



# SPEAK



DECEMBER 1984

No. 7



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Dear SPEAK

It is good that you tell readers about the pill and the loop and all that. Because too many young girls get pregnant. It is very bad when you fall pregnant when you are very young. That is why I am telling you about my first pregnancy.

I got pregnant when I was 16 years old. I was very embarrassed to tell my mother. So I told my sister. My sister took me to the doctor. The doctor said I'm two months pregnant. We went back home. My sister told my mother that I'm pregnant. Mother cried because I was schooling. She told my father in the afternoon, after he came from work. My father said to my mother: "Tell your child that I don't want to see her in front of my eyes."

So I went straight to my brother's house. My brother asked me why my father chased me away from home. I told him that I'm pregnant. He said to me: "Where is the boy who did this?" I said: "The boy is at his house." He called the boy and spoke to him. The boy said "I'll pay for everything". After that I stayed there at my brother's house. Then the father of my child died by car accident. After his death I went back home because my father knew he was dead. He said to me: "Come back now".

From Grace.

# PROPER CARE FOR OUR CHILDREN!

'I leave home at 5 a.m. to catch the train to work. I arrive home at 6 p.m. In between these hours I worry all the time about my children. I worry about them on the roads, I worry about them when they're sick. I work because I want to give my children the best, also because my husband does not earn enough. I earn R50.00 a week.

## WHAT IS THIS PROBLEM?

Many women who go out to work have young children . Everyone knows this .

But who cares for the children while their mothers are at work? If a woman is working it seems that she must have made some proper arrangements for the children. But ask the women. They will tell you. 'I have a problem with day care for children while I am at work.' 'And I'. 'And I'.

The one woman will tell you ' I worry about my children all day because I know the aunty I leave them with doesn't give them the food I leave for them'



Another woman will say 'I worry because I don't know what goes on at the aunty's house. My child is too young to talk so she can't tell me. But she doesn't look happy'.

And another will say 'I leave my children alone locked in the house. I worry sick about them but what else can I do - I need to work to feed them'.

## WHOSE PROBLEM IS THIS?

There is a problem of child care for children of working mothers. But whose problem is this? Why should it be the problem of each mother alone? Why should it be such a problem that some mothers can think of nothing else while at work?



Why should a mother have to get cut on the machine while working because her mind was far away at home with her children?

The problem of child care is the problem of both parents - of mother and father. But it is the problem of all parents together. It is the problem of all the workers in a factory,

*child-care*

and in a community. It is a problem that all workers should stand together to act on.

## BUT WHO SHOULD PAY FOR CHILDCARE?

The employers and the government benefit from the work of all workers. They make profits and run the country on the sweat of workers who are paid just enough to keep alive and to get back to work. The employers and the government should be made to do something about the care of children of working parents.



## WHAT DO PARENTS DO AT PRESENT?

Some are able to leave their children in the care of child minders. Some can leave their children in creches.

Some have no alternative but to leave them in the care of older children who miss their schooling.

And some are forced to leave their children alone at home.



And most often parents just worry, worry, worry, because the arrangements they have made are not good enough.

Women in some communities have organised creches. The article in this SPEAK on child care looks at some examples of what women are doing.

One union the African Food and Canning Workers' Union in the Cape was able to pressurise the local Council around the 1950's to provide a creche in the township for their workers' children.

## What Can We Do?

This is not one person's or one family's problem.

It is the problem of all the workers in a factory, of all the people in a community.

We must take this problem up through our community organisations and unions and make demands on the bosses and the local authority and the government for proper, safe and free child-care for children of working parents.

Until we have this we must continue to come together to organise what we can for our children.

*child-care*

# WOMEN ORGANISING CHILD CARE

AT PRESENT THERE IS LITTLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OR BOSSES ARE DOING ABOUT CHILD-CARE. WOMEN HAVE HAD TO FIND WAYS OF MANAGING WITH THE CARE OF THEIR CHILDREN WHILE THEY ARE AT WORK. SPEAK TALKED TO WOMEN WHO CARE FOR CHILDREN AS WELL AS TO WORKING MOTHERS FROM KWA MASHU, UMLAZI AND CHATSWORTH. WHAT THEY SAY GIVES SOME IDEA OF WHAT WOMEN ARE DOING ABOUT CHILD-CARE AND ALSO SOME IDEA OF THE PROBLEMS THEY FACE.

## CHILDMINDERS

A woman who cares for children in her home said, "I decided to look after other children as a job because I was unemployed and I have my children who attend school. I'm a widow - also I had a problem of not getting a permit. I have been doing child-minding for 10 years and now I look after 4 children



from 6 months to 1 year. The parents pay R14.50 monthly for each child. This is not enough. I have to do this job because I have no other choice. I am not very strong physically. The parents of the children bring them in the morning at 7am and collect them by 7pm".

## IT IS A LONELY JOB

Child-minders do have many problems. In addition to poor and uncertain pay and long hours there is no pension or U.I.F. It is a lonely job - the woman is alone all day with children.



Often the child-minder is old or unwell and not able to give young children the kind of attention they need. Children also need play and toys and it is not easy for a child-minder to provide this on her own.

## PARENTS WORRY

Parents are often unhappy about the child-minding arrangement. Some of their worries are that the children are not properly fed, the child-minder is too expensive, or she doesn't have much time to give each child because she has taken on more children than she can manage.



## A CHILD-MINDING SCHEME

Kwa Mashu Child Welfare decided to do something about these problems by starting a child-minding scheme. The parents pay the Child Welfare R25.00 a month. From this the Child Welfare



*child-care*

pays the child-minder and buys food which the child-minder prepares for the children. The Child Welfare supervises the arrangement and the child-minders meet together regularly. Each child-minder has 6 children to care for. The parents and the child-minders are happier with this. The child-minders are sure of getting paid. The mothers are sure that their children are well-cared for and fed while they are at work.

## CRECHES

Emmy Mbambo, 69 years old, from Kwa Mashu talked about how she started a creche in Kwa Mashu in 1960.

"There were children dying every day. The mothers stayed at home and when I asked why they said because they have children. There was no food, but there was nowhere to leave the children. I went house to house visiting parents to explain that I wanted to offer a place for children so that mothers could work. I asked the Durban Corporation for a hall and they let me use one that used to house cattle. The Welfare gave us some food for the children. There were no toilets - except for bucket toilets. There was no water - we had to fetch that. The parents paid 20c a month.



I was earning very little and so was my husband. I didn't care how much I earned. All I cared for was the children. I used to come home very tired. Sometimes parents would leave their children until 7 pm. And sometimes those who worked night-shift never came at all - I would bring those



children home with me.

With time more and more parents got to know about the creche and wanted to send their children. The Durban Corporation then built 2 creche buildings and later more creches were built in different sections of Kwa Mashu".

## BUT WITH THE CRECHE CAME NEW PROBLEMS



"I always think that the supervisors are doing too much hard work. She's got a group of 40 children to care for, administration to do, to answer the telephone, take register. You can't have a group and supervise. Go to answer the phone and by the time you get back a child is hurt. Child Welfare say they have no money to hire teachers, 40 children in a group for one person to care for is too much. 20 babies for 1 person to care for is too much work."

Then there is the problem of low wages for women who work in creches.

*child-care*



Mrs. Cele with some of the children at her creche in Umlazi.

Kamla from Chatsworth started a creche in a church hall in Unit 10. She has also found it difficult to keep good staff, because of the low pay. She had some problems with the Durban Corporation Health Department when she started because they said she didn't have a good enough place for a creche. But she had been able to arrange the space in the church hall to provide care and play areas for the children. Because she was determined and went ahead with her plans the Corporation was not able to close her creche down. The main problem she has is money for paper, crayons, paints and playthings for the children, but she makes sure the children eat properly.



Mrs Cele from an Umlazi creche told us: "You can't get trained people in creches. Industry pays them better. I had a trained nurse here - 3 in fact - but they couldn't stick it because of the pay - their sisters in industry earn R40.00 a week. Then they say to me 'I'm sorry I must get a factory job'". Money is a big problem for parents and creches. Mrs Cele said: "If a mother loses her job, its her own funeral. She must take her child out of the creche. The government should subsidize creches. By the time they do we'll be in our graves!"

So although women do find ways of managing and although child-minders and creches do provide care for some children of working parents, there are still problems. Problems of not enough money, of overworked, poorly paid child-care workers, of children not getting the kind of care and play they need, of parents having to pay more than they can afford for child-care.

A mother who has her child in a creche said, "Well, the only thing you know with a creche is that you know where your child is during the day. That is the only thing. Nothing else. You may give your child food - but you don't know what happens to that food. The children get sick very easily".

*child-care*

## ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN HELP WITH ADVICE AND TRAINING

Two organisations who are doing something to help creches and preschools are:

DURBAN AND COASTAL SOCIETY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, AND T.R.E.E. (Training and Resources for Early Education).

Durban and Coastal Society for Early Childhood Education runs monthly workshops for preschool workers where child-care skills and ideas for activities with children are shared. They also run training programmes for preschool workers and are willing to help individuals and groups who want to start nursery schools, or organise child-care. This organisation has helped many preschools all over Durban. It was because of the need they saw from communities in and around Durban that this organisation took a leading part in setting up TREE.



TREE helps anybody caring for preschool children. Individuals or groups involved in or wanting to start child-care can contact TREE for advice and training.

These organisations can be contacted at the following addresses:-

T.R.E.E.

P.O. BOX 47513

GREYVILLE

4023

Durban

Tel: 840588 Molly

Durban and Coastal Society for  
Early Childhood Education

P.O. BOX 37246

OVERPORT

Durban



# WE DEMAND FREE CHILD-CARE!



## AND UNTIL WE HAVE THAT LET US ORGANISE OUR OWN!



# SAY NO

Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they call your jobless son  
 a Tsotsi

Say No  
 Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they call  
 Your husband at the age of 60  
 a boy  
 Say No

Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they rape your daughter  
 in detention and call her  
 a whore  
 Say No

Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they call your white sister  
 a madam  
 Say No

Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they call your white brother  
 a Baas  
 Say No

Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they call a trade unionist  
 a terrorist  
 Say No

Say No, Black Woman  
 Say No  
 When they give you a back seat  
 in the liberation wagon  
 Say No  
 Yes Black Woman  
 a Big No

Gcina Mhlope

Courtesy of LIP.



PHOTO: PAUL WINTER

## JANUARY

1985

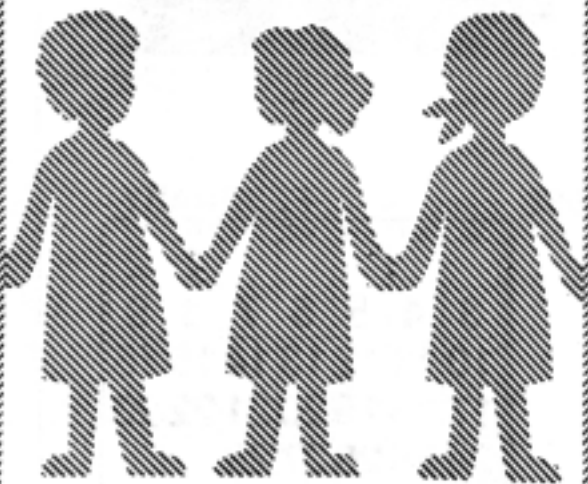
## FEBRUARY

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Buy your SPEAK calendar for 1985. Write to LIP! Now!

# THE WOMEN'S CENTRE



THE WOMEN'S CENTRE is a new service organisation for women which was started by women in Durban. The aim of the Centre is to provide women with useful information and skills.

\* We have a Resources Sub-Committee which is collecting books and short stories which any women can come and borrow. The Resources Committee will also try and help women to find films and slide-shows they are interested in.

\* There is a Literacy Sub-Committee which organises the training of literacy co-ordinators. Co-ordinators teach people to read and write in Zulu or English, depending on what their home language is; and also help Zulu speaking people to learn English. Learning takes place in groups of about 8, and the learners decide when and they want to meet, and what they want to discuss.

\* If women want information that is not readily available, the Media and

Research Sub-Committee may be able to help do the research or find out who has got the required information. This committee also makes slide-shows, pamphlets and booklets to help women organise.

Any woman can become a member of THE WOMEN'S CENTRE. It costs R1.00 a year to become a member. Members can borrow our books.



If a group or organisation would like to borrow books but find it difficult to come into town, contact THE WOMEN'S CENTRE and we will bring our 'suitcase library' to you. In this way women can have a 'library' at work during lunch-times, or in the community.

Also let us know if you would like to organise a slide-show to a group. We will try and help you borrow a slide-show and a projector.

# SOME OF THE BOOKS . . .

## BOOKS

### IN THE DITCH - Buchi Emecheta

This is a story about a single black mother. She is not living in her own country, and has to bring up her 6 children on her own. She talks about her problems, how she feels, what the neighbours say and other things that happen in everyday life. In the end, she talks about keeping your pride even though you are very poor. The book is in easy English and is 128 pages long.



ers work together to keep the workers down. Domitila tells us about the lives of the miners, their hard and dangerous struggles, and their strength and unity. Most of the English is quite easy, and the book is 235 pages long.

## SHORT STORIES

### LISA GODDARD

This story is 33 pages long and is written in easy English. Lisa Goddard is the mother of 2 children and she is just having another baby. Her husband drinks and beats her up. This story takes a look at a part of Lisa's life.



### NIGHT SHIFT

This is a two-page photo story about a woman who works night shift. She explains the added problems this makes with transport and housework. And her

loneliness, because everyone is away at work while she is at home. It is very easy to read this nice short story.

### NOKULUNGA'S WEDDING

Nokulunga lives on the farm. She tells of her forced marriage and the treatment of women in her community. It is a sad story showing how the women don't have any control over their lives. The story is in easy English and is 5 pages long.



THE WOMEN'S CENTRE is sharing an office with SPEAK. The address is:

SPEAK COLLECTIVE  
ECUMENICAL CENTRE TRUST  
20 ST. ANDREWS STREET  
DURBAN

### LET ME SPEAK -

### Domitila Barrios de Chungara

Domitila is a woman. She is a leader among the working people in her country. Most people there work on the tin mines under very bad conditions and with very low pay. The government and the mine own-



# TOO MANY CHILDREN WERE SENDING ME MAD !

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT A FIFTY-YEAR OLD MARRIED WOMAN WHO LIVES IN A TWO BEDROOMED HOUSE IN A TOWNSHIP NEAR DURBAN. SHE HAS 9 CHILDREN - 7 DAUGHTERS AND 2 SONS, WHO ARE THE YOUNGEST. WE HAVE CALLED HER MA DHLAMINI. THE STORY IS TOLD BY HER NEIGHBOUR.

I wasn't living long in the area when I noticed that there was something wrong with my neighbour. As always, early one morning I heard her shouting, crying, running around her house. But this day I felt I had to do something, so, I went to talk to a nearby friend who knew them better. "It's too much of their private life," she said. "Well, I said, "It's too much of their private life, but I can't get peace in my house if there is no peace next door".

As I was coming out of this friend's house I met Ma Dhlamini. She had just a loose dress on with nothing underneath. She



was so dirty and drunk. Some of the neighbours were around just laughing at her, calling her this and that.

I started talking to her. She agreed to go back to her house with me. In her yard were nine babies, toddlers and crawlers. Among these babies there was none older than two years. The house was disorganised. Her children were arriving from school. No washing had been done. Almost all the babies were crying. At that time, all needed a nappy change and a bath. Before her own children came back from school there had been no-one looking after these young children.



I asked her if she didn't want to go to the doctor-if she didn't feel sick? She quickly said, "Oh yes! I'm sick". I was expecting her to resist. I thought maybe this reply was to get rid of me and stop me asking more questions. So, I just said, "O.K., if you want to go to a doctor, I'll take you tomorrow".



Before I woke up the next morning she barged into my bedroom and got into bed with me. "I'm not going away until you take me to the doctor," she said

We went to the doctor and were referred to different offices. She had a double problem - disturbed and drinking. She had to be admitted to Fort Napier. I didn't know what to do about all the babies she was looking after. Three of the babies were her grandchildren, and the rest were children of domestic workers from the nearby suburbs. These women were not allowed to keep their children at work. So Child Welfare, with their employers, arranged that they be taken by anybody who would look after them for R15.00 a month.

We went to Child Welfare and asked them to do something better for these children. They said we should come back the following day. But we threatened to dump the children in their office. So they came and took the children away themselves that very same day.



The husband didn't know what was happening yet, so we had to go to him at work. He said: "Oh Thembi, are you really mad?"

She said: "Yes, yes. Don't you see I'm sick? Don't you care for me? You want me to die."

So he said: "You can take her if you think it will help her."



I really felt bad. I got worried - am I doing the right thing - am I not interfering too much in this family? But that Sunday he came to say that he had seen her at the hospital. She was much better. After a few weeks she came back and was looking so well. She started attending clinic at SANCAAD (a place to help alcoholics) and she hasn't drunk since.

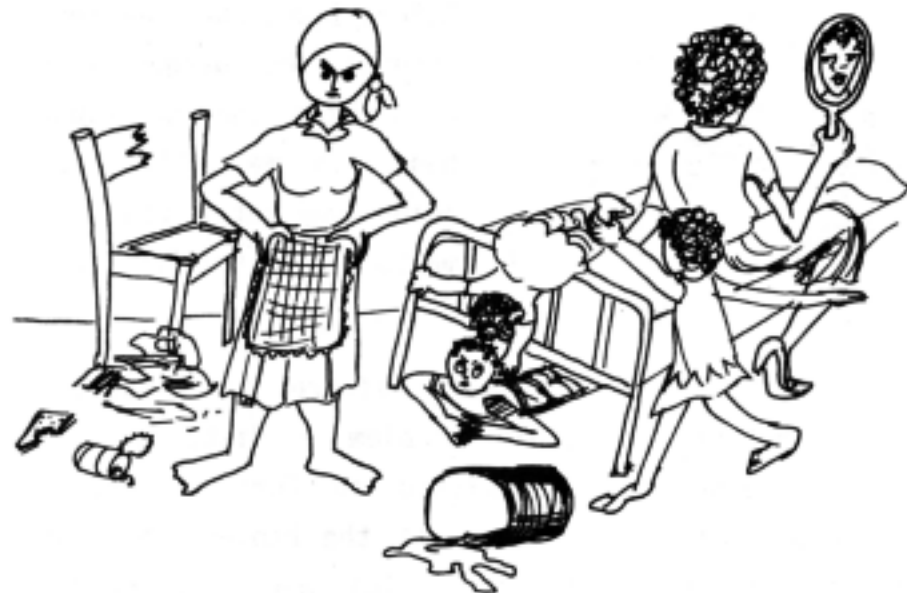
Now she has worse problems but she handles them much better. At that time, her relationship with her husband was not good; three of her daughters were pregnant for the first time; and she had no-one to talk to. Since 1976 she hasn't been to church or town. She has been outside Durban once, when we took her to Fort Napier! She is literally tied to the house.

At times she has all her 12 grandchildren to look after. The eldest is 5 years and the youngest is 2 months. Sometimes she complains that this or that part of her is aching, but she just doesn't have time to rest. Even if she does rest these children will be trampling all over her.

If she doesn't clean the house, no-one will do the cleaning. Her daughters, besides two lately, don't care for anything. They come back, read their magazines, visit their boyfriends, sometimes play with their babies. Then they bath, eat, then sleep. They don't even do their own children's washing. They take for granted that it is Ma Dhlamini's duty to look after their children; that it's her house and that she must clean, cook and do the washing for them.



Sometimes her husband complains, "You know, Thembi, you don't care for me anymore. You don't have time to sit and chat with me because of these children all over all the time". It is maddening but both of them find there's nothing they can do.



She says: "Oh, I've stopped worrying. What comes, comes". But sometimes she complains, "This house is never clean. There's no space to even sleep. It's really too much"!



## WRITE TO SPEAK

Send us a story  
about your life, or  
other women's life.

Post your story to:  
SPEAK COLLECTIVE  
P.O. Box 19375  
Domerton  
Durban.



# Victory for Clothing Workers

In Natal many women work in clothing factories. In most of these factories conditions of work are very bad and the pay is just as bad. This is often how women workers are treated until they organise to fight against such conditions.

But the trouble is that there is a union that all workers in clothing factories are forced to join. They are forced to join the Garment Workers Industrial Union. This Garment Workers Union has a 'closed shop' agreement with all bosses of clothing factories. This means that bosses won't employ a worker unless she or he joins the Garment Workers Union first.

Workers at a factory in Pinetown, James North Africa, were not happy with this union which did not do anything much for them. They could see around them that factories which were organised by FOSATU unions (The Federation of South African Trade Unions) were really winning good demands. So, they asked the National Union of Textile Workers, which is a FOSATU union, to organise them.

About 80% of the workers at James North joined the Textile Workers Union and the union signed a recognition agreement with the bosses. This meant that James North bosses agreed now to talk to the Textile Workers Union as the union representing the workers. But that wasn't the end of their struggle.



Once this happened, the Garment Workers Union became angry that their members had joined another union.

\* They tried to stop the Textile Workers Union from joining the Garment Workers Industrial Council which is where unions and bosses decide on wages and conditions of work.



\* Soon after they organised a meeting at Curries Fountain and tried to tell the workers that other unions are bad because they divide the Garment workers.

\* They then changed the Garment Workers Union constitution to say that any workers who join the Textile Workers Union would be expelled from the Garment Workers Union and this would mean that the bosses would have to fire the workers because of the 'closed shop' agreement.

\* In the factory they tried to put fear into workers by calling them in one by one asking them if they were members of the Textile Workers Union.

\* The Garment Workers Union accused the bosses at James North of not counting the votes for the Textile Workers Union properly.

Eventually this case was taken to the Industrial Court where these sort of disputes sometimes get sorted out. It was here that the Textile Workers Union got an exemption which allowed workers at James North Africa to legally join any union they wanted. So the workers won their struggle.

The Textile Workers Union is now applying for an exemption like this in 5 other factories where most of the workers have chosen to join the Textile Workers Union. Clothing workers at these factories can at last join a union which workers control. So, now they can really fight for what they want.

SHARE 'SPEAK'...



...WHENEVER YOU CAN.



# NATAL ORGANISATION OF WOMEN

SPEAK: WHEN WAS N.O.W. FORMED?

N.O.W.: It was formed in December 1983, but it was actually formally launched on August 9 this year.

Organisation of Women was formed.

SPEAK: WHAT DOES N.O.W. PLAN TO DO?

N.O.W.: N.O.W. aims to work towards the removal of all laws and customs that act against women. Immediately, N.O.W. aims to organise women around issues that most affect their daily lives. We also see it as important that women take an active part in trade unions and community organisations.

SPEAK: WHAT STRUCTURE DOES THE ORGANISATION HAVE?

N.O.W.: Recently, N.O.W. has started branches and working groups in various areas. If you are interested in joining a N.O.W. branch or working group, contact Lungi Makhaye phone number at work: 63471 or 316480



SPEAK: WHY WAS N.O.W. STARTED?

N.O.W.: The women who formed N.O.W. had worked together previously in organising National Women's Day, August 9 meetings. We felt the need to unite against problems like the high cost of living poor housing, pass laws, the lack of proper maternity benefits, child-care and many other issues. So with this in mind the Natal

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# **UNITED ACTION IN THE TRANSVAAL**

On Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 of November 1984, 800 000 workers and 400 000 students took part in a stay-away from work and school in the Transvaal. This was the first time in South Africa that so many people have come together in protest. It was also the first time since the 1960's that trade unions, students, women and community organisations showed their strength together.

Since February this year pupils have been boycotting at different schools in the Transvaal because they want changes in the education system. The Department of Education and Training has closed down schools all over the place. In the general unrest at least 150 people have been killed and many more injured.

A few weeks before the stay-away 7 000 police and soldiers went into Sebokeng Township very early one morning, before it was even light. They entered and searched every home in the whole township. The police and army said that this was being done to catch criminals. But it was obvious that this was an act against the community. Many of the community's representatives were arrested. This operation of the army and police was called Operation Palmiet.

The students had decided to call other organisations to help them in their demands. So now, organisations came

together and decided to call a stay-away. The Transvaal Regional Stay-Away Committee was formed. Some of the organisations which formed that Committee were COSAS, FOSATU, Women's Federation, UDF and others. The main demands were that the army and police move out of the townships, that rent and bus-fare increases be stopped; that the age-limit in schools be abolished; and that elected Student Representative Councils in schools be recognised as the true voice of the students.

The stay-away showed that the people want changes. It showed that workers, students, women and community organisations are united and determined to act together to win their demands.



# STERILISATION — Permanent Contraception for Men and Women

In the past SPEAKS we have spoken about Depo Provera, the Pill, the IUCD, diaphragms and condoms. All of these types of contraceptives work to prevent pregnancy while you want them to. If you decide to have more children, then you can stop using these contraceptives.

Sterilization is different. When you have the operation to become sterilized, you won't be able to have children again. It is a permanent form of contraception. So anyone who feels they may one day want to have more children should not go ahead with sterilization.

Women and men who are sterilized must be able to do so out of choice - a decision that they make that they definitely do not want any more children. No-one, government, doctors, bosses should be allowed to force people into being sterilized.

Both women and men can be sterilized. The operation for men is safer and easier than the operation for women.

No more children sounds like a wonderful idea to me!

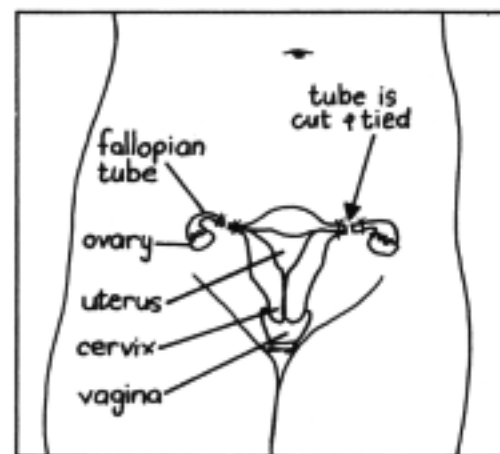


## TUBAL LIGATION - STERILISATION FOR WOMEN

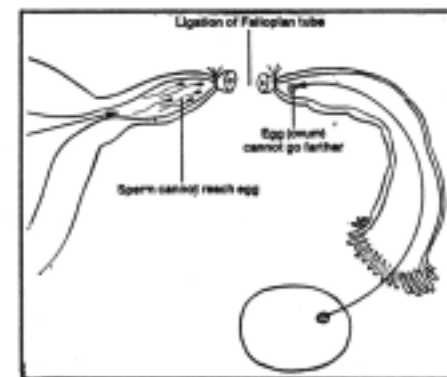
With Tubal Ligation what happens is that the doctor cuts and ties the tubes through which the egg travels down to the womb. By cutting the tubes, sperms from the man cannot reach the woman's egg, and so pregnancy is prevented. The egg still develops each month, and so periods are normal, but the egg cannot be fertilized. Instead it is absorbed by the body.



Outside view of tubal ligation.



Inside view of tubal ligation.



The sperm and the egg cannot reach each other to form a foetus.

## ADVANTAGES

- \* Because it is permanent, Tubal Ligation is the most sure method of contraception.
- \* There is no longer the worry of an unwanted pregnancy.
- \* You don't have to put up with the side-effects that you can get from other types of contraceptives, like dizziness, and weight-gain.
- \* It does not interfere with your sex-life.

## DISADVANTAGES

Having a Tubal Ligation means having an operation. This means:

- \* Having a general anaesthetic (being put to sleep for the operation). You are not allowed to eat or drink for 6 hours before the operation.
- \* Having to stay in hospital for about 2 days, and having to rest and not feel well for at least a week.
- \* It is not usual, but there is a possibility of an infection in the cut and bladder, or bleeding inside the body where the cut was made.
- \* Even though the cut is above the public hair line, you have to have your pubic hair shaved off for the operation.

The operation is permanent, but doctors have found that for 3 women out of every 1000 who have a Tubal Ligation have their tubes grow together again. This means that those women could become pregnant again.

## I DECIDED TO HAVE A TUBAL LIGATION

"I decided to have a tubal ligation because my relationship with my husband was not so good, and we had decided on no more children. But although we had decided he was dilly-dallying around - probably due to our relationship. Suddenly I found myself pregnant and I knew I wouldn't get an abortion I was mad with him and myself as well. I knew I did not want to spend all my youthful years being pregnant.



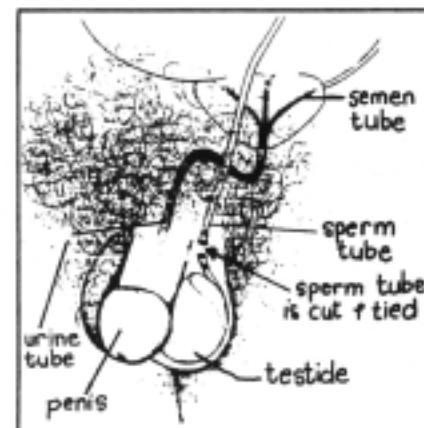
To be sure this wouldn't happen, I decided on a tubal ligation and I regret that I didn't make this decision earlier - I feel so good and relaxed and healthy - no sickness from loop or pills. I have no problems of worrying about a period that is not coming. In fact, I so much wish there were fewer."

## HYSTERECTOMY

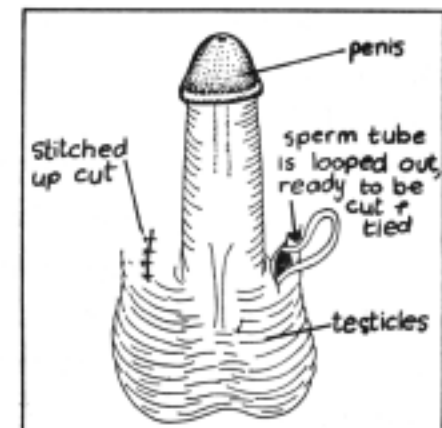
This is another type of operation that women have when there is something seriously wrong with the womb or ovaries. Either the womb, or the ovaries, or both are removed. If a woman has this operation she won't ever be able to have children again. This is not a form of contraception, but rather due to illness that this operation is done.

# VASECTOMY - STERILISATION FOR MEN

This is a small operation that can be done without a general anaesthetic (the man is not put to sleep for the operation). Small cuts are made in the scrotum and the man's sperm tubes are cut and closed. This means no sperms can go into the woman during sex and she can't become pregnant. Vasectomy has no effect on the man's sex life and his fluid comes out just the same, but it has no sperm in it. Sperm only makes up a small part of the fluid that the man has during sex. It is important to remember that sperms are stored in the man's sexual organs for about 3 months. So, after a vasectomy a man must use condoms for at least 3 months. After that time he must be tested by a doctor to see that there are no active sperms left. After a vasectomy the man's body does not make



Inside view of vasectomy.



Outside view of vasectomy.

as many sperms as before and those that are made are absorbed by the man's body.

## ADVANTAGES

- \* This is the safest form of contraception which men can use, because it is permanent.
- \* This is a very simple operation which can be done in the doctor's office.
- \* It can make sex more relaxed because the worry about an unwanted pregnancy is no longer there.
- \* Only a mild pain is felt after the operation.
- \* It is one of the few types of contraceptives for men. It means that



the woman can have a break after having to put up with using contraceptives, and going through pregnancies and childbirth.

- \* A study in Britain showed that 98 out of 100 men who have had vasectomies would advise men who do not want any more children to have the operation.

## DISADVANTAGES

- \* After a vasectomy there is sometimes a slight swelling where cut was made, but it usually goes away by itself. Very seldom does the lump have to be cut out.
- \* The sperm tubes of 1 out of every 1000 men grow back together again.

## VASECTOMY OR TUBAL LIGATION ?

Comparing the two types of sterilization:

Vasectomy is far safer than any sterilization operation done on women. This is because:-

- \* Men only need a local anaesthetic for vasectomy while women must have a general anaesthetic. A local anaesthetic makes only the area to be operated on numb, and you are awake. But, a general anaesthetic makes you unconscious for the time of the operation and there are more chances of problems because of this.
- \* A man also takes less time to heal after a vasectomy. There is a little discomfort, but only for a few hours.

- \* With a ligation on the other hand, healing takes more time, and most often women can't get the rest they need after the operation because of children to care for and housework to do.

- \* Women have the burden of being responsible for contraception, going through pregnancy, and having babies, and child-care. As it is an easier, safer operation for men, it is the man's chance to share the burden of contraception.



## WOMEN AND MEN COMMENT ON STERILISATION

Women are not allowed to be sterilized unless they have their husband's permission. A husband can refuse to sign the form even if his wife wishes to be sterilized. Women should have the right to decide for themselves. It is the women who bear the babies, give birth and have to look after them.

There are some doctors who will do a Tubal Ligation when the woman wants it and does not have her husband's permission.



"I had had 7 children and I was over forty, and I decided to go and see a doctor at King Edward Hospital and ask to be sterilized. He asked me my age and the number of children I had. So I told him. Then he said to me: No, I won't sterilized you because

your husband might die and then another man might not want you! I just said nothing. It would have been better if I had not even gone there to ask as he made me feel so terrible and humiliated. So, I didn't get sterilized and even though my husband has been dead for 12 years now, I haven't taken another man. I don't want another husband".



"I was worried about having a vasectomy - I thought I wouldn't be able to have sex anymore. I spoke to doctors and other men who had had vasectomies, and they told me that I'd be fine after the vasectomy. I had the vasectomy operation and I find I still enjoy a normal sex-life".

"I've had a vasectomy and feel quite normal. It hasn't affected my sex life".

Quite often in hospitals just after the birth of their child, women are asked whether they want to be sterilized if the husband agrees. A woman may feel she wants sterilization after a difficult 9 months of pregnancy. It is hardly the right time to ask a woman who is tired and in pain. But she may agree and regret it later. Her baby may get sick and die.



In some factories where women work with such things as chemicals and spices, it has been discovered that the babies they have are deformed. In order to avoid having a deformed baby, women workers are forced to consider being sterilized. But the bosses should rather be made to make their factories safe. Women should not be forced into sterilization just because they can't change their jobs, and they don't want to risk having a deformed baby. Women workers should not be forced into sterilization.

Doctors tell of treating women who come in with the problem of not being able to become pregnant. They discover that in fact the women have been sterilized without knowing it. There are the little scars from the tubal ligation on their stomach's as evidence.

"A woman from a rural area was told that she needed to have a caesarian birth. But they said they would only do the operation if she first signed a form saying that she would be sterilized as well. That left her with a choice of probably losing her, and or her child's life by trying to give birth naturally, or not having any more children."



"I decided to have a vasectomy because my wife was sick. Also she had been unwell for a long time with a throat problem which made it difficult for her to eat. When we had our third child we decided not to have any more children. I decided to have the vasectomy to save her from more problems. The vasectomy was much easier on me than a ligation would have been for her. It was a small operation. I went home immediately, and have had no bad effects from it".

STERILIZATION IS VERY USEFUL FOR PEOPLE WHO DECIDE NOT TO HAVE ANY MORE CHILDREN. THE BOSSES, THE GOVERNMENT, AND DOCTORS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO FORCE PEOPLE INTO STERILIZATION. HUSBANDS SHOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DECIDE FOR THEIR WIVES. THE CHOICE SHOULD BE MADE WITHOUT PRESSURE FROM OTHER PEOPLE. IT IS THE RIGHT OF WOMEN TO DECIDE IF AND WHEN THEY WANT CHILDREN.

