



April 29, 1992

Letters to the Editor
Seattle Times
P. O. Box 70
Seattle, Washington 98111

Dear Editor:

Two converging tragedies are unfolding in Southern Africa right now. The first is the worst drought of this century that is threatening the very lives of over 115 million people in Zimbabwe alone. Other badly affected countries are Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia and Namibia. The continuing drought has drastically reduced agricultural production throughout the region, by as much as 70% in some countries. The independent country of Zimbabwe, which up until this year supplied grain to its neighbors, has been the hardest hit and currently needs to import some 1.8 million tons of grain merely to feed people who are literally starving. On March 6, 1992 President Robert Mugabe declared the drought a national disaster, and announced plans to divert needed development resources to drought relief programs.

Meanwhile, it is clear that in South Africa apartheid lives and black South Africans still have no vote. The de Klerk government has not used its victory in the whites-only referendum to negotiate seriously for an end to apartheid but instead has used the referendum results as a mandate to stall negotiations by imposing the National Party's demands seeking to preserve apartheid by another name.

Apartheid-created violence has only increased since the March 17 whites-only referendum. While frequently characterized in the press as "black on black" violence, such racist characterization has nothing to do with the reality of the killing. The killing is political violence which has been financed by the apartheid de Klerk regime.

The continued killing by RENAMO fighters in the neighboring country of Mozambique follows a similar pattern to what is occurring in South Africa and is bankrolled by the same sources. Since July, 1990 the Mozambique government has been meeting with
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The Rev. Elaine J. W. Stanovsky
President-Director

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RENAMO in Rome. The talks have focused on ending the war which is being waged against the Mozambican people by RENAMO. Talks have repeatedly broken down because RENAMO continues to violate conditions which it has previously agreed upon resulting in the continuation of its massacres in Mozambique.

While this battle for white control of Southern Africa has been going on, over 1,000,000 Mozambicans have been killed, over half of them children, over 2,000,000 have been displaced inside the country, over 1,500,000 have become refugees in neighboring countries, and over 250,000 have become orphans of the apartheid war. The violence has clearly been directed against civilians. The above statistics do not even begin to address the mutilation of bodies by the cutting off of ears, noses, lips, breasts and genitals by RENAMO killers. Like Inkatha, RENAMO has recruited many people, including some 200,000 children, through terror and intimidation. The worst degradation of all is that children caught up in such violence become so traumatized that eventually they willingly participate in the violence. The evil source of the problem, the apartheid regime, remains like Pontius Pilate in Pretoria.

RENAMO is not only supported by South Africa but by such right-wing United States sources as the Heritage Foundation, Rev. Pat Robertson and Senator Jesse Helms. Not surprisingly, RENAMO killers, along with their Inkatha counterparts, are now at work inside South Africa, following their pattern of violence and destabilization that dates back to their formation inside Rhodesia where their purpose was to weaken the liberation movement and maintain white minority rule. After Zimbabwe finally gained independence in 1980, RENAMO was sent by South Africa to Mozambique in order to try to destroy it. Now many have come back to South Africa to continue killing and maiming while the Bush administration does nothing and says nothing.

What can we do? We can send letters and telegrams to George Bush and the Democratic Presidential candidates urging that all aid to apartheid South Africa and its agents be cut off immediately. In addition, we need the President and United States Congress to work together to provide greatly increased development assistance and humanitarian aid to South Africa's neighbors.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Prince

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cc: Rev. Elaine Stanovsky