



Delegates at union summit.

CALL FOR UNITY

The real fight is for our rights

ON the trains, on the buses and all over the Cape Flats, the people are shaking their heads and asking:

"Why did this have to happen?"

Nomhle, a sixteen year old from Crossroads spoke to Grassroots. "We are shocked. We are angry. We are sad that some have died and been injured in the fighting Crossroads".

These were the reactions of many people to what is said to be faction fighting between the people at Crossroads. Seven people died and 26 were injured. The houses and a community school were burnt down as a result of the fighting.

"Crossroads is our home. We have grown up here. We have suffered because we have no houses. Some of us have passes and others don't. This fighting is bad between our people. This is our country and we want rights for all. We cannot be divided", she said.

Over the years, the people of Crossroads have had to carry the burden of the government's vicious laws.

The people have been pushed from pillar to post. Piet Koorhof has made promises and more promises. Some of it he kept and others were simply forgotten. Some people were given houses and not others. Some were called 'legals' because they have passes. And, others were called 'illegals' because they have no passes.

All this was used to divide and control the people in what is now called a "Faction fighting between legals and illegals".

Mr Mpingsa spoke to Grassroots He said, "We must not allow the government to sow divisions between us. 'Legals' or 'illegals', houses

or no houses, our fight is one".

Last year, close to 16 000 people were arrested for pass offences. Daily, men and women appear in the Langa courts and are faced with fines which they cannot afford. Women and children have filled the jails of the Western Cape for not having passes. There are early morning raids, shacks are pulled to the ground. Many nights the people sleep in the rain around camp fires.

Insecurity and fear is the life of the ordinary Crossroads resident. Overcrowding and a lack of facilities have caused health problems. In 1979 Bazar officials said there were 20 000 people at Crossroads. But, many think it is close to 60 000.

"We want the right to live and work where we choose. We don't want to starve in the homelands. We don't want to be told that Cape Town is for 'Coloured' workers only. We don't want to be divided from our brothers and sisters. How can we go back to where we come from? This is our country too", said Mr Mpingsa.

No, this is not a simple matter. It is not simply a fight between leaders. We must not lose the real fight of the people of Crossroads, of KTC, of Modderdam or Unibell.

Mr Msinga an old man and Nomhle, a young girl said: "The real fight is for our rights. Let us not be misled in this fight. This is the concern of all our people.

People's protest.....



KTC women march on the Administration Board to demand houses.

State's response!



Police move in to stop the march.

"AN injury to one is an injury to all" There were cries of Amandla and singing of workers' songs. This was the scene as trade unionists left the conference hall after a two day meeting.

FOURTEEN independent trade unions representing more than 300 000 workers met at a summit conference in Cape Town recently.

This was the fourth meeting between the unions over the past two years in the search

for a wider unity in the trade union movement.

In spite of many differences between the trade unions, the call was for unity workers need a fighting defence against the problems facing them. A defence against attacks by the state and the bosses.

Committee

The unions decided to form a feasibility committee to work out the details of forming a new federation of trade unions. Guidelines were laid down for the committee. These were:

- to discuss and gather materials from different unions on the structure and policies of a new federation.
- unions will submit proposals. These proposals will be circulated between the different unions and
- a conference will be convened of trade unions within three months to discuss the different proposals.

Six Unions

At this stage, there are six unions serving on the feasibility committee. Some of the unions will be taking the proposals back to their organisations for further discussion.

The following unions are serving on the feasibility committee: Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU); General Workers Union (GWU); General and Allied Workers Union (GAWU); Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (CCAWUSA); Cape Town Municipal Workers Union (CTMWA); Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU).

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Mr. Botha, we have given our answer

PW Botha wants to have a referendum to see if whites accept his constitutional proposals which have been widely rejected by the people.

The people have said they will not be fooled by the referendum, which is seen as an attempt to win voters for Botha and the National Party.

The Cape Areas Housing Action Committee has rejected the referendum.

MAJORITY

CAHAC said: "Any real constitution for South Africa will have to be approved by all the people of South Africa. A referendum for whites will not show how the majority of the people feel about the constitutional proposals.

"The people have already given their answer. All over the country, the people have said no to the president's council and the constitutional proposals.

MANDATE

"Botha is aware of this and he is afraid of the people's rejection. Now he has called for a referendum for whites to reassure him.

"A mandate from the whites does not mean a mandate from the people of South Africa."

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