

MODDERDAM, WERKGENOT, UNIBELL - - all were demolished.

"KRUISPAD sal net soos die ander plakkerskampe gesloop moet word." (CROSSROADS will have to be demolished like all the other squatter camps.)
F.H. Botha, Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner for the Western Cape - letter to Die Burger 9.9.77

WHERE IS CROSSROADS ?

Crossroads (Nyanga Extension 3) is a triangle of land just south of D.F. Malan airport, ending at the Lansdowne Road/Klipfontein Road intersection. Although designated as a future Black area, it is presently still Divisional Council property (mid-February 1978).

WHY FAMILIES SETTLED THERE

Squatting began here in February 1975 as African families were induced to move from other squatter areas (Elsies River, Brown's Camp etc.) or as men moved out of townships and bachelor quarters to be with their families. In April 1975 the Bantu Affairs Administration Board numbered the shacks (1 027), installed a few water taps and started refuse and nightsoil removals. Many families said they were directed to Crossroads by officials and formed the impression they would be allowed to remain there. Officials and police conducted pass raids, but the settlement grew, and today there are approximately 20 000 people in some 3 000 shacks.

DECLARED AN EMERGENCY CAMP - JUNE 1976

In June 1975 shack demolitions at Crossroads led to a series of court actions. Thereafter the Divisional Council tried by legal means to hand the camp over to the Bantu Affairs Administration Board. The attempt failed, and Crossroads was declared an Emergency Camp under the jurisdiction of the Divisional Council in June 1976. Services were improved, a clinic installed, and a levy of R10 per month per shack (reduced in August 1977 to R7) was imposed.

A REAL SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Crossroads is a viable community, with its own committee, very little crime, a strong sense of neighbourliness and mutual support. With help from CUPC, UPRU and the Urban Foundation, two schools have been erected - "Sizamile" ("We have tried") and "Noxolo" ("Peace"). The teachers are paid by parents and supporters. Church groups meet regularly, also a literacy class, craft groups and co-operative self-help projects. Small shops sell food (including home-produce) fuel and furniture, and provide services of all sorts. A clinic copes with health problems and the overall health picture does not compare badly with that in the official Black townships. Divisional Council medical reports reflect a high degree of co-operation between the people and authorities.

EMPLOYMENT

In November 1977 73% of the men and 25% of the women at Crossroads were in employment in the formal sector. In addition, the informal sector (shops and services in Crossroads) employed some 11% of the men and 20% of the women. Average individual earnings tend to be higher in Crossroads (R33 per week) than in Nyanga (R28) (UPRU Survey).

94% of the heads-of-households are in employment according to a survey commissioned by the Concerned Citizens Action Committee. Owing to the recession there is a problem of unemployment and poverty, but surveys show that Crossroads people are better able to help themselves through employment in the informal sector than those who live in the official townships.

AFRICAN LABOUR IS ESSENTIAL TO CAPE TOWN

Although it is Government policy to remove Africans from the Western Cape, and to try to reserve this area for the employment of "Coloured" labour (a policy rejected by the elected members of the majority Labour Party that controls the "Coloured Persons Representative Council") economic realities are in direct conflict with this ideology. The whole economy of Cape Town in fact depends on African labour. Many work in construction, commerce, industries, and the Government itself (especially Railways and Harbours) has employed an increasing number.

Are you a Capetonian?
How long have you lived in Cape Town?
Africans have lived in this city for over 100 years.
Crossroads men have lived on average 18 years, and their wives 11,7 years in Cape Town.
They regard themselves as Capetonians.

Africans employed in Construction:

1968	3 400
1974	13 400

THE MIGRANT LABOUR SYSTEM - THE PEOPLE'S REACTION

Much of Cape Town's African labour is housed in single-sex hostels in the official Black townships. The great majority of the occupants are in fact married men forced to live as bachelors. Life for them is grim and destructive, leading to abuse of alcohol and the acquisition of town "wives". In Langa the ratio of men to women is 11 to 1. Most of the men are migrant workers on contracts of a year at a time. For their women and children this means separation from husbands/fathers for 50 weeks out of 52 throughout the men's working lives; also poor housing, poverty, hunger, sickness and inadequate health care. This migrant labour system is widely regarded as undesirable and condemned as anti-Christian.

SINCE 1966 A VIRTUAL FREEZE ON FAMILY HOUSING

Yet since 1966 virtually no family houses have been built for married Africans and there is an official waiting list of 1 400 African families in need of housing. Married men grown tired of waiting, and wives and children in the rural areas longing to live with their menfolk, and driven by sheer economic necessity, have overflowed into squatter areas in the Peninsula. But instead of trying to help these people, the authorities have bulldozed squatter camps and dispersed some 25 000 people in the past few months.