



NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FRONT OF NAMIBIA

P.O. BOX 3676 · WINDHOEK 9000
TEL. 223624/223634 · FAX 061-36166



6
CNP/10222 10

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

LAND REFORM AND THE LAND QUESTION

25 JUNE - 1 JULY 1991

WINDHOEK

PAPER TO BE PRESENTED BY

**MRS SUE ANSTEY
(CHAIRPERSON - WOMEN'S LEAGUE)**

THE NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FRONT OF NAMIBIA

"SOME THOUGHTS TOWARDS THE LAND QUESTION"

RECONCILIATION · DEMOCRACY · DEVELOPMENT

Office: 6 Teinert St. / Between Republic Road and Bismarck St.

"SOME THOUGHTS ON THE LAND QUESTIONS"

BY THE NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FRONT OF NAMIBIA WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Presented by: Mrs Sue Anstey (Chairperson)

1. LAND COMMISSION

Despite the fact that a Ministry of Land Resettlement and Rehabilitation is in existence, and it has an able Minister, we, of the NPF Women's League, sincerely believe that there is a definite need for the setting up of an INDEPENDENT, PERMANENT LAND COMMISSION.

We see it as being the authority which would set the PROPERTY PRICES, DISTRIBUTE the LAND and ARBITRATE on any immediate or future LAND DISPUTES. In fact, it would be rather like having a "Land Ombudsman".

As it stands at present, it looks as though every farmer or farm business will be wanting to set their OWN PRICES on land sales. The past has shown that, many farmers sold and re-sold their land at exorbitant and obviously unfair prices; prices which very few middle or lower-income groups could afford. In order to redress this situation, we are suggesting that only an independent body could be truly impartial.

2. INCENTIVES AND INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY

As an incentive towards their reaching higher production levels, ALL FARM BUSINESSES should be encouraged to provide Pensions, Retirement and Medical schemes for their Farm Workers and their families, by allowing them a double write-off of these costs for tax purposes. Also to be considered is the provision of Housing, Pre-School facilities, and so on. In return, the Government should provide some kind of TAX CONCESSION. This may sound a little "colonial" in texture, but there is no harm in encouraging and promoting productivity on the farms by supplying incentives for them work well and happily.

Everyone must grow old sometime, and the farm worker does not enjoy the security that the urban employee can get from pension schemes, medical aids, bonuses, etc. THERE HAVE TO BE INCENTIVES for both the employer and employee in order to reach PEAK PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS, which will in the end be to the benefit of us all as a Nation.

Provision must be made for small-scale agricultural projects and farming, similar to the present Peri-Urban small-holding system. These should be approximately 20 hectares each.

Small farmers have not to date had the TECHNICAL ADVICE, ASSISTANCE AND GUIDANCE, which has been available to the Commercial Farmers. Nor have they had access to Credit Assistance Facilities, as have the Commercial Farmers. Both Technical Advice and Credit Facilities MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL, especially the small-scale farmer.

A LAND TAX (even at the rate of R1,00 per hectare) could induce some land owners to sell off some of their excess and unutilized land. In order not to affect the new small-scale farmers, tax should be exempted for farms under a specified size, and the difference between good and poor land conditions, according to the area's geographic make-up, should also be taken into consideration.

Encourage a "large-scale farming ATTITUDE" amongst the small farmers. They should pool their land - acquire mechanization for use by the "company" or "cooperative". Make them shareholders - to share in the profits. Set up Pension/Retirement and Medical schemes by allowing a double write-off of these costs for tax purposes.

THE EMPLOYER IS ALSO THE EMPLOYEE! under a cooperative type farming business, as a person may be a part-owner as well as being an employee.

At all costs, PRODUCTIVITY MUST REMAIN THE ULTIMATE GOAL; and, for all those who reach high productivity levels, whether from small or large-scale farming operations, their reward should be in tax concessions. A similar incentive should be given to any farmer who enters into the EXPORTING of his or her produce, which leads directly to obtaining much-needed Foreign Exchange for the Republic of Namibia.

3. GAME FARMS

The NPF and I! .. question whether in fact these so-called game farms can be considered as "tourist attractions"; as many who visit them simply fly in by invitation of a local or overseas owner, bag a few hunting trophies, and then head straight back to the airport. How many of these hunters tour our land, visit our towns and actually buy things with hard dollars or marks? Who checks on any sales tax that the game farmer should be paying? We should, perhaps consider a limit or impose stricter regulations on this type of business. One must also bear in mind that many an owner is also an absentee landlord.

There should not be an objection to local farmers using game as a back-up for when drought, e.c. affects their main farming business. But, is there any harm in there being some form of control here? How many farmers enjoy the status of host to "weekend hunters" and never have to pay a cent to the Receiver of Revenue for this part-time business (and, business it certainly is, if money changes hand!).

What price the prestige gained by ABSENTEE LANDLORDS boasting overseas of their game ranches in Namibia? How much tax should they pay? How much tax exemption do they gain for themselves overseas? When a poor peasant hunts for food, more often than not it is called "POACHING" - but, when a rich man arrives for a couple of days of shooting our game, it is called "BIG BUSINESS AND A TOURIST ATTRACTION"!

All culling should be done under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Nature Conservation - and let the real tourists keep visiting our own Etosha Pan in order to view our rich game in its own surroundings.

"HUNTING" seems to reek of the old days of COLONIALISM - don't you think ??!