

DURBAN'S BEACHFRONT "CALAMITY"

On New Year's Day there was "calamity" at the Durban beach, not for the 100 000 underprivileged who enjoyed themselves, but for the white minority who have for decades, had the monopoly of recreation and enjoyment there. The media has given much publicity to the fact that the white privileged minority were shocked, dismayed and disappointed that they could not have the sole use of the paradise that they created for themselves.

What were the complaints of the privileged minority who reside in the area? The elite complained that people cooked their meals on the beach — this was a matter of necessity, they could not afford the exorbitant prices of take-away food or sit down meals at restaurants.

Another complaint was that people moved onto the pavements and stayed there for a few days — they did this because they could not afford to pay for the luxury of staying at hotels.

Where did this 100 000 people come from?

The majority of them came from the over-crowded and under-developed townships and squatter camp areas. These areas have no facilities — no recreational areas, no playing fields, no swimming pools, no pavements, no bins for litter, no public toilets, no parks and gardens — there is only escalating inflation, unemployment and an increasing crime rate. It most certainly is not the environment in which one could feel inclined to celebrate the coming of a new year. These people come to the beach only once a year, and not every weekend as the privileged do. Are they to be grudged this one day of fun and entertainment?

Why did this "invasion" not take place in previous years?

Because the oppressed were banned from these areas, and all along the beachfront there were boards stating "WHITE ONLY".

Why were there so many drownings and near drownings?

Most of the people visiting the beach on New Year's Day have never had the opportunity to learn to swim or to indulge in any water sport. Furthermore, they were banned from using public swimming pools and safe bathing areas, which were reserved for the whites.

What sinister plans do the city council and their law enforcement agents have to ensure that the wealthy and privileged enjoy their holidays in Durban?

Their suggestions are:—

1. That pay beaches be introduced. This is discrimination in disguise, as most of the people will not be able to afford the entrance fee.
2. That the roads be cordoned off, and buses and taxis not allowed in. Who requires transport by buses and taxis? Only the oppressed — definitely not the chauffeur-driven elite.
3. The creation of a “task force”, in which the council will seek the collaboration of the “wider community, civic organisations, commerce, trade unions, beach hotels, Fedhasa, residents, councillors, city officials and police.” (Natal Mercury, 4/1/1992) The decisions will appear to be democratic decisions, just as the “task force” has the appearance of being a democratic body, but undoubtedly, the decisions will be made in the interests of the privileged only.

Furthermore, the “task force” is considering a plan to provide recreational facilities in the black townships, and to organise entertaining events in areas away from the beach, and in this way to keep the people away from the beach. This is nothing more than blatant discrimination and apartheid.

WHY FOOD PRICE SOAR?

The Nationalist Government, supposedly acting out of concern, ordered an urgent investigation about the constantly rising food prices. Yet, the committee appointed to do so, some eight months later, “has nothing to report.” (Sunday Tribune — 19/1/92).

The article continues: “the committee faces a mammoth task and there is no guarantee that they will get to the bottom of the great food enigma — who makes the profits or prices soar.”

APDUSA is surprised that the committee comprising learned people is experiencing difficulty in establishing the cause of the rising food prices and who is pocketing the profit.

APDUSA suggests that the committee should begin by directing its attention at the giant monopolies that control the South African economy. The local monopolies and the Imperialists (foreign investments) have invested some 110 billion rand in South Africa.

Every aspect of the South African economy has been heavily penetrated by the monopolies. Approximately 86 percent of the South