

Let's Expropriate Ramatex

I'D like to commend Mr. Jauch for the thoughtful, compelling and accurate reflection on the deportation of the Bangladeshi workers, published last Friday, and I congratulate you for publishing it. Unfortunately, elsewhere in the paper, there was an ignorant attempt at a humorous column on the same situation.

It is much to be regretted that Namibians, if they think about the matter at all, simply assume the Bangladeshis to be foreign trouble-makers who should immediately be got rid of. So little has been learned from history, as Mr. Jauch says. We have also the totally bizarre situation where irregular work visa, employment contracts and worker 'accommodation' was seemingly all organised within one Namibian family - surely this should be investigated.

And we have this equally bizarre company Ramatex, which seems to be a state within a state.

Actually I would like to suggest a solution to all this. Let us just go into the Ramatex facility, deport the management, and expropriate it. Nothing wrong with this, despite what the IMF might say, since in terms of subsidies, grants, incentives and tax breaks we have bought the place several times over.

Run the operation with Namibian management, and continue to supply Ramatex's overseas customers as before.

We presumably could sell the stuff more cheaply since we would eliminate the huge cut taken by the present Malaysian involvement. The staff would then be protected by Namibian labour law and be treated decently, and even the waste products would be treated decently. Why not try?

The Obvious

Via e-mail

Note: Real name and address provided - Ed