

**Wartburg Theological Seminary**

**A People Burning Between Two Fires**

*The Church of Namibia Caught Between South Africa and SWAPO*

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### **Abbreviations**

<b>SWAPO</b>	South West Africa People's Organisation
<b>SADF</b>	South African Defense Force
<b>PLAN</b>	People's Liberation Army of Namibia
<b>CCN</b>	Council of Churches in Namibia
<b>ELOK</b>	Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church
<b>ELC</b>	Evangelical Lutheran Church (in South West Africa)
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>LWF</b>	Lutheran World Federation
<b>OPO</b>	Ovambo People's Organisation
<b>USSR</b>	Union of Soviet Social Republics
<b>USA</b>	United States of America

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## Preface

I had stopped. I had no conceivable reason or plan to stop, but I simply did. I was walking back to our house on Simpson Street after having been downtown at the mall in Windhoek, Namibia. My time downtown gave me a moment to pause, to think, to reflect and to feel. I thought about all that I had seen and all that I had read about over the past couple of months, living and studying Apartheid in Namibia and South Africa. The cauldron of history had brewed a bitter reality which crossed my lips, filled my stomach and had made me want to vomit. Though I had come as a humble college kid from Iowa, I had seen myself as a genuine tyrant of the world— propelled forward by centuries of human history which would have me dwell over people, bringing them into submission.

I did not want this. I came to live with, learn about and love other people. But what privileges were afforded me to come at all? How could I travel freely and where I wanted to? How could my will to ‘see the world’ come to fruition?

I could do all these things because I am Baas, an Afrikaner lord of Namibia. Without any Dutch or South African blood in my veins, I am Baas. I am the one that the world has been trained to love, respect and admire. Baas man! I am the one that all have been forced to fear and many have grown to dread. Baas man! I am behind the Guguletu Seven. It was me who kicked your parents and grandparents from their homes and forced them to carve out an inferior life in Katutura and Khomasdal. I confined you to the reservation. I was there with my German brothers when we massacred your great-great grandparents in the desert. I was there, then, and I am here now.

Looking out over the beautiful city of Windhoek, I shamefully saw myself as Baas. The weight of centuries of wrong slowed my steps and forced me to stop under the beautiful sun shining over that beautiful city. I stopped and I wept. For no reason at all, but for every reason in the world, I stopped and I wept. I cried for the Herero people I had murdered. I cried for the Zulus I had defeated in battle. I cried for the Winneshiek, the Sac and Fox and the Sioux of my homeland. I cried for the Jews that I sent to the chambers. I cried for the slaves I held, the people I conquered, the women I have raped, the torture I have committed, the land I have stolen and the babies whose heads I have crushed. I have done none of these things and have done all of them.

This is what it means for me to be Baas. To grow up knowing in your heart that you are a good man, but to know that in the world outside you are the oppressor. As you greet the world, you do not greet it as yourself, but, instead, as one who has performed countless wrongs to countless peoples over endless generations.

So, that afternoon, in November 2006, I stopped unexpectedly and sat on a rock because I could not move any farther. My feet had lost all their power. Who was I to move a footstep more in this world? Who was I to continue forward in time? If I could move and embrace the future, what greater wrongs would I commit? As Baas, who else would I hurt? I stopped and I cried. I wept deep, painful tears that came out like any other but scorched my soul as never before. I wept with the cries of my victims from the pain of my past. I wept for who I am in the world.

Eventually I was able to stand up once more. I was able to take that next step and allow the future to come. Though the world sees me as Baas, I am Seth. I am a child of God who wishes to proclaim the Good News that God has saved the world in Jesus Christ, and is

bringing life to world. Though I confess that the sins of the world are born in me, I have faith that Jesus, the Anointed One, has resurrected the world to be more than my victim and I, more than its executioner.

I do not wash my hands of these sins—the sins of my skin, my people, my heritage. I confess them before you here to stand with you before the kingdom of God. Many stand as the victim before me: the poor, the outcast, the widow, the eunuch, the foreigner, the black, the brown, the red, the primitive, the infidel, the pagan. I stand before the world as whatever is better—taller, smarter, richer, blonder, more male, more industrious, more American. We all stand before God, you bearing the destruction of my sins and I bearing the wrongs written on my soul.

As I move forward, with each new step, I seek to atone. Here, now, in the academic year, 2013-2014, I present my time and energy to research the history of struggle for Namibian independence as an act of atonement. Through my research and cataloging of SWAPO papers in the Namibian Archives, I have re-entered the world of Apartheid which my people created. Yet, I also enter into the world of violence which we have all created—black and white alike. I enter into war crimes against enemies and brutality among friends. I look deep into the abyss of the soul of my people in the world—the souls of all people—by looking into the soul of Apartheid South Africa and Namibia. There we stand together. This is my atonement: to stand with you there. I atone by refusing to flee. I look deeply into our past and there I remain with you. It is my hope that, as you read this, you will also remain that we may find each other there and remain together from our past to our future.

I offer you my atonement so that you may see the hope of the Gospel, standing firm through sins of the masses to live into the peace of God together. I pray that you receive this



as my atonement, not as an obligation; but I beg it of you as a gift. There are many sins for which I atone and there are many sins that Namibians have suffered. Yet, though there was violence on all sides, God stood in the middle and stood with the church. It is there, in the middle of the violence, that the kingdom of God dwells. The people of Namibia burned between two fires—that of South Africa and that of SWAPO—but, in the end, the flames could not overwhelm them.

I pray for you, as well. As you read this and enter into the reality of burning between two fires, may God keep you through the flames. Do not flee the flames, for God will protect you. God has promised us everlasting life together which even apartheid cannot separate from us. While I atone for the fires I have sent upon your people, may we rejoice together in the life that God graciously offers to us all in Jesus Christ.

- Seth Marshall Nelson

## Introduction

***“Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace”***

***-2 Timothy 1:8-9***

The church in Namibia<sup>1</sup> had a difficult role to play during South Africa's occupation of Namibia and the implementation of the South African *apartheid* program. The church was called upon to articulate clearly a Namibian need for and right to independence from their colonizers and a need for freedom from the racial oppression that was built into the apartheid program. To speak effectively against their South African occupation and oppression, churches in Namibia found themselves in the precarious position of granting theological endorsement to violence for the sake of liberation. In doing so, they also endorsed the methods and activity of the armed liberation movement for Namibia which was led by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). SWAPO was the political party which was engaged in guerrilla warfare with South Africa for the liberation of their home country and the church's endorsement of the armed struggle served also to be an endorsement of SWAPO. The church sided with those who believed that diplomatic, non-violent methods were insufficient in pressuring South Africa to end its occupation and, so, the church lent its voice in support of their efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> By “the church,” I mean Christian churches in Namibia, particularly those concerned with the liberation of Namibia from South Africa. These churches were primarily Lutheran, but also included other Christian bodies such as Roman Catholics, Anglicans, African Methodist Episcopalians, and others. I will also speak to the theology of the Dutch Reformed Churches in Namibia which supported South Africa's rule of Namibia and were adamantly opposed to SWAPO. However, these churches, though having more power than other church bodies, were and still are a minority in Namibia. Therefore, I will argue from the perspective that the church in Namibia was best represented by churches that represented the majority of Namibians, participated in the Council of Churches in Namibia, and were opposed to South African occupation of Namibia and their apartheid program.

The church's support of SWAPO and their use of violence became a challenge when SWAPO turned to use violence against the very people both SWAPO and the churches in Namibia meant to liberate. The church had already allied itself with the liberation movement and SWAPO and remained committed to the ideals of liberation and freedom from oppression. To denounce SWAPO would compromise the whole movement towards these ideals being realized. Yet, to remain silent would allow SWAPO to perpetrate crimes against its own people unhindered, without accountability, and with theological and moral-ethical complacency on the part of the church.

In the end, the church gave a clear, ecumenical voice when denouncing South African occupation and apartheid, but often was silent and offered a confused voice when it came to abuses by SWAPO. When some from the church spoke out against SWAPO, they were unsupported, chastised by others, or both.<sup>2</sup> The church was in a precarious position. If it spoke out against the oppression of South Africa, violence ensued. If it spoke out against the crimes of SWAPO against its own people, violence continued under their South African overlords. If the church remained silent, oppression, torture, and violence would win the day. There was no easy answer and the church spoke out at times when it should have, but it was also silent when it should have spoken up. All the while, it tried to do what it could to shepherd its people through the last days of colonization and oppression.

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<sup>2</sup> Colin Leys and John S Saul, *Namibia's Liberation Struggle: The Two-edged Sword*, (London: James Currey, 1995), 105-106.

## I

**Colonization and Apartheid**

***“But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.”***  
***—Exodus 1:12-14***

Namibia was the last country on the continent of Africa to be colonized by a European power. This was largely due to the fact that there are few places on its western coast which could be used for docking ships and building ports, as well as the desert lands that run between the coast and inland areas (hence the name *Namibia*, which means “walled in”).<sup>3</sup> Namibia was initially colonized by the newly unified Germany in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After losing the First World War, Germany’s rule over Namibia (at the time known as *South West Africa*) was handed over to South Africa by a *Mandate* from the League of Nations with the intention of helping Namibia transition into self-governance as a sovereign country on 17 December 1920.<sup>4</sup> There was no timeline given for this transition or enunciation of consequences to be levied if South Africa failed in their duty, however, and the only the requirement was that South Africa submit annual reports to the Permanent Mandates Commission.<sup>5</sup> Yet, there is evidence that South Africa was never concerned with Namibia’s independence. Even from the time of the initial *Mandate*, South Africa’s Prime Minister, General Smuts, considered the international decree that South Africa help Namibia transition to independence was nothing other than annexation of Namibia by South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Center for Global Education program of study in Windhoek, Namibia. Fall Semester, 2006, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN.

<sup>4</sup> SWAPO Department of Information and Publicity, *To Be Born a Nation: The Liberation Struggle for Namibia* (London: Zed Press, 1981), 122.

<sup>5</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 122.

<sup>6</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 15.

When the League of Nations disbanded after the Second World War, South Africa began refusing to submit the required annual reports to its successor, the United Nations, and, instead, demanded official annexation of Namibia into the Union of South Africa.<sup>7</sup> While the U.N. officially refused to recognize South African annexation of Namibia, for all intents and purposes South Africa already had exercised a *de facto* annexation of the country since assuming governance of Namibia from Germany, in 1920.

The Union of South Africa was ruled in a way that could hardly be considered equal and fair, but when the Nationalist Party took power in South Africa, in 1948, things changed dramatically for members of all races. The Nationalist Party ran on the platform of codifying policies of segregation in South Africa and Namibia, known in Afrikaans as *apartheid*. *Apartheid* included, especially by its official conclusion in the 1990's, vast amounts of legislation that separated white, black, Basters or coloureds,<sup>8</sup> and those known as Asiatics (primarily South Africans from eastern parts of the former British Empire, particularly countries like India).<sup>9</sup> While there are many laws which could be addressed in this paper, a few laws of the apartheid program initiated dramatic change in the lives of South Africans and Namibians and serve as flagship legislation for the separation which many Afrikaners praised and most other Africans despised. The laws included the *Population Registration Act* (1950) which “demanded that people be registered according to their racial group” and the *Group Areas Act* (1950) which forced physical separation between people of different ethnic groups and included the forced relocation of many from racially integrated residential areas

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<sup>7</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 15.

<sup>8</sup> The term “coloured” in South Africa is often understood as “mixed race” in American contexts.

<sup>9</sup> I do not feel comfortable using the racial terms of apartheid South Africa to describe people. However, it is important to use the terms here for the purpose of understanding the oppressive historical reality forced upon the South African and Namibian people by the National Party and its apartheid program.

in cities like Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Windhoek.<sup>10</sup> There was also the *Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act* (1959) which formed so called “homelands” which parsed small percentages of land for native, black South Africans and Namibians to claim as their home.<sup>11</sup> Finally, there was *The Suppression of Communism Act* (1950) which, though intended to curb the influence of the Communist Party of South Africa, was used to ban or punish “any group or individual intending to bring about political, economic, industrial and social change through the promotion of disorder or disturbance.”<sup>12</sup> These acts were central to the establishment to the official and oppressive policy of segregation known as apartheid because they separated people by race with the intent of legally creating inequality between races and punishing those who fought against it.

Initially, the pain of apartheid was felt in Namibia much as it was in South Africa, largely seen in the forced removal of persons from their homes for relocation and in major inequalities between people in access to resources. In order effectively to segregate people, the apartheid regime forcibly had to remove people from racially and tribally integrated neighborhoods. The newly created neighborhoods (also known as “townships”) separated people in such a way that black would live with black, Baster with Baster, and white with white. This forced relocation was quick and severe in some areas of South Africa, like the removal from District 6 in Cape Town when bull-dozer were sent through to demolish the integrated neighborhood in a single morning.<sup>13</sup> In Windhoek, the capital and largest city in Namibia, the process escalated quickly, as well, but took a while to complete. In Windhoek’s

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.sahistory.org.za/liberation-struggle-south-africa/apartheid-and-limits-non-violent-resistance-1948-1960> (accessed 9 February, 2014)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Information given on a tour of District Six by former residents who were forced from their homes and endured relocation during apartheid. November, 2006. Center for Global Education program of study in Windhoek, Namibia. Fall 2006 semester. Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN.

integrated neighborhood known as the *Main Location* (and later as the *Old Location*) the proposal that residents move from their homes to the newly created *Katatura* township was initially rejected by most of the residents it affected.<sup>14</sup> Their opposition was exercised in the form of protests that grew to invoke police response on 10 December 1959. On the night of the 10<sup>th</sup>, Windhoek police fired on the crowd of protestors, killing 11 persons and wounding 44.<sup>15</sup> Afterwards, thousands of residents fled from the Main Location to Katatura out of fear of additional confrontations with police. The fire of South Africa had claimed 11 Namibian victims, and the people of Namibia were reluctant to let it claim more.

The oppression of the apartheid system was also experienced in South Africa and Namibia through the *Population Registration Act* and *The Group Areas Act* for how it restricted where people could work and travel. These legislative acts restricted non-whites from living and working where they wanted to, having the effect of legislating people out of jobs and potential work opportunities. The problem is captured well in a history of the effects of these restrictions written during apartheid:

The impoverishment of the black population of Namibia is no historical accident. It has from the start been a deliberate and comprehensive strategy through which the people have at all times been subordinated to the labour needs of the colonisers. It is part of deliberate South African policy that the peasants in the reserves and bantustans are starved into migrating as wage-labourers, and that only a handful of Namibians can earn cash other than by wage-labour.<sup>16</sup>

Apartheid, from its inception, was not merely about separating different groups based on their differences as its creators espoused. Apartheid was also intended to give privileged

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<sup>14</sup> Even the name Katatura captures the rejection of the new township by Namibians. In Otjiherero, the language of the Herero-Namibian people, Katatura means, “We don’t want to stay here.” Siegfried Groth, *Namibia, the Wall of Silence: The Dark Days of the Liberation Struggle* (Wuppertal, Germany: P. Hammer, 1995), 16.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.namibweb.com/hiskat.htm> (accessed 3 March, 2014).

<sup>16</sup> SWAPO Department of Information and Publicity, *To Be Born a Nation: The Liberation Struggle for Namibia* (London: Zed Press, 1981), 57.

position and opportunity to white workers at the expense of non-white citizens who were prohibited from leaving their assigned residences to seek opportunities on their own.

The economic injustices which were felt personally by individual workers mirrored the economic exploitation that Namibia had suffered since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century under German rule. The German colonial conquest of Namibia had displaced the rightful claims of Namibians to their homelands and resources, replacing them with a system of farming and mining in which the German profited heavily at the expense of the Namibian worker.<sup>17</sup> South Africa, likewise, assumed the mantle of economic exploitation, profiting from the rich mineral and ranching resources in Namibia at the expense of their original owners. South African settlers and mining companies moved in quickly after the *Mandate* was issued in 1920, and were influenced by the National Party government following their 1948 rise to power to make sure most of the profits from Namibian resources made their way to South Africa in addition to other western allies.<sup>18</sup> Estimates calculated during apartheid showed that only 30% of the taxes collected from Namibia, mostly from transnational mining corporations extracting natural resources from Namibian soil, were actually used for programs and policies in Namibia.<sup>19</sup> The other 70% of the taxes generated in Namibia went directly to South Africa, a reality clearly showing economic exploitation. Between the three main industries of Namibia (fishing, farming and mining), most of the wealth was owned by transnational companies with headquarters in the U.S.A., Britain, Germany, France, and South Africa, leaving only meager amounts from wage-labors for native Namibians.<sup>20</sup> It is

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<sup>17</sup> *To Be Born A Nation*, 18.

<sup>18</sup> *To Be Born A Nation*, 22.

<sup>19</sup> *To Be Born A Nation*, 51.

<sup>20</sup> *To Be Born A Nation*, 48.



little wonder, then, that the main body of Namibian resistance to apartheid and South African occupation of Namibia began as a labor movement among Namibian workers.

## II

**SWAPO: Fighting for Freedom**

*“Alas for those who devise wickedness and evil deeds on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in their power. They covet fields, and seize them; houses, and take them away; they oppress householder and house, people and their inheritance. Therefore thus says the LORD: Now, I am devising against this family an evil from which you cannot remove your necks; and you shall not walk haughtily, for it will be an evil time.”*

*–Micah 2:1-3*

Struggling under the labor inequities of apartheid, Namibian workers in Cape Town banded together to form the Ovambo People’s Organization (also known as the OPO).<sup>21</sup> Founded by Herman Toivo ja Toivo and several other Ovambo workers in Cape Town, the group sought economic equality for the Ovambo-Namibian workers on the Cape.<sup>22</sup> When Toivo sent a petition for the group to his countryman in the U.S.A., Mburumba Kerina, a petition which garnered the attention of the United Nations for the movement in 1958, Toivo was immediately sent back to Namibia by the South African authorities in Cape Town. He brought the ideas of the OPO back with him as the group soon took root in Namibia. Samuel (Sam) Nujoma and Jacob Kuhanga set up an OPO group in Windhoek, specifically working towards an end to the contract labor system that was keeping Namibian workers impoverished and oppressed.<sup>23</sup> Working alongside the South West Africa’s National Union (SWANU),<sup>24</sup> the OPO first exercised a leadership role in Namibia by resisting the removal of people from the *Old Location*. After the events of 10 December in the *Old Location*, Sam Nujoma, the man who would become the most prominent leader of the independence

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<sup>21</sup> Sean Cleary, “The Origins of SWAPO”, *Leadership SA*, 1984. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA. Box 8, Folder 10, ID: 720.

<sup>22</sup> Cleary, “The Origins of SWAPO.”

<sup>23</sup> Cleary, “The Origins of SWAPO.”

<sup>24</sup> Cleary, “The Origins of SWAPO.”

movement, was apprehended and sent back to Ovamboland (the homeland of members of the Ovambo tribe in northern Namibia bordering Angola).

Nujoma, shortly after his exile to his home in Ovamboland, left Namibia in March of 1960. It was at this time that Nujoma, on the advice of Kerina in the United States, renamed the OPO to the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) with the hope of including all Namibians in the group's struggle for independence.<sup>25</sup> Nujoma and Kerina hoped that with the name change, the OPO could truly become a group which represented all South West Africans (Namibians) and better attract both national and international support. The next few years were a time in which SWAPO rapidly organized political support, both in Namibia and internationally. SWAPO later gave description to the year 1960 and following:

The birth of SWAPO in 1960, as a truly National Liberation Movement, opened up a new page in Namibia's history. The period 1960-1965 was marked by mass political mobilization of our people as well as intensive political and diplomatic campaigns at the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity to force racist South Africa to relinquish her diabolic rule over Namibia.<sup>26</sup>

For SWAPO, the early sixties were a time of gathering political support and unity from its own people as well as from other nations with whom it sought to ally. SWAPO rallied support in Ovamboland in northern Namibia and Angola while simultaneously setting up offices in other countries including Tanganyika (now Tanzania). It was in Dar es Salaam in January, 1961, that Sam Nujoma opened an international SWAPO office and it was there that he began SWAPO's preparations for an armed struggle with South Africa for the independence of Namibia.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Cleary, "The Origins of SWAPO."

<sup>26</sup> *The Combatant: The Monthly Organ of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (P.L.A.N.)*. Vol. 4. 1. PLAN Commissariat, 1982. (3) Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA, Box 8, Folder 1, ID:253.

<sup>27</sup> Cleary, "The Origins of SWAPO." *Leadership SA*.

The armed struggle between SWAPO and the South African Defense Forces (SADF) eventually began on 26 August 1966. Starting in 1964, SWAPO militants had begun returning to Namibia after receiving training as guerrilla soldiers in order to set up bases of operation in northern Namibia.<sup>28</sup> It was not until 1966, however, that the SADF actually engaged SWAPO fighters in military conflict. On August 26 of that year, a SADF unit raided the Omgulumbashe base camp in Ovamboland and defeated the SWAPO militants there in battle.<sup>29</sup> The armed struggle for Namibia's independence had begun. A month later, SWAPO fighters attacked a government building at Oshikango, burning it to the ground, followed by other attacks and earnest efforts to increase supplies and soldiers on both sides of the fighting.<sup>30</sup> What would become the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) had formed and started the fire in the north to greet that of South African forces occupying their country in the south.

Over the next two and a half decades, fierce fighting ensued between PLAN and SADF forces. SADF had the upper hand when it came to military resources, arms, air support, military training, national wealth, education and population. In many ways, South Africa looked to be the clear and obvious victor in military struggle. SWAPO's struggle for Namibia's independence, however, garnered almost universal support from the international community over the claims on Namibia by South Africa. On 27 October 1966, the General Assembly of the United Nations canceled the *Mandate* for South Africa that the League of Nations issued in 1920.<sup>31</sup> In 1971, the International Court of Justice ruled that South Africa's

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<sup>28</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 176.

<sup>29</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 177.

<sup>30</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 177.

<sup>31</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 302.

continued occupation of Namibia was illegal.<sup>32</sup> A few years later, the UN officially recognized SWAPO as the ‘sole authentic representative’ of the Namibian people in their efforts to work for Namibia’s independence from South Africa. Though SWAPO faced an uphill battle in their military struggle, they had a firm upper hand when it came to international political support. SWAPO was not quickly defeated by the overwhelming military odds they faced, and was determined to burn as the flame of freedom for Namibia’s independence.

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<sup>32</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 303.

## III

**Theologies of Violence in Apartheid Namibia**

***“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”***  
***- Matthew 5:9***

Christians worldwide have long struggled with questions of violence in the cause of justice. Taking up arms, even for the cause of justice, has been accepted only with hesitation by many Christians and is completely rejected by others (as is the case with Quakers, Mennonites, Amish, etc.). Christian resistance to exercising violence comes in no small part from the many teachings and scriptural imperatives in the Bible which lead one away from notions of violent resistance. Jesus, in the Gospel of Matthew, tells his audience in the Sermon on the Mount, “I say to you, Do not resist and evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also” (Matt. 6.39). In this passage, Jesus tells his followers that they should not respond with aggression to violence but are, instead, to “turn the other cheek.” He goes on to offer alternatives to using violence against one’s enemies. “I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt. 6.44). Instead of violently aggressing against one’s enemies, Jesus calls his followers to love and pray for those with whom they are at odds. Jesus gives similar commands elsewhere in the Gospels. In the Gospel of John, Jesus commands his disciples that they are to aspire to show love to others instead of the hatred that is known elsewhere. “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (John 15.12). In Luke, Jesus preaches to his followers that they are to treat enemies with kindness and mercy because they are to be merciful as God is merciful to “the ungrateful and wicked” (Luke 6.35-36). Not only are Christians called in the Gospels to treat evildoers with love and kindness for the sake of Jesus’

commandments, they are also called to show love towards *enemies* because that is the example that God exhibits and is one that they are to follow.

A theology of violence, on the other hand, is a doctrine which believes that it is permissible and, in some cases, God's will that Christians exercise violence in the service of God. Often, Christian theologies of violence are formulated for causes of justice, such as defending one's home, country or neighbors. Yet, theologies of violence have also been formulated throughout Christian history that led Christians to take up arms to fight for objectives which were considered to be the will of God. Perhaps the most notorious call for Christians to attack others in the name of God came from Pope Urban II in 1095 when he called for Christian *crusade* against the Muslim-occupied Holy Lands.<sup>33</sup> In this case, Urban II interpreted God's will to be calling Christians to not only defend against non-Christians, but to accomplish what he believed was God's purpose by violent means, capturing and occupying Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Another instance of a theology of violence, one which paralleled the settlement of Southern Africa by Europeans, was the American notion of *manifest destiny*. A phrase coined by American columnist John O' Sullivan in advocating for the annexation of Texas and the Oregon Territory, the phrase *manifest destiny* grew to embody the idea that God had given the American frontier to European settlers to invade and subdue. O'Sullivan wrote:

It surely is to be found, found abundantly, in the manner in which other nations have undertaken to intrude themselves into it...in a spirit of hostile interference against us... limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our multiplying millions.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Dale T Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement, I* (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 2009), 383.

<sup>34</sup> John O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 17, no.1 (July-August 1845): 5-10. Found at <http://web.grinnell.edu/courses/HIS/f01/HIS202-01/Documents/OSullivan.html> (Accessed 31 March, 2014).

O'Sullivan believed that God (whom he referred to as "Providence" in the text above) had willed that European immigrants settle the western portion of what is now part of the United States of America. This involved forceful incursion against "hostile interference" by other European nations and, as those native to Southern Africa would also learn, the violent displacement of those who were already living there. *Manifest Destiny* is another instance of the many theologies of violence which have been formed throughout the history of Christianity to call people to take up arms and violently attack and conquer others in the name of God.

In the colony of Southwest Africa, violent solutions to political conflict were theologically supported by both the Afrikaner church leadership in South Africa and the churches which supported the independence movement of Namibians, particularly in Ovamboland in northern Namibia.<sup>35</sup> Yet, the theological perspectives concerning violence developed differently among Afrikaners and the Namibian supporters of independence, two groups which were mostly Christian.<sup>36</sup> Afrikaner theology had been forged over nearly three centuries of confrontation with native Africans in southern Africa, supporting the political use of violence to deal with local populations in both South Africa and Namibia. Non-

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<sup>35</sup> In this paper, I am only briefly engaging the theological perspectives of the white Germans who remained in Southwest Africa after Germany lost control of the colony. Though the German churches differed from those of Afrikaners (Lutheran instead of Dutch Reformed churches), their theological positions on the use of violence in governing native Namibians was similar. The Germans had exercised great force in subduing the native Namibian populations that they meant to rule. During apartheid, neither German Southwest Africans or Afrikaner South Africans had shown restraint in dealing violently with Namibians. Though the two groups have major theological differences, they seem to have been of one mind when it comes to killing, imprisoning, and colonizing the people of Namibia.

In this paper I will also not deal extensively with the theology of English South Africans. Though their theological perspectives were important for the culture and decisions within South Africa, the victory of the Nationalist Party in 1948, which ushered in apartheid, was almost exclusively an Afrikaner victory. Therefore, the National Party apartheid program arose from Afrikaner concerns, politics, beliefs and theology, not primarily from those of English South Africans.

<sup>36</sup> *To Be Born a Nation* reports that in the middle of the struggle for independence (1981), 80% of Namibians were Christians (281). Afrikaners in South Africa and Namibia were members of, or, at least, theologically influenced by, the Dutch Reformed Church in those countries.



Afrikaner Christians in Namibia, on the other hand, were initially resistant to taking up arms against their colonizers until diplomatic solutions were proving to be ineffective in securing their independence. When diplomatic efforts seemed to be failing, Namibian Christians believed that God granted them permission to take up arms to fight against the South African occupation and apartheid program which oppressed them.

Afrikaners had developed a robust sense of theological identity, since Jan van Riebaak had landed on the Cape of South Africa in 1652,<sup>37</sup> most distinctly during in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The initial Europeans in the Cape Colony were sent from Holland as employees of the United Dutch East India Company.<sup>38</sup> Many of these employees stayed in South Africa and it was their descendants who would become Afrikaners.<sup>39</sup> These settlers were members of the Dutch Reformed church and their theology was founded on the reform movement of John Calvin, including the Synod of Dort which proved for them to be a formative creed.<sup>40</sup> Afrikaner theology quickly grew to meld John Calvin's doctrine of God's election and the articles of the Synod of Dort (namely articles 12 and 13 which speak of the assurance of election) with their own social and political situations. Afrikaners adapted John Calvin's theology of the mysterious election of God, which he believed occurred before the formation of the world, irrespective of any distinctions between people, nations or merits,<sup>41</sup> to serve their (Afrikaners') own purposes. The white, Afrikaner settlers believed that they were chosen by God as an elect people to protect and control the black, African heathen in their

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<sup>37</sup> J.A. Templin, *Ideology on a Frontier: The Theological Foundation of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1652-1910* (Westport, Conn. u.a.: Greenwood Pr., 1984), 16.

<sup>38</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 15.

<sup>39</sup> Early on in Afrikaner history, a group of persecuted French Huguenots settled in the colony. They shared the religious beliefs of the Dutch who settled the Cape and the two groups melded almost completely over time. Though Afrikaners are mostly Dutch, they have French roots, as well, on account of the group of French settlers early in their history. Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 23.

<sup>40</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 140.

<sup>41</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion: The First English Version of the 1541 French Edition*, trans. Elsie Anne McKee (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009), Kindle location: 7039.

own land.<sup>42</sup> The theological doctrine of election from the Reformed tradition was unconsciously transformed in Afrikaner thought to be more of a sociocultural ideology than a purely theological belief.<sup>43</sup>

Afrikaner belief in election was adapted over time to conform to their own purposes and situations so that, as the Afrikaners pushed inland from the Cape, they had no doubt that every land and cattle herd they took was given them by God, every victory a sign of God's providential endorsement of their incursion inland, and every defeat an opportunity for God to provide for the elect in miraculous ways.<sup>44</sup> Afrikaners in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries drew heavily on literal interpretations of the Old Testament for their ideas of election and their theological group-identity. They believed that they were the new Israel, a "holy commonwealth bound together and to God by their covenant," instead of living as new creations in Christ as Calvin emphasized.<sup>45</sup> As such, they also believed that racial distinctions were given by God and it was the providence of God that they, the Afrikaners, exercise a hierarchy of racial distinctions with their own race's interests at the highest level.<sup>46</sup>

Though there were many events in the history of the Afrikaners that contributed to their theological beliefs, events in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had a major impact in forming both the group identity and theological beliefs of the Afrikaner nation. The most important of these events was the Great Trek. Known as the *Voortrek* in Afrikaans, the Boers (Afrikaners) began to *trek*, or leave the Cape colony for inland settlement, in earnest in 1835.<sup>47</sup> The major Afrikaner *treks* inland into central and northern South Africa were driven by a desire to

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<sup>42</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 39.

<sup>43</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 283.

<sup>44</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 282-283.

<sup>45</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 283.

<sup>46</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 286.

<sup>47</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 103.

escape British rule in the Cape and what Afrikaners believed was not only challenges to their way of life (not least of which was the British abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834), but also challenges to what they believed was the will of God for their lives.<sup>48</sup> The Afrikaners' inland settlement was rife with confrontation against native Africans such as the notorious killing of an Afrikaner treaty party led by Piet Retief at the hands of the Zulu Chief Dingane and the later defeat of Dingane at the hands of the Boers.<sup>49</sup> These confrontations solidified Afrikaner belief in the use of violence against their African neighbors. Not only did it practically suit their interests to use violence against their new neighbors, they believed that God had ordained that they greet the Zulus and other tribes with brute force. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the National Party's belief in the use of violence to rule Namibians and their country harkened back to the force with which their Voortrekking ancestors had taken the heart of South Africa and was nearly unquestioned by them. For the Afrikaners in apartheid Namibia, the question was not whether they should deal violently with African dissenters or not. Rather, the question presented to them in Namibia's push for independence was whether they could learn to live peacefully with their African neighbors, choosing to give up forceful invasion and occupation for peaceful coexistence.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 83.

<sup>49</sup> Templin, *Ideology of the Frontier*, 108-112.

<sup>50</sup> Another set of events in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which formed Afrikaner political ideology and had consequences during apartheid were the wars between the British Empire and the Afrikaner settlers. As was noted, Boers had a hard time getting along with the British Empire on the Cape of South Africa (Cape Town), to the point that the Boers were willing to leave all that they had built and owned for a violent existence amongst those who saw them as foreign invaders in order to evade British rule. In their two newly established countries, however, the Boers felt the British encroaching once again, until conflict occurred between the British and Boers, first in 1880-81 (Templin, 174) in which the Afrikaners garnered a wary ceasefire and next from 1899-1902 (Templin, 253-259) in which the Afrikaners suffered defeat. These battles influenced the Afrikaner belief that the *Volkstem*, the "voice of the people" (Templin, 41), was an instrument of God and, as such, was to be defended against international concerns and bodies like the British Empire. The elect Afrikaners were identified as much by their opposition to Britain as they were by their self-identification, a reaction which would have consequences for the Namibian independence movement in the ensuing 20<sup>th</sup> century. Stubborn Afrikaner opposition to the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century mirrored the opposition that Afrikaners showed to the United Nations and other nations which called for Namibia's independence and an end to apartheid in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Namibian people<sup>51</sup> had a history of fighting with colonizers, but were far more reluctant to engage South African forces than South Africa was willing to send their own forces to fight them. Their hesitation was, at least in part, due to defeats suffered at the hands of their previous colonizers, Germans. Beginning in 1904, predominantly Herero forces fought with German colonizers for the right to maintain Herero land and cattle but, though they inflicted substantial casualties on German forces, they faced near extermination in the Kalahari Desert at Waterberg, in 1907.<sup>52</sup> By that time, Germans had exterminated an estimated 80% of the Herero people, and over half of the populations of the Nama and Damara tribes (only 60% of Namibia's native residents survived German colonization).<sup>53</sup> Though the Ovambo tribes were largely untouched by the fighting south of them, it is understandable that all Namibians, whether Christian or not, or Ovambo or non-Ovambo, were reluctant to take up arms against the next group of colonizers.

During South Africa's occupation of Namibia and implementation of apartheid, an important factor influenced the theology of Namibians concerned with taking up arms against their South African occupiers: Christian conversion. Missionaries had been working to bring Christianity to Namibia throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but for much of Ovamboland and other areas to the south, Namibians were thinking of taking up arms as Christians against other Christians for the first time. Missionaries worked diligently to set up mission stations and gain a religious foothold in the country throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century but, while they were

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<sup>51</sup> The "Namibian people" I am referring to at the beginning of this section were predominantly Namibians native to the African continent. These were the first groups to push for violent resistance against the South African colonizers because they suffered the most severely under South African rule. However, the phrase "Namibian people" grew to include white Namibians and other non-indigenous ethnic groups, as well, through the course of Namibia's struggle for independence. Therefore, the phrase "Namibian people" is intended here to be inclusive of all Namibians who opposed South Africa's colonization of Namibia and is not meant to be a racially exclusive terminology.

<sup>52</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 13.

<sup>53</sup> *To Be Born a Nation*, 13.

successful at developing a presence for evangelism, they were not very successful in attracting Namibian converts to Christianity. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the number of converts among the Namibian people increased dramatically after the German-Namibian wars.<sup>54</sup> For the first time in their history, many Namibian fighters would be joining with Christian sisters and brothers to violently engage other Christians. While this was not a shared concern among Afrikaners whose Christian faith and their belief in God's election of them as a people led them to occupy their neighboring country and use force against locals who resisted, the Christian faith of many Namibians led them to resist taking up arms against their Christian overlords until the point of necessity.

While Namibian Christians were reluctant to take up arms against their South African colonizers, they were adamant in their belief that the apartheid system of the Pretoria regime was not only oppressive and wrong; it was contrary to the will of God. Namibians believed that all people had equal standing before God and apartheid was contrary to the will of God which had created everyone equal. Dr. Abisai Shejavali captured these beliefs well:

All people were born equal in God's eyes and that none was made poor or to be oppressed and exploited by others...that the creation of separate black locations and homelands was evil and that to demand people to call others "baas" [boss] was a sin. The suffering and inhuman conditions in Namibia were caused by apartheid which made people poor, uneducated and unskilled in their own fatherland. Today Namibians were witnessing the imposition of new masters by a regime south of their border without their consent.<sup>55</sup>

Many Namibians, along with Shejavali, believed that, theologically, apartheid was an "immoral, evil, and unacceptable system."<sup>56</sup> It was a system that was created contrary to the

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<sup>54</sup> Shekutaamba V. Nambala, *History of the Church in Namibia*, ed. by Oliver K Olson (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Lutheran Quarterly, 1994), 72.

<sup>55</sup> Nambala, *History of the Church in Namibia*, 131.

<sup>56</sup> Nambala, *History of the Church in Namibia*, 131.

will of God and many Namibian Christians believed that it was their Christian duty to fight against it.

The Namibian people first looked for peaceful, diplomatic solutions to the problem of South Africa's occupation. They organized and believed that international support would eventually move the support of independence in their favor. Herman Toivo ja Toivo put it well in his prison trial in Pretoria in 1968:

From 1960, it looked as if SA could not oppose the world forever. The world is important to us. In the same way as all laughed in court when they heard that an old man tried to bring down a helicopter with a bow and arrow, we laughed when South Africa said that it would oppose the world. We know that the world was divided, but as time went on it at least agreed that South Africa had no right to rule us.<sup>57</sup>

Whereas it seemed that South Africa's policies of colonizing Namibia were nearly unquestioned by Afrikaners, the Namibian people seemed of one voice in calling first for diplomatic solutions by appealing to the United Nations, other international bodies, and other nations in the world. Namibians believed that if the nations of the world sided with Namibia, then South Africa would be forced to release its oppressive hold on its neighbor and grant independence to Namibia.

It did not take long before Namibians, including their church leaders, began to consider alternatives to diplomacy in the face of inaction. Looking primarily to the United Nations as they voiced their concerns over South African occupation, Namibians expected clear and obvious movement against South Africa in favor of Namibian independence from international sympathizers. When this did not happen, even church leaders accepted that the only option left to them was violence. A Namibian pastor and Deputy General Secretary of

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<sup>57</sup> Herman Toivo ja Toivo, *Speech to the Supreme Court of South Africa*, Pretoria, February 1, 1968, Printed in pamphlet by Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa, New York 1973, 8. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 647.

the Lutheran World Federation, Reverend Albertus Maasdorp, clearly articulated this change in position:

In the mid and late Fifties, representatives of the Namibian population expressed their hopes and aspirations to the United Nations. They were the spokesmen of a suffering nation. These people brought forth several movements—liberation movements—and discussed ways of changing the system without the use of violence. However, many of those who called for non-violent action were thrown into prison or expatriated....No one was prepared to listen to our people. It seemed as though they were speaking in one of those big international halls with poor acoustics. Their voices just returned to them. They achieved nothing at all. There came a point when the Namibians, who had been submitting petitions to the United Nations and to Western governments, said: “We have now come to the end of our non-violence. We are now going to take up arms and fight with violence.”<sup>58</sup>

Rev. Maasdorp saw that violence was the only option left to Namibian people when diplomacy failed to produce any movement for independence because South Africa’s system of governance was one of violence. He went on to say that Namibians and South Africans “belong to that part of the world where violence is part and parcel of a suppressive system of government. The state itself is a violent system and brings forth violence.”<sup>59</sup> He saw that violence on the part of Namibian freedom fighters was a response conditioned by the circumstances of Namibia’s occupation and oppression. Furthermore, whereas South African Afrikaners saw that it was God’s Word which led them to occupy South Africa and Namibia, Rev. Maasdorp articulated how the violence of the South African system was not only leveled against Namibians, it was against God’s Word itself. He wrote that the South African system “has done violence to God’s Word about man’s dignity. We, the blacks, count for nothing and are therefore similar to the Israelites until God said ‘Let my people go’.”<sup>60</sup> Though Namibians<sup>61</sup> were slower than South Africans to take up arms against their

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<sup>58</sup>Siegfried Groth, *Namibia, the Wall of Silence: The Dark Days of the Liberation Struggle* (Wuppertal, Germany: P. Hammer, 1995), 25.

<sup>59</sup>Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 25.

<sup>60</sup>Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 25.

neighbors on account of practical and theological concerns, their theological position towards violence changed quickly in the face of failed diplomacy. If other nations would not take up the cause of Namibia's independence, Namibians themselves surely would with whatever means necessary.

The change in many Namibians' attitude towards violence involved both practical and theological concerns. The practical reality of fighting against apartheid was well articulated by Herman Toivo ja Toivo in his defense. "Is it surprising that in such times my countrymen have taken up arms? Violence is truly fearsome, but who would not defend his property and himself against a robber? And we believe that South Africa has robbed us of our country."<sup>62</sup> This sentiment was echoed by a Christian pastor, the Vice President of SWAPO, Hendrik Witbooi, in an interview for *The Windhoek Advertiser*. The excerpt from the interview is as follows:

Asked how a Christian minister could be a revolutionary, [Witbooi's] face firmed and his voice rose: "You must ask yourself why am I a revolutionary. What is the cause? If I am forced to be revolutionary I cannot be blamed, especially in our country where a government that claims to be Christian oppresses us."<sup>63</sup>

Witbooi's sentiments capture the perspective held by many Namibians who fled South African rule in Namibia and then returned as SWAPO soldiers to fight against the SADF. They believed that they were forced to take up arms by an oppressive system created by foreign colonizers and to do so was permissible in God's eyes. They were not fighting, killing and dying in order to inflict pain upon others. Instead, they fought to defend their own

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<sup>61</sup> The Namibians who took up arms against South Africa were largely native/non-white Namibians. However, I use the term Namibians here to include all those Namibians who opposed South Africa's rule of Namibia. This included some white Namibians like Hanno Rumpf, the son of National Party leader Ernst Rumpf, who defected as a white Namibian to join SWAPO instead of fight for the SADF. Gwen Lister, "Top Nat's son slips off to join SWAPO," *Weekly Mail*, January 10, 1986. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 4, ID: 320.

<sup>62</sup> Toivo, p. 11.

<sup>63</sup> "We are still fighting the divide and rule principle", *The Windhoek Advertiser*, September 6, 1983. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 7, ID: 503.



families, friends and homeland from occupation and oppression. Along with Witbooi, those who took up arms against South Africa believed that they were “forced to be revolutionary” and, because of this were not culpable of wrongdoing in God’s eyes.

## IV

**Facing the Fires**

***“If I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked ones, you shall surely die,’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand”***  
***- Ezekiel 33:8***

The church was firmly opposed to South African rule of Namibia and the apartheid policies of the Pretoria regime from the beginning, but their protest struggled to gain an international audience in the first years of the liberation struggle. In 1971, this reality changed dramatically through the *Open Letter* sent from Namibian church leaders to the Prime Minister of South Africa, John Vorster.<sup>64</sup> The letter was sent from the two largest Lutheran church bodies in Namibia, the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC) signed by its chairman Pastor P. Gowaseb and the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOK) signed by Bishop Aula. The church bodies wrote the letter from a position representing “the indigenous population of South West Africa”.<sup>65</sup> The letter accuses the South African regime of failing “to take cognizance of Human Rights...with respect to the non-white population” because the race policies in its apartheid program continuously slighted and intimidated the non-white population and thereby limited their freedom.<sup>66</sup> The *Open Letter* declared that people in Namibia were not free to express their thoughts and opinions and called for voting to be extended to non-whites and political parties to be allowed amongst the indigenous populace.<sup>67</sup> The *Open Letter* also took issue with the limitations of human movements and

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<sup>64</sup> *Open Letter to His Honour the Prime Minister of South Africa*. Printed in “*That South West Africa May Become a Self-Sufficient and Independent State*”: 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Open Letter of the Lutheran Churches in Namibia to John Vorster, Prime Minister of South Africa*, ed. by Hanns Lessing, (Paulinum: Windhoek), 1997, pp. 56-57.

Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Subject 6, 204.1a.

<sup>65</sup> *Open Letter*, 56

<sup>66</sup> *Open Letter*, 56

<sup>67</sup> *Open Letter*, 56

employment. It declared that South West Africa included all races but the *Group Areas Act* denied the free movement of people and thereby denied the free choice of profession and employment.<sup>68</sup> Overall, the churches called for an end to abuses against human rights and South West Africa to become what is now, Namibia- a self-sufficient and independent state. In this letter, the churches clearly sided *against* South African occupation of Namibia and the human rights abuses of the apartheid program. In doing so, they also sided *with* the Namibian independence movement, with SWAPO as its largest and most widely supported independence party.

There were many Namibian church leaders who actively endorsed the SWAPO movement practically as well as theologically. For many church leaders, their collective position against apartheid and South African rule led them to side with SWAPO and, in several cases to join the organization itself. Namibian church leaders were simultaneously leaders of congregations or other church organizations and leaders of SWAPO. Daniel Tjongarero served both as the information coordinator for the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) and as an internal Vice President of SWAPO.<sup>69</sup> Frans Kambengula was the director of the CCN's literary programme and, at the same time, served as SWAPO's transport secretary. Frans Tijirimuje served in the CCN's labour department and while acting as SWAPO's treasurer. Perhaps the most notorious church leader to serve in SWAPO was Pastor Hendrik Witbooi.<sup>70</sup> A direct descendent of the famous guerilla fighter Hendrik Witbooi who led the Nama people against their German colonizers, Pastor Hendrik Witbooi served inside Namibia as SWAPO's Vice President while working as a congregational pastor

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<sup>68</sup> *Open Letter*, 56

<sup>69</sup> "Namibia: Inside SWAPO", *African Confidential*, 11 April, 1984. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 6, ID: 469.

<sup>70</sup> "SWAPO revamps", *The Windhoek Advertiser*, 22 August, 1983. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 7, ID: 507.

in southern Namibia. More than that, Witbooi embodied the church's endorsement of violent resistance as a means to liberation from colonial oppressors. The church, at some of its highest levels, coincided directly with the highest levels of SWAPO. This would prove to compromise the church's voice in speaking out against the abuses of SWAPO leaders in the future of the movement.

Other church leaders, while not officially leaders of SWAPO, came to side with the political body because they were forced to seek refuge with the help of SWAPO. Namibians who fled for their lives and freedom, typically did so in small groups and could only do so with the help of SWAPO soldiers. Ambrosius W. Amutenja, who served as the editor of *Omukwetu*, the Lutheran newspaper of the Evangelical Lutheran Owambokavango Church in northern Namibia, was targeted by the South African police for publishing a leaked list naming fifty Namibians who were to be eliminated by the South African security police.<sup>71</sup> In response to South African threats against his life, Ambrosius decided to flee Namibia and had to rely on the aid of SWAPO guerrillas in order to escape the country. Many Namibian church members and church leaders decided to flee their home country, mostly to Zambia and Angola, through the course of the liberation struggle. In doing so, they came under the care and leadership of SWAPO, owing their safety to the guerrillas who led them out and provided for them in exile.

Initially, those seeking refuge in exile seemed to strengthen the SWAPO ranks, adding to their numbers and support. Soon, however, the increase in refugees proved to be a cause of division giving rise to a new fire- SWAPO burning against those whom it meant to liberate. Though the church's support of SWAPO's use of violence was focused solely on

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<sup>71</sup> *The Combatant*, Volume II, No. 1, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 1, ID: 259.

fighting the oppressive occupation of Namibia by South Africa, SWAPO would show that it believed violence was also necessary against other Namibians in order to secure SWAPO's power.

In 1974 the first true exodus of Namibians from their homeland constituted what would become known as the "Year of Exodus."<sup>72</sup> By 1974, the South African regime had allowed violence to escalate. Police in Namibia began to publicly whip people naked in the streets, children were shamed and humiliated by the oppressive 'Bantu' educational school system of the apartheid program, and those who resisted South African occupation and oppression were tortured with electric shocks and imprisoned for indefinite amounts of time without trial.<sup>73</sup> The heavy handed, cruel and inhuman ways in which South Africa governed Namibia led great numbers of people to flee from South African forces into the care of the SWAPO leadership.

As South Africa's apartheid policies and its violent enforcement of them sent people fleeing over the borders it became apparent that SWAPO was not adequately equipped to receive them. Up to this point, SWAPO had only had to receive small numbers of Namibians into their ranks.<sup>74</sup> They were not ready to receive the exodus of refugees of 1974, including the intelligent youth that were piling over the borders into SWAPO camps in Zambia. It did not take long before tensions arose between old and young SWAPO members. The "old" generation of SWAPO accused the young refugees of "half-heartedness and lack of determination to fight," while the young argued that the older generation of SWAPO members were "corrupt" and more committed to power than they were to genuine

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<sup>72</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 33.

<sup>73</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 32-33.

<sup>74</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 56.

liberation.<sup>75</sup> These tensions and divisions were so strong that they became obvious to those outside the SWAPO movement. The Zambian government, fearing a violent outbreak between refugees within its borders, sent soldiers into the main SWAPO camp in order to disarm the SWAPO military. Zambian forces arrested and moved more than a thousand SWAPO dissidents to a Zambian prison camp in the mountains in May 1976, while simultaneously sending eleven SWAPO leaders to a prison in Tanzania in July of that same year.<sup>76</sup> Those who were sent to Tanzania were tortured for their alleged crimes, while the thousand who were imprisoned in Zambia were deprived of food in the prison camp, but gunned down when they made a peaceful attempt to leave.<sup>77</sup> Though the prisoners were eventually released, there was little evidence to support that any had committed crimes worthy of imprisonment, much less the inhuman imprisonment that they suffered.

Two major things were revealed by the 1976 mass incarceration in Zambia and Tanzania. First, SWAPO elevated the interests and concerns of some at the expense of others, even at the cost of their perceived opponents' human rights and lives. Second, the church, though actively agitating against the human rights abuses of South Africa, would be largely silent when it came to abuses perpetrated by their own liberators. Pastor Selatiel Ailonga, the first pastor to Namibian refugees, sent a letter concerning these abuses to his bishop, Bishop Aula of the ELOK, as well as to Dr. Lucas de Vries, president of the ELC and a leading member of the international body, Lutheran World Federation (LWF). His letter included a call for action from the church on behalf of Namibians stating:

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<sup>75</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 56-57.

<sup>76</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 57.

<sup>77</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 57-59.

This is not a purely political case or internal SWAPO affair. It is a case concerning the well-being of Namibians and their human rights, which touches the church and its responsibility to a great extent.<sup>78</sup>

Though the issue was presented before church leadership in Namibia and (possibly) the LWF, little to no response was given. Siegfried Groth, a German pastor to refugees in Zambia during the liberation struggle, later wrote about the church's response to this crisis soberly noting, "The Namibian churches and the LWF wrapped themselves in silence, trusting the word of the SWAPO leadership."<sup>79</sup> As SWAPO began to abuse its own people, the church remained silent, committed to siding with liberation from South Africa at all costs.

While the fires of SWAPO burned against Namibians abroad, the oppression and violence of the South African regime followed them there. The South African Defense Force (SADF) with its various units, proved to be a strong opponent for PLAN combatants, members of the military wing of SWAPO.<sup>80</sup> However, SADF did not only engage PLAN combatants in combat areas of Namibia and Angola, SADF also killed and imprisoned Namibian civilians in villages and refugee camps, innocent Namibians whom South African forces universally deemed to be terrorists. On 4 May 1978, the SADF unleashed its force on Namibian innocents as it launched an airstrike against a SWAPO camp in southern Angola at the town of Cassinga.<sup>81</sup> Bombing a camp full of men, women and children, few of whom were actual guerrilla combatants in the PLAN ranks, the SADF launched what they deemed to be a successful *raid* on a military installment of their enemies. Most of the world

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<sup>78</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 62.

<sup>79</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 62.

<sup>80</sup> Several issues of *The Combatant*, the monthly organ of PLAN (the armed wing of SWAPO), share poems and encouragement to soldiers feeling lonely and beat down by the struggle. A striking image is a cartoon of a SADF helicopter crashing to the earth as a result of a PLAN rocket (*The Combatant*, Vol. 4, No.1, PLAN Commissariat, 1982, p. 6). The image is meant to be encouragement to PLAN's guerrilla ground infantry to keep their spirits up in the face of superior weaponry. It would seem that even though PLAN's slogan said "Victory is certain!" there were often doubts among its fighting ranks because of the power of the SADF enemy they faced. See Appendix A.

<sup>81</sup> The camp is also known as "Kassinga," spelled with a "K" instead of a "C."

remembers the event as the *Cassinga Massacre*.<sup>82</sup> In the bombings and infantry sweeps that followed, more than 600 Namibians were killed, more than 600 wounded, and “many others simply could not be found afterwards.”<sup>83</sup> Surveying the scene afterwards, SWAPO president Sam Nujoma had this to say:

It was a terrible scene- even trees had been uprooted by heavy bombs. It was sad, terribly sad. If you see those mass graves, the bodies of women and children. To me it was a source of inspiration and determination to fight on in order to fulfill the desires and wishes of those who were sacrificed.<sup>84</sup>

The fire spreading from South Africa burned quite gruesomely in this event against not only Namibia’s freedom fighters, but also against its innocent men, women and children. Though many Namibians were appalled at SWAPO abuses in Zambia and Tanzania a couple of years before the massacre at Cassinga, they could not help but share in Nujoma’s inspiration to fight against the SADF who carried out these atrocities. Following the massacre, many more young men and women joined SWAPO with the intention of fighting against South African genocide, a crime against Namibians which was added to the already well known injustices in the oppression of apartheid and the now illegal occupation of their homeland.

Though many Namibians had a renewed willingness to fight against South Africa following 1978 which benefited SWAPO, SWAPO did not keep from repeating the mistakes of its past. The next and worst set of SWAPO abuses against its own people came in the middle of the final decade of the struggle. SWAPO leadership itself was not even immune to the cruel forces of paranoia as hundreds, if not thousands of Namibians, became victims in what is remembered in Namibian history as the *Spy Drama*. From the beginning of

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<sup>82</sup> Carlyle Murphy, “Sam Nujoma, the Confident Combatant,” *The Washington Post*, June 16, 1984. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 621.

<sup>83</sup> Moses Garoeb in “Parents’ Committee case rests on hearsay says SWAPO counsel”, *The Namibian*, October 18, 1989. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 626.

<sup>84</sup> Carlyle Murphy, “Sam Nujoma, the Confident Combatant,” *The Washington Post*, June 16, 1984. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 621.



SWAPO's armed resistance against South African occupation and apartheid, South Africa had planted spies within the organization. One man who had been one of the first SWAPO members trained for guerrilla resistance against SADF shared his story of being betrayed to South Africa by one of his own countrymen.<sup>85</sup> He and others had been sent away to Eastern Europe to receive military training at a U.S.S.R. military school. Immediately upon returning after their training was complete, they were betrayed to the SADF by a member of their group who had secretly been a South African spy the whole time they were training together. The group was captured and imprisoned on Robben Island for many years as a result of South African espionage. There are other stories like his which show that SWAPO's fear of spies within their midst were, at least in part, justified.

These fears, however, took an irrational and dangerous turn in 1983 with the formation of the Security Service under the leadership of Solomon Hauuala, a leader who claimed for himself the code name "Jesus" but was deemed by others to be the "butcher of Lubango."<sup>86</sup> Trained by the KGB in the Soviet Union, SWAPO's Security Service included 250 men who unleashed a reign of terror on their own people often compared with the atrocities suffered under Stalin.<sup>87</sup> The Security Service unlawfully and inhumanely imprisoned and tortured many Namibian refugees, soldiers and even SWAPO party leaders in Zambia and Angola. On a program assuming internal espionage, the Security Service rounded up many Namibians in exile, imprisoned them without trial, kept them in dungeons underground, and tortured most of them to the point of forced confession.

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<sup>85</sup> The combatant shared his story during a class session in the Center for Global Education program of study in Windhoek, Namibia. 2006 Autumn semester, sponsored by Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.A.

<sup>86</sup> Bona Niilonga Amakniwa and Leefa Martin-Hardley, "An open epistle to Mr. Sam Nujoma," *The Times of Namibia*, 27 September 1989. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 534.

<sup>87</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 100.

The Security Service targeted all levels of SWAPO. Many Namibians in exile reported that, a year after the sanctioning of the Solomon Hauuala's unit, they were deeply paranoid and afraid of their own party and people. They believed that they would be the next to be imprisoned without cause and without any hope for a trial.<sup>88</sup> Refugees in the SWAPO camps in Zambia had seen many people suddenly taken and shipped to Angola where they were not able to communicate with friends or family at home or in Zambia. It did not seem to matter how closely one was tied to the movement or not, everyone was a possible target. Even the wife of SWAPO's President Sam Nujoma, Kowambo Nujoma, was not safe as she, her brother, and eight members of SWAPO's highest ruling Central Committee were all imprisoned by the Security Service.<sup>89</sup>

A former SWAPO member, Philip Ya Nangolah, spoke about some of the abuses that Namibian refugees faced at the hands of SWAPO forces in Zambia and Angola. He said that refugees were "ruthlessly executed in SWAPO camps", ten girls were "sexually debased and raped", and that SWAPO squads which had been trained by East German instructors roamed the Zambian countryside looking for Namibian dissidents and supposed spies.<sup>90</sup> He also claimed that there was a massacre of SWAPO against its own supporters. He wrote that in January 1984, seventeen SWAPO members were killed by their own firing squad for crimes that never even went to trial.<sup>91</sup> It is hard to see a distinct difference between how South Africa labeled all Namibians, even children, in Cassinga as "terrorists" worthy of extinction and SWAPO's policy of execution based on presumed guilt.

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<sup>88</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 103.

<sup>89</sup> Groth, *Wall of Silence*, 100.

<sup>90</sup> Jeremy Gaylard, "UN- Supported SWAPO Tortures, Rapes Refugees and Ex-Members Say," *New York City Tribune*, March 21, 1986, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 2, ID: 273.

<sup>91</sup> Gaylard, "UN-Supported SWAPO Tortures".

Nangolah was not the only voice to tell of the crimes that SWAPO's leadership committed. Bona Niilonga Amakniwa and Leefa Martin-Hardley joined their voices in a published letter to Sam Nujoma after they had been imprisoned in underground Angolan dungeons for years. Bona and Leefa were two Namibian women who had fled their home country to join the liberation movement in exile. After being trained to help the movement, however, they were each thrown into dungeons in Angola, prisons dug several feet underground.<sup>92</sup> At the hands of the Security Service, both were imprisoned without trial as their families were plagued with SWAPO libel as part of the "spy drama."<sup>93</sup> While underground, the women saw schoolchildren who had been abducted by the Security Service from within Namibia. The children were said to have been freed from the oppressive 'Bantu' education they received under the apartheid system in Namibia, which SWAPO replaced with their own "reeducation." Their "reeducation" involved torment at the hands of the Security Service.<sup>94</sup>

As women who were accused of being spies, they were sexually harassed by the Security Service. A rumor had been circulated by a SWAPO doctor in exile which claimed that women spying for South Africa had poisonous razor blades hidden in their vaginas in order to kill SWAPO leaders during sex since these leaders took it upon themselves to exercise "droit du seigneur" ("right of the lord") over female SWAPO members.<sup>95</sup> The SWAPO Security Service proudly reported that they had solved the problem by invasively

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<sup>92</sup> Bona Niilonga Amakniwa and Leefa Martin-Hardley, "An open epistle to Mr. Sam Nujoma," *The Times of Namibia*, September 27, 1989. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 534.

<sup>93</sup> Epistle, 6.

<sup>94</sup> Epistle, 6.

<sup>95</sup> John Carlin, "Torture under freedom's flag", *The Independent*, September 18, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 541.

searching for and removing the supposed danger.<sup>96</sup> It was also believed that the SADF hid small radios in those accused of spying for them. One woman's toe was cut open by a SWAPO bayonet in search of a South African spy radio that was suspected to be there.<sup>97</sup> Another woman experienced a similarly invasive and mutilating search of her left breast.<sup>98</sup>

Though Bona and Leefa were not tried for the crimes of which they had been accused, they were able to appeal for release directly to Sam Nujoma three times when he visited the prison camps during their imprisonment. Their requests were not heeded, so they felt it necessary to publically petition for honesty from Nujoma's leadership as the country finally transitioned to independence at the end of the decade in 1989. They wrote of the necessity of truth for reconciliation saying, "There cannot be happiness without genuine reconciliation. And, of course, not reconciliation without the truth."<sup>99</sup> Nujoma remained aloof to the abuse and torture brought about by the SWAPO Security Service that he had personally commissioned. When questioned about crimes of the Security Service in an interview around the same time the letter was published by Bona and Leefa, Nujoma claimed amnesty for himself. He stated that because SWAPO had already signed a ceasefire agreement with South Africa, which committed them to forgetting the crimes of the other nation, SWAPO could not be held accountable by its own people for the wrongful detention and torture of Namibians.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Epistle, 6.

<sup>97</sup> John Carlin, "Torture under freedom's flag", *The Independent*, September 18, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 541..

<sup>98</sup> John Carlin, "Torture under freedom's flag", *The Independent*, September 18, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 541..

<sup>99</sup> Epistle, 6.

<sup>100</sup> "Sam Nujoma speaks on detainees, Namibians still abroad and the practices of an independent government," Press Clipping from Namibia Communications Centre, September 30, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 544.

A pattern of the abuse emerged towards those who had been accused of being South African spies by the SWAPO Security Service. First, the SWAPO combatant or political cadre was accused and arrested. Upon their denial of being spies (which was typical as it is doubtful that most of those arrested were actually spies), the accused was stripped and bound hand and foot. Then, the accused was beaten with clubs or radio antenna wires, often to the point of unconsciousness. Of this experience one detainee said, “I was tethered like a goat ready for slaughter... I had to endure the most inhumane tortures.”<sup>101</sup> After being beaten, the accused was typically asked three questions: “Who recruited you? Where [were you recruited]? What was your mission?”<sup>102</sup> The cycle of beatings and questioning lasted for days, weeks or months and only ceased when the accused confessed (honestly or otherwise) on a signed statement to being a South African agent, if the accused had survived the beatings to that point. After confession, “spies” were imprisoned in mud dungeons twenty feet deep underground, in many cases for years, like Elizabeth Simasiku who was kept in a SWAPO dungeon for eight years.<sup>103</sup> These dungeons typically held forty people in them with little ventilation, even though fresh air was only allowed in when prisoners were let out to relieve themselves twice a day.<sup>104</sup> It was estimated by those who were accused, tortured and detained by SWAPO that their numbers totaled over a thousand.<sup>105</sup>

Emma Kambangula had a particularly harrowing experience at the hands of the Security Service. A smart woman with a strong intellect, Emma was sent to Hungary and the Soviet Union on an educational scholarship to help develop the brain trust of the SWAPO

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<sup>101</sup> Siegfried Groth, “A report that shocked the world: Siegfried Groth, the man,” *The Times of Namibia*, October 18, 1989, p. 8, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 664.

<sup>102</sup> John Carlin, “Torture under freedom’s flag.”

<sup>103</sup> John Carlin, “Torture under freedom’s flag”.

<sup>104</sup> John Carlin, “Torture under freedom’s flag”.

<sup>105</sup> John Carlin, “Torture under freedom’s flag”.

movement. Upon returning to the SWAPO ranks, Emma was arrested by SWAPO and taken to Lubango, Angola, in September of 1986.<sup>106</sup> There, eight men stripped her naked, tied her down on a bench, gagged and blindfolded her, and beat her for a week. After that week, they tied her naked to the back of a car and dragged her four times across the river. When she persisted in her refusal to confess to being a South African spy, the Security Service hung her upside down from a rope on the ceiling and beat her until the rope broke and she landed on her head. For this she was hospitalized and spent seven months recovering in a wheelchair, unable to walk. Once Emma began walking again, the Security Service once again started beating her to extract a confession. Having lost her resolve at this point, she signed the confession which claimed that she was a South African spy and she was sent straight to a dungeon in Angola.<sup>107</sup>

The church and membership in the church provided little sanctuary from either the SADF or from SWAPO. Namibian Lutheran pastor, Hellao, had the misfortune of suffering at the hands of both South Africa and SWAPO. Hellao sought refuge in Angola from the South African occupation and oppression of his home area in Namibia. He and his family were at Cassinga in May of 1978 when the SADF bombs were dropped.<sup>108</sup> His wife and one of his children were killed in the massacre and he was badly wounded himself. His wounds were so severe that he was sent to the German Democratic Republic for hospitalization and recovery. When he eventually returned, he was arrested by the SWAPO Security Service and tortured to the point of confession. Afterwards, Hellao was imprisoned in a SWAPO

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<sup>106</sup> John Carlin, "Torture under freedom's flag".

<sup>107</sup> John Carlin, "Torture under freedom's flag", *The Independent*, September 18, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8.

<sup>108</sup> Siegfried Groth, "A report that shocked the world: Siegfried Groth, the man," *The Times of Namibia*, October 18, 1989, p. 8, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 664.

dungeon, during which time he witnessed similar horrors visited upon his own people by his own people. He said, “With my own eyes I saw how children, old people, and pregnant women were tortured.”<sup>109</sup>

In the face of SWAPO abuses, many hoped that the church would quickly and actively take up the cause of the victims. Yet, the church faced many challenges in speaking out on behalf of those who were victims of their own independence movement’s abuses. First off, there was the problem of reliable information. Most of the church membership and leadership remained in Namibia throughout the freedom struggle and relied upon SWAPO itself to provide the church with information about the realities of exile. As such, it was nearly impossible for the church in Namibia to substantiate rumors about torture in exile. Furthermore, realities of the freedom struggle made it difficult to speak up publicly about SWAPO’s crimes. In particular, concerns focused on international support of Namibia’s struggle for independence. The German pastor to Namibians in exile, Siegfried Groth, commented on the challenge of SWAPO torture for the international community:

In Namibia itself, even in the churches, it was impossible to officially and publicly address the facts of the case concerning torture by SWAPO. Amongst international bodies, this topic was taboo. The international community, as well as the churches, were overcome with a lameness, a powerlessness that is difficult to explain.<sup>110</sup>

The international community felt a sense of powerlessness to rein in the independence organization that they had given their stamp of approval and was fighting for a cause against South Africa that they endorsed. Groth himself tried to address the problem of SWAPO torture within the church before speaking publicly about what he knew because of the challenging realities of the struggle. He chose to bring the issues before the church before making them public for a few different reasons. First, he did not want to endanger those

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<sup>109</sup> Groth, “A Report that shocked the world,” 8.

<sup>110</sup> Siegfried Groth, “A report that shocked the world”.

detained or their families.<sup>111</sup> To speak out publicly could very well have resulted in further abuse against those still detained in SWAPO's dungeons. Second, he himself was appointed pastor by Namibian churches and felt that it was important that he negotiate directly with the church leadership who had called him. Finally, Groth faced a challenging reality that plagued all who knew about SWAPO's crimes but believed in the cause of freedom; exposing SWAPO for their crimes could hurt the entire Namibian independence movement because any words against SWAPO could be used as propaganda by the South African regime.<sup>112</sup> Groth faced these challenging realities as he considered addressing SWAPO's abuses against its own people.

The churches of Namibia faced tough choices, as well. If the church publicly took up the cause of those who were accused, tortured, and held without trial, they would very likely cripple the movement for Namibia's independence and enable South African occupation and oppression of Namibia to continue with less resistance. If the church remained silent, they would enable their own to violate the human rights of Namibians by continuing to torture and detain them. Pastor Hellao, after his return from SWAPO detention and abuse, gave voice to how the church should proceed saying, "You, as churches and missions, must speak out for the release of those still in detention. Hundreds are still wasting away in dark holes. Many have died. You may no longer remain silent. You must tell the story of our suffering."<sup>113</sup> Others, like pastor Groth, showed great reluctance to speak out, realizing the major setbacks that holding SWAPO accountable would most likely bring about.

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<sup>111</sup> Siegfried Groth, "A report that shocked the world".

<sup>112</sup> Siegfried Groth, "A report that shocked the world".

<sup>113</sup> Siegfried Groth, "A report that shocked the world: Siegfried Groth, the man," *The Times of Namibia*, October 18, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 8, ID: 664.



The Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) faced the most difficult challenges as to whether or not they should have confronted SWAPO about the abuses that were revealed. The CCN emerged out of efforts in the 1970's to bring together a unified church voice for Christians in Namibia and to speak out against the oppressive systems that ruled over the Namibian people. The CCN was officially organized in 1978 and its unity gave it a unique organizational role in Namibia. In addition to spiritual unity, the formation of the CCN was also "an attempt to thwart South Africa's divide-and-rule tactics and to combine church resources in the struggle for liberation."<sup>114</sup> Whereas the *Bantustan* policy of apartheid and the *Group Areas Act* prohibited Namibians from organizing politically within Namibia, the CCN provided a grassroots organizational voice for people, especially Namibian Christians, to speak out collectively against South African occupation and their apartheid program. In this role, the CCN proved to be largely successful and the churches provided practically the only structure and institution in which Namibians could gather to oppose the state.

The people of Namibia looked to the church, specifically the CCN, as their voice against oppression, including the abuse perpetrated against Namibians by SWAPO's Security Service. When internal SWAPO members, many of whom were also in the CCN, learned in May 1984 about the abuses that SWAPO was bringing against its own, they looked to the church (as well as other organizations) to work for justice on behalf of the detained. Lead voices in raising concerns to the church were those of Erica and Attie Beukes who were members of the CCN. They met with Bishop Frederick of the ELC, but he said that he could not "suggest a course of action."<sup>115</sup> In response to the bishop's non-response, Erica Beukes formed a committee of concerned parents, mostly mothers, known as the *Committee of*

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<sup>114</sup> Colin Leys and John S Saul, *Namibia's Liberation Struggle: The Two-edged Sword*, (London: James Currey, 1995), 96.

<sup>115</sup> Leys and Saul, *Namibia's Liberation Struggle*, 104.

*Parents* (also known as the *Parents' Committee*). The group was formed with the purpose of finding “the whereabouts and establish contact with family members in SWAPO camps in Angola and Zambia, and to put pressure on the church and SWAPO leaders to investigate conditions at these camps.”<sup>116</sup> Meanwhile, Attie Beukes urged his boss, the CCN General Secretary Dr. Abisai Shejavali, to convene a meeting of the church leaders to address the issue of detainees, but his concerns garnered no immediate response.<sup>117</sup>

Pushing for church leadership to hold SWAPO accountable, the *Parents' Committee* sent a memorandum to Namibian church leaders in June 1985. The memorandum was sent to leaders in three Lutheran churches of Namibia, two Roman Catholic leaders, the bishop of the Anglican Church in Namibia, the leader of the Methodist church, and to the CCN Secretary General, Dr. Shejavali.<sup>118</sup> The *memorandum* called to their attention the disappearances of their countrymen and children, as well as wrongful imprisonments at the hands of SWAPO. The memorandum also called their attention to the sexual mistreatment of Namibian girls in refugee camps saying, “Scholarships and other privileges such as clothing have been used to dishonor young girls and women.”<sup>119</sup> Finally, it called to the attention of Namibian churches religious persecution by SWAPO members who mocked and derided those practicing their faith in the refugee campus. The details of some of the crimes were sparse, further making the case that there was a need for these matters to be investigated if those inside Namibia were to understand the reality of Namibian suffering at the hands of SWAPO in exile.

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<sup>116</sup> Leys and Saul, *Namibia's Liberation Struggle*, 104.

<sup>117</sup> Leys and Saul, *Namibia's Liberation Struggle*, 104.

<sup>118</sup> Committee of Parents, *Memorandum*, (Windhoek: June 1985), Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 2, ID: 290.

<sup>119</sup> *Memorandum*. Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 2, ID: 290.

In declaring their purpose for convening as a committee and creating the *memorandum*, the *Parents' Committee* put into words the new Namibian reality in which they and their children lived:

It became clear to us that the Namibian people now burn between two fires. This situation demands that the church leaders carry out the Christian duty which they hold towards the nation and bring SWAPO to order.<sup>120</sup>

As fires of SWAPO grew to the north and east of Namibia to greet the fires of South Africa to its south, the Namibian people were burned in between. Unsatisfied with the slow response of the churches of Namibia to the situation surrounding the Namibian people, the *Parents' Committee* sent letters similar to the *memorandum* to the presidents of Angola, Zambia, Cuba and SWAPO, as well as to the General Secretary of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation.<sup>121</sup> They believed that the church was not speaking clearly or loudly for justice for their children and fellow Namibians in exile and, as a committee, took it upon themselves to do so.

The church, particularly the CCN, was not ready to join the *Parents' Committee* in their claims against SWAPO. There were many factors that contributed to the CCN's difficulty in joining its voice to that of the *Parents' Committee*. For one thing, though the CCN and *Parents' Committee* shared a passion for helping the oppressed, it was difficult for the CCN to substantiate or disprove the claims of the *Parents' Committee*. As has been noted, South Africa's oppressive apartheid program severely curtailed the exchange of information from outside of Namibia to those who remained in Namibia. There was virtually no way for the church to launch an independent investigation into SWAPO activities in exile. The *Parents' Committee* had received much of their information from personal correspondence

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<sup>120</sup> *Memorandum*, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 2, ID: 290.

<sup>121</sup> Namibian Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Box 8, Folder 2, ID: 290.

and rumored stories. While these sources were more than sufficient to incite parental concern, they were not enough to launch international efforts of accountability, especially when such efforts could have provided fuel for counter-independence propaganda and, thereby, re-enforce apartheid.

As has been mentioned, South Africa's oppressive restrictions on information added another issue for the CCN and other bodies looking into SWAPO's abuses against Namibians suspected of spying; SWAPO was the main and often only source of information for those inside Namibia about the realities of exile. If there was to be any information about the accusations brought against SWAPO, it would have to come from SWAPO itself, hardly an impartial source. Those who remained in Namibia relied heavily upon SWAPO for news of what was going on in exile and, in this case, was forced to rely on them to indict themselves if the accusations were to be substantiated. To this end, SWAPO did admit that they were holding "100 spies" in detention without trial.<sup>122</sup> This proved to be an admission grave enough to raise concern, but not a full outcry from the international community. Any accountability of SWAPO for crimes against those suspected of spying would not come until years later, and the level of accountability was far from the immensity of torture that the organization had sanctioned against its own people and freedom fighters.

Finally, in thinking about how to address the allegations against SWAPO, the CCN seemed to constantly be thinking about the overall cause of freedom. Similar to Sigfried Groth's concerns about whether or not he should have spoken publicly about SWAPO's abuses, the churches in Namibia were reluctant to undercut the work that had been done through the many years of fighting and mobilizing support from the international community.

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<sup>122</sup> "SWAPO claims spy infiltration," *The Windhoek Advertiser*, 17 February, 1986, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 4, ID: 335.

To lend support to the Parents' Committee and give added voice to their concerns would have very likely undercut the larger goal of national independence. The CCN seemed hesitant to do this, if not *too* hesitant at times. Compounded with the fact that many leading members of the CCN were also leading members of SWAPO, the burden of proof fell on the Parents' Committee to give greater evidence than they were able to in order to sway those church members who fully trusted SWAPO already. The cause of the CCN was closely tied with that of SWAPO and that relationship would not be severed by rumored stories and personal anecdotes, even though they proved to be true in the end.

Siding with the justice of the overall movement towards independence from South Africa and apartheid, the church did not raise its voice with that of the Parents' Committee to denounce SWAPO. In December 1985, Dr. Shejavali wrote to those who had received letters from the Parents' Committee, dismissing the Committee's claims as allegations which were not factual. He accused the Committee of exaggerating the evidence and defended SWAPO's right to protect itself from espionage. However, he did vow that he and other church leaders would work directly with SWAPO on the issue.<sup>123</sup> This was the main reassurance to the concerns brought forth that Dr. Shejavali could offer before urging the international bodies he was addressing to keep supporting SWAPO and the Namibian independence movement. He showed that he and the CCN were clearly focused on the liberation of Namibia and, while they promised to look into the issue of SWAPO abuses, were not ready to lend support to voices which called for SWAPO to be stopped in a time when the issue of independence seemed to be swinging in Namibia's favor. The following March, Erica and Attie Beukes, who had brought the issue to the attention of international bodies without the CCN's consent, were dismissed from their jobs at the CCN. While the

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<sup>123</sup> Leys and Saul, *Namibia's Liberation Struggle*, 105.

CCN deliberated about the issue, the organization clearly decided that they could not work with the Parents' Committee in addressing it.

The people of Namibia continued to burn between two fires. Though the CCN began calling for a cessation of all violence (SADF and SWAPO alike) as early as 1984,<sup>124</sup> the Parents' Committee demanding justice for all Namibians beginning the following year, the United Nations had been demanding Namibia's independence since the early 1970's, the fighting would continue. SADF terrors were visited upon occupied Namibia right up until the end of their fighting with PLAN forces.<sup>125</sup> SWAPO held those suspected of spying right up until the end of South Africa's occupation of their country.<sup>126</sup> For all the work of the churches, the CCN, the Parents' Committee, the United Nations and other international bodies, nobody seemed capable of holding at bay the fires of South Africa, those of apartheid and the SADF. Nor could they quell the fires of SWAPO against those Namibians the Security Service arrested, tortured, and detained, depriving its own people of justice and human rights. For many, Namibia's independence celebration on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, 1990,<sup>127</sup> came too late. Over twenty years of fighting had taken its toll and claimed the lives and well-being of thousands of Namibians. For many, the voice of the church was far too quiet to keep them from suffering at the hands of their own "freedom" fighters.

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<sup>124</sup> "Namibia: Inside SWAPO", *African Confidential*, 11 April, 1984, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 6, ID: 469.

<sup>125</sup> Blignaut de Villiers, "A bloodbath," *The Windhoek Advertiser*, April 3, 1989, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 10, ID: 728.

<sup>126</sup> Frank Girling, "Namibia's need for truth as well as foreign aid," *The Independent*, March 23, 1990, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 16, ID: 781.

<sup>127</sup> David B. Ottaway, "Last Colony in Africa Gains Its Independence," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 1990, Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, Box 8, Folder 16, ID: 802.

## Conclusion

*“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”*

*- Matthew 25:37-40*

The struggle for an independent Namibia was long and difficult. From the time of German occupation in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to the apartheid program initiated by the National Party in 1948, to the SWAPO *Spy Drama* of the 1980s, the Namibian people suffered long for their independence. They were driven from their homes, forced to work for meager wages, and oppressed in many ways. The independence of Namibia on 21 March 1990, was long awaited.

Up to the point of independence, the churches played significant roles in both condoning and condemning violence. Afrikaner churches espoused theology which supported the oppression of most Namibians while condemning efforts to protest the South African regime. For them, questions concerning violence were not how to justify taking up arms against Namibian dissenters but, rather, how they could learn to live peacefully with their neighbors whom they believed God had determined that they rule. It is unclear how well many Afrikaners have adapted their theology to living as peacefully as possible in a democratic South Africa and Namibia, but it is a reality that they had to accept an end to fighting Namibians.

Namibian churches, on the other hand, proved to be a key voice for condemning South African occupation and the oppression of apartheid from within Namibia. They spoke loudly and clearly against the South African regime which intended to annex them under its

oppressive system. When the time came, the Namibian churches articulated a theology that condoned the use of violence to fight the oppressive system which was being forced upon them. Their support was significant in bolstering SWAPO's cause against South Africa. However, when oppressive tactics were employed by the SWAPO leadership and Security Service against Namibians, the church was slow and reluctant to speak. Though the church had good reason for remaining silent, its inability to address SWAPO's abuses allowed the party to carry out its crimes unencumbered by Christian calls for justice.

Yet, even though many were dissatisfied with the church's inability to rein SWAPO's Security Service in, it is clear that the efforts of the church in Namibia mattered. It was the church that wrote the *Open Letter*, brought unity to a country divided by apartheid and spoke out against the oppression and occupation of their South African overlords. Without the church, even with its faults, it is hard to see that the fighting for Namibia's independence would have ended when it did and its people might still be burning between two fires. Words from Dr. Abisai Shejavali written twenty years after Namibia's independence stand as a testament to the need for a church to speak out against unjust governments:

When a government has no fear of God, it cannot do justice to its people in its dealings. But it should be clear that it is a sin against God and a betrayal of the trust and wishes of the nation when a government twists justice for the interests of those in power.<sup>128</sup>

Though Dr. Shejavali was slow to join with voices speaking out against SWAPO as they detained and tortured fellow Namibians in the 1980's, his words speak truth to the need for the church to give voice to the need for fear of God and pursuit of justice over the "interests of those in power." The church in apartheid Namibia spoke out for justice on many occasions against their oppressive overlords. At other times, the church failed to raise the concerns of

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<sup>128</sup> Dr. Abisai Shejavali, "Concern about the future of my country," *The Namibian*, 5 March, 2010.



those who suffered unjustly at the hands of their own “liberators.” The church throughout the world can learn from the realities of the apartheid Namibia that it is “a sin against God” when a government “twists justice for the interests of those in power,” a sin that the church should call to repentance.

**Appendix A: Graphic in *The Combatant* of SADF helicopter shot down by PLAN**

*The Combatant/August 1982*

**EDITORIAL**

in Namibia.

Therefore, in the face of all these typical imperialist manoeuvres, we, the combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, PLAN, celebrate this historic day by selflessly rededicating ourselves to our historical national mission of liberating our Motherland, Namibia, through the intensification of the armed struggle, at all costs. We firmly pledge never to betray our dear comrades who have laid down their precious lives in the battlefield over the last sixteen (16) years by ensuring that Namibia achieves genuine national and social liberation.

**MEANWHILE, THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES AND VICTORY IS CERTAIN!**



*The Combatant: The Monthly Organ of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (P.L.A.N.).*  
Vol. 4. 1. PLAN Commissariat, 1982.

## Appendix B: Copy of the *Open Letter* (1971) from Namibian Churches

STATEMENT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER, MR B J VORSTER, FROM THE CHURCH BOARDS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN OWAMBOKAVANGO CHURCH AND THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SWA DATED 30th JUNE, 1971

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His Honour,

After the decision of the World Court at the Hague was made known on 21st June, 1971 several leaders and officials of our Lutheran Churches were individually approached by representatives of the authorities with a view to making known their views. This indicates to us that public institutions are interested in hearing the opinions of the Churches in this connection. Therefore we would like to make use of the opportunity of informing your Honour of the opinion of the Church Boards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in SWA and the Evangelical Lutheran Owambokavango Church which represents the majority of the indigenous population of South West Africa.

We believe that South Africa in its attempts to develop South West Africa has failed to take cognizance of Human Rights as declared by UNO in the year 1948 with respect to the non-white population. Allow us to put forward the following examples in this connection:

- 1) The government maintains that by the race policy it implements in our country, it promotes and preserves the life and freedom of the population. But in fact the non-white population is continuously being slighted and intimidated in their daily lives. Our people are not free and by the way they are treated they do not feel safe. In this regard we wish to refer to Section 3 of Human Rights.
- 2) We cannot do otherwise than regard South West Africa, with all its racial groups, as a unit. By the Group Areas Legislation the people are denied the right of free movement and accommodation within the borders of the country. This cannot be reconciled with Section 13 of the Human Rights.
- 3) People are not free to express or publish their thoughts or opinions openly. Many experience humiliating espionage and intimidation which has as its goal that a public and accepted opinion must be expressed, but not one held at heart and of which they are convinced. How can section 18 and 19 of the Human Rights be realized under such circumstances?
- 4) The implementation of the policy of the government makes it impossible for the political parties of the indigenous people to work together in a really responsible and democratic manner to build the future of the whole of South West Africa. We believe that it is important in this connection that

5) Through the application of Job Preservation the right to a free choice of profession is hindered and this causes low remuneration and unemployment. There can be no doubt that the contract system breaks up a healthy family life because the prohibition of a person from living where he works, hinders the cohabitation of families. This conflicts with sections 23 and 25 of the Human Rights.

The Church Boards' urgent wish is that in terms of the declarations of the World Court and in cooperation with UNO of which South Africa is a member, your government will seek a peaceful solution to the problems of our land and will see to it that Human Rights be put into operation and that South West Africa may become a selfsufficient and independent State.

With high Esteem,

Bishop Dr. L. Auala  
Chairman of the Church Board  
of the Ev. Luth. Owambokavango Church

Moderator Pastor P. Gowaseb  
Chairman of the Church Board  
of the Ev. Luth. Church in SWA  
(Rhenish Mission Church)

National Namibia Concerns ARCHIVES Wartburg Seminary	
Rec. #	<u>50</u>
File #	<u>CIN 203-A.2</u>

### Appendix C: Box 8 from the Namibia Archives at Wartburg Theological Seminary

ID	Box	Folder	Title	Date written
249	8	1	"Plan Integrated into Fapla Forces"	Sept. 4, 1989
250	8	1	"PLAN claims three captured and 18 dead in far north"	July 3, 1987
251	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 4, No.3	October, 1982
252	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 4, No. 4	November, 1982
253	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 4, No. 1	August, 1982
254	8	1	Why Swapo's '83 probe was a failure- SWATF	April 29,1983
255	8	1	Top Swapo man dies in Angola	April 5, 1983
256	8	1	SWAPO 'would attend new Geneva talks'	January 28, 1981
257	8	1	SWAPO Information and Comment- War Communique	October 15, 1980
258	8	1	Gun in preference of politics	August 13, 1983
259	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 2, No. 1	August, 1980
260	8	1	Top Swapo man dies in Angola (repeat)	April 5, 1983
261	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 4, No. 5	December, 1982
262	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 4, No. 6	January, 1983
263	8	1	SWAPO Information Bulletin	Feburary, 1983
264	8	1	SWAPO Information Bulletin	January, 1983
265	8	1	The Combatant, Vol 6., No. 5	December, 1984
266	8	1	The Combatant, Vol. 6., No. 4	November, 1984
267	8	1	Story of John Angula in PLAN	
268	8	2	"Namibia too has its Mandelas", The Independent	October 17, 1987
269	8	2	"Right wing human rights group to open office in Namibia", The Namibian	March 27, 1986
270	8	2	"CCN rejects Army doctors in north", The Namibian	March 27, 1986
271	8	2	Kjesseth (?) note	March 27, 1986
272	8	2	"Namibia comes under propaganda spotlight", The Observer	March 23, 1986
273	8	2	"U.N.- Supported SWAPO Tortures, Rapes Refugees, Ex-Members Say", New York City Tribune	March 21, 1986
274	8	2	"Namibian Warns of Soviet Takeover of Strategic Area Through SWAPO", New York City Tribune	March 21, 1986
275	8	2	"SWAPO alleges a massive spy network in its ranks", The Namibian	February 21, 1986
276	8	2	"Gurirab confirms 100 are held in detention" , The Namibian	February 21, 1986
277	8	2	"SWAPO claims spy infiltration", The Windhoek Advertiser	February 17, 1986
278	8	2	"SA spies in SWAPO leadership", The Guardian	February 17, 1986
279	8	2	SWAPO exposes South African spy network	February 17,

				1986
280	8	2	"South Africa Penetrated SWAPO, Say Guerrillas", International Herald Tribune	February 19, 1986
281	8	2	Theo-Ben Gurirab- Closing Remarks	February 16, 1986
282	8	2	Namibia's Liberation Movement Exposes South Arican Spy Network	February 17, 1986
283	8	2	Packet with Namibia Comm. Centre documents: includes "Crocker States Type of Support Needed for UNITA"	January 28, 1986
284	8	2	Crocker: U.S. Seeking Political Solution in Angola	February 3, 1986
285	8	2	Theo-Ben Gurirab- Closing Remarks (Duplicates)	February 16, 1986
286	8	2	From: Namibia Communication Centre To: Bill Johnston	February 28, 1986
287	8	2	Note about "Parents Committee"	March 16, 1986
288	8	2	Action Memorandum: South Africa's nuclear weapons capability, U.S. Department of State	January 25, 1985
289	8	2	Press release about the origin and purpose of Parents Committee, and a call for international aid and action	February 26, 1986
290	8	2	Packet of Letters from Committee of Parents to Church leaders, Presidents of Angola, Zambia, Cuba and SWAPO and the head of the UNO	June 1985
291	8	3	"SADF Groupies Outnumbered at Cape Town ECC Rally", The Namibian	December 18, 1987
292	8	3	"Nujoma predicts SA withdrawal from Namibia next year", The Namibian	December 11, 1987
293	8	3	'The Voice of the Voiceless'	December 11, 1987
294	8	3	"Two years of bickering and still irrelevant"	July 3, 1987
295	8	3	"PLAN claims three captured and 18 dead in far north"	July 3, 1987
296	8	3	"Border war of ragged edges", The Guardian	November 23, 1987
297	8	3	International Newsbriefing on Namibia, no. 51	September, 1987
298	8	3	International Newsbriefing on Namibia, no. 50	August, 1987
299	8	3	International Newsbriefing on Namibia, no. 49	July, 1987
300	8	3	International Newsbriefing on Namibia, no. 48	June, 1987
301	8	3	International Newsbriefing on Namibia, no. 43	January, 1987
302	8	3	International Newsbriefing on Namibia, no. 41	November, 1986
303	8	3	The split in Angola	5.3.87
304	8	3	'SWAPO a spent force' but be careful anyway says SA man	June 29, 1987
305	8	3	Angola: Front Line, Africa Confidential Vol. 28, No. 11	May 27, 1987
306	8	3	Anti-Apartheid- Bewegung kritisiert	April 27, 1987

307	8	3	SWAPO befurchtet Wende in Bonn	May 1, 1987
308	8	3	Political Perspective, The Namibian	August 28, 1987
309	8	3	ELCIN on wave of arrests and police raids, The Namibian	August 28, 1987
310	8	3	"We are our liberators says SWAPO member who addressed UDF rally", The Namibian	August 28, 1987
311	8	3	"ELCIN on wave of arrests and police raids", The Namibian (Duplicate)	August 28, 1987
312	8	4	"SWAPO's First Legal Rally in years Draws 13,000"	July 31, 1986
313	8	4	"SWAPO Chief Says Pretoria Used Namibian Airstrips"	May 20, 1986
314	8	4	The Combatant, Vol. 6, No. 7	February, 1985
315	8	4	SWAPO Information Bulletin	June, 1985
316	8	4	SWAPO Information Bulletin	April, 1985
317	8	4	SWAPO sees end of 435, Business Day	April 15, 1986
318	8	4	SWAPO Information and Comment- War Communique	February 26, 1986
319	8	4	SWAPO Politburo reshuffle, The Namibian	January 31, 1986
320	8	4	"Top Nat's son slips off to join SWAPO", Weekly Mail	January 10-16, 1986
321	8	4	"Tambo in his own words", Weekly Mail	January 10-16, 1986
322	8	4	"Gurirab moves in SWAPO reshuffle", The Windhoek Advertiser	January 31, 1986
323	8	4	SWAPO Information and Comment- Central Committee Meeting	January 22-24, 1986
324	8	4	Kjesseth Notes	February 16, 1986
325	8	4	"SWAPO Congress Call", The Namibian	January 31, 1986
326	8	4	Confidential correspondence to William Johnstone	March 14, 1986
327	8	4	"Europeans Take a New Look at SWAPO", Southern African News Review	July 9, 1986
328	8	4	NYU One Hundred Fifty-Fourth Commencement Exercises	June 19, 1986
329	8	4	"Declaration of the 8th Annual Meeting of the Central Committee of the South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia", SWAPO News Release	August 20, 1986
330	8	4	Kjesseth Note	
331	8	4	Letter from President Sam Nujoma	January 21, 1986
332	8	4	Invitation to Second Namibia Brussels International Conference	May 5-6, 1986
333	8	4	Guidelies on the Second Brussels Namibian International Conference	May, 1986
334	8	4	Envelope from Belgium addressed to William B. Johnston	February 2, 1986

335	8	4	"SWAPO claims spy infiltration", The Windhoek Advertiser (Duplicate)	February 17, 1986
336	8	4	"Guerilla Groups open Up new Fronts", The Windhoek Advertiser	March 12, 1986
337	8	4	"SWAPO purge after SA spy ring scare", Africa News Service	
338	8	5	"SWAPO is Shut Out in Namibia Swap", The Washington Times	June 18, 1985
339	8	5	"SWAPO 'has lost war in the north'", The Windhoek Advertiser	June 17, 1985
340	8	5	"SWAPO pledges 'no let-up'", The Windhoek Advertiser	June 17, 1985
341	8	5	"No Thirst for Revenge", Financial Mail	April 5, 1985
342	8	5	"L'angola et la SWAPO rejettent la proposition sud-africaine", Le Monde	March 14, 1984
343	8	5	"Myongo released", The Windhoek Advertiser	July 9, 1985
344	8	5	"West Germans to investigate camp atrocities", The Windhoek Advertiser	July 9, 1985
345	8	5	" SWAPO General Secretary Vows to Fight On for Independence", Reuters	April 18, 1985
346	8	5	"SWAPO Delegation in Talks with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister", Reuters	April 18, 1985
347	8	5	"Non-aligned nations call for sanctions", The Windhoek Advertiser	April 22, 1985
348	8	5	"SWAPO marks 25th Anniversary", The Windhoek Advertiser	April 22, 1985
349	8	5	"Question of legitimacy", The Windhoek Advertiser	April 22, 1985
350	8	5	"No Thirst for Revenge", Financial Mail (Duplicate)	April 5, 1985
351	8	5	"Non-aligned nations call for sanctions", The Windhoek Advertiser (Duplicate)	April 22, 1985
352	8	5	"Back in the fold", Financial Mail	December 21, 1984
353	8	5	"SWAPO plans action", The Windhoek Advertiser	June 14, 1985
354	8	5	"France Works Out Ways of Boosting SWAPO Presence", Reuters	June 6, 1985
355	8	5	"Claims that He Has Penetrated Insurgency Movement", Windhoek Observer	April 20, 1985
356	8	5	"S. Africa, SWAPO Rebels Meeting in First Direct Talks on Namibia", The Washington Post	July 26, 1984
357	8	5	Namibia: Independence NOW! Declaration	Sept-Dec 10, 1984
358	8	5	"Nujoma in India", Rand Daily Mail	March 25, 1985
359	8	5	"SWA meeting", Rand Daily Mail	March 25, 1985



360	8	5	'Apartheid victims', Rand Daily Mail	March 25, 1985
361	8	5	"Rossing says it has a role despite Nujoma's claims", The Windhoek Advertiser	May 8, 1985
362	8	5	"SWAPO's Nujoma Denies Sanctions Will harm Blac-" Daily Report	April 15, 1985
363	8	5	"Minister on Effects of Sanctions Against RSA", Daily Report	April 24, 1985
364	8	5	"Kaunda Urges Increased Pressure Against RSA", Daily Report	April 24, 1985
365	8	5	"Words, Words, Words", The New York Times	May 5, 1985
366	8	5	SWAPO Information and Comment- War Communique	April(?), 1985
367	8	5	SWAPO Information and Comment, "On the 25th Anniversary of the founding of SWAPO"	April, 1985
368	8	5	SWAPO Information and Comment- War Communique (duplicate)	April(?), 1985
369	8	5	SWAPO Information and Comment, Press Statement on the "Internal Government in Namibia"	April 2, 1985
370	8	5	"Namibian Independence Still Distant on SWAPO's 25th Birthday", Reuters	April 13, 1985
371	8	5	"Chinga pledges ongoing support for SWAPO", The Windhoek Advertiser	March 18, 1985
372	8	5	"Nujoma, Gandhi Hold Talks", Reuters	March 25, 1985
373	8	5	"Troops to withdraw", Financial Mail	March 8, 1985
374	8	5	"Call on West to step up SA oil embargo", The Guardian	March 8, 1985
375	8	5	"ANC and SWAPO renew call for oil embargo on South Africa", Reuters	March 7, 1985
376	8	5	"SWAPO Call to Britain Not to Cling to 'Linkage'", BBC	January 12, 1985
377	8	5	"SWAPO decries new interim government", In These Times	July 24, 1985
378	8	5	Photo of Sam Nujoma	
379	8	5	Photo	
380	8	5	Photo	
382	8	5	Photo of Sam Nujoma (duplicate)	
383	8	5	Photo (duplicate)	
384	8	5	Photo	
385	8	5	Photo (duplicate)	
386	8	5	Photo	
387	8	5	Photo	
388	8	5	"The Soweto man who started disinvestment", Weekly Mail	October 11, 1985
389	8	5	Note with SWAPO leaders and where they are located	September 17, 1985

390	8	6	"Deadlock: but are cards stacked against SWAPO?", International Airmail Weekly	July 30, 1984
391	8	6	"Food and Equipment for SWAPO and ANC en route", The Windhoek Advertiser	February 10, 1984
392	8	6	"U.N. Security Council Condemns Terrorism", The Washington Post	October 10, 1985
393	8	6	"Nujoma demands sanctions", The Windhoek Advertiser	December 23, 1985
394	8	6	"SWAPO is losing the fight Mudge tells RAU", The Windhoek Advertiser	February 10, 1984
395	8	6	"SWAPO launches 'las bid' to infiltrate SWA", The Citizen	March 1, 1984
396	8	6	"The courage of a man sure of SWAPO's integrity", The Star	June 11, 1984
397	8	6	"SWAPO blames SA for talks breakdown", The Citizen	July 30, 1984
398	8	6	"Still a long way off", Financial Mail	January 13, 1984
399	8	6	"'They're hamshackling us at every turn'", The Windhoek Advertiser	May 21, 1984
400	8	6	"Sam, Moses meeting off", The Windhoek Advertiser	March 21, 1984
401	8	6	SWAPO Information and Comment- Press Conference, "Comrade Sam Nujoma Exposes Pretoria's Latest Scheme"	February 2, 1985
402	8	6	"Optimism now would not be unrealistic says AG", The Windhoek Advertiser	January 2, 1985
403	8	6	"SWAPO ready to talk", The Windhoek Advertiser	January 2, 1985
404	8	6	"Press Conference by South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)", UN Secretariat	October 30, 1984
405	8	6	"SWAPO Leader Meets Politburo Officials in Moscow", Reuter	October 22, 1984
406	8	6	"Botswana Vice-President Loses Parliamentary Seat", Reuter	October 22, 1984
407	8	6	SWAPO Information and Comment- Press Statement	October 3, 1984
408	8	6	"Violation of Law", The Windhoek Advertiser	August 16, 1984
409	8	6	"Toivo Ya Toivo Made SWAPO Secretary-General", Reuter	August 13, 1984
410	8	6	SWAPO Information and Comment- "Declaration of the 6th Annual Meeting Of The Central Committee"	August 11, 1984
411	8	6	"SWAPO Accuses U.S. of Prolonging South African Rule in Namibia", Reuter	August 13, 1984
412	8	6	"U.S. Said to Help S. Africa Keep Namibia", The Washington Post	August 13, 1984
413	8	6	SWAPO Information and Comment- "It is South Africa Again in Cape Verde"	July 27, 1984
414	8	6	SWAPO Information and Comment- War Communique	July 12, 1984
415	8	6	"Moscow Pledges Support for SWAPO", Reuter	July 2, 1984

416	8	6	"Press Conference by SWAPO President", For Information of UN Secretariat	June 19, 1984
417	8	6	"SWAPO Says it is Willing to Engage in Further Namibia Talks", Reuter	June 12, 1984
418	8	6	"Rebel Rejects Pretoria's Plan", The New York Times	June 10, 1984
419	8	6	"Nujoma Spurns S. African Offer", The Washington Post	June 10, 1984
420	8	6	"SWAPO Rejects South African Offer to Quit Namibia", Reuter	June 6, 1984
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