

## Don't disappoint us

I WAS surprised and saddened to read in The Namibian on Friday of the heavy-handed and rather clumsy attempt by Mr Emvula to impose on the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation a discredited and discarded east European style of trumping up support for government.

Mr Emvula, it doesn't work as those previously in power in eastern Europe and here in our own country have learned to their cost.

Moreover, would it not be more appropriate for the NBC, as a state-financed media, to be setting the pace by demonstrating the constitutional provision of freedom of the media! Obviously if our widely respected and beloved President issues a statement, in a free media it should be given due weight because of the importance of what the head of state says rather than because of an instruction from above.

But let the media make judgements on the balance of what makes news which can't effectively be established by a set of rigid rules. Those judgements by news staff can be debated and criticized by both NBC personnel and the public who, after all, pay for the service through taxation.

Let ministers earn their place in the news and let the NBC get out of the bad old habit, inherited from SWABC days, of uncritically accepting the utterances of ministers as sacrosanct and don't necessarily involve the top news items.

In democratic societies it is con-

sidered helpful to the government to be dealt with in a constructively critical manner. A government able to cope with that and responsive to it will gain for itself respect and acclaim nationally and internationally. Let it become part of our new political culture.

The chiefs at the NBC could take a look at Article 95(k) of our country's constitution and undertake the public service of encouraging the "mass of the population...to influence government policy by debating its decisions". Let ordinary people, too, speak through the electronic media perhaps by introducing a series of discussion programmes. Mr Emvula should devote his enthusiasm to such a project rather than trying to secure entrenched spots for ministers on news bulletins.

Many people hope that the NBC will establish itself as a media genuinely serving the best interests of our people. Mr Emvula, please don't disappoint us.

LONGSTANDING SWAPO  
ACTIVIST  
WINDHOEK

## Appeal to headmen

THE news of arms caches being found at the houses of the 'traditional leaders' in the north disturbs the expectations the people have as a result of the policy of national reconciliation adopted by Swapo and its government.

The 'traditional leaders' in this country have their images tarnished