

April 2015 Journal. Out Now!

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Reply to US Embassy Invitation— from WRP Namibia

Letter:

to Mr. Charles Lobodell, Political Officer, American Embassy, Windhoek, re: Meeting 10 December 2014

Dear Sir,

You have requested a meeting with me to discuss:

- Our position on the election.
- Our programme for the next 5 years in parliament.

We have delegated Mrs Erica Beukes, Jacobus Josob and our two parliamentarians to meet with you on Thursday, 14:00, 11 December 2014. As indicated I will not be able to attend.

Our delegation is to discuss the following concerns.

In 1976 Dr Henry Kissinger on behalf of the American Government requested Sam Nujoma to get rid of the “radicals” in SWAPO. The “radicals” were SWAPO Youth League and PLAN fighters who were demanding a stop to the corruption of the SWAPO leadership and a Congress to call the leadership to order and chart out a political programme centred on self-

determination. This leadership were using warehouses of weapons, food, clothing, medicine and general provisions as their wholesalers while PLAN fighters were dying of hunger in the camps.

They were also opposing the Sole and Authentic Representative status of SWAPO bestowed on it by the United Nations Organisation. The SWAPO leadership was tribal and did not represent the Namibian Nation.

Dr Kissinger also had talks with President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia.

Shortly thereafter the Zambian Army rounded up the Plan and Youth League members and started killing them. The survivors were kept at Mbaroma Camp in Zambia.

As a result of the Kissinger initiative, SWAPO in 1978 started building 3 metre deep dungeons in which it threw hundreds of SWAPO members culling them regularly by firing squad and hurling some of them from a mountain cliff in Southern Angola. Thousands died in this manner until 1989.

Three days before the Cassinga massacre the SWAPO leadership ordered the Mbaroma Camp inmates to be dressed in army fatigues and brought to Cassinga in southern Angola to be massacred on 4 May 1978.

Sam Nujoma during this reign of terror caused the 11-year old son of Martha Ford (née Beukes) to be killed as reprisal for her criticism of their treacherous politics and sexual abuse of young girls. Mrs Ford was a member of the Politbureau.

The ultimate consequence of this was that the issues of self-determination and civilization was deferred to today. We now sit with a kleptocracy which ravages the country and its people like a swarm of locusts.

Our delegation will also inform you of the electoral fraud

which has become endemic in this country. The very sovereignty of the country has been shown to be void with the Indian voting machines. This has been declared "free and fair" by the European Union while the German Supreme Court has declared voting machines to be intransparent and open to fraud. Even Universal Franchise has been assailed and nullified.

Our concern is that the Kissinger Initiative put an indelible question mark on your invitation. We cannot be blamed for suspecting that this may be the beginning of American intervention in Namibian affairs which bodes ill for Namibia, ourselves and our party.

If that is the case, we demand that you desist from continuing the Kissinger initiative.

We write this letter for the historical record, the laws of which are stronger than any power.

Hewat Beukes, Authorised Representative.

Namibia: WRP election successes

Workers Revolutionary Party to Rebuild the Fourth International is a member of the Workers International for the Rebuilding of the Fourth International.

Its leadership emanated from the liberation struggle of Namibia and were part of the socialists in the SWAPO Youth League, which in 1976 unsuccessfully challenged the SWAPO Leadership for all-encompassing corruption and imperialist collaboration due to imperialist intervention.

In 1984 we started building our party clandestinely and stood in the forefront of the struggle against the terror campaign and mass killings of SWAPO members by the SWAPO leadership in exile in Angola and Zambia.

In 1988 our party called out the mass protests of 4 May 1988 against South Africa just prior to independence obtained in 1989.

Since 1990 we have fought on all fronts on issues wracking the working class and the colonial status quo maintained by the colonial ruling classes through a caretaker boss-boy SWAPO regime.

We dealt with trade union issues, the homeless, the landless and workers who were in struggle over the past 24 years.

We participated in elections to articulate a workers programme and self-determination for national groups.

We did not stand in the 2009 elections due to our work with mass workers groups such as the TCL miners whose pensions were stolen, teachers who were being pauperized, fuel workers who were being brutalized, the Truth and Justice Committee seeking historical restitution of history and the landless whom the regime sought to bulldoze after they had taken their land by themselves.

We took part in the 28 November 2014 general elections, incorporating former soldiers of South Africa who were forcefully conscripted during the colonial era and whose pensions were stolen by the SWAPO regime, and won two seats in the National Assembly to the consternation of the bourgeoisie.

The media speculate on how a party which has not made one rally or campaigned could obtain such a high number of votes and for that matter a communist party.

Our votes varied between 1.5 and 2% over this vast country (1,600 km north to south, from central Namibia to north west 1,600 km, east to west 800 km.)

Our votes came mostly from organized groups and from supporters of our work over 24 years.

(We plan to produce a fuller report on the Namibian election campaign and results in the next issue of Workers' International Press – Editor)

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ELECTION MANIFESTO FOR NAMIBIA 2014

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Introduction

We are using the 2014 elections to propagate the following enlightenment for the working people of this country:

On 13 November 1970, the Namibian nation called together the National Convention at Rehoboth where national groups were represented by their respective leaders including the SWANU and SWAPO. It was to be a united front for the liberation of Namibia from South Africa. In January 1971 the UNO declared – SWAPO a tribal organization – the Sole and Authentic Representative of the Namibian People, thereby rendering void the right to self-determination of the Namibian People.

The UNO subsequently revoked the representative status of the leaders of the different national groups and thus opened the way for the South African sponsored Turnhalle Conference in 1975 and the Conscription Act in 1977.

We the present leaders of the WRP – then leaders of the Youth League – with others led the Anti-Conscription movement, which was opposed by the SWAPO leadership in exile.

The Anti-Conscription movement led to mutiny within the SWATF and soldiers who escaped fled into exile to Angola and Zambia where they were forced to confess to being spies and all of them were killed.

In 1982 the "Five Western Powers" with South Africa and the UNO agreed to so-called National Reconciliation in which the South African sponsored parties would reconcile to leave the colonial economic situation as is.

SWAPO willingly reconciled with the colonial ruling classes, but seized N\$36 million of the SWATF/KOEVOET pension. These soldiers were demobilized and immediately became victim of Labour Hire and dire exploitation as part of the lower working classes.

The SWAPO leaders now use their phony liberation status to refuse to give back the stolen pensions.

The SWATF/KOEVOET represent in every respect the plight of the working classes of Namibia.

For this reason, we the WRP have integrated this group of soldiers to give them the respectable political home which they deserve.

Our election campaign is based on the following:

- 1. We, the WRP, go to Parliament to speak over the heads of the bourgeois parliament, to the masses of the people. We have no regard for the Namibian Parliament as it is an institution of capitalism and in a backward country like this it takes absurd forms in which it is a mere rubber stamp for legislation and decisions of the big corporations and the banks. We cannot speak of taking over parliament as the elections have already been rigged with inaccessible electronic voting machines made in India.*

2. We are using these elections to advance the demands of the working class including the poor peasantry and in particular the demands of the SWATF/KOEVOET families and relatives, in relation to stolen pensions, loss of income and losses in general through economic sanctions, marginalization, victimization and discrimination, landlessness and homelessness.
3. We will articulate and support the demands of the Herero and Nama people for War reparations for Genocide (1904-8) from the German State.
4. We will put forward the seizure of our Natural Resources to enable us to fund the upliftment of the working class and poor peasantry in general and the neglected SWATF/KOEVOET soldiers in particular.
5. We will put forward the immediate cessation of the wanton sale of our natural resources through Exploration Licenses (EPL's) with seizure of it without compensation, to enable us to fund the upliftment of the working class and poor peasantry.
6. The demands of the SWATF/KOEVOET will also highlight the demands of the working class in general.
7. We will further advance the demand for basic needs of the working class families to be provided and subsidized by the government on the first tier level (Municipalities), housing, water and electricity, public transport, clinics, kindergartens, sport and recreation facilities, etc to be brought to the people.
8. We will advance taxation for excesses and demand **living** wages tied to the rate of inflation (and not minimum wages).
9. We will demand land to the landless and subsidies for the upliftment of the poor peasantry.
10. We commit ourselves to rebuild the 4th International with the world's working classes, the subregional working classes of Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia and in

particular South Africa with which we share a common political history.

Hewat Beukes

Authorised Representative.

December issue of the Journal

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Reinstate NUMSA in COSATU

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September issue of the Journal

The latest copy of the WIRFI Journal available on line [here](#).

This months issue has:

- *Euro-election shock By Balazs Nagy*
 - *NUMSA presents its case to the world By Bob Archer*
 - *Namibia: Rehoboth Land Case Mockery By Hewat Beukes*
 - *A response to George Harissis's 'Unions in the Firing Line' By Bob Archer*
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In Response to the SA Metalworkers union's "Movement for Socialism" proposal

HEWAT BEUKES, a leader of Workers International, previously a member of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) Youth League and now in opposition to the Namibian SWAPO government, interviewed TANGENI NUUKUAWO, a leader of the 1971-72 general strike and also formerly a member of the SWAPO Youth League. This is an extract from the book ["Movement for Socialism"](#)

In the first chapter of "Trade Union Struggles for Freedom in South Africa" (page 43 in this book) there is a reference to the 1971-72 general strike in Namibia (then South West Africa) being a prelude to the strike wave in Durban in 1973. The Namibian strike also profoundly affected the freedom movement when 4,000 youth joined the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) in exile.

The South West African Native Labour Association (SWANLA) was formed in 1943 by the South Africa colonial government for the purpose of herding workers from the north of Namibia to work in the mines in the south.

Under the so-called contract system, workers were gathered together in Ondangua and then driven down to Grootfontein where their assigned bosses would collect them. The compulsory contract was for 18 months. Over time the entire commercial, small industrial, mining and agricultural sectors would be fed by contract labour.

Tangeni experienced this himself and remembers his father who was a labourer in Walvis Bay. He was employed on compulsory 18-month contracts, during which time he could not come home and his wife was not allowed to visit him. Tangeni obtained a permit to visit his father in the compound, but for only one hour at lunchtime.

The beds were concrete slabs protruding from the wall, one on top of the other. Rooms were small for two to four occupants, but during the return of seasonal workers these were overcrowded. The food was the same day after day for 18 months; lunch consisted of porridge with either meat or fish relish, and breakfast consisted of brown bread with jam.

It was slave conditions, performing back-breaking labour without sitting down for more than eight hours a day. Workers developed back problems and illnesses arising from the unsanitary conditions. If you became sick you lost your job.

Many Angolans were contracted. They were much cheaper than the Namibians. Mostly illiterate, they suffered even worse abuse and exploitation. Many lost their lives due to being killed on farms with no relatives to enquire and question their whereabouts. They were slaughtered.

The inhuman conditions built up frustration and resentment to breaking point amongst the vast number of workers housed in large compounds especially in the urban areas, and in 1971 the anger boiled over into a general strike which started on

13 December 1971 and ended on 20 January 1972.

The organisation was underground with the leaders explaining to the workers concentrated in the compounds that their situation could only be changed through political struggle. They needed to overthrow the system. They demanded amongst others:

- the right to free movement;
- better wages and better conditions of work;
- the pass book to be replaced by an I.D.;
- the right to negotiate for pay and to choose their own employers.

However, finally the only change brought about by the strike was the shortening to six months of the compulsory period before returning home to see their families.

Nevertheless the strike had a heavy impact on the economy. Production went down in mines and fishing, also farms were unattended. Most important, it gave way to political organisation and awareness. The colonial regime transported many workers back to the north, but they returned as organised workers, and as a token of defiance and freedom they cut a large section of the border fence between Namibia and Angola.

Before the strike, political organisation was loose. The SWAPO Youth League consisted of unstructured individuals. The Strike gave structure and organisation both to the workers and the Youth League. In 1973 there were school boycotts in the north and organisation of national resistance against the Bantustan policy enforced by the Odendaal Plan of 1964 which put homeland "second tier" authorities in place for the various national groups.

These boycotts and resistance were met by harsh repression by the colonial regime and the homeland authorities. In the north youth and workers were tied to trees and flogged with palm branches. This led to an exodus of four thousand youth in 1974 to join the SWAPO in exile in Zambia; when the Anti-Apartheid Committee interviewed the youth in Lusaka they mostly wanted to hear about the strike

No wonder! The Namibian General Strike defied the largest colonial military force in Africa – one soldier for every 12 Namibians – and shocked not only the colonial administration for its determination and death defiance but the South African regime itself.

It was a big thing internationally. South African contract workers in mines and industry suffered the same conditions as those who took strike action in Namibia, and so the mood spread. A strike of 300 PUTCO workers in the Transvaal against low wages was followed by the wave of strikes which exploded in Durban in 1973. Our general strike had an impact in South Africa, and the development of workers' struggles in South Africa had an impact on us.

In Namibia the general strike led to a restive period of labour resistance and political organisation culminating in the 1978 Rössing Strike which involved thousands of miners at the Rössing uranium mine and other mines and which saw the formulation of a broad set of demands including trade union demands. This level of development was influenced by the trade union struggles in South Africa.

Today it is particularly important that the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) has broken with the ANC. Even when we joined SWAPO in exile in Zambia in 1974 we were already conscious of the corruption and political poverty of the SWAPO leaders and SWAPO in government has proved this to be true! We knew when we organised the general strike that workers' conditions could only be changed through political struggle. Workers here are faced with the same task as workers in South Africa – to start a Movement for Socialism.

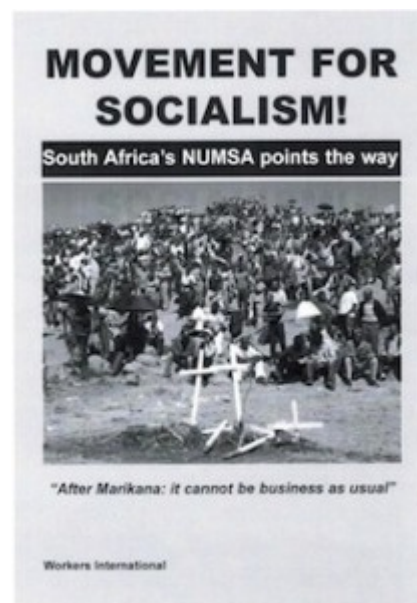
NUMSA is the biggest affiliate of the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), but COSATU is in President Zuma's pocket and the ANC can't even implement the Freedom Charter! I thought the general secretary of the ANC was a communist, but then I listened to his statements on relations between the ANC and the unions and realised that the ANC seeks to seriously weaken the workers' situation, and so I

agree 100% with NUMSA's decision to work towards a new independent workers' party for socialism.

It is now our job to educate and organise!

New Book: Movement for Socialism! South Africa's NUMSA points the way

On 7th May 2014 the African National Congress (ANC) was returned as the government of South Africa, but there is deep disquiet. For the defeat of apartheid did not bring an end to capitalism as many militant activists had hoped, and a small group of the ANC at the head of the government and their cronies in the trade union leaderships have prospered while imposing neo-liberal policies which are impoverishing the masses. Meanwhile the workers' movement has been set back in a number of different ways in the last 20 years.



In response to this, even before the general election, at its Special National Congress in December 2013, the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) had with- drawn its support from the ANC and its ally, the

South African Communist Party (SACP), and had already begun a series of actions to establish a united front to coordinate struggles in the workplace and communities. These stormy developments in the class struggle in South Africa have profound implications for working people everywhere.

This book highlights the way forward proposed by the leaders of the NUMSA to resolve the crisis. To assist readers outside of South Africa to understand how this came about, we include the history of the struggle by South Africa's working class and its close links to the Namibian workers, movement to overthrow white majority racist rule as part and parcel of the struggle for socialism by participants in the movement.

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