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NAMIBIA: SOUTH AFRICA, SWAPO AND THE SETTLEMENT

SUMMARY

The apparent settlement of the conflict in South-West Africa, now called Namibia, rapidly unravelled in September and early October as the United Nations attempted to substantially alter the initial Western plan for independence that had been accepted by South Africa on April 25, 1978. The inclusion of Walvis Bay in U.N. resolutions on Namibia in July raised initial skepticism by South Africa of working within the U.N. framework for a settlement. Then, in September, when U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim presented a detailed plan for implementing the U.N. resolutions, the South Africans decided to proceed with their own implementation of the original April agreement.

By substantially altering the size and composition of the U.N. force proposed for Namibia and extending the timetable for elections well beyond the December 31, 1978 deadline, the Waldheim proposal would tend to boost the chances of the Soviet-supported forces of SWAPO taking control of the territory upon independence. SWAPO, never genuinely interested in creating a democratic, multi-racial society in Namibia, only accepted the Waldheim plan after South Africa rejected it.

Although working for over a year to persuade South Africa to accept their plan for independence last April, the five Western nations supported the Waldheim plan in September and have ominously threatened reprisals if South Africa continues to reject the U.N. proposal. The Western nations did agree in October to continue negotiations with South Africa and avoid a U.N. confrontation. But

the apparent reversal of policy by the West on Namibia parallels the situation in Rhodesia where the British and American governments withdrew from an agreement negotiated between Ian Smith and then Secretary of State Kissinger in 1976. These reversals have substantially eroded Western credibility in both Rhodesia and South Africa and have contributed significantly to the increasing tensions and polarization in the region.

HISTORIC AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND OF NAMIBIA

Located on the southwest coast of the African continent, Namibia sprawls over an area four times the size of Britain (472,359 square miles). Although rich in potential mineral wealth, the territory is one of the most sparsely inhabited areas of the world with large tracts of desert and a total population of less than one million. Regional, tribal and racial differences divide the population which, prior to the period of colonization, never existed as a united political entity.

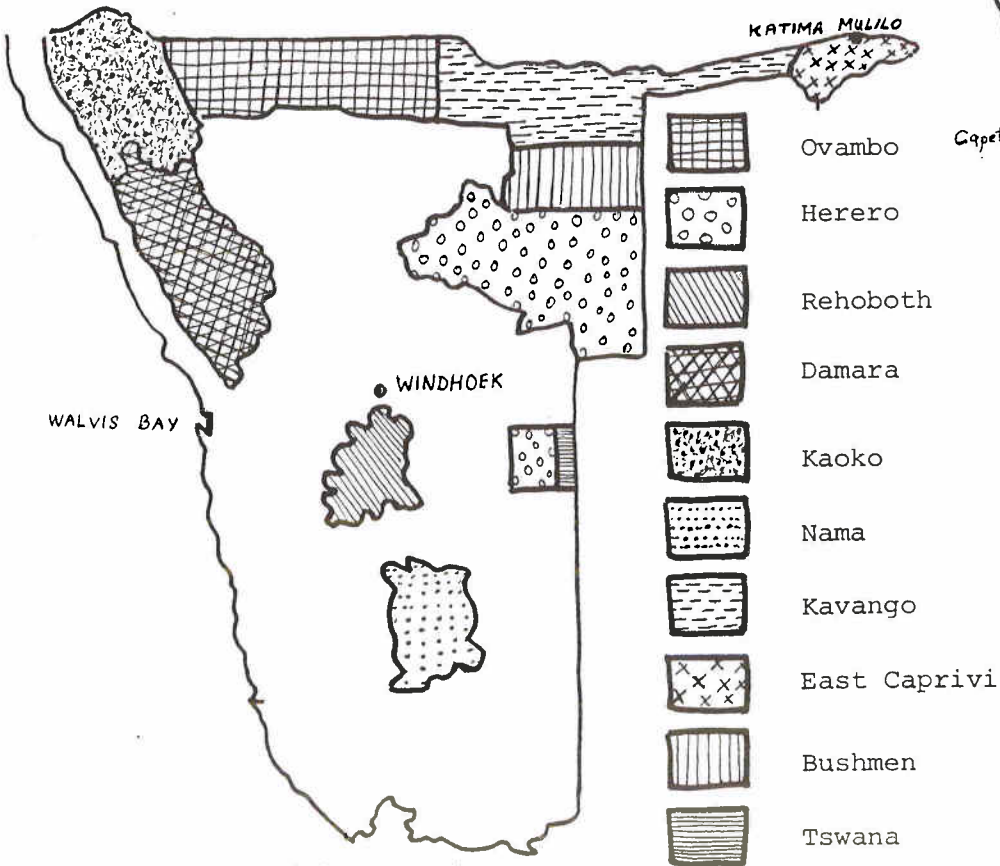
After some conflict for control of the area between various European powers, in 1884 the Germans finally annexed all of the present territory except Walvis Bay and a few offshore islands. The small German presence in the area surrendered to South African military forces in 1915 after the outbreak of World War I in Europe. South Africa established the South-West African Protectorate and formally obtained jurisdiction to govern it as an integral part of South Africa under a League of Nations "C" mandate in 1920. The United Nations, created after the demise of the League, has attempted to revoke the mandate, but South Africa has consistently contended that the U.N. lacks any inherited jurisdiction from the League.

The United Nations established a Council on Namibia in 1966 and later recognized SWAPO as the only legitimate representative of the people of the area. South African Prime Minister Vorster affirmed the principle of independence through self-determination for Namibia and in 1972 established a multi-racial advisory council. The eleven population groups of Namibia sent delegates to a Constitutional Conference in September, 1975, which led to the so-called Turnhalle Agreement setting December 31, 1978, as the date for independence. SWAPO and the United Nations vigorously objected to this agreement, particularly provisions granting representation and some autonomy on the basis of racial and tribal groups.

With the U.N. threatening reprisals against South Africa in March, 1977, five Western nations (the U.S., Britain, Canada, Germany, and France) urged South Africa to "facilitate the holding in Namibia on a territory-wide basis...free elections under the



NAMIBIA: Regional locations of tribes



(Source: Africa Institute)

aegis of the U.N. and refrain from any steps inconsistent therewith." Representatives of the five Western nations visited South Africa in late April, 1977, and Namibia in early May. Negotiations continued for an alternative formula for independence until the following April when South Africa agreed to work through the United Nations to create an independent Namibia.

THE BASIC AGREEMENT

The agreement reached between the Western nations and the South African government on April 25th contains the general provisions of a formula for the creation of an independent Namibia. The basic provisions of this initial agreement which South Africa now intends to implement consists of the following provisions:

1. A United Nations representative would work with the South African Administrator of the territory to prepare for elections.
2. All voters would be registered and elections initially would be held to draft a new independence constitution for Namibia and then additional elections for a representative government.
3. A ceasefire would take place in the country in which South Africa would cease military operations against SWAPO, which in turn would halt its intermittent guerrilla warfare in Namibia.
4. During the period preceding the elections, South African military forces would be reduced to 1500 men and restricted to either one of two bases in the northern part of the territory. At the same time, a U.N. force of up to 3000 men would oversee elections.
5. All political prisoners held by either South Africa or the forces of SWAPO would be released and South Africa would end emergency regulations which provide for detention without trial.
6. The issue of Walvis Bay would be postponed and not be a part of the initial settlement.

Nearly three months passed before SWAPO agreed to these general provisions in late July; but they also provided differing and in some cases contradictory, interpretations of some of the provisions. These disagreements intensified with the presentation of the Waldheim plan before the U.N. in September. SWAPO initially dissented from the Waldheim plan, but after South Africa rejected it, SWAPO decided to accept it.

UNITED NATIONS ACTIONS ON NAMIBIA

On July 27th, the general proposal came before the United Nations Security Council which then passed two resolutions dealing with Namibia. The first resolution, adopted 13-0 with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia abstaining, contained only three provisions creating machinery for carrying out the Western plan: This provided that the Security Council

1. Request the Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative for Namibia in order to insure the early independence of Namibia through free elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations;
2. Further request the Secretary General to submit at the earliest date a report containing his recommendations for the implementation of the proposal in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 385 (1976);
3. Urge all concerned to exert their best efforts towards the achievement of independence by Namibia at the earliest possible date.

The second resolution, dealing with Walvis Bay, passed by a unanimous 15-0 margin and nearly led to the withdrawal of South Africa from the entire agreement. In this new resolution, the Security Council

1. Declares that the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia must be assured through the reintegration of Walvis Bay within its territory;
2. Decides to lend its full support to the initiation of steps necessary to insure early reintegration of Walvis Bay into Namibia;
3. Declares that, pending the attainment of this objective, South Africa must not use Walvis Bay in any manner prejudicial to the independence of Namibia or the viability of its economy;
4. Decides to remain seized of the matter until Walvis Bay is fully reintegrated into Namibia.

This attempt by the Security Council to include the disposition of Walvis Bay into the general settlement created the greatest initial controversy in the debate over Namibia. Only after declaring her vigorous dissent to this second resolution did South Africa reluctantly agree to proceed with implementation of the first resolution.

THE ISSUE OF WALVIS BAY

Walvis Bay is a South African enclave on the Namibian coast. While consisting of only 420 square miles (or less than 1/10 of 1 percent of Namibia itself), the Bay is the only deep water port on the coast and center of commerce for the territory. In contrast to Namibia, nearly half of the 26,000 people of Walvis Bay are white.

Historically, the British formally annexed Walvis Bay in 1884, shortly before the Germans annexed the rest of South-West Africa. In their proclamation at the time, the British made Walvis Bay a "part of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and subject to the laws in force therein." A dozen islands off the coast also came under British jurisdiction and were also made part of the area that would later become South Africa.

However, when South Africa assumed her mandate over South-West Africa in 1920, she proceeded to administer Walvis Bay and the islands as a part of the annexed area. The Walvis Bay Administration Proclamation of 1922 provided that "...the port and settlement of Walvis Bay, which forms part of the Province of the Cape of Good Hope, shall be administered as if it were part of the mandated territory." This administrative convenience has led to great legal misunderstandings. The language of this proclamation parallels the controversial language in the 1903 Panama Canal treaty in which Article III grants authority, "the United States would possess and exercise if it were the sovereign of the territory...."

In 1977, as Namibia began movement towards independence, South Africa issued a proclamation which declared that "Walvis Bay shall cease to be administered as if it were part of the territory and as if inhabitants thereof were inhabitants of the territory and shall again be administered as part of the province (of the Cape of Good Hope)." This proclamation led some nations and SWAPO to denounce the alleged "annexation" of Walvis Bay by South Africa. The front-line states (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia) have referred to this as the dismemberment of Namibia.

Until the agreement with SWAPO on July 12th and the U.N. resolution quoted above, the Western nations appeared to support the legal position of South Africa. At the time of the April 25th agreement with South Africa on Namibia, the Western nations declared that "All aspects of the question of Walvis Bay must be subjected to discussion between the South African Government and the elected government of Namibia." On November 4, 1977, the Western governments abstained from General Assembly Resolution 32/9D which declared that Walvis Bay was an integral part of Namibia. In the series of Background Notes published by the United States Department of State, the issue which deals with Namibia asserts that Walvis Bay "is administered as part of

South-West Africa but in terms of sovereignty is an integral part of the Cape of Good Hope Province of the Republic of South Africa." (December, 1974, p. 1.)

But the United States and the other four Western nations apparently abruptly changed their positions on Walvis Bay in order to draw SWAPO into an agreement. At the time of the basic agreement with SWAPO on a Namibian settlement, Sam Nujomo, the President of SWAPO stated that he would not accept independence for South-West Africa without the inclusion of Walvis Bay in the new state (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, July 14, 1978, p. E5, hereinafter cited as FBIS). In a midnight press conference Nujomo stated that he "is going to see to it that the Security Council treats Walvis Bay as an integral part of Namibia." (To the Point, July 21, 1978, p. 9.)

Although voting for the resolution on Walvis Bay (quoted above on page 5), Secretary of State Vance asserted that "This resolution does not prejudice the legal position of any party. It does not seek to coerce any party." At the same time, Vance emphasized the practical value of the integration of Walvis Bay, noting that "We recognize that there are arguments of a geographical, political, social, cultural and administrative nature which support the union of Walvis Bay with Namibia." (Quoted in To the Point, August 18, 1978, p. 8.) But the language of the resolution categorically states "Namibia must" include "the reintegration of Walvis Bay." Thus, since Walvis Bay had never been a part of even the mandate territory, the U.N., with Western support, boldly demanded the relinquishment of part of South African territory.

On July 28, 1978, the South African Prime Minister, John Vorster, succinctly stated the position of his government on the U.N. action as follows: "Walvis Bay is South African territory and no decision by the United Nations or any other body can deprive South Africa of it. In fact, only a decision by the South African Parliament can bring about change to the status and position of the territory of Walvis Bay." In an interview several days later Vorster referred to the joining of the two resolutions as indicating "they wanted to doublecross us." (FBIS, August 3, 1978, p. E11). This bitterness towards the Western nations has hindered negotiations with South Africa on Namibia issues.

Beyond the historical and legal grounds for asserting control over Walvis Bay, South Africa has advanced its own various vital interests in maintaining the enclave. The port is the fifth largest in South Africa with tremendous commercial value. Through control of the surrounding area, South Africa has access for air traffic stopover that is now denied them by black-ruled nations to the north. Continued control of the area will undoubtedly provide them with important leverage in dealing with a future government in Namibia.

The main principle asserted by supporters of integration of Walvis Bay into Namibia consists of the geographic proximity of the area and its value as a port. But at a time when territorial integrity is asserted so adamantly in Africa, this principle is expeditiously abandoned in the case of South African rights in Walvis Bay. The Angolan enclave of Cabinda, just up the coast from Namibia, shares a similar geographic separation, but the Cabinda liberation movement fails to elicit African or much international support. Numerous examples exist of nations controlling or owning non-contiguous territories adjacent to other nations, such as Hong Kong, Macao, Northern Ireland, Berlin, Guantanamo Bay, and Gilbralter.

South Africa has always agreed to negotiate with any future government of Namibia questions relating to the use of Walvis Bay, but have usually qualified this by referring to "friendly" governments. Somewhat fearful that a Marxist government may come to power in Namibia, South Africa believes that continued use of Walvis Bay would deter guerrilla action taken against South Africa itself. More broadly, legitimate fear exists that Marxist control of this port could have profound strategic implications for the entire South Atlantic area.

THE TRANSITION PERIOD TO INDEPENDENCE

Upon the insistence of South Africa, the United Nations moved away from an immediate resolution of the Walvis Bay issue. But the Waldheim report, accepted by the United Nations Security Council by a 12-0 vote (the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia again abstaining, and China not voting), raised other issues in the implementation of the proposals that forced South Africa to announce on August 20 that she would proceed with the April 25 plan on her own. The changes in the plan that Waldheim insisted upon in his report that caused a rupture with South Africa involved the size and composition of U.N. forces and the timetable for holding new elections. More fundamentally, Waldheim proceeded to announce his plan without previous consultation with South Africa, as had been promised. Although Ambassador Martti Ahtissaari, representing Waldheim, had spent seventeen days on a fact-finding mission to Namibia, he had never raised some of these particular proposals with the South African administrators of the territory. This led South Africa to conclude that support for SWAPO in the U.N. might have had more influence on the details of the Waldheim plan than an interest in creating a viable democratic government in Namibia.

THE ROLE AND PLACEMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMED FORCES

Under the general settlement, South African armed forces will be reduced in number from their current estimated strength of about 25,000 men down to 1500, stationed in two bases in the north near the Angolan border where SWAPO forces are also concentrated.

South Africa has emphasized the role of a general ceasefire preceding any military force reduction. Foreign Minister Botha, in his speech before the Security Council on July 27th, noted that his government had "been influenced decisively by the provision that there should be a complete cessation of hostilities including, inter alia, mine-laying, killings, abductions, etc., before any reduction in South African forces takes place."

While the general plan would allow South Africa to continue to have authority over her remaining troops in the territory, the U.N. military personnel would be stationed throughout Namibia. However, SWAPO's leader Sam Nujoma has asserted a very different view by claiming that "The racist forces must be disarmed and placed under the direct command of the U.N. peacekeeping forces in one camp, the location of which will be decided by the Security Council." (Quoted in To the Point, July 21, 1978, p. 9.) Naturally he also insists that South African forces abandon Walvis Bay where South Africa believes other personnel, beyond the 1500 limit, could be stationed. In an interview in Madrid, SWAPO's deputy chairman Muyongo stated that after the election "our troops will guarantee territorial integrity including the port of Walvis Bay." (FBIS, August 16, 1978, E. 3.) Finally, Nujoma inverts the ceasefire formula by asserting that South African forces must be confined to bases before a ceasefire can be considered. Even then he talks ominously about the struggle continuing. (FBIS, July 14, 1978, E1, E5.)

The size of the U.N. and South African forces are integrally related to the effectiveness of a ceasefire. Initially, South Africa had proposed that her own force levels be reduced from over 20,000 down to 4000 as the ceasefire and transition to independence progressed. However, the five Western nations persuaded South Africa that a comprehensive cease-fire could be implemented and on that basis the South Africans agreed to reduce their force levels to 1500. At the time the Western nations indicated that U.N. forces would about equal South African forces or, mostly for psychological reasons, be slightly larger or up to 2500.

Thus the South Africans were particularly stunned when Waldheim proposed a U.N. military force of 7500 men, accompanied by an additional 1200 civilian administrators and still another 300 civilian police officials. This substantial increase in personnel led the South Africans to vigorously object that, on the one hand,

a ceasefire required so few of their personnel to remain in Namibia, but on the other, such a large U.N. contingent was required. Moreover, since the U.N. officially recognizes SWAPO as the legitimate representative of the Namibia, they feared that the large U.N. force would provide tactical support for a rise to power by SWAPO.

ELECTIONS: TIMETABLE AND PROCEDURES

South Africa has insisted since the 1972 Turnhalle Convention that Namibia should become independent by the end of 1978. In his speech to the Security Council, Botha bluntly warned against any delays in this timetable by stating "Our acceptance on April 25, 1978, was passed on the assumption that the proposal would be implemented in good faith by December 31, 1978 -- not 'at the earliest possible date' if this phrase were to signify a later date."

Towards this end the South African government initiated a voter registration campaign following the April agreement. In September, South Africa extended for a month, to October 20, the deadline for registration. By early October, 90 percent of the population of the territory had been registered, although some church groups in Namibia complained that some people had done so only under duress. Nujoma, the head of SWAPO, disputed the validity of the registration campaign under South African auspices. The United Nations ostensibly supported Nujoma's position because one of main reasons for delaying elections under the Waldheim plan centered on establishing a verified voter role.

The timetable for elections thus became one of the principal points in dispute between the U.N. and South Africa. Waldheim proposed elections be held seven months after U.N. adoption of the U.N. plan for Namibia, which would mean holding elections no sooner than April, 1979. On the other hand, South Africa maintained that the seven month period agreed to by Western nations should date from the April proposal. Therefore Pretoria asserted that delays by other parties, namely SWAPO and the U.N., should not delay independence for Namibia. Thus South Africa scheduled elections for a constitutional assembly for December 4 to 8. But South African Prime Minister Botha emphasized that the door remained open for general elections even under U.N. auspices if the elected assembly later wanted them.

Nujoma undoubtedly believes that elections in April with a reduced South African influence, will invariably boost his own chances of success, either electorally or otherwise. This does place both Nujoma and possibly the U.N. in the curious position of delaying a drive led by South Africa to create an independent black majority rule government.

Given the attitude of Nujoma toward elections, the whole issue may become academic. In an interview with the German publication Der Spiegel, Nujoma was asked whether SWAPO was prepared to face free elections and the following exchange took place:

Nujoma: All the South Africans want to do is turn Namibia into one of their bantustans. But we are not fighting for that. We will intensify the armed struggle and kick the fascists out of Namibia, including their black puppets.

Spiegel: You mean you keep wanting war and no elections?

Nujoma: It does not make any difference, struggle or peaceful seizure of power.

Spiegel: Seizure of power by SWAPO?

Nujoma: Yes, naturally. We have fought. The power is due us. And we shall not share power with anyone.

(Quoted from FBIS, August 1, 1978, p. E9.)

ADMINISTRATION OF NAMIBIA PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE

Another major disagreement between SWAPO and South Africa centers on authority in the territory during the period between a ceasefire and the installation of a new elected government. Nujoma argued in the Security Council that the United Nations special representative should outrank and be able to overrule the South African Administrator General. He maintained that the U.N. Council for Namibia was the only legal authority over the territory. (FBIS, August 1, 1978, E7.) In an interview Nujoma outlined his views further by maintaining that "The U.N. special representative will be responsible for security arrangements, law and order, taking the population census and the registration of voters. He will be responsible for announcing the results of the election." (To the Point, July 21, 1978, p. 9.)

Most of the authority Nujoma attributes to the U.N. representatives the South Africans insist shall reside in the present Administrator General, Justice Steyn. In an interview, former Prime Minister Vorster insisted that "it must be understood very clearly that the special representative of the secretary general is not a dictator in South-West Africa, and he doesn't come to South-West Africa as a dictator. He comes there to work in close conjunction with the administrator-general, who is not only in charge of the election but who, in accordance with the understanding and the agreement, is also running the territory until such time as it becomes independent." (FBIS, August 3, 1978, p. E12.)

On this issue also the Waldheim plan apparently lent support to the position of Nujoma. By having a much larger U.N. force than originally anticipated, the influence of South Africa in the territory would be reduced during the transition period. Pretoria contends this would increase the possibility of SWAPO intimidation during an election period which the U.N. may not be willing to arrest. Of possibly greater concern to South Africa in the Waldheim plan was the new introduction of a 360-man U.N. civilian police personnel to also oversee Namibia. At no time had such a proposal been raised before and under the April proposal; South Africa would maintain complete civil administration of the territory until the installation of a freely-elected government.

NAMIBIA: THE INTERNAL POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS

Although having a population of less than one million people, Namibia is divided into about a dozen different ethnic and racial factions which overlap with varying political groupings. Out of the total white population of 99,000, fifty-two thousand of them voted in a referendum on the Turnhalle draft constitution in May, 1977, with almost 95 percent of them supporting an interim government leading to independence.

Before the apparent impasse arose over the Waldheim plan for independence, several parties formed in anticipation of forthcoming elections. These parties have continued to campaign for support, but have recently directed more attention towards South Africa and the U.N. than towards their prospective constituents. Of the five parties only two of them have indicated they will participate in South African sponsored elections in December. The parties and their general orientations are as follows:

- * The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance: a multi-racial moderate party that came into existence to fulfill the independence aspirations reflected in the Turnhalle Convention. Although led by a white, Dirk Mudge, the party enjoys strong support among the Herero people in central Namibia. The DTA quickly announced they would participate in the December elections and at present are expected to win the most seats in the constitutional assembly.

- * AKTUR Party: the Namibian branch of ruling Nationalist Party of South Africa led by Abraham du Plessis has a small, largely white following. AKTUR will also participate in the December elections.

- * Namibian National Front: a left of center multi-racial party led by Bryan O'Linn that has been very critical of both South Africa and SWAPO. On October 8th, the NNF urged its supporters "not to legitimize

a neo-colonial and illegal process" by participating in the elections in December. (FBIS, October 11, 1978, p. E9) The NNF has supported the U.N. plan, but has attacked the U.N. for its support for SWAPO.

* SWAPO: Despite their conduct of a guerrilla war against South Africa in Namibia, SWAPO has an official representative in the capitol of Windhoek and solicits political support for Nujoma. They naturally reject the December elections and support the U.N. plan.

* Democratic SWAPO: Led by dissidents from Nujoma's SWAPO organization they have tried to attract support among the Ovambo people, the largest tribe in the territory. Andreas Shipanga, the leader of this group, met with Waldheim in New York early in October and expressed qualified support for the U.N. plan. He opposed any inclusion of front line state troops in any U.N. force, saying "we don't want to be misunderstood when we say we support the U.N. report as saying we would accept anything the U.N. offered." (FBIS, October 5, 1978, p. E4)

While important, the figures on tribal breakdowns and their possible correlation to prospective voting patterns can be misleading. The following chart of the population divisions would seem to indicate that SWAPO, with Ovambo support, could dominate an election:

Bushmen:	26,000	Rehoboth Basters:	19,000
East Caprivi:	29,000	Whites:	99,000
Nama:	37,000	Damara:	75,000
Ovambo:	396,000	Kavango:	56,000
Coloured:	32,000	Tswana:	5,000
Herero:	65,000	Others:	15,000

(Source: D. S. Prinsloo, "SWA/Namibia: Towards a Negotiated Settlement," Foreign Affairs Association Study, Report No. 6, August, 1977, p. 353.

However, unity does not exist among either SWAPO or the Ovambo (see below p. 17). Nujoma himself apparently has doubts about his own electoral prospects and, until being pressured into a settlement in July, he expected the U.N. to turn political power over to his faction of SWAPO.

With various minor parties, largely organized along tribal lines, no clear majority may emerge in any elections. Since the first vote will be for representatives to draft a new constitution, the precise kind of document then drafted may well determine the nature of the subsequent elected government and the kind of protections for minority groups.

RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA

Nearly all of the Western participants in the negotiations over Namibia initially hailed the prospective settlement as a profound breakthrough in developments throughout southern Africa. Secretary of State Vance provided this assessment after Security Council approval of the Namibian resolutions: "In my government's view, the importance of what has been achieved has implications which go far beyond the Namibian problem itself. The successful resolution of this international issue can encourage solutions for other pressing problems of Africa, particularly in the case of Rhodesia." Ambassador Young optimistically predicted there could be a peaceful settlement in Rhodesia "within the next few weeks" if a speedy solution with U.N. participation develops in Namibia. (Washington Post, July 13, 1978, p. A23.)

In Senate debate on lifting the economic sanctions against Rhodesia, Senator Clark, chairman of the African Affairs Subcommittee, cited the agreement on Namibia and stated that "we now stand on the threshold of turning around the course of events in southern Africa." He went on to argue that "What we are saying is that the Rhodesian Government need do no more than what South Africa did in Namibia." (Congressional Record, July 26, 1978, S 11789-91.)

Many superficial similarities exist between the Namibian and Rhodesian situations: minority white-ruled countries are attempting to transfer power to tribally divided black majorities and protect vital interests. In order to facilitate the transfers and end guerrilla warfare the five front-line states of Africa joined with several Western nations and through the auspices of an outside mediation force, such as the United Nations, provide for free elections leading to democratic government. The problem with such a general outline of the settlement in Namibia and applying it to Rhodesia ignores both the details of the arrangements and the factors which brought the conflicting parties to settlement. Thus the lessons of Namibia may be quite the opposite of those implied by Vance, Young, and Clark.

The general plan for the process of transferring power in Rhodesia actually bears little relationship to the process outlined earlier in this paper. Under the April Namibian plan, South Africa clearly remains the dominant force in the territory throughout the process of transfer. The maintenance of law and order and other civil functions would be performed by the present administration appointed by South Africa. The SWAPO guerrilla forces will not be allowed to take any constabulary role in Namibia and some South African military forces can remain in place. In contrast, the Anglo-American plan for Rhodesia grants no such similar authority to the existing government in Salisbury and mandates a much larger role for the forces of the Patriotic Front armies leading the guerrilla warfare.*

* For a detailed examination of Rhodesia, see Heritage Backgrounder Number 62, "Rhodesia in Transition," (August 9, 1978).

Actually, the present Internal Settlement in Rhodesia more closely resembles the general Western plan for Namibia than does the Anglo-American plan. Like the Namibian plan, the Rhodesian Internal Settlement simply calls for a ceasefire and then all parties can participate in free democratic elections. For the transition period leading to elections the government in Salisbury actually already includes prominent black leaders of Rhodesia, something not even contemplated in Namibia. In both agreements, the U.N. is invited in to supervise the elections. Demands under the Anglo-American plan for Rhodesia to completely displace the existing government are not part of even the Waldheim plan for Namibia. The introduction of some U.N. police personnel into Namibia has been one of the critical elements in prompting South African rejection of the Waldheim proposals.

As important as the nature of the various formulas applied to Rhodesia and Namibia are the settings of the two conflicts and the forces which compelled accommodation. In Namibia the powerful position of South Africa and their determination to carry out their own internal settlement contributed substantially to forcing SWAPO and the Western nations to promptly work out a settlement. SWAPO forces only agreed to resume negotiations on the Western plan a few days before South Africa had scheduled to announce its first steps towards implementing its own plan of settlement. (Washington Post, June 10, 1978, A14.) The two other critical factors which forced SWAPO into an agreement were the pressures applied upon them by the front-line states, particularly Angola, and internal divisions within SWAPO itself. Finally, SWAPO only agreed to the U.N. plan after its rejection by South Africa.

ROLE OF ANGOLA

Angola, on the northern border of Namibia, has provided both a physical sanctuary and base of support for SWAPO guerrilla forces. Logistical and material aid for SWAPO has almost all come through Angola and this prompted the South African attacks into this territory which severely restrained guerrilla actions. This same section of the country is also the principal locale of the continuing civil war in Angola.

Even with the assistance of upwards of 20,000 Cubans, over a thousand East Germans and massive logistical support from the Soviet Union, President Neto's regime has failed to consolidate power in Angola. The nation still suffers from sporadic trouble on three military fronts

- 1) In the north, the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda has forced a reduction of oil production by 15 to 20 percent and constrained Angola's only significant source of foreign revenue needed to help sustain the Cubans and the war.

2) Other Neto forces are tied down in the east in continued fighting with Holden Roberto's Front for the National Liberation of Angola. Neto has attempted to reach accommodations with Zaire in order to curtail continued fighting in this area.

3) But the major fighting has taken place in the south against U.N.I.T.A. (National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola) forces ably led by Jonas Savimbi. His forces control about one-third of the entire country. The Foreign Minister of the UNITA guerrilla army, Jorge Sangumba, has declared that "Angola will be the Soviet's Vietnam." Such a prediction necessarily depends upon outside support for their efforts such as the Soviets supplied to forces fighting the United States in Vietnam. Thus far, with only limited support, presumably coming from France and South Africa, the guerrilla forces have prevented Neto from consolidating control over much of the country. Even in Luanda, the capital, the government had to impose a curfew in late July "To put an end to the climate of instability." (FBIS, July 27, 1978, El.)

The three-front war and other disturbances have brought the economy of Angola to a halt. The country has reportedly accumulated a debt of over \$1.3 billion to the Soviet Union and the cost of maintaining Cuban forces runs about \$1.7 million a day. The generally desperate situation of Neto's regime has prompted his government to seek settlements with both Zaire and Namibia in order to attempt to isolate and eventually destroy the insurgent liberation movements in his country.

With Angola the major base of support for SWAPO, the decision of the Neto regime to pressure Nujoma into a settlement on Namibia has probably been critical. Without continued support for the resistance movements in Angola, Neto may have been willing to continue to use his nation as base of support for the guerrilla attacks against South Africa in Namibia. Thus, limited intervention in Angola, such as the United States refrained from engaging in, has undoubtedly played a vital role in bringing about a possible settlement in Namibia. Nonetheless, Andrew Young, often credited with bringing about the settlement, has publicly attacked France for her role in Angola, stating that France's "left hand may be destroying in Angola what its right hand builds in Zaire." (Washington Post, July 13, 1978, p. A23.) The real question in Angola, assuming that a settlement is reached in Namibia, is whether the Cuban forces deployed there to allegedly protect against foreign threats to Neto, will finally begin to diminish.

SWAPO: DISSENSION AND SUPPRESSION

Although recognized by the United Nations as the only legitimate representative of the people of Namibia, SWAPO has never enjoyed a broad base of support in Namibia itself, particularly after internal divisions occurred in SWAPO leadership in 1976.

SWAPO originated in the Owamboland People's Congress in the late 1950's with initial leadership coming from Herman Toivo ja Toivo and Andreas Shipanga. Sam Nujoma joined with them in 1959 and by 1960 formed SWAPO, initially as a non-violent organization. The name SWAPO was selected to attract a territory-wide base of support. Toivo was arrested in 1960 by South African authorities and imprisoned. Nujoma became the first president of the Organization which then turned towards limited guerrilla warfare, sending recruits to the Soviet Union, China, Algeria, Ghana and Tanzania for military training. Marxists in SWAPO dominated the organization, but did not consolidate their power until just two years ago.

A substantial rift in SWAPO developed in the early 1970's between young members of the organization and Nujoma. Many of those fighting in South-West Africa charged Nujoma and his leadership group residing in Lusaka, Zambia, with corruption, nepotism and incompetence. At a meeting held in southern Zambia in March, 1976, they demanded that a new Congress be called. A force of about 800 dissidents attempted to march on Lusaka to present their grievances to Nujoma, but he enlisted the support of Zambian authorities and had the dissidents, including Shipanga and two other executive committee members, arrested and imprisoned in a concentration camp in Zambia. Eventually, over 1,000 were imprisoned in what Zambian authorities called "protective custody." But the Zambian High Court later denied any legal authority for such imprisonments and demanded their release. Nujoma then solicited the support of another front line state, Tanzania, and had his leading political opponents transferred to a prison in Dodoma, Tanzania.

Only limited international protests arose over Nujoma's suppression of dissent. But with the movement towards independence of Namibia, Tanzania finally allowed the release of 19 key SWAPO members, including Shipanga. Nujoma protested the actions and requested they be sent to him rather than deported. In a press conference on August 26th, Shipanga claimed that SWAPO still held 1,800 Namibians in prison in Zambia and that a "sinister plot" existed to prevent their return to Namibia. He requested Ahtisaari to secure their release from Zambia. (FBIS, August 28, 1978, p. E4.)

How many additional SWAPO dissidents are imprisoned elsewhere is unknown. On August 9, 1978, SWAPO's secretary for publicity and information said, "SWAPO has released 11 counter-revolutionaries and we hold no more prisoners. Reports of thousands of prisoners still held by SWAPO are completely unfounded and we challenge anyone to prove the contrary." (FBIS, August 10, 1978, E5.) However,

when the question of political prisoners arose earlier, SWAPO's European representative asserted that members of SWAPO held by South Africa should not be confused with "internal SWAPO issues where SWAPO members were detained for disciplinary action." (Quoted in Prinsloo, p. 27.) With no access to prisons in Angola, Zambia, or Tanzania, it is impossible to know just how many dissidents remain in custody. In the raid into southern Angola to destroy guerrilla bases on May 5, 1978, South African forces claimed that many people at the camps had been kidnapped or were otherwise being held against their will.

Upon his release from prison, Shipanga returned to Namibia and assumed a leadership role in a new political force called Democratic SWAPO. This group has aligned itself with the Namibian National Front Party, formerly a small moderate party. If Shipanga can attract significant support among his former SWAPO colleagues, then the National Front may become a powerful, pivotal political force centered between the more conservative Democratic Turnhalle Alliance and the Marxist faction of SWAPO headed by Nujoma.

Meanwhile, as part of the Namibian agreement on the freeing of political prisoners, South Africa may shortly release Toivo ja Toivo who was arrested for violating the Terrorism Act in 1960. Toivo, now 54, has apparently kept abreast of events in Namibia and hopes to gain a leadership role in the new state. Toivo held the position of chairman of SWAPO at the time of his arrest, but Nujoma has since demoted him to vice president. Some reports indicate Toivo resents Nujoma as an usurper and lackey of the Soviet bloc. Nujoma's supporters insist that Toivo will side with them in any forthcoming elections. (New York Times, August 11, 1978, p. A5.) Since Toivo still has numerous contacts and influence in SWAPO, he could play an important role in either rejoining Nujoma, Shipanga, or heading up another Ovambo oriented political entity.

The divisions within SWAPO resemble in some respects the divisions within the Patriotic Front in Rhodesia. But Nujoma has already consolidated political power by ruthlessly suppressing dissent within SWAPO just as it appears that Mugabe would attempt to do should the Patriotic Front come to power. While Nkomo still vies with Mugabe for leadership of the Patriotic Front, Shipanga and Toivo can only challenge Nujoma in elections in Namibia overseen by a third party. Under a genuinely democratic framework, as envisioned in the Western plan, Ovambo opponents of Nujoma may be able to effectively challenge his position which they have been unable to do within the narrow SWAPO political framework.

Precisely on the basis of having genuinely free elections, South Africa challenged the ability of such to transpire with very large U.N. military and civilian forces that would ostensibly sympathize with SWAPO. Even following what South Africa has termed internal elections in December a framework for further, more broadly supported, elections can take place.

Only by accepting the general Western plan in July was Nujoma able to maintain his leadership of SWAPO within Namibia. South

African elections in Namibia in December have not been supported by Shipanga and other SWAPO dissidents, but if they assent to other elections later on, then Nujoma may be outflanked within Namibia by other leaders who have an Ovambo following. Nujoma's acceptance of first the Western plan in July and then the Waldheim plan in September does not mean he has changed his attitude, only his latitude of action. Immediately following acceptance, Nujoma called for an intensification of the armed struggle. (FBIS, July 14, 1978, p. E4) On August 23rd, the very day of the departure of U.N. Ambassador Ahtisaari, Nujoma's forces in Zambia launched a major attack against a South African military installation at Katima Molilo. South Africa retaliated against SWAPO bases in Zambia. The tenuous situation along the frontier undoubtedly made South Africa more reluctant to accept the Waldheim plan.

If Nujoma's faction of SWAPO does not appear to be gaining popular support among the people of Namibia, then attacks against South African forces may be used to prevent prospective electoral defeats. Even if free and fair elections transpire to select representatives to a Constituent Assembly, the failure of any party to attract majority support may only herald an inaugural crisis that would usher in chaos with independence. Only respect for democratic processes can assure their effective implementation of the independence plan, and thus far Nujoma's proclaimed goal of obtaining complete power has little correlation with such political processes.

OCTOBER AGREEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Discussions between the representatives of the five Western powers and South Africa to establish common grounds on the implementation of U.N. Secretary General Waldheim's report on the future of Namibia were successfully concluded on October 18, 1978. The serious reservations that South Africa had expressed over the police force, fair consultation, the number of U.N. troops and the date of the elections were thoroughly examined and as a result the South African government and the five Western representatives agreed that it would now be appropriate for the Secretary General's special representative to resume his discussions with the South African Administrator General to work out the modalities of the proposed election under U.N. supervision and agree upon a firm date for these elections.

The South African government will, after the election of leaders in December, use its best efforts to persuade those elected to consider ways and means to achieve international recognition through the good offices of the U.N. Special Representative and the Administrator General of the territory.

CONCLUSION

South Africa has administered the territory of Namibia for over half a century but has agreed to grant independence on the basis of democratic elections. Despite assertions that South Africa illegally controls the territory, the five Western nations and then the United Nations negotiated with Pretoria to work out a general formula for a peaceful transition to independence. Only when the U.N., with the support of the Western nations, substantially altered the plan for independence did South Africa dissent from working within the framework of the U.N. Instead of completely rejecting granting independence and majority rule to Namibia, South Africa has simply proceeded to implement the terms of the initial April 25th Agreement with the five Western powers. They still will allow U.N. observers at the elections and do not rule out future cooperation with the U.N. following elections of leaders in December who will be able to speak on behalf of the people of Namibia during the transition period preceding independence.

South Africa's concern with the potential creation of a hostile state on their northwestern frontier has undoubtedly figured prominently in their reluctance to come to any settlement that they believe unfairly favors the forces of the Marxist oriented wing of SWAPO. Sam Nujoma only very reluctantly gave his tacit assent to any plan for the creation of a democratic form of government in Namibia. But given his general Marxist orientation, his past persecution of dissidents even within his own organization and his continued emphasis on violence leading to total power for his forces, Nujoma cannot be expected to adhere to any political process that does not put his own forces in power.

Even with the apparent impasse in reaching a broadly supported plan for the creation of a democratic multi-racial society, formulas may yet develop that can accommodate all parties. Although proceeding with December elections, South Africa has insisted that those elections do not preclude any other negotiated arrangements by Namibians in the future, even including acceptance of the Waldheim plan. Western discussions with South Africa in October developed a consensus on conducting further negotiations on disputed points and precluding a U.N. confrontation.

While Western nations have thus far been unwilling to work closely with the more moderate leaders in the Rhodesia conflict to bring about a settlement, the prevailing powerful position of South Africa in Namibia may force greater consideration of their concerns about the formula for creating a moderate government in that territory. Possibly the creation of viable, democratic government in Namibia will encourage a reexamination of the Rhodesia situation, and more broadly, reassure South Africa that changes within her own society will not precipitate revolution.

Jeffrey B. Gayner
Director of Foreign Policy Studies