

## International News

# The Uranium Wars in Africa—Part I

by Zoltan Grossman

Zoltan Grossman works with the Black Hills Alliance

For years, the nuclear cycle has played a crucial role in global politics. Nuclear reactors and weaponry have become the most sought-after technology on earth, creating intense conflicts among nations. In the late 1970's, a string of military interventions around the world gave rise to claims that uranium, the kernel of all nuclear programs, may be an important factor in wars in the Third World. Whether in America, Australia, or Africa, uranium mining is essentially a non-white issue. It has figured prominently in national struggles on every continent.

Foreign armed occupations of at least six African nations have been linked, directly or indirectly, by various sources to the issue of uranium exploitation. Nuclear Colonialism on the continent has been particularly attributed to two nuclear nations, South Africa and France. Two African states desiring nuclear status, Morocco and Libya, have also been accused of thirsting for uranium in their armed annexations of neighbors' territory.

This first of five articles will deal with one such case in northwest Africa. Subsequent articles will further attempt to answer the question "Just what exactly is an 'Energy War'?"

### I. THE SAHARAN WAR

Since the 1960's, an ignored desert

war has been raging in the Arab nation of western Sahara. Formerly Spanish Sahara, the territory was colonized by Spain until Franco's death in 1975. Sahara was then promptly invaded by Morocco and Mauritania and the territory divided between the two. The anti-colonial organization, Polisario, defiantly declared an independent state that was recognized by most African nations.

The intense war between the Saharawi and the two occupying forces was fed by outside sources. Polisario directed a hit-and-run guerrilla campaign from Tindouf, one of the many refugee camps in Algeria. King Hassan of Morocco received military aid from Shah Pahlavi of Iran. Mauritania was heavily supported by its former colonial master, France. The United States, however, repeatedly claimed neutrality in the conflict.

In 1978, a new element was brought onto the scene. Intentions of large-scale uranium mining in the region were announced. A method had been devised to extract the yellowcake uranium from phosphoric acids. These are found in phosphate rocks, which are the reason for any country's desire for western Sahara. Mauritania, and especially Morocco, have their own phosphate mines. But adding the rich Bou-Craa reserves of Sahara would make them the most immense on the globe.

The fighting increased. In the same year, France intervened militarily on

the side of Mauritania. The action was originally to "protect" Mauritanian iron and urano-phosphate reserves, but it resulted in aerial attacks on Sahara itself. French jets bombed Polisario positions with napalm, taking off from bases in Senegal. Despite the air strikes, Mauritania capitulated to Polisario in 1979, but Morocco then took over the entire territory.

King Hassan had perhaps realized the nuclear value of Sahara. His desire for nuclear power was fed by France, which was building a series of plants for Morocco. A contract was negotiated with Westinghouse to build a quarter-billion dollar uranium

Uranium Wars cont. on page 11

Uranium Wars cont. from page 4

concentrating plant. The possibility was raised of Israel and the Soviet Union receiving this new technology from Morocco.

Finally, Morocco had announced the intention of exporting up to 2,000 tons of uranium within twenty years. At current levels, this would make the Kingdom the sixth-largest uranium producer in the world. But the quagmire in Sahara was frustrating the efforts. The June, 1978 issue of *Africa* magazine speculated on these events:

"It is thus essential for Morocco to consolidate its control over the territory to prevent a pro-Algerian Polisario state from coming to power and controlling these resources. Could the potential for uranium production

from Saharan phosphates change the American seemingly neutral attitude to the Saharan question? Prime Minister Osman hinted this when he recently declared: 'Why do you think that everyone is so interested in the fate of South Africa?'"

One year later, President Carter suddenly announced massive arms shipments to Morocco. These included rockets, electronic sensors, helicopter gunships, and Huey Cobra warplanes. His announcement, after the King's takeover of all Sahara, gave as the reason for denouncing neutrality the possibility of a Moroccan defeat.

## Nuclear Opponent Shot Dead by Security Forces

Diosdado Dimaano, of the Philippines (where Westinghouse is building a reactor) was recently shot dead by security forces. The shooting took place when the police were seeking the leaders of the anti-nuclear movement of the island of Batangas. Dimaano however was only a sympathizer and is the second to suffer this fate. In June 1978 Ernesto Nazareno "disappeared" while in custody. The NRC has granted Westinghouse the export license for the Philippine reactor.

Gorleben, West Germany, is the site of a unique anti-nuclear protest. Twenty theology students have been occupying the underground salt caverns where authorities plan to store atomic waste. A make-shift protester village has sprung up along side the site in support of the group.

The village, which has been the scene of anti-nuke protests for months, is reported to consist of some 50 new wooden houses and huts with a large array of flags, banners, and painted slogans. Visitors gather at Friendship House where there is literature, daily concerts, and theater presentations. The demonstrators have voiced their goals: a halt to the production of atomic wastes through nuclear energy, a halt to drilling in the saltmines, the withdrawal of police from the area and an end to the construction of the temporary storage site.

### IC3 Reflective Mylar Film

With or without adhesive backing. Perfect for solar cookers.

Jack Kelsay, manager  
Universal Coating Co.  
2300 E. 26th St.  
Minneapolis, MN

ZOLTAN GROSSMAN  
40 PURE-WAGER (former Madison BHA)  
306 N. Brooks Box 318  
Madison, WI 53718 Tel. (608) 251-4856  
h/257.1208 2760

# The Uranium Wars in Africa (Part II)

by Zoltan Grossman

For years the nuclear cycle has played a crucial role in global politics. Nuclear reactors and weaponry have become the most sought-after technology on earth, creating intense conflicts among nations. In the late 1970's a string of military interventions around the world gave rise to claims that uranium, the kernel of all nuclear programs, may be an important factor in wars in the Third World. Whether in America, Australia, or Africa, uranium mining is essentially a non-white issue. It has figured prominently in nation struggles on every continent.

Foreign armed occupations of at least six African Nations have been linked to the issue of uranium

exploitation. Nuclear colonialism on the continent has been particularly attributed to two nuclear nations, South Africa and France. With, of course, the help of the United States multi-nationals and the U.S. government. Two African states desiring nuclear status, Morocco and Libya, have also been accused of thirsting for uranium in their armed annexations of neighbors' territory.

This second article of a five part series dealing with uranium development and confrontation in Africa concerns development in Chad and Libya. Part three will deal with France and its 'ex-colonies'.

'I do not believe atomic weapons are good for mankind, but we are victims of horrible terrorism from nations that have them. Is it unnatural for us to want to feel secure? Didn't your bomb come as a result of fear? Besides, we want nuclear power for peaceful reasons.'

-Colonel Mu'amar el-Qadhafi  
Leader of Libya

The Civil War in Chad, an isolated and ignored North African nation, has been raging since 1966. It is probably the only war that is widely acknowledged, even in the American press, to be directly attributable to uranium.

The military situation in the former French colony is immensely complicated. Troops involved are from Libya, France, Nigeria and 11 different Chad factions. The conflict has historically been that of Arab

northerners, supported by Libyan troops, battling Black southerners supported by thousands of French troops. Yet when the Arabs achieved a victory of sorts in 1978, both Libya and France continued to infringe on Chadian territory.

The conflict centers on the 35,000 square mile 'Wazou Strip' along Chad's northern frontier with Libya. It is in the Tibesti Mountains of this region that the large deposits of uranium lie, once controlled by France, but now under the Libyan flag. Libya annexed the strip in 1973, and unsuccessfully attempted to seize more territory in 1979. The London Observer (April 15, 1979) saw its motives clearly:

'The Libyans, having armed and helped various rebel leaders in the past, are now seen as wanting to cash in on their credit, while making sure of their

claim to the uranium-rich mountain region on their border.'

In the past, Libyan influence in uranium-rich Central Africa may have been a contributing factor to the 1979 French military intervention there. The conflicts in the region require a closer examination of Libyan domestic policy, and especially of the Islamic Politics of Colonel Mu'amar el-Qadhafi.

At home, Qadhafi has created an independent government dedicated to the 'materially and spiritually liberated man'. In recent years, however, his progressive policies have been overshadowed by political alliances with Emperor Bokassa, Idi Amin, and Billy Carter. Qadhafi, has been called a 'madman' by both Yasir Arafat and Ayatollah Khomeini.

By his own admission, Qadhafi seeks to dominate the 'French' uranium fields of Northern Africa. He sees a nuclear program as promoting the 'self-esteem' of Muslims, by furthering Islamic military power, and creating a 'renaissance' of the advanced Islamic sciences of ancient times. Qadhafi outlines his philosophical beliefs on the subject in THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE ECONOMY: SOCIALISM, his second 'Green Book'.

'The fact that we do not possess the know-how in atomic energy or technology has nothing to do with Islam. (page 10) Islam had opened the minds of Muslims in order to enable them to harness the powers of the universe...and place them in the service of man, for God has said they are in the service of man. (page 23) ...We say that artificial rain is wrong and going to the moon is wrong. Muslims should have been the first to do this.' (page 24)

It seems that the Libyan French conflict in North Africa is based simply on competition over the common desire to control the atom. It is seen repeatedly around the world that support of and opposition to nuclear power transcends political and religious differences. The tribal peoples, in the case of Tibesti the nomadic Toubou tribe, are often

caught in the middle.

The Qadhafi position on nuclear Islam is by no means shared by all other Muslim leaders. The revolutionary government of Iran has cancelled plans for four U.S. reactors ordered under the Shah's regime. Nuclear power is seen in Iran as unnecessary in an oil-rich nation, and an unwelcome U.S. influence. Egypt, however, is building a nuclear plant under U.S. auspices. The Muslim nation with the strongest nuclear commitment is Pakistan, which has announced its intentions to build an 'Islamic Bomb'. This bomb, built to counter the nuclear pressures of Israel, India, and the Soviet Union, may be the result of Libyan policy.

European sources have long suspected the existence of a 'uranium funnel' from Libya to Pakistan. This fear was heightened by a 1979 incident north of the French-owned Arlit mines in Niger. An ore carrier truck of uranium was found overturned and its contents missing. Speculations spread of a Libyan-Pakistani hijacking. The hijackers were not identified in a subsequent investigation, but other bizarre facts were revealed. The French state was forced to admit that it has been supplying hundreds of tons of uranium to both Libya and Pakistan. Apparently President Giscard of France does not oppose their access to nuclear fuel, as long as it is on French terms. The policy may be an effort to pacify the Libyan efforts at expansion into the French-dominated uranium fields.

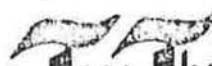
Meanwhile the war in Chad grows. A new civil war has erupted between the Arab victors in the conflict, particularly President Goukouni and his rival Hissene Habre. In April of 1980, Paris announced the withdrawal of its 1200 troops, but economic domination of Chad continues.

The war promises to be long and inconclusive. It remains as a good lesson to the world on the consequences of a nuclear policy that lets nothing get in its way.

Zoltan Grossman works with the Black Hills Alliance.

NEWS

Appropriate  
Technology Group



Supercette

# The Uranium Wars in Africa: Part III—France

By Zoltan Grossman

The French colonial empire once extended across the northwestern one-third of Africa. The domination by one country over such a diverse and massive territory was doomed to failure, and the colonies disassembled in the 1960s. But the empire did not die. Economic control over the people and resources has remained firm, and in certain cases grown. One reason for this historical reality may be an increasing thirst for nuclear fuel.

The French government's nuclear commitment is the strongest of any in the world. After the near-meltdown in central Pennsylvania, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing went on national television to announce that the building of reactors would be speeded up. His administration has "successfully" commenced fast-breeder reactor and neutron bomb programs. By 1985, 55 percent of French energy output is expected to be nuclear. This new cornerstone of domestic and foreign policy has only one weak point. There is simply not enough uranium at home to fuel a nuclear program of such magnitude. The only place to turn is to the African mines.

Out of the former colonies, eleven have uranium deposits. These are Niger (the sixth largest producer in the world), Algeria, Mali, Morocco, Togo, Tunisia, Senegal, Gabon, Central Africa, Mauritania and Chad. It is the latter five that are among the nations "lent armed support" from Paris. The attitude of the French public has been as aloof and unconcerned as the historical U.S. public attitude toward interventions in Latin America. But the facts are simple: wherever there is a uranium war on the continent, French troops or transport are there.

At home, only 95,000 tons of uranium ore are available, 2.2 percent of global production. Yet through the mining activities in Africa of French industry (particularly Minatome and Cogema), France controls 10 percent of the global output and 10 percent of "reasonably assured reserves." A November 1979 article in *Stern* magazine (West Germany's *Life*) is adamant that African uranium is fast

becoming to France what Persian Gulf oil is to America, with even more definite military consequences. The Director of the International Peace Research Institute in Stockholm agrees that "a major reason for continuing French presence in Africa may be to secure uranium." A report from Paris Friends of the Earth contends "the concordance between the foreign policy of the French government and the search for an unfailing supply of uranium appears to us to be flagrant."

The past two years have seen French troops and jets help three regimes battle independence movements in their uranium regions. In 1978, Mauritania fought the Saharans, and Zaïre overpowered the Katangans. A continuous war has been waged in Chad against Islamic separatists. These conflicts will be dealt with in other installments. It is in three uranium countries, Central Africa, Gabon and Senegal, that the French army has been permanently stationed. As the only foreign armed force involved in these nations, France has brought down the full brunt of nuclear colonialism.

The Central African Republic under the despot Jean-Bedel Bokassa has been one of the world's saddest stories. After a brutal decade as a President with full French backing, Bokassa decided in 1976 to convert the "Republic" into an "Empire." In a country with a per-capita annual income of \$194, he had a lavish \$22 million "coronation," all French money. During this era, the only major issue discussed between President Giscard and Emperor Bokassa was how much uranium. Nuclear France would receive.

One expert, Samuel Ochiola, has stated in his book *Minerals in African Underdevelopment* that Central Africa "may one day be one of the major producers of uranium in the world." There are an estimated 20,000 tons in the Bakouma and Mpatou mines, possibly yielding up to 500 pounds of uranium concentrates. A major agreement signed with Bokassa in 1975 promised the French Atomic Energy Commission one-third of the payoff with Central Africa and three "private companies" dividing the rest.

President Giscard couldn't have been happier. After all, two of his relatives are involved in uranium exploration in the country.

But two events convinced Giscard to unseat Bokassa in September 1979. One was a massacre of 100 schoolchildren in the capital city of Bangui. The 8- to 16-year-olds were slain in the presence of the Emperor after they protested an "imperial decree" to buy expensive school uniforms. The second incident was Bokassa's offer to Libya, France's chief rival in African nuclear affairs, of a military base and specifically of a chance to exploit Central African uranium. The first event embarrassed Giscard, the second antagonized him.

The French military swiftly moved in and replaced Bokassa with David Dacko, a ruler more firmly under the control of Paris. He immediately moved to prevent political freedoms from returning. The Bangui schoolchildren took to the streets again, to protest against the new dictator. This time they were met by French paratroopers in combat gear. In replying to criticism of foreign domination, Dacko exclaimed: "The French troops will stay for ten years if necessary."

Of all the nations on the African continent, Gabon is probably the most dominated by foreigners. The small West African state has been called the "most economically exploited by overseas companies." The ministries, police, presidential guard, businesses, schools and banks are all controlled by Frenchmen. This domination is even greater than in the colonial era—550 French troops and advisers remain in an exclusive zone.

The cause of this continuation of colonialism is very clearly the extreme richness of Gabonese mineral deposits, including seven-tenths of 1 percent of the entire world's uranium. In 1971 the government commenced a four-year, half-billion dollar plan to develop its resources of manganese and uranium. A 1972 estimate indicated there are 2.6 million exploitable tons of ore in the country. While uranium is not the primary resource in quantity, it is the fastest-growing in importance. As throughout the entire continent, the

forceful upholding of the status quo has created the "best of all possible worlds" for the nuclear industry.

The French mining industries point to the per-capita yearly income of the Gabonese, the highest in Black Africa, as proof of their "policy of well-being" towards Africans. Yet, the mining has created severe disparity in incomes, and the emergence of a "super-elite" in Gabon. Among this class is the President, Omar Bongo. Every cover of the Party newspaper *Dialogue* displays a large photograph of Bongo, whether at his birthday party or at the White House with a beaming President Carter. Bongo has recently been moving away from French control, wishing more trade with the U.S., Britain, West Germany and South Africa. Gabon, as one of the most uranium-rich countries in Africa, will continue to be a pawn of nuclear powers for some time to come.

In the former West African colony of Senegal, 1,200 French troops remain. While the uranium deposits within the nation were certainly not the initial reason for continuing occupation, they may be a reason for the lack of any withdrawal. The potential development of uranium may also be used as a lever by the French government to have Senegal cooperate in French military designs in other African uranium countries. For instance, the French air force used bases in Senegal as takeoff points for napalm strikes on guerrilla positions in the western Sahara. Senegal, as well as Gabon, also sent troops to Zaïre to aid the French against Katangese separatists. Senegal is very much a part of the vast, interlocking network of African uranium alliances.

The positions of the anti-colonial organizations within these nations towards the subject of uranium mining itself is not well known, as it is in Namibia. The common pattern of mining exists throughout Africa and the world: a steady deterioration of health, sovereign rights and economic well-being. The further expansion of the French nuclear program can only result in more violence against those unfortunate enough to live in uranium territory.

Zoltan Grossman works with the Black Hills Alliance.

1981: President Mitterrand will not halt arms sales to South Africa, enriched uranium sales to Iraq, or the French presence in Africa.



## Uranium Wars in Africa (Part IV)

# Racism and Uranium Mining Link Hands

by Zoltan Grossman

For years the nuclear cycle has played a crucial role in global politics. Nuclear reactors and weaponry have become the most sought-after technology on earth, creating intense conflicts among nations.

In the late 1970s a string of military interventions around the world gave rise to claims that uranium, the kernel of all nuclear programs, may be an important factor in wars in the Third World. Whether in America, Australia or Africa, uranium mining is essentially a non-white issue. It has figured prominently in national struggles on every continent.

Foreign armed occupations of at least six African nations have been linked to the issue of uranium exploitation. Nuclear colonialism on the continent has been particularly attributed to two nuclear nations, South Africa and France. With, of course, the help of the United States multi-nationals and the U.S. government. Two African states desiring nuclear status, Morocco and Libya, have also been accused of thirsting for uranium in their armed annexations of neighbor's territory.

The following article, fourth in a six-part series, deals with the manner in which the mineral uranium controls the fates of the South African and Namibian people.

If one thing has been learned from the South Africa of the 1970s, it is that nuclear energy and apartheid are inseparable. For the racist state to survive, it needs to have energy self-sufficiency, a solid export base, and military superiority over the rest of Africa. It is a well-known fact throughout Africa, and particularly in Namibia, South Africa's neighbor to the northwest, that uranium and other energy resources will be crucial in ending white minority rule.

The importance that South Africa places on its energy future became evident after the Iranian revolution, when 80 to 90 per cent of the nation's oil supply was suddenly cut off. The government then decided to continue in its energy policy trend and to throw everything it had into the nuclear industry and the manufacture of "synfuel" (synthetic fuels derived from the conversion of coal to oil). Without fuel the army's

tanks would be useless and the industrialized giant would stop dead in its tracks.

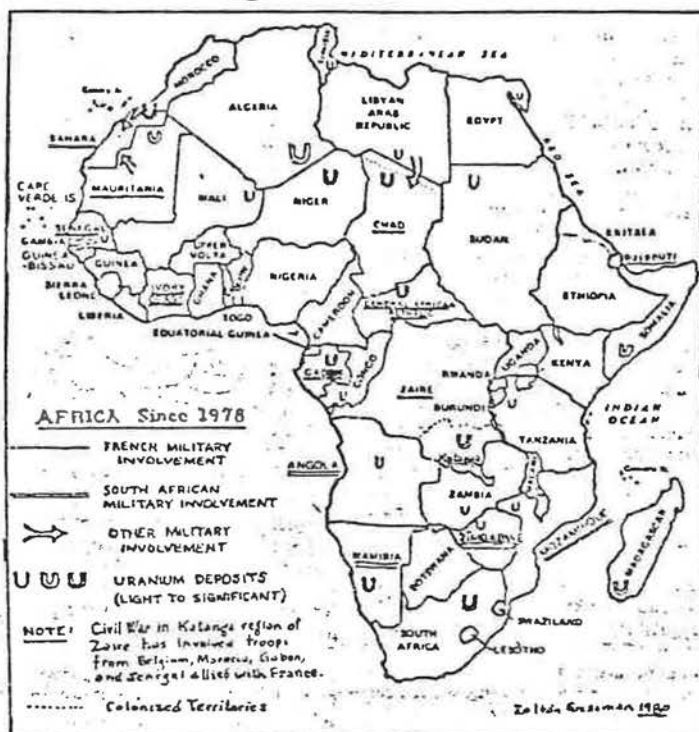
As this reality becomes clear, two of the largest organizations fighting apartheid are changing their strategies. In South African-occupied Namibia, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) is focusing on the vital uranium field at Rossing. In the Republic of South Africa (RSA) itself, the African National Congress (ANC) is concentrating much of its wrath on the government's SASOL Synfuels Program.

The government's rush to replace Iranian oil led it to sign a contract with the U.S. Fluor Corporation to build the largest synfuels facility in the world. Located near Johannesburg, the gigantic SASOL plant is testimony to the technological strength of the state working in conjunction with Western finance. SASOL also means that the white minority may be able to crush any majority revolt with sheer, prolonged force.

With this in mind, the ANC attacked the heavily-guarded facility in June, 1980. It succeeded in destroying two storage tanks, but the strategic factories remained intact.

The action may have been the opening shot in an effort to cripple Western-built industries that are serving apartheid's interests. This fight may soon extend to the RSA nuclear program, as the import of Western technology and expertise has made it both formidable and crucial in the 1980s.

The 'progress' of the RSA program has been due largely to technical skill. The growth of South African skills in the nuclear field has been the result of the West's education and advice. Western loans for the South African nuclear industry have been documented as far back as the 1950s, particularly from Germany, the United States, France and Britain. In the field of uranium mining, the RSA is apparently counting on exporting much of its 17 per cent of global reserves in exchange for nuclear technology. A stop to mining in its territories not only implies that the RSA would not be able to fuel its own



nuclear program, but also that the industry itself may not grow.

A number of countries have been actively exploiting the reserves of both Namibia and the RSA. They either import the uranium, own and operate the mines. The multi-national corporations within both countries are from Britain, France, West Germany, Iran (before 1978), Holland, Japan, Canada and the United States (Union Carbide in Namibia, Exxon in South Africa). In addition, Belgium and Switzerland use South African uranium; and Sweden and the Soviet Union import Namibian uranium.

South Africa's first nuclear facility, the twin research reactors Safari 1 and 2, were constructed in the mid-1960s by the Allis Chalmers Corp. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The United States and Britain have also supplied enriched fuel for Safari; France and Germany (a corporation called 'Nukem') have supplied equipment. Safari was the last important step towards a nuclear power program and weapons capability for South Africa, and it remains so today.

The Koeberg twin-reactor power plant is expected to go on line in 1982-3. Located near Cape Town, it is being built by a French consortium, with

Westinghouse (United States) providing the design and Belgium and Japan providing other assistance. Babcock & Wilcox, the firm which designed the Three Mile Island plant, provides equipment for Koeberg (and fuel for Safari-1). The plutonium to be produced by Koeberg could, with the proper facilities, be fashioned into a nuclear bomb.

The most controversial aspect of the RSA program is the Valindaba-Pelindaba complex near Pretoria. The development of this uranium enrichment project is an effort by the industry to become completely self-contained, to be able to enrich South African uranium in South Africa. Very few countries have this technology, as it is the final stage needed in manufacturing weapons-grade uranium. Pelindaba, put on line in 1978, undertakes the uranium hexafluoride stage of enrichment. Valindaba began enriching in 1975, and in 1981 it is to be expanded into a full-scale commercial enrichment facility. The United States has supplied I.B.M. computers for the complex, and Switzerland (perhaps also Japan and France) have supplied equipment. But it is West Germany that has heavily aided in the enrichment process, as documented by Zdenek Cervenka and Barbara Rogers in their book, *The Nuclear Axis*. The Fed-

## NORTHERN SUN MERCHANDISING

A wide selection of t-shirts, buttons and anti nuclear, alternative energy materials, including books, records, posters and lots of free literature.



the anti nuclear family

## T-SHIRTS

**TURN ON THE SUN** - beautiful four color design on tan, lt. blue, gold, red or blue. \$6.50 each\*

**NORTHERN SUN ALLIANCE** - two color design (our logo) on black, brown, red, tan, lt. blue or purple. \$5.50 each.

**QUESTION AUTHORITY** - white on black, blue, black on red. Still only \$5.50 each.

Childrens' sizes - red or blue \$4.00 each

Baby shirt - 6 ast. colors available \$3.50 each

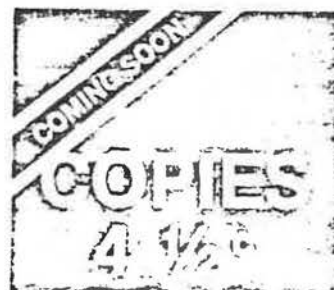
**SURE, I'M A MARXIST** - (see photo) black on red, tan, yellow or lt. blue. \$5.50 each.

## Winter Clearance Sale

Up to 40% Off

freewheel bike coop

with 1/2 3/4 5/8  
we don't care  
we sell cycling  
and all its stuff  
and more  
and more



eral Republic not only provided heavy training and assistance, but supplied sophisticated centrifugal technology. With this design, the RSA is well on its way to a nuclear capability. Interestingly, Cervenka and Rogers translate the Zulu word 'Pelindaba' as "We don't talk about this anymore," while 'Valindaba' translates into "We don't talk about this at all."

In the 1980s, the most vulnerable segment of the South African nuclear fuel cycle is at the front end—in uranium mining. Most of the uranium within the RSA is extracted from existing mines, since uranium nearly always occurs with gold or copper. But in Namibia, still called South West Africa by the occupying apartheid forces, the Rossing uranium mine lays claim to being the largest in the world. This is a crucial factor in the ongoing civil war there. To understand Namibia, one has to understand its history and its relationship to the United Nations.

In 1966, the UN withdrew the League of Nations mandate given to the South Africans after the First World War, and declared the international state of Namibia. The UN Council for Namibia was set up as the legal government, and SWAPO was recognized as the representative of the Namibian people. Yet the RSA continued its occupation with tens of thousands of troops. In 1974, the Council issued UN Decree #1, making it illegal for a nation to exploit or use Namibian natural resources. As a result, all uranium shipments out of Namibia are done clandestinely.

In 1979, French and South African planes flew the uranium to France secretly (via Gabon, Zaire, and the Ivory Coast). In January, 1979, one flight was intercepted over Angolan territory by a MiG jet fighter. It was ordered to land, but a short time later the order was mysteriously cancelled. Under the Decree, Angola would have been supported in an effort to "seize and impound" the shipment, yet one of the RSA's foremost enemies gave the plane "full permission to overfly." Why was this? One reason may be the presence of uranium on Angolan territory, but another explanation given by one SWAPO source was the pressure exerted by the Soviet Union, which has a direct financial stake in the RSA uranium. The Angola incident is certainly indicative of the strange alliances in African uranium wars. By 1980, the uranium from Rossing was being shipped by sea to a Belgian port.

In June, 1980, United Nations hearings on Namibian uranium were held in New York. Multi-national corporations exploiting Namibia came under sharp attack by the participants. In particular, Rio Tinto Zinc, an infamous corporation with strong links to the British government, was targeted as the largest shareholder in Rossing. Around 43 per cent of the British civilian nuclear program is fueled by Namibian uranium. Antinuclear movements there and

elsewhere are realizing that support for SWAPO and other liberation movements may slow the flow of uranium into reactors. In turn, SWAPO has made clear that an antinuclear victory in Europe may cut in on the economic power of the apartheid occupation. The issue of nuclear colonialism is clear-cut in Namibia.

At Rossing itself, the all-black workforce is severely underpaid. Workers' homes are located in the path of prevailing winds from the mine, exposing them constantly to uranium dust and radioactive radon gas. One main river of Namibia is polluted by Rossing. In the mine, no protective clothing is worn and safety precautions are nonexistent. In the families' homes, even doors and windows are no protection from the waste tailings (85 per cent as radioactive as the original ore) because the homes must be aired in the stifling heat. The white management of the mine lives a comfortable 50 miles from Rossing. These inhuman working conditions led to a strike in 1978, which was met by RSA troops and dogs.

Recognizing the hazard posed by the mine, and the possibility of a mass outbreak of throat and lung cancer, SWAPO came out with a clear position on uranium. It takes into account not only political and economic issues, but also an environmental one. This position, expressing fear of the possible radioactive poisoning of the Namibian people, was announced at a Conference on Uranium Mining and Indigenous Peoples, held in Copenhagen and attended by Indian, Aborigine, Greenlander, and Namibian delegates. *GORETH GUOTE*

Elsewhere in southern Africa, it remains to be seen if other nations will take SWAPO's lead, or instead bow to economic pressures. Uranium exploration is occurring near Lake Kariba. On the Zambian side, a Japanese firm is interested in the uranium; on the Zimbabwe side, a subsidiary of Anglo-American is exploring. It is not clear what position the government party ZANU will take, but its "conciliatory" statements to Union Carbide indicates it does not intend even to nationalize the mining interests, much less ban them. The Minister of Mines, Morris Nyagumbo, has been in prison for 14 years and may not be informed about uranium safety. But the trend set by SWAPO is important, as it is a symbol of the antinuclear movement in the Third World.

The different aspects of Nuclear Apartheid—the reactors, fuel enrichment, and uranium mining—can of course be viewed in an anti-colonial and environmental light. But these issues pale in view of the intended objective of the RSA's atomic program. South Africa intends to produce a weapons capability sufficient to enter the "nuclear club." With minority rule in its dying days, this may be the most crucial issue facing the RSA, Africa, and one day perhaps the world.

Next month: The Apartheid Bomb

**JOIN  
CITIZENS PARTY**  
111-1/2 Franklin Ave.  
Mpls., Minn. 55404  
(612) 872-9111  
**Statewide Caucus**  
April 28  
Hennepin Co. Govt. Center  
Paid For By N.C. Citizens Committee  
M. J. Kelly, Treas.

**Health  
Yourself**  
4505 France Ave.  
820 9521  
**Whole Foods  
Vitamins and  
related sundries**  
This ad worth \$1.00 off  
\$5.00 minimum purchase

**U FILM SOCIETY**  
Bell Museum Aud. 17th Ave. & University S.E.  
Call 373-5397 for info

Showings at Bell Museum Auditorium,  
West Bank Auditorium  
Thru Mar. 3  
**KNIFE IN THE HEAD**  
Bruno Ganz stars in political thriller  
Mar. 6-8  
**THE PATRIOT GAME**  
"Most definitive film on struggle in Northern Ireland"  
Mar. 11  
**14th TOURNEE OF ANIMATION**  
One of the very best of the annual tourneys  
Mar. 13-15  
**ANDREI RUBLEV**  
Tarkovsky's Russian classic (full-length version)  
Mar. 21-22  
**MAIDS OF WILKO**  
Newest film by Polish master Andrzej Wajda  
Starts April 3  
**THE CHANT OF  
JIMMIE BLACKSMITH**  
"The one great Australian film" Pauline Keel

Plus: Japanese Cinema, more films  
from Ireland, Taiwan, Romania (The  
True Story of Dracula)  
See newspaper listings for details

**WAVES OF GRAIN**  
WOODWORKING STUDIO

HANDMADE TO ORDER  
**WATERBEDS  
FUTON FRAMES  
FINE FURNITURE**

PHONE 823-0000  
4251 NICOLLET

**RELATIVE  
4 STREET**

805 4TH STREET SE. 5 BLOCKS WEST  
DINKYTOWN AT 35W

OPEN DAILY 10 AM  
UNTIL MIDNIGHT

RECORDS  
BOOKS  
TAPES  
SMOKING ACCESSORIES  
INCENSE TAPESTRIES

VISA

**NO PAIN  
NO GAIN**

**QUALITY  
ELECTRONIC  
REPAIR**

STEREO TV INSTRUMENT  
REASONABLE RATE  
CONSISTENT SALES  
OF USED EQUIPMENT  
WORKER CONTROLLED

**CHRONIC  
ELECTRONIC  
COOP**

3464 MINNEAPOLIS AVE.  
724-3-29

**whole foods co-op**  
2501 1ST AVE S  
PHONE 872-0485

- MACROBIOTIC FOODS •
- VITAMINS •
- CATTIER CLAY •
- FRESH PRODUCE •

10% DISCOUNT FOR  
VOLUNTEERS AND  
SENIOR CITIZENS

HOURS:  
MONDAY - SATURDAY  
10 AM - 8 PM  
SUNDAY - 12 PM - 6 PM

**the  
Journey**



## South Africa Enters the Nuclear Club

by Zoltan Grossman

For years the nuclear fuel cycle has played a crucial role in global politics. Nuclear reactors and weaponry have become the most sought-after technology on earth, creating intense conflicts among nations.

In the late 1970s a string of military interventions around the world gave rise to claims that uranium, the kernel of all nuclear programs, may be an important fact in wars in the Third World. Whether in America, Australia, or Africa, uranium mining is essentially a non-white issue. It has figured prominently in national struggles on every continent.

Foreign armed occupations of at least six African nations have been linked to the issue of uranium exploitation. Nuclear colonialism on the continent has been particularly attributed to two nuclear nations, South Africa and France. With, of course, the help of the United States multi-nationals and the U.S. government. Two African states desiring nuclear status, Morocco and Libya, have also been accused of thirsting for uranium in their armed annexations of neighboring territory.

The following article, fifth in a six part series, deals with the racist South African government's entry into the nuclear club.

*"If South Africa wishes to use its nuclear potential for other than peaceful purposes, it would jolly well do it according to our decisions and our judgements."*

—South African Finance Minister  
Owen Harwood, 1977

The final result of uranium mining in Namibia and the Republic of South Africa (RSA) may be the development of nuclear weapons as the ultimate defense of white racial power. This goal has been heavily assisted by Western cooperation—from the uranium's removal from the ground to its eventual enrichment for weapons. As they loan technology and advice, the allied powers are well aware that a South African finger on the nuclear button further raises the specter of world war.



Peg Averill/WIN magazine

In July 1977, both Soviet and American intelligence agencies disclosed that the RSA was planning a nuclear test in the Kalahari Desert near Namibia. The two nations issued public warnings to the Vorster government, and no detonation took place.

On September 22, 1979, an American satellite detected a double-pulse flash—the "signature" of a nuclear explosion—in the South Atlantic off of South Africa. A blast wave was recorded at the U.S. Arecibo antenna in Puerto Rico, and radioactive fallout may have later been detected in New Zealand.

The U.S. government declined to make the Arecibo data public, and offered counter-theories to the hard evidence of a bomb explosion. A meteor, a lightning bolt, and a "lost" nuclear weapon were all offered as possible reasons for the flash. All were eventually disproven, to the embarrassment of the officials.

The blast, as some estimates indicate,

took place near a South African-owned archipelago 1,000 miles south of the coast. An RSA navy fleet was 'training' in the sea nearby, and some experts now believe that an American-made missile was fired from one of the ships, tipped with a South African nuclear warhead.

But why a nuclear missile? In a civil or guerrilla war a nuclear strategy to save apartheid would be useless. A conventional atomic bomb dropped on black Soweto would scorch white Johannesburg. Then could the bomb be used against "external enemies?" Lagos? Salisbury? Maputo? Luanda? Moscow? With so many enemies, Pretoria would find this plan ineffective. Is the bomb then intended for blackmailing Bonn or Washington to intervene during a crisis? Is it to be used as a 'nuclear umbrella' over fraternal Israel (now involved in its own 'Great Trek' on the West Bank, and believed to possess its own nuclear arsenal)? The answer to all

these theories, as the evidence stands now, is probably no. The answer lies in the pulse signature of Sept. 22.

The blast that lit the sky that night was smaller than the one that destroyed Hiroshima in 1945. Many sources contend that the work was that of a large model of the neutron bomb, or "enhanced radiation device," the weapon that kills people and spares property. France is the only other nation to have officially tested the N-bomb; the U.S. is now unshelving its own project. The military advantage of the bomb is that it kills everyone within a one-kilometer radius, yet spares inanimate objects from heavy damage. The South African nuclear program suddenly makes much more sense. The use of radiation against the Black population becomes a terrifying possibility.

At the U.N. Hearings on Namibian Uranium, Australian doctor Helen Caldicott described the medical effects of the neutron bomb in a war situation:

The radiation dose has to be so intense—and it is—that it produces what is called acute encephalopathic syndrome, which means that the brain swells. Now, the brain is enclosed in a thick box, called the cranium or the skull, and there is no room for expansion. So, if the brain is damaged and it swells, you get very serious symptoms—like you cannot walk straight, you become drowsy, you get vomiting. And the soldiers also become psychotic. They get severe headaches, and this lasts for some hours. Then, for several hours before they die, they have a period of lucidity and normality.

I think this is probably the most inhumane way that man has devised to kill his brother...

In a South African civil war, there would be no distinguishing between combatants and noncombatants. In the apartheid society, the all-black villages and townships could be heavily radiated, harming perhaps a handful of whites. And that's it. The historical legacy of South Africa may be that it introduced neutron warhead missiles—after smallpox blankets, gas chambers, and napalm—as one more technological improvement in the history of genocide.

Next month: Zaire and Katanga

## Protestors, Police Clash at Seabrook

protestors lined up outside the plant fence, chanting at the police and leaning on the fence. When the fence began to sway, one policeman, who had his hand on top of the fence, received

tric production will increase from 3.6 percent in 1970 to an estimated 23 percent in 1985. By contrast, according to an estimate by the Atomic Indus-

been offered to neighbors of hydroelectric facilities, and so the rate reduction is generally regarded as a way to overcome local antimuclear sentiment.