

# Namibia: A multi-racial experiment under attack by Soviet-run terrorists

The following profile of the politics and history of Southwest Africa, on its way to becoming the independent nation of Namibia, was contributed to *EIR* by a Namibian source. Our source paints a picture contrasting sharply with the conventional portrait of this South African protectorate, that of an oppressed colony whose black majority is engaged in bitter racial struggle with a white minority and white South African administrators.

Two points stand out: First, approximately one decade ago, the majority of Namibians, black and white, ceased viewing Namibian independence as a racial issue, and integrated themselves into a process of reform that has made meaningful progress. Second, the organization which has received U.N. recognition as the "sole representative of the Namibian people," the Southwest African Peoples Organization (SWAPO), is proven to be a Soviet-controlled asset for destabilization of the independence process, an entity whose support accordingly collapsed approximately a decade ago. Its Soviet masters, since that point, have been using it solely as an instrument of terror in an attempt to return the independence drive to the status of a bloody racial conflict.

We add to our source's observations, on this account, that SWAPO members, like members of South Africa's Communist Party-controlled African National Congress, have been reported by Western intelligence sources to be receiving guerrilla training in East Germany—a fact which corresponds to the recent exposure of East German agents inside Namibia, posing as German-descended Southwest Africans, and attempting to whip up whites for racial violence against blacks. The object of Soviet policy, with SWAPO its instrument, is the racial polarization of the entire region.

## **Namibia: physical-geographical characteristics**

Namibia is located in the southwestern part of the southern cone of Africa, below Angola and Zambia, with Botswana on the East, and South Africa to the immediate south. The Atlantic Ocean is on the West.

Namibia has an area of 823,144 square kilometers (comparable to a state such as California), or three times the size of West Germany. About two-thirds of the population is directly dependent on agriculture, including agricultural-related services. Most of this category depend on subsistence farming. There are about 5,000 large-scale ranches, ranging

from 4,000 hectares, to as much as 15,000 hectares in the south where it is dryer. Sixty percent of the livestock are cattle, the rest sheep and goats, all of which are primarily range-fed.

Water, or lack of it, is a key factor in the economy. Rainfall ranges from 600 millimeters (ca. 24 in.) per year in the North, to 50 millimeters (less than 2 in.) per year in the southwestern area.

Namibia has abundant mineral wealth, and mining is the primary earner of foreign exchange. There are substantial deposits of copper, lead, zinc, tin, diamonds, uranium, and salt which are presently being exploited. In addition, there is extensive prospecting, and promising prospects for coal, iron ore, gas, and even gold.

The manufacturing sector is very small, limited primarily to light industry, with very few exports.

The water infrastructure is being expanded at great expense, with canals bringing water from the North to the South. There is great potential for further expanding this network.

Fishing off Namibia in the Atlantic could have been the most important source of protein, while providing employment and foreign exchange. However, Russian factory ships depleted almost to the point of extinction the plentiful schools of fish in the currents off Namibia, taking advantage of the internationally unresolved status of the area.

## **Population**

Namibia has a total population of only 1.2 million, made up of 11 distinct ethnic groups. There are only 1.4 people per square kilometer. About 10% of the Namibian population is white. Sixty percent of the entire population is concentrated in the extreme northern part of the country, where there is an abundance of water. Agriculture and mining are the primary employment. Extensive, labor-intensive agriculture projects are being developed in the North. However, were a substantial industrial sector developed in Namibia, these agricultural projects could be easily mechanized, freeing the population for more productive industrial employment.

## **Political history**

The New Yalta combination of the Soviets and Western oligarchic financier interests have combined their efforts to

maintain control over Namibia. Had this not been the case, the level of economic and industrial growth in Namibia, given its enormous potential, would have been much more advanced by now.

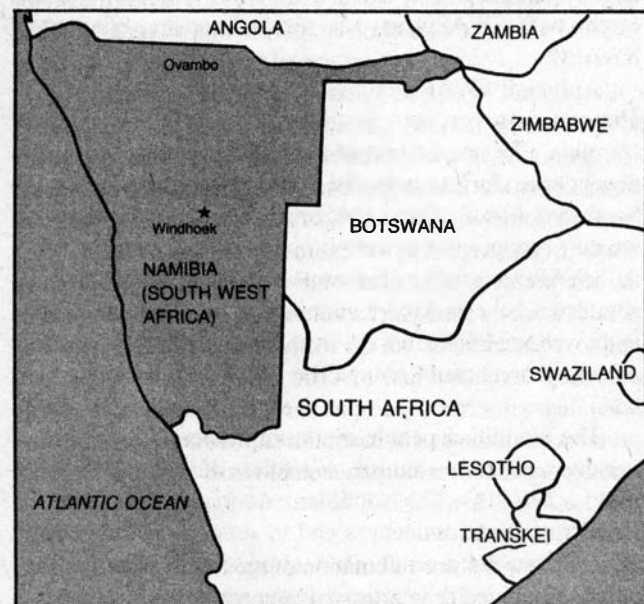
In 1884, Namibia was made the German colony of Deutsch Südwestafrika. In the treaty of 1884, Britain retained the enclave of Walvis Bay, the only natural port of Namibia.

In 1915, during the First World War, the colony was lost to the British Crown. After the war, the League of Nations gave the mandate over South West Africa to Britain, with the proviso that the country be developed towards independence. Britain, in turn, passed the responsibility for South West Africa over to the British-run Union of South Africa.

In 1945, the League of Nations ceased to exist, and the British wanted to make South West Africa the fifth province of the Union of South Africa. Internal opposition in Namibia thwarted this attempt.

Already by the mid-1950s, Namibians were petitioning the United Nations to be relieved from the administration of the Union of South Africa. In 1959, the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) was formed, the first black political movement, not primarily based on ethnic lines.

In late 1959, the Ovamboland People's Congress was founded in Cape Town, South Africa, by members of the South African Communist Party and a handful of people from the Ovambo ethnic group from northern Namibia. The OPC a few weeks later changed its name to the Ovamboland People's Organization, and became active in Namibia. In April of 1960, the OPO changed its name to South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), because the name Ovamboland People's Organization (OPO) would have drawn too much attention to the ethnic base of the organization. The Ovambo group is the single largest of the 11 ethnic groups in Namibia, accounting for half of the total population.



In December 1959, the first political unrest in Namibia claimed a number of black lives. In early 1960, about 900 people, mainly of the Ovambo group, left the country. Among them were Sam Nujoma, the president of SWAPO, and other current leaders.

At this time, the decolonization of Africa was in full swing, and SWAPO, along with SWANU, was given recognition by most of the emerging independent black African nations. By 1962, the SWAPO leadership came to the conclusion that "political and military efforts in pursuit of national liberation were not contradictory, but rather complementary and should be pursued concurrently." Russia, Communist China, Algeria, and Tanzania were the first to aid SWAPO in its military efforts to oppose the South African presence in Namibia. The first armed clash between SWAPO and the South African authorities took place on Aug. 26, 1966, at Ongulumbashe in Ovamboland, 25 kilometers from Angola.

By 1967, SWANU had been effectively cut out by SWAPO, and SWAPO was the only Namibian political organization which got foreign recognition. The difference between the two at that time was that SWANU did not favor violence as a means to achieve independence.

In 1970, the United Nations General Assembly passed resolution 276/1970, declaring the presence of South Africa in Namibia illegal. In 1971, the World Court in The Hague, with a split decision, endorsed the UNGA resolution. In 1972, the majority of the black political leaders in Namibia, including SWAPO, had formed the South West Africa National Convention for purposes of having a united body to discuss the independence of Namibia with United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, who visited Namibia that year. In 1973, however, the UNGA resolution 3111/1973 declared only SWAPO the authentic representative of the peoples of Namibia.

In 1974, round-table meeting, open to all political parties and interest groups, was called. This was later known as the Turnhalle Conference. This was a crucial turning point, since it turned the political dynamic in the country away from black versus white confrontation, toward working out a common political strategy for acquiring independence.

While these developments were ongoing, the unstable political situation in Angola, following the April 12, 1974 coup in Portugal, became worse as the Portuguese announced that they were going to give independence to Angola, and set up the unstable transitional government of three competing liberation factions. The Soviets and Cubans ultimately backed the MPLA group, which took power on Nov. 11, 1975.

It was during this unstable period beginning in 1974, that SWAPO was able to establish operational bases in southern Angola, from which they conducted armed incursions into Namibia. The result was a massive onslaught against the Ovambo population by SWAPO, murdering, maiming, and abducting citizens. The intimidation against the population

was extended into the neighboring Kawango area and the northern parts of the so-called white area. Infants and the elderly were the targets on white farms. The population was plagued by acts of sabotage against infrastructure vital for progress and stability. Power lines, roads, and water carriers as well as communication lines were destroyed at regular intervals.

When the South African government agreed to a one-man-one-vote election according to U.N. Resolution 435 in 1978, the population saw positive signs of achieving peace. While several political parties and groupings organized for the election, SWAPO not only increased its intimidation against the population, but actively campaigned for a boycott.

In accordance with the stipulations of Resolution 435, the South African government appointed an administrator-general, while the special representative of the secretary-general of the U.N. visited Windhoek to prepare his headquarters for the coming elections. The U.N. envoy, however, stayed for only three weeks. The administrator-general passed legislation to dismantle discriminatory laws in Namibia and created the machinery to hold elections. More than 300 journalists and observers from all parts of the world witnessed the free and fair elections in December 1978. Eighty-one percent of the total electorate voted; 86% of the Ovambo ethnic group voted, disregarding SWAPO's threats and calls for a boycott.

The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), a grouping of 11 ethnically based political parties, won the elections with a clear majority, and formed a government which was controlled by South Africa. The population's expectations for peace, however, were not met as SWAPO would not cease the violent incursions into Ovamboland. It was clear, however, that the population realized that South Africa had honest intentions to lead Namibia toward independence.

An independent government service was set up. Remaining discriminatory practices were eradicated and SWAPO's popularity in the country decreased rapidly. Due to its lack of support, SWAPO's organizational structure collapsed in 1979 and has not been reinstated.

The 1978 elections did not ensure recognition for the Namibian government. This led to conflicts between the DTA and South Africa, resulting in the resignation of the intermediate government at the beginning of 1983. When South Africa tabled new plans for an intermediate government, the so-called State Council, another conference of Namibian political parties, started at the end of 1983. The emerging Multi-Party Conference, MPC, included the right-wing all-white Nationalist Party as well as the left-radical SWANU and SWAPO-D.

The MPC made it clear to South Africa that they would seek a negotiated solution to the problem of Namibia. The South African government agreed that the MPC should table concrete suggestions, which the latter did in April 1984.

President Kaunda of Zambia agreed to host and chair a

conference of reconciliation with SWAPO and the MPC in Lusaka, Zambia in May 1984. After initial sessions, however, SWAPO, on advice of the Soviet ambassador in Lusaka, left the conference, terminating all negotiations.

SWAPO "promised" the Namibian population that the "war will be waged for another 90 years."

The MPC agreed on the formation of a transitional government for Namibia, which was inaugurated on June 17, 1985. More than 25,000 people attended the celebrations, and their hopes were high again. The MPC set up a cabinet with legislative and executive powers, while the South African administrator-general in Namibia had no politically significant role to play any longer, except to sign legislation passed by the Transitional Government of National Unity. Although the MPC was not elected to power, this body represents the broadest possible spectrum of the population.

The indications that Namibia is on an evolutionary road toward independence from South Africa are increasing. A Constitutional Council was appointed by the MPC to draw up a constitution which will have to be approved by the population.

South Africa will not accept the United Nations as a supervisor of universal elections in Namibia, for one simple and very good reason: The U.N. refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of any political parties except the Soviet terrorist asset, SWAPO.

In spite of SWAPO's terrorist activities, its political activities are not banned inside Namibia. This tends to prove that the transitional government is serious in its intentions to allow SWAPO participation in the political process, should it choose. The invitation to SWAPO to become part of the negotiating process still stands. But instead, SWAPO has vowed to escalate the war until it has usurped power in Namibia. In this connection, note that SWAPO permits no sympathetic political party a parallel status in a prospective alliance to represent the population. Parties who desire to join forces with SWAPO have to disband and become part of SWAPO.

Although SWAPO enjoys little support among the population any longer, its activities are extremely dangerous for Namibia's future. As part of the process leading toward independence, for example, the Southwest African Police and Southwest African Territorial Forces, once virtually all white, are now becoming increasingly Namibian—at present, 65%. As SWAPO's terrorism has escalated, these Namibian security forces have had to be increased in number and increasingly well armed. Therefore, any sudden withdrawal of South African troops could plunge the nation into a bloody civil war.

The Namibian people are more desperate than ever to achieve a peaceful solution, regardless of international support for SWAPO. The Namibians are motivated to defy external forces and influences and to support an independent government based on democratic principles. Whether they will be permitted this, is the only question.