

# THE S.W.A. / NAMIBIA ELECTION

by Paul Weinberg



Polling Day.

Contrary to what the S.A.B.C. and most of the South African press reported, numerous accounts of intimidation occurred during the South African directed elections in S.W.A./Namibia last year. In the Keetmanshoop area alone Mr Hercules, an N.N.F. organizer had collated at least 15 sworn affidavits in which employees explained how they were forced to vote. "There would have been far more but the majority of people fear to lose their jobs by reporting intimidation" he said.

The major culprit in the town was said to be the Stellenbosch Farmers Winery. Although the manager Mr B. Müssler denied any accounts of intimidation, many of his employees complained of how they stood to lose their jobs if they did not vote.

One particular employee of the firm, Mr A. Stephanus, in his affidavit, explained that workers were divided into two groups — one was to vote for Aktur and the other for D.T.A. "It was made known to me that if I did not vote I would lose my job. As an NNF supporter I refused to vote and now stand to be laid off".

In another incident Mr Hanse a farm labourer and a NNF supporter was refused back pay until he had voted for Aktur.

Reports of intimidation in the Northern areas were received from Bishop Awala. He stated that people were threatened that they would not receive pensions or would lose their jobs if they failed to vote.

Reports of intimidation came from all the non-participating parties, Swapo, Swapo Democrats, and the N.N.F. who all claimed that many of their supporters had phoned in complaining of intimidation. Cases of people being paid to vote and children under 18 voting were also reported.

## WHAT THE NON-PARTICIPATING PARTIES HAD TO SAY . . .

INTERVIEW DURING THE ELECTION WITH Mr A. Shipanga, an ex-member of Swapo executive, who was detained by Sam Nujoma along with many other Swapo members in April 1976 and released in June 1978. He then, after a brief period overseas, returned to South West Africa/Namibia and formed the Swapo Democrats.

Q. What were the reasons for the split with Nujoma culminating in your detention in Tanzania?

A. There was in fact no split with Swapo until 2 April, 1976 when we found ourselves surrounded by Zambian troops under the instructions of Kaunda.

The reason given for our detention by Nujoma was an attempt to take over the leadership.

Q. What are the differences between Swapo and the Swapo Democrats?

A. Firstly, we disagree with the assertion made by Nujoma that Swapo is a party of peasant workers and revolutionary intellectuals. Swapo we believe is a party of all committed Namibians who want independence. Secondly, the fact that Swapo is committed to scientific

socialism will only bring about chaos. The high number of illiterate people cannot appreciate what scientific socialism means.

Thirdly, we disagree with Swapo's notion of a classless society — this is merely a utopian dream. While we do not tolerate apartheid or exploitation we propose equal opportunities for all.

Q. What is the Swapo Democrats strategy for a S.W.A./ Namibian solution?

A. In the short term through United Nations supervised elections.

Q. How do you rate your chances in the U.N. supervised elections?

A. We have no doubt that we will play an important part in the election.

Q. What are your economic reforms?

A. No radical change — but a gradual shift of control to the public sector.

Q. Do you see anything positive emerging from the South African directed elections?

A. Not at all. These elections will not offer any solutions — they do not address themselves to the problems of this country.

#### 4. INTERVIEW WITH MR E. S. TRIRIMUJE — SWAPO INTERNAL WING SECRETARY FOR FINANCE, ONE OF THE FEW EXECUTIVE MEMBERS WHO WAS NOT DETAINED DURING THE ELECTIONS.

Q. What impact have the detentions made on the party?

A. Nothing — we are used to it. Many of our members were detained earlier, after Kapuuu's death in terms of proclamation AG 26. It does not matter if we are detained, new young dynamic leaders will take our places.

Q. Has the party been subject to other harassment by the South African administration?

A. Yes, we have never been given a free hand in campaigning. Two of our party organisers in the Caprivi area were detained a week before the election and other organisers left for fear of detention. During a peaceful demonstration on the Saturday before the election 70 of our supporters were detained and many were beaten up.

Q. What has Swapo's attitude been to the elections?

A. A farce — we advised our members not to participate or

if they do to spoil their papers. We believe there is a direct correlation between army presence and a high percentage poll.

Q. Will you participate in a U.N. supervised election?

A. Yes because we know they will not be manipulated.

#### INTERVIEW WITH NNF SECRETARY FOR PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF SWANU, MR V. RUKORO.

Q. To what extent has South Africa deviated from the Western proposals which it initially accepted?

- A. 1. By instigating a unilateral process
2. The election was not fair or free. S.A. was in charge and not the U.N.
3. Political prisoners have not been released.
4. We cannot campaign properly because of the Group Areas Act.
5. There is no common voters' role in the electoral process. The X-Ray system which has been used is open to abuse by South African officials in control.

Q. What would the outcome of this be?

A. Firstly it may lead our country to disaster which would result in an escalation of the bush war and economic sanctions being applied. Blacks would then be placed in the difficult position of accepting the D.T.A. government or Swapo.

Q. How do you view the South African supervised election?

A. A non-event, a face-saving formula by the South African government which will not secure our independence.

Q. What is the NNF's alternative?

A. To place our full weight behind the U.N. elections which will pave the way for a peaceful solution. If the U.N. elections failed to take place we would seriously consider taking up arms against the South African colonialists.

Q. In what ways do you differ from Swapo?

A. Firstly on the question of a democratic process. People should have a free hand in electing a government. Secondly on the question of human rights — Swapo detains fellow country men.

Thirdly, economically, we disagree with nationalisation — we therefore propose foreign investment — to create employment and increase production. Instead of complete state intervention in private enterprise we propose a limited degree of national intervention — in other words a mixed economy. □



Mr Hanse, a N.N.F. supporter, "I was refused backpay unless I voted for Aktur."



Mr A. Stephanus, a Stellenbosch Farmers Winery employee, who stands to lose his job because he refused to vote.