

White settlers

WITH great fanfare and pomp, the white settlers in the town of Oranjemund started on October 18 this year to celebrate what they call the 50th birthday of Oranjemund. Celebration will take a whole week of dining, wining, not to speak of dancing and rejoicing.

Namibian workers staying in the town of Oranjemund and in the labour camps called hostels, were asked to take part in the celebrations. The request was seen by the Namibian workers as an insult in that it requested them to take part in celebrating an event commemorating the colonial dispossession of the Namibian people and exploitation of our country. The town came into existence as a result of the labour of workers who have contributed so much but have not been justly rewarded. The town is therefore inextricably linked to the mine. It is also not an exaggeration to assert that without the Namibian migrant workers, the town in question would not have been established.

The celebration must be exposed for what it is. The settlers are not celebrating the birth of the town of Oranjemund, but the more than 50 years of plundering one of our most valuable resources by CDM and the government of the colonial power.

It was diamonds from CDM which have principally fuelled the colonial machine over the past 70 years. Namibian workers recall with a deep sense of anguish the fact that during the 60s and early 70s CDM generated an average of 75 percent of mining sector taxation.

Workers are aware that companies like CDM are anxious to strip the country bare before a government of the people can bring its natural resources under its control. CDM, for instance, has in the late 1970s, maintained production at 25 percent above average levels. It has and is still, overmining.

It is even an open secret that CDM is going all-out with a round-the-clock three-shift system to raise output to the highest possible level. Such is de Beers tight control over diamond marketing that not even South Africa can check whether it has secretly stockpiled undeclared gems from Oranjemund. These and other exports, are illegal in terms of the International Court of Justice verdict of 1971 and UN Decree Number 1 on natural resources of Namibia, are systematically stealing the birthright of the Namibian nation.

We, the toiling, sweating and oppressed Namibian workers have nothing to celebrate for, we feel strongly that we have been discriminated against for so long. There are two different scales of payment, namely Extensive scale for whites, and Common scale for blacks. Strangely enough, the whites get an additional 12 percent allowance for working under unpleasant and sandy conditions. Aren't the black workers working under the same unpleasant conditions?

The migratory labour system is very much in force and under such a system

employees are not entitled to a pension scheme.

Training is a mere show and of cosmetic nature. As a result, most, if not all, black workers are unskilled and do unskilled labour.

With such a state of affairs, we the Namibian workers are CDM, feel that we are not party to such a celebration. We have nothing to celebrate.

To us the 50th birthday of Oranjemund is a reminder of 50 years of exploitation, overmining and oppression of the Namibian people.

NAMIBIAN WORKER
ORANJEMUND

FLAG and fish

THE Namibian of October 3 (No. 56), page 3, reported that Mr Charles Courtney-Clarke, Chairman of the Fishing Licence Action Group (FLAG) issued a press release on the current state of the fishing industry. Moreover, a map depicting the 'presumed South African-claimed waters' appears on the same page of The Namibian.

In the press release in question, FLAG referred to the 'Namibianisation of this country's legitimate 86 percent share of the fishing resources between the Orange and Cunene Rivers' and 'challenged' certain members of the 'National Assembly' to support the 'Namibianisation' of the 86 percent of the fishing resources over which South African companies have 96 percent control. FLAG's remark is either wrong or misleading. Namibia's fishing resources between the Orange and the Cunene, amount, not to 86 percent, but to 100 percent. Furthermore, as the present writer will demonstrate below, it is legally impossible for the so-called 'National Assembly' to conduct negotiations respecting the territorial integrity of Namibia. Thus, the 'National Assembly' cannot 'Namibianise' anything.

The legal issues respecting the territorial integrity of Namibia in this area in question may be summarised as follows. The territory of Namibia stretches from the mouth of the Orange River to the mouth of the Cunene River. Walvis Bay and all the islands situated within the territorial sea of the mainland form an integral part of the territory of Namibia.

South Africa however, claims title to Walvis Bay and to the twelve islands, depicted on the abovementioned map, commonly known as the Penguin Islands. The island depicted on the map as 'Merker' is in fact Mercury. These islands are not more than six miles from the mainland, in other words they are all well within the territorial sea of Namibia. It is important to remember that since 1915 South Africa has unsuccessfully been attempting to incorporate the whole territory of Namibia into South Africa, a claim that has been rejected by the people of Namibia, the United Nations and indeed the International Court of Justice. Having failed to turn Namibia into the so-called 'fifth province' South Africa embarked upon the fragmenta-