

EPISCOPAL CHURCHMEN for SOUTH AFRICA

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—For A Free Southern Africa—

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NAMIBIA: THE TRIPLE VETO - again

The USA, Britain and France today exercised their veto power in the United Nations Security Council in behalf of South Africa and against an assertion of UN rights in Namibia and of the rights of the Namibian people to their freedom and independence.

The big three teamed together again - as they did on 30 October 1974 when they thwarted South Africa's expulsion from the UN - to cast the second triple veto in the history of the world body. The three Western permanent members rejected a mandatory arms embargo: they saw no threat to international peace and security in South Africa's occupation of Namibia.

Resolution S/11713, put forward by Cameroon, Guyana, Iraq, Mauritania and Tanzania, invoked Chapter VII of the UN Charter in declaring that South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia 'constitutes a threat to international peace and security' and that all states should prevent the supply of arms, ammunition, aircraft, vehicles, military equipment, spare parts or any activities promoting their supply or their manufacture and maintenance in South Africa and Namibia.

Ten of the 15 members of the Security Council voted for the resolution: China and the Soviet Union (both permanent members), the five sponsors and Byelo-Russia, Costa Rica and Sweden. Japan and Italy abstained.

Experts point out possible jeopardy to the intricate legal structure built over the years to affirm UN rights in Namibia, to effect the organization of UN supervised and controlled elections and to condemn South Africa's usurpation in the territory, including its discriminatory and repressive laws and practices and the 'homelands' policy violative of the territorial integrity of Namibia, all mentioned in operative clauses of S/11713.

Namibia has been a focal issue for 55 years at the League of Nations and at the United Nations. The International Court of Justice, the Organization of African Unity, individual nations and independent groups have responded to the anguish and struggle of the Namibian people and their liberation movement, SWAPO, for freedom. The abrupt set-back at today's session may mark the end of an era; it surely redefines and refines the ongoing struggle.

South Africa and its satraps in Namibia are pressing ahead with plans for a 'constitutional conference' of bantustan officials - Prime Minister B.J. Vorster calls them 'true leaders' - and representatives of the white minority. South African Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller in his formal reply of 27 May 1975 to Security Council resolution 366 of 17 December 1974 (giving South Africa till 30 May to declare its intent to withdraw from Namibia) asserted the conference will take place in the near future. South Africa and its stooges in Namibia - the respite offered by the triple veto notwithstanding - are in haste to try to concoct a regime - who knows - to present to September's gathering of the UN General Assembly as the basis of a South West Africa which will ask admittance to the UN.

A wider context appears: the ADVERTISER of 30 May reveals the presence in Windhoek of Daniel Chipenda, secretary general of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), one of the three liberation movements in the rich former Portuguese territory north of Namibia, the one backed by the USA. An aide contended Chipenda's visit was private and connected with the leader's health. The ADVERTISER has run recent stories to the effect that the hitherto predominant movement in southern Angola, UNITA, is losing adherents in that region to FNLA.

QUESTIONS FOR THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT -

- What is the policy toward South Africa?
- Toward the UN's right and role in Namibia?

WRITE:

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