

the trantraal brothers

CROSSROADS



PART 4 OF
A SERIES

CROSSROADS

Witdoeke

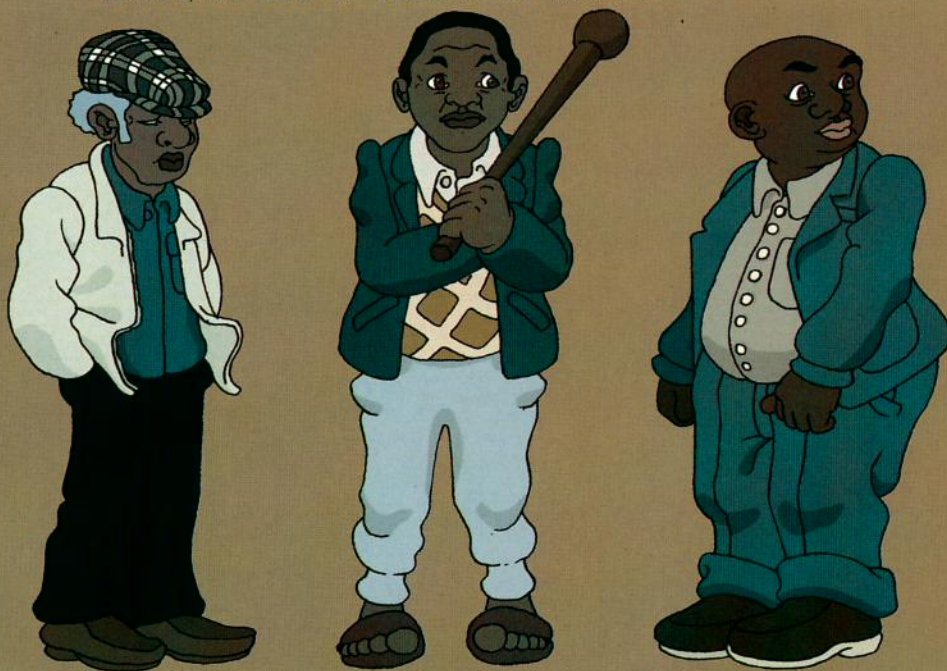


Koni Benson
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IN THE LATE 1970'S CROSSROADS WAS KNOWN AS 'A PLACE FULL OF TRANSKEI WOMEN.'



BY THE LATE 1980'S IT WAS BEING REFERRED TO AS ICALA LIKITATA, THE 'SIDE' OR 'PLACE OF THE FATHERS.'



THIS TRANSFORMATION WAS NOT INEVITABLE: IT WAS A DIRTY, MULTI-FACETED STRUGGLE. IT TOOK OVER A DECADE TO RECONFIGURE THE POLITICAL SPACE OF CROSSROADS FROM ONE SYMBOLIZED BY SQUATTER WOMEN'S MOBILIZATION INSPIRING INTERNATIONAL ANTI-APARTHEID RESISTANCE CAMPAIGNS TO ONE OF CORRUPT MILITARIZED CONTROL BY VIGILANTES ARMED AND EMPOWERED BY THE APARTHEID STATE.

THE 1979 NEW DEAL MARKED A TURNING POINT IN THE CROSSROADS STRUGGLE.

IT MARKED A WIN AND A LOSS BOTH AT THE TIME AND IN HINDSIGHT. CROSSROADS WOULD NOT BE BULLDOZED BUT WHO WOULD REMAIN A RESIDENT BECAME A BATTLE-FOUGHT OUT NOT DIRECTLY AGAINST THE STATE BUT WITHIN CROSSROADS ITSELF.

THE DEAL LAID OUT A RANGE OF CATEGORIES TO LIMIT WHO WOULD QUALIFY FOR HARD-EARNED AND DESPERATELY NEEDED LEGAL AND HOUSING RIGHTS IN THE CITY.

THERE WAS A VAGUE CATEGORY OF AFRICANS WHO WOULD BE OFFERED JOBS AND HOMES IN THE 'HOMELANDS.' 'THIS CONCERNED A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PARTICULAR CROSSROADS FAMILIES,' SAID THE FINAL AGREEMENT.

KOORNHOF MADE IT CLEAR HE WOULD NOT 'REHOUSE VAGRANTS AND PERSONS OR FAMILIES WITH NO VISIBLE MEANS OF SUPPORT WHICH RENDERED THEM A BURDEN TO THE COMMUNITY ITSELF.'

AS IT HAD AIMED TO THE TERMS OF THE 1979 KOORNHOF NEW DEAL RECONFIGURED THE STAGE OF STRUGGLE IN CROSSROADS POLITICS.

THE NEGOTIATIONS AND FINAL DEAL MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF WOMEN'S INFLUENCE IN CROSSROADS POLITICS.

LIKE LATER NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA, CORE PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE NEW DEAL STOOD IN OPPOSITION TO THE VISION CROSSROADS WOMEN HAD DRAMATIZED IN IMFUDUSO, THEIR POWERFUL THEATRICAL PRODUCTION ABOUT THEIR STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE IN CAPE TOWN. AS THE NEW DISPENSATION TOOK HOLD, WOMEN'S ORGANIZING WAS OVERTLY AND COVERTLY STAGNATED, TURNING IMFUDUSO INTO INSPIRATION FROM THE PAST.

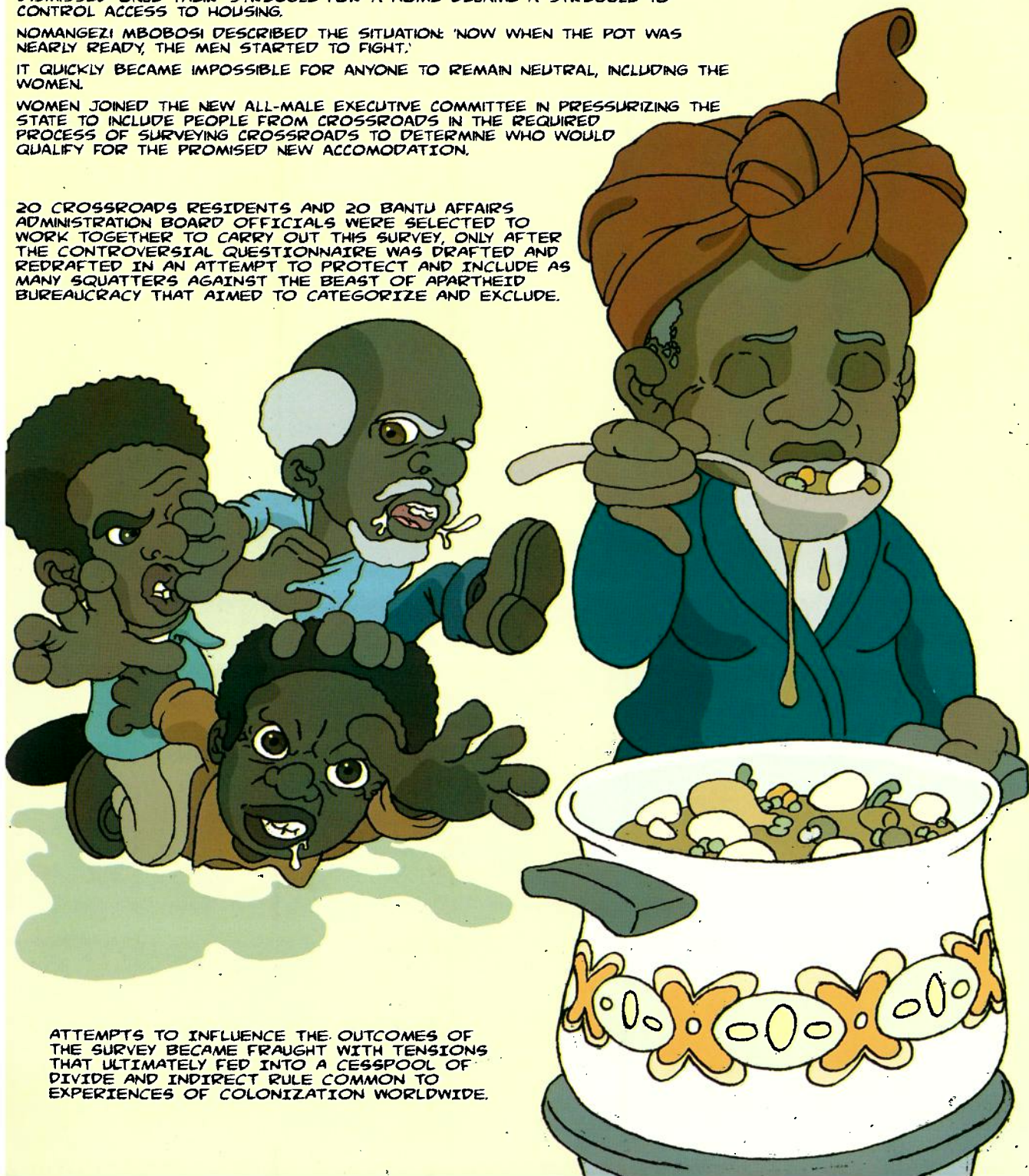
CROSSROADS WOMEN HAD BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED FOR THEIR WORK IN GETTING THE STATE TO THE NEGOTIATION TABLE, BUT WERE QUICKLY DISMISSED ONCE THEIR STRUGGLE FOR A HOME BECAME A STRUGGLE TO CONTROL ACCESS TO HOUSING.

NOMANGEZI MBOBOSI DESCRIBED THE SITUATION: 'NOW WHEN THE POT WAS NEARLY READY, THE MEN STARTED TO FIGHT.'

IT QUICKLY BECAME IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO REMAIN NEUTRAL, INCLUDING THE WOMEN.

WOMEN JOINED THE NEW ALL-MALE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN PRESSURIZING THE STATE TO INCLUDE PEOPLE FROM CROSSROADS IN THE REQUIRED PROCESS OF SURVEYING CROSSROADS TO DETERMINE WHO WOULD QUALIFY FOR THE PROMISED NEW ACCOMODATION.

20 CROSSROADS RESIDENTS AND 20 BANTU AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATION BOARD OFFICIALS WERE SELECTED TO WORK TOGETHER TO CARRY OUT THIS SURVEY, ONLY AFTER THE CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DRAFTED AND REDRAFTED IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROTECT AND INCLUDE AS MANY SQUATTERS AGAINST THE BEAST OF APARTHEID BUREAUCRACY THAT AIMED TO CATEGORIZE AND EXCLUDE.



ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOMES OF THE SURVEY BECAME FRAUGHT WITH TENSIONS THAT ULTIMATELY FED INTO A CESSPOOL OF DIVIDE AND INDIRECT RULE COMMON TO EXPERIENCES OF COLONIZATION WORLDWIDE.

ONCE BUILT, HOUSES IN NEW CROSSROADS STOOD EMPTY FOR MANY MONTHS.

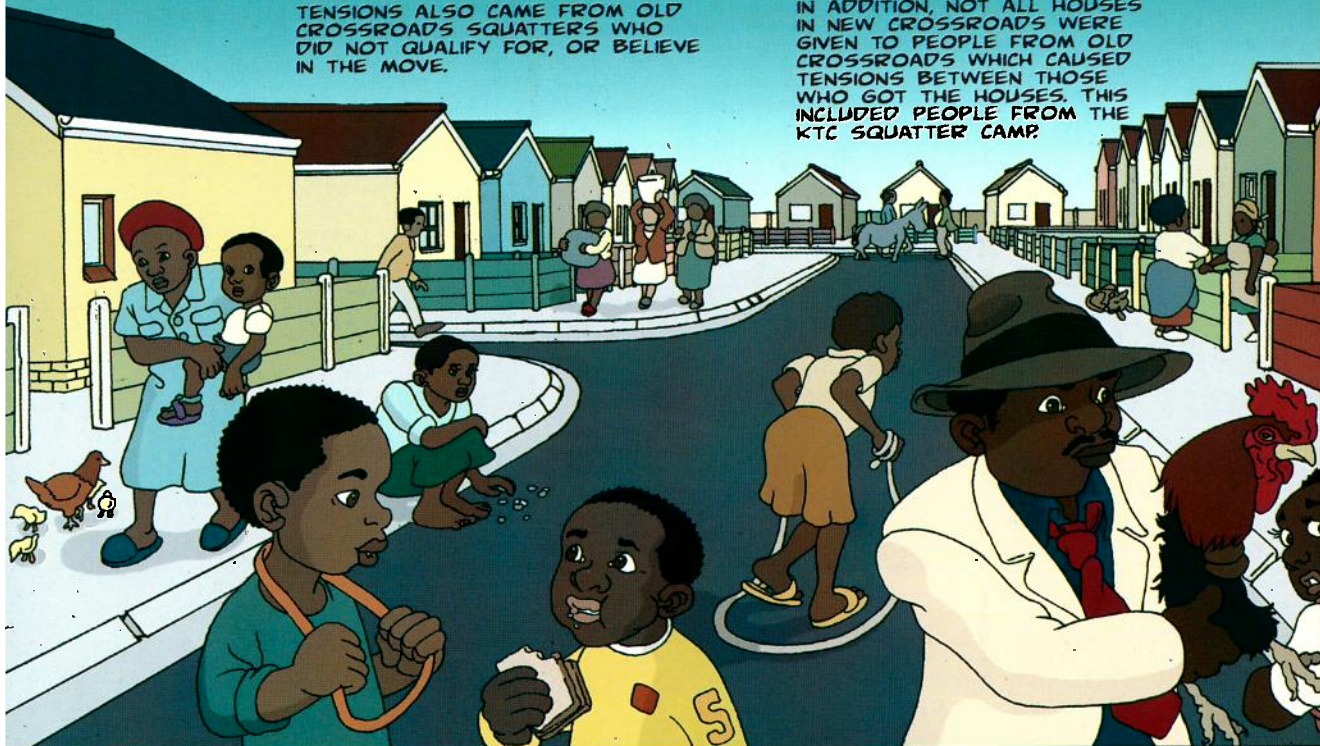
THERE WERE A NUMBER OF REASONS THAT PEOPLE WERE RELUCTANT TO MOVE: THE BREAKING OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AND COPING MECHANISMS; HIGHER RENTALS; AND INTIMIDATION BY SOME RESIDENTS IN THE SURROUNDING AREAS OF NYANGA AND GUGULETHU WHO ALSO NEEDED HOUSES AND FELT THAT SQUATTERS HAD UNDERMINED THE WAITING LISTS THAT TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS LIVING IN OVERCROWDED HOUSES AND BACKYARD SHACKS HAD BEEN ON FOR YEARS.



THE CROSSROADS 'LISTS' WERE EQUALLY DIVISIVE; ONLY PEOPLE LISTED ON THE 1976 AND 1980 SURVEYS AT CROSSROADS WERE ALLOWED TO MOVE TO NEW CROSSROADS, WHICH EXCLUDED FAMILY MEMBERS AND SUBLETTERS.

TENSIONS ALSO CAME FROM OLD CROSSROADS SQUATTERS WHO DID NOT QUALIFY FOR, OR BELIEVE IN THE MOVE.

IN ADDITION, NOT ALL HOUSES IN NEW CROSSROADS WERE GIVEN TO PEOPLE FROM OLD CROSSROADS WHICH CAUSED TENSIONS BETWEEN THOSE WHO GOT THE HOUSES. THIS INCLUDED PEOPLE FROM THE KTC SQUATTER CAMP.



MOVING TO NEW CROSSROADS WAS SEEN BY MANY IMFUDUSO WOMEN AS A MILESTONE IN DIVISION WHERE WOMEN'S ALLIANCES WERE SLOWLY SEVERED.

MAMA MAPISA:

ON OUR ARRIVAL HERE WE STOPPED PERFORMING THAT PLAY, BECAUSE NOW ALL OF US HAVE HOUSES.

THE LEGACY OF THE STRUGGLE IN OLD CROSSROADS FOR THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN THE CITY ENGENDERED A FIERCE DEFENSIVENESS OF THEIR NEW HOMES IN NEW CROSSROADS ESPECIALLY AMONG THE OLDER WOMEN WHO HAD SUFFERED REPEATED ENDORSEMENT OUT OF THE CITY AND HAD BEEN CONSTANTLY HARASSED BY THE AUTHORITIES.

MAMA LUKE REMAINED IN CROSSROADS. HER DAUGHTER, SIPOKAZI, EXPLAINED WHY:

MY MOM WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS LEFT IN CROSSROADS BY CHOICE.

THE WHOLE CAST OF IMFUDUSO WAS IN NEW CROSSROADS EXCEPT MY MOM. NGXOBONGWANA WAS IN CHARGE AND HE'D SAY IF YOU WANT TO GO TO NEW CROSSROADS YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO SO AND IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO SO.

THERE WERE A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT DID NOT WANT TO GO. SHE HAD HER OWN NETWORKS. I DON'T THINK SHE WANTED TO CUT THOSE TIES. ECONOMICALLY IT DID NOT MAKE SENSE.

New Crossroads

IN SPITE OF TENSIONS CAUSED BY THE MOVE THERE WAS AN ATTEMPT MADE BY MAMA NTONGANA TO LINK WOMEN FROM OLD AND NEW CROSSROADS, INITIATING NOMZAMO (SIXHOSA FOR SHE WHO STRUGGLES).

HOWEVER, THIS PROVED UNSUSTAINABLE.

Old Crossroads

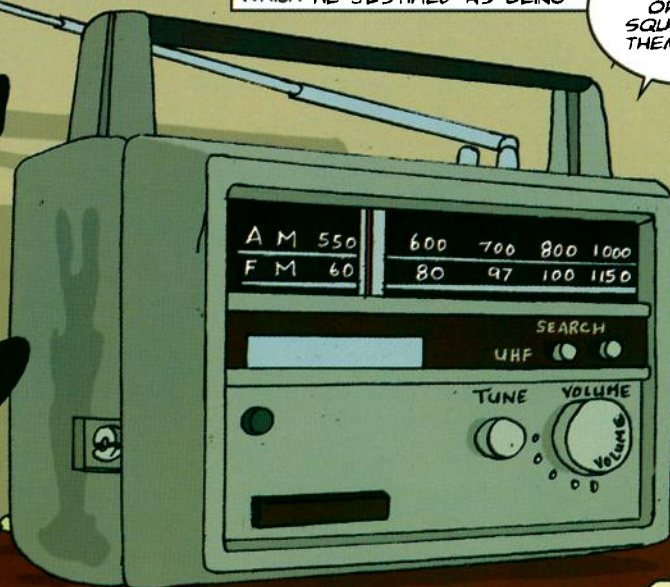
NOMANGEZI: 'WE TRIED BUT IT DID NOT EXIST BECAUSE THERE WERE TWO SIDES ALL THE TIME. WE NEVER DID EXACTLY WHAT WE DID IN CROSSROADS: TO BE ONE BODY. WE WERE DIVIDED IN NEW CROSSROADS. THE SEPERATION RULE OF THE BOERE WORKED OVER THERE.'

HOUSING HAD ALWAYS BEEN A MEANS OF SOCIAL CONTROL AND GOVERNMENT-SPURRED DIVISIONS WAS THE MOST COMMON REASON GIVEN TO EXPLAIN WHY ATTEMPTS TO REORGANIZE A WOMEN'S COMMITTEE IN NEW CROSSROADS FAILED.

WHILE WOMEN'S ORGANIZING WAS GRADUALLY POLITICALLY MARGINALIZED, THE MESSAGE OF IMFUDUSO CONTINUED TO INSPIRE MORE AND MORE DISPOSSESSED AND EXCLUDED PEOPLE TO COME AND SQUAT ON PIECES OF LAND SURROUNDING CROSSROADS.

KOORNHOF ADOPTED A BRUTAL ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY AFTER THE DEAL, WHICH HE JUSTIFIED AS BEING

...IN THE INTEREST OF THE SQUATTERS THEMSELVES.



THE NYANGA BUSH CAMP RECEIVED NATIONAL ATTENTION WHEN THE STATE TEARGASSED PROTESTERS OUTSIDE THE COURTHOUSE WHEN SQUATTERS WERE ARRESTED.

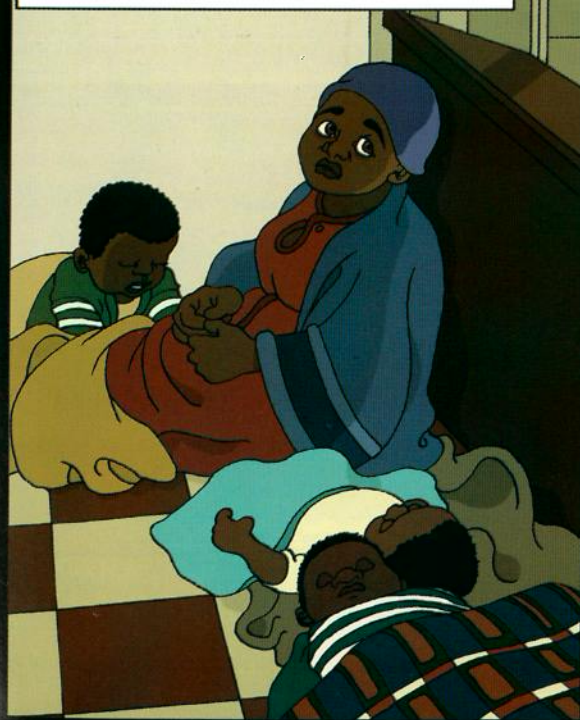
AS FAR AS THE STATE WAS CONCERNED, THE CROSSROADS DEAL HAD TO REMAIN UNIQUE. IF IT BECAME A PRECEDENT THEY WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THE END OF INFLUX CONTROL.

DEPORTATIONS BEGAN ANEW, CAUSING A MASSIVE OUTCRY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

IN MARCH 1982, 56 SQUATTERS FROM NYANGA BUSH WHO HAD TAKEN REFUGE AT ST. GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL IN THE CENTRE OF CAPE TOWN WENT ON HUNGER STRIKE. ONE WOMAN SUFFERED A MISCARRIAGE BUT CONTINUED TO FAST.

AFTER THREE DAYS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE SQUATTERS AND KOORNHOF, WITH THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AS ARBITRATOR, THE 24 DAY FAST ENDED WHEN THE GOVERNMENT AGREED TO DEAL 'COMPASSIONATELY' WITH 350 SQUATTERS.

THE STATE'S RESPONSE TO SQUATTING WAS INCREASING THE BAD PRESS THE CROSSROADS DEAL HAD TRIED TO REVERSE.



SOCIAL STRUGGLE PROLIFERATED IN THIS PERIOD AS THE STATE ATTEMPTED TO BACKTRACK ON THE PROMISES MADE.

IN OLD CROSSROADS DELAYS FOR PERMITS CONTINUED. RAIDS INTENSIFIED ROUNDING UP THOSE 'PROMISED' PERMITS AND HOUSES REGARDLESS OF THE ORIGINAL LISTS AND SURVEYS.

APARTHEID STATE REFORMS CREATED 'URBAN INSIDERS' AND 'RURAL OUTSIDERS'. THE GOAL WAS ECONOMIC CO-OPTION OF THE URBAN INSIDER, WHOSE POSITION WAS IMPROVED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OUTSIDER.

URBAN INSIDERS, WHO WERE GIVEN THE STATUS OF 'LEGALS', WERE GIVEN MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY.

RURAL OUTSIDERS, OR 'ILLEGALS', WERE TREATED AS FOREIGNERS FROM THE BANTUSTANS AND FACED STRICTER LAWS GOVERNING THEIR URBAN PRESENCE AS TEMPORARY CONTRACT AND SURPLUS LABOUR.

THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR QUALIFYING URBAN BLACK PEOPLE IMPROVED DRAMATICALLY.

HOWEVER, THEY AND THEIR DEPENDENTS CONSTITUTED ONLY ABOUT ONE AND A HALF MILLION PEOPLE, AS COMPARED TO THE TOTAL BLACK POPULATION OF TWENTY MILLION FOR SOUTH AFRICA AS A WHOLE.

LIFE FOR OUTSIDERS, AS THE EXAMPLE OF NYANGA BUSH DEMONSTRATED, WOULD BE MADE INFINITELY WORSE.



IN CROSSROADS NGXOBONGWANA INVERTED THE INSIDER-OUTSIDER DIVIDE BY REDEFINING AN INSIDER AS SOMEONE WITH A RIGHT TO CONCESSIONS MADE TO CROSSROADS AS A PLACE FOR THOSE WITHOUT SECTION 10 RIGHTS.

THUS AS REMOVALS OF SQUATTERS BY THE STATE CONTINUED A SECOND KIND OF REMOVAL BEGAN-THOSE CARRIED OUT BY THE NEW CROSSROADS LEADERSHIP.

THIS INTERNAL RECONFIGURATION OF MALE-DOMINATED POLITICAL POWER STRUGGLES SUFFOCATED IMFUDUSO WOMEN'S MESSAGE AND PREVIOUS ABILITY TO MAKE AND DEFEND CROSSROADS AS A PLACE FOR DISPLACED WOMEN.

AS CROSSROADS GREW, THE COMPETITIVE STAKES FOR CONTROLLING PEOPLE AND TERRITORY INCREASED. BY THE END OF 1979 ANY INTERNAL OPPOSITION TO THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED ALL-MALE EXECUTIVE THAT CONTROLLED ALL ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LIFE FROM EDUCATION TO THE YOUTH TO THE CRECHES, WAS QUICKLY CRUSHED.



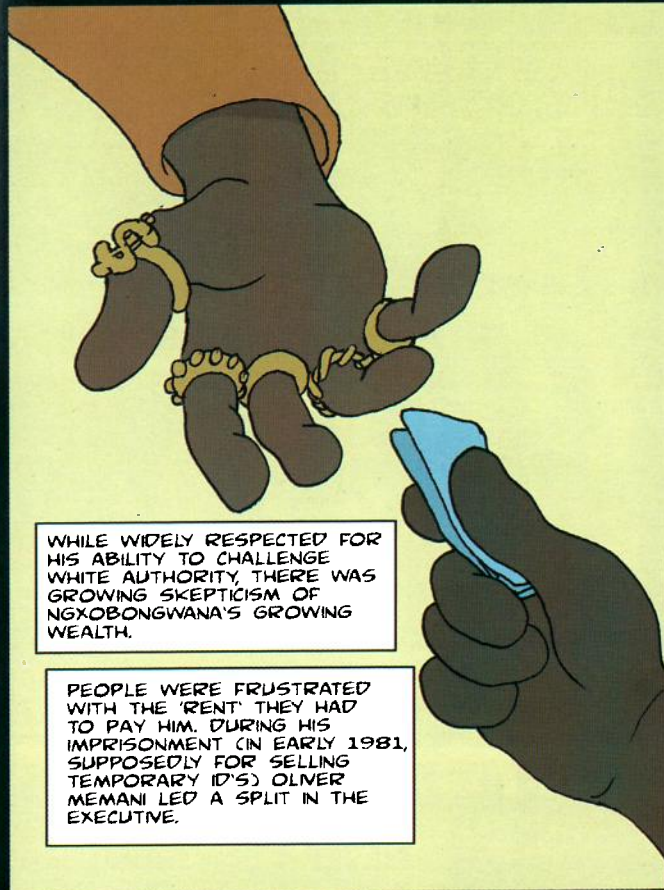
THE HOMEGUARDS, A SELF-STYLED SEMI-MILITARY POLICE UNIT WITHIN CROSSROADS WAS UNDER THE CONTROL OF A MR. SAM NDIMA.

FOLLOWING THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS, HEADMEN WHO RULED AT A LOCAL LEVEL WERE NECESSARY ALLIES FOR EFFECTING POLITICAL CONTROL, AS WELL AS ACCUMULATING CAPITAL.

NGXOBONGWANA HAD THE ABILITY TO STRADDLE BOTH GROUPS AND BECOME THE SYMBOL OF A CHIEF.

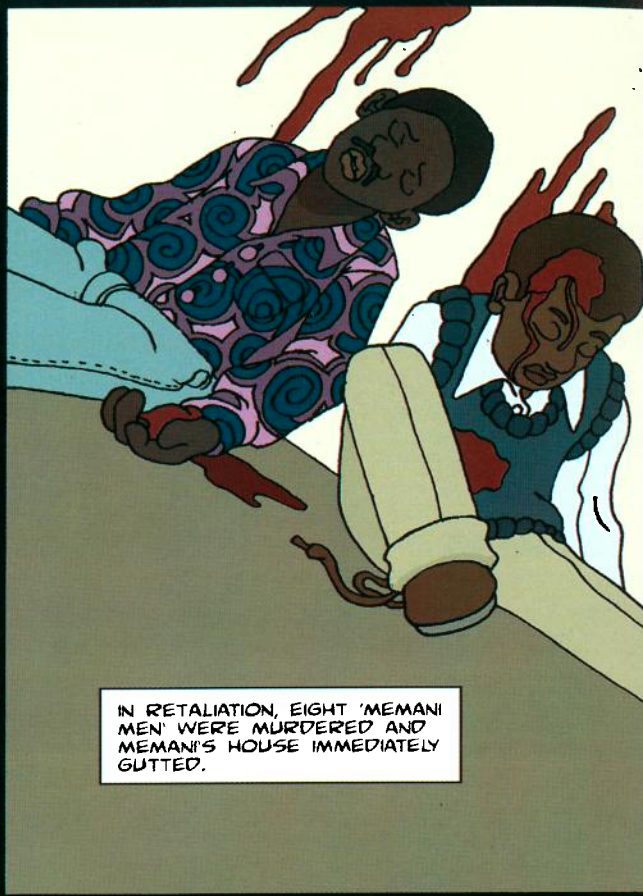
THOUSANDS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE STREAMING INTO THE AREA DURING THE LATTER HALF OF 1984 FOUND THEMSELVES UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF ABOUT 15 LEADERS.

FROM 1980 ONWARDS PATRONAGE AND PATRIARCHY WERE MIXED INTO BATTLE AGAINST THE STATE.



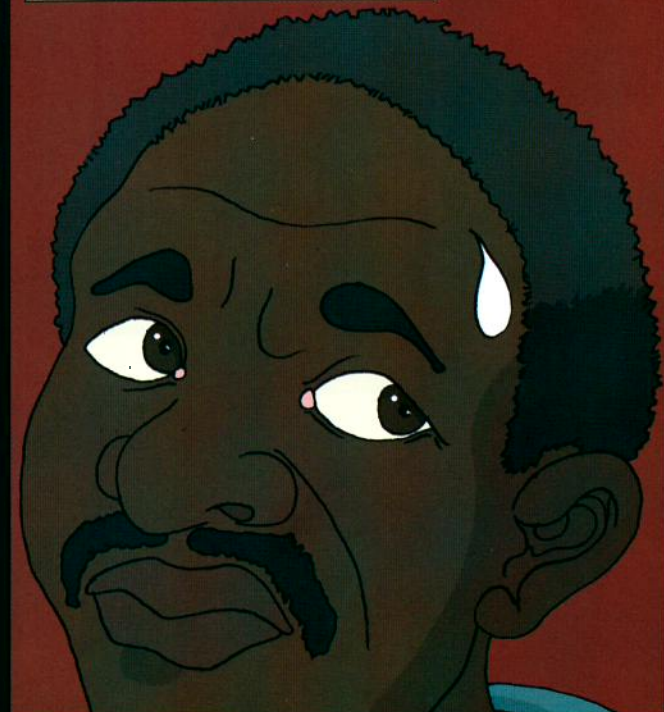
WHILE WIDELY RESPECTED FOR HIS ABILITY TO CHALLENGE WHITE AUTHORITY, THERE WAS GROWING SKEPTICISM OF NGXOBONGWANA'S GROWING WEALTH.

PEOPLE WERE FRUSTRATED WITH THE 'RENT' THEY HAD TO PAY HIM. DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT (IN EARLY 1981, SUPPOSEDLY FOR SELLING TEMPORARY ID'S) OLIVER MEMANI LED A SPLIT IN THE EXECUTIVE.



IN RETALIATION, EIGHT 'MEMANI MEN' WERE MURDERED AND MEMANI'S HOUSE IMMEDIATELY GUTTED.

MEMANI FLED TO KTC WHICH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY SURROUNDED BY NGXOBONGWANA'S 'ARMY': MEN WIELDING PANGAS AND IRON BARS LOOKING FOR MEMANI SUPPORTERS AND WEARING WHITE HEADBANDS TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES.



THE WHITE SCARVES BECAME KNOWN AS 'WITDOEKE'. THE HEAD-CLOTHS HAD INITIALLY BEEN WORN BY OLDER MIGRANTS DURING CONFLICT IN THE LANGA HOSTELS IN THE PAST AND WOULD COME TO REPRESENT 'OLDER MEN' WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND AS OPPOSED TO YOUTH OR CAPE-BORNERS.

WITDOEKE WOULD BE USED AS PRO-NGXOBONGWANA, PRO-CONTROL OF CROSSROADS BY CONSERVATIVE 'XHOSA-TRADITIONAL' MEN AND PRO-PEOPLE WITHOUT RIGHTS. IMPORTANTLY, THEY REPRESENTED PEOPLE WHO FELT THREATENED BY NEWCOMERS.

BY THE END OF 1983, NGXOBONGWANA AND HIS ALLIES HAD COMPLETE CONTROL OVER BOTH OLD AND NEW CROSSROADS.

THIS CONTROL WAS BUILT ON A COMBINATION OF COERCION, CONSENT AND RELATIVE LEGITIMACY.



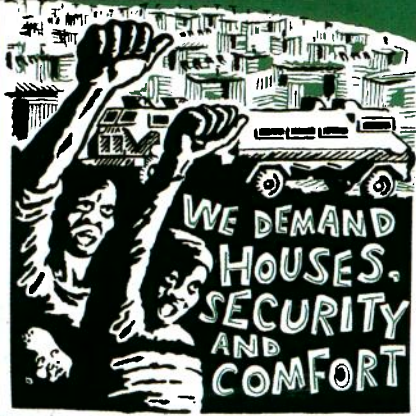
IN 1983, KOORNHOF ANNOUNCED THAT FUTURE PHASES OF CROSSROADS WOULD NOT HAPPEN.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT MET WITH SHARP CRITICISM FROM THE NEWLY FORMED UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT (UDF), THE FIRST LEGAL AND NATIONAL MASS POLITICAL ORGANIZATION SINCE THE 1950'S.

UDF

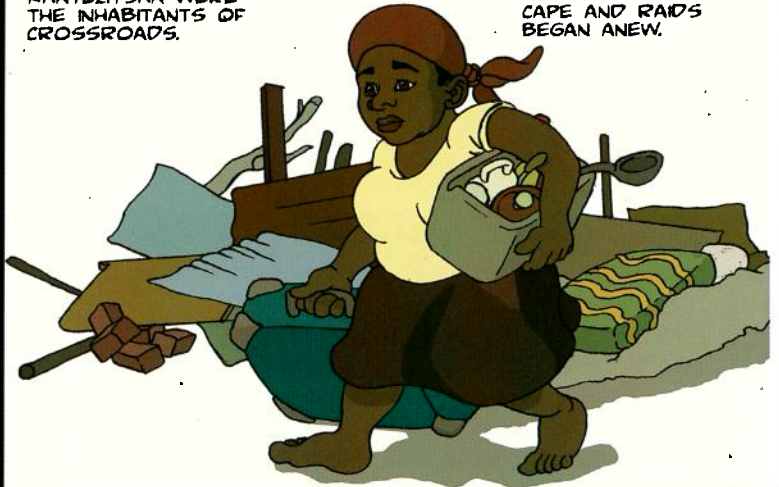
THE UDF LAUNCHED A DEFIANCE CAMPAIGN: 'ASIYI EKHAELITSHA' (WE ARE NOT GOING TO KHAYELITSHA).

LITSHA



THE FIRST PEOPLE SCHEDULED TO BE MOVED TO KHAYELITSHA WERE THE INHABITANTS OF CROSSROADS.

SQUATTERS IN CROSSROADS WERE NOW AS VULNERABLE AS ANY IN THE CAPE AND RAIDS BEGAN ANEW.



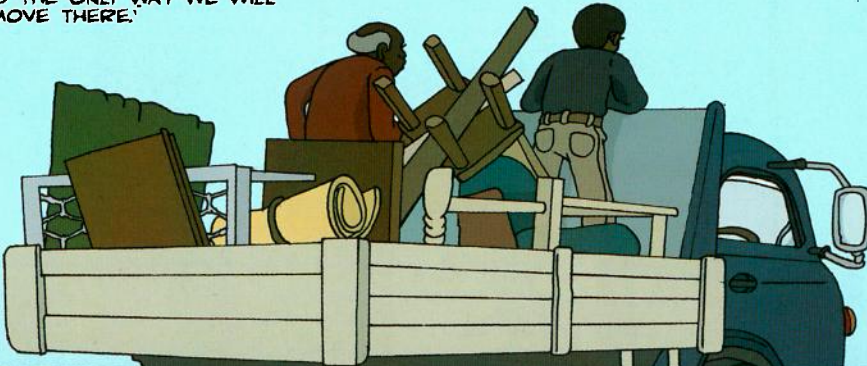
THE CROSSROADS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE INFORMED THE PRESS THAT THE PROponents OF A MOVE TO KHAYELITSHA 'WILL HAVE TO KILL US FIRST AND THEN MOVE OUR BODIES TO KHAYELITSHA, BECAUSE THAT IS THE ONLY WAY WE WILL MOVE THERE.'

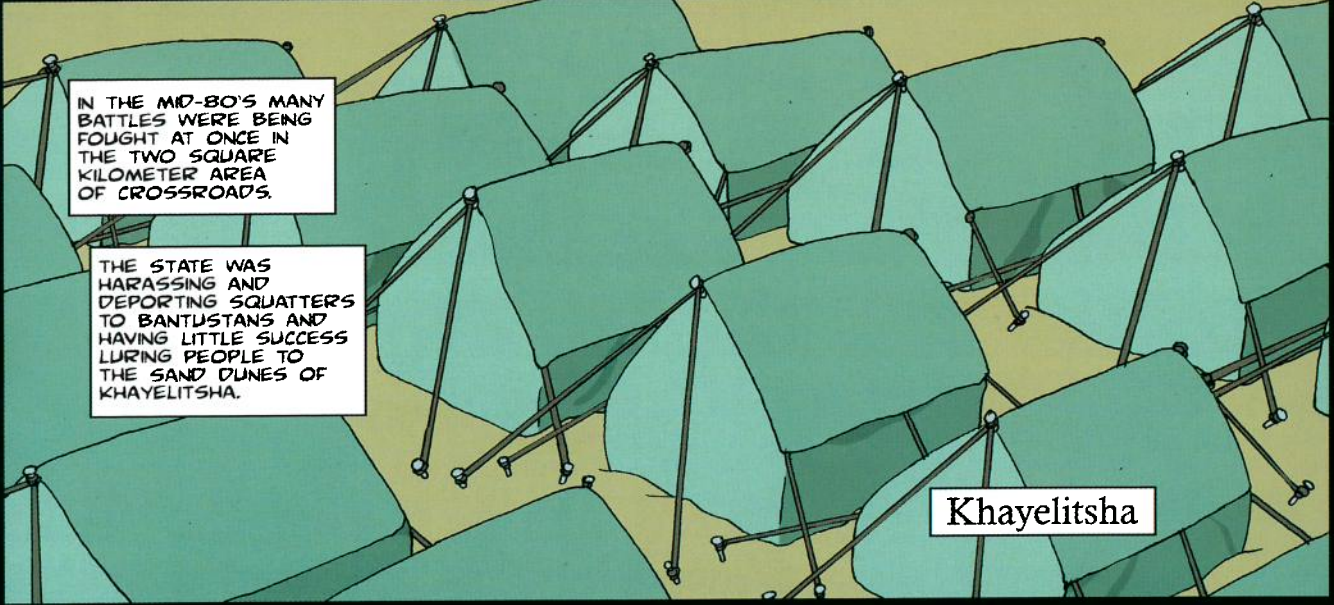
AVERAGES OF 48 HOMES A DAY WERE DEMOLISHED IN THE CROSSROADS COMPLEX AT THIS TIME.

THE MAJORITY REFUSED TO LEAVE AND CROSSROADS CONTINUED TO GROW. NGXOBONGWANA LED THIS RESISTANCE.

THE SUPPORT OF BOTH THE UDF AND THE WESTERN CAPE CIVIC ORGANIZATION INCREASED NGXOBONGWANA'S SENSE OF POWER AND LEGITIMACY AND CREATED A CONFLICT WITHIN A CONFLICT: AS THE UDF INTENSIFIED ITS ANTI-REMOVAL CAMPAIGN, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE LEFT OLD CROSSROADS IN AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE THE INCREASING REPRESSION WITHIN THEIR OWN COMMUNITY.

NGXOBONGWANA'S DOMINATION CREATED SUSPICION AND LOSS OF CREDIBILITY RATHER THAN THE SOLIDARITY NEEDED TO SUCCESSFULLY FIGHT FOR THE CITY.





IN THE MID-80'S MANY BATTLES WERE BEING FOUGHT AT ONCE IN THE TWO SQUARE KILOMETER AREA OF CROSSROADS.

THE STATE WAS HARASSING AND DEPORTING SQUATTERS TO BANTUSTANS AND HAVING LITTLE SUCCESS LURING PEOPLE TO THE SAND DUNES OF KHAYELITSHA.

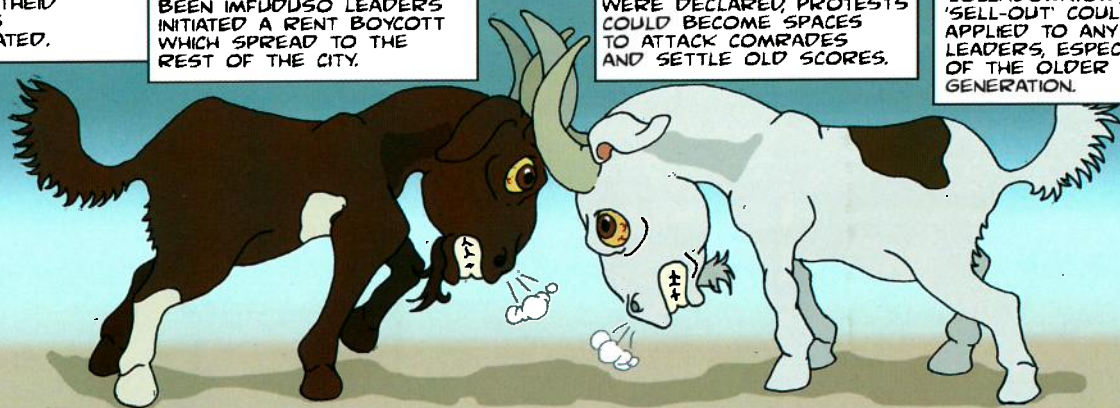
Khayelitsha

MALE LEADERSHIP STRUGGLES CONTINUED. ANTI-APARTHEID PROTESTS PROLIFERATED.

IN NEW CROSSROADS AT THIS TIME WOMEN WHO HAD BEEN IMFUDISO LEADERS INITIATED A RENT BOYCOTT WHICH SPREAD TO THE REST OF THE CITY.

AS UNREST MOUNTED AND STATES OF EMERGENCY WERE DECLARED, PROTESTS COULD BECOME SPACES TO ATTACK COMRADES AND SETTLE OLD SCORES.

IN THIS CONTENTIOUS CLIMATE THE LABEL 'COLLABORATOR', OR 'SELL-OUT' COULD BE APPLIED TO ANY LEADERS, ESPECIALLY OF THE OLDER GENERATION.

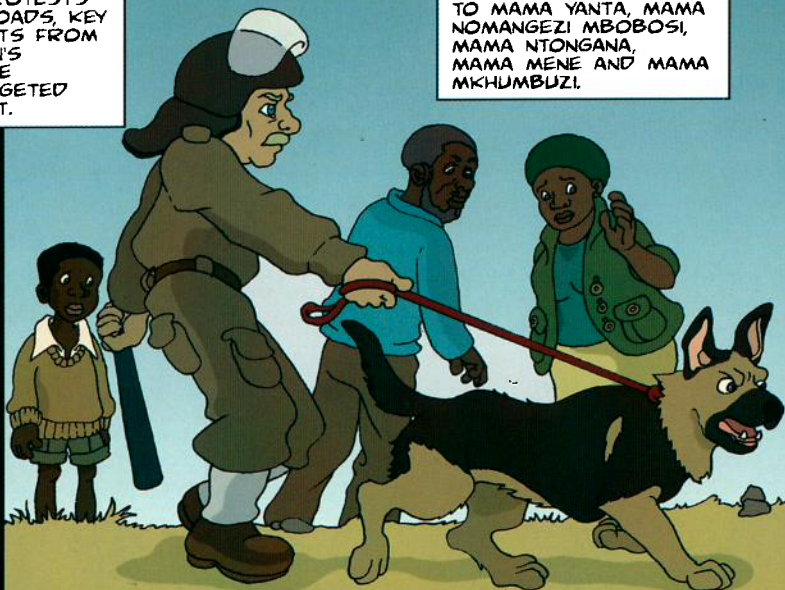


IN THE MIDST OF ONE OF THE RENT PROTESTS IN NEW CROSSROADS, KEY VETERAN ACTIVISTS FROM THE OLD WOMEN'S COMMITTEE WERE INDIVIDUALLY TARGETED AND CHASED OUT.

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED TO MAMA YANTA, MAMA NOMANGEZI MBOBOSI, MAMA NTONGANA, MAMA MENE AND MAMA MKHUMBULI.




AWAY WITH
RENTALS!
ASINNAMALI!





FROM KHAYELITSHA TODAY
MAMA YANTA RECALLS
BEING CHASED OUT WITH
BITTERNESS AND ANGER:

'THERE WAS
TURMOIL IN
CROSSROADS
AND THAT WAS
THE REASON
I LEFT IT.'



THERE WERE
PEOPLE FROM NEW
CROSSROADS WHO
ASSOCIATED ME WITH
THOSE LEADERS
FROM OLD
CROSSROADS
DAYS.

THEY BEAT
ME AND SET
MY HOUSE
ON FIRE.

I AM STILL
HARBOURING A GRUDGE
BECAUSE THEY NEVER
TOLD ME WHY THEY ARE
BEATING ME. I JUST SAW A
GROUP OF PEOPLE CARRYING
DEADLY WEAPONS AND SING-
ING SONGS WHICH SAID
THAT THEY ARE COMING
TO BEAT ME.

I HAD A
FIVE-BEDROOM
HOUSE IN NEW CROSS-
ROADS; I STILL WANT TO KNOW
THAT SINCE I WAS A LEADER WHO
FOUGHT FOR PEOPLE'S RIGHTS,
WHAT LED ME TO END UP IN
THIS ONE-ROOM HOUSE IN
KHAYELITSHA?



NOMANGEZI
MBOBOSI:

I MOVED TO NEW
CROSSROADS IN
1981. I STAYED
THERE UNTIL 1984.

OUR HOUSES
BURNT DOWN
IN 1984 AND THEN
I CAME TO
KHAYELITSHA...
I WAS FORCED TO
COME HERE.

ALTHOUGH THE ATTACKS HAPPENED IN AN AURA OF CONFUSION, MANY ARGUE THAT WOMEN WERE EXPELLED BECAUSE OF THEIR PREVIOUS LEADERSHIP ROLES.

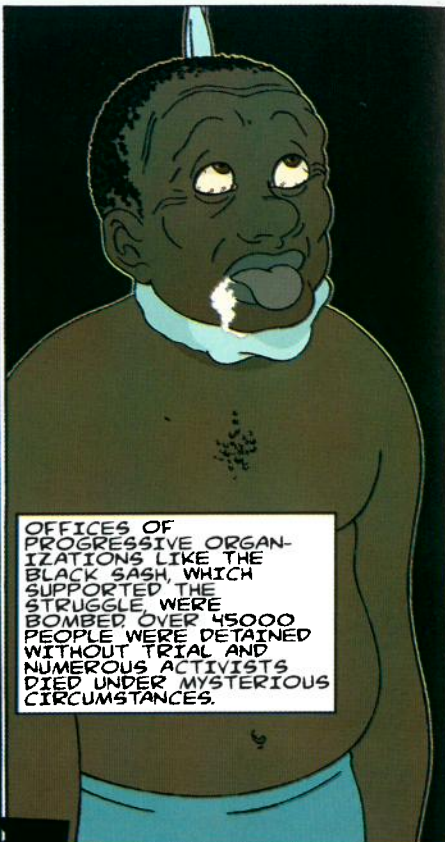
THIS SEEMED TO BE A PREVENTATIVE OR SYMBOLIC MOVE ON THE PART OF NEW LEADERSHIP COMPETITION IN CROSSROADS, BECAUSE THESE WOMEN HAD ALREADY BEEN PUSHED OUT OF ANY POSITIONS WITH CLOUT BY THIS TIME.

MAMA NTONGANA WAS QUOTED IN A NEWSPAPER AT THE TIME SAYING: 'I'M SORRY TO BE SAYING IT BUT I'M NEVER GOING BACK.'

MAMA YANTA STILL STAYS AWAY:

GOING TO CROSSROADS WILL JUST INFLICT MORE WOUNDS. MY BEST FRIENDS WERE SCARED TO ASSOCIATE WITH ME BECAUSE THEY FEARED FOR THEIR LIVES

THEY DID NOT EVEN WANT TO BE SEEN TALKING TO ME. I WAS A LONER BECAUSE THEY WERE AFRAID THEIR HOUSES WERE GOING TO BE BURNT TOO.

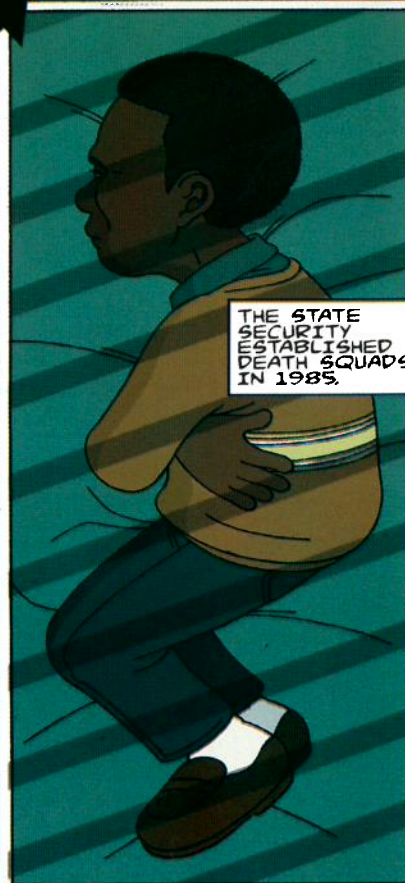


OFFICES OF PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE BLACK SASH, WHICH SUPPORTED THE STRUGGLE, WERE BOMBED. OVER 45000 PEOPLE WERE DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL AND NUMEROUS ACTIVISTS DIED UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

THIS WAS A VALID FEAR. THE DECLINE OF APARTHEID FROM THE LATE 1970'S TO THE 1990'S WAS MARKED BY VIOLENT CONFLICT AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OVERWHELMING IN MAGNITUDE.

BY MID-1980 VIRTUAL CIVIL WAR EXISTED IN MANY PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE ARMY OCCUPIED MANY TOWNSHIPS.

IN ATTEMPTS TO REESTABLISH 'LAW AND ORDER' FROM 1984 TO 1988 35000 SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSE FORCE (SADF) TROOPS WERE DEPLOYED IN THE TOWNSHIPS



THE STATE SECURITY ESTABLISHED DEATH SQUADS IN 1985.



WHAT BECAME DETRIMENTAL TO PEOPLE IN CROSSROADS WERE THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY GUERRILLA WARFARE TACTICS DEVELOPED IN ALGERIA AND MODIFIED IN VIETNAM AND COLOMBIA THAT HAD BEEN ADOPTED BY THE APARTHEID STATE TO IMPOSE ITS VISION OF REFORM.

THE AIM OF THESE TACTICS WAS TO RIP APART THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF REBELLIOUS COMMUNITIES DEEMED 'BLACK SPOTS' BY THE APARTHEID GOVERNMENT.

MCCUEN'S LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT THEORY KNOWN AS L.I.C. HAD BEEN PRESCRIBED IN A 75-PAGE DOCUMENT ENTITLED 'THE ART OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE' AND DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE MANAGEMENT SECURITY SYSTEM.

The Art of Counter-revolutionary Warfare



Col. J.J. McCuen

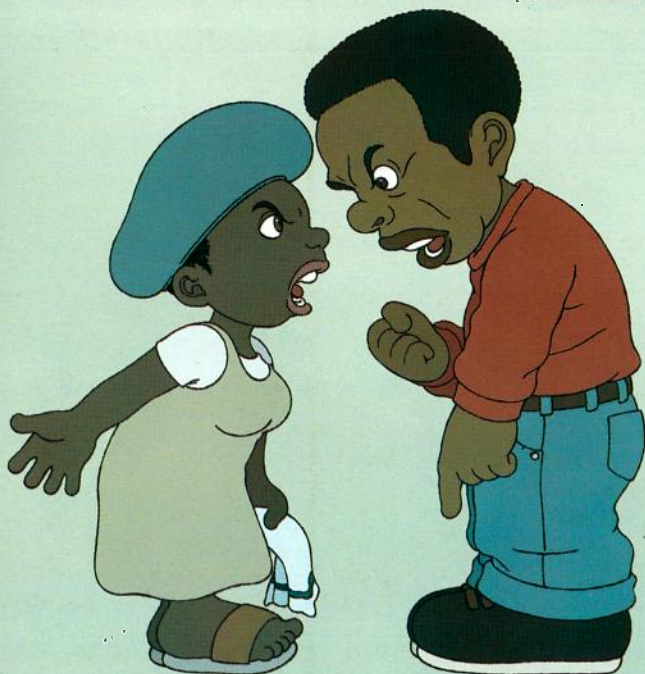
COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE STRATEGY AT THE TIME ASSERTED:

A GOVERNING POWER CAN DEFEAT ANY REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IF IT ADOPTS THE REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY AND PRINCIPLES AND APPLIES THEM IN REVERSE. THE PURPOSE IS TO DEFEAT THE REVOLUTIONARIES WITH THEIR OWN WEAPONS IN THEIR OWN BATTLEFIELDS.

L.I.C. PURPOSEFULLY 'PENETRATES INTO HOMES, FAMILIES, THE ENTIRE FABRIC OF GRASSROOTS SOCIAL RELATIONS.'

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS WERE ESPECIALLY TARGETED.

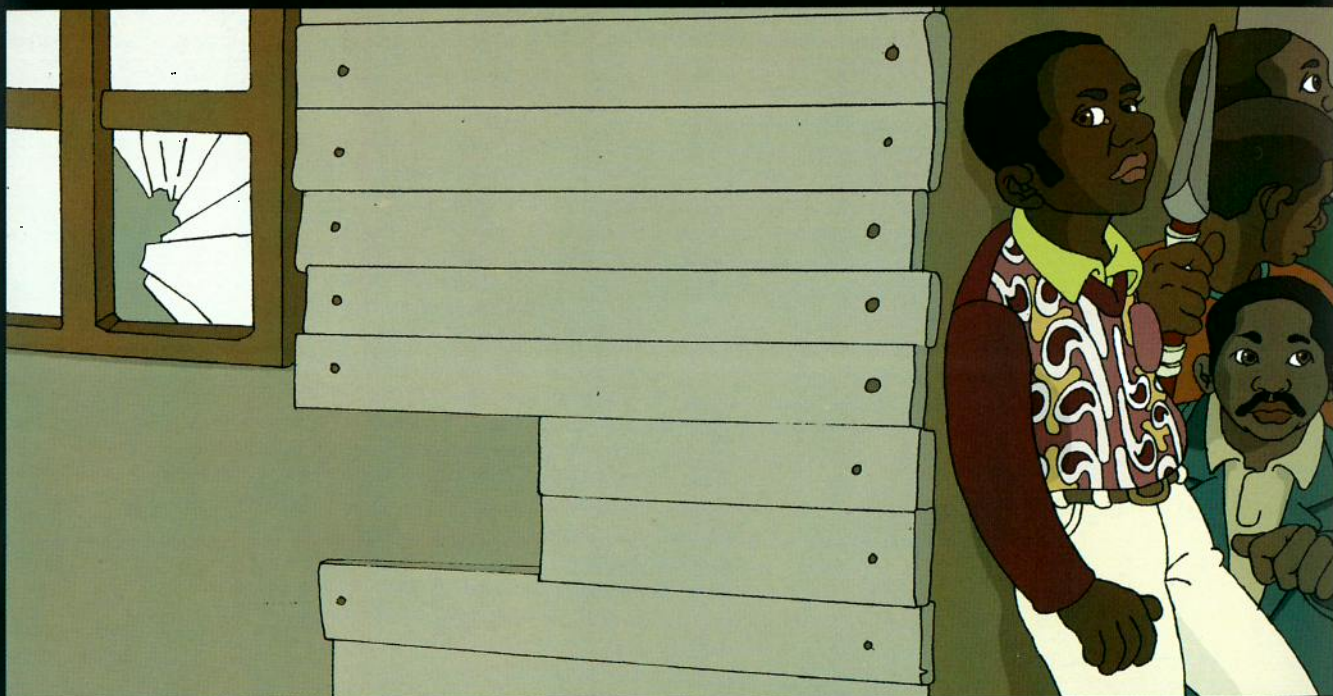
IN L.I.C. THERE ARE NO 'CIVILIANS'...IT IS A SCIENCE OF WARFARE WHOSE GOAL OF CONTROLLING THE QUALITATIVE ASPECTS OF HUMAN LIFE MERITS THE TERM 'TOTALITARIAN'.



THE STATE WANTED TO LOWER THE DENSITY OF CROSSROADS AND INCREASE ITS ACCESS TO THE AREA IN ORDER TO CRUSH PROGRESSIVE AND YOUTH ORGANIZING. AT THIS TIME GREATER CROSSROADS, ESPECIALLY KTC, WAS SEEN AS A HUB FOR UMKHONTO WE SIZWE, THE UNDERGROUND ANC MILITARY UNITS KNOWN AS MK COMRADES. SECURITY FORCES IN THE STATE WERE LOOKING FOR CRACKS TO EXPLOIT.



AS THE MOST POWERFUL OF THE LEADERS, NGXOBONGWANA WAS SAID TO HAVE HAD CONTROL OVER 100, 000 PEOPLE OUT OF AN ESTIMATED POPULATION OF 150, 000 PEOPLE IN CROSSROADS. HOZA, YAMILE AND TUTU WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE OTHER LEADERS WHO WERE SAID TO HAVE BETWEEN 40, 000 AND 50, 000 SUPPORTERS BETWEEN THEM. IT WAS IN THE TERRITORIES OF THESE SMALL LEADERS WHERE THE PROGRESSIVES RECRUITED.



ELESE DEPOUTCH, APPOINTED CROSSROADS WARD COUNCILLOR IN 1996, RECALLS THAT NGXOBONGWANA BANNED THE CAPE YOUTH CONGRESS PERMANENTLY FROM CROSSROADS AND MOST YOUTH FLED TO THE SATELLITE CAMPS OF PORTLAND CEMENT, NYANGA BUSH AND NYANGA EXTENSION. THESE NEIGHBOURING CAMPS, HE SAID, WERE CONTROLLED BY THREE FORMER HEADMEN WHO HAD REVOLTED AGAINST NGXOBONGWANA'S AUTOCRATIC RULE:

'NGXOBONGWANA THREATENED TO ATTACK THESE CAMPS IF THEY CONTINUED HARBOURING AMAQABANE (COMRADES).'

'HE VOWED TO DEFEND HIS ROLE AS MAYOR OF CROSSROADS AND GET RID OF THE AMAQABANE.'

THE EMERGENCE OF VIGILANTES TO PROTECT BLACK TOWNSHIP COUNCILLORS AT THIS TIME WAS NOT UNIQUE TO CROSSROADS.

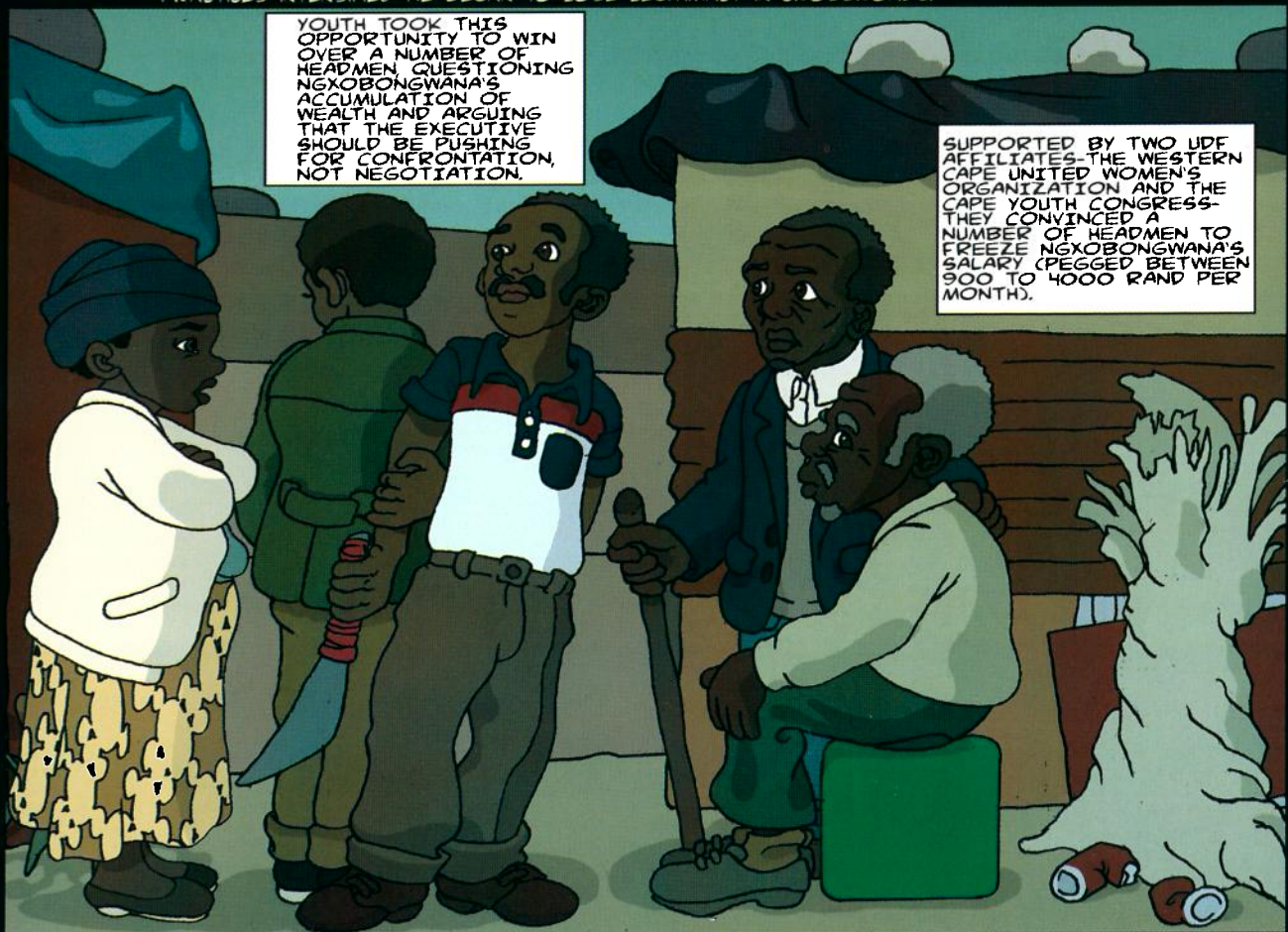
THE STATE'S ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE ENTIRE SURVIVING CROSSROADS COMMUNITY TO KHAYELITSHA COINCIDED WITH THE DETENTION OF NGXOBONGWANA, FROM JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1985.

LIKE THE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP THE YOUTH TAKING TO THE STREETS OR GOING UNDERGROUND TO JOIN THE ANC WAS SEEN AS A THREAT TO NGXOBONGWANA.

THE GROWING POLARIZATION OF US AND THEM MEANT THAT NGXOBONGWANA'S ENEMIES WERE ASSUMED TO BE COMRADES AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT AFFILIATES.



NGXOBONGWANA WAS VULNERABLE AT THIS TIME. HIS SUPPORT WAS D'WINDLING. HE HAD BEEN INCARCERATED FOR AN OLD CHARGE RELATED TO THE SELLING OF IDENTITY CARDS AND CORRUPTION OF HOUSING LISTS THAT DATED BACK TO THE DAYS OF THE 1979 SURVEY, AS HIS AUTOCRATIC AND EXCLUSIONARY PRACTICES INTENSIFIED HE BEGAN TO LOSE LEGITIMACY IN CROSSROADS.

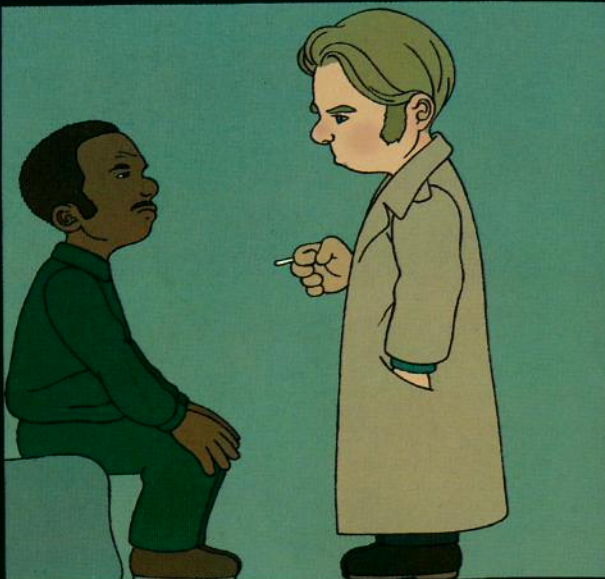


YOUTH TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WIN OVER A NUMBER OF HEADMEN, QUESTIONING NGXOBONGWANA'S ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH AND ARGUING THAT THE EXECUTIVE SHOULD BE PUSHING FOR CONFRONTATION, NOT NEGOTIATION.

SUPPORTED BY TWO UDF AFFILIATES-THE WESTERN CAPE UNITED WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION AND THE CAPE YOUTH CONGRESS- THEY CONVINCED A NUMBER OF HEADMEN TO FREEZE NGXOBONGWANA'S SALARY (PEGGED BETWEEN 900 TO 4000 RAND PER MONTH).



IT WAS DURING THIS TIME IN POLLSMOOR THAT THE STORY OF NGXOBONGWANA TAKES A DRAMATIC TURN, FROM HIS POSITIONING AS COMMUNITY LEADER TO ALIGNING HIMSELF WITH THE BLACK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF APARTHEID LOCAL GOVERNMENT.



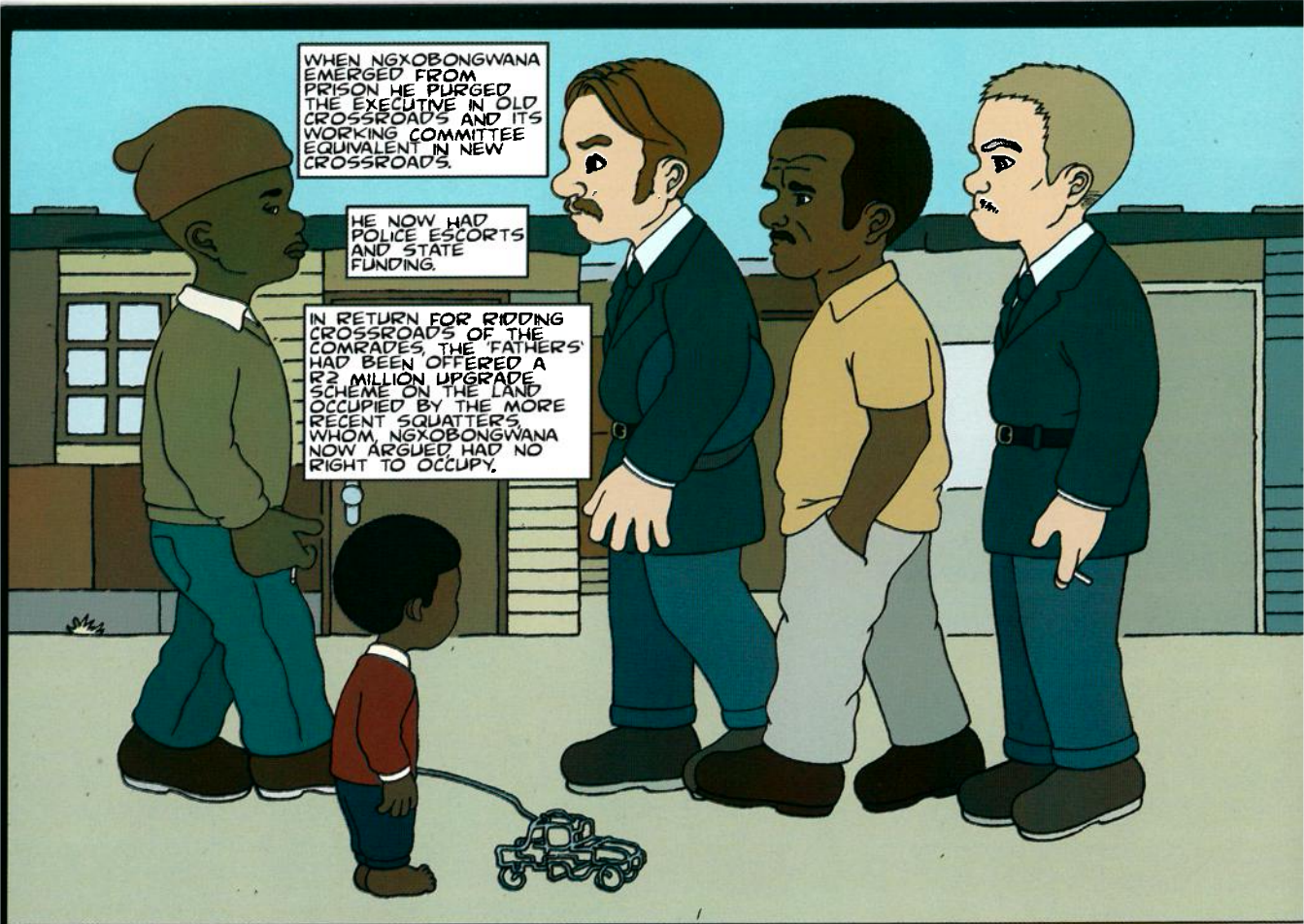
DURING HIS INCARCERATION NGXOBONGWANA WAS VISITED BY THE AUTHORITIES WHO USED SQUATTERS' THREAT TO HIS POWER AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECRUIT HIM AND HIS HEADMEN TO CRUSH PROGRESSIVE FORCES WHO WERE SUCCEEDING IN MAKING THE TOWNSHIPS UNGOVERNABLE.



THEY COULD CONCEIVABLY HAVE OFFERED HIM THE OPTION OF COOPERATION OR KHAYELITSHA.

THEY STRESSED THAT HE WAS ON THE VERGE OF BEING OVER-RUN BY NEW YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND BY HIS HEADMEN RIVALS.

NGXOBONGWANA SWITCHED LAWYERS, BROKE WITH THE UDF AND ONLY GRANTED CERTAIN HEADMEN VISITATION RIGHTS.



WHEN NGXOBONGWANA EMERGED FROM PRISON HE PURGED THE EXECUTIVE IN OLD CROSSROADS AND ITS WORKING COMMITTEE EQUIVALENT IN NEW CROSSROADS.

HE NOW HAD POLICE ESCORTS AND STATE FUNDING.

IN RETURN FOR RIDING CROSSROADS OF THE COMRADES, THE 'FATHERS' HAD BEEN OFFERED A R2 MILLION UPGRADE SCHEME ON THE LAND OCCUPIED BY THE MORE RECENT SQUATTERS, WHOM NGXOBONGWANA NOW ARGUED HAD NO RIGHT TO OCCUPY.



MAMA STUURMAN:

NGXOBONGWANA WAS USING THE POLICE TO DO HIS DIRTY WORK

WHENEVER WE GO DOWN TO THE POLICE STATION TO OPEN A CASE, IF IT'S A NGXOBONGWANA ISSUE, THEY WON'T OPEN A CASE. WE WERE THE ONES OPPOSING NGXOBONGWANA SO WE GOT BEAT.

INTIMIDATION AND FEAR WERE MOUNTING AND WHEN NGXOBONGWANA ORGANIZED A VOTE TO CONTROL THE UPGRADE, HE FOUND NO WILLING OPPOSITION, BUT HIS OWN POSITION WAS FAR FROM SECURE.

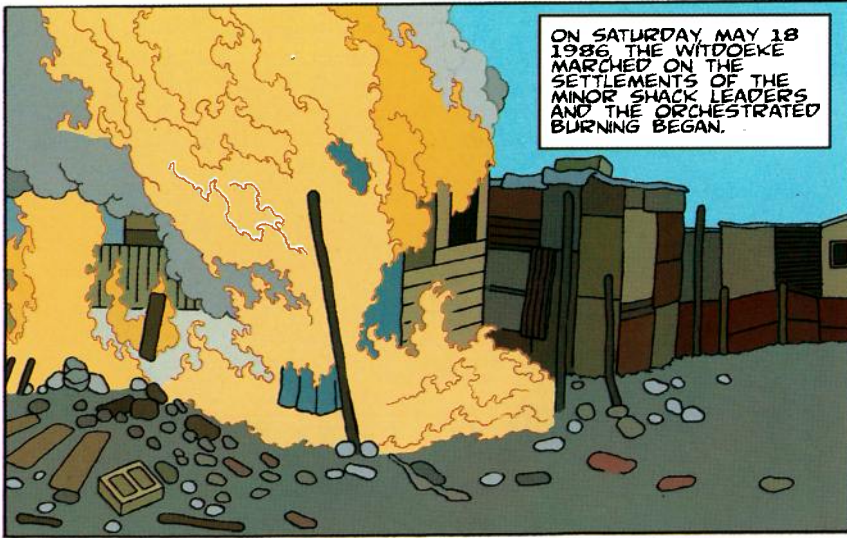


WHAT FOLLOWED WAS A WELL-DOCUMENTED THIRTY DAY WAR BETWEEN THE STATE-SUPPORTED WITDOEKE AND THE PEOPLE OF CROSSROADS, ESPECIALLY THOSE SEEN TO BE THE ANTI-APARTHEID 'COMRADES'. POLICE ASSISTED NGXOBONGWANA, DRIVING OUT THOSE WHO WERE SEEN AS A THREAT TO HIS LEADERSHIP AS WELL AS THEIR 'FOLLOWERS' (OR THOSE UNLUCKY ENOUGH TO LIVE IN THEIR 'SECTION') TO THE SAND DUNES OF KHAYELITSHA.



WITDOEKE WERE THE FOOT SOLDIERS RECRUITED BY NGXOBONGWANA AND HIS ALLIES, MOSTLY FROM CROSSROADS, BUT INCLUDED RECRUITS BROUGHT TO CROSSROADS FROM KHAYELITSHA BY HOZA WHO HAD RECENTLY RELOCATED THERE IN EXCHANGE FOR PERMITS FOR 'HIS PEOPLE.'





ON SATURDAY MAY 18 1986 THE WITDOEKE MARCHED ON THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE MINOR SHACK LEADERS AND THE ORCHESTRATED BURNING BEGAN.



SECURITY FORCES TEARGASSED THE AREA TO DISPERSE THE INHABITANTS.

THE ARMY AND POLICE WOULD THEN HOLD PEOPLE BACK WHILE THE WITDOEKE LOOTED THEIR SHACKS AND THEN SET THEM ALIGHT.



ALL COULD SEE THE POLICE WERE THERE. THEY USED BARBED WIRE TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM COMING BACK, WITH THE WESTERN CAPE DEVELOPMENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVES THERE, WAITING TO TAKE PEOPLE TO KHAYELITSHA.



AT THE END OF THE FIRST DAY 13 PEOPLE WERE DEAD, 75 INJURED AND 20,000 HOMELESS.

AS A YOUTH WINNIE NKOSI
HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN
RESISTING FORCED
REMOVALS IN OLD
CROSSROADS IN THE
1970S.


WE'VE BEEN IN
MODDERDAM AND
BUILT SHACKS THERE,
ELSIES RIVER, WHERE
WE PLAYED COLOURED
-THEN I WAS 'WINNIE KING'
ON MY COLOURED ID IN
WERKGENOT ROAD.

MY HOUSE WAS THE
FOURTH HOUSE IN
CROSSROADS. I HAD A
HOUSE IN RETREAT AND I
LEFT IT FOR CROSSROADS.
PEOPLE, WHITE PEOPLE,
WERE SAYING COME TO
CROSSROADS. ONE, TWO,
MY AUNTIE AND FOUR-
MINE, THEN THE REST
CAME.

WE WOULD
BUILD HOUSES
AT NIGHT...I WAS SO
YOUNG AT THE TIME, I
DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A CHILD.
POLICE WOULD BURN SHACKS
AND JAIL US AND WE WOULD
RUN AWAY. ALL OF THESE
THINGS HAPPENING TO US
MADE US KNOW
ABOUT
ORGANIZATION.

I CALL IT AN
ORGANIZATION
BECAUSE WE WERE
A GROUP-WE DIDN'T
KNOW THE ANC
YET.





I WORKED UNDERGROUND AND I RAN TO AVOID PRISON. PEOPLE COULD COUNT ON ME. I WAS FULLY SPIRITED.

ONE TIME I DID 90 DAYS IN DETENTION IN THE JAIL ON ROELAND STREET. IN JAIL THERE WERE MANY PEOPLE THERE FOR BREAKING THE LAW. MOSTLY WOMEN IN JAIL. I WAS JAILED WITH MY BABY.

IN 1982 SHE WAS GIVEN A HOUSE IN NEW CROSSROADS, AND WAS THEN INVOLVED IN THE RENT BOYCOTTS AND JAILED THIS TIME IN MITCHELL'S PLAIN.


IN JANUARY 1986 SHE WAS ATTACKED BY WITDOEKE. AT THIS TIME SHE WAS CHAIR-WOMAN OF THE UNITED WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION.

NGXOBONGWANA'S ERSTWHILE ENFORCER, SAM NDIMA, SAID THEY PUNISHED HER BECAUSE SHE HAD PASSED ON INFORMATION FROM THEIR MEETINGS.

BUT RECALL HOW WITH THE YOUTH THESE RENT BOYCOTTING AND UWO WOMEN HAD PUSHED THE QUESTION OF NGXOBONGWANA'S POWER WHEN HE WAS IN JAIL THE PREVIOUS YEAR.




'WITDOEKE WERE LOOKING FOR ME. ALL THESE MEN WERE LOOKING FOR ONE WOMAN: ME. THEY WANTED ME BECAUSE I HAVE COME WITH POLITICS. NOW THE MEN AND THE WIVES DON'T GET TOGETHER 'COS THE WOMEN ALL COME WITH ME. THE MEN DON'T FEEL WHAT WE FEEL. I WAS SITTING HERE IN THIS HOUSE, WITH A BLACK CUP OF TEA. ALL THESE MEN CAME AND TOOK ME AWAY AND LOCKED ME IN A CONTAINER, WITHOUT A PLACE TO WEE, PASS WATER, NUMBER TWO.'



'IT WAS TWO METERS BY ONE METER. I HAD TO STAND FOR FOUR DAYS. I WET MYSELF.'

'PEOPLE STARTED RIOTING TO THE WITDOEKE: WE WANT THAT WOMAN BACK, WE WANT MAMA NKOSI BACK. SHE'S DONE NO WRONG!'



'AFTER FOUR DAYS I WAS BROUGHT BACK. MY HOUSE WAS EMPTY. NO CURTAINS, CARPETS, NOTHING AND THEN I WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH STRUGGLE ANYMORE.'



ON JUNE 9TH HOZA JOINED NGXOBONGWANA AND THEY MARCHED ON KTC, DESTROYING MOST OF THE CAMP 53 PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND 7000 SHACKS DEMOLISHED. SQUATTERS WERE SCATTERED ACROSS THE CITY, A LARGE NUMBER EVENTUALLY FINDING THEIR WAY TO KHAYELITSHA, IN SPITE OF ALL THEIR PREVIOUS RESISTANCE.

A FORMER SECURITY BRANCH MEMBER TOLD THE TRC: 'I FLEW OVER THE SQUATTER CAMP TO VIEW THE WORK OF THE WITDOEKE...THEY WERE ATTACKING THE INHABITANTS AND BURNING THEIR SHACKS. IT LOOKED LIKE A SUCCESSFUL WAR MISSION, BECAUSE OF THE 'LINE' OF ADVANCE AND THE ENORMITY OF THE DAMAGE.'

THE ROLE OF POLICE IN CASSPIR'S, WEARING BALACLAVAS, WAS CAPTURED BY THE PRESS. THE BBC TELEVISED SCENES FROM THE FRONTLINE AND USED WHITE DOTS TO POINT OUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE. YET THE GOVERNMENT DENIED ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TRAGEDY, EXPLAINING THE MAYHEM AS 'BLACK ON BLACK' VIOLENCE.

THE VIGILANTES HAD ACCOMPLISHED IN A FEW WEEKS WHAT THE STATE HAD FAILED TO DO IN TEN YEARS AND BY SEPTEMBER 126, 000 HAD MOVED TO KHAYELITSHA, WHERE WITDOEKE CONTINUED TO HARASS 'COMRADES'. AT THE END OF THE TWENTY-SEVEN DAY WAR AN ESTIMATED 100 PEOPLE WERE DEAD AND 70, 000 WERE TURNED INTO REFUGEES IN THE LAND OF THEIR BIRTH.





ON JUNE 21ST 1986, AFTER INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH 50-60 OF THE CROSSROADS LEADERS, BISHOP TUTU GOT EACH SIDE TO AGREE TO A CEASEFIRE, REPORTING THAT LEADERS AGREED THAT THEY ARE NOT 'IN THE BUSINESS OF FIGHTING FELLOW BLACKS' AND THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A MANIPULATION OF A VERY TENSE SITUATION BY CERTAIN INTERESTED PARTIES.

THE STATE THREW A VICTORY FEAST OF FRESHLY SLAUGHTERED BRAAI MEAT FOR THE WITDOEKE; THE TRC REVEALED THAT THE R3000 BUDGET FOR THE PARTY HAD BEEN APPROVED EVEN BEFORE THE ATTACKS TOOK PLACE.

THE STATE COULD NOW ABOLISH ITS MUCH CRITICIZED INFLUX CONTROL POLICY IN 1986, HAVING EVACUATED MOST OF THE 100,000 'ILLEGALS' THEY ESTIMATED WERE IN THE CAPE.



WITDOEKE ROLLED BACK THE SPACES AND GAINS MADE BY WOMEN IN CROSSROADS IN AT LEAST FOUR IMPORTANT WAYS:

FIRST, WITDOEKE WAS A VIOLENT BATTLEFIELD OF MEN WHICH, LIKE OTHER CONFLICT SITUATIONS, HAVE SHOWN ENFORCES A SPECIFIC KIND OF MILITARIZED MASCULINITY ON MEN AND RE-CASTS WOMEN INTO POSITIONS OF INDEPENDENCE AND INFERIORITY.

SECOND, WITDOEKE BURNED DOWN SHACKS AS WELL AS FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS WOMEN HAD HIGHLIGHTED IN THEIR CAMPAIGN THAT CROSSROADS BE A PLACE FOR 'PEOPLE WITHOUT A PLACE'. WITDOEKE IMPOSED THE STATE'S 'ORDERLY (EXCLUSIVE) URBANIZATION' PROGRAM AND MILITARIZED HOUSING ALLOCATION POLITICS. THE FORCED REMOVAL CHASED OUT PEOPLE AND PUT THE ISSUES OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO SQUATTER WOMEN ON THE BACKBURNER.



THIRD, THE NEWLY REFORMED URBAN SPACE WOULD BE RUN BY A LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF 'FATHERS', WHICH MEANT THAT WITDOEKE REASSERTED AND INSTITUTIONALIZED A PARTICULAR VERSION OF TRADITIONAL PATRIARCHY. 'FATHERS' FROZE THE MOST HIERARCHICAL AND SEXIST ASPECTS OF ANYTHING THAT FAINTLY ECHOED ANY PRE-COLONIAL OR RURAL XHOSA 'TRADITION'.



FOURTH, WITDOEKE BROKE CROSS-RACIAL PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCES THAT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN BUILT BY WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP AND RE-DREW THE POLITICAL BOUNDARIES OF THE CROSSROADS STRUGGLE TO BE ONE OF FATHERS VERSUS COMRADES. WOMEN WHO HAD FOUGHT FOR CROSSROADS FIT NEITHER OF THESE OFFICIAL CATEGORIES OF PLAYERS. THIS HAS RESULTED IN THEIR DISAPPEARANCE FROM THIS PHASE OF CROSSROADS HISTORY.

TO BE CONTINUED



crossroads

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Koni Benson, André Trantraal and Nathan Trantraal

If only capitalism feeding off of racism and sexism to determine who has shelter and water and food and all the basics was **history**. Watch this space and find out what happens in the struggle to survive and thrive in Cape Town over the course of twenty years.

