

Are commies so bad?

IN THE last edition of The Namibian and some other newspaper, I had the opportunity to read what some members of the SADF were saying about communism. Before I say anything about the subject, I would like to inform readers that I was born and brought up in the communist state of Yugoslavia. I might add that while living and working in my home town I had always refused offers to become a member of the Communist Party.

According to what these army members say, which can also be taken as the general opinion of Namibian whites, particularly farmers, communism means dictatorship which includes the killing of political opponents, oppression, exploitation, poverty and other abuses of human rights.

Many of them regard anyone who opposes the apartheid system and white minority rule as a communist or even, terrorist. I believe that these SADF anti-communist preachers think that this socio-political system in which we live, or have been forced to live, is one of the best. One thing is sure, it is some kind of capitalism.

It is as unwise to say: Christianity is better than Islam or the other way around, as it is to say or think that capitalism is better than communism or vice versa.

Of course any socio-political structure benefits someone profitably. If we compare communism and capitalism, let's say according to the number of private-owned cars and television sets, we will have the impression that capitalism is much better. But if you look at other things in the capitalist society, like the number of suicides, drug addicts, kidnappings and terrorist attacks, then we have another picture. It seems to me that people in the capitalist world are not so free and happy. Life under communism is safer and better.

We must also not fail to give attention to job security in communist states where it is very difficult to fire workers from their jobs. Here in Namibia the firing of workers is 'normal procedure'.

If we want to learn the facts we will notice that communism by itself is not some kind of poverty-maker. In many communist-ruled states, living standards are much higher than in non-communist states; take for example Latin America or the Philippines. None of them are ruled by the communists but there are so many poor people. What about Namibia?

When the SADF 'experts' talk about communism, they talk about the Soviet Union in the Stalin era, which is a matter of the past, just as is black slavery in the United States. Life of the Soviet citizen today is far better than it was in Czarist Russia. Every-

body in the USSR today has enough food and clothing. I am convinced that even in the most communist states, citizens enjoy more democracy, more freedom and more justice than the majority here in Namibia. The waves of protest in the communist countries today, like the one in Poland, is not directed against the communist system itself. The Solidarity Union in Poland is not an anti-communist movement, which is trying to destroy the Polish socio-political structure. In fact, the union leaders are better communists than their rulers.

To many of those who so strongly criticise the communist way of life, communism and marxism mean the same thing, which is also wrong. Somebody can be communist and not marxist; he can be Stalinist, Maoist etc.

I myself do not adhere to any ideology. I concern myself as a Christian only, but to be a good believer and Christian does not mean to be ready to kill communists and non-believers.

Rather it is to mean to work together and work in peace and harmony. If we are not prepared to do this, our future is bleak. To try to bring people to your side by creating a fear of the unknown is primitive and cheap propaganda, which as such is not a part of Western civilisation which the SADF claims to defend.

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