

## Poly from page 1

admit his own daughter at the expense of others when she did not have enough points? He may claim that he was not directly involved in the pre-selection, but he worked closely with the consultant who did the pre-selection.

“Mr Jafta holds that Office in trust. He should not just be fair to everybody but he must be seen to be fair. I would not have quarreled if his daughter had met the requirements. I consider this to be corruption.”

In an open letter addressed to the Chairman of the Polytechnic, Labour Commissioner, ACC, and the Minister of Education, staff members and students at the Polytechnic said that they were fed up with the manner in which the institution was being run, adding that the time to speak out was now.

Last month, labour inspectors visited the Polytechnic and, according to the staff members, conducted themselves professionally and procedurally. But

as the discussions went on, the Vice Rector for Administration and Finance, Mr Gert Gunzel, allegedly walked out of the meeting when the idea of forming a union was brought up.

“This is a show of disrespect for the laws of Namibia,” read part of the four-page Open Letter. “They have unions and present old information to the Labour Commissioner to justify that the trade union we want to set up was not needed here.

“The Polytechnic is the only publicly funded institution established by law which does not allow the creation of a union in the workplace. We want to see what the Polytechnic Council will do after the behavior of Gunzel.”

The students and staff members have also alleged that the Rector of the Polytechnic, Dr Tjama Tjivikua, has “ceded” most of his powers to Neavera Olivier, Director of Planning and International Relations. She started as Dr Tjivikua’s personal assistant and quickly rose to become a director.

Dr Tjivikua and Olivier al-

legedly travel a lot while the institution is sinking in problems. They were allegedly in Thailand and South Africa last month. There is a circular about this but the Council has not taken any action so far. Nepotism and favouritism allegedly also plays a role when it comes to recruiting people, with relatives and friends (names supplied) being preferred over competent and qualified people.

“We the workers are treated as if we have no rights at the Polytechnic,” read the Petition. “We tried to establish our union but one of us was fired in the Library. Fifteen years of the rule of Tjivikua is enough. An injury to one is an injury to all.

“This is a government institution and no people’s personal bedrooms and properties. We start our union, whether you like it or not. If you try to victimize us, we will tell more. We the workers know that victimization is taking place in different ways. We will fight till the end. The Polytechnic must

stop to be a high school. The workers will fight until the end.”

Dr Tjivikua could not be reached for comment as he is said to be out of the country.

## Namwandi’s vision for the future



**IUM Vice Chancellor Dr David Namwandi, left and Professor Lazarus Hangula, Vice Chancellor of the University of Namibia, UNAM.**

**Vice Chancellor of the International University of Management, IUM, Dr David Namwandi, wants at least 50 per cent of Namibians to have access to higher education. By 2030, national research (world class) should be underpinned by investment of not less than 1,8 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product, GDP, private and public. Speaking recently at the first meeting of VCRF in Windhoek, Dr Namwandi also said that investment in higher education should reach five per cent of GDP, if Namibians were to be masters of their own destiny and if they were to achieve Vision 2030.**

## Death toll hits 1,000 in “Operation Enduring Freedom”

By Patrick Martin

The US House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly Wednesday evening against a resolution to end the war in Afghanistan and begin a withdrawal of US troops within 30 days. The roll call vote, with only 65 in favor and 356 against, showed top-heavy majorities of both Democrats and Republicans opposing an early end to the war.

House Democrats voted against the resolution by 189 to 60, House Republicans voted against by 167 to 5. The leaders of both parties lined up in unanimous opposition to the resolution, which would have invoked the 1973 War Powers Act. This provides that the president can send US armed forces into war abroad only with the authorization of Congress or if the US is already under attack.

The measure, introduced by a handful of liberal Democrats led by Dennis Kucinich of Ohio, would have had no effect even if it had passed, since the bill would still require Senate passage and then face a certain presidential veto.

Moreover, the bill would have allowed President Obama to keep US troops in Afghanistan through December 31 if he determined this was necessary for “national security.” In other words, the deadline set by the “antiwar” resolution is only seven months earlier than the nominal deadline announced by Obama in his speech last December, when he claimed that some US troop withdrawals would begin by July 2011.

The perfunctory debate and swift defeat of the resolution were a demonstration of the enormous gulf between the great mass of American people and the representatives of big business who comprise the congressional delegations of both parties.

A majority of the American population opposes the war in Afghanistan and wants it to end as soon as possible. But even a symbolic gesture in the direction of this mass antiwar sentiment finds little support in Congress.

Despite the toothless character of the congressional opposition, there was an effective media blackout on even the most tepid criticism of the escalating US military operations in Afghanistan. There was no reporting of the debate or vote on the network newscasts, although the roll call ended just after 6 p.m.

There were only two reporters sitting in the press gallery during the debate, a fact taken note of and denounced by one congressman, Democrat Patrick Kennedy of Rhode Island, who is retiring from Congress and may thus feel less politically constrained.

The House vote came two days after the Pentagon reported that the death toll among US troops engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom, the official title of the Bush-Obama “war on terror,” has passed the 1,000 mark. Of these, about 930 were killed in the course of operations in Afghanistan, with the balance consisting of soldiers killed in a dozen other countries, mainly in accidents, where they were deployed allegedly against Al Qaeda—including Yemen, Somalia, the Philippines, and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Of the 930 deaths in the Afghanistan theater, which includes Uzbekistan and Pakistan, some 726 are classified as combat deaths, with the rest due to helicopter and plane crashes, weapons malfunctions and disease. More than 5,000 US soldiers have been wounded, more than half of them severely enough to require evacuation from the war zone.

The US death toll in Afghanistan has risen rapidly over the past year, and according to an analysis of the deaths over the last three months, one third of those killed had previously been deployed in Iraq. US troops are being killed this year at the rate of slightly more than one per day.

According to the tabulation by icasualties.org, the US death toll rose from 117 in 2007 to 155 in 2008 and doubled to 316 in 2009. In the first two months of 2010, another 70 US soldiers have been killed. The US-led NATO forces have lost another 670 soldiers since the war began in November 2001, including 272 from Britain and 140 from Canada.

Casualties among the occupying forces have been concentrated in Helmand and Kandahar provinces, with 671 deaths in those two provinces alone, the heartland of Taliban resistance, nearly 40 percent of the combined US-NATO losses.

The death toll among Afghan civilians and guerrilla fighters opposing the US occupation is far less accurately tallied, but undoubtedly amounts to tens of thousands.

The House vote to uphold the Obama administration’s escalation of the war coincides with a visit to Afghanistan by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who met with the puppet president Hamid Karzai in Kabul, then toured Helmand and Kandahar provinces in the south, the focus of the US escalation.

Gates met with US troops at a base just north of Kandahar, Afghanistan’s second-largest city, which is to be the target of a major US offensive in the coming months. He told them they would play a lead role in that offensive, declaring, “Once again you will be the tip of the spear.”

The 800 soldiers in the Stryker battalion have suffered 21 dead and 62 wounded, a casualty rate of 10 percent, in heavy fighting against entrenched Taliban forces in the rural area outside the city.

An equivalent casualty rate for the 30,000 troops ordered into Afghanistan by Obama would mean 750 dead and 2,250 wounded just among the new forces, not counting the casualty toll among the nearly 100,000 US and NATO troops already deployed.

According to press accounts, Gates and Karzai discussed the details of the coming offensive into Kandahar with General Stanley McChrystal, the top US commander in Afghanistan. McChrystal told reporters that the military operations in Kandahar would be conducted differently than the recent offensive against Marjah, in neighboring Helmand province.

Unlike Marjah, a largely rural area, Kandahar is a large city of an estimated 900,000 people, where Taliban forces operate covertly rather than openly, at least in the daytime. McChrystal said that only 6,000 of the 30,000 troops ordered in by Obama have arrived and moved into position. The Kandahar operation would require several more months of preparation. **WSWS**

## POWER

from page 1

those accusing us of having handlers? Who are the handlers of The Namibian newspaper; who are the handlers of Informante; who are the handlers of NBC and who are the handlers of The Windhoek Observers? Your guess is as good as mine, but what is clear is that their individual and collective doing is not theirs alone.

Let us take the example of the so-called “jobs for comrades”. This is an illusion which was exclusively coined by The Namibian newspaper for reasons known to itself. For all we know there is no such thing, if it were so, all those areas that have voted resoundingly for the SWAPO Party will have all its inhabitants being employed by the SWAPO Party Government Ministries/Offices/Agencies exclusively. Nothing of the sort has happened. Fear has been infused in the minds of some cadres instead of empowering our people we think that doing so is “jobs for comrades”, but why has the same newspaper not been vocal about those hibernating to weaken and destroy the system? Who doesn’t know that as things stand many

hibernators are currently being promoted at the expense of Party cadres. In some Ministries/Agencies/Offices it is a curse to belong to SWAPO Party. A certain Acting CEO was this week quoted as saying that “as CEO he is angered that some of his decisions may be questioned by the ruling party”. Thanks God he/she is just acting, if he were to be permanent this would be the likes that newspapers like The Namibian would glorify on its SMS page. Besides who is to say that the media in our country is democratic when it comes to their views against SWAPO Party. For instance, over 600,000 people voted for SWAPO Party in the just ended elections, yet when you read the SMS page of The Namibian newspaper, an impression is created that the people of Namibia do not like SWAPO Party. Apparently a “selection of messages are published” but each person spent a N\$1 to send such messages albeit anonymously: who decide which dollar is worth publishing?

Take the NBC for example, the President would be speaking for say 10 minutes or more but his speech would be summed up in 3 seconds to the Namibian people. Is this still

“informing and educating” the Namibian people? And still some in NBC are paid to determine on whom the camera should be focused and forget altogether the pursuance of the statutory vision and mission of the public broadcaster. As a Party we have our own newspaper, Namibia Today, yet major decisions of the Party are found in other media outlets first, before same appearing in Namibia Today. We can give lipservice to advertising ban in The Namibian newspaper but yet we buy and read it religiously. Of course, nothing wrong to buy and read it, but why pretend that we are reading what we hate?

In the final analysis, our mission must be to listen to the people, majority of them who voted for the SWAPO Party. They are not some silent majority hidden somewhere to preserve and protect the interest of the vocal minorities who own and control the media or direct our means of production, no no no, these are human beings who love this country much more than Washington DC, Berlin, London or Paris would ever imagine. To actualize this aspiration, we must implement, without fail, real rural development and youth empowerment programmes. This of necessity must include a deliberate intervention to ensure that all mines, banks and local authorities must be compelled to allocate at least 10% of their shares, profit and land ownership to the youth and rural poor. For sure, the media and vocal minorities will be against this demand and is to be expected. But the government of the people must welcome this with open arms for the sake of sustainability of governance, national interest and security of our revolution.

**A luta Continua.**

**Namibia Today is published by SWAPO Party, Department of Information and Mobilization.**  
Tel: 061-276370/78/79/80  
Fax: 061-276381

Cell: 081 124 2749

General E-Mail: [inform@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:inform@namibiatoday.com.na)

Advertisements: [adverts@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:adverts@namibiatoday.com.na)  
Letters: [letters@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:letters@namibiatoday.com.na)  
Editorial: [editor@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:editor@namibiatoday.com.na)  
Personal: [asserntinda@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:asserntinda@namibiatoday.com.na)  
Queries: [enquires@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:enquires@namibiatoday.com.na)  
Subscription: [subscribe@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:subscribe@namibiatoday.com.na)  
SWAPO Party: [swapoparty@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:swapoparty@namibiatoday.com.na)  
Accounts: [accounts@namibiatoday.com.na](mailto:accounts@namibiatoday.com.na)