

# Returnee problems

IN THE name of reconciliation, all Namibians, irrespective of colour, creed or political affiliation, are supposed to tolerate one another and forget about the past. Contrary to this, most returnee job hunters are often told mainly by white business managers throughout Namibia that 'we have no work for terrorists' or 'Nujoma should give you jobs'. The type of language used against poor returnees is not only abusive but an insult. Do whites not see that the winds of change have arrived?

One may say that these are isolated incidents, but the fact is that those who are victims of such practices argue the contrary. All of us are supposed to be guided by reconciliation, but it seems that it is just a theoretical term.

We are of course in a transitional phase in our country, and after a few weeks we will enter another phase. At this stage we cannot afford to have elements drunk with these rotten attitudes in our society. They must be sternly warned to stop insulting returnees who are also entitled to work because they are sons and daughters of this country. Last month two returnees asked me to take them to South West Breweries Ltd to go for job interviews. This was in accordance with an advertisement which appeared in a daily paper of the same day. They were treated badly by Mr P von Kuehne at the Human Resources Department of the Breweries.

To add insult to injury, the same Mr von Kuehne asked the two people questions such as whether they spoke French. One wonders what this had to do with working at the Breweries. People like this are poisoning the spirit of reconciliation.

President Nujoma noted when officiating the launch of the training of the first black troops who will serve as a guard of honour on independence day that everybody should forget the past, and that Namibia was not the only country where people had fought against one another. Europe had experienced two wars, and yet the same nations were now striving for a united Europe, he said.

We thought this and other reconciliatory statements made by President Nujoma and other leaders would set an example, but there are still elements in our society who don't want to forget the past.

Reconciliation should be a two-way thing. Let us all have tolerance for one another and build our unity on the foundations of reconciliation, love, peace and harmony.

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