

Negotiations: SWAPO Denounces Western Stalling



Combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN).

If the US State Department's press releases are to be believed, the long and tortuous search for an end to the illegal South African occupation of Namibia is finally at an end. In recent weeks the Western press has reported a flurry of meetings involving South Africa, the five-nation Western Contact Group negotiating team, the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO, and their frontline African supporters. Confident announcements of "major breakthroughs" in the Namibia negotiations have issued from Washington with all the fervor (and frequency) of solemn promises of a balanced budget and faith in God around election time.

But if you're planning to attend the flag-raising ceremonies in Windhoek, don't pack your bags just yet. Overlooked in the press's eagerness to report on calls for the selection of UN election supervisors, and to trumpet this first diplomatic "success" for the Reagan administration was the launching of yet another massive South African invasion into Angola, clearly intended to derail the negotiations. Also overlooked in the general euphoria was SWAPO, whose assessment of the latest negotiations stands in sharp variance to that of the Western five. In early August, SWAPO Information Minister Hidipo Hamutenya, in London after three weeks in New York for the "final round" of discussions, denounced South Africa and the five for continued stalling in the latest talks. We reprint below excerpts from his statement on August 3:

In recent weeks, the spokesmen of the Western Contact Group have been making very optimistic statements that a unique opportunity now exists for the implementation of the UN plan for the decolonization of Namibia, which South Africa has managed to block from being implemented over the last five years. The representatives of the five Western powers have been telling SWAPO, the frontline states and the UN Secretariat that South Africa has of late indicated willingness to give up its illegal occupation of Namibia and to allow the Namibian people to proceed to national

independence.

The five presented to SWAPO and the frontline states what they said were their final proposals on the agreement which could lead to the immediate implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435. These proposals contain three main points, namely:

1. The choice of the electoral system to be used in electing the proposed Constituent Assembly;

2. The deployment of UNTAG monitoring forces; and,
3. The resolution of the impartiality issue which South Africa has been raising.

With regard to the first issue, the Western five told SWAPO that both they and South Africa have dropped their insistence on a mixed electoral system; and that South Africa will decide on one or the other of the two standard electoral methods, i.e., proportional representation or single-member constituency system.

On the deployment of UN troops, the five Western governments proposed that a small number of UN military personnel be allowed to monitor SWAPO transit camps in Angola and Zambia.

Regarding the so-called impartiality question... they said that Pretoria would be satisfied with a general reaffirmation by the Security Council that the UN will supervise and control the elections impartially, that SWAPO will not take part in the meeting of the Security Council which will be called to authorize UN operations in Namibia, and also that SWAPO will not participate in the meeting of the General Assembly which will be called to authorize the funding of UN operations in Namibia.

On June 14, 1982, the summit of the frontline states held in Dar-es-Salaam and attended by the president of SWAPO, accepted, in principle, the proposals of the Western five with only minor modifications, such as the demand that the electoral system must be decided upon before the negotiations can be regarded as having been concluded. The speedy acceptance of the five's latest proposals was predicated on the belief that there would be immediate proximity talks in New York to conclude the negotiations by July 30, which the five proposed to be the target date. However, from June 15, the five were unable to convene the New York proximity talks which they had promised, and it was not until the first week of July that they finally decided to begin consultations with SWAPO and the frontline states at a level lower than that of foreign ministers which the five had originally promised.

The New York talks which started on July 6, have now gone into recess, but the talks have hardly accomplished anything of significance. The South Africans, who were expected to be in New York by July 6, in order to give their positions on the remaining key issues, such as, the choice of the electoral system, the composition of UNTAG, cease-fire arrangements, and the deployment of UNTAG troops did not turn up during the last three weeks of the talks. Instead of coming to New York to enable the negotiations to reach a final and definitive conclusion, the South Africans chose to raise a new condition for the resolution of the Namibian conflict, namely, the withdrawal of the Cuban troops from Angola.

In this connection, the South Africans and the Reagan administration are, again, trying to prolong the agony and suffering of the Namibian people under apartheid and colonial fascism. Washington and Pretoria are now using the Namibian negotiations as a trumpcard to arm-twist Angola regarding the Cuban troops. They are using our people's suffering in an attempt to achieve their own global and imperialistic objectives in southern Africa. SWAPO strongly denounces this sinister attempt to delay our country's independence by injecting into the Namibian negotiations an extraneous issue of the Cuban presence in Angola.

It is because of the American/South African attempts to link the Namibian issue to the Cuban presence in Angola that no agreement could be reached in New York on the outstanding issues, namely, the choice of the electoral system, the composi-

tion and deployment of UNTAG as well as the cease-fire arrangements.

The five are, however, now shamelessly saying that more time is needed before we can get South Africa's explicit agreement on all these outstanding issues. At the same time, Pretoria is busy trying to invent yet another new excuse with a view to avoiding the implementation of the United Nations plan. I am referring to the claim by Pik Botha, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, in Windhoek last week that SWAPO is planning to assassinate the so-called Namibia internal leaders. This is nothing but a cheap smear campaign intended to hide South Africa's unwillingness to proceed with the implementation of the UN plan.

In summary, SWAPO's view regarding the Western moves on Namibia is that the five are less than honest in trying to create a false sense of momentum regarding the negotiation. They have been manufacturing heavy doses of optimism, while, in actual fact, the leader of the Contact Group—the USA—is busy conniving and conspiring with the Pretoria racists in an effort to delay Namibia's independence.

The Struggle Continues!

The Victory is Certain!

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