

CROSSROADS / Berkeley



Crossroads Berkeley is our symbol. We are inspired by the community of Crossroads, near Cape Town, South Africa, which was built by African people with their bare hands, in defiance of the laws of apartheid and its bulldozers, whips and guns.

Crossroads is a place where survival is an act of resistance. "In April last year (1984), they came at 3 o'clock in the morning," recalled Sanna Yezile. "They beat us and broke our house down. My husband resisted and was shot dead. After that I slept in the ruins of our house for seven months." For China and Cishe Bengane, "the only way to be certain of having a home is to bury it each morning and dig it up each evening...the children know where everything goes; they can take it all apart within minutes and put it back together within minutes."

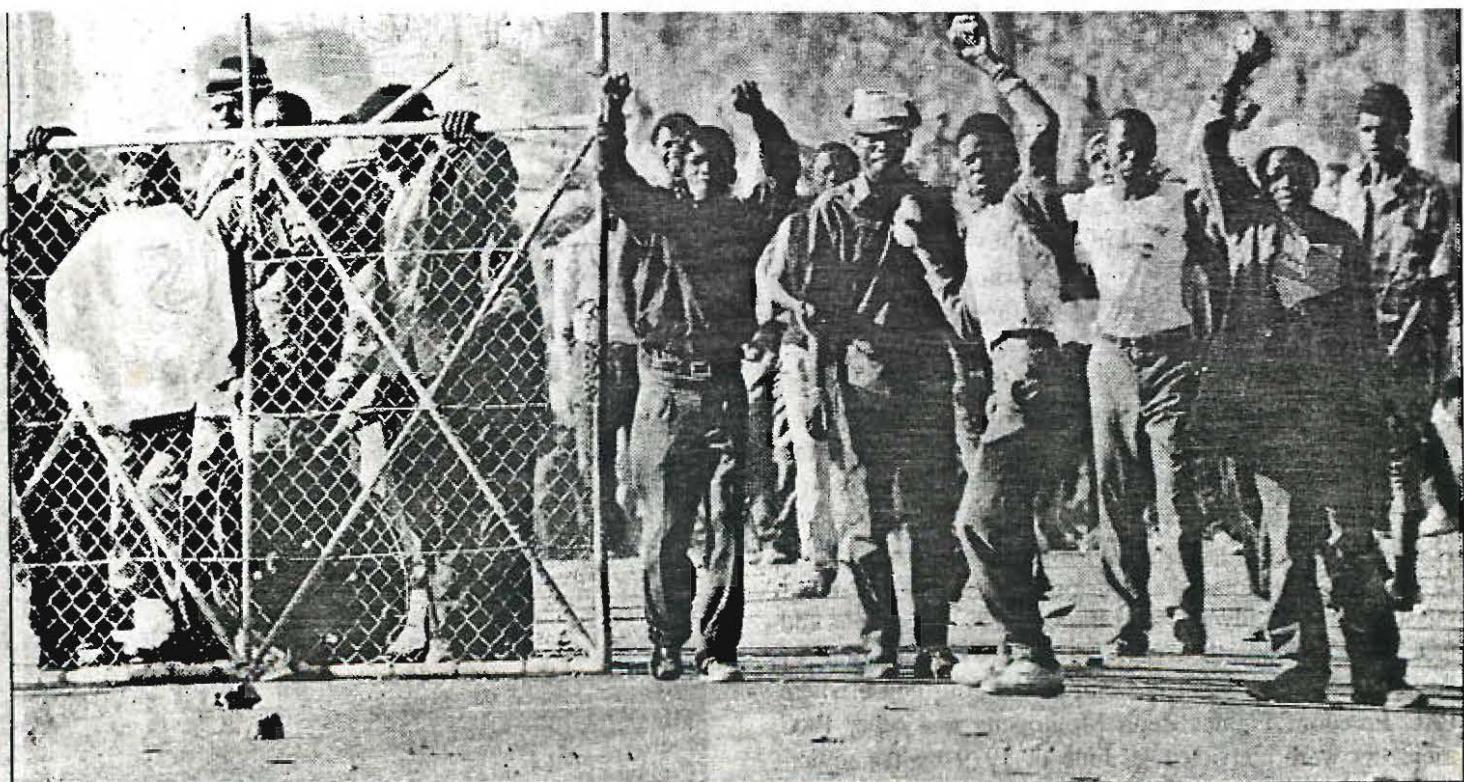
This is not South Africa. But here too, racism is legal and resistance is repressed. On Thursday morning, cops from UC and several East Bay cities viciously attacked our shantytown, because we have successfully exposed their commitment to investments in apartheid. In the debate over "who was violent," of course, we should remember the greatest violence of all: the slave conditions that Black South Africans live under, and UC's huge profits from them. It is clear that the role of the law and the police is not that of a neutral arbiter of public order, but is to maintain this white supremacist system.

The Benganes, like many of the 80,000 Black people in Crossroads, came there from the lifeless bantustan called the Ciskei. They were forcibly "relocated" to the Ciskei by the government, from land which their families had worked for generations. So the battle over the land or Crossroads is just one part of the Africans' struggle to take back control of all their land, which was stolen by white settlers. They have been fighting for 300 years to control their land, as other people from El Salvador to the Philippines to Big Mountain are doing. Botha's petty reforms, such as the legalization of mixed marriages, have no relevance to this fundamental demand. That is why he has not even dented the people's will to struggle.

How will the people of Azania (the African name for South Africa) get their land back? Bambata was the last traditional warrior to lead an uprising against the whites. After his defeat in 1906, he said, "We lost our land on the battlefield, and we must regain it on the battlefield." Today, Bambata's spiritual grandchildren, the two liberation movements (African National Congress/ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress/PAC) are preparing to wage this battle. Public organizations like the Azanian People's Organization/AZAPO and the United Democratic Front/UDF also play a vital role.

There are two sides to this struggle. UC supports apartheid! They have \$2.4 billion invested in corporations that help the white settlers keep control of the land. We want to be clear that we're on the other side -- the side of the Black nation in Azania/South Africa. We will stop police buses in Berkeley; we will raise funds for the freedom fighters in South Africa. We, together with many others who hate oppression, will force UC out of South Africa, and U.S. imperialism out of Africa.

Contact FREEDOM RISING for speakers from the liberation movements, films, study groups:
561-9040, or write 3543 18th St., Box 22, S.F. CA, 94110



Confrontation at Crossroads: Squatter community fights forced relocation.