



posture of the organs of the UN whose servant he is.

The authors would do well to emulate Dr Perez de Cuellar's honest concern on these points instead of echoing Swapo's hoary ploy of pointing to "South African partiality" as a means of diverting attention from them. All thinking Namibians know by now that South Africa - like any country - is focussing on the protection of its own interests, not those of any Namibian party. The recent *contretemps* between the Administrator General and the Cabinet following Mr Pienaar's speech, serves to underline this.

The fact that South Africa's interests are not at stake here, probably explains why that government formally abandoned its demand for UN impartiality in August 1983. The fact that our interests *are* at stake explains why Namibian parties who do not enjoy the benefits of UN bias, continue to make this demand.

Why press for negotiation and reconciliation before independence? Because this is the only way in which political compromise,

peace, stability and a decent shot at economic prosperity and national reconstruction can be achieved in Namibia.

The simple fact is that negotiations between Swapo and South Africa or between other Namibian parties and South Africa, will not achieve this. It can only be achieved in negotiations between Namibians espousing different views.

We understand why Swapo wishes to sign a ceasefire agreement with South Africa and why it does not wish to negotiate with other Namibian parties. By signing a ceasefire with South Africa, Swapo will gain prestige and will be seen as the winner.

J KOZONGUIZI
INTERIM GOVERNMENT
MINISTER

NOTE: This letter has been shortened
- Editor.

In struggle

I WOULD like to refer to an announcement in a recent radio programme stating that church leaders should not be involved in politics. Why is this the case?

Obviously church leaders are our guides in the struggle. They are the ones who can truly solve problems, especially regarding the "beatings and torture" by Koevoet in northern

Namibians closer to one another, in the past eight years. And how could it be otherwise, when these arguments - just as the authors accuse those whom they attack of doing - gloss over or sidestep uncomfortable facts and bend reality to suit their limited purposes.

To turn instead to a few substantive points raised in the text:

Why a Constitution before elections? So that you know what you are going to get. A constitution is the skeleton of a country's political system; the set of parameters within which the political contest between parties espousing different approaches, is regulated. Constitutions reflect common values, not the political preferences of a (temporary) majority.

Building on the constitutional principles and guidelines of the Western Five - adopted at the instance of the much-maligned Reagan Administration - set out in Annexure J to the NPP-435 study, all that is necessary now, is to agree on a constitution embodying these principles, before elections.

Can the members of NPP-435 really be so gullible as to wish to rely on the possibility that Swapo - a most undemocratic organisation, as all Namibians with any experience of it know - will abide by abstract principles limiting its power, if it is under no obligation to do so.

Constitutions, in setting limits on the freedom of majorities to work their unfettered will on others in society, are the best guarantee of civilised government yet developed. They are best constructed so as to be acceptable - as the rules of the political game - to all in any national society, not just to a temporary majority. Perhaps this is the point the authors have missed.

Excuse of UN Partiality The protagonists of the present arrangements in the UN are often least comfortable when addressing this point.

The facts are that SWAPO has been declared repeatedly since 1973, by the General Assembly, to be the "sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia". As a consequence of this and other actions of the Assembly, it enjoys the status of 'permanent observer' throughout the UN system.

Those who have had the opportunity to discussing these matters with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, can testify to his personal discomfort and embarrassment at the

A dilemma

AN OPEN LETTER to the Executive Committee of NPP-435 concerning the booklet entitled *The Choice: Namibia Peace Plan 435 or Society under Siege*

THE conscientious reviewer of this weighty essay is confronted with several dilemmas. Is the pamphlet intended, as its authors suggest in the preface, to "... present Namibians with the facts ... and thus to provide them with the opportunity of assessing for themselves the situation and to draw their own conclusions ..." or is it, as the authors claim, only three paragraphs lower on the same page "... to strengthen the commitment of (certain) churches, parties and groups to the immediate implementation of Security Council Resolution 435"?

Is it intended to constitute analysis or advocacy? The compilers seem undecided.

Are the authors, if they intend to provide a dispassionate analysis, naive or disingenuous? If they intend to advocate a cause, are they merely incompetent or do they underestimate the intelligence of their readers?

Perhaps the most distressing factor of the work is that, despite its grandiose claims, exotic style and partisan tone - even the Namibian Chamber of Commerce is roundly chastised for having the temerity to seek to have Namibia excluded from sanctions against South Africa - it breaks no new ground. The arguments are all familiar, even tired. They, and numerous others like them - often more elegantly and persuasively expressed - have failed to resolve this dispute, to stop the killing, to bring Namibians closer to one another, in the past eight years. And how could it be otherwise, when these arguments - just as the authors accuse those whom they attack of doing - gloss over or sidestep uncomfortable facts and bend reality to suit their limited purposes.

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