



25th September, 1978

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The Editor,

Sir,

What place in its history will Afrikanerdom accord Mr. Vorster ?

Will it record, as I certainly <sup>now</sup> fear it may have to, that he was the person whose last significant public act was to abandon a reasonable prospect of peace for Namibia for one of almost certain disaster -- and so to set in motion a train of events which would lead his people, and a great many others, to that future which he found too ghastly to contemplate, but which he was quite incapable of bringing himself to do anything brave enough to prevent ?

As I understand it the Nationalist Government's two principle reasons for rejecting Dr. Waldheim's plan to implement the western proposals for Namibia are these -- the size of the proposed UN peace-keeping force and the intention to delay elections for a few months.

The Nationalists claim that a UN force of the recommended size will be used to sway the elections SWAPO's way. This is pure conjecture, and there is no evidence to support it. On the contrary, as far as I can establish, there is nothing in the record of the conduct of the proposed Austrian commander of the peace-keeping force in his previous UN assignments to suggest that he has been anything but completely impartial in carrying out his duties. Why should he suddenly change now ?

On the other hand what is not conjecture is the role the Nationalists have played in trying to influence the results of elections in the result of which they have had an interest. In the homelands they have used every available means to help their clients win. And where, as in Kwa-Zulu, their clients have not won, they have done their best to subvert the winners. Why should any Namibian expect anything else but this to happen in the kind of election which is going to be staged there now ? Their suspicions will be reinforced by the Nationalist refusal to accept a postponement of the election date. Mr. Ahtisaari reported that the only political body participating in the elections which did not want a postponement was the Nationalist protege, the DTA. Statements by other ~~these~~ organisations since Mr. Vorster made his "go-it-alone" announcement confirm this.

One is driven to the conclusion that what Mr. Vorster and the Nationalists want for Namibia is not independence but conditional independence. It can be independent as long as it elects a government of which the Nationalists approve. This, one begins to suspect, is not the kind of government most Namibians want. But, if it is, one would be much more convinced of the fact if it were elected under the auspices of 7,000 UN troops than under that of ~~the South African Defence Force and the South African Police.~~ a massive presence of the South African Defence Force and the South African Police.

Yours faithfully,

P.M. Brown.