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A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented in RW
4.00pm JUNE 1984

Title: Popular Resistance in Namibia, 1920-1925.

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No. 150

POPULAR RESISTANCE IN NAMIBIA, 1920-1925

Tony Emmett

The first five years of the South Africa mandate marked an important milestone in the development of resistance in Namibia. Between 1920 and 1925 resistance against colonial rule assumed a variety of forms unparallelled in Namibian history. The Bondelswarts rebelled in 1922 and the Rehoboth Basters, with their Herero, Damara and Nama allies, in 1925. Further smaller-scale outbursts of violence erupted in other parts of the territory, and rumours of a general black rising were rife amongst both black and white communities. Even the San, who were usually isolated from other black communities by their nomadic existence in marginal parts of the territory, resorted to stock theft and banditry on an unusual scale, becoming embroiled in skirmishes with the police and administrative officials. This period also saw the introduction of new forms of political organisation that transcended pre-colonial divisions and began laying a basis for national unity. Among the organisations that were established during this period were the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU), the African People's Organisation (APO) and the South West Africa National Congress (SWANC). In particular, UNIA with its pan-Africanist platform proved remarkably successful, spreading from the industrial centre of Luderitz to other urban centres, and then to the countryside.

The resistance movements of this phase of Namibian history have thus far received little attention from researchers. The few studies of resistance during this period have concentrated almost exclusively on the two rebellilons[1] and, for the most part, treat these outbursts as discrete episodes unconnected with other manifestations of protest. Very little has been written about the various political organisations that came into being during this period, and where these are mentioned, it is usually in the context of urban centres such as Luderitz and Widhoek.[2] Some of the most striking features of this period such as the diversity and scale of popular involvement and the rich network of relationships connecting the different strands of protest, have therefore gone largely unnoticed.

However, what was especially noteworthy about this phase of resistance was not only its intensity and scale, but the qualitative changes in the prevailing forms of social consciousness and political mobilisation. The early 1920s saw for the first time concerted efforts to transcend the narrow communal divisions of pre-colonial Namibia and to forge a new popular unity by means of innovative ideologies and organisational structures. Prior to this, attempts had been made to limit conflict between indigenous communities and to forge alliances against the colonial incursion, but these alliances had always been between discrete communities and, on the whole, appear to have been tenuous and unsuccessful. One of the tragedies of the great rebellions of 1904-1907 was the failure of the Namas and Hereros to coordinate their revolts. Following the resistance of the early 1920s, the innovative organisations and ideologies that originated during this period disappeared and were replaced by predominantly communal and ethnic forms of mobilization. Defiance and confrontation gave way to accommodation and, where it manifested itself, resistance took more covert and symbolic forms.[3] Although colonial opposition gained momen-

tum during the mid-1940s, it was not until the late 1950s that formal politicial organisations based on national and popular identifications emerged.

This pattern of resistance raises some general questions about the development of anti-colonial protest. There has been a clear trend in African (and other Third World) studies to emphasise continuities in the development of resistance. Whether this is linked to a unilinear model of progressive westernisation or associated with the process of imperialist and capitalist penetration, the tendency is to depict the development of social movements as a succession of stages or as a progressively unfolding consciousness. The long-surviving notion of "primary" and "secondary" resistance, for example, suggests a clearly defined sequence of stages. Although this distinction originated from the ethnocentric and teleological framework of modernisation theories,[4] slightly modified versions still enjoy respectability, even among "progressive" writers such as Basil Davidson.[5] A related approach is to see early millenarian movements as precursors or progenitors of more "advanced" social movements like nationalism or socialism.[6] Thomas Hodgkin, for example, maintains that African millenarian movements "represent a relative primitive phase in the development of nationalism", while Eli Kedourie argues that "the mainspring of nationalism in Asia and Africa is the same secular millenialism which had its rise and development in Europe ..."[7] More sophisticated analyses of socialist writers like Peter Worsley,[8] Eric Hobsbawn,[9] Allen Isaacman[10] and Charles van Onselen[11] tend to depict early social movements such as millenarianism and "social banditry" as foreshadowing more class-conscious and politically-directed movements.

While a critique of evolutionary perspectives of social change is clearly beyond the scope of this paper, it might tentatively be suggested that more attention needs to be devoted to the discontinuous features of change in Third World formations. As Sholto Cross suggests in a paper on African social movements during World War I, the search for continuities in the development of protest and social consciousness may have helped to obscure qualitative and discontinuous changes.[12] In this paper special emphasis has been placed on the discontinuous features of both colonial policies and resistance in Namibia. The first part of the paper is devoted to an analysis of the social conditions that gave rise to the resistance of the early 1920s, while the latter part deals with the various manifestations of resistance, focusing in particular on the Garveyist movement. The paper closes with a brief analysis of the major reasons for the failure of the resistance during this period.

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On July 9, 1915 the last German troops defending the colony of South West Africa surrendered to the numerically superior South African forces at Khorab, ending thirty years of German colonial rule and initiating a new phase in Namibian history. With a few limited exceptions,[13] historians have devoted little attention to the five years of military occupation which followed and helped to lay the foundations for permanent South African control of the territory. At the basis of this neglect has been a widely held assumption of an essential continuity between the German and South African administrations of the

territory. Although this assumption has taken various forms and been incorporated within a variety of different analytical frameworks, its implications have been consistent: Namibia merely passed from one set of imperialist interests to another, and it continued to evince the typical characteristics of imperialist subjection and capitalist exploitation;[14] the "mode of exploitation" did not "change in the slightest, and its form only in minor aspects";[15] South African rule in Namibia "emulated" that of the Germans;[16] the repression of the Bondelswart rebellion of 1922 demonstrated to the colonised that "under the new rulers nothing had changed for them";[17] the South African administration "reproduced, if in slightly less draconian form, the essentials of the German labour code".[18] As with most misleading propositions, there is an element of truth in the assumption of continuity. The goals and interests underlying South African rule were indeed similar to those of the preceding regime, and South Africa was the direct beneficiary of German policies of domination and expropriation. Exploitation and a highly repressive labour system were the hallmarks of South African rule in Namibia as they were of German rule. These similarities, however, provide only part of a more complex picture which includes some significant breaks with the past.

The change of regimes in Namibia was not simply an isolated event, but was played out against the global shifts of power of the First World War. Capture of the German colonies had been one of the war aims of the allies, and the disposal of these colonies by means of the mandate system was a product of the new alignments of power of the post-World War period. Richard Rathbone has aruged that World War I was a "period of immense and significant change" for Africa. More specifically, the war accelerated the process of political and economic change in colonial Africa, bringing the colonies into more centralised relationships with the metropolitan powers and radically altering the "style" of coloniailism.

> Before 1914 Africa was for the most part a dream for the greedy speculator. From 1918 it seems likely that her role was more centrally related, as part of the empire, to the very heart of the metropolitan economies.[19]

A number of divergent, and sometimes incompatible, requirements and influences helped shape South African policies in the territory during the military occupation. Notwithstanding South Africa's long-standing interests in the German colony, its legal hold over the territory was tenuous. The invasion of German South West Africa had been undertaken on an official understanding with Britain that all occupied territory would be put at it's disposal for an indeterminate settlement at the end of the war. After the successful conclusion of the military campaign, South Africa thus set about establishing its claim to the territory. This was based on two major arguments, that South West Africa was essential for South Africa's national security and, secondly, that the Germans had proved themselves unfit to rule the colony.[20] In order to lay the foundations for its second claim, the South African administration in Namibia began collecting evidence of the injustices and atrocities of German rule of the colony. The evidence was published in an Imperial "Blue Book" in 1918. However, this strategy imposed certain conditions on South Africa's administration of

the territory. Clearly it was not only necessary to persuade the world of the inadequacies of German colonial policy, but also to establish that South African rule represented an appropriate improvement on German rule. Certain minimal reforms were thus necessary in order to secure control over the territory.

Besides these requirements there is evidence that South African officials actively disapproved of German colonial practices. While the two regimes shared common interests in exploiting the colony, the South Africans were critical of the costs and efficiency of German policies. As administrator Gorges pointed out to Smuts, it was regrettable that "so many white lives had been lost and so many millions of pounds wasted" on colonial wars which were a result of inappropriate colonial policies. These wars had not only succeeded in destroying large parts of the colonial labour supply, but posed a direct threat to South African interests as "unrest" might spread across the borders into South Africa.[21] The Germans had themselves come to realise the counter-productivity of their policies, and shortly before World War I had begun to introduce reforms in a bid to stabilise the labour force.[22]

The changeover also altered the relationship between administration and settlers. The South African administrators found themselves in the unusual situation of being faced not only with a hostile, or potentially hostile, black population, but also a hostile white population. In the other German colonies, most of the German settlers were expelled or repatriated. Namibia was unique among the mandated territories in retaining a large German community.[23] The possibility of a black rebellion therefore posed a double threat to the military administration, because the German community might take advantage of the opportunity to rebel against the occupying forces and reintroduce German rule.[24] In part therefore, military insecurity favoured a more conciliatory approach to the black population. Far more important, however, was the lack of identification between administration and settlers. Especially during the closing phase of German rule, the settlers had wielded considerable political influence. With the change in colonial regimes, however, the settlers were reduced to the status of enemy subjects, and this allowed the new administration greater freedom to pursue alternative goals and interests. It was not until after the granting of the mandate that the settlers, and in particular the farmer, were able once again to impose their influence on colonial policy.

In spite of a perceived need for change, a number of constraints operated to produce a degree of continuity with the past. For example, the Hague Convention required the occupying power of a conquered territory to limit changes to existing legal and governmental structures. South Africa's tenuous hold over the territory was also a factor limiting change. Not only was the future of the territory undecided, but the new administration experienced a variety of difficulties in the implementation of its policies. These difficulties were associated with the newness and temporary nature of the administration during the period of martial law, and included staff shortages, lack of experience and information on local conditions and the incompetence of local officials and police. Under these circumstances, policy options were severely limited.

A prominent feature of German colonial rule was that it telescoped the colonial process into a relatively contracted period, achieving the expropriation of Police Zone blacks and the creation of a rigidly con-

trolled labour force within little more than 20 years. The brutal suppression of the 1904-1907 rebellions and the dramatic finality of the expropriation of most Namibians in the southern and central parts of the country, were reflected in the laws promulgated in the post-rebellion period. Legislation introduced immediately after the rebellions aimed not only at the destruction of indigenous economic power (and thus the creation of a servile labour force), but also at the destruction of indigenous social and political organisation. With a few minor exceptions such as the Berseba Namas, the Bondelswarts and the Rehoboth Basters, blacks in the Police Zone were prohibited from owning or obtaining land and large stock. The law also forbade more than ten families or individuals from residing on any farm or property. The pass laws compelled all blacks above age of seven to register as labourers and to wear brass badges in addition to carrying a diensbuch (service book) with them. Blacks without labour contracts had no legal rights, and all whites had the power to arrest them. The police were empowered to administer direct punishment (without the control of a court) to black servants for a variety of offences including "laziness", "negligence", "vagrancy", "insolence" and "disobedience". As the simplest and least expensive form of punishment, flogging was used extensively during the German period. Between January 1, 1913 and March 31, 1914, for example, there were 2,787 "sentences" to lashes and 46,719 individual lashes administered. In terms of the semi-legal vaterliche zuchtigungsrecht ("right of parental chastisement"), employers were allowed to mete out beatings to their labourers. Questions were only raised in those cases where labourers were hospitalised or died from their beatings, and even then the situation was rationalised. As the German governor Leutwein saw it, "beating to death was not regarded as murder; but the natives were unable to understand such legal subtleties."[25]

Taken individually, the changes[26] introduced by the South African administration during the period of martial law appear both superficial and insignificant. The German system of registration, together with the diensbuch (service book) and brass badge, were abolished and replaced by a pass law. The age of those required to carry passes was raised from seven to fourteen, and "Certificates of Exemption from Labour" provided for those who could show "visible means of support". To qualify for this certificate the applicant had to own at least ten head of large or fifty head of small stock. As under the German law, blacks were barred from obtaining any right or title to fixed property without the consent of the administrator. They were, however, allowed to acquire and own livestock. This, the Deputy-Secretary of Native Affairs in Windhoek reasoned, would "tend to make the native more contented and law abiding".[27] The South African administration clearly did not envisage that the right to own cattle would be allowed to interfere with the flow of labour, rather it saw the right as an inducement to accept labour.

Although, ultimately, the South African authorities subscribed to the same objective of labour control, they insisted that this control should be more centralised and that there should be a stricter separation of magisterial and police functions. In other words, labour control was seen as the prerogative of the state, not of the individual employer backed up by the state. There was thus, during the period of martial law, a growing tendency for the central authority to define and

regulate relations between blacks and whites, employers and employees. Between 1916 and 1920 the Masters and Servants law was revised twice, in order to make the regulation of labour relations more comprehensive and detailed. Besides carefully defining the respective obligations of employers and employees, the Masters and Servants laws outlawed the practice of "fatherly correction" (whereby white employers had the right to beat their servants) and put a stop to the practice of flogging which magistrates were urged to "make special efforts" to prevent.

> It should be widely made known to the native that masters and policemen have no power to flog, and any complaints of flogging must be carefully investigated and that the offender prosecuted without respect of person.[28]

Spurred on by the need to discredit the former German regime and to contrast German rule with its own, the South African administration actively enforced the new provisions of the law. Between September 1915 and January 1918 more than 310 cases involving ill-treatment of black servants were brought before the lower courts alone.[29] The more serious cases of murder and assault against white settlers were given prominent attention in the 1918 Blue Book and elsewhere.

The real significance of these changes, however, lay not so much in their direct contribution to reform, but in the effects produced by their combination with surviving elements of German policy. As already argued, South African policy in Namibia during the military occupation was shaped by a variety of contradictory influences and constraints, so that what finally emerged was a combination of both German and South African colonial policies. While these policies shared the common goal of exploiting the labour resources of the colony, they were not necessarily compatible as they differed in the means they employed to secure this common goal. Furthermore, the situation was complicated by two additional factors. The need to discredit German rule and project an image which would be acceptable to the international community was a factor which was extraneous to the normal concerns of a labour-extractive system. It helped to produce, in the upper echelons of the administration, a tentative liberalism which was out of step with the rest of the social formation and which quickly evaporated after the granting of the Mandate. A second set of complications resulted from the logistic difficulties associated with creating a new administration under the conditions of war.

While it retained the general framework of the German forced labour system, the South African administration removed some of the means by which labour had been extracted. German labour policy was dependent on a generalised and decentralised system of violence for its survival. When the South Africans administration prohibited the practices of flogging and "parental chastisement" strains occurred within the system of control. Instead of being able to "discipline" their labourers themselves, farmers were now obliged to travel to the seat of the district magistracy. This often involved the inconveniences of long journeys and of being absent from their farms for a number of days.[30] Besides the loss of time and other expenses entailed, the farmers feared that absence from their farms would result in other labourers deserting, stealing their stock, or neglecting to take prop-

er care of their farms.[31] In addition, there was the uncertainty of whether the farmer would be able to secure a conviction against his servant as some of the magistrates were regarded as too "lenient".[32] However, in those cases where a conviction was secured and the labourer was sentenced to a term of imprisonment, the farmer would be deprived of his labour for that period. According to colonial officials, black labourers were aware of of their employers' dependence on them and took some satisfaction in serving jail sentences because this deprived their employers of their labour.[33]

A second policy conflict arose out of the relaxation of the German restrictions on the ownership of stock. While the ban on the ownership of large stock was repealed and provision made for the exemption of certain black stock-owners from the labour requirement, no clear policy emerged for the allocation of land to the colonised. The German law which prohibited blacks from obtaining "any right or title to fixed property" remained in force, and the question of reserves was held in abeyance until after the granting of the Mandate. This inconsistency in the policy of the military administration held a number of important implications. As the number of black owned stock increased, so obviously did the need for land. In order to meet the land shortage black stock owners adopted a variety of strategies. In some cases they simply moved onto vacant Crown land or unoccupied farms. Some of these squatter settlements were later recognised as temporary reserves by the administration. Squatting on white farms also became common during this period, particularly as it provided a source of labour at a time of severe labour shortage. In other cases government, municipal or private land was hired for grazing. Temporary reserves like Orumba and Okatumba in the Windhoek magisterial district soon became overstocked and overcrowded. As a result conflicts arose with the white farmers who complained of stock thefts and trespassing on their land.[34] When more permanent reserves were finally established in the early 1920s, the administration decided to close the temporary reserves and met with strong resistance from their occupants.[1] The accumulation of stock by blacks who had been formerly prohibited from doing so, also threatened the interests of settler farmers. Settlers complained that their farms were being overrun by the stock of their labourers. They claimed that if they tried to limit the number of stock kept by their servants, they ran the risk of losing them - a serious eventuality in a situation of chronic labour shortage.[35]

The incompatible influences at work in the transitional colonial policies of the military period led also to conflicts between the police and senior administrative officials. The police who had been recruited from South Africa and identified closely with the settler farmers, did not understand or share the views of senior officials who wish to present an enlightened image of the South African administration of Namibia.[36] The magistrate of Outjo complained to the Secretary for the Protectorate in 1920 that distrust between police administrative personnel had resulted in "a want of that harmony between magistrate and police which is so essential to the good administration of any District, while it also encourages the native to think that the police are in the wrong and are inimical to them thus leading to the insolent attitude complained of - an attitude in marked contrast to what it was under German rule".[37]

The problems experienced with the police were but one symptom of a more general malaise that permeated the administration. The magistrate of Okahandja succinctly summed up the situation in 1920:

> When one looks back at the past four and a half years with what we have had to contend - dealing with an hostile population, wholly insufficient and inefficient staffs, incompetent and almost useless police, a complete change of native policy, the disorder on active warfare, and, above all, an Administration which was necessarily unstable and to a certain extent temporary and uncertain - it is not to be wondered at that conditions today are still far from ideal or even satisfactory. The instructions laid down in the native memorandum (of 1916) ... were a big step forward in the right direction. Unfortunately - and here I think one touches on the crux of the whole matter - it has not been found possible in the absence of constant and firm supervision, with the staff and police at our disposal, to carry out the excellent directions laid down.[38]

This administrative malaise served not only to create friction within the ranks of the administration, but also impaired the control the colonial state was able to exercise over the colonised, preventing it from effectively executing those functions of dominance and control central to the colonial enterprise. Within this context the black work force was able to devise various strategies to resist or by-pass the system of forced labour. Although desertion had become a well-established tactic even under German rule, shortages and inefficiency of police, the removal of police powers from the settlers, and the general inefficiency and lack of control of the administration made desertion and the withholding of labour an even more attractive and feasible prospect during the period of martial law. The disruptions and confusion caused by the military campaign and change of administrations provided further opportunities for desertion and other forms of resistance. Following the Union's invasion and occupation of the territory, desertions, particularly from farms, reached unprecedented heights,[39] precipitating a severe labour crisis, especially among farmers. Another way of circumventing the repressive labour system was by accumulating enough stock to qualify for an exemption certificate. The magistrate of Otjiwarongo reported in 1920 that "the Herero" was "straining every nerve to acquire large and small stock, in order that he may again become independent and relieved of the necessity of working". He maintained that between 1914 and 1920 black-owned small stock had increased from "no more than a few hundred" to more than 4,000 in his district.[40] In the minds of both the settler and the authorities, the dramatic increase in black-owned stock was closely linked to increasing stock thefts during this period. Although the available evidence makes it difficult to confirm or refute this link, it would appear that losses of small stock in particular were very heavy. It was even alleged that because of stock theft small stock farming was no longer viable in the territory.[41]

However, for the majority of blacks in Namibia the strategies outlined above were not immediately available. At the low wages paid during this period, it would have been impossible for most blacks to

obtain sufficient stock to qualify for exemption from forced labour. Strategies such as stock theft, desertion and living in the veld held their own limitations and difficulties. Even for those who were able to acquire exemption certificates, problems still arose as to where they could keep their stock as there was little land available to black stock-owners during this period. In the situation the majority of Blacks fell back on the widespread strategy adopted in other parts of Africa against forced labour, poor wages and other conditions of colonial repression. In the words of the settlers and colonial authorities, they became "insolent", "lazy", "inefficient", "unreliable" and "negligent". By 1920 complaints of this sort had reached a climax and permeated every level of the settler community.[42] The administration showed some awareness of the relationship between the inefficiency of the black labour and the repressive labour policy of the state. The magistrate of Otjiwarongo, for example, referred to "a passive resistance movement, at present confined to doing the work as badly as possible"[43] and the Secretary for the Protectorate pointed out that "large numbers" of blacks

> work only because the law compels them to do so, and in consequence they do their work with very little grace and with only so much effort as circumstances demand. This is the reason for the general complaint about the inefficiency of labour in this country ...[44]

Another unanticipated consequence of the change in colonial administration during the World War I was the generation of unrealistic, but firmly held, expectations of reform among the black population. The defeat of the German colonial power during the war helped foster the belief that their lands would be returned to them. As late as 1946, a Herero witness told Michael Scott:

> What we don't understand is that when two nations have been at war, such as Britain or Germany or Italy, and when one or other of those nations is defeated the lands belonging to that nation are not taken away from them. That nation remains a nation, and their lands belong to them. The African people although they have always been on the side of British people and their allies, yet have their lands taken away from them and are treated as though they had been conquered.[45]

Expectations like these appear to have been widespread among Police Zone blacks during the military period. It is probable that these beliefs were encouraged by reforms adopted during this period. Although these were only minor concessions, war propaganda, the prosecution of German employers, and the tensions that existed between settlers, police, and administrators undoubtedly made an impact on Namibians. These expectations were, however, to be rudely shattered in the period that immediately followed the military administration, and played a significant role in the concerted resistance to colonial rule between 1920 and 1925.

It was against this background that South Africa was granted the mandate over Namibia. The new security of tenure that came with the

mandate meant that the colonial administration needed no longer to pander to international opinion by presenting a liberal image to the world. Colonial policies could now follow colonial interests, and the paternalism of the interim military administration could be stripped away to reveal the grim realities and requirements of the settler economy. With the end of the war and the international recognition of South Africa's right to Namibia, the German settlers could be welcomed back into the fold as fellow whites and colonial masters. There was no longer a need, as there had been in the earlier period, to depict them as brutal and vicious in their treatment of blacks.[46]

Changes in colonial policy in Namibia after 1920 were not only a response to the new international status of the territory, but also reflected the deepening political crisis in South Africa where the government was coming under increasing pressure from Afrikaner nationalists and militant labour.[47] From the beginning Botha and Smuts regarded Namibia as a potential safety-valve for the political pressures building up in South Africa. Even before the German forces in Namibia had surrendered, Botha wrote to Smuts about the possibility of using the lures of land and jobs to neutralise dissatisfaction, particularly amongst the Afrikaners.

> We shall have to make a point of it in the elections that the territory will now afford an opening particularly for acquiring land, as well as an opening in the police and administration.[48]

Following the South African occupation of the territory, the military administration devoted considerable attention to restoring farming, commerce and industry in the territory. Mining was resumed although on a smaller scale than previously and farming flourished owing to the ready markets for farm produce during and immediately after the war. Not only did the presence of the Union garrison provide a market within the territory, but there were also excellent markets for slaughter stock both in South Africa and overseas. The abnormal prices realised for stock resulted in high values being placed on land. Partly because of the high values of land and the uncertain future of the territory, few settlers entered the country during this period. The smallness of the settler population in turn ensured that the level of agricultural production would remain low, thus maintaining the high prices.[49]

However, within two years of the war the economic boom came to an end, and by 1922 the territory, along with other parts of the world, had entered the depths of the post-war recession. The disbandment of the military garrison after the war meant that an important local market for farm produce was lost. The end of the war had also seen the reorganisation of agriculture on a world scale and the consequent contraction of markets for slaughter stock and other produce both in South Africa and overseas. At the same time a severe drought overtook the territory. The situation deteriorated further with the reversal of the inflow of capital from Germany to the territory, and the severe slump in diamonds and other major mineral products of Namibia.[50]

With the establishment of the mandate, a more sympathetic policy was adopted to the settler community early in 1921 an Advisory Council was appointed to represent settler interests, and played a prominent

role in shaping colonial policies of this period.[51] An extensive settlement scheme, based on the grossly over-optimistic recommendations of the Farmers' Produce Commission,[52] was launched in the second half of 1920. The scheme coincided with the onset of recession and drought, and by 1921 most of the new settlers and even some of the more established farmers were in serious financial difficulties. Rather than back down on its settlement policy, the administration continued to dispose of large quantitites of land to South African settlers, many of whom had neither the financial resources nor the farming experience to cope with the harsh demands of the Namibian environment. In support of this short-sighted scheme, the administration provided extensive financial aid to the white farming community, and increased pressures on indigenous communities to provide labour to the largely unviable farming operations.[53] Both strategies were to have disastrous consequences. The pressures put on indigenous communities were to provide a major impetus to the revolts of the Bondelswarts and the Basters, while the aid provided to settlers only succeeded in encouraging dependence on state aid and ensuring the short-termed survival of essentially unviable farming ventures.

The vigorous settlement policy also had implications for the allocation of reserves. Essentially, the reserves policy that was initiated in the early 1920s emerged out of the contradictory blend of South African and German policies that characterised the military period. In South Africa the major thrust of native policy had been to frame legislation and administrative devices to draw labour out of the reserves. German colonial policies in Namibia, on the other hand, had attempted the proletarianization of the majority of the population in the Police Zone by means of military force. The existence of a large landless population, however, posed problems of control for the South African administration in the territory. The policy that emerged during the early 1920s was therefore an attempt to steer a course between the two contradictory demands of establishing reserves (in order to facilitate control, reverse, or at least control, black urbanisation, and standardise administrative procedures) and, at the same time, ensure an adequate supply of labour. As the Native Affairs official Captain Bowker pointed out in 1916, the two goals were not necessarily incompatible:

> It may prove more economical to consider the possibility of establishing one large settlement for all the Protectorate Natives in an area such as the Kaokoveld, where the natives would be entirely segregated from the European Farming community, and from which, through economic pressure, they would be forced to seek employment, the labour market thus not being seriously affected; on the contrary, it is felt, that such a course would act as a stimulus to labour, for the natives would be under closer control and the payment of such taxes as may be levied could be effectually enforced and such money would have to be earned.[54]

In addition to these considerations, provision had to be made to accommodate the livestock accumulated by landless blacks and those in the overcrowded "temporary reserves". It was also hoped that the allocation of reserves would go some way towards meeting black land

demands and the expectations generated by the change in regimes. In broad outlines therefore the policy of the early mandate administration made provision for the creation of reserves to accommodate the residents of the temporary reserves, squatters on both white farms and the Rehoboth Gebiet, and the "surplus" populations of the urban areas. The amount of land allocated was, however, strictly controlled. Furthermore, land was allocated largely in marginal areas of the country which were less suitable for farming. A variety of economic pressures such as grazing fees, dog taxes and the strict control of "informal sector" economic activities were imposed to facilitate the efflux of migrant labour. These measures were incorporated into an over-arching system of legislative and administrative controls which applied to all blacks in the country.

In terms of the 1921 recommendations of the Native Reserves Commission, 655,650 hectares would be allocated for the proposed reserves and a further 636,881 hectares "in case of future extension, or of unsuitability of the proposed reserves". Together with the reserves that had been created during the German period, the total allocation of land for Africans, as envisaged by the Commission, amounted to 2,237,874 hectares.[55] This was only slightly more than the 2,125,154 that had been allocated to 311 settlers in 1921 alone.[56] In spite of the meagreness of the proposed areas, the opening of the reserves was delayed by drought and inadequate water supplies.[57] By the end of 1923, 634,000 hectares had been allocated. The insignificance of this area can be gauged from a comparison with the more than 1,9 million hectares allocated for settlers in 1922 and 1923 at the height of the drought. A further 349,782 hectares were added to the reserves in 1924 and about 754,360 in 1925.[58] With the proclamation of Otjimbingwe (77,498 hectares) after 1925, the programme of the Reserves Commission was completed.[59]

Grazing fees were extended to all reserves with the exception of those granted under German treaty. Livestock was taxed on a sliding scale with the obvious intention of limiting the number of animals kept on the reserves. Thus large stock was taxed on the basis of 1 d. per head per mensem for one to twenty five head, and 3 d. for herds of twenty six or more. Similarly the grazing fee for small stock was 1/4 d. for herds of 100 or less and ½ d. for those above 100.[60] That the major aim of grazing fees was to ensure a steady flow of labour for the reserves is made clear by the report of the Native Reserves Commission 1928.[61] In the reserves recognised by German treaties, grazing taxes were not imposed. However, a dog tax , also based on a sliding scale, was levied under Proclamation No. 16 of 1921.[62] Particularly in the early twenties the tax proved an effective instrument for forcing labourers from these reserves onto the labour market and was an important contributory cause in the Bondelswart rising of 1922. To bolster the reserve system, a battery of laws and regulations were passed between 1920 and 1922.[63] These included amendments to the Masters and Servants laws, a vagrancy law, and a series of regulations making provision for the removal of squatters from Crown and Mission land, the control of movement of all blacks in the territory, the branding of black-owned cattle and the control of blacks in urban areas.

To sum up, the first five years of the mandate saw an important shift in colonial policies, away form the limited reformism of the

military period and towards a more rigorous system of control. In part this shift was a result of the administration's need to rationalise its policies, both by bringing them more in line with those in the Union and by resolving the contradictions that had arisen from the blending of South African and German colonial policies during the military period. It flowed also out of the greater security of tenure provided by the mandate, the deepening political crisis in South Africa, and the ill-timed and short-sighted settlement policy to which these two developments gave rise. Perhaps the most crucial factor in the configuration of events that contributed to the resistance of the early 1920s was the extreme vulnerability of settler agriculture in Namibia during this period. The marginality of settler farmers made them heavily dependent on extra-economic coercion to ensure a supply of cheap and servile labour.

This is vividly illustrated by the conditions that gave rise to Bondelswarts rebellion of 1922. Conflict between the Bondelswarts and white farmers was evident from the beginning of South African rule. In 1915, for example, the Native Affairs Department reported that although the Bondelswarts were "anxious to obtain employment ... several absolutely set their faces against accepting work with farmers. On being asked the reason I was told in almost every instance, that farmers were used to dispense Justice without reference to anyone". There could be little doubt, the Department argued, that the "great shortage of farm labour" was a natural reaction to the "ill- treatment meted out to farm labourers in the past, by German and Dutch farmers alike". In spite of this the Department was using "every effort and persuasion" to induce the local black population to accept farm labour.[64] In the same year the officer in charge of Native Affairs reported that several incidents had been brought to his notice

> where farmers engage boys at 15/- per month, and when paying them off, they give them the equivalent in stock. The equivalent of a goat usually being 15/- ... I need need not point out that 15/- ... is much in excess of the value of an ordinary breeding goat, which is worth from 5/- to 10/- according to size.[65]

Nor had the situation changed for the better in 1920 when the military magistrate of Warmbad blamed deteriorating relationships between whites and blacks in the area on the "poor wages, improper treatment (and) poor food" to which farm labourers were subjected. The farmers, he said,

> look upon the Hottentots as a kind of animal, not a human being and his first impression is that a Hottentot because he is a Hottentot should have a hiding once a day.[66]

Many of the settlers attracted to the Protectorate by low interest loans, were farmers possessing little capital or stock and contemptuously known as "bokboere" (goat farmers) by the more established settlers. The portion of these already marginal settler farmers deteriorated further as a result of the poor rains between 1918 and 1920, and the severe drought of 1921-22. Complaints about poor wages

and the withholding of pay were already common during the military period, and the situation could only deteriorate under the combined assault of the drought and recession of the early 1920s. The administrator, for example, reported in 1922 that because of the depression, "many farmers not of the really poor class, unfortunately find themselves unable to pay wages in cash and some are unable to feed their employees properly". Although the administration was opposed to the payment of wages in kind, the administrator said he saw no immediate "option but to countenance the payment of wages in kind where the native does not object".[67]

It is one of the ironies of the build up to the Bondelswart rebellion that at a time when the administration was sanctioning the payment of wages in kind, it should impose an absurdly high tax to force the Bondelswarts into the labour market. A dog tax of 5/- was first introduced in the rural areas in 1917, but under pressure from farmers, the administration in 1921 increased the tax to £1 for the first dog, £2/10/- for two dogs, £4/10- for three dogs, £7 for four dogs, and £10 for five dogs.[68] Dogs played an important role in the Bondelswarts economy. Not only were they used for hunting, but they were essential for the protection from, and destruction of vermin, particularly jackals. In those cases where the dog tax was not paid, the police were empowered to seize and destroy dogs. Prosecution of Bondelswarts for non-payment of the tax commenced in September 1921, and by January 1922 the Warmbad Magistrate had tried 140 cases.[69] The average sentence was a fine of £2 or fourteen days imprisonment. In addition to the dog tax, the Bondelswarts were subjected to a variety of other pressures and regulations such as the strictly enforced game laws, which put further obstacles in the way of hunting, and quarantine regulations which prevented the Bondelswarts from selling livestock on the most profitable markets.

Another key issue which helped to precipitate the Bondelswarts rebellion revolved around the appointment of a captain for the community. A labour extraction system of the type that operated in Namibia during the early mandate period, was not only dependent on the state to dislodge a labour force from the countryside, but also required the assistance of the state to counteract any political or military organisation (or even individual defiance) on the part of the labour force or potential labour force. In the case of the Bondelswart community, the past rebellions and military successes of the Bondelswarts were a potent source of anxiety for the settlers. As the Bondelswarts had been able to maintain a territorial base in spite of their rebellion against the German colonial authorities, they were able to retain a certain degree of communal identity and political organisation. Settlers and state thus sought to limit and control the political organisation of the BOndelswarts. These efforts largely took the form of preventing the Bondelswarts from obtaining effective leadership. Until 1918 the state resisted all moves to secure the appointment of a captain. The position of the administration was clearly stated by the magistrate of Warmbad in 1917:

> I cannot in my opinion too strongly advise the Administration not to appoint a Captain or Chief over the Bondelswarts as that would immediately combine the nation which could then give endless trouble.[70]

Although the administration continued to resist the appointment of Jacobus Christian, the most influential leader of the Bondelswarts, between 1918 and 1922 it sanctioned the appointments of three captains for the Bondelswarts. The first, Willem Christian, was described by the local magistrate as a "harmless idiot who was incapable of influencing his people in any way or even showing any interest in them". He was followed by Hendrik Schneeuwe, who had to be removed after he was accused of embezzling tribal funds. Timotheus Beukes, described by the Chief Native Commissioner as having "no desire or particular ability" to lead the Bondelswarts, then assumed the captaincy.[71] Ultimately, it was the return of the legitimate and effective Bondelswart leaders, Jacobus Christian and Abraham Morris, from Namaqualand, that precipitated the rebellion of 1922.

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Having sketched in the context that gave rise to the resistance of the early 1920s in the first part of this paper, this section will examine some of specific manifestations of that resistance. As the rebellions of 1922 and 1925 have already been adequately documented,[72] they will not be dealt with here, except to place them within the broader context of resistance. Instead this section of the paper will focus predominantly on the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) which provided the ideological nexus around which the various strands of resistance coalesced and began to obtain the coherence of a movement.

The Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA & ACL) was launched in Luderitz in 1921. The catalyst for the formation of this branch of the Garveyist organisation was a small group of West Africans and West Indians who had settled largely in the coastal towns of the territory. The majority of this group originated from Liberia, the Cameroons, Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, and had been brought into the territory by the Germans before and during World War I. In 1910, for example, fifty men and a number of women and children were deported from the German colony of Kamerun to Luderitz, following a mutiny among the black Schutztruppe in the West African colony. The majority of this group were returned to West Africa after the occupation of Namibia by South African forces, but a number who were working in Luderitz stayed behind.[73] Other West Africans, particularly the Liberians, had been brought to Namibia by the Woermann shipping company. Some of these had been deck hands on the Woermann ships and had been stranded in Luderitz and other coastal towns when war broke out in 1914.[74]

While they intermarried with the local people, the West Africans formed a distinctive segment of the Namibian population. As a group they had a higher level of education and greater urban and industrial skills than the local population and some earned relatively high wages. Others lived on the fringes of their communities supporting themselves by gambling or petty crime. The magistrate of Luderitz and Swakopmund complained frequently about the "gambling and thieving propensities" of the West Africans in their districts. The West Africans were "the cause of a lot of trouble", the magistrate of Luderitz complained in 1920. Many of them lived "by swindling the aborigines of their hard earned wages by card sharping".[75] The police believed

that they were "corrupting" the local blacks and were the cause of an escalating crime rate in Luderitz, but perhaps most troublesome to the administration were the "political inclinations" of some of the West Africans.[76]

The first formal connection between Namibia and the Garveyist organisation occurred in 1919 when the UNIA sent commissioners to the Versailles Peace Conference in an unsuccessful attempt to influence the plans being framed for the former German colonies.[77] In 1922 a UNIA delegation was sent to Geneva to petition the League of Nations to turn the former German colonies over to black leadership. The League was also urged to appoint a black representative to the permanent Mandates Commission. Another petition relating to the mandates was issued by Garvey in 1928, but enjoyed as little success as the first attempt.[78] Although Garvey's ambitions for the former German colonies failed to have any impact on the international status of the colonies, the ideas propagated by his organisation were of considerable significance to political developments in Namibia. In fact Garveyism and its various mutant versions provided the first coherent, if somewhat fanciful, ideological framework within which the various Namibian communities could unite in their efforts to resist colonialism.

Towards the end of 1921 the Luderitz branch of UNIA had a membership of 311 and had collected £41/10/0 in subscription fees. Given the size of the black population of Luderitz (2,155 according to the 1921 census) and the low wages of the overwhelming majority, this was a considerable achievement. The organisation catered for both the welfare and the political needs of its members. Its welfare benefits included assistance in time of sickness, funeral expenses, and financial assistance of relatives of deceased members. Its membership covered the whole spectrum of black groups, both local and foreign, in Luderitz.[79]

Two members of the UNIA executive are mentioned recurrently in the administration's files. Fritz Headley, the president, was clearly the dominant figure in the organisation, and John de Clue was a prominent member of both the UNIA and the ICU. Both men were described as West Indians. John de Clue was the owner of a cafe in the black township, while Headley was chief stevedore at the Luderitz docks and earned a daily salary of seven shillings plus rations.[80] According to a summary of wages drawn up by Native Affairs Department of Luderitz from labour contracts approved by the Department the average daily wage for blacks ranged between one shilling and 2/6.[81] When members of the UNIA and ICU in Luderitz broke away from these two organisations to form the SWA African National Congress, the reason given was that the two organisations were dominated by West Africans and South African blacks respectively.

The issues taken up by the Luderitz branch of UNIA were also indicative of the distinctive interests of its leadership. Although the organisation called for a unity and freedom from colonial oppression on behalf of all blacks, these appeals were characteristically couched in the vaguest of terms. On the other hand, where the Luderitz branch expressed more concrete grievances, it was representing the interests of a small and privileged minority, a distinctive and largely foreign black petty bourgeoisie. This is clearly illustrated by a letter written by Headley, as president of the Luderitz branch, to the Negro

World in 1921.[82] Headley begins his letter with a protest against the "tyrannical system of serfdom and injustice" applied in Luderitz and other parts of Namibia. Towards the end of the letter he criticises the inadequate medical facilities provided for blacks in Luderitz. However, sandwiched between this show of altruism, and taking up the larger part of the letter, is a clearly spelt out appeal on behalf of black traders in Luderitz. This marginal trading class established four small businesses in the black township, but were being threatened by white-owned stores operating on the periphery of the township. The question of black trading rights in Luderitz was a leading issue for both UNIA and the ICU. When black delegations representing these organisations petitioned the magistrate of Luderitz in 1921 and the Native Commissioner in March 1922, black trading rights were a central grievance.[83] This issue also came up in correspondence between the Luderitz branch of the ICU and Kadalie.[84] In this regard it is perhaps significant that at least one of the owners of the four black businesses in Luderitz, John de Clue, was a prominent member of both the UNIA and ICU.

However, once the movement spread beyond Luderitz, its composition and activities underwent fundamental changes. In particular, the Windhoek branch of the organisation assumed a character markedly different from that of the Luderitz branch, although the initiative for its formation had come from Luderitz and it was initially run by West Africans.[85] By January 1922 when the Windhoek branch applied to the local municipality for permission to erect a hall for the organisation, the executive of the branch had already come under the control of local black leaders. Herero leaders, in particular, were prominent in the organisation. These included Hosea Kutako, who was later to emerge as the dominant figure in Herero politics and one of the most powerful Namibian leaders until the formation of the nationalist organisations in the late 1950s, Aaron (John) Mungunda the brother of Kutako, Traugott Maherero, the Herero leader of Okahandja and Nikanor Hoveka, another prominent Herero leader and later headman of the Epukiro Reserve. Although the Hereros appeared to be the dominant force in the Windhoek branch, the leaders of other groups were also represented on the executive. The Damara leaders, Alpheus Harasemab and Franz Hoisemab, were both on the executive.[86] During 1922 the president of the Windhoek Branch was Aaron Mungunda, although the administration suspected, with some justification, that his brother, Hosea Kutako, was "the controlling spirit". The chairman was Solomon Monguya, a Xhosa employed by the Railways, and the secretary Clements Kapuuo, the father of Clements Kapuuo who was to become leader of the powerful Herero tribal grouping after the death of Kutako.[87]

The UNIA spread rapidly in Windhoek and it surrounding areas. According to the leaders of the Zwartboois, a Nama grouping which was opposed to the organisation, "almost all the natives of Windhoek and also of the farms of the districts" had joined the organisation by the end of 1922. These included both "black" (Herero, Damara, etc.) and "yellow" (Nama) people.[88] In November 1922 the Department of Native Affairs inspected the books of the organisation and found that 871 members had paid the required 3/3 entrance fee. The membership of the organisation was probably much larger than indicated by the subscription figures because the office bearers were unable to account for all

tory, and which in 1922/3 had brought blacks and whites to the brink of a state of war. In 1922, for example, Joseph Hailand, a UNIA member in Usakos, had written to Headley asking what could be done to alleviate the oppression of government and farmers, and expressing alarm about the way in which local whites were arming themselves. Headley replied that he did not "know of any war between white and blacks".

> We are living in a peaceful state down this way in Luderitz, both white and blacks, alike, and I dosn't (sic) see the cause of anybody arming themselves. One thing that I will ask all of my people is to obey the laws of the Government, and abide by the Constitution of the Protectorate, and I am sure that the Government, or the Farmers, cannot molest you ...[95]

The attitude adopted by headley and other literate or semi-literate West Indians and West Africans to the overwhelmingly illiterate indigenous population was often blatantly paternal. In a letter to a local newspaper in March 1924, for example, Headley described the objects of the UNIA in the following terms:

> To establish a universal Confraternity among the race: to promote the spirit of pride and love; to reclaim the fallen; to administer to and assist the needy; to assist in civilising the backward Tribes of Africa; to assist in the development of independent Negro Nations and Communities or Agencies in the principal countries and Cities of the World; for the representation and protection of all Negroes irrespective of nationality; to promote conscientious worship among the natives of Africa; to establish Universities, Colleges, Academies and schools for the racial Education and Culture of the people; to conduct a world wide Commercial and Industrial Intercourse for the good of the people; to work for better conditions in all Negro Communities.[96]

Even if one overlooks the inherent paternalism and vague, high-flown terminology of this passage (which was clearly aimed at the white readers of the newspaper), the aims outlined by Headley were hopelessly remote from the pressing needs and interests of the local population, struggling for survival in the rural areas. In the same letter, the UNIA president went on to argue that

> ... the Negroe's that are domociled in the Protectorate (SWA), has as much interest at stake into the Financial and Industrial development of the Republic of Liberia, as he has at the present time, if any, in the Windhoek Native Location ...

Local leaders of the Windhoek branch approached the administration in July 1922 to obtain permission for some of their leaders to travel to New York, where Garvey had his headquarters. The three leaders who were to make the trip included the Windhoek president, Aaron Mungunda, and two others, one a Nama and the other a Herero. The plan was

squashed by the Native Commissioner who "suggested various difficulties in the way even if permission were granted".[97]

Windhoek leaders thus concentrated their attention on propagating the aims of their organisation in other parts of the territory. In October and November 1922 Mungunda and Theodore Hanbanue, a Damara, visited Karibib, Usakos and Okahandja in order to hold meetings with the local black population. It is clear from the response they received that the ideas of the UNIA had already penetrated the areas beyond Windhoek and generated considerable interest. According to the report of a police spy at Usakos, Mungunda urged "the black men to pull together and to unite as one and then they will get their liberty as this is their land". He explained the strength of the whites in terms of their unity. Blacks should do the same and assist one another, no matter if they were Hereros, Damaras or Ovambos. At Karibib Mungunda was reported to have told a meeting that their organisation was working in conjunction with Americans and that they wanted to establish their own administration.[98]

The UNIA envoys seemed to have aroused the most interest in Okhandja, at the time a major centre of the Hereros. Four meetings were held there, and the report of the local police spy on these meetings clearly illustrates the extent to which Garveyism had already become associated with millenarian expectations. At the first meeting Mungunda explained that the object of the organisation was to unite blacks. He urged his audience to listen carefully to what he had to say as he had already been wrongly reported in other districts. At the next meeting Mungunda complained that what he had said at the first meeting had been misunderstood, because all the young men and women had been asking him "when the Americans were coming to release them".

> If I told you that the American Negroes were coming to release you, I think you would be satisfied, but it would be a lie. I know nothing about America. The society has been formed through American ideas, but Americans only explained it but did not do the work - we must do that. It is no use holding out false hopes about America, because I do not believe that they will ever be able to come here to help you.[99]

The police spy who attended the meeting, concluded his report by stating that although he did not think the Okahandja blacks would rebel, talk that the Americans were coming to free the country had spread throughout the district.

The millenarianism that became associated with Garveyism in the Namibian countryside, took a number of different forms, all of which were grounded on the basic premise that help could come from the "Americans" or some other external source. According to some versions, the Americans would arrive in ships or aircraft, in other versions soldiers would issue from the ground. The Rhenish missionary in Omaruru reported that a rumour had spread in the district that certain people had landed at Cape Cross and that the government should find out whether they were not American soldiers.[100]

Almost everywhere in the Police Zone, Garveyism created an air of expectancy which, combined with the disillusionment of blacks and the

underlying tensions of the society, produced a general attitude of defiance and persistent reports of an approaching revolt. For example, a police spy operating in the Okahandja district was told "that three days beyond Gobabis there are a lot of natives including Hereros, Bushmen and American negroes waiting for the white people to come there to start a fight. There are altogether about three hundred natives there with rifles, and some without rifles. They still want more arms. A Herero came from there to get recruits." From what he had heard during his tour of the district, the spy gained

> the impression that the natives intend to rise and that the action is being engineered by American negroes. The trouble if it arises will begin on the eastern border of the district when the rain starts. One of the causes of discontent is the sheep inspection and the branding law. Vaccination has also caused a great deal of discontent. The American negroes have advised them not to brand their stock, refuse to allow their sheep to be inspected, and refuse to be vaccinated.[101]

These impressions were supported by another police informer who toured the same district a few weeks later. He reported that a number of people had joined UNIA, had collected money for the organisation and were waiting for badges.[102] Yet another informer reported that at Okasise he had been told that "the Herero people want to fight but have no rifles".

> At Okamatero I met some Hereros who said they were waiting for the Americans, then they would start ... At Okambahe I found a Herero who said that the American People had written on the stone at Karibib. He said that the Americans had built houses at Windhoek, where they can come together ... At Waldau the Hereros spoke of the Americans giving a button, to keep until the time is come ... I think the American negroes are at the bottom of all the unrest, and that the Hereros, except for the American influence, would never think of fighting again, having once fought the Germans. The Hereros are very eager and anxious for the Americans to come.[103]

While millenarian movements have often been described as essentially irrational and backward looking, as Keller points out, they also represent "an attempt to cope with the present, to change it, and to create a more promising future".[104] Michael Barkun has argued that many millenarian movements can be seen as a response to disaster.

> Men cleave to hopes of imminent worldly salvation only when the hammerblows of disaster destroy the world they have known and render them susceptible to ideas which they would earlier have cast aside.[105]

Robert Edgar has used Barkun's framework to illustrate the context that gave rise to Wellington Butelezi's brand of Garveyism in the Transkei[106] - a form of Garveyism which shared many characterisitcs

with that of the Namibian countryside. The situation in Namibia in the early twenties provides some confirmation of the disaster hypothesis. Pre-colonial Namibian societies had been subjected to a series of traumas and disasters, including colonial conquest, the rinderpest epidemic of 1897, near annihilation and an unusually harsh form of forced labour. In the early 1920s disaster had culminated in the cruel shattering of the hopes created by the defeat of the Germans. That the millenarian tendencies of Garveyism should have taken root most firmly among the Hereros, also lends some credibility to the disaster hypothesis.

However, there are aspects of millenarianism other than the response to disaster which need to be considered. What is particularly striking about the Namibian situation in the 1920s is not merely the destructive (and disastrous) impact of colonialism on Namibian societies, but also the essential powerlessness of the colonised in the face of the organisational and military capabilities of the colonial state. It is clear that even those who had placed their faith in the "Americans" were aware that the colonial state could only be dislodged by military force, but it was equally apparent that indigenous communities did not on their own possess the means to take on the military power of the colonial state. For the most part Namibians did not passively regard the "Americans" as liberators, but rather as a catalyst which would help to bring about a general rising of the Namibians themselves. Seen against this background, the millenarian beliefs expressed by Namibian Garveyites appear less absurd or irrational. It may be argued that the political and military assertion of the Namibian people only became a practical possibility when external developments helped to balance the disproportionate power of the colonial state. That South African military forces had been able to dispose of the German colonial regime raised the possibility that a third external power - especially one perceived as being black - might be able to sweep away the new oppressors.

Another important aspect of millenarianism in Namibia is that it not only served as a means of boosting the morale of the colonised (and thus providing ideological support for active defiance of the administration and settlers), but also helped to undermine the morale and confidence of the settler and colonial state. While settlers and colonial officials scoffed at the absurdity of the beliefs that the "Americans" would come to the aid of black Namibians, there was a distinct uneasiness in their reception of these reports. There appears to be a certain relish in the way in which black Namibians divulged to white employers, police informers or colonial officials reports of imminent rebellions or "American" activities. There is something of a taunt in the example mentioned earlier that certain unknown people had landed at Cape Cross, and that the government "should see whether these were not Americans". The millenarian content of Namibian Garveyism may thus also be seen as a specific form of political struggle, or even as a means of extending the long tradition of military resistance in Namibia. George Balandier has argued that in certain contexts, religion may become "a smokescreen for politics".[107] In Namibia, millenarian assertions seem sometimes to approach a form of "psychological warfare".

During 1922-23 white fears of a general rising reached unprecedented heights. Reports of impending rebellions reached the administra-

tion from nearly all districts. Settlers maintained that conditions in 1922-23 were similar to those that preceded the rebellion of 1904 "when the former German Government made light of everything, even answering with threats until eventually the memorable days of January 1904, broke upon us".[108] In February 1922 the magistrate of Keetmanshoop appealed to the administration to supply the town with 300 rifles. He maintained that he was "satisfied there is mischief brewing - and if the Police were in a position to protect the public or even the public in a position to protect themselves, I would have delayed writing to you".[109] In the latter half of the same year, following the circulation of a letter calling for the unity of Ovambos, Namas, Damaras, Hereros and San, the management of the OMEG copper mine asked the administration for "at least two machine guns".[110]

Although the colonial authorities went out of their way to squash and discourage rumours or reports of impending rebellions, they were at times also infected by the alarm and insecurity that pervaded the country. The apparently panic-stricken response of the administration to the Bondelswart Rebellion is only one example of the tenuousness of the confident image the administration attempted to project.[111] In October 1922 Native Commissioner Manning was doubtful that a general rising would occur but foresaw the possibility of small "outbreaks" in isolated parts of the country after the rains set in.

> As submitted in previous Memoranda, the question of settled conditions in parts where no strong tribal control exists largely depends upon a sufficient number of Police and outposts for regular patrols strong enough to carry out the law and - in the absence of a small mobile force which seems very desirable - rifle associations in every district ... I would respectively venture the opinion that the means of enforcing all laws or promptly dealing with possible outbreaks in this large Territory are not adequate at the present time.[112]

During the same month the Secretary for South West Africa sent a coded telegramme to the magistrate of Okahandja requesting him to employ spies to ascertain the extent to which blacks in the districts were armed. It would be "bad policy" to open small stations and have men and equipment captured, he advised. Forces should be concentrated.

In a situation of this sort, the fine dividing line between the intention to create fear and insecurity among whites and the more active intention to encourage or bring about an actual rebellion is blurred. That between 1922 and 1925 there were two large-scale rebellions and a number of other smaller incidents of resistance and defiance, is on its own an indication that rumours of a general rising went beyond the mere attempt to frighten the settlers and the administration. The dilemma this posed for settlers and administration is expressed by the Rhenish missionary A Kuhlmann:

> If there was a question of an armed rising we would hardly find it out, for as long as the people talk big, there is no direct danger, but if the hidden spark of hostility contin-

> ues to smoulder on there is no saying when it may burst into flames.[113]

Indications of rebellion were apparent even before the Bondelswart revolt erupted in May 1922. The Bondelswarts had come close to an active rebellion in 1917, and thereafter there were frequent reports of unrest in the district of Warmbad. More important, there were indications that the Bondelswarts may have expected their rebellion to develop into a general rising. According to a police informer, talk of a general rising in the Herero stronghold of Okahandja had begun in 1921.[114] In February 1922 the magistrate of Keetmanshoop appealed to the administration for military assistance to meet what he termed his "strong suspicion of native unrest in this town and District". Although he was reproached by the Secretary for SWA for exaggerating the situation, the magistrate refused to back down, asserting that there was indeed a "restlessness among the Natives". To back up his claim, the magistrate stated that only a few days before there had been a "big meeting" in the Warmbad district (the district of the Bondelswarts). "Even the Hottentots from this district were notified to attend and their masters were unable to hold them back."[115]

In March 1922 the magistrate of Rehoboth also reported "unrest amongst the Hottentots in this country". A Baster field cornet had been told that the Namas were preparing for war. The Baster captain, Cornelius van Wyk, told the magistrate that "since the New Year he had noticed strange Hottentots in his area and that letters are passing between Hottentots here and others outside the District". A patrol sent out to investigate had found the suspected Namas in possession of Garveyist propaganda.[116] In his own account of the Bondelswart rebellion, the administrator, Gysbert Hofmeyr, maintained that fear of a general rebellion had prompted the administration into bombing this small and poorly armed community into submission. He claimed that after the outbreak of the revolt he received information which convinced him "of the possibility if not probability, of the whole country going ablaze and the history of German times being repeated unless a peaceful settlement was quickly announced ... or a decisive blow was quickly struck".[117] Further evidence to support this emerged after the rebellion. The Keetmanshoop police reported in October 1922, for example, that during the rebellion, Jan Hendriks, leader of the Veldskoendraers, had convened a meeting of Nama and Herero leaders in his area "with the object of assisting the Bondelswarts". It was also reported that another meeting had been held in the Berseba reserve where the Isaacs faction and the younger people had decided to help the Bondelswarts. It was only through the intervention of the collaborative Chief Goliath that they had been prevented from doing so.[118] According to evidence presented to the Bondelswarts Commission, the Bondelswart leader, Jacobus Christian, wielded considerable influence not only over his own people in the Warmbad area, but also over Namas at Berseba and Keetmanshoop. Shortly before the military campaign against the Bondelswarts, the Keetmanshoop Nama captain, Manasse, wrote to Christian asking what could be done about the pass laws.[119]

During the rebellion a Basuto who was employed by the municipality as a foreman of the Keetmanshoop black township addressed a meeting urging the people to attack the town and sieze arms and ammunition. In July a police patrol which had been sent out to arrest Jan Hendriks,

captain of the Veldskoendraers, and six others for failing to pay the dog tax, was fired upon. Hendriks was later sentenced to six years imprisonment for attempted murder.[120]

In the same month the magistrate of Gobabis was killed by a poisoned arrow during a skirmish between the police and a large group of San. The conflict with the San had begun in June 1922 when a police patrol was sent from Gobabis to investigate stock thefts on an isolated farm and was ambushed by a large group of San. In July the Gobabis magistrate set out with an armed patrol to locate the San and "negotiate" with them. At Epukiro the magistrate received information to the effect that the San under Zameko were going to fight and that they had collected large quantities of dried meat as provisions for the kriegsleute (soldiers). "They say straight out that they are going to make war." A missionary from Epukiro who had gone out to investigate the theft of some stock was compelled to beat a hasty retreat when he came under fire from the San. A few days later the magistrate and his patrol located the San and in the ensuing battle the magistrate was killed by a poisoned arrow.[121] After this incident the administration received information which connected the San revolt with a more general rising of blacks in the territory. According to one informant, two representatives of Samuel Maherero had entered the territory from Bechuanaland, and had toured the country, in order to discuss the strategy for a future rebellion. The tactics of 1904 had been inadequate because the Hereros had first attacked the farms, giving the whites in the towns the opportunity to mobilise. The mobility of the Hereros had also been restricted by their large herds of cattle. In preparation for the coming war, blacks should therefore sell their cattle and buy horses and donkeys, and when the time came they should attack the towns first. The messengers had also stated that the Damaras and Bushmen (San) would also be involved in the war.[122] Although this report may have been fabricated by the farmers of the district, who had long been agitating for police reinforcements, other information that emerged during this period lends some credibility to the report. For example, a missionary at Epukiro reported in the same month that the San were going to make war. In June 1922 the magistrate of Rehoboth reported that the Hereros were buying horses on a "large scale". This and other information led him to believe that the Hereros were preparing to rebel.[123] In September and October there were persistent reports linking a general rising to the eastern frontier, and including the San among the rebels. For example, one informant stated that Hereros, San and "American Negroes" had gathered on the eastern frontier to prepare for a war.[124] Another referred to the killing of the Gobabis magistrate adding that

> (t)hose were native people who did that, and all natives are the same. We can easily get rifles ...[125]

As the rainy season approached, talk of an impending rebellion became more persistent. In Omaruru, for example, a police informer stated that

> (t)he talk is that if there is any trouble here, they, the Hereros, are to let Samuel Maherero know; they also state that they can get guns and ammunition in a day. This talk

> is general in the location among Hereros including men and women.

The informer went on to say that he had heard "a little while back" that Herero emissaries had been sent from Windhoek into the area occupied by the Bondelswarts.

> The Hereros, the Rehoboth Bastards and the Bondelswarts are on friendly terms. The Hereros say that the Bastards have declined to give up their arms to the whites and that the Hereros would stand by the Bastards in trouble.[126]

Another informant from the same district stated that meetings had taken place from the Okahandja district in the centre of the country to the Grootfontein district in the far north. Whenever the Hereros met on the farms, "their first and general conversation" was about the rising.[127]

However, the general rising which had been so widely anticipated in 1922-23, failed to materialise. The spirit of insurrection instead spent itself in more limited acts of defiance and resistance which only served to impress on the people the preponderant power of the state. In various parts of the country blacks defied colonial regulations relating to branding, sheep inspection and compulsory vaccination.[128] In the Rehoboth district a group of Namas who had not been allocated a reserve simply moved onto private farms with their stock, and threatened to "kill any policeman who was sent to turn them off".[129] By 1924 the optimism and militancy of 1922-23 was already giving way to resignation and passivity. At the beginning of 1924 the administrator was able to report that "(n)o rumours of Herero or other native risings have been circulated as has been the case in practically every preceding year".[130] Acts of resistance still occurred, but these were more sporadic and isolated.

None of the other organisations established in Namibia during this period were able to match the influence and popular appeal of the UNIA, and all failed to spread beyond the small, and relatively privileged, populations of the towns. The ICU, first launched in Luderitz in December 1920, was from the start dominated by South African immigrants, who, like the West Africans, formed a distinctive segment of the Namibian population and received preferential treatment from the authorities. In terms of an administration circular sent out to municipal authorities in 1922, for example, it was pointed out that "Cape Coloured persons and people of that class" did not fall under the pass laws, the curfew regulations, and the municipal by-laws which required blacks to keep off the side walks of certain Namibian towns. With the exception of the prohibition against their obtaining liquor, "these people are entitled to be placed on an equal footing with Europeans in so far as the law is concerned".[131] The circular also suggested that "wherever possible separate areas should be reserved for coloured persons at some distance from the ordinary locations". In general a "liberal and progressive attitude" was advised in regard to all blacks in urban areas. That these perceptions of differential status were shared by the leaders of the ICU and UNIA in Luderitz is made explicit in a report by the Native Commissioner for SWA on a meeting with ICU and UNIA leaders in March 1922.

> It was noticed that although this deputation seemed concerned about the welfare of visitors - presumably natives as a rule - they said they thought their class should not have to live in proximity to raw natives.[132]

The ICU in Luderitz never got much beyond attempts to maintain the organisation and the occasional articulation of grievances of the privileged urban groups. As such, it did not represent a great threat to the authorities, whose major anxiety was that it might spread to the contract labourers on the mines or to farm labourers.[133] Measures were therefore taken to isolate the ICU from labourers beyond the townships, and office holders were warned to restrict their activities to the "educated class".[134] The organisation was also contained by restricting the movement of organisers within the territory, and isolating the two Namibian branches from headquarters in South Africa.[135] Another major tactic of the administration was to encourage splits in these organisations. Here it was clearly aided by the suspicion that delevoped among local blacks of the foreign origins and privileged status of expatriate blacks in both the ICU and the UNIA. The clearest example of this strategy was the formation of the South West African National Congress (SWANC) in Luderitz in the latter half of 1922.

The major catalyst for the establishment of the SWANC in Luderitz was S M Bennett Ncwana, a rather strange figure who flits in and out of black politics in the Cape and SWA.[136] Ncwana visited Luderitz in the latter half of 1922 in order to launch the organisation and held the position of "chief organiser". According to the Luderitz Native Affairs Department which had interrogated members of the new organisation, the SWANC "was the outcome of dissatisfaction on the part of SA and SWA natives with the IC Union (chiefly dominated by Capeboys) and the UNIA Association (introduced and directed by West Indian and West Coast natives) which is continually calling for funds for American propaganda".

> The local natives have apparently realised that they were being made use of by the others and now wish to look after their own interests. It is difficult to ascertain what their aims in this direction were except that they were desirous of helping one another.[137]

According to Ncwana, the major grievances of Namibian blacks were the "unsympathetic administration, no outlet for discussing native grievances, unreasonable taxation considering the absence of profitable work, and the absence of native educational facilities". Ncwana was apparently also "emphatic in his professions of being desirous to work in harmony with the authorities".

> "I have been a moving spirit" he said, "in the native movement, but never an agitator. I did adopt an aggressive policy in my paper, but I found that it was not judicious. I dropped the paper and tried to start afresh on the lines of educating European opinion."[138]

Although the SWANC planned to adopt the constitution of the SANNC, it was intended that the Namibian congress would be an entirely separate body and not a branch of the South African organisation.[139]

The administration was not slow to realise the potential usefulness of an organisation like the SWANC to its attempts to curb organised black resistance in the territory. In a letter informing the administration in Windhoek of the formation of SWANC, the officer in charge of Native Affairs in Luderitz clearly outlined the strategy which the administration was to follow with considerable success.

> In the absence of any law forbidding the formation of native unions the most this department can possibly do to minimize the danger which may arise from such unions is to endeavour to split the membership into different factions - as has been done here - but there is little doubt that determined efforts will be made by one of the older bodies to eventually bring them under the same banner again ...
>
> It is probable that a purely native Congress can be handled more easily than the UNIA or the ICU - especially with a few Union natives, with an ingrained respect for the white man's authority at the head of affairs - and, if the Congress were taken under the wing of the Government, at its formation, with some unobtrusive, but effectual, provisions for Government supervision it might be a good policy.[140]

These views were strongly endorsed by both the Secretary of the Protectorate and the Native Commissioner. The latter observed that "under official guidance this new association ... might prove very useful in upsetting dangerous, irresponsible foreign doctrines". He added that the "combination of native races in SWA" had been "unknown in former years" and that this was causing alarm among white residents of the territory.[141]

Although documentation of this period of the ICU in Namibia is at best sketchy, it would appear that the Luderitz branch did not survive the various problems it experienced in 1923-24. As for the Keetmanshoop branch, there is no evidence that it existed in anything but name. UNIA experienced similar difficulties. The Native Affairs Department reported in September 1923 that local blacks had withdrawn from the UNIA branch in Windhoek and that no meetings had been held "for some time". The conviction of Marcus Garvey in New York on a charge of fraud may have contributed to the decline of the association, it was suggested.[142] The Luderitz branch was experiencing similar difficulties, and in 1924 the administrator reported that the Luderitz branches of both UNIA and ICU had "practically died out and it is only the South-West Africa National Congress which still has some adherents and occasionally holds meetings".[143] It is not known how long the SWANC survived, but it appears to have made no significant contribution, and is unlikely to have lasted beyond 1925.

The defiance and militancy which reached a peak in the 1922-23 period may have died down completely if it had not been for the Rehoboth rebellion of 1925. Although this rebellion revolved around the essentially "internal" issue of local autonomy for the Baster community at Rehoboth, it once again helped to provide a focus for the more generalised and dispersed resistance of other communities - and in

particular for the Hereros. It further involved issues which transcended the interests and concerns of the immediate community.[144] As a semi-autonomous community, the Rehoboth Gebiet represented the last refuge for black stock-owners from the labour extractive system that was taking shape in Namibia during the early 1920s. Because the Rehoboth community was itself undergoing a process of impoverishment, the renting of pasturage to black stock-owners provided an important source of income to the Basters.[145] Proclamation 11 of 1922, which made squatting illegal, was not applied to Rehoboth, and it was not until the Baster Agreement of 1923 that the authorities obtained the legal means to control squatting within the Gebiet. However, the resistance of Baster rebels who opposed the agreement prevented the administration from taking action against squatters, and it was only after the suppression of the Rehoboth rebellion in 1925 that African tenants of the Basters were prosecuted within the Gebiet. The magistrate of Rehoboth pointed out after the rebellion that the prosecutions of squatters

> which was hardly possible under the old system of control by the Raad, has certainly had the effect of stimulating the labour supply and driving out loafers as well as preventing the Gebied from becoming a refuge for deserters.[146]

It was clearly in the interests of black squatters in Rehoboth to exert every available influence towards retaining or extending Baster autonomy. In terms of size of population and stock-ownership alone, the Africans in Rehoboth formed a significant group. In 1925 the population of the Gebiet numbered 3,500 Basters, 2,500 Africans and about thirty whites. Between 1925 and 1928, 230 Herero families were removed from Rehoboth, taking with them 8,000 head of large stock and 25,000 head of small stock.[147]

For the Hereros outside Rehoboth, the Basters rebels also offered potential allies against the colonial regime - particularly as the Rehoboth Burghers had retained most of their arms. Already in 1922 there were reports that the Herero leaders in Windhoek had established contact with the Basters.

> The Hereros say that the Bastards have declined to give up their arms to the whites and that the Hereros should stand by the Bastards in trouble.[148]

These shared interests between Hereros and Basters became particularly important during the Rehoboth rebellion because the rebellion coincided with the administration's attempts to remove the Hereros from the "temporary" reserves in the central districts of the territory to the newly established reserves in the Sandveld. The Herero leaders had strongly resisted the move, arguing, with some justification, that the allocated area could support neither them nor their stock, that it was "a country only good for wild beasts".[149]

By all accounts Africans, and particularly the Hereros, in the Gebiet responded enthusiastically to the cause of the Baster rebels. It is significant, for example, that more non-Basters than Basters were arrested, and finally prosecuted, during the culmination of the rebellion. Of the 632 people so arrested, 289 were Basters, 218 Herer-

os, seventy five Namas and fifty Damaras.[150] In his annual report, the administrator expressed concern about the role of non-Basters in the rebellion.

> The most serious aspect of the attitude of the opposition in Rehoboth, not only in this instance, but during the past eighteen months, has been the effect on the natives who have apparently come to regard the Gebiet as a sort of haven where no law exits ... the attitude of natives incited by the opposition section was openly hostile ... It follows that the natives do not wish to see our laws enforced in the Gebiet.[151]

The Rehoboth magistrate reported that he had received information to the effect that the Hereros were in favour of attacking the police several days before the South African forces moved into Rehoboth.[152] Some months before the Rehoboth rebellion reached a head, the administration feared that a general rebellion might break out in the territory. In December 1925 the Administrator's Office sent an urgent communique to all magistrates in the territory warning them that "the administration has received reports of native unrest which has been accentuated by the attitude of the Rehoboth Community as a result of Proclamation No. 31 of 1924". It was believed that "native emissaries" had been sent from one district to another and that "secret communications" were being exchanged. While the administration cautioned against alarm, the magistrates were instructed to keep a close watch on all "native movements" and to submit a weekly report on developments in each district. The magistrates were also urged to establish "intelligence systems" to facilitate the removal of whites from isolated rural areas should a rising occur.[153]

Towards the end of March 1925 the head of the military forces in the territory urged the Union Government to proclaim martial law in the Rehoboth district, arguing that if resistance in the Gebiet was "not immediately checked by extreme and drastic measures, conflagration may rapidly spread over the whole country and place us in position to face a serious situation which under present adverse conditions will be difficult to cope with".[154] A few days after the suppression of the rebellion, reports continued to reach the administration of a possible rising of the Hereros. The magistrate reported on 7 April that he had received information that the Hereros intended to rise. He had been unable to ascertain the date of this rising, but "gathered that it would be in about three weeks time."[155]

Perhaps the clearest evidence of the administration's fear of a general uprising were the measures adopted by the military in other parts of the territory after the suppression of the Rehoboth rebellion. Herero witnesses maintained that the aircraft used to intimidate Rehoboth rebels, not only flew over Rehoboth but also over the Herero reserves of Orumba.[156] Following the suppression of the Rehoboth rising, the administration pressed the Union government to sanction "bombing demonstrations" in selected areas throughout the territory including Ovamboland. The proposal was at first vetoed by the Minister of Defence, probably because of the international outcry that followed the bombing of the Bondelswarts in 1922. The administrator continued to insist on the importance of these "demonstrations" and

permission was finally granted.[157] The aim of these "bombing demonstrations" was to impress upon potential rebels the great power of the state, and thus avert a possible general rising. The "bombing demonstrations" were used, for example, to impress upon leaders of the Orumba "temporary reserve" the consequences of continuing to resist the move to their new reserve in the Kalahari sandveld.[158] They also appear to have served their purpose in other areas. The magistrate of Keetmanshoop, for example, reported that he had taken "advantage of the presence of the Hereros in Tses Reserve at Kl. Vaalgras on the occasion of the Bombing demonstration, to address them on the question of branding and am glad to say that they all without exception are having their cattle branded."[159]

CONCLUSION

Essentially there were three major sets of factors which accounted for the failure of this first phase of popular resistance in Namibia: the fragmented nature of the Namibian social formation, the composition and nature of political organisations established during this period, and the preponderant power of the colonial state.

Largely on account of ecological conditions, Namibia has a relatively small population scattered over an area which is two-thirds that of South Africa. The vast distances and scattered population have provided a major obstacle to national organisation throughout Namibian history. However, in the early 1920s the Namibian population was still in the process of recovering from the shattering impact of the colonial wars and repression of indigenous institutions of the early twentieth century. Although they were largely dispossessed, the people of the Police Zone lacked the social integration to constitute a proletariat. The larger part of the population was scattered among the various farms and in small and badly organised rural communities. The urban population was small even in relation to the total population, and tightly controlled by the colonial state. A foreign component of the black population, with distinct interests of its own, played a dominant role in the urban areas and added further diversity (and disunity) to the Namibian social formation.

The division of the territory into the Police Zone and northern area placed additional obstacles in the way of national organisation, and effectively excluded the more densely populated northern areas from the political movement that developed in the Police Zone. Similarly, migrant workers from the northern areas were effectively isolated from the rest of the population by the contract labour and compound systems. However, despite the isolation of the north and co-option of tribal leaders into a system of indirect rule, there are indications that some of the Ovambos were also influenced by the spirit of rebellion that permeated the southern and central regions. During the period of intense resistance towards the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1923, Ipumbu, king of the Ukuambi Ovambos, issued ammunition to his people and ordered them to guard the Onolongo and Ondangua routes into his country in order to prevent whites from entering or passing through his territory. There were also reports that the Ukuambi were selling stock to obtain ammunition and gun powder. In December 1922 an Ukuambi headman who had quarrelled with Ipumbu informed the administration that the Ukuambi king had been

sending agents into the Police Zone in order to acquire both arms and information.

> They (Ipumbu's agents) invariably go without passes and are clever in evading the police. They are all after buying rifles and ammunition. He does not send a few at a time, twenty to thirty are always away south. They bring him stupid information such as "this Government is finished, we hear all over that the Americans are coming to take this country."[160]

Early in 1923 the Portuguese representative at Namakunde on the border with Angola stated that he had received reports "that natives in Damaraland were making preparations with Ovambos and natives in our territory to rise against our and your Governments".[161] Earlier there had been a rumour in the Outjo district that the Hereros were obtaining arms from Ovamboland.[162]

In spite of these and other, earlier-mentioned signs of co-operation, the anti-colonial movement in the territory never achieved the degree of coordination necessary to pose a serious threat to the colonial state. On each occasion the authorities were able to isolate and deal swiftly with manifestations of resistance, thus preventing further outbreaks elsewhere in the territory.

The structures in Namibian political organisations during this period were also unsuited to the task of leading effective and unified resistance to the colonial state. Both the UNIA and ICU were externally-based organisations, and this allowed the authorities to isolate the Namibian branches from their headquarters in Cape Town and New York. Furthermore, the millenarian content of Garveyism tended to deflect Namibian resistance away from internal organisation towards a hopeless dream of external intervention. Most damaging, however, was the class basis of the leaders of both organisations. Garvey's organisation essentially represented the interests of the Negro petty bourgeoisie, and it was therefore to be expected that his economic nationalism would attract members of a similar class in Namibia. Comparable difficulties were associated with the leadership of the ICU.[163] Like their counterparts in South Africa and the United States, the Luderitz leaders of UNIA and the ICU occupied a relatively privileged, if somewhat marginal (and therefore ambivalent), position within the Namibian social formation. That these leaders were also predominantly foreign made their privileged position in the community particularly visible and helped to generate resentment among the local population. Even more important, where this embryonic class secured control over one of the organisations, it ensured that its own interests would be given precedence. Finally, internal cleavages within both organisations provided the administration with an ideal opportunity to drive a wedge between their different factions.

In the final analysis, however, it was the disproportionate military and organisational resources of the state that brought about the abandonment of this phase of resistance in Namibia. In particular the aeroplane changed the whole complexion of guerrilla warfare in the territory and provided a powerful symbol of colonial supremacy with which to intimidate the colonised. Aircraft had been used not only to effect the swift suppression of the Bondelswart rebellion and to in-

timidate the Rehoboth rebels, but also to impress upon other indigenous communities the military power of the colonial state. While military technology may under most circumstances be less important than political and ideological means of control,[164] the analysis in the first part of this paper suggested that between 1915 and 1925 the colonial state was still in the process of consolidating its hold over the indigenous communities of Namibia. It was only after 1925, with the establishment of reserves, the co-option of indigenous and urban elites, and the further elaboration of the legal superstructure, that the colonial state was able to exercise effective control over the colonised population. Given the circumstances of the early 1920s, the colonial state was forced to rely more heavily on its "instruments of violence". The introduction of aircraft was therefore crucial in preventing localised outbreaks of rebellion from spreading to other parts of the territory. It may be argued that although the circumstances and consciousness of most of the black population favoured a general rising, it lacked the organisational structures necessary to plan and coordinate such a rising. This meant that a general rising would only be possible if a specific community took the initiative in leading the rebellion and was able to hold out long enough for other communities to join it in the struggle. The administration clearly realised this, and therefore acted swiftly and brutally to suppress both the Bondelswart and Rehoboth rebellions.

Without the resources to challenge the enormous power of the colonial state, overt resistance ceased to be a practical or rational alternative, and the colonised could do little but wait for some development to change the balance of power in their favour. For the next twenty years of Namibian history, resistance in the police zone took largely covert and symbolic forms.

NOTES

(Except where indicated, all archival sources used are from the State Archives, Windhoek).

1. See, for example, G L M Lewis, The Bondelswarts rebellion of 1922. MA thesis, Rhodes University, 1977; G M Cockram, South West African mandate. Cape Town: Juta, 1976; R Freislich, The last tribal war. Cape Town: C Struik, 1964; P Pearson, 'The Rehoboth rebellion', in P Bonner (ed.) Working Papers in Southern African Studies, Vol. two. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981.

2. Z Ngavirue, Political parties and interest groups in South West Africa: a study of a plural society. Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1973; SWAPO, To be born a nation: the liberation struggle for Namibia. London: Zed Press, 1981.

3. "Truppenspieler" movements, such as the Herero Otjiserandu or "Red Band" organisation, were particularly active during the inter-war period. Sharing many of the characterisitcs of the Beni societies of east and central Africa, the Namibian "Truppenspielers" combined features of pre-colonial and colonial societies in para-military organisations which provided an outlet for both protest and recreation by the assumption of military ranks, uniforms and drilling. See, for example, Ngavirue, op. cit.

4. J S Coleman, 'Nationalism in tropical Africa'. American Political Science Review, 48, 2, 1954, pp. 404-426, for example, used an explicitly "modernisation" perspective in this early discussion of "primary" and "secondary" resistance. The relationship between the primary/secondary distinction and the "tradition-modernity" dichotomy is particularly evident in this article.

5. B Davidson, Africa in modern history. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978, pp. 150-153.

6. T Hodgkin, Nationalism in colonial Africa. New York: New York UP, 1957, pp. 113-114.

7. E Kedourie, Nationalism in Asia and Africa. London: Frank Cass, 1971, p. 106.

8. P Worsley, The trumpet shall sound. London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1968.

9. E Hobsbawn, Primitive rebels. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1959.

10. A Isaacson, 'Social banditry in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Mozambique, 1894-1907: an expression of early peasant protest.' Journal of Southern African Studies, 4, 1977/78, pp. 1-30.

11. C van Onselen, Studies in the social and economic history of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914, Vol. two: New Nineveh. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1982, pp. 171-201.

12. S Cross, World War I and social movements in East and Central Africa. Paper delivered at conference on Africa and World War I, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, March 1977.

13. For example, S J Schoeman, Suidwes-Afrika onder Militere Bestuur 1915-1920, MA thesis, UNISA, 1975; I Goldblatt, History of South West Africa. Cape Town: Juta and Company, 1971, pp 206-209. While Schoeman's study is the most comprehensive, it is essentially descriptive and fails to provide an adequate analysis of the transition process.

14. See, for example, D Innes, 'Imperialism and the national struggle in Namibia.' Review of African Political Economy, No. 9, 1978.

15. South West African People's Organisation, To be born a nation. London: Zed Press, 1981, p. 20.

16. M Scott, In face of fear. Johannesburg: M Scott, 1948, p. 37.

17. H Drechsler, Let us die fighting. London: Zed Press, 1980, p. 248.

18. R Moorsom, Colonisation and proletarianisation. University of Sussex, MA thesis, 1973, p. 74. Most of these studies provide little, if any, evidence to back up their claims: an indication that the proposition is regarded as self-evident.

19. Rathbone, 'World War I and Africa: Introduction', Journal of African History, 19, 1, 1978, p. 4. See also R W Imishue, South West Africa: an international problem. Institute of Race Relations, 1965, pp. 2-5.

20. M H Swanson, 'South West Africa in Trust, 1915-1939', in Gifford, P and Louis, W R (eds.) Britain and Germany in Africa. New Haven: Yale UP, pp. 643-647.

21. University of Witwatersrand Library, J C Smuts papers, Gorges - Botha, 21/1/18.

22. See for example, E H L Gorges, Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their treatment by Germany. London: HMSO, CD 9146, 1918, p. 6.

23. Imishue, op. cit., p. 15.

24. This is clearly illustrated by the Administration's quandary in 1916 when it decided to send a military expedition against the defiant Ovambo King, Mandume. Fears that the German settlers in the south of the territory might rebel while a large contingent of SA troops was engaged in the north, prompted military administrator Gorges to telegraph Smuts for reinforcements from the Union.

25. Report on the Natives of SWA, op. cit., p. 158-159. See also H Bley, South West Africa under German Rule. London Heinemann, 1967 and H Drechsler, Let us die fighting. London: 2nd ed. Press, 1980.
26. SWA, Native Affairs Memorandum, 1916.
27. Ibid., p. 8.
28. Ibid., p. 10.
29. UG 22-17, Papers relating to certain cases dealt with by the Special Criminal Court, 1917.
30. ADM 567/2. For example the Verband der Verwertungs Vereiningungen of Windhoek complained (to the Secretary, 7/1/20) that some farmers lived more than 200 kms from the nearest magistracy and might be compelled to spend 8-14 days away from their farms.
31. ADM 567-2, Magistrate, Malthohe - Secretary, 23/6/20; Deputy-Commissioner - Secretary, 7/5/20.
32. ADM 567-2, Deputy-Commissioner - Secretary, 7/5/20; SWA Police Warmbad - Magistrate, Warmbad, 26/7/20; Magistrate, Maltahohe - Secretary 23/6/20.
33. ADM 567/2, Magistrate, Gibeon - Secretary, 3/1/20; See also Magistrate, Windhoek - Secretary, 21/8/20.
34. Native Affairs Memorandum 1916, op. cit., 1916; Administrator's reports, 1924 and 1925; ADM 263/3.
35. ADM 567/2 eg. Verband der Verwertungs Vereiningungen - Secretary, 7/1/20; Agricultural Society, Karibib - Magistrate, 30/4/16.
36. ADM 567/2, Administrator - Acting Prime Minister, 8/4/19; ADM 567/6 Magistrate, Okahandja - Secretary, 18/11/17.
37. ADM 567/2, Magistrate, Outjo - Secretary, 30/6/20.
38. ADM 567/2, Magistrate, Okahandja - Secretary, 9/3/20.
39. State Archives, Pretoria, PM 214/8/1916, Administrator's report for 1915-16; ADM 13/23.
40. ADM 567/2, Magistrate, Otjiwarongo - Secretary, 9/6/20.
41. ADM 567/2, Deputy Commissioner - Secretary, 7/5/20; Magistrate, Maltahohe - Secretary, 23/6/20.
42. ADM 567/2.
43. ADM 567/2, Magistrate, Otjiwarongo - Secretary, 9/6/20.
44. ADM 567/2, Secretary - Acting Primb Minister, undated.

45. Testimony of Fridoline Kazombiaze, M Scott, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

46. About half of the German population of Namibia, consisting mainly of administrative and military officials, was repatriated in 1919. The remaining Germans were incorporated into the settler population and provision made for them to assume South African citizenship. (See, for example, Union of South Africa, Administrator's report 1939, UG 30-40, 1949, pp. 14-16). In 1926 the SWA Legislative Assembly adopted a resolution to the effect that Copies of the 1918 Imperial Blue book, Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their treatment by Germany should be removed from Official files and libraries and destroyed. This proposal was later implemented (H Drechsler, Let us die fighting. London: Zed Press, 1980, pp. 10-11).

47. See, R H Davies, Captial, state and white labour in South Africa 1900-1960. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1979; D O'Meara, Volkskapitalisme. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1983.

48. Both, Karibib - J Smuts, 2/6/15; W K Hancock and J van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers. London: Cambridge University Press, 1966, p. 639.

49. University of the Witwatersrand Library Smuts Papers, A 842/B1, Ballot, D W F E, Memorandum, 20/7/1935.

50. See, for example, Administrator's reports, 1920 and 1921.

51. See, for example, Administrator's report, 1921, p. 5.

52. See Ballot memorandum, op. cit.

53. SWA Administration, Report of the Land Settlement Commission, Windhoek 1935. See also A312, Item 25, 'Land Settlement in SWA'.

54. ADM 2163/3 (1), Native Affairs, Windhoek - Deputy Secretary, 10/7/16.

55. Administrator's report, 1921f f. 14.

56. Administrator's report, 1925, f. 59.

57. Administrator's report, 1922, UG 1923, p. 13 and Administrator's report, 1923, UG 21-24, 1924, p. 13.

58. Administrator's report, 1924, UG 1925, p. 24 and Administrator's report, 1925, UG 26-26. 1926, p. 29.

59. Administrator's report, 1924, UG 33-25, 1925, p. 24.

60. Administrator's report, 1924, p. 21.

61. SWA, Report of the Native Reserves Commissioner, LA 2-28, Windhoek, 1928.

82. SWAA A50/31/1, cutting from Negro World, 8/10/21.

83. SWAA A50/31/1, Magistrate, Luderitz - Town Clerk, Luderitz, 19/11/21; ADM C248, "Coloured and Native People, Luderitz: Alleged Grievances", 24/4/22.

84. See, for example, ADM 152/C248, W Andrianse - C Kadalie, 26/1/22.

85. SWAA A50/30/1, Native Affairs, Windhoek - Secretary, 22/11/22; Liebig's Co. - Secretary, 20/1/22.

86. A312, Item 77, Executive, UNIA, Windhoek - Major, Windhoek, 2/1/22.

87. SWAA A50/31/1, Native Affairs, Windhoek - Secretary, 22/11/22. It was men like Kutako, Mungunda and Kapuuo who provided the links between the first phase of populist resistance in the 1920s and the creation of a mass-based nationalist movement in the late 1950s.

88. SWAA A50/31/1, David Zwartbooi et al. - "The Government", undated. (Date of translation, 30/11/22).

89. SWAA A50/31/1, H Drew, Windhoek - Secretary, 10/11/22.

90. SWAA A50/31/1, Native Affairs, Windhoek - Secretary, 22/11/22.

91. SWAA A50/31/1, H Drew, Windhoek - Secretary, 10/11/22.

92. A 312, Item 77, Headley, Luderitz - G R Hofmeyr, Windhoek, 6/2/22; Executive, UNIA, Windhoek - G R Hofmeyr, 17/2/22; SWAA A50/31/1, Headley, Luderitz - Abraham, Swakopmund, 25/3/22; Headley, Luderitz - Hailand, Usakos, 14/11/22.

93. SWAA A50/3/1, Headley, Luderitz - William Abraham, Swakopmund, 23/5/22.

94. SWAA A50/31/1, H Drew, Windhoek - Secretary, 10/11/22.

95. SWAA A50/31/1, Headley, Luderitz - J Hailand, Usakos, 14/11/22.

96. Algemeine Zeitung, 9/3/24, cited by Z Ngavirue, Political parties and interest groups in South West Africa: a study of a plural society. Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1972, p. 256. Headley was quoting here from the "General Objectives" of the UNIA constitution.

97. SWAA A50/30/1, Native Commissioner - Secretary, 11/7/22.

98. SWAA A50/31/1, SWA Police, Usakos - Magistrate, Karibib, 26/10/22; SWA Police, Karibib, 19/10/22.

99. SWAA A396/4, "Report of Native Corporal Jacob", 6/11/22.

100. H Vedder, 'The Herero', in C Hahn, H Vedder and L Fourie, The Native Tribes of South West Africa. Cape Town: Cape Times, 1928, p. 163; SWAA A396/13, Statement by A Kuhlmann, Omaruru, 11/10/22.

101. SWAA A396/4, Statement by David Ngxibi, 3/10/22.

102. SWAA A396/4, "Report of Native Corporal Jacob", 27/10/22.

103. SWAA A396/4, Statement by John Retsang, 31/10/22.

104. B B Keller, 'Millenarianism and resistance: the Xhosa cattle-killing'. Journal of Asia and African Studies, 13, 1-2, 1978, p. 96.

105. M Barkun, Disaster and the millenium. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974, p. 1.

106. R Edgar, 'Garveyism in Africa: Dr Wellington and the American movement in the Transkei.' Ufahamu, 6, 3, 1976, pp. 31-57.

107. Quoted by Keller, op. cit. p. 97.

108. SWAA A396/4, Letter to editor, Lander-Zeitung, 11/10/22. See also SWAA A396/13, Statement by A Kuhlmann, 11/10/22.

109. SWAA A396/10, Magistrate, Keetmanshoop - Secretary, 2/2/22.

110. SWAA A396/4, Native Commissioner - Acting Secretary, 12/10/22.

111. See, Bondelswarts rebellion report, op. cit.

112. SWAA A396/4, Secretary - Magistrate, Okahandja, 13/10/22.

113. SWAA A396/13, Statement by A Kuhlmann, 11/10/22.

114. SWAA A396/13, Statement by David Kobase/Gowaseb, 17/10/22.

115. SWAA A396/10, Magistrate, Keetmanshoop - Secretary, 2/2/22 and 10/2/22; W Theron - A J Waters, 21/2/22. The misgivings of the Keetmanshoop magistrate were justified when only two months later the Bondelswarts actively rebelled against the administration.

116. SWAA A396/6, Magistrate, Rehoboth - Secretary, 14/3/22 and 18/3/22.

117. Union of South Africa, Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts rising, 1922. UG 30-22, pp. 4-5.

118. SWAA A396/10, SWA Police, Keetmanshoop - SWA Police, Windhoek, 30/11/22.

119. G L M Lewis, op. cit., p. 196.

120. Union of South Afria, Administrator's report, 1922, UG 21-23, p. 25; SWAA A396/10, SWA Police, Keetmanshoop - SWA Police, Windhoek, 27/7/22; Magistrate, Keetmanshoop - Secretary, 25/7/22.

121. SWAA A50/25, Acting Magistrate, Gobabis: 'Report on the Bushmen trouble in the Gobabis district', 17/9/22; SWA A50/25, Van Reyneveld, Epukiro - Karalowa, 12/7/22.

122. SWAA A50/25, Statement by Max Hallmann, Gobabis, 17/8/22.

123. SWAA A50/25, Magistrate, Gobabis - Secretary, 17/8/22; SWAA A396/6, Magistrate, Rehoboth - Secretary, 29/6/22.

124. SWAA A396/A, Statement by David Ngxibi, Okahandja, 3/10/22.

125. SWAA A396/4, Magistrate, Okahandja - Secretary, 1/9/22. Hunter - gatherers like the San, have generally received little attention in the history of southern Africa. For example, W G Clarence-Smith, in his study of southern Angola, maintains that hunter-gatherers were "of negligible historical importance". (Slaves, peasants and capitalists in southern Angola 1840-1926. London: Cambridge University Press, 1979, p. 72.)

126. SWAA A396/13, Statement by William Kaapnaar, Omaruru, 16/10/22.

127. SWAA A396/13, Statement by David Kobase/Gowaseb, Omaruru, 17/10/22.

128. See, for example, SWAA A219/2; A219/6; A219/12; A396/4; A396/13.

129. SWAA A396/6, Magistrate, Rehoboth-Secretary, 7/12/22 and 6/1/23.

130. Union of South Africa, Administrator's report, 1923, UG 21-24, p. 12.

131. ADM C248, Circular to all municipalities: "Control of Natives and Coloured Persons in Urban Areas", 20/7/22. Initially, the administration regard the ICU as an organisation representing Cape Coloureds, and early documents even referred to it as the "Industrial Coloured Worker's Union".

132. ADM C248, "Coloured and Native People, Luderitz: Alleged grievances", 24/4/22.

133. ADM C248, CID, Windhoek - Secretary, 29/12/20; Magistrate, Luderitz - Secretary, 5/1/20 (letter misdated, should be 1921); Native Affairs, Luderitz - Secretary, 25/5/21.

134. ADM C248, Natives Luderitz - Protsec, 31/12/20.

135. Clements Kadalie, for example, was repeatedly refused permission to enter the territory.

136. Ncwana was an early and fairly prominent member of the ICU, who moved periodically between the ICU and its rival ICWU. After defecting from the ICWU, Ncwana joined the ICU for a short period before deserting this organisation in 1921 and launching a bitter attack on it in his newspaper, The Black Man. Later he again joined the ICWU and helped found the African Land Settlement Scheme with the object "to assist the Government by inducing natives living in towns to settle on the land". At other times Ncwana also acted as the general organiser of the Cape Native Voters Association which mobilized black voters for the South African party, and according to Kadalie helped write the election literature for the Nationalist candidate Professor Schoeman who defeated Maragaret Ballinger in 1949.

137. ADM C248, Native Affairs, Luderitz - Secretary, 7/9/22.

138. SWAA A50/13/1, undated report from Windhoek Advertiser (see fn 65, above).

139. ADM C248, Native Affairs, Luderitz - Secretary, 19/9/22.

140. ADM C248, Native Affairs, Luderitz - Secretary, 7/9/22.

141. ADM C248, Internal Memo., C N M - Secretary, 14/9/22; Secretary - Native Affairs, Luderitz, 29/9/22.

142. SWAA A396/5, Memorandum, Native Affairs, Windhoek, 28/9/23.

143. Administrator's report, 1924, pp. 27-28.

144. For further information about the Rehoboth Gebiet and the dispute that led up to the rebellion, see P Pearson, op. cit.; J D Viall, The History of the Rehoboth Basters. Memeo, 27/10/59.

145. Pearson, op. cit., pp. 33-44.

146. SWAA A50/6, Magistrate, Rehoboth - Native Commissioner, 3/9/26.

147. Vial, op. cit., p. 46.

148. SWAA A396/13, Statement by William Kaapnaar, 16/10/22.

149. Scott, op. cit., p. 59.

150. Administrator's report, 1924, p. 13.

151. Ibid., p. 12.

152. A312, Item 79, Manning, Rehoboth - Administrator, 11/4/25.

153. A312, Item 79, Administrator'S Office - All magistrates, 20/12/24.

154. A312, Item 79, Secretary - Hoofd., Cape Town, 30/3/25.

155. A312, Item 79, Magistrate, Grootfontein - Secretary, 7/4/25.

156. Scott, op. cit., p. 62.

157. A312, Item 79, Administrator - Minister of Defence, Cape Town, undated; Secretary, Windhoek - Hoofd., Gibeon, 9/4/25; Hoofd., Cape Town - Administrator, 11/4/25.

158. Scott, op. cit., p. 63.

159. SWAA A219/2 (2) Magistrate, Keetmanshoop - Native Commissioner, 25/4/25.

160. A312, Item 39, Statement by Ukuambi refugee headman, Festus, Ondonga, 28/12/22.

161. SWAA A396/15, Portuguese Representative, Namakunde - Union Government representative, 19/1/23.

162. SWAA A396/11, Magistrate, Outjo - Secretary, 20/3/22.

163. Philip Bonner has argued that one of the fatal flaws of the ICU in South Africa was its petty bourgeois leadership. P Bonner, 'The decline and fall of the ICU - a case of self-destruction?' in E Webster (ed.), Essays in Southern African labour history. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978, pp. 114-120.

164. See, for example, Barrington Moore, Jr., Injustice: the social bases of obedience and revolt. London: MacMillan, 1979, p. 85; Claude Welch, Jr., 'Continuity and discontinuity in African Military organisation', Journal of Modern African Studies, 13, 2, 1975, pp. 236-237.