

## **BISHOPS AND SWAPO**

Contrary to a newspaper report that the “Catholic Bishops back Swapo”, what Archbishop Denis Hurley said in Johannesburg on 30/1/83 was: “When the bishops visited Namibia in September 1981, they learned that the people of Namibia wanted the war stopped. They said they wanted an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of South African troops, which they regarded as an army of occupation, and the holding of ‘free and fair’ elections under United Nations’ supervision. They said they were prepared to accept whatever party emerged from the elections, but the people seemed certain that should such elections take place, Swapo would win.”

“Should we dictate to the people what they should want?” asked Archbishop Hurley. “We pointed out to them that many said that Swapo is Marxist. They said, ‘We do not know about that. But what we do know is that there is strong Christian influence in Swapo and throughout Namibia, and this will balance whatever Marxism there may be in Swapo.’”