

S152

SPEAK

MAY 1992

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WOMEN AT CODESA
Winning victories for all of us

SURVIVING AS A SINGLE
A true story

THE HANDS-ON DAD
Unionist Mtutuzeli Tom

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NOTHEMBI

Domestic worker, single parent and star musician

BLACK SISTERS



What they did to us
telling us black was not so beautiful
we should be slightly lighter
Use He-man, Ambi...
then we will look so beautiful

What they did to us
telling us crizzly coarse hair was not so
beautiful
our hair should be slightly straighter
Use Hairstraight, Soft-a-silky...
then all the men would love us so dearly

What they did to us
telling us roundness was not so beautiful
we should be slightly slender
Use Slimline, Kilo-shop...
then all the men would like to marry us

To them skin lighteners, my sisters
I say voertsek, voertsek
My skin is my own
I don't want a lighter kind of love

To them hair straighteners, my sisters
I say voertsek, voertsek
My hair is my own
I don't want a straighter kind of love

To the diet poisons, my sisters
I say voertsek, voertsek
I don't want a slender kind of love

Elizabeth Khaxas

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■ **Cover Photo:**
Anna Zieminski

COMMENT

We have some celebrating to do with you.

For the first time ever you can buy SPEAK at your corner shop.

And no more waiting around - SPEAK will be on sale every month.

Our aim remains the same: to challenge, inform and educate. Above all - to give women a voice. With SPEAK in your hand there will never be a dull moment. We are known far and wide as the magazine that gets people talking.

In this issue we give you lots more to talk about.

We celebrate with you a talented woman musician - Nothembi Mkhwebane - who is breaking through in the male-dominated music world.

Mahadi Miya shares with us her experience of surviving as a single.

We bring you good news on claiming child support from fathers. We have an interview with Mtutuzeli Tom, a union leader who takes his responsibilities as a dad seriously.

We write about how women around the country made Codesa sit down and listen. Write to us - tell us what you want to read about. SPEAK is your magazine. Stay with us and enjoy! ☺

Talk back

Hand Lebowa back to South Africa

I am a boy of 20 years. Ninety-nine percent of the people who work for the Lebowa government are relatives of each other. The new government is the same. Most of the people born in the ghettos have no share in the government. Thousands of people are unemployed because they have no relatives working for the government. I have made almost 190 applications, but there is no work for me. Now I am calling on the Minister of Lebowa to resign and hand over the government to South Africa. I am calling on all members of the ANC to liberate suffering nations. I am calling on unemployed people of Lebowa to start demonstrating all over Lebowa calling for Ramodike to resign. SPEAK is very important. Freedom is in our minds. I know every woman calls for peace.

*David Nkadimeng "Pirate"
Sekhukhune*

Letter from Sri Lanka

SPEAK is a wonderful magazine. I am happy I had a chance to read this magazine. You may be aware we are in the midst of our freedom struggle. The fighting between the Sri Lankan

forces and the liberation tigers of Tamil Eelam has created chaos in this region. Women, especially the Tamil women, including children, have severe problems. There is no end to the violence against women in this region. Women are being raped and tortured by the forces. Women bear the sufferings of evacuation forced upon them by military operations. Heavy aerial bombings make tension in our lives. Women refugees have many problems. We can do little, but the needs are so much.

At the Centre for Women and Development we meet women in distress, make them confident and also organise seminars and workshops in order to build up leadership abilities among them. This makes women speak out and say what they think. They need education and skills if they are to take the role of leaders. Our programmes are well received by the people.

*Soraja Sivachandran
Centre for Women and
Development, Sri Lanka*

Speak out for rural sisters

I feel very honoured to receive your magazine, especially as I live in the remote areas where it is hard to find something to read. I find SPEAK very educative and informative as

far as the women's struggle is concerned, especially as we are on the threshold of a new South Africa.

Though SPEAK has done so much, I'm concerned about the sisters in rural areas who are naive about the giant step taken by their urban counterparts. I feel SPEAK is duty-bound to destroy that ignorance. These people must be educated about the final struggle, and know what role they have to play in the future, side by side with men.

*D.S. Magubane
Jozini*

Men must stop overruling women

In many Western countries women get the same treatment as men. Although Africa is lagging behind, women are liberating themselves from domestic work in order to play a vital role in the community. It will be useless and meaningless to talk about democracy while the mothers of Africa and the world are denied their rights in the community. Men must also see to it that women get the respect they deserve.

Men should also stop overruling women. Some men feel they will be inferior if their wives get better education. Education is the light that never fades and therefore it should not be seen as a threat to the couple's life.

*Frederick Mohlatole
Mphahlele*

Lots of work to do - but victory is certain!

Write to SPEAK

Thanks to all readers who have written.

Please keep your letters flowing in.

We are often forced to shorten letters because of space.

*Send your letters to :
SPEAK, PO Box 45213,
Mayfair 2018, South Africa*

Any interested writers out there?

The Writenow Book Club invites all writers - students, professional and new - to become members of the club. For more details send a self-addressed sealed envelope to the following address: The Secretary, Writenow Book Club, PO Box 774, Crown Mines 2025, Johannesburg. Telephone (011) 339-4761 or 862-1192.

*Themba Tshongwe
Johannesburg*

Praise from Ray Alexander

Thank you for the bound copies of SPEAK and your calendar which I placed at the African Studies UCT.

You are doing a fantastic job, my congratulations to you and your entire collective.

*Ray Simons Alexander
Cape Town*

Getting better all the time

Thank you so much for the bound sets of SPEAK. They are so handy for casual reading and filing. The subjects and topics you covered in 1991 were quite diverse and interesting, particularly issues relating to youth and men. They injected an exciting dimension in SPEAK. SPEAK seems to be improving year by year. I was also particularly impressed by the article you had on Maria Rantho, a very dynamic advocate of women's rights and disability issues.

I hope you will have more of these in future. As I read this particular article I thought of other disabled women who are blind and who have interesting and informative stories to tell to us women, able and disabled.

It is always a joy to read SPEAK. Keep up the good work.

*Fikile Mazibuko
Johannesburg*



You know, some of my women friends have taken to pulling off some of those insulting anti-women bumper stickers you find on cars and taxis. I have to admit to pulling off one or two myself in the past few years. But we've noticed some new ones are out and we're going to stick with them. Like this one:

"Women's faults are many;
Men have only two:
Everything they say and
everything they do."

* * * * *

I'm sick of men who think women mean 'yes' when we say 'no'. I know many other women feel the same way. So here's something to ask those harassing men. "Which part of 'no' didn't you understand?"

* * * * *

Here's a story from my friend who lives in Durban. Her ex-husband had failed to pay maintenance for their two sons for three months. She battled to make ends meet until at last, worried and angry, she asked the police to issue a warrant for his arrest.



Kwa-Sophie...

Police found and arrested the ex-husband in a far-off place where he was enjoying a long holiday. "How could you have me arrested?" he later demanded angrily, "I'm the father of your children." "When you start to behave like a father, I'll treat you like one," she replied.

* * * * *

As Thandeka Mgoduso of Imbeleko said at an international women's day meeting this year in Dobsonville, Soweto: "They (men) make rules that will favour them."

* * * * *

The struggle for non-sexist language is a long one. I hear the

chairperson at a Black Sash meeting wanted to tell a group of women they could report back on an issue. "Hey you guys ... I mean girls ... women ... people."

* * * * *

My journalist friend covering Codesa just phoned me. She's furious. "Sophie," she said, "I went up to one of these government ministers at Codesa to arrange an interview with him and he didn't look at my face. He just stared and stared at my breasts."

What did he say about the interview, I asked, trying to cool her down.

"He said: 'Sure, maybe we can do it over lunch sometime'.

"The trouble is," carried on my friend, "it's not just the Nats at Codesa who behave like this ..."

* * * * *

Quote of the month: "*I myself have never known what feminism is. I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat.*" Rebecca West, *The Clarion*, 1913. ☉

As a matter of fact

■ The ANC has set up a commission to get rid of gender discrimination within the organisation.

■ Recent statistics published by a morning newspaper show that 95 out of 100 South African women who are raped are black. Between June 1991 and March 1992 more than 22 000 rapes were reported. It is believed a shocking 478 000 rapes during this time were not reported.

■ Wits University in Johannesburg has set up an interim support group to aid victims of sexual harassment and abuse. This follows reports of rape, live sex shows, pornographic publications, verbal abuse and victimisation on the campus.

■ According to the *Guardian Weekly* hundreds of women in Nigeria marched in protest against the ritual killing of at least 17 women in the country.

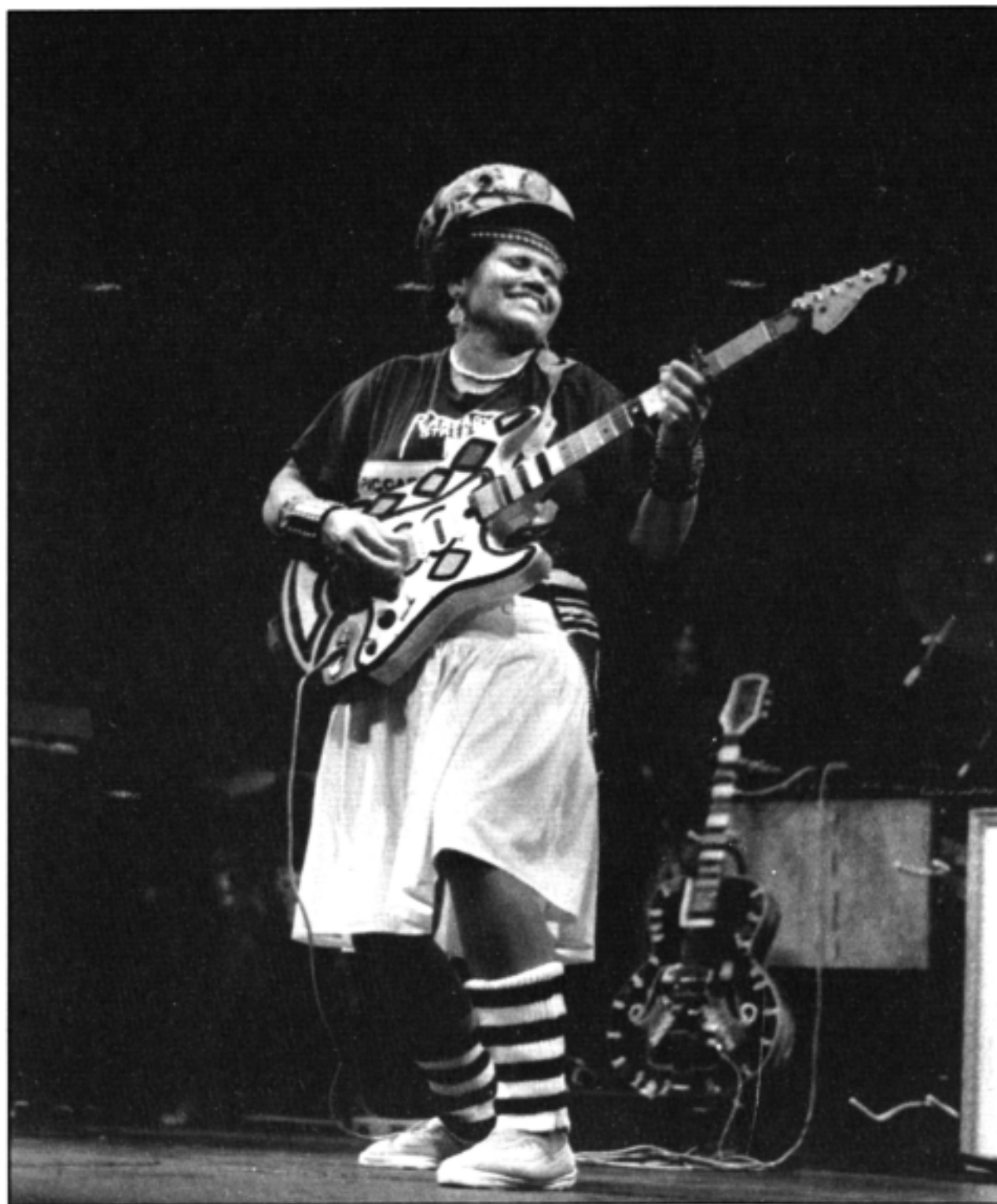
■ Cosatu has appointed Dorothy Mokgalo as its first gender Co-ordinator. One of her main tasks is to make sure resolutions passed by Cosatu on women workers rights are put into practice.

■ The PAC's congress in April accepted that the chairperson of African Women's Organisation (AWO) become the secretary for women's affairs on the PAC's national executive committee. AWO is the women's wing of the PAC. ☉

NOTHEMBI

Rocking back to Ndebele roots

Nothembi Mkhwebane is a traditional Ndebele musician who is fast becoming a local and international star. She performed with her band, The Siblings, in Johannesburg recently. **SPEAK** chatted to her before the show one night.



Photos: Anna Zieminski

Nothembi is covered almost from top to toe in colourful, beaded traditional costume - headgear, anklets, necklaces and skirt. She designed them herself. We are about to discover that Nothembi has many, many talents.

She sings and plays at least four instruments: the guitar, keyboard, the mouth organ and

an Ndebele instrument called 'isikhumero'. She also writes her own music.

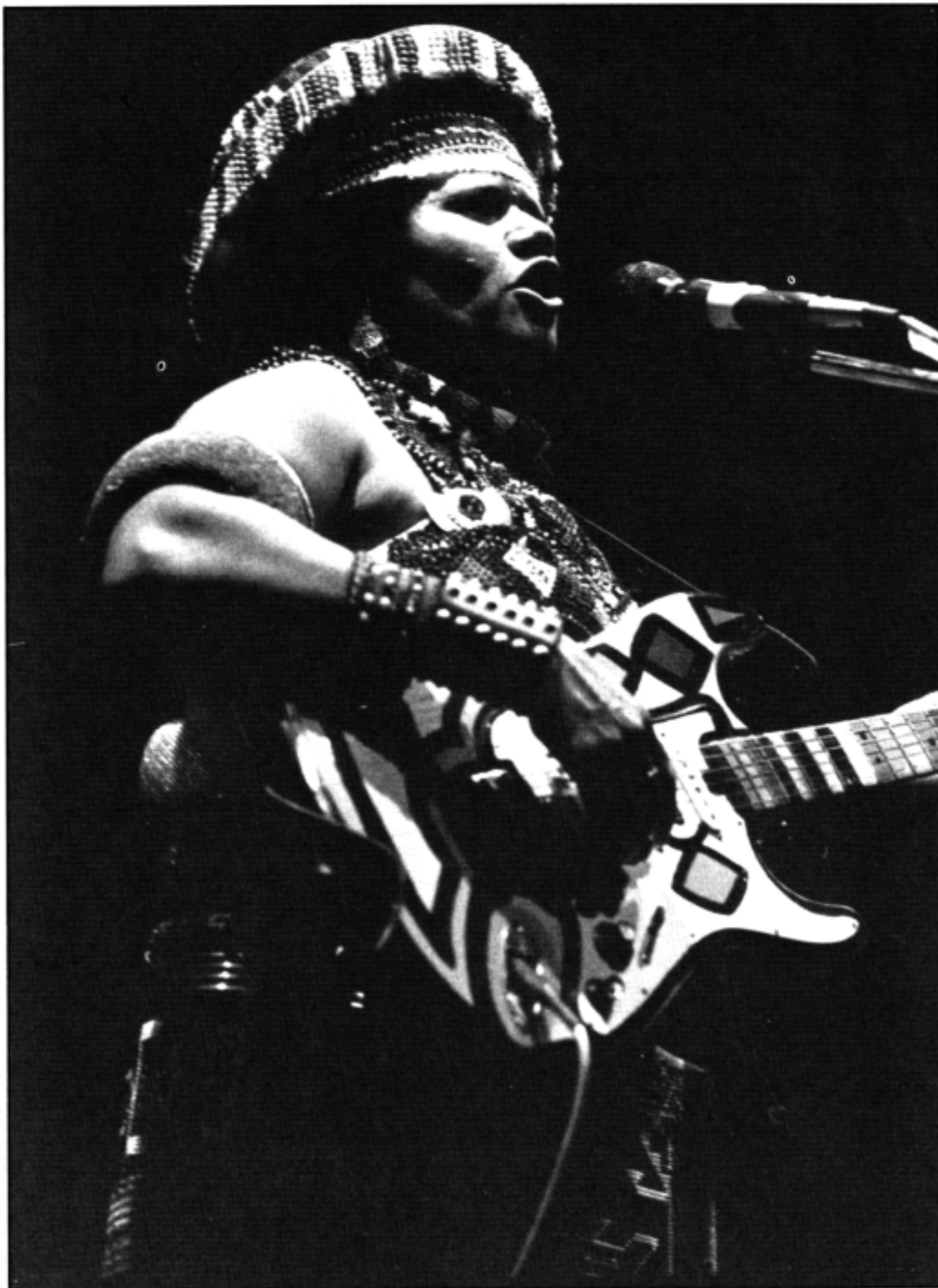
For her, there are few role models to follow in the tough music world.

"Also," says Nothembi "my music is very different and there are no Ndebele stars I can look up to."

Off-stage Nothembi is warm and full of life. She's

one of those people who talk with their hands and laugh with their eyes. She has managed to make a music career that is going from strength to strength.

On stage Nothembi is a burst of colour, smiles and energy. She plucks a painted electric guitar like a rock musician. She keeps in touch with her audience all the time,



Nothembi...domestic worker, single parent, student and star musician.

making sure they are with her on this musical journey to her rural past. The ululating crowd is with her all the way. For many people, Nothembi's jived-up traditional music takes them back to their roots.

Her life is not all glamour and glitz. During daylight hours Nothembi is a domestic worker. She lives in a backyard shack in Mamelodi, outside Pretoria. She is a single parent of a seventeen-year-old son, Mathews and a twelve-year-old

daughter, Sannah. Mathews is in her band.

Nothembi did not go to school when she was a child. She has only recently learnt to read and write. She has had to fight to be accepted in the male-dominated world of music and recording.

Nothembi has recorded three albums so far, among them 'Izintaba Azihlangani' and 'Umhlophekazi'. When we ask

whether she's made a lot of money, Nothembi says: "No, the albums were very successful in their sales, but I didn't get any money from the companies."

"I can see that I'll make money," she continues, "but I'm not chasing money with my music. If there is money to be made, I must get it in the proper way."

When we met Nothembi she was clearly tired. Her triple shift seems to be taking its toll. It's been a hard day's work at the Lubbe's, the Pretoria family for whom she has cooked and cleaned for 10 years.

She describes a day in her life: "I wake up at 5 am, and I start work at 7 am. At 3 pm I leave and come home to have a rest. After taking a nap and cooking supper for my son, I go to night school. I have to sleep in the afternoon so my mind is fresh. On Friday evenings I go to rehearsals with my band and sometimes we perform over weekends."

Nothembi grew up on a farm in Belfast in the Eastern Transvaal, looking after an old white couple. Both her mother and grandmother were powerful singers. Her uncle taught her to play instruments. He taught her to play a guitar he'd made using a five litre can. He's still on the farm, and Nothembi says, "He still can't understand how I managed to do it. He's very proud of me."

Nothembi first came to Pretoria to look for work in the sixties. "But town life was never good enough for me," she says. "I longed for the

farm, the sheep and buck we used to look after... ploughing, riding horses and milking cows.”

She still misses all of this and keeps in touch with the life she loves through writing music. This she does mostly when she cooks. “While I’m preparing a dish, and putting a little bit of this ingredient in and a little bit of that I make up new tunes with words.”

Through her songs, Nothembi tries to keep people in touch with their tradition and culture. She believes that connection has been lost in some parts because of the American influence on music. She promises her music will not change.

Nothembi won the Woza Africa Foundation award when she toured America and London with Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Mahlatini and the Mahotella Queens in the 1980’s.

Before she was ‘spotted’ by the television programme Lapologa, she was singing at local ceremonies and community venues.

Ten years ago, Nothembi’s music was almost unknown in South Africa. She became famous overseas first.

“At that time (in the 1980’s) my level of music was looked down on, even by myself,” she says. But her confidence has grown as the music becomes ‘acceptable’.

In fact, she says, “The response to my music came too fast for me to build the money to buy instruments. I had to do it very slowly.”

Learning to read and write has made it easier to deal with greedy businessmen and promoters.

“At least now I can read the contracts,” she says. “As a woman it’s a bit difficult

communicating with people of the opposite sex when you’re doing things as an independent person. I also had to teach them an appreciation of Ndebele cultural norms and that wasn’t so easy.

“To be a successful female singer you need to be more than just dedicated to your band. You have to respect yourself as a woman and be exemplary.” She wishes there were more women musicians to support her. To young girls with good voices Nothembi says:

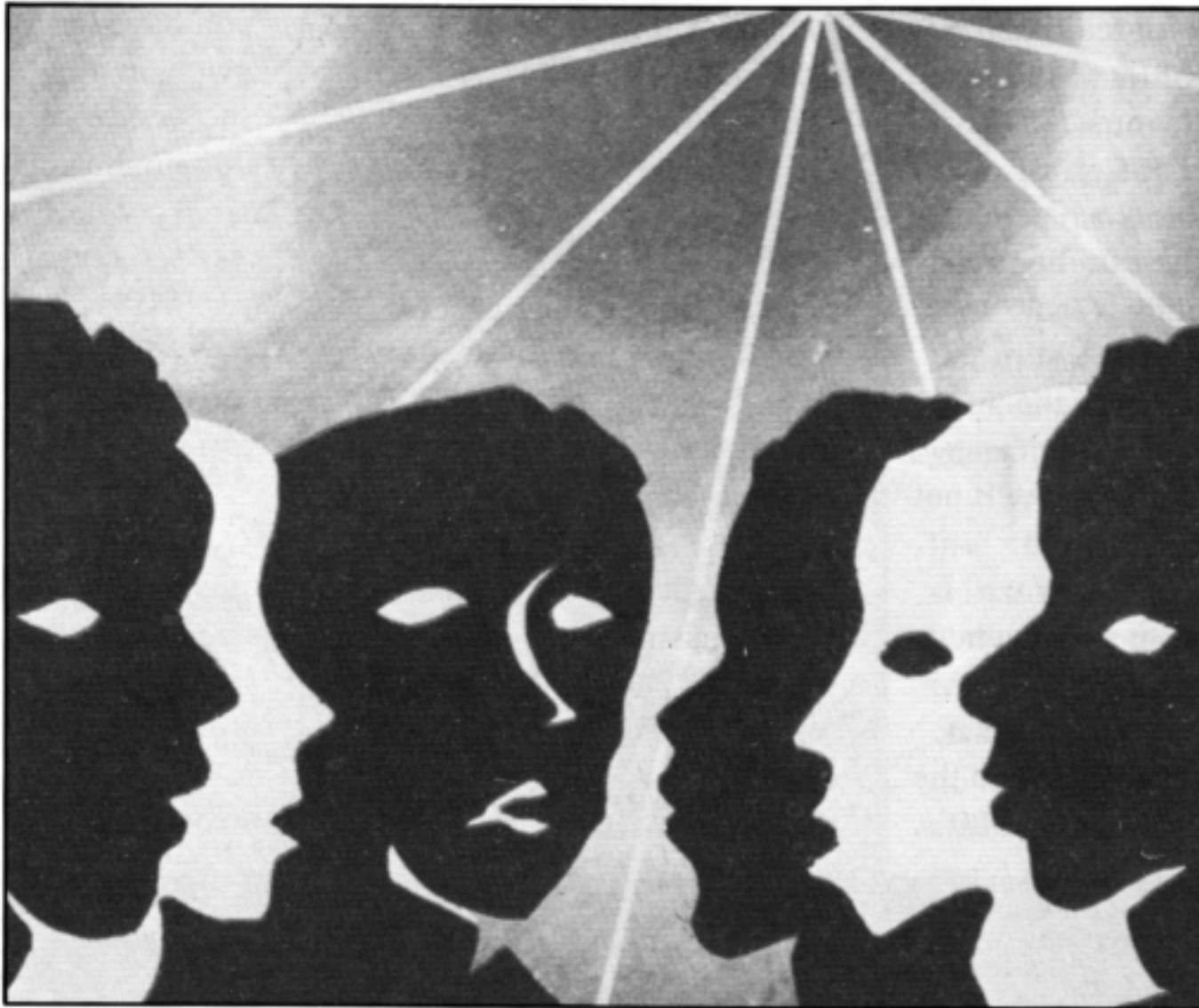
“Be determined, stay on your path and don’t lose your individuality and cultural norms.”

In the future, she would like to start a school and teach others to play the guitar. She is also going to publish a book about her life. This should provide inspiration to those of us who have yet to make our dreams come true. ★



Nothembi with members of her band, The Siblings.

WOMEN SHAKE UP CODESA



Hundreds of people sent letters of complaint to Codesa about it. Lawyers for Human Rights published an advert in newspapers calling for Codesa to do something about it. The ANC Women's League drew up a long report on how to change the situation... What was all this about? It was about the concern and anger people and organisations felt over the lack of women involved in negotiations at Codesa. They demanded that something be done.

Finally, the battle has been won. Almost five months after it was agreed that the Management Committee of Codesa should find ways to deal with the "women's issue," a committee has been set up to make sure Codesa recommendations are non-sexist. The committee is called the Gender Advisory Committee (GAC). Each of the 19 parties attending Codesa have been asked to send a representative to sit on this committee. The GAC will report-back to the Management Committee -

which is the top structure of Codesa. It will look at all the resolutions coming from Codesa to check they are non-sexist. The committee will also advise the different working groups of Codesa on problems women face that they should investigate. The ANC Women's League said in its report that Codesa must form such a committee to make sure women can act "on an equal footing with men". Codesa, the League said, must, for example, not ignore the fact

that many women cannot choose for themselves which political party to vote for.

SPEAK spoke to the chairperson of the GAC, Mavivi Manzini from the ANC, after the first meeting of the committee.

“We have a lot of work to do before the next big meeting of Codesa in the middle of May,” she said. “All the representatives on the committee have a common understanding of what we have to do, so this makes it easier. Women in the different



Mavivi Manzini - Chairperson of Codesa Gender Advisory Committee.

Photo by Karen Hurt, SPEAK

political parties had all already agreed there was a problem with the lack of participation of women in Codesa and we had all complained about this to the Management Committee.

“Our first meeting was on Founders’ Day - April 6. As we said in our statement after this meeting, the sitting of this committee has given a new meaning to this day. It was the founding day for the new South Africa.” ●

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Send us R5.00 and get Vukani Makhosikazi, a 266-page book that tells stories of South African women and their struggles. Or, become a new subscriber and get the book free!



Send R5.00 with your name and address to: SPEAK, PO Box 261363, Excom 2023, South Africa. This offer is only for people living in Southern Africa.

Breaking down the borders

Women in Mozambique

In South Africa, women are organising to make sure their demands are heard in talks about a new society. Women in Mozambique have already been through this process. What lessons can South African women learn from their experiences? SPEAK asked Bobby Rodwell to talk to the Organisation of Mozambican Women (the OMM) in Maputo.

When SPEAK went to the offices of the Organisation of Mozambican Women - the OMM - we were greeted warmly by the general secretary, Theresa Ramoa Themba.

SPEAK: Can you tell us how the OMM was formed?

Theresa: The OMM was launched during the struggle for independence from Portuguese rule in Mozambique. Frelimo believed women's liberation was an important part of the struggle. Many women were active in the struggle. In 1972, women in the liberation movement asked to build a women's wing in Frelimo. The OMM was launched a year later in 1973.

SPEAK: Did Frelimo take notice of women's demands when they came to power in 1975?

Theresa: Women were not ignored when the new constitution was drawn up. The constitutional clause on women's status is very good. It says women are equal to men at every level of society. That was a major victory won by the women of Mozambique.

SPEAK: It is very important women's rights are part of the law of any country, but does the law automatically change women's lives?

Theresa (smiling sadly): While women in Mozambique have made some gains, they have been small. We still live in a male dominated society.

An important lesson we have learnt is that good ideas on paper do not carry any guarantee that things will really change. While Mozambique does have a good constitution on women's rights, women still have a long struggle ahead. As we say "A Luta Continua".

SPEAK: In 1990 the OMM broke away from Frelimo to form an independent women's organisation. Why?

Theresa: Times have changed. In the past it was right

to be the women's wing of Frelimo. Today, with the move towards multi-party democracy in our country, it is time for all the women in Mozambique to come together in one non-aligned organization which is not linked to a political party. Women must work together, no matter what political party they support. In this way we can strengthen ourselves.

SPEAK: Has it been difficult to be truly independent of Frelimo? Many of the top members of OMM are still Frelimo members.

Theresa: That is not a problem. The OMM has committed itself to independence from political parties. There are no longer any party politics within the OMM.

SPEAK: Who funds the OMM?

Theresa: Frelimo still funds the OMM.

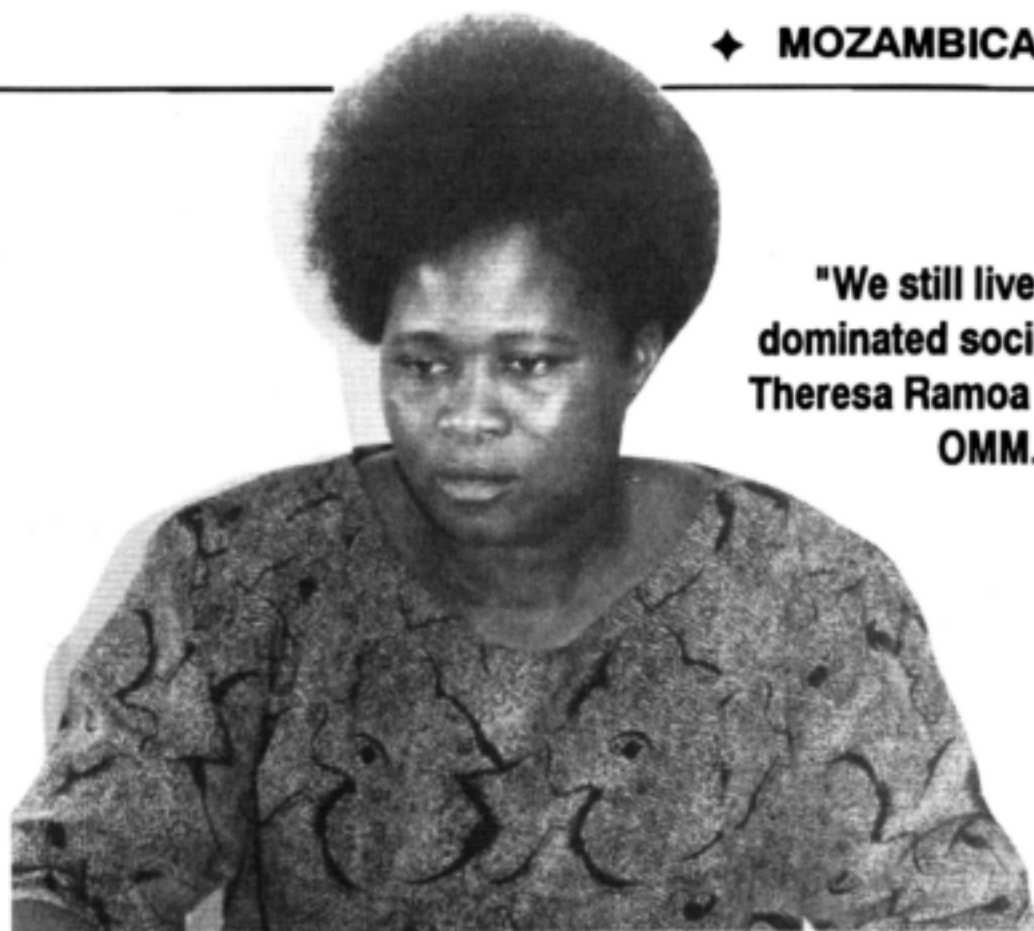


Photo by:
Bobby Rodwell

"We still live in a male-dominated society," says Theresa Ramoa Themba of OMM.

SPEAK: Isn't that a problem? Doesn't it mean Frelimo still has a hold on the OMM?

Theresa: Frelimo supports the OMM's new direction, so there is no interference. In a country as poor as Mozambique it is difficult to make changes overnight. The OMM is moving towards self-sufficiency so hopefully one day the women of Mozambique will support

their own organisation.

SPEAK: What are the advantages of being a national women's organisation which is not linked to a political party?

Theresa: It means the women's movement focuses on women's issues and not on party politics. In the past the women's movement sometimes focused on "the struggle" rather than the "women's struggle".

Xiconhoca

Facing up to problems:

Xiconhoca is a character who appears on posters throughout Mozambique. His behaviour teaches people about many problems they face in building a new society. Here, Xiconhoca cannot accept equality with women. He says: "I've heard there's some movement for women's liberation. Well I'm telling you that I'll have none of that in my house. You're my wives, and your job is to work for me, and produce children. You hear?"



Since we've become independent our membership has also broadened. Groups like the business women's group are now members.

SPEAK: Does this move mean you are not political anymore?

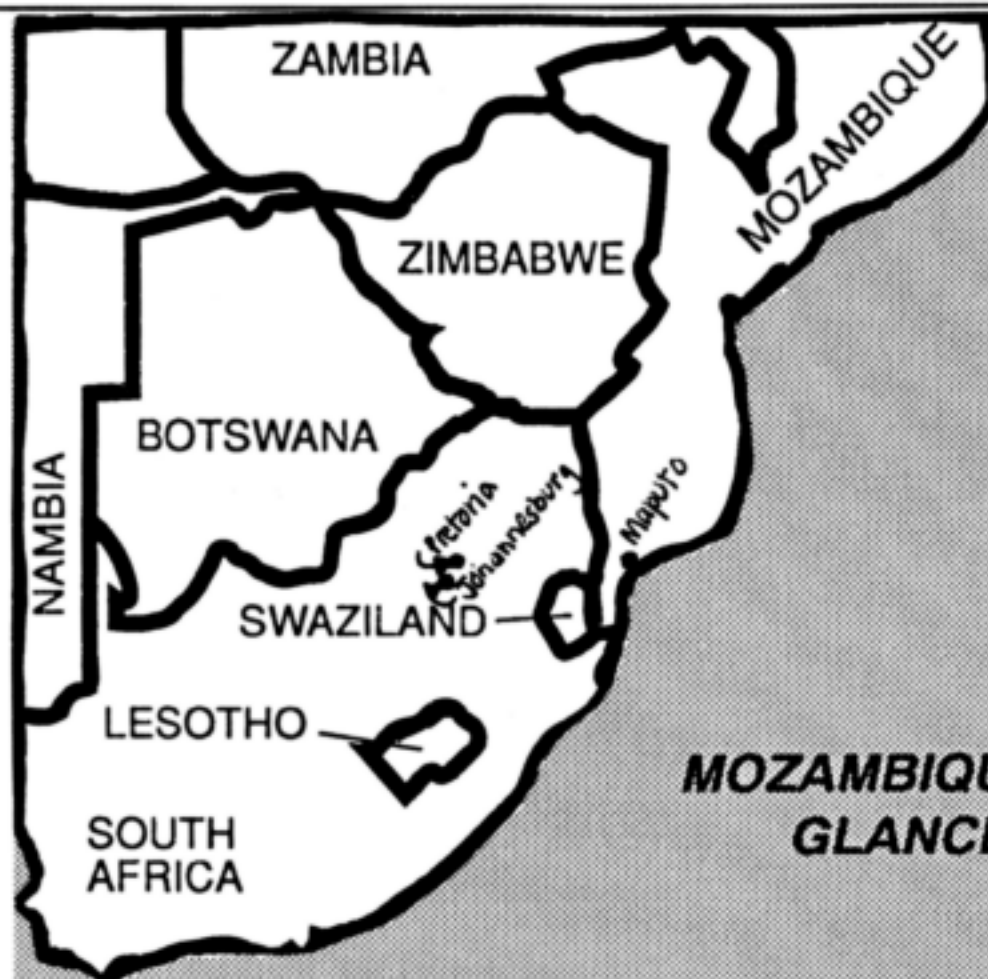
Theresa: Not at all. The position of women must always be looked at within the broader political situation. OMM will certainly always be political. Much of our work is around political education of members.

SPEAK: The civil war in Mozambique must have affected your work.

Theresa: Yes, it has. As always, women have borne the brunt of the civil war that has destroyed so much of our country. But as women we struggle on!

SPEAK: Do you have any message for the women of South Africa?

Theresa: Let us break down the borders that separate us. There is much we can learn from each other's successes and failures. Let all the women of Southern Africa work together as they truly are - ONE! ☉



MOZAMBIQUE AT A GLANCE

Mozambique is one of South Africa's neighbours. From this map you can see how close the capital of Mozambique, Maputo, is to Pretoria, the capital city of South Africa.

The South African government has tried to destroy this country by supporting a war against the people of Mozambique. The South African government has armed, trained and supported the main agent of this war - the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR).

Almost one million people have been killed in the Mozambican civil war, millions more have had to flee their homes and the MNR has destroyed hospitals, schools and clinics.

At the moment the Mozambican government is holding talks with the MNR to try to finally stop this war.

SOME FACTS

Ruling party: Frelimo (Mozambique Liberation Front)
Official language: Portuguese
Date of Independence: 26 July 1975

WOMEN

In 1966, Frelimo made a statement on women saying the liberation of women was a "fundamental necessity".

In 1973, Frelimo women launched the Organisation of Mozambican Women (the OMM).

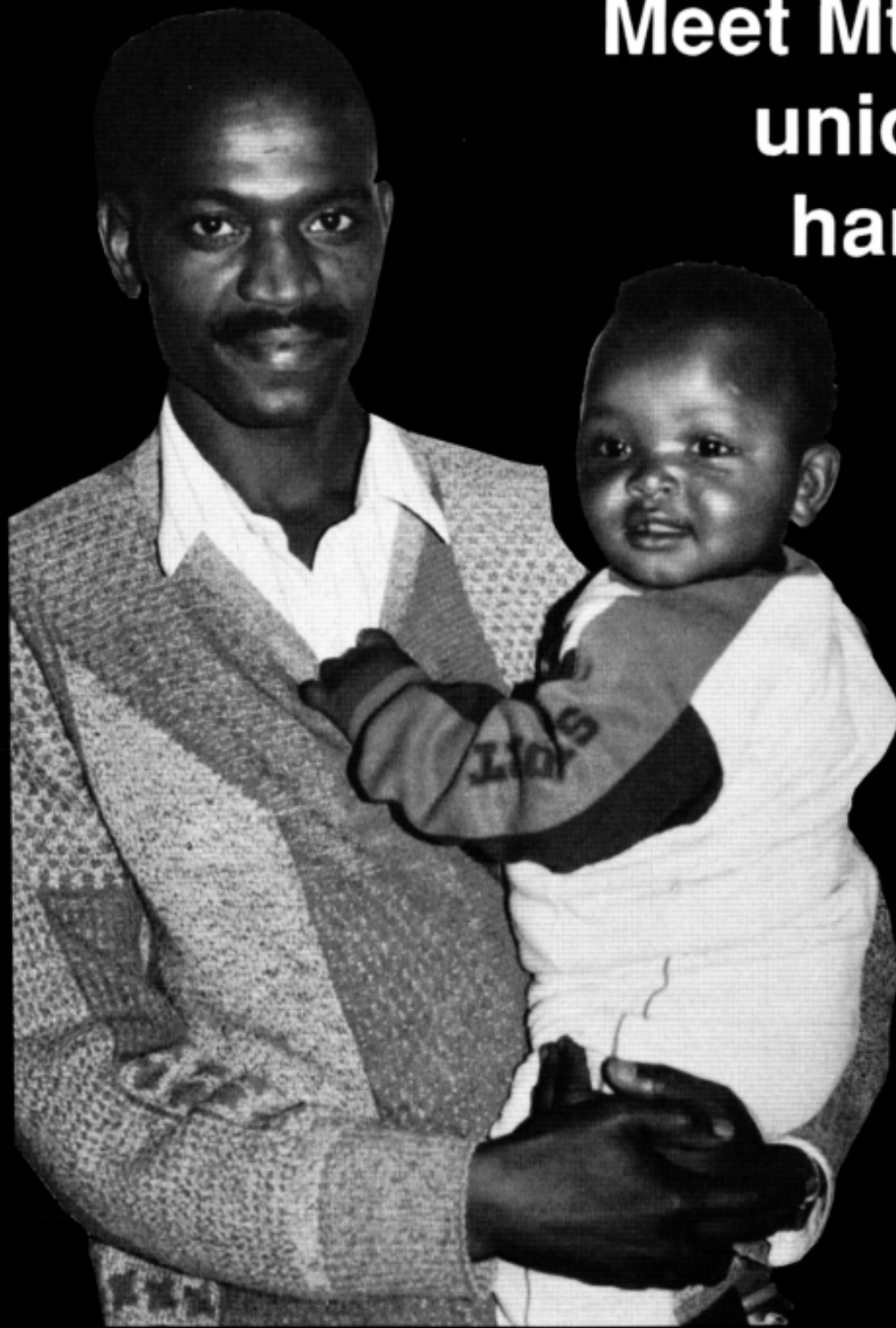
In 1975, the new constitution of Mozambique called for equal treatment of women in all aspects of life.

In 1980, Mozambique had the highest number of women in political positions in the whole of Africa.

In 1990, the OMM decided to separate from Frelimo and become an independent organisation.

"Women are the most oppressed and exploited in our society. Without the liberation of women, our revolution can never go forward."

Samora Machel, former president of Mozambique. ☉



Meet Mtutuzeli Tom - union leader and hands-on father

The acting president of the National Union of Metal workers of South Africa (NUMSA) knows as much about nappies as he does about negotiations. When his wife went away to study, Mtutuzeli Tom took over the child-care and the housework. Eric Naki went to speak to him at his East London home about being a hands-on father.

NUMSA acting president Mtutuzeli Tom doesn't mind taking orders from his wife. He just gets on and does the housework she has asked him to do. And when his wife Catherine isn't there, Mtura, as Tom is called, says he is quite happy to take over running the home - including caring for their baby son.

This isn't an empty statement. He has acted on his words. Mtura and Catherine married two years ago. They are the proud parents of a one-year-old baby boy, Mkonto (Wesizwe). Soon after the child was born Catherine left home to study for her matric in Lesotho. She left her husband in charge of Mkonto and all the household chores.

Mtura agreed to take the full weight of home responsibilities on his shoulders while she was away. This was not an easy

NAPPIES AND NEGOTIATIONS

task. He works full-time for Mercedes Benz of South Africa (MBSA) in East London, where he is a shop-steward. He is also the branch treasurer of the Mdantsane Residents Association.

Mtura adapted to his role in the home very easily. He has very different views on child-care to many men of his generation. He definitely doesn't see child-minding and house work as 'women's' work.

"When the boy was born, I took two days paternity leave from work," he said. He would have taken more leave but couldn't because of an in-house agreement between Numsa and management.

"I cooked fresh porridge for Catherine in the morning and brought her whatever she wanted for herself and the little Mkonto. "When she left for Lesotho, I became like the mother of the child. There is nobody else to assist me because my mother is semi-paralysed." Mtura is now skilled at changing nappies, soothing a crying baby and feeding a child. He boasts he is better than most people at doing the job. He has been lucky with day-care for his son. His neighbours look after Mkonto while he is at work during the day, and when he has to attend union meetings.

But he says being a trade unionist, community leader and a baby-carer at the same time can be tiring. He has sometimes had to miss meetings - and some people thought he was deliberately avoiding doing organisational work. They did

not know that as a father, Mtura is as dedicated to his child as to the struggle. At the moment, things are easier for Mtura as Catherine is back at home waiting for her school results. She cares for the child most of the time, so her husband has the time to attend to union matters. But this doesn't mean Mtura has given up doing housework and washing dishes and clothes. "Now I do all of this under her instructions.

"This is a different situation here where I get orders from her. I obey her commands



"I feel disturbed by what I see in the labour field where women earn less than men even if they do the same job".

because the housework is also my responsibility. You see, I have to share work with her," he said.

Mtura is prepared to take on the responsibility of running the household by himself again so his wife can study further. He is determined to send Catherine on to university if she passes her matric.

"I must give her the kind of education she deserves. I won't

feel inferior to her even if she is more educated than I am. That is what I want because my parents could not do it for me". His parents could not afford to send him to university so he left school after passing matric. He joined MBSA in 1982 and a year later was elected shop-steward.

Last year he was elected acting president of Numsa when the union's leader, Max Xulu, was suspended by the union. He will hold the position until the next national Congress in 1993.

Mtura has strong views on the women's struggle. He says the struggle for women's rights should be intensified everywhere - both at home and in organisations.

"We should take women's rights seriously, as women are no longer the subjects of men. "I feel disturbed by what I see in the labour field where women earn less than men even if they do the same job.

"People should be paid according to their work and not according to sex."

He said he would not object to a woman state president in South Africa as long as she made decisions in a democratic way. Women should fight their way to the top and not expect men to lift them up.

When SPEAK visited him at his home in Mdantsane, Mtura was lifting his bouncy and fat son, who now weights 13,5 kilograms. "This boy is developing a rash and I have to take him to the clinic," he said before we left, pointing to Mkonto's little round face. ☛

Elnews



Zodwa Mahlangu and her family. Each woman shares her tiny space with at least three others.

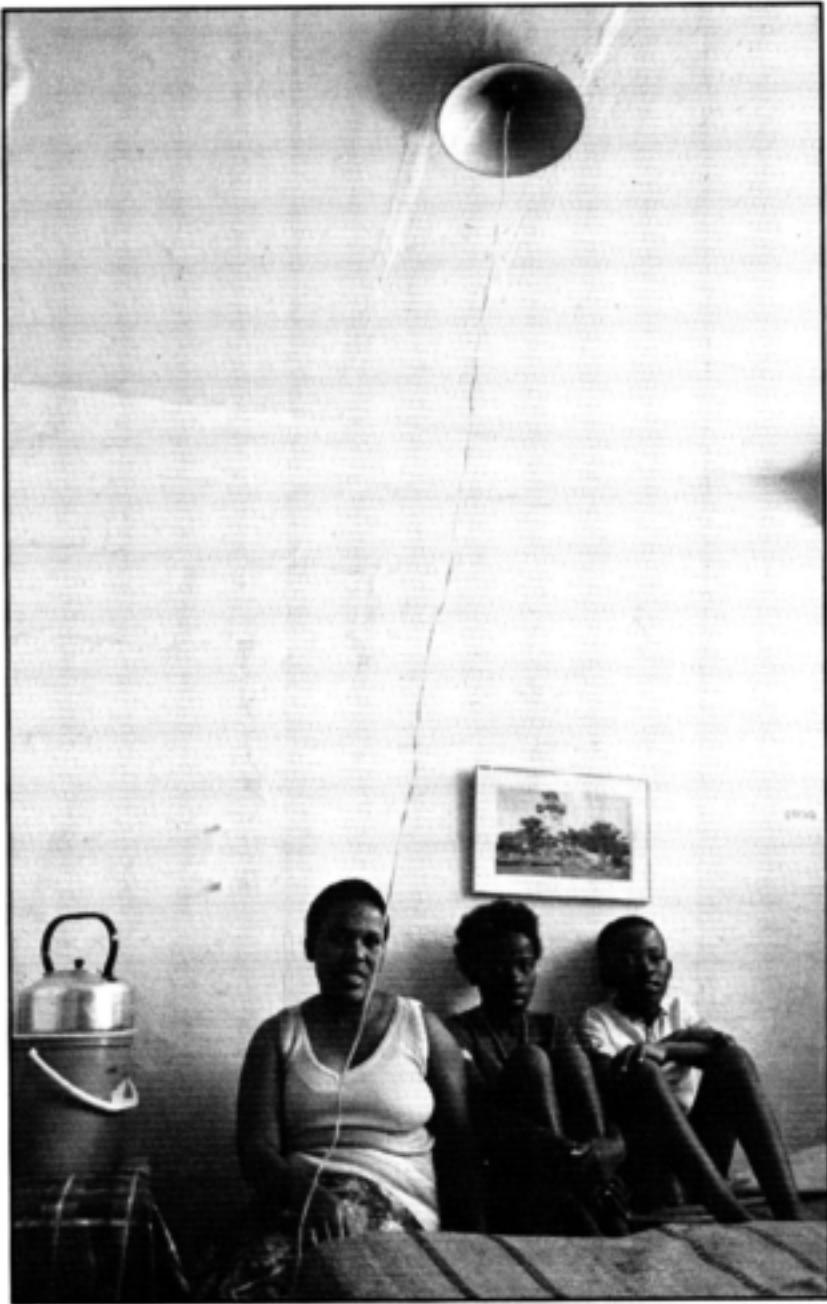
LIFE IN A HOSTEL

These photographs of Helen Joseph Women's Hostel were taken by Anna Zieminski during 1990 and 1991. She began taking photographs of life in the 'Helen Joseph' hostel because "men's hostels were suddenly part of the violence in the country. Then I heard of a women's hostel in Alexandra which I had not known existed. I was curious. I wondered who stayed there and why they were there. As a woman photographer I was especially interested in the lives of other women. So I went along to find out."

Nearly 3 000 women from all over South Africa live in 'Helen Joseph' hostel. Some of them are office-workers and teachers. Others are dress-makers, hawkers, hairdressers. Very few of the women live in the hostel out of choice. There is nowhere else for them to live. ☛



In the kitchen.



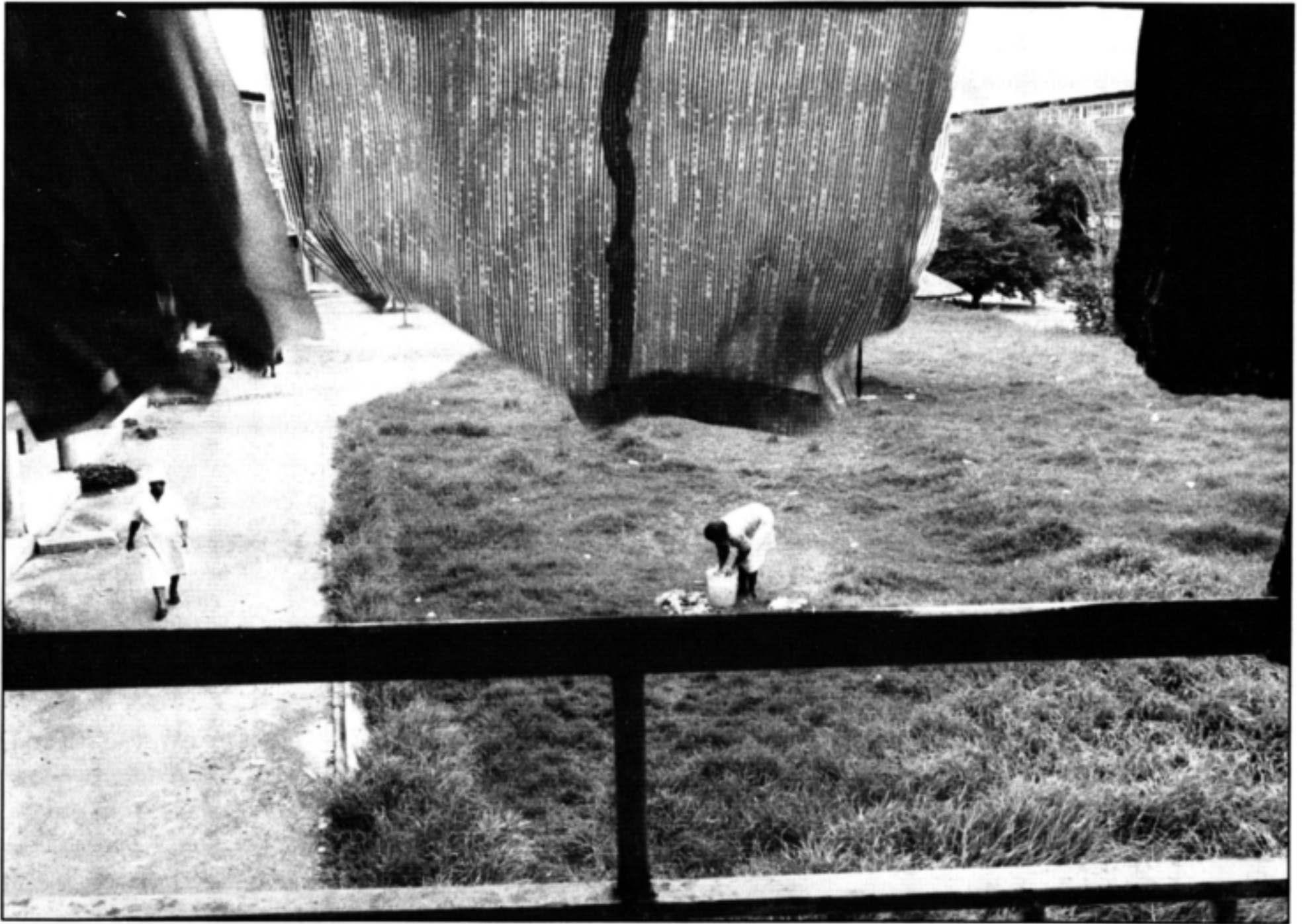
There are no electric plugs in the rooms. Women complain the buildings are not looked after and there are no recreation facilities. Here Barbara Ponde poses with her twins.



Women say they want to live as families or as single people with privacy. They would like to change the hostel life they are, at present, forced to live.



Sharing some time together.



Life at the hostel goes on. It is not a good life, say many of the women who live there.



The laundry room with poor facilities where residents do their ironing.

Are daughters discriminated against? Hanifa Dhansay put this question to young people in Johannesburg

BEING PREPARED TODAY FOR TOMORROW

Parents don't treat boys and girls the same," said 21-year-old **Dikeledi Hlatshwayo**. "Many parents say this is because of tradition. They say boys are more powerful than girls.

"My parents expect me to be more disciplined than my brother. I must tell them where I am going. They don't let me go out late at night, but my brother can do what he wants. When I ask them why, they say it's because it's not safe for me. They say boys know how to defend themselves.

"My brother doesn't do anything at home. I do all the cleaning, cooking and washing. Boys like to say housework is 'woman's work'. I don't think this is fair. It's an excuse to be lazy. I like to do gardening. I don't call it 'man's work'."

Solly Nkosi who is 19 years old does housework at home but said things are not equal between girls and boys.

"Sometimes I think parents treat their daughters better than they treat their sons," said Solly. "If a boy wants money, parents tell him to go and find money himself. So boys end up gambling on the streets. But parents give girls money for clothes and other things.

"I have no sisters. At home I do the cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing. Some of my friends laugh at me when I say I have to go home to clean the house. They say it is 'girls' work'. But I don't see it as 'girls' work'. Cleaning is important. And you must know how to cook, whether you are a girl or a boy. This belief that housework is 'girls work' is



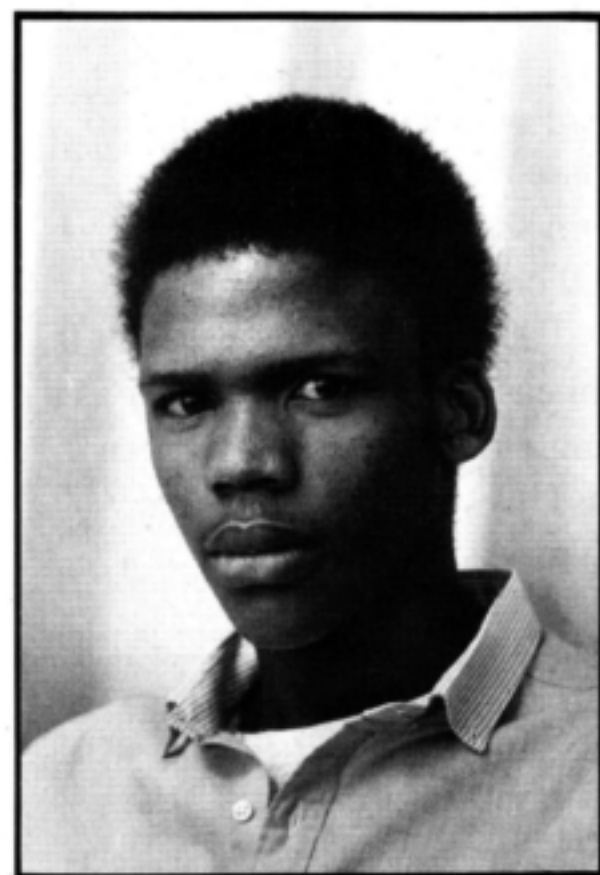
Lizelle Reneke: "Parents must think carefully of how they bring up their children."

bad. It affects the way boys and girls grow up. Parents must treat boys and girls the same. They must teach boys to do things in the house too. Otherwise boys will carry on thinking they are better than girls. I regard girls as my equal. Just as I have intelligence, they also have intelligence."

Twenty-three-year-old **Marcelle Chuene** felt girls get a raw deal.

"My sisters are always occupied in the house," he said, "you'll find them working from the time they get home from school. While they are working you'll find the boys out in the streets.

"I think parents should treat their children equally. Maybe then girls will have a chance to develop their talents, like boys do. Most boys play sport like cricket or soccer. But how many girls get a chance to play sport?"



Solly Nkosi: "Sometimes I think parents treat their daughters better than they treat their sons."

"Boys have more freedom," said 18-year-old **Lizelle Reneke**. "Boys can go out more often and don't have to say where they are going. And they can bring girlfriends home. Then there's the division between 'boys' work' and 'girls' work'. Boys don't have to wash dishes or cook. This is bad. Boys grow up not knowing how to cook or look after themselves. Parents must think carefully of how they bring up their children.

"In the new society men and women both have a role to play in the workplace. We can't go on teaching children that a woman's place is in the house. If parents treat their children the same, boys and girls will grow up to be equal."

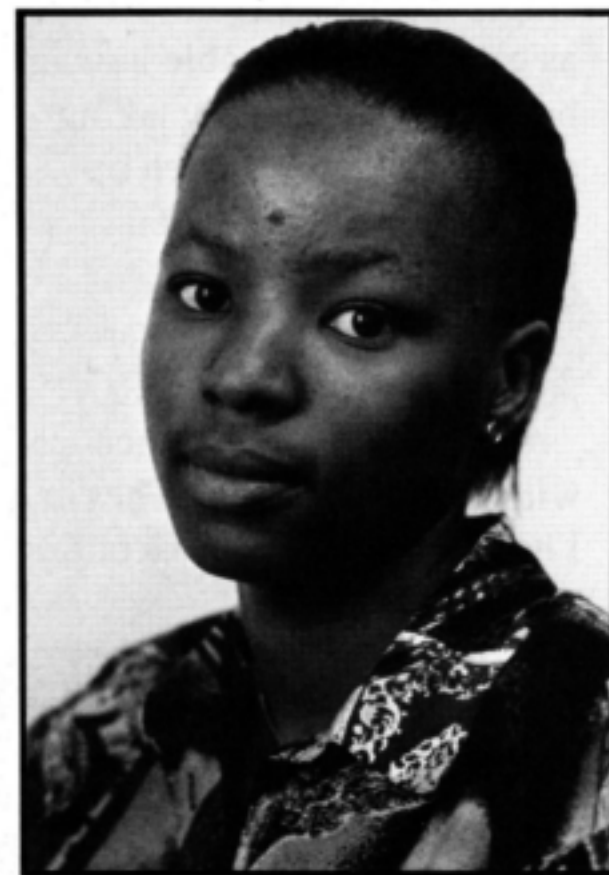
Zipora Seremane, 21-year-old, said parents are usually very strict with girls.

"They don't let girls go out,"



Dikeledi Hlatshwayo: "My parents expect me to be more disciplined than my brother."

she said. "They say girls will get pregnant if they go out with boys. But parents don't worry much about their boys. Parents say boys can look after themselves. This makes boys believe they are big and strong. This affects girls badly. Girls grow up to believe they need men to protect them. They don't develop a sense of independence. Parents don't encourage girls to believe in themselves. When girls are young they are dependent on their parents. When they get married they depend on their husbands. If parents treated girls and boys the same, this could be changed. But it's not easy for parents to change. Most parents say it is cultural for girls to do the housework. But girls are the ones who suffer. And can a culture be good when it makes people suffer?" ●



Zipora Seremane: "Can culture be good when it makes people suffer?"

Photos by Anna Ziemiński

THE CUTTING EDGE

As a single, independent person I have been harassed by my family, my neighbours and society in general.

Single people - especially single women - are not treated as capable, honourable human beings. It is definitely taking people too long to catch up with the singles and their lifestyles.

My own experiences are proof of this.

My first bad experience was with my own family. They felt I had disgraced them by falling

More and more people are choosing not to get married these days. This isn't always an easy choice. Mahadi Miya writes that society still looks down on singles

pregnant out of marriage. They were even more angry when I refused to marry the father of my child. I was made to feel stupid and unreasonable. Nobody cared

to find out my reasons for refusing marriage. I was just told it was not decent to be an unmarried parent.

This just made me more determined to do what I knew was right for me and my daughter. I could not marry a man who was not prepared to share the simple things like babysitting, nappy changing and child-care expenses.

Talking about expenses, it is not easy to cope financially as a single mother. Now and then I find myself spending money unnecessarily, for a toy or a

**A true story about surviving
as a single mother**

sweet-looking outfit. As my daughter has got older and started to talk, it has become more difficult. She demands this and that because she sees it on other kids. I don't want to feel like she is worse off because of my decision to stay single. It is difficult to refuse her, but it digs a hole in one's pocket.

Then, a year ago, I had to face the world. I decided to buy myself a house and move out of my mother's home. I took my daughter with me.

My family had by now learnt they couldn't give me orders.

It wasn't easy to make the move. I was lucky my friends supported me. Since deciding to move I have had to face all kinds of male harassment. It has been far worse than ever before.

Before moving, there was a lot of paper work to be taken care of. Whenever I got to any office where I was served by a man, they never failed to tell me about their wishes to "get to know me better" as soon as they learnt I am single. I felt as if my single status was a threat to these men. They made me think they had no respect for single women. The word "Mrs" before one's name is obviously still some barrier against male harassment. The word "Miss" makes them think one is available.

After the move I had to face my new neighbours. As soon as they noticed I was all by myself, without a man or a "Mrs" before my name, I started feeling they thought I

was an enemy. They seemed to feel they couldn't trust me.

In the beginning there was a sudden interest from the men. They started to visit me without their wives. I soon managed to make it clear to them I was not stranded. I had chosen to be single.

The women ignored me. They would not ask me to join in any of the neighbourhood activities like planning for block funerals. I did not let it bother me. I kept to myself and ignored them. Then, after a few weeks in my new house, I woke up one morning to find my backyard

fence standing open. Somebody had cut it. I could see the cut was done very neatly and probably by an adult, but I did not know who could have done such a thing because I did not see anyone doing it.

I decided to get the fence fixed and not worry about it.

Alas! Two weeks later it was cut again, at the same spot as the first time. This time I decided to leave it standing open. I wanted to show them I didn't care.

All I know is that my backyard fence would still be whole if I had a pair of trousers as a window dressing. ☆



Happy being single ... Mahadi Miya with her daughter, Kutloano.

Photo by:
S'khalo Miya

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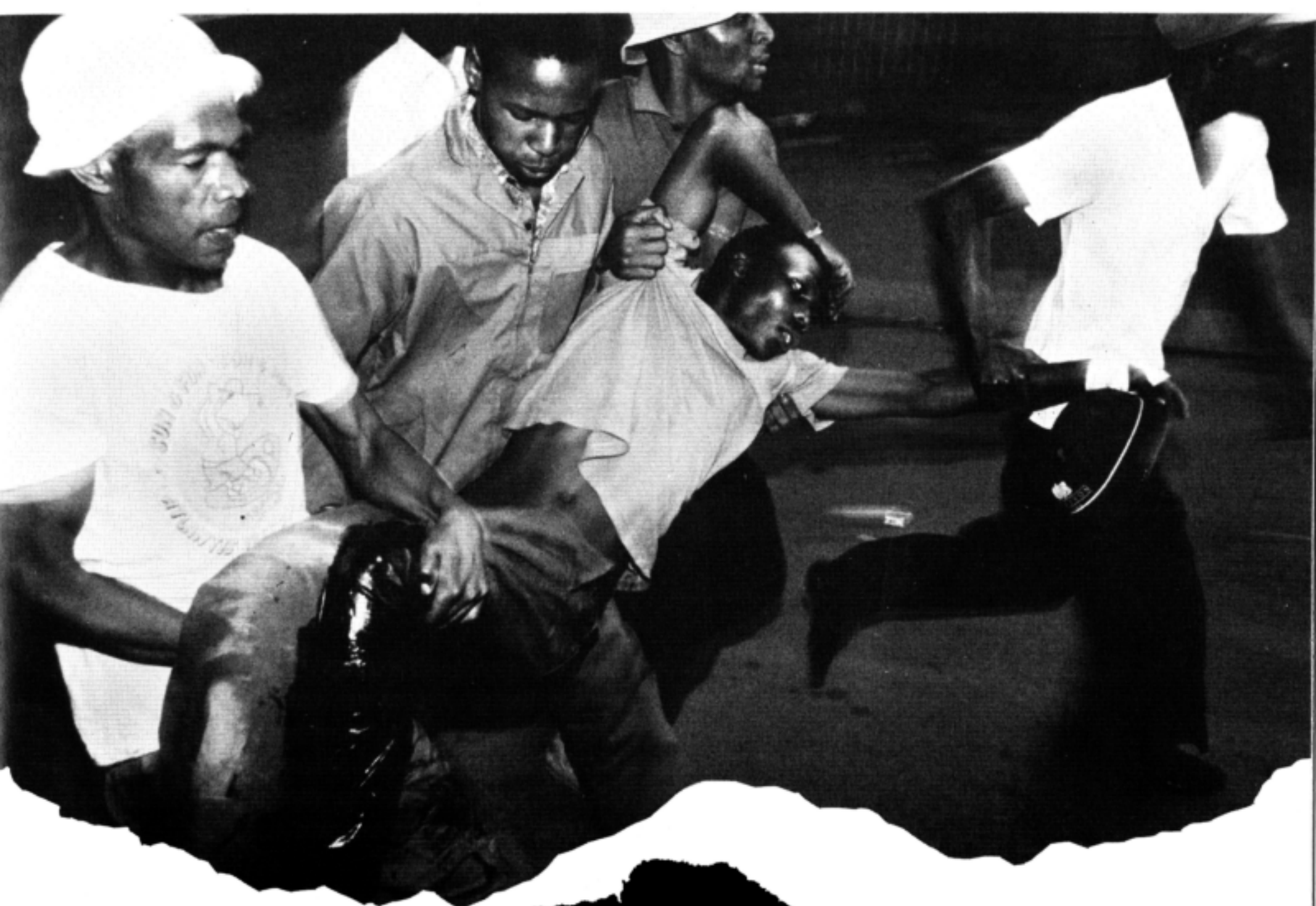
Hand over that child support, dad

At last a new law has been passed making it easier for mothers to get child support from the fathers of their children.

Here are some of the changes to the maintenance law:

- Women can now claim for the costs of pregnancy and child-birth. The father can also be asked to back-pay maintenance from the day the child was born.
- Mothers will no longer have to wait for hours every month in queues outside government departments for their money. The law says maintenance payments must now be paid into the woman's bank account or given to her directly.
- The new law says it's up to the father to prove he has paid maintenance. Before, the mother had to prove he had not paid.
- The father could now be sent to jail if he misses payments. The new law says the court has the right to take away all his belongings to make up the payment. His name can also be sent by the court to the credit bureau. The credit bureau keeps lists of people who have not paid their debts. The people whose names are on this list can't get things on credit. For example, they can't buy something hire purchase. If he keeps on not paying maintenance, the court can sentence him to up to six months in jail.
- One of the biggest problems with the old law was that fathers who did not pay would just disappear. Now, the magistrate's court will be able to order people, like his friends, employers or family, to tell the court where the father is.

Mothers still have to take the father of their child to court so the magistrate can order him to pay a certain amount of maintenance each month. Mothers who want to do this should go to a maintenance officer at their local magistrate's court. ☺



“We are running for our lives”

Women in Alex talk about the violence

“Alex is Burning” screamed South Africa newspaper headlines earlier this year. But what are the stories behind the headlines? Bobby Rodwell asked four women from Alexandra.

Over 70 people killed in Alexandra since the war broke out in early March this year.

Four hundred and seventy one residents injured.

About two thousand people forced from their homes.

These figures from the Human Rights Commission and the Alex Peace Group tell only some of the horror and agony of the latest violence in Alexandra township. SPEAK asked four women from Alex to tell us their experiences. All the women we talked to have been forced to flee from their homes to shelters for displaced people or to the homes of friends and relatives. Their stories are similar to those of thousands of other South Africans who have been forced by political violence to become refugees in their own country. All four of these women were too scared to have their real names published.

Zodwa had been staying in one of the shelters for about a week when we talked to her. She told us about the night she fled from her home.

"There was shooting in our street. Suddenly a bullet was shot through the door of our home. We thought we were going to die. I grabbed my one-year-old child and ran out into the darkness. I took nothing with me. There was no time. All I took was the clothing I was wearing.



Photo by Andrew Shabangu, Alex Art Centre

Alex women try to cope with life in a shelter.

"My husband was at work when we fled from our home. When he got back to Alexandra he could not enter Beirut. We only found each other five days later. He did not know whether I was dead or alive.

"It feels as though this will never end. Last year when Inkatha attacked the residents, I was pregnant. This year I was forced to run through the streets with my baby in my arms.

"We believe it is just luck we are still alive. If it were not for the young boys in our street who formed a street committee to protect us, we would have long been dead. They saved our lives many times, those young boys.

"Something must be done about Inkatha. It is trying to take over

Alexandra. We all lived happily together before they moved in here. This has got nothing to do with different tribes not being able to live together. I have always been very happy in Alexandra and I am a Zulu. We have always lived happily together, until Inkatha came."

Maria spoke about her fears of how this violence will affect the children of the township.

"I worry so much about the children. My child is only ten-years-old, but she is as nervous as a small kitten. If she hears shouting or chanting she runs and hides. She has started getting bad headaches. The violence has had such a

bad effect on our children.

"I live in Third Avenue - part of the area Inkatha now controls. This violence has been going on for a year. Every time Inkatha has a rally, there has been violence. The members also insult us women because we do not wear traditional clothing.

"Since last year, we have had this sense of waiting. We hear gunshots and wonder if we will be next.

"This time we **were** next. That was why we had to run. My family left our home with nothing. All my possessions are in my home. I

know my home has been broken into. It is too dangerous to go back to see what I have left.

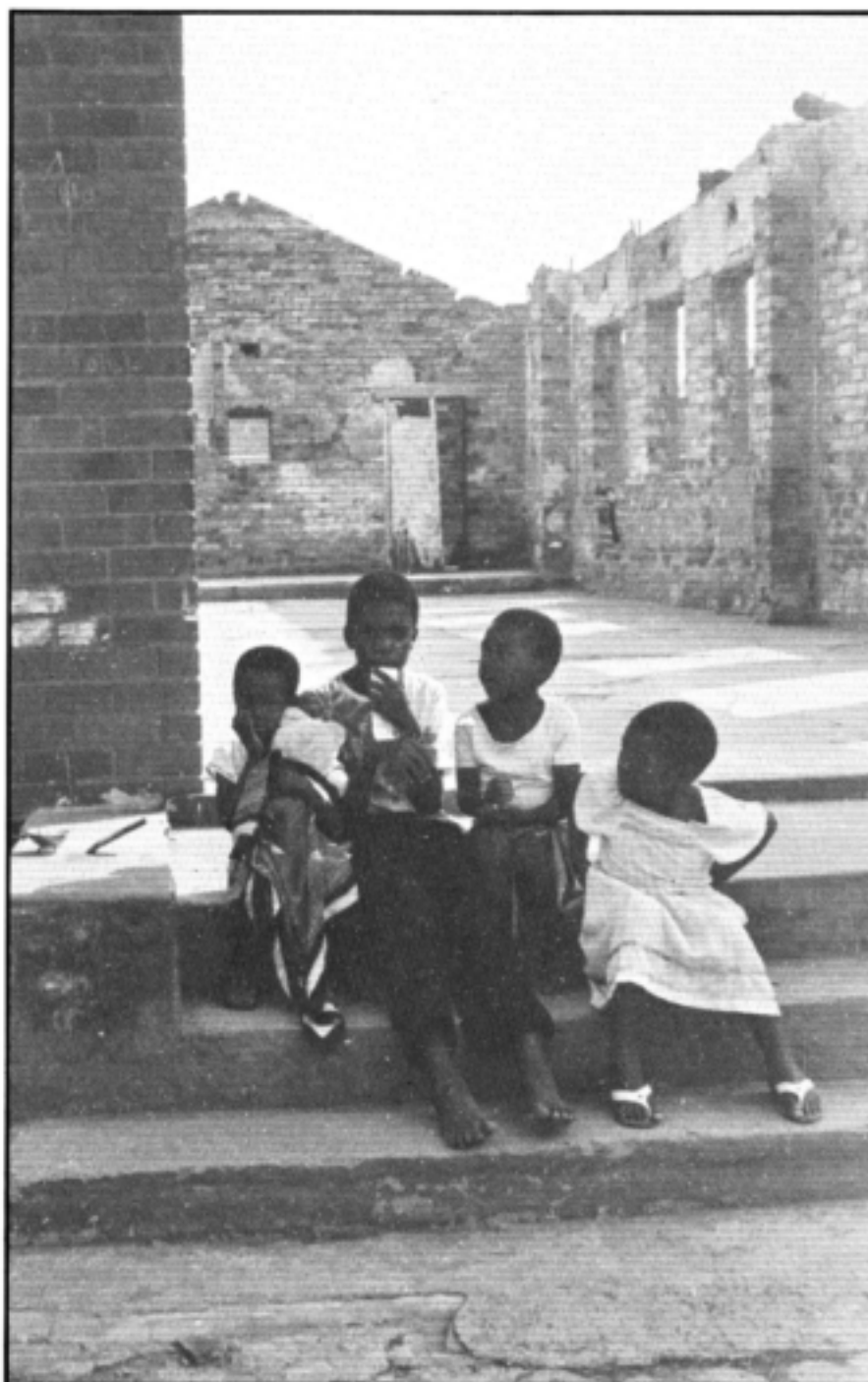
"Now I am homeless and without belongings. I am living with relatives. It is difficult. There are many of us living in one room. There is a lot of tension.

"It also restricts your relationship with your husband. It is so difficult. You are only a homeless refugee, but you are still expected to be a wife and mother."

Anna and **Palesa** also talked about the pain of coping with the violence.

"Two boys were shot in our street. Right in front of our home. Can you imagine?

Two young innocent boys. "We left our home together with our children. We know our home has been broken into. We have lost everything. Some people managed to take their furniture. We were not so lucky, we left with nothing. But what could we do? We were running for our lives."★



Alex children outside a shelter.

What happened to Alex?

Until last year, Alex was one of the few townships in the PWV area that hadn't exploded with violence. Then, a little more than a year ago, the war began in this township outside Johannesburg.

Inkatha members from Natal kicked hostel dwellers out of the Madala Hostel in March last year. The new hostel dwellers started terrorising people living in homes near the hostel.

On 7 March 1992, an area of Alex known as Beirut burst into flames. This area borders the hostel and residents say Inkatha is trying to control more of the township. They say Inkatha attacked houses to force the owners to move. The people of Alex say Beirut is now Inkatha territory.

SPEAK asked Tony Rutherford from the Alex Peace Group (a group which monitors the violence) about the violence.

"Ninety percent of the violence is the fault of the Inkatha members who have taken over the hostels. Groups of people come out of the hostel and fire at anyone in sight.

"These hostels are military bases. They **must** be closed down and the shacks around them demolished. The hostels must be turned into flats for families and single people."●

Photo by Andrew Shabangu, Alex Art Centre

FEELING CHEATED?

Claim your rights at the Small Claims Court

Thandi Skosana had worked as a domestic worker for the Smith family in Johannesburg for four years when they told her they were moving to Cape Town. They paid her for the days she had worked, but would not give her notice pay or holiday money.

Petrus Ngwenya wanted to build a garage at his house in Daveyton. He paid a deposit of R1000 to a building company which promised to start building the next week. Building had not started five weeks later, so Petrus asked for his money back. The company refused.

Mary Kenke paid a deposit on a fridge at a Johannesburg shop. She signed an agreement to pay the rest of the money off every month and the shop promised to deliver the fridge in a few days. After two weeks the fridge had not been delivered and the shop refused to give Mary her deposit back.

Thandi, Petrus and Mary had all been cheated in some

***The Small
Claims Court is a
cheap way to
claim your rights
if someone has
cheated you.
SPEAK looks at
how you go
about taking
someone to this
court.***

way. All three of them decided to take it up. They all went to the Small Claims Court.

What is the Small Claims Court?

The Small Claims Court is like a Magistrate's Court, but it doesn't cost any money to make a claim. People are not allowed to have lawyers with them in court. This makes it

cheap and easy for ordinary people to use this court.

Cases are heard after work so people don't have to take time off to go to court.

The judges or magistrates in the Small Claims Court are called **Commissioners**. They are experienced lawyers who do this work for free.

You can find out where the nearest Small Claims Court is from the clerk of the court at the Magistrate's Court.

What cases can you take to the court?

You can take a person or a company to the Small Claims Court if you have been cheated of money or goods worth less than R1500.

You can take a case to this court if:

- you have paid for something but never received the goods;
- you have sold something but never got paid for it;
- you are a domestic worker or farm worker and did not get paid all the money your

boss owes you. This will change once domestic and farm workers have won their right to be included under labour laws in this country.

What you must do

1. You have to make your claim at the Small Claims Court in the area where the person you are taking to court lives or works or where he or she has a place of business. It can also be in the area where the contract was broken.

2. You must first send a **letter of demand** by registered post to the person or company you are making a claim against. In this letter you must ask for the money owed to you. You must also say you will go to the Small Claims Court if you haven't received this money within 14 days of the date of the letter. Keep a copy of this letter and the registered slip.

3. If your claim has not been settled after 17 days, go to the **clerk of the court** at the Small Claims Court to start a case. Take a copy of the letter of demand, the registered post receipt and your identity document with you.

4. The clerk of the court will give you a **summons form**. Ask him or her to help you fill it in. Ask the clerk to make the date of the case in five weeks time so you have time to prepare.

The summons will call you the **Plaintiff** (the person making the claim) and the person you are claiming against the **Defendant**. You and the clerk of the court must sign the summons.

5. Once the summons has been signed, it will have to be delivered to the person you are claiming against. You can deliver it yourself, or the messenger of the court will



You will have to explain to the court why you are making your claim.

deliver it for a cost of about R10. The summons must be delivered at least 10 week days before the case. Whoever delivers the summons must get written proof that the defendant received it. This means the defendant must sign for the summons. This written proof is called the **return of service** and it must be handed to the clerk of the court together with the original summons.

6. You must tell the clerk of the court if you want an interpreter in court.

What will happen at the hearing?

Both you and the defendant must appear at the Small Claims Court on the date and at the time stated in the summons. You will both have to tell your sides of the story to the court.

You must take a copy of the letter of demand, the post office receipt, a copy of the summons and your identity document with you to the court. You can also take other documents which prove your case. If you



Anyone can take someone to the Small Claims Court if they have been cheated.

have witnesses to back your case, these people must be at the court with you.

When your case is called, the Commissioner will ask you to take an oath and swear to tell the truth. You will then have to explain why you are making the claim.

When the defendant tells his or her side of the story, you can tell the Commissioner whether you agree or not.

After the Commissioner has heard both sides and looked at all the documents he or she will pass judgement.

The judgement

At the end of the case the

Commissioner will give a judgement.

She or he can say the claim was valid and the defendant must give you the money or goods you asked for. The court might let the defendant pay off the money in instalments;

OR,

■ She or he can say there was not enough information for the court to decide. If this happens, you can bring the claim again after you have found more evidence to support your demand;

OR,

■ She or he can say your claim was not valid and you have lost the case.

If you win the case and the defendant refuses to pay you or misses an instalment, you can go to the clerk of the court and get a **warrant of execution**. This means the court can take the goods or property of the defendant and sell them to raise money to meet your claim.

*This information came from a book published by the Black Sash called **The Small Claims Court and You**. You can get a copy of this book from the Black Sash, Khotso House, 25 Anderson Street, Johannesburg 2001 (telephone: 011-834-8361).*

If you need help in preparing your case ask the clerk of the court to help you. You can also ask for help at any Black Sash advice office, or at a legal aid office. ★



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Do you wake up each morning feeling tired in body and mind? Do you feel depressed or anxious? Do you find you can't sleep at night?

ARE YOU UNDER STRESS?

Thousands of South Africans suffer from stress. This is not surprising.

South Africa is one of the most stressful countries in the world to live in.

In this article we offer some tips on coping with stress.

What is stress?

When your body and mind become tired from trying to cope with the difficulties of everyday life, you are stressed. Your stress might be caused by breaking up with a partner, sickness, fear, death, the political situation or losing a job. Worries about exams, AIDS, finding a job or a home, or just trying to make ends meet can all lead to stress.

Are you suffering from stress?

Different people experience stress in different ways. Stress can make you sick. It can also make you feel like you can't cope with your life. Here are some of the signs of stress:

Feeling over-emotional

Stress affects your emotions.

* You may feel irritable most of the time and start fights when you usually wouldn't;

* You are suffering from anxiety if you feel as

if your worries will never end. You may feel as if you have a knot inside your chest;

* Not being able to sleep well is also a sign of stress. You may find you cannot fall asleep at night, or you wake up in the middle of the night and cannot get back to sleep. You lie awake and worry;

* Some people have panic attacks. These attacks are a frightening kind of anxiety. If you have a panic attack you start to breathe heavily and faster than usual. Your hands start to tingle and you feel as if you are going to die. The attack often ends in a faint;

* Stress can make you depressed. You no longer feel like doing things you enjoy. You feel as if your world is coming to an end. Often you do not feel like getting up in the morning.

Getting sick

Stress can also make you ill.

* You may get stress headaches above or behind your eyes, at the back of the neck, or a band of pain around your head;

* You may get muscle pains along your shoulders and up into your neck. Your muscles feel sore if they are rubbed. Sometimes your neck gets so stiff you can hardly move your head;

* If you are under stress your body is less able to fight illness. You may get sores on your lips or inside your mouth. You may start to get common

illnesses like colds or flu often because your resistance is low;

- * You may get stomach problems like diarrhoea or constipation;
- * You may even develop stomach ulcers;
- * A lot of skin problems get worse when you are stressed;
- * Many South Africans suffer from high blood pressure (hypertension). Stress makes high blood pressure worse;
- * A stressed person is more likely to have a heart attack.

Stress solutions

The most important thing to do is to try and work out the root cause of your stress. Once you have done this there are ways in which you can deal with stress. The first step is to care for yourself.

Dealing with illness caused by stress

- * If you are constipated you can try eating brown bread and more fruit and vegetables;
- * If you have a very sore pain in your stomach, especially after eating, take special care. It could be a stomach ulcer. You must see a doctor so you can have tests done and get treatment to heal the ulcer. Stress is a big cause of ulcers;
- * If you feel especially stressed you may have a problem with your blood pressure. Go to a

Hit a cushion, shout or laugh.

Work out what is causing your stress.

Talk about your problems.

doctor or clinic and have it checked.

Dealing with emotions caused by stress

- * Work out what is causing your stress. Try to talk about the things that make you feel upset to someone who will listen with real concern and understanding;
- * If one person is making you upset, try to talk to him or her as the situation arises;
- * You can also let your emotions out by hitting a cushion, crying or shouting;
- * If you have an anxiety attack or you feel one coming on, slow your breathing down. Tell yourself to take slow breaths. Talk to yourself calmly. This way you will begin to calm down and be able to deal with things better;
- * Try telling yourself you are only allowed to



worry for a certain length of time each day. For example, if you and your partner have broken up and it hurts you very much, tell yourself you are only allowed to think about it for one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening. This can help you to have more positive thoughts for the rest of the day.

More ideas

* Relaxation exercises are very good for relieving tension. Lie down in a quiet place, close your eyes and tense your body for a few seconds, then relax. Relax your body, starting with your toes and working up to your head. Finally, let your mind relax by clearing it of thoughts. Think of being somewhere quiet and peaceful. You can do this silently, or with quiet music. If you do this for a few minutes a day, or when you feel especially irritable or angry, it will help you to feel calm and positive.

* Get someone to rub those sore shoulders and muscles of yours. A massage is a great way to spend some special time with people you love. Massage will help to do away with headaches, muscle pains and depression because, like exercise, it makes you feel good about yourself.

* Nice, loving sex is a great stress reliever.

* Being healthy helps you deal with stress.

Eating healthily is your first step. Try a balanced diet with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. Eat less salt.

People who learn to deal with stress are healthier and live longer than those who bottle it up.

* Exercise helps fight stress because it makes you feel good about yourself. People who exercise are less likely to suffer from stress.

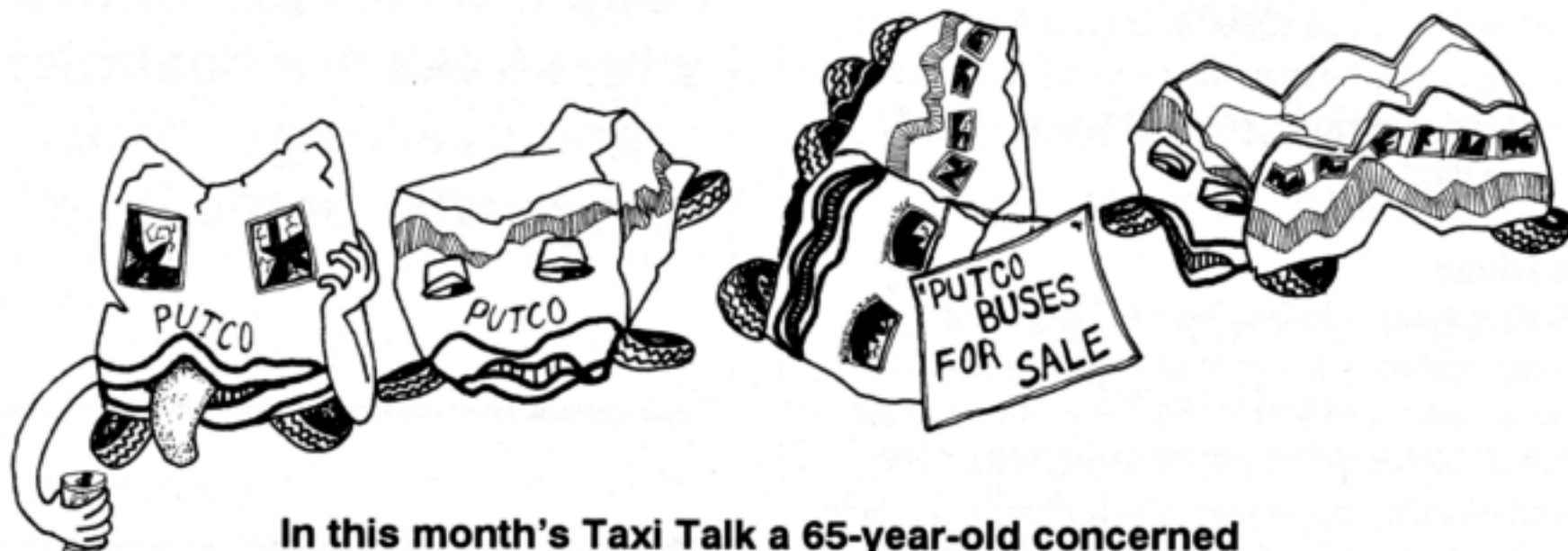
* Take up a hobby - do something that makes you feel good about your life. You may enjoy dancing, listening to music, gardening or reading, as long as it is something that relaxes you and makes you feel happy.

* Laughter is good for your health. It helps to let out stress. Doctors say changes occur in your body after you have had a good laugh. Your stress level drops and you feel better. So make friends with people who make you laugh!

People who learn to cope with stress are healthier and live longer than those who bottle it up. So, close your eyes ... and relax... ☆



Taxi Talk



In this month's Taxi Talk a 65-year-old concerned mother offers advice on how women should treat the men in their lives. Learn from people like me, she says.

Things have totally changed these days. Women nowadays treat their husbands as lovers - not as brothers as we were told by our elders.

Women care too much. They don't realise men are just like Putco buses - stopping at one bus stop, picking up a woman, dropping her at the next and picking up a new woman.

"You should take him as your brother and you will respect him, but if you take him as your lover, you will not like him to move away from you even for a second."

That is what we were advised by old people when we got married.

Here's one good example.

When men come home after midnight these days, their wives shout at them: "Tom, where do you come from at this time of night?"

He won't tell his wife the truth. Men were never meant to be truthful.

When we got married we were advised by old people not to ask him any questions when he comes in late. We would welcome him, ask how

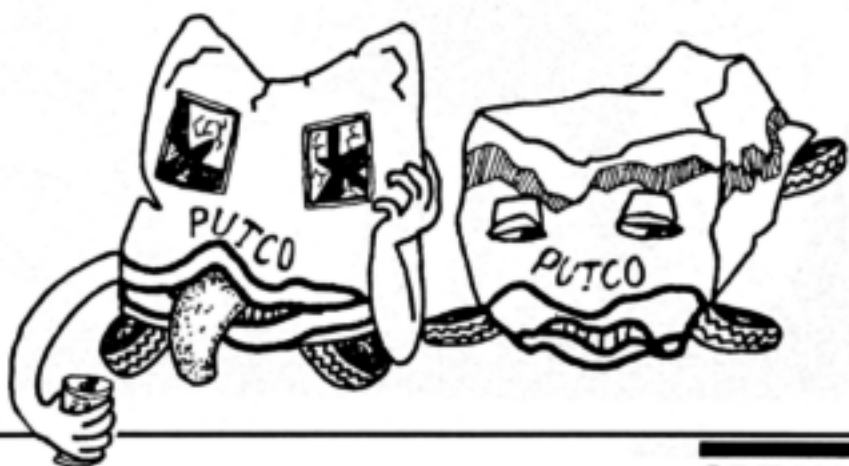
he was and give him his meal. We would tell him: "I am pleased you are safe home."

If you keep on doing this, he will begin to wonder why you are not jealous of the other woman. He will start looking under the beds to see who you have been enjoying yourself with. He will stay at home to see your "lover".

Soon you will get bored with him at home all the time, and you will have to chase him away, asking him if he doesn't want to have a drink with his friends.



As I said, men are like Putco buses. With all this stopping and starting, picking up different women, they end up looking like the scraps of Putco buses packed up at New Canada. They are all for sale, but nobody wants to buy them. You'll keep yours in your home, even though it's a scrap, because it's yours. So why bother yourself being jealous of your dear husband? Let him go and enjoy himself. After all they were meant to end up as PUTCO BUSES FOR SALE! ☆





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