

# 10 years of peace?

THERE is another side to the story of the so-called 'Ten years of peace in East Caprivi' (The Windhoek Advertiser, August 26). It has not had ten years of peace as Brigadier Gert Nel suggests: it HAS been ten years of humiliation and intimidation.

I regard this report as an attempt to invalidate the very successful Swapo rally held in the region on August 20, as well as to discredit Caprivians in the eyes of fellow Namibians. Brigadier Nel's long report on the so-called 'peace' is mere propaganda.

Leaders have been intimidated and harassed by the SADF and its counterpart, Swapol, formerly SAP. The so-called 'leaders', as claimed by Brigadier Nel, are instruments used to further the prevailing status quo. The traditional leaders are merely the equivalents of the Katjuonguas and Matjilas of Namibia.

As regards what Brigadier Nel calls 'cooperation' between the army and civilians, I have the following to say:

- ★ intense psychological war is at work in the region;
- ★ the people do not admire the SADF or SWATF, because it is not their army, but South Africa's. The civilians may 'cooperate' with the army because they need to survive; but it is not out of their own will. Their fear is legitimate.

The bitter irony behind the creation of 701 Battalion is that most young men have joined the army as a last resort. The rate of unemployment in Caprivi is so high that people are left with two major options: to join the army, undesirable as that is, or become a teacher.

The SADF and Swapol have repressed any sign of protest so that may give an illusion of 'peace' in the region.

Regarding Enok/FNDC, this company may be credited with monopolistic and exploitative practices in the region. It is notorious for paying low wages; and they are certainly not contributing to any development worth mentioning.

The SWABC is nothing other than a mouthpiece of the interim government and its masters in Pretoria. It is also used to disseminate the kind of propaganda which Brigadier Nel exemplifies.

Brigadier Nel should not be so smug. The schools boycott may spread to Caprivi; the latter is not an isolated island where we do not see or feel the pain of our brothers and sisters throughout the country.

If the Caprivi is anti-Swapo as Brigadier Nel suggests, then how does he explain the record attendance at the rally of August 20?

CHUMA MAYUMBELO  
MARTIN MWINGA  
SYLVESTER SIKOPO  
NICOLUS MUTWA  
KAMWI NYAMBE  
NGANGE SIKABONGO