite hymn of Peder Kjeseth (named Haimbeli by his Godparents, the Shejavali's) ends with the chorus:

"We shall not, we shall not be moved; We shall not, we shall not be moved. We're like a tree that's planted by the water; we shall not be moved."

You and I must pray for strength "not to be moved." We must pray for endurance to continue faithfully on this path which we have begun.
DIVESTMENT SURFACES AT SEVERAL ALC DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

The divestment issue came up at several district conventions of the American Lutheran Church this spring. Meeting in convention in 1980 the ALC resolved to divest from corporations doing business in South Africa. But now, five years later, this action has not been fully carried out.

There is growing impatience on the part of ALC members at the lack of progress on divestment, especially since other groups have completed divestment, legally and prudently. (For example, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., each with portfolios between $70 and $100 million, have virtually completed divestment in a period of 2 to 3 years, without damage to their portfolios.)

But beyond the talk of “risk”, “equal profit” and “prudent man rule”, the decision to divest was intended to make a moral statement: that members of the American Lutheran Church did not want to share in profits made at the expense of black people in southern Africa.

This year various resolutions were passed in many districts; some expressed solidarity with our Namibian friends, some called for U.S. sanctions.

Others spoke directly to officials of the American Lutheran Church, asking them to finally complete the divestment called for by the 1980 Convention. The Western North Dakota resolution stated that the Board of Trustees “appeared derelict in its fulfillment” of the convention resolution and “adamantly reminded them” of the directive to divest.

LUTHER JOHNSON URGES DIVESTMENT AT CENTRAL DISTRICT GATHERING

At the Central District ALC convention in Blair, Nebraska, Pastor Luther Johnson of Denver spoke about the morality of our investments:

“What is an investment, after all? An investment is a loan; and a loan is a helping hand extended to my sister or brother or neighbor, to assist that sister or brother or neighbor to accomplish some goal important to him or her. A loan, therefore, is an extension of myself. It is, indeed, my bodily presence in the life of my sister or brother or neighbor.

“Now a strange and wonderful thing has happened to us who are part of this family we call The American Lutheran Church—especially to us who are pastors or lay professionals and participate in the church’s pension program. We have become enormously wealthy. My family does not believe me when I say it, but I have been entrusted with a great fortune, as indicated by the reports I receive from the Board of Pensions each year. This fortune has been accumulated by the payments made on my behalf, for my family’s protection and for my retirement, by the congregations and ministries I have served.

“Because I have this great treasure, I am able to extend a helping hand to various brothers and sisters and neighbors in the form of loans to them. I do not do so directly, but have entrusted this task to the Board of Trustees of our church, trusting that they will make wise decisions commensurate with who I am and who we are together.

“I have never been asked by the Trustees how I want my fortune managed. I have wanted to trust that what they do with it will be in accordance with my beliefs, that it will be faithful to the community that we are together and that it will bring honor to the Jesus whom we serve.

“Now it happens that my sisters and brothers in South Africa and Namibia have asked me to stop lending a helping hand to those corporations and businesses who, by their cooperation with the structures of racism and apartheid, help to perpetuate the system and strengthen the chains which bind the bodies of these sisters and brothers.

“They have asked us to take this step of divestment. I cannot turn a deaf ear to them; nor can our Church, which has already twice voted for divestment. We are now asking the Trustees to comply with these wishes.”

Obviously, these feelings were shared by others. Of the more than 300 delegates, only 5 dissented from a strong resolution urging the Trustees to complete the divestment process promptly and asking that progress toward this goal be reported regularly in the Lutheran Standard.
REV. FARISANI ADDRESSES 1985 TRINITY COMMENCEMENT

"As servants of God, we are to lead from Egypt to Canaan--and we (in South Africa) know what our Egypt is!" said Rev. T. Simon Farisani, speaking May 18 at Trinity Lutheran Seminary's (TLS) commencement in Columbus, Ohio.

Farisani, a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa, serves as Dean in the nominally independent "homeland" of Venda.

First arrested and tortured in 1977 after preaching that apartheid "is the policy of the devil", Farisani's third arrest and extensive torture in 1981 is detailed in the Lutheran World Federation film: "Torture of a South African Pastor."

In his address Farisani went on to say that the church cannot live in the luxury of neutrality, let alone in indecision.

Leaving the interpretation to his listeners, since "sanctions" advice by South Africans can be interpreted as economic sabotage, Farisani commented that Jesus did not say "business is business" in the temple courtyard.

Farisani was the recipient of an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from TLS. His ever-present humor bubbled through the humility of his acceptance as he said, "May my degree be to the honor of Jesus Christ--may He increase and I decrease. And I'm already in a precarious position at five foot seven inches!"

Farisani's U.S. itinerary included addressing the joint Ohio convention of the AELC, ALC and LCA.

He also met with church leaders in Michigan and at the ALC offices in Minneapolis. Accompanying him were his wife, Reginah, a teacher, and their six month old son, Zwo.

Dean T. Simon Farisani and his wife Reginah at the Trinity Lutheran Seminary graduation where Farisani spoke and received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.

REV. SHANGHALA FINISHES WORK AT TRINITY SEMINARY

Holding high the processional cross, Namibian pastor Josephat Kashindi Shanghala led his classmates into Trinity Seminary's commencement in Columbus, Ohio, on May 18th.

A candidate for the Master of Sacred Theology Degree, Shanghala prepared his thesis on "Strengthening the Namibian Lutheran Youth Organization through Christian Education."

At home, in Ongwediva, Ovambo Namibia, he was director of a youth center, as well as having served as a parish pastor.

This summer, after Ndamono Shanghala finishes her degree work as an Associate of Science in Business Administration at Franklin University, the family will return to Namibia.

A nurse by profession, Ndamono and the Shanghala's young sons--Sachaeus and Vendelinus--joined Josephat in Columbus in the fall of 1983.

Celebrating with the Shanghalas was the Rehabeam Auala family. Auala, a student at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, is the son of the late Bishop Leonard Auala, who was the first Namibian bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church (ELOC) and a hero in the Namibian struggle for independence.

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The service in Katutura was only one of hundreds of church services around the Territory as Christians responded to a Council of Churches call for a day of prayer for peace and independence. In services in Ovamboland, well inside the 'operational area' where South Africa's martial law control is most brutal, Christians celebrated the day of prayer in their local churches.
DUMISANI KUMALO VISITS COLORADO

KUMALO’S VISIT ENCOURAGES NAMIBIAN ADVOCACY NETWORK

South Africa expert Dumisani Kumalo gave the Colorado divestment movement a boost April 14 when he brought his energy, expertise, and first-hand experience to the west.

Kumalo, an exiled South African journalist, serves as Projects Director at American Committee on Africa (ACOA) in New York.

Kumalo’s Denver warm-up activities included: breakfast with key legislators and the Colorado State Treasurer, a radio talk show, lunch with representatives of the Colorado Council of Churches, an appointment with the editorial staff of the Rocky Mountain News.

This was followed by a meeting with Denver’s mayor and city council, and led up to Kumalo’s main appearance at Colorado University that evening where he debated “constructive engagement” and divestment with Ed Fugit, Deputy Chief of the Southern Africa Bureau at the U.S. State Department.

Kumalo maintains that change in South Africa is inevitable. Majority rule will come. But the United States could assist in this change by bringing economic pressure to bear on South Africa, he says.

In the transportation, energy, and computer industries South Africa’s economy is dependent on U.S. support. Kumalo believes the withdrawal of U.S. corporations and the ending of bank loans would hasten the day of liberation, and thus lessen the bloodshed.

“Constructive engagement, however well intentioned it was, has served only to give support and encouragement to the apartheid policies of the South African government,” said Kumalo.


(Above) Dumisani chats with Rev. Red Burchfield and Susan Burchfield, who is a part-time staffer for National Namibia Concerns, and one of the original founders.

(Right) Dumisani addresses a breakfast meeting with legislators and Colorado state officials.
Wartburg Seminary students, Moe Wick and David Weiss, view the nine-foot-tall “letters of support” that were sent to protesting students at Columbia University and the University of California. Signed by students and faculty of this Lutheran seminary, the letters expressed support for protests against investments in companies that do business in South Africa.

NATIONAL NAMIBIA CONCERNS
PRESIDENT MEETS BISHOP TUTU

“We cannot rely on the culprit to solve the crime. Only when they are hit in the pocketbook will they begin to change. What about constructive engagement? I don’t think South Africa is a country we want to be engaged to at all!”

Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA) spoke those words in his introduction of Nobel Peace Prize winner Bishop Desmond Tutu at a dinner of the California Democratic Council in Los Angeles, May 10th.

Rev. Susan Wolfe, Board President of National Namibia Concerns attended the dinner along with political, community and religious leaders of the Southern California area.

“You are center stage only because so many others are faithful where they are,” stated the modest Tutu as he addressed a largely black audience at the Ambassador Hotel. Repeatedly, the Bishop thanked Americans for putting pressure on their government and the South African government to put an end to apartheid.

“You needn’t poke your nose into the business of South Africa. You could live happily, though I hope not, without being involved. But you have said that what affects my sisters and brothers affects me... thank you for making us again have faith in human nature.”

In the eloquent and humorous style for which he is famous, Tutu spoke about the tragedy of apartheid and the need to dismantle. He recalled with appreciation the achievements of black Americans and what that has meant to those who have no voice in the land of their birth. “They (S.A. government) were saying to us, you are a non-this, a non-that, a non-white, a non-European as though you came from non-Europe.”

Given the South African government policy, Bishop Tutu addressed the issue of divestment at great personal risk.

“The corporations doing business in South Africa say they should not pull out because the blacks will be hurt most of all. That is baloney! Why are they so suddenly altruistic?”

Several times he repeated: “I am not crying over the legislation proposed by Americans who urge disinvestment.”

Tutu made clear the fact that apartheid dehumanizes all who are involved in it, both black and white. He termed apartheid “bad human ecology”, saying, “we are wantonly wasteful of human beings. If we took human ecology seriously we could propel all of Africa into the twenty-first century.”

Stressing hope, and sharing a steadfast faith, Tutu proclaimed: “God has given us a task; together we’re going to be liberated and then we’re going to be free!”
What's Happening

GARY NELSON, EYEWITNESS AT SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE ATTACK IN WINDHOEK

from Namibia Communications Center

Hundreds of peaceful demonstrators against South Africa's interim government in Namibia were brutally beaten by South African Koevoet police June 17 in the Black township of Katutura, outside Windhoek, the capital of Namibia.

The violence came unexpectedly, according to eyewitnesses. About 4,000 persons had attended a rally organized by SWAPO and other political parties opposed to the government that South Africa was installing at a celebration on the other side of the capital.

At the end of the rally, close to 1,500 persons left the sports field and marched into the Black township, away from the white run city of Windhoek.

"The crowd was peaceful, it was more of a celebration than a confrontation," said Gary Nelson, an American who is teaching this year in Namibia. Marchers were singing happily and chanting "435 Now!" when 6 Koevoet armoured personnel carriers drove up behind the crowd. A few minutes later 8 more Koevoet vehicles came in front of the crowd, blocked the way and started firing tear gas grenades.

"I saw the Koevoet getting out of the trucks and throwing their batons at cars and beating the people," said Mr. Nelson. There was no warning, and no provocation for the assault.

"A young woman was lying on the ground, covering her head with four Koevoet beating her," said Mr. Nelson. "I had decided to go back the other way when a Koevoet threw a rock at me in the back. He saw I was white and had a camera, he ran up to me and apologized," said Nelson. "His commanding officer, who was white then came up to me and said it wasn't his soldier who threw it, it was SWAPO who had thrown it."

Mr. Nelson, an NNC network member, is teaching mathematics and science at Martin Luther High School this year on a church volunteer programme. He is a member of Namibia Action Group at University Lutheran Church in Seattle, Washington.

"I have seen the programme of the celebration in the white part of town," said Mr. Nelson. "It seems that at the time the beatings were taking place, the official celebration was releasing white doves of peace."

ARTICLE CHOSEN FOR PUBLICATION

The assignment for the 3rd grade class in Talmage, Nebraska, was to write an editorial on something they felt strongly about. Nine year old Amy Carman felt strongly about apartheid. Her article was chosen for publication by the editors of the "Lincoln Star".

AFRICAN RIGHTS

By Amy Carman

I think the black people of Namibia and South Africa should have their rights. It isn't fair that they don't have rights. If you were a black person how would you feel? You would feel awful. Black people are people, too, and they should have rights. They are just a different color. Colors don't matter, people do. We white people are no better than the black people. We should help the black people by getting the government of South Africa to change its laws.

CONGREGATION SUPPORTS NAMIBIA THROUGH GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION

It was a simple letter with only two lines: "Enclosed find a check for $5000. We designate it for the Humanitarian Aid Fund and for the Brick Making Ovens."

The letter was signed by the pastor and the president of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Port Angeles, Washington.

It is hard to imagine the joy that this gift will bring to the struggling church in northern Namibia as they experience partnership with Christians in a far away land. Our thanks to the members of Holy Trinity—and to all the rest of you who have shown your concern through financial support.

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN GROUP ACTIVE

Mark Petersen writes about the work in Southern Wisconsin: "Our hopes are still on fire! Yes, there are times when, as a committee struggling to spread the word about the need for the freedom of the Namibian people, we seem to take three steps ahead and four steps back. Yet as we fight for U.N. Resolution 435 with a dedicated and special committee we are bound together in hope for the freedom of Namibia."

Mark Petersen's report on the activities of the Southern Wisconsin Namibia Committee shows their commitment. After listing their projects for 1984, he writes, "Yes, we are pleased to say that all of our goals were attained—but one! Our most important goal was not accomplished: The freedom of the Namibian people! Consequently, our committee has stepped up their action...."
PLEASE HELP SUPPORT NAMIBIAN ADVOCACY

Dear Friends,

Eight years ago at Wartburg Seminary we decided to seek support from Wartburg graduates to meet the needs of a Namibian doctoral student and his family during their last months of study.

There were only 400 addresses in that first mailing to the Wartburg Seminary family. But the response was so generous that the Shejavalis suggested some of the money be used to support projects of the Lutheran churches in Namibia.

That is how National Namibia Concerns began. From these tentative beginnings, Namibia Concerns has grown to be the largest grass-roots Namibia education/advocacy network in the country. With a mailing list of more than six thousand individuals and congregations, National Namibia Concerns plays a leading role in educating people about the situation in southern Africa.

We are now at a crucial point. The development and nurture of such a large network is costly. Until this year, all work for Namibia Concerns was done on a volunteer basis. Even now, we pay for less than one full time position. Our major expenses are printing, postage, telephone, shipping, purchase of educational materials and media, conferences and seminars. For example:

- The cost of printing one newsletter is $1700.
- The cost of one mailing to the network is $360.
- A new film for our lending library is $450 to $650.
- The cost of printing resource materials is $200 per month.
- A two-day education/advocacy event, with Namibian speakers and resource people costs $4000 to $5000.

While we have received support and encouragement from mission executives in our churches, we are still dependent on contributions from our network to meet expenses. You are our main hope. In order to continue telling the story we need your support. Please help us to continue to spread the word of suffering and hope by sending a contribution today. Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel that proclaims we are all one in Christ the world around.

Sincerely,

Solveig Kjeseth
Executive Director

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