

# Corporations support tyranny

by Mark Simkins

Canadian companies are making enormous profits in Namibia, a territory illegally occupied by South Africa, according to Aaron Shihepo, a member of the South West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO). The Falconbridge Copper Mining Company of Canada and Hudson's Bay Company paid millions of tax dollars to South Africa and made millions from apartheid, he said. Shihepo and Susan Hurlich of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of South Africa made these remarks at the completion of a cross-country speaking tour on the SWAPO cause last Sunday at Dalhousie.

Hurlich said Falconbridge pays 12 million dollars a year in taxes on profits from copper mines in Namibia to South Africa largely by paying its black, migrant workers slave wages. Workers make \$10.38 a week for a 10 hour day, six day week, she said. They live in maximum security camps that they are lucky to get home from once a year. She also suggested Falconbridge laid off 300 Sudbury miners recently because the company found Namibian copper cheaper.

Hudson's Bay Company was cited as another big Canadian company making money in Namibia, where it is buying furs for export to Europe and North America. The Bay paid 12.6 million dollars this year to South Africa in taxes on the pelts of the curaco, an animal similar to the persian lamb. White farmers in Namibia raise the animal on vast farms of scrubby veldt and underpaid black shepherds tend the sheep. The shepherds make \$2.50 a day, tops, contrasted to curaco coats which sell for \$875-6000 a piece on the international market. When an anti-apartheid group challenged a share holders annual meeting at the Bay's Montreal headquarters in 1976, a Bay spokesman said, "Don't be silly, withdrawing from Namibia would be denying the Namibian people an outlet for their resources!", Hurlich recalled.

SWAPO was formed in 1959 to foster political action by Namibians for independence from South Africa. "We tried peaceful means; we handed in petitions and organized demonstrations. The South African police answered by shooting them down. In Windhoek, (capital of Namibia), 12 people were killed

and 50 wounded by the South African police at a peaceful march," Shihepo said. After 1966, when the United Nations lifted its 50 year old mandate giving South Africa rule over the region, Shihepo said, "SWAPO had to re-think its strategy. They decided that the struggle could no longer be just political and on the 26th of August, 1966, SWAPO launched its first attack."

Shihepo said SWAPO has an infrastructure of supporters within Namibia, so that if one is arrested, another will take his place within hours. He says SWAPO has bases in neighbouring Zambia, including two camps for refugees with full services including education, and offices in nine African countries. The fall of Portuguese Angola three years ago allows SWAPO fighters to infiltrate along Namibia's longest border outside of South Africa. SWAPO guerillas must, though, contend with South Africa's 50,000 troops in Namibia concentrated along that frontier.

Shihepo met with Canada's minister of External Affairs, Don Jamieson, but he feels Canadian

actions like ending government credit to South Africa have been mostly cosmetic. He said that Jamieson's ending of the credit system for foreign countries "just closed an account that had not been used for 15 years. South Africa still gets credit from Canadian companies, Canadian business men still get free junkets to South Africa." Shihepo said negotiations at the UN were even less successful than his talks with Jamieson, "The South Africans ran away from the bargaining table".

According to Shihepo, there was a good reason for their departure; "South African interests can never be in accordance with SWAPO's because South Africa hopes to impose a regime of 10 states; one central state of all economically valuable land for whites and nine fringe states from which whites would draw cheap migrant labour." Shihepo left for Zambia leaving his Canadian audience with the sobering thought that Falconbridge Mines obtained rights from South Africa this year to exploit the rich uranium deposits of Namibia.

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## Don't shoot the teach

To the Gazette:

Andrew Lynk is right in asserting (Letters, March 9) that students have a role to play in assessing teaching effectiveness, and most faculty members would agree with this. However he is wrong to identify research as the reason for poor teaching. In fact the main reasons for poor teaching are too little research and too much teaching. The teaching requirement at first-rank North American universities is at most two courses. Here at Dalhousie the general rule is three courses; as a result both teaching and research suffer.

Sincerely,  
P.A. Fillmore,  
Professor of Mathematics

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