

# American Committee on Africa



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Dear Friend,

One of the most interesting parts of my recent trip to Africa was my attempt to visit Namibia (formerly South West Africa) with the first and only visa granted to date by the United Nations Council for Namibia. I should like to report briefly on this attempt in the context of the struggle for independence in this key country of southern Africa, and how the American Committee on Africa is trying to help. We want our friends to know of our efforts for your continued support is essential if we are to make further impact.

ACOA supported the creation by the United Nations of the Council for Namibia as the administrative agency for this international territory after the U. N. terminated South Africa's mandate. The International Court of Justice gave its opinion in June, 1971, declaring South Africa illegally in occupation of Namibia. Since ACOA has urged the U. N. to exert its administrative role in Namibia, we felt it important to obtain and test a visa from the U. N. Council even though it was probable that South Africa would prevent a U. N. visa holder from entering Namibia.

Only South African Airways flies to Windhoek in Namibia, and it is necessary to transfer in Johannesburg. I planned to be in Rabat for part of the annual meeting of the Organization of African Unity, so before leaving New York I purchased a round-trip ticket on Pan-Am which went from Morocco to Kinshasa, to Johannesburg, then to Blantyre in Malawi; Johannesburg-Windhoek-Johannesburg was a side trip. I made reservations to fly Pan-Am from Kinshasa to Johannesburg on Wednesday, June 14.

On June 13, the front page of a Kinshasa newspaper carried a statement from the Interior Ministry of South Africa that I would not be allowed beyond the airport in Johannesburg, and that it



## Houser lashes at US firms

THERE are some American firms whose businesses stretch even over independent African countries but are acting like "extensions of the South African police state. Mr George Houser, the executive director of the American Committee on Africa said when he addressed a Press conference at Africa 2,000 in Lusaka yesterday.

Mr Houser who has been refused entry into Namibia twice now said that he seriously wants to go to Namibia and that he would only visit the country on a UN visa and not on the South African government visa.

He declared that he will still attempt to visit Namibia using the United Nations visa to

assert UN authority there.

Mr Houser who explained how he was refused permission by the manager of Pan-American Airways to land in Johannesburg said: "This is no joke. I would like to go to Namibia. If I will be able to get there, there are many things I can do." he said

# AIRLINE FOILED

## NAMIBIA VISIT

By Times Reporter

THE director of the American Committee on Africa, Mr George Houser, is considering legal action against Pan-American Airways for not letting him land in Johannesburg last week on his way to Namibia.

The United Nations Council for Namibia issued Mr Houser a visa authorising him to visit Namibia to assert UN authority there.

"Pan-American Airways had no right to deny me permission to land in Johannesburg. My lawyers in New York are considering taking legal action," Mr Houser said in Lusaka.

### No control

He said he would never, under any circumstances, accept a South African visa because the regime had no control over Namibia.

Mr Houser, who arrived in Zambia on Saturday, saw leaders of Swapo and other African liberation movements at the Liberation Centre in Lusaka yesterday.

The American Council on Africa — a non-governmental body — arranged an American tour for President Kaunda when he was released from prison in 1960, and a year later it persuaded the UN to invite the President to attend the UN general assembly.

*Zambia Times 6/13/72*

was unlikely that a recognized international airline would accept me on a scheduled flight to South Africa without a South Africa visa. South Africa does not require such a visa on a similar transfer to Botswana.

The South African government had told Pan-Am in South Africa that I should not be permitted on the plane, I learned from Pan-Am's Kinshasa manager, and Pan-Am in New York had also given the Kinshasa office instructions. Thus Pan-Am, refusing me a seat on a through ticket, served as the enforcement agency for South African policy which has been declared illegal by both the U. N. and the World Court, with at least the concurrence of the United States. I made a formal written protest to Pan-Am in Kinshasa and a full report to the United Nations. A team of lawyers is working on the possibilities for legal action.

Publicity about the visa test was widespread in Africa, and a few samples are reprinted with this letter. There was extensive coverage by the British Broadcasting Corporation and in the British press. The U. S. press was not interested.

This action is only one of many ACOA has taken in the last several years to support freedom for Namibia and to oppose South Africa's de facto racist control there. When the International Court's opinion was given, ACOA recruited a committee of lawyers which prepared a detailed statement of the obligations of the United States in the light of the Court's opinion. (This statement, and the other material mentioned, is available on request.) In connection with this, an ACOA delegation secured a meeting with U. S. Ambassador to the U. N. Bush to ask for U. S. implementation. Legal action to force compliance with some of these obligations is under way; for instance, U. S. corporations should not receive credit for the money that they pay - illegally - to South Africa.

*Wash. Post 3/12/72*

As you know, ACOA has been working for some time on the problem of U. S. economic involvement in all of southern Africa. In Namibia, American Metal Climax Corporation and

Newmont Mining company jointly own Tsumeb, the largest base mineral mine, and other properties. The December, 1971 general strike of Namibian contract workers against intolerable conditions included the shut-down of the Tsumeb mine and deepened the need to expose U. S. responsibilities in the territory. A pamphlet was prepared and printed, Namibia: U. S. Corporate Involvement, which discusses Tsumeb, U. S. and Bethlehem Steel, other corporations, and trade relations. ACOA helped to prepare material for presentation at annual

### Houser faces Namibia ban

PRETORIA. — American George Houser, who plans to enter Namibia on a UN visa, will not be allowed beyond Johannesburg airport, the interior ministry said here.

Mr Houser was due here on Monday night, but failed to arrive.—Reuter.

*Zambia Times 6/20/72*

### U.N. Told Strike By Miners Continues

UNITED NATIONS, March 11 (UPI)—Judge William Booth of the New York City Criminal Court reported to the United Nations that the miners' strike in Southwest Africa's Ovamboland continues despite police measures, official U.N. documents disclosed today.

The judge, who is black, appeared before the 11-member United Nations Council for Namibia yesterday to give an account on his mission as observer to the trial of 12 strikes in Windhoek, Namibia (Southwest Africa).

In his report, Booth said the trial was in his view an attempt to crush the resistance of the strikers.

# American Committee on Africa scores illegal rule of Namibians by New York based mine combines

By SIMON ANEKWE

The American Committee on Africa has called on two multi-million-dollar New York-based mining companies to stop exploiting Africans who sweat it out for them in the mines of Namibia, formerly South-West Africa.

Namibia is ruled by the government of South Africa; but the United Nations and the World Court have said that such rule is illegal and South Africa should leave the territory.

ACOA acted in support of the paralyzing strike by over 10,000 laborers in the mineral-rich trust territory. In messages to Ian MacGregor, president of American Metal Climax of 1270 Avenue of the Americas and to Plato Malozemoff, president of Newmont Mining Corp., 300 Park Ave., ACOA said:

"In support of the courageous general strike of the contract laborers of Namibia, ACOA calls on AMAX and Newmont to publicly reject and end their use of contract labor at the Tsumeb operation in Namibia.

"We call on AMAX and Newmont to end starvation wages, to pay equal pay for equal work, to make work agreements with worker-representatives, guarantee safety from reprisals by the illegal South African occupation forces in Namibia".

The Committee warned that it would back a Congressional inquiry into the companies' Tsumeb operations and "their role in supporting the illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa".

The contract workers are recruited with the assistance of the Pretoria government from Ovambo homelands some 300 miles away. They are signed up for periods of about 18 months, quartered in labor camps and are not allowed to bring their families or change jobs.

While the strike has hit the mines hardest, there is general dissatisfaction among the 60,000 contract laborers throughout the country. Other employers have been more responsible than the miners, however.

Coming after the June 1971 World Court Decision that South African presence in Namibia is illegal, the significance of the strike is "unmistakable", ACOA pointed out.

"Namibia is a mineral-rich country", the Committee noted. "But American Metal Climax, Newmont and other mining

companies there, are stripping the country of its natural wealth, and using the labor of a captive population to do it".

The two companies made more than \$15 million in profits during 1970. Their contract labor is paid \$300 a year, plus food and shelter in labor camps. But the Namibians have no political rights: the government of South Africa sees to that.

U. N. and made a report to the Secretary General. ACOA held a public meeting to hear his report and he appeared on radio and TV. (Meetings were also held with Namibian church leaders who have come to the United States.) The African Defense and Aid Fund has sent out a brochure about the strike as part of a financial appeal.

ACOA maintains frequent contact with the U. N. on Namibian and other questions. Following the court opinion, we helped to finance a SWAPO (South West African Peoples Organization) delegation to come to the United States while the General Assembly was in session. At that time a SWAPO official became the first representative of a liberation movement to be heard by the U. N. Security Council. ACOA made several appearances before U. N. agencies and originated the suggestion that the U. N. hold hearings on international exploitation of Namibia and call before it the U. S. corporations as well as others.

SWAPO, which ACOA supports, is gaining increasing recognition as spokesman for the people of Namibia. This was demonstrated at an international conference it organized in Brussels, which I attended en route to Africa last summer. More than four hundred were registered, representing eighty countries including both East and West, and three United Nations bodies participated.

Despite the International Court's endorsement of the U. N.'s position, and the heroic resistance of the Namibian people themselves, outside backing has been weak, and mainly verbal. The conference,

stockholders' meetings of AMAX and Newmont, and joined in demonstrations at the meetings.

ACOA also moved in other ways to support the strikers. We tried to secure and to circulate widely information about what was going on. In addition to efforts with the media, a Fact Sheet on the strike was issued. ACOA's new President, Judge William H. Booth, just before his election, traveled to Windhoek to serve as an observer for the International Commission of Jurists at the trial of Windhoek strikers. He visited the Windhoek African compound and met with Chief Kapuuo of the Hereros and others. On his return he testified at the

# Namibia Problems Persist; Airline Policy Disputed

of the Namibian people themselves, outside backing has been weak, and mainly verbal. The conference, hopefully, has begun mobilizing world opinion to get political, moral, and financial support for SWAPO and the struggling people of Namibia.

We have pledged our support, and that really means your support. For the campaign we run, the literature we publish, the legal action we initiate - all our work depends on your generous contributions. And Namibia is only one country. We have done almost as much this year in support of the people of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) where, in addition, we have had to fight hard in Washington against racist policies in government. There is the struggle in the Portuguese colonies, where the U. S. is allied with Portugal; and then, the hub of it all, apartheid South Africa.

So give today, as much as you can. We rely on you.

Yours sincerely,



George M. Houser  
Executive Director

Some of the world's most experienced airlines are flying a collision course toward a clash with the United Nations over the Namibia issue.

The development is a spinoff of the most recent whirl of activities aimed at getting South Africa to recognize the UN's authority over the territory. Highlighting these activities last week was the Security Council's guarded approval of Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim's request for authorization to appoint a special

representative to help him negotiate with South Africa for Namibian independence.

The airlines came into the picture when George M. Houser, executive director of the New York-based American Committee on Africa, accused Pan American World Airways of blocking his attempt to fly into Namibia on a visa issued by the General Assembly's Council for Namibia. The visa was the first ever granted by the council, set up to administer the territory until it achieves independence.

Appearing before the council on Aug. 1, Houser accused Pan Am of "extending South Africa's police state apparatus" by refusing on Pretoria's instructions to carry him from Kinshasa to Johannesburg en route to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia.

Only South African Airways (SAA) flies to Windhoek. While it is possible for a traveler from outside South Africa to fly the entire distance by SAA, he would normally find it more convenient to fly to South Africa by one of the international airlines serving the country and then transfer to SAA for the last leg of the flight.

The elements of a UN-initiated clash with Pan Am and other international air carriers stems from the suggestion by some Namibia Council members that other individuals and organizations follow Houser's course in challenging South Africa's right to block access to Namibia-bound travelers carrying visas issued by the council.

If, as seems likely, others try unsuccessfully to run South Africa's blockade-by-proxy, the Council for Namibia can be expected to take a tough stand against the offending airlines, a council member said. One delegate said he would not rule out a council call for a boycott against such air carriers even though he admitted its demand would almost certainly be ignored.

Because Houser has threatened legal action against Pan Am, the airline's New York headquarters is reluctant to discuss the case. However, Pan Am spokesman Bryce Miller told The Delegates World that "we've heard about the incident" and that "our legal department is aware" of Houser's threat to sue.

Delegates World  
7/14/72