

**SWAPO**

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her excitement at the first ever historic exhibition of Namibia's liberation struggle as waged by SWAPO Party. The exhibition is part of the 50 anniversary of the founding of SWAPO Party. SWAPO Party was founded on 19 April 1960.

She said that the exhibition

was a revelation of the foot prints the SWAPO Party had made in the sand of time and in the jungles of Zambia, Angola and elsewhere where the struggle was waged from.

"It depicts the road we had traveled as a liberation movement and the courage and determination the brave sons and daughters of this soil had portrayed amidst all adversities, the enemy fire, the hunger, thirst,

rain or sunshine," she said

The exhibition is rich, dealing with issues such as political, military and diplomatic fronts which characterized SWAPO's liberation strategies which brought about Namibia's independence and freedom in 1990.

"We are setting the tone of the new discourse and are asserting a Namibian identity and a sense of purpose, of place and



SWAPO Party Secretary General, Cde Pendukekeni Iivula-Ithana. Photo by Levi Upula

**Militarism**

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general would not have been summarily dismissed over a magazine article if the war had been going well.

The day McChrystal was fired, the death toll for US and NATO troops rose to 76 in June, making this the worst month for the foreign occupation forces since the US first invaded Afghanistan in October 2001. Among the Afghan people, President Hamid Karzai is widely reviled as a corrupt American puppet. Antiwar sentiment is mounting in all the European countries with military contingents in Afghanistan, as well as in the United States, where a majority in opinion polls now say the war is not worth fighting.

A report issued Monday by a congressional committee found that the supply chain for US troops in Afghanistan funnels hundreds of millions of dollars into the coffers of corrupt local warlords, many of whom in turn pay Taliban insurgents not to attack their trucks. The Pentagon is thus indirectly financing the insurgency, to the tune of \$2 million a week according to one estimate cited in the report.

On Tuesday evening, three of the most pro-war US senators, John McCain and Lindsey Graham, both Republicans, and Independent Democrat Joseph Lieberman, issued a joint statement condemning McChrystal's comments as "inappropriate and inconsistent with the traditional relationship between commander-in-chief and the military."

They effectively endorsed his dismissal in advance, declaring, "The decision concerning General McChrystal's future is a decision to be made by the president of the United States."

The backing for Obama from congressional Republicans and many right-wing media pundits shows that significant sections of the ruling elite have lost confidence in McChrystal and his counterinsurgency strategy. There was growing criticism for the past month, following the evident failure of the US intervention in Marjah and the forced postponement of the planned offensive into Kandahar, Afghanistan's second

largest city and a Taliban stronghold.

Obama's selection of Petraeus to replace McChrystal is a clear effort to appease these right-wing critics. Petraeus directed the US military escalation in Iraq in 2007-2008, which is credited in ruling circles with salvaging the US intervention there, although some 90,000 US troops still remain. The appointment of Petraeus was suggested in advance by neoconservative columnist William Kristol, and hailed by the right-wing media as a political masterstroke.

The second key element in the McChrystal affair is what it has revealed about the internal state of affairs in the US military. An entire layer has developed in the officer corps and high command, which is openly contemptuous of civilian authority, while their nominal superiors are themselves thoroughly intimidated by military opposition.

The Army plays an ever-growing role in American political life, fueled by an endless succession of wars. The US military has been continuously engaged in combat operations for nearly nine years, the longest such period in American history, and the Pentagon operates under a "Long War" doctrine, which envisions a more or less indefinite continuation of such warfare.

A few of the more perceptive press commentators have pointed out this aspect of the McChrystal affair. Simon Tisdall, writing in the British *Guardian*, observed, "The disrespectful behaviour of the US commander in Afghanistan and his aides was symptomatic of a more deeply rooted, potentially dangerous malaise, analysts suggest. This week's events might thus be termed a very American coup."

Liberal Yale law professor Bruce Ackerman, writing in the *Los Angeles Times* about "An increasingly politicized military," argued that the McChrystal affair is more ominous than the celebrated Truman-MacArthur clash of 1951, which ended with MacArthur's dismissal in the midst of the Korean War. That is because McChrystal voices openly the sentiments an officer corps that has become, through a political selec-

tion over the past three decades, overwhelmingly oriented to the right-wing of the Republican Party and to Christian fundamentalism.

Ackerman cites surveys showing that "a majority of active-duty officers believe that senior officers should 'insist' on making civilian officers accept their viewpoints" and that "only 29% believe that high-ranking civilians, rather than their military counterparts, 'should have the final say on what type of military force to use'."

The ominous implications of this trend were expressed in two reports published today in the *New York Times*. An article by correspondent C.J. Chivers describes growing frustration among field officers, NCOs and rank-and-file soldiers in Afghanistan with McChrystal's counterinsurgency tactics, which, in the name of reducing civilian casualties, call for "further tightening rules guiding the use of Western firepower— airstrikes and guided rocket attacks, artillery barrages and even mortar fire—to support troops on the ground."

Chivers claims the rules "have shifted risks from Afghan civilians to Western combatants," leading to widespread resentment among the troops over "being handcuffed" in the fight against the Taliban and other insurgents. His unstated conclusion is that the replacement of McChrystal should be welcomed as a step to unleashing the full power of American weaponry on the Afghan population.

A commentary by correspondent Robert Mackey, published on the *Times* web site, takes note of the Chivers article and poses the question, "Is a Culture War Between American Soldiers and Civilians Inevitable?" Mackey points to the growing gulf between the American population and an all-volunteer military, much of its leadership recruited from the families that have provided several generations of military officers.

McChrystal himself, he notes, was the son of a major general who served in the US occupation government in Germany after World War II and later at the Pentagon. All five of McChrystal's siblings either joined the military or married into it.

What such commentaries begin to reveal is the emergence in the United States of a distinct military caste, virulently hostile to democracy, civilian control and any form of popular opposition to American imperialism.

The firing of McChrystal and his replacement by Petraeus represents, not a blow against this trend, but the means by which Obama and the Democratic Party adapt themselves to the demands of the military brass.

McChrystal's only crime—his "error in judgment", in Obama's parlance—was to express in too blunt and unguarded a fashion the sentiments of broad sections of the US officer corps. **WSWS**

history of the great deeds and personal sacrifices of our heroes and heroines of our country and its people.

"We are asserting our right to tell our own stories about our glorious history. For this to happen, we need to undertake, with a degree of urgency, a process of reclamation and assertion. We must contest the colonial denial of our history and initiate our own conversations and dialogues about our past.

"We need our own historians and our own scholars to interpret the history of our country. Our history is too important to be left for others from elsewhere to write it for us. There will be a lot written and debated about the history of SWAPO but this opportunity at least affords a chance to our historians, youth, scholars and the public at large to mirror the prevailing conditions of

our struggle at the time."

Hundreds of people have been visiting the National Art Gallery since the opening of the exhibition, mainly those who were in exile, only to find their pictures when they were young. Founding President Sam Nujoma was among the most excited persons at the exhibition, reminding Namibians how important history was. He went through the exhibition halls, seeing photos he had not seen for ages.

"We must preserve our history," he said. "History is very important for us. Through history, we know where we come from and where we are going. A nation without history is like a tree without roots.

"History is important. Our forefathers paved the way for us. We stepped in their shoes and waged the struggle to its logical conclusion. Here we are, free and inde-

pendent, sovereign as a nation. We must pay tribute to our heroes and heroines."

Many liberation heroes and heroines who visited the exhibition said it served as tribute and living testimony to the memories of Namibia's fallen comrades who laid down their lives in the cause of Namibia's independence struggle. Cde Iivula-Ithana said the exhibition would rekindle memories of those who were involved in the liberation struggle to remember those difficult, but yet rewarding years of fighting for a noble cause of liberation.

"As we leave from this exhibition, let us spread the word and encourage other people to come and witness closely the telling story of our liberation as it is presented by the people who are the living memories themselves."

**Pohamba**

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(Southern African Development Community) region should receive our undivided attention. It is an issue which our two countries and indeed the entire region should continue to be seized with," said President Pohamba.

"As a result of increased consumption and higher demand, scar-

city of electricity has become one of the most daunting challenges for our governments. The inadequate generation capacity in the region must be addressed speedily, prudently and strategically to ensure sustainable socio-economic development in the region"

The Zambian President is here on a three-day state visit. During his stay in Namibia, he would visit the Neudam Agricultural College outside Windhoek before moving

on to Walvis Bay and Swakopmund where he would visit several places which include the Zambia Dry Port, Namport, Etosha Fishing Company and the Walvis Bay Salt Works and Chemicals. President Banda is the fourth Zambian President. The first one was Dr Kenneth Kaunda, who was followed by Fredrich Chiluba. Chiluba was followed by the late Levy Mwanawasa, who was succeeded by President Banda.

**Correction**

**In our last edition, we ran an unedited version written by Dr Jerobeam Shaanika. The said article was not supposed to be published without his final editing. We regret the error and the inconvenience this might have caused. Editor.**

**View Point**

**Black skin or black ignorance?**

GIVING a lecture at Wellesley College in Boston, Massachusetts, Louis Farrakhan had this to say; "We are not oppressed because we are Black; we are oppressed because we are ignorant. It is ignorance that keeps us on the bottom, not Blackness." Many times we are made to think so much against the blackness of our skin, to fight that blackness and to try and change it. It is not the blackness of the African skin that we must be fighting but the darkness of our ignorance, the blackness of a deep-seated lack of knowledge.

It is this kind of ignorance that makes the life of an African a life of contradictions. We inherited, cherished and perpetuated colonial educational systems that make us dumb, that teach us not to think; welfare systems that keep us poor and perpetually dependant, foreign aid that keeps our nations in a permanent state of poverty, religious establishments that are going to send us to hell; we embrace international laws that maintain inequality. There is this vain motivation that makes our people seek an education.

Many of our people believe that knowledge is meant to make us acquire a decent home, a good job, a nice car and a decent savings account. Real knowledge must make the African provide decent homes to others, provide good jobs, manufacture nice cars and own banks where other people can have decent savings. We need to evolve from a system of contradictions that is often projected in our African parents, a system that creates self-defeating attitudes, negative self-perceptions and frustrations.

We have allowed the global charity industry to grow into a billion-dollar enterprise at our own expense. The West is now awash with professional philanthropists whom we consider helping professionals — ultimately helping themselves to us, rather than helping us. They have earned obscenely comfortable lives in the name of our

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