



# SPEAK



RECEIVED BY  
9 JUN 1988  
U.S. MAIL

JULY 1984

No 6



**INSIDE:**

**LOOKING AT MATERNITY  
WOMEN IN LAMONTVILLE**

# contents

# LETTERS TO SPEAK



- \* Letters to Speak 2-3
- \* "As we are women we must go forward"-Lamontville women speak 4-7
- \* Keeping Fit Together Takes proper Organising 8-9
- \* Picnics and Preschools in Phoenix 10-11

## LOOKING AT MATERNITY

- \* Workers, but mothers too 11-13
- \* Maternity Benefits from U.I.F. 13-14
- \* We WILL be Working Mothers - what women in Unions are fighting for 15
- \* We're getting our way at O.K. 16-17
- \* Whiteheads Women are Winning 17
- \* Maternity rights in Other Countries 18

- \* STORY - Two Worlds of Motherhood 19-20
- \* HEALTH - The Diaphragm and the Condom 21-23
- \* AUGUST 9 - A Day for Women to Celebrate 24

A WOMAN'S PLACE  
 HUNGARION HOUSE  
 VICTORIA EMBANKMENT  
 LONDON WC2  
 01 836 6081

Dear Sisters

Enclosed is a subscription to SPEAK. We're really interested in seeing the magazine, and maybe in selling it in our centre.

If you know of any relevant magazines or newsletters that are produced by or for women we would really like to have some names and addresses to write to.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

In sisterhood *Caroline*

for A Woman's Place Collective

Perhaps anyone who can help with this request could write directly to "A Woman's Place", and also let us know so that all SPEAK readers can get to know about them too - SPEAK Collective.

TOKOZA COSAS BRANCH  
 Tokoza  
 1421

Dear SPEAK Collective

I did receive your letter on 8 June 1984. I am very happy that you have received my 1st letter. I will be happy if you can send me English SPEAKS as soon as possible. I don't know how I should return to you the money that I will be getting from selling those copies.

The Tokoza COSAS Branch, that is, Congress of South African Students wants to help you.

Yours in Struggle

Donald Miya

Secretary, Tokoza COSAS Branch.

We thank you for your support for SPEAK. People who sell SPEAKS can send the money by postal orders to the SPEAK address. Otherwise you can write to SPEAK to make other arrangements - SPEAK Collective.

MORE LETTERS  
TO SPEAK

## PACSA

PIETERMARITZBURG AGENCY FOR CHRISTIAN SOCIAL AWARENESS

P.O. Box 2338  
Pietermaritzburg  
3200

Phone: 20052

Ubunye House  
165 Pietermaritz Street  
Pietermaritzburg  
3201

PLEASE MAY WE HAVE 12 COPIES OF "SPEAK" NUMBER 4 AND ALL FUTURE ISSUES.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF YOU FOR PRODUCING THIS VERY RELEVANT BOOKLET.

P.O. Lefalane  
0741

Dear Women

I am exceptionally happy to have this chance to write to you. Per chance I got your booklet SPEAK from my daughter who is studying in Natal. When reading it, I found the contents therein very important, interesting and educating. Such as:

- a. Problems of women workers.
- b. Health.
- c. The life of a woman organiser.
- d. Story.
- e. Of all, the New Black Tax.

Really, I have learned something from SPEAK.

I am staying in one of the rural areas Sekhukhuneland. My nearest town is Pietersburg. We have an organisation which started last year, 1983. It consists of thirty people, women only. Some are women teachers, five are housewives. The name of the organisation is "Etsoseng Club".

Nobody had any experience in running an organisation when starting this, we have collected R10.00 each member, tried to raise money by buying and selling. Our aims are to help villagers by teaching cooking, baking, cripples and the poor people to help themselves.

SPEAK can help a lot with its experience.

Yours sincerely

W.M. Nchabeleng (Mrs)

South African

Institute of

Race Relations

(Natal Inland Region) Telephone: 21286

Incorporated Association  
and for sale



P. O. No. 11 1988 00 000 0

AFRICAN ART CENTRE,  
THE OLD MILL,  
Printing Office Street,  
Pietermaritzburg  
Telephone 21796

SPEAK Collective

Could it be possible for me to get your regular magazine called SPEAK.

I am a representative of the Domestic Workers Association and would like to have about 20-30 copies each time you make out a print. I have found this magazine very interesting and bears helpful issues and would like to distribute them to the domestic workers.

Please let me know if this magazine is free or if not how much do I have to pay?

Sincerely

Thembeke Sibisi

We are glad that SPEAK is useful for people. Each SPEAK costs 10 cents, and then the postage costs are added on.

# "AS WE ARE WOMEN WE MUST GO FORWARD."

SPEAK spoke to women from Lamontville about their women's group. The Lamontville woman's group is a branch of the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW). NOW is a new organisation in Natal - mainly in Durban and surrounding areas.

## FORMING THE WOMEN'S GROUP

The woman's group in Lamontville was formed in November 1983. That time we were planning our woman's group as things were so bad.

Every thing was upside - down.  
Nobody knew where they  
were going to get help.

Things had been very bad in Lamontville in 1983. There was fighting in Lamontville after Mr Dube was killed. Mr Dube was a popular leader in Lamontville. He was fighting against rent increases. He showed up how badly the administration board had been dealing with house repairs. He also showed how the community councillor's did not represent the community. His killing was an

injury against the community because he supported the struggles of the community. After Mr Dube was killed many police came in with tear gas.



They were coming in the houses of the people and shooting tear gas. The police were driving around Lamontville shooting tear gas. It went on day in and all night. Police camped up in the hills by the clinic the whole month until July. People could not be on the streets at night. The police would come into the houses - kicking the doors and hitting people with shamboks. One of the members of our woman's group came home one night and there was blood all over the house.

The police had hit her son. Women tell of being raped by police at that time.



It was really bad. Then there was the rent increase and the bus boycott as well.

## HELPING EACH OTHER

Our woman's group spoke about the problems - children with no place to stay, no food, no work. At first 15 women joined the group. Each paid 50c a month to save up to help each other in the group who has problems. Maybe some children can't go to school, maybe somebody is sick and can't go to work.



We held our meetings in one woman's

home. After two months we moved to the church. Now we meet at the church every week. We elected a chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, vice-treasurer, secretary and vice-secretary and two organisers.

## TALKING TO THE ADMINISTRATION BOARD

In March we decided to go and see the superintendent of Lamontville, Mr Turner, of the Port Natal Administration Board, as he was prepared to close doors on people who had no money to pay rent.

We organised as women because we would be safe from tear gas and shooting as woman and children. We could appeal on behalf of our children. We wrote a letter to take with us. When we came there to Port Natal Administration Board, the policeman at the gate said: "You are not allowed to see the superintendent."

We told him: "You're not allowed to stop us at the gate."

So he said: "Alright, you can carry on."

Mr Turner said he would not see all of us. We said that we were all together. He asked us what we were complaining about. We asked him why the rents were going up when the houses were cracked and broken. Why are they closing houses when people can't pay rents. They should speak to the people first and ask them why they are not paying rent before closing houses and taking furniture.



While we were at the Administration Board office we saw policemen gathering around with their guns. But this did not worry us - nothing happened with them.

Mr Turner said he would take our complaints to Mayville. But we knew he did not take our letter there. Instead he took it to Ms Nxasane, who is a councillor. He said we must talk to the councillors and not to him.

There is no point in going to the councillors. We can't speak to them because they do nothing for the people.

Nothing has happened about the letter. We have since asked Mr Turner where the reply is, and he said: "They can't reply from Mayville, and I don't know why." When we said we want to go to Mayville, he said: "You can't see them. You have to wait until I tell you."

## REPAIRS USED TO GET DONE

Things were different before. This was about 1960 when we were under Durban Corporation. The buses from Lamontville to town were only 5c, and return was 10c. The rent for a three roomed house was R1-25 per month in the 'New Look' section. Flats cost



R5-00 plus 20c for the school levy. There were no community councillors at that time.



Mrs Luthuli of the Women's Group shows an unrepaired hole in a house in Lamontville.

The houses were painted every year. When the windows were broken they would go to the office and they would be replaced. Now they just put plastic in. The toilets when they jammed, the plumbing people would come and fix it without charging. Now they don't come at all. Even the doors, when they were broken - they would come and bring new doors and take the old one back. If there were holes in the roof they would come and fix them. When the owner of the house was sick they would tell the office. The family would not have to pay until the owner was well again. When a person lost his job he was supposed to report

until he got one. Now they just move the people out and take the furniture away.

And as we are women we say, "We must move forward, WE cannot delay while things are so bad in Lamontville.

We have discussions. For example we discussed that we do not want Lamontville to go to KwaZulu. We will lose our rights if we do.



We want to do sewing and knitting and crocheting so that we can sell what we make for money. A lot of women cannot do it and others will teach them. We will use the money in the treasury to buy wool. Many women in the group

are domestic workers and others are factory workers.

We work with other organisations in Lamontville - JORAC (Joint Rent Action Committee), JCC (Joint Commuters Committee), Malayo (the youth organisation) and COSAS. There is a joint co-ordinating committee where there are representatives of the women's group, JORAC, JCC, and Malayo. If there is going to be a meeting or an issue in the community we all work together at it. We share costs too - say of a loud speaker for a big meeting. Each organisation must raise money for it.

When there is any meeting we ask to speak for 5 minutes to tell the people about our women's group.



Another thing, the women said we must write a letter to the women of Hamba-

## Lamontville

nati and we have to ask the women of Chesterville and the women of Klaarwater. And all these women said we have to go and see Mr Kornhof about Lamontville incorporation into KwaZulu. We do not want to go to KwaZulu. We will lose our section 10 rights, and then belong to a 'homeland', and have to pay R1-00 at the labour bureau to get a job - like Kwa Mashu.



We are thinking of taking a full bus to see Mr Kornhof - we will go as women and mothers. He can't shoot us.

A lot of women are finding it difficult to make meetings at night (6 o'clock) because they have to cook for children and husbands. Some men do not like their wives to come out. We are talking about changing our meetings to a Saturday or Sunday instead of a weekday - so that more women would be free to come.

## THE NEXT ISSUE OF SPEAK IS LOOKING AT CHILDCARE

SO PLEASE WRITE TO US ABOUT:-

- who looks after your children while you're at work?
- how far away from home do you have to take them to the place where they are cared for during the day?
- how much do you pay for day-care?
- how many children are looked after at the same place as your child?
- what do you feel about your child's day-care?

Please send your reply to: SPEAK COLLECTIVE, P.O. Box 19375, Domerton, 4015, Durban.

## KEEPING

We organised a women's keep-fit group in our area, and we want to tell other women about it. This is because we see organising women as important. For us the experience has not been an easy one, because things have fallen apart quite a bit. So we want to tell about this, the problems we've had and the lessons we've learned.

Mostly to build again.

It all started with 3 of us sisters doing keep-fit at home. The woman who lives next door saw us exercising and wanted to join in. This got us thinking. We felt that we wanted to form a group that would last - so that we had a permanent group. We wanted to be all women - to do something new instead of just sticking to cooking and all. We thought if women start to come out of their homes for activities it would be good. Maybe in time we could organise other things as a women's group.

Anyway, our group got going as one of our members made friends with a gymn teacher who offered to come and instruct us.

By this time we were exercising in one of the member's yards because it was bigger. As more women in the area saw us they wanted to join in.



## FIT

## TOGETHER

So our group became bigger until we felt the best place to fit us all was the hospital parking lot not far from the end of our road. We organised to wear matching track suits to make us stand out more and show that we were all part of one group. Because we were moving to another venue we needed transport, and so we used to travel to the parking lot in one of the member's car. This turned out to be a big problem in the end as we were dependent on her for transport. When she withdrew, this meant we could no longer travel there.

### SELF PROTECTION

Some of the women were afraid of the parking lot. As we did not want to lose any members for any reason we took along weapons (like candlesticks, a whip, a pair of nunchukers) to ensure that we could protect ourselves. We did not have any problems though.

### A NEW TURN

One evening one of our members came feeling so depressed about her problems with her husband, we decided not to go out running but instead to sit and talk. So, almost by mistake our group took on a new development.

This started a good pattern. So from then on the same kind of thing was discussed, even while exercising. This particular woman's husband even fussed about her coming to keep-fit. We encouraged and supported her and now she's got her way and more. Now she even goes out with friends with his acceptance. Of course we hear husbands say: "You can go to keep-fit with



## MEANS

## ORGANISING

pleasure - as long as my food is ready on time!" One woman who was trying to get her husband to stay home more and spend some time with the children, was told: "OK, if you give up keep-fit." In the end she didn't give up keep-fit and he does spend more time with the children. Many husbands supported the group. So our discussions really helped.

We had some actual meetings but we did not form a structure as we felt we did not need it at that time. We decided to raise funds for equipment, so we had a raffle. One member said she was opening up a basement in which the equipment could be stored for any member to take out for a while.

Around this time we also had a Christmas party - mostly for the children in our street - husbands were also invited. The women organised it.

### THE PROBLEMS START

It seems that too many activities of our group depended on one person. The member who had the car was also the member whose basement was to be used, and it was the same person who looked after the money. The Christmas party and raffle draw was at this same member's house and money is kept there. It seems that she became jealous when someone else also became friendly with the instructor, who she saw as 'her friend'. So she never went and picked up the gym instructor again.

As it was the end of the year anyway, it was difficult to organise against things falling apart like this. Everybody

## PROPERLY

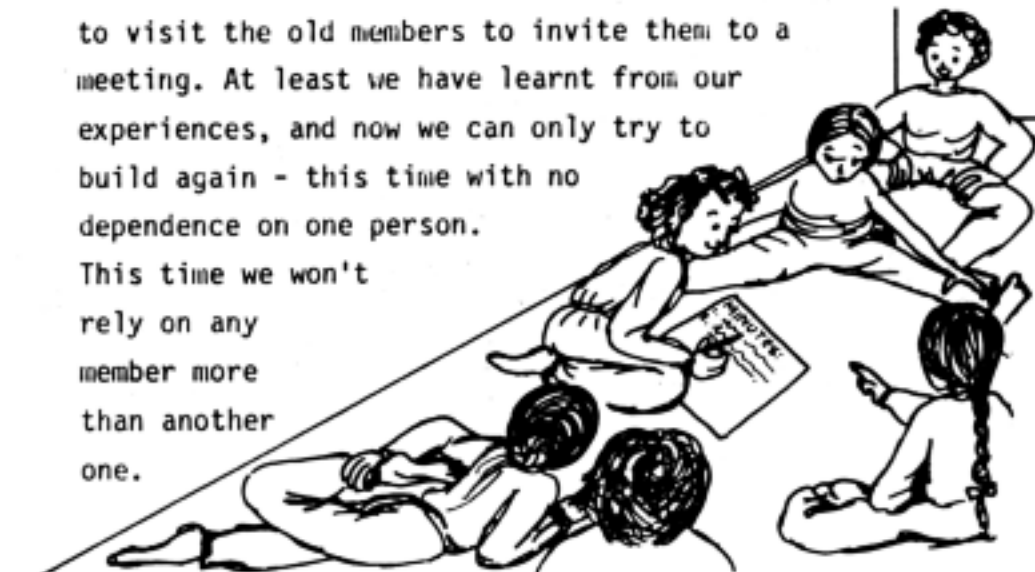
felt disheartened. People have started doing keep-fit on their own.

When we think back - going to the parking lot had been so good because we ran together, talked, exercised, maybe ran off to the shops, talking more. We seemed to handle problems then - like some of us wanted to go to a fair instead of keep-fit and others wanted to do keep-fit. We didn't want the group to split, so we did both - we did keep-fit and got to the fair by running there!

### AND NOW?

We want to start again on a fresh footing. This time with a proper structure and organisation - keep proper minutes of our 'business matters'. We are starting to visit the old members to invite them to a meeting. At least we have learnt from our experiences, and now we can only try to build again - this time with no dependence on one person.

This time we won't rely on any member more than another one.



# PICNICS AND PRE-SCHOOLS

Northlen Women's Circle in Phoenix are going ahead strongly. In SPEAK number 3 we heard about how they started their organisation. In this issue we read about their latest happenings

Women from Unit 15 asked the Northlen Women's Circle to help them set up a group there. House meetings were held in Unit 15, and soon Sunford Women's Circle had been established. Pre-schools were started, and Northlen Women's Circle helped with the training of the pre-school teachers. Now Sunford and Northlen Women's Circles are like sisters, and often consult each other.

Pre-school teachers are women chosen from the Women's Circle who are keen and good with children. The teachers are taken to see how the other pre-schools are run. There is no formal

training, but the teachers go to monthly workshops where they learn useful skills for working with children. The workshops are run by the Coastal Society for Early Childhood Education.

The Women's Circle organised an end-of-year graduation of the pre-schools. Both Northlen and Sunford Women's Circles participated. To raise funds for the graduation they arranged a trip for women and children to the Hazelmere Dam. Even though it had been raining, everyone insisted on carrying on with the trip. Games were planned for the day, starting off with a three-legged race for both the women and children. Then there was a game where the women had to find and put on their shoes from a bundle while blind-folded. There was much laughter! Another game was musical chairs. There were prizes for winners of all games. There was also a singing



# IN PHOENIX

and dancing competition.

"While we were there it rained and we had to shelter under the mango trees at the dam. But we carried on with the fun!"

It was a day enjoyed by all.

Many more events have taken place. The Annual General Meeting was held in February at which the Secretary, Treasurers and other office bearers are elected. Then in May there was a jumble sale which raised R50.00. Handwork groups and keep-fit classes continue, and yet another areas has come to ask for help in setting up pre-schools.

As one can see, there is always work to do - but it has big rewards!



## WORKERS, BUT MOTHERS TOO

Monica works in a factory. She is a single woman, living on her own in town since she arrived to look for a job. She started work as a cleaner in a clothing factory and was working well so that she could be promoted to a machinist. The pay was very low and she just managed to make ends meet. She was lonely in town but soon made a few friends. She became friendly with a man who lived near her rented room.

In a few months Monica found she was pregnant. She told the man, but he just laughed and said it was not his business. He had asked Monica to marry him, but once he learnt of her pregnancy he stopped visiting her.

Monica saw that she would have to care for the baby on her own. But she didn't mind. She was a working woman and would not have to worry about money since she could earn. But as the months went on and Monica began to grow bigger the supervisor at the factory came up to her and asked her when she was going to leave work. Monica said: "I'm not leaving work - I'm going to leave my baby



by Käthe Kollwitz

with my mother and return to work."

"Oh no!" said the supervisor, "that's what you think. The rules here say that a pregnant woman must leave work. Once you have had the baby you can come back here and try for a job. If we have one and employ you, you'll be lucky."

Monica couldn't believe her ears. Hadn't she worked as hard and well as anyone else? Why was she being treated like this. Surely as a woman she had a right to have a baby and a right to keep her job?

The machinist next to her overheard what the supervisor had said, and at lunch time she spoke to Monica.

"I had the same problem," she said, "my husband and I decided to have a baby after 2 years of marriage. I was then working at another factory and my husband was also working. We had planned that we would save for the baby and once I fell pregnant I would stay at home until the baby was a year old. I fell pregnant and decided I would leave work by my 6th month. But when I was only 3 months pregnant my husband lost his job and became unemployed. Our rent went up

too. We decided that I couldn't leave work but would have to find someone to care for the baby from when it was 2 months old. I spoke to my boss and told him I wanted 3 months leave to have my baby. I knew I had to do this even though I didn't know who would look after my baby when I got back to work.

The boss said: "Take your leave, but you will have to reapply for your job. I can't afford to keep your job open for 3 months. My worry is to pay my staff, my rent, and make my profits.

And so I went to have my baby - at the same time worried sick about how we would manage and who would care for the child

once I was able to go out again looking for work. After a month of walking around from factory to factory I found a job - but my husband wasn't so lucky. A neighbour cared for the baby while we were both away - I at work and my husband looking for a job. Life is hard for us - the bosses seem to think we shouldn't have babies. But they have to accept that we will because we are not only workers - we are also women. Of course we must be able to have children."



# MATERNITY BENEFITS FROM U.I.F.

The story of Monica and her friend is the story of almost every woman worker who needs to work for survival, and, if she is of child-bearing age, could fall pregnant.

But why should a woman worker face so much insecurity and fear, and not have the choice of keeping her job. The stories of these 2 women raise many questions for women workers.

What we need to fight for is the right of a woman worker to come back to her job when she has a baby; and to have financial support (maternity benefits) while she is on leave. She needs the right to have and care for her baby, and the right to return to the same grade of work at the same pay without losing out on any benefits. And furthermore she needs good child-care facilities and time off to look after sick children.

If a woman has these things it will help her to be more independent. She would be more able to cope with other problems she has to face, like being left by the father of the child, from dealing with the problem of an unemployed husband, rent increases and child-care.



## WHAT IS U.I.F.?

All workers, except farm workers, domestic workers, and seasonal workers have Unemployment Insurance Fund (U.I.F.) money deducted from their wages every week. Workers can claim from this money when they lose their jobs. Women workers can also claim from U.I.F. when they go on Maternity Leave to have their babies. U.I.F. is run by the government. While a fund of this kind is necessary, the present fund is not nearly good enough.



## WHO CAN CLAIM?

Women who have worked for at least 4 months before they leave to have their baby can claim Maternity Benefits. Those who can't claim are women working on farms, domestic workers, migrant workers, and workers who are only employed for a few months every year. You also won't get U.I.F. if your boss is paying you more than one third of your normal weekly wage (one third is equal to 33%).



## HOW MUCH MONEY WILL YOU GET?

Maternity Benefits pay 45% of your weekly wage. That is, for every one rand that you were getting before, you will now get only 45 cents. For example, if you were getting R55.00 a week, you will now only get R21.00 on Maternity Benefits.



### FOR HOW LONG CAN YOU CLAIM?

It is possible to claim for 18 weeks before your baby is born, and up to 8 weeks after it's birth. BUT, THERE IS A CATCH:- Maternity Benefits only give you one week of payment for every six weeks you have worked before going on

Maternity Leave-

TABLE

A is number of weeks worked, B is number of weeks you can claim for EXAMPLE

A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
6	→1	12	→2	18	→3	24	→4	30	→5	36	→6	42	→7	48	→8	54	→9
60	→10	66	→11	72	→12	78	→13	84	→14	90	→15	96	→16	102	→17	108	→18



### HOW TO CLAIM YOUR MONEY

The boss should write maternity as a reason for leaving on your blue card. Take this blue card with you when you leave work. The bosses have to give it to you. Very soon after you stop work you should take your blue card with you to the U.I.F. offices.

In Durban there is an office in Masonic Grove government office (Telephone: 321211). There are also offices in all the big townships.

You will be given a form to fill in. On this form there is a medical certificate which your doctor must complete. Your money will be posted to you every two months.



### WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOUR MONEY DOESN'T COME?

If you have put in your claim for Maternity Benefits and your money doesn't come you must:

1. Go to your union office and ask the

organiser to phone the U.I.F. office.

2. If you have no union, or your union can't or won't help you, you must contact one of these 2 places:

BLACK SASH ADVICE OFFICE or  
SUITE 1 CENTRAL COURT  
125 GALE STREET  
DURBAN  
PHONE: 69215

LEGAL RESOURCES CENTRE  
10 ST JOSEPH'S CENTRE  
20 ST ANDREW'S STREET  
DURBAN  
PHONE: 65785

### SOME PROBLEMS WITH THIS FUND



It is only available to some groups of workers. Farm workers, domestic workers and migrant women workers can't claim.



The amount you can claim depends on the number of months you have worked for. This means you need to have about 3 to 4 years between each of your children to claim full benefits for each pregnancy.



You can only claim for 18 weeks before and 8 weeks after the baby is born, instead of being able to have more leave after the baby is born.



You only get paid 45% of your weekly wage.



If you are getting paid more than 1/3 of your wage by your boss while you are on maternity leave, you can't claim any benefits from the government fund.



AND OF COURSE THERE IS NOTHING FORCING BOSSES TO GIVE YOU BACK YOUR JOB WHEN YOU RETURN. IF YOU DO GET YOUR JOB BACK YOU MAY BE PAID AS A NEW WORKER, AND HAVE LOST ALL YOUR BENEFITS!

How can we allow this situation to continue? We must see what can be done, and what is being done at the moment.

# WHAT ARE THE UNIONS FIGHTING FOR?

In some factories where independent trade unions organise, the workers have won certain maternity rights. Some of these factories are:

Smith Industries in Pinetown, organised by the Metal and Allied Workers' Union.  
Whiteheads in Tongaat, organised by the National Union of Textile Workers.  
O.K. Bazaars and Clicks organised by the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union of South Africa.

Kellogs in the Transvaal organised by the Sweet Food and Allied Workers' Union.  
Here are some of the demands that have been won by these unions:

- \* That a woman's job is kept open for her and that when she comes back she will be on the same rate of pay as she was before.
- \* The number of months that she can stay away on maternity leave is much longer at some factories. For example, women workers from O.K. Bazaars have won the right to take 1 year's Maternity Leave.
- \* When women workers return to work after being on Maternity Leave they receive the same salary increases as those that the other workers have been given while

they were away on Maternity Leave.

- \* The bosses pay all benefits, like U.I.F. medical aid, and pension while the woman worker is on Maternity Leave so that doesn't lose out.
- \* Women workers are not forced to do heavy or dangerous work which would damage the health of themselves or their unborn child while they are still pregnant.
- \* Women workers have won the right to full pay while on Maternity Leave.

But these rights are the least we should expect. Women still don't receive money from the government fund for long enough after the baby is born, and anyway getting only 45% of their salaries is not much good. And what about the right to child-care paid for by the company, and the right of workers to take paid time off to care for their sick children?



# THINGS ARE GOING

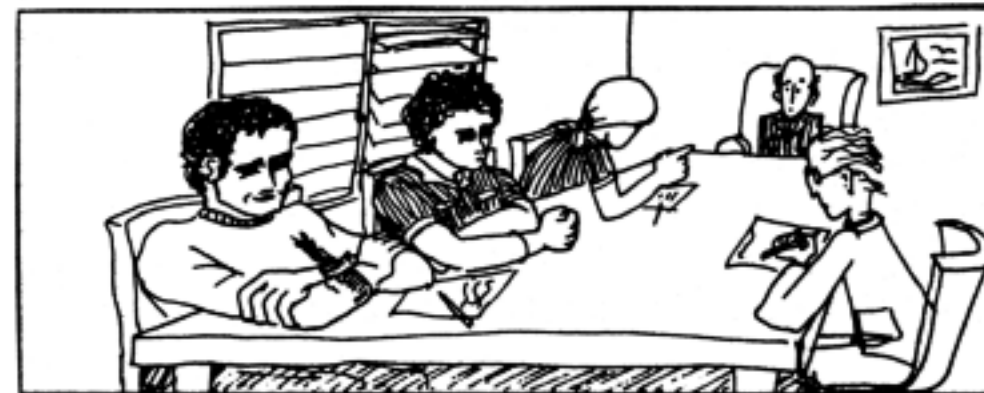
HERE IS THE STORY OF ONE GROUP OF WORKERS' STRUGGLE FOR BETTER MATERNITY CONDITIONS. THESE WORKERS ARE ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMERCIAL, CATERING AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA (CCAWUSA). THIS UNIONS ESPECIALLY ORGANISES SHOP-WORKERS. CCAWUSA HAS SIGNED AGREEMENTS FOR BETTER WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS WITH THE BOSSES OF O.K. BAZAARS, EDGARS, WOOLWORTHS AND A NUMBER OF OTHER SHOPS.

CCAWUSA was one of the first unions in South Africa to negotiate a good maternity agreement for their women members. Such big victories as 12 months leave in some stores have been won, as well as women being assured of a job on the same salary scale when they come back. Some women members of CCAWUSA who are shopstewards at O.K. Bazaars tell us about the agreement:

"The important thing is that now you don't have to choose between a baby and a job. Now it is possible for us to take time off to have a baby, knowing that when we come back to work we'll still have our job - and without any drop in salary or loss of benefits.



But if there were no women shopstewards things would slide backwards again - just as such a good agreement wouldn't have been won in the first place. Even now you get some store managers not telling their workers about the maximum benefits, or making them a little worried by saying: 'One year is a long time, wouldn't it be better to come back after six months?' So then the worker feels she'd better come back earlier - just in case. We must put a stop to that kind of intimidation - and women shopstewards are much more likely to do that. Because we are the ones who understand how a woman feels.



But an important thing is that our male shopstewards have also been very strong about this maternity issue. One of the O.K. Bazaar men shopstewards said: "It is important that there are women shopstewards. Maternity rights is a workers issue. But if you are negotiating maternity rights with management and women shopstewards are there negotiating - they have a better effect because they speak with more force."



# OUR WAY AT O.K.



Our union feels that men and women should be equal as workers, so all workers must fight against things that hold women down. A big thing still is money. Because most women can't stay away from work long enough for this reason - money. And you feel so terrible when you have to leave your two month old baby and come back to work. On the bus to work you just want to get off at the very next stop and rush home again rather than go back to work. But at least now you know there is a job waiting for you when you do get back.

One improvement that might be made more easily in maternity agreements is paid time to go to ante-natal clinic. At the moment we have to use our one day off a month to go to the clinic, plus doing the hundred and one other things you have to fit into your day off. The same applies to taking time off for sick children. Now we are able to have children we must be able to care for them too!

At least we're getting somewhere. But we still need more women shopstewards. It's important for workers and bosses to see that women can, and will, fight for their rights. As we women workers become stronger in our organisations, we will be able to get more and more rights - like proper day-care and such things too.

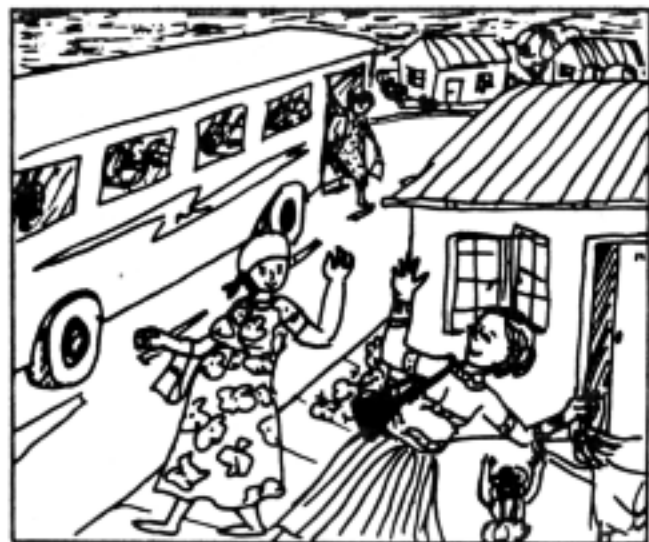
# WHITEHEADS WOMEN ARE WINNING

Whiteheads is a textile factory in Tongaat which employs many women. The National Union of Textile Workers(NUTW) organises there. NUTW is part of FOSATU - the Federation of South African Trade Unions. Often these women at Whiteheads are the only breadwinners for their families - in an area where rents are very high. So losing your job through pregnancy means that you are likely to lose your house, on top of all your other problems.

When the workers at Whiteheads first told the bosses that they wanted maternity rights, the bosses took the hard-line position that women must either work, or they must stay at home



and have babies. So it took a lot of pushing to make the bosses accept that women have a right to work, and a right to have children.



Having heard that CCAWUSA has good Maternity Agreements with the shops where they organise, a shopsteward from Whiteheads visited CCAWUSA offices to find out more about what important demands to have in a maternity agreement.

So through discussions amongst Whiteheads workers, and consultations with other independent Trade Unions, Whiteheads are very close to being another factory where the workers have gained important steps towards proper maternity rights through their union.

## MATERNITY BENEFITS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Women workers in different countries have struggled over many years to win decent maternity rights. Through their struggle in women's movements, trade unions and other organisations, they have been able to force people to take notice of the issue of maternity rights. Whilst there is still a long way to go before the demands of women workers are fully met, here are some examples of especially good rights that have been fought for and won in different countries.

- \* Women in Italy have the right to get their jobs back for up to one year after the birth of their child.
- \* Norwegian women have 12 weeks maternity leave before the birth of their child, and up to 18 weeks after their baby is born. During this time they get their full pay for 16 weeks.
- \* In Finland, fathers are allowed to take paternity leave to look after their children.
- \* French women workers have 1 hour a day to feed their babies. They can do this until the child is one year old.
- \* In many countries women workers get extra benefits if they have twins, a caesarian birth, or other problems during birth.
- \* In some countries workers can take paid leave to look after their sick child.

EVERYBODY HAS THE RIGHT TO HAVE CHILDREN - AND BOTH MEN AND WOMEN ARE INVOLVED. IN THE SAME WAY EVERYBODY HAS THE RIGHT TO WORK, AND HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT WORK. PROPER MATERNITY RIGHTS ARE NECESSARY IF WOMEN ARE ABLE TO HAVE AN EQUAL CHANCE AT WORK AND IN SOCIETY. SO MATERNITY IS AN ISSUE FOR ALL WORKERS. WORKERS MUST FIGHT THROUGH THEIR UNIONS FOR THE RIGHT TO HAVE AND RAISE THEIR CHILDREN PROPERLY.



# TWO WORLDS OF MOTHERHOOD

## MASHA THE FACTORY DIRECTOR'S WIFE.



Masha is the factory director's wife. She is going to have a baby. Although everyone in the factory director's house is a bit anxious, they are still happy and excited. The factory director will have an heir to whom he can leave all his money - the money that is made by the workers in his factory.



The doctor has told all the servants to look after Masha very carefully. She must not get tired or feel worried. She must have everything she wants. Then the baby will be strong and healthy, and Masha will have an easy birth so that she feels young and healthy again afterwards.



That is how they talk in the factory director's house. These rich people say that pregnant women are special and must be carefully looked after. But are they always careful with pregnant women? Do factory directors always help pregnant women?

## MASHA THE DYE WORKER.

There is confusion in the factory's dye department - a woman worker has been carried out as if she is dead. What has happened to her? Was she poisoned by the steam? She is no newcomer. It is high time she got used to the factory poison.

"It's absolutely nothing," says the doctor. "Can't you see she's pregnant? Pregnant women are likely to behave in all sorts of strange ways. There is no need to give in to them."

So they send the women back to work. She stumbles like a drunkard through the workshop. Her legs are numb and refuse to obey her. It is no joke working ten hours a day, day after day, amidst the steam and damaging fumes. And there is no rest for a working mother. At home there is her old blind mother waiting for dinner. And her husband returns home tired and hungry from his day at a factory. She has to feed them all and look after them all. She is the first to get up in the mornings, and the last to get to sleep.





In the house there are doctors, midwives and nurses. The mother lies in a clean soft bed. Her husband is by her side. The baby is born strong and healthy. That is not surprising. They have taken such care and made such a fuss of Masha the lady.



Masha tries to get leave by applying to the factory director himself.

"I'm having a baby soon. I must get everything ready. My children are little, and then there is my old mother and the housework."

But he will not listen. He is rude and humiliates her. "If I started giving every pregnant woman time off it would be simpler to close the factory. If you didn't sleep with men you wouldn't get pregnant."

The baby of Masha the dye worker is still-born. It has not managed to survive the nine months. The steam the mother breathes in at the factory has poisoned the child while it was in the womb. The birth was difficult. Masha is lucky to be alive. But by the evening of the following day Masha is already up and about doing the washing and cooking.



So Masha the dye worker has to work to the last minute.

So this is how the factory director treats pregnant women. And the doctor? He says that Masha the factory director's wife must be looked after carefully for the sake of herself and her child. But how does he treat Masha the dye worker?

Masha the lady can lie in bed for nine days on doctor's orders. She has servants to look after her household. If Masha the dye worker develops a serious illness from going to work too soon after giving birth - well that is too bad. There is no one to look after the working mother.



#### CHILDBIRTH FOR MASHA THE LADY AND MASHA THE DYE WORKER.

For the household of Masha the lady, birth is a big event.

# THE DIAPHRAGM

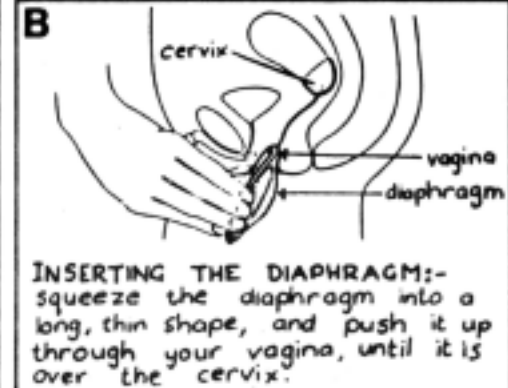
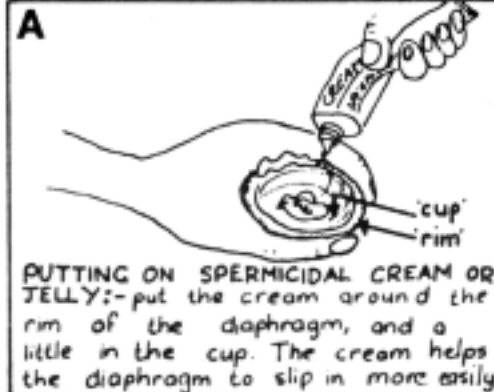


## How does it work?

The diaphragm is a shallow cap made of soft rubber. A woman puts it into her vagina before having sex. It covers the entrance of the womb (cervix) and prevents the man's sperm from getting inside the womb. The diaphragm must be used with spermicidal cream or jelly which kills sperm. This is in case some sperm goes under the diaphragm and into the womb. The diaphragm should be left inside the vagina for about 6 - 8 hours after sex so that all the sperm can be killed. Different women need different size diaphragms. This means that a doctor or sister must measure the size of your cervix so that you are given the right size diaphragm.



## How to use the Diaphragm



## Advantages

- \* If the diaphragm is used properly, and with a spermicidal cream or jelly, it is good at preventing pregnancy.
- \* It is safe to use and it doesn't affect a woman's health.
- \* The diaphragm is used only when you are going to have sex, so you don't have the worry of con-

traception all the time.

- \* You can use your diaphragm over and over for up to a year or more if you check it regularly for holes and tears.
- \* Some women use their diaphragm to catch the blood during their periods.



## Disadvantages

- \* Women who are allergic to rubber can't use diaphragms.
- \* Some people feel that it interferes with sex as a woman has to put it in beforehand.
- \* A woman might want a private place to go when putting in her diaphragm. She also needs soap and water to wash it with after she has taken it out. These things may not be available for all women.
- \* It doesn't work well for women whose vagina muscle's are weak and stretched - for example, after giving birth.
- \* The diaphragm can be bought at chemists, but it is very expensive. It is also available from some clinics, although they might not give it to you very easily. So it is a good idea to take a few friends with you for support if you want a diaphragm.



## Some important things to remember

1. Always use the diaphragm with a spermicidal cream or jelly.
2. Check with your finger to see if you have put the diaphragm in correctly. You should feel the diaphragm over your cervix - it feels like the tip of your nose.
3. Always wash and clean your diaphragm with soap and water after using it. Check to see if it has any holes or tears. If you find any, get a new diaphragm.
4. If you are constipated the diaphragm could be uncomfortable to use.



## Some people's comments about condoms and diaphragms

I felt it was important for me to do something about contraception for a change, instead of my wife always. So I went to the nearest clinic. They were so embarrassed. They quickly gave me a packet of condoms without cream, nor with any explanation about how to use it.



Well me and my girlfriend actually had a terrible experience with a condom. They are supposed to be tested for strength - but this one burst! I think the only saving thing was that we were using spermicidal cream.

I much prefer condoms actually. It is just so nice not having to take all the responsibility the whole time.



...and they don't mess you up like the injection did.

What I think is best about the diaphragm is that you have more control. You put it in yourself when you need it, and take it out when you don't. It's very nice for me because my boyfriend can only come about once a month because he works so far away.

I must say I like a diaphragm... and seeing as my husband won't use condoms... it means I still have contraception that doesn't harm me.



I can't use a diaphragm. At the clinic they pointed out that my uterus was leaning sideways. So while I could think the diaphragm was protecting me, it might not be covering the uterus at all.

# THE CONDOM



## How does it work?

A condom is a long rubber cover that the man uses on his penis while having sex. It works by stopping the man's sperm from getting into the woman's vagina and womb. It must be put onto the man's erect penis before he puts into the woman's vagina.



## Disadvantages

- \* Some men won't use condoms because they don't like them.
- \* Some people feel it interrupts love-making while the condom is put on.
- \* If the condom has holes in it the woman can fall pregnant, especially if no spermicidal cream or jelly was being used.



## Advantages

- \* It is good at preventing pregnancy if it is used properly and it doesn't have any holes or tears in it.
- \* Condoms are easy to get at clinics and can be bought at chemists quite cheaply.
- \* Condoms are safe and do not affect the health of either the woman or the man.



- \* Condoms protect people from getting V.D. (Venereal Disease) or from spreading it if they have got it already.
- \* The woman does not have to use any other kinds of contraception. This means she isn't the one who has to take all the responsibility for preventing pregnancy.



## Some important things to remember

1. The condom must be put on before the man's penis is put inside the woman's vagina as sperms can leak out and cause pregnancy before he has an orgasm.
2. A condom should never be used more than once.
3. It is safest if the condom is used with spermicidal cream or jelly.
4. The man must check to see that the condom is still on properly when he takes his penis out of the woman's vagina.

# AUGUST 9 - A DAY FOR WOMEN TO CELEBRATE



"You have tampered with the women  
You have struck against a rock.

20 000 women protesting together against passes. This took place on August 9 1956 - which has since become National Women's Day.



Women doing handcraft together - as they do in Phoenix, Kwa Mashu and other townships - teaching each other and talking together.

Women planning together. Natal Organisation of Women members preparing for an August 9 meeting.



Women working together - as we are encouraged to do by the women of Sunduza who share their farm work and tools where they live in Transkei.



Women working together - SPEAK Collective producing the next issue of SPEAK.



Women together - organising others to become members of a strong united trade union.