

New supermarket

I LISTENED, this evening (June 13) to comments by representatives from most of the existing supermarkets in Windhoek.

Without exception they all said "I welcome competition, BUT the present time is not right - the cake is not big enough - trade will suffer, etc etc."

Also what each one did NOT say is that competition, to them, does not mean survival of the fittest by efficient and economic marketing; it means a market big enough to support a non-financially competitive cartel.

I have the strong impression that they are terrified that one day a competitor will arrive in Windhoek who is not interested in price fixing, or cartel agreements, one who will offer real financial competition and readily show the public that the present price structure, forced upon us by greed for larger and larger profit without effort, is not an economic necessity.

Yet each of these representatives would claim that they believe in free enterprise - a market based economy. I say they do not believe in free enterprise. Free enterprise is competition between outlets, largely to the advantage of the public in lower, competitive pricing, not adding to inflation by increasing profit margins.

For instance it used to be, in times past, that a shopkeeper would only increase prices on new stock which had cost him more to purchase. Nowadays it is common practice to review stock prices weekly at the very least, even if the stock has been held for months, and was purchased at a very much lower wholesale price.

Another practice which could fall away with competition is that of artificial creation of shortages, thus ensuring a reluctant public acceptance of a mutually agreed 'cartel' or price raising.

No, Mr Shopkeeper, I do not agree with your stated reasons for keeping 'Pick 'n Pay' out of Windhoek - I am very suspicious of your motives.

But I am a coward, I am afraid of reprisals, so I will sign off as

CHARLIE
WINDHOEK

Job well done

IT IS almost fifteen months since our country became independent. Numerous steps

were taken to ensure peace, stability, progress and reconciliation. All these were possible due to the mature leadership of His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Namibia. Dr Sam Nujoma, we thank you for your leadership and for keeping our people together in harmony.

There is no doubt that our democratic system is working - politically, we are free. We recognised that the road to economic independence has numerous stumbling blocks - it often requires goods and services that are not locally available and that are hard to obtain elsewhere.

The government of this new Republic has done a commendable job in a short period of time. The cumulative projects that are being embarked upon ten times more than previous governments have done in the 20 years prior to independence.

The improvements in communication networks - be it the Trans Caprivi Highway, the Trans-Kalahari highway or the tarring of roads in Katutura and other townships, are indeed progress in the right direction. The initiation of air links between our neighbours as well as distant countries are highly appreciated.

Your Government, sir, has embarked upon commendable housing projects in various parts of the country. We know that in the past the majority of people, particularly blacks, were not kept in mind as far as housing was concerned.

The 'development brigades' initiated by your government in order to alleviate unemployment, as well as providing food for our people are all well thought of steps. Incentives offered to commercial farmers have enabled them to produce bumper harvests of maize this season.

We commend your Government, sir, for recognising the need to educate our youngsters. The budget allocation to the Ministry of Education and Culture is proof of this. We know that the allocated funds to this Ministry will not solve all the educational problems in this country, for they are inherited from the apartheid system, and are complicated and require evolutionary approaches.

Many thanks, Mr President, that our country is for the first time in history a member of various international organisations. Sir, you have delegated men and women of high calibre, integrity and professionalism to positions of authority in the Government. We com-

mend the work done by the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the National Assembly for providing the type of leadership that all admire. Both are pragmatic in their approaches.

Mr President, you pointed out recently that opposition parties should not oppose merely for the sake of opposing, nor the governing party defend for the sake of defending only. We hope that our lawmakers will reflect national problems in their parliamentary deliberations instead of party politics.

Now that peace has come to Angola, we hope that economic co-operation with our northern neighbour will increase. As a member of the SADCC we hope that our trade ties with neighbours will increase in order to benefit from the cooperative advantages that exist. And once Walvis Bay and the Off-shore Islands are returned to Namibia, and South Africa fully democratised with apartheid laws abolished, a full diplomatic relationship with our southern neighbour will then be established.

Finally, I would like to thank the people of this nation for their unshakeable support to the governing party. Let me remind all those who support this party that independence was hard-won, and it is we the people, who must preserve it.

Let us not be misled by those who want to see us fail.

LEO HANGALA
WINDHOEK

Land conference

I WOULD like to publish this noble request in the name of the fallen owners, heroes and currently living heirs. May I also have the privilege to shortly dwell on the sad history of Namibia.

Numerous volumes have been written on the treachery, robbery, murder and ultimately the total colonisation of my country. The Germans, some boasting generations here, were the first, followed by the South Africans. In the present-day independent Namibia the South African and German colonialists here, misusing the constitution and its contents, inter alia the so-called reconciliation, are of the intent to manipulate the Land Conference in their favour.

Sight should never be lost that Namibia historically, culturally and politically belongs to the San, Ovambos, Hereros, Namas, Damaras, Caprivians,