



## How Will Namibia's Descendants Look in Chinese Uniforms?

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It is interesting to note the debate over China's involvement in Africa. That eight African countries, including Namibia, received visits by the very President of China on the heels of a Chinese summit hosting 48 of Africa's 53 countries, indicates the importance the government of China has attached to its ties with Africa which has seen trade quadruple between the two since 2001.

What is also interesting is how few of the African governments have seriously entered into the debate as to the benefit and shortcomings of such a growing relationship whereby, increasingly, China is gaining access to Africa's very future.

In discussions with the common folk of Namibia, many are quick to express concerns. In a recent survey conducted by The Namibian and published on 1/26/07, the citizens of this country were quick to point out the problems in the governing policies of Namibia, including an estimated 40000 Chinese in a country with growing unemployment. It has been explained to me that, since China made financial contributions to the ruling party prior to independence, Chinese citizens now have much greater access and facilitation to work, work visas, and land in Namibia than many other foreigners -especially if remuneration is involved.

Thus, America sends Peace Corps volunteers, and China sets up construction firms. So must the citizens of Namibia now pay for contributions received by the ruling party?

Make no mistake, this has nothing to do with antagonism towards the Chinese people. They are smart and very hardworking. People are people. Like many, they want to make a living. Neither should this be construed in such a way to encourage ill-feeling towards the Chinese. As a Christian, we are taught to love one another. My concern is the wisdom of government policies in Africa which adversely affect the people of Africa.

Asia - China included - is renowned for its shrewd, calculating business practices.

African governments are not a match for them, and China quickly ascertains this to their own advantage. Mr Hengari has noted that "the Bank of Namibia or key Government departments don't have any PhDs in their employ" and of Namibia's collective allergies to competence" - in his words.

Through gifts, China gets access to net much more, in future gains, which is its goal. Many in Africa do

not put much priority on the future, except for lip service. Some may talk about the year 2015 or 2030. But China's approach is totally different. They completely understand the concept of willingly making present-day sacrifices in order to reap future gain. Whereas Africa barely looks to the year 2030, China looks to the year 3019!

Your reaction to that statement is my point. Many don't care about lining their pockets. Aid, this is why greed and corruption in Africa plays right into China's hand - and probably why China doesn't care to address the corruption and human rights issues in Africa. Shortsighted, corrupt officials will not properly protect Africa's future. The government of China also notoriously ignores wars and the HIV crisis, as it realizes that a continent bent on self-destruction also fits very well into its scheme of world dominance.

If a communist government does not care for the human rights of its own people - even intruding into the number of babies their citizens may have and churches coming under the government eye - then why should they (the communist government) care for the human rights of foreign people?

Beware Namibia! Poor school scores and low worker skills also play right into China's hand. Is it any wonder they have placed so much emphasis on Africa?

With more and more access to different parts of the world and its resources, its burgeoning population, and growing military might - including "surprisingly strong" weapons of mass destruction, the government of China is methodically on its way to governing, controlling and dictating the world.

As Joseph Fredericks - chief of Bretanie of the !Aman community - erred in selling land in 1884 to the Germans, which gave the Germans both access to Namibia's diamonds and a beachhead from where war eventually was waged, much of Africa is posed to make the same mistake again, willingly. Short-term greed and gain in exchange for future tragedy does not sound like a good deal to me.

Maybe it does to the leaders of Africa. In that case, the people of Namibia may write their descendants to explain how the country's leaders made lucrative deals with China so that they (their descendants) may wear Chinese uniforms! If you really think the President of China came to Namibia because he really cares about the suffering and unemployed here, the desert, and the Kudu, then maybe I have wasted my time. But I have fulfilled my responsibility by trying to warn the people of Namibia. The country does not need more suffering. Note that such things as a new parliament building, new homes for the military elite, and a new soccer stadium (examples of Chinese aid to Africa) cleverly do not produce so much as a tin can for the people. China is smart. A new building for the government or military does not help the suffering, but it can give the Chinese government access to what IT wants - resources and dominance.

The people of Namibia will be well advised to check out all the fine print of agreements being signed with the Chinese government, as well as to listen in on all the back-room verbal exchanges which iron out all the details of the perks ( planes, vacations, houses, etc.) and/or bribes which will be forthcoming in exchange for such signed legally-binding agreements.

The people of Namibia are less than smart if they think that China is less than smart. How will Namibia's descendants look in Chinese uniforms?

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