



allowed to speak out on what they think about the media reporting on them. And their criticism should not always be taken as a threat to freedom of the press.

**SHATUMBU KAVIKU
WINDHOEK**

Note: We agree. Ministers should be able to criticise us as freely as we may criticise them, and this does NOT represent an inroad on freedom of the press. But if we feel we are right and they are wrong, then there should be no problem with us responding in kind. Ed.

Pay problems

ALLOW us to voice our displeasure in your newspaper. We are members of signal platoon (communications) and qualified as processing officers with the Namibia Defence Force (NDF). We are sick and tired with and unhappy about an excessive workload, sometimes 24 hours, in cold offices without heaters.

The work we are doing is not only our job but the NDF's as a whole. Although we work 24 hours on duty our salaries are less than R400. How can private soldiers and lance corporals work with generals when their salaries are so low? We want to be paid according to our capabilities.

We therefore appeal to the Cabinet and our Ministry of Defence to reconsider the R400 salaries for NDF communications personnel who work every day, every weekend, all holidays etc. R400 is very low.

**UNHAPPY MEMBERS
GROOTFONTEIN**

Mixed feelings

I WISH to react to the so-called Okahandja Declaration which was read to the audience who gathered at the All Herero Cultural Memorial Day in Okahandja recently.

While I wholeheartedly support the cultural gathering of that nature, I have received the declaration with

mixed feelings, particularly the appeal made to foreign missions and other charitable organisations to come up with material assistance to facilitate the repatriation of the Herero in Botswana. I have mixed feelings because many of those who claim to be sympathetic to the repatriation do so in order to reap massive harvests as they have done in previous times. For instance, the same messiahs went to Botswana and collected money and Lister engines on the pretext that such engines would be installed in boreholes drilled for them by the colonial administration in Namibia and to date we do not know the whereabouts of these engines and the money. In addition some Batswana nationals were accused of having engaged lawyers in order to block the repatriation and hence each of those who wanted to be repatriated were asked to contribute a specific amount so that they could engage lawyers to effect their repatriation. From the money collected, people enriched themselves by purchasing farms and buying houses. I believe you will agree with me when I say money is collected, but not to the benefit of those supposed to make a living. An example is the appeal made to Herero people here and abroad to make donations to build a decent house for their paramount chief. This received a positive response but to date Hereros hear that the house was built by the colonial administration with taxpayers money which means the house is a government house. We have no legal claim to it although we contributed money to build it.

I want to send a strong appeal to foreign missions and the Government of Namibia to see to it that this illegal collection of money and material equipment by the so-called messiahs is brought to an end with immediate effect.

Finally I appeal to the same government and non government organisations to channel their assistance through a body worked out by those who want to be repatriated and that body or association be registered and recognised by both Namibian and Botswana governments.

**CONCERNED HERERO
BOTSWANA**