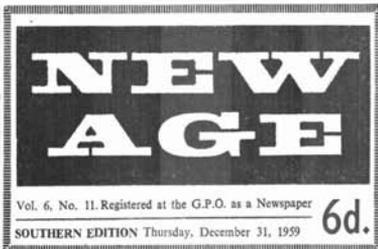


# THE TRUTH ABOUT SOUTH WEST AFRICA

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## An On-The-Spot Investigation of the Background to the Windhoek Riots

By BRIAN BUNTING

**D**ESPITE intimidation and intense pressure from Government and City Council officials and the police, the Africans of Windhoek location are standing firm in their opposition to the enforced removal to the new location of Katutura.

"WE WOULD RATHER DIE THAN LEAVE OUR HOMES," MANY OF THEM TOLD NEW AGE.

The boycott of the bus service, beerhall, cinema and dance hall declared by the Africans in protest against the removal scheme on December 8—two days before the riots—continues in full force, and the beerhall in the location remains closed.

In a letter to the United Nations the leading spokesmen of the Non-White people—Chief Hosea Kutako, Chief Samuel Witbooi, Sam Nujoma (President of the Ovamboland

People's Organisation), and Taita Kaukueta (Acting President of the South West Africa National Union in the absence overseas of Mr. Korongizi)—express their rejection of the location removal scheme and state:

"The situation in South West Africa is critical and demands immediate action by the United Nations to remedy the situation".

### NO RIGHTS

The Africans are opposed to the removal, the statement says, "because the apartheid policy is responsible for the injustices under which they live in South West Africa, such as lack of political rights, inadequate educational facilities, inadequate medical facilities, unsuccessful farming, the restriction of the movements of the Africans in the land of their birth, low wages, banishments and the removal of the Africans from their lands."

"All these injustices which have relegated the Africans to the status

(Continued on page 2)



Main street in the old Windhoek location, photographed on the day the women demonstrated to the Administrator against the arrest of some of their number who opposed the removal scheme.



The new location is only half-finished, as the Council did not intend to start the removal until June, 1960. Here (above) are some of the new houses, situated in the bare veld north of the town, and (below) the new office of the location superintendent, surrounded by barbed wire and with a sentry-box at the gate for the guard.

## The Police Were Worried

From BRIAN BUNTING  
CAPE TOWN

**O**N my way to Windhoek by plane last week, I was accompanied by Head Constable Sauermaun, one of the top Special Branch men in Cape Town. A prominent item in his luggage was a powerful pair of field glasses. At Windhoek airport he was met by a number of the local Special Branch men, and he duly pointed me out to his Windhoek colleagues.

From the moment I arrived in Windhoek, I was "tailed" by Special Branch men day and night. The Europeans sat around my hotel in motor cars, or drank beer on the stoep and made a careful note of everybody who came to see me. The Non-Europeans had the less enviable task of following me long distances down the streets under burning, cloudless skies. Every person I spoke to, every address I visited, every phone call I made was duly entered in Special Branch records.

To protect some of my African friends from this police prying, I had to go out at night

into the bush and conduct my interviews in pitch darkness.

On the morning I was due to leave Windhoek, I was woken at about 5.15 a.m. by the inevitable knock on the door of my room in the hotel. Two members of the Special Branch entered and showed me a warrant signed by the Chief Magistrate authorizing them to look for evidence in connection with alleged incitement to public violence in connection with the recent Windhoek location riot.

They went through all my notes and papers and scrutinised all the photographs I had taken in Windhoek town and location. They asked me whether I had distributed any pamphlets in the location and whether I had seen Mr. Japie Basson.

After making copious notes, the two detectives departed, taking nothing with them. I caught my plane at Windhoek airport and returned to the Union—but just in case I got up to any mischief on the way, two Special Branch men were on the plane with me to see me safely over the border.

While on the one hand I was hounded by the police like a common criminal, on the other hand I was received with great courtesy by some of the most prominent citizens of Windhoek. Among the Europeans I interviewed were the Mayor and Town Clerk, the Location Superintendent, the Chief Native Commissioner, members of the United and Nationalist Parties, representative figures in the English, Afrikaans and German speaking communities, and officials of the Chamber of Commerce. I also had lengthy discussions with leaders of the South West Africa National Union, the Ovamboland People's Organisation and other leaders of the African and Coloured communities.

I was taken on a conducted tour of the old and new location in the mayoral car, accompanied by the Mayor, Mr. Jaap Snyman, and the Location Superintendent, Mr. de Wet.

New Age readers can thus be assured that the story we print this week is based on the facts, as told to me by the people on the spot.

# "END UNLAWFUL RULE," SAY AFRICAN LEADERS

(Continued from page 1)  
of slaves are meted out to the Africans only and not to the Europeans".

Coloured and African leaders reaffirmed to New Age their demand for an end to rule by the Union Government and the placing of the territory under United Nations trusteeship.

**VOLENTARY REMOVAL?**  
Following the United Nations telegram to Mr. Louw calling for the abandonment of the use of force against the inhabitants of the Windhoek location, the Mayor of Windhoek, Mr. Jaap Snyman, has been claiming that far from being forced to move to Katutura, the location residents are falling over themselves to get houses there.

"The U.N.O. resolution will not hold up the removal scheme in any way", Mr. Snyman told New Age. "We are not interested in U.N.O. The people have come to us and asked us to move them and we are doing what they want".

Mr. Snyman claims that about 2,000 people have already moved to Katutura, and that the people are so keen to move, that they are prepared to occupy houses at Katutura which are not even completed.

"If we had the houses ready we could move 75 per cent of the people without any trouble today," he added.

In my tour of the location I did

see people in occupation of half-finished houses, but I was unable to interview people in either the old or new location, and so cannot give their reasons for moving.

However, even City Council officials admit that half the people who have moved are Coloured, while African leaders told me that most of the Africans who have moved so far are employees of the Government and City Council who would be penalised if they refused to move.

## SURROUNDED BY GUNS

In any case, as Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Ovamboland People's Organisation, put it to me: "This is not a move of our own free will. How can we exercise free will when we are surrounded with guns?"

Armed police are still patrolling the location, and riot trucks and vans are kept in readiness at the Council offices in the location. I saw these trucks, with police standing by, on my tour of the location. But the Mayor refused to allow me to photograph them.

"The police are only here because of the emergency", he said. "Such measures could be used to allow me to do this if the way we usually rule the people here".

The previous week, said the Mayor, attempts had been made to burn down the houses of some of the people who were willing to move. "The police are here for



Mr. Uatja Kankueta, former Cape Town university student, is Acting President of the South West African National Union.

the protection of persons and property". (It was told later that the houses set on fire belonged to a policeman and an unpopular member of the Advisory Board who has supported the removal scheme.)



Mr. John Garvey Mnumjua petitioned for and was granted a hearing at the last session of the United Nations, but was unable to get a passport to leave South West Africa.

There are about 18,000 people living in the old location, which houses most of the Non-White population of Windhoek in row upon row of unsightly tin shacks, built and owned by the inhabitants. There is another, smaller location in the suburb called Klein Windhoek. Only three Non-White families, Coloureds, live in the European part of town, where they own property. No Asians are allowed in the whole of South-West Africa.

Of the 18,000 in the old location, about 1,500 are Coloured, the remainder being Africans of Herero, Ovambo, Damara and Nama origin. There is no apartheid in the location, and apart from minor incidents, there have been no clashes between any section of the inhabitants who have got on well together.

Why are the City Council and the Government determined to move the location from its present site?

Both the Mayor and the Chief Native Commissioner claim the main reason is their desire to provide better housing. A second reason given by the Mayor is that the present location is too small, and provides no space for expansion.

The Mayor categorically denied that the desire to implement apartheid was a factor in the location removal scheme. YET THIS IS THE MAIN AFRICAN OBJECTION TO IT.

In the new location Africans will eventually be separated from Coloureds, for whom a new township is to be started next year. (Those Coloureds who have moved to Katutura since the riots will have to move out again and have been warned not to regard their present homes as permanent.)

**ETHNIC GROUPING**  
But in addition, there will be ethnic grouping for the Africans, Hereros, Damaras, Ovambos and Namas will be compelled by law to live in that part of the location set aside for them, and it will be an offence for a man to live in the wrong ethnic group area.

The Africans also say that the new location regulations are far more severe than those under which they are living at present, and they object strenuously to the restrictions which will be imposed on them.

Other objections are:  
● That rents will be increased from the 3s. 6d. a month paid by all persons, male and female, over school-going age in the old location, to 4s. 6d. for a house in Katutura.

● That bus fares will be increased from 4d. to 6d., as Katutura is farther from town than the present location.

(Continued on page 3)



Uziel Nguarambuka, aged 17, lives with his parents in the Windhoek location. "We shall never move," he told New Age. "Katutura is like a jail and nobody wants to go to jail."



Mr. David Kasume, New Age agent, works in a garage.

## GETTING RID OF THE "AGITATORS"

**WINDHOEK**  
"I KNOW the mentality of these 'Natives', the Mayor, Mr. Jaap Snyman, told New Age. "I grew up with them. It is not in their nature to oppose law and order. It was only when the agitators started telling the people not to move that the trouble began."

In pursuance of this belief, the authorities are now trying to get rid of the "agitators".  
The Organising Secretary of the South West Africa National Union, Mr. Nathaniel Mbaeva, has been endorsed out of Windhoek and forced to return to his reserve in the Gobabis district. The Assistant Secretary of the Ovamboland People's Organisation, Mr. Jacobo Kubangwa, has also been sent out of Windhoek and returned to Ovamboland.

It will be remembered that Mr. Toivo Herman Ja-Toivo, one of the founders of the O.P.O. who was endorsed out of Cape Town after he sent a message to U.N.O. last year, was also forced to return to Ovamboland where he is now living under

severe restrictions in the village of his chief.

## TWO MORE

Two other African leaders are threatened with deportation from Windhoek at this moment—Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of O.P.O., and his employer, Mr. Bartholomew Shimboma, a carpenter and hawker.

When I asked the Mayor why these two were being deported, he said he knew nothing about it apart from what he had read in the newspapers. The location superintendent, Mr. de Wet, said it was a police matter.

Mr. de Wet reminded Mr. de Wet that it wasn't the police but the municipal registering officer, Mr. Van Loggenbergh, who had taken action against the two. On December 8 Mr. Shimboma had received a letter from Mr. Van Loggenbergh ordering him to discharge Mr. Sam Nujoma from his employ by December 30. Mr. Shimboma refused because, as he told me, he didn't see why he should. Mr. Nujoma had paid his service contract until January 1960.

Mr. Van Loggenbergh then summoned the two to his office, cancelled Mr. Shimboma's licence and Mr. Nujoma's contract and issued them with deportation orders.

## NO INCOME

When I had claimed it was a police matter, he then said it was because their presence in Windhoek was contrary to the regulations. He was unable to explain to me why, apart from saying that they had no income, by which he probably meant they were not employed by a White man.

It was to appear for Mr. Shimboma and Mr. Nujoma that Mr. Oliver Tambo flew from Johannesburg to Windhoek last week, only to be turned back at the airport by the Chief Native Commissioner, because he did not have a permit to enter the territory. The two men are now being represented by a local attorney, by which has noted an appeal on their behalf against the expulsion order.

Mr. Nujoma lives in the Windhoek location with his wife and four children, the youngest a one-



Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Ovamboland People's Organisation.

month-old baby. Mr. Shimboma has one child living with him in the location.

## NO RETREAT

"Even though they deport me, we will never retreat an inch until South West Africa is placed under United Nations Trusteeship as the Africans wish," Mr. Nujoma told New Age.

"And after we have got U.N. trusteeship, we want our independence. We want a true democratic government. We do not hate the Whites. We want Africans and Whites to live together in peace and equality in South West Africa."

"Deportation orders or jailings or killings will never stop us fighting for our rights. We will fight to the last drop of blood. We don't want the Union Government in South West Africa."

"As soon as we have our independence, we will also help our brothers in the Union to have the rights which they want today. We will also co-operate with the African states to put an end to colonialism on the African continent."



Mr. Bartholomew Shimboma, business man

## ANC Condemns Windhoek Killings

THE African National Congress, at its recent conference in Durban, passed a resolution protesting "against the forcible removal of people and the provocative acts of the local authorities, the police and the Nationalist Government which have driven the people of South West Africa to desperation."

"The conference vehemently protests against the unprovoked and reckless use of force and fire-arms against the unarmed people in Windhoek. These incidents are clear testimony of the incompetence and maladministration of South West Africa by the Nationalist Government."

"The flagrant violation of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the repeated refusal to take notice of United Nations resolutions by the Government of the Union are a threat to peace in the area. This conference urges U.N.O. to take immediate steps about the granting of self-government and withdraw the privilege abused by South Africa of administering the territory."

# "FIRST U.N. TRUSTEESHIP, THEN INDEPENDENCE"

(Continued from page 2)

Once again, heavy financial burdens are being imposed on a people who already live below the breadline. No official figures are available, but it is clear that Africans in South West Africa live on a much lower scale than in the Union, although the cost of living is the same, if not higher.

Average monthly wages for unskilled Africans range from £8 to £13 a month. The City Council itself is proposing a new wage

## A Location By Any Other Name . . .

When the City Council chose the name Katutura for the new location in Windhoek, they were given to understand it meant "Place of Final (or Permanent) Residence".

Later, however, they discovered it meant the exact opposite—"Place Where There is no Final Residence". But by then it was too late to change and the name is blazoned in huge letters on the Council buildings in the new location. The Africans must have had a good laugh over that one.

scale for Council employees in terms of which the starting wage for an unskilled labourer would be £10 a month. Contract labourers from Ovamboland get 3s. 3d. a day plus food and quarters. The average wage of a farm labourer is probably about 25s. a month plus food and quarters.

For any of these people a rental of £2 a month would be a heavy burden. The Chamber of Commerce and the Sakekame have discussed the matter and advised that wages of people moving to Katutura should be raised, but so far nothing has been done and as far as the people are concerned talk of increases remains talk, whereas the increased rental is a fact. Acknowledging this difficulty, the Mayor says he is calling a meeting of all public bodies in January at which the question of wage increases will be discussed again.

## POLITICAL OBJECTION

At bottom, however, the main objection of the Africans to the removal is political.

"The refusal of the Africans in the Windhoek location to be moved to the Katutura location has been stated on numerous occasions in the most direct and unambiguous terms," said Mr. Uatja Kaukutu, Vice-President of the South West African National Union, in a statement to *New Age*.

"There is not the slightest doubt that the overwhelming majority of the Africans are opposed to the removal scheme . . . apart from its being repugnant and unacceptable, even if it be under the guise of 'new locations'. Our opposition to the removal, apart from other weighty economic and political considerations, is founded on principle. Since this move involves a principle there can be no compromise."

Mr. Kaukutu pointed out that "the removal scheme was fathered by an all-White Town Council, a body 100 per cent unrepresentative of the Africans . . . in spite of our oft-repeated refusal, the Administration, with characteristic flagrant disregard for African opinion, thought fit not to reply to our grievances, but instead appointed valuers to evaluate our houses for purposes of paying compensation."

In reply to this charge, Mr. Snyman claims that in 1957, when the building of the location was first discussed, the Advisory Board, a half-appointed, half-elected body of 12 members, accepted the idea of the removal scheme. But he admits that today the Advisory Board has changed its mind and opposes the scheme.

## UNITED OPPOSITION

In fact, it has been obvious for a long time that the Africans were solidly opposed to the removal. Two months ago a mass meeting was held in the location and addressed by the Mayor, Mr. Snyman; the Chief Native Commissioner, Mr. Bruwer Blignaut; the Location Superintendent, Mr. de Wet, and others.

Between 3,000 and 4,000 people attended this meeting. **YET NOT ONE SINGLE AFRICAN COULD BE FOUND TO SPEAK IN FAVOUR OF THE REMOVAL.** All the Africans who spoke at that meeting opposed the scheme. (This meeting was reported in *New Age* of November 26.)

Nevertheless, the Council plunged on. Valuers were appointed. Here is a time-table of the subsequent events:

December 4: A member of the



At a huge meeting in the location, African opposition to the removal scheme is made abundantly clear.

Advisory Board was beaten by a municipal policeman for refusing to give the value of his house to a valuator. A crowd gathered and following a scuffle four women were arrested.

## WOMEN'S DEMONSTRATION

Angered by this, women from the location marched to the Government buildings to protest to the Administrator and ask for the release of the arrested women. The Administrator refused to receive them and ordered them to leave the grounds. The police told them to go to the Chief Magistrate, who addressed them, but they were not satisfied with his statement. The four women were fined £3 each for creating a public disturbance.

December 8: In protest against the removal scheme, the Africans proclaimed a boycott of the beerhall, bus service, cinema and dancehall—all municipal undertakings. From the outset the boycott was a complete success.

December 10: A special Advisory Board meeting was called by the Town Council in the afternoon. Present were the Mayor, Location Superintendent, Chief Magistrate, Police Chief and about 200 Africans. The Mayor told the people that if the boycott was continued the Council would be obliged to withdraw the services. The Police Chief warned the audience that they had to obey the law of the land. The sort of demonstration which the women had conducted the previous week was illegal and would not be tolerated, he said.

The people raised the question of the location removal, but the Mayor refused to discuss the matter, saying it was already decided and there was no point arguing about it. **BUT IT WAS THAT VERY NIGHT THAT THE TENSION RAISED BY THE REMOVAL SCHEME EXPLODED IN A NIGHT OF VIOLENCE AND TERROR IN WHICH 12 PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND 34 INJURED.**

Had either the Council or the Administration made the slightest effort to meet the grievances of the people, the riot might have been avoided. There is no doubt the people were incensed by the continued refusal of the authorities to listen to their point of view.

## THE RIOT

What happened during the riots is now the subject of a judicial inquiry. But it was reported in the local Press that the army had to be called in to help suppress the outbreak, and the Mayor himself took

part in a sortie to fetch machine-guns for the relief of the police force surrounded in the Council buildings in the location. An armoured car and several types of riot vehicles were also employed against the people.

The statement sent to the United Nations by Chief Hosea Kutako, Chief Samel Witbooi, Sam Nujoma

police fired without warning killing several people. The Africans reacted by throwing stones. The police retreated into the municipal offices from which they fired killing more people.

"Later the military force came in armoured cars with machine guns. They fired shots at random with the result that some people were hit by bullets in their homes".

## PEOPLE FLEE

Following the riot, several hundred people, mostly Coloureds who did not stand with the Africans on the removal issue, fled from the location. Some of the refugees feared assault by Africans, some by the police. Many spent the night in the bush. Others made their way to Katutura and settled in without further ado.

This is the atmosphere in which the "voluntary removals" of which Mayor Snyman speaks took place.

December 16: Mayor Snyman, in a speech commemorating the Day of the Covenant, said: "We have come to this land to stay. Here the Afrikaner will never give up. The outside world must take notice of this . . . it is a pity that tonight we find ourselves in practically the same circumstances as the Voortrekkers when they made the Covenant. But if we honour that Covenant, God will protect us."

"God gave us this land. Let us go forward to preserve it for our descendants".

An uneasy quiet reigns in Windhoek today. The Council proceeds with its £1,500,000 removal scheme. But the people in the old location repeat: "We shall never move. We would rather die than accept apartheid".



The Mayor of Windhoek, Mr. Jaap Snyman.

and Uatja Kaukutu says the riot started with a scrimmage outside the beerhall. When the police force arrived in the location, they ordered the people to disperse within five minutes. The leaders of the Africans requested more time to enable them to persuade the people to go.

"As the people turned to go the



Houses in the old location are mostly pondokkies of wood and iron. Only a few people have brick houses.



African building teams at work on houses in the new location.