

Quo Vadis Our Democracy?

PRESIDENT Nujoma's report to the Swapo Central Committee must have sent shock waves through democrats both at home and abroad. It definitely proved a point. Democracy in our country is only as strong as the opposition is weak.

We have not forgotten the press conferences called by the then Swapo Secretary General, Moses Garoeb, whenever a politician left his/her party to join Swapo. They were heralded as democrats, heroes, people unifying the nation. Today when a Swapo member uses the same democratic and constitutional right to join or form another party, he/she is a 'rebel' who is dividing the nation. Does this mean that in the understanding of Swapo Central Committee, the only way to unite the nation is to be a Swapo member? What does that mean? We must all belong to Swapo, a one party state. If so, 'quo vadis' democracy?

Less than 10 years ago, 'Boss', the apartheid regime's security network used to bug the telephones of those involved in the liberation struggle, following their movements and arresting some of them. At the time, one was filled with a sense of pride if

this was happening to you because you fought the apartheid regime for an independent democratic Namibia where these evils would be a thing of the past. In less than ten years, we are facing the same oppressive system.

In a totally arrogant violation of the constitution, whilst being paid by all Namibian taxpayers, Tsheehama shamelessly admits to bugging telephones. What he did not admit to, is how his agents followed Namibians who were holding a peaceful meeting outside Outjo, and once they left, the agents had the temerity to question workers at the camp. Why is this happening now? What threat

are democrats to Namibia? The only threat is obviously a threat to Swapo and in the understanding of the Swapo CC the party is the nation and the nation is the party. One wonders whether they understand the concept of government as having three arms. Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, and NOT the Swapo CC.

One wonders whether the President's speech was nothing more than Tsheehama's intelligence report on CoD and if so, does Tsheehama report to the Swapo CC or the Namibian Government?

The ultimate shock for a Namibian democrat must come from the reaction of some CC

members regarding the election of a new CCN General Secretary. Because they feel incapable of leadership in Swapo and because they showed so little moral obligation to the Namibian Constitution regarding the third term, they expected the CCN to do the same. Hence their inability to understand and recognise actions from CCN leaders. In the first place Dr Nakamhela was not elected, nor did he stand for a third term because the CCN constitution explicitly precludes any General Secretary from being elected for a third term.

Dr Nakamhela, a real democrat, made no attempt to mess with the

constitution for his own gain. He handed over to his successor with dignity and will be praised and remembered in history.

Again, we are led to understand that the Swapo Central Committee was threatening action against civil servants and managers in parastatals who are sympathetic to CoD. Are these the same people who, when they felt unchallenged, made provision for civil servants to take leave of absence to contest elections? Or was this only meant for Swapo-supporting civil servants? After all, only a few weeks ago, the PM stated publicly that the civil service was political.

Finally, Namibians, open your ears and eyes and read the signs. Our liberation struggle was not to replace white faces with black masks, to replace Boss with Tsheehama, to change the constitution when it suits us, to deny Namibians freedom of association or to have a one party state. The time has come to stand up and defend our hardwon democracy. There is only one obvious solution. Let us join CoD in our thousands.

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IN a recent edition of The Namibian, you published a report of President Sam Nujoma to the Swapo Central Committee.

In it, I was shocked to read words such as 'ruthless', 'rebellious', and 'threats' and other references to the Congress of Democrats as a new party or to its members and leader, Ben Ulenga, in particular.

Regarding the word 'ruthless' I have this to say: it is the Swapo leadership which is ruthless. It

Not A Rebel

is the Swapo President who is on record for having caused more than 2000 Namibian patriots to disappear while in Swapo dungeons. Ulenga does not have the blood of a single Namibian on his hands, neither does his party.

It is the President's ruthlessness which made him decide to send our soldiers to die in the DRC for his interests and those of his fellows, Laurent Kabila and

Robert Mugabe.

Leaving Swapo to join or form another party is not rebellious in any way. It is a right guaranteed by the Namibian Constitution. It is Swapo leadership who are rebellious against the supreme law of our land, the Constitution. Hence they feel threatened by the birth of a democratic party, launched and led by Ben Ulenga, the president of a new generation.

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