

May Day Message from the WRP Namibia

The WRP Political Committee greets the workers of Namibia, Southern Africa, Africa and the world on this 1st day of May, Workers' Day, which symbolizes the bloody struggle for workers' rights over many, many decades. These rights included the right to organize and belong to unions, the 45 hour week, the right to withhold labour etc.

For Namibians this struggle culminated in the labour rights contained in the 1992 Labour Act.

Since 1992 however, these rights were rapidly eroded in rogue courts, new legislation drafted by corporate business and passed by the new regime, parading as the great liberator.

The Marikana Massacre on 16 August 2012 exploded the Southern African myths of the 'liberation movements' defending and furthering the rights of the working people.

NUMSA, the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa, formalized the concrete fact that the regimes like SWAPO and the ANC were agents of the capitalists against the working class. They stated, **"that unless the working class organises itself as a class for itself it will remain unrepresented and forever toil behind the bourgeoisie"**.

Now that these regimes have devoured the crumbs thrown to them by finance capital, mining, and commerce to pose as states, the SADC States have declared that they are on high alert after self-manufactured evidence surfaced of imperialist tendencies to destabilize them by regime change. Their trigger fingers are itching for a few more Marikanas to earn bale-outs from their masters.

But, the peace and stability which they claim is being threatened, is threatened by the unrelenting attacks on employment, labour and union rights, which these regimes are spearheading on behalf of the capitalists.

Their paranoid and neurotic threats underline in red the NUMSA declarations and should put the regional working class on high alert.

The Namibian regime is totally bankrupt as can be seen from the abandoned construction projects one month into the new financial year; from the piecemeal payment of teachers at the end of April, etcetera, etcetera.

They wish to make their crisis, the crisis of the working class. Oh!, how they wished they could have made it a tribal conflict of the working class!

The WRP's message is, dedicate this May of the year of the Great Workers' Revolution, 1917, to the Unity of the Working Class and to stay alert to build their independent fighting organs to defend itself and the Working People from the Ruin the capitalist ruling classes wish to bring upon the people.

March forward to working class unity in the Southern African Region, Africa and the World.

It is the only way forward to redemption!

Paul Thomas
Secretary of Publicity.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY TO REBUILD THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 24064 Windhoek Tel: 061-260647 namab737@gmail.com

Hewat Beukes discusses the Past, Present and Future of the WRP Namibia

Why did the party loose it's N\$1.3 million allowance from Parliament in 2015? Why has the WRP distanced itself from it's own representatives in Parliament? What type of "communism" does the party stand for and does it have a place in our modern democracy?

Alna Dall speaks to President of the WRP, Hewat Beukes

An interview with Party President, Hewat Beukes

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Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Namibia's Ex-combatants

By Hewat Beukes 11 June 2016 at UN PLAZA, Windhoek

Introduction

The struggle for what is today known as Namibia started in 1884 with the advent of German colonialism. At first it started with the southern peoples, the Nama, Baster, Damara, the Herero and the Bushman where the Germans had immediately seized land. The groups initiating the struggle against the German were first the Nama followed by the Herero. The Baster later followed.

These struggles against the Germans culminated in the extermination wars against first the Nama and Herero in 1904-8 and thereafter the Baster in 1915.

In 1919 the League of Nations ceded the administration of the 'territory' including Ovambo and Kavango lands with the Çaprivizipfel' to South Africa. Having been driven out of South Africa by ever expanding colonial annexation and land expropriation, the Khoisan in specific the Rehoboth Basters were the first to resist. Since 1919 they filed petitions to the League of Nations to object against South African colonialism. In 1923 an uprising of the Herero and Baster was looming in Rehoboth, but the town was encircled by South African troops with machine guns and canons. The Baster and

Herero were disarmed, the Herero banished from Rehoboth and more than 40 'ringleaders' of the Baster were to die by firing squad. A last minute intervention by the League of Nations staved off the execution. By then the Herero had lost virtually all their land and the Baster 2 thirds of their land.

The resistance continued on the political level with frequent petitions to first the League of Nations and then its successor in 1945, the United Nations Organisation (UNO). Civil resistance was continued by the nationalities led informally by Hosea Kutako of the Herero. He would later commission Baster, Herero, Ovambo emissaries to the UN to argue the case for Namibia and present the demands for in particular the land and self-determination of the nations of Namibia.

In the meanwhile a new evil had arisen under South African colonialism. Contract labour. In 1943 as a measure to institutionalise slave labour from the populous northern areas of Ovambo and Kavango lands, the South West Africa Native Labour Association (SWANLA) was established by the South African Administration. It brought young men from the north under conditions tying them to specific employers (owners/hirers) in the south in particular the mines, but also to the farms. Farmers and even small businesses of all races and tribes in the south used the facilities of this slave system.

Farms became killing fields for many of these young workers.

Together with skilled and semi-skilled labour from the south they built the Namibian infra-structure and untold profits and wealth for the mining bosses, commercial business and a fledgling industry including fishing.

The toll on them was horrendous. Besides the horror on farms, fathers and youngsters were broken from the families in

humiliation and deprivation. It was the most complete system of deprivation and dehumanisation.

By 1960, the following social-economic and political demands and expectations, expressly and implied, led in the national demand for self-determination:

1. An end to contract labour and proper wages and labour conditions;
2. An end to restriction of movement and pass laws;
3. A restoration of landed property of the Herero, Nama, Damara and Bushman;
4. The right to self-determination of all nationalities in the territory now known as Namibia, including the independence of the Caprivi.

In 1959 there was the Old Location Uprising. SWANU leaders such as Kaukwetu played distinctive roles in directing the masses led by Damara and Herero women.

The sixties saw SWAPO initiating a token guerrilla war on the insistence of the AOU. This was not a serious attempt as illustrated by the fact that the Commander-in-Chief Sam Nujoma and his second-in-command Lukas Pohamba from Lusaka visited the South African Army and Intelligence at the international airport in Windhoek from where they went to Pretoria after which they returned to Zambia.

REPRESENTATION

By 1970 the nation was politically represented by tribal chiefs, SWAPO was an Ovambo tribal organisation, SWANU a nationalist organisation supported by workers and lower middle class elements. Workers were embroiled in labour struggles in particular the contract labourers but by 1978, there was a fully-fledged national workers movement led by the Rössing miners articulating broad workers' demands.

In 1971/2 contract labour staged a national General Strike

which ignited the whole of the Southern African sub-region and led to 4000 youth fleeing in its aftermath to Zambia following persecution and torture by northern tribal authorities.

In 1970, in an attempt at a United Front, the National Convention was convened on 13 November 1970 in Rehoboth by the tribal chiefs, the Volksparty, SWAPO and SWANU. In response thereto the UN declared SWAPO the Sole and Authentic Representative of the Namibian Nation.

This was a clear renunciation of the Right to Self-Determination of the Namibian People.

Again, in 1975 after the declaration of the Namibia National Convention as the successor of the National convention the UN reiterated the status of SWAPO.

But, already a crucial incident had occurred earlier in 1974. Chief Clemens Kapuuo commissioned by the NC visited Europe and the United Nations to argue the case for independence for Namibia. While in Europe he sought the assistance of Peter Katjavivi the West European Representative of the SWAPO. While hosting the Chief and his delegation, Katjavivi blocked his access to African, European and Caribbean Governments by slandering the Chief as a South African agent. The Chief met closed door upon closed door and was informed of SWAPO's Sole and Authentic Representation status.

This broke up the National Convention. The Chief returned and joined the South African initiative to ostensibly lead Namibia to self-determination through what would become the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance in 1976.

This opened the door to forced conscription of Namibians into the Territorial Army.

There would have been no successful forced conscription if it was not for this particular event offset by SWAPO's Sole and Authentic Representative status.

The malice of this act by the UN and the imperialists is seen in the fact that at the time they conferred Sole Representative status on SWAPO, PLAN and SPYL were in political struggle on the following issues:

1. SWAPO was in alliance with UNITA and South Africa against MPLA.
2. The SWAPO leaders were selling provisions (clothes, food, medicines, weapons) donated for the guerrilla war stored in massive warehouses as wholesalers while PLAN fighters were dying in the camps of hunger, went barefeet and many were without weapons.
3. SWAPO had no political programme.
4. SWAPO was not the representative of the Namibian peoples.

The foreign missions and the United Nations in Zambia were aware of the full extent as the SWAPO leadership's inability to be the Government of Namibia.

SWATF, PLAN and the agreements for DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION

It is within the above historical background which the question of the SWATF and PLAN must be viewed.

With the clear denial by the UN and the imperialists of the Namibian peoples' right to choose their own representatives, tribal chiefs saw their only way out of a prospect of dominance by a tribal force itself as accepting the prospect of at least limited self-rule by the colonial power.

A result was forced conscription which saw teenagers and young men forced into the army most against their will, some out of joblessness, and a few out of choice. They were from the working class and poor peasantry.

The war itself was a low intensity war. More SWAPO members were killed by the SWAPO leadership and the SWAPO leadership

in collaboration with South African than died in the war. The war reached some degree of seriousness only because of the commitment of fighters who thought they were fighting a just cause. Those who excelled were killed, because the war was not meant to be serious.

(Cassinga in 1978 and 1 April 1990 alone caused an estimated 1500-2000 deaths.) Thousands more were killed and thousands were not accounted for.

Nevertheless, this 'war' is the stuff from which the SWAPO leadership manufacture enduring myths: the war (meaning they as freedomfighters) brought independence. SWAPO was not part of the negotiations, in any event, not a decisive participant: The terms of independence were determined by the 5-Western Powers and negotiated with the Soviet Union, and South Africa. The period 1976-89 had seen a giant working class rise in South Africa in solidarity with the Namibian working class who were fighting pitched battles and brought the South African economy to its knees. By 1989 4 million workers could down tools at any one time.

South Africa could no longer rule under Apartheid and it found in the SWAPO leadership the tool to continue its rule.

Thus, since 1982 they worked out the conditions under which Namibia would become independent. SWAPO as a condition to be allowed to rule Namibia agreed to every condition guaranteeing the continued rule of the colonial ruling classes.

The issue of the SWATF and its demobilisation and reintegration were merely technical issues.

These modalities were contained in the 1982 and subsequent agreements and in terms of the Labour conventions of Namibia. Severance pay, pension and insurance had to be paid out. Jobs had to be created, preferably by integration into a Namibian Army.

SWAPO reneged on these terms immediately upon taking over government.

The reason why they did so and why they could so were twofold:

1. The need to enrich themselves as quickly as possible, and,
2. The lack of leadership amongst the demobilised soldiers.
3. The lack of good faith from the side of the brokers of the agreements.

A black irony started to emerge. The issue of PLAN and SWATF were treated as a moral dichotomy: the one was a freedom-fighter and the other a murderer.

However, most PLAN fighters and former SPYL members were barred from benefits as slandered as spies.

Today, both groups remain on the edge denied income and work.

The criteria for conciliation, benefits and the coveted War Hero status took contradictory forms: Aupa Indongo a billionaire and known collaborator with South Africa has been anointed as War Hero with street names in Windhoek, police spies and former collaborators are SWAPO parliamentarians: Elton Hoff, a demobilised SWATF is Supreme Court Judge, etcetera, etcetera.

The problem which the soldiers and the PLAN face is that they have no clear programme to counteract the denial of the SWAPO leadership on the following:

1. No effective counter-propaganda;
2. No effective action plan;
3. No clear set of demands.

Our position is clear as contained in our manifesto. We support the soldiers not only for compensation but as a section of the working class of this country which is being exploited and oppressed.

We will continue to propagate their position as part of our overall programme for the working class to take political power.

Issue 16 of the Journal April 2016 out now!

Inside this issue:

Europe:

Who can solve the 'Refugee Crisis' by Mirek Vodslon

How can we build a workers' Europe? by Bronwen Handyside

Draft Programme: A Europe fit for working people (for discussion)

Namibia:

Director of Elections, a letter and a communiqué

Committee of Parents / Truth & Justice Commission demands

Continued Human Rights Abuses

Report of a book launch

MUN Regional Committee supports Marikana inquiry call

Namibian Road authority's reckless roads

Religious ideology:

Discussion Article by Allen Rasek

South Africa:

UF march call

New edition of the The Worker out now!

Out now! Issue Number 3 of Namibia's proletarian newsletter The Worker.

This issue includes material relating to the recent Regional and Local Authority elections and the ongoing attack on the WRP by the SWAPO regime.

Urgent Financial Appeal

The Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP) in Namibia is a section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International.

It will hold its Congress in Windhoek on 1, 2 and 3 October 2015.

We appeal to socialists internationally to contribute to the fund for this Congress.

The WRP participated in the November 2014 elections and achieved a real breakthrough, winning two seats in the National Assembly after only four weeks of campaigning, travelling many hundreds of miles into the different regions of the country.

The working class in Namibia has responded through the WRP to the fact that they must fight for political power with a programme independent from the bourgeoisie, including the bourgeois nationalists who dominate the workers' movement.

Workers International Journal has published details of the way the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) – dominated state has responded to the election result. They have connived in setting up a fake "Workers Revolutionary Party" and used this as a pretext to block the funding to which the party is legally entitled. This is despite a ruling by their own Ombudsman which recognises our Party's legitimacy. In fact SWAPO acts as representatives of the interests of the bourgeoisie in Namibia, desperate to stop any demands of working people from being heard in parliament.

So this cannot be a "normal" congress. We need to bring together the new forces that have emerged – often hundreds and hundreds of miles away – to discuss the problems facing various sections of workers and landless people and what kind of leadership and programme is now required.

It is on this basis that we seek your urgent financial support.

To those supporters who have already responded we give our heartfelt thanks.

The WRP estimates it could cost up to 300,000 Namibian dollars (= rand) in order to hold this Congress. That is approximately £14,000, or \$22,000 US.

That is a very tall order indeed, but they assure us that however much we can raise, the Congress will, despite all difficulties, be held and carry out its business.

Bob Archer,

Secretary,

Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International

If you can send a sterling-denominated cheque, please mail it to:

P0 Box 68375, London E7 7DT, UK

If you are remitting by other means, please email us at info@workersinternational.info discuss how to transfer the money.

Letter from Workers International to Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia

15 June 2015

To Mr. Peter Katjavivi

Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia

Sir,

we write to you in great concern about a campaign of slanders and threats, including death threats, which is targeting several members of our Namibian section, the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The authors of these criminal acts are members of a group around lay lawyer August Maletzky and former member of parliament Benson Kaapala. August Maletzky took this campaign to its highest point to date on Wednesday, 10 June, at about 18H30 when he shouted several times across the street at the house of our member and the legal representative of the WRP, comrade Hewat Beukes, that Hewat Beukes would be killed.

These threats by the Maletzky-Kaapala group have been multiplying and intensifying since you, Mr Katjavivi, as

Speaker of the National Assembly, chose to promote this same group of violent and dishonest elements around Maletzky and Kaapala as a "faction" of the WRP on equal footing with WRP's legitimate leadership and its only legal representative, comrade Hewat Beukes. You choose to ignore the fact that comrade Hewat Beukes is indeed the only legal representative of the WRP, a fact that is legally binding for everybody and especially for you in your function as Speaker of the National Assembly.

This is evidenced by your letter of the 21st of May, 2015, Ref 3/1/5/1, published by the Workers Revolutionary Party, by which you try to justify withholding from that Party the funds and offices to which it is entitled by law and by the votes of 13,328 Namibian citizens. Your arbitrary and illegal decision treats WRP voters as some second-class citizens whose political choice, embodied by the WRP and formulated in its electoral manifesto, are not entitled to be fully represented in the National Assembly and in the political life of Namibia. That the Speaker of the National Assembly deems feasible such a blatant breach of law and such a massive denial of elementary democratic rights sheds a crude light on Namibian democracy. That the victims are the supporters of the sole workers party in Namibia shows unequivocally that the Speaker of the parliament of Namibia especially does not consider workers as worthy of being fully represented in that parliament.

We are sure that this lesson will not be lost on the workers and the poor peasants in Namibia and in other countries. But our primary concern at the moment is for the safety of our comrades. Obviously your promotion of the Maletzky-Kaapala group emboldens this group to ever more daring attacks on our members.

We ask you to rein in this group immediately. The first step to do so is to immediately start acting according to the law and release the funds and offices due to the WRP. Indeed, it is only your illegal stance on this question that entertains

Maletzky-Kaapala group's hopes to lay hand on funds and offices and thus encourages it to proceed with its dangerous, fraudulent and criminal activity.

We hold this group to be an instrument with which your party, SWAPO, tries not only to deprive the WRP, its voters and supporters of their democratic rights, but also to destroy the WRP politically and physically.

We inform you that not only our international organisation but the working class movement in Namibia and in several other countries hold your party and you personally responsible for all consequences past, present and future of your continued promotion and usage of the Maletzky-Kaapala group and of all other attempts to silence and destroy the WRP and the working class of Namibia.

We are certain that none of your actions, Mr Katjavivi, takes place without the knowledge and approval of your party and its supreme representative President Hage Geingob to whom we therefore send a copy of this letter.

Yours Sincerely,

for the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International,

Bob Archer
Secretary