



2

## CROSSROADS AGAIN

By the time this edition of REALITY appears the community of 20,000 people at Crossroads on the Cape Flats may have been destroyed and dispersed. It is some-time now since the government announced that this would happen before the year ended.

As an indication that the end was approaching a series of what might be termed softening-up raids on the people of Crossroads were conducted during September. The place was surrounded at nightfall by police and administration officials and other agents of white authority who went into it with arms, teargas, dogs and other accoutrements of civilised power. They spent the night, searching, demanding documents, arresting people who hadn't got the right ones. Many of those who didn't have the right documents were the legal wives of men legally employed in Cape Town. The right place for them, according to apartheid's decrees, is not with their children and husbands, within reach of their husbands work, but back in the homelands, 500 miles away. There wives and children must suffer in patient and obedient loneliness, for eleven months of the year, waiting for the twelfth month, when their husbands

and fathers come home for the fleeting moments of their annual leave. And if you are not sufficiently patient and obedient, if, in fact, you reach the point where you can't stand the loneliness anymore and, in desperation, take your children and go to Cape Town to be with him, there you will meet the police with the arms and the dogs and the teargas, and the officials without hearts. One man was shot dead by the police in those preliminary raids on Crossroads. His friends say he was a spectator, somebody who had just arrived on the scene to find out what was happening. But what if he was more than that, somebody who had picked up a stone?

Whose side is right on? The man who picks up a stone to defend his home and his right to live with his family within reach of his work? Or the man who comes with a gun in his hand, and teargas, and dogs, preparing the way for the bulldozer which will smash that home and drive that wife and children out, back to bitter loneliness 500 miles away?

The man with the gun may have the law on his side, but who has right on his side? The man with the gun, or the man with the stone? □