

The Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC) --

Education and Mobilization around Namibia:

Introduction:

In the 1970's TCLSAC supported the Namibian struggles through education and leverage in Canada as well as through material aid projects. We were able to draw effective links with Canadian struggles through our work around Falconbridge (with mines in Sudbury, Ontario, as well as Namibia) and the Hudson's Bay Company (which has a long history of exploiting both Native Canadians and Namibian farmworkers). Material aid projects included raising funds for an ambulance for SWAPO. A slide-tape show, "One Namibia, One Nation" was produced in 1979. It is still useful for our work, although we hope to update it. Friends in Quebec are working on a French version.

Our work in 1982:

TCLSAC Reports, our regular publication, provides information and analysis on Southern Africa from a Canadian perspective. Articles on Namibia appear frequently.

Namibia Study Group: This group was established to inform TCLSAC members as well as interested individuals about the historical background to the Namibian struggle, the continuing South Africa aggression in Namibia, and future prospects for true Namibian independence. It was held for six weeks in the spring of 1982, and involved reading and discussion. We feel that this group has provided a good basis for our future work.

Production of pamphlets on Namibia: In co-operation with the Inter-Agency Working Group on Southern Africa (a coalition of non-governmental organizations which are members of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation), we produced three pamphlets: Women in Namibia, Labour in Namibia, and Resource Extraction in Namibia. These pamphlets form part of an educational kit, which is available at this seminar.

SWAPO/ANC Tour and Solidarity Conference, April-May, 1982: TCLSAC played an active part in the organization of a cross-Canada tour by representatives of the South West African Peoples' Organization and the African National Congress. We also provided leadership and resource people for a conference in Ottawa held in conjunction with the tour. These were the largest and most significant educational events on Southern Africa ever held in Canada, in terms of the numbers of people reached and the variety of organizations involved.

The organizational network set up for these events gave impetus to the formation of the Canadian Southern Africa Coalition (CAN-SAC) a Canada-wide co-ordination and communication network. Specific tasks the coalition has committed itself to which relate to Namibia include: continuing to lobby the Canadian government regarding its position in the contact group, material aid to SWAPO, obtaining an honorary degree for Herman Toivo ja Toivo, and organizing another tour in the future.

TCLSAC's Plans for 1983

In our annual September strategy session this year, we decided that the overall focus for our work in 1983 will be "South Africa's war of destabilization in Southern Africa". The events we have planned for 1983 will target different aspects of this issue.

Educational Events: We plan to place greater emphasis on our internal educational work by devoting one evening per month to either speakers on Southern Africa or readings and discussions on specific issues. We will continue to hold special public educational meetings, and hope to organize a series of "Seminars of Solidarity" including at least one on some aspect of the situation in Namibia.

Media Workshop: We are planning an educational workshop for interested members of the media, to be held in January or February of 1983. This workshop will specify ways in which media reporting on Southern Africa can be most effective in presenting comprehensive analysis of the issues there.

Namibia Book Project: We have initiated enquiries regarding the possibility of sending books to the SWAPO camps in Angola and Zambia. We hope to have this project underway soon.