

FileProposal :

The changes taking place in South Africa and the legalization of the African National Congress (ANC) have prompted me to come forward and to take advantage of the new business opportunities brought about by the political atmosphere prevailing to-day. Since I am definitely in sympathy with the black man's cause in South Africa and wish to counterbalance the many years spent working with the white South African interests (through my connection with De Beers, I offer the following proposal :

1. To train two black South Africans in my office in Antwerp, thus enabling them to gain general knowledge about diamonds and to acquire the necessary skills to make them self-sufficient within 12 to 18 months.
2. This initial period would be used to establish extensive connections with the various African representatives active in the diamond trade in Antwerp. These are people from Zaire, Banghi, Namibia, Ghana, Angola, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Botswana, Lesotho.

This effort is intended to create and establish ties and contacts in order to generate earnings in general.

3. Once we have a self-sustaining operation in Antwerp, we will look for business opportunities in South Africa.

Since we can expect a continuation in the political changes in South Africa, it would be speculative to outline in detail the various projects which can be realized in this country. I will just mention that manufacturing, trading, mining, distribution are all within reach, as well as affiliated industries such as jewellery manufacturing and the like.

4. My connections with the Diamond Trading Company could be used to generate a dialogue for future projects.

Who am I ?

My name is **Maurice SCHEINMAN**, living Frankrijklei 49 in Antwerp (zip code 2000). I am of Belgian nationality, 50 years old, married with four children.

French is my mother tongue, and I have a very good knowledge of English and Hebrew; my Dutch and German are fair.

I began my professional career by learning the technical aspects of diamonds, i.e. sawing and cleaving, then assorting and marking the diamonds for manufacturing.

Once I knew all these techniques, I established my own company with a partner. We began our activities by assorting and preparing rough diamonds for the general market in Israel. Later we expanded into manufacturing and international distribution of polished diamonds. At the height of our activities we employed 350 workers in three factories, as well as contractors.

Exports were directed mainly to the United States, Japan, Hong Kong, Italy, France, India, England. Our yearly turnover reached 1,6 billion Belgian francs. We had a direct supply of rough diamonds from the Diamond Trading Company of London (De Beers).

My main responsibilities were buying, manufacturing, and distribution at home and abroad. It required extensive communication and direct contact with many people, including training, and also travel to promote and sell our products.

In 1980 there was a severe crisis and slump in the diamond market, as a result of which our company was liquidated. The following years were taken up to sort out and handle various problems arising from this unusual situation. I did however gain some very valuable experience and hindsight which do serve me well to-day.

Since 1988 I have re-established myself independently in Antwerp, Belgium. I provide technical services, agency service and am associated in commercial ventures with Israeli and Belgian diamond companies.
