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THE CURRENT POLITICAL AND MILITARY
SITUATION IN NAMIBIA

REPORT BY SWAPO

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CURRENT POLITICAL AND MILITARY SITUATION IN NAMIBIA
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1. South Africa's Short And Long-term Objectives

Despite the recent announcements by P.W. Botha, President of South Africa, of August 1, there is no iota of evidence that South Africa has found the political courage and will to move Namibia's decolonization process out of a deadlock.

Far from being a serious proposal intended to achieve the implementation of Resolution 435, the announcement is a propaganda ploy, jointly hatched out by South Africa and the Reagan Administration to try to justify their cruel intentions to delay further Namibia's independence.

South Africa's immediate policy objective towards Namibia remains one of trying to satisfy certain requirements in terms of long-term survival of the apartheid system. One of these requirements is the creation of a string of pliant black states in Southern Africa, states which will be ready to do Pretoria's bidding by not extending solidarity to the embattled peoples of South Africa and Namibia.

Such a state of affairs would, in Pretoria's calculations, isolate SWAPO and the African National Congress of South Africa. It would also, the apartheid regime believes, dampen the fighting morale of the oppressed people in Namibia and South Africa.

Pretoria's campaign of destabilization against South Africa's neighbouring independent African states is today the key strategic pressure to transform the neighbouring states into pliable political entities. As it is well-known, the destabilization campaign takes the form of direct military attacks on these countries, organizing, training, supplying and directing of puppet groups in the neighbouring countries with a view to terrorize the people and disrupt development programmes in these countries.

It is in the light of these important requirements for the perpetuation of the apartheid system that South Africa's refusal to accept Namibia's right to genuine independence must be seen. In other words, the only kind of independence for Namibia is one that satisfies the requirements of what South Africa considers to be her national security interest. This means a independence which is not very kind of/different, both in form and substance, from that of the Transkei; Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei. It is clear, therefore, that a Namibian independence leading to a fundamental transformation, particularly one perceived to be a consequence of a SWAPO victory, is something that the Botha regime is as yet unable to reconcile to.

Therefore, notwithstanding the scale of socio-economic and political challenges the apartheid regime is facing at home and its desire to reduce the pressure of demands for economic sanctions, apartheid South Africa is avoiding to make reapprisals of its political strategy

towards Namibia, however agonising such a reappraisal may be. Hence, instead of allowing the implementation of the UN Plan for the independence of Namibia which will result into a nationally acceptable and internationally recognized resolution of the Namibian independence conflict, Pretoria is bent on a puppet solution.

It is trying in this regard to achieve international visibility and credibility for its stooges in Namibia whom it grafted into the administration of its illegal occupation of Namibia in June last year. To this end, Pretoria has put aside 4 million Rands, annually, for a propaganda campaign to create a favourable image for its Namibian puppets. This money is being channelled through a newly formed company known as "Strategic Management, Inc." which is handling Pretoria's propaganda efforts abroad in support of its puppet show in Windhoek. Strategic Management, Inc. runs South African propaganda offices concerning Namibia in Bonn, London, Paris and Washington.

The work of these offices is to influence world public opinion against SWAPO, as they attempt to project a favourable image for the "interim government". The attempt to tarnish SWAPO's image is called "deglamorization" strategy. It entails, among other things, infiltration of South African spies and agent-prorocateurs into the ranks of SWAPO to create dissensions and disruptions of the Movement's liberation activity. It also involves sponsoring of visits to Namibia

by rightwing Parliamentarians from the West who, upon return to their own countries, announce that SWAPO lacks popular support inside Namibia. Some of these reactionaries organize meetings about so-called SWAPO violations of human rights in the Movement's exile centres. Two such conferences were recently held in February and March in Bonn and London, respectively. The central aim of all these anti-SWAPO propaganda campaign is for South Africa to achieve by other means that which is unachievable politically and militarily inside Namibia, bringing SWAPO to heel.

2. Pretoria's Puppet Show in Namibia

As in the case of the Bantustans, South Africa did not intend to allow its puppet show in Namibia to have real power to upset the status quo. In this regard, Pretoria has organized the "interim government" in such a way as to ensure that the Afrikaners, grouped in the local branch of Botha's own party in South Africa, have a veto power over the black puppets. This veto power is exercised through a consensus formula whereby every group in the puppet show must agree before any decision can be considered to be binding.

In this regard, even the most demagogic elements in the puppet show are unable to match their pseudo populist rhetoric with any meaningful action. They have been unable, for instance, to do anything about the acute

problems facing our society. Burning issues such as those relating to inequality of health services, separate and unequal schools and residential areas for different racial groups, mass unemployment, continue to be the main features of the Namibian society.

Instead of being able to formulate any policy which is of consequence, the puppets in Namibia are, true to type, doing their masters' dirty work. They are, for instance, being used to lend support to racist South Africa's repressive laws, such as those restricting the Namibian people's freedom of speech, assembly and movement. These puppet have been calling for investigations into the activities of the Council of Churches in Namibia, Namibian National Students Organization (NANSO), and other groups with anti-colonial orientation. They are also being used to support Pretoria's repressive measures used to prevent SWAPO from staging political rallies and demonstrations. The puppets are also being used to entrench laws by which opponents of the occupationist regime are detained without trial.

Furthermore, the puppets rushed through their "National Assembly" a neo-fascist bill called "Wages and Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act" which was designed to ban "outside" trade unions from playing part in the forming of trade unions in Namibia. This bill was prompted by a fear, on the part of the "interim government", of awakened proletarian activism in the country, following increased contacts between the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) of South Africa

and representatives of the Namibian mine workers. Through all this, the South African puppets in Namibia are being used in Pretoria's efforts to tighten the bonds of restrictions on our society.

The notion of the puppet show being "interim" meansthat South Africa has decided to shelve UN Security Council Resolution 435 whilst strengthening its strategic alliance with the Reagan Administration to prolong the occupation of our country and to continue to use occupied Namibia as a launching pad for the destabilization of Angola by South Africa and as a conduit for channelling US men and weapons to the UNITA reactionaries.

Beyond the intervening time or the "interim", South Africa could wish to be in a position to bring about a UDI in Namibia, if the internal and external political circumstances would permit such an adventure.

One of the essential first steps that the apartheid regime has taken towards bequeathing Namibia with a UDI type of political framework, which could then be projected as a fait accompli, is the current drafting of a bogus constitution.

As if to publicly confirm that the kind of independence that Pretoria envisages for Namibia is actually of a Bantustan type, the apartheid state has brought to Namibia the former South African racist Chief Justice of the Bophuthatswana Bantustan to take charge of the drafting of the bogus constitution, known as V.G. Hiemstra.

That South Africa should pursue such an imperialist policy at a time when the apartheid system is showing visible cracks at its seams is in itself a clear manifestation of the regime's delusion of its own regional omnipotence.

3. The Popular Resistance

Despite the general media silence on Namibia, there is widespread and enduring popular resistance in Namibia, which manifests itself in a number of forms.

In the first instance, Namibia is in the throes of a bloody war, a war which is actually affecting the life of our society in the sense that it has created political and economic difficulties and uncertainty for all sections of the population. Thousands of families have their members involved in this intensifying armed struggle. A great number of Namibians have suffered atrocities committed against them by the occupation army in its desperate attempts to break the Namibian people's resistance to colonialism.

Contrary to South Africa's cleverly doctored war reports, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's armed forces, has thousands of combatants actively engaged in armed liberation activity inside Namibia. This is a fact. However, PLAN's ability to wither the storm of South Africa's "counter-insurgency" operations would have been inconceivable without enduring support of the masses of the Namibian people. This is in itself a significant measure of popular resistance on the part

of the Namibian people. Thousands of Namibian peasants have suffered untold brutality at the hands of the apartheid soldiers. There is a long chain of secret torture chambers throughout rural Namibia where suspected SWAPO supporters and sympathisers are subjected to all forms of physical and mental torture. But the support to the struggle continues in these areas.

Similarly, by and large, the Namibian workers and intellectuals, including Namibia's spiritual leadership, have remained steadfast in their opposition to colonialism in our country. Through semi-legal activities, they have been able to provide articulate expression to the wishes and aspirations of the masses of our people, thereby laying a firm foundation for frustrating Pretoria's neo-colonial manouvres.

SWAPO is happy to report to the participants at the Second Brussels International Conference that in the recent months, popular resistance in Namibia has begun to take on more and more organized expression. There are visible indications of broadening efforts to mobilize and rally all sectors of our society behind the struggle for liberation led by SWAPO. Workers, women, youth and students organizations are getting ever more organized and militantly involved in the resistance to colonialism. Since the beginning of the year, the SWAPO Youth League and the SWAPO Women's Council have been organizing public meetings and rallies in defiance of the racist regulations by denying our Movement freedom of expression and assembly. Students at schools, such as Augustineum, a government

High School, and Concordia College have become ever more militant. Augustineum has in recent weeks, for instance, been the scene of a student strike in opposition to Pretoria's unjust colonial education and presence of elements of the Koevoet paramilitary unit on school campus.

From the foregoing, it is quite clear that despite the blanket news and information blackout in Namibia, the resistance to the illegal occupation is continuing. The continuing detentions of many people on charges of "terrorism" and "promotion of the aims of communism", the disappearance of people, political trials of SWAPO political activists, violent attacks on SWAPO meetings, coupled with strikes and demonstrations at government schools and generalized opposition to Pretoria's puppet show in Windhoek all testify to the sharpening of contradictions between the occupation regime and the oppressed Namibian people.

Plans are underway to sustain and intensify popular resistance at a higher level in the course of 1986 and beyond. One example of these was the recent meeting of all Namibian social forces that are opposed to Pretoria's puppet scheme and are demanding the immediate implementation of Resolution 435. This meeting took place on 29-30 April, 1986 in Windhoek, under the auspices of the Council of Churches in Namibia. It was attended by representatives of SWAPO, all churches in Namibia (with the exception of the pro-apartheid Dutch Reformed Church), and different eleven political and cultural

groups, all of which share a common stand in rejecting South Africa's colonial occupation of Namibia and demanding the immediate independence of Namibia in order to bring peace, justice and social progress to our oppressed motherland. Some of these groups have not, in the past, shown any sign of readiness to make serious sacrifices for Namibia's liberation; they spoke, together with SWAPO, with one voice about the imperative need to bring about Namibia's independence on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolution 435.

4. Military Situation

The ability of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) to sustain and advance the armed liberation struggle to a higher level and also to impose a military stalemate over the last 20 years, has significantly contributed to the decline of the colonial economy in Namibia. It has done so by generating serious economic and political uncertainty. It has also helped considerably to aggravate apartheid South Africa's current socio-economic crisis. A significant part of the 24 billion US dollars that South Africa owes to foreign banks have been spent in Namibia to keep Pretoria's war of colonial repression going and to maintain the overall administration of South Africa's occupation of Namibia. Above all, it has vastly extended South Africa's defence perimeter. This extension of the regime's defence perimeter entails the deployment of more than 100,000 troops in Namibia and a vast arsenal of war materials. As if all these were not enough, the regime has furthermore

been compelled to conscript thousands of Namibians into its repressive war machinery, primarily to try to ease its shortage of manpower and at the same time to create tools of Namibia's future destabilization. Also, by involving local conscripts in its military establishment in Namibia, South Africa has been wanting to claim that its military campaign against SWAPO was supported by the majority of the population. With the desperation of the doomed, the occupation army is trying very hard to militarize the country's health services in the rural areas and schools. South African troops are found, as a general practice, teaching children in their military uniforms and in possession of firearms, teaching Namibian children. The idea behind all these acts of military desperation is the desire to intimidate the population and to "win the hearts and minds" of the oppressed masses of the Namibian people. In the rural areas where health facilities are few and far between, the occupation army has established hospitals within its local military bases in order to compel the people to be dependent on those services of the same hated, repressive war machine.

The South African regime in Namibia has created a pseudo-cultural front known as Etango in the Ovambo-speaking part of Namibia. In the Okavango area of northeastern Namibia, that "cultural" front of the apartheid army is known as Ezuva, meaning "sun" in both instances.

In line with Pretoria's short-term and long-term political objectives regarding Namibia, there are clear indications that the apartheid regime intends to continue with its untenable military option in Namibia. One of these indications is the continuing of the renovation of the regime's military bases in Namibia which SWAPO has been observing in recent months. Also, in December last year, South Africa's Deputy Minister of Defence, Adrian Vlok, visited 25 of such bases in northern Namibia. During that tour, South African military intelligence officers in northern Namibia made it clear to a visiting journalist from the Philadelphia Enquirer that the SADF would never give up Caprivi. The journalist reported that it became clear that the SADF is doing in making improvements and tightening security.

South Africa's continued military control over the Caprivi area provides the apartheid regime with forward bases for its campaign of destabilization in the region.

All these developments are increasing the repression of our people by the regime as they exacerbate its economic, political and military crises. But in an effort to strengthen its strategic alliance with the Reagan Administration, aimed at rolling back the progressive gains of the National Liberation Movement in our region, South Africa is prepared to go on fighting for its occupation over Namibia. This occupation is seen by the Reagan Administration as a trump-card in Washington's effort to bring about the demise of the MPLA government

in Angola through the South African destabilization of Angola to be accompanied by increased US support to UNITA and American-dictated haste withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola.

5. Conclusion

To summarize: despite the enormity of the cost that Pretoria is being forced to pay for its illegal occupation of Namibia, the regime is still bent on a military solution to the Namibian conflict. The objective truth of the situation is, however, that the racists in Pretoria will not be able to reverse the tide of PLAN's armed resistance. This^{is}/so because the regime's resources are not unlimited. Many of the regime's weaknesses have been exposed as a result of the continuing armed struggle by SWAPO in Namibia and the deteriorating political situation in the apartheid republic itself. One of the weaknesses of the South African army is the over-extension of its defence perimeter which stretches over 3,200 km. from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean, cutting across Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Angola. In this vast arena of armed confrontation, the apartheid army can at best win battles, but not the wars of national liberation in Namibia and South Africa.

It is also important to stress that those who go around preaching about the invincibility of the South African army tend to lose sight of the fact that that army enjoys only a mere 18% of the South African white and

black puppet population in support. This our view of reality about the South African military right; and it is from the perspective that we proved with the prosecution of our just and heroic armed struggle.

We are totally convinced that in the face of intensified internal pressure in Namibia and South Africa and stepped-up sanctions measures by the international community, Pretoria will be brought to heel much sooner than is generally recognized. And it is in this connection that we expect from this Conference look forward to adoption of effective programme of actions, towards comprehensive and mandatory sanctions.

The oppressed Namibian people have confidence in the force of international solidarity to help us bring change in our region.