

Private Sector Is Not Coming To The Rescue

WE have been waiting eight years now to see what the Government can do to combat Namibia's major problems, which are hunger, poverty, diseases, unemployment and crime. It did not take our Government many years to identify this nation's major problems. It puts on a mask by having the private sector to blame and continues pointing fingers at the private sector, saying that the private sector must meet it halfway. This is an obvious mask: how can a father in a courtyard rely on other people to feed his family?

I know that the private sector is good, but in Namibia one looks at the fruits they are producing. These are paying lower salaries, ignoring the safety of workers at work, retrenchment of workers, and finally liquidation or takeovers. Statistics prove to us that there are more workers retrenched from the private sector than by the Government since independence.

I would like to ask the Government to take off the mask and redouble its efforts in alleviating this nation's common problems, not to wait for unexpected solutions from the private sector.

On the hunger problem, inflation in Namibia is increasing rapidly and as a result some of the basic necessity customer goods are more expensive than luxury goods.

Income tax is also increasing, on a weekly basis. This shows hunger is not being alleviated but extending in Namibia.

Approximately 60 per cent of Namibians still live below the poverty line with less income than is needed to provide the minimum necessities to live, and almost 20 per cent are landless. As a result they have no soil for farming and up to 30 children are depending on one breadwinner with a salary of less than N\$1 000 a month.

Statistics show that the death rate in Namibia caused by malnutrition, STDs, Polio and HIV/AIDS, in just the eight years since independence, exceeds the number that died in the liberation of the country. Before 2000 the probability is that more than 6 000 Namibians will die because of those well-known diseases yet

nothing is done to prevent this and those diseases.

Most Namibians are still unemployed, when jobs are created by the Government and the private sector only for qualified citizens and the qualifications are not educational nepotism, tribalism, favouritism, and sexism. For the so-called workers, the same system applies when it comes to promotion and other benefits.

People are preached to that these are elements of colonialism but even now I still see them in

the fields. If you talk about this you are regarded as still in the colonial government or a tribalist forgetting that action speaks louder than words.

Demonstrating or matching on State House has become a precondition for requirement for employment in Namibia, look at what happened and is happening to the ex-Plan combatants, I wonder where those automatic jobs came from and why were they not given to them or even to the internal Swapo fighters and the Namibians at

large.

Namibia has become a broad road for every drug-dealing company in the world. Crimes such as armed robberies, rapes, thefts, aeroplane hijacking, homicides and suicides have turned to be our nation's daily bread. Short sentences, or even warnings, are given to those found guilty. Our government shields evil-minded robbers. The Government must stop taking cover behind the private sector.

ROSE MBUCHE,
WINDHOEK

Not Yet A Ghost Town But ...

I AM a second-year distance university student at the University of South Africa. Some few years back, the Right Honourable Prime Minister Hage Geingob, was reported to have gone on a crusade for the town of Omaruru, amongst others, to ward off the looming prospect of becoming yet another ghost town.

I am referring to the envisaged multi-million-dollar investment for establishing a metal smelter at the town, which one has not heard anything about ever since. Is it still in the pipeline? Or is it overtaken by NDP1 (fate as yet unknown) or NDP22 (still in the offing)?

Business has become stagnant, un-

employment is rampant and apathy has taken root particularly amongst the youth since the shutdown of the nearby aluminium mine many years ago. Yet, for the town's "godfather", it is business as usual.

The situation is exacerbated by the recent closure of the two manufacturing plants (i.e. van den Berg Foods and Namswa Pty Ltd).

The fact of the matter is: the town is in dire need of a major rescue bid and ideas such as those shared by the Right Honourable Prime Minister may be just the thing.

FOR THE LOVE OF MY HOMETOWN
A T R OZUUKO, OMARURU

LETTERS should be addressed to Letters To The Editor, The Namibian, PO Box 20783, Windhoek. Faxed to (061) 233980, or e-mailed to jean@namibian.com.na. Letters which include the writer's name will be given priority. Readers are requested to please keep their letters as short and to the point as possible. The Namibian reserves the right to shorten letters without changing their meaning.

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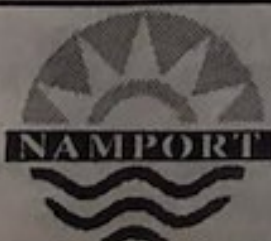
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