

BROADCAST BY THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
TO THE DIAMOND DIGGERS AT KAO AND LIQHOBONG, ON
FRIDAY, 7TH NOVEMBER, 1969

I am very concerned to learn that very few of you have renewed your diamond digging licences, all of which expired in September and October of this year.

I am also aware that many of you would like to co-operate with Government and would have renewed your licences had it not been for the intimidation by a small Opposition group led by Mr. Motanyane who has since the dissolution of Parliament this morning ceased to be a Member of Parliament for the area. Unfortunately he and other misguided people have, for political motives, influenced you not to co-operate with Government. You would be well advised not to listen to these men who have no concern for your welfare but try to disturb the general peace and harmony of the diggings for political reasons.

I understand that many of you are also concerned about being required to register yourselves for electoral purposes at your own home, instead of being allowed to register at Kao or Liqhobong where you are presently working. You must realize that Government could not accept you as being residents at Kao or Liqhobong whilst you are digging illegally. To legalize your activities at Kao or Liqhobong you must renew your digging licences. When once you have done this, Kao and Liqhobong could then be considered as your place of work. This I explained very clearly to a delegation of the diggers which met me in my office on the 14th May this year. The delegation expressed its complete satisfaction with my explanation and agreed to register at their homes.

As you have no doubt heard, the registration of electors was suspended with effect from 8th November, 1969. Therefore, if you had renewed your licences timeously at the end of September and October, 1969, you could, for purposes of the Electoral Act 1968, have been regarded as actually permanently resident at Kao and Liqhobong and your registration as electors at these places could have been favourably considered.

I wish to stress that the fact that whether the diggers are or are not registered as electors at Kao and Liqhobong has no bearing on and is not taken into consideration by the Department of Mines and Geology in its dealings with the

diggers