

# Lister And The Osire Band

READERS' LETTERS

I BEG to differ with Gwen Lister's Political Perspective of Friday, June 16, which likened Pan Africanism to a new passion in Namibia. In my view Pan Africanism is not a passion but a struggle. This struggle is not new to Namibia and its early recording dates back to the 1940s when the Marcus Garvey movement was eminent and influential in the independence politics of Namibia around the coastal town of Lüderitz and in central Namibia. Early independence struggle pioneers such as Nujoma, Ya Toivo, Pohamba, Katjavivi and many others can testify to the influence that Garveyism had on the ideology of

Namibia's earliest political parties.

Pan Africanism is a supranational ideology, therefore the raising of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) flag alongside the Namibian flag is in line with the OAU decision taken in September last year during a meeting in Sirte, Libya. This practice is Pan Africanist and signifies Namibia's commitment to implement Pan African decisions. It is, therefore, flawed to argue that "die hard nationalists are confused that raising the OAU flag

should have the same prominence as raising the Namibian flag, in the sense that a die-hard nationalist will opt more for raising the Namibian flag than that of the OAU.

President Sam Nujoma's patronship of the Pan African Centre of Namibia (Pacon) is qualified by his tested commitment to the Pan African struggle. He has on numerous occasions expressed himself in support of African Unity, and the need for Africans to lend their energies to work towards continental political and economic

integration. At one point he called on the African Diaspora to come home and contribute to the development of Africa. At home he has genuinely promoted the policy of national reconciliation - a precept for peace and nation building.

What the president dislikes however is intrinsic racism expressed through hypocrisy and extrinsic sabotage by the forces who do not want Africa and Africans to develop and advance, particularly those who have been at the helm of apartheid rule

and imperialist subversive programmes. The President is ready to work with anyone who has a genuine interest in the development of Africa. Why the president is a patron of Pacon is solemnly an internal issue.

The Osire Band's performance during a CoD rally in Gobabis is a saga clustered with grandeur, sensationalism, hysteria and hearsay. For one thing we in Pacon do not have the facts like *The Namibian* newspaper which is privileged to obtain such from its sources. Quite surprisingly,

Lister's column does not seem to provide enough facts on whether the Osire Band has once performed at a Swapo Party election rally, which is different from performing at the independence celebrations; the latter being a day for all Namibians and all other people and not restricted to Swapo.

I will argue henceforth that there is no correlation between Pan Africanism and a refugee band performing at a party political rally which does not also signify, Namibia's version of Pan Africanism as Pan Africanism is a supranational agenda. What is important to note, though, is that while countries are striving towards implementing Pan Africanism, the rule of law is enforceable in order to regulate conduct. Thus, Pacon unfortunately cannot be coerced by Gwen Lister's dictatorial in becoming her spokesperson on an issue such as the Osire Band's performance at an election rally, supposed to be confined to national politics.

Comrade Kaumbi did the right thing to go on national television to exhibit the racist pictures depicting President Mugabe inhumanly. God created human beings and

primates. Thus, it is insulting that a section of white media practitioners and probably, a major section of the white population still maintain the racist view that blacks are sub-humans.

For their information the Negroid race is the first and the oldest race. All other races evolved from Africans. The oldest remains of human beings are to be found in Africa. The Negroid race has given culture, science and religion to humanity.

In Pan Africanism among some of the tasks at hand are to deconstruct racism and not to ignore the struggle for social, economic and political justice and cultural self-preservation.

I concur with Lister, that it is inconceivable for disagreements not to occur on issues, in a movement of thought or action. These differences I believe may be in vision, strategies, priorities and perceptions. However, it should be the firm commitment of the members of any movement to engage one another through consultations and debate in order to ensure that they build on strength and confidence.

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*Note: This letter has been shortened - Ed.*

## STANDPOINT OF THE NAU (NAMIBIA AGRICULTURAL UNION) REGARDING LAND REFORM

ue to the following:

- This is an extremely sensitive and emotional matter;
- Clumsy and illegal action can cause conflict and instability;
- Public statements and demands have been made in the media that have caused anxiety;

The President and the Ministers