

## Undeserving project

I WAS shocked to read in The Namibian (25 July 1991) of the Ministry of Transport and Works' intention to start widening the road to the airport within the next few weeks. I was under the impression that the government didn't have money to throw around!

The report states that "the road improvements will knock time off the tedious journey to the airport". Are we, as a developing country, with a desperate shortage of fundamental facilities such as schools and hospitals, really able to justify spending millions of Rands merely to relieve a few privileged people of a little frustration?

It is interesting to look carefully at exactly the sort of time that is going to be saved by the road improvements. For the forty kilometres from the Windhoek city limits to the airport, the journey takes 30 minutes at an average speed of 80km/hr. Were improvements to make it possible to drive at an average speed of 100km/hr the journey would be reduced to 24 minutes.

A much cheaper solution to the problem of getting to the airport on time would be to leave home six minutes earlier than usual.

I am sure that the argument will be raised that a widened road will also be a safer road; that in the long run there will be fewer fatalities. Although I don't believe that this is even necessarily going to be the case (three lane roads have in many cases been shown to be the most dangerous of them all) I feel that improved safety is not a good enough justification in any case. At the risk of sounding callous, I would say that the number of lives that could be saved through improved educational and medical facilities is much higher than that which will result from the safer road.

I would appreciate hearing the Ministry's views on the subject as well as exactly how much of the taxpayer's money is being spend on this, in my opinion, undeserving project.

**STEVE CRERAR**  
**WINDHOEK**