

XXIII KONFERENSIE
CONFERENCE

14 - 18 OKTOBER 1968.
OCTOBER

J O H A N N E S B U R G .

" PARKE-AFDELINGS EN DIE BEVOLKINGS -
ONTPLOFFING. "

" PARKS DEPARTMENTS AND THE POPULATION
EXPLOSION. "

Raadslid / Councillor P. R. B. LEWIS.

14.10.1968.

PARKS DEPARTMENT AND THE POPULATION EXPLOSION

ADDRESS BY

COUNCILLOR PATRICK R. B. LEWIS

C.A. (S.A.)

TO THE

INSTITUTE OF PARK AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION (SOUTHERN
AFRICA) CONFERENCE

CRANBROOKE HOTEL, 14TH TO 18TH OCTOBER, 1968

POPULATION
EXPLOSION

Between the years 350 A.D. and 1850 A.D., a period of 1500 years, the population of the world doubled. The next doubling took only 100 years, that is, from 1850 to 1950, and it is now estimated that its present rate of growth will see the world's population doubled between 1950 and 1990.

A century ago five cities in the world had populations of over one million, but today there are 100 such cities. In the year 1960, 285 million persons lived in metropolitan areas of one million, but by the year 2000 it is estimated that 1285 million people will live in enormous metropolitan areas, and where the population is from 300,000 to one million in certain areas, it will increase from 154 million to 820 million in the next forty years.

MOVEMENT OF
PEOPLE

In addition to the population explosion, the great phenomenon of our era is the movement of persons from the rural areas to the cities, and the growth in the size of the cities. Let us take America as an example. In 1850, 15.3% of the American population lived in urban areas, and in 1900 this figure had increased to 39.7%. 1960 showed an increase to 69.9% and in the year 2000 it is estimated that 82% will live in urban areas.

What of the local scene ? The following projections are made of the South African population :

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROJECTIONS

Area & Year	Whites	Coloureds	Asiatics	Bantu	Total
<u>REPUBLIC</u>					
1960	3,088,492	1,509,258	477,125	10,927,922	15,002,797
1965	3,398,000	1,751,000	533,000	12,186,000	17,868,000
1985	5,203,000	3,383,000	849,000	19,583,000	29,018,000
2000	7,033,000	5,831,000	1,159,000	27,949,000	41,972,000
<u>TRANSVAAL</u>					
1960	1,468,305	108,007	63,787	4,633,378	6,273,477
1965	1,617,000	125,000	71,000	5,167,000	6,980,000
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<u>WITWATERSRAND</u>					
1960	766,379	78,134	39,915	1,296,486	2,180,914
1965	845,000	91,000	44,000	1,446,000	2,426,000
1985	1,294,000	176,000	71,000	2,266,000	3,807,000
2000	1,750,000	304,000	97,000	3,233,000	5,384,000
<u>JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN</u>					
1960	413,153	59,467	28,993	650,912	1,152,525
1965	456,000	69,000	32,000	726,000	1,283,000
1985	698,000	133,000	52,000	1,137,000	2,020,000
2000	943,000	230,000	71,000	1,623,000	2,867,000

As in America, we have a movement of people from the farms and dorps to the urban areas. Think back forty years when there was the so-called "poor white" problem. Today where are the bywoners of the 1920's and 1930's - they came to the towns and cities and were absorbed in the industrial life.

Think of it - double the population in forty years ! Do you realise that we shall have to build as much accommodation in the next forty years as we have built since Van Riebeeck landed at the Cape. Where are the people going to live ? For one thing we are going to have more and more urban sprawl, and better transport systems will have to be developed so that people can commute longer distances in reasonable times. Then I visualise large urban renewal schemes being undertaken, when the older suburbs will be redesigned with increased density, enabling large numbers of people to be housed near the city. I can foresee that in the future a far greater percentage of our population will live in high rise buildings, and individual home ownership will become increasingly difficult.

LEISURE
TIME

Another factor to be taken into consideration is the prediction that in the years to come working hours will be less and less, and people will thus have more leisure time. With the increase in leisure time, and the standardisation and mechanisation of work processes, the average worker is obliged to look outside his job for his main interests. The salient fact about leisure is that it is growing much faster than is our capacity to use it wisely. Another arresting factor is that the more monotonous a worker's job, the more monotonous the recreation he seeks in his free time, and many modern jobs tend to breed a passive, non-inventive attitude to leisure activities. It is therefore highly important that people be educated, especially young people, in the healthy and constructive use of leisure time.

TOURISM

At a recent symposium figures were given of the anticipated tourist traffic that we can expect in South Africa, which, by the year 1990 should number 470,000.

When these visitors come to see our cities, what recreation facilities will we be able to show? In Johannesburg will we have a mock-up Gold Mine, a replica of Ferreira's Camp, a Native Village, an Early Street Scene, and in all our main cities will we have striking restaurants and cafe style tea gardens in our parks? I hope we shall have some of these things for they are of immense recreational value, and most could come under the control of the various Parks Departments.

We here today are concerned with matters relating to parks and recreation. How does all this population explosion, movement of people from one area to another, and tourism, affect us? What is our task, and how can we plan to cater for all these people? What are we trying to cater for?

What types of parks do we need? What are the types of recreation that people need and want? What land do we require to cater for such needs, and how far from people's homes must it be? Do the needs vary for people of different income groups, and do people living in flats require more recreational facilities than people living in homes? With increased density of population, will the mass of people have to become spectators or can they still be participants in sport? Are we going to change people's natures? Will our country folk who come to town, who are farmers at heart with great attachment to the land, feel lost and out of tune amongst the fumes, noise and rush of city life? How can they keep contact with the soil? Will their children know what farmyard animals are like?

This afternoon I do not propose to try and answer all these questions. I want to put our minds on enquiry, so that in our various spheres of activity we can anticipate what is required of us. Let us therefore examine two or three points in greater detail.

Leisure
Time

What do we mean by recreation? In general terms recreation means the refreshment of the strength and spirits after toil, diversion, play pastime, entertainment and amusement. It does not need to be confined to sporting activities. Recreation should, therefore,

include such activities as pleasure journeys, viewing and studying scenic sites, picnicking, camping, walking, mountaineering, horse-riding, swimming, boating, angling, hunting, sports activities, i.e. organised games, as well as gardening. Open air recreation embraces all these activities, where man's spiritual and physical powers are renewed and refreshed, in other words, anything where man's spirit is re-created.

The degree of recreation which these activities provide depends upon certain prerequisites such as personal taste and preference, as well as the daily routine activities of the person. It is, however, important that all factors work in concert so that the activities can be enjoyed in comfort, conveniently and without irritation. The necessity of recreation for the working man is generally realised, and is an important aspect of social welfare and health. To obtain recreation outside the dwelling area, and, for the townsman, outside the polluted city area, is an asset of great value, and the urge for recreation in the open air is noticed more and more among the ever increasing urban population.

A recent survey of recreation in America, Sweden and Britain showed the greatest increase in outdoor recreation to be in the form of caravan parks, pleasure rides, holiday houses, motor boats, picnicking and camping. A conclusion which derived from these studies was that the future development of outdoor recreation was primarily dependent upon two variables : first, the location of outdoor recreation resources in relation to the location of the potential users, mainly the urban population, and, second, the ease of access from one to the other.

Resources

Now, with regard to parks, there are various types, for example :

1. Children's playgrounds
2. Local Parks
3. Local recreation facilities
4. Regional Parks
5. Regional recreation grounds
6. Local Game Parks, and
7. National Parks.

1. Children's Playgrounds: These should be within reasonable access of homes, and may be located within local parks, and may I say here that it is definitely more advantageous to have a playground well used than one which is immaculately orderly and tidy.
2. Local Parks : These usually have a formal layout with such features as provide enjoyment for adults who live within half a mile of them, but if the parks are to be anything more than "lungs", and if the ordinary citizens are to be encouraged into the smaller parks (which in many cases are nearly always empty), then greater action must be taken by the city to make them attractive. This is not a reflection on the horticultural standard of the parks, it signifies that a high horticultural standard is not enough, and that local parks

must be made into activity places. It is essential that appropriate features appear in local parks to suit the particular preferences and needs of social groups in different parts of the city.

3. Local Recreation Facilities : These usually take the form of tennis courts, bowling greens, football, cricket and hockey fields, and, sometimes, small swimming pools.
4. Regional Parks : cater for special amenities such as picnicking, walking, etc., and should be of an area of not less than 100 acres in extent, where there are open stretches of country where casual ball games can be played. A regional park should provide sufficient space and facilities for a day's outing, where the whole family can be variously entertained with a choice of pursuits. Land-scaping of such parks should maximise the natural features of flora and water surfaces, in order to simulate something of the character of the natural and rural environment. At the same time, the influence of man-made order should be present, ensuring that the aspect and scenery of such parks has an obvious sense of harmony and beauty. They should provide opportunities for physical exertion as well as contemplative pleasure.
5. Regional Recreation Facilities are confined to the provision of facilities for organised "playing field" games, as well as large swimming pools and swimming baths, on a regional basis. In examining Greater Johannesburg for instance, it is obvious that due to short-sighted policies in the past, the populations to the north and the south will look to Johannesburg for a great deal of their regional recreational facilities. In other words, Johannesburg will have to provide facilities on a semi-metropolitan basis.
6. Local Game Parks: In suitable areas within, or near, Municipal boundaries, which will foster an interest in wild animal life.
7. National Parks : Those areas under the control of the Provincial or State authorities which have been set aside for the preservation of game, of flora and fauna, and places of historical interest.

Fundamental
Issues

The fundamental issues we have to face are the following :

- (a) The increase in population is not something that is going to happen, it is happening, and there is a very steady movement from rural to urban areas.
- (b) Working hours are decreasing, resulting in greater leisure time.
- (c) South Africa is actually promoting a wider tourist traffic, and with jumbo jets we will have tourists by the thousand every day.

Action to be taken:

What steps must we take to deal with the implications of these facts ?

The period up to World War II was an era during which nobody thought that land for leisure was a resource to be set aside, conserved and planned to meet the demands of an essential community activity, outdoor recreation. Before the advent of the country's large-scale industrial development and the resultant growth of the cities, almost every South African family had its favourite picnic spot, and an exclusive corner in the abundant wealth of the natural environment was part of every South African's national heritage.

I would say at the outset that because of the population explosion it is not just a good idea, but it is vital to convince the political leadership that conservation of the outdoors, and stimulation of the "return to the outdoors" is the most essential element in the South African way of life. A total of seven acres per 1000 population is accepted as being the overall minimum requirement for parks and recreation grounds within the municipal area, and this figure does not include land required for metropolitan and provincial parks which provide facilities for picnicking, camping and similar activities, and from this figure are excluded private sports clubs, municipal and private golf clubs and waste ground designated as parks. Therefore, in an age of rapid economic development the regional park may otherwise fight a losing battle against the new industrial complex unless we co-operate and work in close harmony with the State and the Province to have land set aside, or retained, for future recreational purposes, so that urbanisation and industry do not encroach upon our heritage, and the ever increasing urban population can keep in touch with nature, and our flora and beauty spots can be preserved for posterity. We must define our needs, make an inventory of available resources, draw up a recreation plan and programme, implement them and educate people in the constructive use of leisure time.

We must adjust ourselves to the fact that parks must cater for recreation, and must not just be places of green lawns and beautiful flowers. Men do need nature in their cities, not only to provide visual and physical relaxation from the tensions of their lives, but also to provide them with opportunities to play, to express themselves in the revitalising pursuits of leisure time recreation. In addition, we must recognise that recreation has a far wider meaning than sports fields, bowling clubs, tennis courts and swimming baths. We must also recognise that the demand of the dwellers in high rise buildings for recreational facilities differs from that of the home dweller who can potter around in a garden, or have his own workshop, and that the requirements of the various income groups varies, and participation in open air recreation is directly related to economic status and living standards. Generally a correlation may be observed between high income and low density, and the pattern is somewhat similar to that on the income distribution map.

Motor cars play a dominant role in recreation, for motoring is by far the most popular mode of travel, and it is thereby closely linked with recreational activity, but it is a pastime which, for its proper enjoyment, needs an objective which, in most cases, is an open space where the family can picnic and relax and enjoy the outdoors.

Education Recreational facilities must be extended to cater
for leisure: for leisure time activities to enable people to
 enjoy the time at their disposal, and this is where
 recreation centres and recreation clubs come into
their own, for it is with professional guidance and facilities at
such centres that the individual may develop his talents, co-
ordinate hand and mind in pursuits which provide tangible rewards
for the effort devoted to them, and he will thereby experience the
sense of identity and fulfilment which his work fails to provide.
Recreation centres provide a service more valuable than is generally
realised, and their high cost is outweighed by their obvious social
and psychological benefits. Is it not possible that in future some
of these may be located in parks and open spaces, enabling citizens,
concrete-bound in the cities, an opportunity of gardening and learn-
ing about plant life, thus keeping in touch with the soil, and, at
the same time perhaps, providing a service to the community by
assisting in the preservation and beautification of our open spaces ?

Because so many city children, and for that matter, adults, are losing touch with the animal world, I think it is important that people living in cities, and particularly those in flats where it is difficult, if not impossible, to keep pets, should have an opportunity of seeing wild animals at close quarters without having to travel hundreds of miles to do so. The success of the Krugersdorp local Game Park, and the keen public interest shown a week or two ago in the birth of a baby rhino, is proof of this. As many of you know, a private Lion Park was recently opened near Johannesburg, and very many people are going there on Sundays and weekdays who could not get away to the Kruger Park. There seems room for more of such game parks, suitably located in typical country and developed by Municipal Councils for the benefit and enjoyment of their local populations.

Tourism: I touched upon this lightly early in my talk, and here
 I would say that it is imperative that we commence,
 as soon as possible, the positive promotion of the
 aesthetic content of our cities to provide a visual
impact upon those who come to see but not to stay. Our Parks
Departments can do a great deal in this respect by creating spectac-
ular points of beauty in the city, in addition to spectacular parks
with, perhaps, items of historical interest, and dreary streets can
be transformed by hanging baskets of brilliant flowers from lamp
standards. Durban has given a lead in this respect, and many are
the compliments I have heard about the bowls of flowers around the
City Hall, and the floral arrangements down West Street. Their
Rose Garden is a delightful place, as is the beautiful Japanese
Garden which has transformed a once marshy piece of wasteland.

An open air theatre in a magnificent landscaped garden - if it can be done in wet, sooty London, why not in Johannesburg ? It will cost a lot of money, but would our Mining Houses not assist ? They give generously to many projects, the most recent being to heart research, so would it not be a good idea if they gave generously to gladden hearts when alive ? I think I am correct in saying that Cape Town has taken advantage of some of her parkland to give her citizens just such a theatre at Maynardville, and, of course, as we all know, the Mother City is the home of the world-famed Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, a National Park, while not so very far away, and a pleasant drive from the city, one can visit the interesting Karoo Garden at Worcester.

Port Elizabeth, too, has shown what can be done by the reclamation of swampland, for her Happy Valley is a joy to her citizens and visitors alike. Springs, on the East Rand, has done a splendid job in converting an ugly old mine dump into a beautiful place, while Pretoria is well-known for its gardens at Brummeria Park and its recreational area at Fountains.

We have an abundance of these potential recreation resources in the Republic, and it is for each and every one of us to play a part in the conservation of the outdoors, particularly those of us who live inland, and to develop with foresight and imagination the resources at hand for the benefit of our citizens.

I was very encouraged to hear of a Conference recently convened by the South African Nature Union in Pretoria, where consideration was given to the planning on a provincial and national scale for recreational facilities, so that areas could be set aside for open air activities. Papers were given to this conference on a wide range of subjects by various Government Departments, and I must say that unless suitable areas are set aside timeously, ground will be used for other purposes, and lost to posterity. All the speakers emphasised the need for more open spaces for the population of the future, for the conservation of our water, veld, flora and fauna, and told what each department had done in the way of assisting to provide recreational facilities on a regional basis. It was felt that by the end of the century the demand for outdoor recreation in South Africa would quadruple, and that without sufficient planning and control this may result in the country becoming, and here I quote, "pockmarked with slumland 'resorts' like those which America had encountered". However, the speaker said that with foresight and determination to meet the challenge, South Africa could become, in this sphere of activity and use of the natural environment, a prototype for the rest of Africa to copy.

So far we have concerned ourselves only with the needs of the European population, but there is equal, if not greater, need for all forms of recreation for the different non-White groups who, it must be remembered, outnumber us many times, and whose lives are far more drab and monotonous than ours. What should be done by the authorities for these people ?

For the large Bantu population practically every form of recreational amenity needs to be provided. Not only football fields, with a few tennis courts thrown in. Suitable water features where boating, as well as aquatic sports, can be indulged would make an enormous improvement in all non-white areas. Dams can be artificially constructed and the resulting pleasure derived by the people would make the effort and expenditure well worth while.

Then, too, there is great need for open air amphitheatres where, in addition to traditional theatrical productions, musical concerts, jazz festivals, beauty competitions, mannequin parades, fashion shows, as well as more robust entertainment such as boxing, weightlifting competitions, etc., can be staged both by Councils and by private enterprise.

The value of recreational amenities for the Bantu population is so important that we in Johannesburg regard it as an absolute essential, and although our recreational programme costs a great deal of money (approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million rand per annum), we believe it has been a major factor in preserving racial peace here in Johannesburg.

All forms of children's parks and playgrounds are another essential, and these can sometimes be provided in conjunction with school playing fields.

Finally, the more sophisticated amenities such as cycle race tracks, athletic tracks, bowling greens, hard-surfaced tennis courts, grassed football fields where professional football can be played at night under flood lights, swimming baths, and a golf course have all been provided by our City Council in the Bantu and Coloured areas with great resulting contentment and happiness to the population.

One is sometimes faced with the argument that recreational facilities, parks, etc., should not be provided for our non-White population unless they can themselves pay the full cost. This overlooks the fact that the majority of Bantu families, and many Coloured families as well, fall in the sub-economic group and just haven't the means to foot such bills.

As to the need for parks, libraries, playing fields of all kinds, and all the other improvements I have mentioned, it must be remembered that over 90% of our Bantu and Coloured families live in houses with a maximum of four rooms, so that there is usually just no place in the house where the people can indulge in hobbies, and thus most have to find their amusements elsewhere. Far better for this to be done under attractive conditions conducive to some spiritual and mental uplift rather than on street corners and in shebeens.

I have said that there is a necessity to provide parks that are spectacular, which are a feast for the eyes, and balm for a troubled spirit, and here let me tell you the story of one in particular.

At Tod Inlet, near Victoria on the Island of Vancouver in British Columbia, is a living monument to two people, husband and wife, who, in their lifetime, created a gem of such beauty and magnificence that it is a sheer delight and joy to all who see it - The Butchart Gardens - the showpiece of the Pacific Northwest.

You come suddenly to the edge of a cliff, and behold a breathtaking scene for there, fifty feet below, in a vast bowl hewn out of solid rock, lies the sunken garden: thousands of flowering plants, trees and shrubs create a magical world of colour, pale pinks and purples to brilliant reds and blues, emerald lawns and a lake banked in marigolds, and from the far rim of the bowl, hung with ivy, a crystal waterfall cascading into a silvery pool.

Robert Butchart was a pioneer in the manufacture of Portland cement in Canada, and with his wife, Jenny, moved west in 1904 to open a new limestone quarry, and he built a rambling mansion nearby. Five years later the quarry, its limestone exhausted, was a gaping, ugly mud-hole, the sight of which brought Jenny Butchart to tears many times. She felt that as they had made the place ugly in the first instance, it was now up to them to make it beautiful, and one afternoon when she had been more than usually upset by the prospect, for she was a person who loved beauty, the idea of incorporating the quarry in a garden landscaping scheme took root in her mind. At that time she had little knowledge of gardening or landscaping, but what she did have was unbounded enthusiasm and a natural artistic flair,

backed 100% by her husband who provided the finance. "You plant, I'll pay", he is reported to have said, and thus began the gardening experiment which was to have such far-reaching effects.

Over a period of five years, starting with sweetpeas and rambler roses given to her by a friend, Jenny Butchart transformed the quarry into a glorious sunken garden - brilliant green lawns, a lake, gay flowers cascading down the walls of the pit. News of the garden spread, and visitors started arriving to view the loveliness. Jenny said, "Flowers are fleeting, so people should enjoy them", and to date six million have done so.

Her efforts did not cease with the beautification of the pit, for she extended her gardening activities to include an exquisite English rose garden, a formal Italian garden surrounded by hedges as finely sculptured as Florentine statues, and a dainty Japanese garden nestling against a forest of Douglas pines, the whole covering some 25 acres of the estate.

All this cost vast sums of money which her husband supplied, and she had labourers to help her, but none worked harder than Jenny. In the winter seasons she and her husband travelled extensively abroad, and everywhere they went she gathered plants for her beloved garden, rare species, seeds, trees, adding to the millions of plants already blooming in the old lime pit.

In 1939 the Butcharts offered to sell the gardens to the City of Victoria or the Provincial Government for a sum of one dollar, but neither was prepared to pay for its upkeep, so the property was willed to a grandson, Mr. Ian Ross, who, on returning from the war, restored the gardens to their former glory with the aid of English, Dutch, Portuguese and Polish immigrant gardeners.

There is a permanent staff of forty, and twenty-five gardeners produce flowers for all seasons, but the cost is tremendous, and Mr. Ross was obliged to levy a small entrance charge in order to preserve the gardens, and Benvenuto - meaning Welcome - as the estate is known, is now out of the red.

In 1953, Ian Ross put in four miles of underground wiring for an illumination system that has made the gardens as popular by night as by day, a wonderland of colour framed in the soft glow of a hundred hidden lights. Visitors number 350,000 per year, and the 1000-car park is always jammed, and twenty to thirty coaches arrive every day bringing beauty-hungry people to enjoy the living, lovely remembrance of Jenny and Robert Butchart.

I was privileged to visit these gardens last year, and would now like to show you some slides to give you an impression of this area of re-creation -- the lifting of the senses to pleasurable heights.

DIE PARKE-AFDELING EN DIE BEVOLKINGSONTPLOFFING

TOESPRAAK DEUR

RAADSLID PATRICK R.B. LEWIS

G.R. (S.A.)

OP DIE

KONFERENSIE VAN DIE INSTITUUT VAN PARKE-EN ONTSPANNINGS-
ADMINISTRASIE (SUIDELIKE AFRIKA)

CRANBROOKE HOTEL, OP 14 TOT 18 OKTOBER 1968.

BEVOLKINGS-
ONTPLOFFING

Die bevolking van die wêreld het tussen die jare 350 n.C. en 1850 n.C., n tydperk van 1500 jaar, verdubbel. Die volgende verdubbeling het net 100 jaar geduur, vanaf 1850 tot 1950, en daar word nou beraam dat die wêreld se bevolking teen die huidige aanwastempo tussen 1950 en 1990 sal verdubbel.

n Eeu gelede was daar vyf stede in die wêreld met bevolkings van meer as n miljoen mense; vandag is daar 100 sulke stede. In die jaar 1960 het 285 miljoen mense gewoon in metropolitaanse gebiede met n bevolking van een miljoen, maar teen die jaar 2000 sal daar na beraming 1,285 miljoen mense in reuse-metropolitaanse gebiede woon en waar die bevolkings van 300,000 tot n miljoen in sekere gebiede is, sal dit van 154 miljoen tot 820 miljoen gedurende die volgende veertig jaar toeneem.

VERSKUIWING
VAN MENSE

Benewens die bevolkingsontploffing is die uitstaande verskynsel van ons tyd die verskuiwing van mense van die plattelandse gebiede af na die stede toe, en die toename in die omvang van die stede. Laat ons Amerika as n voorbeeld neem. In 1850 het 15.3% van die Amerikaanse bevolking in stedelike gebiede gewoon; in 1900 het die persentasie na 39.7% gestyg. Teen 1960 het dit gestyg tot 69.9% en in die jaar 2000 sal daar na beraming 82% in die stedelike gebiede woon.

Hoe staan sake hier by ons ? Hieronder volg toekomsskattingsyfers ten opsigte van die Suid-Afrikaanse bevolking :

BEVOLKINGSYFERS EN TOEKOMSSKATTINGSYFERS

Gebied & Jaar	Blankes	Kleurlinge	Asiâte	Bantoes	Totaal
<u>REPUBLIEK</u>					
1960	3,088,492	1,509,258	477,125	10,927,922	15,002,797
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Net soos in Amerika het ons n verskuiwing van die mense van die plase en dorpe af na die stedelike gebiede toe. Dink terug aan veertig jaar gelede toe die sogenaamde „armblanke“-probleem bestaan het. Waar is die bywoners van 1920 en 1930 ? Hulle het na die dorpe en stede gekom en is in die nywerheidslewe opgeneem.

Dink net daaraan - die bevolking word in veertig jaar se tyd verdubbel ! Besef u dat ons net soveel huisvesting in die volgende veertig jaar sal moet verskaf as wat daar verskaf is sedert Jan van Riebeeck aan die Kaap geland het ? Waar gaan die mense woon ? In die eerste plek gaan die stedelike gebied verder en verder uitbrei, en beter vervoerstelsels sal ontwikkel moet word sodat die mense langer afstande binne redelike tye kan aflê. Dan sien ek dat groot stadsvernuwingskemas aangepak sal moet word; die ouer voorstede sal herontwerp moet word met n h  er woondigtheid, sodat

groot getalle mense naby die stad gehuisves kan word. Ek kan vooruit sien dat n baie groter persentasie van ons bevolking in die toekoms in hoë geboue sal woon en dat dit al moeiliker sal gaan om n losstaande huis te bekom.

VRYE TYD

n Ander faktor waarmee daar rekening gehou moet word, is die voorspelling dat die werkure in die jare wat voorlê al korter gaan word en dat die mense dus meer vrye tyd sal hê. Die gemiddelde werker sal met die toename in die vrye tyd en die standaardisering en meganisasie van werkprosesse, verplig wees om sy grootste belangstellings buite sy werk te soek. Die belangrikste feit wat ontspanning betref, is dat dit vinniger toeneem as ons vermoë om dit verstanding te benut. Nog n belangrike faktor is dat hoe eentoniger n werker se werk is, hoe eentoniger is die ontspanning wat hy in sy vrye tyd soek; baie moderne soorte werke is geneig om n passiewe houding, sonder enige vindingrykheid, teenoor ontspanningsbedrywighede te laat ontwikkel. Dit is dus uiters belangrik dat mense, veral die jong mense, geleer moet word om hulle vrye tyd op gesonde en konstruktiewe wyse te bestee.

TOERISME

Daar is op n onlangse simposium syfers verstrek van die toeristeverkeer wat ons in Suid-Afrika kan verwag; teen die jaar 1990 behoort 470,000 toeriste die land te besoek. Watter ontspanningsgeriewe kan ons die besoekers aanbied wanneer hulle ons stede besoek? Sal ons in Johannesburg n nagemaakte goudmyn, n replika van Ferreira se Kamp, n Bantodorp, n straattoneel uit die ou tyd hê? Sal ons aantreklike restaurante en teetuine van die kafee tipe in die parke van al ons vermaamste stede hê? Ek hoop dat ons n paar van die dinge sal hê, want die ontspanningswaarde daarvan is ontsaglik, en die merendeel daarvan kan onder die beheer van die verskillende parke-afdelings staan.

Ons het vandag hier met sake met betrekking tot parke en ontspanning te make. Hoe raak die bevolkingsontploffing, die verskuiwing van mense van een gebied na n ander, en toerisme ons? Wat is ons taak, en hoe kan ons vir al die mense voorsiening maak? Waarvoor probeer ons voorsiening maak?

Watter soorte parke het ons nodig? Watter soort ontspanning het die mense nodig en wil hulle graag hê? Hoeveel grond het ons nodig om in die behoeftes te kan voorsien, en hoe ver moet dit van die mense se huise af wees? Het die mense in die verskillende inkomstegroepe verskillende behoeftes en het woonstelbewoners meer ontspanningsgeriewe nodig as die mense wat in huise woon? Sal die mense, na gelang die bevolkingsdigtheid toeneem, feitlik almal toeskouers moet word of sal hulle nog aan sport deelneem? Gaan ons die aard van die mense verander? Sal ons plattelandse mense wat na die stede toe kom en wat in wese boere is en geheg aan die grond is, verlore en uit hulle plek uit voel in die dampe, die lawaai en gejaagdheid van die stadsluwe? Hoe kan hulle kontak met die grond behou? Sal hulle kinders weet hoe plaaswerfdiere lyk?

Ek is nie van plan om die vrae almal vanmiddag te beantwoord nie. Ek wil u laat dink, sodat ons op ons verskillende bedrywigheds terreine kan vooruitsien wat daar van ons vereis word. Laat ons dus twee of drie punte van nader beskou.

Vrye tyd.

Wat bedoel ons met ontspanning ? In die algemeen beteken ontspanning die verfrissing van liggaam en gees na werk, afleiding, speel, vermaak en pret. Dit hoef nie tot sportbedrywighede beperk te wees nie. Ontspanning behoort dus bedrywighede soos plesierritte, die besigtiging en bestudering van landskapterreine, pieknieks, kampeerdery, stap, bergklim, perdry, swem, bootry, hengel, jag, sportbedrywighede, naamlik georganiseerde spele, asook tuinmaak, in te sluit. Opelugontspanning sluit al die bedrywighede in waar n mens se geestelike en liggaamlike krag hernieu en verfris word, met ander woorde, enigiets wat die mens se gees verfris.

Die mate van ontspanning wat die bedrywighede bied, hang af van sekere voorvereistes soos persoonlike smaak en voorkeur sowel as die daaglikse roetinebedrywighede van die persoon. Dit is egter belangrik dat alle faktore saamgespan moet word sodat die bedrywighede met gemak, in gerief en sonder irritasie geniet kan word. Daar word algemeen besef dat ontspanning noodsaaklik vir die werkende man is, en dit is n belangrike aspek van volkswelsyn en gesondheid. Om ontspanning buite die woongebied, en vir die stadsmens buite die besoedelde stadsgebied te verkry, is n baie groot bate, en die drang na ontspanning in die buitelug word al hoe sterker onder die steeds toenemende stedelike bevolking.

n Onlangse opname wat ten opsigte van ontspanning in Amerika, Swede en Brittanje gemaak is, het aangetoon dat die grootste toename in buitelugontspanning in die vorm van woonparke, plesierritte, vakansiehuisse, motorbote, pieknieks en kampeerdery gevind word. Daar is na aanleiding van die opnames tot die gevolgtrekking genaak dat die toekomstige ontwikkeling van buitelugontspanning hoofsaaklik van twee veranderlike faktore afhang: eerstens die ligging van die buitelugontspanningshulpbronne met betrekking tot die ligging van die potensiële gebruikers, hoofsaaklik die stedelike bevolking, en tweedens die vraag hoe maklik die gebruikers die geriewe kan bereik.

Hulpbronne

Wat die parke betref, is daar verskillende soorte, byvoorbeeld :

1. Kinderspeelterreine.
2. Plaaslike parke.
3. Plaaslike ontspanningsgeriewe.
4. Streekparke.
5. Streeksontspanningsterreine.
6. Plaaslike wildparke, en
7. Nasionale parke.

1. Kinderspeelterreine

Dit moet binne n redelike afstand van die huise af wees, en kan in plaaslike parke geleë wees en ek wil net meld dat dit beslis voordeliger is om n speelterrein te hê wat baie gebruik word as een wat onberispelik netjies en skoon is.

2. Plaaslike parke.

Die parke is gewoonlik formeel uitgelê met aantreklikhede wat genot verskaf aan volwassenes wat binne n halfmyl van hulle af woon, maar as die parke meer as „longe" moet wees en as die gewone stadsbewoner aangemoedig moet word om die kleiner parke te besoek (wat in baie gevalle feitlik altyd leeg is), moet die stad drastieser stappe doen om hulle aantreklik te maak. Dit is nie n refleksie op die tuinboukundige standaard van die parke nie; dit dui net daarop dat n hoë tuinboukundige standaard nie genoeg is nie en dat plaaslike parke in plekke met bedrywigheid omskep moet word.

Dit is noodsaaklik dat daar in die plaaslike parke aantreklikhede moet wees wat aan die besondere voorkeure en behoeftes van die sosiale groepe in die verskillende dele van die stad voldoen.

3. Plaaslike ontspanningsgeriewe

Die geriewe bestaan gewoonlik uit tennisbane, rolbalperke, voetbal-, krieket- en hokkievelde, en somtyds kleiner swembaddens.

4. Streekparke

Maak voorsiening vir spesiale geriewe soos pieknieks, stap, ensovoorts, en behoort minstens 100 acre groot te wees, waar daar oop ruimtes is waar daar algemene balspeletjies gespeel kan word. n Streekpark behoort genoeg ruimte en geriewe vir n dag se uitstappie te voorsien, waar die hele gesin op verskillende maniere vermaak kan vind. Met die landskapverfraaiing in sulke parke behoort die natuurlike eienskappe van die blomme en wateroppervlakke beklemtoon te word ten einde iets soortgelyks aan n natuurlike en landelike omgewing te skep. Terselfdertyd behoort die mens se ordende invloed ook uitgeoefen te word ten einde daarvoor te sorg dat die voorkoms en die natuurskoon van sulke parke opvallend mooi is en harmonieer. Hulle behoort geleentheid vir fisiese inspanning sowel as bepeinsing te bied.

5. Streeksontspanningsgeriewe

Is beperk tot die voorsiening van geriewe vir georganiseerde spele wat op sportvelde gespeel word sowel as groot swembaddens, op n streekgrondslag. Wanneer n mens Groter Johannesburg byvoorbeeld van nader beskou, is dit duidelik dat die bevolkings ten noorde en ten suide van Johannesburg vanweë kortstigtige beleidsrigtings van die verlede na Johannesburg sal opsien vir die merendeel van hulle streeksontspanningsgeriewe. Met ander woorde, Johannesburg sal geriewe op n half-metropolitaanse grondslag moet voorsien.

6. Plaaslike wildparke

In geskikte gebiede binne of naby die munisipale grense, sal belangstelling in die dierelewe aangewakker kan word.

7. Nasionale parke

Die gebiede onder beheer van die provinsiale of staatsowerhede wat daargestel is vir die bewaring van wild, veldblomme en wildediere, en plekke van historiese belang.

Fundamentele
vraagstukke

Ons moet die volgende fundamentele vraagstukke voor oë hou :

- (a) Die toename in die bevolking is nie iets wat gaan gebeur nie - dit gebeur reeds, en daar is n gestadige verskuiwing van die plattelandse gebiede na die stedelike gebiede.
- (b) Werkure word al korter; gevolglik is daar meer vrye tyd.
- (c) Suid-Afrika doen daadwerklike stappe om meer toeriste te lok, en met die reuse-vliegtuie sal ons elke dag duisende toeriste kry.

Stappe wat gedoen
moet word

Watter stappe moet ons doen ten opsigte van die implikasies van dié feite?

Die tydperk tot die Tweede Wêreldoorlog was n tydvak waarin niemand daaraan gedink het om grond vir ontspanningsdoeleindes opsy te sit en dit te bewaar en te beplan om aan die behoeftes van n noodsaaklike gemeenskapsbedrywigheid, naamlik buitelug-ontspanning, te voldoen nie. Voor die begin van die land se grootskaalse nywerheidsontwikkeling en die gevolglike uitbreiding van die stede het feitlik elke Suid-Afrikaanse gesin sy gunsteling-piekniekplek gehad, en n eie hoekie in die oorvloedige weelde van die natuurlike omgewing was deel van elke Suid-Afrikaner se nasionale erfenis.

Ek wil dit aan die begin sê dat dit vanweë die bevolkingsontploffing nie net n goeie idee is nie, maar dat dit lewensbelangrik is dat die politieke leiers daarvan oortuig moet word dat die behoud van die buiteluglewe en die stimulering van die idee van "terug na die buitelug" die noodsaaklikste element van die Suid-Afrikaanse lewenswyse is. Altesaam sewe acre per 1000 mense is die absolute minimum vereiste vir parke en ontspanningsterreine binne die munisipale gebied en die syfer sluit nie grond vir metropolitaanse en provinsiale parke in wat geriewe vir pieknieks, kampeerderie en soortgelyke bedrywigheede voorsien nie; private sportklubs, munisipale en private gholflubs en oop stukke grond wat vir parke aangewys is, is nie by die syfer ingesluit nie. Die streekpark sal in n tydperk van snelle ekonomiese ontwikkeling aan die verloorkant teen die nuwe nywerheidskompleks wees, tensy ons geesdriftig met die staat en die provinsie saamwerk om grond vir toekomstige ontwikkelingsdoeleindes opsy te sit of te behou, sodat verstedeliking en die nywerheid ons nie van ons erfenis ontroof nie en die steeds toenemende stedelike bevolking met die natuur in voeling kan bly, en ons veldblomme en mooi plekke vir die nageslag bewaar kan word. Ons moet bepaal wat ons behoeftes is, n inventaris van die beskikbare hulpbronne maak, n ontspanningsplan en -program opstel, dit uitvoer en mense leer om hulle vrye tyd op konstruktiewe wyse te benut.

Ons moet ons aanpas by die feit dat parke vir ontspanning voorsiening moet maak en nie net plekke met groen grasperke en pragtige blomme moet wees nie. Die mens het die natuur in die stad nodig - nie net om visuele en fisiese ontspanning te bied ten einde

die spanninge van hulle lewens te verlig nie, maar om ook aan hulle die geleentheid te gee om te speel en hulleself in verfrissende vryetydsontspanning uit te leef. Daarbenewens moet ons onthou dat ontspanning veel meer behels as sportvelde, rolbalkklubs, tennisbane en swembaddens. Ons moet ook insien dat die bewoners van hoë geboue se behoefte aan ontspanningsgeriewe verskil van die van die huisbewoner wat in 'n tuin kan ploeter, of sy eie werkwinkel het, en dat die behoeftes van die verskillende inkomstegroepe van mekaar verskil en dat deelname in buiteligontspanning regstreeks met ekonomiese status en die lewenspeil verband hou. Daar is in die algemeen 'n wederkerige verband tussen hoë inkomste en lae digtheid, en die patroon is ietwat soortgelyk aan dié op die inkomsteverspreidingskaart.

Motorkarre speel 'n uiters belangrike rol in ontspanning, aangesien die motorkar by verre die gewildste vervoermiddel is; daardeur is dit nou verbonde aan die ontspanningsbedrywigheid, maar dit is 'n vermaak wat 'n doelwit moet hê om dit behoorlik te kan geniet. Die doelwit is in die meeste gevalle 'n oop ruimte waar die gesin piekniek kan hou, kan ontspan en die buitelig kan geniet.

Voorligting in vryetydsbesteding

Ontspanningsgeriewe moet sodanig wees dat dit vir vryetydsbedrywigheede voorsiening maak, sodat mense die tyd tot hulle beskikking kan geniet en dit is waar ontspanningsentrums en ontspanningsklubs tot hulle reg kom, want dit is met die professionele leiding en geriewe by sulke sentrums dat die individu sy talente kan ontwikkel, sy hande en denke kan koördineer in verband met afleiding wat tasbare belonings bring vir die moeite wat daaraan bestee word, sodat hy selfkennis kan opdoen en 'n bevrediging kan vind wat sy werk hom nie kan bied nie. Ontspanningsentrums lewer 'n diens wat waardevoller is as wat in die algemeen besef word, en die hoë koste wat daaraan verbonde is, word meer as geregverdig deur hulle klaarblyklike sosiale en sielkundige voordele. Kan sommige van dié ontspanningsentrums nie in die vervolg in parke en op oop ruimtes opgerig word nie sodat stadsinwoners, wat deur beton in die stede ingehok is, die geleentheid kan hê om tuine te maak en iets omtrent die plantelewe te leer en op die wyse in voeling te bly met die grond en terselfdertyd miskien 'n diens aan die gemeenskap te lewer deur te help met die bewaring en verfraaiing van ons oop ruimtes ?

Omdat so baie stadskinders, en inderdaad volwassenes ook, voelig met die dierewêreld verloor, dink ek dat dit belangrik is dat mense wat in stede woon, en veral dié wat in woonstelle woon waar dit moeilik, indien nie onmoontlik nie, is om troeteldiere aan te hou, die geleentheid behoort te hê om wilde diere van naby te kan sien sonder om honderde myle af te lê om dit te kan doen. Die welslae van die Krugersdorpse plaaslike wild park en die lewendige belangstelling wat die publiek die afgelope week of twee gelede in die geboorte van 'n klein renostertjie getoon het, is 'n bewys hiervan. Soos baie van u weet, is daar onlangs 'n private leepark naby Johannesburg geopen, en baie mense wat nie na die Krugerwildtuin toe kan gaan nie, gaan Sondag en weksdae soontoe. Daar is ruimte vir meer sulke wildparke wat gerieflik gelee is in 'n tipiese landskap en wat deur munisipaliteite ontwikkel word tot voordeel en genot van hulle plaaslike bevolkings.

Toerisme

Ek het vroeër in my toespraak kortliks hierna verwys en nou wil ek sê dat dit dringend noodsaaklik is dat ons so gou as moontlik moet begin om die estetiese voorkoms van ons stede te verbeter sodat

dit n gunstige indruk maak op diegene wat dit besoek maar nie gekom het om hier te bly nie. Ons Parke-afdeling kan in die opsig baie doen deur benewens skouspelagtige parke, miskien met dinge van historiese belang, skouspelagtige mooi plekke in die stad te skep en die voorkoms van eentonige strate te verander deur mandjies met pragtige blomme aan die lamppale op te hang. Durban het die leiding op die gebied geneem en ek het al baie komplimente gehoor oor die bakke met blomme rondom die stadshuis en die blomme in Weststraat. Hulle roostuin is n verruklike plek, net soos die pragtige Japannese tuin wat eens n moerasagtige stuk afvalgrond was.

Daar kan miskien n opelugteater in n manjifieke landskaptuin opgerig word - as dit in die nat, roetbesoedelde Londen gedoen kan word, hoekom nie in Johannesburg nie? Dit sal baie geld kos, maar sal die mynmaatskappye nie help nie? Hulle dra mildelik tot baie ondernemings by; die mees onlangse bydrae was vir hartnavorsing. Sal dit nie n goeie gedagte wees as hulle mildelik daartoe kan bydra om mense se harte te verheug solank hulle nog leef nie? Ek dink ek is reg as ek sê dat Kaapstad n deel van sy parkgrond gebruik het om aan sy inwoners so n teater in Maynardville te verskaf. Ons weet natuurlik almal dat die moederstad die tuiste van die wêreldberoemde Kirstenboschse botaniese tuin, n nasionale park, is, terwyl n mens die interessante Karootuin by Worcester, nie so ver daarvandaan nie en wat met n aangename roete uit die stad uit bereik kan word, kan besoek.

Port Elizabeth het ook gewys wat gedoen kan word deur die herwinning van moerasgrond, want Happy Valley is n genot vir die stad se inwoners sowel as vir besoekers. Springs, aan die Oosrand, het goeie werk gedoen deur n lelike ou mynhoop in n mooi plek om te skep, terwyl Pretoria welbekend is vir sy tuine by Brummeriapark en sy ontspanningsterrein by die Fonteine.

Ons beskik oor baie van dié potensiële ontspanningshulpbronne in die Republiek, en elkeen van ons moet ons deel doen om buiteluggeriewe te bewaar, veral dié van ons wat in die binneland woon, en ons moet met versierendheid en verbeelding die beskikbare hulpbronne tot voordeel van on stadsinwoners ontwikkel.

Dit was baie bemoedigend om te hoor dat die Suid-Afrikaanse Natuurunie onlangs n konferensie in Pretoria gehou het; op die konferensie is daar oorweging geskenk aan die beplanning van ontspanningsgeriewe op n provinsiale en nasionale skaal, sodat daar gebiede vir buitelugbedrywigheede afgesonder kan word. Op dié konferensie het beamptes van verskeie staatsdepartemente referate oor n groot verskeidenheid onderwerpe gelewer, en ek moet sê dat grond vir ander doeleindes gebruik sal word en vir die nageslag verlore sal gaan tensy daar betyds geskikte gebiede afgesonder word. Al die sprekers het die noodsaaklikheid van meer oop ruimtes vir die bevolking van die toekoms beklemtoon sodat ons water, veld, veldblomme en wilde diere bewaar kan word. Hulle het ook berig wat elke departement gedoen het om te help om ontspanningsgeriewe op n streekgrondslag te voorsien. Dit was die mening dat die vraag na buitelugontspanning teen die einde van die eeu in Suid Afrika sal verviervoudig, en dat die gebrek aan behoorlike beplanning en beheer tot gevolg mag hê dat die land later met krotbuurte soos die waarmee Amerika te doen het, te kampe sal hê. Die spreker het egter gesê dat Suid Afrika met versierendheid en vasberadenheid op die terrein van buitelugontspanning en die benutting van die natuurlike omgewing 'n voorbeeld vir die res van Afrika kan word.

Ons het onself tot nou toe nog net by die behoeftes van die blanke-bevolking bepaal, maar daar is net so 'n groot behoefte, indien dit nie groter is nie, aan alle vorms van ontspanning vir die verskillende Nie-blanke-groepe wat - en dit mag ons nie vergeet nie - baie groter in getalle is en wie se lewens baie verveliger en eentoniger as ons s'n is. Wat behoort die owerhede vir die mense te doen ?

Vir die groot Bantoe-bevolking moet daar feitlik elke vorm van ontspanningsgerief voorsien word - nie net sokkervelde met 'n paar tennisbane daarby nie. Geskikte waterplesierplekke, waar bootry sowel as watersport beoefen kan word, sal 'n geweldige verbetering in al die Nie-blanke-gebiede meebring. Kunsmatige damme kan gebou word en die genot wat die mense daaruit sal put, sal die moeite en koste daarvan regverdig.

Dan is daar ook 'n behoefte aan opelug-amfiteaters waar die stadsrade en private ondernemings benewens die tradisionele teateraanbiedings, musiekkonserte, jazz-feeste, skoonheidskompetisies en modeparades, ook ander gesonde vermaak soos bokswedstryde, gewig-optelkompetisies, ens., kan aanbied.

Die waarde van ontspanningsgeriewe vir die Bantoe-bevolking is so belangrik dat ons dit in Johannesburg as absoluut noodsaaklik beskou en ofskoon ons ontspanningsprogram baie geld kos (ongeveer 'n half- tot 'n driekwartmiljoen rand per jaar) glo ons dat dit 'n baie belangrike faktor is in die handhawing van rassevrede in Johannesburg.

'n Ander noodsaaklikheid is alle soorte kinderparke en speel terreine en die kan saam met skoolspeelterreine voorsien word.

Laastens het ons Stadsraad al die meer gesofistikeerde geriewe soos fietsrenbane, atletiekbane, rolbalperke, hardeblad-tennisbane, grassokkervelde waar daar saans onder spreiligte beroepsokker gespeel kan word, swembaddens en 'n gholfbaan in die Bantoe- en Kleurlinggebiede voorsien - geriewe wat tot groot tevredenheid en geluk onder die bevolking aanleiding gee.

'n Mens kom soms te staan voor die argument dat daar geen ontspanningsgeriewe, parke, ensovoorts vir ons Nie-blanke-bevolking voorsien behoort te word nie tensy hulle self al die koste daarvan kan betaal. Daar word nie rekening gehou met die feit dat die merendeel van die Bantoe-gesinne onder die subekonomiese groep ressorteer en eenvoudig nie oor die middele beskik om sulke rekenings te kan betaal nie.

Wat die behoefte aan parke, biblioteke, speelterreine van alle soorte en al die ander verbeterings wat ek genoem het, betref, moet dit onthou word dat meer as 90% van ons Bantoe- en Kleurlinggesinne in huise met hoogstens vier kamers woon; gevolglik is daar gewoonlik net geen plek in die huis waar die mense stokperdjies kan beoefen nie en moet hulle hulle vermaak dus elders gaan soek. Dit is baie beter om dit onder aantreklike omstandighede, wat bevorderlik vir die geestelike en verstandelike ontwikkeling is, te doen as om vermaak op straathoeke en in smokkelkroeë te gaan soek.

Ek het gesê dat dit noodsaaklik is dat daar skouspelagtige parke, wat 'n lus vir die oog en balsem vir 'n gekwelde gees is, voorsien moet word, en nou wil ek u veral een storie vertel.

By Tod Inlet, naby Victoria op die Eiland van Vancouver, in Brits-Columbia, is daar 'n lewende monument van twee mense, 'n man en vrou, wat in hulle leeftyd 'n juweel van sulke prag en skoonheid geskep het dat dit vir almal wat dit sien, louter genot en plesier verskaf. Dit is die Butchart-tuine, die pragstuk van die Noordwestelike Stille Oseaan.

U kom skielik by die rand van 'n rots, en voor u is daar 'n asemrowende toneel, want daar, vyftig voet na onder, in 'n groot kom wat uit soliede rots gekap is, lê die dieptuin; duisende blomplante, bome en struik skep 'n towerwêreld van kleur, ligroos en purper tot helderrooi en blou, smaraggroen grasperke en 'n dam waarvan die wal met gousblomme beplant is, en van die verste rand van die kom af, waar die malvas afhang, stort 'n kristalhelder waterval in 'n silwer poel.

Robert Butchart was 'n pionier in die vervaardiging van Portland-sement in Kanada, en hy en sy vrou, Jenny, het in 1904 weswaarts getrek om 'n nuwe kalksteengroef te open en hy het daar naby 'n groot woonhuis gebou. Vyf jaar later was die groef, waarvan die kalksteen toe uitgeput was, 'n lelike gapende moddergat - 'n toneel wat Jenny Butchart dikwels tot tranes geroer het. Sy was van mening dat dit hulle plig was om dit te verfraai, aangesien hulle dit in die eerste plek so lelik gemaak het, en een agtermiddag toe dit haar meer as gewoonlik ontstel het, want sy was 'n persoon wat lief vir skoonheid was, het die gedagte by haar ontstaan om die groef in 'n landskaptuin te omskep. Sy het destyds min kennis van tuinmaak of landskapverfraaiing gehad, maar wat sy wel gehad het, was 'n grenslose geesdrif en 'n natuurlike kunsaanleg; haar man, wat die geld voorsien het, het haar heelhartig gesteun. „Plant jy, ek sal betaal” het hy na bewering gesê en so is daar begin met die tuinproefneming wat sulke verreikende gevolge sou hê.

Jenny Butchart het oor 'n tydperk van vyf jaar, nadat sy begin het met pronkertjies en rankrose wat 'n vriendin aan haar gegee het, die groef in 'n pragtige dieptuin verander, met heldergroen grasperke, 'n meer, helderkleurige blomme wat langs die mure van die groef afhang. Die nuus van die tuin is versprei en besoekers het die skoonheid daarvan kom besigtig. Jenny het gesê dat blomme van verbygaande aard is en dat mense hulle skoonheid behoort te geniet; tot nou toe het ses miljoen mense dit gedoen.

Haar pogings het nie by die verfraaiing van die groef geëindig nie; sy het ook 'n voortreflike Engelse roostuin, 'n formele Italiaanse tuin omring deur heinings wat soos Florentynse standbeelde gesny is, en 'n fyn Japanese tuin teen 'n woud van Douglasdennebome aangelê. Die hele tuin beslaan ongeveer 25 acre van die eiendom.

Dit alles het baie geld, wat haar man voorsien het, gekos, en sy het arbeiders gehad om haar te help, maar niemand het harder as Jenny gewerk nie. Sy en haar man het gedurende die winterseisoene

uitgebreide reise onderneem en oral waar hulle gegaan het, het sy plante vir haar geliefde tuin, seldsame soorte, saad en bome versamel om by die miljoene plante wat reeds in die ou kalkput geblom het, te voeg.

Die Butcharts het in 1939 aangebied om die tuin aan die stadsraad van Victoria of die Provinsiale Regering teen 'n bedrag van een dollar te verkoop, maar nie een van hulle was bereid om vir die onderhoud daarvan te betaal nie. Gevolglik is dit bemaak aan 'n kleinseun, mnr. Ian Ross, wat nadat hy van die oorlog teruggekeer het, die tuin met behulp van Engelse, Hollandse, Portugese en Poolse immigranttuiniers in ere herstel het.

Daar is 'n vaste personeel wat uit veertig lede bestaan, en vyf-en-twintig tuiniers voorsien blomme vir al die seisoene, maar die onkoste is ontsaglik, en mnr. Ross was verplig om 'n klein toegangsfooi te vorder ten einde die tuine te kan bewaar, en Benvenuto - wat „welkom” beteken - soos die landgoed bekend staan, het nou geen skuld meer nie.

Ian Ross het in 1953 vier myl ondergrondse bedrading vir 'n verligtingstelsel aangelê; die tuine is nou saans net so gewild as bedags - dit is 'n wonderland van kleur in die sagte gloed van 'n honderd verskuilde ligte. 350,000 besoekers besoek die tuin per jaar, en daar is altyd 'n opeenhoping op die motorparkeerterrein, waar daar plek vir 1,000 motors is; twintig tot dertig busse bring elke dag mense wat 'n honger na skoonheid om die lewende, lieflike herinnering aan Jenny en Robert Butchart te geniet.

Dit was my voorreg om dié tuine verlede jaar te besoek, en ek wil nou vir u 'n paar skyfies wys om u 'n indruk te gee van hoe dié herskeppingsgebied lyk - wat gedoen kan word om die sinne van die mens tot genotryke hoogtes te laat uitstyg.

JOHANNESBURG.
September 1968.

Collection Number: A1132

Collection Name: Patrick LEWIS Papers, 1949-1987

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: Historical Papers Research Archive, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Location: Johannesburg

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