



Long Road to Liberation: An Exiled Namibian Activist's Perspective

By Hans Beukes



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In the late 1950s Hans Beukes, a native of the then South West Africa, was a student at the University of Cape Town when he won a 'solidarity scholarship' tenable for three years at the University of Oslo in Norway. 'At your age, Mr Beukes,' his professor in Constitutional History told him, 'it ought to be an adventure.' And so it turned out.

As he was about to board an ore carrier bound for Oslo from Port Elizabeth, the South African government confiscated his passport. Back in Cape Town he met an American activist who would become a key figure in the US Civil Rights movement. Allard Lowenstein had no words of comfort for him, but a challenge: 'Unless some of you are prepared to leave the comfort of your homes to go to fight the regime on the world stage, where they now monopolise opinion, you can forget about getting rid of apartheid.

' Beukes accepted the challenge. Thus was launched 'the Beukes case' in the annals of the international tug-of-war about the future of the Territory that would become Namibia.

The author paints a memorable picture of the protracted struggles against the apartheid government, and of the ceaseless work done in mobilising international public opinion against that repressive regime.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Hans Beukes was born in the then South West Africa, now Namibia; attended school there and in South Africa – before going into exile – and graduated in Economics at the University of Oslo; employment in the public service before becoming a teacher – at secondary and high schools; a spell as Scandinavian correspondent for the Afrikaans language newspaper, Die Burger of Cape Town; married, with two sons and three grandsons.

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