



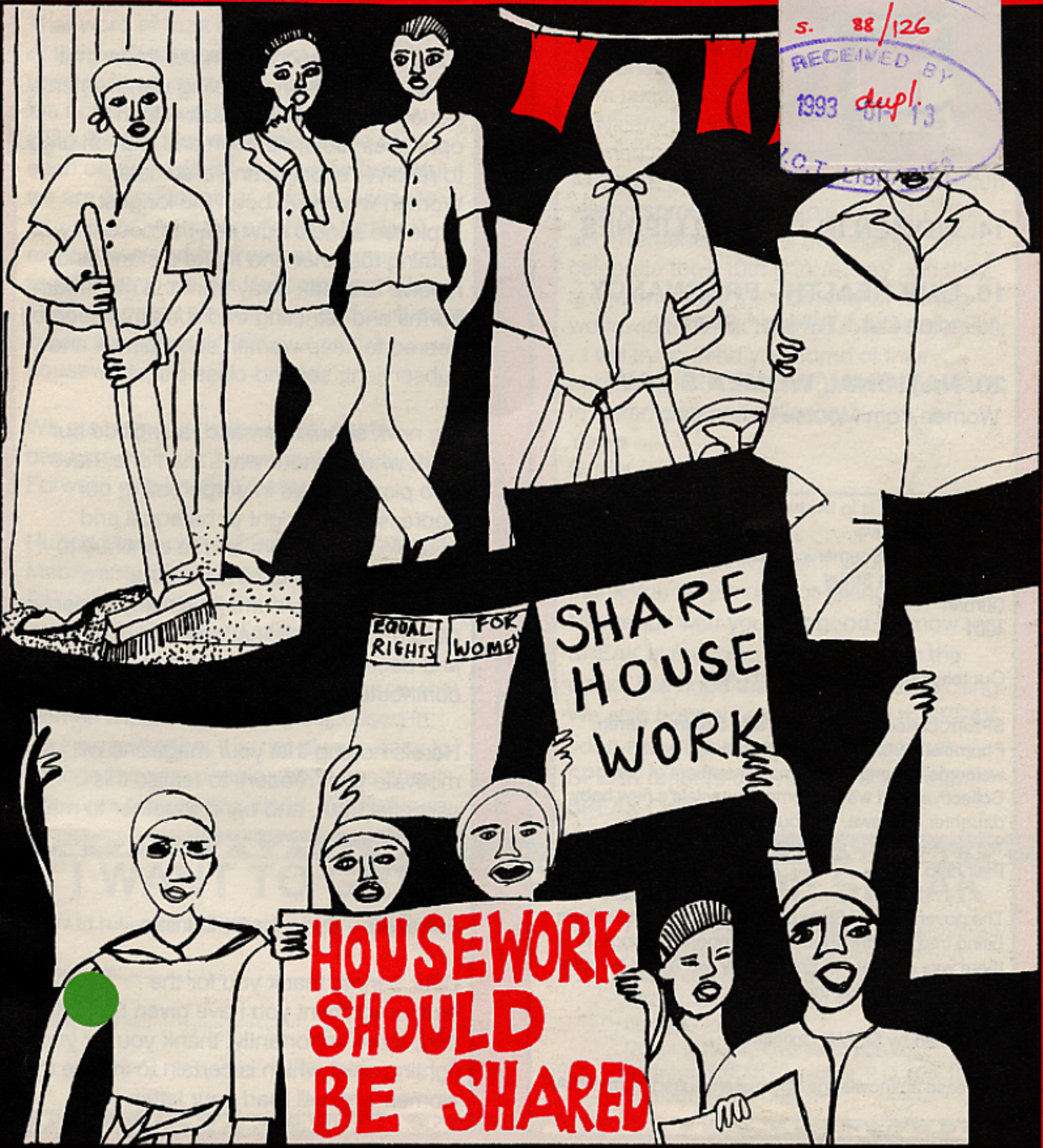
# SPEAK



NOV '87 - FEB '88

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SPEAK's office is in Durban. Our address is:

SPEAK Collective

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20 St Andrew's Street Troyville  
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Our telephone number is: 3011-624

SPEAK Collective members are: Gill, Irna, Karen, Phumelele, Shamim and Vanessa. We warmly welcome Gill and Irna as new members of the Collective. And we welcome Phumelele's new baby daughter, Vuyiswa, into our lives.

We would like to thank Ingrid, Thandi and Zandile for their help.

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.

Published by SPEAK Collective

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Dear Friends

Thank you for the copy of SPEAK. It is new in approach, although the problems it deals with are so old, and for decades, shelved, left unsolved and considered irrelevant.

It is therefore encouraging to know that these old problems, dealing with women's issues are now being dealt with in openness, determination and with an urge to resolve, educate and eradicate. Women who have been the longest exploited should now see the necessity of coming together and make a stand and resolve to break away from the man-made norms and restricting traditions that seemed geared to keep women subordinate and subservient, second-class citizens.

We now, should demand, alongside our men, who, in more ways than one, have also played a role in perpetuating our oppression, the right to be equal and unexploited partners and to continue to fight together as comrades for a democratic, just, humane society - rejecting all forms of subordination and oppression, and deem it our right to function and contribute towards this finality.

Here's hoping that your magazine will motivate your readers to realise this essential truth, and band together to make it a success.

Greetings

Sanna

Asherville - Sydenham, Durban

Dear Sanna, thank you for the encouragement you have given SPEAK, and, more importantly, thank you for your fighting spirit which is certain to inspire the women who will read your letter.

Dear SPEAK

We read the letter from Mr Qabula for the last two days. We agree about women's problems from their husbands, concerning organisation. The men they don't allow their women to join organisations, and the women they don't learn how to solve problems. The men cannot find out how strong are their wives, because the wives they don't get a chance to learn about unions.

That word of trust is very difficult, because of the contract and migrant labour. We used to leave our wives for about a year, in the homelands. Although we say it's a difficult word it's very important to trust each other, because we can be powerful if we are going together, sharing opinions and advice. As we are fighting against exploitation and oppression we must go together until we get freedom, and after. That is the way we can help and trust each other, sharing everything, even the housework.

We are demanding the equal rights because an injury to one is an injury to all. Forward with women's struggle!

Hubert Matshoba, Alfred Qezu, Ndumiso Mabilwane, and Ngamngam Siwa Dairy Belle workers from Adult Learning Project (ALP), Cape Town.

Dear brothers, it is very good to know that women's issues are being discussed in your organisation. It is not always easy to change the way people see things about women's place in the world. We feel sure

that we can only challenge these ideas if they are brought out into the open and talked about everywhere - in our organisations and in our homes. Your letter will encourage other men to look at how they treat women, and look at ways in which they can also support the women's struggle - SPEAK Collective

Dear SPEAK Collective

Thank you so much for your letter in July and the fine poster and latest SPEAK. It is really developing well. I hope you get some response from UK magazines.

I am taking your poster and SPEAK with me to Nicaragua in September. I'm going on a women's study tour to meet women of AMNLAE and other organisations, and am seeing some of their projects and achievements. We will be helping them celebrate their 10th anniversary and they are keen to feel the solidarity of womrn worldwide. I think they will love your poster - I will try to send you some of their publications (in Spanish!) when I get back. In sisterhood and solidarity

Yours  
Sylvia  
Oxford, England

Dear Sylvia, thank you for your letter, and thank you very much for taking SPEAK to Nicaragua with you. It's good to know that SPEAK is reaching women all over the world. We hope that your trip was exciting. We also hope that you will write to SPEAK soon about your experiences, so that SPEAK readers can hear all about them! - SPEAK Collective

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# HOUSEWORK

## Whose work is it?



Women's lives are filled with preparing meals, washing up, clearing up, cleaning up, sweeping, ironing, washing clothes, shopping, caring for children and others - it never ends, there is never a break from it, even when you are on holiday. It would seem, by the way things are run in most homes, that women were born with brooms and scrubbing brushes in their hands and recipes in their heads!

For women who go out of the home to work and for women who work in the home as 'housewives' there is no end to the working day. It starts from as early as 4 in the morning and ends as late at 10 at night with washing, ironing and preparing tomorrow's meal.

**TALKING TO PEOPLE ABOUT HOUSEWORK**  
SPEAK decided to talk to people about housework. We wanted to know what women and men thought about these jobs in the home. All the women and men we talked to were workers in shops, offices or factories.

We met two women who were sitting in the sun. They were both called Lindiwe. Both have children and both have been married - one is

now divorced. We asked them, "Do you think that men and women should share the housework?"

"Of course they should, my dear," said one Lindiwe, "They are flesh and blood the same as we are flesh and blood. We work even as they work, we get tired the same as they get tired. There is no reason why they shouldn't share the housework."

"But do the men in your lives share the housework?", we asked.

"You must be joking!" they answered.

"My husband cooks - sometimes, but only sometimes," said the other Lindiwe, "And when he has cooked, you must know that he has done something really great for you. You really know about it!"

We went into a clothes shop and asked one of the women sales assistants whether her husband shared the housework with her.

"He helps, he doesn't share," she said. Very quickly there were more women sales assistants around us, joining in. They all said that their husbands help with cooking now and again.

"But they come home and sit on their bottoms when they come home from work, with a nice beer to relax. And you're rushing around, upstairs and downstairs doing this and that. And then you have supper, and still there's more work to do, getting things ready for the children, ironing. I get to bed sometimes at 10.30pm - and I get up at 4am," said one of the women.

"Ja, men do do more than they used to," said a young woman, "But there's more that they could do. Things are better than before."

Si'khonzi is a student. He is part of a student organisation. We asked him if he thought housework should be shared. He said: "It is important to treat ourselves as human beings, and not according to sex. If two people are married they have the responsibility of the house, they are eating the same food, and there shouldn't be a division between men and women. We've been taught in the past and in our schools to be one way. Teachers tell us the girls should clean the windows, do the sweeping and cooking. In the home mothers tell girls they must learn to cook and clean and do housework. Girls are brought up to be inferior."

"Changing attitudes lies with women themselves. They have to challenge the boys. Girls allow themselves to be made use of. Girls must challenge and even the boys who have a clear understanding must discuss things with other boys," said Si'khonzi.

A man who works at a factory in Durban said that he agreed that women carry the burden of housework, and that men should do more. But he said that there was no ways that he was just going to start helping in the house. In their factory the workers had to fight hard to win their rights, and if women wanted to win the right that their husbands share the housework, then they are going to have to organise and fight for it!

A woman domestic worker told us that she could never see men doing housework. "They are too much like children. They want everything done for them."

We talked to Nomusa who is a shopworker in Durban. She has three daughters and three sons. She is married. She lives in Umlazi. She told us how her work never ends.



"My husband does nothing in the housework, in fact, he doesn't even do the garden."

Nomusa first lived with her children in the countryside. Her husband worked in town. She had to manage all the jobs at home while he was away. As time went on they decided that she should come and stay in town.

"Firstly when we came he said I must not go and work, I must look after the kids and the house. But to sit at home for the whole day cleaning I get bored so I asked him if I could go to work."

"So every day I have to wake up four o'clock, go to the kitchen, prepare water for him and put it in the bath. Leave soap and face cloth and toothbrush and toothpaste. While he is in the bathroom I take out his clothes underpants, vest, trousers, shirt and socks. Then clean his shoes. About 4.45 am I go to the kitchen put his lunch in his bag. I have to see to the weather, and take out his raincoat and put it in his bag. At 5.00am the tea must be ready next to him while he is dressing."

"He comes first from work. He just goes to lie and relax on his bed and I come in do tea for him while I am busy with the cooking. Sometimes he will tell me 'See you later' going to sit and drink with his friend. I am also tired

from work. A mother of six kids but what must I do? I have to do everything for him with him not bothering to help me."

Nomusa is trying to change things for her children.

"I have taught my boys everything so that they must know to do the housework and help their sisters. I saw that my husband's mother didn't bring him up properly and I decided that I had to. My boy is staying very far from us now at the moment but he comes home clean and fit showing that he can cook and do washing for himself. So for the man to help their wives is good to make everything easy for both of them. If he has the blood to be tired, so even the woman gets tired, not so?"

### SO, WHOSE WORK IS IT?

After all of this talking with people about housework, we had lots to think about! The message was clear! Housework is a lot of work. It never ends and it is women's burden. Most people feel this is wrong. Housework should not be seen as women's work. If women organised and got men to share the 'home shift' life would be different. If boys and men were taught to do housework they would be able to do it. But there are some who say that it is part of our way of life that housework is women's work. They say you can't change this.

Photographs by Myron Peters, Afrapix



In some countries women have organised around housework and have won battles to change things.

### **WOMEN ORGANISE AROUND HOUSEWORK**

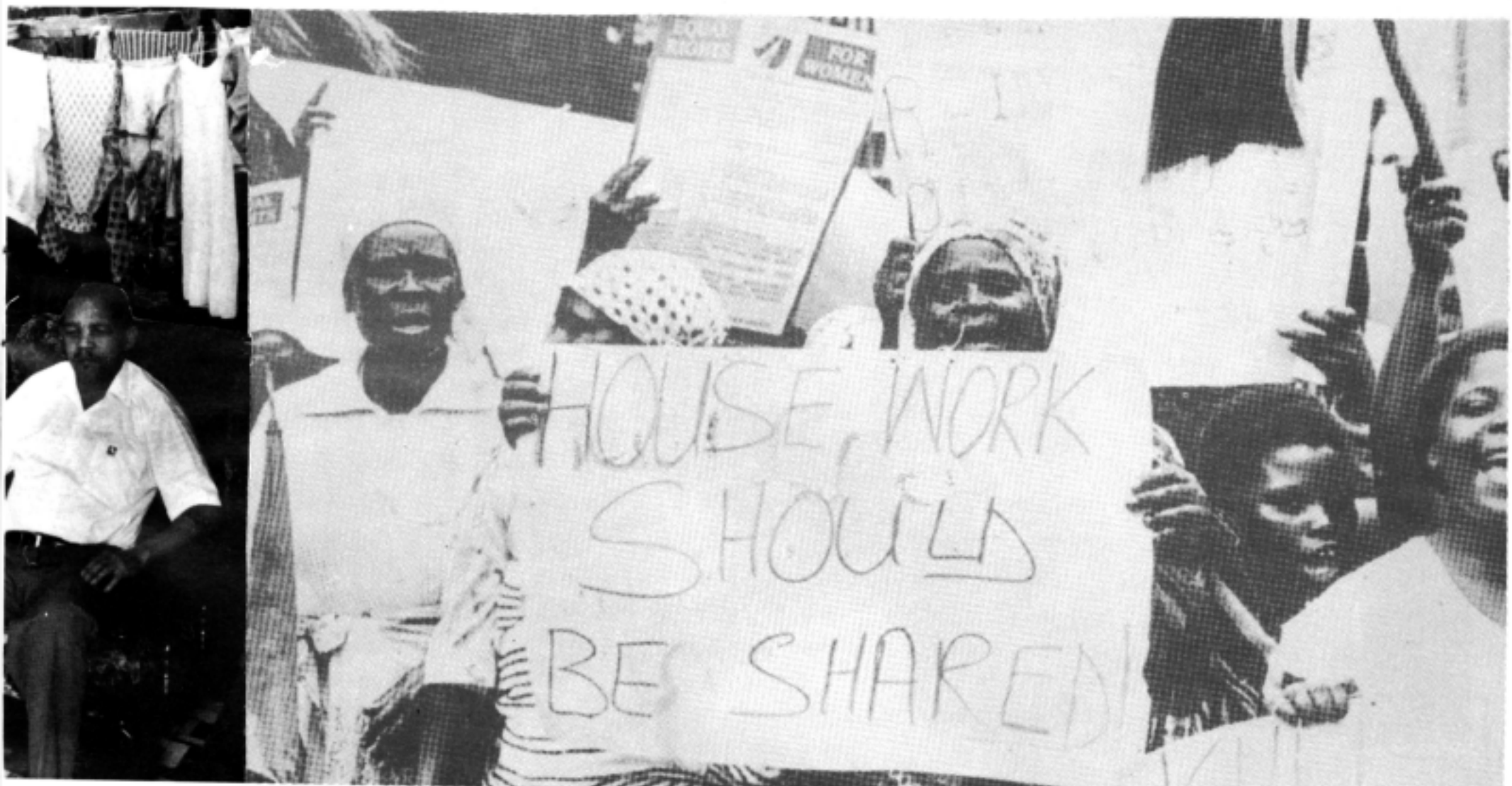
In Bolivia, South America, women wanted their men to understand how much housework was worth. Domitila, a women from the tin mines wrote about what they did. "We got the idea of making a chart. We put as an example the price of washing clothes per dozen pieces and we worked out how many dozens of items we washed a month. Then the cook's wage, the baby sitter's, the servant's. We worked out everything that we miner's wives do every day. Adding it all up, the wage needed to pay us for what we do in the home, compared to the wages of a cook, a washerwoman, a babysitter, a servant, was much higher than what the men earned in the mine for a month. So that way we made our companeros understand that we really work, and even more than they do in a certain sense. And that we even contribute more to the household with what we save. So, even though the government doesn't recognise what we do in the home, the country benefits from it because we don't receive a single penny for this work." These women were able to show that housework is work!

Women in Europe and United States of America have demanded that there should be 'wages for housework'. They say that it is time that everybody knew that housework is hard and boring, and that it is certainly work. Other women say that the fight must be to make housework shared work and not women's work.

In Cuba a law was passed that men should share in housework. This law is called the Family Code. It was passed so that women could be freed from half of child care and housework. The government has also set up laundries, creches and canteens so that housework is less of a burden. This has made it easier for women to go out to work and to get more involved in organisations and to have time to live happier, healthier lives!

### **WHAT WILL SHARED HOUSEWORK BRING?**

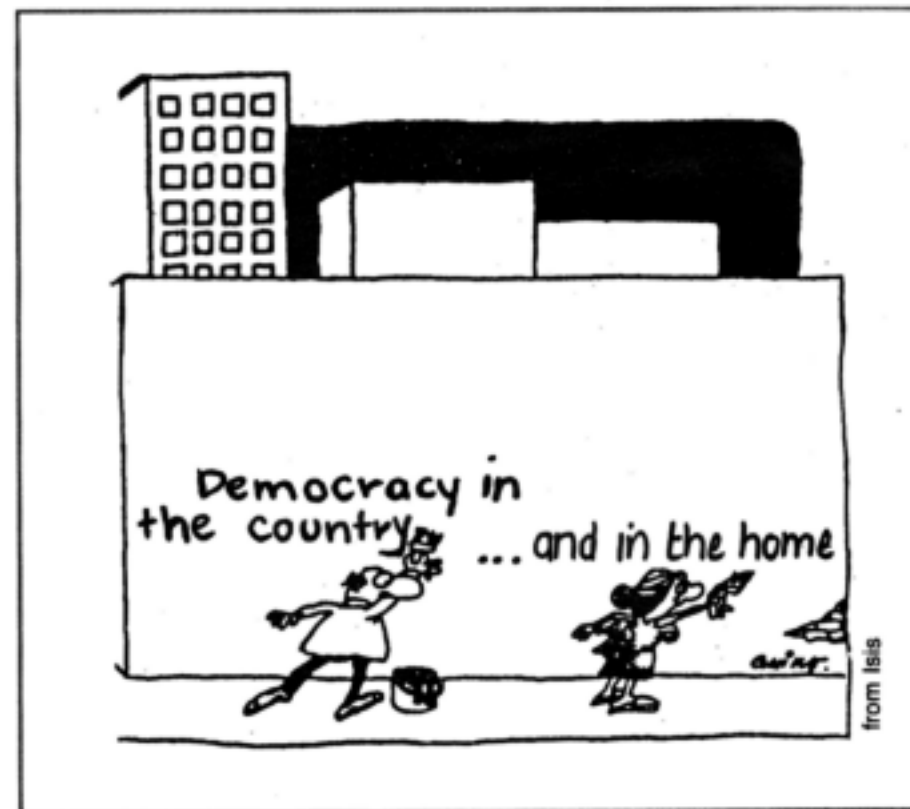
If men shared housework women would no longer have to work an 18 hour day. They would have the time to put their feet up, to read the newspaper, to go to meetings, to study, to think, to become more involved in the world around them. They can become a real part of building a new society. And part of this new society will be greater equality in the home. As one woman said "We are not asking men to help with housework. We want them to share it!"



# Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow



Women in the Western Cape held their first rally to celebrate the revival of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW). It was FEDSAW who organised the march of women to Pretoria on 9 August 1956 to protest against African women having to carry passes. Women from different women's groups and organisations in all regions of South Africa are organising to revive FEDSAW.



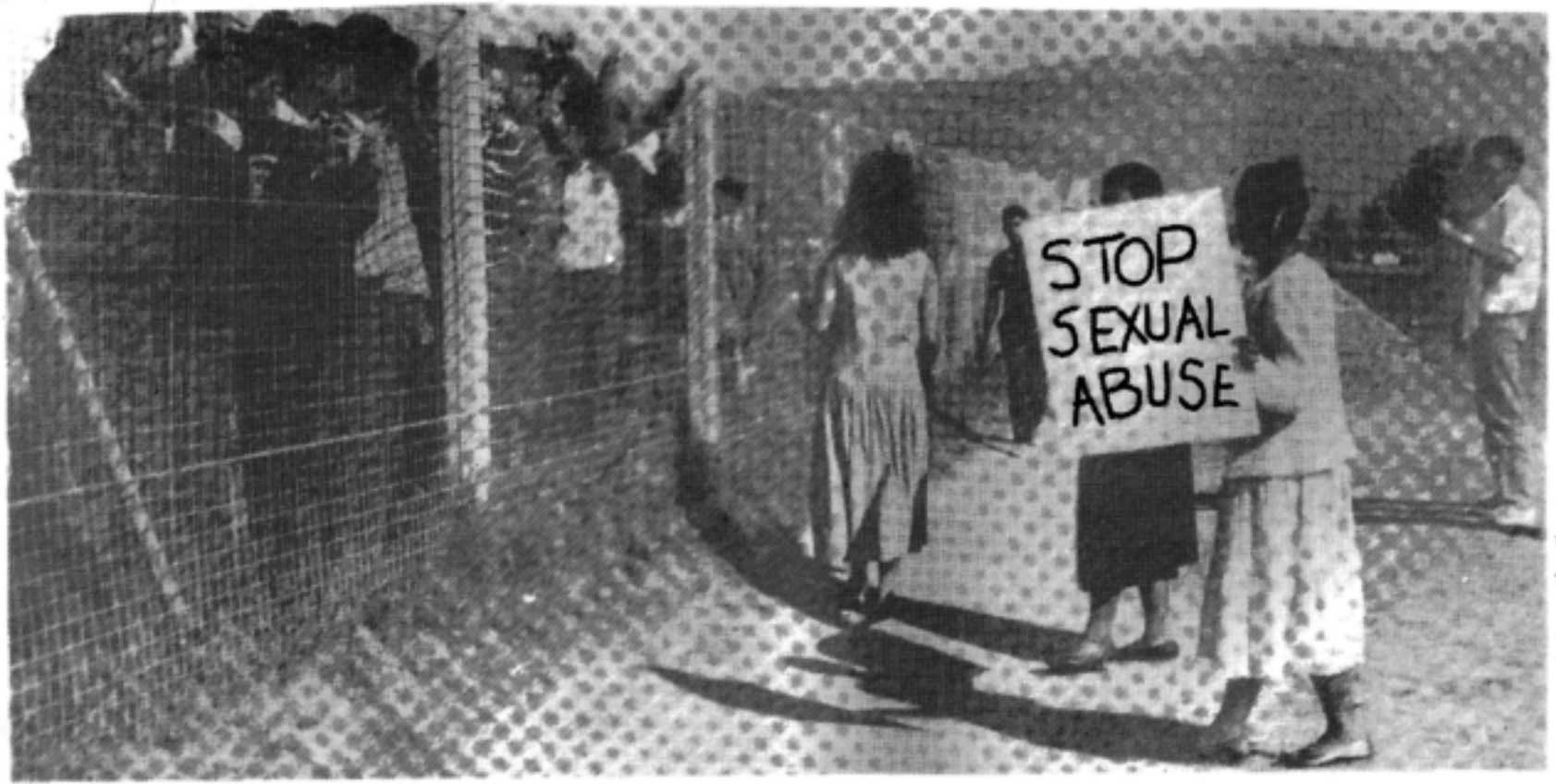
## RAPE IN MARRIAGE

In September this year a Bloemfontein magistrate found a man guilty of trying to rape his wife. The magistrate made his decision because of a new set of bills about sexual crimes. If these bills are agreed to by parliament, they will become new laws. This will mean some changes for women.

Men should not be allowed to get away with the crime of raping women. Husbands who rape their wives should not be allowed to hide behind marriage. Rape should be treated as a crime whether it happens in marriage or not.

Isn't murder a crime no matter whether you are married to the person you killed or not? These new bills make things better for women. But they do not go far enough. A woman will only be able to take her husband to court if the attorney-general (who is usually a man) allows her to. It is also very difficult for a woman to prove her husband has raped her. But at least the Bloemfontein judgement is a beginning - it means that the law is starting to agree that rape in marriage is a crime. No woman should ever be forced by anyone to have sex against her will.





Photograph from South

We know that girl students have to put up with unwanted attention from men teachers. This goes on in schools all the time. Students are starting to take this issue seriously. Students at Steenberg High School in the Cape boycotted classes in August this year. They did this because girl students reported the actions of a man teacher to the Students' Representative Council (SRC). The teacher is known to touch girls' breasts, put his hand up their dresses and touch parts of their bodies. Girls should not have to put up with this unwanted attention from anyone. Men teachers who do this are using their position of power.

The SRC went to lawyers, and nine girls signed affidavits about the actions of this teacher. These were given to the acting principal. The SRC has demanded that the teacher be dismissed and other teachers warned. The SRC say that if the principal does not act, they will take the matter to the chief inspector.

A group called 'Organisation of People Against Sexism' (OPAS) organised a placard demonstration outside the school. OPAS believes that it is important that all people fight against sexual harassment.

Sistren is a women's theatre collective from Jamaica. When this group of women first came together ten years ago, they said, "We want to do plays about how we suffer as women. We want to do plays about how men treat us bad." Sistren has been alive for a long time now. They have produced many plays. They start off by talking about the issues that face women. It may be about prostitutes, unemployment, poverty or housewives, or migrant workers' lives, or children, or women workers. That discussion becomes a story that is made into a play. The Sistren women's collective have taken their plays all over Jamaica, and to other parts of the world as well. Through plays they are telling people about women's oppression loud and clear!



from Match

## LONG LIVE WOMEN

by Nise Malange  
THIS IS THE TRIBUTE TO ALL WOMEN WHO ARE TRIED,  
CHARGED AND SENTENCED FOR TREASON, TO THE WORKING  
WOMEN WHO ARE ROBBED OF THEIR BIRTH RIGHTS IN THE  
FACTORIES AND OUTSIDE, TO THE WOMEN WHO ARE BUSY  
PLOUGHING IN THE FARMS, AND TO ALL THE WOMEN OF OUR  
LAND.

LONG LIVE WOMEN - LONG LIVE THE MOTHERS OF THIS  
EARTH

Without you, how will this earth look like?  
You have given joy and beauty in this earth  
You have given birth to the leaders of this earth  
and they have robbed you of your rights  
Don't cry, don't cry women.  
History will judge them.

When I talk to women - words become stuck in my throat  
Because I am woman  
Because we are women we cannot allow exploitation  
We cannot fold our arms and pray whilst our country is in a state of  
collapsing.

We cannot sit behind whilst our kids, brothers and sisters are dying  
in the streets  
Whilst our mothers and sisters are sentenced to long term  
imprisonment  
Whilst they are charged for treason  
Whilst they are brutally killed by cowards  
Whilst country wide we are fed with propaganda

Probably all the meetings and organisations will be silenced and  
my voice will not reach you:  
It does not matter  
You will continue to hear me, I will always be beside you and my  
memory will always be loyal to you  
And we will overcome this grey and bitter moment where our  
mothers and sisters are buried alive

Let's stand up and fight!  
I am talking to you women of our country, to the peasant women  
who believed in the struggle for equal rights, to the working women  
who worked more; to the mothers who knew of our concern for her  
children, to the women who have sacrificed their lives for our  
rights.



# WOMEN WRITING POEMS

**HOME  
WARD**

by  
**Sanna**



I remember her - -  
All too well.  
Walking barefooted - - calloused -  
Along the dusty, winding roads,  
Struggling through thorn studded fields,  
Hungry, tired and cold.  
Dripping, drooping, doggedly - -  
Forever damned.  
Dodging ditches, dogs, dongas,  
In a cloud of dust,  
Her baby bobbing on her back,  
Slinking behind the rows of  
Cold, crumbling, corrugated sheets,  
Groping around this makeshift box,  
She lovingly still calls her home - -  
Her very own.  
Shivers, searches, and slowly sinks,  
Blinking through her tears,  
Her erstwhile dreams of sadness, -  
Clutching her baby; consuming her whole life.  
Too tired - sleep she must.  
Till the new day breaks,  
Fraught, and frowning  
With life's endless anxieties and fears;  
The agony, the pain which  
Afresh the new day will surely bring.



If you would like to tell your story, write a letter or poem, or do a drawing, send it to:  
**SPEAK Collective**  
 P.O. Box 19375 Domerton 4015

## Rape Crisis

Rape Crisis is a women's organisation. It advises women who have been raped or sexually abused. It also does research into why rape happens. We are in Durban. If you would like to talk to us, phone (031) 232323 or 295123.

## AGENDA

AGENDA is an exciting new journal which offers a forum for comment, discussion and debate on all parts of women's lives. AGENDA will include articles, interviews, life stories, photos, poetry, book reviews and briefings. There are special rates for unemployed women, workers, and students. If you want to know more, please write to us:

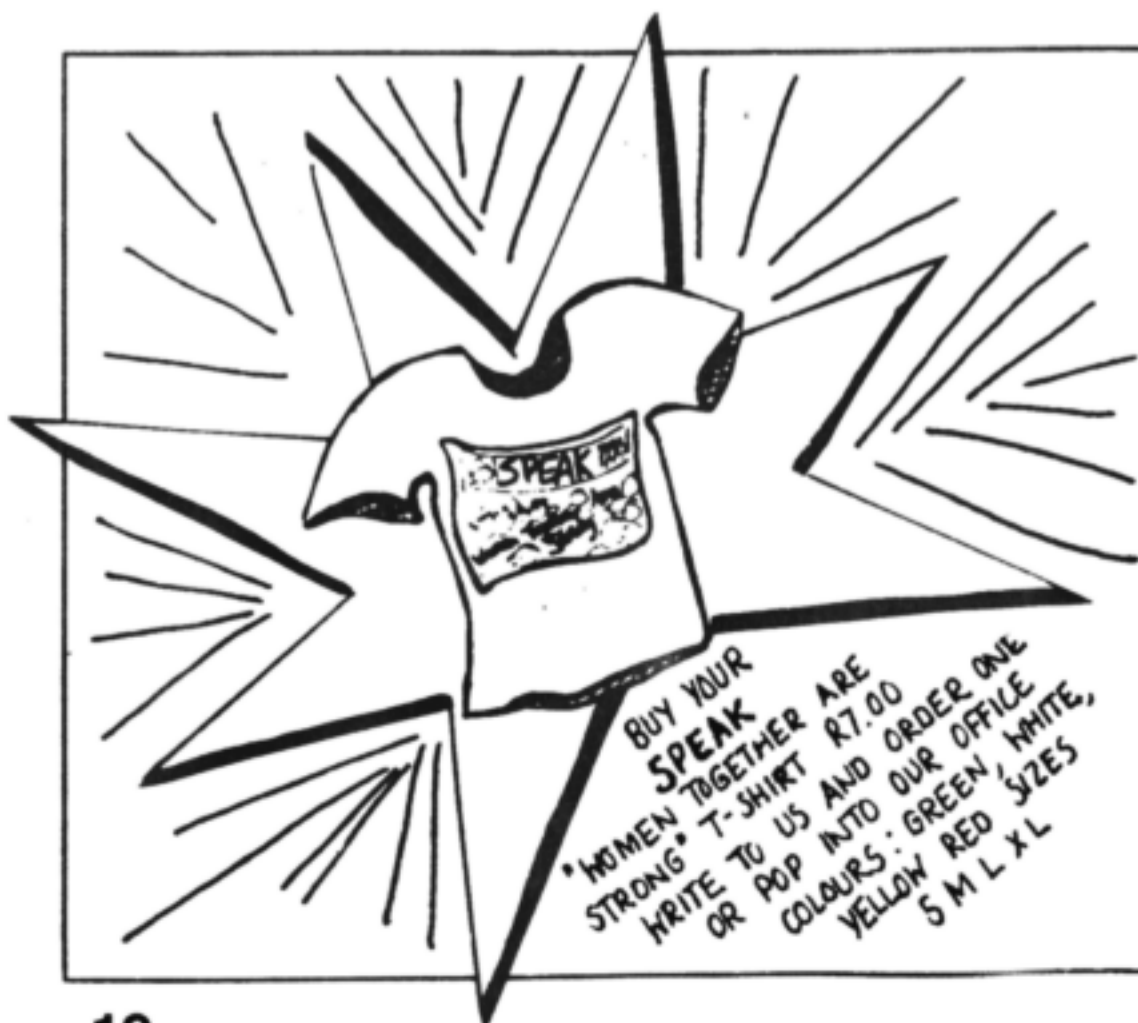
**AGENDA**  
 c/o Sociology Department  
 University of Natal  
 King George V Avenue  
 Durban  
 4001

## FLOODS IN DURBAN - WHY SO MUCH DAMAGE?

Ezimbokodweni is just 10 km from Durban. It is a place where there is a lot of unemployment. Some women from there told us what happened to them in the floods in October this year. They said: "We build mud houses and when rain is heavy, the walls fall down. And the water comes right inside the house. Most of our African people have no beds, the children lie on the floor. Blankets get wet and children catch a cold. Most of our people are close to the river. There is a big river on the other side which overflowed most homes. The cemetery was washed away. We are badly in need of help because of the floods."

These floods were very bad in and around Durban. More than 250 people died, and many people are still missing. The government says that about 56 000 people have been made homeless. But a group from the University of Natal, called the Built Environment Support Group, found that about 522 900 people have been made homeless in and around Durban.

If there were jobs for all, and at a living wage, people could afford to live in better houses. And if people had better places to build their homes, there would have been much less suffering in these floods. In other areas of Natal where people have better houses and living conditions, only 70 houses were destroyed.



# My Turn Now!

Vuyiswa was crying out of anger out of sadness and out of fear. Her tears melted into cloth, thoughts running into each other. Thabo, her husband, had left the house in a rage, slamming the door as he left.

Vuyiswa's mind was ablaze with so many mixed feelings - hurt, anger, jealousy - she turned her head this side and that side as if one way or another she would find some answer, some peace. Was she wrong to demand the things she did? Was she just one crazy woman, alone in this world, fighting this man she both hated and loved? And the waves of arguments over the past days, months and years swept through her mind. And so did the sweet times, yes, those days and evenings of discussions and laughter, and love.

They had met at school, both frustrated at the bantu education they were expected to swallow. Both sure that they were going to fight to change things. Thabo had agreed with her when she got angry with her parents for not letting her go to student meetings. They said she had things to do at home - younger ones to care for, meals to cook. She had become angry with them. Together they had worked out ways to explain to her parents how important those meetings were. How important freedom was for them all.

They had married. Thabo had gone on to study at night school. They had agreed on this because of the babies - they demanded so much from Vuyiswa. Later it would be her turn to study. She worked to help support his studying, she worked to keep them all healthy, clean, fed and loved. Somehow, her turn to study had never come. Thabo's studies had never ended. And her bright and questioning mind that craved for freedom had become dulled with



questions about childcare and food. Thabo was still busy fighting for freedom - attending meetings, and even giving talks at some.

Over the past few months Vuyiswa had felt that she could no longer stand it. It was her turn to study, to develop, to grow. Thabo had trapped her, in the home, and she had allowed this to happen. How different now was her home to her parents home, against which he had helped her to fight? He wouldn't see it. It meant him having to give up some of his life in the outside world. Vuyiswa's world was growing smaller and smaller. Thabo's was growing larger and larger. Why, she hadn't even been able to get to her union meeting on the weekend because his meeting at the same time was 'more important'.

Vuyiswa turned to look at her sleeping children. Tiny faces, peaceful in sleep, reflecting the bond between them all - mixtures of her and him and themselves. She knew that she had to carry on with her fight. For them and for her. For the present and for the future. The importance of the task that lay ahead of her filled her with determination. Vuyiswa kissed her children gently, smiled at her wedding photograph hanging on the wall, looked for and found a pen in her bag, and unfolded the application forms for night school.

# Women in the Philippines



Poster of the Gabriela movement of the Philippines.

Women in the Philippines are organising! Since 1983 a number of women's organisations were formed in the Philippines.

In July 1986 women from two organisations - Gabriella, and the Network on Sexual Violence Against Women, protested outside a hotel. They were protesting about men from Norway who had ordered brides by post. These men had come to the hotel to collect their brides.

The women from these two organisations were angry that women were being treated like things you could order by post. They said that this is one of the things that women must fight in the struggle for their rights.

Gabriella unites more than 50 women's organisations. It takes up women's issues, it tries to educate women and to give them information.

The women's organisations are fighting for human rights for all people in the Philippines. But they want to get more women involved in fighting for change. And they want to make sure that women's problems are also taken up in the struggle for human rights.

People in the Philippines have been fighting for their rights for many hundreds of years. Long ago they were ruled by the Spanish. The name Gabriella is the name of a woman general who

fought against the Spanish army more than two hundred years ago. Today the government of the United States of America (U.S.A.) has a big army base in the Phillipines. For many years the U.S.A. government has supported undemocratic rulers in the Phillipines. The people of the Phillipines are involved in a struggle to make sure that they have a say in the government. They want to make sure that everyone in the country will be able to lead a decent life.

In 1985 there was a change of government. The new government is not as harsh as the one before. It has made it more possible for people to set up their own organisations. But there are still many struggles to fight.

Life has been very hard for most people. Many people are very poor. Many people have to leave farm areas to look for jobs. Jobs are scarce. Sometimes women who don't find jobs are forced to become prostitutes, or put their names down to become brides of men they do not know. Some people work in the large factories owned by companies from rich countries like the U.S.A., Britain and Europe. These companies set up factories in the Phillipines because they know they will get lots of cheap labour here. It is often women who work in many of these factories.

Because many of the women are new to factory work and know nothing about trade

unions the bosses think that they will be able to push these women around. The bosses say that it is good to have factories here because the women are 'good tempered, obedient and cheerful'. This is also why men come from as far away as Norway for brides in the Phillipines. They too think that women from the Phillipines can be bossed around.

But women are organising! Young women who came to factories with no experience are now becoming organised and militant. The bosses now have to face them as fighting workers. Women are setting up organisations like Gabriella to take up all the problems of Phillipine women. Some women have also set up a women's political party.

These organisations see women's struggles as part of the struggles of the workers and people of the country. But they also believe that women must make their voices heard about the things that affect them.

The women's organisations know that there is still a long way to go. They are trying to understand the ways in which women are oppressed in the Phillipines. They are trying to find ways to get many more women actively involved in organisations. And they are already seeing this happening. More women are coming forward. More women are developing skills and confidence to lead and fight for change.



# PREGNANCY

## - Finding Out

## - Talking

## - Sharing

"I'm pregnant!" Those two words are said everyday by women everywhere. Some women may shout these words loudly for the whole world to hear! Other women may say them quietly so that nobody else hears. It all depends on what is happening in a woman's life at the time. For some women it may mean a child that she has waited so long for. For others it may mean an unwanted pregnancy. Some women are pleased. Some women are frightened. Some women feel lots of different things. Some women feel nothing. A woman who is pregnant may feel as if her world has been turned upside down - for some it is a nice thing, for others, maybe not.

But whatever the feeling, if a woman is going to continue her pregnancy, her life is going to change. There will be times when she may feel very tired, and maybe unwell. There will be other times when she may feel the pleasure of her pregnancy. Whatever she feels, she needs to take care of herself so that both she and the baby will be as healthy as possible.

### **HOW DOES A WOMAN KNOW SHE IS PREGNANT?**

When a woman has sex with a man without either of them using prevention (contraceptives), there is a chance that

the woman could fall pregnant. The first sign of pregnancy is usually that the woman's period is late. If her period is more than ten days late, there is a good chance that she may be pregnant. But a late period can be caused by other things besides pregnancy. Often a woman may not notice her period is late. Some women have one or two light periods even though they are pregnant.

Other things may tell a woman that she is pregnant. She may feel like vomiting when she wakes in the morning or at other times of the day. Often she may feel very tired. She may feel an itching or pain in her breasts, especially around her nipples. This is because her breasts are getting ready to produce milk. Many women may notice that they are going to the toilet to wee more often than usual. A pregnant woman may feel all, some or none of these things. Some women just know that they are pregnant - they can just feel it!

### **PREGNANCY TESTS**

A woman can find out if she is pregnant by having a pregnancy test. The pregnancy test can be done at a clinic or by a doctor. A woman can also do the test herself using a urine pregnancy test kit that can be bought from a chemist. These kits cost about R15.



The clinic or doctor can either do a urine test or a blood test. The blood test can be done very soon - as soon as a period is missed. The urine test is done later than this. It is done at least two weeks after a missed period. It is better to do it on the very first urine the woman passes in the morning. Most clinics and doctors will do a urine test for pregnancy, because it is much cheaper than a blood test. But a woman can ask to have a blood test if she wants one. She will have to pay more for this, even at a clinic. When a woman is about two months pregnant a doctor can often tell this by feeling her womb.



## **PREPARING FOR PREGNANCY**

If a woman is thinking of having a baby, she should think hard about it. Is she old enough? Is it a good time in her life to have a baby? If she is on her own, will she cope with a baby on her own? If she has a partner, does the partner also want a baby?

Women need to eat well and look after their bodies all the time, but if a woman wants to fall pregnant she has to be especially careful about her health. She must eat good healthy food. She should not smoke or drink. If she has just stopped using the loop or pill, it is better that she wait until she has had at least one period. This allows her body to get back to normal before falling pregnant.

If a pregnant woman comes into contact with German measles in the first three months of her pregnancy, she may need to have an abortion because she stands a chance of having a deformed baby. Women can avoid this worry. Before she falls pregnant she can have a blood test to see whether she has had German measles before. If she has, then she is fine. But if the blood test shows that she has never had German measles, then she can have an injection for German measles. But then it is very important that she waits for four months before falling pregnant.

## **AN EXCITING TIME**

Pregnancy can be an exciting time. Those people who are close to a woman who is pregnant can be part of this excitement. They can also offer the kind of support that a woman who is pregnant needs. A friend or partner can go with the woman who is pregnant when she goes for a pregnancy test. They could also go with to the clinic for check-ups. The doctor or nurse may let them listen to the heartbeat of the baby. It is a time when close family, friends, and the father of the baby, if he is around, can talk

about the baby that is on its way. All of this makes everyone feel a part of the growing baby.

### **A PREGNANT WOMAN NEEDS PROPER CARE**

A woman who is pregnant should try to eat good food such as milk, meat, fish, peanut butter, and whole wheat or brown bread. She should eat vegetables and a piece of fruit every day. This helps her to get enough of the important things that keep the woman and her growing baby healthy.

A pregnant woman needs lots of rest. The people she lives with can help to make sure that she is not left to do all the housework, cooking, and childcare.

If a woman has the feeling of wanting to vomit, she can treat this by eating a dry biscuit before she gets out of bed in the morning. And she should eat lots of small meals, rather than few big meals.

During the first four months of pregnancy a woman should be very careful not to

take any pills or tablets for any sickness. If the doctor or nurse gives her pills she should ask if it is really necessary. This is because many medicines interfere with the growing baby and sometimes damage it.

When she is ten weeks pregnant a woman should go to a clinic or doctor for a check up. This will help the doctor to make sure that there are no problems with her and the baby's health.

When she is three months pregnant she will need to go for regular check-ups. These check-ups are to make sure she and her baby keep healthy throughout the pregnancy. The clinic or doctor may give her special tablets to take to keep her blood healthy for her growing baby. Visits to the clinic or doctor also make sure that the woman is known when she is ready to deliver her baby.

There is another important check-up that a woman who is pregnant needs. When a woman is pregnant, her teeth and gums can be weakened, and so it is important to have this checked.

## **PREGNANT WORKERS NEED SPECIAL CARE**

## **ORGANISING FOR CHANGE**

- **WOMEN'S GROUPS**
- **UNIONS**
- **COMMUNITIES**



## ORGANISE AROUND HEALTH CARE

Many pregnant women are unable to eat the proper foods they need because there is not enough money. Sometimes the clinic or doctor is too far away, often the woman is worried she may lose her job as the boss does not want her to take time off for check-ups. She may also not be sure of keeping her job after the baby is born. These are some of the problems pregnant women may face. Some of these things can be changed if women organise in their communities and unions. It is our right to have healthy lives, for ourselves and our children, both born and unborn.

Women and their organisations need to make sure that all women have safe, healthy and happy pregnancies. We need to demand:

- Better health care services and proper health education during and after pregnancy. We need clinics that are close by with enough doctors, dentists and nurses. We need to be

able to have blood tests and medical care at prices we can all afford.

- Safe, healthy working conditions for pregnant women.
- Good parental rights agreements at work so that both parents can have the time off that they need to care for their babies and children. Women workers must have time off to go to clinics for check-ups. They must be sure of getting their jobs back. They must get paid maternity leave. Men and women must have an equal chance to be involved in the care of their children. Fathers should get time off to go with to clinics for some of the check-ups. Fathers should get leave during and after the birth of the child.
- A living wage so that we can afford to live in decent houses and eat healthy food. Unborn babies and pregnant women need to be healthy and comfortable.

We need to work for a time when men and families share in the pregnancy. This means sharing in the work and in the joy.

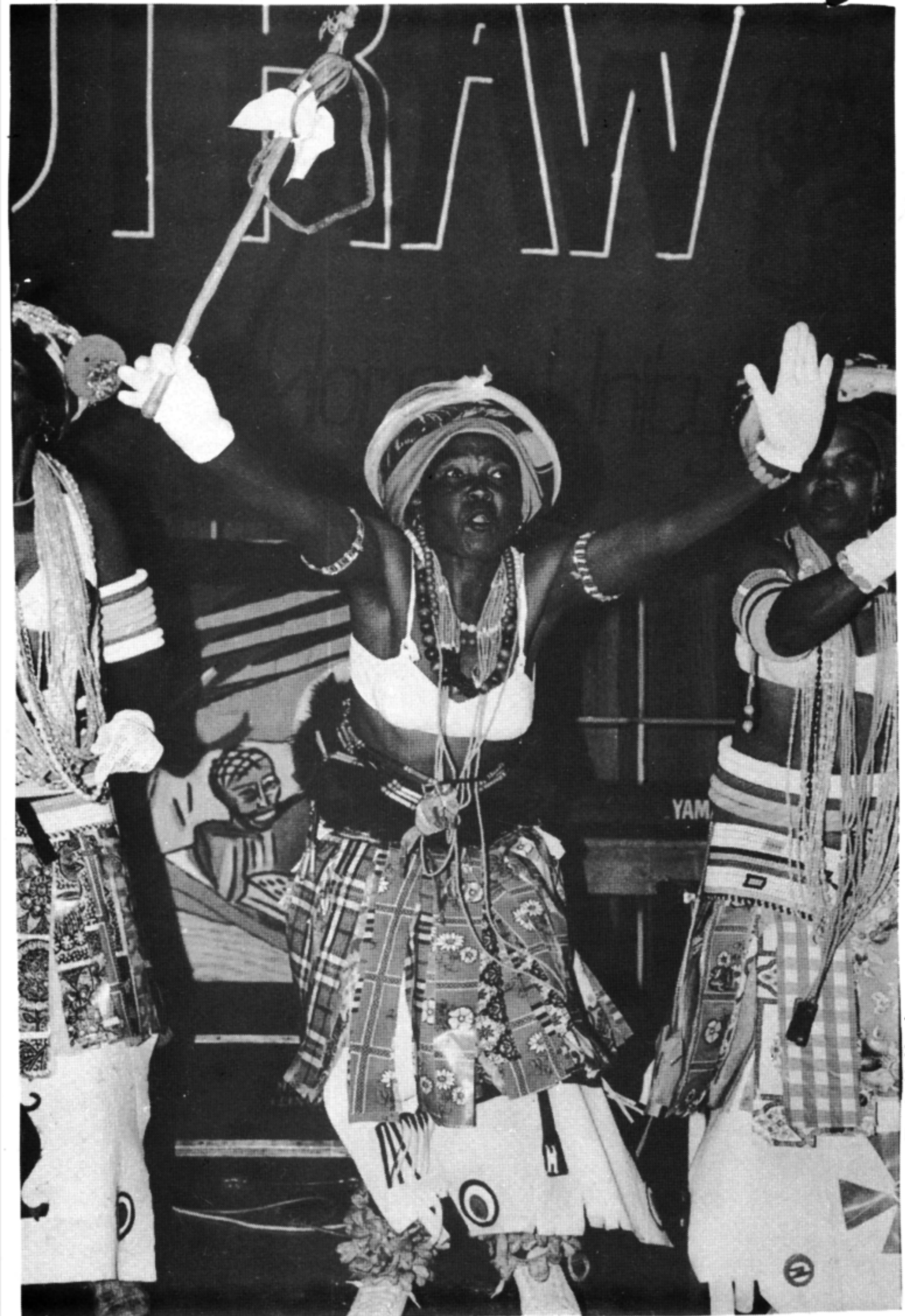
IF MEN WERE  
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WOULD THEY  
BE MORE  
CAREFUL

GOOD  
HEALTH  
SERVICES  
EVERYWHERE

WOMEN WHO ARE  
PREGNANT NEED REST



# Womens Day



Photograph by Anna Zieminski, Afrapix

Women from Moutse celebrating  
at Federation of Transvaal  
Women's (FEDTRAW) Culture  
Day on August 9 1987