THE WAY TO WAR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA OPENS WIDER: SENATE REPEALS CLARK AMENDMENT

The US Senate on 30 September voted to repeal the Clark Amendment. The count was 66 to 29.

The Clark Amendment is a singular piece of legislation enacted by the Congress in 1975/76 at the height of the Angolan war when it was discovered that the US government was heavily engaged in support of two rival factions fighting the new government of the Peoples' Republic of Angola. Gerald Ford's Washington was supplying covert aid through the CIA to the FNLA and particularly to UNITA. The South African Defence Force - launching armored columns from the occupied International Territory of Namibia - was striking deep in Angola and did in fact come within sight of the capital of the new nation, Luanda. Pretoria, Washington, FNLA, UNITA, with aid from other parties, governmental and private, had a common goal: destruction of the socialist government in Luanda.

Senator Nancy Kassebaum introduced the repeal proposal in the upper house of Congress, saying that Clark was 'an expression of Congressional distrust of the Presidency in the exercise of foreign policy...It's time to wipe the legislative slate clean.' Senator Barry Goldwater - major-general, air force reserve - proclaimed: 'If we're a world power - and I think we are - we need muscle in the President's office to act like a world power.' THE NEW YORK TIMES reports that Senator John Heinz, in a concortion of reasoning dismayng not only to Africa but to the world at large, 'added that repealing the Clark Amendment would correct the impression in Africa that Angola was considered to be of "no significant interest to this country"'.

The Reagan administration's interest in Angola is of extreme and proven significance. The US veto in the UN Security Council this past 31 August of a draft resolution which condemned the Pretoria regime for its latest invasion of Angola was a clear and defiant message to all the world. Even America's allies did not oppose what essentially was a toothless resolution. The American president is on record as wanting to support UNITA and its leader Jonas Savimbi. And so does he support Pretoria. In late March this year a team of US military intelligence experts visited Namibia and Angola to assess UNITA's strengths and needs. Earlier in the same month Pretoria's military intelligence chief and a team were in Washington and New York talking with their US counterparts. In a 26 August column Jack Anderson reported: '(CIA director William J.) Casey asked for "improved logistical capabilities," meanwhile, to support anti-communist forces, calling this a "critical need....especially in Angola"'. American mercenaries are part of South Africa's infamous 32 battalion, that special shadowy unit which focuses on spreading murder, destruction and terror in southern Angola.

US engagement in the Angolan war is real, is increasing. The single obstacle to full-blown entry is the Clark Amendment. The House of Representatives is the last line of defense in preventing all-out US commitment to a southern African war, in restraining the hard-line US Senate and the imperial presidency from secretly entangling the United States in a conflict on the side of racism and repression.

WIRE/PHONE/WRITE your Representatives. Demand they retain the Clark Amendment.

WASHINGTON, DC 20515 PHONE: 1-202-224-3121 or in their home offices in your state
The United States government is accelerating its efforts to control events in Southern Africa, with immediate attention to trying to settle the Namibia 'problem'. The Western Contact group - the USA, Britain, West Germany, Canada and France - met in New York on 24 September and issued a statement which Namibia watchers unanimously regard as more of the kind of utterances heard during the four and a half years of delicate negotiations the Western Five have conducted. These talks have mainly been with Pretoria, but included the Front Line African states - Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, and later newly independent Zimbabwe and Nigeria - and with SWAPO of Namibia, the liberation movement designated by Namibia's lawful authority, the United Nations, as the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia. The 24 September communique doesn't even mention SWAPO. Questions put to the US spokesman at a press conference at the US Mission to the UN in New York met with 'no further comment', either as to the role of SWAPO or about any details of this latest deal presented to Pretoria. Details of a purported set of American proposals were carefully leaked in South Africa. The US is said to have put forward 'amendments' to the long agreed upon UN plan for a peaceful settlement in Namibia which is contained in Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978. The Reagan administration has talked of 435 as the 'basis' for settlement and said the plan would remain inviolate, but that interpretations and adjustments would be necessary. The leaked 'amendments' are considerable, amounting to a new plan.

SWAPO, which has been fighting to liberate its country from foreign rule for 15 years, would be expected to have no military bases inside Namibia during a UN-monitored election process. The occupying South African Defence Force would be monitored at bases inside Namibia by military components of the UN team which would come largely from the Western Five. These troops would wear their national uniforms, not UN blue. The elections would - as in 435 - be run by the South Africans. Parties in the elections would have to agree beforehand that a minority right's clause be included in the new nation's constitution, a move intended to placate Namibia's whites and protect their and foreign corporations' inordinate holdings. SWAPO, the sure winner in fair and free elections, would not be permitted to allow any group to use Namibia as a 'springboard for terrorist attacks on South Africa' - interesting phraseology coming from the USA. Walvis Bay, Namibia's only deep-water seaport, is considered part of South Africa, a direct refutation of Security Council Resolution 432 - which was accepted by the USA in 1978.

The aim of this scheme of course is to handcuff a SWAPO government. It reflects Washington's obsession with Cubans in Angola, the country which hosts the SWAPO liberation struggle. It is in accord with the Reagan administration's grand world concept of contest with the Soviet Union in which the rights and development of small states emerging from colonialism are crassly overridden. How will Pretoria, the Reagan government's new ally, react to the 'amendments'? Pretoria is on record as utterly refusing to allow a SWAPO government in Namibia. The Western Five speak hopefully of January 1983 as the time for independence of Namibia. They vow to work hard, consulting and assuredly arm-twisting all parties concerned - except of course Pretoria. Pretoria will string the Western countries along as it has in the past, appearing to come close to agreement, then finding new 'problems', demanding and getting more concessions. All the while the South African Defence Force will proceed with its repression of SWAPO and any dissident inside Namibia and will constantly mount more attacks deep into Angola. The Pretoria regime, confident of US support in the wake of the American government's veto in the Security Council of a draft resolution condemning such an attack and because of Washington's silence on South Africa's repression in Namibia, Angola and elsewhere will drive on and on. The prospect of wider war in Southern Africa is certain.
CHRONICLE OF SHAME: HOW PRETORIA AND ITS FRIENDS HAVE IMPEDED FREEDOM FOR NAMIBIA

David de Beer, a South African, was expelled from Namibia where he had been administrator of St Mary's Mission at Otibo and secretary-treasurer of the Anglican diocese of Namibia. He was forced to leave in 1972 at the same time as Bishop Colin Winter. Now living in the Netherlands, David de Beer is associated with the ecumenical Christian movement Kairos and the confederation of anti-apartheid organizations doing such effective work. He kept a chronicle of events about Namibia, which is printed here with updates:

Namibia Briefing: The Recurring Failure of Negotiations with South Africa

The following diary of events has been drawn up to show clearly how the white South African government has for fifteen years refused to comply with United Nations resolutions to withdraw from Namibia. Further, it can be seen how South Africa has used more than four years of negotiations with five Western countries to its own advantage. South Africa has been allowed, unpunished, to continue developing its own plans for an 'internal government' in Namibia, while at the same time it has sabotaged plans approved by the UN Security Council.

Oct 1966: UN General Assembly (Res. 2145) revokes South African mandate to be in Namibia. South Africa refuses to withdraw.

May 1967: UN Council for Namibia, based in New York, formed to administer Namibia until independence. South Africa refuses Council access to Namibia.

Oct 1968: South Africa begins to introduce 'homeland governments' in Namibia.

Mar 1969: UN Security Council requests South Africa to withdraw immediately from Namibia.


Oct 1969: South Africa refuses to withdraw.

Jul 1970: UN Security Council (Res. 270) requests all states to refrain from any dealings with South Africa implying recognition of South Africa's authority in Namibia.

Jun 1971: International Court of Justice gives Advisory Opinion that UN General Assembly was entitled to end South Africa's mandate, and that South Africa is in Namibia illegally.


Feb 1972: UN Security Council (Res. 309) requests Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim to initiate contacts with all parties concerned to gain independence for Namibia.

Mar 1972: Waldheim visits South Africa and Namibia.

Aug 1972: Waldheim appoints Dr. A. Escher as special representative to continue his contacts.

Oct 1972: Escher visits South Africa and Namibia.


Jun 1973: UN Council for Namibia calls for end of contacts with South Africa due to lack of progress.

Dec 1973: UN Security Council (Res. 342) decides to end contacts with South Africa. UN General Assembly recognizes SWAPO as authentic liberation movement of Namibia.


Sep 1974: UN Council for Namibia adopts Decree no. 1 for the protection of the natural resources of Namibia, enacting penalties against those exploiting Namibia's animal and mineral resources without express UN approval.

Dec 1974: UN General Assembly approves Decree no. 1.

Dec 1974: UN Security Council (Res. 366) sets 30 May 1975 as deadline for South African withdrawal from Namibia.

May 1975: South African refuses to withdraw.

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Jun 1975: United States, United Kingdom and France veto UN Security Council draft resolution calling for arms embargo against South Africa because of its continued occupation of Namibia.

Sep 1975: South Africa announces a 'Constitutional Conference' in Namibia. SWAPO is excluded, and hand-picked tribal leaders invited. This becomes known as the 'Turnhalle Conference'.

Jan 1976: UN Security Council (Res. 385) calls for free and fair elections in Namibia under UN supervision and control.

Oct 1976: USA, UK and France veto UN Security Council draft resolution calling for sanctions against South Africa for failing to comply with Res. 385.

Apr 1977: The Turnhalle Conference has by now drafted a plan for Namibia based on a national assembly of tribal leaders, regional tribal governments and racially divided town councils. South Africa is on the point of giving executive powers to the Turnhalle in Namibia and promises independence by 31 December 1978.

At the UN there are again demands for sanctions against South Africa because of its refusal to comply with Res. 385. The western powers ask for a 'last chance' to negotiate with South Africa. The USA, UK and France (permanent members of the Security Council) are joined by West Germany and Canada (members of the Council for 1977 and 1978) for these discussions.

Jul 1977: The first negotiations have some success. South Africa does not grant executive powers to the Turnhalle, but appoints an administrator-general, South African judge M. T. Steyn, to rule by proclamation.

Apr 1978: South Africa agrees to western proposals for election in Namibia under UN supervision (but not control, as in Res. 385).

May 1978: While the western group is negotiating with SWAPO in New York to get an agreement, the South African Defence Force, striking from occupied Namibia, attacks Cassinga, the largest SWAPO refugee settlement in Angola. Over 800 men, women and children are killed. SWAPO breaks off the talks in New York and SWAPO President Sam Nujoma flies to Angola 'to bury the dead'.

Jul 1978: SWAPO agrees to western plan for elections. South Africa refuses to go ahead with the plan as UN elections could only be held in 1979, and Pretoria claims to have promised elections in 1978.

UN Security Council adopts resolution (Res. 431) requesting Secretary-General to appoint Special Representative for Namibia 'to ensure the early independence of Namibia through free elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations' and to report back with recommendations for implementation of Res. 385.

Security Council also adopts resolution (Res. 432) noting that Walvis Bay is an integral part of Namibia, that 'the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia must be assured through the reintegration of Walvis Bay within its territory', and that 'South Africa must not use Walvis Bay in any manner prejudicial to the independence of Namibia or the viability of its economy'.

Aug 1978: UN team, lead by Special Representative (and Commissioner for Namibia) Martti Ahtisaari visits Namibia.

Sep 1978: UN Security Council (Res. 435) adopts western plan for elections in Namibia supervised by UN civilian and military force but leaving the running of the electoral process in the hands of the South Africans.

Oct 1978: With sanctions again being proposed, the five western foreign ministers travel to South Africa to try to get Pretoria to agree to UN elections. Pretoria determines to go ahead with its unilateral elections in December.

Nov 1978: UN Security Council (Res. 439) condemns Pretoria's upcoming unilateral elections and declares them 'null and void'.

Dec 1978: In an election (boycotted by SWAPO) with much intimidation, the now-named Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) wins a big majority in the 'constituent assembly'. Western powers say they will not recognize the election results.
Jan 1979: UN team visits Namibia to prepare a detailed plan for implementing Res. 435.
Feb 1979: Waldheim presents detailed plan, suggesting 15 March 1979 as cease-fire date.
South Africa protests at Waldheim plan for having SWAPO bases in Namibia.
Mar 1979: 'Proximity talks' take place in New York among South Africa, SWAPO, the UN and western group to solve problems raised by Pretoria.
Apr 1979: South Africa arrests dozens of SWAPO leaders and members in Namibia.
May 1979: Pretoria changes 'constituent assembly' in Namibia into a 'national assembly' with legislative authority, and forms a DTA advisory council to the administrator-general.
Jun 1979: South African and UK foreign ministers want negotiations re-started.
Jul 1979: UK appoints Sir James Murray as temporary special envoy.
Aug 1979: M.T. Steyn is replaced as administrator-general by Dr Gerrit Viljoen, head of the secret Afrikaner society, the Broederbond. Murray holds talks in Pretoria. National assembly gets further powers. President Agostinho Neto of Angola proposes a demilitarized zone (DMZ) on Angola/Namibia border to meet South African fears of SWAPO infiltration from Angola.
Oct 1979: Pretoria sends list of 'Questions on DMZ' to the UN.
Nov 1979: UN organizes proximity talks in Geneva on the DMZ, but Pretoria sends only low-level delegation to observe.
Dec 1979: South Africa says 'yes' to DMZ, but it wants military bases within the DMZ.
Apr 1980: Administrator general Viljoen suggests possibility of South Africa negotiating directly with SWAPO and Front Line states, i.e., without UN.
May 1980: Term of office of national assembly extended to November 1980. Viljoen announces tribal governments by July 1980. In a letter to Waldheim, Pretoria again says 'yes' to DMZ, but wants 20 military bases within DMZ, and wants UN to repudiate SWAPO.
South Africa, in letter to the UN, claims sovereignty over the Penguin Islands, an uninhabited group lying off Namibia's coast between Walvis Bay and the Orange River, the border with South Africa. It reiterates claim over Walvis.
Jun 1980: Waldheim replies to letter on DMZ and asks for earliest possible implementation of Res. 435.
Jul 1980: Viljoen changes administrator-general's advisory council (DTA members) into a 'Council of Ministers' with executive powers and led by Dirk Mudge. This is now a de facto internal government.
Aug 1980: South Africa replies to Waldheim letter again claiming UN is not impartial, and raising new questions on DMZ.
Oct 1980: Gerrit Viljoen is replaced as administrator general by South African lawyer Danie Hough.
UN team led by Under Secretary General Brian Urquhart and Special Representative Ahtisaari goes to Pretoria for final discussions on DMZ and other issues, and to fix a date for cease-fire and implementation of Res. 435. Mission fails to obtain South African agreement on fixing date.
Jan 1981: In Geneva, SWAPO is prepared to sign cease-fire immediately and implement Res. 435. But administrator general Hough announces South Africa is not ready to implement Res. 435 and breaks off talks. Mudge says Res. 435 can only be implemented when the UN proves it is impartial, i.e., revokes its recognition of SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia. UN Security Council adjourns Namibia debate without a vote.
Feb 1981: Front line states - Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe plus Nigeria - call for economic and political pressure by the West to force South Africa to settle in Namibia. Non-aligned countries call for sanctions against South Africa. OAU Council of Ministers calls for sanctions against South Africa. UN Council for Namibia calls for sanctions against South Africa.

Mar 1981: UN General Assembly meets on Namibia. South Africa refused a seat. General Assembly asks Security Council to impose sanctions on South Africa. President Ronald Reagan of the United States calls South Africa 'a friendly nation' which the USA should not abandon. DTA delegation tours USA. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher says the UK will not impose sanctions on South Africa.

Apr 1981: US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Chester Crocker tours Africa, including South Africa, to consult on Namibia. Crocker briefs western contact group in London. West announces they are working on changes to UN plans for elections in Namibia, but vow they will not change Res. 435.

In the Security Council, the USA, UK and France veto sanctions resolution aimed at South Africa.

May 1981: Term of office of national assembly extended to November 1981. Five western foreign ministers meet in Rome and want plans for new proposals to continue. US officials says proposals can only succeed when South Africa's just fears for its own security are met. Proposals said to want constitutional guarantees before any elections. South African foreign minister Pik Botha meets in Washington with Secretary of State Alexander Haig and at the White House with President Reagan.

Aug 1981: At the Security Council, the USA casts the sole vote (veto) against a draft resolution condemning South Africa for its latest invasion of Angola from occupied Namibia. France votes for the resolution; the UK abstains.

Sep 1981: UN General Assembly, in a special emergency session, calls for complete isolation of South Africa. The western five announce the negotiations are back on track and declare a timetable has been set for Namibian independence early in 1983. Details of the plan are not known but leaked reports indicate substantial differences from Res. 435.

In the negotiations since 1977 the contact group of five western countries - all of them heavily invested in both South Africa and Namibia - has allowed Pretoria to sabotage the plans for elections in Namibia which they themselves drew up. Neither have these western countries mentioned any form of punishment against South Africa for its obstructive and aggressive actions.

The west has also allowed Pretoria four and a half years in which to build up an internal puppet regime in Namibia (including a police force and an army), something which the western countries in 1977 said was totally unacceptable, and something which the 1977 initiative was launched to prevent. Now they talk of the 'new realities' of Namibia due to the internal Turnhalle regime.

The USA is clearly in the lead in the current episode of re-started negotiations. Notwithstanding the lack of another triple veto in August in the Security Council, the western alliance will hold fast on the question of sanctions against South Africa.