

**CONTENTS**

Namibia: Any Hope for Future Settlement ..... 1  
 C. E. Okpalefe

Africa: Imperative for Delinking From the Capitalist  
 World Economy ..... 14  
 M.L. Baregu

Imperialist Capital Investments in Africa: The  
 Japanese Model ..... 34  
 J. Owoeye

African Socialist Ideologies and the IMF Policies for  
 Economic Development: The Case of Zambia ..... 41  
 N.N.J. Mijere

Democratic or Socialist Transformation of the Rural  
 Areas: A Comparative Review of the Experience of Tanzania,  
 Mozambique and Zimbabwe ..... 60  
 E. Maganya

Indigenous Responses to the Imposition of Colonial Law:  
 The Case of the Kuria People of Tanzania ..... 77  
 B.A. Rwezaura

The Teaching and Research of Political Economy in Africa  
 With Specific Reference to East Africa ..... 89  
 H. Campbell

**BOOK REVIEWS**

Communist Working Group: Unequal Exchange and the Prospects  
 of Socialism. Copenhagen, Denmark: Manifest Press, 1986.  
 225 pp., notes, bibliography ..... 107  
 A. Aidoo

Mahmood Mamdani: Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda. Trenton, New Jersey:  
 Africa World Press, 1984, xi + 115 pp. Tables, notes,  
 index ..... 110  
 S. Isabirye

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**Introduction**

The conflict of what is today known as Namibia is rooted in many years of history. Like the rest of Africa, Namibia was enveloped by the expanding European colonialism of the 19th century. To be Precise: by the year 1884, German campaigns for the control of the territory were completed and Namibia formally become a colony in September of that year, when it was proclaimed a German Protectorate.

Thirty years thereafter, in 1914 (the eruption of World war I, caused by European colonial rivalries amongst others), a new phase was to begin in Namibia's history. In that war, South African forces, with the support of the British, engaged the German forces in the territory, defeating the latter in 1915. From then on to 1919, South Africa ruled Namibia as its newly acquired colony. After the war, in 1919, the question arose of what to do with the conquered territories and, in particular, with the German colonies that had been seized by Japan, France, Britain and the Dominions. Namibia, after having been seized by South Africa (a Dominion) was therefore affected by this question. The Paris Peace talks which were convened to discuss post-war peace terms and fashion out the League of Nations, has on its agenda the issue of the seized territories. This issue witnessed divergent perspectives of opinion and proposals, ranging from complete annexation to complete internationalization. At the end of the talks, a compromise solution known as the mandates system was hammered out. Namibia thus became a class C mandate under the administration of Britain and South African with the latter acting.

Although the idea behind the League's mandates system was to ensure a progressive development of the mandate towards self-determination, Namibia, like many other mandates, could not achieve independence before the outbreak of World War II. The aftermath of the war, in 1945, was to witness the emergence of the United Nations and the transformation of the mandates system into the trusteeship system. But for Namibia, unlike for many other mandates, the process of transition from the mandate system to trusteeship ended up in a discord that was to make a lasting impact on it. An age-long desire by the Union of South Africa to incorporate Namibia in the Union led to the former's refusal to sign a trusteeship agreement for the territory. In spite of the many advisory opinions and legal judgements by the I.C.J., and the many United Nations resolutions and international pressures notwithstanding, South Africa refused to quit Namibia.

Frustrated by South Africa's intransigence to all the good intentions of the United Nations, the Namibians have had to take up arms to liberate their country from the yoke of colonialism. Serfontein<sup>1</sup> states that the first clashes between SWAPO fighters and South African security forces took place at Ovambo on August 26, 1966. This was just over a month after the July 18, 1966 controversial ruling by the I.C.J., the climax of the frustrations suffered by the Namibians.

\* Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, Nigeria.



Namibia has, since then, remained a hot-bed of international politics, of not just SWAPO versus South Africa but involving a host of other actors (the Western nations, the Transnational Corporations, etc.) acting to maximize their interests or at least maintain existing interests, which are mainly economic, strategic and political. Giving a sound description of the Namibian situation, Itsejuwa Sagay says:

No other single issue has aroused so much passion and controversy and occupied the attention of the international community as much as the issue of Namibia.... the dispute which has been a subject of four advisory opinions and two judgements of the I.C.J.; and of well over a hundred resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council of UN, remains the longest, the most intractable, and potentially one of the most dangerous unresolvable problems of the international community.<sup>2</sup>

Conflict begets settlements; this article takes a critical look at the major settlement attempts that have been made on Namibia and examines what hopes there are for future settlement.

## TURNHALLE

The Turnhalle Constitutional Conference is perhaps worthy of consideration here as the first major settlement effort even though it was internal and sponsored by Pretoria, an interested party in the Namibian conflict.

It all began on September 14, 1974 when du Plessis, leader of the National Party in Namibia and also Minister of Community Development in the South African Government, issued a historical document at a press conference in Windhoek. The document stated that the Head of the Committee of the Party, then meeting in Windhoek, has decided that the time was opportune for the whites in the Territory to take positive action and hold talks with members of other population groups with a view of reaching an agreement about the future. Just two months later, on November 20, 1974, the National Party leader in the Territory's Legislative Assembly, Mr. Dirk Mudge, in an important policy statement to the all-white and all-Nationalist 18-man Legislative Assembly, explained that the whites were "extending the hand of friendship" to the "non-whites" and would invite them "to work together with us in a political dispensation in which there will be room for all. They must accept responsibilities together with us. Prejudice and hate must be removed".<sup>3</sup> These were the preliminary talks that laid the foundation for the Pretoria-sponsored Turnhalle Constitutional Conference.

This settlement effort initiated by the Union Government did not reflect a voluntary change of heart by the latter. The move was induced by the then 26-year-long international condemnations and pressures that Pretoria received on the Namibian question, coupled with the reprisals in a protracted guerrilla warfare which SWAPO began in 1966.

However, by September 1, 1975, the conference was called into session in Windhoek after much argument on the question of representation. According to the convenor, the conference was designed to represent all the 'people', which meant that delegates were to be selected only as representatives of their ethnic nationalities. This policy of representation automatically disqualified SWAPO and SWANU from representation unless they were willing - as of course they were not - to seek selec-

tion as delegates of a particular ethnic group. Not only were Namibians to be represented tribally, representation was also made compulsory. Thus, according to Landis, when the Damara Advisory Council and the Damara Tribal Executive at the behest of their people refused to participate, 26 hitherto unheard-of 'Damara leaders' were recruited by the Damara United Front (itself a new organization allegedly created by the South African Secret Police) to represent the homeland at Turnhalle.<sup>4</sup> Predictably, this ethnically based mode of representation was unequivocally criticized and rejected by SWAPO.

When eventually the conference sat, there were some 130 delegates (the official figure was later given as 150)<sup>5</sup> in attendance. The nature and composition of the conference, it must be emphasized, was enough to predict the outcome, which was, indeed, what the Pretoria government wanted it to be. Most of the black delegates were chiefs or notables on the public pay-roll, some were teachers or civil servants also dependent on the government. Many were unable to adequately understand or speak Afrikaans, the working language of the conference, and required interpreters. None had any sophisticated parliamentary experience, and few had dealt with whites in other than a subordinate-superior relationship.<sup>6</sup> Notable among the white delegates in attendance were Dirk Mudge, Eben van Zijl and A.H. du Plessis, and on the black side were Chief Clemens Kapuuo of the Hereros and Pastor Cornelius Ndjoba, Prime Minister of Ovamboland.

Chief Kapuuo created a stir when he brought a white American lawyer, Stewart Schwartz, described as a constitutional expert, to the conference. But after some wrangling, a compromise was reached allowing him to attend the conference as a constitutional and legal adviser; he was not to join in the conference discussions with the delegation. After having observed Chief Kapuuo, a number of other black groups indicated that they, too, would like legal advice. Rather than face the risk that unknown and aggressive counsel might be chosen by them, conference officials arranged to supply counsel to any group that requested it. The lawyers, who were paid by the South African government indirectly through the homeland authorities, were all South Africans; most of them had previously represented their government against Namibia's interests before the World Court.<sup>7</sup>

Once these problems were solved, the Conference went into serious deliberations. When it adjourned, less than two weeks after it went into session, thus marking it as the first session, the Conference produced a Declaration of Intent. The Declaration committed the Conference to draw up, within three years, a constitution that was to pave the way for some form of independence at a later date. Other matters were put on the agenda of the first session of the Conference but most could not be discussed. Before the Conference was adjourned on November 10, Committees of Inquiry were appointed to submit recommendations on education, social uplift, economic development and employment practices. The setting up of these committees was seen as important, as some delegates had argued that changes in these aspects of life, especially for the blacks, were basic to the success of any independence arrangement.

The Conference resumed for the second session on November 10, 1975, but this was preceded by a bitter internal clash in the National Party hierarchy. The schism, which principally was between Mr. A.H. du Plessis and Mr. Dirk Mudge, arose mainly from the latter's too 'moderate' views as well as his increased popularity with



the 'non-white' delegates. This second session ended abruptly after only five days, although it was scheduled for three weeks. It was, indeed, almost a total failure and produced few positive results. All major points on the agenda, including the ending of discrimination in all fields and the development of a new social, political and economic order, were referred to four committees.

The Conference went through two further sessions: the third session which began on March 2, 1976, and lasted for three weeks and the fourth session which started June 2, 1976 and lasted only three days. It was, however, during the third session that a special 35-man committee was appointed, on March 19, 1976. The job of the committee, known as the Constitutional Committee, was to draft constitutional guidelines for the Turnhalle Conference. The Committee, headed by Mr. Mudge as chairman, met briefly in April, then for several days at the end of May. It had a lengthy three-week session in June and resumed its discussions on August 3, 1976.

With tight time-constraints, punctuated by sharp public criticisms and temporary walkouts, the committee finally produced a short statement of principles on August 18, 1976. It was described in the media as a 'promise' of independence for the Territory by December 31, 1978, as a unitary state. The latter 'promise' ostensibly complied with repeated General Assembly and Security Council demands that South Africa preserve the national unity and territorial integrity of Namibia.<sup>8</sup> Assessing the 'promise', Landis noted that the statement did not constitute a promise or agreement of any sort whatsoever and that "it was at best a statement of the wishes and hopes of one committee, which has not even been approved by the conference plenary".<sup>9</sup> The South African government, which officially had no role in any of the discussions - whatever its role behind the scenes - was not bound by statements of the committee or even by decisions of a plenary session of the conference.<sup>10</sup>

In the end, the Committee came up with a constitution that purportedly established a form of democratic multi-ethnic federation for Namibia. Under the constitution there would be a National Assembly of tribal leaders and representatives, regional tribal governments and racially divided town councils. There was also to exist an Administrator-General and an advisory council which later became known as the Council of Ministers. These constitutional provisions were merely cosmetic as the constitution made no basic attempt to change the exploiter-exploited and superior-subordinate structural base of Namibia's political economy. This latter argument was well articulated in Landis' analysis of the draft Turnhalle Constitution. She came up with the following conclusions:

1. that it did not ensure national unity and territorial integration, but rather preserved - and even extended - fragmentation of Namibia into bantustans;
2. that it indirectly preserved the *de facto* dominance of whites in Namibia (and through them South African influence);
3. that it was unlikely to provide meaningful protection for even the few fundamental rights it recognised; and
4. that it did not provide for any popular participation in the interim government.<sup>11</sup>

Despite Turnhalle's unacceptability both for Namibia and the outside world and despite the massive criticisms and condemnations it received from SWAPO and the international community, South Africa, persistently and doggedly pursuing its policy, went ahead and organized elections in December 1978. The elections which were

characterized by widespread intimidation and chaos and boycotted by SWAPO and some other political bodies in Namibia, saw the emergence of a loose grouping called the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) as the government party. Dirk Mudge, who had been very much involved in every stage of the Turnhalle arrangement and was head of the DTA, predictably became the leader of government in Namibia. This was South Africa's sponsored internal arrangement for the December 1978 'independence' of Namibia.

Significantly, because of Turnhalle's defects and lop-sidedness, its lack of popular acceptance and its world-wide condemnation, South Africa sadly declared that the Turnhalle arrangement was merely an interim solution pending an internationally accepted settlement. This, therefore, leads to the next stage of this analysis, the external settlement efforts, in which a critical examination of the UN Western Plan shall be undertaken.

## UN - WESTERN PLAN

On instructions from our Government we have the honour to transmit to you a proposal for the settlement of the Namibian situation and to request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

The objective of our proposal is the independence of Namibia in accordance with resolution 385 (1976), adopted unanimously by the Security Council on 30 January 1976. We are continuing to work towards the implementation of the proposal.<sup>12</sup>

These were the words in a two paragraphed letter of 10th April, 1978, signed by the <sup>13</sup> Representatives of Canada, France, Federal Republic of Germany, the UK and the US, and addressed to the President of the Security Council. The proposal conveyed by this letter is today popularly referred to as 'the Western Proposal', 'the UN Plan' and/or 'the Contact Group Initiative'. These titles stand for the same document. However, the negotiation of this proposal dates back to 1976 when the Turnhalle arrangement was still in process. In the diplomatic offensive initiated in 1976 prior to the drawing up of the proposal, the above named five Western nations, tagged 'the Contact Group', acted as go-between for the Pretoria government, SWAPO and the black African states in the sub-region. Although there were initial obstacles, the concessions which were later made by the interested parties resulted in the drawing up of the settlement proposal, which has since defied implementation because of certain unresolved issues and logistics problems.

The Western Proposal stipulated the following:

- (1). In accordance with Security Council resolution 385 (1976), free elections will be held for the whole of Namibia as one political entity to enable the people of Namibia to freely and fairly determine their own future. The elections will be held under the control and supervision of the United Nations.
- (2). Elections will be held to select a Constituent Assembly which will adopt a Constitution for an independent Namibia. The Constitution will determine the organization and powers of all levels of government. Every adult Namibian will be eligible, without discrimination or fear of intimidation from any source, to vote, campaign and stand for election to the Constituent Assembly. Voting will be by secret ballot, with provisions made for those who cannot read or write.



In September 1978, the UN Security Council (Resolution 435) adopted the Western plan for elections in Namibia, which were to be supervised by the UN. To implement this proposal, a time-table<sup>14</sup> was drawn up, which began with the appointment of a United Nations Special Representative, who was to be responsible for the organization of the elections in Namibia. In January 1979, a UN team visited Namibia to work out a detailed plan for a ceasefire, a necessary condition for the elections. March 15, 1979, was given as the date for a ceasefire.<sup>15</sup> In March, 1979, 'proximity talks' between the Western Five, South Africa, UN and SWAPO were held in New York to work out details of the ceasefire plan.

Immediately before the March 15, 1979, ceasefire was to take place in Namibia, South Africa refused to participate because it objected to the presence of liberation forces within the country. Once again, peace was threatened. This action by South Africa went to confirm what the UN Special Representative, Mr. Mrti Ahtisaari said after his team's tour of Namibia in 1978. He stated:

"It will be a long time before we can create the atmosphere that would guarantee a free and fair election in the territory".<sup>16</sup>

In an effort to resolve the ceasefire statement, the late President Augustino Neto of Angola, in August 1979, suggested a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) along its border with Namibia, that is, a fifty-kilometer DMZ on either side of the Angolan-Namibian border to be patrolled by UN forces.<sup>17</sup> This was meant to assure South Africa that SWAPO would not infiltrate into Namibia from Angola. Although Pretoria accepted the idea after appeals from the US and UK diplomats in the UN, South Africa frustrated its implementation by insisting on having twenty military bases within the zone. As the crisis dragged on, the Western nations proposed the November 12-15, 1979 summit at Geneva to discuss Namibia. The participants would be the five Western nations, SWAPO, the South African government, and the five frontline states (Angola, Zambia, Botswana, Tanzania and Mozambique). The South African government refused to appear unless DTA members also were represented. This condition was not accepted. The stall, thus, continued. Meanwhile, on the home front, SWAPO - Pretoria attacks and counter-attacks had been stepped up.<sup>18</sup>

As 1979 moved into 1980, the situation in Namibia did not change in any positive way. In fact, by September 1980, Pretoria had introduced another obstacle which supposedly questioned the impartiality of the UN to administer fair elections in Namibia. Hopes for a peaceful settlement were raised again when, by October 1980, as a result of continued diplomatic pressures from the international community, Pretoria agreed to an all-sides meeting. Consequently, an all-parties conference, to be chaired by the UN was arranged to be held in Geneva on January 7, 1981. This time, it was agreed that internal political parties in Namibia - namely, the DTA directed by Dirk Mudge - would sit at the same table with SWAPO negotiators. The Republic of South Africa would be accorded the same advisor status as the other front line nations in the region. UN officials did not want the subject of the constitution to be put on the agenda, to avoid further areas of disagreements by South African officials. Instead, it was agreed that the peace plan and other practical proposals would figure on the agenda.<sup>19</sup>

Waldheim, on the first day of the Conference, called for a firm agreement on a ceasefire date that would open the way to Namibia's independence by the end of 1981.<sup>20</sup> In the event, Waldheim's call for a ceasefire agreement was to be short-circuited by the United States moves in Southern Africa. Thus, as the talks continued, even the most elementary step towards a ceasefire became impossible. The conference ended on January 13, 1981, without any meaningful accord being reached. The new hope that had emerged just prior to this conference soon became overwhelmed by gloom on January 13, and thereafter. To many a SWAPO sympathizer, the picture was to become even more gloomy with the change of government in the USA, the controller of the Western bloc. Jimmy Carter's administration was being replaced by the right-wing hardliner, President Ronald Reagan who, no sooner than he was inaugurated, launched his policy of 'constructive engagement' with South Africa. Today, many observers on Namibia claim that the Reagan administration has made Pretoria more obstinate and unrealistic over the resolution of the conflict in the Territory.

South Africa has continued to engage in a series of stalling tactics, the most dramatic of which include the insistence on President Reagan's first raised demand for the withdrawal of the 25,000 strong Cuban troops in Angola, as a pre-condition for elections in Namibia. Pretoria's claim to Walvis Bay is still very much hammered on. South Africa is now also demanding for elections based on one man, two votes, as a condition. All these demands did achieve the goal for which they were designed: to stall the implementation of the Western proposal. Indeed, the Proposal has failed to bring about a peaceful settlement.

## ANALYSIS

As was outlined above, both the Turnhalle (internal) and the Western Plan (external) settlement arrangements, as far, have failed to successfully resolve the Namibia conflict. The question now needs to be asked: Why have they failed? In providing answers to this question, it will be revealed how the actors' interest calculus affected their set expectations and demands and consequently, their manoeuvrability during the settlement talks and activities.

A critical look at the Turnhalle clarifies how certain actors had designed it (the Turnhalle) to produce in Namibia a post-independence atmosphere that would ensure the continuity of their interests. For South Africa, a government in an independent Namibia, that would (1) grant sanctuary and provide military assistance as well as logistics support to the rival and 'communist' ANC in its struggle against the white minority regime in Pretoria and (2) deny it (South Africa) continued access to Namibia's cheap natural resources and other enormous economic gain, should then be avoided. Only a puppet government could guarantee assurance against such threats and Turnhalle was designed and tailored towards the establishment of such a government in Namibia. South Africa's business interests operating in Namibia were also to continue to reap enormous economic gains under such a system and could not, therefore, oppose their government's sponsorship of Turnhalle.

For the local white settler population, the enormous economic leverage and socio-political rights enjoyed in the pre-Turnhalle era would in no way be diminished by Turnhalle. In fact, if anything, the small level of power, which Turnhalle had given them, would enable them to increase their economic and



socio-political leverages. Turnhalle, it must be observed, was not designed to transfer political power to the blacks in an independent Namibia, but to allow the 'sharing' of power by the whites and blacks. Turnhalle could, therefore, not be objected to by the white settler population.

Those who were to benefit from Turnhalle tactically paved the way for its maturity by carefully ensuring that the composition of black representative.<sup>21</sup> to its conference was such that it could not be vocal and radical enough as to kill it halfway. All political parties, including SWAPO, were denied representation.

SWAPO, a very strong actor in the Namibian conflict, was completely removed from the Turnhalle talks by the policy of representation adopted by the convenor. It is also essential to observe that, even if SWAPO had been invited to send a representation to the conference, it would have refused on principle. For it to attend, SWAPO, apart from other conditions, had demanded that talks should take place under UN supervisions and their object should be free elections under UN control. SWAPO had been undeniably committed to the total and genuine liberation of Namibia, establishing a system that is free from neo-colonial manipulations. In fact, the order that SWAPO intended to establish an independent Namibia was a complete opposite of the objectives of Turnhalle. The sponsors of the Turnhalle settlement talks were aware that SWAPO could not be bent into accepting a neo-colonial order. Consequently, they adopted the tactics of by-passing SWAPO. The question then arises: If Turnhalle was intended to bring about a peaceful resolution of the Namibian conflict, could its peaceful settlement objective be said to be achievable without the genuine participation of SWAPO? The answer is obvious. Any settlement arrangement that fails to enlist the interest and co-operation of SWAPO<sup>22</sup> is doomed to fail. It was, therefore, not surprising that SWAPO was unequivocal in its criticism and total rejection of the Turnhalle.

Another major group of actors on the Namibian scene, the Transnational Corporations (TNC's) never raised any objections to the Turnhalle arrangement. The theoretical explanation for this behaviour is simple. If, as we have observed, Turnhalle sought to establish an independent Namibia of a neo-colonial order, and neo-colonialism guarantees the continued profitability of foreign investments, it was therefore logical for TNC's to covertly or overtly support Turnhalle.

Significantly, though, governments of the Western nations (whose interest it has always been to support neo-colonial order in the Third World) criticized and rejected Turnhalle. The explanation to this can also be easily understood. The rejection of Turnhalle by the West is not because it didn't want a neo-colonial order for independent Namibia per se; rather, the rejection was predicated on the fact that the West realized the futility of Turnhalle without the involvement of SWAPO. To the West, a system that guaranteed their interests could be installed in Namibia through some other arrangements and therefore, the unpopular Turnhalle could go. It is against this background that all the efforts put in by the West to draw up the equally unsuccessful Western Proposals for the peaceful settlement of the Namibia situation can be fully appreciated.

When taking a critical look at the Western Plan, laudable as it is, can it be said that it was a realistic proposition, capable of meeting the fears, hopes and aspirations

of the key actors in the Namibian conflict?

Historically, the proposal originated during the administration of President Carter of the United States, the hegemonic power of the West. As a man of peace, Carter's personality, coupled with Black American support during his period in office, may have influenced his administration's undertaking of a diplomatic offensive for the formulation of the Western Plan, a policy proposal that was amenable to African aspirations. For Carter, the Western Plan meant bringing about independence in Namibia with the blacks in control of government, but this should not be misconstrued as a sell-out of Western interests. The thinking behind the Carter policy, perhaps, was that it would still be possible for the West to do profitable business in Namibia, even under the leadership of the purportedly 'communist' SWAPO. The experience in Zimbabwe where, as a result of situational realities,<sup>23</sup> the government of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe could not carry out a socialist restructuring of the economy (that would have had negative affect for Western economic Interests) must have reinforced Carter's policy.

However, when the administration of President Ronald Reagan came into place and Dr. Chester Crocker took over as Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, the Western Plan was viewed otherwise, namely as suicidal to the interests of the West. The new administration may have wanted to terminate further moves on the proposal but the realization that such an action would have brought Reagan world-wide criticism led to the adoption of an alternative policy, designed basically to frustrate the proposal. Reagan's 'constructive engagement' policy in Southern Africa as well as his support for Cuban troops withdrawal from Angola as pre-condition for Namibia's independence, basically satisfy his "frustrate the Western Plan" strategy. The United States' powerful and influential rule amongst other Western nations, coupled with their own desire to protect their interests in Namibia, made the rest of the West toe Reagan's line of action.

The West, during the Plan's diplomacy, may have fooled the rest of the world into believing that it was genuinely committed to bringing about independence in Namibia, but what is happening between it and South Africa behind the 'iron curtains' leaves this much to be doubted. For how can one reconcile the objectives of the Western plan as opposed to the objectives of the US constructive engagement policy and the West's veto of the Security Council's radical anti-Pretoria sanctions (e.g. economic sanction and arms embargo)? To understand the failure of the proposal, it must be realized that the West could never have been prevailed upon or pressurized into facilitating Namibia's independence, particularly under uncertain conditions, for this would have amounted to asking a Winston Churchill to preside over the liquidation of the British empire.

South Africa, on its part, accepted the Western Proposal with some reservations, never really thinking that an independent Namibia would emerge. Following the Proposal's implementation, it would continue to protect its economic, political and strategic interests in the Territory. This feeling by Pretoria was intensified by its intelligence reports which confirmed that in the advent of any comprehensive, fair election SWAPO could win as much as 83% of the votes.<sup>24</sup> Such a situation, for Pretoria, had to be avoided since SWAPO would most probably bring the spectre of a



red flag hanging over Windhoek, which in the Pretoria lexicon, would be unacceptable. To block the implementation of the proposal, Pretoria adopted a series of stalling tactics, as have been mentioned earlier. Indeed, the South African delegation to the fruitless Geneva Conference declared, at the close of the Conference that the Western Plan was premature.<sup>25</sup> South Africa's negotiations and demands during the Western Proposal talks were largely unrealistic and one is forced to believe that the time was not right for Pretoria to be realistic over the Namibian conflict. Probably, when the stream of resistance in Pretoria has been exhausted, South Africa itself will, covertly or overtly, call for genuine negotiations to hands-off Namibia.

As to the local white settler population: their interests were not served by granting independence under a completely black leadership, particularly under SWAPO. The Turnhalle experience had shown that they were only prepared to extend their 'hand of friendship' to the blacks or at best share power (not equally with the Blacks in Namibia. By their calculations, these were the only arrangements (and which Turnhalle was about) that would enable them to maintain their privileged position. The implementation of the Western Plan would, no doubt, have led to granting independence to Namibia, with a government that would have been overwhelmingly black. For the local white settler population, the Western Plan, therefore, was a negation of their interests and, consequently, they must have put serious pressure on Pretoria to forestall its implementation. At one time, they were not certain whether Pretoria would not succumb to international pressures, thereby allowing the implementation of the Western Plan. This was before the last of the Western Plan Conferences was held in Geneva, from January 7-13, 1981. In their lexicon: if the implementation of the Western Plan cannot be forestalled, we can work to incorporate our interests within the Plan. To achieve this latter option, the white settler group began to pressurize Pretoria into arguing for the representation of the DTA in Geneva. This was achieved and the DTA was to sit at the same table with SWAPO negotiators. Commenting on this Conference, Woldring observed:

The whole of the abortive Conference in Geneva in November 1979<sup>26</sup> was used by the whites to draw the world's attention to the existence of minority interests which should be treated 'on an equal footing' with majority interests.<sup>27</sup>

This observation gives backing to the argument that uncertainty drove the white settler group to strive for an option that would ensure the incorporation of their interests within the Western Plan. Since Geneva, however, the Western Plan for settlement has gone into the cooler and this has, no doubt, created some happy feelings among the local white settler population.

Mention must also be made of the TNC's who, as actors on the Namibian scene, must have expressed some concern over the Western Proposal. They are no less concerned with what happens in future Namibia than the other actors already mentioned. Their basic interests have been to undertake profitable investments in Namibia and they undoubtedly wanted on independent Namibia with political climate that would enable them to continue such profitable investments. Although the intent behind the West was that the interest of the TNC's would be protected, the TNC's were sceptical over what would happen if the implementation of the Western Plan resulted in the establishment of SWAPO government in Namibia. The Plan had no guarantee against this possible outcome and, since SWAPO's 'communist' orien-

tation was seen as a threat to their investments, they (the TNC's) had no other option than to join hands with South Africa and the local white settlers and stall the realization of the Western Plan. They have, therefore, continued to give support to Pretoria, in the form of clandestine supply of ammunitions and economic support that has enabled the latter to maintain its hold over Namibia. This *status quo* position, no doubt, is very favourable to the protection of their (the TNC's) investments and profitability.

Confident of winning the proposed United Nations supervised free and fair elections, SWAPO calculated that it could, through the Western Plan, achieve for Namibia what it had been trying to achieve through the use of a guerrilla armed encounter. Therefore SWAPO accepted the Western Plan that was to lead to a United Nations supervised election in Namibia. However, South Africa's obstinacy had prevented its implementation.

## CONCLUSION

Thus far, settlement efforts have failed to bring about the much desired change in Namibia. Could one therefore say with any certainty that peaceful settlement to the Namibia conflict is no longer possible?. If not, what hopes are there for future settlement?

In games of settlement talks, like the Turnhalle and the Western Plan discussed above, what is uppermost in the mind of the interested parties is to ensure that the outcome of the talks incorporates their interests. The maxim of the actor is: 'the maximization of pay-offs and the minimization of losses'. And, of course, these who negotiate from a position of strength often try to dictate conditions, to the detriment of those who negotiate from a position of weakness. South African and SWAPO, the two main actors, have always negotiated from a position of strength and weakness respectively. This position has to be reversed and until this is done, any future settlement talks or arrangements will be questionable and end in failure.

However, recent happenings both in Southern Africa and on the international scene are indicative of a ray of hope for the future. There has been an impressive expansion and intensification of the liberation struggle of the African National Congress in South Africa itself. This is dividing the white tribe thus destroying the unity which has been a source of strength in wars of conquest against the country's black population. This situation is complemented by the successes and advances of the SWAPO liberation fighter in Namibia. On the international scene, the imposition of economic sanctions by the West on South Africa appears to be gaining ground. This was begun by the US Congress's and Senate's passing of a bill (earlier vetoed by right-wing hardliner, President Reagan) which strongly supports the imposition of harsh economic sanction on South Africa. Several international and local magazines and newspapers report that some transnational business concerns have begun withdrawing from South Africa. Although there is scepticism as to the sincerity of the West in the execution of these sanctions, there is a general agreement that a genuine imposition of sanctions by the West would certainly weaken the strength of South Africa.

The continuity of these phenomena would no doubt weaken the strength of



South Africa vis-a-vis the strength of those opposed to the forces of oppression, domination and exploitation. When this happens, like it did to Ian Smith's UDI in Zimbabwe, South Africa would then accept to negotiate a much more realistic peaceful settlement with those opposed to the overthrow of the *status quo*. A realization of this hope is a possibility in the very near future.

### FOOTNOTES

1. Serfontein, J.H.P., *Namibia?* (London: Rex Collings, 1976), p. 52.
2. Sagay, I., *The Legal Aspect of the Namibian Dispute* (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1977), p. xix.
3. Cited in Serfontein op.cit., p. 250.
4. Landis, E.S. "Namibia: Impending Independence" in Carter, G.M. & Omeare, P. (eds.), *Southern Africa in Crisis* (Bloomington, Ind. : Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 185.
5. Serfontein, op.cit., p. 262.
6. Landis, op.cit., p. 189.
7. Id., p. 186.
8. Id., p. 188.
9. Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
11. Landis, E.S., "The Turnhalle Constitution: An Analysis", *Africa Today*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July-Sept., 1977), p. 21.
12. See U.N. Doc. S/12636 of April 10, 1978 or *The Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 5, Nos 1 & 2 (1979), p. 129.
13. The names are: (1) Andrew Young (USA), (2) James Murray (UK), (3) William H. Barton (Canada), (4) Jacques Leprette (France) and (5) Rudiger von Wechmar (FRG).
14. For details of the time-table, see *The Nigerian Journal of international Affairs*, op. cit., pp. 133 - 135.
15. Mishambi G.T., "Struggles in Namibia". A paper presented at the International Conference on Peace and Security in Southern Africa, Arusha, Tanzania, May 24-31, 1985, p. 22.
16. See Murphy C., "Namibian Greet Arrival of U.N. Transition Team", *Washington Post*, August 22, 1978.
17. See Mishambi, op. cit., p.23, and Meyer C., "Break through in Namibia", *Washington Star*, August 10, 1979.
18. For some brief reports on the attacks, see Darker, F.J., *South Africa: Lost Opportunities* (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1983), p. 109.
19. Id., p. 110.
20. Lelyveld, J., "Namibia Conference Convenes in Geneva", *The New York Times*, January 9, 1981.
21. Most of the black delegates were chiefs or notables on the public pay-roll; some were teachers or civil servants, also dependent on the government. Many were unable to adequately understand or speak Afrikaans, the working language of the conference.
22. SWAPO, apart from its international recognition as the sole authentic representative of the Namibian people, possesses a standing liberation army that is capable of coercive force.
23. Its infrastructure is tied closely to that of South Africa, its pool of trained local manpower is small and its economy is grossly undeversified and highly integrated into the economy of South Africa.

24. Woldring, Klass, "Namibia: Reflections on Alternative Plans for Independence", *Australian Outlook*, Vol. 35, No 3 (December, 1981), p. 306.
25. Lelyveld, J., "Namibia Parley Fails to Achieve Accord on Truce" *The New York Times*, January 14, 1981.
26. This date should not be confused with the 1981 date. The Conference was first proposed for November 1979 but it could not be held (following some disagreements, including the issue of DTA representation) until January 7, 1981.
27. Woldring op. cit., p. 302.