

16 5152

# SPEAK

JUNE 1992 No. 40

R1.50 (incl. VAT) R1.36 (Other Countries)



**Women's National Coalition**

## A NEW FIGHTING FORCE?

**WIN  
A  
DRESS!**

**RAPE IN MARRIAGE**  
a woman takes her husband to court

**AIDS TESTS**  
are you thinking of having one?

**WOMEN IN PERU**  
organising communal kitchens

**NEWS ABOUT THE PILL**  
**UNION WOMEN MOVE AHEAD**



9 771019 137001



# Subscribe to SPEAK

and get this book free

**I would like to subscribe to SPEAK.  
I enclose R \_\_\_\_\_**

**Name \_\_\_\_\_**

**Address \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please send me my free book.**

---

Subscription rates for:	6 issues	or	12 issues
<b>South Africa</b>			
Individuals	R12.00		R24.00
Organisations and Institutions and donor subscribers	R40.00		R80.00
<b>Overseas</b>			
Individuals	US\$40.00		US\$80
Institutions	US\$80.00		US\$160
<b>Southern Africa</b>			
Individuals	R18.00		R36.00
Institutions	R45.00		R90.00

Send your money to: SPEAK , PO Box 53085, Troyeville 2139, Johannesburg, South Africa

# INSIDE

## FEATURES

- 6 **The Women's National Coalition**  
A fighting force?
- 13 **The Pill**  
Should it be sold over the counter?
- 16 **Rural Women**  
A photo story
- 19 **Rape in Marriage**  
A woman takes her husband to court
- 22 **Women in Peru**  
Organising communal kitchens
- 23 **Women change the picture**  
Interviews with women behind the camera

## PEOPLE

- 9 **Cheryl Roberts**  
Our Star at the Olympics
- 10 **Dorothy Mokgalo**  
Fighting for women in the unions
- 27 **Steve Mokwena**  
Putting youth first

## ADVICE

- 21 **Reporting Rape**  
What to do if you are raped
- 22 **AIDS Tests**  
How to prepare yourself

## HEALTH

- 31 **C-film**  
A look at a new contraceptive

## WIN

- 26 **Win a dress!**

## REGULARS

- 2 **Readers Talk Back**
- 3 **Kwa-Sophie**
- 4 **As a matter of fact**
- 32 **Taxi-Talk**



Rural women's lives

Page 16



A woman charges her husband with rape

Page 19



Women's National Coalition

Page 6

## SPEAK STAFF

### CO-ORDINATORS

Shamim Meer  
Roshnie Moonsammy

### EDITOR

Karen Hurt

### ASSISTANT

### EDITORS

Libby Lloyd

Elinor Sisulu

### DESIGN AND

### LAYOUT ARTIST

Dipuo Masetlha

### JOURNALIST

Thoraya Pandey

### OFFICE

### ADMINISTRATOR

Jacqueline Mathabe

### VOLUNTARY

### MANAGEMENT

### COMMITTEE

### MEMBERS

Gill Lincoln, Nise Malange, Helen Rees

A warm welcome to Elinor Sisulu who joins the magazine as an Assistant Editor.

### SPEAK offices:

Office 7, 17th Floor,  
Conlyn House, 156  
President Street,  
Johannesburg, 2001,  
South Africa.

Telephone: (011)  
29-6166

Fax: (011) 29-4354

### Postal Address:

SPEAK, PO Box  
261363, Excom 2023  
South Africa

### Subscription enquiries:

NND, Telephone:  
(011) 402-1205

Design: SPEAK,  
TOPS

### Cover Photo:

Anna Zieminski

## COMMENT

They didn't get as far as toy-toying together but they did launch an alliance of women's organisations. SPEAK was at the historic launch of the Women's National Coalition which brings together women with very different political beliefs and backgrounds - can it work? June 16 remains a date we will never forget. It was a turning point in our history when children rose up and demanded an end to Bantu Education. Children sacrificed their lives and limbs, their childhood and, for many, their homes as they went into exile to fight for a better future. Those 'children' return today to living conditions that have not improved much.

We commemorate June 16 1976 by talking to Steve Mokwena about his work with 'marginalised youth' who will probably never find jobs or be able to further their education. He talks especially about the problems facing young women. We have advice for people thinking of having an AIDS test as well as information about a new form of contraception. There are changes in the way women can get the Pill - we take a critical look at the government's new system. Rape in marriage does happen and a brave Ciskeian woman challenged the law by charging her husband with rape. This SPEAK has all of this and much more. Get someone (preferably male!) to cook you a meal so you can put your feet up and enjoy this exciting issue of SPEAK.

*PS With Codesa 2 underway and political leaders making decisions about our future it's up to us to make sure they are guided by the demands and concerns of the people of this country. Don't be left out - make your voice heard. ☺*

# Talk back

## Disgusted by cartoon of rape

My friends and I were shocked to see the cartoon about the cricket victory of South Africa against Australia that appeared on the front page of Weekly Mail (28 February 1992). The cartoon showed a springbok raping a kangaroo. It was a disgusting, sick, chauvinistic image of conquest. What made it worse was that it was published by a so-called



Part of the cartoon which appeared in the Weekly Mail that Sanna Naidoo was disgusted about. It shows the head of the raping Springbok.

progressive newspaper. In our struggle for a democratic and non-sexist society such attitudes by our "comrades" need to be dealt with. It shows they have not gone beyond slogans and theories. We need to bring about change in our own circles - starting with our comrades in progressive work places!

*Sanna Naidoo  
Pretoria*

## Not enough schools for disabled children

Women in Lebowa, can we unite and help our cripple children because our men are failing in their duty to do so? Aren't we unhappy about having only one boarding school for cripple children in Lebowa?

There are a lot of crippled children who stay at home. Some are kept in the bedroom so that people cannot see them. Others are attending ordinary schools where children ill-treat them. There they are called 'stupid' and other bad names - like 'mad child'.

Day schools for the handicapped are not serving the needs of the people in rural areas. There are many handicapped children in rural areas where people earn low incomes and they cannot afford transport fees. So children have to go to boarding schools.

Schools for handicapped children must be in places that are safe for them.

I wish other women would join me to solve this problem.

*Matebane Bethsheba  
Pretoria*

*If readers would like to contact Matebane, write to: 290 Preller Street, Muekleneuk, Pretoria.*

*If you want more information about disabled people or about organisations for disabled people in your area, you can write to: Disabled People of South Africa, PO Box 39008, Booyens, 2016, Johannesburg, or telephone (011) 982-1130. They will put you in contact with a local branch or a self-help organisation in your area.*

**Parents must help to stop the violence**

We as parents must point the way forward to a democratic future. We cannot deny that the violence, which has almost become a way of life in our beloved country, has already put back some of our gains. Parents - it is up to us to plan how to unearth those responsible for the present violence and bring them to book.

**Edward Mathebula  
Tembisa**

**What about school-going mothers?**

I'm very happy to get this opportunity to write this letter to you.

I'm confused by mothers who attend school. You said a woman who breast-feeds her baby must try to feed her baby three times a day. What about a mother who goes to school at 7.30am and comes home at 4.30pm? Tell me what is going to happen to a baby with such unfavourable breast-feeding conditions?

**Edward Mphage Matsepe  
Boleu**

*Many women who go out to work also face the problem you have raised. Some women deal with the problem by squeezing their breast milk into a bottle which they keep in a cool place. The person (male or female!) looking after the child can feed the baby this milk for up to six hours after it has been squeezed into a bottle. Although it is unfortunate the baby will not benefit from direct breast-feeding during the day the baby will still benefit from the goodness of breast milk during the day. The baby can still be breast-fed at night and early morning. The issue you raised is an*

**Write to  
SPEAK**

**Thanks to all readers who have written.**

**Please keep your letters flowing in.**

**We are often forced to shorten letters because of space.**

**Send your letters to :  
SPEAK, PO Box 261363,  
Excom, 2023  
Johannesburg  
South Africa**

*important one - it is also about women's demands for child-care.*

**Criticism of SPEAK drawing**

I write to criticise the drawing which appeared on the back cover of SPEAK 38, 1992. My view about this drawing is that it promotes sexism because it promotes male domination. The source of pleasure in the drawing is music which comes from the guitar. The guitar player is a male and women



**The drawing Howard Ndaba is unhappy about.**

are 'dancing to his tune'. 'Dancing to his tune' generally means following him passively and without fuss. What's more, there are no men dancing to this tune. Only women are dancing. It makes you think, doesn't it? One may say the drawing shows patriarchal society where men are highly valued. If he stops the music then everything stops. It confirms the wrong perception that men make history whilst women look on. It would have been better if the guitar player was a woman and people dancing were men and women. In this way domination could have been played down or equally distributed.

**Howard Ndaba  
Khanya College,  
Johannesburg**



*Thanks for keeping us on our toes. We hope you noticed Nothembi Mkhwebane, the famous woman guitarist, on the front cover of issue number 39!*

They say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. If our friend Bra Sakkie's comment is anything to go by we might be able to get through to a man's head through the same channel.

Bra Sakkie, who read the last issue of SPEAK cover to cover, told us "the whole magazine is like an AK" and "Taxi Talk is like a bazooka, even the letters are like grenades". He went on to say: "Seems like all women in South Africa have declared war on men". His only hope, he said, is that women will declare a ceasefire every supper-time. Not a chance, boetie. Sounds like we don't need AK's, bazookas and grenades - no meal at supper-time could turn out to be our most powerful weapon.

\* \* \* \* \*

A cousin of one of my colleagues has fond memories of a young and sincere church minister by the name of Allan Boesak. This Reverend made a real impression on him and his fellow young Christian friends ten years ago at a youth meeting. Boesak said to them: "Never be caught with your moral pants down." Time is not the only thing that flies.

\* \* \* \* \*

Seen and adapted from a poster on the wall of a feminist organisation in Zimbabwe: "Why we oppose votes for men:

- because men are too emotional to vote. Their conduct at football matches and political meetings shows this."

\* \* \* \* \*

A friend of mine gets mad when she is asked whether she is 'Miss or Mrs' when men just get called 'Mr' whether they are married or not. Anyway, she went out to



## Kwa-Sophie...

buy a piece of furniture on account. The man serving her did not ask her if she was 'Miss or Mrs', he just wrote down 'Ms' So-and-So on the account. My delighted friend told him: "Hey this is the first time I've ever met a shop assistant who uses 'Ms'!"

"Well, my wife's a bit of a feminist," he replied.

\* \* \* \* \*

Kontak is one of the women's organisations which is part of the newly-launched Women's National Coalition. They are having an annual general meeting where the theme is "FUTURE SHOCK: COPING SKILLS". Well, we got a bit of a shock when we opened the invitation's registration form. "I, mr, mrs, miss ...." Seems, unlike the furniture salesperson, they 'ms'd' the point.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Women's National Coalition started with a bit of a jolt when the chairperson welcoming delegates, who were all women, opened the workshop by saying .... "Ladies and gentlemen ..."

... but it ended on a good note. Some women (who may have been a bit frustrated by this time with the lack of 'amandla's' and revolutionary songs at the workshop) came in singing 'Malibongwe' long and loud. And then there was some good 'comradeship' as ANC women explained to puzzled-looking Nat women that it was a praise song for women. "Malibongwe ... Malibongwe ..." joined in the Nats.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not so long ago a well-known male 'comrade' beat his girlfriend black and blue. This wasn't the first time he had assaulted her. Many 'comrades' tried to stop her from reporting the matter to the police. Anyway, the whole incident has given rise to a kind of a sick joke amongst some of my women friends:

What's the difference between an ordinary man wife-beater and a comrade wife-beater?

When she wants to report him to the police, the ordinary man asks how can she betray her husband, while the comrade asks how can she betray the struggle.

They're not talking about the struggle for human rights, we hope.

\* \* \* \* \*

Quote of the month: "We shall teach all South Africans, men and women, that freedom cannot be won for any one section or for the people as a whole as long as we women are kept in bondage." From the SA Women's Charter, 1954. ☉

\* \* \* \* \*

# As a matter of fact...

Organisations in the Southern Transvaal which focus on violence against women have decided to set up a network. At a meeting in early May in Soweto, 10 organisations including the Eldorado Park Violence Prevention group, the Alexandra Action Group and People Opposing Women Abuse, decided they should work together and share resources.



Amnesty International reported recently that thousands of cases of rape or sexual abuse by members of the security forces have been reported around the world. The report says women and girls as young as 14 have been abused by soldiers, police and prison guards. Amnesty says very few such cases have been properly investigated and very few of the attackers have been punished.

South Africa is no exception. In the past few weeks, at least five charges of rape have been laid against members of the South African security forces in the Transvaal - four in Phola Park and one in Katlehong.



A Sunday newspaper said more and more doctors in the PWV area are defying tough abortion laws and performing abortions. The doctors told the newspaper they had had enough of the law which treats abortion like murder. People and organisations fighting for a change in the law say about 200 000 back-street abortions are performed each year in South Africa.



One in five students in England have been victims of rape or attempted rape. These statistics come from a national survey done by the Cambridge University Students Union. The report says date rape is very common at English universities and colleges and that five out of six of the women knew their attacker.



A daily newspaper reported that a US insurance firm has paid R455 million to 800 women in

the largest sex-discrimination settlement in the history of the US. The women were refused sales agent jobs at the insurance company because of their sex.



A number of angry American women recently smashed their bathroom scales in protest against diets after a government report was released which slammed diets. At a demonstration outside a city hall in West Virginia, posters reading, "scales are for fish not women" were held up high by protesting women. The US report says women should eat healthily and exercise instead of dieting.



Ever thought of boiling broccoli for supper? According to scientists broccoli could fight off cancer. Their research shows, an ingredient in the vegetable is much more effective in fighting tumours than other substances which have already been researched. ☺



**IT'S A STRANGE WORLD, ISN'T IT?**

# Forcing open the doors



A serious moment ... delegates, Mavivi Manzini from the ANC and the DP's Gill Noero.

## The Women's National Coalition

**"T**he future depends on us whether there is to be a non-sexist South Africa. No one is going to give it to us. We have been banging on doors for generations and nobody has opened them. Now we have to force open the doors through the voices of millions of South African women. We here must do it!"

This was the opening message to the Women's National Coalition launch from Frene Ginwala, deputy head of the ANC's Emancipation Department.

After she had spoken, women from the ANC, Inkatha, the SA Communist Party, the

**In April, women from different organisations joined forces to launch the Women's National Coalition. Thoraya Pandy was there.**

**Photos by Anna Zieminski**

Nationalist Party, Cosatu and about 55 other organisations stood up, cheering and ululating. Despite their

political differences, they agreed women must unite to "force open the doors". They have launched the Coalition to make sure women's rights are included in the laws and constitution of the "new" South Africa.

"There's no turning back. Nothing can stop us," said one delegate at the end of the weekend workshop.

More than 250 delegates from about 60 organisations came from all over South Africa to Johannesburg to attend the workshop.

Preparations for the launch began in August after the ANC Women's League called a meeting of different



organisations to discuss joint action. Regional coalitions have been launched in Western Cape, Transvaal and Natal. Other groups are being formed in areas like Transkei and Northern Cape. Membership of the Coalition is open to all organisations which include women, as well as to individual women.

**B**ut how will the Coalition make sure women's voices are heard?

The meeting agreed a women's "charter" must be drawn up and that women must sit on constitution-making committees.

"A charter of women's rights must contain what women want - not what lawyers and experts say we need," said Ginwala. "I believe we must grow big ears. We must listen to women everywhere - in rural and urban areas, factory women, women in big mansions and bring all their demands together."

The meeting set a one year time limit to draw up a "charter". A national steering committee was elected to co-ordinate the process. The committee will also look at how to make sure the "charter" will really change women's lives.

SPEAK talked to delegates from different organisations after the meeting. All said they were excited.

"We are going to win this struggle if we carry on working together like this," said Beauty Maningi of Cosatu. "The Coalition will not only strengthen our work in Cosatu, but all women's voices." She added though that there

were still differences between the 'haves and have-nots'. "We have to be tolerant of each other," said Maningi. Nationalist Party representative Anne Routier said: "It is a miracle we were able to achieve what we did. But I do feel some things, like the voting, were handled undemocratically." Voting for the steering committee was one of the things delegates disagreed about. The Nationalist Party - together with some of the smaller organisations - wanted all organisations to have the same number of votes. The meeting decided organisations with more members should have more votes.

**R**outier said the Coalition should continue to exist after the "charter" campaign. "I don't like one offs," she told SPEAK.

Faith Gasa from Inkatha felt women had achieved something great. "It is amazing that in two days we were able to sort out very difficult issues. In Codesa very

small issues hold us up," she said.

**P**atricia Dlulane of the ANC Women's League in Transkei said:

"White ladies have always looked down on us but this forum will prove to them black women are just as capable. We don't all feel comfortable with each other, but time will solve this."

The Rural Women's Movement said they would start a village to village information campaign about the "charter".

"We are excited about this. This is the first time rural women have been to such a conference," the delegation said.

They said though they were disappointed that not one "madam" brought their domestic worker to the workshop.

"We must reach out to those women whose madams are hiding them to say, come out this is happening!"

Irene Khumalo of the PAC said



**Voting was one of the hotly debated issues. But despite the differences women were determined to unite.**

bringing women together was a "good thing," but she was tired of white middle class women dominating meetings.

Giving her personal view, Khumalo said: "They cannot understand apartheid is to blame for the inequalities. They had a good education and have comfortable lives. They want to rush things - democracy is important in our organisations. "Customary law is a part of our lives which cannot be ignored. This means things will not happen as speedily as we would like."

But despite the differences, delegates were committed to making sure the Coalition works.

"Women have made history this weekend," said one woman as she left the meeting.

It is now up to the delegates and their organisations to put words into practice and get out there and mobilise women. ☉



**Lydia Kompe and Beauty Mkhize from the Transvaal Rural Women's Movement work out who they will vote for.**



**The steering committee: (From left to right): Mirriam Stein; Jennifer Kinghorn; Frene Ginwala; Anne Letsebe; Thoko Msane.**

**Women's National Coalition  
Steering Committee:**

- Frene Ginwala** - convenor (ANC)
  - Anne Letsebe** - co-convenor (Black Social Workers Assoc)
  - Mirriam Stein** - co-treasurer (Union of Jewish Women)
  - Jennifer Kinghorn** - co-treasurer (Soroptimist International of SA)
  - Thoko Msane** - secretary (Young Women Christian Assoc)
- The additional members are:
- Mavivi Manzini** - ANC
  - Faith Gasa** - Inkatha Freedom Party
  - Anne-Marie Nutt** - Kontak
  - Pat Horne** - Natal regional coalition
  - Nozizwe Madlala** - SA Communist Party
  - Lydia Kompe** - Transvaal Rural Women's Movement
  - Mathapelo Makgoba** - Cosatu
  - Elda Olifant** - Disabled People of SA
  - Modiegi Khumalo** - National Assembly of Women
  - Sandra Botha** - Democratic Party

# CHERYL ROBERTS



## OUR STAR AT THE 1992 OLYMPICS

By Thoraya Pandey

**S**outh African table tennis champ Cheryl Roberts is going places fast.

Thirty-year-old Roberts is one of two table tennis players chosen to play for South Africa at the Olympic Games in Barcelona in Spain later this year. She has also been invited to China and Japan to train for the Olympics.

"I am very happy and excited to have a chance to improve my game," she told SPEAK. "I need all the training I can get. I have seen international

competitions and we are lagging years behind in South Africa."

Roberts grew up in Wentworth in Durban. She has been playing table tennis since she was 14 years old. But the game which is now taking her to one of the most famous sports events in the world, wasn't her first choice.

"At first I played ordinary tennis but I couldn't carry on as there were no courts in Wentworth."

**E**very Sunday she had to take two buses from her home to tennis courts in Sydenham.

"My parents did not have a car and as with nearly all working class families, sport was not thought of as important, so I had no option but to play the sport on my own."

When she tried to join a tennis club closer to home she was told: "Sorry this is a 'whites only' club".

So she went to play table tennis in a neighbour's garage.

"It was much better to go next door for a game of table tennis than having to take two buses to Sydenham every week."

Since then she has never looked back. In 1985 Roberts was chosen as Sportsperson of the Year by the South African Council of Sport (Sacos). She has won three national championships and nearly 150 table tennis titles. Five years ago when she was studying in England she was chosen captain of the university team.

Roberts hasn't only spent her time improving her own game. Many young table tennis players in the townships know Cheryl Roberts as a trainer and as a fighter for better sports facilities in their areas.

"The problems in sport," she said, "are not only the racial inequalities but also the inequalities between men and women.

"Men believe they are better than women in sport. They refuse to change their sexist attitudes.

"Newspapers, which influence the way people think, also push male domination, power and control in sport. Things are difficult but we are trying to change them."

Roberts is busy organising a "Gender and Sports Conference" to begin to change this situation. She has spent much of her spare time doing research into sport in the poorer areas of South Africa and into women in sport. She has also written four books on sports politics.

She is very excited about being chosen to play at the Olympics and she promises she will give it her best shot.

**Good luck Cheryl! ◦**

## NO EASY ROAD

**Cosatu has finally appointed a gender co-ordinator - Dorothy Mokgalo. What does she hope to achieve? What problems does she face? Thoraya Pandy went to find out.**

**D**orothy Mokgalo definitely has a difficult job ahead of her. The position of gender co-ordinator is a new one so she has no one else's example to follow. She also has to deal with problems women often face in the workplace.

"I always feel I have to work ten times harder than men to prove myself," she said when SPEAK went to visit her at the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) head office in Johannesburg.

But, she said, she does not have to work alone - the member unions of Cosatu help her.

It is thanks to the member unions and to women's sub-committees in Cosatu that she is sitting in the head office. It was a battle to get Cosatu to employ someone to help organise women.

"Women's forums were set up in the unions in 1989," said Mokgalo. "Then in 1990 it was agreed Cosatu would employ a full-time women's co-ordinator to help organise women. It seemed a victory, but a few months later the decision was changed because two unions were against it.

"We were shocked and upset by this. We all asked what sort of democracy this was. But we took it up again with the same spirit and we succeeded!"

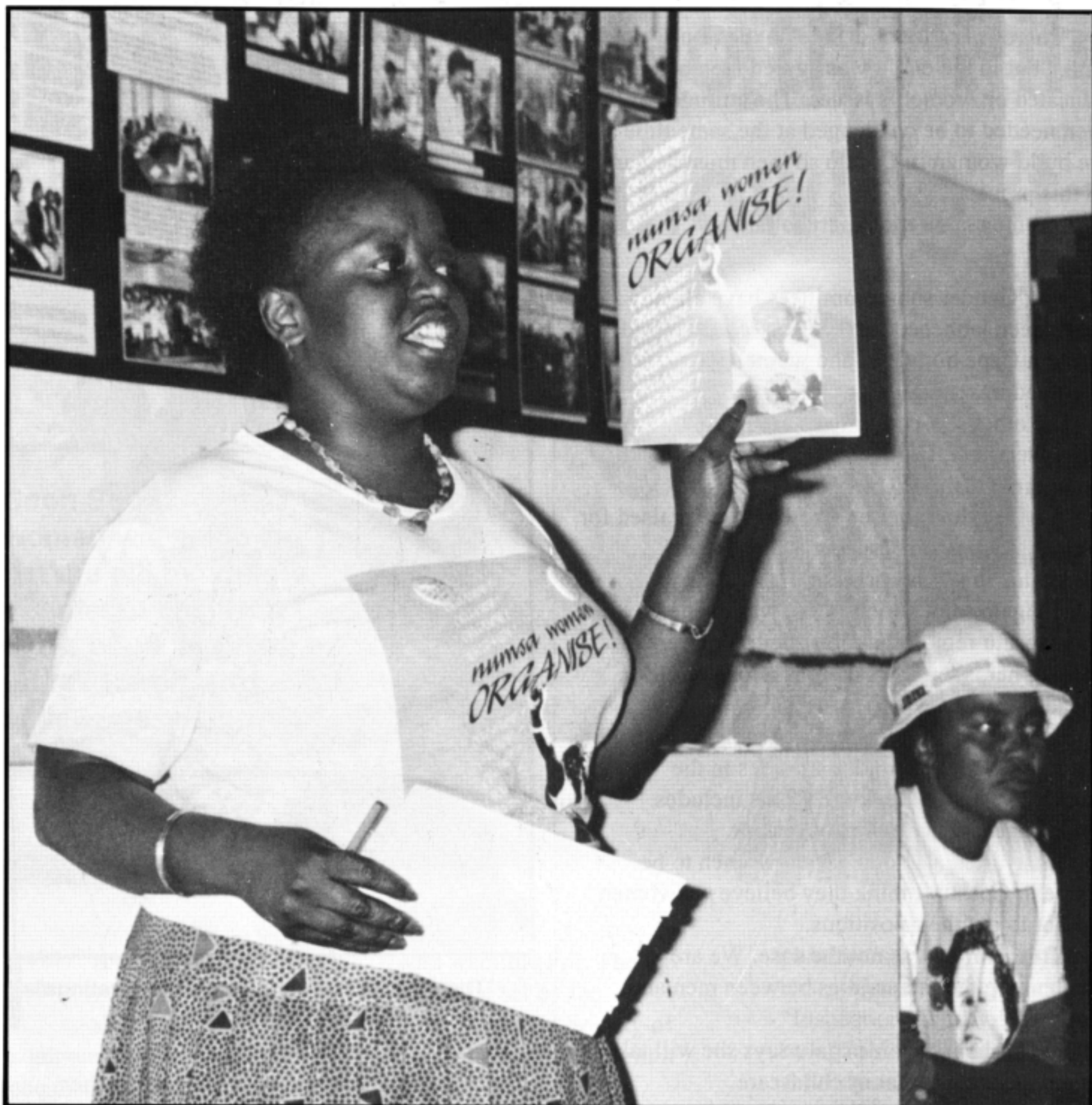


Photo by Karen Hurt, SPEAK

**Dorothy Mokgalo: "I feel I have to work 10 times harder than men to prove myself."**

Mokgalo started work as gender co-ordinator in March this year. At the moment the position is for only one year.

"The decision to appoint me for one year only has also affected the way I do things," she said. "It is as if I only have a year to change things that have been a part of society forever."

Hopefully this will be looked at again when Cosatu holds a national women's conference in August this year. One of the issues to be

discussed is removing the time limit on this position.

**M**okgalo's main task is to build women leadership within the union federation. She plans to do this by setting up gender sub-committees in Cosatu regions all around the country.

But why, if her job is mainly building women, is she called a gender co-ordinator (which includes men and women) and not just women's

co-ordinator?

"There was a lot of debate on the issue," she said, "but in the end it was agreed men had to be educated on women's issues. The attitudes of men needed to be challenged at the same time as we build women in Cosatu so men must be part of this process."

And men have taken part so far.

**S**ix Gender sub-committees have already been launched. In the Western Cape and Eastern Cape both men and women were involved in setting these up.

The other sub-committees are in the Witwatersrand, Highveld, Northern Natal and Southern Natal.

"I do not think these men should be praised for taking up women's issues seriously," said Mokgalo, "but it is encouraging."

Mokgalo said, although she was excited by the way Cosatu regions and member unions are helping her, she thinks there is a long battle ahead.

She said one of the greatest problems is that of changing "male comrades attitudes in the workplace and in the home". This includes getting men to share the housework.

"Many men also don't want women to be active in Cosatu. I think they believe we women are out to get their positions.

"This is of course not the case. We are challenging the inequalities between men and women."

One of the issues Mokgalo says she will take up with Cosatu is that of child-care.

"There should be child-care facilities at all meetings to make it easier for women with children to go to meetings," she said.

It sounds like Mokgalo has a difficult fight ahead, but she has a long history in the trade union movement and plenty of experience to draw on.

She became active in the unions in 1985 when she joined the Metal and Allied Workers Union (Mawu) which later became the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa). During the past 8 years she has been active in both the education and women's committees of Numsa and Cosatu.



Photo by William Matlala, COSATU

**"There should be child-care at all meetings"-  
a COSATU Women's forum**

She said though her work has cut into her family life.

"It is a problem, especially when I have to choose work above family life all the time."

But she is committed to carrying on the battle. She said this struggle against sexism has to be fought everywhere, by everyone, in the unions, political organisations and in the media.

"One would expect structures to challenge sexism as they do racism, but it appears they still have a long way to go.

"The fight against women's oppression and exploitation is a long and bitter struggle but we must continue, at all costs, if we are serious about wanting change," she added. ●

# There's more to the Pill than just swallowing it

---

Soon South African women will be able to get the pill over the counter at chemists. Is this a good or a bad thing? Karen Hurt investigates.

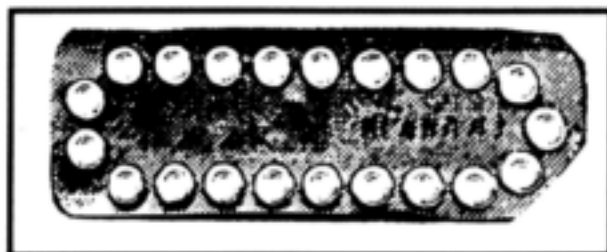
---



**F**rom this month South African women will be able to get the contraceptive pill from some chemists without a prescription. It will cost very little - and could sometimes be given free.

Pharmacists who have completed a family planning course through the Department of National Health and Population Development, will be able to order the Pill and get it free from the government. They can give it out free or charge a fee if they take a medical history from women

who want the Pill. The fee would be set by the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa. At present it is R3.80.



SPEAK phoned the Department of National Health and Population Development to ask about this new system. We asked how the Department would make sure there was no abuse by

pharmacists who might start charging more. They said: "Inspection visits will be made by officials of National Health and Population Development."

We spoke to a doctor who said he was worried about this new system even though it would make it easier for many women to get the Pill.

He said: "There is more to the Pill than just taking it. Each woman who wants to go on the Pill should have a full medical history taken and tests done before choosing which Pill will best suit her. Different pills have different side-effects for

different women. How many pharmacists will have time to take a full medical history? Pharmacists are often busy - and is a chemist shop the best place for this to happen? There will be other customers around."

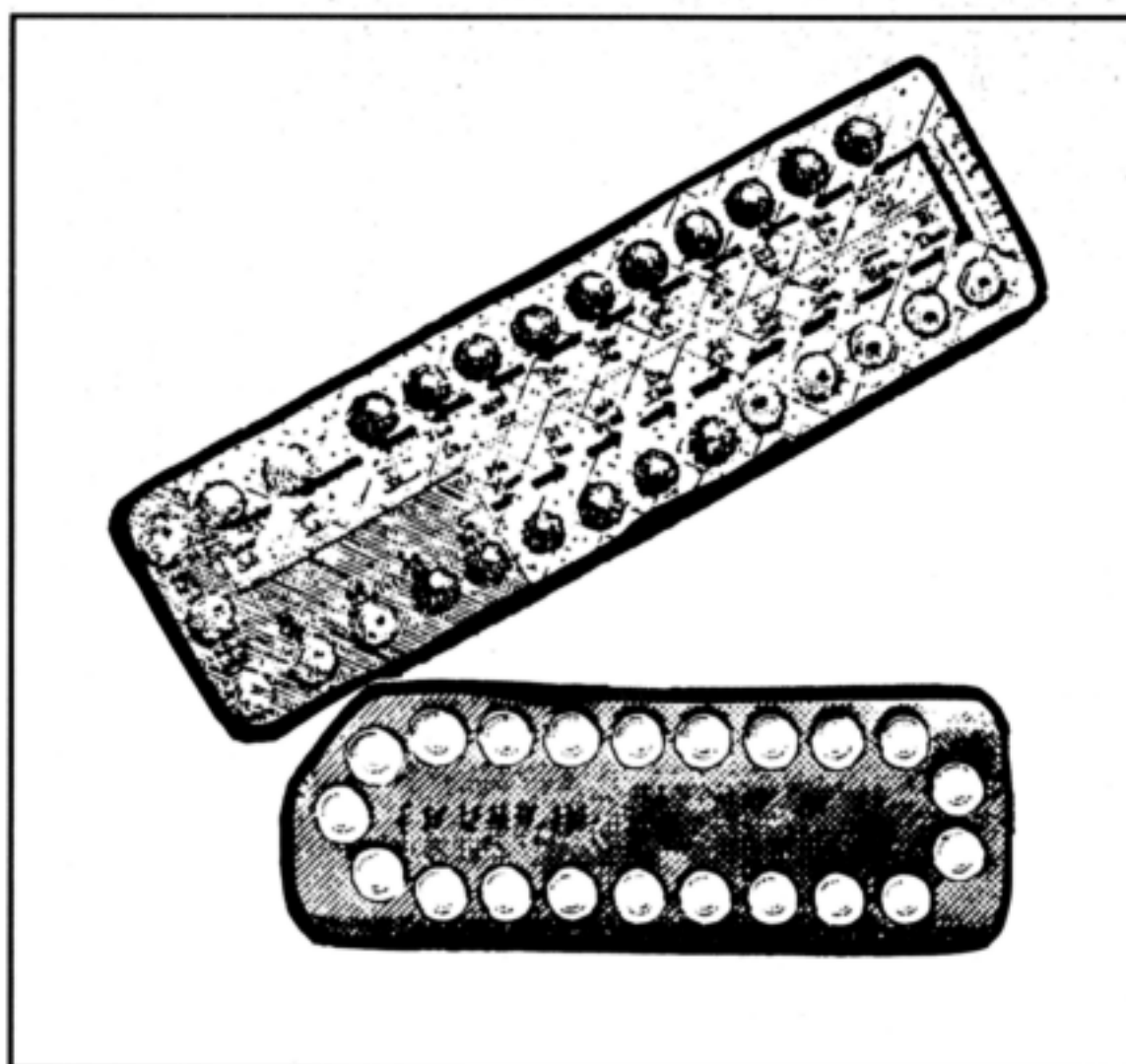
**T**he Department says the chemist "is trained to counsel, take a full history and decide on an oral contraceptive. The pharmacist is linked to a clinic and women will be referred to the clinic for yearly check-ups."

The Department made the decision to introduce this new system "to meet demands of women using contraception to make services more easily available, to include the pharmacist as a member of the primary health care team."

There are, however, many questions that beg answers. If the government is serious about meeting "the demands of women using contraception" shouldn't they provide more clinics where women can be given full information and have the required tests in privacy? Are chemists going to have special rooms where personal medical history can be told to a

pharmacist? Are chemists going to employ more pharmacists to deal with the new system? Are women going to benefit in the long run or has the government just found a new and cheap way of handing out contraception? Isn't this new system simply part of the old system - third-rate over-the-counter health care for women. There is, after all, more to the Pill than just swallowing it. Read on ...

- Your age;
- Any medication you may be on;
- Whether you have a serious problem with varicose veins;
- If you have ever had a stroke or heart attack;
- If you smoke, or have a weight problem.
- A Pap smear test to check for cervical cancer;
- A breast examination to check for breast cancer. You should be taught how to



**You have to be healthy to go on the pill.**

- examine your breasts yourself. You should do a self-examination on the first day after the end of your period;
- You should be told what to do:
  - If you miss taking a Pill;
  - If you have severe diarrhoea;
  - If you take other medicines that might stop the pill from working, like antibiotics or medicine for TB.

**B**efore going on the Pill you should have a proper check-up with a doctor or a registered nurse who has trained in family planning. You should have a complete head-to-toe medical check-up. This is to make sure your health is good enough for you to go on the Pill. Your check-up should include, among other things:

- Your medical history which including questions about:

- You should return for regular check-ups to make sure you are on a Pill that is best suited for you.

By-the-way, never borrow the Pill from someone else. Different Pills have different strengths and a Pill that suits your friend may not suit you - in fact it may not even work for you. ☉





Get your set of  
**SPEAK cards today!**

Send in the form below with payment to:  
SPEAK, PO BOX 261363, Excom 2023, Johannesburg, SA  
For six cards send R3.00  
For twelve cards send R6.00

*We have these and many other designs*

Please send me .....cards  
I enclose R.....

Name.....

Address.....

# Challenge

*A New Ecumenical Magazine for Southern Africa*

- News, Views, Comment, Reflections
- Bible Studies, Liturgy, Theology and Spirituality

*Published in Southern Africa for Southern Africa  
An Initiative of The Institute for Contextual Theology*

Edited by Albert Nolan

The editorial board includes: Frank Chikane, Dean Farisani, Khoza Mgojo, Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Beyers Naude & others.

Contributions and Subscriptions:  
Challenge, P O Box 32047, Braamfontein, 2017



# Agenda

**A JOURNAL ABOUT  
WOMEN & GENDER**

*Puts you at the forefront of  
gender analysis*

- AGENDA has
- \* up to date research, debate and discussion on women in South Africa
  - \*international women's news
  - \*regular columns: women and the law; women and health.

AGENDA is published four times a year.

Get your AGENDA from leading bookstores or subscribe for only R28 a year. Write to: AGENDA  
P.O. Box 37432 Overport 4067  
Telephone: 031-3054074

## South African LABOUR BULLETIN

**S A Labour Bulletin** has articles about unions; strikes and other labour action; community issues; and about the politics of the working class. It is read by a wide range of people and is used by unions and other organisations as part of their education programmes.

Subscription rates (send to the address below)

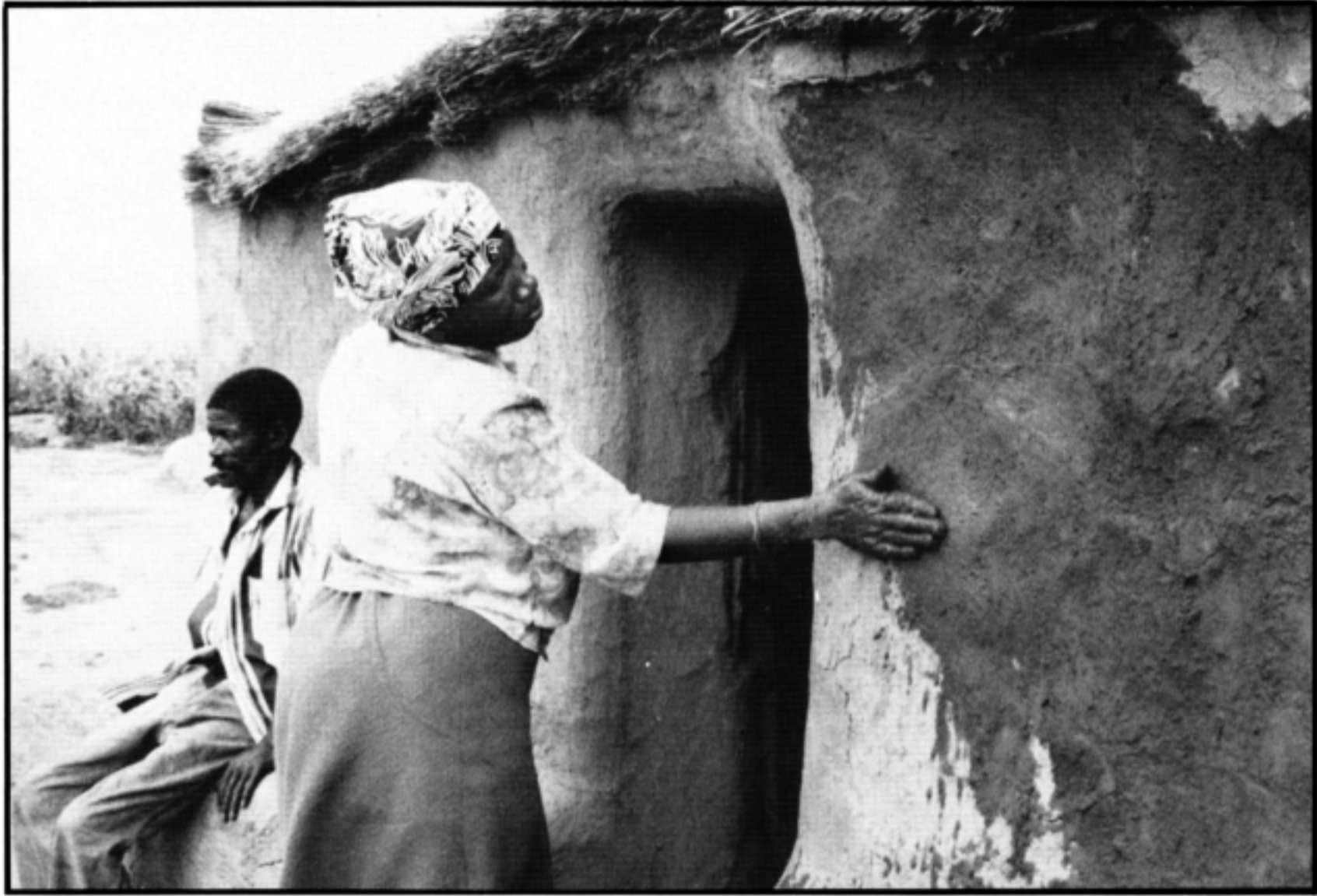
Workers (send copy of payslip)	R24 for six editions
Students (send copy of student card)	R24 for six editions
Salaried individuals	R54 for six editions
Organisations etc	Please contact us for rates

If anyone wishes to help distribute Bulletins by selling them for us, please contact us at the address or phone number below.

SALB P O Box 3851 JHB 2000 Tel: (011) 337 8511

# Rural Women's Lives-

This photo-story about rural women's lives and rural women organising is by Gill de Vlieg.



Women are the both house and home builders.

Building a house. Daggakraal, Eastern Transvaal.



Collecting wood. Beesterkraal, Western Transvaal.

Girls learn from a young age that part of their life involves hard labour, such as collecting wood and water.



Collecting water from a stream. Driefontein, Eastern Transvaal.



**Many men leave rural areas to work in towns. Women are left to look after the family, animals and the land - yet women seldom have the right to own the land they work on.** Supervising the milking. Kwa Ngema, Eastern Transvaal.



Women co-operative members do embroidery near Tzaneen, Northern Transvaal.

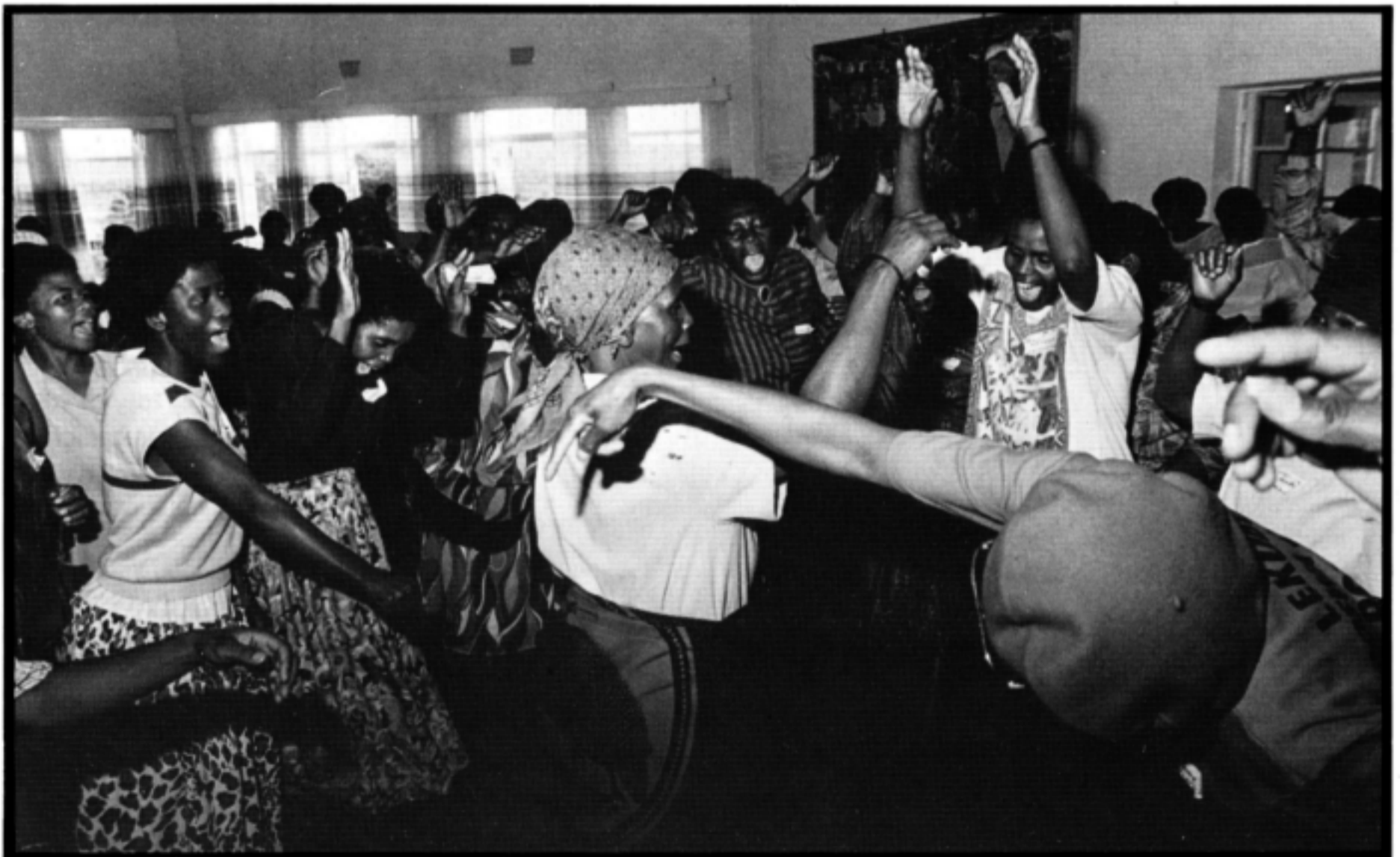
**Many rural women rely on money sent to them by male family members from the towns. This money does not always come. Co-operatives help to bring in much-needed income of women's own.**

# Rural Women Rise ...



Here women, old and young, have come together to ask questions like: 'What traditions affect us badly and how should they be changed? What traditions are good for women and can we try to keep them?'

Women's workshop, Maake, Northern Transvaal.



Rural women rise! The Rural Women's Movement holds meetings and workshops where rural women discuss their problems. They look for ways to raise their problems so their voices are heard throughout the land.

Celebrating at the Rural Women's Movement workshop, Marishane, North Eastern Transvaal.

# Rape in marriage - the law must change

**I**n December 1990, a Ciskei woman, Nombulelo Ncanywa charged her husband, Mandisi Raymond Ncanywa, with rape in the Bisho Supreme Court in the Ciskei.

Mrs Nombulelo Ncanywa, a nursing sister, married Mr Ncanywa, a Grahamstown businessman in 1980. By 1990 the couple were separated and Mrs Ncanywa had started divorce proceedings. On 26 March 1990 Mr Ncanywa went to Mrs Ncanywa's house. He beat up both Mrs Ncanywa and her cousin Mzoxolo Mqingwana, who was visiting at the time. He forced them to strip naked and tried to force them to have sex with each other. When they were unable to have sex, Mr Ncanywa shaved off their pubic hair and took away their underwear. He then raped Mrs Ncanywa.

The case between Mr and Mrs Ncanywa was historic. It was the first time ever in Ciskei and in South Africa as a whole that a court allowed a woman to charge her husband with rape. When Mrs Ncanywa charged her

---

**In South Africa a woman cannot charge her husband with rape. This will soon change though. Claire Keeton writes about a woman who challenged the law and won.**

---

husband with rape she was also challenging the Ciskeian and South African legal systems as well as the laws of many other countries.

Mr Justice Heath, the judge who heard the case, was influenced by a change in the law on rape in marriage in Britain. In British law, there is a 250-year old legal rule which says a woman gives permission to have sex with her husband when she gets married. This rule means that a woman cannot refuse to have sex with

her husband and therefore cannot accuse her husband with rape. This rule is called Hale's rule because it was made by a British judge, Chief Justice Hale in 1736.

In Britain this rule was changed in 1991. There is now a new law in Britain which says that it is a crime for a man to rape a woman, no matter who she is.

South African law on rape in marriage is based on Hale's rule so it is not possible in South African law for a woman to charge her husband with rape.

When he made his judgement in the case of Mr and Mrs Ncanywa, the Ciskeian judge, Justice Heath said no "civilised" country should follow Hale's rule. He said in modern society the husband and wife become equal partners with control over their own bodies. The vows which a woman makes at marriage do not mean her husband can force her to have sex with him.



Photo by Arna Zieminski

**Women protest against violence both inside and outside the home. International Women's Day march through Hillbrow, 8th March 1991.**

**L**egal experts in South Africa hope the law on rape in marriage will change. They are happy about Justice Heath's decision to allow Mrs Ncanywa to charge her husband with rape.

Mr Clive Plasket of the Legal Resources Centre in Grahamstown said that in 1989 the Law Commission had recommended that it should be a crime for a husband to rape his wife. The South African parliament rejected this mainly because it was felt that it would cause a break-up of family structure.

Ms Lydia Levine of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand feels that it is wrong to use the excuse of break-up of the family. She said if a woman charges a husband for rape she is not

responsible for breaking up her family. If a husband rapes his wife it is he who is responsible for destroying the family. "Just because she married him doesn't mean she gave him the right to violate her body. A woman has the right to live in safety in her own home and the law must protect this right", she said.

Mr Brian Currin, the director of Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) said the judgement was "a major step forward in the long and hard battle for an end to legitimated violence against women, and we commend Justice Heath for this".

Ms Karen Buckingham, a volunteer for Rape Crisis in Cape Town, demanded that the people who make the laws in South Africa recognise that rape within marriage is a crime. She said Rape

Crisis has statistics which show that 6 out of 10 battered wives have also been raped by their husbands.

In March 1992 Mr Ncanywa was found guilty of raping his wife. He was sentenced to eight years in prison. His sentence was suspended for five years. This means that he will not go to prison unless he rapes again in the next five years. Mr Ncanywa was sentenced at a time when the number of rapes in Ciskei is increasing. Major Bangile Tom, a spokesperson for the Ciskei police, said rape cases were reported nearly "every other day". Already 64 rapes have been reported since January this year. More than half of the people who have been raped have been younger than 18 years. One of them was a two-year old baby.

Rape is increasing throughout South Africa. In 1992, 23 000 rapes were reported in South Africa. The number of women raped is much greater because many women do not report that they have been raped. Organisations researching rape in South Africa and the homelands say there are over 1000 rapes every day in the country. They say one in every two South African women will be raped in their lifetime and that most of these rapes are committed by people the rape survivor knows - like husbands or boyfriends. A change in the law on rape in marriage will be a victory for women in South Africa. ●



**"There is no love in rape." A young boy holds a powerful message during an anti-rape march in Soweto, February 1990.**

## What to do if you want to report rape

Though we all hope we will never be raped, it is important we know what to do if it happens.

- Get help by calling the first person you can.
- Do not bath, shower or change your clothes. Any semen or blood on your body and your clothes is important evidence that the police need about the rapist.
- Ask a friend or relative to go with you to the police station, hospital or doctor.
- When you get to the police station say you want to speak to a police woman on your own. Tell her everything that happened.
- A doctor or the district surgeon must examine you to see how badly you have been hurt.
- A doctor must fill in the correct forms. The doctor can get the forms from the police station.
- If you are examined by the district surgeon you should see another doctor afterwards to check that the rapist has not passed a disease to you. You also need to check for pregnancy.
- To prevent pregnancy you can ask the doctor for the "Morning After Pill" or a method called "menstrual extraction". You can also ask for tranquillisers to improve your emotional state.
- Take time off work. Arrange to see a counsellor to help you deal with all the feelings which rape survivors have.

Organisations which help and advise rape survivors are:  
 People Opposing Women Abuse. Telephone (011) 642-4345  
 Soweto Crisis Line. Telephone (011) 473-2505  
 Rape Crisis, Cape Town. Telephone (021) 479762  
 702 Crisis Centre (011) 642-4462  
 702 Help Line (011) 331-9889

National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NICRO). NICRO can be contacted at the following telephone numbers:  
 Johannesburg (011) 29-5236; Pretoria (012) 326-5331; Bloemfontein (051) 47-6678; Durban (031) 304-2761; East London (0431) 2-4123; Kimberley (0531) 2-6392; Pietermaritzburg (0331) 5-4442; Port Elizabeth (041) 54-2611; Soweto (011) 984-4284; Cape Town (021) 47-4000; Tygerburg (021) 930-3965; Zululand (0351) 2-1574

Most of the advice in this article comes from the NICRO booklet called "What every woman should know about rape". You can get this booklet from NICRO offices around the country. ●

# WOMEN IN PERU

## Organising Communal Kitchens

**I**t is 2.30 in the morning. Apolonia Martinez is waiting in line to get water. She is not sure there will still be water by the time she reaches the front of the queue. Sometimes it runs out.

Apolonia has waited in line for over two hours, but she does not complain. She has got used to waiting for water.

She lives in a squatter camp outside Lima - the capital city of Peru in Latin America. She is one of six million people living in squatter camps around Lima. They face the same kind of problems as people living in squatter camps in South Africa. Everyday they have to struggle to get water and food. They don't have electricity or sewerage or adequate health services.

Apolonia is one of thousands of women living in these squatter settlements in Peru who have started to organise to make their lives easier. They have organised communal kitchens all around these areas so they can share the load of cooking and the cost of food.

She is the elected leader of one of these kitchens and says these kitchens don't only save time and money. They are a place where women

**Women in Peru have organised communal kitchens to share the work and the cost of cooking. SPEAK looks at how women organising these kitchens have broken tradition and become community leaders**

can meet and support each other.

"Because of these kitchens," Apolonia says, "we have become more of a community. Neighbours are working together, helping one another."

Another woman involved in the kitchen, Isobel, says these kitchens have helped women make ends meet.

"We know if we want our children to eat one healthy meal a day, we

must work together and contribute," she says.

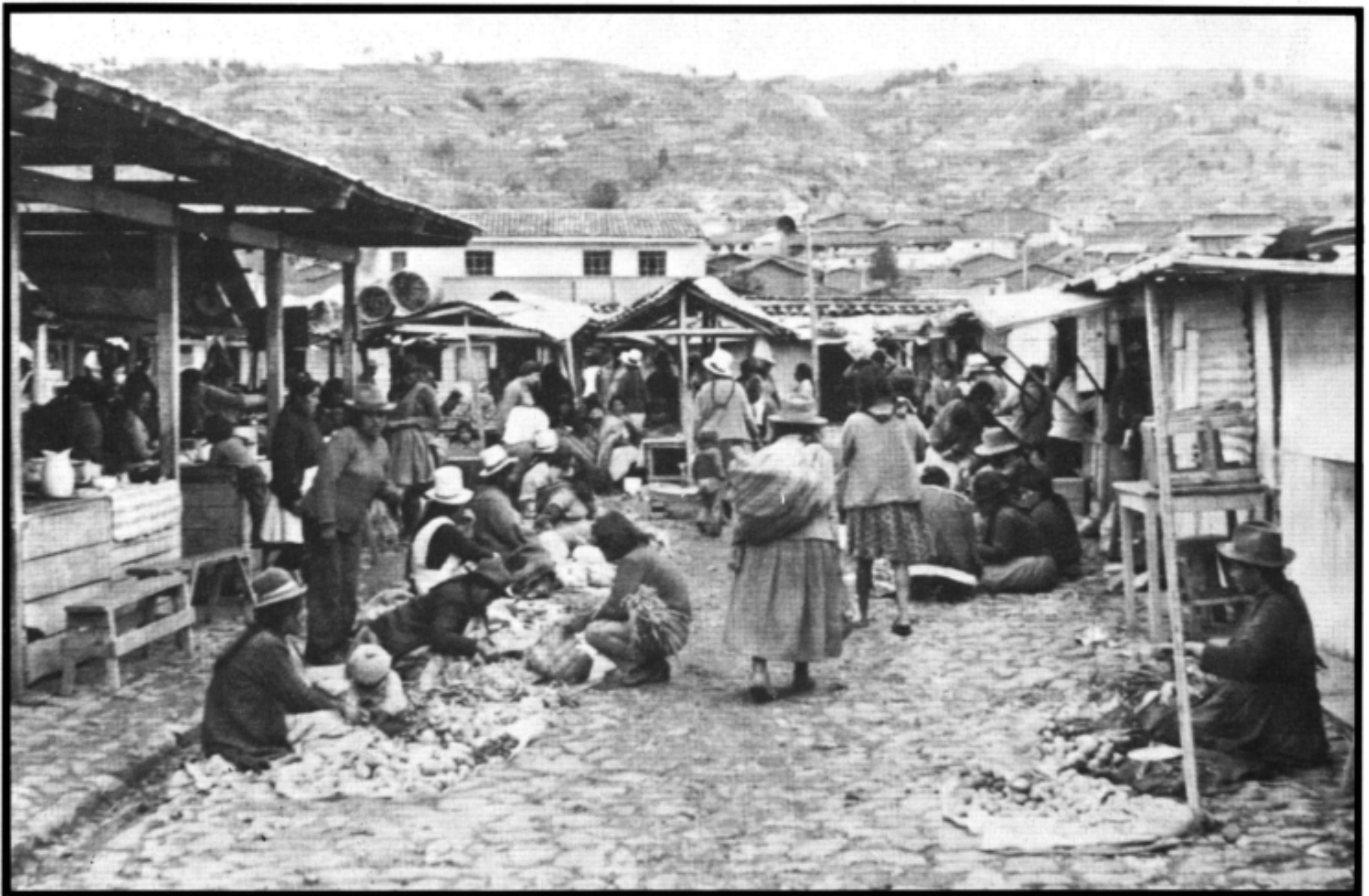
There are thousands of kitchens in the squatter communities in Peru. Each kitchen has between 15 and 300 members. They all belong to one central organisation which links them together and helps raise funds for them.

Each communal kitchen works like a co-operative. Every year members of the kitchen elect a president, a secretary, a treasurer and a health representative.

The kitchens are often situated in one of the member's homes. Each member contributes towards the costs of buying the food.

The members on duty take on different tasks each day. Some of them cook and distribute the meals, others collect water, or go to the market





**Women buying and selling at a market in Peru.**

to buy food for the day's meal.

The lunch preparations begin at seven in the morning. The members on duty that day decide on the day's menu, and go to the market to buy the food. Others stay behind and begin the cooking. Throughout the morning each family delivers their pots and buckets to receive the day's rations, and by 11.30 distribution of the food starts.

**O**n a good day, the meal is soup, a main dish and rice, but this doesn't happen often. Sometimes the women in the kitchens can only afford to cook soup.

Women in Peru are brought up to believe they are inferior to men. They are taught they have to serve the men in their lives.

These kitchens have proved to the women's husbands, friends and neighbours that women are capable of organising.

Marlena says: "At first my husband was opposed to the idea of my forming a kitchen. He said my place was in the home, taking care of the

children. He felt threatened by me doing something on my own. Once he saw I was completely committed to forming the kitchen, and once I was able to make him understand the kitchen would benefit him, our children and the neighbours, he changed his view. Now sometimes he even helps."

The women have also become active in community politics and other grassroots movements. Protests to demand schools and water are often organised and led by women. Apolonia was elected the community's public health representative.

Most importantly, through organising the kitchens, the women have changed their attitudes about themselves.

"Since I formed the kitchen, I feel a new self-respect," says Apolonia. "I think other people in the neighbourhood notice a difference in me. Some day I'll run for president of the country!"

*This story was taken from Women in Action - a magazine published by ISIS International. ●*



Mpumi Poswa and Yolanda Modise are both building careers that are usually followed by men.

# Women change the picture

**SPEAK asked Bobby Rodwell to talk to Mpumi Phoswa and Yoyo Modise of Film and Allied Worker's Organisation Community Video School (FAWO CVS) about their experiences as the only two women in a class of 12 film students.**

**SPEAK: Why did you choose to study film?**

**Yoyo:** Well I feel that it is about time that black women look beyond nursing and teaching as professions. In black society if women are lucky enough to complete their schooling and have the chance to study further they are expected to become nurses or teachers. Of course this goes back to the economic situation in many families - nursing and teaching are often the only possibilities. I wanted

**Is it possible to challenge the white male dominated film industry?  
Two young black women film students give their views**

to do something different and I was lucky my parents encouraged me. In fact it was my mother who saw the advertisement for the FAWO Community Video School. My parents who live in Orlando, Soweto really encouraged me to apply.

**Mpumi:** My parents wanted me to become a nurse! A respectable career...I resisted. I wanted to do something creative. I borrowed money from my sister to travel from my

Umlazi, Durban home to Johannesburg to be interviewed for the FAWO Community Video School. Today my parents are very happy about my choice. I took home the video I made at film school and they were really interested. Now my parents often give me ideas for film scripts!

**SPEAK: What do people say when you tell them you are training to be film makers?**

**Yoyo:** People are generally shocked. It breaks their stereotype of "the women's place is in the home". I enjoy the idea of breaking through barriers.

**SPEAK: Why is it important for women to break the barriers and become film makers?**

**Yoyo:** Women know about society, especially their own role in society. Film scripts are usually written by men. In most films women are shown as important for their looks and not their personality or the work they do. We need to see different images of women in film. Women must not be seen as inferior to men. That is an important message we can carry into our films. That is why it is important for women to become film makers.

**Mpumi:** Film is very powerful. We need to change the image of women in films.

**SPEAK:** Have you found it difficult being women in a class of mainly men?

**Mpumi:** Sometimes we get the message "you're a woman, what do you know?" from the men in the group but slowly they are changing their attitudes. Of course, it would have been very difficult if we had not been together. Yoyo and I have become really close.

**Yoyo:** Yes, some of the male students took a while to get used to the idea of women in the group. I never thought it would be easy. I was prepared to take on the challenge - that is why I entered film training school in the first place. I was tired of seeing "Van der Merwe - Director, Van der Merwe - Writer, Van der Merwe - camera" and all men! The South African movie industry is controlled by white men. There are few black film makers, even fewer black women. The



Photo by Sary Bernstein

**Behind the camera - Mpumi and Yoyo are determined to put women in a positive way in the picture.**

struggles Mpumi and I have faced in our class are good practice for what we face in the industry! And I intend to fight discrimination!

**SPEAK:** Has it been important to stick together?

**Mpumi:** We both feel that it would have been very difficult to be without each other. One day we had an argument - I was so worried that night I could hardly sleep - the next day all was forgotten and we were friends again. I was so relieved. It's been very important to stick together. I believe that black women working in the film industry must unite in order to strengthen themselves.

**Yoyo:** Black women must fight against our underprivileged backgrounds - its the only way we can empower ourselves!

The FAWO Community Video School (CVS) was set up in 1991. It was formed to give people in black communities the opportunity to learn how to make films and videos. The FAWO school aims to empower young black people

with technical skills to tell stories through film, about experiences and issues in their communities.

This is very important as the film industry is controlled by white males. The FAWO CVS runs a two year full-time course and part-time programmes. The school wants to increase the number of women on it's courses. ☺

FAWO CVS can be contacted at FAWO, P.O. Box 16399, Doornfontein 2028, Johannesburg. Tel (011) 4024570/1, Fax (011) 4020777

Information on training courses in film and video can also be obtained from the National Media Training Forum (NMTF). This is a national network of South African organisations involved in community media training. The people to contact are:

- Western Cape  
Fahdiel Manuel.  
Telephone (021) 448-1222.  
Fax (021) 47-5398
- Natal  
Kubi Rama. Telephone (031) 301-5657. Fax (031) 301-6611
- Eastern Cape  
Rod Amner. Telephone (0461) 311050
- Transvaal  
Chris Vick. Telephone (011) 337-1487.  
Fax (011) 337-8638

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP? GIRLS CAN BE ANYTHING THEY WANT TO BE THESE DAYS...



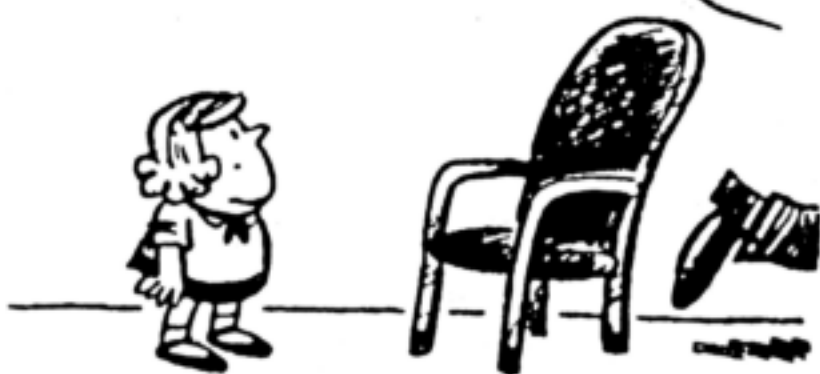
...BRAIN SURGEON... COLLEGE PROFESSOR ... PRESIDENT... YOU SHOULD DREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM...



HOW ABOUT PAID EQUALLY?



YOU'VE GOTTA BE REALISTIC...



FROM ETTA HULME FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM



Photo by Karen Hurt, SPEAK

*Nana Gumede shows off the dress that you could win!*

## Win a Beautiful Dress!

• Fill in the form below and you could be the lucky winner of this beautiful dress from Ekhaya Fashions.

• Ekhaya Fashions is the place to shop for bright and beautiful African clothing designs. You'll find Ekhaya Fashions at 112 Main Street, Johannesburg, which is on the corner of Main and Eloff Streets. Or give them a ring at (011) 331-9578.

1. Who is the newly-elected convener of the Women's National Coalition?
2. Which shop does the dress prize come from?

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postal code: .....

Send your entry form to: **SPEAK Magazine, PO Box 261363, Excom 2023, Johannesburg.** This competition is only open to people living in Southern Africa. No employee or relative of an employee of SPEAK or Ekhaya Fashions may enter this competition. The winner will be announced in the September issue of SPEAK, so make sure your entry form reaches us by 1 August 1992.

# “WORK WITH THE YOUTH AND TOUCH THE FUTURE”

**Steve Mokwena's work with youth is not just a job - it is his life. Beathur Baker discovered this when she interviewed him for SPEAK**

**T**rying to pin down Steve Mokwena for an interview is difficult because he is so busy. He is committed to finding ways to solve the problems the black youth in South Africa face. For him, unlike for many others, youth includes young women.

Twenty-four-year-old Mokwena grew up in Diepkloof, Soweto. It is his experiences which have made him committed to working with youth.

He was ten years old at the time of the 1976 Soweto uprising - and it made a deep impression on him.

He managed to finish high school and go to the

University of the Witwatersrand. He now works for the Joint Enrichment Programme of the South African Council of Churches. His work involves looking at ways to change the lives of thousands of young black people in South Africa who have little education and little chance of getting jobs. They often turn to crime and violence because of this.

He feels it is important to look at the problems young women face - like rape and teenage pregnancy.

“I've always known from seeing the lives of women in my own family and society that women suffer a lot of pain even within their own homes.



Photo by Karen Hurt, SPEAK

**Young women are also youth.**

“When people talk about youth they often mean young men - they do not think of young women as part of the youth,” he says.

“Often when people organise skills-training for the youth who have no education they forget about young women. They think of the man as the provider and so offer job-training courses for the men. They ignore the many teenage mothers who have to support children and are not always able to carry on with their education because of this.”

Mokwena says violence against women increases when political violence gets worse.

“Having grown up seeing violence against women, the youth have come to accept that men and women are not equal. In the townships, people are constantly exposed to violence. They don’t see violence against

women as something out of the ordinary - some even try to argue that it is right. We need to educate them. Teachers should be discussing this and educating the youth.”

He believes young men feel powerless and angry because of apartheid. They take out their anger on young women.

“Amongst the youth the girls have no say. Young men are frustrated and angry and they take it out on the girls.”

Mokwena believes this has to change.

He has been very busy helping to organise a National Youth Summit for the Joint Enrichment Programme which will be held this month. Youth organisations from all over South Africa have been invited to the meeting to try to find ways of solving the serious problems facing South African youth.

“We need to focus our energies around the youth, and in future make sure youth are given priority instead of being sidelined...,” he said. “If we work with the youth we touch the future. To ignore the youth is to condemn the nation”. ●

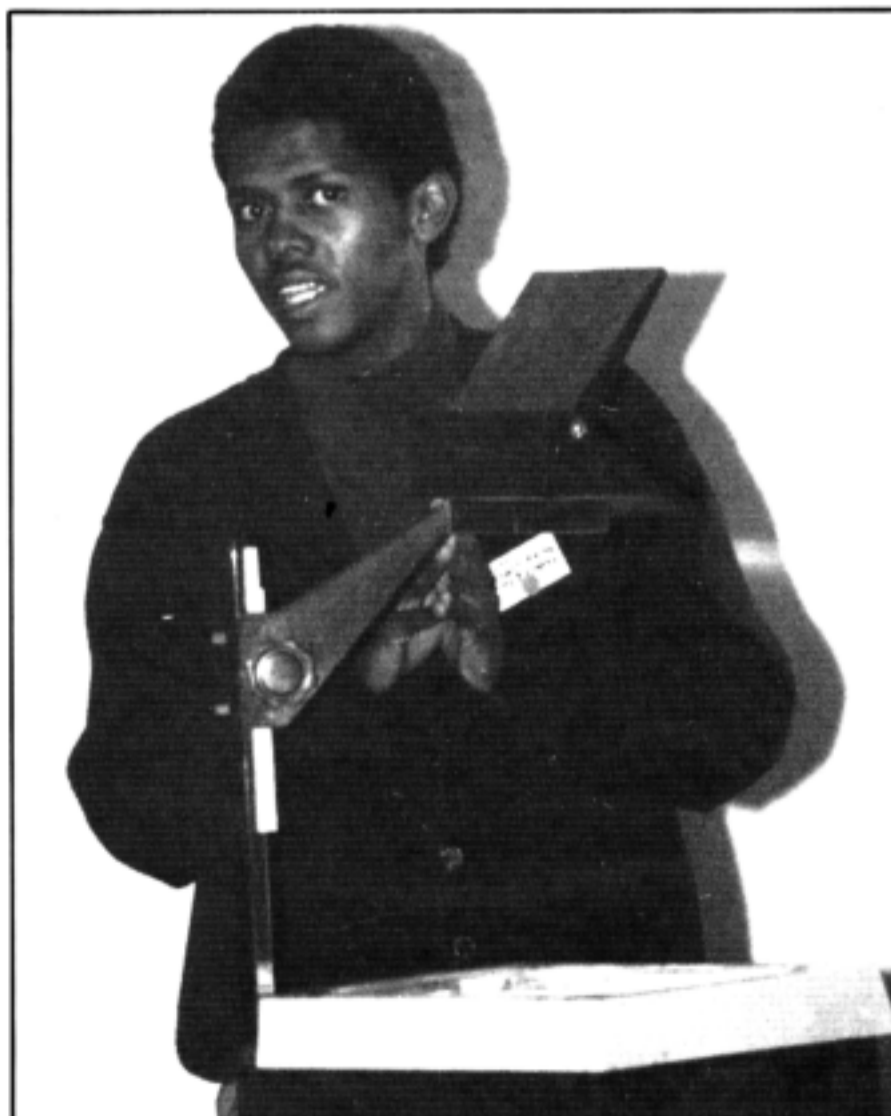


Photo by Sidney Selope

**Steve Mokwena:**  
**"To ignore the youth is to condemn the nation."**

# Thinking of having an AIDS test?

But I love you  
Show me you  
love me too.

If you really love me  
you won't risk giving  
me AIDS. Maybe we  
should both have  
a test.

If you think you have been infected with the HIV virus or that you have AIDS, you may want to have an HIV test. Don't rush into it.

First ask yourself why you want to have a test. These are some of the reasons:

- Some insurance companies insist on HIV tests for people applying for insurance policies.
- When you start a new relationship you and your partner may want to be tested to be sure you are both free of AIDS.
- Before becoming pregnant you may want to be sure there is no chance of passing the HIV virus to your baby.
- You may have been exposed to the virus by having sex without a condom, through a blood transfusion, or, in the case of drug addicts, sharing needles.
- If you have lost a lot of weight in a very short time, have a continuous cough, and continuous diarrhoea you may be worried you have AIDS. Remember, not all people with these signs have AIDS.



Graphic by Aids Counselling Trust (ACT)

Before having a test, visit a trained AIDS counsellor. Sometimes counsellors tell people they are unlikely to have AIDS and therefore do not need a test. For example, a woman may think she has AIDS because she shook hands, kissed or shared a cup or plate with someone who has AIDS. The counsellor will tell this woman it is not possible to get AIDS this way.

You should not have the test unless you feel prepared for it. No-one should test your blood without your permission.

Counselling is private. The counsellor will not tell anyone else what you have told her or him. If you want to, you could use a different name.

When you are ready, you can take the test at a hospital or private doctor. You will get the results two weeks later.

If you are told you are HIV positive it means you can pass the virus onto others. You may already have done so. If you are HIV positive you will find this difficult to deal with. You should go for after-test counselling to help you deal with the problem. Counselling is also provided for your family. There are AIDS/HIV support groups made up of people who are HIV positive.

*To find out more about AIDS contact the AIDS Centre at telephone: (011) 725 6552 or your local AIDS, Training and Information Centre. ☉*

# C-FILM - a new contraceptive



Photo by Karen Hunt, SPEAK

C-film looks like a small, thin square of see-through paper

**C-Film is a new contraceptive being sold in South Africa. SPEAK looks at this product**

## What is C-Film?

C-Film looks like a small thin square of see-through paper. It is made of polyvinyl alcohol film. This film contains a chemical called Nonoxynol-9. Nonoxynol-9 is a safe and

effective way of killing sperms. C-Film is sold in packets of ten and can be bought at any chemist without a prescription. One packet of ten costs R19.80.

## How is C-film used?

Before having sex a woman pushes the C-Film high into her vagina, close to the neck of her womb (cervix). Once it is placed in the vagina C-Film lasts for about two hours. If the woman wants to have sex more



than two hours after placing the first C-film, she needs to place another C-film into her vagina. When C-Film comes into contact with the fluids of the vagina, it becomes a sticky gel. This gel releases Nonoxynol-9 which kills sperms.

### How safe is C-Film?

Tests have shown that C-Film is a very safe way of preventing pregnancy. It does not harm your body in any way, no matter how often or for how long it is used.

### How effective is C-Film?

Tests carried out all over Europe have show that C-Film is a very efficient way of preventing pregnancy.

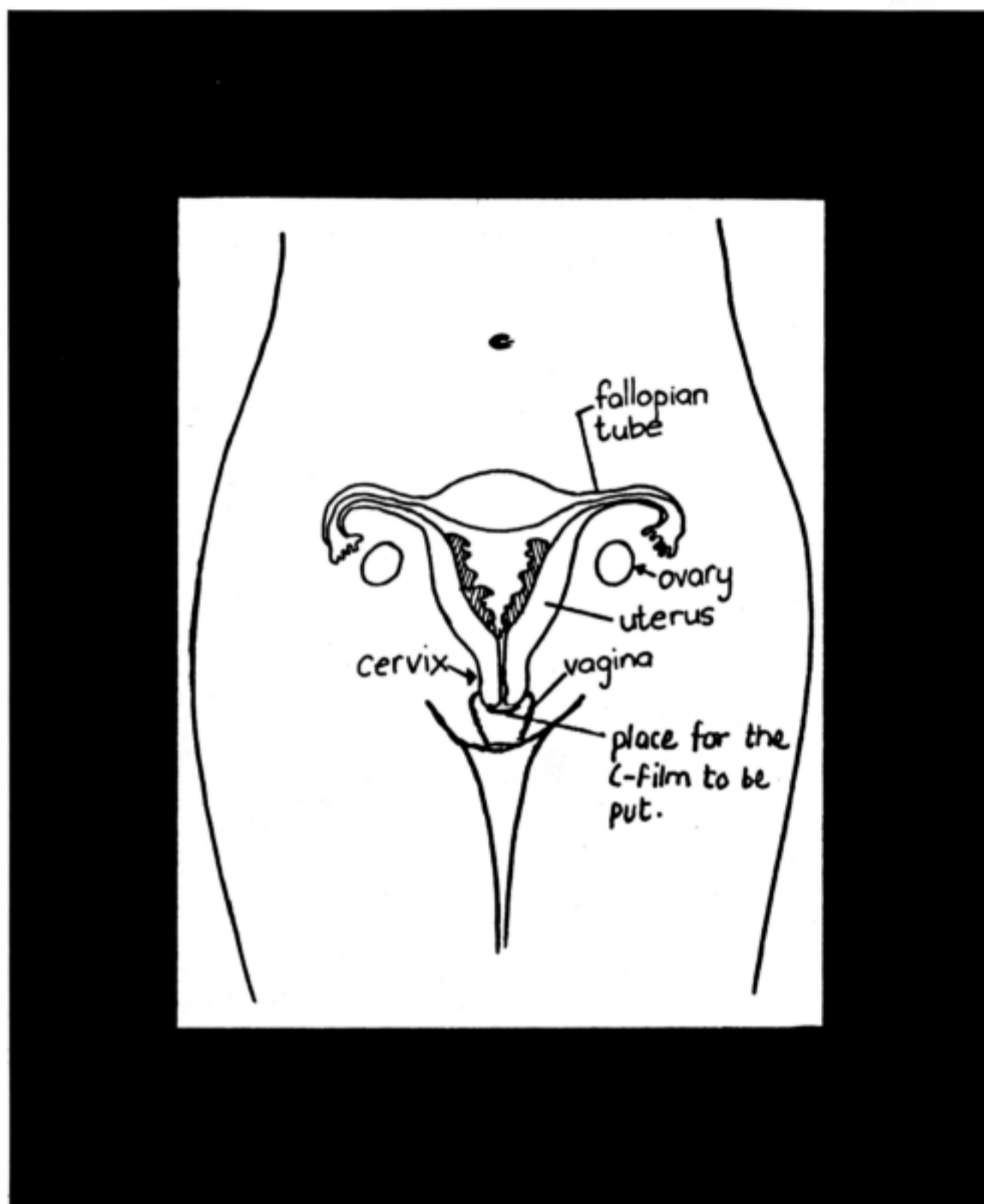
C-Film was found to prevent pregnancy in 93 out of every 100 women tested. Remember, C-Film only works if it is used properly - it has to be placed right against the neck of the womb (cervix).

### Should C-Film be used on its own?

C-Film has been shown to have a safety rate of 93 - 97% when it is used properly.

Although C-Film can be used on its own, there is a slight risk of pregnancy. C-Film is more effective in preventing pregnancy if a woman uses it with another kind of contraceptive like a condom or diaphragm.

SPEAK asked a woman pharmacist what she thought of C-Film and she suggested that women use C-film on its own most of the time but during their most fertile period they should



Drawing to show where C-Film should be placed.

use it together with a diaphragm or condom. To find out when your most fertile days are, discuss your menstrual cycle with a health worker.

### What are the advantages of C-Film?

When used together with a condom or diaphragm, C-Film is much more convenient than jellies or foams which can be messy and uncomfortable.

C-Film increases the effectiveness of other methods of contraception such as the pill, the loop and the rhythm method.

C-Film is easy to insert and does not change the way you feel during sex. A woman does not have to tell her partner that she is using C-Film and he will certainly not notice it. C-Film washes away with a woman's natural body fluids.

### Disadvantages of C-Film:

The major disadvantage of C-Film is that at a cost of R19.80 for 10, many South African women will not be able to afford it. And the Department of National Health and Population Development does not intend offering C-Film in its clinics.★

# Taxi Talk

**After 16 years in the trade union movement, union administrator Maggie Magubane writes she is fed up with paper commitments to non-sexism.**

**H**ow much longer are women going to be seen as minors - even by our political organisations and trade unions?

At every trade union congress, resolutions are passed saying the union will fight all forms of discrimination and promote participation and leadership by women.

This is only paper work. These resolutions are never put into practice.

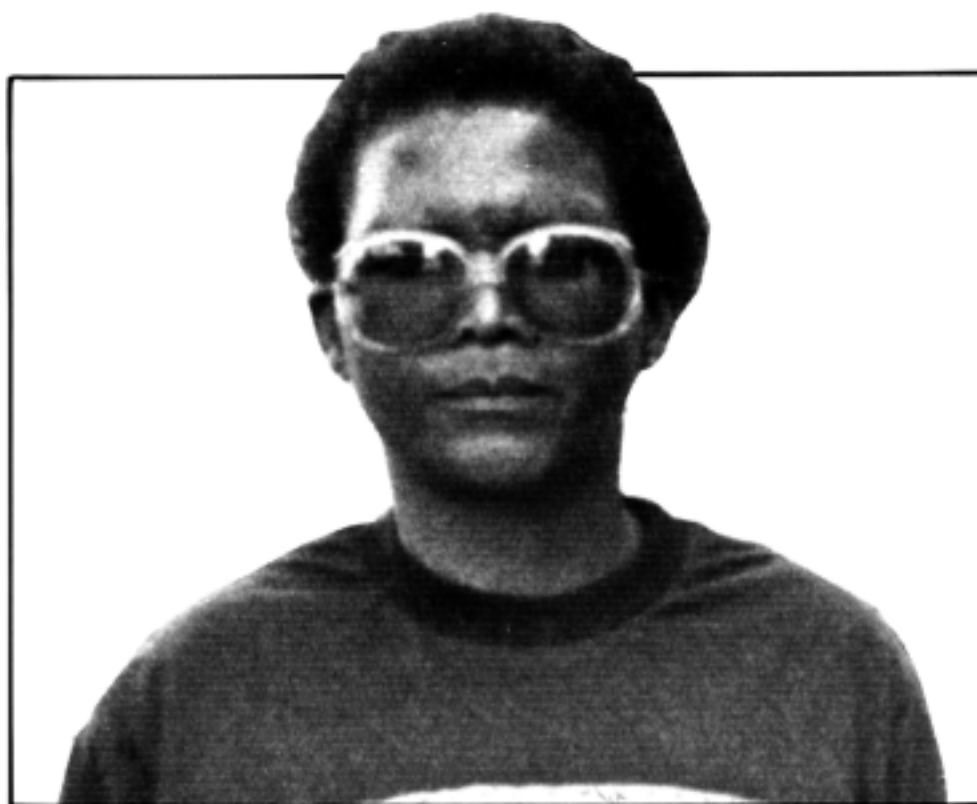
Afterwards we have to listen to male comrades saying there is no way they can be led by a woman. We have to listen to certain shop stewards insisting women can't be elected as office bearers - it is against tradition.

Despite the resolutions, there are still union organisers who believe it is your duty as a woman to make tea for them in the office.

You still find male comrades who won't let their partners go to meetings. They expect them to be at home after work and over the week-ends.

In meetings, women's views are not taken seriously.

In some meetings when a woman stands up to talk, the men will make funny remarks or whistle at her before she even opens her mouth. Many women won't talk in meetings because of this.



**Numsa administrator Maggie Magubane.**

When a woman does raise a point, she is often ignored. But if later in the discussion a male comrade makes the same point, the meeting will applaud him.

And then there are the male comrades who do listen to you, but who are shy others will say they are being dominated by women. They won't support

you at the meeting. They wait until afterwards and then congratulate you or ask you to explain your point.

**Y**et when you look at all the work done by women - in the home and in the workplace - you see how much we contribute. The men are seen as the heroes, but often it is thanks to the women that they get this recognition.

As a concerned woman, I ask myself, is it worthwhile for women to attend meetings when our views are not considered?

Are we in the trade union movement really striving for liberation?

If so, when are we going to start practising the policies of our organisations? When are we going to change this tradition business?

Customs are only beliefs. We need to create new traditions and customs if we are serious about building a truly new South Africa. ☉

# NOTICES

## Zambian Conference

"Women's Exclusive", a Zambian-based magazine is hosting a conference on 'Promoting women in business: the Southern and East African scenario'. It is on from 13 - 17 July this year. If you are interested in finding out more, write to:  
The Co-ordinator, Promoting Women in Business Conference, PO Box 31646, Lusaka, Zambia.

## A resource centre book

Want to start a resource centre in your community? There's a book out full of ideas and advice. It's called "Ulwazi - for power and courage."

Write to:  
ERIS, Media Resource Centre,  
Department of Education, University of Natal, King George V Avenue, Durban, 4001.

## Video on Rape

Nicro has produced a video about rape. It looks at many different sides of rape - like why women don't report rape, what the laws say and what support services are available for women who have been raped. Rape survivors speak about their experiences as well.

If you want to use the video, contact:

HEATHER REGINAS telephone: 011-290234 at the Nicro offices.

'Nicro' stands for: National Institute of Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders.

The United Nations Human Rights Centre in Geneva is preparing background documents for the World Human Rights Conference in 1993. It will consider recommendations from Non-Governmental Organisations if they are sent before March 1993. It is up to women to make sure their rights are put firmly on the agenda.

\* \* \* \* \*

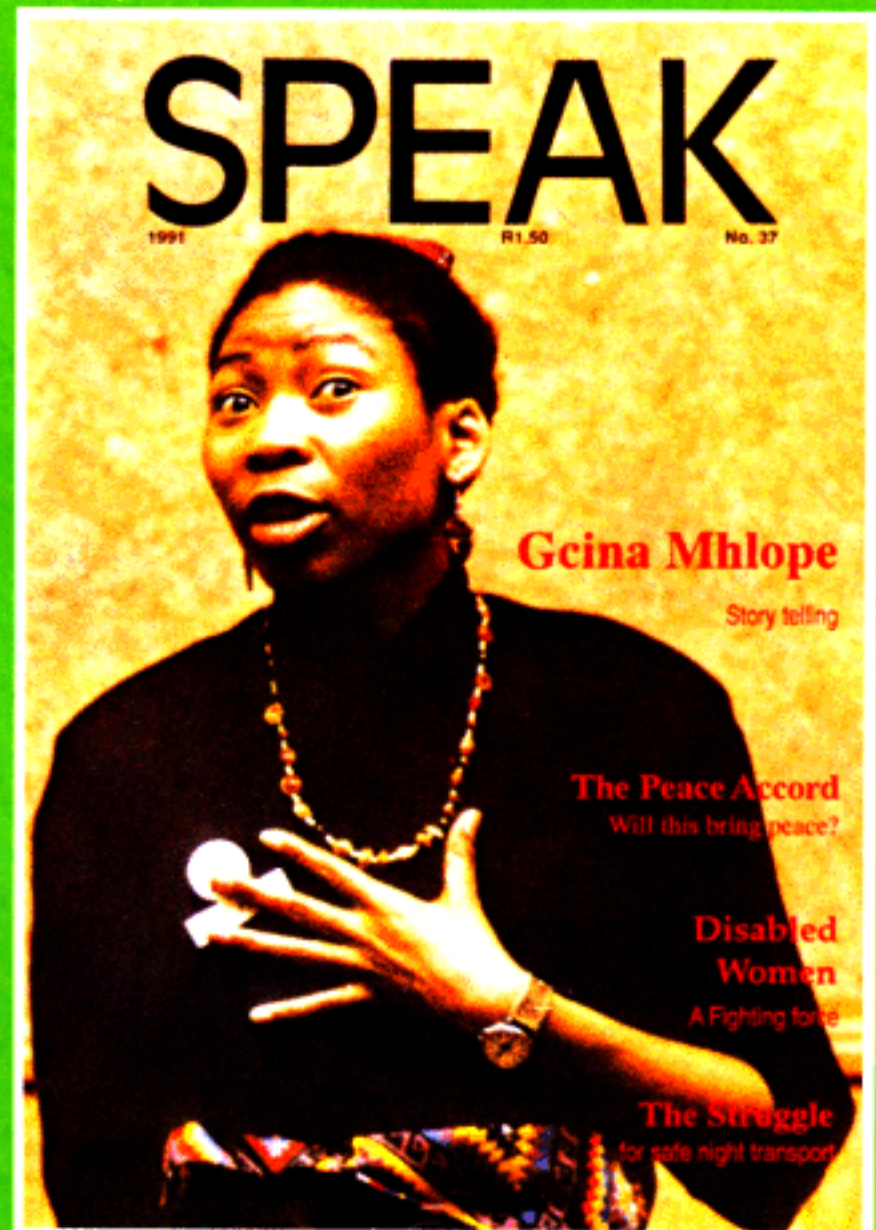
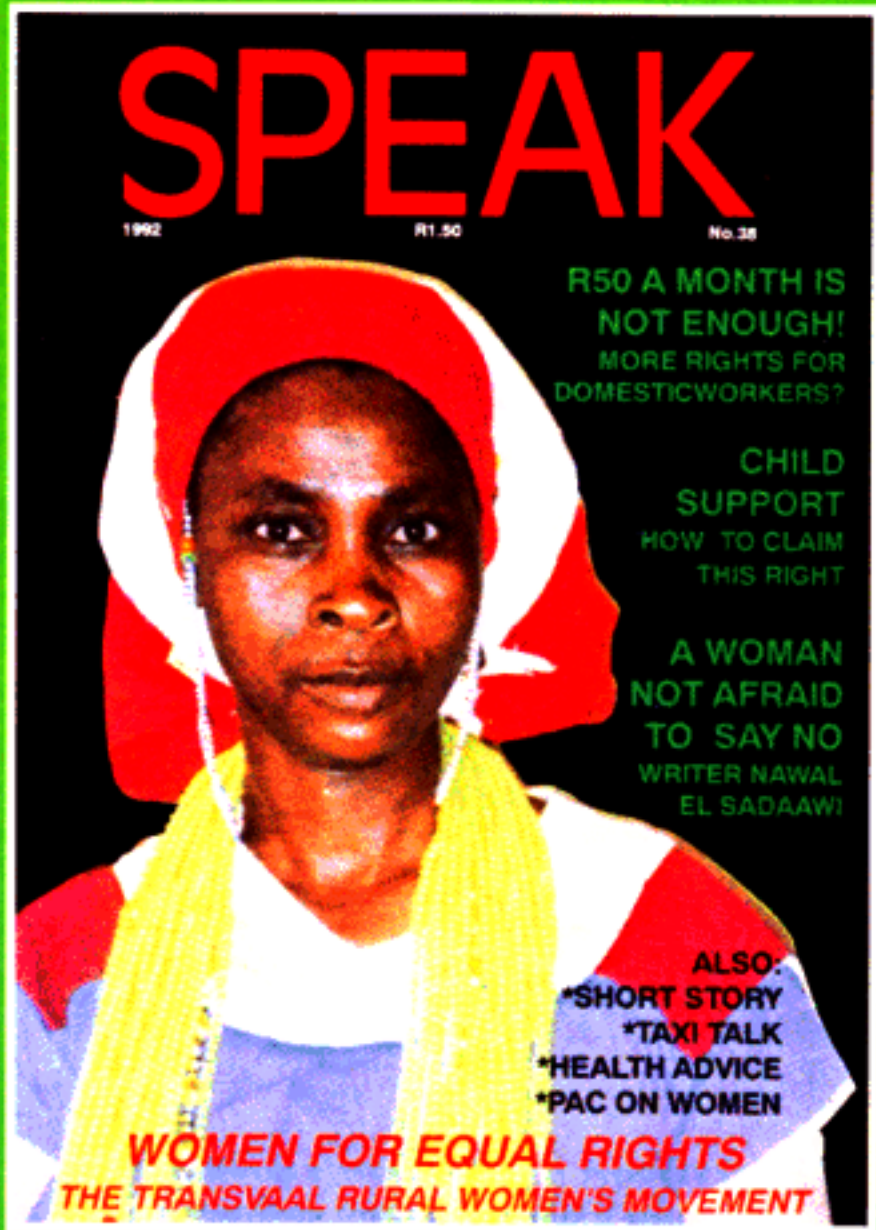
The International Women's Rights Action Watch tells us the latest big news is:

CHINA IS THE PLACE  
FOR THE  
1995  
UNITED NATIONS WOMEN'S  
CONFERENCE

If you want to put a notice on this board, these are our deadlines:

ISSUE	IN BY
August	1 July
September	1 August
October	1 September
November	1 October

Unfortunately we can't promise that there will always be space for all notices - but we will do our best!



Don't slip up...  
Remember to buy SPEAK

See subscription details on inside front cover

Printed by Hortors Print