

'Poisonous, Arrogant & Unfounded Opinions'

I READ with utter dismay the Political Perspective by Gwen Lister in The Namibian of Friday July 10 on the third term of the presidential office for President Sam Nujoma.

This article's purpose is to provide facts and only facts and to inject clear fresh ideas or progressive thoughts in the Namibian political environment. This environment is being polluted by poisonous, arrogant and unfounded opinion declarations such as those of Lister's Political Perspective which could tarnish the good reputation and image of Namibia if allowed to go unchallenged or uncorrected.

It is ludicrous for Lister and her likes to write false information about democracy in Namibia - abusing her media/press power warranted by the freedom of the Press in the country. Democracy in Namibia is entrenched, healthily alive and kicking, and not under any threat.

Arbitrary power is the natural object of temptation (Swift, 1706). And therefore one feels that it is now time for the exposition and condemnation of arbitrary media/press power and freedom by Lister which has reached the highest proportions in her avarice to maximise the sale of her newspaper.

Definitely Ms Lister, in her Political Perspective referred to here, has abused her media power arbitrarily by dogmatically imposing her opinions on the Swapo Party in general and Swapo MPs in particular.

Is this not influenced by typical white liberal arrogance? Some white liberals believe that they are the liberators and guardians of the black people with the natural right to dictate to them (blacks) how they should conduct their affairs. And it seems it is on this basis that Lister regards herself as a political sage and Messiah sent by God to salvage Namibia by arrogantly imposing her opinions on a government governed by a black majority party, Swapo Party.

Lister, because of her absolute corrupt media power in expression of her political aversions, patronises some unspecified Swapo MPs in Parliament, and unjustifiably castigated democratically elected Swapo Party Secretary General Mr Pohamba as she wrote; "There is no doubt that Swapo members in the House do not have freedom of choice to vote the way their conscious dictates if the vote is taken, let us say by show of hands".

She went on to write that "It is not enough for Pohamba to use coercive tactics by reminding Swapo members that the decision of the Congress is binding and that none dare change their minds". Is this really not a plain display of white liberal arrogance and prejudice advanced into a high degree of dysphasia and political dysphoria. Is freedom of the press in this country meant for arbitrary media power abuse?

Does Lister really imply that there are some Swapo MPs in Parliament who are not free to articulate their feelings openly and who, if given a secret chance, will join the ranks of the opposition members in Parliament to undermine or reject party resolutions they have formulated in party structures to which they belong? One is compelled to enquire if apostasy is a healthy element to be encouraged in any situation?

Lister's accusation against Mr Pohamba on the third term exposed her as a heartless and shameless political demagogue.

In many cases, it reflects vividly well in Lister's opinions that according to her will everything democratically decided in Swapo should not be regarded as having been decided democratically as long as it is not in line with her interests. She appears to be ruled by passion other than reason because of her habitual bemoaning and berating the Swapo Party in general and the Swapo Party leadership in particular on decisions taken by the party organs.

In democracy majority rule, and this implies that if majority of the broad and vast Swapo membership vote in favour and endorse an issue, the rest of the other members are suppose to comply with it, and this is not only unique to Swapo, but it is a universal acceptable practice in many democratic profit or non-profit making public or private institutions where reason not passion prevails.

Apparently there are some Swapo MPs of whom Lister is their Messiah who articulate their course and plead for their protection on their behalf (sic). Hence her call to the Speaker of the Parliament to call for a secret ballot when the proposed amendment on the third term comes in parliament so that her (Lister) so-called Swapo MPs who are not free to vote openly by show of hands could join the ranks of the opposition MPs in voting against the third term. What a dreadful conspiracy equivalent to high treason?

One thought that Namibia was building a culture of openness based on the virtues and values of transparency, but one becomes frightened and shocked to see journalist-cum-politicians like Lister-opting to take a leap into darkness by encouraging a reactionary culture of secretiveness at the expense of openness.

Namibian MPs per statute are entitled to Parliamentary immunity and privileges regarding their utterances or actions in Parliament, and therefore one fails to understand why some Swapo MPs are said to be 'not free to take

a stand' as implied by Lister?

Political oratory is less given to unscrupulous practices than forensic, because its treatment of wider issues. In a political debate the women or man who is forming a judgement is making a decision about his own vital interests. There is no need, therefore, to prove anything except that the facts are what the supporter of a measure maintains they are.

In line with the above quotation, it should be mentioned that the political oratory of Lister and other opponents of the third term is done in line with their vital interest as argued above.

Lister and her kind exploit the third term issue to dramatise, exaggerate and distort facts for misinformation in order to increase the sale of their ailing newspapers to maximise profit.

Selfishly they milk the issue negatively without considering the great harm they are causing the image and reputation of this country, and let alone the catastrophic slow undermining of peace and stability with their irresponsible dogmatic and flawed professing of doom based on lies and fabrications.

They are engaged in a psychological warfare, causing fear and panic by detracting and portraying others to look as if they were monsters who are there to destroy the constitution.

Apparently the sin is just when others (the vast majority of Swapo members) proposes to let Namibia effectively and efficiently manage the transfer of power shift in an evolutionary manner that will not cause unnecessary shocks that may result in the disruption or destabilisation of the country's democratic political system, and peaceful political environment. This change is being managed within the framework of the Constitution which is an excellent approach.

It is an ideal thing to manage evolutionary change than to opt for an abrupt radical revolutionary change that could lead into crises and the collapse of the stable political system and atmosphere as history has shown many revolutions have ended-up in decay and collapse. Let Namibia manage change, and not allow herself to be managed by change.

There is no way in which the proposed amendment of the constitution for the facilitation of the third term could undermine democracy in Namibia like Lister always attempts to mislead the world in her Editorials.

The constitutional clause in question is one of the amendable ones, and therefore as long as the process of amending it is done within the parameters of the law as it appears to be the case then there is nothing to cause any commotion.

Lister always condemns Swapo as an undemocratic organisation without providing any substantive facts and evidence. But to many people's knowledge issues in Swapo are debated and decided upon democratically at party congresses and other meetings. How could Lister claim to know Swapo in and out, even better than Swapo members themselves without her belonging to any of the party structures?

There was no day in which Lister has provided her readers with hard facts on her political dyspeptic allegations on the so-called lack of democracy in the Swapo Party, and please, for how long will this nation continue to be served with Lister's substandard and half roasted journalism materials?

The majority of the citizens of this country want the third term, and therefore Lister and her kind should not resist change as it is irresistible, but instead she should learn how to manage change and adapt to it. This is a simple rule of the game as Namibia goes by majority rule but not by minority rule!

The endorsement of the third term by the Swapo party and hopefully by Parliament will be not end in itself, but rather an open a beginning. This is so because that endorsement will not mean that President Nujoma would become an automatic President of the Republic of Namibia after endorsement of the third term.

The race for Presidency will still be open for any Namibian harbouring ambitions to be President to run for the high office of the land.

The third term will provide continuity and consolidation of peace, political, economic and social stability in this country as a proper and stable way of the management of the process of change as already mentioned.

Democracy call for patience, self-containment, and making concessions, and therefore those who sees Nujoma as the main obstacle for them to get political power should learn how to be a little bit patient, and wait for the next more few years in the name and for the sake of the vast majority of the masses of the Namibian grassroots people who democratically want Nujoma to continue for another term while preparing and adjusting themselves psychologically for change.

UETUTIZIRA VEKETA, WINDHOEK

Note: Readers can decide for themselves whose are the more 'poisonous, arrogant, and unfounded opinions' - the letter writer's or Gwen Lister's. - Letters' Ed.

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA



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(1999 ACADEMIC YEAR)

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