

I wonder how many people realise that there is not a single beach — or few square yards of sand available to Coloured children between Long Beach beyond the station (often non-existent at high tide) and Cape Point.

SLEGS VIR BLANKES

Bright eager eyes
Sparkling with animation,
Small hot brown hand
Held gently, but firmly,
In her own. Lest eager feet
Precipitate him downward
To that forbidden heaven
Of sea and rock and sand
God made especially at Boulders Beach
For the delight of children.
Sounds of their happy laughter
Floated up to us, mingling with
Squeals of excitement.
The clash grew firmer
As with determined effort
The small boy, hardly four,
Pulled her, dragged her to a stop
Urgently pointing:
Kom, Ouma, look,
Here's a way down.
The sad old eyes met mine
In mute and baffled resignation.
With a small shrug:
Should things be?
She led him slowly on.
At every little track
Or path that might have led
To the entrancing beaches
He stopped her, with growing urgency
Repeating: Kom, Ouma, look,
Here's a way down.
A robin in the bush nearby,
A chorister, pours out
A few exultant notes,
Then falls into silence.
The small persistent voice
Aching with longing
Fades in the distance.
Was that a groan I heard
From God?

Pattie Price,
Simonstown.

(Reprinted with kind permission of The Argus, Cape Town)

HOSTELS

Mrs. H. Suzman:

Already there is an enormous amount of hostel accommodation in Cape Town. Something like 30 000 men, so-called 'single men' — most of them are married I might add — are living in hostels in the Cape Peninsula area and in Johannesburg there are 21 500 men and women in hostels and another 22 500 are on the waiting list, excluding the Resettlement Board. Now, rising up in Alexandra Township, which is controlled by the Peri-urban Areas Board in an area to the north-west of Johannesburg, are two vast monuments to what I can only call the Orwellian future envisaged by the Hon. the Minister of Bantu Administration.

The original intention was that Alexandra would accommodate 30 000 so-called single men and women in twelve blocks. This was the euphoric description in *Bantu* in May, 1966: "12 modern blocks of flats, 10 for men and 2 for women." "Darkness", said *Bantu*, "has made way for the dawn of a new day." Well, when the dawn breaks and the plan is complete, there will in fact be 24 blocks with 60 000 inhabitants from Sandton, Randburg, Kew, from north of the Houghton Ridge right to the Jukskei River, living in these single quarters, people who are mostly married, and for many of whom accommodation is already provided by their employers . . .

There are a couple of real home-from-home comforts. The one in the men's hostel anyway is the built-in charge office and cell — that is real home-from-home comfort — and the other home-from-home comfort which I thought was really a very far-sighted amenity is the electronically controlled steel door that can be slid down to seal off any section of the building in case of riot or trouble. That was pretty far-sighted, I must say.

Hansard No. 4, Col. 1912/1913/1914. 25th February, 1972.