

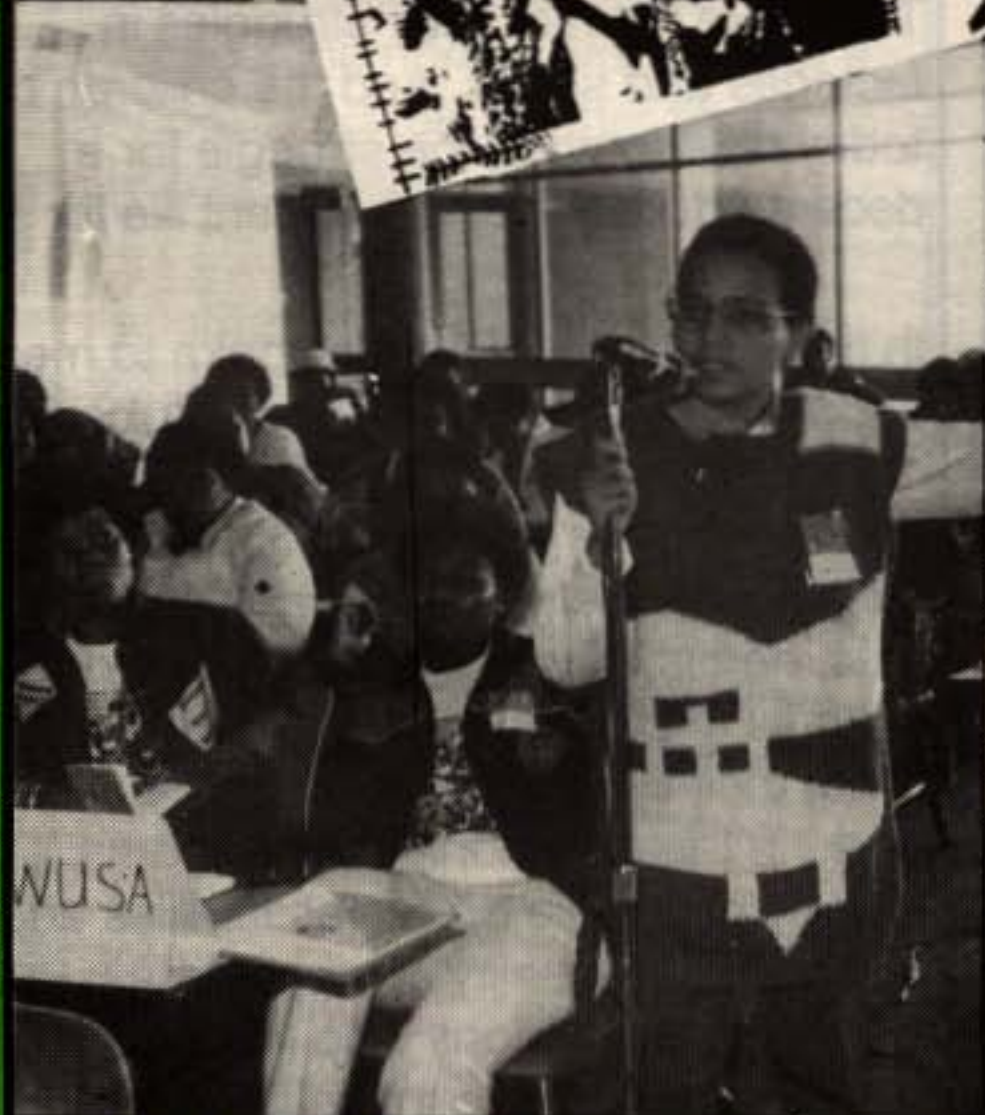
SPEAK

2 APRIL 1988

July - August 1988

Number 20

50c



VIVA COSATU WOMEN

CONTENTS

2. Letters to SPEAK
4. Is This a Dream?
7. Viva COSATU Women Viva!
10. AIDS - Let's Talk About It
12. The Dancer by Gcina Mhlophe
14. Women Workers in Britain
Fighting for a Woman's World Too
16. We Are Breaking the Silence
18. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
20. I am Pregnant -
What Can Go Wrong?
24. You Can't Kill the Spirit

SPEAK'S OFFICES

We have offices in Durban and Johannesburg.

SPEAK Collective
Office 14
The Ecumenical Centre
20 St Andrew's Street
Durban
4001
Phone: (031) 3011624

SPEAK Collective
3rd Floor, MGM House
127a Anderson Street
Johannesburg
Phone: (011) 3316100

SPEAK Collective members are: Gill, Irna, Karen,
Phumelele, Shamim and Vanessa.

The government's State of Emergency stops us from being free to write about many important things. If there was no State of Emergency, we would be able to write about these things.

THANKS

We thank those who helped with going out to do interviews for the article called "We Are Breaking the Silence". They are Tsidi, Letabo, Leratto and Sylvia and Dudu. Thanks!

Cover photographs by Santu Mofokeng, Afrapix.

Published by SPEAK Collective
© Please acknowledge any material used from SPEAK.

SPEAK

a magazine for women

The government has declared the third State of Emergency. And it is much harsher than before. The government has banned organisations, like the UDF. People have been banned. Good newspapers like South and the New Nation have been banned. The government is now trying to crush the unions through new laws like the Labour Relations Bill. Many hundreds of people have been detained. Many people have died. And yet many more people have decided to fight for justice and democracy even harder. You can ban almost anything, but you can't ban peoples' fighting spirit.

We remember the struggles of the youth. The time of June 16, 1976, and their brave stand against bantu education. The children of that year are workers now. They take forward their struggles in factories and shops. And the children of today take forward the struggle for a decent education and a decent life for all.

In this issue of SPEAK we spoke to men and women about fighting for justice and democracy in the home. We spoke to people who are working hard to change their lives in their homes. They share their lives, housework and children. It is good to know that people see the need to make their lives better in every way, at work, in the community and at home. Millions of people do live as families and can work for equality in their homes. But there are also millions who live lives without families. Like those living in hostels, in the employers backyards, and in prisons. These problems will only change when we organise to win our long struggle for justice in South Africa.



Dear SPEAK

I am writing this letter to say something that I think is important to both men and women. But it affects women more directly.

"The pill" (contraceptive) is used widely by women all over the world and more and more women are being encouraged to use it. There are many types of "the pill" being made. These are supposed to suit all women. Most doctors and family planning people will tell you that there is a pill that would be okay for you. But you are not really told how "the pill" will affect you. There are warnings on the boxes, but these don't cover all the side effects. "The pill" affects the normal workings of a woman's body, and many other things about a woman's health also.

There is another point that is related to contraceptives and is important. Men can also take responsibility for contraception. They can use condoms which do not harm women or men's health at all. It appears to most people that it is just easier for women to take responsibility. This does not seem right. I would like other people to also talk about this.

Deon, Durban

Dear brother, thank you for your letter. It is good to hear men talking in such a way. We hope that other men will also start to think in a caring way about these issues - SPEAK Collective.

Dear SPEAK

I want to share something with SPEAK readers. It is something that happened at work.

There was a man who used to come and bother me, asking for love and all that. He didn't even know me. He used to irritate me, and I kept telling him to leave me alone and stop bothering me. But he would keep coming back. One day I told a friend who also works in my building about this problem. She asked me what his name is. I told her. She shook her head, and said "It's the same guy." She told me that this man had also been bothering her with the same stuff. Then we asked around. It turned out that there were five of us women who work in our building that this man was proposing love to, and bothering us all the time. He would not leave any of us alone when we asked him to. Men can be dangerous, especially if you are alone in your office.

Anyway, us five women made a plan. If he came to any of us, we would find an excuse to use the phone. Then we would phone one of the other women, who would then phone the others. And then we would all arrive in her office, and talk to him straight altogether. And this is what we did! He started bothering one of us, and within minutes we were all there. We asked him what he was doing bothering all of us. He protested, and said we weren't being fair by all coming together. We said: AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!

What do other SPEAK readers think of this?

Yours in Sisterhood
A Fighting Sister
Durban

Dear Fighting Sister, we think you're all great ! We've got to fight this unwanted attention and harassment. How else will it end? - SPEAK Collective

Is this a dream?

Sweeping is not just women's work.

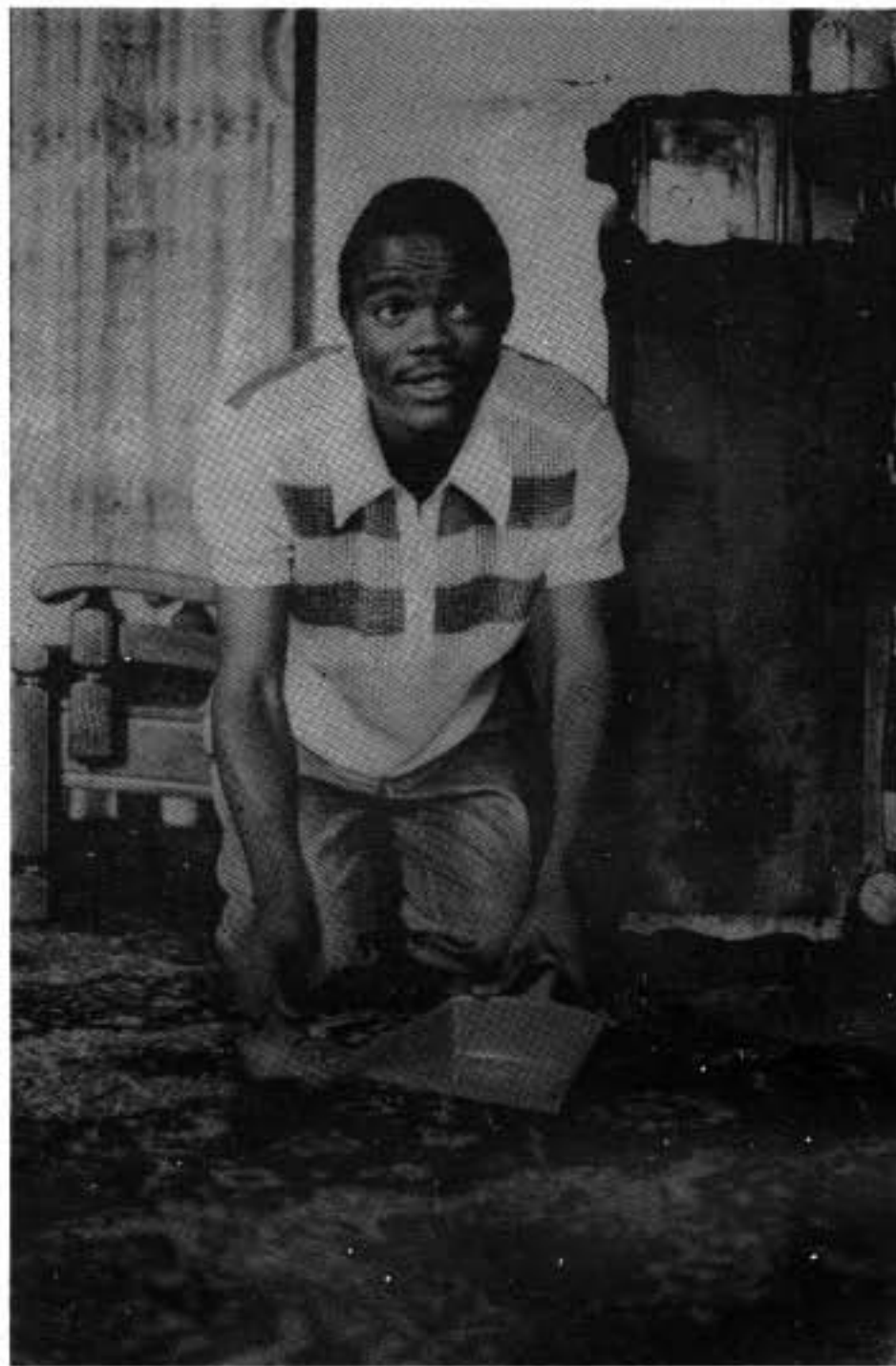
Think of a time when you come home and start cooking. While you are in the kitchen somebody else is seeing to children, making sure that they get ready to sleep. Also making sure the older ones are doing homework.

Think of a time when you finish cooking and sit down while somebody else is cleaning up and you also get a chance to see your children after a day's work.

Think of a time when as a woman the man in your life knows that you are a human being. That you need rest. That you need to go out and be away from cooking and cleaning. And that you need to attend a meeting at work and in the community without feeling guilty about childcare and other responsibilities at home. Is this kind of life all just a dream? We wanted to find out. SPEAK went out to find men and women who live and share together for the benefit of both of them. It was very hard because there are not many men around who know that it takes a lot of sharing to make a relationship enjoyable.

Share the Home, Share the Housework
Ndumiso is not married. He lives with his mother, brothers and sisters. He said "I don't

Photograph by Phakade Magwaza, Afrapix



mind what work in the house there is to do. As long as it needs to be done, I do it. Housework is for us all. After all we share the house. Why can't we share the work as well?"

Often the reason why men do not want to work in the home is the fear of what people are going to say about them. Magrapes and Thabo are two men we spoke to who have had comments made about them.

Magrapes shares housework with his wife. He told us, "One day I was doing washing for the family outside the house. Another man just came angrily and asked why I was washing. He said that I am setting a bad example. He said that all women around will expect men to wash for them."

A lot of this way of thinking comes from the way most of us are brought up. We are told that a good wife is the one who does everything for a man. So, if a man does what is seen as woman's work, he is a funny man. We forget that sharing housework means both a man and a woman will have more time together at the end of the day. It also means that love will grow.

Sharing A Life Together

Thabo is married and has children. "I wash nappies for my little ones whenever I can. But I know that people think that it is the worst thing for a man to look after children. My neighbour started singing a song saying that my wife was bossy because he saw me hanging nappies. I ignored him. I told my wife and we both laughed about it."

Ndumiso, Magrapes and Thabo are some of the very few men who are prepared to share housework no matter what people say. Most people think like Vusi Twala. Vusi Twala is a man who wrote to Tribute magazine saying how bad it is for a man to look after children. "Can you imagine Jomo Sono changing and washing nappies," said Vusi. Jomo Sono is a very well known soccer star. We are not sure whether Vusi asked Jomo if he minds caring for his children. But Vusi says this because in his mind successful men like Jomo cannot take part in child care. This is how many people think.

Brian looks after his two children. He said, "Men only live half lives until they care for their children. Looking after children is a joy. It

makes you a full human being. Your children don't know you and you don't know them until you look after them."

Men And Women In The Struggle

Ndumiso is a member of a community organisation that is fighting for change so that people can live better lives. He said, "For me democracy applies from the time I wake up in the morning, at the work place and in my organisation." Ndumiso felt strongly that what he preaches in his organisation must also happen at home. He also felt strongly that it is important for men to support their wives by taking over responsibilities at home to make sure women also attend meetings. Men comrades forget that it is part of the struggle to make sure that the woman in his life gets time to get involved in community and union struggles. Ndumiso continued to say, "It is a mistake for men in the struggle to leave their wives out in what they are doing. You need that support from each other in order to grow."

Why Is It So Hard To Achieve A Shared Life?

We have been made to believe that there is always somebody who is better. We believe that lawyers are better than street sweepers. White is better than Black. Men are better than



"It isn't all easy going, but men only live half lives until they care for their children."

women. Men are believed to be bosses. This attitude makes us think that men cannot do certain things especially at home. We are brought up to think that a good woman is one who does everything for her man. When a man does things for her, people say it means she is lazy and she is failing to be a good woman.

"In fact in the Black community, a man who shows a lot of love for a woman is believed to have been given muthi to make him soft. And that is bad. Being seen spending a lot of time with your family as a man is not appreciated by other men," said one woman we spoke to.

A Big Battle

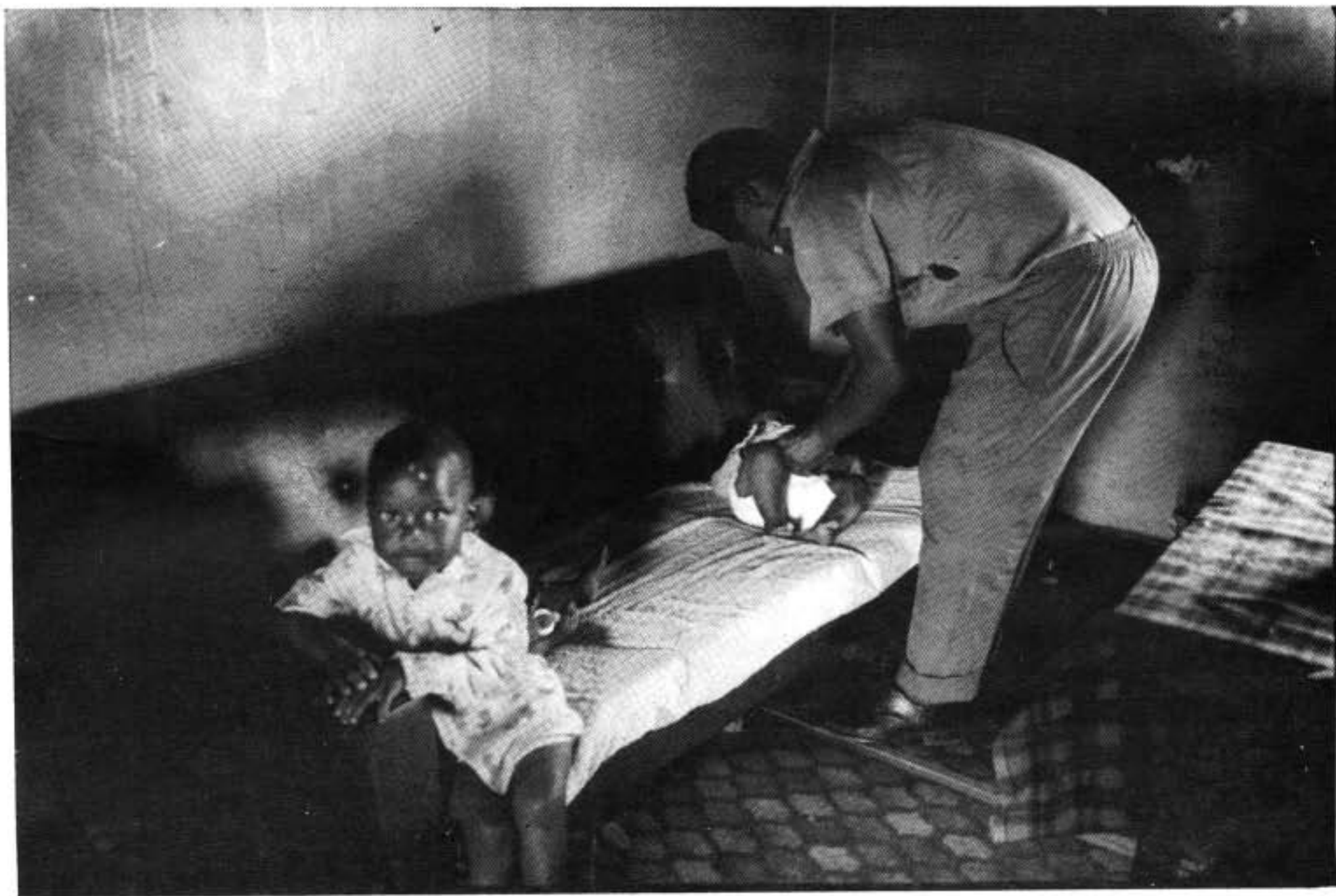
We also spoke to women who live with men who have made changes. There were very few women who found men willing to share everything. Most of them had to fight very hard. One woman said, "It is very nice to be in a relationship where everything is shared. You get to understand and love each other better. But it is a big battle. It does not happen overnight. You have to keep reminding the man you live with that you are also a human being and you need to be helped and to be

loved. It is very difficult because some of them never think about it at all. But you still try. It need not get to the point of quarrelling. If a person is loving he should understand your concern.

We Have To Be Brave In Our Lives

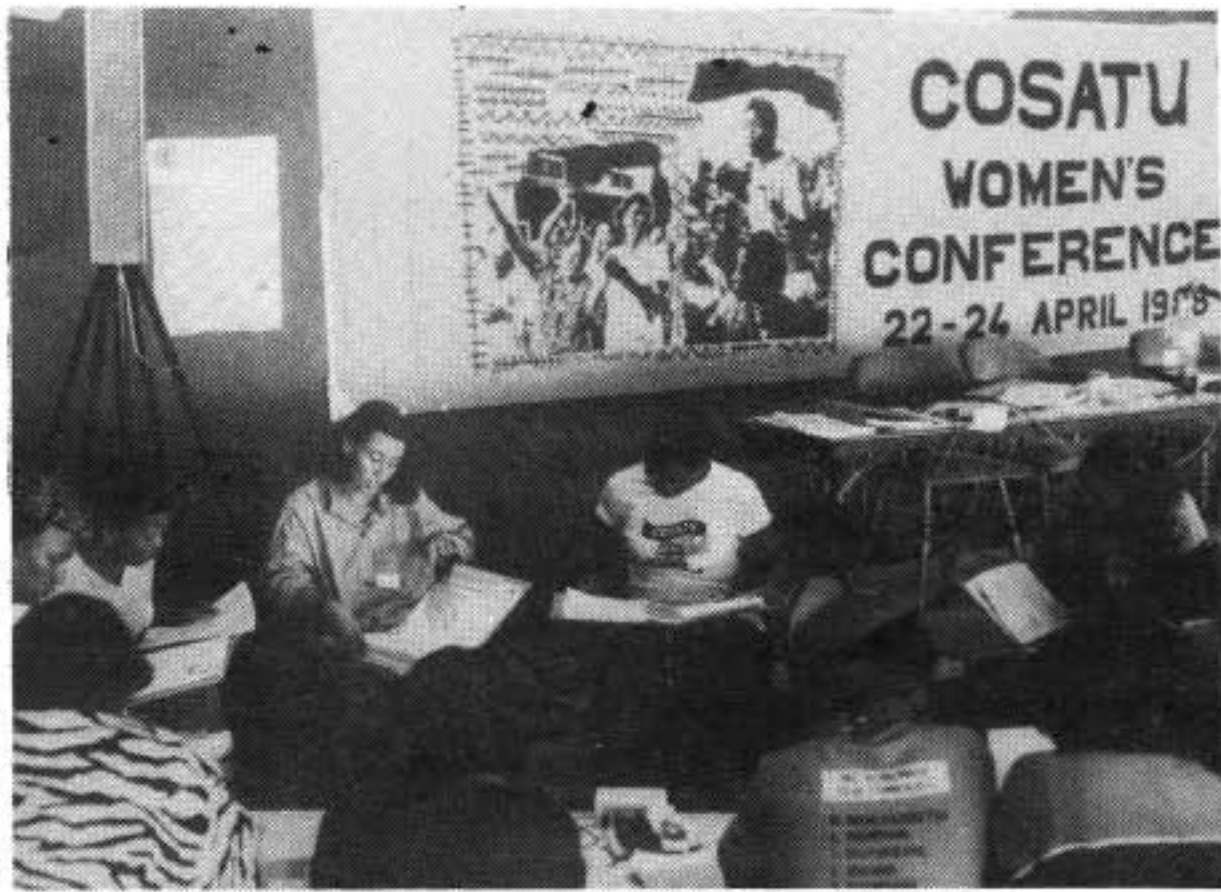
Another woman said, "We are facing many problems. There are laws which make it difficult for people to have normal lives. Workers are fighting for better working conditions. In the townships people die every day. Many people think that talking about problems between men and women these days is crazy. They believe that fighting bosses and government for our rights is the only battle. But, if we win the fight against bosses and government, will women be free?"

So many problems! All these problems cannot be solved overnight. But let us start working on something we can change now. Let us change our lives now and work for democracy in our homes. Let us share our lives and responsibilities at home, This will make us even stronger to fight all other problems outside the home.



"It is very nice to be in a relationship where everything is shared. You get to understand and love each other better"

VIVA ! COSATU WOMEN VIVA !



Photographs by Santu Mofokeng, Afrapix

Over three hundred women came from their unions to the COSATU WOMEN'S CONGRESS. This was a very special time. Never before in South Africa had women workers from all over the country come together to discuss their problems as women. Women workers came from all the different unions affiliated to COSATU. There were also women from sister women's organisations in communities. SPEAK was there - selling magazines, badges and t-shirts.

Women's lives

The women at the conference looked at what is happening to women in the community, in the union and at work. They also looked at women and health and safety. The women decided that there were many things in their lives to fight and change. They met for three days. There was a lot of serious discussion. But there was also time to be enjoyed. One evening was set aside for plays, songs and dance.

Taking up women's struggles

At times the women did not agree with each other. And so they spent a lot of time talking about things. They spent a long time talking about how to take up women's struggles in COSATU. And after much talking they decided to organise women's forums at a local level. This means that women will meet in the areas where they live and work. And they will talk about their problems. And they will decide what to do about them.

Pregnancy, Health and Safety

The women at the conference said that pregnant women should have at least nine months paid leave. And this leave should be for all women even if they have just started a job. They said pregnant women should not do jobs that will harm their health and the health of their child. And there should be paid time off to attend clinic.

Contraception (prevention)

They said that the injection -depo provera- is very harmful to womens health and should be banned. They said men should take an equal part in using prevention. Men can use condoms. The women want schools to have sex education. And they want women to get proper medical check ups before they are given contraceptives .

Abortion

They said that many women die from abortions that are not done properly. They want COSATU to educate workers about abortion. And they want Cosatu to work with other organisations to fight for the right to a safe, free, and legal abortion whenever necessary.

Unemployment Insurance (UIF)

The women want UIF to be given to farm workers and workers who work in peoples homes. These workers do not get UIF benefits.

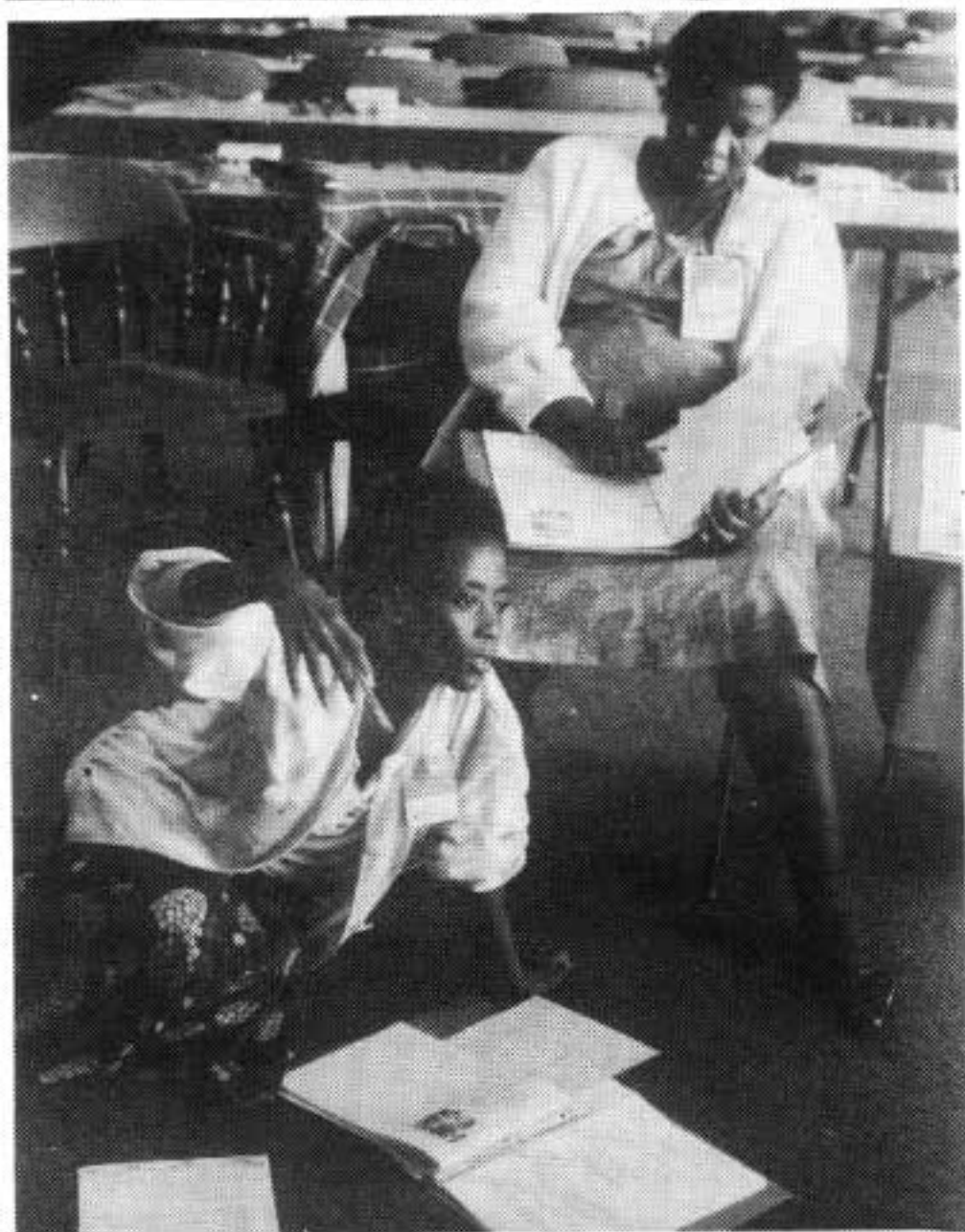
Cancer of the cervix

They said that many women are dying from cancer of the cervix. This is cancer at the opening of the womb. If women have tests called pap smears this cancer can be found out early. And if it is treated early it can be cured. The COSATU women want the government to provide free information about this cancer. They want free pap smears at clinics. And they want companies to give women workers time off to have these tests.



Violence and women

The women want COSATU to give its members education on rape. They want



Photographs by Santu Mofokeng, Afrapix

COSATU should look at training women in self defence so that they could defend themselves against attacks by men.

Sexual harassment

The women said that they are sexually harassed by men in the union, at work and in the community. They said that women must discuss these problems freely.

Child care and maternity

The women said they would fight for free child care for their children from the government and the bosses.

Women in the family

The women talked about how difficult it is for women to take part in union work and attend meetings because they have to attend to housework and childcare. They said that men should also take part in caring for children. And that housework should be shared by all those living in the house. They said COSATU members should be educated so that there could be equal relationships between men and women in COSATU and in the country as a whole. The women said that they would fight for these ideas in the union. And they said they would not allow COSATU members to hold ideas that keep women in the home.

Taking these decisions forward

There are lots of things to change in women's lives. The women spent much time at the conference working out what these things are. They talked with strong voices. And they looked at how COSATU could take up these problems.

Now is the time for these words to be put into practice. We wish the COSATU women well in doing this. If they are able to change these things in COSATU they will be also making changes for all women in the country. Then we will be able to say in even bigger voices - **VIVA COSATU WOMEN VIVA!**

COSATU to fight for the courts to take rape seriously. They also want COSATU to educate men and women on the problem of men beating their women. They said that

AIDS - LET'S TALK

Everyone has heard something about AIDS. Some mine bosses have tested workers on the mines for the AIDS germ. And these bosses sent workers who were found to be carrying the AIDS germ back to the countries they came from. These bosses talk of AIDS coming from Africa. Others say AIDS is only spread by men who sleep with other men. Some black people say that it is only white people who get AIDS. And some white people believe that only black people get AIDS. What is the truth about AIDS?

AIDS is a disease that anyone can get. Black people can get AIDS. White people can get AIDS. Men who have sex with men can get AIDS. Women who have sex with women can get AIDS. Men who have sex with women and women who have sex with men can get AIDS. Unborn babies can get AIDS if their mothers are carrying the AIDS germ.

There is no cure for AIDS. But we can prevent the spread of AIDS if we know more about the AIDS germ and how it is spread.

What is AIDS?

AIDS is a sickness caused by the AIDS germ. This germ is very small. If it gets into our bodies it can live there for many years without us knowing about it. We will not feel sick and we will not know we are carrying the germ. This is because it takes many years for the AIDS germ to weaken your body. A person can carry the AIDS germ for up to 14 years before getting sick. Once you get sick with AIDS your body can no longer fight off sickness like before. You feel weak. And you lose weight. Later you may get serious chest infections, skin rashes and a running stomach.

A person who has the AIDS germ but has not yet got sick is called an AIDS carrier. They can pass on the AIDS germ to other people even when they are still healthy. They will not know they have the AIDS germ and they will not know that they have passed it on to other people. Most people who pick up the AIDS germ will die from the AIDS sickness. They will

die because their body is not able to fight any illnesses. There is no treatment for the AIDS sickness. This is why people are so afraid of the sickness.

How Do You Get AIDS?

The AIDS germ has to come out of one person's body and get into the next person's body. It comes out in the man's sperm, from the discharge from the opening to the woman's womb (cervix), and from blood. It only gets into another person's body through a cut, or a sore or a needle prick. It cannot get through healthy skin.

* You can get AIDS from having sex with someone who already has the AIDS germ in their body. This can happen with sex between men and women. And it can happen with sex between men and men. The germ travels in the man's sperm, and it travels in the discharge from a woman's cervix. The more people you have sex with, the bigger your chance is of getting AIDS.

* Babies can get the AIDS germ. Mothers who have the AIDS germ can give it to their babies before they are born. The child is born healthy but becomes sick before its first birthday. The child usually dies before it reaches two years.

* You can pick up the AIDS germ from blood that has the AIDS germ in it. This blood has to get inside your body through a cut or a sore or a needle prick. This can happen when you get a blood transfusion that has not been checked for the AIDS germ. Or it can happen if you are pricked by a dirty needle that has the AIDS germ on it. This may be a danger for health workers.

So the AIDS germ does not pass through the air. There is, therefore, no need to run away from a person who has the AIDS germ.

How Do We Prevent AIDS?

Condoms prevent the AIDS germ from passing from one person's body to the other person's body during sex. In other words, condoms

ABOUT IT

prevent the AIDS germ in the sperm of the man, or in the discharge from the cervix of the woman, going into the other person's body during sex. Everyone should use a condom when having sex with someone you don't know very well, with someone who has many partners and with a prostitute.

The more people you have sex with, or the more people your partner has sex with, the bigger chance you have of picking up or spreading the AIDS germ.

Education About Aids Is Important.

We need to know how the AIDS germ is spread. And how it is not spread. If we know these things we can help prevent the AIDS germ from spreading. If a person is very worried that they may have the AIDS germ, then they can get a blood test done at a clinic. The blood test can tell if the AIDS germ is in the blood.

There is no cure for AIDS but we can discuss ways of preventing AIDS. The government is not providing us with the information we need to help us. We have to take this on as our responsibility to protect ourselves and others. We need to discuss AIDS in our unions and community organisations. We need to speak to our children about AIDS. We need to practise safe sex with condoms. If you are sexually active, don't take a chance. Keep condoms next to your bed, in your bag, and in your pockets. Then they are there with you when you need them.

If you want more information on AIDS you can get the CRITICAL HEALTH booklet on AIDS. Write to CRITICAL HEALTH, P.O. Box 16250, Doornfontein, 2028. The Workplace Information Group (WIG) has a pamphlet that you can get from them. Write to WIG, P.O. Box 5244, Johannesburg 2000. The Industrial Health Research group in Cape Town is writing a booklet for union educators. This booklet has information on AIDS for workers and unions. You can get this from Industrial Health Research Group, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch, 7700. All of these groups will be happy to help you. You can also write to SPEAK with any questions about AIDS. You don't have to give your name if you don't want to. We will answer all letters that we get.

AIDS IS A KILLER...

but we can try to stop it spreading...

by thinking about it seriously

you may have only one sexual partner. But if your partner is having sex with other people the risk of getting AIDS gets bigger. Because those people probably have other sexual partners. And those others have others. And so on. In the end you may be linked up with people all over.

by understanding that condoms are clever



they prevent the mixing of sexual fluid between partners. They stop the AIDS germ from being passed on. There are also other good things about condoms. They also help to stop other sex diseases, like VD from being passed on. And of course they also stop you from getting pregnant. Condoms are a very healthy way to have sex! Women and men can buy them at a chemist, or get them from family planning.

by being caring and responsible about those people we have sex with.

The Dancer

by Gcina Mhlophe

Mama,
they tell me you were a dancer
they tell me you had long
beautiful legs to carry your graceful body
they tell me you were a dancer

Mama,
they tell me you sang beautiful solos
they tell me you closed your eyes
always when the feeling of the song
was right, and lifted your face up to the sky
they tell me you were an enchanting dancer

Mama
they tell me you were always so gentle
they talk of a willow tree
swaying lovingly over clear running water
in early Spring when they talk of you
they tell me you were a slow dancer

Mama
they tell me you were a wedding dancer
they tell me you smiled and closed your eyes
your arms curving outward just a little
and your feet shuffling in the sand;
tshi tshi tshitshitshitha, tshitshi tshitshitshitha
o hee! how I wish I was there to see you
they tell me you were a pleasure to watch

Mama
they tell me I am a dancer too
but I don't know...
I don't know for sure what a wedding dancer is
there are no more weddings
but many, many funerals
where we sing and dance
running fast with the coffin
of a would-be bride or would-be groom
strange smiles have replaced our tears
our eyes are full of vengeance, Mama

Dear, dear Mama,
they tell me I am a funeral dancer.



Drawing by Sanna



Women Workers in Britain

FIGHTING FOR A WOMEN'S WORLD TOO

Women's voices are heard

In Britain many more women workers were joining trade unions in the 1970's. There had never been so many women in unions before. But very few women were active in the unions. Very few women went to union meetings. Very few women were chosen by the workers to take up their problems and to speak for them in the factories. The shopstewards chosen to do this were mostly men. And the leaders of the trade unions - like the branch secretaries and presidents - were also mostly men.

Women in the unions saw that this was not good. The men who were the unions leaders did not always take women's problems seriously. The men were sometimes not even aware of what women workers were going through. The women union members saw that their problems as women workers would be taken up properly only when women were involved as shopstewards and leaders in their unions. Women began to organise to make their voices heard.

Finding out about women

The women got the unions to take women's issues seriously. They got the unions to look at the jobs women were doing. At how many women were shopstewards. And at what women members felt their problems



were. And they looked at whether the constitutions of unions made it more difficult for women to take positions in trade unions.

Organising women's meetings

The women decided to meet in women's forums. These were meetings for women workers only. The women felt more confident to talk at these meetings. As one woman said, "Often men in charge don't listen to what women have got to say. They don't think the women have got anything worth talking about, and that attitude keeps a lot of good women down."

The women now saw the union as their organisation. They advised the union on women's problems and made sure these were being taken up. Women who were in these forums say that it made them realise they were not alone in the union. And they felt brave enough to take part in other union meetings.

A place for women in unions.

The women fought for a place on union executive committees. The members of the executive committees are the secretary, president, treasurer, and representatives from factories. Their job is to carry out the wishes of the workers and to run the union. It was important that women were in these

committees. But they also saw that it would take a long time before women would get elected on these committees. This was because women had never done these jobs before. So some unions gave a special number of seats to women on the union executive. As one woman said, "We need to be able to voice our demands. Until we get education and experience, we need to have seats set aside for women like this."

Changing meeting times and organising child care

The main reason why women were not taking part in trade union work was women's work in the home. One woman said, "I have two jobs already. I'm a worker and a mother. Now you are saying that I should do three jobs and be a shopsteward as well".

So unions tried to have work time meetings instead of evening meetings. When meetings were held after work they tried to organise child care while meetings were going on. Or they tried to give women baby sitting allowances. Also transport was organised to and from meetings. Men were encouraged to share work in the home so that women could be more active in the unions. And some unions changed the meeting style so that there was free discussion in place of formal meetings.

Changing union education.

Most women felt that trade union education was not looking at women's problems. Very few women went to union courses. Those who went felt very shy to speak. Some unions began to change their education. They set up discussion groups for women in the factories. Other unions made sure that women's problems were raised in all union education courses. Women say that these things have helped them. As one woman said, "I'm not frightened anymore to bring forward points in meetings or courses. I have gained confidence I never had before."

Making women organisers.

Women in the unions saw that for women to have strong organisation it was important to have women organisers. And they saw that it was important to have some women organisers whose main job would be to organise on women's problems in the unions. Some unions have done this. Women say this has made a difference. It is easier for women to talk to and share problems with women organisers. And it has helped having organisers whose main job is to focus on the needs of women.

Changing union pamphlets

Women saw that they were not always shown in a good way in union pamphlets



THE WOMEN MEET



LATER BACK IN THE OFFICE



A NEW ERA DAWNS

This is part of a pamphlet about 'George the groper', and how the women at work deal with him. NALGO is a union in Britain.

NALGO
 fights
 for women's
 rights

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS
 A TRADE UNION ISSUE. IF YOU
 ARE PESTERED AT WORK,
 CONTACT:**

and newspapers. Sometimes women were shown as sexy pinups. Women were not shown as people fighting their own struggles. Women have been able to change this in some unions.

Let us make our voices heard

Women workers in Britain took up the fight to get more women involved in trade unions. They were able to change some things to suit women better. And they were able to get more women to be actively involved in trade unions. Their battle is not over. They have to keep on fighting to keep what they have won. And there are new battles every day to make sure that women's voices do get heard. But what the women in Britain are doing is a lesson for women everywhere. We can learn from the struggles of women in Britain. We can make sure that womens voices are heard in our unions, in our townships and in our country.

This article was written for SPEAK by LACOM, Johannesburg, from a LACOM booklet "The Women's Struggle for Participation in trade unions in Britain". You can order the booklet from LACOM, SACHED TRUST, Union Centre, 31 Pritchard Street, Johannesburg.



Drawing by Gili Bond. Jajta coras, Harare, Zimbabwe

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE STRUGGLE

WE ARE BREAKING THE SILENCE

Going around with SPEAK number 19 was much more interesting than usual. Just about everyone we met had something to say about the article on women beating. Some only saw the writing on the cover which said -"BREAKING THE SILENCE - Women Say Our Men Must Stop Beating Us". And this was enough to get them talking! We were pleased. Because we want people to discuss these things. We really want to break the silence.

Some liked the article very much. They said, "It is very clearly written". "It tells exactly what women go through". "It is very strong and has ideas of what women can do". "It's a wonderful article".

But there were those who could not believe we were writing about such things. And these were mostly men. One man asked, "What are you saying? I have seen so many women beating men and you say nothing about that".

Another man said, "These things should be discussed in the bedroom."

Another said, "I don't believe it but you are asking women to form vigilante groups."

Talking about women beating
We decided to find out what others thought about men beating their wives and girlfriends. Some students helped us. They took copies of SPEAK 19 to some men and women . They asked them to read the article.

SPEAK

April May 1985 Number 19 50¢



BREAKING THE SILENCE

WOMEN SAY OUR MEN MUST STOP BEATING US

And then they went back for a chat. Only two of the people they spoke to said that men should beat their wives or girlfriends. These two felt that it was important that men showed who was the boss in the home. And they believed it was tradition for men to show women their strength.

Women beating must stop

But most of the people we talked to said it was wrong for men to beat women. And they wanted to see a stop to this.

One young man said, "What you are asking me, sister, of this article, is like asking if I agree that my mother should be beaten up by my father, which he did. All this never made sense to me. My mother is not a child. My dad beat her up for things like not being

home by 6p.m. This stopped the day my two brothers and I dealt with my father man to man."

Another man who is a teacher and 45 years old, said, "It is true that it happens worldwide that women are beaten and even killed by their husbands. Only women can come together and fight this, because they feel the pinch." This man had beaten his wife two weeks ago. He said he will stop and he took the SPEAK magazine for his wife to read.

One woman thought it was not right. But she also saw this as part of life. She said. "My child this is normal in our lives. Though I am one of the lucky few. I have always been respected by my husband. In our society it is a shame to think of separating from your husband. People seem to think there was something wrong with a woman rather than with the husband. That is why most of us stood it."

Another woman said, "It is high time women must fight for their rights. If two people do not agree they must talk together. There is no need for beatings"

Let us fight to break the silence

It was good that people were willing to talk about this and that most wanted things to change. It is good that women in COSATU are talking about this problem of women beating.

Lets fight together to break the silence. Let us take these problems out of the bedroom so that we can work for a world where women are respected.



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

Drawing by SPEAK

Yesterday, Today, To

Workers' Day, May 1 is Celebrated All Over South Africa

There were meetings all over the country on May 1 this year. At the May Day meeting in Cape Town there was a special message for women workers. Lizzie Phike spoke at the meeting. She is an organiser for the Food and Allied Workers' Union, which is joined to COSATU. Lizzie really spoke out. She said that many women were prevented from joining in the struggle. Husbands stop their wives from leaving the house to attend meetings. Lizzie said: "The Freedom Charter tells us to share. We must share in both the wealth and the responsibilities. Men must also share the duties of looking after the house and the children." We need more women who speak out like Lizzie Phike!

Hospital Fees Go Up

The Health Workers' Organisation in Durban is calling on organisations to get together to do something about the hospital fees that have gone up. People will have to pay more than they did before. And poor people will suffer. One of the bad things is that anyone who goes to the hospital after hours, on weekends and holidays will have to pay R22.50 to be seen to. And hospital staff who used to get free health treatment, will have to pay fees in cash.

There are meetings happening around this issue. And there is also a petition. If you want to know more, write to: Health Workers Organisation P.O. Box 45277, Chatsglen 4012, Durban.

Tartrazine is Food for Thought

Tartrazine is a food colouring. It also adds flavour to food. It is used in many yellow- coloured foods. It is banned all over the world because it is bad for people's health. Things like cheese and onion chips, fanta, nikkaks and most chocolates and sweets have tartrazine in them. If some food has tartrazine in it, the company must say so on the packet. So look out for it!



Here's something different! Children have fun at the Five Freedoms Forum Open Day in Johannesburg on 31 May.

morrow



Zimbabwe Has a New Way of Seeing Schoolgirl Pregnancies

Some people in Zimbabwe have been looking at the problem of schoolgirl pregnancies. They say that it is not fair that the girls who fall pregnant are expelled from school. What about the boys who have been responsible for the pregnancies? Why should girls lose their education while boys carry on as before. This was raised with the education authorities and now things have changed. Schoolboys responsible for pregnancies are now also expelled. And teachers responsible for schoolgirls pregnancies are sent to prison for six months, get fired, and are blacklisted. This means that they find it very hard to get a job as a teacher again.

But pupils expelled for pregnancies are now given a second chance. Both schoolgirls and schoolboys who have been expelled for this reason can apply to come back to another school. The schoolgirls can apply to another school a year after her baby is born. The education minister said, "We don't think you should be condemned for life, instead you should be given one more chance."

Well at least in Zimbabwe the government looks at both sides of the story. And this is more fair to the girls than before.



The SRC at the University of Durban Westville have just launched a women's group. They invited the Mpopomeni Women Dancers to perform their dances as part of the celebrations. Everybody thought they were wonderful. Our photo shows the dancers in action!

Watch Out for Skin Lightening Creams

People have been celebrating because they thought that skin lightening creams were going to be banned from July. But no more. We still have to fight for this. Because skin lighteners really spoil people's faces forever. They make the skin go lighter at first and then after a few months the skin goes even darker than before. You can see the dark patches and tiny lumps on many faces of those who have used the creams. Their skin will never look the same again.

So the battle against skin lightening creams must go on. The bosses who make money out of selling us these terrible creams went to the government and asked for more time. And they have been given it. We will only know now in on January 1991 whether the Department of Health is going to ban them. We need not wait until then to know whether we should use them or not. Skin lightening creams should be banned because they are bad.

I AM PREGNANT

WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

Nomabelu was very worried. She was alone at home. Her neighbours were in their room next door. She did not want to trouble them. But what should she do. The pain was getting worse. She had not felt so much pain before in her life. It was not yet her time. She still had three more months to go before the baby was due. She held her back. She bent over. The pain still would not stop.

Most pregnancies are normal. In most pregnancies we will feel normal aches and pains. These are just part of being pregnant. But there are some aches and pains that are danger signs telling us that there is something wrong. Nomabello has a bad pain. How will she know if this pain is a danger sign telling her to rush to the clinic or doctor? It is not always easy to tell. If you are not sure ask the clinic or doctor anyway. It is your right.

Is it a danger sign if you bleed when you are pregnant?

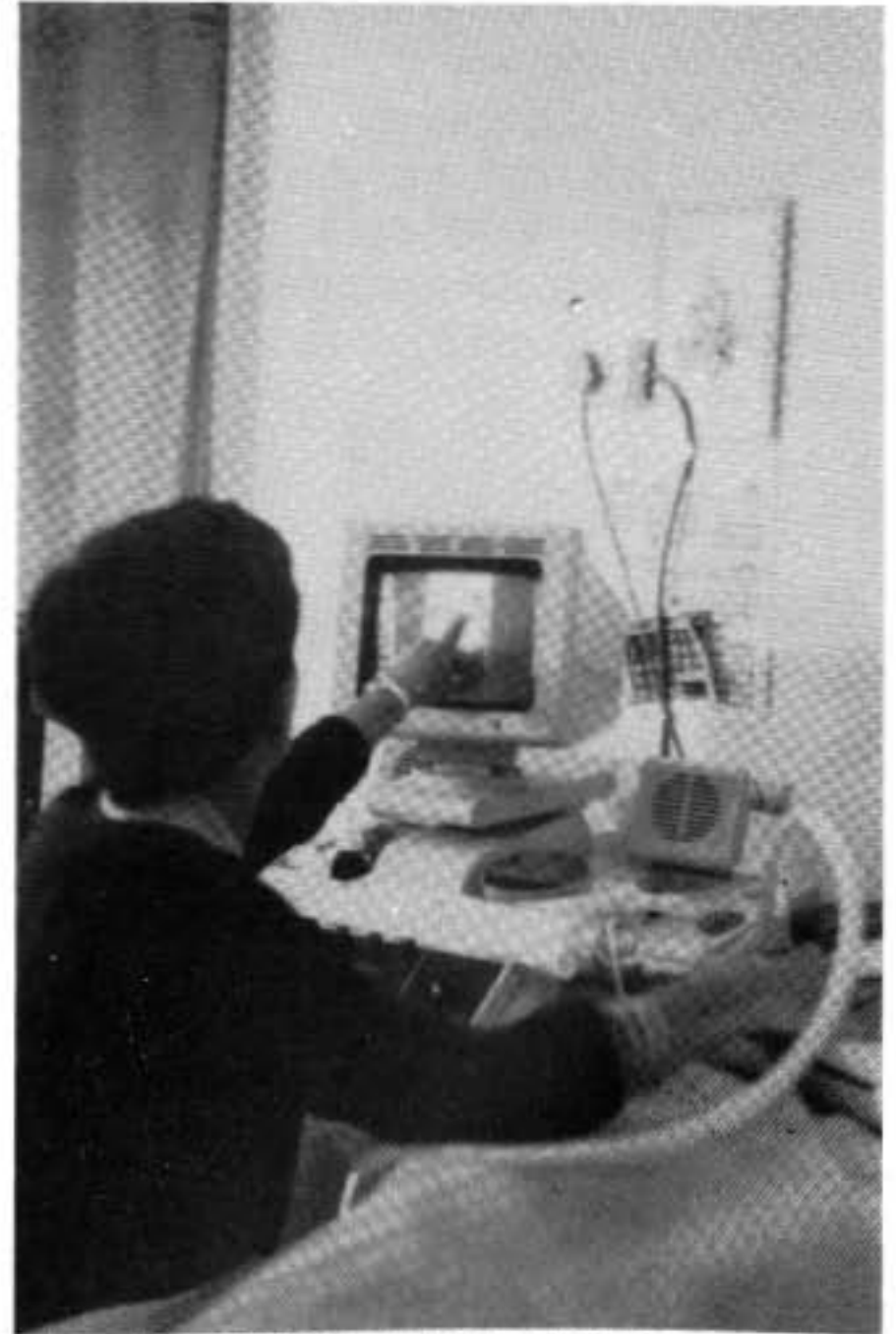
A small amount of bleeding early in pregnancy can be normal. Sometimes a woman may bleed a little when there should have been a period. There may be bleeding because the fertilised egg pushes into the lining of the womb and the baby begins to grow there. But bleeding after this time may be a sign of miscarriage. Heavy bleeding, or bleeding with pain are both bad signs. If this happens you should go straight to the clinic or doctor.

Sometimes the bleeding stops and the pregnancy continues like a normal pregnancy. No harm has been done to the

growing baby by this bleeding. But sometimes the pregnancy is lost. You will need to have the inside of your womb scraped to make sure nothing stays behind. This operation is called a D and C. You need an anaesthetic which puts you to sleep. The operation is done through the opening of the womb so you are not cut inside. Wait until your next period before you try to fall pregnant again.

Bleeding in late pregnancy can happen from many problems. But they are all serious.

The afterbirth may be too low. Bleeding may start if the afterbirth is too low in the womb. The afterbirth (placenta) passes food from the mother's blood to the baby's blood inside the womb. If the clinic



The ultrasound machine shows a picture of the baby growing inside the mother's womb.

has an ultrasound machine the doctor can tell if the afterbirth is too low by looking at a picture of the womb shown through this machine. For this picture to be made a jelly-like cream is put on your stomach. Then a metal instrument is passed over your stomach. And this makes a picture of your womb show on a screen that is like a television screen. This picture shows the doctor where the afterbirth lies. If the afterbirth covers the opening of the womb completely you may need to spend the rest of your pregnancy in hospital. This is because even though the bleeding may stop for a while, you may start to bleed heavily again at any time. This also means that you will need a caesarian section operation to deliver the baby. This problem is called placenta proevia.

The afterbirth may tear away.

Another thing that could cause bleeding is if the afterbirth tears away from the wall of the womb. This is called abruption. You feel bad pain and often bleed heavily.

Sometimes you just have a bad pain and the blood stays inside the womb. When these things happen the baby's life and the mother's life are in danger. So if you have bad pain or heavy bleeding you must get to the hospital quickly.

Sores may cause bleeding.

Another thing that causes bleeding is sores or infection on the opening of the womb, or inside the vagina. This is not as serious as the other causes already mentioned but you must see the doctor or clinic when this happens.

Is it a danger sign if you have bad pain over your womb?

Your baby may be early.

Usually pain over the womb means that you are in labour. Labour pains come and go. They slowly get worse. Remember that many women have their babies early. These babies are called premature. So, if you do not think your time has come but you have this kind of pain, be careful. You may be having a premature baby. Get to the clinic or hospital quickly.

You may have an infection in your urine. Pain in different parts of your stomach can be caused by infection in your urine (wee). You may feel the pain low down over your bladder, or on both sides of your lower back, over your kidneys. You may feel hot and shivery, and may vomit. It may burn when you wee. If you have a bad infection in your kidneys, you may need to be in hospital and get medicines through a drip. If you go to the clinic or doctor early you will be treated early and will get better quickly.

Pain over the womb is also caused if the afterbirth tears away from the wall of the womb. We talked about this with bleeding.



Babies that are born too early need special care in an incubator.

Is it a danger sign if you get bad swelling in your hands, feet, or face?

You may get a little swelling of the hands and feet at the end of your pregnancy. Your shoes feel a bit tight, especially by the end of the day. The rings on your fingers feel a bit tight. This is quite normal in pregnancy.



If your eyes and face are very swollen and your blood pressure is high you will need bed rest in hospitaland medicines through a drip.

But if there is a lot of swelling you must go to the clinic or doctor. You will know if there is a lot of swelling when your shoes don't fit. When your rings get stuck on your fingers. When your face and eyes become swollen. You may also get very bad headaches and you may not be able to see clearly. The doctor will check your blood pressure and urine (wee). If your blood pressure is high and if you have protein in your urine, you have preeclampsia. This is a serious thing. It could lead to losing the baby and to the mother having a fit and maybe also dying. It must be treated in hospital with bed rest and medicine in drips. If it is treated early then you and your baby will be safe.

Is it a danger sign if the baby is not kicking much?

A healthy baby moves and wriggles in the womb. You will feel small flutters and sometimes big kicks. These usually start in the fifth month of pregnancy. As the baby

grows you can even see the baby moving when you look at your stomach. Slower movements could mean that something is wrong. Babies often move more at different times of the day. Watch how your baby is moving. Get used to how it kicks every day.

Then you will know if the kicking becomes less. If this happens go to the clinic or doctor straight away. The clinic will check the baby's heart with a stethoscope or do an ultrasound. They can also put a belt around your stomach and keep a check of the baby's heart beat for half an hour. If there is a problem it is best to deliver the baby as it is safer for the baby to be out of the womb.

But remember babies are different. Some play netball in your womb while others are lazy. So if you have a lazy baby don't worry. It is only if your baby's movements get less than they used to be that you need worry.

Is it important to get injections for syphilis?

Syphilis is a disease that gets passed on during sex if the man or the woman is carrying the syphilis germ. If you have syphilis the syphilis germs can pass between you and your baby. Then the baby may be born very sick. And the baby may even die. The doctor will be able to tell if you have syphilis from a blood test. This is one of the reasons to book early at the clinic when you are pregnant. If syphilis is found early it is easier to treat. You will need three penicillin injections. Make sure you get all three. And get your husband or boyfriend treated too. If he is not treated he will just give the disease back to you. It is always important to be treated for syphilis but it is even more important when you are pregnant

Is it a danger sign if your waters break?

The baby inside your womb is floating in water. The water gives the baby room to move and to grow. It stops the baby being hurt if your stomach is hit. When you are in labour the bag of water often bursts. Sometimes a lot of water rushes out of your vagina. Sometimes it leaks out slowly. If the water breaks when you are not in labour it can be dangerous. Germs from outside your body can get inside your womb, and this

can give you and your baby a bad infection. So if water starts to come from your vagina, in a rush, or slowly, and you are not in the clinic or hospital, don't wait. Go straight to the clinic or doctor for a check up.



The nurse listens to the baby's heart beat

Ask if you are not sure.

Remember these problems don't happen often. But if you are ever worried about anything in your pregnancy go to the clinic. Ask the doctor or sister. Don't wait until it is too late. We want healthy babies and healthy mothers. It is our right.



Photographs by SPEAK Collective

Labour Relations Amendment Bill • Sharpeville

State of Emergency • Detentions • Sharpeville • June 16 • State

Banning of newspapers New Nation and South • Group Areas Act •



You can't Kill the
spirit
She is like the
mountains
Old and strong
She'll go on
and on
and on
You can't
Kill
the
Spirit

Banning of UDF • Forced Removals • Detentions