



# APDUSA VIEWS

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## **DECENT HOUSING - A HUMAN RIGHT**

Freedom of movement and the choice of where to live are the democratic rights of all people of this country. With the scrapping of the obnoxious Group Areas Act, people are exercising this right to build or buy houses in areas of their choice. There are sections of the "white" population group who want to still enforce the Group Areas Act by intimidating people of colour who have moved into formerly exclusively "white" residential areas. This reaction is not surprising from people who belong to the privileged minority of the ruling class. However, what is most disturbing are reports of the racist attitude of some people, who themselves have been the victims of the racial laws of this country. We appeal to these people to set aside their racial prejudices and exercise tolerance, especially towards that section of our South African society that has been the worst victim of "racial" apartheid.

No human being wants to live in overcrowded, anti-social conditions that breed crime and, misery. Yet millions of people live in dehumanizing and squalid conditions in squatter camps on the periphery of urban and developed residential areas. The scrapping of the Pass and Influx Control Laws has led to the movement of impoverished people to urban areas in search of work. These squatter communities are seen as a threat to the security and peace of the better-off communities. Here again we wish to remind people that the suffering and degradation that these communities undergo is not of their making. Successive generations of white rule in this country has been responsible for breeding such misery.

We do not condone or encourage squatting for the obvious reason of the attendant human suffering that accompany it. Our stated view on squatting is clear. We want a total elimination and disappearance of squatter settlements and townships. However, we abhor the demolition of existing squatter settlements without provision of suitable, alternate housing.

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## **THEY ONCE SUFFERED TOGETHER**

A local authority was recently offered R4-million by the Independent Development Trust to develop a buffer zone between two residential areas. The development was aimed at providing low-cost housing for people earning less than R 1 000,00 per month.

The owners of one of those areas raised strong objections to the proposed scheme. The basis of their objections was that the scheme, if implemented, would reduce the value of their properties. At a meeting called to discuss the matter, out of a vote of 140, only 26 voted for the scheme. The rest voted against the scheme.

The immediate effect of the decision is to deny workers the right to own houses in the buffer zone. The objectors went so far as to say that they preferred "squatting" with all its attendant evils than formal low cost housing.

Who were those objectors? Were they the rabid members of the AWB, White Wolves or the Boerestaat Party? No! The majority who voted against the scheme were Africans!

Makes you think, doesn't it? It shows that a black (African, Indian and "Coloured") worker is oppressed in more ways than one. Here we have the case of better-off Africans, many of whom can only afford those houses because of government subsidy, turning against their less fortunate fellow oppressed. Those better-off were only yesterday herded with all other Africans into locations and townships with all their inferior or non-existent facilities, poor housing, violence, etc. They all suffered together. With the abolition of the Group Areas Act, the better-off were able to buy and occupy houses in a relatively cheap residential area. As soon as they got into "paradise", they turned against their poor fellow oppressed, and treated them in the same way the racist whites treated the better-off Africans just a few months before.

There is a very important lesson to be learnt here. The incident is a taste of what the CODESA brand of the "New South Africa" will look like. In that South Africa the colour of your money will count far more than the colour of your skin. There will be new alignment of forces. The rich and well-off among the black population will have more in common with the rich and well-off among the whites. Their class interests are the same and they will band together to fight any threat to their wealth.

From the time society was divided into rich and poor, the rich have always feared the poor. And with good cause, too. For, when the poor take what is due to them, there will no longer be any rich.

#### **EDITORIAL NOTE**

The buffer zone referred to lies between The Grange which, until recently, was Whites Only area and Slangspruit, a poorly-built and serviced African Township. Both are in Pietermaritzburg.

## **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.

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## 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 African economy is controlled by six monopolies - Anglo American, Old Mutual, Sanlam, Liberty Life, Rembrandt and Anglo Vaal.

Of these, Anglo American itself controls 46,3 percent of the economy. In fact, some political analysts estimate that the income of Anglo American is more than the combined income of Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Bophuthatswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania put together. One now appreciates the gigantic nature of that corporation. 80 percent of the sugar industry is controlled by Anglo American and Barlow Rand.

The same monopolies own wholesale and retail outlets. In this manner, the monopolies are in a position to manipulate and control prices - all with one objective in mind - to make the maximum amount of profit.

We know why the committee is dragging its feet in respect of the enquiry. They cannot expose "the big boys" because he who pays the piper calls the tune. The Government, in the final analysis, is the representative of Monopoly Capital.

Our prediction is that food prices will continue to soar. Survey after survey point out that year-after-year prices on basic food items have increased at an average of 25 percent to 30 percent.

The monopolies will continue to cream off the profits - exploitation will continue unabated.

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## RETURN THE "GIFTS"

Now that Abdul Bhamjee has been found guilty of stealing millions from the NSL, it is only fair to assume that most of the money he handled was tainted. What then is the position of the "gifts" he so generously dished out to "very important persons", like Mr and Mrs Mandela. Another recipient was the inimitable Sam Ramsamy. In his case a brand new tradition was born - just to cater for him. This new tradition is that if its your birthday and you happen to be Sam Ramsamy, you receive a very expensive Raymond Weil watch as a "gift".

This brand new tradition does not end there. It goes on to say that if it is your birthday and you are. . . (you know who), then not only do you get a very expensive. . . (you know what), but your wife also gets one! Logically, this means that on her birthday, he also gets one. But its tough luck. Santa Bhamjee Claus is behind bars. In prison, if you have the money and if you know how, you can get most things. But not all. Raymond Weil watches are not available in prison.

But seriously, we believe that all persons who received gifts from Bhamjee are duty-bound to return the gifts to the source from where the money to buy them was stolen.

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## ANOTHER BUDGET FIASCO

On Wednesday 18 March 1992, the whites only Minister of Finance, Barend du Plessis slipped in his 1992 budget. True to form he took great care to look after the beneficiaries of the "gravy train". He allocated 59 million rand per working day to keep the Tricameral circus running. This is a total of 15,4 BILLION rand!!! (One billion rand is a thousand million rand).

Compare this to the 4,6 billion spent on education and 1,2 billion spent on health. And this in a budget Linda Ensco lauds, in the Natal Mercury 19/3/1992, as spending "record amounts of money on social services. "

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

### **"YES" DROWNED IN BLOOD**

20/3/1992

Dear Sir,

The Daily News 13/3/1992 reported that 20 people had died in renewed violence in Umlazi outside Durban. The next morning the figure rose to 25. Those who died were poor and oppressed. The most plausible accounts of these events are that the killings were the result of a dawn attack by KwaZulu police on sleeping residents. In the weeks that the ruling class press whipped up hysteria for their racist white referendum 300 people died in the violence.

These are just figures. They do not begin to tell the story of the tragedy of each death.

On the morning of 13 March 1992, a ten-year old girl was brought to the R.K. Khan hospital in Durban. She had been shot in the neck, the back and her thigh bone had been shattered by a bullet. She will spend three months in hospital. Hopefully, her leg will recover.

The next morning her father had to tell her that her mother had died in the murderous morning attack. The child cried until there were no more tears in her little body. If you talk to her today she smiles - a sad and unconvincing smile.

To grow up with no mother and the uncertainty of a violent future. This is all de Klerk's much lauded "yes" vote means to this child. And I make bold to say so, too. with the millions of other oppressed and poor children in South Africa.

Yours sincerely,

INFURIATED.

## **SHAMELESS TEARS**

Dear Sir

I was amazed, astounded and flabbergasted by Steve Tshwete's tearful reaction when South Africa beat Australia in the Benson & Hedges' cricket series.

Why did Tshwete cry? He claimed that they were tears of joy. How can any person who has suffered the ravages of discrimination in South Africa, shed tears of joy for South Africa? Let us remind Tshwete that millions of

us in South Africa also cried when they won, but we cried in anger. We were angry because there are millions of oppressed youngsters in South Africa who never ever held a cricket bat in their hands. Millions of youngsters who cannot play cricket or any type of sport, even in their back yards, because they do not have a home, they have no schools, they have no food. These youngsters are not even certain if their parents will return home from work - they may be killed in the violence that is plaguing our society. Our youngsters have nothing that assists them towards becoming good sportspersons. For these youngsters to play cricket at any level (let alone international level) is an unattainable dream.

Tshwete - we feel betrayed by the tears that you shed for the privileged South African Sportspersons who have been nurtured from the cradle with all the comforts necessary to make them sportspersons.

"BETRAYED"

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