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WINDHOEK

On diamond theft

I WISH to react to CDMs campaign against diamond theft.

I would like to make it categorically clear that this campaign amounts to cheap propaganda on the part of this company.

CDM said recently that "employees developed a philosophy that diamond theft was legitimate and therefore not morally wrong as the company itself was perceived to be 'stealing' diamonds from the Namibian nation".

I want to tell CDM that the people of Namibia are sick and tired of multi-nationals. It is a wellknown fact that CDM and other companies worked hand in hand with racist South Africa to exploit, oppress Namibi-

ans.

Therefore the company committed untold unforgivable and unforgettable contraventions such as over-mining and transfer pricing.

Furthermore, de Beers, the owners of CDM, have created a number of subsidiaries that held onto mining and prospecting rights and the fees paid to them are set against tax.

One subsidiary, the Marine Diamond Corporation, leased to CDM several prospecting and mining areas along the Atlantic Coast.

It is clear that this deal was made to avoid paying tax. This is a grossly unpatriotic act and amounts to economic sabotage in our country. It is also designed to prevent economic growth.

In theory CDMs operations were/are overseen by the so-called Diamond Board of SWA, which advised

the South African Administrator General. However, he himself discovered that the Board never had physical control of the diamonds.

All inspections and supervisions were done by CDM, mostly white South Africans, who parcelled up the diamonds and despatched them to Kimberley, where they were valued by de Beers officials and not Namibians.

The Government must not be misled by CDM into thinking that it is its employees who are 'stealing' the diamonds.

If diamonds are being stolen, perhaps it is also whites who are not searched. The security men who work at the gate on the Namibian/South African border are whites, and some of them live at Alexander Bay. They are not Namibians and they often search only blacks while whites are given the green light.

It is also an insult that the people who control entry into Oranjemund are ex CDM shop assistants, mostly females from South Africa.

Lastly, instead of CDM asking its employees to hand in stolen diamonds from 23 to 29 August, they themselves must hand in diamonds which are kept in Kimberley and London.

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