

SPEAK

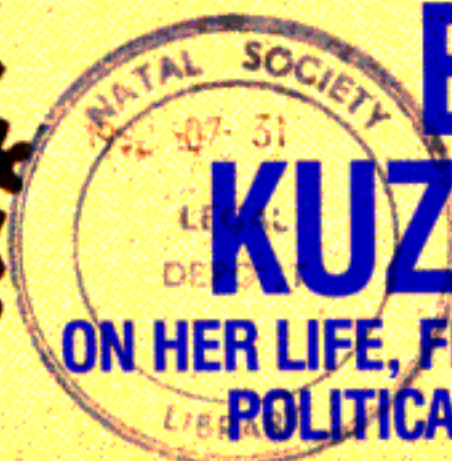
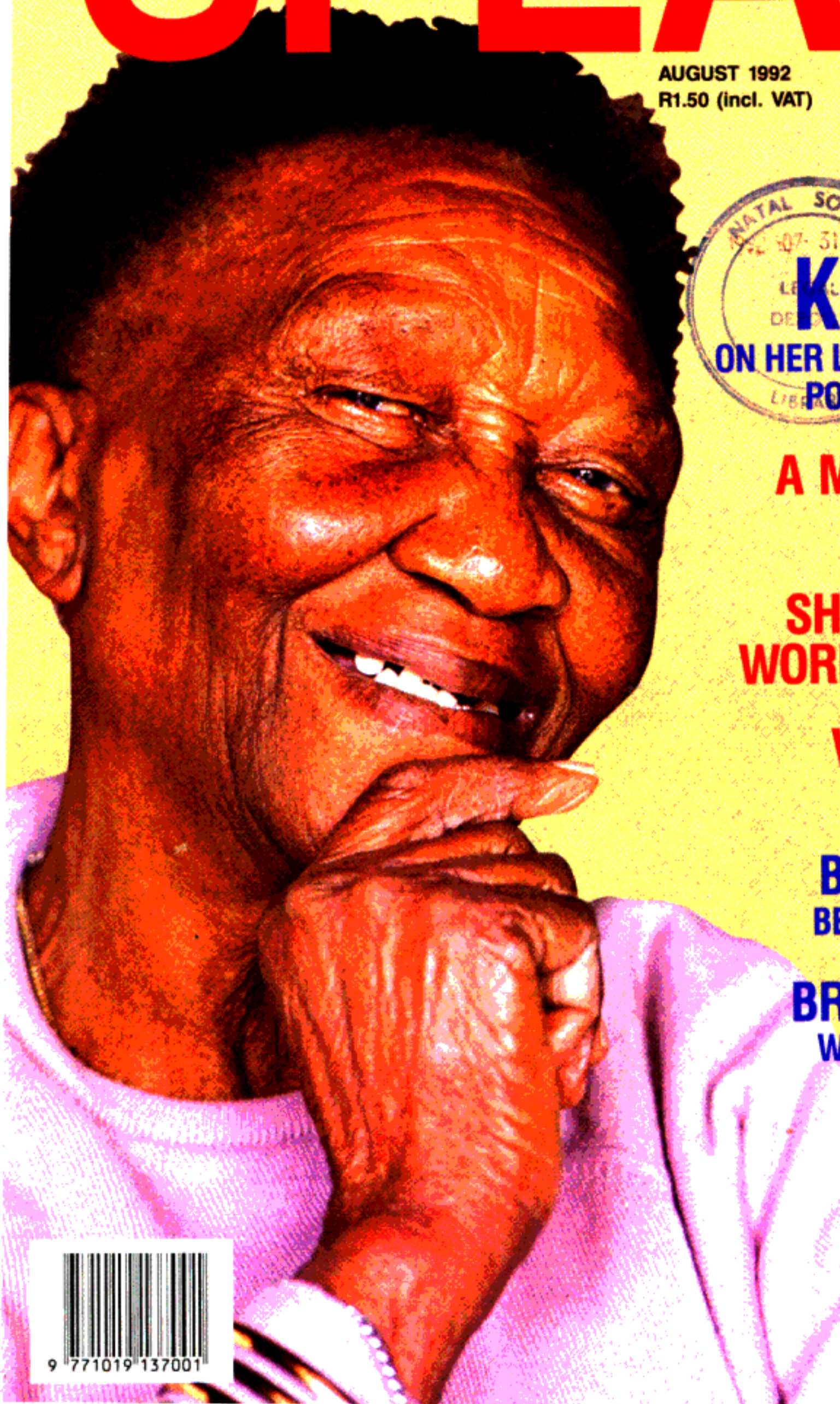
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AUGUST 1992

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ELLEN KUZWAYO

ON HER LIFE, FEMINISM AND
POLITICAL TOLERANCE

**A MAN SAYS YES
TO ABORTION**

**SHOULD HEALTH
WORKERS STRIKE?**

**VUKUZENZELE
HAWKERS SUCCEED**

**BUYING ON HP
BEWARE OF DANGERS**

**BREAST CANCER
WHAT EVERY WOMAN
SHOULD KNOW**

WIN!

- ★ WALKMAN
- ★ BOOKS



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INSIDE

PEOPLE

- 5 **Ellen Kuzwayo**
Strong views from a strong woman
- 24 **Chris Diamond**
Speaks out on abortion

FEATURES

- 8 **Growing big ears**
The Women's National Coalition
- 10 **"Vukuzenzele"**
Hawkers tell of their success
- 13 **The hospital strike**
No easy struggle
- 16 **Women in action**
- 26 **Women in Zimbabwe**
Nine fighting years of Women's Action Group

STORIES

- 9 **Poem**
What if we stop working?
- 18 **No Turning Back - new book**
Union women talk about fighting for equality
- 20 **We miss you all**
A story about AIDS in the family

ADVICE

- 22 **About HIV and AIDS**
How you get it; how you don't
- 23 **Buying on HP**
Know your rights

HEALTH

- 28 **Breast cancer**
What all women should know

WIN

- 12 **Win a walkman!**
- 19 **Win a book!**

REGULARS

- 2 **Readers Talk Back**
- 4 **Kwa-Sophie**
- 31 **As a matter of fact**
- 32 **Taxi-talk**
- 33 **Community notice board**



Ellen Kuzwayo

Page 5



AIDS in the family

Page 20



Hospital strike

Page 13

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COMMENT

We celebrate August 9, National Women's Day with all our readers! It is a day when we remember how women fought against pass laws. It is also a day to speak out about what must change for women to be free. We agree with Ellen Kuzwayo when she says, in her interview with SPEAK, that South Africa has committed and experienced women leaders. She herself is one of them.

We offer you Dora Tamana's poem in celebration of Women's Day. She urges women to unite to fight for their rights.

The Women's National Coalition (WNC) has launched "Operation Big Ears" to listen to women in this country so a women's charter can be drawn up. We keep you up to date on how they are going to do this.

It is not common to find a man who fights for the right of women to have legal abortions. Chris Diamond of Abortion Reform Action Group is one of them. SPEAK went to find out why. Breast cancer on the increase in our country. We urge you to read our article which gives advice about how to do breast self-examinations.

Many people buy on Hire Purchase without knowing much about it. Read our article and be aware of what you are getting into.

Write and let us know what you would like to read about in SPEAK - we look forward to your ideas and views.

We've had a great response to our competitions - it is good to know we have readers from far and wide. Don't be disappointed if you are not a winner this time - maybe next time. And remember, just buying SPEAK makes you a winner with us anyway! ●

Talk back

Call me Ms!

Thanks for telling us about the title "Ms". I now call myself "Ms" - never Miss or Mrs.

Good!!

Good luck for your future and best wishes

Dina Jones

Kanyamazane, Kwa-Ndebele

Pasop, Banna!

I would like to speak to men about their view of women's ability in this modern world. Most men seem to still want to believe barbaric myths like "a woman's place is in the kitchen". To those men I would like to say: Gone are the days when we were forced into the fields whilst you sat under a tree drinking beer; gone are the days when we were bound to cleaning, cooking and ironing whilst you read newspapers. There is no better and more powerful strategy to challenge this than for us African women to come together. Let us stand up, African women, and fight for tolerance and our rights. If we don't do it now, we will forever be seen as the inferiors, the cleaners, the slaves, the weak and the stupid.

Parliaments and congresses are always male dominated. That's why they are never successful. We women are seen as not knowing the political language.

What a disgusting lie!! We have to change this by coming together and proving them wrong.

Also remember, education is a strong weapon.

Emang lo bueng Basadi!!

Banna, ek se, pasop julle!! Ons is hier.

Mavis Siamisang

Lime Acres, Cape Province

Help!

SPEAK is a very pleasing magazine. The Herschel Advice Office would like to have a bunch of SPEAKs but so far we are still lacking funds to obtain such copies.

We would be very pleased if you can provide us with the address of the following organisation which you wrote about in SPEAK number 37: Convigua - the Widow's Committee in Guatemala. Our office intends spreading its wings to help all the widows of Herschel who feel there is nothing they can do themselves to improve their standards of living.

Yours faithfully

MZ Tshoyela

Herschel

We often get letters from people who cannot afford to subscribe to SPEAK. Is there anyone out there who would be prepared to sponsor a subscription like this? If so, please contact SPEAK.

You can get in touch with *Convigua*, the Widow's Committee in Guatemala by writing to OXFAM, GADU, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX27DZ, England.

Solidarity from PAC women



On behalf of the African Women's Organisation I would like to express solidarity on the historic launch of SPEAK as a monthly magazine. African Women's Organisation holds SPEAK magazine in the highest esteem because it has promoted our activities in a very accurate and unbiased way.

We hope this good work will be maintained. We wish this magazine success in all its endeavours.

*Mrs Irene Khumalo
National Publicity Secretary
African Women's Organisation,
Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)
of Azania
Johannesburg*

More Shado please!

I'd like to congratulate you on the July issue of SPEAK. It was my first time to see your magazine. What made me buy

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*



Shado Twala

it was the cover picture of Shado Twala. I dig her a lot. Please keep on publishing things about her. I like to hear about her all the time. I would be glad to get her poster. I also like her golden voice - it's more than golden - it's inexplicable! Keep it up, Sister!

*Phumzile Penelope Ntombela
Hammarisdale, Natal*

Get your set of SPEAK cards today!



★
6 cards
for R3.00

We have these and many other designs.

Send your money along with your name and address to:
PO Box 261363, Excom 2023,
Johannesburg, South Africa.

.....
● **Congratulations!** ●
● Congratulations HA ●
● Nkuna of Sovenga! ●
● You are the lucky ●
● winner of our radio ●
● cassette recorder ●
● competition in SPEAK ●
● 39! You will be ●
● receiving your prize ●
● soon. ●
.....

Codesa has failed ... for the moment at least. Some women are now talking about Codema (Conference for a Democratic Marriage). We hope Codema doesn't suffer the same fate as Codesa.

* * * * *

In a letter to 'Read On', a Zimbabwean magazine, a male reader wrote: "I would like to say 'no' to your issue on equal rights between men and women ... The father is the head of the family and the mother is the tail. The head leads the way and the tail is to wipe away insects. The two work together for the family. We cannot all be leaders ..."

My colleagues and I think he's lost his head.

* * * * *

Some men attending the book launch of *No Turning Back* -



Kwa-Sophie...

the struggle for gender equality in the unions were not amused by Cosatu gender co-ordinator Dorothy Mokgalo's explanation of the difference between men and women. She suggested when making people God worked like artists do with a rough sketch first. The rough sketch, she said, was man ...

* * * * *

Well, since Dorothy's speech, we've had more than one long-faced man visit our offices. When we asked one why he looked so depressed, he said, "After all, I'm just a rough sketch."

* * * * *

... Five percent of the people at the book launch were men. There were three lucky draws in the competition to win the book. Two of the winners were men. Rough sketch or not, they still seem to have all the luck.

* * * * *

And the greatest communications challenge of all is the challenge of communicating the idea that the time has come, in all countries, for men to share more fully in that most difficult and important of all tasks - protecting the lives and the health and the growth of their children.

From FACTS FOR LIFE, UNICEF

South African
LABOUR BULLETIN

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.

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Agenda

A JOURNAL ABOUT WOMEN & GENDER

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Ellen Kuzwayo

SPEAK spoke to well-known writer and community activist Ellen Kuzwayo just after her return from opening the International Feminist Book Fair in Holland. We asked her about the book fair and her views on the women's struggle

Writer, community leader, activist, teacher, social worker, grandmother and more - Ellen Kuzwayo is a woman of many talents. At 78 years of age 'Ma K', as she is affectionately known, does twice the amount of work of many young people. SPEAK went to visit her at her small home in Orlando West, Soweto. Whilst we were there the phone did not stop ringing with people who needed advice or wanted to set up meetings.

Ellen Kuzwayo is full of energy and ideas. She tells us she is busy writing her third book, which she hopes to complete by the end of this year. As national treasurer of the World Affiliated Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and Life President of the Black Consumer Union of South Africa, she has many duties to carry out. Kuzwayo is also actively involved in the Self-Help Movement (a group of women working for economic empowerment) and many other community projects. She recently gave the opening speech at the International Feminist Book Fair in Amsterdam, Holland. We asked her about this.

SPEAK: Can you tell us something about the International Feminist Book Fair?

Ellen Kuzwayo: About 150 women writers from all over the world were at the Book Fair. There were also publishers and journalists. There were very few men. It was wonderful to have women from all over the world come together in such a powerful display of their achievements. There were thousands of books in one huge building - big books, small books, books written in hundreds of different languages in colourful covers, loud colours, big striking images and small delicate images. Authors were signing their books, displaying paintings - and debating issues that affect women and women writers all over the world.

SPEAK: In Africa feminism has been seen as coming from Europe and North America. Some people still think feminism is "un-African" and call it Western feminism. What do you think about this?

Ellen Kuzwayo: This is because Western feminists have imposed their views on others. The first time I went to the International Feminist



"The Women's National Coalition is long overdue - it is a coalition which needs to be nursed"

Book Fair in 1984 women from Africa, South America and Asia were simply all called "third world women". The problems facing African women were not seen as issues which we as African women had to deal with - we were simply all "third world". The Western women seemed to think we African women allow ourselves to be doormats to our men. Western women failed to understand that African women will deal with the problems they face in their own way. These days women from all over the world are coming together and talking about the struggles in their countries. The issues discussed are no longer dictated by Western feminists. We should not associate the word "feminist" with Western feminism. It is a good word, whether it is applied in Africa, Asia or Europe.

SPEAK: What is your definition of feminism?

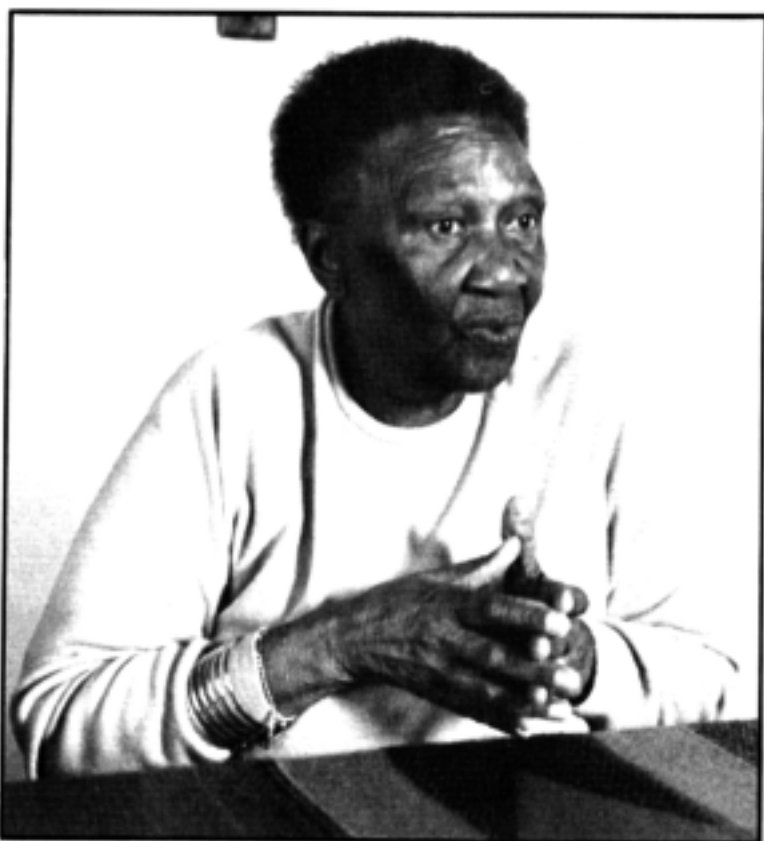
Ellen Kuzwayo: I consider feminists to be women who recognise they are oppressed as women and who are prepared to fight for basic rights, privileges and choices which women should have in a society.

SPEAK: What do you think of the Women's National Coalition's plan to draw up a women's charter?

Ellen Kuzwayo: I think it is long overdue. It is a coalition which needs to be nursed. We have women who are good leaders. Leadership positions must not be dominated by white women as has been the case in the past. Leaders must come from their own communities and women know their own communities best. If we have leaders who are trusted, committed and experienced, the Coalition will be of great benefit to the women of South Africa.

SPEAK: People respect you for your community work and do not see you as belonging to any political organisation. How do you manage to rise above party politics?

Ellen Kuzwayo: I have been a member of a political organisation for generations! But I do recognise we belong to communities where people have different political beliefs. We should not be divided by these differences. In my work in the community I never force my political views on anyone. We must work together as a community



"Women of the world need to share skills and ideas"

and be tolerant of each other. Every person has the right to her or his political beliefs.

SPEAK: You are both an international figure and a community figure. Do you find it difficult being part of two worlds?



Photos by Anna Zieminski

Ellen Kuzwayo: "We South Africans have to learn political tolerance"

Ellen Kuzwayo: Not at all. I am an international figure because of my work in the community. I started working on self-help projects with women as far back as 1979, long before I ever thought I'd be a writer. I had just left social work practice at the time, and also just come out of detention. It was the time a film was made about women of South Africa called "Awake from Mourning" - and I think that said it all. Women were beginning to awaken from the 1976 riots and the Self-Help Movement had begun to grow. Women started taking control of their own lives. The Self-Help Movement has always had contact with women overseas. I once went to a self-help centre for the wives of Turkish labourers in Denmark. Women were knitting and designing clothing. The idea came to start a similar centre at home. That is how Zamani Centre in Jabavu, Soweto started in 1984. That is what we need to do as women of the world - share skills and ideas. ☉

Books written by Ellen Kuzwayo:

Call me Woman published by Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1985

Sit Down and Listen published by David Phillip, Johannesburg, 1990

OPERATION BIG EARS!

The Women's National Coalition (WNC) was set up in April this year for all South African women to draw up and adopt a charter for women's rights. SPEAK looks at what's been happening since their launch

The Women's National Coalition (WNC) wants to make sure women's rights are included in the laws and constitution of the "new" South Africa.

They call their campaign "Operation Big Ears". It has six steps.

The first step is to raise awareness among women all over the country.

"This campaign is designed to allow women to say in their own words what their needs, demands and aspirations are," said Frene Ginwala of the coalition.

"The second step is to collect views, issues and demands from women," added Ginwala.

The third step she said, would be to study all the ideas.

The next step would be to send all the information back to regional and other structures for further debate.

"No matter what the outcome of the research and views collected is, it will be made public," said a WNC member.

The fifth step will be to put together these views, issues and demands.

"The last step would be to round off the campaign with the adoption of the charter or whatever we call the document," said Ginwala.

More than 100 fieldworkers will be employed in the campaign. "These fieldworkers will contact women across the country. They will also collect information for a research project."

R5.5 million is needed for the whole process and WNC is trying to raise this money.

Seven regional structures have been launched since April and some have already begun to implement Operation Big Ears. ●



SPEAK will keep you informed about what is happening in the regions.

Anyone who would like information about NWC structures in their region should contact:

The WNC National Office

Boni Nokwindla
Suite 3609, 36th
Floor
Office Towers
Carlton Centre
Commissioner St
Johannesburg 2001
Tel: (011) 331 5957

WHAT IF WE STOP WORKING?

If someone asks about your wife
you may say
"Oh she doesn't work"
but open wide your eyes
I am truly a slave
in the kitchen
in the factory
not a soul to help me
dirty pots
brooms
brushes
are all that stand around me
all the time

The day begins
amidst the wails of the young ones
"Are my clothes washed?"
"Mother, clean me."
"Please, mother, comb my hair."

"Did you buy my book?"
"A pencil, I need a pencil."
"Come on son, you must take your
medicine."
"Listen, is the meal ready?"
"It's very late...where's my lunch?"
"My shirt is crushed,
quick, just run the iron over it
gosh -- aren't my shoes polished yet?
What a slowcoach this woman is!"

At last they've all gone
I'm late too
looks like I've missed the train
crept onto a bus after waging a last
fight,
stood on one foot
clinging like a bat to the pole
and who is this leaning against me
fun for them -- agony for us

and if I don't make it to the market
in the evening
we'll starve tomorrow

Here he comes, my man,
staggering home after work
and may be next
he'll be punching me like a sack of
grain

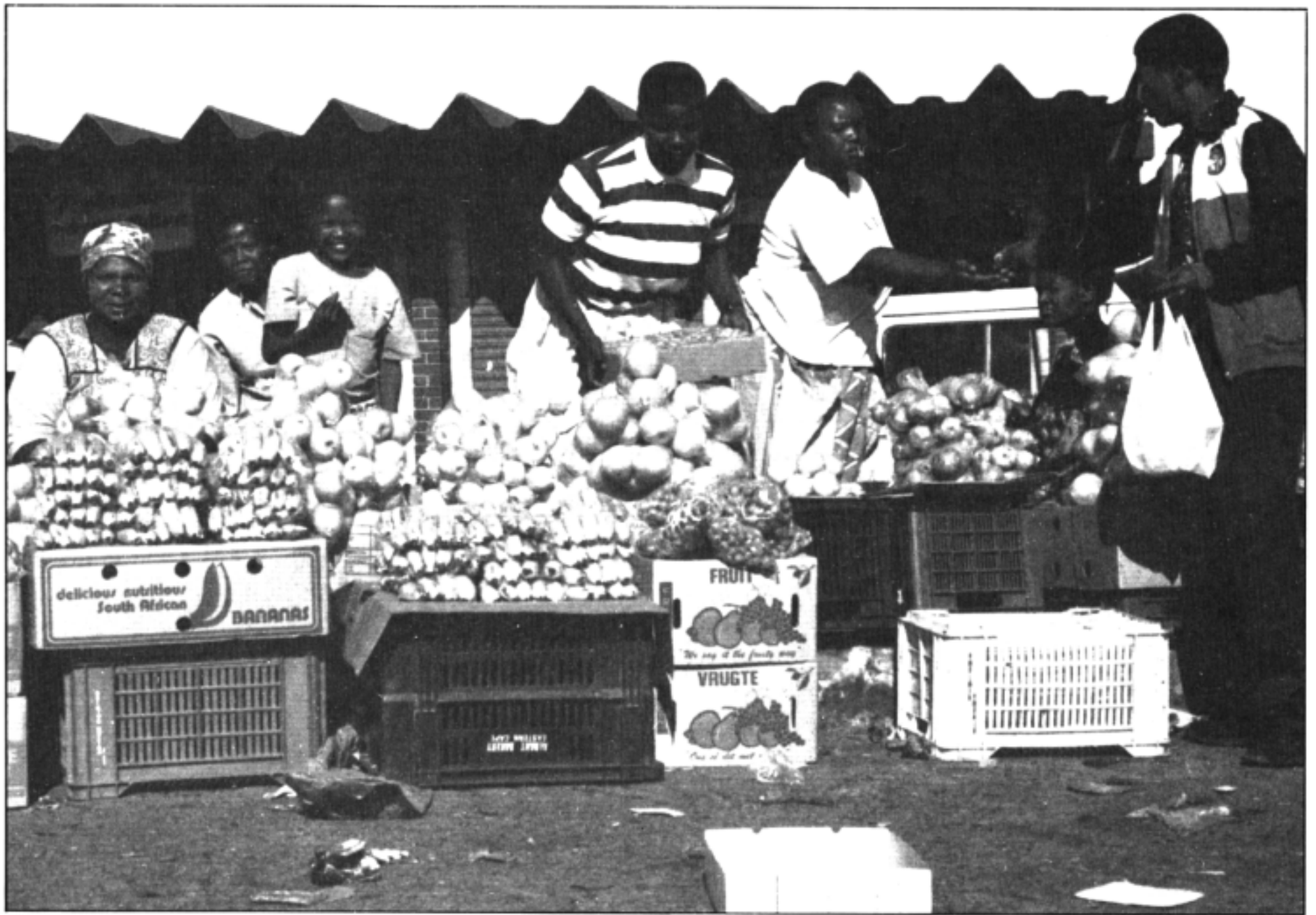
My body collapses
unable to stand all this
and yet I rise
again and again
to clean the house
and wash the clothes
no rest for me

And then
the night shift
and of course
overtime that must be done
some of my precious hours of rest
are swallowed up there

Truly
I am a machine
in the domestic factory
engaged in non-stop production

When will you ever realise
that woman
belongs to that category
of workers
who are truly essential for
society to survive.

Asian Women Workers' Newsletter



Photos by Chris Mabuya

Hawking is for all who share the idea of "vukuzenzele"

“Vukuzenzele!”

Hawking is hard work but there are some success stories. Chris Mabuya talked to four hawkers in Ciskei who believe the sky is the limit

They own cars, they send their kids to schools and universities. “They” are a group of hawkers at the Mdantsane Highway terminus, in the Ciskei.

These informal sellers have turned their backs on formal sector jobs and taken to the streets - one of them for more than 30 years - selling their goods to the public.

The results have been worthwhile. As one of the hawkers, Ladylock Skeyi explained: “Hawking has been seen as a job for uneducated people but I’m sitting here with my matric certificate.”

Skeyi started hawking in 1960. She has not done any other work and did not listen to her husband when he tried to make her look for “better jobs”.

Her first selling stand was three empty cupboard containers turned upside-down for the fruit and “vetkoek” she sold to school children. She now has a real stand with a shelter.

"Those were trying times," she said.

She would often sit outside the whole day without getting any business.

"People sometimes just ignored me and I began suspecting others of having bewitched my business. At other times we had to run away from the police or have our stuff confiscated."

But she says "vukuzenzele" (the will to wake up and do something for yourself) kept her on her feet.

In 1964 she decided the biggest bus and taxi station in the Ciskei, the Mdantsane Highway Terminus, was a good place for hawking.

She sold chicken and was nicknamed "Masekeseke" - after the name she gave to the chicken she sold. Business boomed and she was joined by her husband, after persuading him to leave his job at a company where he earned very little.

She carried on hawking after her husband died in 1981.

The decision paid off. Skeyi, now the President of the Ciskei Hawkers' Association, owns a car and a van and has managed to send all her eight children to school.

They have all passed matric, except one who is now in standard nine. One is doing first-year at the University of Cape Town.



Ladylock Skeyi wouldn't change her job for anything

She is also part of an organisation involved with "street kids". She says this is why she encourages other hawkers not to take their children away from school.

Another hawker at the terminus, Hilda Nqayi, joined this "informal business" in 1970. Like Skeyi, her beginnings were very small

- at first she had to display her wares on empty samp bags.

A former factory worker, Nqayi did not like her job so she took to the streets, at first selling cow shins and later vegetables and live chickens.

An organiser of the Ciskei Hawkers' Association, Nqayi also speaks of success.

She has managed to send her three children to school. One of them has passed matric, and the other two went as far as their junior certificates.

She bought herself a van which she now uses for shopping at the East London's Municipal Market.



Hilda Nqayi: "The sky is the limit"

"We are going forward and the sky is the limit!", she said.

But hawking does not involve selling only vegetables and chickens. The trade is for all who share the idea of "vukuzenzele".

Priscilla Mamati, who left Cape Town in 1972 to work as a nurse at Mdantsane's Cecilia Makiwane Hospital, resigned in 1986 after discovering she had a talent for sewing.

Like other beginners to the hawking trade, she had no experience in business.

At first she tried to sell vegetables. Then she decided to concentrate on using her sewing skills.

"Now I am in business and I'm willing to stretch out my hand and lift up other people"

This was so successful she could afford school fees for her son, who is now studying part-time for a university degree.

"Now I am in business and I'm willing to stretch out my hand and lift up other people."

Mamati also drives her own car and is involved in the Ciskei Hawkers' Association.

The Border area has a very high number of unemployed people due to retrenchments. Many of these unemployed people have also found their place in this "underground economy".

Fuzile Dunywa is new to the hawking business. He has been out of work since 1987.

"I am one of the victims of unfair dismissals and retrenchments in our region", he said.

Since he was laid off work, he has been preparing to set up 10 tuck shops at the terminus. Dunywa says he will choose unemployed people to manage the shops. In this way he hopes to create more jobs for other victims of unemployment. ●

WIN A WALKMAN!



All you have to do is send us your name, address and the names of two South African women you would most like to read about and see on the front cover of SPEAK - and you could be the winner in our lucky draw competition!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal code: _____

I would most like to see the following South African women on the front cover of SPEAK:

1. _____

2. _____

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

Don't miss out! Become a SPEAK subscriber and get your favourite magazine delivered to your doorstep each month.

See inside front cover for details.



Photo by Cecil Sois, Dynamic Images

"We had no other choice"... Baragwanath strikers picket outside the hospital

STRIKE!

Should health workers go on strike?

This has been a burning issue following the strike of general hospital workers, like cleaners, assistants and drivers, around the country.

The government says "no", the strike puts patients at risk. The National, Education Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) says "yes", all workers should have the right to strike.

SPEAK asked a striker,

Should health workers have the right to strike or are patients' rights more important?

By Thoraya Pandya

doctor, nurse, patient and Nehawu shopsteward from hospitals around Johannesburg what they felt. We also tried to talk to strike-breakers. They wouldn't speak to us saying they were scared of being attacked.

Striking ambulance driver Gladys Mlangeni said she was not happy about striking, but had no other choice.

"One of the patients could be my mother or sister, but how can anyone survive on the R460 a month some workers earn? I earn R1 000 and it is very difficult to support my family of five on that. I cannot see how others manage on less.

"White and black workers are treated differently. We drive the same ambulances, but

are paid less than white drivers.

“We deserve to be treated with respect and to get a decent salary.”

She said it upsets her when the government says workers do not care about patients.

“The government never cares about people who die of malnutrition and TB everyday. If they cared for the patients why did they refuse our offer of a small emergency staff?” she asked.

Mlangeni explained workers offered to provide a small staff for emergency departments during the strike.

“The authorities said ‘no’. This proved they were not interested in the patients.”

Peter Ngatane, a doctor at Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto, said he supports the strikers. He, like all doctors, was not on strike.



Photo by Cecil Solis, Dynamic Images

Hospitals around the country have been hit by strikes this year



Photo by William Matela

“The government never cares about people who die of malnutrition and TB everyday,” says ambulance driver Gladys Mlangeni

“Not one of the workers’ demands was met,” he said. “They say there is no money but daily we hear of corruption in the government.”

SPEAK asked Ngatane if he would ever go on strike.

“Yes, if my working conditions were as bad as these workers, I definitely would. But my patient must not suffer because of my strike. Those under my care would still get my care.”

A patient at Baragwanath hospital, Joyce Malukene, who was in hospital after a car accident, said she understands why workers were striking.

“I support them,” said

Malukene. "I would also go on strike if I was a hospital worker."

She said the strike did not affect her as badly as it did some patients.

"Some operations have been cancelled and people are sent home early. If they finish my operation they say I will be sent home.

"People will always get hurt in a struggle. The only thing which makes me sad is black people get hurt the most. In this case, it is the patient and the worker. I am worried about the families of the strikers who are not getting salaries."

A nurse, who asked not to be named, said she supports the strike, but she would not join.

"The lives of patients must always come first. If nurses should strike then lives will be lost."

She said nurses were under a lot of stress because of the strike.

"We work twice as hard, but I am not angry at the workers. I am angry at the authorities for making no effort to solve the matter! It is important for the state to admit these workers are just as important as doctors and nurses."

SPEAK also talked to Nehawu **shopsteward** Martha Kolanisi.

"Our decision to strike did not just fall from the sky. It came after four years of begging. The bubble of anger finally burst. There was just no other way," said Kolanisi, a nurse at Hillbrow Hospital.



Photo by Cecil Sois, Dynamic Images

Volunteers took on some of the work, like cleaning and serving food which was not done because of the strike

She said health workers were very worried about the patients.

"Many of us feel guilty. One of the patients could be family or friends. We care about them, but we also need to survive and have our jobs taken seriously."

Why did hospital workers go on strike?

General hospital workers (cleaners, drivers and ward assistants) at state hospitals in the Transvaal went on strike on 1 May 1992. Weeks later, workers at hospitals across the country joined them.

Doctors were not part of the strike. Some nurses joined, but most did not.

Here are some of the demands workers made:

- One national bargaining forum (at the moment the union has to negotiate with 14 different state health administrations);
- An increase of the minimum (lowest) wage;
- a 15% increase;

- permanent status for all workers (at the moment many workers are temporary and do not get benefits like pension and medical aid)

The National Education Health and Allied Workers Union first made some of these demands over four years ago. In 1990, hospital workers went on strike but decided to return to work so the government could consider the demands. Early this year the government still had not met most of the demands.

"This strike has risen out of years and years of struggle," said Aslam Dasso, spokesperson for the South African Health and Social Services Organisation (Sahsso).

"The government's health budget was increased this year, so I can't understand why there is no money to increase the workers' salaries. There is also a lot of overspending - like keeping 14 different health administrations going." ●



Photo by William Matshela

Boitumelo Mofokeng, a member of Congress of South African Writers (COSAW) and a managing committee member of SPEAK, reads a powerful poem at the launch of the book 'No Turning Back'. More than 120 people, mostly women Cosatu members, made sure the book was successfully launched. Johannesburg, July 1992

WOMEN IN ACTION



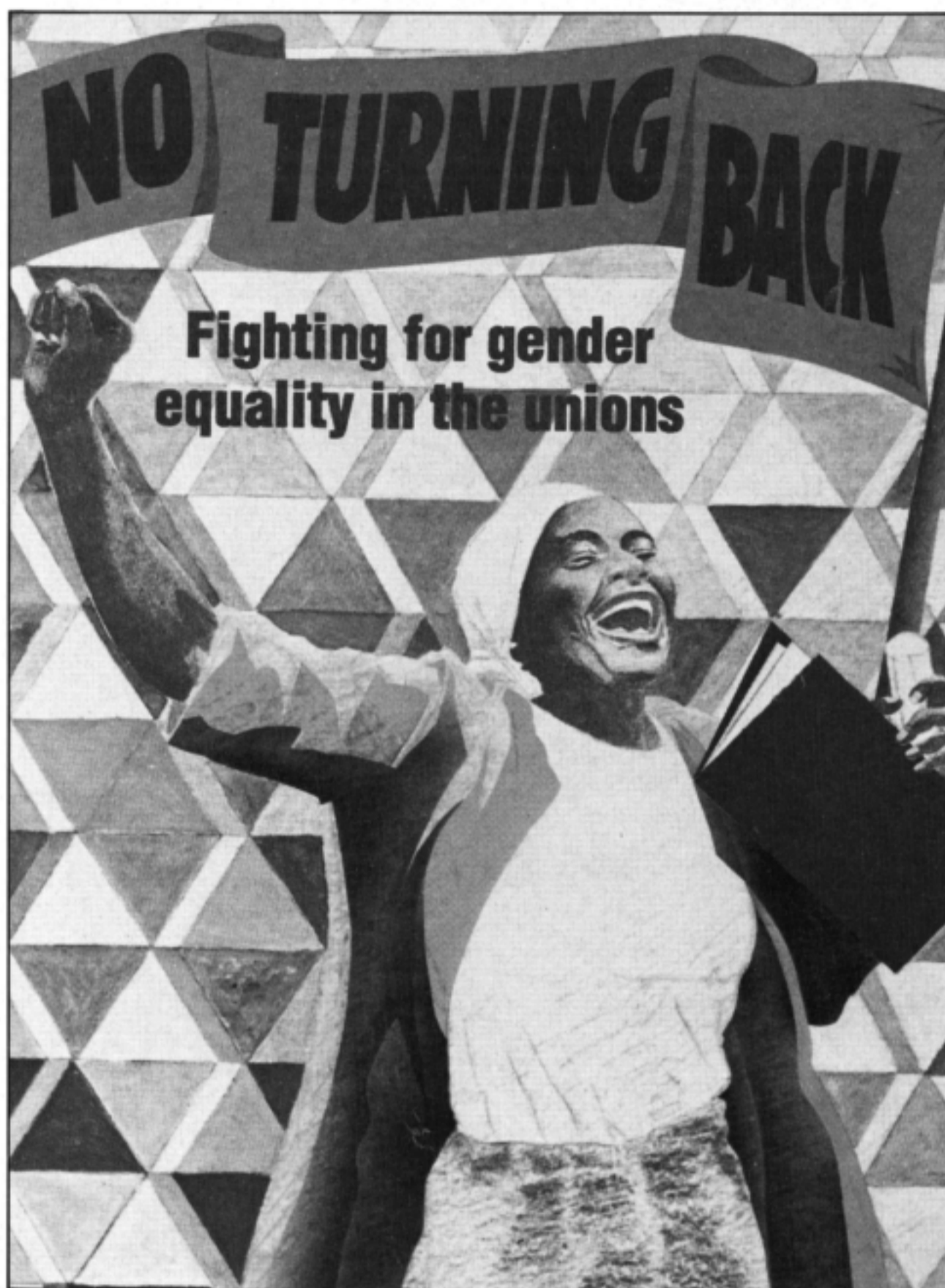
ANC Women's League members in Cape Town make their demands known loud and clear outside parliament as part of the mass action campaign. June 1992



Photo: Gill de Vries

The Black Sash protested against all massacre deaths and called for the resignation of the Minister of Law and Order. July 1992

We at SPEAK are both proud and pleased to announce the arrival of *No Turning Back - Fighting for gender equality in the unions*, a book written and produced jointly by Cosatu Wits Women's Forum, Lacom (SACHED) and SPEAK. Here is a taste of the book!



NO TURNING BACK

Interview with Claire Slingers and Diane de Vries of South African Domestic Workers Union (SADWU)

Claire: I myself am scared to socialise with a male comrade because once you socialise they think you must go to bed with them. That is nonsense. He must know that I am a human being like you are, so don't take the skin off my face. I find

that relationships within the struggle just don't work. Maybe it can work if you are asked in a decent way. Otherwise it's just dating and he's seeing 50 other women. That's bad - you can get sick from it.

Diane: Even as a married woman - they ignore these rings. It's a sickness. When they see a woman they see a blanket to cover themselves - to sleep with. It needs a strong woman to overcome that, and it's not all women who are strong.

Once I went to a conference where there were a lot of women, and the way the men behaved - they are like dogs sometimes. I was sharing a room with a woman who was new in the union and she was being used by a male comrade. When I came into the room he was actually there. I didn't want to impose things on her, but I spoke to her. I told her that this was not the first time this person was doing this. I said just because he is a big person in Cosatu it doesn't mean that everyone has to say yes.

I told her you can say no. It is your right. And if you need assistance we can talk about it.

From No Turning Back ●

**I told
her
you
can
say no.
It is
your
right**

About the book

"We have written this book because we believe the struggle for equality between men and women is part and parcel of the broader struggle for national liberation. If we don't fight for this equality now, the revolution sweeping our land is going to leave women in the dust - and still sweeping in the kitchens at home, at work and in organisations.

The experiences shared in the book come from Cosatu members across the country.

We met frequently over 16 months, up until the book launch in July 1992. Every aspect of the book was workshopped from content to cover. We had many discussions and shared many stories about our lives. From time to time we called in experts such as designers, publishers, editors and photographers to share their special skills.

For all of us it was an inspiring experience. We gained new skills in publishing and new insights into women's oppression.

Refiloe Ndzuta from the joint working group summed it up for all of us when she said: 'This whole process has broadened my mind. I thought I knew about the

problems facing women, but I have gained more. I hope this book will open the minds of the comrades to rights they never knew they had. It's going to let them be free to fight for those rights.' " - the No Turning Back joint working group ●

Win a Copy !



Send us a postcard with your name and address and write a sentence saying why you want the book and you could be one of five lucky winners in the *No Turning Back* lucky draw. Your entry must reach us by 1 September 1992.

If you are not lucky enough to win a book, *No Turning Back* costs R14.00 for those living in southern Africa. You can order it from: SPEAK, PO Box 261323, Excom 2023, South Africa. Please write to us for rates for other countries. ●

This month SPEAK brings to you the first part of a three part story from the book "We Miss You All: AIDS in the family". This is a true story about the experience of Noerine Kaleeba, a Ugandan woman who lost her husband and many other family members from AIDS

We Miss You All:



AIDS in the Family

The day AIDS came into my house

AIDS came into my house on the afternoon of 6th June 1986 when the British Council sent a telex to tell me that my husband, Chris was seriously ill in a hospital in England. He had gone to Hull University for further training in 1985.

I often wonder what my life would have been like today if that telex hadn't come. I know now Chris was already very ill and dying, long before the telex was sent, but for me that telex was the beginning of my misery and suffering. When I

was given the telex, I was shocked. The message was clear. My husband was critically ill in a British hospital. He had been unconscious for three days. Had he been involved in an accident again? No. He seemed to have meningitis (this is a serious illness in which the covering of the brain swells). He was not in pain, but his condition was critical. The British Council staff were very concerned, offering tea and comforting me. They suggested I return the next day for more news.

I left, walking like a zombie. Fortunately, I had come with my friend Mary, otherwise I would

have been run over on the road. The following day I went back with my friends Margaret and Mary to the same news. His condition was still very serious. Everything which could be done was being done. Everyone was too nice and kind. I began to suspect he had already died. I wanted to go to him. He needed me. The Council people had to ask London first.

I went to a friend in the microbiology laboratory (where they test for germs and viruses) to ask him what he knew about meningitis. He suggested I find out what type of meningitis Chris had. I went back to the British Council with the question. The following day the answer came - cryptococcal meningitis (this is a fungal infection of the covering of the brain. It is the type of meningitis which is common among AIDS patients). My friend reacted in a funny way, and asked me if I was quite sure that it was cryptococcal.

I went back to the British Council and asked Debbie Vowels, who worked at the Council, to write it down for me. My friend in the laboratory asked me to find out if they had done an AIDS test. I wondered what the AIDS test had to do with it, but I went back the next day and asked the question. Everybody looked at each other. They said they would find out from the hospital in London, and asked me to come back the next day to talk to the doctor on the phone. I can't quite remember how I got through those days. I remember crying a lot. All I knew was that Chris was dying. When I went back the next day, Dr Symonds told me on the phone the AIDS test had been done and it was positive. I did not accept this news right away. I was already too filled with misery. I did not believe it. There was no reason whatsoever to link my husband with a white homosexual disease, which was what we knew in Uganda then.

I did not know the stigma (bad attitude) associated with AIDS, so I told my friends at work and the neighbours. I told my in-laws, and my parents. I told anyone who came to sympathise with me.

Meanwhile arrangements were made for me to go to Chris. My sisters came to stay with my children who suffered terribly throughout this

time. I was so shocked and sorry for myself that I did not know how to comfort them.

My first encounter with AIDS

My first meeting with a person with AIDS was very short and I quickly forgot about it. Today the experience is very vivid in my mind.

I was working at Mulago Hospital as a physiotherapist (a medical person who helps to heal diseased and injured muscles). One day I wanted to show a group of physiotherapy students how to move a paralysed person from a bed to a wheelchair. I found a young man, about thirty years old, who agreed to be used for the demonstration. His medical notes said he was paralysed due to Immunosuppression Syndrome. I did not know what that was. When I told the ward sister which patient I had chosen for the demonstration, she came closer to me and said: "I wouldn't touch him if I were you. He has AIDS.



We don't touch him, we only show his mother what to do."

I did not use him for the demonstration, neither did I go back to him to explain that I would not be coming. I cancelled the class and arranged for another patient from the orthopaedic ward (the ward for patients who have diseases of the bones or muscles).

I did not think about him again, until AIDS came through my front door. Today there isn't a day which passes when I don't wonder what happened to him. With whom did he carry the burden? With whom did his mother carry the cross? What friends did she have to share her emotions? How much did he know about AIDS? What support did he have: God, children, loved ones? I suppose I will never know. ☉



Noerine Kaleeba at an AIDS conference in Kinshasa, Zaire in December 1990

In next month's SPEAK we learn how Chris became infected with AIDS and how Noerine nursed him through his final illness.

Noerine Kaleeba wrote the book "We Miss You All" with the help of two women, Sunanda Ray and Brigid Willmore, from the Women and AIDS Support Network (WASN) in Zimbabwe. The book is published by WASN. Noerine Kaleeba has received many international awards for her work in the fight against AIDS. SPEAK salutes Noerine for her courage and honesty in sharing her story.

The HIV virus can lead to AIDS

You cannot get the HIV virus from:

- Toilets
- Hugging
- Kissing
- Cups, spoons, knives, plates, glasses
- Holding hands
- Sharing a bath
- Telephones, door handles
- Towels
- Sharing food
- Dancing
- Talking to, hugging or playing with someone with the HIV virus
- Crowded rooms
- Insects or mosquito bites

How you can get the HIV virus:

- By having unprotected sex (sex without a condom) with someone who has the HIV virus;
- By sharing syringes (injections), razor blades or toothbrushes with someone who has the HIV virus;
- Mothers can pass the virus on to their babies during pregnancy;
- You can get the HIV virus through a blood transfusion if the blood is not tested. Hospitals in South Africa now check blood for the HIV virus before they give it to anyone.

Remember:

Having safe sex by using condoms can help to protect people from getting the virus or passing it on.

Adapted from the booklet 'Love and AIDS' produced by the Johannesburg City Health AIDS Programme, PO Box 1477, Johannesburg, 2000.

BUYING ON HP

Many people cannot afford to pay cash for big items, like furniture. **SPEAK** looks at the customer's rights when buying on Hire Purchase



People buying things on Hire Purchase (HP) often have problems as they don't understand the agreements they have signed. Some salespeople don't explain the customer's rights. Here are some things to remember when you buy something on HP:

- You have to pay a **deposit** and then a **set amount** back each month. You do not own the goods until you have finished paying off the full amount you owe. The seller is only letting you use the goods and the shop can take back (repossess) the goods if you stop paying.

- You have to sign an **agreement** saying how much you must pay back each month. Read the agreement before signing anything. Take the agreement home and ask someone else to explain it if you don't understand everything.

- If the seller does repossess

the goods, you have **21 days** to payback the amount you owe. You can then take the goods back.

- The repayments should include **insurance**. Many salespeople don't explain this. Ask what the insurance covers before signing the agreement.

The National Black Consumers Union says all insurances cover the death of the buyer. If the buyer dies, the insurance company will pay back the amount still owed to the shop. Relatives cannot be told to carry on the repayments. The seller cannot repossess the goods.

Insurance also often covers some breakages. If this is the case, the shop should not charge you for repairs. They can claim the amount from insurance.

If you are sick and are not earning money, the shop might be able to claim insurance for the monthly payments, if you give them a medical certificate.

- Many people don't realise they can sell the goods back to the store if, for example, they are retrenched and cannot afford to make the monthly payments.

Remember the cash price is not the same as the Hire Purchase price. If you buy HP, you have to pay interest every month and you will end up paying much more than if you had paid cash. It is a good idea, if you can afford it, to pay back a little more each month. This makes the interest you pay less and means you end up paying less.

Thanks to the National Black Consumers' Union (NBCU) for this information. For more advice about HP contact: NBCU, 211 Connaught Mansions, 215 Bree Street, Johannesburg. Phone: (011) 337-6210 ○

ABORTION

Campaigning to change the law

Abortion Reform Action Group (ARAG) was set up to get the law on abortion changed. SPEAK asked Chris Diamond who runs ARAG's Johannesburg office why he feels abortion should be legal

Chris Diamond is an unusual man. He believes women should have the right to choose what they do with their own bodies - and he is prepared to do something about it. He operates the Johannesburg office of the Abortion Reform Action Group (ARAG) from his home in Parkhurst on a voluntary basis.

SPEAK asked him what his work involves.

"ARAG tries to pressure the government to change the law on abortion," Diamond says.

"The law should allow women to decide for themselves whether they want an abortion and when," Diamond explains.

"Because abortion is illegal ARAG cannot tell women where they can have abortions. We can only give people free information on how the law on abortion works and when it is possible to for a woman to have a legal abortion."

Diamond comes from Britain and has lived in South Africa for 18 years. He

believes South Africa still has a long way to go before changes are made in the law on abortion.

Last year the Ministry of Health did a survey asking women around the country whether they wanted the abortion law changed. ARAG was encouraged and thought the law might change. But the Minister of Health, Dr Rina Venter, said only 50 000 women wanted the law on abortion to change.

Diamond believes the survey did not show women's true views. He says far more than 50 000 South African women have illegal abortions each year.

"Overseas medical records show that each year more than a thousand South African women fly to countries like Britain to have safe and legal abortions because they cannot have them in South Africa. Those who do not have the money to go overseas have to settle for unsafe backstreet abortions. It is estimated that in South Africa more than 200 000 women have illegal abortions each year.

"At Baragwanath Hospital, 4000 women a year are admitted after having abortions.

"We should look at the numbers of women who have illegal abortions and then decide what women want. How can all these women be against changing the law?" says Diamond.

"The laws in this country make it terrible for any women who needs an abortion. Why should any women die from a botched abortion? If the laws were different, having an abortion would be as safe and legal as any other medical procedure, and it will be the woman's personal choice."

Diamond feels government health departments should give free treatment to women who have had illegal, unsafe abortions. The government should also see that all women are given proper information and free contraception if they need it.

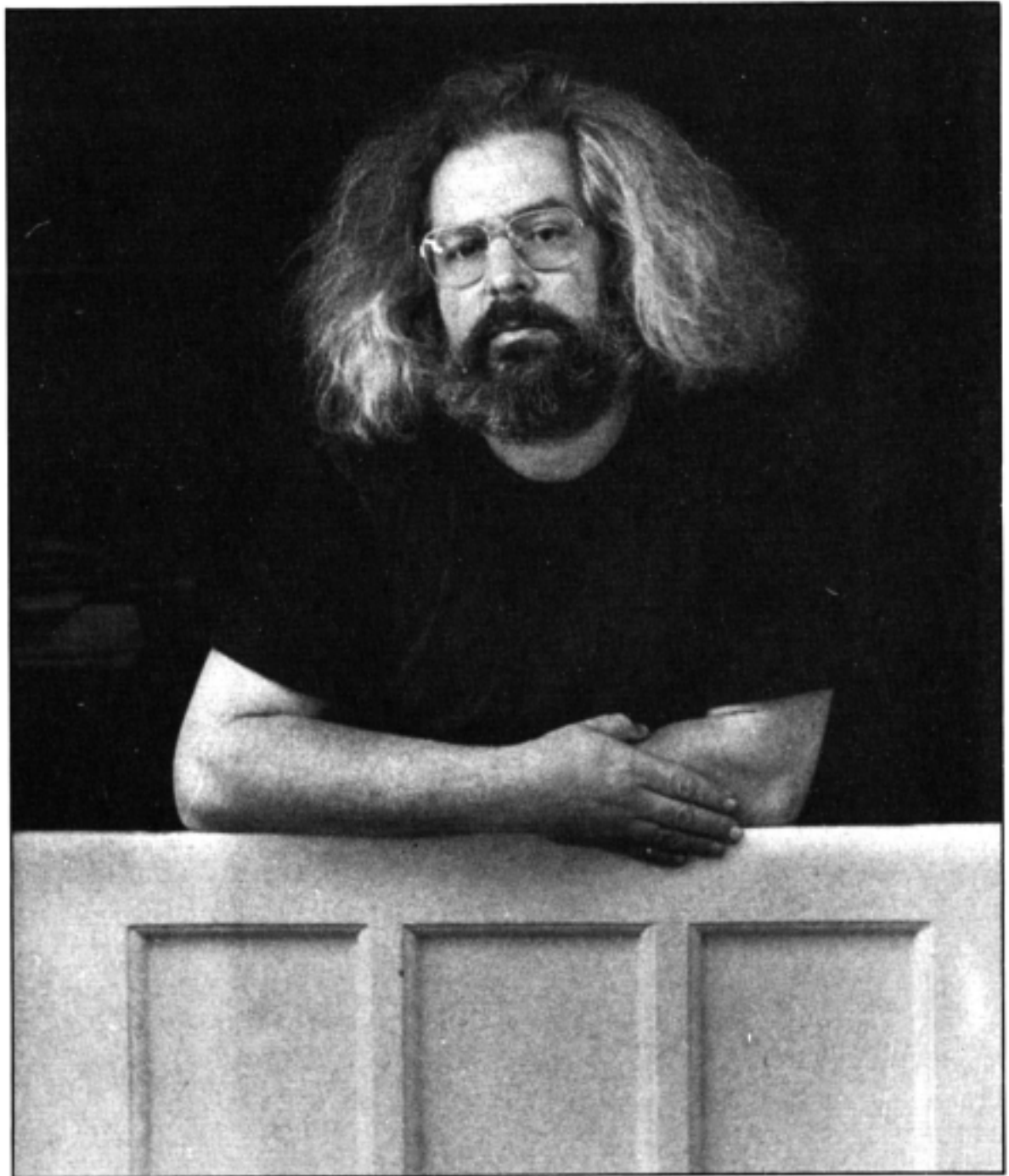


Photo by Anna Ziemiński

Chris Diamond - "The people who do not have to have abortions and never will are the ones making laws and decisions about it - like the politicians"

About pro-life groups (groups which are against abortion) Diamond says: "I cannot see people who say "No" to legalising abortion help bring up thousands of unwanted children.

"The people who don't have to have an abortion and never will are the one's making laws and decisions about it," says Diamond, "like the politicians".

"In the end it's a woman's problem and always will be. As part of a group campaigning to have the law changed, I think it's important for women to realise they are not alone." ●

Abortion - what the law says

Abortion is illegal in South Africa. The law says a woman can only have an abortion if:

- her pregnancy threatens her life or her physical and mental health;
- there is a serious risk the baby, once it is born, will suffer from a serious physical or mental disability;
- the pregnancy was a result of rape or incest;
- the pregnant woman is unable to understand fully the responsibility of being a parent. This could also apply to girls under sixteen years of age.

A woman has to go through a long and difficult process to prove she has the legal right to have an abortion.

Because of this, only 4 out of every 10 women who apply for a legal abortion in South Africa get one. Most of these are white women. To contact ARAG in Johannesburg, phone :

(011) 4429540.

launch an organisation - the Women's Action Group (WAG) - to fight for women's rights across the political barriers.

WAG collected stories from women who had been arrested and wrote protest letters to newspapers and magazines. When most of the women were freed at the end of 1983, WAG demanded the Zimbabwean government pay back the women for their suffering. They said many women who had been arrested had reported being raped, abused or insulted by police. They asked the government to promise there would never be another "Operation Clean-Up".

The government never met

these demands. Even today, before big conferences, police sometimes round-up prostitutes saying they give Zimbabwe "a bad name".

"Members of the police and army have a bad attitude towards women," said one woman after Operation Clean-up. "They go with prostitutes while their wives are at home in the rural areas, so they look at all women in town as dirt."

Another woman said: "We fought for this Zimbabwe together with men. At Independence the new government officially recognised women as an oppressed group. The Ministry of Women's Affairs was set up to promote women's equality

and to change customs and laws which oppress women. Now, we are being arrested and punished for being women."

Since its launch, WAG has continued to grow and to fight for women's rights. WAG now has about 1 000 members.

WAG has members from the rural areas, trade unions and community organisations. The group publishes a magazine, Speak Out/Taurai/Khulumani, in English, Shona and Ndebele. The organisation also has a health information project, works closely with AIDS groups and has an outreach programme for women in the rural areas.

Although women in Zimbabwe still have a long struggle ahead, WAG has managed to win some battles.

In 1985, 23 women in jail for abandoning their babies were freed after WAG wrote to the government. WAG said: "These women are suffering punishment alone, even though the fathers of their babies are guilty of baby-dumping too."

WAG has also challenged the bad way some newspapers write about women - particularly prostitutes. Last year 500 women marched through Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, to protest this. They said: "Human rights are for women too! It is not a crime to be a woman!"

WAG works closely with other women's organisations in Zimbabwe. ●



Director of WAG, Salina Mumbengegwi, with a copy of their magazine

Photo by WAG

BREAST CANCER

Most lumps women feel in their breasts are not cancer, but some are. SPEAK looks at breast cancer and explains how to do monthly breast self-examinations

What is cancer?

Our bodies are made up of cells which divide. This is natural. But sometimes the cells start to divide in an uncontrolled way and a tumor or growth forms. If the growth stays where it is and doesn't spread it is called 'benign' which means it is not cancer and can be removed easily. If, however, it spreads through the lymph vessels and blood to other parts of the body it is called 'malignant' or cancer.

In South Africa one in every 15 women stands a chance of getting breast cancer. According to the National Cancer Association the number of women, especially young women getting breast cancer is increasing.

Being aware

A woman's breasts are naturally lumpy. They can also change size when weight is gained or lost. A woman's breasts can change after breastfeeding. Many of these changes are normal and should not cause worry.

Even so, it is important for women to keep in touch with their bodies, so they notice should any changes which are not normal happen.

Keeping healthy - breast self-examinations

The National Cancer Association says women should examine their breasts every month. Women should go to a doctor once a year for a

breast examination as well as a PAP smear test (a test for cancer of the cervix).

The best time for a woman to examine her breasts is straight after her monthly period. Women who do not get periods anymore, should do it on the first day of every month.

See our drawing on how to do a breast self-examination.

All breasts are naturally lumpy because they are made up of tiny bags and pipes that make milk. Many women worry that painful, lumpy breasts are a sign of breast cancer. This is usually not true. Many women have painful breasts, especially before and during their monthly periods.

For women doing breast self-examination

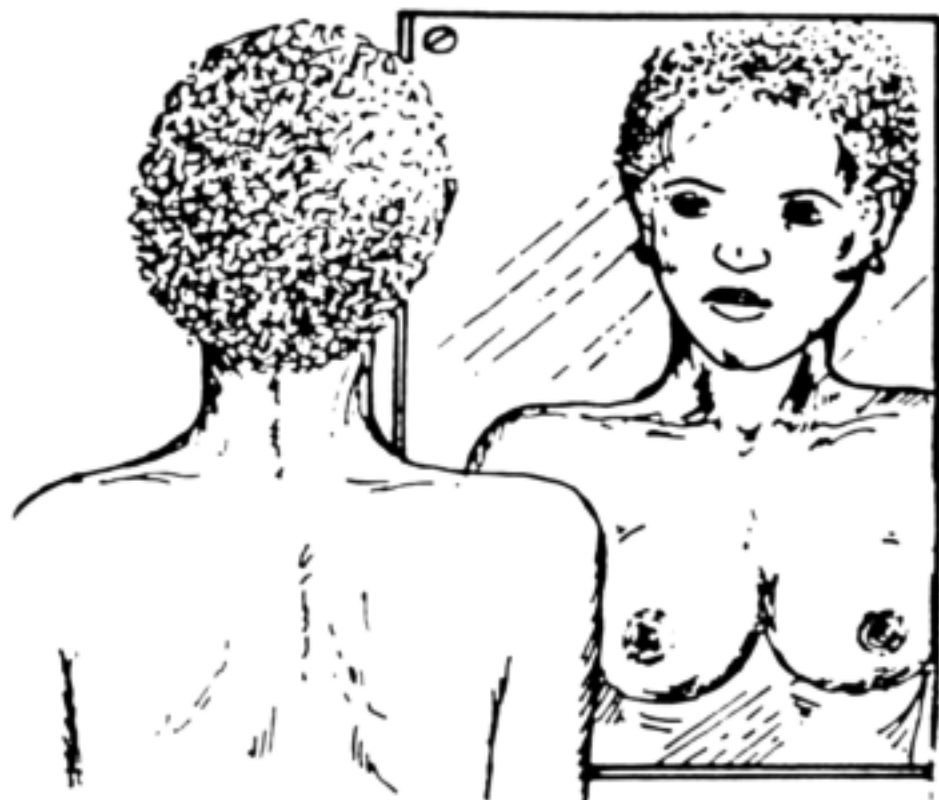
What you should look out for:

■ New lumps or thickening of the breast

Look out for new lumpiness or thickness in your breasts. Even if you find this, it may not necessarily be cancer. There are diseases and problems other than breast cancer which can cause lumps.

But if you do discover a new lump which does not go away throughout the month, it is best to go to a doctor or breast clinic where you can get advice. The doctor may do a biopsy - where she removes some breast tissue so the cells can be examined under a microscope.

Examine your breasts every month after your period



Look at your breasts in front of a mirror. If your breasts change in the way they look, you must go to a doctor.



Lie in the bath or lean up in bed. Use your right hand to feel your left breast, and then your left hand to feel your right breast.



Start at the outside of your breast. Roll the breast under your fingertips, move down and inwards until you have felt all of your breast. Don't forget to feel over the nipple.



If your breasts are big then use both hands to examine. Roll your breast between your fingertips.

SIGNS:

- Go to the clinic if you feel any few new lumps in your breast;
- Go to the clinic if you find blood, milk (unless you are breastfeeding), or if 'pus' coming out of the nipple;
- Go to the clinic if your breasts suddenly look different to how they looked before.

■ **Fluid**

Another way you can notice something may be wrong with your breasts is when water, blood or other liquid comes out of your breast and you are not breastfeeding.

Also look out for:

- unusual changes in the shape and size of your breasts;
- swelling under your armpit or upper arm;
- dimpling of the skin on your breasts;
- should your nipples suddenly turn in.

Mammograms

Mammograms are another way of testing for abnormal lumps in the breast. Mammograms are expensive and are usually only done on women who are at high risk for breast cancer. It would be a good thing for all women over 50 years old to have a mammogram once a year.

Who can get breast cancer?

All women have a chance of getting breast cancer but some women have a greater chance than others. Those more likely to get breast cancer are:

- women who are over 40 years of age;
- women who have never borne children or who have had children late in life;
- women who have a close female relative, like a mother or a sister with breast cancer.

Dealing with breast cancer

If a woman has breast cancer there are different steps to take, depending on how far it has spread.

In some cases, surgeons may feel it is necessary to remove the lump in a small operation called a lumpectomy or the breast in an operation called a mastectomy. In other cases, chemotherapy (treatment with anti-cancer drugs) or radiotherapy (treatment with high energy rays like X-rays. This destroys the cancer while doing as little harm as possible to the normal cells) may also be used.

Whatever happens, a woman has a right to decide what course of treatment she wants.

Breast cancer can be very difficult to deal with emotionally and it is important for women who do

have breast cancer to have support from family, friends and other women in the same position.

Many women are too scared to examine their breasts in case they do find a lump. Try not to be scared and just make it part of your life. The earlier you find something wrong the the easier it is to treat. You may never find something wrong - but at least you are in touch with your own body!

Reach for Recovery is a support group for women who have breast cancer. It is made up of women who have had breast cancer. If you want to find out more about Reach for Recovery, or breast cancer, write to Ms Zerilda Nel, National Cancer Association, PO Box 2000, Johannesburg, 2000, South Africa. Or phone (011) 403 2825. She will be able to put you in touch with their offices in other parts of the country.

Most teaching hospitals in South Africa have breast clinics:

- Addington Hospital in Durban
- Johannesburg General and Hillbrow Hospitals in Johannesburg
- Groote Schuur and Tygerberg Hospitals in Cape Town
- HF Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria

Amongst the other hospitals which have breast clinics are:

- Frere Hospital in East London
- Livingstone Hospital in Port Elizabeth ●



As a matter of fact...

Battle won

After a two year legal battle, Unity Dow, a woman lawyer, has won the right for her children to be Botswana citizens. Although Dow is a Botswana citizen, two of her children, both born in Botswana, were not allowed citizenship because their father is American.

Dow proved the Citizen's Act discriminated against women and was unconstitutional. Dow argued Section 15 of the constitution does not allow discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion or race.



Marriage is more work

A government study of Australian families found when women get married their unpaid work (housework) increases by more than 60 percent.



Girls and boys are best

India has banned women having tests which tell the sex of an unborn baby. In future such tests will only be offered to women for special health risk reasons. The government wants to prevent the abortion of healthy female foetuses in communities that value boys more than girls.



Cheryl wins appeal

Table tennis player Cheryl Roberts won back her place on the South African Olympic team to Barcelona. Roberts was removed from the team after testing positive for a banned drug. She was able to prove the test was positive because she was under medication for flu at the time the test was taken.



Don't pass it on

It is now a crime in Kuwait for anyone who knows they have the HIV virus to intentionally pass it on to others. Kuwait is the first Arab country to pass such a law.



Healthy young lungs

Malaysia hopes to ban cigarette smoking by people under 18 years old. The sale of cigarettes to anyone under 18 would also be banned.

Japan may pay out

South Korean women who were chosen by the Japanese army during the Second World War as battlefield prostitutes for its soldiers may be compensated. Many of the women, some now in their 60s, are suing the government for medical and living expenses.



Providing the muscle

The Swedish government may soon provide bodyguards for women threatened by violence from men, including ex-husbands. The government has put aside 1.75 million dollars (R4.7 million) to try out this programme.



Information from: local daily and weekly newspapers, Women's Health Journal, Women's International Network News





Taxi Talk

Whose party is it anyway?

That's the question Mahadi Miya asks after going to a children's birthday party

The other day I went with my daughter to a birthday party at my neighbour's, the Mthethwa's. As we entered the house we could hear the sounds of partying.

"Hip-hip Hooray!" roared old Mthethwa. He was sitting with some other neighbours in the living room. Mthethwa jumped up and made as if to do a traditional dance, then sat down again. People cheered and clapped - obviously having a great time.

I certainly wouldn't want to deny them that good time. The problem was, it wasn't Mthethwa's party. That day, his youngest child, Zuko, was turning three.

In the dining room things looked a little different. Zuko and about 12 other kids were sitting around the table waiting for their fun to start. Zuko looked very unhappy. The other kids were beginning to pick on each other as they waited for his mother, Mamzo, to light the three candles on the cake. Poor Mamzo was busy running to and from the living room with beer bottles and ashtrays.

I quickly offered to light the candles and started singing 'Happy birthday to you!' Zuko was not to be fooled. He threw a tantrum - yelling for his mother. The other kids were

fighting with each other. There was nothing else for them to do.

Zuko looked at his father as if to say: "Whose party is this anyway?"

He wasn't the only one asking this question. I felt the same.

This was supposed to be Zuko's special day, but adults seemed to be the only ones celebrating.

Zuko's "party" is not unusual.

Kiddies parties should be fun for children and parents. Instead, too often, parents take over and use the occasion to have a party themselves.

This of course means alcohol.

"A party without liquor is no party - even if it is a child's party," is what too many people say and think.

At the rate Mamzo was supplying liquor to the adults, they were likely to get drunk soon. There is then the danger the parents and their friends will forget about the kids altogether. My mind runs wild and I picture children wandering into the street - perhaps getting run over.

Shouldn't we be trying to give our kiddies real parties? Parties which are fun for them and alcohol-free? Shouldn't we make their parties something special - not something they would rather forget? ●



NOTICES



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

ISSUE	IN BY
September	August
October	September
November	October

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

Do you need to talk to someone about how you are feeling because of a traumatic experience? **The Trauma Clinic** offers counselling to those who have been victims of any kind of violence. The service is open on a Wednesday & Thursday from 1-00p.m.

For an appointment phone Nthabiseng Mqale at (011) 716-3675 or write to Project for the Study of Violence Psychology Dept. P.O. Wits, 2050

Jill Taylor and Sheelagh Stewart's book, "Sexual and Domestic Violence; Help, Recovery and Action in Zimbabwe", is now available. The book is for anyone who wants to advise or help those affected by sexual and domestic violence. Although the book was written for Zimbabweans, it is useful for everyone, especially in African countries.

For more information, write to:
 Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Project
 PO Box UA 171
 Harare
 Zimbabwe

Cape Town Rape Crisis has produced a pamphlet for women explaining what maintenance is and what you have to do to get a grant.

Write to the:
 Cape Town Rape Crisis
 12 Nutall Road
 Observatory, 7925
 Telephone:
 (021) 47 6762

The Education Resource and Information Project (Erip) is a non-profit community organisation in Cape Town. It provides skills training and resources to organisations working towards social, political and economic change in South Africa. Erip also assists community organisations to set up resource centres.

Contact them at:

The University of the Western Cape
 Modderdam Road
 Bellville
 Telephone: (021) 959 2132
 Ask for Murray Michelle - training
 and Jeanne Berger - resources

AUGUST 9 — NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

I have seen the rays of our new South Africa rising

You who have no work, speak.
You who have no homes, speak.
You who have no schools, speak.
You who have to run like chickens
from the vulture, speak
Let us share our problems so that
we can solve them together.
We must free ourselves.
Men and women must share
housework.
Men and women must work
together in the home and out
in the world.
There are no creches and nursery
schools for our children.
There are not homes for the aged
There is no-one to care for the sick.
Women must unite to fight for
these rights.

I opened the road for you
You must go forward!

Dora Tamana, April 1981

Photo taken at August 9 celebrations in Johannesburg 1988