ONE BIG MAC - HOLD THE DEFORESTATION

Had a Big Mac lately? Aren't you hungry for Burger King now?

But wait, you might want to consider what Norman Myers, renowned environmentalist from Oxford, England, is saying before you rush off to McDonald's or Burger King. According to Myers, the world's tropical rain forests are being turned into cattle-grazing pastures at an alarming rate. In Central America, grazing land more than doubled between 1961 and 1978 while wooded land was diminished by 39 percent. This destruction allows North Americans to save five cents on each hamburger.

Two decades ago, United States imported 2,000 tons of beef annually. By 1978 beef imports had risen to 100,000 tons. Six of the seven Central American countries export 85 to 90 percent of their beef to the United States, while more than 50 percent of the children in those countries suffer malnourishment.

Central America is not the only region of the world where land that could be used to feed the people is taken by the wealthy elite and multinationals for profit. According to Oxfam America, 36 of the world's 40 poorest countries export food to North America. Clearly, our appetite for beef is paid for by the lives of others.

According to World Institute's State of the World, 1984, "No clearer connection between deforestation and the demands of affluent societies can be found than in the conversion of tropical forest to grazing land in Central America and Brazil." Thousands of species of flora are being destroyed. Myers estimates that one species a day becomes extinct because of deforestation. In addition, the world ecosystem and global cycling of water, oxygen, carbon and nitrogen are being disturbed.

Is our country really "the breadbasket of the world"? According to Oxfam America, 55 percent of grain the U.S. exports is fed to animals, not people. World Bank 1982 figures show 17 countries in the world with a total food supply of less than 2,000 calories per person per day. In 1982, the United States sent twice as many agricultural exports to Canada as to all 17 of these countries combined. Canada's population is 24 million; the population of the 17 countries is one billion. The Netherlands received more U.S. agricultural exports than the entire continent of Africa.

S.A. UPDATE

In early August, South African civil rights lawyer Victoria Mxenge, who had been defending 16 anti-apartheid activists charged with treason, was gunned down by what other Blacks described as a government-sanctioned hit squad.

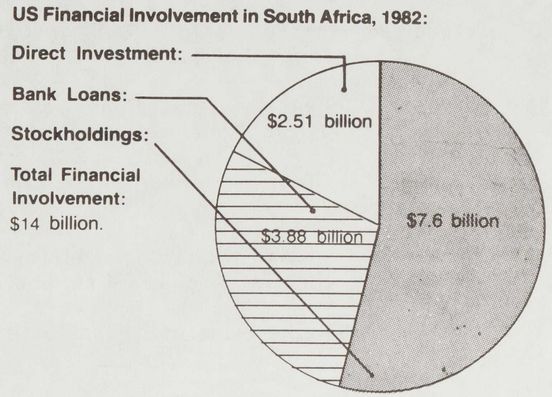
In July, Anthony Brown was shot in the back while fleeing from the Minneapolis police. Brown, a young Black man, was unarmed.

While such tragedies are more common in South Africa, the difference in frequency may only be due to the difference between a society that openly advocates racism and one that placidly accepts it. At the core of each is the same belief that certain people are inferior and therefore due fewer rights because of skin color.

These beliefs become policy when it seems "necessary" to wage war against people and become permanently manifested through internment camps, reservations and "bantustans." The native people of this land have certainly experienced a form of apartheid, which may have been a model for South Africa. Racism is the critical link between U.S. apartheid and South African apartheid. Understanding that connection has become a central focus of anti-apartheid work in the Twin Cities.

On October 11, a rally was held at Hennepin County Government Center to protest racist policies and practices in the Twin Cities, in the United States and in South Africa. Fred Dube, a representative from the African National Congress, the largest anti-apartheid group in South Africa, was a rally speaker as were Vernon Bellecourt from the American Indian Movement and State Rep. Randy Staten, author of divestment legislation in Minnesota. Divestment resolutions are still alive in St. Paul and Minneapolis as the anti-apartheid movement continues to expand and grow.

-- Dale Jones



CHARLOTTE KASL AGAIN OFFERS REIKE CLASS AS FUNDRAISER FOR F.N.V.W.

Charlotte Kasl will again offer a Reike healing course as a benefit for Friends for a Non-Violent World.

"Reike is a natural form of healing based on a science of energy. After this first-degree class, you will have increased ability to channel light energy into yourself and others. Reike should help you grow on physical, psychological and spiritual levels," Charlotte says.
The course will be offered from 7 to 10:30 p.m. November 8 and from 1 to 5:30 p.m. November 9 at her home, 4134 Park Avenue South, Minneapolis.

Interested persons should contact Grace Gibas at 784-1741 or Betsy Dodder at 698-7813.

C.A.L.C. OFFERS RACISM SEMINAR

On Saturday, November 16, Clergy and Laity Concerned will offer the Tillman Seminar on Racial Justice. This workshop is designed to help church and community leaders structure their personal lives as well as their organizations to reflect a commitment to racial justice. The seminar, to be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Minnesota Church Center, 122 West Franklin, Minneapolis, will cost $10. Mary Norman Tillman, who has worked on racial justice issues such as fair housing and text-book racism, will lead the seminar. For more information, call CALC at 871-8033.