



LETTERS to the EDITOR

Independent Namibia will not inherit debts

THE last sentence in your otherwise accurate and ground-breaking article on South African-occupied Namibia's external borrowing (AFRICA No. 133) is both probably inaccurate and (contrary to your intent) helpful only to South Africa and its allies. The status of the Mudge Administration's external debt does not bear any legal examination. The precedents of revolutionary governments which repudiate their predecessors' borrowings but honour their own (eg. most recently Cuba) do not suggest that such action automatically ends access to international finance.

The 'SWA/Namibia' regime has been widely recognized to be unlawful for many years. The UN General

Assembly, the Security Council and the World Court are agreed on that. Therefore, it has no power to borrow and every bank is on notice of that fact. If the banks took their case to international law, the World Court's answer is quite easy to predict as it (by a very large majority) has already advised that all South Africans or South African territorial regime economic transactions in respect to Namibia since the revocation of the mandate are unlawful and legally unenforceable.

The loans floated to date are — apparently without significant exception — fully guaranteed by the Republic of South Africa. Therefore the logical and simple course of action for the banks after the 'SWA/Namibia' Administration (valid under South African law but not internationally) is gone is to claim from Pretoria, not Windhoek. Very few overseas loans have been floated because — even with South Africa's guarantees — the odium and risk attached to such a paper is high. Suggesting that a lawful Namibian Government would feel obliged to repay can only help sales outside South Africa.

Given the known illegality of the issuing body, the South African guarantee, the limited number of loans outside South Africa, and SWAPO's clear stand that an independent Namibia is not in law the successor to the illegal occupation regime, declining to accept any responsibility for the Mudge borrowing spree is not only economically imperative and legally correct but perfectly practicable for the future independent Namibia.

*Reginald Herbold Green
Falmer, United Kingdom*

The OAU Summit

I READ with consternation the recent happening in Tripoli, Libya (AFRICA No 132). This incident has proved beyond reasonable doubt the immaturity of some African leaders in pivoting the affairs of the OAU. I see no reason why some African countries should be pressurized by the United States of America, notably by the Reagan Administration, not to

attend the 19th OAU Summit.

My own suggestion as regards the forming of a quorum in the OAU is that instead of two-thirds it should be changed to one-third in order that what happened in Tripoli may not repeat itself. Why is it that some African countries are against the admission of Sahroui Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Why are we fighting for the emancipation of our brothers who are still under colonial rule when those who happen to procure their independence are debarred from being members of the Organization?

*Vincent A. Okalor
Kano, Nigeria*

MANY African countries, instead of being in the forefront of the battle for the total liberation of southern Africa, apparently prefer territorial aggression, rancour and civil strife which all culminate in the inability of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to embark upon a common assault aimed at up-rooting racism and colonialism in Africa. Britain and the US with all their Western ideologies based on democracy and intrigue seem unconcerned about the inhuman treatment being perpetrated on Africans in South Africa and Namibia. As for southern Africa's feuding liberation groups, it must be stressed that no meaningful tribute is being done Nelson Mandela and the other martyrs of the struggle as long as they are disunited.

*Augustine Uti
Lagos, Nigeria*

The troubled Horn

IT IS a pity that tension is again mounting in the Horn of Africa. It is again sombre and disheartening to learn that the two so-called world powers — the USSR and the US — are again fishing in the troubled waters of the Horn. And, that amidst angry accusations of aggression, the two revered and well-loved leaders of the two warring nations are pointing fingers at each other. Whatever made these two gentlemen resort to this? Why can't Siad Barre and Haile Mengistu sit down and settle their nations' differences?

It should dawn on the Ethiopians and the Somalians that all eyes are on them and that the earlier and more peacefully they resolve their problems, the happier the towns of Africa and Africans around the world will be. For, in the words of a well-known Nigerian writer, Cyprian

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