WOMEN WORKERS
1993
baricades

Women breaching boardroom

Changing attitudes

Reports

Inshallah

Parangal

Bhawalites

Women who recognize discrimination and fight for their rights are often met with resistance and obstacles. Women are breaking through barriers and making progress. The struggle continues, and women are fighting for their place in the boardroom.
Women's charter on the way

By Ismail Lagardien
Political Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT is canvassing support for its charter of women's rights which it published this week and which forms part of its programme of purging the statute books of discrimination on the basis of sex.

A flyer, which is to be published in nine indigenous languages, asks the public’s views on:

- Equality between men and women;
- The prevention of domestic violence; and
- Legal protection of women against discrimination.

Legislation which will come before Parliament proposes expressly to "prohibit discrimination solely on the grounds of sex, marital status and pregnancy in the workplace and the profession and by employment agencies, professional control bodies, partnerships and employer pension funds and other organisations registered by law".

The legislation will seek to ensure that men and women are paid equally for equal work and attempt to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace and in training institutions.

An Equal Opportunities Commission is proposed to investigate cases of "unreasonable distinction between men and women in statutes, the common law and in general practice".

"The choice of a woman living according to indigenous traditions and customs on how she desires to interpret her traditional role is not affected by the proposed legislation," the leaflet explains.

Comments should be sent before March 1993 to The Director General, Department of Justice, Private Bag X81, Pretoria 0001.
Draft bill to outlaw discrimination at work and college

Prison threat over sex bias

Political Staff
SEXUAL discrimination will become an offence punishable by fines up to R5 000 or imprisonment if parliament approves draft legislation published today.

The Promotion of Equal Opportunities Draft Bill aims to prohibit discrimination on grounds of sex, marital status and pregnancy.

It also provides for an Equal Opportunities Commission to promote equality and equal opportunity between the sexes.

The draft bill is part of a government package to counter discriminate against women.

It would make it an offence punishable by a fine of up to R5 000 and imprisonment of up to six months for discrimination against anyone as regards employment, pay, employment benefits and promotion solely on grounds of sex, marital status or pregnancy.

But it makes exceptions where a woman's presence requires a person of a certain sex.

The anti-discriminatory provisions apply to employment and education institutions, although single-sex schools are exempt.

The bill also outlaw sexual harassment, which is defined as making an unwelcome sexual suggestion, making an unwelcome request for a sexual favour, or engaging in any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature or in circumstances in which the other person believes a negative response would prejudice his or her employment or studies.

The bill, sexually discriminatory practices would be deemed unfair labour practices under the Labour Relations Act.

The Equal Opportunities Commission would be appointed by the State President to investigate discriminatory practices and recommend lawful remedies.

The commission may also draw up a code of conduct to ensure equality between the sexes, which may become binding if the government agrees.

The commission may also hear complaints and refer them to the embassies or the Industrial Court.

The bill proposes giving the relevant minister power to give and withdraw guidelines to sex and would also allow "permissible discrimination" in favour of women — such as in order to get the public to obey the law.

Political Staff

Prison threat over sex bias

GARVEN THOMSON
The Argus Foreign Service

LONDON — Britain's television programmes are putting viewers in a bind by showing how much the slow news is talking about violence, sexual abuse and other problems.

Couched in the context of valentine's day, channel d's three-day "love weekend" is designed to highlight the problem established by Britain's relatively broadened arts scene and the success of high-profile programmes by introducing the kind of non-fictional, half-hour programmes more familiar on New York's cable TV.

The centerpiece of the weekend will be the live late-night "Naked Chat Show", hosted by host John Howard and a panel of experts.

Another South African film, "Cape Town-born sex therapist, Jan Dale, is expected to be a guest.

Guests may be encouraged to strip for the chat show, although Johnson and Myskie have not yet decided whether they will do so.

The producers say there will be no censorship to get members of the audience to throw their photos — but equally do not wish to be seen.

The Argus Correspondent

Johannesburg — The West Indies cricket team, fresh from victories over Australia and world champions Pakistan, flew into Jan Smuts Airport soon after dawn today.

They will be followed later today by Pakistan, who won the Sharjah Cup in Dubai yesterday by beating Sri Lanka in the final.

The two visiting teams and South Africa will meet next week in a series of 10 one-day matches for the Total International trophy.

The West Indies, led by Richie Richardson, are without one of their star fast bowlers, Richard Hadlee, who has chicken pox. He will join the side in a week.

The West Indians team looked tired after their nine-hour flight from Perth, but both Richardson and team manager David Holbrook said they hoped the historic visit would help towards solving South Africa's many problems.

"We are willing, in whatever little way we can, to lend our support to the progress in political problems and movement that is taking place in South Africa," said Mr. Holbrook.

Richardson had hoped the team's visit would help the cause of "united and equal opportunity in this country".

The West Indians are due today for three-way tour of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, where they will play their first match in the triangular against South Africa on Saturday.

The team was met on the tarmac by the ANC's head of sport, Mr. Steve Tshwete, the president of the National Olympic Committee, Mr. Sam Ramasamy, the United Cricket Board managing director.

Mr. Holbrook, who was under pressure to make the team a success, said he had a plan for the future of cricket in South Africa.

"We hope to make cricket in South Africa a success," he said, standing on the tarmac.

The presidents of the South African Cricket Union, National Olympic Committee, and the South African Cricket Board, were all present at the airport.

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Draft bills to outlaw sexism soon

By BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

SEX discrimination in South Africa will be outlawed if three draft bills, released by the government yesterday to promote women's rights, become law.

It will be an offence for anyone to be discriminated against because of their sex, marital status or pregnancy — and men and women will have to be paid the same for the same job.

Women will no longer have to have their husband's signature to open accounts and it will be illegal for banks and other institutions to ask for details about their marital status.

It will also be an offence for women to be fired because they get married or fall pregnant.

But the three bills do not provide for equality in taxes, medical and pension schemes and subsidies and exclude women from being liable for military call-up.

The marital power, which gives husbands legal power over their wives, is to be abolished. Fathers will have no priority over guardianship of children.

The Abolition of Discrimination Against Women Draft Bill, the Prevention of Domestic Violence Draft Bill and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities Draft Bill were released yesterday by the Minister of Justice, Mr Kobie Coetsee.

They provide for the appointment of an Equal Opportunities Commission to monitor and prevent discrimination on grounds of sex.

Benefits bonus for thousands of women

Political Staff

THOUSANDS of women civil servants and teachers, particularly those who are married, will receive substantial benefits when the government's proposals for equal rights for the sexes are implemented.

The Minister of Justice, Mr Kobie Coetsee, confirmed yesterday that women civil servants would receive the same benefits as men and women would not lose their housing benefits when they married.

Mr Coetsee also pointed out that the Ombudsman would receive increased powers to take action if there was sexual discrimination against civil servants.

He did not give any estimate of the cost of these reforms.

Mr Coetsee said he hoped it would be possible to submit the bills to Parliament this year but this would depend on public reaction, which had to be submitted by March 19.

As presently drafted, the draft bills will make it a crime of rape — with a maximum penalty of death — if estranged husbands force sex relations on their wives, but it will not be rape if they are still living together as husband and wife.

The DP's spokeswoman on women's rights, Ms Dene Smuts, welcomed the proposed legislation but said the distinction on assault inside and outside marriage said something very fundamental about people's views of marriage, the status of women in general and wives in particular.

Mrs Margaret Lessing, executive director of the Women's Bureau of South Africa, said yesterday that the Draft Bill on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities was a major breakthrough for women, Sapa reports.
WOMEN'S VOICES ABSENT IN BILLS ON EQUAL RIGHTS

CHARLENE SMITH

WOMEN will discuss three draft bills designed to curtail discrimination against them at a major conference of the Women's Coalition in Johannesburg this week.

Women's rights activists are not impressed that they were not consulted in the drafting of the bills released for comment by Minister of Justice Kobie Coetsee on Friday.

They are the Prevention of Domestic Violence Draft Bill, the Abolition of Discrimination Against Women Draft Bill and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities Draft Bill.

Cathy Albertyn of the gender research centre at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at Wits said she was pleased women's issues were now on the political agenda, but it would require more than amending laws to redress the inequality of women.

She pointed out that in terms of existing labour legislation discrimination in the work place was already an unfair labour practice.

"It requires more than legislation. There is no state-funded shelter for battered women and yet it is estimated that around one in four women are battered."

Frere Giniwala of the ANC's gender committee said women should have been consulted to assist in the drafting of the bills.

Another provision in the bills makes marital rape illegal in cases where the marriage relationship has broken down and the parties no longer live together. Magistrates will also be empowered to authorize the seizure of firearms to prevent domestic violence.

Under the Equal Opportunities Bill it will be illegal to discriminate on the basis of gender, marital state or pregnancy. Women will also have to get equal pay for equal work.

Sexual harassment will also be forbidden.

Nonetheless, discrimination will not be a crime. Victims may lay complaints with the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Other advances which are unlikely to cause women much excitement are the provisions that will now allow them to legally enter liquor stores and pubs, box or wrestle, and become underground miners.

Lawmakers have deftly stepped around the thorny issue of abortion where no changes will be made.

The bills will not be presented to Parliament as legislation at this stage. Should the draft legislation eventually be accepted, it would have to be phased in gradually and systematically, Mr Coetsee said.
By TERRY BETTY

SOUTH AFRICAN women lag sadly behind their overseas counterparts in the managerial stakes.

The Central Statistical Services 1981 population census shows women comprise 41% of the entire workforce, yet occupy only 30% of the managerial positions – the majority working in clerical jobs.

This is in stark contrast to the US where women make up 45.7% of the workforce, and fill 42.3% of the executive and managerial posts. In fact, there are now less white male than women bosses in the US.

The SA census also shows women are still precluded from earning top salaries.

While 10 899 men in SA earn over R300 000 a year, only 1 284 women fall into this category.

Garry Whyte, appointments general manager, Bruce Eccles, says the differentiation in salaries narrows the higher a woman climbs the corporate ladder. “Once a woman is in the boardroom she is treated on a par with her male counterparts.”

Chauvinist

But he admits women have to work a lot harder to get there than men.

P-E Corporate Services managing director Martin Westcott says while SA is still a chauvinist country, more and more women are getting to the top of the corporate ladder.

“It is a distinct trend that started about four years ago, but has gained momentum in the last two years.”

He says this is even happening to the extent that women are becoming the breadwinners in many families. “It is exacerbated by the fact their husbands may have been retrenched.”

He says most women who have made it to the top have a number of degrees behind their name.

He says the women come from the broad socio-economic spectrum.

However, Mr. Eccles says they predominate in a more educated environment where men tend to be more open minded.

Mr. Eccles says the profile of such women is often that they are childless or have children that have left home.

Those who still have small children have a supportive family structure.
NP's women's Bills: An election ploy? Genuine?

By IAN CLAYTON

The government's belated commitment to women's rights is indeed progress, but it has all the makings of being a progressive plank in its election platform — rather than becoming law in the near future.

Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee was asked three times at a media conference last week whether he would bring the three draft women's rights Bills to parliament during the current session, and three times he deliberately avoided making any such commitment.

For good reason: apart from technical drafting issues and the assessment of the public's response, Coetsee will have a major political battle to get consensuses from the National Party majorities in all three Houses of Parliament, which are dominated by men.

He does have President FW de Klerk on his side, which is an obvious advantage, but the MPs in all three Houses have to pass the Bills — and they could bury them in committees and with procedural obstruction.

Officially, public comment on the three Bills must be submitted by March 19. Coetsee said whether the Bills are submitted to parliament this year would depend on public reaction.

The chances are that the Abolition of Discrimination against Women Draft Bill, the Preventing of Domestic Violence Draft Bill and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities Draft Bill will remain little more than that until after the first elections.

This would help the NP to woo the 53 percent of voters who are women and make the party sound progressive on women's rights, without having to deal with the realities of caucus pressure against the measures.

Though the proposals have a number of weaknesses, they also represent considerable progress in legislating against sexual discrimination.

The Bills outlaw sexual discrimination, making it an offence for anyone to be discriminated against because of gender, marital status or pregnancy.

Men and women will have to be paid the same for the same job, and it will be an offence for women to be fixed because they get married or fall pregnant.

Women will no longer have to have their husband's signature to open accounts, and it will be illegal for banks and other institutions to ask for details about their marital status.

Marital power, which gives husbands legal power over their wives and places them in the position of minors, will be abolished. Fathers will no longer automatically be given preference for guardianship of children.

It also proposed that an equal opportunities commission be established to promote the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status and pregnancy and the creation of equal opportunities between males and females.

Justice Department officials are keen to see the measures translated into law. The department has appointed an advocate, Jackie Schultz, to promote the measures.

That and the drafting of the Bills — no mean feat in itself — does not, however, mean law and real change. It certainly remains to be seen whether the NP has the political will to put its money where its mouth is on women's rights.
know about their rights ● Sexual harassment at work

Clause on harassment gets a thumbs down

By Sizakele Kooma

THE inclusion of a clause on sexual harassment in the Equal Opportunities draft legislation has not been met with much enthusiasm in some institutions.

Although the Institute of Personnel Management admits the Bill will at last force companies to acknowledge the hazards of intimidation of women employees by their male colleagues, it has reservations about some of the issues that it feels the Bill does not address.

Ms Jenny Wilkinson, co-author of the IPM's policy document on sexual harassment in the workplace, said the important issues had not been sufficiently addressed.

"Rights and concerns of others must be respected, failing which the emphasis of the legislation will be in the wrong place.

"Sexual harassment need not be directly in relation to another person specifically. It could be an offensive calendar or poster hung on a wall," Wilkinson said.

The Bill states, among other things, that "no employer shall sexually harass an employee in his or her employment or a person who applies for employment or a position with him or her."

Wilkinson believes too much emphasis on the word unwelcome where the Bill refers to an "unwelcome sexual suggestion", an "unwelcome request" or "unwelcome conduct" places the onus on the victim to prove the "unwelcomeness."
The Minister of Local Government and Housing presents the following Bill, entitled: "The Local Authorities (Improvement of Housing) Bill 1999," for consideration by the House:

The Bill has been drafted in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission on Local Government and Planning, which was established by the Minister of Local Government and Housing in 1997.

The Bill aims to improve the housing conditions in local authorities by providing additional powers to the councils to ensure that all residents have access to safe and affordable housing.

The Bill includes provisions for the enforcement of building regulations, the provision of affordable housing, and the improvement of existing housing stock.

The Bill will be debated during the coming weeks, and the Minister of Local Government and Housing will make a statement on the progress of the Bill at a later date.
Women bosses, need anti-stress networks
Puting Women's Rights on Paper

TODAY'S WOMAN

The Argus, Wednesday, March 19, 1983
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Putting Women's Rights on Paper

TODAY'S WOMAN

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Politics needs ‘woman power’

**KEYWORD** Women's issues will never get attention without women MPs

By Pearl Majola

While women's issues are beginning to gain some recognition in South Africa, women will have to assert themselves to ensure that they are involved in drawing up the new constitution.

Various efforts have been made by women's organisations in this regard, especially by the Women's National Coalition.

The Women's Lobby (TWL), formed in December 1991, has set itself to concentrate specifically on this issue as South Africa gears up for its first democratic elections.

"Our main aim is to lobby for women to be involved in the whole political process, not just as typists but as decision makers," says TWL chairman Mrs Babette Kabak.

"We feel this area is particularly important because our country is at a crucial stage of change and we must take the opportunity to make our voices heard now," she said.

"Women's issues are never going to get attention without women legislators. It's been proven in many countries that women's rights are not taken seriously unless there are women at the leadership level."

"Even the charter that the WNC seeks to draw up will end up as a useless piece of paper unless we have women legislators who will ensure that the contents of that charter are implemented," Kabak warned.

"Besides, there is no reason not to have women in decision making positions because they are just as interested and concerned about the economy, unemployment, education the environment and other issues of national importance as men are."

TWL's programme of action is concentrated on the workshops which have started running for various women's organisations.

These workshops include talks by women politicians and discussions of the issues at hand. In addition, a questionnaire which seeks to find out women's interests and self-determination is circulated for each woman to fill in.

"The questionnaire will serve as research which will be analysed by a big research company and could be used as a tool to push women's issues," Kabak explained.

"We focus on women's organisations because the experience worldwide is that volunteer groups have been a training ground and stepping stone for women's entry into public life."

"Women are close to the community and learn at first hand what is needed to set development on the right course for the benefit of those at the grass-roots and the entire community," says Kabak.

But the organisation also aims to hold informal talks with men's groups on the exclusion of women from policy making processes and traditional reasons for this. The aim of these talks, according to Kabak, would be to create new insights among men into gender issues.

The workshops are not the first effort from the one-year-old organisation. Since its formation, it has lobbied business and other influential and prominent groups to promote women into decision and policy-making positions in local, regional and national structures.

One of such groups already approached by TWL is the South African Broadcasting Corporation to whom a list of women in various categories of expertise was sent for use in selecting for panel discussions and interviews.

"Our success will depend on the response of the follow-up made by the women's organisations we are in contact with and our own ability to reach all the women through their organisations," Kabak concluded.
Battle of the Budge

Maternity benefits:

SSNY

Ref: C143.31

Family and Parental Leave

Women in the UK have the right to take up to 52 weeks of maternity leave, including 18 weeks of statutory leave. During this period, they are entitled to:

- 90% of their salary for the first 39 weeks
- 90% of their salary for the remaining 13 weeks

Women can choose to share up to 39 weeks of leave with their partner, although the benefits are not the same. The shared period can last up to 39 weeks and is paid at a rate of £31.35 per week.

Parents also have the option to take up to 50 weeks of shared parental leave, with up to 37 weeks of leave paid at 90% of salary.

The leave is available for parents who have been employed for at least 26 weeks prior to the expected date of birth or adoption.

For more information, contact your local council or visit the Government website.
Black marks against females and managers

BLACK managers and female managers have half as many subordinates and earn on average 33% less than their white male counterparts. This is the finding of a three-year study made under the auspices of the Collaborative Working Group for the Advancement of Black Managers. The aim of the study was to establish the main factors that affect advancement in general.

Working group convener and Bristol Myers Squibb medical director Ben Allman says this is the first scientific study of its kind in the world. It was conducted because black management advancement programmes focusing on prejudice, education and training are insufficient.

He says black and female managers cope less well with stresses and pressures in the environment for similar reasons, although this is significantly more acute for black managers.

Abusers

He says women feel that they are discriminated against, have to tolerate more peer-related jealousy, do not have support and do not have sufficient stimulation or challenge in the workplace.

Black managers earn less salary, receive less feedback and are expected to produce the goods without being included as a member of the team. They also spend longer hours travelling to and from work.

On the home front, women are pressured by boredom, interpersonal conflict, lack of time for themselves or for a social life, feel they are not appreciated and often are substance abusers because of this.

But the home environment is the real problem for black managers, as they face twice as much pressure there than they do at work.

Pressures include the fear of financial adversity and retirement and the effect of an economic downturn. Half of them are afraid of the security forces, they are pressured by their peers to support mass action and strikes and those promoted are regarded as sell-outs by their peers.

The survey also shows that black managers are far more pressured by the lack of education for their children and the inadequacy of health services. For them their home environment is less stable, potentially more violent and much less attractive than for other managers.

With all these pressures, many black managers do not feel it is worth their while to climb the corporate ladder.

All managers surveyed were subjected to family and financial stresses and were concerned about the political future, the economy, violence, their relationships with their superiors, their lack of personal time and the quality of people resources available to support them in the workplace.

These findings are supported by the fact that in South Africa 66% of blacks are likely to suffer from stress-related illnesses over the next two years versus 50% for white males.

Such disorders include ulcers, heart disease, hypertension and psychological syndromes. Dr Allman says blacks show more stress-related symptoms, such as anxiety, tension, fear, insomnia and depression, and he says that these are warning signs that need to be addressed before the person becomes seriously ill.

Dr Allman says a person can only achieve if there is stability in either the workplace or the home environment, and suggests that corporate responsibility may extend beyond the workplace. "A manager cannot be simply trained, promoted and then ignored or forgotten."

Dr Allman says that for female and black managers it is imperative that they establish formal and informal networks and associations throughout industry, which helps them cope with pressure, as problems are shared and recipes for success formulated.

Strategies

White males tend to cope better, as they have their "old boy" type of network for mutual support structures and they are in the majority in most companies.

As for how to address black pressures, a collaborative working group will convene later this year. It will include experts in the field of organizational and human resource management — for example, industrial psychologists — as well as representatives from the conglomerates.

Dr Allman says strategies would probably have to include restructuring mentorship, helping managers to become aware of their pressures so that they do something about them and address issues of self image and confidence, as nobody can perform if these are negative.

By TERRY BETTY
Protest against high tax on married women

COSATU is to stage a lunch-time picket today outside the Receiver of Revenue offices in Johannesburg to protest against high tax rates for married women.

This is one of the Cosatu events to mark International Women's Day today.

Cosatu gender co-ordinator Dorothy Mokgalo said a charter of women's rights would also be launched.

The charter contains demands on maternity rights including 12 months' fully paid maternity leave, job security, an end to meetings to accommodate men.

Victimisation for pregnancy, removal of sex, race and age discrimination and women's representation on employment committees. It also covers domestic and sexual violence, sexual harassment at work, education and training and the establishment of child care centres.

Mokgalo said the lack of child care facilities at union meetings and congresses prevented women workers from participating fully in these events. Cosatu is tackling this problem as well as rescheduling meetings to accommodate women.

A march on John Vorster Square will be held this afternoon to deliver a memorandum on women and violence.
Fight against injustice goes on

People's Lives
Focus on women's struggle against abuse and make bonds

Women's Rights
By Stiglitz Rooma

Demonstrations and rallies planned for today.

Many protest marches
WOMEN have come out strongly against the Draft Bill on the abolition of discrimination against them and have proposed it be revised as soon as possible.

"Flawed legislation should not be pushed," said women lecturers at a seminar on women's rights at Unisa last week.

All speakers said the proposed abolition of about 50 laws that discriminate against women did not signify much change in their status. Among the contentious issues highlighted were:

- **Flawed legislation should be revised and not pushed:**
  - Guardianship - Although equal status would be afforded to both parents, the women felt it would still discriminate against parents of illegitimate children as unmarried couples were not included in the clause.
  - This means that the mother would enjoy full guardianship.
  - Maternity leave - Women employees who went on maternity leave were not guaranteed getting their jobs back.
  - Cohabitation - No recognition and protection was given to unmarried couples who lived together against problems that arise on separation or the death of one partner.
  - Equal opportunities commission - The work of the commission is not stipulated and it is also not mentioned how it will be constituted.
  - Assistant ombudsman - It was not acceptable. In its place should be a Ministry for Women.
SA'S WOMEN SHOULD NOT ONLY BE SEEN, BUT HEARD

THE SUNDAY MORNING ASSESSMENT

If the government is serious about ending discrimination against women it should consult women, says CARMEL RICKARD

The first question summed up the content was formulated.

Monday's conference offered participants a daunting agenda: a welcome, an opening address and no fewer than five panels, each with three speakers, tea and lunch, all in just over five hours.

No space for questions, let alone comments. As a special concession, however, the chairman took a couple of written questions at the end of each section.

When pressure to take part continued, the organizers agreed to extend the conference by an hour.

The first question summed up the concerns of many: Was this conference consultative or informative? If consultative, when was there time for consultation? If informative, was it necessary to fly people in from all over the country instead of simply sending them documentation to read?

Some of the official conference speeches were simply pat, alternately sympathetic and patronising.

Then Wits law professor Jane Sinclair sliced through the waffle with her devastating analysis of the bills' flaws. Acknowledging that they abolished some important discrimination, she dealt at greater length with significant omissions.

Sections of the Black Administration Act were left untouched, even though they perpetuate the inferior status of African women married by customary law.

The bill did not finally scrap the marital rape exemption, so that violent husbands who rape their wives cannot be charged with rape if they live under the same roof.

The bill did not deal with abortion, leaving this issue for some no doubt desperate woman to raise before a future constitutional court.

And it left intact less obvious discrimination — like the restrictive judicial discretion to divide property on divorce.

As her list of complaints grew, so did the enthusiastic support. A standing ovation left no doubt that she captured the audience's feeling.

However, debate about the bills does not end with their content.

Punted as evidence of government concern about human rights and equality for women, the timing and haste with which the bills were drafted and published — without prior consultation — must also be evidence of government awareness that women form 54 percent of the electorate.

The government appears to hope that if the bills are enacted quickly, they will be a vote-catching sweetener in the anticipated elections.

Strategic thinking, of course, is the business of politics, but the Pretoria conference shows that government officials do not understand how to consult.

The random guest list left out key players; the lack of time for anything other than passive listening gave the impression that the organizers did not welcome real dialogue.

And why were Justice Department officials, including the minister, the new deputy minister and the director-general, not on the panels to answer...
Do you have a skin pigmentation problem?

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1. What are the benefits of using your product?
2. How does it compare to other similar products on the market?
3. Are there any potential drawbacks or side effects?

By Stacey Koman

Is it possible to redress past wrongs and harmonise indigenous laws?
Women threaten protest

The ANC's Women's League on Saturday threatened to engage in large-scale protest action unless the rights of women were recognised. Secretary-general Baleka Kgotsitile said she was reacting to male political party leaders who jeered at the recent multiparty planning meeting when the ANC proposed that women should be part of their delegation as advisors.
Protest threat from ANC women

The ANC Women's League is threatening "large-scale protest action" against the exclusion of women at the negotiating forum. A League secretary-general said female leadership who signed the Codesa Declaration of Intent are not committed to the principle of non-segregation and democracy, said Kgositile. The League said men attend.
Women call for role in negotiations

By Esther Waugh
Political Reporter

The issue of female representation at the negotiating forum could come to a head today when women meet at the World Trade Centre.

In an open letter to political leaders, the Women's National Coalition noted the relative absence of women in negotiations.

"Women are the most disadvantaged of South Africans. Collectively, they have the lowest income levels, employment, legal status, esteem.

"One of the great challenges facing all our leaders is how the new South Africa is going to accommodate the needs and concerns of women," the letter said.

The ANC Women's League last week threatened action if women were not adequately represented in the restructured negotiating forum.

An Inkatha Freedom Party meeting decided on Wednesday that women have full representation.
Women's Place in the House

Execution of a Hanging Question

The ANG was targeted for elimination as part of the Secretary of Defense's '93 Base Realignment and Closure Program. The House Armed Services Committee recommended that the ANG remain within the Department of Defense and be funded as a full-fledged military force. However, the Senate Armed Services Committee voted to eliminate the ANG. This created a hung question in the House, where the vote was split along party lines. The ANG was ultimately saved by a narrow margin, with the support of key House members who recognized the importance of the ANG to national security.
A crucial time for women's power,
Delegations must include a woman

All political negotiating parties will have to expand their delegations at the multiparty talks and in the negotiating council, by one delegate - who has to be a woman.

At a meeting of the negotiating council at the World Trade Centre yesterday, Inkatha's Suzanne Vos argued for compulsory female representation.

She threatened to disclose the full text of discussions on the women's issue if the council did not recommend the delegations be enlarged.

The council agreed to recommend the change, which will give each party four delegates in the negotiating forum and two in the negotiating council, the main negotiating body in the new structure.

The negotiating council teams will consist of a delegation leader and a woman, who will have full negotiating rights.

In the plenary session, all negotiations will include women.

It was also agreed that women would be allowed to caucus as women and put forward the women's cause at the negotiations forum. This means they can break ranks with their political party agenda if it conflicts with the women's agenda.

The recommendation will be tabled for final ratification at tomorrow's forum discussions. Sources said it was unlikely to be rejected.

Parties also agreed that the media would be allowed to attend the talks.

The negotiating council indicated that violence was going to be high on the agenda for the two-day meeting, which starts tomorrow.

Delegations

Nelson Mandela, ANCYL general secretary, said it was important to submit a structure for discussions on violence.

ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa said it had been decided that the planning committee should handle this as the question of violence should transcend party political interests.

"Violence, in this forum, can best be approached in a structured way and constructively with a much better chance of finding solutions," he said.

On Coesa agreements, the council could not reach a conclusive agreement on their status. As a compromise, it was decided that a subcommittee would draft a consolidated document for the council's consideration.

A summary would be presented to the forum tomorrow.

Ramaphosa said this was a major breakthrough as this document, together with the primary Coesa agreements and the summary, would set the scene for negotiating substantive matters.

It would also form the foundation of the new forum.

However, all the parties had not agreed to be bound by the Coesa agreements, which were still open for final debate.

The council also agreed on a rotating panel of six permanent chairmen for all council and forum meetings.

It also agreed on a set of standing rules for the negotiations process. Tomorrow's meeting will have to adopt mechanisms and procedures, standing rules, the name of the new forum, its composition and structure, and who will participate.

The transition process, including Coesa agreements and the accommodation of parties not at Coesa, will be discussed, and a decision needs to be taken on the phases of the transition process and the international community's role.

Inkatha also wants to discuss whether the new SA should be a federal or unitary state.

Yesterday's meeting decided that the final point on the agenda for the two-day meeting would be the way forward and issuing instructions to the negotiating council regarding constitutional issues.
The struggle continues for women

By Esther Waugh
Political Reporter

Inside the World Trade Centre, negotiations will be formally resumed today, but outside, the women will be making their own statement.

The ANC Women's League and its allies are planning to protest against the exclusion of women representatives in the negotiations.

The battle for women's representation began in earnest after a meeting of the negotiating council decided two weeks ago to convene a meeting which would include a woman representative from each group.

The majority view was that women should be given full negotiation status since more than half the voters were women. This battle was finally won this week.

However, the ANC Women's League believes it was only through protesting that this right was won, and they believe the protest should continue today to draw attention to the important role of women.
Female managers are underutilized resource

BEN ALTMANN

from 1972

"Women generally manage less than the opportunity of men. They are less likely to get promotions, less likely to be found in supervisory positions, less likely to be chosen for key roles in decision-making. This is not just a problem of gender, but also a problem of culture, where women are often expected to fit into a mold that doesn't fit them. The result is a lack of role models and a lack of opportunities for advancement."
Black women ‘deserve better employment deal’

SHARON SOROUR
Labour Reporter

BLACK women face more obstacles in the workplace than their white counterparts, having historically occupied the lowest rung of the working ladder, according to a report in the latest Innes Labour Brief.

Corporate social investment consultant Mrs Antoniette Leresche said black women were not only educationally disadvantaged because of their race, but discriminated against on the basis of their gender.

Most black women were able to find employment only in a limited range of industries, where promotion was restricted by management attitudes which regarded women as subordinate.

"In addition, women are not well-represented in the labour movement at leadership level."

Numerous factors relating to the environment in which they worked and personal barriers affected women’s place in the workforce.

Mrs Leresche said: "Powerlessness and lower pay are the two main features of the environment in which women work."

South Africa was facing a manpower crisis of unprecedented proportions. This related both to the shortage of skilled and managerial personnel and the oversupply of unskilled labour.

One of the solutions lay in implementing affirmative action programmes to address gender bias which had dominated the workforce "for so long".

The challenge facing manpower planners in the managerial and skilled worker categories was to find ways of attracting qualified and skilled women back into the workplace.

"This can be achieved by offering better remuneration packages, equal to those for men. In addition, flexible work arrangements must be implemented to enable women to balance the demands made on them by family commitments and their work," she said.

"The process of socialisation had stereotyped women as subordinate to men and classified them as homemakers, where men were classified as breadwinners."

"This has implications not only for their remuneration levels, but also for their self-image in that a conflict is created between femininity and achievement."

The oversupply of unskilled workers provided little incentive for companies to improve working conditions and wages for unskilled women.
A woman’s place is in the home

The case of Enoch Toho has had an unexpected but important side-effect: It will bring great benefits for women. Under the old township regulations, it was almost impossible for women to have a house allocated to them. Virtually all township houses were allocated to men. Their wives were recorded as "honest parasites" as their dependents. The result was that women had no control at all over the family home. In the Toho case, Judge Michael Stegmann ruled that the tenure of a council house is an asset in the joint estate of a couple married in community of property. This means that on divorce, the wife is entitled to a share of the asset. The husband cannot simply dispose of the house.

As most black marriages have been in community of property, the judgment will affect most rented township housing. Similar regulations apply to housing in the rural townships, and also to the allocation of land in rural areas. The Toho judgment seems to apply to these situations as well. The Toho case is therefore an unexpected but important victory for women’s rights to housing.
Rights for Women Stillborn

By Paul Benjamin
In April this year women won an important victory of inclusion in the negotiations at the World Trade Centre. The lack of media coverage of the ANC Women's League demonstration at Kempton Park and important proposals put forth by the ANC and Inkatha at the forum, has led to the marginalisation of this important victory. Nevertheless, women will be present in each delegation at Kempton Park.

The tragic events of the past few weeks have correctly resulted in calls for action to set the transition process in motion. Issues of immediate concern include: the establishment of an independent electoral commission (IEC) to administer democratic elections; the creation of an independent media authority; the reintegration of the TBVC areas; agreement on the composition and rules of a transitional executive council (TEC); and measures to ensure joint control over security forces.

A further decision over the type of state (federal versus unitary) has been insisted upon by some parties.

Decisions on each of these issues will have important consequences for South African women across the political and social spectrum. Thus, negotiators must consider the impact of their decisions on women, who will make up the majority of participants in a democratic electoral process.

First, women's participation on the IEC is critical. The rules established by the IEC, including the reintegration of the homelands (where many more women than men live), delimitation of constituencies, and the location of polling sites, will significantly affect women's participation in elections.

If the IEC decides to regulate the selection of parties' electoral lists, then quotas or fixed targets for the numbers and placement of women on party lists should be considered.

Furthermore, IEC voter education must consider that one of the largest groups of voters will be rural, illiterate women.

Many women have argued that a code of conduct accepted by political parties must articulate women's unique concerns, such as violence against women, intimidation of domestic workers, farmworkers and other vulnerable women. An electoral process that does not permit women voters to participate in an environment free from violence, coercion and intimidation will not be free and fair.

Second, an independent media must seek to publicise women's issues during the electoral process. Women's organisations must be given equal time to present the views and opinions of women.

Women candidates and national figures must be promoted, not ignored, by the media. Representatives of the diverse spectrum of South African women must be included on a restructured SABC board. The media will be integral to the education of women as voters and promoting their confidence in the process.

Third, women must be part of the TEC. Without a presence in the most powerful body of the transitional period, the commitment to include women in the World Trade Centre talks can only be viewed as political opportunism and electioneering by male political leaders.

Fourth, women must contribute to discussions over the security of the process. The security concerns of women have continually been ignored despite the fact that women and children are arguably the most insecure groups in South Africa. Women are victims of "politically motivated" and domestic violence.

The insensitivity of security forces to women victims of violence and the failure of the Peace Accord structures to involve women, among other issues, must be part of security discussions.

Fifth, the critical implications of federalism or regionalism for women have not been considered in the current debate. Negotiators must carefully examine how the powers delegated to regions affect women.

Situation where states are given control over "social welfare issues", where states have the power to legislate issues such as abortion, or where a state constitution provides for a greater jurisdiction of customary law, could have a tremendous impact on women.

The constitution of the state of kwaZulu, provides an interesting example of the implications of federalism for women. On one hand, it proposed to "recognise and protect the application of traditional and customary rules". This would have important legal repercussions for kwaZulu women.

On the other hand, it provides a clause for "procreative freedom", permitting women to "terminate an unwanted pregnancy when safe". The implication of state powers in this case could result in an interesting scenario where men flock to kwaZulu to reap the legal benefits of customary marriages and women rush to the state to obtain legal abortions.

Women across the political and social spectrum are making their voices heard on issues such as federalism, customary law, security, constitutional equality and economic empowerment.

Yet, women negotiators will be accountable to their political parties and not the broad and diverse constituency of South African women. Thus, links between women negotiators and women's organisations, such as the Women's National Coalition, women's sections of political parties, the Rural Women's Movement, trade union women, women's anti-violence campaigns and other regional and grassroots bodies, must be maintained and strengthened during this process.

Negotiators must remember that women are more than 53 percent of the voting population. A transition process that does not consider their safety, their equality and their unique experience of racial and gender discrimination will be inherently flawed.

● Rhoda Kadalie is gender equity coordinator and Amy Biehl a Fulbright scholar at the University of the Western Cape.
Bills on women's rights, set to become law this year.
Mum's the word for women delegates

SOMEPeople might say the multiparty talks are delaying the new South Africa, not hastening its birth, but some of the delegations are at least trying.

After all, the Government has an Indian woman as a delegate to the Negotiation Council, one Xhosa heartland is led by a ginger-haired lawyer, and an Afrikaans-speaking ex-Minister in the Rhodesian Cabinet speaks for the Tawanas.

Rowan Cranje, a Minister under Ian Smith and under President Lucas Mangope since 1982, is — on the conference floor at least — effectively the sole voice of the Bophuthatswana delegation. The Ciskei team is similarly partially mute, leaving the talks to Mick Webb, a King William's Town lawyer, who has been an adviser to Oupa Gqozo ever since the brigadier seized power.

At the other end of the horseshoe-shaped conference floor, Devgie Govender — Minister of Education and Culture in the House of Delegates — sits alongside Roelf Meyer with heavyweights like Tertius Delport and Faan van der Merwe taking a back seat.

There is a similar situation at the adjoining table where Dawie de Villiers has Mathilda Ncobendwane alongside him as a National Party delegate. She is involved with the National Party in Tembisa.

Neither Govender nor Ncobendwane have said a word in two days of talks, but then not many women have. Despite the decision that every party should include one woman as a delegate — "allow the ladies into our meetings", as Webb put it — two delegates sit in the front row at tables and have speaking rights, while advisers sit in the row behind.

On Monday, for instance, 27 men said their say before the first woman spoke up. There was a brief flurry of speeches by women just before lunch, including a tongue-lashing from Sisayi of the National People's Party, who said it was no surprise that little progress had been made when the men, simply talked on and on. That was said without so much as a glance at her NNP teammate, Amiechand Kedani. But after that, as the debate got hotter, the women seemed to go silent.

The only party that has not accepted the instructions on women's delegations is the Conservative Party. That prompted Colin Eglin of the Democratic Party to ask whether the Le Roux on their list was Mrs. or Miss. Even Frank Le Roux, member of Parliament for Breitspan, couldn't resist a chuckle.
World's women meet for equality

By Zingisa Mkhoma and Kaizer Nyatsamba

An international conference starts in Johannesburg today to address the issue of equal rights for women in South Africa near the top of the negotiations agenda.

The conference, co-hosted by the Women's National Coalition and the US-based Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law, runs until Sunday.

Women's National Coalition convener Frené Ginwala, who also heads the ANC's research department, said speakers would include leaders from Australia, Canada, Namibia, Thailand and Uganda.

The theme of the conference is "Ensuring gender equality in the new South Africa".

A major focus is how to mobilise women, said Ginwala who conducted a briefing on the agenda yesterday.

Critical

ANC Women's League spokesman Lindiwe Zulu said the league believed the conference was taking place at a critical time in the country's history, and that women had "a crucial role to play within the climate of political intolerance".

She said: "This morass of fear, hatred and destruction is rendered even murkier by the senseless attacks on white civilians and children, and the ANCWL strongly condemns such actions."

"We believe such actions feed directly into the programmes of the ultra-right wing and keep the fires of racial hatred burning," said Zulu.

The president of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Dr Glenda Simms, told the briefing yesterday that South African women needed to learn how to deal with diversity.

Simms said: "Just because you have diversity in this country, does not mean you cannot get around specific issues."

"This is not about loving each other; it's about the removal of systematic racism — it's about an equitable society."
Raw deal for half world’s population

By CHARLENE SMITH

WOMEN form half the global population and toil through two-thirds of the world’s working hours—but they earn only a tenth of what men do, own a tenth of the property and constitute two-thirds of the world’s illiterate population.

These figures were presented at a conference on “Ensuring Gender Equality in the New South Africa” in Johannesburg this weekend by Sutteera Thomson, director of Thailand’s Genderwatch Group.

The conference, organized by the Women’s National Coalition, a lobby group representing South Africa’s major women’s organizations, heard speakers from every continent present papers outlining issues on women’s rights in their nations. (See story)

Gleeda Strauss, president of the Canadian government’s Advisory Council on Women, said that when the council was mooted in 1969, it was noted that “ending discrimination against women was a long-term project of social transformation”.

Canada now has among the most progressive women’s rights communities in the world. Despite most countries having clauses in their constitutions or laws prohibiting sex discrimination, there is not a country where women receive the same pay for the same work as men.

Thailand is experiencing an economic boom and women predominate in industries which generate more than the country’s budget annually. However, two-thirds of women receive half the minimum wage set by the government, and many of those women work 16-hour days.

In Canada, where 56 percent of undergraduates are women, they still earn only 70c to every dollar earned by men.
future decisions

SAA women demand a voice, in

ACTION

ACTION
WOMEN have served the ANC's guerrilla army well — but many feel patronising male attitudes kept them out of the military frontline.

City Press spoke to a number of these brave women.

Jackie Molefe left the country at the tender age of 17 in 1964.

She was recruited for military training just after Nelson Mandela had been sentenced.

“I was very young,” she said, “but I knew exactly what I was doing although I did not know that I would be gone for such a long time.”

Jackie's parents had been involved in the ANC since she was a child. She says: “I was always tormented by seeing my father — the head of the family — being insulted and searched by young white cops.”

She left with a group of 10 men. When they reached Dar es Salaam she discovered there were three women among 1000 men. At Odessa in the then Soviet Union where they were trained, the number of women rose to 11.

She said: “Because of the ratio of men to women, bad feeling ran high and sometimes the men would insult us and call us names. Of course some women did flirt a lot and this sometimes led to fights.”

There were fears among the leadership that the presence of women would cause confusion in the camps.

The women had worked out a code of conduct “to ensure our survival because we saw no life outside the movement”.

We had to work together to make sure that our presence in the army was not disruptive, and, with time, attitudes changed and we began to gain the respect of our male comrades.”

After training — she specialised in communication — the women were fit and strong and they expected to be sent to SA for combat.

“Unfortunately women were mostly sidelined into clerical jobs,” she said.

However, in 1977 Jackie was approached by the late Moses Mahbida to join the Revolutionary Council and head the MK’s communications department. She joined as the only woman.

“I am not ashamed to say that I used my department to uplift women. I helped establish the Ruth First Training Centre in one of the camps in Angola.”

In 1980 she became a member of the ANC NEC. She is still head of communications. “I think a future army needs a code of conduct in which sexism will be punishable,” she said.

“Phindi” was 15 when she left the country in 1980. She wanted to go for military training but was persuaded to go to school first. She went to the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania where she completed her O-levels. Then she worked for a year as a clerk in the treasury department.

In 1985 she finally joined MK and worked so hard that after a while she became an instructor.

She was then sent to Lesotho in 1987 and in 1988 she entered SA to work with underground structures of the Special Operations Unit. She managed to hide herself so well that she was able to find a job in Hillbrow.

She was arrested and prosecuted for possession of a pistol in 1991 after Askaris tracked her down.

She said that after she was released she was watched closely.

She now works for the ANC head office.

Dipuo Mvelase left home in 1981 at the age of 17. She had only attended Cosas meetings but through her activist boyfriend, Vincent, she read banned literature.

She also attended Saturday school and was taught by ANC spokesman Carl Niehaus.

The hanging of ANC guerrillas was the final factor.

In 1986, she left Angola in 1986, worked underground in Botswana for a while and then entered SA at the beginning of 1989 to work with Operation Vula. She was arrested with others in 1990. They eventually received indemnity in 1991.

Dipuo now works for the ANC's department of political education.

Like Jackie, she feels sexism prevented women cadres from taking part in the combat.

Daisy Fortune Chiloane was also 17 when left home in 1978. She had been a pupil activist at Tlatuka High School in Kwathema when she was arrested.

After a week in police cells where she said “they beat us like hell” she was asked to turn state witnesses by the cops. She agreed — even though she did not know who she was to give evidence against — and was released. She then left to join the ANC in exile.

She was furious deep inside and opted to train immediately.

In Angola, during cultural activities, it was discovered that she could sing and she was seconded to Amandla, the ANC's cultural group.

That was in 1980 and she stayed with the touring group for years.

Daisy fell pregnant and had to leave the war zone in Angola to start a new life in Tanzania where there were facilities to raise kids.

She is back with Amandla which intends touring the mines — for like the struggle, the show must go on.
Who will man the ministry?

While it's easy to predict who's going to be the next president of the country, candidates for a future women's minister are more hotly debated.

- Siphiwe Mfeka of the African National Congress' Research Department is a favourite. Mfeka is a lawyer by training and the convenor of the Women's National Coalition. She has shown herself to be unafraid of rapping the boys on the knuckles when they ignore the interests of the sisterhood.

- Lydia Kompe of the Women's Rural Movement, is also a frontrunner. Described as a "woman with oomph", she has worked for decades with dispossessed communities with the Transvaal Rural Action Committee. Kompe recently turned her attention to organising women in rural areas into self-help projects and into the Women's Coalition. "She has a strong sense of the feelings of grassroots women," was one comment.

- Zanele Mbeki was nominated because she is concerned with "social and economic upliftment". As the head of the Women's Development Bank, she also has the skills to wring money from depleted state coffers. Mbeki is Thabo Mbeki's wife (not that this is important). As he's tipped to be future minister of foreign affairs, the state would not have to fork out money on two ministerial residences and entourages — they could share.

- Mampielo Ramphele was also nominated. Her seminal works on poverty and on policy initiatives to combat it, are her most glowing references. But this woman also knows how to break through glass ceilings — she is the first black woman vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town. "She is the sort of person who will ensure she is accountable to women," said her nominee.

- Although young, Pregs Govender, project manager of the Women's National Coalition, is another candidate. A former official of the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union, she has tackled her WNC job with the vigour of a seasoned unionist and is intent on breathing life into such oft-touted concepts as "empowerment" and "grassroots control". Govender helped establish the Worker's College, South Africa's largest permanent training institution for workers and unionists, at the University of the Western Cape.
Women’s tears. Unhappiness in many parts of the world. Time to repent, says Gospel project.

By Stelio Kooma

Women’s tears...
Ministering to women's needs

SISTERS have decided to minister to themselves — at a conference earlier this month, women's delegates decided to lobby for a women's ministry. Their demand was fuelled by the technical committee membership lists of the negotiating forum announced on the same weekend. Of the 43 members, only five are women. And there are no women on the constitutional committee.

"I am ashamed of my organisation," said the African National Congress' Frene Ginwala at the conference. "How are a bunch of men going to produce a non-sexist constitution?"

Only after a long struggle was it agreed earlier this year that each of the 26 teams negotiating the country's future should have at least one woman member.

About 200 women representing business, academia, labour and the rural areas met a fortnight ago to map out a parliamentary road. They decided that a women's ministry would free resources and give gender issues clout. A women's minister would sit in the cabinet and be at the cutting edge of policy and law-making.

But, many delegates were concerned that gender issues would be "ghettoised" by creating a separate ministry.

They warned, that, depending on the commitment to this ministry, it could end up being under-funded and under-staffed.

It could also go the way of the women's ministry in Malawi, which is little more than Kamuzu Hastings Banda's entertainment wing, serving tea and embellishing public functions.

For some conference delegates, therefore, women's desks in government departments and in regional and local government structures are a popular option. "These desks would look after women's interests within a department," said Cathy Alberts of the Gender Research Project at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Other likely mechanisms in a new government are state-funded parliamentary committees — to check all draft legislation for its gender sensitivity — and independent advisory councils to research, review and report on gender issues to parliament.

But, as Ginwala says, these "beautiful models" are useless without enforcement mechanisms. Means of enforcement include an equal opportunities commission which would investigate discriminatory employment practices, a human rights commission to probe human rights abuses and an ombudsman.

Legal enforcement could be assisted by clauses guaranteeing women's equality in a Bill of Rights, a women's charter and a women's litigation fund, which would fund test cases.

These are lofty concepts which need to be debated. More essential is the building of a strong women's movement, says Pregs Govender, the project manager of the Women's National Coalition.

"There has not been a sustained, nationally co-ordinated movement focusing on gender-specific issues, like violence against women and the right to control one's own body," she says.

Instead, women have organised around political issues. The 1956 march on the Union Buildings and the Congresswomen who stopped to shame policemen bulldozing shacks are etched in the country's history books.

To break the silence of women in the negotiations process, the WNC has started a campaign "to help women identify their needs and to make an impact on the constitution-making process."

It is an ambitious project, trusted as
A fresh view of Chris Hani

By Sizakele Koma

We have heard of Chris Hani the MK commander, the Latin master and peacemaker.

The latest issue of Speak magazine tells us about Chris Hani the feminist.

The heart-warming story, as told by colleague and friend Thenjiwe Mbitinto of the SACP, again opens our eyes to the nature and character of the man who was branded a militant.

Among the things Mbitinto says in the article is that Hani was one of the very few leaders in the ANC, SACP and MK who actively fought against women's oppression; he was a member of the SACP's gender committee, which he insisted should not consist of women only, and he also shared chores with his wife and children at home.

Other informative stories in the issue include the contributions of the women of Eritrea, East Africa, in a war that defeated the Mengistu Haile Mariam regime of Ethiopia and the plight of women and children caught in the crossfire in a brutal war in the Natal Midlands.

Are stokvels meant to bring together women for gossip and fun? No, say members of these groups in another story. They have managed to pay off their hire purchase debts and bury their dead through the financial assistance of others in the group.

Planning on leaving that oppressive, lying, cheating man you married? Helpful information on how you should go about it is also part of the June package of Speak magazine.
The big clean-up
NEWS FEATURE  Tshepo Khumbane urges mothers to rely o

HOLLOW TALKS: Multiparty indaba may not improve things:

THE talk about a new democratic order in South Africa means very little to women. The point is that even the multiparty talks, presently thrashing out a new dispensation for the country, may not have the will and the capacity to improve the fortunes of the country's women.

It is women themselves who must, take up the cudgels and relentlessly fight on to better their lot.

One such woman who has found a means in the battle for self-sufficiency is Ms Tshepo Khumbane.

Khumbane's life centres around teaching rural women to fend for themselves, thereby removing the dependency syndrome that usually makes them "back in the sun and look for afield to their men to bring food parcels and money from the cities".

Often those food parcels and money are not forthcoming, what with the husbands having "settled" with their more sophisticated concubines in the big cities of gold and misery.

"Instead of the rural women weeping and complaining that "uhaba ka Sipho" has not been home for years, Khumbane helps them realise that they can do something for themselves.

How does she do that?

Grow vegetables
She teaches women in rural areas to grow vegetables and raise chickens. What they do not consume they may sell in order to swell their coffers.

Employed by the Environmental and Development Agency, Khumbane also strives to uplift people's lives in the rural areas by making them realise they are people with dignity, deserving of respect. She retaimes them in old community methods, dismantled by the Government through its resettlement policies which decimated African existence in the rural areas.

Just as it is important to educate the rural folk about self-sufficiency, women must be sensitised about their independence, that they are simply not appendages of men. They have equally an important role to play in a society. The challenge facing women today is: should they accept that they are living in a society that is man-made, or should they say men are just as dependent on them as women are to them? As an attempt to address those issues, the women want to establish if the current negotiations will pass laws that will give them equal status to men.

Faced with the knowledge that they account for 53 percent of the total population, women refuse to accept that they are entitled to less in education and training. In the workplace women still occupy 17 percent of the positions available in the middle management.

They are also paid less than men in most sectors. For every rand earned by a man, a woman doing a job of equal value only earns 60 cents.

These, and other contentious topics about women's fight to correct the injustices may be viewed on TSS at 9pm tonight.
Gender bias continues, says UN

WASHINGTON. — United Nations researchers are gathering information about the world's women, and so far have not found a single country that treats its women better than its men.

Only 33 countries now keep enough gender-based statistics to enable a comparison to be made, says Mr. Mahbub ul Haq, head of the UN project that chronicles human development.

Despite the struggle among women for equality, changes in national laws and other efforts to lessen the incidence of gender bias, "no country treats its women as well as it treats its men," says the UN report, to be released this week.

In its conclusion, the study shows that some countries do much better than others in giving equal treatment to women.

Among the lowest rated is Japan, which is ranked No. 1 in the UN's 1993 human development index, but drops to No. 27 when gender differences are considered.

Other countries that decline in the index are Switzerland, Canada, Germany, the United States, Hong Kong, South Korea, Luxembourg and Sri Lanka.

The report said that if women's unpaid housework were counted as product output in national income accounts, global output would be 30-35% greater.

Saps-AP
Two super women

SHINING STAR Efforts of a retired Virginia nurse whose hard work bears fruit at last.

By Sizakele Kooma

MELODING Day Care Centre in Virginia, Orange Free State, is among the best in the country, thanks to retired nurse Nnuku Radebe.

For almost four decades, Radebe fought for a decent day care centre to be established in the township of Meloding, tackling first the administration board, then the town council until she succeeded with the provincial administration in 1977.

But securing a site did not signal an end to her battles.

Radebe wanted a model day care centre. This meant she had to have a lot of money and recruit the best staff in the area. Undaunted by the demands of her dream, she started working. It did not take long before she secured a fund-raising number and was consulting several companies and mining institutions for help.

The massive face brick structure, which sits on a large stand that not even the large variety of colourful playing equipment can cover, is the first thing you notice when you enter the township.

The interior is just as striking. The four classrooms, in which the children are having their afternoon nap, are bright and cheery, with toddler artwork hanging on the walls, theme tables for individual groups standing in one corner and an assortment of toys strewn on the floor.

Meloding Day Care Centre smacks of affluence. The care and education of 260 children is in the capable hands of eight teachers, three cooks, two cleaners and a gardener.

But unlike most wealthy people, who would rather hoard their riches than share with the less privileged, the school services 18 play groups in the nearby squatter camps.

The play groups were also established at Radebe’s initiative. When the shack communities sprang up around the township not so long ago, she realised the need for keeping the young off the streets. Two years ago she started with pioneer groups and established the others last year.

The play groups, run by volunteers who were trained at Meloding, operate on a daily basis for two hours. The children are given a meal, also supplied by Meloding, followed by activities that include singing and drawing.

LOST GENERATION Centre is place of hope for youth of trouble-torn Natal town

By Sizakele Kooma

IMBALI Rehabilitation Centre in Maritzburg is a hive of activity — from youths singing and dancing on the stage to those huddled in a corner, deeply engrained in what a female tutor is saying.

These youths are part of what is sometimes termed South Africa’s “lost generation” — children who have killed or witnessed death, who have had little or no education, who sit idle in the townships because they are unemployable and who bear the deep scars of physical and emotional trauma suffered as a result.

Creative writing skills
They are at the centre to learn drama, music and creative writing skills — activities their teachers and committee members of the programme hope will not only act as therapy but will bring together all the youths in the township and act as part of the solution to the violence in the country.

All this because a youth once tried to kill Ruth Bhengu.

Bhengu, a handicrafts and sewing trainer with the Wilgespruit Fellowship, has escaped unharmed. Anyone would have been satisfied with survival but not Bhengu.

“I went back and bought out the boy who had fired at me. I wanted to know why he did it and how he would have felt had he died,” Bhengu said.

“The violence in our townships has been worrying me for some time. I thought he might be able to help me understand why our youth has become destructive.”

Volunteered to work

Mdn Mgwenya, the gunman who was then 23 and a B Comm student at the University of Natal, could not offer Bhengu any insight — but he volunteered to work with her.

“I wanted to be sure that the project would be run in a way that would benefit the youth, that it would be sustainable and that we would not be seen as commercialising their misery.

“Most of all, I hoped our efforts would change the culture of violence that had developed in the township.

“I wanted to help our youth engage in positive activities, so that they would not misdirect their anger.”
PEOPLE'S LIVES  
Radebe celebrates after a four-decade

**woman of**

**the month**

"The massive face brick structure is the first thing you notice when you go into the township."

Nnuku Radebe

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"Jburg's 'lost generation' from the depths of despair"

28

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**woman of**

**the month**

"These youths are part of what is sometimes termed South Africa's 'lost generation'"

Ruth Bhengu

28/5/93 (SSSA)

Sunder
Quest for woman power in politics

By Sizakele Koma

They might be a long way from forming their own political party but the least South African women can do for themselves is to put into power a political party that is serious about gender issues.

This sisterly advice was given by international speakers at a workshop on educating women for elections, attended by 200 women from 75 community-based and political organisations.

The message carried through in the speeches of the women from Uganda, the Philippines, Chile and Sweden, was that it is not just enough to teach women how to vote. It was equally vital to equip women to vote for a political party that had high on its agenda issues that tug at their heart-strings.

“The sex struggle is part of the race struggle. Women’s issues must therefore be an integral part of the electoral agenda,” said Ugandan Miria Matembe.

She said women should evaluate individual political parties by what they say in their manifestos. The exercise will ensure that whatever party they vote for will have the rights of women entrenched in the constitution.

The message from Filipino women, brought by Aida Santos, was that women should build their own electoral machinery. They should structure their agenda in a way that will help them infiltrate the male-dominated political struggle.

“Women must not be content with just being ‘appendages’. They should recognise their right to shape the nation and their responsibility to the coming generations. They should also realise that it is not enough to be political activists, yet being marginalised from the political processes,” Santos said.

One way of achieving their goal would be by pushing that women’s issues be accepted as national issues. Women’s issues, she said, use issues of gender, development, human rights and liberation. The four issues which were considered national issues also related to women in that they touched on power, access and control. They were about land, water, education and employment. They affected the rights of women as persons and individuals to just and human lives. They stated that no country could be liberated until its people are free. Lena Naslund of Sweden said South African women should beware of politicians who reduced women to hobbies, who believed they were the masters and use a language they do not understand. “Women should be made aware that the decision on the party that will win the elections will be determined by the women vote, since women make up 54 percent of the total population. They should realise their power to choose a party that will represent their interests,” Naslund said.
Plan to encourage women to take part in sport.

By Francoise Gault
Women's health a priority

Improving women's health must be a development priority as the health of future generations of South Africans depends on the well-being of their mothers.

This was said by the head of the Department of Nursing at the University of the Western Cape, Prof Caroline Ntsane, at the annual general meeting of the Planned Parenthood Association (PPA).

"The problems of women are inextricably caught up in the overall development process, and therefore should be addressed at that level," Prof Ntsane said.

Sapa
Cosatu general secretary Mr Jay Naidoo with his son Kami at the launch of the National Child Care Campaign, are flanked by children from crèches in the CBD.

Cosatu crusade

By Pearl Majola

THE choice is difficult for most mothers who find themselves with sick children on working days. Either stay home and lose the day's earnings or go to work and worry the whole day.

As more women enter the job market, the issue is more than taking leave because of sick children.

It also involves the availability of affordable child care facilities which will ensure that, while parents are at work, their children receive medical care.

In recognition of the importance of child care rights, Cosatu has officially launched its National Child Care Campaign which calls on the private sector and the Government to provide subsidised child care facilities.

The campaign, which has been going on for about a year, also calls on employers to provide 20 days' paid leave for parents to take care of their children's needs, like that of education and health.

"This campaign is about persuading employers and Government to place aside resources to properly edicate children at child care stage so that they have a good foundation before entering formal school," says Cosatu general secretary Mr Jay Naidoo.

"Ultimately the campaign is about free and compulsory pre-school education for all children," Naidoo says.

"The provision of child care facilities means more than just allowing parents to do their work without worry about children," says Cosatu's Gender Programme co-ordinator, Ms Dorothy Mokgola.

"It also means that women, who have always carried the responsibility of rearing children, can get time to do and get involved in other activities.

"Another important aspect of this campaign is that it will create awareness that child care is in fact not only the women's responsibility. Parenting involves both mothers and fathers," she says.

The campaign's objectives have been divided into short, medium and long term.

"The immediate goal will be the paid leave for school meetings, children's health and other needs. The medium term aim is to get the Government and the employers to make provision for facilities near the workplace or support established facilities in communities where the employer's majority of workers live." The long-term aim is to involve the State, political, civic and other organisations in setting up good and affordable facilities," Mokgola says.

According to Cosatu, some employers — particularly in the motor industry — have responded positively to the call.
Workers get a bum deal

By FRED KHUMALO

WOMEN workers at a Natal poultry farm do not wear panties on the chicken breeding premises — and that's by official decree.

The stark naked truth came to light following the dismissal of about 400 workers when they demanded they be allowed to wear panties.

To check that rules are not broken, workers say male supervisors feel the women's bottoms daily.

National Chick Farms managing director Mike Walne said rules requiring workers to change clothes were standard throughout the poultry industry as clothing could be a possible source of germs.

Unusual

Walne found it surprising that workers were now questioning the unusual dress rule, which had been in operation for 12 years.

The Food and Allied Workers' Union confirmed the union had intervened and was demanding the unconditional reinstatement of the workers.

But the workers have refused to go back until the company agrees to scrap the unusual dress code.

On entering the breeding premises, the women take off their clothes — panties and shoes included — and get into specially designed short pants.

The Fawu official said the company rule was that supervisors were entitled to examine the women's private parts to ascertain the absence of the essential underwear.
Domestics bill

skirts wage issue

PROPOSED legislation for domestic workers in South Africa has introduced a range of minimum job rights, but has skirted the issue of minimum wages, saying that they should be negotiated between employer and employee.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Bill, tabled in Parliament this week has not yet been passed and no date has been set for its implementation.

The rights will include a basic 46-hour working week and maximum overtime of three hours a day, or 10 hours a week. In the case of childminders or people caring for the sick, handicapped or frail, this can be increased to 14 hours.

Overtime rates will be “time-and-a-third” in the case of hours worked over the daily or weekly minimum.

Workers will be entitled to paid public holidays on New Year’s Day, Good Friday, Ascension Day, Workers’ Day, Republic Day, Day of the Vow and Christmas Day.

The proposed legislation says an employer has to give the domestic worker at least 14 consecutive days’ leave on full pay for every 12 consecutive months of employment.

Provision is also made for sick leave, and pregnant domestic workers may not work in the four weeks before the expected date of confinement, and for eight weeks afterwards. Sapa
A new resource booklet says employers must take responsibility for stopping sexual harassment at work, reports STAN VUYO SUKO:

THE GROPE, the leer and the lewd suggestion are all part of the job for many women workers. But the days of men taking advantage of their "favourite fringe benefits"—their female colleagues—may be numbered.

Working women frequently suffer in silence. Young women, particularly, feel too threatened to speak to managers who are usually men, and who see sexual harassment in the workplace as a non-issue.

A recently published booklet, "Sexual Harassment in the Workplace", stresses that companies have a major responsibility in preventing such behaviour.

Compiled jointly by the University of South Africa (Unisa) Women's Studies Department and the ANC Women's League, the booklet shows employers how to formulate policy on sexual harassment and create an environment in which it will not be tolerated.

A survey conducted in May 1992 revealed that only six percent of companies surveyed had a formal policy on harassment. Previous research had shown that 76 percent of women said they had been harassed at work.

At the same time only two percent of men surveyed had been harassed by woman colleagues or superiors.

Ms Truida Prekel, a director of the Women's Bureau, said the biggest stumbling block to ending the harassment is that 60 percent of men would never consider such action and therefore cannot comprehend that any of their friends would do so either.

"Because they're judging other men's action by their own, the question of sexual harassment becomes a non-issue for them."

Harassers, she said, fell into three categories: The man who thinks it is a macho thing to do and considers it a joke, the man who uses it as a power game to put down women who are "becoming successful" and the "serial harasser" who has a psychological problem and needs help.

Prekel warned that 30 percent of men harass women at work and do not want their companies to adopt a firm policy to prevent it: "They certainly wouldn't want to be cheated out of their favourite fringe benefit."

Although sexual harassment is not yet against the law in South Africa, employers can be held liable. They may be convicted of an unfair labour practice if they fail to create adequate channels for complaint, or if they knew of such cases and failed to take preventative action.

In 1987, at the first reported hearing of a sexual harassment case in South Africa, the Industrial Court ruled: "An employer undoubtedly has a duty to ensure that employees are not subjected to this form of violation within the workplace."

Ms Letitia van Dyk, head of the industrial relations department at Associated Banks of South Africa, says her company tackled the problem seriously after a regional manager was accused of sexual harassment.

"He was dismissed after an internal disciplinary hearing. Now he's trying to sue us through the Industrial Court for unfair dismissal."

"This wouldn't have happened if we had a formulated policy. We just have to try to handle the problem, using labour guidelines from other spheres."

Ms Delisele Dludla, a Unisa Business School lecturer, said: "I think every one has their limits and can tell when office banter has a menacing undertone. Assert your rights at the beginning."

The solution is for working women to approach management to draw up a policy dealing with sexual harassment.

Women who have been harassed may be more vulnerable and less confident. They may resign without broaching the issue, or may become less productive.

Ms Lindiwe Zulu, ANC Women's League media relations officer, said: "The solution is to educate black women about their rights. Too much energy has gone into politics, and women's rights have been ignored. Women need to take a stand."

The booklet warns that unchecked sexual harassment could lead to:

- an intimidating or hostile environment;
- lower productivity;
- poor quality performance;
- low staff morale;
- absenteeism; and
- a bad public image for the company.

In conclusion the booklet tells companies that sexual harassment is no longer an office joke.

"It's damaging to both victims and employers and offenders should be told in no uncertain terms ... Hands off!"

AH, BILL—CAN YOU REACH TO SWAP THIS FOR THAT?

EQUAL OPPS

SOUTH 19 - 23/6/1993

355A
Steel men face crunch

By Ike Motsapi

MEMBERS of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa are today expected to attend countrywide lunch-hour report-back meetings on salary negotiations with the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA. Mr Les Kettle, general secretary of Numsa's national bargaining forum, said yesterday that 12 meetings would be held at factories and plants.

"The union decided to inform its members about the present salary negotiations with management," said Kettle. "We informed the bosses about our intended action and they have not objected," said Kettle.

Seifsa is offering a six percent wage increase which it said was a final offer and Numsa has rejected it because it says it is far below the inflation rate. "We demand that management reconsider its offer. We made it clear to them during our initial talks that we want salary increases to be more than the inflation rate," said Kettle.

Seifsa executive director Mr Brian Angus said the employers had made a final offer of six percent and that there was no movement on the issue. "We will be meeting with the unions within the next few days to discuss their proposals.

"Seifsa has also urged employers to have consultations with the worker representatives regarding the proposed report-back meetings," said Angus.
Hell hath no fury like a ‘talks’ token

SPITTING SPIDERS Focus is on male darlings but women delegates are ignored.

By Sizakele Kooma

This week women delegates of eight political parties at the Negotiating Forum came out fuming against what they view as a deliberate attempt to discourage them from effective participation in the talks.

Actively involved

At a meeting organised by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a German development association, the NP’s Sheila Camerer, CP’s Avril Budd, DP’s Martha-Anne Finnemore, ANC’s Baleka Kgotsitile, PAC’s Monikoko Moloi, IFP’s Faith Gasa, Kobie Gouws of the AVU and Nomusa Nkala from the Transkei government told a predominantly female audience that they were not at the talks to give support to the men. They were as actively involved in the process as darlings of the camera Roelf Meyer and Cyril Ramaphosa.

They blamed the SABC crew for never focusing the lens on women when they spoke and journalists for not soliciting their comment on issues discussed at the forum.

When Roelf Meyer or Cyril Ramaphosa speak, the camera zooms in on them. But when a woman does, it races through the room. The viewers see this and think we are just passive companions of male delegates,” Faith Gasa said.

This and the subtle unimportance attached to their male colleagues to their role at the forum, the women say, adds to their many frustrations.

said Kobie Gouws: “It has been a bewildering experience. We have been given the responsibility of shaping the country’s future. But sitting next to the men, hearing and seeing what goes on, I can’t help but think that they view us as tokens.

“Some parties change their women delegates like they change underwear. It gives the impression that their only interest is to have a woman in their delegation. They are not concerned about her input in the process.

“The fact that women were not present at Codesa 1 and 2 puts them at a disadvantage. We are finding it difficult to catch up and keep up.”

Meaningful involvement

Baleka Kgotsitile said commitment to meaningful involvement of women in the talks could be shown by including them in the current all-male planning committee and giving them a chance to chair council meetings by rotating the seat.

She said the “crawling” pace of talks was also frustrating for her as a woman and a negotiator: “Sometimes I think we forget on whose behalf we are there.”

Despite their frustrations and the negative vibes they pick up from their male counterparts, the women feel the contributions they have made at the forum are laudable.

“We need continuous empowerment. We want women to feel that we are doing it for them. Talk of us being non-participatory is discouraging,” said Gasa.

Women delegates, said Finnemore, need mentors, training and evaluation, which the process of appointment did not provide.
‘Sex equality’ bill is diluted

Political Staff

GOVERNMENT proposals for the legal equality of men and women have been watered down, with key elements being withdrawn from a bill tabled yesterday.

The first draft, released in February, provided for joint guardianship over children by parents and for the removal of provisions that allow the Defence Force to dismiss women who become pregnant.

Woman boxers

The new draft bill, now called the Promotion of Equality Between Men and Women Bill, also omits a clause that would eliminate the marital power of husbands over women in the Natal Code for black people.

The proposal to scrap the ban on women becoming professional boxers and wrestlers has also been dropped.

The original Abolition of Discrimination Against Women Draft Bill was released in February by the Minister of Justice, Mr Kobie Coetsee, for comment.

Some key provisions dropped

Although he said then that he hoped all three women’s rights bills would be submitted to Parliament this year, two are still being considered by the Joint Committee on Justice and the third has still to be tabled.

The original bill provided for both parents of children born during a marriage to have guardianship and custody.

At present, husbands hold guardianship, and usually retain it after divorce, but the provision for guardianship to be held jointly has been dropped in the new bill.

The original bill proposed the deletion of provisions in the Defence Act for the dismissal of women if they fell pregnant, regardless of whether they were married or not, but this clause also is not in the new bill.

The first draft proposed the scrapping of the marital power in the Natal Code that puts black women in the legal position of minors, but this clause is not in the new bill.

The original bill removed the ban on women becoming professional boxers and wrestlers, but the new bill does not.

The Department of Justice said the object of the new bill was to promote equality between men and women.

This year

It also said the bill provided for the removal of the remaining vestiges of the husband’s marital power.

Senior Justice Department officials are confident the women’s rights bills will be passed later this year.

Opposition groups say the government is using its apparent support for women’s rights to promote the image of the National Party, and that it is not serious about the bills becoming law.
Easing others’ hardships

woman of the month

By Sizakele Kooma

Refaele Serote’s protected and privileged upbringing meant she was never aware of the hardships other people faced in life.

It was not until she went to university and eventually got married that her eyes were opened to a world full of poverty and disease.

In her quest to find out why and how people live in deprivation she wound up working as a volunteer for the South African National Council for Alcohol and Drug Dependence and Nicro in 1983.

Four years later she had established a sexually transmitted diseases clinic called Sex Health Education at the Alexandra Clinic where she worked as a public relations officer. She had also taught herself about AIDS and homosexuality.

An invitation by the World Health Organisation to an AIDS conference in Cameroon in 1989 exposed her to alternative education programmes she could adopt in setting up an AIDS project in South Africa.

In 1989 she established the Township AIDS Project in Soweto — the first “pure” AIDS organisation.

The TAP, she says, started in the boot of her car. Within a year it was operating from five offices at Ipeleng, Soweto. Serote, the director, was working with a social worker and three educators, who were giving workshops to young people, women and gays.

In 1992, when she thought the project had grown and could function without her she went back to her own township, Alexandra, where she set up another AIDS project.

“I targeted the squatter community because information on the disease was not reaching them. Most of them were illiterate and couldn’t read media reports that provided information. They could also not hear about it on TV because they did not have electricity,” she said.

Serote operates the project single-handedly but hopes the relationship she is developing with traditional and church leaders will help cover other people she is not able to reach.

Her programme involves workshops held in squatter areas or at her office in Alexan-Kopano where she backs the education with visual material. She also organises weekend seminars.

When she is not educating people on AIDS awareness, Serote counsels AIDS patients and HIV-infected people referred to her by clinics. She also provides food parcels and clothing to the needy and finds scholarships for children. Occasionally she fights for someone dismissed unfairly or helps people find employment.

“In 1989 there were 300 reported cases of AIDS in Alexandra. Today the number has risen to 6 000. There are weeks when I see a new case every day. There is nothing we can do when they have been infected. The only thing I can do is help those who are not infected take care of themselves,” she said.

Serote hopes to set up a service involving the whole Alexandra community in the campaign for Aids awareness. The programme will have counsellors and care-givers in every area with education and information provided in the vernacular.

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Refaele Serote

“I targeted the squatter community because information was not reaching them. Most were illiterate and couldn’t read media reports that provided information. They could also not hear about it on TV because they did not have electricity.”

 angels fear to tread:
Women business skills increasing

THE number of women entrepreneurs in South Africa is increasing — but the "vast reservoir" of potential women business-owners remains largely untapped.

Professor Ronal Erwee of the University of Pretoria Business School says women-owned businesses are "the fastest growing segment of the small business population in the US".

The total number of these businesses in the US increased to 4.4 million by 1997.

By 1997 40% of all new businesses in West Germany were started by women.

No comparable statistics for SA are available, but the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) says about 25% of their clients are women.

The small business units of banks and organisations involved in the training of entrepreneurs say the proportion of women clients is "steadily increasing".

Professor Erwee says many women in SA moving into entrepreneurship "still tend to choose traditionally female activities — mainly due to their current skill base and experience.

"Many prefer" businesses such as general dealers, personal services, manufacturing, clothing, crafts, retail, PRO/marketing, design/art, estate agencies and legal and financial services.

But she says there are major shifts in sectors in which women are now operating.

"Established businesses, women are diversifying into new or related services and multiple ventures as well as imports and exports."

The level of sophistication in applications for loans is increasing. Business plans are clearer and financing is sought from major banks or institutions.

Some are moving from informal sector micro enterprises to larger informal outlets — such as flea markets.

Professor Erwee says many women enter the workforce by starting a business from home after their child-bearing years.

Professor Erwee says a number of business-owners come from the ranks of female "corporate high-flyers."

She says: "Women working in large companies, but in independent units are more likely to establish a small business than those in the large body of the corporation."

These women tend to form consulting companies or specialist services companies.
Women bearing brunt of tough times as firms cut back on staff

□ Union paper says families suffering as mums laid off

SHARON SOROUR Labour Reporter

WOMEN workers are not only bearing the brunt of Africa's economic crisis, but are also victims of government-sponsored structural adjustment programmes put in place to fight economic decline, according to African trade unions.

Women were "especially vulnerable" to economic austerity measures regarded as an integral part of structural adjustment, according to an article in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) newsletter, Union Women On The Move.

"This is because women generally work in low-paid-sector jobs, which are the first to go when administrations are given orders to restructure."

The sectors and jobs targeted for retrenchment were those where most of workers were women, namely, health, education, clerical and secretarial jobs.

Women also played a key role in agriculture and in the informal sector and poor urban and rural families — 30 percent of which were headed by women — were at risk.

The promotion of export-oriented crops had favoured men and neglected the important role of women as producers of subsistence crops, said the article.

"Restrictions on credit has forced many businesses to close down."

According to Ms Lois Stewart, head of the ICFTU's equality department, women were disproportionately affected by structural adjustment and in different ways.

"This is essentially because they do not have the same kind of employment stability as men."

Women workers were usually the first to be retrenched when times were bad.

"Given the relatively low levels of education, the majority of women find it difficult to find new jobs, except perhaps in the precarious informal sector."

what makes life even more difficult is that, when jobs are scarce, employers give preference to male workers."

As more and more women lost their jobs, both family welfare and nutrition began to suffer.

Love and hope are keeping Doulos afloat

STAFF REPORTER

LOVE, hope and the opportunity to serve have drawn volunteers from all over the world to tackle a very complicated job — and finish it.

The volunteers are workers of the Christian missionary organisation Operation Mobilisation or OM, as it has become known among them.

The ship is the Doulos, listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's oldest active passenger ship, and the job is to complete the ship and replace her ancient direct-current electrical network with a modern alternating-current system.

Doulos is Greek for servant and the "heart transplant", as her crew calls the electrical project, is aimed at keeping her at sea to carry on living up to her name.

The dedication of the volunteers, many of whom are in the electrical field, led them to "give up jobs, bibles and the armpit hair..."

And the "approximately 100 Manitoba dollars needed to pay for those who come from donations and the local community."

One of the most" exterior is Johan from Denmark. But he has been there for about the project for a few years."

"Every day between 120 and 125 people come on board to keep the ship pleasure for a few years."

"We will take on board over 100 tons of cable, over 40 and 200 kilometer of wire, all of which has to be removed from the Doulos."

"The ship is the Doulos, listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's oldest active passenger ship, and the job is to complete the ship and replace her ancient direct-current electrical network with a modern alternating-current system."

Doulos is Greek for servant and the "heart transplant", as her crew calls the electrical project, is aimed at keeping her at sea to carry on living up to her name.
The Peace and Sport Foundation is in charge of the World Peace and Sport Forum, which brings together leaders from all over the world to promote global understanding and cooperation. The forum is held annually in Monte Carlo, Monaco, and attracts attendees from all walks of life, including politicians, business leaders, and athletes. The foundation aims to use sport as a tool for peace, bringing people together to bridge cultural and political divides. The forum features panel discussions, workshops, and networking events, with the ultimate goal of fostering a more peaceful and harmonious world. The Peace and Sport Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 by Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the Modern Olympic Games. The organization is based in Monaco and works with partners around the world to promote its mission of using sport for peace.
A bank for the poor — and it works

GRASSROOTS: As the most oppressed group in society, rural woman stand to benefit most from initiatives like the Rural Bank

Loans are paid back at an interest rate of 20 percent. Yunus says this may drop back this year to the original rate of 16 percent.

About 92 percent of bank's loans are to women.

"Firstly, they are the most closeted in Bengali society and had to be helped out of their circumstances, and secondly they are more trustworthy than men. Because they have children to care for they will not spend their money carelessly," Yunus says. The established banking system would never lend money to those without assets, especially women.

"The banks are anti-poor. They make rules, build walls and call them collateral," says Yunus.

"They are anti-women and anti-illiterate. Look at the amount of paper they make people sign."

New loans are approved not by bank officials but by the women, meeting in groups weekly.

Groups of five members of women are residents of the same village. A bank official attends the meeting, but the group members decide who gets the loan.

The Grameen Board is comprised of 12 members. Nine are elected by borrowers, three are members of the government and one is elected by the board.

Besides opposition from established banks, Yunus encountered jealous husbands and religious leaders who thought he was trying to convert the predominantly Muslim women to Christianity.

"When there were two divorce cases in the beginning this worried us. We wanted to give up, and did so for a while. But because of the tremendous need we started again."

Yunus says that once religious groups realised that his efforts are helping women, they have accepted them in their villages.

Grameen may be the only bank in the world to encourage birth control, sanitation and a clean environment as part of its lending policy.

Thus borrowers pledge to "keep our families small", shun child marriage and the "curse" of wedding dowries, "build and use latrines", and "plant as many seedlings as we can during planting season."

For South Africa and other developing countries, the Grameen Bank provides a discussion point or a point of departure, says Yunus.

Yunus says it impossible for commercial banks to set up similar projects as they have a different mind-set.

"This kind of bank needs a different structure than that of commercial banks who require collateral. The Grameen bank works on the basis of a person's character, not on what assets they have," he says.

Already South Africa is among 30 countries which have based similar projects on the Grameen phenomenon.

The Women's Development Bank (WDB) was formed two years ago in South Africa and has already started giving out loans to women in rural areas. The WDB is an affiliate of Women's World Banking based in New York which works through the commercial system using, among others, a direct lending, risk sharing and guarantee programme.

With the population of Bangladesh at 115 million and expected to double in 30 years time, Yunus estimates that about 10 million families need assistance.

So he needs money to grow. But his relationship with aid agencies has been cool.

He says United States Development Aid was actively opposed to the Grameen Bank from the start.

He hopes that with the Clinton administration this will change.

He says Clinton introduced the same system into his state of Arkansas, when he was still governor, after meeting with Yunus. And when he took office he promised he would set up the "Good Faith Fund" because of the inner-city problems, high unemployment and poverty in America.

Clinton has plans to set up 1 000 micro-lending programmes in the US based on the Grameen model, says Yunus.

His relationship with the World Bank is allegedly strained. He was promised $200 million (R600 million) by the World Bank in 1988 but refused to take the money.

"I told them I didn't like the way they did business. After a while they will send their experts and tell you what to do. I tell every donor they have to look thoroughly at the way the bank works, and if they don't like it, they can get out."

However, things are looking up. He would not say with whom he was negotiating, but a sum of $250 million (R750 million) for the next four years is at stake.

And what about help from the government?

"The best way they can help is stay away from us," he laughs.
JOHANNESBURG. — Black women should refuse to sell their labour to those who oppose their interests and buy only from those who support their cause, Mrs Adelaide Tambo said yesterday.

Mrs Tambo, widow of ANC leader Mr Oliver Tambo, who died earlier this year, was addressing the National African Chambers of Commerce annual conference at Sun City in Bophuthatswana on the role of black businesswomen in the new South Africa.

She said black women, who were the largest consumer force and potentially the largest source of paid labour, had to strive for economic empowerment by establishing themselves as an independent economic force.

"We are the largest consumer force. We are potentially the largest source of paid labour, while our stokvels are also a major source of funding for venture capital." Mrs Tambo said women had to translate these latent strengths into an effective voice that should be heard at every level of the production, distribution and banking sectors of the economy.

"We must strive to become producers, distributors, bankers and financiers." — Sapa
Lost Laundry in the Boys' Locker Room
Sisters are going it alone

By BERENG MTIMKULU

THOUGH very little is done to upgrade their business skills, women make better customer-friendly traders, and have more successful businesses than their male counterparts.

This is the view of Mark Peters, a senior consultant and lecturer at Wits University’s Centre for Developing Business. He said despite South Africa’s “entrepreneurial-unfriendly environment” small businesses run by women are mushrooming.

Though the number of female entrepreneurs is on the up, Prof Ronel Erwee of the University of Pretoria’s Business School said the “vast reservoir of potential businesswomen are still ignored.

In an interview with City Press this week, Peters said problems affecting the growth of black women’s businesses are given scant attention at most business conferences.

Women also tend to open small businesses to avoid the high costs of sourcing loans from financial institutions. According to the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC), only about 20 percent of its clients are women.

However Prof Erwee notes that major shifts are evident in women’s focus on business sectors. Established businesswomen are diversifying into new, multiple ventures, especially shifting to imports and exports.

Some are moving from informal sector micro enterprises to larger informal outlets like flea markets.

Though most businesswomen still tend to target their products and services at women, Peters said they have a better understanding of people’s needs, have an ability to pay more attention to detail and male customers feel more at ease when dealing with women traders than dealing with men.

“They’re better at short-term horizons while men tend to look at the bigger picture,” said Peters.

Peters said that businesswomen in rural areas open small business for social survival rather than the urge to have booming businesses. These businesses, he said, do not usually grow.

According to a document compiled by Wits Business School Centre for Developing Business (and attributed to Small Business Opportunities in SA), women develop managerial skills within their businesses.

“New sources of entrepreneurs are emerging. More and more females are starting their businesses with a high success rate,” said the document.
TWENTY-TWO years ago, I was vice-chair of the SRC at Stellenbosch University when the opportunity arose to send a few students to England on an Abe Bailey Travel Bursary.

I was one of those elected by my fellow SRC members. When the names were sent in, we were advised that females were not eligible.

So someone else went. I didn’t like it.

This year, I have experienced exactly the opposite, and I don’t like that either.

A decision was taken — by sufficient consensus — by the planning committee of the Multi-party Negotiation Council that every negotiating party would have two delegates, one of whom had to be a woman.

One of the Afrikaans newspapers featured a cartoon on the front page of this programme of affirmative action, showing a very muscular person, with hairy legs and dressed in women’s clothing, manhandling up to the World Trade Centre. One security staff member muttered to another: “Should we check for steroids?”

We have reached the point where the matter must be discussed openly, since there are lessons to be learnt. My party was not a part of the sufficient consensus.

The decision was largely driven by Inkatha, which proceeds from an Ulundi decision that seats should be reserved for women in all future public bodies, including parliament. This is, in my view, retrogressive, since it perpetuates the marginalisation of women.

Of all the parliaments in the world, only four reserve seats for women: Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Tanzania. But it does not work, according to a Bangladeshi delegate who addressed a recent conference of our National Women’s Coalition.

Clearly, the non-interventionist approach does not work either — only the Scandinavian countries have 30 percent-plus female representation in parliament. Until very recently, the old democracies — the US, Britain and France — have all had only six percent female MPs.

The position is improving, but slowly. One of the problems is structural rather than the product of prejudice: few women with young children can decamp to the legislative capital for part of the year.

The same applies at the World Trade Centre. I am able to be an MP because I live in Cape Town. But I can’t decamp to Johannesburg full-time, so I share our women’s seat with one of the DP’s most senior elected female officers, Marintheatho Finnewore, party leader in the Eastern Cape.

Since few parties or organisations have senior female office bearers, there was a problem to start with.

You run the risk with this sort of arrangement of placing people at a disadvantage, and in the full glare of public scrutiny, instead of the other way around. You run the further risk of inviting unfair questions about their competence and of creating the impression that they are passengers — sidecar riders on a machine driven by men.

It is important to put senior party women in the hot seats because they have been elected to speak for their parties and because they are then already part of the process of policy formation.

It is expecting the impossibly
The sisters are misguided, humourless and dull

The women's movement is boring, humourless and fails to tackle issues that affect women.

Ferial Haffajee reports

The trouble with the women's movement in South Africa is that it is dead boring. Feminism here is caught up in the rhetoric and practices of the 1980s, not the 1950s.

It is too politically correct, too careful of treading on toes, too quaintly and too unexciting to draw in women in any numbers. And it is not talking up the many issues affecting South African women and making the difference it says it wants to.

Sunday's meeting to celebrate Women's Day in Mayfair, near Johannesburg, was a prime example. Hundreds of women came togged in turbans and their party gear, singing and dancing up the stairs to the hall. They were ushered on to grey chairs to listen to speeches from a grey podium, with only the performance of a group of female Umkhonto weSizwe cadres to break the tedium.

The women didn't mind: most were seasoned activists used to nothing else. They were probably like the women who attended Women's Day meetings all over the country - a loyal core who provide the shock troops in mass action.

But the Mayfair meeting, like the women's movement generally, failed dismally to draw in other women from the neighbourhood, the domestic workers and housewives, the secretaries and other professional women who make up the rest of the female population.

The reason that women's campaigns around the country are failing to speak to anybody except the converted is that they do not speak directly to women and lack the excitement, wit and humour that political campaigns need to make them compelling.

And the proof of the pudding is that when the occasional compelling and exciting campaign is planned - like last year's "Reclaiming the Night" candle-light city marches against rape - it is well supported.

It's not that women are apathetic or uninterested. Merle Caminsky, of the Women's National Coalition (WNC), says that when the organisation began setting up tables at shopping centres and other places women go to, the response was phenomenal.

"There were many women who want to volunteer to do work," she says.

But functions like the Mayfair meeting just don't make the grade. It comprised only speeches (with the odd cultural item thrown in), which failed to take a fresh look at the endemic rape, maintenance, discriminatory laws and taxes - issues of immediate significance to ordinary people.

It became an African National Congress electioneering event, with the most popular slogan not "Wathinta abafazi, wathi'nt'imbokho" (You strike a woman, you strike a rock!), but "Now is the time... Vote ANC!"

This, says Rose Telea of Speak magazine, reflects the developing nature of politics in South Africa and the fact that "women's groups tend to work within liberation movements. To have a women's movement, you need to transcend political movements and organisations".

A group of women who represent the Women's Studies Programme at Natal University said: "Too much energy is being devoted to negotiations at Kempton Park and little is being done at grassroots."

But they also insist that things are changing: "A lot is being achieved. Issues are being debated at universities and in organisations, and the media is devoting more space to women's issues."

"The process of turning debates into action is always a slow one," says the Natal University group, adding that "violence makes the process much more difficult".

Fiona Dove, editor of The Shop-Steward, believes that as a result of the freer political environment, "more space has been created for women to start thinking about ourselves and to get more women to start taking up leadership roles."

And Pat Horn, of the ANC Women's League and the WNC in southern Natal, says a much wider range of women is being attracted to women's programmes and activities.

After 1990, and since the establishment of the WNC last year, more women have been taking part in gender campaigns - including politically conservative women and those in the churches who had mostly shied away from activities, Horn says.

But while the WNC, with its wide selection of member organisations, is uniting women, it has to be careful about ruffling the feathers of its multi-ideology, multi-class membership. It tends to shackle itself into issuing "press releases and holding conferences that only educated women go to", said one woman activist.

The WNC - again, an unexciting name for an exciting project - is planning a five-month programme of themes which, on paper at least, promise a little more interest.

Plans are under way for another night march, called "Making the streets safe for women"; for a "women's chain" around the country; and for national candle-lighting ceremonies. "There is space for creativity to see the Women's Charter come alive," says ANC representative Feroza Adam.

But what about a little more humour and cheer? Perhaps South African women should be taking a page out of the book of their counterparts in the United States, where abortion rights activists draped a banner around the Statue of Liberty, proclaiming "No choice, no liberty."

Or the group from the Women's Action Coalition who go around the US telling women how to launch fax attacks on unsuspecting governors, jamming their fax machines with paper loops of thousands of pages lobbying for improved health care or more stringent legislation against sexual harassment and rape.

Or the Mother's Day banner slung on to a perilously high service board at Grand Central Station in New York which read: "Happy Mother's Day... 830-billion owed in child support."

Asha Moodley, of the Azanian People's Organisation, cautions that not all South African women support the demand for abortion rights and paternity leave. But dissenting views should present an opportunity for a stirring public debate that will keep women talking and get the policymakers listening.

In the run-up to elections, there is the opportunity for clever campaigning. Women could say to politicians that votes will come with their commitment to change the maintenance laws, to break the "glass ceiling" which limits women's promotion in the corporate world, scrap discriminatory taxes and inheritance laws, and to give women property rights.

The American women's lobby - with its votes for "Hillary's husband" - was instrumental in the failure of ex-president George Bush to win last year's election.

And it was the rather crude T-shirt women wore at the Republican Convention which said it all. It featured a woman's shaved pubic area and stated: "Read my lips... No more Bush."
A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE WORLD (TRADE CENTRE)
OBILITY OF WOMEN AT NEGOTIATIONS

4 WOMEN APPOINTED TO TECHNICAL BODY

By Sizakele Kooma

ONE of the aspirations of women delegates in the negotiations council was fulfilled this week when four women were appointed to two technical committees that were previously a male reserve.

Stella Sigau of the Cape Traditional Leaders and Cornia Kruger of the Afrikaner Volksunie were elected to the planning committee, while African National Congress delegate Baleka Kgositsile and the Democratic Party's Margaret Finnemore are now in the panel of chairpersons.

The chairperson of the women's caucus and Transkei government delegate, Nomsa Jajula, hailed the move as a sign of vertical mobility of women.

"The four delegates will neutralise the male-dominated system of the council and will play an educative role among their male counterparts," said Jajula.

She said the appointments were a good start and would ensure women's involvement in all the subcouncils of the Transitional Electoral Council and, eventually, full participation in leadership positions of the future government.
New smart needed on workplace quality

NEWS FOCUS
Chief wants female equality off agenda

JOHN PERLMAN
Chief Reporter

THE leopard skin sash is only just visible over the collar of his double-breasted suit jacket. But while Chief Mwelo Nonkonyana may wear the trappings of Xhosa royalty discreetly, he has not kept his belief in traditional values tucked away. Far from it.

On more than one occasion Nonkonyana, chief of the Amabhula clan in Transkei and a member of the Cape Traditional Leaders delegation at the multiparty talks, has accused the Bill of Rights' drafters of failing to give indigenous law and customary values their due place.

"The Bill of Rights as drafted now is taking only one legal system, Roman-Dutch law, and has totally disregarded indigenous legal systems," he says. "We accept that some elements from the Roman-Dutch system should be retained. But if that is the only system then there are problems ahead."

Nonkonyana tries to dramatise this point with an example out of his own life. "I am a traditional leader because I am the first male child, even though I am the fourth-born," he says. "This is because of our system, which is accepted by the people."

"Now our fear is that my son can be successfully challenged for my throne by my daughter, because that Bill says that all forms of discrimination — and it is emphatic on gender — should not be permitted. So now my daughter, who is the first-born, can take my son to court and I have no doubt that my son would come second."

Nonkonyana insists this would tear his clan apart. "It would cause a hell of a lot of havoc because the children born by my daughter would not be of my clan, and as such that link between the royal family and the people would be severed."

Nonkonyana (36) was born in Flagstaff, but "I didn't grow up in the royal family. Instead I was sent to Lusikisiki to live with relatives. I grew up as a commoner, mixing freely with the people. I am not talking about these things from a position of glory. I knew the feeling on the ground because I was part of that," he says.

Nonkonyana, later attended the Jongilizwe college of chiefs and headmen. "We were taught customary laws and practices and I then became interested in law. A law degree at Fort Hare was cut short by boycotts but Nonkonyana completed his studies — including a dissertation "on the conflict between indigenous and Roman-Dutch law" through UNISA while acting as a magistrate, State advocate and then a legal adviser to the Transkei Development Corporation. Somehow tradition has survived the schizophrenia of the migrant labour system. People who uphold their culture will not abandon it because they live in Sandton or a shack somewhere," he says.

Nonkonyana also believes the two systems of law could operate in parallel. "But our biggest problem," he says, "the immediate one, is that they are not even considering the consequences of this present bill of rights."
Getting together ... A proposed new union will help self-employed women, such as hawkers.

Union to help self-made women

Ferial Hassajee

The first phase of establishing a union for self-employed women will get off the ground in October with the launch of an advice centre to assist women hawkers, women who run their own businesses but do not employ anybody and women who do contract work.

The union — which will be launched and named in the middle of next year — is an effort to bring together women who work in those sectors of the economy where there is no union organisation.

Broadly, the union describes its potential membership as "women who earn their living without a regular or salaried job." It will not be for unemployed women or a small business development initiative, as many people have assumed.

The union will bring self-employed women together by setting up a network of members and helping them to get access to skills training, credit and loan facilities, legal assistance as well as health care advice and assistance.

The Association for the Establishment of a Self-Employed Women's Union (Afesewu), which is doing the preparatory work for the union, says the aim is to help women make choices and to negotiate to improve their lot.

Areas they will focus on include earnings, working conditions and securing access to social security benefits like unemployment, sick and maternity benefits for self-employed women. They will also investigate means of providing child-care, housing and food security for their members.

"Although there is no traditional employer-employee relationship in the case of these workers the aim is to make women and their work visible," says the association.

"Negotiations will be done with whoever controls people's working conditions and we will teach women to negotiate for themselves." So women hawkers may negotiate with local authorities, while women who do contract work have to negotiate with contractors. Members will be trained to lobby for changes to restrictive legislation and regulations.

Subscriptions to the union will include a R10 joining fee and will cost R2 a month. A union organiser will start recruiting members when the association opens its advice office in October.

The union will not be expanded to include self-employed men. "The intention is not to deal with the entire informal sector, but to build working class women's leadership," says Pat Horn, a representative of the association.

She says even in unions where women make up the majority of the membership, women leaders do not dominate. Instead, she says, most male hawkers work with women partners and the union will encourage men to send women to join the union.

The union will also have links with the women's groups of existing trade unions and already the organisers have met officials from both the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the National Council of Trade Unions.

They are "very excited" by the idea, says Horn, because this union will be able to organise sectors which are completely unorganised. The formation of the union was inspired by the Self-Employed Women's Association in Ahmedabad, India.
Fight for right is frustrated

WOUNDED WAIT Legislation on things coming with the legislation next month.

"The Equal Opportunities Bill is one of the Bills that would have gone through next month. The Bill was intended to eliminate all discrimination based on gender, marital status and pregnancy. Women could have used it each time they felt any of the three conditions were used to discriminate against them," she said.

Erwee maintains the Equal Opportunities Act would have enabled discrepancies to be redressed in the corporate world. During the first year of its institution in the USA 14 000 women used it to successfully fight discrimination at work. South Africa still had to grapple with many issues concerning women's career development, the professor said. Sexual harassment and equal pay for work of equal value were high on the list.

"Official statistics say women get 90 percent of what their male colleagues earn when they actually get 75 percent. Women are still appointed on a lower salary scale."

Erwee suggested women influence their individual boards of directors to change while waiting for legislation. Corporate awards for progressive companies had also been used to eliminate discrimination. For five years after the establishment of the South African Federation of Businesswomen's Gold Award in 1982 there were few women in senior ranks and discrepancies in salaries, benefits and training. From 1987 to 1992 significant changes became evident.

By Sizakele Kooma

SHOULD WOMEN have allowed the scrapping of the five Bills on sex discrimination to go ahead or was it wiser to wait for a new constitutional dispensation to wipe out all discriminatory laws?

This debate was again brought to the fore at the fourth Working Women's Convention in Johannesburg.

Professor Rosel Erwee of the University of Pretoria is one of the people who feels frustrated that after lobbying women's support for more meaningful changes to be added to the five draft proposals Bills released by the Government at the beginning of the year some "women in high places" decided that legislation should be held back.

"Women's organisations had put a lot of work into repurposing the draft proposals and negotiations were held with the relevant ministers, But some people felt that because they were not consulted, the bills could not be passed," Erwee said.

The ANC Women's League and the National Woman's Coalition were two of the organisations that proposed that the legislation be held back. They felt the move was not honest. They saw it as a National Party ploy for the female vote. Erwee believes blocking the legislation had put a damper on the fight against sexual discrimination at work.

"Women are going to have to wait for a new government, whereas they could have enjoyed a lot of original good
MK women ready for gender battle
WM 17-23/9/93

What role will women have in the new, integrated army?
**Pamela Dube** spoke to women members of MK and the SADF

"That's out. It's patronising. Women should not be made window-dressing in any field," snaps the chief communications officer of Umkhonto weSizwe, Jackie Molefe.

Tough and straight-talking, 50-year-old Molefe is the most senior woman in MK, having been a member for 29 years. Her tart comment was directed at the SADF, whose policy is to not use women in combat.

It underscores one of the hidden snags in the proposed integration of a guerrilla and a regular army. Although Molefe declines to give details, she took direct part in military operations when MK was on a war footing. She and other MK women will not allow themselves to be sidelined into "support mustering" in a future SADF.

Typical of MK's battle-hardened female cadre is soft-spoken 55-year-old Elizabeth Nhlapo, who operated inside the country for 14 years. She was arrested in 1978 for recruiting for the ANC and on her release six years later continued training underground. "It was frustrating being in the country and not being able to communicate with my children. Fortunately they understood."

SADF policy states that women cannot be used "in the face of the enemy." Currently they are confined to traditional women's jobs such as catering, medical services, office work, telecommunications, personnel and public relations, as well as intelligence, radar operations, fire-fighting, logistics and the military police.

They make up 14.7 percent of the SADF's permanent force, says SADF media liaison officer Colonel Margaret Neethling. It took 57 years for the SADF to draft women in the army - the first intake was in 1970. Twenty-three years later there are 156 top-ranking women officers - 136 commandants, 14 colonels and two brigadiers.

Neethling stresses that SADF women have to undergo the same military training as men in similar positions. She experiences no discrimination, but adds: "Due to the operational requirements of the defence force, some practices may seem discriminatory."

The SADF's Lieutenant Talita Nothard is "comfortable" with the current policy: "I feel we are contributing enough as office workers to the army. I wouldn't want to be there in an explosive situation on the ground. In South Africa, traditionally women are not seen as fighters but peacemakers."

Nothard (24) was influenced by a soldier friend to sign up with the SADF in 1987. "But soon after joining, I realised there is nothing I enjoyed better than being a soldier."

The MK women concede that their equality was hard-won: "At first it was difficult for some MK cadres to accept us as equal partners," said Molefe, who joined MK in 1964 at the age of 20, was trained in the Soviet Union and later moved to Tanzania, specialising in communications. "But when they realised that we're as capable as they are, attitudes changed and we fought alongside our male colleagues."

"It also goes back to the policy of the organisation you are working for, in the ANC the gender equality question has long been addressed. Many MK women hold powerful positions."

MK's chief-of-staff, Siphywe Nyanda, agrees that the army should not categorise military duties according to gender. "MK is an army of volunteers, we have no hiring system. Everyone who feels capable of doing the military work was trained regardless of gender. We are not dealing with statistics here, only soldiers."

He cites the case of Thandi Modise of the ANC Women's League, who was arrested in South Africa while carrying out an MK operation during the 1980s. MK women had always taken part in ground operations, and this should continue, Nyanda said.

"Both sets of women agree on one thing: they see a larger role for themselves in the integrated army of the future."

"I suppose it will be an extremely interesting exercise," Nothard says. "I'm aiming for a higher position."

Even though Molefe and Nhlapo do not see themselves taking combat roles in the future because of their age, they are ready to work as advisers.

Molefe says women soldiers should be involved from the outset in drafting policy for the new army. "I would definitely like to see many women footsoldiers in the future."

For her the war for gender equality in her chosen profession is not over. "We have to start fighting for our participation at all levels. We've won the battle with our male colleagues in MK - now we have to fight the repressive regulations of the SADF where women are concerned."
JOHANNESBURG.——
The SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union is implementing an internal campaign to centralise bargaining and empower women.

In a statement yesterday Saccawu said a programme had been drawn up to achieve industrial councils in each of the union's sectors by December.

A committee to investigate the empowerment of women in Saccawu had also been set up. — Sapa
Making history in a man's world
Women bear the brunt of crisis in textile industry

SHARON SOROUR
Labour Reporter

Workers, especially women, are bearing the brunt of a crisis in the international textile and garment industry.

The crisis has been caused by stiff competition between countries for a share of limited and stagnant markets.

General secretary of the Brussels-based International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation, Neil Kearney said 130 countries were competing for a share of the market in 25 to 30 countries.

He was writing in the publication of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Union Women on the Move.

Employer attitudes were hardening, conditions were worsening and workers, mainly women, were losing their jobs.

"This started after the collapse of the superpower structure. Employers have seen this as a signal for a free-for-all."

"In many places companies have created 'states within states' where labour laws and basic human rights count for nothing." he said.

There had been a major upsurge in child labour in Nepal and Bangladesh, he said.

"Some children aged five are working in the carpet industry. They stand to lose their eyesight and their fingers will eventually become deformed."

In a garment factory in Bangladesh a 9-year-old girl was forced to work for 72 hours continuously to meet a production deadline. She was allowed to rest occasionally for a few minutes beside her machine.

The industry employs millions of women in developing countries.

"To keep costs down workers are usually paid below the legal minimum. In the garment sector in Sri Lanka and Indonesia women workers cannot buy enough food with their wages."

"They are dependent on food parcels sent by relatives who live in the countryside."

Mr Kearney said trade unions had to go back to their roots to try to meet the crisis in the industry.
Lobby for gender votes

By Shukri Komaan
Equality 'denied to black women'

LIBBY PEACOCK
Weekend Argus Reporter

CONSTITUTIONAL plans — in which African women living under customary law are excluded from the policy of equality for all women — have been slammed as going against the grain of what a Bill of Rights is all about.

Traditional leaders placed an amendment to a clause before negotiators at the multi-party talks in Kempton Park on Thursday — after a compromise already had been reached on the issue.

Angry Democratic Party MP Dene Smuts told Weekend Argus yesterday: "For 10 weeks, an ad hoc committee sat to resolve the political problems between participants.

"The traditional leaders were part of that committee on this matter and, therefore, they were part of the compromise."

"Then, acting in what can only be described as bad faith, they went against the compromise and, at the eleventh hour, tabled an amendment to the compromise, an amendment which they thought would strengthen their position."

"Because of what we consider bad faith, we think that the traditional leaders now must be given no quarter and that we must not tolerate a compromise."

The system of customary law — in which women were effectively legal minors with no standing in law — was exactly what a Bill of Rights was trying to change.

Ms Smuts said: "They (the traditional leaders) were trying to put themselves beyond the reach of the equality clause by using culture as a framework."

A committee will be sitting again on Wednesday to resolve this issue.

African National Congress negotiator and secretary-general of the National Women’s League Baleka Kgotsiwe told Weekend Argus: "The proposed text is couched in terms that are very problematic. The negotiating council decided to shelve the matter."

Lawyers for Human Rights' women's desk director Ilse Ockers — who is also a member of the National Women's Coalition — said it was a "completely untenable situation" to have the most oppressed sector of society — black women — excluded from constitutional equality guarantees.

Ms Ockers said customary law as it existed today was "a complete distortion" of the African customs as handed down through the centuries.
new products on the market.

The problem is that the market is flooded with
new products, and consumers are often confused by
the sheer number of choices. This has led to a
increase in the number of failures
in the market.

In order to
succeed, companies need
to develop new
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effectively.

They need
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Technology can help
companies test new
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accurately.

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grow
and
flourish.
Call for women's ministry

Own Correspondent
DURBAN. — A ministry of women's affairs should be established by a new South African government and a certain number of jobs in the public sector should be reserved for women, the Inkatha Women's Brigade decided at the weekend.

Several thousand women attended the brigade's national conference in Ulundi, at which Inkatha leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi called for a democratic transition that would eliminate not only racism but also discrimination against and the exploitation of women.

The resolution also called on a future government to sign the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The brigade also slammed the SA Defence Force for its "inhuman action" during the raid on a house in Transkei in which alleged APLA members were killed.
Women must make their votes pay
ANC women call for quota

THE ANC's Women's League has called on the organisation to lay down a quota of one-third of its candidates for Parliament to be women.

The call follows the defeat of a move for a 30% quota at the ANC's last national congress in Durban in July 1991 and widespread criticism by women within the organisation about its failure to ensure their adequate representation in national, regional and branch structures.

The call was made at a meeting in Johannesburg yesterday.
Breaking the Traditions of Inequality

Now Is the Time To

The major struggle for women in the world today is to expose the cultural, economic, and political structures that maintain and reproduce gender inequality. The focus of this special section of The American Women's Studies Journal is on the development of a gender-conscious curriculum that can help us understand and challenge the cultural, economic, and political factors that sustain gender inequality.

The articles in this issue explore the ways in which gender inequality is reproduced in various contexts, including education, politics, and the economy. They also discuss the role of gender inequality in shaping individual identity and social relations.

The articles are written by a diverse group of scholars and activists, and they offer a variety of perspectives on gender inequality. Some focus on the experiences of women in specific contexts, such as the workplace or the family, while others examine gender inequality more broadly, using a transnational or interdisciplinary approach.

The articles in this issue are intended to inspire debate and action, and to provide a platform for those who are committed to challenging gender inequality. We hope that they will help us to think more critically about gender and to work towards a more gender-equitable future.
rove trade links among women

Developing women in business roles

THE National Association of Women Business Owners in South Africa is set on a mission to foster, nurture and empower women business owners to develop their businesses.

Newbo has had a relatively low profile since it was established in 1988 by Professor Ronel Erwee, of the graduate School of Management at the University of Pretoria, but now is taking a powerful direction as a driving force for women entrepreneurs in South Africa.

"Newbo, which is affiliated to the World Association of Women Entrepreneurs, hosts a Congress which will have international delegates and women in business who come with the express purpose of developing trade links.

President Elaine Strydom said the association had identified four levels of entrepreneurs which they hoped to address.

These include the emerging entrepreneur, women who have just started up, those with businesses between 18 months and three years and entrepreneurs with businesses that have been running for four years and more.

"We also want to include achieving women within the corporate environments who have important roles to play in an advisory capacity," Strydom said.

She said Newbo hoped to create conducive environments to motivate, educate and share experiences with women in fledgling companies or those who were about to start up.

"For the already successful entrepreneur, Newbo will be an opportunity to overcome the relative isolation many of them work under, to talk to like-minded women and feel the benefits of friendship and support that even the most successful people need.

"A series of business therapy workshops have already been implemented. Our members will have access to a database of both existing and potential members.

"We would also like to become a source of real facts and figures about women-owned businesses. There really is no central point for these kinds of statistics.

"It is our vision for the future that Newbo should enable women to set up, run and manage their businesses in such a successful way that they can employ more people, provide medical aid and pension schemes and be responsible employers," Strydom said.
ALL South African women — from prostitutes to presidents — are being invited to join a fledgling party which will concentrate on women's issues and fight against sexism.

Two Cape Town women are working as facilitators to establish the South Africa Women's Party and they are welcoming any contribution — cash, brains or sweat — they told Weekend Argus yesterday.

Michel Muller, a freelance journalist and student, and Estelle Hefer, a trained quantity surveyor who is not working at the moment, have already obtained 130 signatures, some from men, and need 370 more to fulfill the requirements of the Electoral Act before the party can be formally registered.

Said Michel: "We want to get away from labels. When we talk about women, we talk about all women — from prostitutes to presidents."

"We want to contest the election. We are on a recruitment drive. We are not even registered as a party yet and we are looking for money and signatures.

"The reason why we are starting a political party and not a lobby or support group is that in other parties there has not been an overwhelming honesty about women's issues.

"No women's group has ever had any teeth ... a political party will give women teeth."

Estelle said: "This is not about one group taking power from another, but about acknowledging women's equal share in the world. If you want majority appeal, you have to be fairly moderate, because most women in South Africa are conservative, religious and rural."

Michel added: "If women acting independently are seen as radical, then we are."

The idea to form a party started in June 1991 when there was "some horrible massacre."

"We thought if we had to vote tomorrow, who would we vote for? Everything seemed so bloody and helpless."

"We see ourselves only as facilitators, providing passionate driving power. We call on women with the know-how to come forward. Women must realise their vote is very important. They represent the majority of the electorate. They must look at what liberation means to them."

Issues like gender equality, "body politics" which includes rape and incest, ecology and sexism will be addressed, as will health policies affecting women.
Dr Shirley M Sebakwane of the department of education at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg looks at the biggest handicap South African women teachers have — their gender:

The problem trying to establish why certain women teachers choose to join Sadtu while others, suffering the same disadvantages, still remain in professional organisations such as Tusta.

My PhD study on women teachers in Lebowa's urban and rural schools suggests that women teachers are divided from each other geographically, urban and rural, by qualifications, salary, position, experience, membership of teacher organisations, social and cultural background, marital status, subject matter and involvement in social and political issues.

But the most essential division among black teachers is gender. This obvious factor is being neglected and one might assume that the concerns of female teachers are equivalent to those of male teachers.

Male language

In order to look at the relationship of women and professionalisation, one needs to look at the language that teachers use in presenting their case to the DET.

One would discover this is a male language which does not provide any model for the needs and role of the female professional teacher. This reflects the domination of men in Sadtu.

Why do women teachers allow this situation to develop in the first place? Part of the answer is that Sadtu does in fact meet some women teachers' needs.

In fighting for higher salaries for all teachers, Sadtu was forwarding the interests of female as well as male teachers. Women, to an extent, participated in professional politics, but did not seriously challenge the domination of men. This was partially because some of their needs were being met.

This, however, is not a sufficient answer, for it does not explain why more women are not involved in teachers' organisations and why there is not a public discussion about women's need for professional status. This I would argue, is because there is no vocabulary available which women could use to express their desire for social mobility and social status. However, this does not mean that women do not have these concerns.

Research suggests that women teachers in Britain became more active in occupational politics from the late 1800s to World War I. They participated in existing teachers' organisations to a greater extent than before where they fought for equal pay and the right to vote, and formed their own separate organisations. These teachers sought an alternative association which would "really concentrate on women ... put us first and make us feel we mattered".

However, the context in which these women operated was extremely hostile. They demanded equal treatment with their male counterparts and also fought for their rights within the teaching profession. Yet the equal pay argument was so strongly debated that it led to men's succession and the formation of the National Association of Schoolmasters (NAS), an anti-feminist union. In South Africa women have not yet fought for these rights.

They seem not only to have been burdened by the effects of the Black Education Act and the suppression of trade unionism, but also put off by a patriarchal culture from participating in predominantly male teacher unions and professional teacher associations.

There is a strong culture of collectivism which women could exploit. Black women teachers could re-appraise their position and black women's associations and groups such as burial societies, megodishano and so on, could act as mobilising forces to obtain equal rights and opportunities. The Women's National Coalition is already giving a process of "consciousness-raising" prominence.

But such consciousness-raising should not divert attention away from the need for men to engage in "consciousness-formation" as well. African men need to acknowledge that, even if oppressed, they also sub ordinate women. Men need to be emancipated from the predominant ideology and set or relations — patriarchal relations which they impose on women.

There is a need to re-educate male education-policy-makers, education officials, inspectors and principals about women's issues. The socialisation process that includes civic organisations, women's organisations, the mass media and schooling could be used to change attitudes towards women teachers.

Women teachers could also, among other things, adopt feminist theories and methods to oppose the existing social order and begin to build a base for a new understanding and the transformation of South African society. Therefore schools can provide a site for feminist teachers to raise issues of sexism and gender oppression. Indeed MacRobbie and Garber in the UK have argued that the school can be a progressive force if it can serve as a site for feminist teachers to introduce the ideas of the women's movement to girls and to open up a discussion on the structural limitations and oppression they face.

While feminist teaching focuses on gender oppression, we need to realise that, in the South African context, feminists in teaching and outside of it tend to be white and middle class. Therefore, although white women may share with black girls the common oppression of being female in a patriarchal and sexist society, they are divided from them by class and by race, ethnicity, culture, religion and so on.

We need to be very clear about the specific meanings of class, "race", and gender for people in differing relationships of control and power in a society dominated by men, racism and capitalism.

We therefore need to understand this complex of relationship webs and then act to encourage resistance and oppression, not only in the form of various kinds of opposition to oppressive beliefs and practices, but also to include more critical and politicised work in the form of organised and conscious collective oppositional actions. This kind of opposition has been called "counter-hegemony" by the American feminist writer, Kathleen Weller.

Future challenge

The challenge that Sadtu faces in the future is how to bring all teachers with different cultural views, socio-political aims, trained and untrained, qualified and unqualified, male and female together to pursue a common goal. Sadtu has to devise tactical 'accountability' organisational strategies if it is not to be weakened in its wider relations with the State in education (as well as the black communities). The divisions such as geography, age, position, subject specialisation found in the study conducted in Lebowa need to be looked at very critically, for they prevent the build-up of permanent groupings of organised labour which might challenge government policy and promote better education within the region.

I therefore argue that there is need for an "ideological construct" — a vocabulary which women could use to express their desire for mobility and social status. Women teachers need to mobilise on issues relating to equality of opportunity in the teaching profession in terms of security of tenure, maternity leave with pay and representation in teacher unions.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that despite the claim by the DET that it had implemented a policy to eradicate wage disparities between men and women between teachers in different racial classifications, such inequalities still exist in the profession because most women teachers are underqualified (particularly rural ones).

Pressure groups of women need to be formed to demand union support for women's struggle, to challenge the gender-differentiated curricula, sexual harassment prevalent in schools, and to encourage more women to join unions and hold office...
PEOPLE'S LIVES Liberation in other countries did not deliver women from bondage

Plans to form a women's party

By Sizakele Koma

BARS that elections might not bring any change to the status of women, are causing a lot of agitation in women's circles and serious suggestions have been raised about starting a women's party.

The idea has come up at almost every women's conference held this year, dispelling any probability of its being seen as either an empty threat or an idiotic joke.

The consideration for a women's party was in fact raised as far back as three years ago by a group of women in Pretoria, according to an advocate Ms Mojanku Gumbi.

Gumbi, who is head of the legal secretariat of Azapo, said the women began enlisting members after they had erected information on the required procedure from the Department of Home Affairs.

"The idea has resurfaced again," she said.

"The movement this time is, among others, the recent omission of women's names on the list of Cosatu members nominated to go to parliament and the fact that proposed names of people who should draft the interim constitution.

The precedent set by neighbouring Zimbabwe and Mozambique, where national liberation did not deliver women from male bondage, is also another driving force.

In the impression women get is that political leaders recognise the importance of gender equality but whether they give effect to the recognition is a different story.

"But despite their concentration in the lower echelons, women still take themselves seriously. The fact is that gender equality is now on the national agenda and that a special sub-council on the issue will be set up is credit to women's efforts," she added.

In the same breadth she noted that the struggle for gender equality was still being treated as separate from the national struggle for liberation when in fact they were linked and should be treated with equal seriousness.

Gumbi is one of the many women who believe a women's party should be considered a critical issue.

Move real fast

She also contends that if women want to get into that trail of partnership they should move really fast.

Women in Azapo recently had a consultation where the issue was raised and they presented it at the organisation's annual conference.

"Women have shown a lot of commitment to the overall struggle. But they have been frustrated by, among other things, the pace at which they have been moving upwards.

They thought they would move up faster, but they have realised they cannot. The examples set by Zimbabwe and Mozambique also make us feel unsettled," she said.

A women's party, Gumbi explained, would not be in conflict with the ideals of the struggle.

It would be a way of ensuring a balance of power. Men would also know that women have an option and, therefore, would be careful not to exploit them.

Gumbi does not think it would be difficult to solicit members for the party. She also does not think it would be any harder to get strong leadership.

"A lot of women are concerned about party lists. They fear they might be excluded or as in Zimbabwe, their names would be featured at the bottom so that when cuts are made they would be the first to go.

"Leaving the responsibility of compiling lists to central committees will make the situation worse. Some fairness can be ensured by dividing branches or regions of the political organisations in the selection process," she counselled.

If the above is still unsatisfactory, Gumbi contended, it is still one of the better ideas.

"Quotas generally are going to be necessary in South Africa. They are the only way people can be forced to implement fair decisions.

The 40 percent either way system is a suitable alternative. At any given time, there would be 40 percent men and 40 percent women in parliament and the remaining 20 percent would float between them."
Women call for end to all discrimination

PRETORIA. — The Women's Bureau of South Africa says customary law and family traditions should be respected "but women must not be discriminated against".

The bureau said yesterday in its submission to the World Trade Centre planning committee on the Bill of Rights: "Whatever our government, we hope it will stand by the terms of the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women."

The bureau supported in principle the Women's National Coalition's stance that recognition of culture should always be subject to equality. — Sapa
LONDON. — Most working women with partners in five Western European countries still shoulder the bulk of household chores, a survey published yesterday said.

Some 5,000 women aged between 18 and 64 were interviewed in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain between June and July 1993 for a survey on Women and the Kitchen conducted by European Marketing Information.

"Most working women have to reconcile the pursuit of a career with household responsibilities and, if a mother, caring for the children too," the survey, carried out for Tupperware UK, said.

The survey found that almost 70% of women were mainly responsible for the cooking within the five countries. Britain recorded the highest proportion, with 75% of women taking responsibility, and Spain the lowest with 61%.

Only six percent of all women said their partners did the shopping.

Responsibility for cleaning fell to 65% of French and German women, while the lowest percentage was recorded in Spain, where 46% of women took charge.
Women’s place in the

Assessing Success

Women’s National Coalition is to disband. Pearl Majola reports:

Pregs Govender, the project manager of the Women’s National Coalition (WNC), speaks confidently and proudly of its “victories” from the organisation’s grand Carlton Towers office in Johannesburg.

The coalition, with affiliates ranging from political parties like the IFP, NP, ANC, CP and PAC to the nonpolitical organisations like the church women’s manyano, the Rural Women’s Movement, Black Sash and others, was formed in April 1992.

The objectives were to identify women’s demands and collate them for inclusion in the constitution and to ensure equality for women. This would be done through a campaign which would also empower women at the same time.

More profiled at national level

So what victories is Govender talking about?

“This year, like never before, has seen a high level of debate on women’s issues. Nobody can now talk about issues without involving women,” Govender responds.

“The coalition created an environment in which women’s issues got the deserved attention and were more profiled at national level than ever before.

“Through our rights campaign women have been empowered with the confidence to say what it is they want.”

This self-confidence, she says, will remain long after the coalition is gone. She adds that in 10 months they have also taken on board those organisations which were not originally part of the alliance, like manyano women and women from organisations like South African Black Taxi Association and Achlib, the hawkers association.

“It has also acted as a catalyst and served to stimulate and develop women’s support for one another.”

Women’s rights charter

One of the WNC’s main tasks was to draw up a women’s rights charter defining what women saw as their rights and therefore wanted included in future legislation.

In January research began on what the charter should include. Although that research has not been completed, each of the 13 regions has identified issues important to them. Out of these, the WNC has distinguished five as most critical: women’s legal status; women and land resources — land, housing and water, among others; women and health; women and work; and women and violence.

Govender concedes that there are problems, attributing these to the broadness of the organisation.

Between now and February, women are going to hold meetings involving all members of the community to discuss their strategy.

Questionnaires, which were sent out as part of the research on what women want, are being processed. Over the next three months the regions are going to discuss issues raised by the organisations in their communities.

There will be report-back meetings to debate the issues that emerge from the meetings and to formulate strategies to ensure that those issues are taken up.

Regional conferences will then be held in February to debate the role the
Elation as customary law gets thumbs down

By Sizakele Kooma

CUSTOMARY law will not be included in the fundamental Bill of Rights but the women’s caucus at the constitutional talks has given the assurance that this did not mean African culture is being eradicating.

"It's a tremendous victory for women," said Ms Frene Giawala, speaking for various women’s groups.

Conceding that there was a commitment to non-sexism in the country, Giawala said she believed it was the threat by rural women to boycott the elections that had led to the decision. The inclusion of customary law in the Bill of Rights would have meant that women from communities which observed those customs could not be protected by the equality clause in the proposed law.

ANC delegate Ms Mavivi Manzini said: "Today’s decision does not assume that African culture is eradicated. It simply means that women can challenge customary law and provide for its development and reform."

"There could not have been two groups of women — those who are equal and those, to whom customary law applied, who were not."
THE LAW

Few SA firms equipped to deal with sexual harassment of workers

SHARON SOROUR
Labour Reporter

FEW organisations in South Africa are equipped to deal with cases of sexual harassment in the workplace.

"This is one of the findings of a survey conducted by human resource consultants FSA-Contact, involving 114 organisations including many of the largest and best-known companies in the country.

The survey found that although 12 percent acknowledged they had experienced incidents of sexual harassment, only 11 percent of the companies had a formal policy on sexual harassment, said spokesman Olof van Schalkwijk.

In terms of the Labour Relations Act of 1956, sexual harassment is considered an unfair labour practice.

Employers who fail to deal with complaints of sexual harassment and don't take steps to prevent its recurrence are guilty of an unfair labour practice.

Companies which fail to take adequate action against offenders risk expensive lawsuits from victims.

The incidents experienced by companies surveyed had been dealt with as isolated cases and had not led to the implementation of a formal company policy.

"Approximately half of the 114 companies stated they had not yet discovered a need for a formal policy but that any possible complaints would be handled via the company's grievance procedure."

While one participating organisation stated employees were not encouraged to report incidents of sexual harassment, the survey found most companies handled incidents promptly to discourage further occurrences.

Mr van Schalkwijk believed normal grievance procedures were inadequate to deal with the "sensitivities" involved and companies could find themselves "floundering when faced with a complaint."'

He said companies facing a sexual harassment lawsuit could not plead ignorance because an employee who had suffered harassment could bring an action against the employer "who knows, or ought to know, and fails to take action, or takes inadequate action to prevent the harassment."

In addition, where inadequate complaint channels existed the industrial court could also find the employer liable since the employer's lack of knowledge was his or her own fault, and not that of the employee.

"A victim may institute criminal and civil action against both the perpetrator and the company."

The survey found that of the 12 companies with formal policies on harassment, only five were South African.
Women win their place

Black are not the only winners in the new constitution. Women are, too.
A battle that has simmered since the negotiations began between an informal, cross-party women's coalition and traditional African leaders represented at the forum resulted in a crushing victory for the women.

Tribal law, which is weighted spectacularly in favour of men, has not been accommodated in the new constitution. Polygamy will not be the legal prerogative of men only.

Women won substantial victories during negotiations. According to one rule, each party at the talks was entitled to two delegates, one of whom had to be a woman.

The vocabulary of the talks has also held to the strictest norms of political correctness. Every clause in the vast tomes that make up the new constitution and Bill of Rights carries the words "and women" whenever men are mentioned. The

John Carlin reports that the new constitution is set to greatly empower South African women

Word "chairperson" always replaces "chairman.

Perhaps the most dramatic blow for women's rights has been struck by the ANC. In recent years, the long-standing call for a non-racial South Africa has been unfailingly supplemented at ANC rallies and in ANC documents by the additional demand for a "non-sexist" South Africa.

Beckoning words with deeds, the ANC announced last week that when it puts forward its list of candidates for next year's elections, a third will be women. South Africa's first democratic parliament will almost certainly contain one of the highest proportions of women of any parliament. — The Independent News Service.
WOMEN in the Eastern Cape will wear the trousers in the election.

A study by the border ANC shows almost 65 percent of the electorate in the broader Eastern Cape — including Border/Kei region — will be women.

The statistics are based on Development Bank of South Africa figures from 1990.

Observers believe this profile will significantly affect the shape of the campaign in the region.

ANC elections training co-ordinator Mr Joe Jongolo says most women voters are concentrated in rural areas, especially of Transkei.

In Transkei’s Herachel district, for example, it is estimated that there are 14,531 black men voters compared to 31,899 women.

The high proportion of women in the region is believed to be due to migrant labour policies and the depressed regional economy which has forced men to leave the region in search of employment.

Business groups in the Border-Kei estimate over 26 percent of the labour force in the region has left in the form of migrant workers.

Professor Jan Coetze of Rhodes University’s Sociology Department says he would expect the high proportion of women to be duplicated in other South African rural areas.

It is anticipated the dominance of women will give them a powerful voice in a region largely regarded as an ANC stronghold, and will make them a sought-after target group in the elections race.

Ms Ndurri Gwaij, co-ordinator of the Border Women’s Coalition and Gender Focus Group, says women must realise they have significant political muscle.

She adds the coalition is urging women to use their clout to ensure that political parties not only articulate, but practice women’s rights.

Jongolo says his organisation is still formulating its election message, but says this will include strong overtures to women.

Coetze says he expects political parties wanting to appeal to women to concentrate on housing, education and health issues, which will have a strong appeal to women.

He says women are extremely active in rural communities because they have been forced to take over the functions of running the household and family.

“They have a history of having to take responsibility,” he says.

The women’s coalition agrees. Gwaij says: “Rural women are the ones who have contributed the most. They are the silent majority, the silent activists. They are the educationalists, they manage rural societies.”
Women! Still being downplayed!
Women's party for elections

The recently launched South African Women's Party (SAWP) intends fighting the April 25 elections next year. Its convenor, Ms Michelle Muller, said yesterday: "SAWP, which launched its operations in Cape Town this week, "wanted to unite women of all races, religions, cultures, capabilities, sexual and political orientations" and to empower women to independently take charge of their futures through political action."
Women urged to use their numbers as weapon in poll

□ Importance of role in struggle should not be 'watered down'

SHARON SOROUR
Labour Reporter

ORGANISATIONS like the United Democratic Front and Cosatu would not have been formed were it not for the role women played in the struggle after the 1976 uprisings, ANC regional executive committee member Hilda Ndude told a domestic workers' election rally.

"Speaking on a platform with former Cosatu secretary-general Jay Naidoo, she said the role of women in the struggle should not be "watered down".

"The people who started organising after the 1976 uprisings were women and were it not for women, organisations like the UDF and Cosatu would not have come into being."

Ms Ndude urged women — who make up 54 percent of the electorate — to use their numbers as a "weapon".

Commenting on the decision by the ANC national executive that its lists for the national and regional parliaments should include a minimum of a third women candidates, Ms Ndude said the national executive had to be a "watchdog" to ensure the decision was upheld in the regions.

She said women should not be voted onto the lists "simply because they wear a dress ... they must be gender-sensitive".

Ms Ndude assured domestic workers an ANC-led government would address their concerns about their rights.

"What is clear is that the ANC cannot deliver everything overnight."

"The new government will be one of national unity and while we are hoping for an ANC majority, it will represent all people in the country."

She said the ANC would prioritise the needs of the oppressed and the people who had been disadvantaged by apartheid.

"The fears of the minority should not supersede the will of the oppressed people."

She told workers the ANC and its alliance had embarked on a programme of reconstruction to address questions of housing, health care, unemployment and education.\)
By Barbara Ann Boswell

Women's rights will not be compromised once a new government comes into power, if the Black Sash has anything to do with it.

The Western Cape branch of the women's organisation launched a campaign on Thursday: the International Day Against Violence Against Women, to ensure that election promises to woo women's votes would not be empty.

The Black Sash released a document entitled “A Declaration to Raise the Status of Women”, a public pledge supporting the right of women to be free from abuse. Politicians will be asked to sign the pledge.

“We are committed, both in private and public life, to upholding the right of women to be free from abuse and will campaign vigorously for this liberation from violence,” reads the one-page declaration.

According to Ms. Dot Clemishaw, a worker at the Black Sash, gender desk, political parties and candidates for public office across the board will be asked to sign the declaration.

“It will be used as a tool for women's liberation in the period leading up to the elections,” said Clemishaw.

When parties release their election lists, we will be asking candidates to sign the documents, and this will give an idea of who stands for what.”

Clemishaw hopes that in signing the declaration, politicians will be committing themselves to the empowerment of women — a promise which they can be held to after elections.

“We have to highlight that focusing on women’s needs and rights cannot be avoided — it cannot be pushed on the political back burner any more.”

Clemishaw added that the declaration will be circulated among members of the Women’s Alliance and the Women’s National Coalition, organisations made up of women from all political persuasions, and that it would be further circulated by these women.

The Black Sash will also have information stands in the suburbs and the City on December 10, Human Rights Day, to “conscientise and arouse people's awareness” around women's rights.
Time to stand up – like a woman

For the rest of time, write’s organise of the South African Women’s Party, Wioletta Miller, is the story of all women in this country to lead the course of politics in the new
A new Act abolishes certain discriminatory laws against women, but their battle for equality has far to go, says Winnie Graham

Women’s struggle still far from over

The new interim constitution should give women of all races an irrevocable platform to fight sexism.

The struggle for “gender equality” gained impetus at the World Trade Centre where, for perhaps the first time, rural women started working with their urban sisters to ensure that women’s rights are properly addressed in the new South Africa.

The quest for equality, of course, is not new. The struggle began decades ago when feminists (the women disparagingly dismissed as the “haary armpit brigade”) burnt their bras, tossed out their lipstick and insisted on full recognition.

They created enormous awareness — but their militancy did not reap the rewards they hoped for.

The new wave of feminism, encompassing women of all races in South Africa, is more subtle — but even more determined. The women’s lobby is no longer satisfied simply with the promise of equality. It wants women in top positions both in government and business.

Several organisations have emerged demanding that political parties nominate more women in the April 27 elections, while an all-women’s political party is being mooted.

Then too, women’s groups are being formed in companies round the country to promote their cause in the workplace. While some are little more than pressure groups determined to snatch promotion, more responsible women are opting to network among each other and to consult regularly with management.

But even more interesting than the urban women’s determined bid is the rural women’s growing impatience with masculine superiority.

List of grievances

This was particularly apparent recently when speakers at the Women’s forum, a discussion forum organised by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation to promote democracy and international co-operation, analysed the effects of customary law on the rights of women.

Stella Sigcau of Transkei (and a representative of the Cape traditional leaders), told the gathering that a delegation of rural women from the northern Transkei visited the World Trade Centre to hand in a list of their grievances. Their complaints centred largely on sexism.

“The women objected to such sexist practices as the ritual washing of their chiefs’ feet,” she said.

Sigcau, who made headlines five years ago when she briefly headed the Transkei government, analysed a number of customary laws and argued there was no conflict of interest between these and equality for women.

The practice of lobolo, she said, had also been corrupted. When the system was introduced centuries ago, the gift of cattle was intended, not as a “bridge price” but as a form of insurance for a young woman in the event of disaster befalling her husband.

The cattle insured that she would always have milk for her children. Now, lobolo had turned into a financial arrangement between the father of the bride and the would-be groom.

Sigcau said that women had no status in the old days they had been used as pawns to patch up relationships between warring tribes. Little had changed.

“Polygamy is another custom which needs to be checked out the window,” she said. “Men who want more than one wife need to think of the effect this has on children. The cost of living makes it impossible to support more than one family.”

Inheritance was another illsome issue in rural society. Traditionally women could not inherit land.

She quoted instances where widowed (or divorced) women had sometimes to take minor sons to court to sign on their behalf to ensure they would not lose their homes.

The rights of an adult woman (and mother) were often subordinate to a minor male child.

According to customary law, Sigcau said, young men were circumcised after initiation. The custom, however, was being amended because men realised it was safer for the operation to be performed in hospital. “If they can move from a custom to suit themselves, they should re-evaluate the role of women in society,” she said.

“Our fight is not aimed at dispensing with customs. Nor are we talking of abandoning our traditions. However, we want to eradicate customs that are blatantly discriminatory. Equality for women will not make men lesser.”

Her appeal for workshops throughout the country where women could be enlightened to make informed decisions was endorsed by Nomusa Jajula, a member of the Transkei government delegation at the negotiations and a member of the Gender Advisory Committee.

“Racism had been part of the African’s lot for 300 years, but sexism has been with us since the beginning of time,” she told an applauding audience.
End to marital powers

CAPE TOWN — The legal position of South African women will be drastically improved with the scrapping of the remnants of marital powers in accordance with the General Law Fourth Amendment Act, which becomes law today.

Justice Minister Kobie Coetzee said in a statement he trusted that the changed transaction and litigation powers of women would meet their aspirations to participate fully in business to the benefit of the economy.

The scrapping of marital powers means that a married woman will now have equal management powers as her husband and will in future not need her spouse’s permission to sign contracts.

A woman will also no longer have to declare her marital status, except in instances where the same information would be required from the man. (SSA)

The Prevention of Family Violence Act becomes law today and enables a married woman to lay a charge of rape against her husband and for victims of family violence to settle their disputes outside the court.

Other important provisions of the Act include empowering a Judge or magistrate to issue an interdict — through a simplified procedure — forbidding certain violent acts being committed in the home and compelling anyone suspecting child abuse to report the matter to a social worker or the police.

"The greatest advantage of the Act is to enable victims of family violence to settle their differences outside the court and eliminates the trauma and stigma of appearing in a civil court.

"It is also within reach of all victims of family violence because of the practical, inexpensive process." — Sapa.
First women's party launched

Our country contains two majorities: an African majority and a female majority. As we proceed along the transition to democracy, the first majority is being included. But what about the other?

The question stands at the heart of a new political force: the South African Women's Party recently launched in Cape Town, the country's first women's party.

The party's platform is anti-sexism (which encompasses body politics — reproductive rights, rape, violence against women), gender issues and environmentalism. Supporters come from varying backgrounds, but share a concern about where women's issues go in the new era. For them, the signs are not encouraging. What is to be made of a draft Electoral Act that finds it necessary to insist explicitly in its code of conduct on "the full participation of women in political meetings, party structures and electoral activities"?

The implication is that women shy away from such activity, even though the contrary is true.

Women are and have always been active in organisations, spearheading campaigns, sustaining activities and more.

The problem is that generally, they remain in subservient roles, while men define the issues and agendas.

The six member Status of Women sub-council in the new Transitional Executive Council hardly breaks with this tradition.

It serves in an advisory rather than participatory capacity; men still define and prioritise the political agenda.

"Everywhere I looked, if women were there, they were in some sort of advisory capacity or lobbying position," says Estelle Hefer, who sits on the SAWP's interim working group.

"Women were still excluded. Why can't they just do it for themselves? That's what this party stands for — we believe women are qualified and skilled enough to represent themselves."

In the Transvaal, Nina Romm from the Women for Women in Government lobbying campaign wants to see at least a 30 percent quota of women in Parliament. "Out of 12 million, there must be at least 120 competent women."

All welcomed

The women's sub-council in the TEC, women's ministries and lobbying groups, as well as the ANC's 30 percent quota and Cosatu's 10 percent quota for women, are to be welcomed. But there's no guarantee that those ranks will be filled by women (or men) who strongly support women's issue. The question of gender representation is not answered merely by female tokenism, but by a politically conscious commitment to anti-sexism. It is on the issue of sexism — the point where women's and men's interests collide — that the SAWP intends to take a firm stand.

"If you know that political women don't necessarily champion gender interest," says Michel Muller, a founding member of the SAWP, "the future looks bleak for addressing crucial gender questions - things like a woman's right to control her own body, marital laws and taxes, community health care, freedom of sexual orientation and protection from violence against women."

Thus far, besides Azapo and Inkatha, the SAWP is the only political party to take a clear pro-choice position around abortion: "Women want control over their fertility because they realise that fertility is central to their economic situation and education," explains Muller.

The SAWP believes women should decide for themselves when it comes to reproductive issues. They must have a choice, which also implies adequate health care and safe, affordable contraception for women. "If we want to see long-term economic stability, women need to control their fertility," says Muller.

The reasons behind setting up a women's party seem obvious.

History demonstrates constantly how women's issues are sidelined, she declares.

"We have sincere questions about whether the new government will merely be a transfer of power to a multiracial brothhood, or whether it implies real social transformation for women."

The SAWP needs to raise R10,000 and get 500 signatures to register as a political party.

*This article is excerpted from the December edition of Work In Progress.*
WOMEN WORKERS - 1994
ANC meeting calls for action on sex inequality

DELEGATES at the ANC conference on women's issues yesterday would refer all gender loopholes in the ANC's reconstruction and development programme and the interim constitution to the NEC for discussion, the ANC said yesterday.

Representatives from ANC branches countrywide, the mass democratic movement, Cosatu and UN, who attended the three-day conference, discussed proposals to deal with the marginalisation of women in government and in legislation.

A major problem in the ANC's reconstruction and development programme was seen to be housing, which delegates felt should be made affordable and accessible for women.

It was proposed that public subsidies favouring men be introduced.

It was decided that the programme should work towards "developing a society in which violence against women is unacceptable". A document on the interim constitution outlined how parliament should operate to ensure that gender was taken into account (355A).

It was agreed ANC MPs should consult and be accountable to women in their constituencies, through ANC and civil-society structures.

It was also proposed that a parliamentary committee be established charged with assessing legislation for its gender implications, be established and all parliamentarians, "educated" on gender issues.

Public appointments should be made in accordance with representation, meaning a fair distribution of women in positions of power at all levels.

Delegates said courts should be made more accountable for women by reducing legal costs and giving support in civil cases and maintenance claims.

And conference delegates decided "should not be restored only where people had been dispossessed by apartheid laws but should include women who were denied land ownership because of customary laws. It was decided that inequalities in customary laws and certain religious beliefs should be broadly challenged before a gender commission which had been proposed to the ANC's national executive committee."

Women dispossessed by law or custom should have access to restitution and land claims courts should enforce gender-sensitive approaches that would empower women in the process of reclaiming.

Delegates proposed that expenditure on women be "expressly stated" in all reports related to allocations in the Budget.

The setting up of financial and fiscal commissions was suggested.

These commissions would take into account the implications for women of recommendations they might make in terms of the Budget.

In addition, rural development, health institutions and social welfare with women playing an active role should be addressed.
Women's coalition presents report to TEC

HUNDREDS of women travelled to the World Trade Centre outside Johannesburg yesterday to formally hand over research reports on women's issues to the Transitional Executive Council (TEC).

The National Coalition, which was formed in 1993 to ensure women's issues were addressed during the transition, plans to use the data gathered in the research project to formulate a chart for women to push for equality within the constitutional framework.

The coalition, which says it represents about 2-million women, commissioned the research covering a wide range of issues, from rape and sexual harassment to political awareness. Copies of the report were presented to the TEC by co-convenors Frenze Gwani and Anne Leisbebe.

The women first assembled at the Kempton Park town hall to assess the reports and hear accounts of experiences highlighted in the research.

Then they left for the World Trade Centre. Coalition project manager Praga Govender said: "Today's events have more than symbolic significance. From today, no member of any organisation actively involved in the transition process can claim to be unaware of women's issues."

"For instance, no one can claim they did not know that women are outraged by the laughable sentences which are sometimes passed for rape. No one can claim to be unaware that women want more vigorous measures to be taken against those who commit acts of violence against women."

"No one can claim to be unaware that vulnerable rural women are targeted in disinformation and intimidation campaigns," she said.

Women were prepared to mobilise to hold decision-makers accountable.

The reports catalogue feedback from more than 200 focus groups.
focus on Women

THE FLAMBOYANCE OF DRESSES of men clad in skin
ty animal hide skirts and san
dals made of car tyres may have been a
colourful picture for the television
and newspaper cameras to capture.

But the warlike scene outside the Union
Buildings in Pretoria was not the only occasion
of political significance that took place last
week.

Three days after the Zulu imbizo, bus loads
and flashy carloads of women from all over the
country converged on the town hall of the sleepy
town of Kempton Park. They had come to
discuss the demands that had been raised by
more than a million women — rural and urban,
professional and illiterate, black and white — in
a research project that took 18 months to com-
plete.

Heart-rending stories

Inside the hall, 10 women related heart-rending
stories of their experiences under oppressive
social, customary, religious and labour laws.
Later a convoy descended on the World Trade
Centre, where the convenors of the National
Women's Coalition submitted the document to
the Transitional Executive Council.

The women will decide at a national work-
shop to be held at the end of the month whether
the document should be turned into a charter for
women's rights or an aspiration document.

For the moment, they expect the transitional
structures to extract information and use it to
enable them to participate in the elections with-
out intimidation.

Said Mavivi Manzini, a member of the TEC
subcouncil on the status of women: "They raised
a number of important issues that have to do
with harassment, in and out of the home, and
the voting process itself. The TEC should look at
the points they made and act on them to ensure
that they feel free to vote for parties of their
choice."

Historic document

Information for the historic document was col-
lated by a team of 60 field workers, led and
trained by a group of qualified supervisory
researchers. The research was participatory,
conducted through workshops, focus groups
and questionnaires.

The research ran concurrently with national
campaigns for women's rights, which included
a march on violence against women and the
fight against the exclusion of customary law
in the Fundamental Bill of Rights, among others.

The whole exercise was phenomenal and it
achieved major successes. The report, as a first
step in the fight for equality, raised women's
consciousness on politics and their role in the
current political process. Hopefully, it also nar-
rowed the class and racial gap.

Said research manager Sioncey Lebethe:
"The aim of the research was not only to get
women's views but to empower them too."

"We were not conducting a dry market re-
search. We were dealing with sensitive issues. It
was more like counselling, helping the women
talk about their problems. I was touched that so
many of them could trust us and let us into their
secrets."

Field workers

Most of the women, Lebethe said, used the field
workers as safety valves to let out what had
obviously been haunting them for a long time.
"They were hopeful. Their expectations were
very high. Most of them thought their lives
would change overnight. We had to explain to
them that the whole concept was a process and
we were still at the beginning. Their need for
immediate results is a challenge to the Women's
Coalition. It will have to move quickly," she
said.

"The women raised important issues that
have to do with harassments, in and out of
the home, and the voting process. The
TEC should look at these points and act
on them to ensure that they feel free to vote."

Sowetan 24/11/94

Women of all hues and classes across the
country face a multitude of iniquities in
society. Last week they went to
Kemptown Park to express their views
and expectations. Sizakele Kooma
reports: (355A)
Women chary of using their power

While women constitute 54 percent of the South African population it seems many of them are unlikely to exercise their voting power.

This is part of the findings of a Sowetan opinion poll on voting patterns released last week and showing, among other perceptions, that 10 percent of the eight percent of people who say they will not vote are women.

According to the study of mainly urban communities countrywide, these women cited three main reasons for their decision — that they are sick and too old to vote or go to the polling stations; that they do not have identity documents and that they do not understand what is going on in politics.

―They also cited fear of violence and intimidation, lack of interest in politics and being unsure of who to vote for as other reasons.

―There is a chance that these figures will have changed by election day and there may well be fewer women who do not want to vote,‖ says Ms Helen Tysen of Market Research Africa.

Offer to women

Responding, Women's National Coalition convener Ms Frene Ginwala said: "It is important for women to vote because it will not be enough for us if the only change we get after the elections is black men replacing white men in government.

―Political parties should start spelling out what they have to offer women, why women should vote for them. But this is also an opportunity that women should take advantage of to ensure change to improve their lot. We will still have to push, nag and challenge after the elections, but voting is a major step,‖ Ginwala stressed.

Ginwala also said there was a need for intense voter education programmes by the IEC and that parties would have to undertake to abide by the provisions of the electoral code of conduct to ensure full participation of women in the elections.

Black Sash national co-ordinator for voter education Ms Gillie de Vlieg said women could be encouraged to vote if they were taught how to vote by other women.

―The patriarchal structure of our society also makes women feel intimidated. Feedback from our trainers is that the biggest problem to be overcome is male domination, which sometimes results in women trainers being denied access to some areas. "Chiefs are suspicious of women entering their areas and educating women about voting,‖ De Vlieg said.

―A lot of voter education is done by males and we believe it is very important for women to be educated by other women." The Electoral Code commits the parties to give effect to the following undertakings and stipulations in relation to women:

―To facilitate full participation by women in political activities on the basis of equality;

―Ensure free access by women to all public political meetings, facilities and venues;

―Respect the right of women to communicate freely with political parties and organisations; and

―Generally refrain from forcing women to adopt a particular political position or to engage in, or to refrain from engaging in, any political activity otherwise than in accordance with their free choice.
Soweto pupils in street protest

THE STAR / FRIDAY FEBRUARY 11 1994
Bringing comfort to SA’s women

Gone was the politically correct rhetoric as woman after woman spoke of her plight. Ferial Haffajee reports on the Women’s National Coalition conference.

The story of Nonduduzo ‘One who brings comfort’ did not leave many dry eyes among the hundreds of women who met at an unusual conference at Kempton Park last week.

Nonduduzo is a baby girl from Northern Natal whose father was assassinated before she was born. “For the first time since her husband was assassinated, she broke down and cried as the baby was born,” says Phuile Nombela, who was with the mother at the birth and gave the baby her poignantly named.

Nombela went on to tell how she agitated about where to place her bed every night to make sure she and her husband were not within target range of gunmen and about how her sister and mother were forced to spend a night in a pit latrine toilet to evade hit men looking for her brother.

Nombela’s personal testimony was used to amplify women’s demands for an end to political violence. At a Women’s National Coalition conference with a difference last week, 12 women took to the rostrum at the Kempton Park town hall and told their personal stories to illustrate the broad demands of women around the country. One had been raped, another beaten, someone had seen a family being killed while another could not afford 60 cents a month for health care.

The demands in the report will form the basis of a women’s charter, while the research report will be used to tell political parties exactly what they should offer to get women’s Xs.

“This is the largest and most inclusive study of and by women,” said Frere Gwiraza, a convenor of the National Women’s Coalition, which was established to do the research.

Fatima Hajaig, a member of the Transvaal Indian Congress delegation at negotiations, breathed life into a doleful topic — “How cultural value systems oppress women?” She spoke of a Muslim woman who was separated from her husband and who went from inam to inam trying to get a divorce. They all told her that Muslim women could not divorce their husbands — advice she believed until told this was not written in any scripture.

Nombela Dwambe, a bishop’s wife, thumbed her nose at the belief that “a bishop’s wife must be above politics and display dignity”.

How to get women’s votes

Ten things women will vote for according to the Coalition’s report:

- Dismantle blind taxation
- Contractual rights that don’t change when they marry
- Legal systems recognizing single parenthood and extended families
- Equal pay for equal work
- Outsourcing “sex for jobs” and “sex for promotion”
- Maternity leave
- Heavy sentences for rapists and a more rigorous investigation of rape charges
- More female prosecutors and police officers
- Women on party lists
- Election campaigns that target women and don’t trust that they will vote like their husbands or fathers

“That usually means shut up,” she said, before launching into an attack on patriarchy in the church. Her speech had the Women’s National Coalition delegation nodding their heads in agreement.

And then Lydia Kupi, who is on the ANC’s national election lists and who spoke for rural women, said women wanted no more of polygamy, that they wanted to become chicks and that they were definitely not baby-makers. “Marriage is love, not children,” she said amid hoots.

A rural health-care worker, Grace Lebodi, read an open letter from women in her area — “Dear health-care policy maker, You speak about affordable health care. When 60c is a visit is too much for some of us, what is affordable? … Don’t dump diphera down my throat. And how can you tell me breast-feeding is best when I am hungry and under-nourished?”

You could have heard a pin drop when Debbie Nel told how she had been abducted and raped. She reminded the assembled women that in the five minutes she had spoken, at least two women had been raped somewhere in the country.

Fatima Hajaig, a member of the Transvaal Indian Congress delegation at negotiations, breathed life into a doleful topic — “How cultural value systems oppress women?” She spoke of a Muslim woman who was separated from her husband and who went from inam to inam trying to get a divorce. They all told her that Muslim women could not divorce their husbands — advice she believed until told this was not written in any scripture.

Nombela Dwambe, a bishop’s wife, thumbed her nose at the belief that “a bishop’s wife must be above politics and display dignity”.

Women marched on the World Trade Centre to tell politicians how to win their votes

PHOTOGRAPHER: RUTH MOTAU
‘ANC hijacked women’s coalition’ — Nats quit

The National Party yesterday withdrew all its members from the Women’s National Coalition (WNC), saying the multi-party body to promote gender equality had been hijacked by the ANC.

A member of the national steering committee of the WNC, Mrs Anne Routier, said the coalition had openly taken on the colours of the ANC.

She said NP members of the Pietersburg WNC were “gravely offended” by posters displayed at a recent meeting of President FW de Klerk (optioned “Wanted … Criminal for Political Offences”.

CT 16.2.94
NEWS  Wooing floating votes and pressing for female rights

Womens’ party scrapes in

By Pearl Majola

THE Women’s Rights Peace Party, the first women’s party in the country, was officially launched in Johannesburg yesterday after making it just in time to register by Saturday’s deadline. The party is targeting women in general and “progressive” men.

It is also hoping to woo some of the 25 percent floating votes shown by the latest statistics.

The WRPP’s objectives, among others, are to ensure the establishment of a nonsexist, nonracial South Africa where women’s rights will be properly addressed and to make gender a priority in the reconstruction of South African society.

At the party’s lead are Ms Nina Romm and Mrs Connie Khoza, both of whom have worked extensively in women’s rights issues in rural as well as urban situations.

“WRPP is not interested in ‘women’s rights only,” Romm said at a Press briefing yesterday. “We are committed to a social order in which gender relations are reconstructed for the benefit of us all. “Our strategy is to make visible, through all means possible, the gender inequities in our society and how the current political process is not addressing these inequities in any substantial way.”

The party will contest only the national seats but the leaders declined to say how many members it has and said its election list would be released later.

For nominations a letter from a member of the community is required as well as a curriculum vitae accompanied by motivation for candidacy.

(Report by P Majola, 61 Commando Road, Industria West, Johannesburg.)
Rejoin women’s body, NP urged

BY SHIRLEY WOODGATE and JOHN SODERLUND

The Women’s National Coalition (WNC) has urged the National Party to reconsider its resignation from the coalition following claims that the organisation, headed by Frenze Gwala, appeared to be acting as an ANC front.

The WNC, which represents 2 million women, is the biggest women’s organisation in the country and comprises 80 women’s bodies across the racial, religious and social spectrum.

The NP resignation, tabled by Anne Routier, who was a member of the WNC steering committee, comes 10 days before the WNC’s Women’s Charter Conference starting next Friday.

Examples of ANC sympathies included the display of posters of President de Klerk with the words: “Wanted . . . criminal for political offences” at a WNC meeting in Pietersburg, and the sale of ANC T-shirts at the launch of the WNC’s research project in Kempton Park.

Routier said ANC candidates were conducting voter education in the Natal Midlands in the name of the WNC.

“When an NP representative complained about the slant in the voter education programme in the northern Transvaal, she was told that the WNC’s car, petrol and money came from the ANC and that not a word would be changed,” said Routier.

The NP would in future direct its efforts concerning women and the removal of gender discrimination through the TPIC’s subcouncil on the status of women, which made the activities of the WNC largely redundant, said Routier.

In a letter to the NP, the WNC said such problems had been raised previously by other political parties. “Although the coalition has constantly restated its commitment to a non-party-political stance, misunderstandings about the nature of the coalition have occurred at different times and from different perspectives.”

It appealed to the NP to reconsider and discuss the matters at next week’s WNC conference.
Produce Rural Women

Equal rights - Women presented demands to the community and conference.

Photo: Paul Weinberg
ANC backs women's struggle

THE ANC will back women in their fight against chauvinist cultures, ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa said last night.

Admitting that the ANC had not done enough for women, he said "many more" women were needed in the post-election cabinet.

Addressing an ANC women's conference in Johannesburg, Ramaphosa said "women across the racial and class spectrum... continue to stand oppressed as human beings".

"This also happens in the largely white, Calvinistic doctrine. It also happens in traditional African homes as well as Asian homes, where women are regarded as people who must be silent and walk three steps behind their men.

"It is a situation which all of us must make concerted efforts in resolving." — Sapa.

(O McCort, 14 Commissioner St, Johannesburg)
A female voice for new parliament

By ZANIE VUTELA

WHEN Constance Khoza saw the small number of women candidates on the various parties’ election lists, she was so shocked that she decided to form a new party to increase women’s participation in politics.

After consulting with other concerned women, including Operation Hunger executive director Ina Periman, the Women’s Rights and Peace Party was formed two weeks ago and registered for elections just in time.

But, said Khoza, the party does not necessarily intend to “detract attention” from the existing political parties.

Her party’s main concern, she told City Press, was to make sure women’s needs were enshrined in the new constitution and to strengthen the voices of the few women representing their parties in parliament. “Otherwise, their voices would be completely drowned.”

Khoza, a teacher by profession, is a BSc UED graduate from Fort Hare University and later obtained a MSc degree in the United States. She has been a teacher and a principal at several schools.

She worked in teacher training and later joined the National Institute for Personnel research, which seconded her to Swaziland to take part in nutrition research.

Later she was appointed Swaziland’s National Home Economist, mainly concerned with problems of rural nutrition.

When she returned to South Africa, Khoza said, she became a director of the South African Council of Churches’ Interchange Aid Programme which helps women sell and export their handicraft wares.

As a participant in the African Conference of Churches she was able, on the eve of Tanzania’s independence, to take part in the drawing up of that country’s constitution — ensuring that women’s rights were enshrined in it.

“We were helping the Tanzanian women in their struggle to get their country to accept their participation,” said Khoza.

“After all these experiences I’ve come to the conclusion that throughout Africa there’s a problem when independence comes — insufficient attention is given to gender issues.”

“But I believe we have a unique opportunity in SA to ensure that there will be more women in parliament and that they will be able to address issues involving children, health and education.”

With her experience and that of her colleagues in community work, Khoza said, they will be able to feed both the men and the women in parliament with invaluable resource material on the nature of women’s problems at grassroots level.

She has always been concerned with community work, Khoza said, and has had to service people from all walks of life and political groupings — “whether I approved of their stand or not”.

Her party would work “day and night” to get as many women as possible into parliament, Khoza said.

“But people must understand that we do not want to oust the men — we want to work with them and give them the necessary insight into the problems we face as women.”
ANC discusses women's issues

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The ANC conference on women's issues at the weekend discussed proposals to deal with the marginalisation of women in government and legislation.

The three-day conference would refer all gender loopholes in the ANC's reconstruction and development programme and the interim constitution to the NEC for discussion. It said yesterday.

It was decided that the reconstruction and development programme should work towards "developing a society in which violence against women is unacceptable".

A document on the interim constitution outlined how a future Parliament should operate to ensure that gender was taken into account.
Future depends on us, say SA women

By NOMVULA KHALO

AFTER decades of suffering double oppression due to their colour and sex, black South African women have become almost equal to their white counterparts and women in other parts of the world.

For the first time in the political history of their country, they will be voting for the government of their own choice.

They are looking forward to April 27 — and hope that the elections will mark the beginning of a new phase in their struggle for recognition.

City Press asked some prominent black women to voice their hopes and fears concerning the post-election era.

Woman’s Development Bank operations manager Loranto Phakatse said: “I hope that when the elections come the violence that has engulfed our country will end.

“It is impractical for us to expect changes immediately after the election. But we hope that the government that comes to power will consider women and address our needs.”

She feared that the political organisations not taking part in the elections might not accept the results and throw the country into a turmoil.

“My other fear is every woman’s worry: if everything goes wrong, what will happen to my children?”

“If that should not dampen our spirits. We should all support each other in every way we can,” she said.

National Beverage Services manager Eunice Sibuya said: “I do not fear anything — and I am ready for the future.

“I have taught my children to be independent, as every mother should. ... “But my problem is the youth are so ignorant. They think after the elections everything will be easy — and it is not so.

“It’s going to be very tough. People will realise that there is nothing for nothing — there is a price tag to everything.

“Democracy does not mean free for all. It means we must have all the necessary resources.”

South Africans have a lot going for them and a healthy infrastructure too, said Sibuya.

“I am very optimistic. We are going into the unknown — and it depends on us to make it happen.”

Women’s Development Bank corporate affairs manager Dr Gail Midkoti said: “I am looking forward to a brighter and better future and I am ready to contribute in the new South Africa.

“I hope that women will be given the opportunity to hold top positions in their workplaces.

“We need to start doing things for ourselves and stop talking about them.”

South Africans have suffered a lot, she said, so it is up to all of us to vote for the right people who will make the right use of their positions and deliver the goods.

She feared nothing, Midkoti said. “Black Association of Travel Agencies of South Africa club co-ordinator Thandile Diedericks said: “I’ll be very disappointed if the newly elected government won’t be able to represent women, because the outgoing government had no time for us.

“I also hope those who want the best for themselves and those who threaten war. They cannot be ignored — but I don’t think they will stand a chance because South Africans are ready for April 27.

“She’s optimistic about the future, Diedericks said, and she hopes there will be as many women as possible in Parliament because they are very strong by nature and capable of doing things.

“I only hope that the promises being made are going to be kept,” said Diedericks.

Young Women’s Christian Association general secretary Thoko Msare said: “I hope that the organs of civil society which have done so much for the development work on the ground will see a different relationship with the new government they put in power.

“I hope the government supplies the kind of policies that encourage people to take part in shaping their own development.”

Msare also hopes that education will be made accessible and available to all people regardless of who they are.

“My fear is the continuing violence that may occur because other people are resisting change and would rather destabilise than build. That would be a sad situation, as so many lives have already been lost in this country.

“I remain hopeful that the kind of government we will have will encourage people to take part in building and sustaining democracy in the future.”

EUNICE SIBIYA... Fears: None. “We are going into the unknown — and it depends on us to make it happen,” she says. Hopes: That people will realise that there is nothing for nothing — there is a price tag to everything. But South Africans have a lot going for them and a healthy infrastructure.”
I do not fear anything – and I am ready for the future.

Calli Mokotodi: "...Hope that when the elections are held the violence that has engulfed the country for so long will at last come to an end.

Lorato Phalatse: "...We are not taking part in political upheavals – and might throw the country into a turmoil. Hope that when the elections are held the violence that has engulfed the country for so long will at last come to an end.

Eunice Sininyi: 'I have taught my children to be independent. And if we all think about doing things for ourselves and stop thinking of all of us to have priority for them. For this little while, who will make the right use of their positions.

Gall Mokotodi: "...When we hold positions in our workplaces we all have to prioritise our needs and stop thinking of all of us to have priority for them. For this little while, who will make the right use of their positions.

"But my problem is the youth are so ignorant. They think after the elections everything will be easy – and it is not so.
Women at the bottom of the ANC list

By Quentin Wilson

WOMEN leaders in the ANC have expressed concern at the organisation’s final list of candidates earmarked for parliament after April 27.

Although the list of 200 candidates has met the organisation’s commitment to include 66 women candidates, most are stacked at the bottom of the list with little chance of reaching the national assembly.

Even if the ANC wins the election by a landslide and captures 66 percent of the national vote (that is 132 seats), the majority of women candidates will be left in the cold.

Of the top 30 positions, only Ms Albertina Sisulu (at number 10) and Ms Gertrude Shope (number 22) stand out among the men. In contrast, 19 women dominate the last 30 positions.

“One must understand that members of the ANC are not angels when it comes to gender sensitivity,” Ms Nomatyzala Hangana, Western Cape ANC Women’s League chairperson, noted wryly.

“Although we, as women, are not 100 percent satisfied with the list, there are positive aspects as well. The process of getting all branches and regions to come up with women in leadership was educative and put women’s issues on the agenda. It is part of an education drive which we intend to continue,” she said.

Hangana said there was “disappointment” that more women candidates were not placed higher.

“If that happened though, then the leadership would stand accused of fiddling with democracy,” Hangana said. “Delegates at the conference made their choice and this has to be respected. That, I suppose, is one of the drawbacks of democracy.”
Women demand fair deal
Three lapping election topics

Mark Geesser looks at three of them: Polygamy, abortion and gay rights.

But there are some key issues which none of the parties will tackle in their campaigns.

The politicians have plenty to say about most topics as the election winds down.
Call for focus on rural women

EMPOWERMENT policies that did not address the plight of black rural women would fail the most needy in SA, Oriental and African studies researcher Deborah Johnston said yesterday.

Speaking on Economic Policies in the New SA: The Gender Dimension of Empowerment, Johnston said there were several indicators that showed black women were over-represented among the poor.

The 1985 census showed that 52% of the female labour force had jobs compared with 54% of men, with the level of poverty in rural areas higher as a result.

"First, the black rural population contains many more women than men. In rural areas as a whole in 1991, the ratio of adult women to men was 1.3:1. This appeared to rise in the poorest areas (3:1)," she said.

"Second, women are in poorer paid occupations; and even in the same sectors are likely to be paid less than men," she said.
Women can look back with pride

By Sizakele Kooma

SOUTH African women vowed two years ago that they would have full participation in the changing political scene.

And as the world celebrated International Woman's Day yesterday, they looked back at their achievements and their hearts swelled with pride.

First was the increase in the representation of women from a mere 5 percent in Codess to almost 50 percent in the Negotiating Council. Their role was also upgraded from that of observers to active participants in the negotiations process.

Major success

A major success in the council was the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council sub-council on the status of women. This special body, which has six representatives, will ensure that women participate in the elections without any hindrance which might include harassment, intimidation, ignorance, illiteracy and discriminatory practices, among others.

Outside the negotiating council, women also made significant strides.

The Women's National Coalition, an affiliation of 80 women's organisations across the political spectrum, was set up to promote political awareness among women and to encourage them to fight for their rights.

Woman's charter

The WNC's goal, to draw up a woman's charter, was realised this year with the submission of the first interim report of the document to the Transitional Executive Council.

Copies of the draft document have been sent to the various political organisations and parties for use in policymaking.

It was also presented to a United Nations conference this week by WNC convener Dr Frenza Gtuwala. The WNC wants the document to be considered when the final constitution is drawn.

The presence of a women's party among the 20 parties registered to fight the elections is another credit to women's active involvement in promoting awareness on political rights.

The Woman's Rights Peace Party, led by artist and former Unisa lecturer Nina Romm, is an indication of women's determination to bring about equality for all South Africans.
Women’s party is not anti-men

THE Women’s Rights Peace Party says it is not an “anti-men” party. Ensuring that women’s rights are recognised in all sectors of society will benefit everyone, it says.

The party’s key task is to get women into Parliament to ensure that women’s rights and issues form part of every decision made there.

The party was established in February and will contest elections at the national level and provincial level in the PWV.

“We are not against other political parties, or against men,” party co-leader Constance Kosa said. “We stand for a new non-sexist and non-racist society.

“Affirmative action programmes should redress the injustices of sexism as well as racism in all spheres of society such as the domestic sector, business, education and defence.”

Women have the right of control over their bodies, including decisions on reproduction and abortion, says the party manifesto. “We do not however insist that all members adopt a ‘pro-choice’ stance on abortion,” said Kosa. “We believe this is ultimately an issue for every individual to personally decide upon, according to their own beliefs and conscience.”

The party hopes to get enough votes to put women and “progressive men” into Parliament “so that they can constantly check on every single decision and resolution made by the new government, and vigorously oppose those that in any way discriminate against women and children”.

“It is time for women to have equal decision-making powers with men,” the party manifesto states. “By taking the step of registering as a political party, the Women’s Rights Peace Party is clearly giving women and men everywhere the message that it is time for the presence of a party in government in which the leaders are women, and the majority of candidates are women.”

The issue of sexism and discrimination against women “must be addressed at the same time as liberation from racism and apartheid”.

The party intends ensuring that “women’s rights” and other gender issues are part and parcel of “every debate and decision in the next Parliament.”

“They should not be sidelined or marginalised through the creation of ‘special commissions’, ‘women’s desks’ or ‘lobbying groups’.”

Experiences of women, in Africa and overseas, have been that campaign promises to address gender issues were often not fulfilled in the post-election period. “We do not want to repeat earlier global experiments in democracy, where national liberation struggles have failed to effect women’s emancipation.”

Former Unisa lecturer and “consultant in creative change management”, Nina Roman, heads the party. Her two co-leaders are Kosa, a development consultant and educationalist with UN experience, and Dora Ndaba, described as a “pioneering businesswoman in the informal sector”.

Report by O. Grieve, YM, 11 Dupont St, Arch.
'Guarantee women's rights' plea

THE transfer of power from 'one lot of chauvinists to another' merely perpetuated chaos, destruction and oppression, according to SA Women's Party ejection co-ordinator Michel Muller.

Speaking at the launch of the party's Western Cape regional campaign she said the new South Africa was no guarantee of women's liberation or women's integration into the mainstream.

'Voting for the Women's Party meant a vote for anti-sexist legislation and practices and the ultimate abolition of discriminatory norms in traditions, cultures and religions.'

'It was a vote for independent political action. Until women's groups had a vehicle for political expression their contribution would remain marginalised.

'They will remain forever subservient to macho or mail-dominated ideologies.'
Few women fill senior positions

While women comprised 36% of the workforce, excluding the TVB territories, only a tiny minority of women were in senior positions in the public and private sector. UWC's gender equality officer Martha, Kadalie, took last night...
Fraud takes ever-wider toll

BY JEFFREY GRAY

Steps to restore order

WOMEN'S VOTES SAID

to be in jeopardy

BY JEFFREY GRAY

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Addressing an international conference on terrorism, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has called for an "unwavering commitment" to democracy and human rights.

In a speech to the conference in Bonn, Germany, Rice said the United States is "uncompromising in our support of those who stand against such terrorism, whether it be in the Middle East or anywhere else in the world.

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Secure your children’s future

TOMORROW as we celebrate International Women’s Day, let us remember that women comprise more than half of the South African population.

A primary goal therefore, should be to attain political equity with men.

There must come a time when women will hold more than 50 percent of the decision-making of the country.

It is ironic that in our country there are still men who are trying to prevent women from voting.

You cannot have your choice made for you by your husband, your boyfriend, your father or your chief. You have exactly the same right as men.

In addition to having higher ethical standards, women will bring a different perspective to politics - the human angle.

3.559

equal taxation and a stop to abuse. By voting you can bring real democracy to South Africa. Democracy can bring dignity and an end to the humiliation you and your children have felt.

Democracy can result in a better life - education, jobs, decent housing. Voting is not just your right ... it is your responsibility.

Because, for the first time, you can shape the future for you and your children.

Men will not give up their domination easily. Women should fight to liberate themselves from male oppression.

They should vote to decide on issues that affect them as women. Equality is a principle in the constitution. It is essential for women to vote and work within the system to empower themselves socially, economically and politically.

If women vote, their aspiration of ending male oppression and realising equality with men can be achieved.

OPPRESSED

As a woman you are oppressed by government laws as well as by cultural laws and customs. You should vote for your freedom NOW.

You should vote to:

- Protect your children
- Improve health care for you and your children.
- Get better and affordable housing.
- Be given paid maternity leave.
- Have equality at work and equitable justice.

You should vote for ownership of property,

UNZIMA LOMTHWALO ... Rural women are often the backbone of economic survival in rural areas. Pic Elmond Jiyane. Article and picture courtesy of SPEAK magazine.
Labour Law

Heat in the kitchen

The issue of discrimination against women at work will come before the Industrial Court this year. A Vanderbijlpark woman is suing her former employer after an offer of promotion to a managerial position was allegedly withdrawn because she is a woman.

Jannoula Argirakis has instituted proceedings under the Labour Relations Act against Albany Bakeries, registered as Tiger Bakeries Ltd in Germiston.

Argirakis alleges that during October 1992 she was offered the position of assistant manager at the company’s Sasolburg branch by Albany’s Albert Jobert on instructions from head office. An immediate 50% salary increase, a further 50% increase six months later and a company car to the value of R65 000 was included in the package, she claims.

She states that the staff had been informed of her new position, which was due to take effect last February and that a lunch was organised to celebrate it.

However, Argirakis alleges that on January 28, days before she was due to take up her new post, she was told by Jobert that he had been instructed by Albany’s new divisional director, Callie Paxton, to withdraw the appointment. Argirakis alleges Paxton had told Jobert he did not like the idea of a woman being appointed as assistant manager. The staff was informed of the decision.

Argirakis says she was “extremely humiliated, surprised and disappointed” by the decision and that Jobert apologised to her. She alleges she subsequently declined an offer by Paxton for her to become a sales representative and resigned in March after seeking legal advice. She also turned down a later offer by Paxton to take up the position of assistant manager. Argirakis claims the offer was made merely to have the case against Albany stopped.

Good faith

Albany says the later offer to Argirakis was made in good faith after it had reconsidered its position. The company also says Argirakis had refused the offer of a post as assistant manager. It says Paxton believed that, in terms of company policy, Argirakis may have had difficulty carrying out some of the tasks of assistant manager and admits that Paxton had instructed Jobert to withdraw the initial offer. A proposal to upgrade her position and provide her with a company car was then proffered.

It claims that Argirakis’s being a woman was not a major consideration when it offered her the position or when it later withdrew the offer.

An effort to resolve the dispute at a conciliation board hearing in May failed.

Albany Bakery human resources director Ockert van der Merwe says his company is committed to fair treatment of all its employees and does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race or sex. “We have implemented a management integration pro-
Charter reflects women's needs

Two years' research by the Women's National Coalition has reached fruition with the presentation of a draft women's charter.

Ferial Haffajee reports

One of the first documents to be presented to the government of national unity in June will be a draft women's charter.

The Women's National Coalition last week brought two years' work to virtual completion when it presented the charter to a conference of over 300 delegates representing more than 80 women's organisations.

The Coalition is unlikely to demand the charter's inclusion in the Bill of Rights. Instead, it will be used as a political document to lobby parliament and organise women.

The charter is detailed, offering something for all South African women. Flowing from Coalition research into women's needs, it includes sections on the economy, law, education, development, rape and battery.

It speaks as much to urban executives through calls for equal taxation as to rural women by stating that "custom, culture and religion shall be subject to the equality clause in the Bill of Rights" and by promising them a say in development projects.

Women leaders will find comforting its promise that no tier of government will be without women representatives. Many ideas in the charter aim to improve the lot of women in the informal sector while other working women are catered for by a package of proposals which includes equal access to education and training, equal pay and improved child-care facilities.

The charter dodges the issue of polygamy, promotes freedom of choice on abortion and calls for the legalisation of prostitution. These nettles may take time to grasp but changes likely to occur soon after the installation of a government of national unity may see higher numbers of women judges and magistrates, gender balance in the human rights and gender commissions as well as in the constitutional court.

The charter also calls for state-funded counselling centres for women who are battered and raped, but does not promise free health care.

In a move that took some by surprise, the ANC Women's League supported a National Party motion for the dissolution of the Coalition.

"Most regions felt that because the charter is ready, there is no reason for the Coalition to continue," said Thandi Modise, deputy president of the League.

The conference instead decided to extend the life of the Coalition to the end of June when the charter will be presented to the first parliamentary session of a government of national unity.

New faces will lead the Coalition: some full-time staffers have left, while parliamentary candidates who also held leadership positions in the Coalition have had to step down. The Coalition's steering committee is to meet soon to decide on replacements.
Senior nurses at Katlehong Health Care Centre point at a stagnant pool of water at the entrance of the clinic.

Poho talked about blocked toilets, stagnant water forming around the health centres, and the general squalor that has become an eyesore not only to the staffers, but to the patients who must be served under such conditions.

Supposed to be exemplary
She said they were supposed to educate the community about cleanliness, yet the very same clinics that were supposed to be exemplary contradicted these values.

"Katlehong needs a black Medical Officer of Health who is better attuned to the culture of blacks and will be sensitive to the community needs," Poho said.

Germiston Health Department's MOH, Dr Phyllis Back, said she was not aware nurses had serious grievances.

She said there were structures to deal with complaints, and suggested they make use of them.

"I suggest that nurses discuss their complaints with the management service department, a body that deals with grievances. "Obviously I cannot respond to allegations made through the Press," Back said.
Call for Women's Council

Need to focus on violence. She gave refuge to the homeless and the hungry.
NP’s bad news for SA women

By Sizakele Kooma

THE new National Party spells bad news for women. It is not interested in affirmative action, it scoffs at prostitutes and still cling to outdated views on abortion.

State President FW de Klerk told a women’s breakfast meeting in Sandton yesterday in clear and very strong terms that his government was not ready to ‘level the playing fields’ on the above contentious issues that feature high on the agenda of South African women.

In a nutshell, an NP government will continue to act against abortion and prostitution, both legally and socially. It will also not redress the imbalances between men and women by applying a quota system.

‘Women’s rights are not less or more important than those of men and children. The NP stands for equality and equality to us means the rights of all must be balanced,’” De Klerk said.

Despite this statement, the State President admitted that women had in the past been discriminated against and still were. The discrimination, he said, had largely come through both formal and customary laws.

To cheers and clapping from a sprinkling of women fans in the audience, he also lashed out at women’s parties as demeaning to the role of women in public life and politics.

The NP, said De Klerk, found quotas offensive: “We believe the quota system is offensive and it ends up humiliating the very people who are supposed to benefit from it.

‘Merit alone should determine if a person gets a job.’

(365A) (2)

He said democracy was not about forcing people into positions. People should be free to do what they want. Women did not want their lives disrupted by shutting up and down to Cape Town.

‘We cannot force women to be in parliament. We believe they should be elected and not organised into positions.’

The removal of discriminatory laws and the introduction of development programmes that will be supportive to women was the NP route to encouraging women’s participation in politics.

The final constitution would also make accommodations for a commission for gender equality that would recommend to parliament the laws that should be amended to uplift the status of women.

Hopes of women being freed from the burden of unwanted babies were dashed when the State President said his government would not change the present abortion laws. He said the 200 000 deaths a year as a result of unsafe abortions, in the country could be cured by education programmes for women.

‘The right to choose cannot be left to the mother. She is not the only one involved in the matter. The decision also affects the community and the unborn child. A child has a right to legal protection before and after it is born,” he said.
WOMEN THE WORLD over are increasingly being absorbed into the labour force, blurring the dividing line between home and workplace more than ever. This is contained in the 1994 World Labour Report from the International Labour Organisation.

Millions of women are fitting into complex daily schedules, fathers working flexitime so they can share responsibility in the home, while children of employees are being provided for by day-care enterprises because there is nobody to look after them, the report notes.

One of the main reasons for this has been the “feminisation” of the workplace, according to the report. “Women have become a higher proportion of the labour force in almost all regions of the world,” says the report.

The report adds that in the OECD (Organisation for Economic Development) countries, for example, the proportion of women aged between 15 and 64 who are in the labour force increased from 53 to 60 percent between 1980 and 1990.

“All in the world as a whole, over 40 percent of women aged 15 and above are now economically active. For many women this is a deliberate decision. They want to work outside the home. Many women are now better educated and have higher aspirations—they expect a career as well as a family. But women are also being forced to work: families which are struggling to survive often need both partners to bring in a wage.”

“And when the woman is a single parent she may have little choice but to find a job to feed her children,” the report says. This increased “supply” of women workers has been reinforced by an increase in demand.

Employers in an ever more competitive global economy have been searching for ways to cut costs by using a flexible low-wage labour force.

In general that means women.

Precarious contract

“Everywhere,” says the report, “women comprise the majority of the ‘contingency’ workforce, that is, temporary or part-time workers, and workers in various forms of precarious contract.”

The report adds: “When both parents go out to work this can bring strain as they juggle demands from home and work.

“Primarily this means meeting the needs of children—both routine child rearing and coping with emergencies such as illness.

“But there can also be elderly parents to consider, and again the carers are likely to be women: in the past they may have looked after their parents after bringing up their own children, but now that they are bearing children later in life, the two responsibilities are likely to come closer together—and even overlap.

“Today’s mothers can find themselves part of the ‘sandwich generation’—squeezed between their parents and their children.

“A trend for men to take on more caring responsibilities ... can be discerned, resulting in greater strain for them,” says the report.

A study in New York, for example, found that between 1977 and 1989 the proportion of men reporting a significant conflict between family obligations had increased from 52 to 72 percent.

“These conflicts also create problems for employers, particularly through absenteeism. One survey in Canada found that in the past six months almost half the respondents had to miss at least one day’s work for family reasons.”

A similar situation exists in South Africa. A recent local survey has shown that the rate of absenteeism is too high and this was caused by family commitments.

Women are said to outnumber men, especially in factories.

Despite the widespread nature of the problem, the World Labour Report says few countries have explicit policies of offering adequate support to workers with family responsibilities.

Family needs

The most important issues it identifies are care facilities for children and the elderly, maternity leave and adequate allowances for such leave, and working arrangements sufficiently flexible to be able to respond to family needs.

Child care is one of the most pressing issues. “In a number of countries, governments leave this primarily to parents, believing that arranging child care should be just another aspect of family life.” Other countries take a different approach—seeing child care more as a public responsibility.”

In the absence of suitable or affordable facilities, says the report, more employers are developing child care programmes, either by providing facilities on site, or totally or partially subsidising places at other institutions for the children of their employees.

“An important development in the search for harmony between work and family has been the adoption by an increasing number of countries, during the last decade, of a period of leave to care for a young child, which can be taken by either parent immediately after maternity leave.”

Key issues

The report also identifies a number of other key issues for working parents, such as the right to take leave to look after sick family members, whether children or other dependent relatives.

And it argues that more and more companies will have to introduce more flexible working arrangements which include job sharing, flexitime and others, not just to cut costs but also to accommodate the family commitments of their workers.

South African unions have in the recent past negotiated paternity leave but many women workers still do not even enjoy the basic maternity leave rights.

Trade unions are going to have to enhance their fight for these rights, and the new political setup, which should be accommodating to worker demands and interests through the Cosatu connections, will hopefully look positively at such issues.
Unified charter for equality

The Women’s National Coalition represents a variety of urban and rural women’s organisations. It convened women around the country before the elections to discuss their concerns and compile *The Women’s Charter for Effective Equality*.

The preamble to the Charter contains the following:

- **We**, women of South Africa, claim our rights. We claim full and equal participation in the creation of a non-sexist, non-racial, democratic society.
- As women, we have come together in a coalition of organisations to engage in a campaign that enabled women to draw on their experiences and define what changes are required within the new political, legal, economic and social system.
- South Africa is the poorer, politically, economically and socially for having prevented more than half of its people from fully contributing to its development.
- Women’s subordination and oppression has taken myriad forms under patriarchy, custom and tradition, colonialism, racism and apartheid.
- We recognise the diversity of our experiences and recognise also the commonalities of our subordination as women.
- We are also committed to seizing this historic moment to achieve effective equality in South Africa: the development of the potential of all our people, women and men, will enrich and benefit the whole of society.

- **Women** have achieved success and made invaluable contributions to society despite widespread gender discrimination.
- We claim recognition and respect for the work we do in the home, in the workplace and in the community. We claim shared responsibilities and decision-making in all areas of public and private life.
- Democracy and human rights, if they are to be meaningful to women, must address our historic subordination and oppression. For women to be able to participate in, and shape the nature and form of our democracy, both the concepts of human rights and democracy must be redefined and interpreted in ways which encompass women’s diverse experiences.
- We require society to be reorganised and its institutions to be restructured to take cognisance of all women. In particular, women should have full opportunity and access to leadership positions and decision-making at all levels and in all sectors of society. Affirmative action could be one means of achieving this.
- We hereby set out a programme for equality in all spheres of public and private life, including the law and the administration of justice; the economy; education and training; development infrastructure and the environment; social services; political and civic life; family life and partnerships; custom, culture and religion; violence against women; health; and the media.
Seeds of women’s liberation take root.
be made to the new Government:

Women's health and women's issues in general

women meet to formulate policy

Violence, sex education, teenage pregnancies and abortion to get priority

Proposals from the Women's Health Foundation:

1. Promote a health handbook
2. Carry out a policy research
3. Monitor the emergency services
4. Develop a network of support
5. Organize conferences and seminars
6. Promote women's health

Why is it important to focus on women's health?

Women's health is crucial for the overall health of society. Women often bear the burden of family responsibilities, which can affect their health negatively. By focusing on women's health, we can improve the health outcomes of women and their families. This, in turn, will lead to a healthier and more productive society.

Women's health issues:

1. Maternal health
2. Reproductive health
3. Mental health
4. Nutrition
5. Sexual and reproductive health

Let's take action to ensure that women have access to quality healthcare and support in their journey towards health and well-being.
FRENE GINWALA

Voice of experience

In the politically correct new SA it's tempting to believe Frene Ginwala was elected Speaker of the National Assembly last week simply because she is a woman. But it would be a mistake.

Those who know her say Ginwala (62) ranks among the ANC's top minds intellectually and in toughness. Remarks one colleague: "Nobody messes with Frene and gets away with it."

It's the sort of reputation needed by a Speaker, whose task, over the next year or two, will be to help strip away layers of political intolerance and guide the development of a new culture of democracy.

Johannesburg-born Ginwala was head of the ANC's research department at the time of her election. She is SA's first woman Speaker.

She left SA as a student in the early Sixties to help arrange the escape from the country of the late ANC president, Oliver Tambo. While in exile, she completed a law degree at London university and a DPhil at Oxford and was a barrister in London.

Ginwala, who is unmarried, also worked as a journalist and broadcaster in east Africa for various British newspapers and the BBC. From 1969-1972, she was managing editor of the Tanzanian newspapers The Standard and Sunday News. Prior to the unbanning of the ANC, she was the organisation's spokesperson in the UK.

Ginwala returned to SA in 1991 and became actively involved at various levels within the ANC— including the negotiation process and the establishment of the Independent Electoral Commission. She is deputy head of the Commission for the Emancipation of Women and convenor of the Women's National Coalition.

Intellect and firmness, coupled with the correct measure of independence, are among the qualities of good Speakers. But Ginwala faces the added challenge of dealing with an assembly composed largely of novice MPs. Her handling of proceedings could set new precedents.

This doesn't mean she will make changes for the sake of change, though a reassessment of the role of Speaker is a possibility. For example, Ginwala will certainly not give up her crusade for women's rights and may at times be in conflict with the executive. She could, therefore, be far more actively involved in public debate than previous Speakers — and possibly even take a lead on certain controversial issues.

Ginwala also hopes to be more active in restoring to the National Assembly the respectability it lacked during the apartheid years. She wants to see it become a "genuine forum" for the exchange of ideas among the elected representatives of the people.

"The process of political change did not stop last week. It must continue and the forum for that continuation is parliament."

She believes the success of the process will depend as much on her ability as the cooperation and dynamism of MPs.

An important part of the task will be to develop a clear differentiation between the legislative and executive arms of government, which Ginwala believes are too often seen as one and the same. "Parliament cannot allow itself simply to be a rubber stamp of the executive."

Nor will Ginwala allow herself to be at the beck and call of the ANC. She says the organisation knows her well enough not to expect her to become a mere pawn.
SA Parliament a world leader in the fight for sexual equality

From being one of the world's most sexist governments, our new Parliament, with its 106-seat contingent of women, has emerged as one of the world's most progressive.

South Africa has moved from 141st place on the list of countries with women in Parliament, to seventh. This leap underlines the commitment by President Nelson Mandela to a non-sexist South Africa. He has repeatedly made it clear that he considers discrimination against women as abhorrent as racism.

In September 1993 the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the world organisation of parliaments based in Geneva, polled 171 countries. SA was among the 50 countries whose representation was less than three percent — a lot it shared with countries like Belize, Morocco, Lebanon, Turkey and Yemen.

SA is now among the top 10. Top of the list is the Seychelles, which has almost attained equality, with women making up 45.6 percent of parliamentarians. The other countries in the top 10 are Finland (39 percent), Norway (35.8 percent), Sweden (35.6 percent), the Netherlands (30.3 percent), Iceland (28.7 percent), Cuba (22.8 percent), Austria (21.2 percent) and China (21 percent). Women now jump from 2.7 percent to 24.5 percent, South African women now better represented than their British and American counterparts.

For all their years of persistent feminism the Americans only just make the global average of 10 percent.

The new profile of the South African Parliament is symbolised by the appointment of Frene Ginwala as Speaker of the House. Yet, despite these gains, the top echelons of our new government remain bastions of male power.

In the 30-member cabinet only two ministerial positions are held by women — Health Minister (Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma) and Public Enterprises Minister (Stella Sigcau).

Three women hold deputy minister posts: Winnie Mandela (Arts, Culture, Science and Technology), Thoko Mbane (Agriculture) and Santile Nkondo (Welfare and Population Development).

All nine of the provincial premiers are men. Although women are well represented in the provincial parliaments, they are reportedly absent from the regional executive committees.

Of the 90 senators, only 16 are women. But, even though women have been left out of the upper structure, they are determined that their presence in Parliament will have impact.

Only the Freedom Front (nine seats) and the African Christian Democratic Party (two seats) lack women MPs. The DP has one (out of seven seats), Dene Smuts, and the PAC also has one (out of five seats), Patricia de Lille.

The 10 female IFP MPs (out of a party total of 45 seats) have already formed a parliamentary women's caucus.

The 10 NP women MPs (out of a party total of 85 seats) were meeting this week to decide on strategy.

A day after the opening of Parliament ANC women MPs were already tackling the content of President Mandela's speech and discussing strategy on women's issues, including the possible establishment of a Ministry of Children.

Phumzile Ngcuka, spokesman for the ANC's 46-strong women's caucus (out of a party total of 272 seats), said the priority would be to integrate women's issues in affairs of state and to "make sure women's issues maintain visibility."

The ANC women said they were unhappy with the number of women in the cabinet and would lobby to change this.

Another priority would be to tackle the civil service, which had been dominated by "white males."

Nomsa Ngqakula said the caucus would collect CVs and draw up a database of women so that they could start identifying women who could be directors-general and commissioners.
The vital cog in
the ANC's wheel

By Sizakala Kunene

ne Carolus, 36, has now cracked
from politics. In fact, her life of activ-
ism is now refuelled and taking on
new meaning.

"I am still in politics and I am going to
be around in an up-front way," she says.

Reminders of her retirement, she says, were based on the
"irrational assumption that Parliament is the only vehicle
for change."

The energetic and amiable Capetonian did not end up
with a parliamentary seat as political specialists and most
women had predicted.

Vital part
But she still remains as vital a part of the African National
Congress as she was before the elections.

Carolus is in the organisation's policy co-ordinator. She
holds influential positions in the human resources and art-
and culture department too.

"I am not disappointed that I did not get a post in
Parliament. I have never been interested in being a career
politician. I am deeply committed to change and I believe in
extra-parliamentary organisations that will effectively
set the vehicle of the new democracy in motion."

Carolus' mission, of which she speaks passionately, is
to work with women in making sexism unacceptable.

"If a lot of change is taking place in the country. But for
women change is being made in a formulaist rather than a
tangible way. The present set-up offers a window of
opportunity for us to be altered," she said.

Giant task

The limited allocation of Cabinet posts to women, she
said, was a reflection of the giant task that women still face
in trying to erase sexism.

The new Parliament was supposed to be a legitimate
institution to look at "men and women and not only at
blacks and whites."

"If women did not stand up to fight for a quota system
we would have ended up with zero women in the Cabinet.
But I can confidently say that the women that are there
have a voice."

"For more and meaningful change to take place the
activism of putting women on the agenda should continue
to be strong outside Parliament. At the moment the sensi-
tivity to gender equality is not at a high quality," Carolus
said.

She said women should not accede to Parliament's
responsibility for change in their lives.

Parliament, she said, was an important vehicle for
change but society too had to be organised and know how
to use that vehicle.

The first step, she suggested, would be to empower both
men and women on how to deal with sexism.

"We have to be militant about combating sexism as
we were in dealing with racism. Women should establish forums
which they will use to demand and take their rights. In terms of
legislation, money should be made available for them," she said.

Carolus is dedicating all her efforts to establishing three
non-parliamentary groups.

After her much-publicised marriage to Western Cape
academic Mr. Graham Elliott almost three years ago she is not
planning to run a family yet.

"I haven't learnt to take care of myself. Babies are not part of
my agenda," she said.
Changing face of new Parliament

ELEGANT SPEAKER

Gimvola still remains deeply concerned about women’s issues and struggle:

By Pearl Majola

A long marble-lined corridor leads to Madam Speaker’s office in the new wing of the Parliament buildings in Cape Town.

Partly a couple of security checkpoints, I was greeted by Dr Françoise Gwamva in office, the first woman and the first black person to be the Speaker of Parliament in South African history. The passage leading to the office is lined with portraits of unsmiling, wigged white men in the traditional Speaker’s robes, gazing into space.

But once in the office, one is greeted by a courteous and highly efficient Ms Gwamva Omo, Gimvola’s secretary.

"Madam Speaker will see you now, Miss Majola," announced Omo in her formal but relaxed Afrikaans accent.

Beautiful garden

Inside, draped in her usual suit, 61-year-old Gwamva sat comfortably in the chair, her facial expression conveying a beautiful garden.

"Yes," she said. "I don’t think I will change my name, Madam Speaker, just that what are doing," the smiling reply to the colonial painting, she said the name Van Riebeek and his crew navigating on the sea.

Described by some as the most eloquent and elegant speaker for the women’s movement, she told me what would happen to her role in that unfulfilled struggle now that she holds a position which requires such impartiality.

"My role, convictions and my commitment to the women’s move have not changed," she said.

"There is a danger that when women reach certain positions or succumb, they lose touch and say that if they can do it others should be able to do it as well.

"But I believe it is inescapable on any woman that if she overcomes obstacles she should see it as her responsibility to help remove obstacles for others," she said.

Women, therefore, still have a right to call on me to do just that," she mused.

Gwamva added that she had been too involved with women’s issues for as long as she could be, bringing in my new responsibility as Speaker, she explained. "That simply means I will continue to speak at engagements but I will not speak on issues being debated in Parliament.

About the representation of women in the new Parliament, Gimvola said it was not enough but was a noteworthy change. She said she was proud of a stronger representation which had been built among women despite political differences.

Women’s caucus

There would seem to be a move to establish a women’s caucus within Parliament which would be the organised voice of women on issues of common interest, she said.

"For my new job, Gimvola pointed out, was a "dreadful challenge" and at first she had "a sense of excitement and a slight degree of concern about whether or not she could do it."

"I will do my best, I am given that I am human. For me the difficulty is in not being able to work as I would like to work," she added. "There are debates that will go on in here," she said.

"But there is a great challenge in the job which is to help shape Parliament for a democratic South Africa and make it as: people-friendly and accessible as possible. This job gives me an opportunity to give direction to that process."

She said accountability could be achieved, for instance, by using simple terminology like agenda instead of order paper. More people would feel welcomed during debates in Parliament if they did not have to wear suits and ties.

The face of Parliament has changed and women like Gimvola and others, now a familiar feature at Parliament Buildings, are part of that change.

But as Gimvola comes, these women should not forget their responsibility towards others to make the change permanent and continue the struggle for women’s rights until it is won.

At the crossroads of rural ownership

THE land claims of labour-tenants on South African farms need to be recognised to ensure the success of the Government’s land redistribution programme, says Farmers Research and Resource Project co-coordinator Albie Dillane.

He said in an interview that the Government’s land reform policy should be developed at a local level and not at a national level.

Dillane said that the Government faced the challenge of erasing the claims of labour-tenants which were not recognised in the Interim constitution and the Government’s reconstruction and development programme.

Labour-tenants are distinguished from farmworkers in that they are entitled to a plot of land and keep livestock.

Dillane said that the FWRP had reviewed considerable rural support because it recognised this link, whereas the trade unions were campaigning among farm workers because they had established a campaign of wage and other employment-related issues.

The FWRP has been organising farm workers since 1991, when it was established to study the implications of the drought for farm workers. Its efforts have been focused on the south-western Transvaal and the Eastern Transvaal.

The organisation has an agreement with the Union of South African and its affiliated unions to represent farm workers.

Dillane also said that the resolution of commercial farming land needed to be considered. The Government had earmarked only state-owned land for redistribution.

Also of concern was Eastern Cape farmer My Greenfield’s recent remark that large-scale farming might be necessary to curb soil erosion in the province.

Dillane said this might mean the removal of non-farming residents.

A pre-election agreement on labour-tenants had yet to be passed by the Transkei Executive Council to the relevant ministers for consideration. A resolution to set up farm tenancy arrangements to deal with disputes should be implemented.

Dillane said. "Sure."
Coalition lives on to fight

BY ZINGISA MKHUMA

The Women's National Coalition (WNC) has resolved to stay on and fight for women's rights in the new South Africa although its previous mandate expired with the formulation of a Women's Charter and the new political dispensation.

The decision to continue the campaign for effective gender equality was taken at the WNC conference held in Johannesburg at the weekend.

The conference was attended by 100 delegates from women's organisations, WNC office bearers and WNC regional coalitions.

The new WNC convenor, Jean Ngubane — who succeeds parliamentary Speaker Frenel Ghvula — said at a press conference yesterday that two crucial decisions had been taken at the weekend.

The first was that the WNC should give women a national voice, and the second that a national structure should stay in place to co-ordinate and facilitate the campaign for equality.

"Every organisation within the coalition must play a part. The WNC and its affiliates will now build organisations, structures and lobbying power to ensure that women's equality becomes a reality," said Ngubane.

She said the WNC had a specific task to see that the Reconstruction and Development Programme took into consideration the work that had been done by the WNC. She said discussions had already been held with Minister Without Portfolio Jay Naidoo to decide how women were going to be represented in the RDP structures.

WNC outgoing member Dr Sheila Mabuza said the coalition was also there to influence the three most important institutions regarding women's rights — the Gender Commission, the Human Rights Commission and the office of the Public Protector.
Penalties for marriage to remain

By BARRY STREES

The tax penalties on married women are to remain in force, even though they may well be illegal in terms of the interim constitution which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex.

The Minister of Finance, Mr Derek Rays, did announce some relief for married women in his proposed 5% transitional levy in his Budget speech yesterday, but he did not refer to the tax penalties on married women.

"Basically, nothing has happened on this matter," the director of legal drafting, Mr Ian Meiring, said.

He said this was one of the matters the new tax commission, consisting of Professor Michael Katz and Professor Denise Davis, would have to look at.

"The revenue loss (from taxing married and single people the same) will be more than R5 billion and the major part of this is from married women," he said.

In his speech, Mr Keys said the transitional levy would only apply to married women who earned over R75,000.

Earlier this week, the Black Sash challenged the government to remove all sexual discrimination in tax and threatened to take it to the Constitutional Court.
Pregnant women gain protection

Clare Dyer

EMPLOYERS who sack women for becoming pregnant will automatically be guilty of sex discrimination and could face unlimited claims for compensation, after a ruling by the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg.

The court ruled that import clerk Carole Nardin's employers had no right to sack her when they discovered she was pregnant even though she would be unable to fulfill the main purpose of her employment contract, covering for another employee on maternity leave.

The decision follows a seven-year battle in which her claim against the Heathrow airport cargo company Emo was rejected by an industrial tribunal, the Employment Appeal Tribunal and Court of Appeal before the Law Lords referred the case to Luxembourg.

Women dismissed because of pregnancy will now find it much easier to claim compensation. Previously, those employed in the private sector had to show that the employer would have treated a man requiring the same time off for an illness more favourably.

Kamlesh Bahl, chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, said: "This case will have major implications for employers, who will need to change their employment practices." Sackings for pregnancy are still fairly common.

Paul Nicholls, employment law specialist at solicitors Dibb Lupton Broomhead, said: "Our advice to employers is to review their policies immediately. If employers don't amend their procedures, they can expect substantial claims winging their way towards them."

Under a European directive implemented in the 1993 Trade Reform and Employment Rights Act, a woman sacked during pregnancy or maternity leave will from October be able to bring a claim for unfair dismissal.

But the compensation ceiling for such claims is £1,100, whereas sex discrimination claims filed by Carole Nardin's now have no upper limit.
Charter lists women's demands

THE Women's National Coalition said yesterday its working relationship with government had to be clearly worked out if its women's charter was to be implemented successfully.

The Women's Charter for Effective Equality was drafted after a three-day conference of all coalition affiliates at the weekend.

The charter addresses a range of issues including violence, equality before the law, sexual harassment, traditional law and calls for women's participation in politics and protection under custom, culture, religion and in the family.

It recommends women's participation and representation in judicial and quasijudicial structures, including traditional courts.

It said women offenders should not be disadvantaged and their relationship with their children should be considered. The charter also calls for women's involvement in economic decision-making and that jobs no longer be categorised on the basis of sex.

It recommends affirmative action programmes for women, demands recognition for women breadwinners and the abolition of discriminatory taxation.

Women also needed alternative means to get access to credit.

The charter recommends the decriminalisation of prostitution with measures to protect the health and safety of sex workers and their children.

Women living under customary law should have access to land and security of tenure, and participate in rural development.

The coalition said women should have adequate, effective and enforceable maintenance and/or social welfare benefits.

The charter also includes the right of women to have control over their bodies, including the right to make reproductive decisions.

The coalition's national convener Jean Ngubane said it planned to play a monitoring, facilitating and challenging role. She said affiliates resolved to build and mobilise women in an effort to empower women.

Ngubane said the coalition needed to influence the composition of the gender and human rights commission and the office of the public protector.
Tax 'unconstitutional'

Political Staff

PARLIAMENT should refuse to pass the Budget because it violated the highest law of the land, the Black Sash said yesterday.

The decision to retain tax penalties for married women contravened the constitution which prohibited discrimination on grounds of sex, it said. It was evident from the Budget speech these constitutional provisions had been ignored, the Black Sash said in a statement.

The Democratic Party's Ms Dene Smuts said in statement equality translated into hard cash and no section of the population should be penalised due to prejudices.

"The fact that revenues would drop by R2 billion if taxes were equalised between married and single people does not justify a serious violation of the section on equality," the Black Sash said.
5,000 women eligible for wealth levy

Polling start

Cape Times, 4th
Dr Frene Ginwala ... she thought someone was trying to shut her up by making her the Speaker of the National Assembly.

Dr Frene Ginwala was deeply depressed at being made Speaker of the National Assembly. A sort of instinctive suspicion nagged at her.

"I felt somebody was trying to find a way to "shut Frene up,"" she said of her disappointment at the time. "I felt it was a conspiracy to keep me quiet."

And she felt she would have to be "quiet", that the role would necessarily neutralise her politically, disarm her.

Arguably, some of her powerful colleagues might have wanted nothing less, knowing too well, perhaps, the discomfitting attention of her daunting (and feminist) intellect.

But it is far more likely her peers saw in her that essential amalgam of wisdom, wit, sense of justice, and resoluteness that best empowers the person who must referee the grand tournament of ideas that democratic debates should be.

And, having "wallowed for a while in self-pity", the unexpected challenge of turning Parliament into a meaningful and powerful political instrument seized her.

Frene Ginwala had had other ideas about coming to Parliament.

"When I agreed to stand for Parliament, I thought it would be great. I used to tell friends that I wouldn't be on dozens of committees, I would sit and read and think and write ... in peace."

That was not to be.

Luckily, unexpected challenges are not new to the 61-year-old barrister.

Born and schooled in Johannesburg, Ginwala began her law studies at King's College, London, returning in 1959 to study at home.

Though she was politically active — "like all of us were" — she held no position in the ANC at that stage. "I was just a kid," she recalled.

Nevertheless, her acquaintance overseas with key anti
African political figures drew the attention of the ANC leadership who, unbeknown to her, were already planning an international presence for the movement, an external wing.

What they needed were contacts, and they believed she might be the key. After some discussion, she wrote to a top-ranking friend in Tanganyika and assurances of support were received. It was then revealed to her that Oliver Tambo would be the man to “go out” and set up the ANC in exile.

But before any further planning could take place, Sharpeville shattered all political certainties.

On the night of the massacre, Frene Ginwala was interviewing Monty Naicker of the Indian Congress in Durban. (She began freelance work to earn a living while studying.)

Visit

“Walter Sisulu phoned to speak to him, and then asked to speak to me. In the course of the conversation he suggested I should visit my parents in Mozambique. My father was born there. We were oil millers.

“Without giving it much thought, I left for Mozambique the next morning... and I didn’t return to South Africa for 31 years.”

Frene Ginwala, at 26, became the ANC’s “travel agent” in Africa, helping Oliver Tambo — and scores of others — into exile.

“If I’d known what was involved in half the things I did, I would never have done them,” she grinned.

Indeed, she did many things.

She worked for the ANC in Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique and Britain. While in east Africa, she worked as a journalist, editing the monthly political journal, Spearhead, and in the early 1970s was managing editor of the Tanzanian Standard and Sunday News newspapers.

While in exile, she qualified as a barrister and completed a doctorate in philosophy. She was a researcher, consultant, lecturer, activist and spokesperson.

Looking back, she says the exiled community “always had hope, and we could not have continued if we did not. But it was vague in the early days. Then, in the 1980s, that hope became confidence. We never doubted negotiations were on the cards.”

When talks did finally begin after 1990, she was back at the centre of things.

Ginwala, who lashed the ANC in 1989 for the “glaring” absence of women at decision-making and policy-making levels, played a central role in marshalling women’s organisations into a powerful front.

Response

Today, she acknowledges that one of the most gratifying things about being made Speaker has been the response of women “across the country, women of all ages and races and groups, who will stop and talk to me in the streets and say how much they feel about it. That makes me feel good.”

She also feels good about a role in Parliament which has neither neutralised nor silenced her.

She is determined to make Parliament a critical element of democracy.

“If Parliament, the National Assembly, is going to be democratic, to be the voice of the South African people, an institution in whose choosing every South African had a say, unlike the Cabinet or other institutions, then you can’t lock it away somewhere.

“We have to find a way of building a relationship between parliament and people that goes beyond a connection once every five years at the ballot box.

“We have got to look at all possible ways to make this a place for freer exchange.”

There has already been much change in Parliament, and more is on the way.

Significantly, she has found that the parliamentary staff “clearly wanted a lot of changes, but seem not to have been able to make them (in the past). So I’m pushing at an open door.”

One thing she will not tolerate being called Mr Speaker.

A new political Who’s Who Says of Ginwala: “Of stern guilt and even sternier countenance, she does not suffer fools gladly.”

True in good measure, it is, perhaps more the picture of a Victorian parson than of Ginwala, who smiles easily.

Yet, while MPs know they have no starchy matriarch in Madam Speaker, she is indeed, as the headline writer so crisply declared, no push-over.
Women angry at failure to end bias

Staff Reporter
WOMEN'S groups have reacted angrily to the failure of the Budget to remove sexual discrimination in taxes which they believe flies in the face of the new constitution.

However, married women are favoured with a higher abatement on the new transition levy, which will only be imposed on married women earning more than R175,000 a year.

All other taxpayers pay the 9% levy on incomes over R50,000.

The Black Sash hoped the preferential abatement was merely a "stop-gap" in the progress towards an equal tax structure. It was "disappointed" the government had not lived up to the promise of the constitution which makes gender discrimination unconstitutional.

Married women could be forced to take the issue before the Constitutional Court.
Personal needs

After our time to look
Above very little
A few women we

Crush This

A number of things

Here’s why

Three “Crush this” women

New Women’s National Coal-

Women’s Coalition has

Women’s Coalition is promoting women’s cause to its proper conclusion.

People’s Lives

By Pearl Madigan

Sundown Monday July 11, 1994
Dynamic Nomandia determined to get buses on the right road

Nomandia took three days off two weeks ago to spend some well-earned time with her two children. Making quality time available for her family is necessary, but not always possible.

Besides her new position as director of Golden Arrow Bus Services, Nomandia is also involved in the ANC Women’s League, a member of the SA National Civic Organisation, co-chairperson of the Cape Metropolitan Negotiating Forum, and co-ordinator of the Local Government Committee.

“My children don’t always understand my work situation, and that is frustrating, but this is the sacrifice I have made.”

“At some point in my life I had to forego the luxury of being a mother and a parent to be able to dedicate myself to what I believe in. I think it’s for the good, as I’ve always been a fighter against racism and sexism.”

Nomandia regards herself as an ordinary person who has developed because of the struggle. She wants to see more women becoming involved in business, not only in a bus company, but in similar positions, as she believes there are many women who are capable. For now she has her hands full improving the bus services for the community of Cape Town.

“One of my main aims is to promote efficiency. The buses have to arrive on time, which is not happening now, and we can’t do business like that.”

“The taxi service is just as important to the community, and I feel that Cape Town has a population big enough for both taxis and buses,” said Nomandia.

“There is space for both because buses can get where taxis can’t. The bus service just needs to be developed sufficiently, especially in the townships.”

Safety is another issue that needs to be considered:

“Taxis or buses are not safe if you don’t build an environment of safety. That competition between buses and taxis mustn’t lead to an insecure situation, therefore taxis mustn’t see buses as taking profit away from them, or vice versa.”

Nomandia feels buses are much safer because they are bigger and less accident prone.

“The taxis drive fast, and usually in overcrowded conditions. This creates a bigger risk of accident.”

Her community involvement is of utmost importance to Nomandia.

“It is not only the bus company, but also the community I am representing,” she says.

“Wherever I am, I am supposed to be speaking for things that would benefit the people more than anything, and it’s a real challenge.”

Nomandia explained that Golden Arrow ploughed profit back into the community through a training and education foundation that was founded last June and which spawned a business fund as well.

About her appointment as the first woman director in the company, Nomandia says “I intend to play my role constructively, as I’m not a token, and definitely not here just to balance the gender question.”
More women in hunt for jobs

By Josias Charte

MORE women are expected to enter the job market and at a much faster rate than men according to University of South Africa's Bureau of Market Research.

"In 1980 men made up 79 percent and women 21 percent of the labour force in South Africa. By 1991 the portion of men in the labour force had dwindled to 61 percent and by 2011 a further decrease of three percent to 58 percent is expected."

The BMR says the changes in the face of the labour market were due to the entry of married women into the market.

Labour force

It also predicts that women entering the job market will increase by an average rate of 3.2 percent and 2.4 percent for men. The bureau also says the country's labour force is expected to soar to 23,1 million by the year 2011, which represents an increase of 95 percent from 13.6 million in 1991.

This means that 476 000 people will enter the job market each year. The bureau also says it expects the black labour force to expand by 826 000 a year between 1991 and 2011, while the projected increase among whites is 14 200.

Coloureds will experience an increase of 27 500 in their workforce and Indians 8 300.

Formal sector

The portion of blacks will rise from 69 percent to 77 percent in this period.

Currently the black labour force supplies only four out of every 100 entrepreneurs in the formal sector, but in the forecast period it will supply 90 out of every 100 new entrants to the labour market, the BMR says.
The Municipal Workers' Union will launch a parental rights campaign with a range of activities at the Showground, Goodwood, today.

The campaign hopes to highlight the plight of women workers in the municipal sector and is campaigning for paid maternity leave, job security and continuous service, health and safety provisions.

Union spokeswoman Merle Brown said although women were only a small proportion of the workforce in the municipal sector, they worked under the most atrocious conditions.

"The events today will bring together union members and their families from distant towns and cities and will be joined by the broader community."

"Our programme is filled with children's activities and cultural items and speakers from the union and Cosatu will address the gathering," she added.

"The campaign is also being launched in other parts of the country."
Women deliver charter

Political Staff

NEARLY 40 years after then Prime Minister Mr J G Strijdom sent a lowly official to meet an ANC Women's League march — and proceeded to ignore their demands — the National Women's Coalition handed copies of the Women's Charter for Effective Equality to the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr Frene Ginwala, president of the Senate, Kobie Coetsee of the NP, and Constitutional Assembly chairman Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, in Parliament yesterday.

The coalition delegation included Ms Jean Ngubane, national convener, and Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, chairwoman of the SABC board.

The coalition wants Parliament to declare August 9 as National Women's Day — an "international day in support of the women of South Africa" and in recognition of their important contribution to the attainment of democracy in South Africa.

Ms Ngubane said women represented 54% of the population but had mustered only 100 seats (out of 400) in Parliament, with only two women in the 27-member cabinet. "This just isn't good enough," she said.

Replying, Mr Ramaphosa said South Africans should feel proud that many women had risen above the obstacles placed in their path to become leaders in the community.

According to the delegation handing over the charter to Western Cape Premier Mr Hernus Kriel yesterday, law-makers now had the opportunity to reflect women's aspirations in South Africa by consulting the newly compiled Women's Charter — while the commitment to sexual equality by Mr Kriel would be monitored.
Prisoners threaten ‘a violent revolt’

THE SA Prisoners’ Organisation for Human Rights (Sapoor) warned yesterday that prisoners who believed they were eligible for release under the amnesty provisions would stage a violent revolt if their plea for freedom continued to be ignored by Correctional Services.

The threat followed a refusal by Johannesburg Prison commanding officer Brig Wessel van Niekerk to hand a memorandum from prisoners to PWV provincial legislature member Robert McBride and Sapoor head Golden Miles Bhudu.

Bhudu said the refusal by Van Niekerk to hand over the memo, intended for delivery to PWV Premier Tokyo Sexwale, indicated the situation in prisons had not changed.

Prisoners’ attitudes towards resolving problems were gradually changing from peaceful to violent, Bhudu said. He did not know what other peaceful means prisoners could explore to secure their release — as promised by President Nelson Mandela at his inauguration on May 10 1994.

Correctional Services spokesman P Potgieter denied prison management had been asked to pass on the memorandum.

Potgieter said Van Niekerk had told McBride and Bhudu a prisoners’ petition would have to be checked by prison management before being given to outsiders.

PWV setting up gender commission

JACQUIE GOLDING

A PWV legislature/Womens’ Coalition gender commission would be set up before government’s first 100 days in office were up, PWV premier Tokyo Sexwale said yesterday.

Speaking at a news conference after the Women’s Coalition handed over its women’s charter, Sexwale said women were invited to form a commission with the legislature in an effort to get issues affecting women into the constitution.

This was in line with President Nelson Mandela’s opening address in Parliament, where he pledged to give a report-back on reforms within 100 days of taking office, Sexwale said.

References to issues directly affecting women, such as rape and wife battering, were omitted from the interim constitution or were not clear.

Sexwale said that since government came to power, SA had become one of the top 10 countries in the world in terms of female representation in Parliament. It had previously been rated 14th.

He added that government had a duty to ensure that women were satisfied with the constitution.

PWV Women’s Coalition representative Dorothy Motubatsi said the charter echoed the aspirations of women nationally.

Acting chairman Kay Gounden said the Women’s Coalition supported the legalisation of prostitution and abortion.

Sapa reports from Cape Town that a motion proposed by Adelaide Tambo (ANC), declaring August 9 National Women’s Day, was approved unanimously by the National Assembly yesterday.
Women want rank in SANDF

BY BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

WOMEN should be employed at all levels of the defence force, including the infantry, and women should have parity in the cabinet, the ANC Women’s League demanded yesterday.

It also said the Development Bank should be dissolved if it could not be changed and its chief executive, Mr Andre le Grange, removed.

Women’s League president Mrs Winnie Mandela and senior executive members said at a press conference at the end of the National Women’s Day commemorations that women were still suffering from discrimination, including within the ANC.

The league’s deputy president, Ms Thandi Modise, said: “We had women in the trenches and we had women in the struggle, but we don’t have them in the defence force.”

Ms Lulama Xingwane, MP, a member of the league’s executive, said that unless Mr Le Grange was removed from his position, the bank should be closed down.

She said the bank had funded apartheid institutions and today it was supporting the Western Cape because it had supported the National Party.
Charter highlight of Women’s Day

By Quentin Wilson

NATIONAL Women’s Day was celebrated on Tuesday with the handing over of a Women's Charter to President Nelson Mandela and all nine regional premiers.

Co-ordinated by the Women's National Coalition, the charter was drawn up over the last 30 months, during which time the views of over three million South African women were taken into account.

Intended as a “guideline” for the country’s politicians, the charter “gives expression to the diverse experiences, visions and aspirations of South African women”.

Speaking at the handover in Cape Town where Western Cape premier, Mr Hernus Kriel, accepted the Charter, Woman’s Coalition member, Ms Hilda Ndude urged him to lead other provinces in the struggle for women’s rights.

Ndude said to Kriel: “You have committed yourself here today to this charter. As women in this provincial legislature we will be the watchdogs of this charter and ensure that you keep your word.”

Another ANC member of the legislature, Ms Lynne Brown, said it was “wonderful” that this year’s Women’s Day celebrations were being held inside government buildings.

“Every year we celebrate this day, but the fact that we are able to do so in this government building is truly historic,” Brown said.

Ms Gertrude Fester, part of the 12-person delegation which met Kriel, paid tribute to ANC MP Ms Feroza Adam, who was fatally injured in a car crash in Athlone at the weekend.

“It is a great tragedy that Feroza could not be with us today. Her death is a huge blow for us all. She was such a dynamic, energetic fighter for women’s rights.

“They may be burying her today, but they will never be able to bury all that she stood for,” Fester said.
Still fighting after 40 years

Fourty years ago, this month, thousands of South African workers marched to the Union Buildings to protest against the apartheid government's pass laws on August 9.

Four decades on, thousands more women look to their sisters elected into Parliament to voice their demands and get them tabled.

1) Minister of Health Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma echoes the sentiments of other women in Government when she says it's hard when you don't have a wife like past politicians "to do everything else in the rest of your life".

She says Parliament was a place "designed for men". There are limited child care facilities, and "few conveniences" for women. "It became clear to us that after the change of government, many of the men toilets had been converted into female toilets."

She believes the women's struggle continues, and says: "I think significant gains have been made for and by women in this country within the first 40 years after the inaugu-

2) PAC MP Patricia de Lille led the party in multi-party negotiations prior to the election. She says Parliament needs to become more "women friendly". She is helping to establish the first new support service and networking body being set up between extra-parliamentary women's groups and those in government.

"After the Cabinet has looked at an issue, for example, you just find this bill on your table. And most of the time it's in legal language which needs deciphering even before you can get to grips with the issue."

With so much to do, we have no time, and this is how women in the movement with these skills can help."

3) Sheila Camerer, long-standing NP MP and former jour-

nalist and attorney, was also a deputy minister of justice in the previous government. She says things have changed for the better for women. Women in the bul-

lowed hall of Parliament are overcoming their own smaller struggles for the benefit of those who will follow. One example she bemoaned points out, is the fact that there are no facilities for women in the resident gymnasium which don't entail pass-

ing the men's urinals.

Without the help of all women who "helped make up the existing quota", she doesn't believe women MP's would be in a posi-
tion of strength.

4) IFP MP Suzanne Vos says the demands of the job require MPs to have "wings" on their feet.

She is proud of how women in Parliament deal with professional obstacles and gender-based occupational hazards such as the long working hours - after which many women take care of their children.

Vos is involved with others in strengthening the (in-house) multi-party spaces, net-

working "both formally and oth-

erwise to be effective as a body."

She feels women have man-
egaged to make a difference in what "has been a male-domi-

ned process of running the coun-

try, in the past". Her own contribu-
tion toward making parlia-
mment more woman-friendly - one hat out of need was to "appro-

priate the male toilets" close by.
The Star 17/8/1994

**The spirit of foetal facts**

Women trying to get pregnant should stop drinking because of damage it does to their bodies’ capacity to support a foetus. Australian researchers experimenting with mice confirm harmful effects of alcohol on the embryo and foetus through the placenta in pregnant women. - Reuters.

**xa a woman, strike a rock**

Parliamentarians point out that South Africa has swooped up from 142 to seventh on the world list of countries where women are incorporated in government.

Ministers and MPs, notably the women, agree that three cheers are in order for the Government of National Unity, as political change appears to have become a catalyst for initiating gender sensitivity and recognition of the need for women’s rights.

As with the political process toward democracy, the expectations of women on the ground are high, even though their representatives in leadership are still operating as a minority.

However, despite the fact that in the 30-member cabinet there are only two women ministers, and three deputy ministers (and the premiers in all nine regions are men, and of the 90 senators, only 16 are women) many women, such as Health Minister Dr Nkosazana Zuma feel that “this is a good start especially if one looks back in recent history”.

National Party MP Sheila Camerer points out that women comprise 25 percent of the new Government and that “this is a tipping point in governments around the world” allowing them to form a lobby.

The women who hold office say that together, they support from their sisters on the ground, “we’ve begun flexing muscle to see women’s issues as a priority in the new constitution.

They also feel the appointment of Dr Frene Ginwala, a stalwart of the women’s and political struggle, as Speaker of the House, is another step in the right direction as she is the first woman to hold this position.

And although they are all still settling into their various positions, they want to strengthen their personal commitment to secure gender equality. Part of making parliament a more woman-friendly place to work in – as Patricia de Lille (PAC MP) calls for – has been the initiation of a multi-party women’s caucus which will promote the interchange of ideas and cement camaraderie.

This group is roping in the expertise and power of women in sectors outside of government to ensure that no official regulations which are passed by government discriminate against women.

Together with the NGO’s involved, the caucus believes that drawing lay-women into the process of ensuring women’s rights are addressed by the GNU will also get women in the various constituencies involved.

Women MP’s say this initiative, although still an informal organisation, will be officially launched soon, and is already a great support system for them.

The chief priority of women’s NGO’s and government aligned groups now, is to see that a widely representative gender commission is set up, and that plans for affirmative action programmes for women – including those in government – are implemented.

Another is addressing “with more urgency” the political position of all women, especially making sure that the Reconstruction and Development Programme does not sideline women across the board.

This process will test the strength of women’s organisations and their representation in government, but the word from the ground says this is no problem.

Initiatives such as those of the powerful umbrella body, the Women’s National Coalition (WNC), have united local NGO’s and government organisations throughout the country in canvassing women’s demands, researching and drawing up a proposal toward a bill on women’s rights.

When the first democratic elections took place in this country, the women – a 54 percent majority in this country – already spoke with one voice. The completed “Women’s charter for effective equality” has been presented before Parliament on last week’s National Women’s Day.

The overall message from women across the board about the future of women’s fight for liberation is that, although it may not be as long in coming now, the struggle to see women’s rights firmly entrenched in the new constitution – and implemented on the ground – will be carried out more rigorously as it approaches.

**TOMORROW**

The medical doctor of today is a terminally ill dinosaur stuck in a timewarp of “cut, burn and poison” medicine, says a visiting American specialist.
more representation in committees:

UNEuropean Union Women 91.

Long Night for Women's Equality

Richard B.
Women and tax

MORE power to the National Party, the Democratic Party and the Black Sash for taking the government to task over continued discrimination in the taxation of married women.

The Sash is considering going to the Constitutional Court on the issue, which might not be a bad idea given government's procrastination over the years. Compounding the iniquity is the fact that lower paid married women are penalised the most. Certainly the loss of revenue to the fiscus is a consideration, but the cost can and should be made up by increases in taxes, tariffs, and/or duties that are gender blind.

There can be no good reason why female taxpayers should contribute a greater — or for that matter, lesser — proportion of their earnings to income tax than males.

The tax commission chaired by Professor Michael Katz and due to report in a few months should concentrate on means of making up the loss caused by eliminating gender discrimination, rather than on whether it should be removed. It has become the norm for married women to work, although probably at salaries which have yet to attain parity for similar jobs with those of their male colleagues. That anomaly, too, deserves to be relegated to the past, but subjective factors will probably make the issue more complex and slower to resolve in detail.

World attention is focusing on SA regarding the dismantling of race discrimination, providing a good opportunity for recognition of more progress on the gender front as well.
Domestics — are you keeping to the law?

TODAY'S WOMAN looks at new legislation governing the employment of domestic workers.

ARE you, unknowingly, breaking the law with regard to the working conditions of your domestic worker?

Did you know, for example, that the law states that your domestic worker's salary must be handed over in an envelope or a container, and must be accompanied by a statement?

Did you know your domestic worker is entitled to six public holidays on full-pay a year?

If she does work on these days, she (or he) is entitled to a double day's wage, or one-and-a-third times the wage — plus a day's paid leave within seven days of the public holiday.

In January, The Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1983 was extended to cover the first time basic working rights for domestic workers.

The act changes totally the relationship between employer and domestic worker by now placing the relationship on a legal basis.

The domestic worker now has legal rights that must be adhered to, or else the employer could run the risk of a visit from an inspector from the Department of Manpower if the worker lays a complaint. The inspector can impose the fine if the mistake is not rectified.

The act defines various categories of domestic workers: full-time workers; regular day workers who work for the same employer for three days or less a week for the period for at least four consecutive weeks; and, casual workers who work for an employer three days a week or less for a period of less than a month.

It stipulates the minimum conditions — employer and employees are, of course, free to agree to more favourable but not less favourable conditions.

- **Working hours:** An employer may not ask a domestic worker to work more than 46 hours a week. The maximum daily working hours must not exceed nine hours 15 minutes a day for a five-day week, or eight hours a day for a six-day week. A live-in domestic worker may not work for a spread-over time of more than 14 hours a day.

- **Meal intervals:** A domestic may not work continuously for more than five hours without a meal interval of at least one hour. This may, by agreement, be reduced to 30 minutes. Meal intervals do not form part of the hours of work unless the worker is required to look after children, the elderly or sick during her meal interval.

- **Overtime:** In addition to normal working hours, a domestic worker may agree to work over time but is not obliged to do so. Overtime may not exceed three hours on any day or 10 hours in any week, except when the worker is looking after children, the elderly or sick. The payment for overtime may not be less than one-and-a-half times the workers hourly rate.

- **Sunday work:** A domestic worker can agree to work on a Sunday but this is not compulsory. If she works for four hours or less the employers must pay her a full day's wage, or one-and-a-third times her hourly rate for four hours, plus a day off on full pay the following week. If she works more than four hours, she gets double the daily rate or one-and-a-third times the wage rate for the hours worked, plus a day's leave on full pay the following week.

- **Public holidays:** The employer must grant the following public holidays on full pay: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Ascension Day, Workers Day, Day of the Vow and Christmas Day. If the public holiday is worked the domestic must be paid a double day's wage or one-and-a-third times the hours worked plus a day's paid leave within seven days. All domestic workers, including casuals, are entitled to public holidays off on full pay.

- **Annual leave:** A full-time domestic worker is entitled to at least 14 consecutive days' leave a year on full pay. Regular day workers have one working day's leave for every 26 days worked. Casuals are not entitled to any paid vacation leave.

- **Sick leave:** A full-time domestic who works not more than five days a week is entitled to not less than 30 working days per 36 months she is employed. Workers who work more than five days a week get not less than 36 working days per 36 months. A regular day worker is entitled to one working day's sick leave for every 26 days worked. Sick leave must be granted on full pay. Casual workers do not qualify for sick leave.

- **Maternity leave:** Maternity leave is not compulsory, and it may be granted with or without pay. An employer is prohibited from requiring a pregnant worker to work for four weeks before the baby is due and eight weeks after the birth.


DISCRIMINATION

‘Women unfairly taxed’

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

The Black Sash has added its voice to warnings of constitutional court action to end discriminatory taxation of women.

Deputy finance minister Alec Erwin told the national assembly yesterday it was possible there was an “inconsistency” between constitutional provisions forbidding gender discrimination and policy on taxing married women.

The Katz commission on taxation would give the question urgent attention.

The government intended removing tax discrimination against married women, he said.

The implications of ending this discrimination would have to be considered, because revenue might have to be raised from other sources.

Sheila Camerer (NP) said the argument that the country could not afford to do without the extra income from married women was invalid.

It was clear the taxation system discriminated against married women and as such was unconstitutional.

Dene Smuts (DP) said organisations like the Black Sash seemed “poised to pounce” on the issue.

Black Sash spokeswoman Martha Bridgman said it was clear from the parliamentary debate that legislators were unaware of the discriminatory and unconstitutional nature of current tax policy.

“Neither the legislators nor the public need a commission of inquiry to tell them, as past commissions have, the tax burden is unfairly spread.

“Women are unfairly taxed.

“If forced by parliament’s inaction now, they may well go to the constitutional court to rectify the situation at the government’s expense.”

The Black Sash urged the government not to wait for the tax commission’s report to rectify the situation.
SOUTH Africa's new Constitution could free married women from tax inequality which goes back to the first Income Tax Act of 1904. And this could cost the State billions of rand.

This is the conclusion of research by Dr Hennie Coetzee, tax partner at chartered accountants KPMG Aiken & Peat, and part-time professor in taxation at Rand Afrikaans University.

Married women are still victims of unequal taxation in spite of steps by government to implement the 1987 Margo Commission's recommendation that the "married couple" unit for purposes of tax be changed to the "individual".

Dr Coetzee cites the example of a taxpayer paid by a "married man" and a "married woman" who in the 1994-95 tax year would each earn R160 000 (ignoring the Transition Levy).

The married man, after a rebate of R2 225, would pay tax of R22 475.

The married woman, after a rebate of only R300, would pay R25 350, a difference of R2 875 or 12.79 percent more than the married man.

At an income level of R69 000, married women pay 23.27 percent more.

The 1993 Constitution is designated "the supreme law of the Republic and any law or act inconsistent with its provisions shall, unless otherwise provided expressly or by necessary implication in this Constitution, be of no force and effect to the extent of the inconsistency" (Chapter 1 (4)).

This is binding on all legislative, executive and judicial organs of state at all levels of government.

The Constitution also holds that every person is entitled to equality before the law and equal protection of the law; and that nobody can be unfairly discriminated against on grounds, among others, of gender (Chapter 3: (8) 1 and (8) 2).

"When it comes to other laws overruling the Income Tax Act, the only circumstances where this occurs is where double taxation treaties exist between South African and other tax jurisdictions", says Dr Coetzee.

"For instance, where a British resident works in South Africa for a period not exceeding six months, he will normally be taxed only in the United Kingdom in terms of the double tax treaty between the Republic and Britain."

But what of the provisions of the Income Tax Act relating to "married women" when considered against the fundamental individual rights and non-discrimination provisions of the Constitution?

"Prima facie, it would appear that the tax law is inconsistent with the constitutional provisions of Chapter 3 (8), albeit 'to the extent of the inconsistency' mentioned in Chapter 1 (4).

"The objective conclusion is that discriminatory provisions in the Income Tax Act are based not on gender but rather on economics — it simply would cost too much to suddenly tax 'married women' on the basis of other 'married persons'."

"To put it differently, in 1987 (when the Margo Commission made its recommendations), the fiscus would have lost too much revenue had 'married women' suddenly been taxed on the same basis as married men.

"The question is: if this overt discrimination is challenged constitutionally, would the Commissioner for Inland Revenue be able to enforce payment?"

The 1994 Act made a "married couple" a "tax unit" in South Africa's tax system, in line with the system in the United Kingdom where, from 1799 until 1900, a married woman's income was taxed as part of her husband's income.

For the first half of the century, says Dr Coetzee, this mattered little since relatively few married women entered the formal job market.

But as more and more wives started working to supplement the family income, the effect of the married couple being a "unit" for tax purposes meant that the wife's income was taxed at the marginal rate applicable to her husband's income.
Harassment a top issue

NEW YORK — Sexual harassment and the stress of being a working mother have emerged from a new survey as the top issues among women at work here.

More than 1 800 women completed detailed written questionnaires for the survey initiated by the New York City Women's Bureau.

Forty percent of women reported harassment at work, complaining of lewd comments, groping hands and unprofessional behaviour. The survey covered women in all occupations, but found that professional women either suffered more or reported more harassment.

The women uniformly reported that the harassment affected their work and damaged their self-esteem.

The stress of working while raising a family emerged as a problem almost equal to office or shopfloor behaviour. — The Telegraph
TOMORROW

Minister Without Portfolio Jay Richardson

Raised on the milk of non-violence and respect for all....

For women's rights

Share burden, share must

Society, Woman

A guardian-angel, as in their fight for some tomorrow make

Women now have
contacts through NAWBO
Women make business
business — making it work for you

by WANDERLE MISACH

NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners) launched in Cape Town in 1984. It is an international organization.

The National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) was founded to provide opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

NAWBO is an international organization.

Women make business — making it work for you.
WHO echoes women's plea

Support woman's rights
Women’s groups critical of Constitutional Court

Lesley Cowling

With four black judges and two women, the 11-member Constitutional Court finalised this week is the most representative Bench this country has seen.

But women's groups are disappointed that some excellent women candidates, who shone in public interviews last week, did not make the final list.

President Nelson Mandela chose Judge John Didcott, Judge Johan Kriegler, advocate Pius Langa and legal academics Yvonne Mckgoro, Kate O'Regan and Abie Sachs from a list of 10 drawn up by the Judicial Services Commission after public interviews of 24 candidates.

Mandela excluded three black candidates — vice-chancellor of the University of Zululand, Charles Dlamini, and advocates Bernard Ngoepe and Lewis Skeveiyi — and Wits University law professor John Dugard.

The court now comprises six white men, three black men, one black woman and one white woman. Though some organisations said they understood "representivity" to refer to more than race and gender, women's rights groups were not happy.

Babette Kabak, of The Women's Lobby, which works for the inclusion of women in political structures, said she was disappointed at the exclusion of women, in particular the exclusion of Professor June Sinclair, who had worked for women's rights for many years.

Trish van der Nest, of the Women's Legal Status Committee, said the selection of two women by the JSC was a step forward, but that more women should have been included.

Other aspects of the selection process had also caused concern. The Women's Legal Status Committee was also angered by questions put to women candidates about whether they could cope with their professional responsibilities because of family commitments.

"This is so typical of the kind of questions male lawyers ask women — questions they would never ask their male counterparts," said Van der Nest.

Besides Sinclair, women's groups were disappointed that the JSC excluded Navi Pillay, a 53-year-old Durban attorney with a strong line on women's rights and a broad sympathy with the New Unity movement.

Sentencing while the jury's out; PAGE 31
Equality 'too costly'

Gender equality, as provided in the constitution, had been accepted in principle in the civil service, but it was too costly to implement, a member of the Public Service Commission, Professor Yvonne Meathin, said yesterday.

The payment of equal housing subsidies to married women could not be implemented immediately because of the costs, she told the parliamentary select committee on Public Service and Administration.

"To bring that on a par will require a phased process depending on the funds the government has allocated." In the constitution, discrimination on the basis of gender had to be abolished. The commission therefore had investigated the cost of obtaining gender equality.

But the "very large cost" of extending housing subsidies to married women had made this impossible.
14 years on: Zimbabwe women still not equal

Zimbabwe's women, who fought alongside the men in the country's guerrilla war for black majority rule, face an uphill battle for sexual equality in virtually all fields 14 years after independence.

Although they make up 52 percent of Zimbabwe's population of nearly 11 million, their presence in the top echelons of political and economic power is minimal, women's groups say.

In private business, the only women in boardrooms and managers' offices are still largely secretaries taking dictation from male bosses.

Although having a powerful block vote in terms of sheer numbers, their representation in national politics is largely token. Only 17 of the 150 members of parliament are women.

Solid support

President Robert Mugabe, whose ruling Zanu-PF party swept to power in 1980 on a crest of solid support from women, has an all-male Cabinet of 23.

Three women Ministers of State do not sit in the Cabinet and do not run substantial departments.

Zimbabwe's 100,000 whites, who form 1 percent of the population, have two of their number in the Cabinet.

GREATER representation in government and joint ownership of property with spouses are priorities on the agendas of women's groups

In the politburo — Mugabe's inner Cabinet in Zanu-PF which decides policy — there are only three women and 24 men.

Of the state-appointed governors who run the country's provinces, only one is a woman.

Of 23 permanent secretaries — civil service heads of ministries — only two are women.

Mugabe blames the women themselves, saying they vote men into power instead of backing their "sisters":

"What do you expect when you don't vote women into parliament for me to appoint them as Ministers?" he asked recently.

Zimbabwe's constitution stipulates that Cabinet Ministers should be members of parliament, but women activists are quick to point out that Mugabe, who has the power to appoint MPs, has named some men who were not parliamentarians to his Cabinet.

They say women's participation in national legislative bodies was largely dictated by political party structures and election processes which, through a 'men's wing', compartmentalised them into an appendage of the party.

"In Zanu-PF, as in most political parties in this country, we have the youth and women's leagues which are marginal to the main wing which should be renamed 'men's wing' as it is male-dominated," said a woman politician who asked not to be named.

"Even for a woman to get elected to a top position in the Women's League, you need the patronage of a male party boss," she added.

Most women activists agree that cultural practices and attitudes are the main obstacles.

These also stand in the way of women's rights to own property, which traditionally is registered in a husband's name and on his death is inherited by his son, brother or another male relative.

Meeting resistance

Women's groups are pressing to have such laws amended to allow family property to be registered in both spouses' names.

But they are meeting resistance from traditionalists and government officials, including Mugabe, who normally prefers to be seen as a champion of women's advancement.

At a recent public debate on land ownership, Mugabe shocked the nation when he attacked married women who advocated that property should also be registered in the names of the wives.

"Our women are now rebellious," Mugabe thundered. "If a woman wants property in her own right, why did she get married in the first place?"

"Better not wed, then, because marriage means you are together with the husband as head of the family. Are there the terrible ideas you are getting from the West?"

One of his senior Ministers, who is also in charge of women's affairs, Dinyus Mutsasa, hit out at calls for equality between husband and wife.

"If you learned these attitudes in America, I say go back there. There should be no meddling in traditional values which are good," he told an audience of businesswomen.

Women's groups then went on the offensive.

"The president has always been a staunch advocate of women's and human rights, and what he said is a total departure from that stance. His statement was insulting as far as women are concerned," said an official of the Zimbabwe Women's Bureau, a non-governmental organisation which helps women organise conferences and houses the destitute.

"He must remember that it is the women who constitute the majority of the voters who put him in power. It was a reaction by a man, not by a president of a nation who is supposed to cater for the interests of both men and women," she added.

Mugabe later toned down his remarks, clearly looking ahead to the general election that must be held by April next year.

— Sapa-Reuters.
STOPPED THIEF ... Ms Cynthia Marthinussen, who gave chase when she saw a man snatch a bag of lottery tickets from a stall at a Wynberg supermarket. After following him for almost a kilometre she snatched the bag back.

Picture: RENNY GOOL

Student teacher foils thief

Staff Reporter

A WOMAN student at Hewat Teachers Training College chased a thief for nearly a kilometre to retrieve lottery tickets stolen at a Wynberg supermarket on Saturday morning.

Ms Cynthia Marthinussen, 20, of Summer Close, Ottery, said she and her mother, Mrs Sheila Marthinussen, had been waiting in Main Road for a lift when she heard people shouting about 80m from her.

"I noticed that an elderly woman selling tickets at a stall had been bumped off her feet by a man who pushed past her and grabbed a black leather bag containing several reels of lottery tickets," she said afterwards.

"When I realised nobody was going to do anything to stop him, I took off after him.

"I didn't think I just ran. Looking back now, I don't know whether I was brave or just plain foolish.

"Someone tried to trip him with a broomstick, but he jumped over it and fled into the subway at Wynberg station, where a man slowed him down by bumping into him with his shoulder.

"This gave me a chance to catch up and snatch the bag away from him."

The would-be thief took off in the opposite direction and Ms Marthinussen returned the tickets to the unidentified elderly woman.

"The woman was so pleased she just couldn't stop hugging me," she said.
Few women at the helm

KATHRYN STRACHAN

WOMEN make up 36% of SA's total workforce but their representation in management is just 13%, according to the Associated Countrywomen of the World.

At a conference in Johannesburg last week, the association reported that women in SA made up only 1% of company boards.

This was despite predictions that SA, which already lacked trained managers and skilled professionals, could be short of about 400 000 managers by 2000.

In Africa, 85% of the food was produced by women — but they owned less than 1% of the land.

If women of all races fared badly, black women were particularly underprivileged.

According to a document produced by the ANC Women's League, African women represented less than 0.3% of management in the formal workplace above supervisory level.

Nearly 60% of professionals were white men. About 20% were white women, and African women made up a small minority at just more than 4%.
Helping Women Raise Sights, Voices

BY 2024
Population

Birth control hurdles

The Right

Stars Here

Fired from discrimination
Questions or concerns
contact our local
office.

Meet our team.

Focus on family
planning.

Return to work.

Women's health and
well-being.

Addressing the needs
of families.

Contact information.

Support services.

Learn more.

For more information,
visit our website.

Contact us.

Take action.

Resources.

Advocates for
women's rights.

Advocate.

Citizen.
Women reject list of male advisers

By ANTHONY JOHNSON
Political Correspondent

It's back to the drawing board for the Constitutional Assembly sub-committee that compiled a short-list for its panel of constitutional experts.

The nine-member short-list, compiled from 140 nominees, was rejected yesterday by women on the constitutional committee as unrepresentative, because it included only a "token" woman.

A five-person panel — which may be expanded to seven if there is a constitutional amendment — will advise the assembly in writing a final constitution over the next 18 months.

The committee agreed that more names could be submitted to the subcommittee for consideration at a meeting this morning.

The short-list submitted yesterday was: Professor Deon Basson, Prof John Dugard, Prof Gerhard Erasmus, Prof Johan Kruger, Prof Christina Murray, Mr Bernard Ngoepe, Mr Ishmael Semenya, Prof Johan van der Westhuizen and Mr Zac Jacoby. Among those excluded from the original list were Mr S.B. Zwane, a storeman, and Mr Michael Preiss, the manager of a boiler firm.
‘Strong women’s movement needed’

JOHANNESBURG. — A strong women’s movement was needed to combat discrimination, oppression and violence against women in the new South Africa, Minister Without Portfolio, Mr Jay Naidoo said at the Transvaal Rural Action Committee’s annual general meeting at Nasrec here on Saturday.

“There is no doubt a strong women’s movement is needed to ensure that the provisions of constitution on gender equality become a reality,” he said.

At government level, a plan of action to benefit women would be implemented within the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in conjunction with other ministerial departments, provincial and local governments.

“Through provincial workshops, women will have a role to play in shaping policies in health, economic, legal and other spheres. In this way, the question of women’s emancipation will not be treated as a side issue but as an integral part of the reconstruction of the new South Africa,” Mr Naidoo said.

Other measures the RDP was committed to included affirmative action for women in the civil service, free basic health services to pregnant women, a programme to set up rape and abuse units in police stations to handle violence against women, and water provision and clinic building programmes.

In redefining the position of women in society the first step was to understand the depth of women’s oppression, Mr Naidoo said.

“On the whole, the lives of women are framed within patriarchal assumptions and practices. Women’s choices in life are subject to decisions made by men.

“While some laws, like marriage laws, have changed to give women equal status, oppressive attitudes remain enforced by socio-cultural and religious laws and customs,” — Sapa
A delegation of 175 women left the country last week for a gathering in Dakar, Senegal, to formulate strategies for the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing next year.

This is one of a series of consultations that South African women have held with their counterparts in the southern African region and on the continent as a whole.

Despite this activity, which has been going on since last year, millions of women throughout the country know very little about the conference and the purpose it serves.

The Women’s Decade, as it is called, is a global conference held every 10 years to review the position of women worldwide and to agitate for the removal of obstacles to their full and equal participation in all spheres of life.

The conference decides on issues that governments, who are members of the United Nations, should aid the development and emancipation of women. The governments have to commit themselves to the process by adopting strategies and implement them in the next ten-year period.

The UN World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, China, in 1995, will be the fourth such conference. The last one was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1985.

South Africa was only given observer status at the Nairobi conference, which was attended by 15,000 delegates from all over the world. The dismantling of apartheid and readmission to the United Nations, however, qualifies the country for full participation in Beijing.

South African women hope to be present at the plenary session in Dakar, where strategies will be shaped for the whole of the African continent, and later at the Beijing assembly, making a lasting impact on the women’s movement in the country.

In preparation for the conference the non-governmental organisations (NGO) planning committee has set up 10 regional structures, one in each of the nine regions, with five coordinators each.

The significant matters of concern to be raised by the South Africans at the conference centre on themes of equality, peace, development, education, health, employment and youth, among others.

Each province has set up its activities in relation to the Reconstruction and Development Programme. Thus, says Nomtuse Mbere, Unicef gender and development consultant and the NGO forum convenor, was thought sensible since the "RDP is the framework within which women’s emancipation will take place”.

She elaborates: “Poverty, inequality and domestic violence have come up as the most critical areas of concern for South African women. Fortunately for us, these are the issues that most countries on the continent consider serious.

“We are going to Dakar to lobby for and make sure that the OAU is aware of issues that women regard as priorities.”

Mbere says the economic set-up in Africa is another major issue that will be discussed. She says the structural adjustments that have taken place in most countries in the continent have created problems in the areas of health, a availability of jobs, food and refugees. All these problems have affect women most.

The proceedings in Dakar will extend to November 23. The conference started yesterday with the NGO plenary discussions on a platform of action for Africa. South Africa hopes to facilitate discussions on domestic violence, peace, legal issues and education.

The NGO session will be followed by a paper presentation slot from November 16 to 20. In this section technical experts, chosen by the Economic Commission for Africa, will give their input on issues to be raised by NGOs.

The draft programme of action that will come out of these two sessions will be taken to intergovernmental level, where the ministers of the various African states will accept it and commit themselves as the OAU to carrying it out.

The South African ministerial delegation, whose session is from November 21 to 23, will be led by Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo.

The adopted document will be forwarded to the 39th global preparatory committee meeting to be held in New York in March 1995. At this session, the document will be debated and adopted by the UN. Then it is in October.

Says Mbere: “We have had a lot of support from the government although there were a few hassles. But we understand that things have not gone smoothly because the government is new.

“We were not accessible to the people at grassroots level. We relied mostly on the provinces to communicate with women. This was because of a lack of funds. But we still have time before Beijing. The process is open to all women at all levels.”
Women push for a say in local govt

BY JO-ANNE COLLINGE

Women from rural areas are determined to fight for a place in local government to break the traditional exclusion from community decision making which they have endured.

This was one of the issues on which more than 300 delegates to the annual conference of the Rural Women's Movement reached consensus at the weekend, said spokesman Daphne Nkosin.

The conference, which took place near Soweto, was addressed by Minister without Portfolio, Jay Naidoo, who touched on the question of violence against women.

Rising socio-political tensions had resulted in an increase of attacks on women, he said, and the RDP office was negotiating rape and abuse units at police stations.

Delegates resolved to organise locally to set up "self-defence units" for women, so that they would be better equipped to fend off attacks and to help victims cope with the trauma.
Woman still left behind at work

The new political dispensation is in danger of proving the old adage that the more things change, the more they remain the same — when it comes to gender equality.

The old guard controls their empire much as they have always done.

Statistics reflect this. The University of Cape Town Business School's Breakwater Monitor, a national human resource database, reports that women still only represent 9.4 percent of middle management, although they now make up 47 percent of all promotions.

And while women constitute 41 percent of the economically active population in South Africa, they are still clustered around the poorly paid community and social services sectors.

Ian Fuhr, a change management consultant at Labour Link, believes that business is the last bastion of apartheid.

"Business is lagging. We have a closed business environment — a symptom Fuhr refers to as "open doors but closed minds". These problems are addressed in The Gender Agenda, a book that is aimed at changing attitudes in a non-confrontational way. Sexual harassment, stereotyping, fear of victimisation and men as "providers" are a few of the issues Women's Forum delegates on November 30 will recognise in the play."

The play's purpose is twofold, explains Fuhr. "There is a pervasive victim mentality among women. They need to see it so they can understand the need to do something to change the course of their lives." Clearly, changing attitudes is a slow process. This is evident in the demographics of employees who attend company-sponsored business management courses at universities.

At UCT's Associate in Management programme this year, only two out of 33 people are women. In both cases, the women applied individually.

Nicola Coombe, UCT liaison officer for the Graduate School of Business says: "Next year a shipping company will be the first to send women on the course voluntarily.

"We are meeting with a lot of resistance in our efforts to make companies aware that they should be sending men and women."

The corporate world seems no more enlightened in Durban.

The University of Durban-Westville's business development programme has 45 men and a mere two women enrolled this year.

Comment: Professor Willard Mansfield of the Graduate School of Business: "There isn't much in the way of women being sponsored by their companies — some companies don't send any women."

In many cases, the problem lies with human resources departments, says Lynne Ruthford, vice-president of the Institute for Personnel Management.

"In business practice nothing has changed. We are so focused on affirmative action that we're forgetting about diversity management. Management should take a look at who they are prepared to invest time and money in."

Ruthford says a major mindset shift is necessary to manage diversity successfully.

One company that creates advancement opportunities for all staff is Southern Life, which on October 20 won the national Gold Award in the corporate category for the second time.

The award is presented annually by the South African Federation of Business and Professional Women to the company that does the most to create and maintain a career advancement curve for its female employees.

Jan Calitz, managing director of Southern Life, said, "Discrimination of any description has no place at the Southern. We try to give our staff every opportunity to achieve their ambitions."

Although the number of female executives in the company does not yet reflect this fact, Calitz was optimistic. "Historical inequalities are being eliminated as more and more women make it to the top."

Riane Eisler puts it succinctly in her book The Chalice and the Blade (published by Harper and Row): "It is not about women taking over, but women and men together expressing their full potential."
Women express concern over peace, equality

Dakar. — African women have ended an often-chaotic conference in Senegal's capital Dakar with a document setting out their position for next year's world women's conference in Beijing.

The document expresses the women's concerns about peace, equality and development.

South Africa's delegation, angry at being barred by security staff at the opening session of the ministerial meeting on Monday, left on Wednesday.

"The need for a meaningful search for peace in the African region has led women, principal victims with their children in civil and ethnic conflicts, to demand full involvement in the process of prevention, management and resolution of tension at the national, regional and sub-regional level," it said.

Ministers from Swaziland, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Kenya were also kept outside while President Abdou Diouf opened the session.

Sapa-Reuters.
Women geared for world-class work

The Argus Correspondent

EAST LONDON. — Under pressure to meet world standards for its new Colt 4x4, Mercedes-Benz has made a bold move — it has hired women for the assembly line for the first time.

"Of 130 new workers, who are turning out 20 Colts a day, 35 percent are women.

"We do better than the men," said Nosipho Molefe, who assembles electrical parts.

"And we check in on time," said another woman.

"Plant manager Ian Dillina agrees. The women have been more flexible and open-minded about their assignments. We're heading into world-class manufacturing, and this requires a lot more teamwork and quality," he said.
Women's issues boosted by new deputy-speaker

By JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT

THE new deputy-speaker in the Western Cape has pledged to use her new office to help not only poor black women from the Cape Flats townships but "the Man der Merwes in the civil service".

Miss Mampê Ramotsamai would do her best to see that women got a better deal, said the former activist as she settled into her office at the Western Cape Provincial Legislature this week.

She stressed that men should realise that women were just as good as them and should not be denied better jobs because of their sex.

"There is a great need for the upward mobilisation of women in the civil service," she said.

"We also have to look at the Van der Merwes in the civil service, some of these women have been secretaries for years; they too need the chance to move up if they want to," she said.

The 38-year-old ANC MP has been active in women's organisations for more than 10 years and she says she is equipped to take on the challenges of her new job.

However, her strong stand on women's rights should not be considered another feminist attack against men, but rather as a way of empowering "women as a people", she said.

"It is only the naive who see women's attempts to uplift other women as feminist attacks."

While women were different,

MAMPÊ RAMOTSAMAI

people had to realise their capabilities were on a par with the menfolk.

Her criticism of the "anti-women-in-power" group was not deep-rooted, she added, but they should stop seeing women in jobs as a threat.

Instead of blaming men, she said it was the responsibility of women's organisations to inform them of their agenda. Her own prejudice in the past had taught her this was the way to go.

Although she's always considered herself a liberal, she had previously not supported the cause of gays and lesbians. Then she sat down, and talked to a gay group, and realised they had rights too.
Gender equality still elusive

By CP Reporter

The fifth African Regional Conference on Women held in Dakar, Senegal, in which South African women officially represented their country for the first time, once more highlighted the stark difficulties faced by women on this continent.

The conference, like its four predecessors, ended on a high note. Noble proposals were made and many delegates expressed optimism about the future prospects of women.

Yet, if history is anything to go by, little will be done by way of practical implementation.

For most African women, when the Fourth World Conference on Women is held in Beijing, China, in September 1995, the much sought after equality between men and women will still be as elusive as ever.

The integration of women in developmental projects in Africa will also continue to be a chimera. In short most African governments have not done much to advance the lot of women.

The Dakar conference highlighted some of the major obstacles to the implementation of projects that would see an appreciable advance of women by the end of this century.

Of particular concern to the delegates was the fact that despite regional and individual efforts made by member states, the international community, local and international non-governmental organisations, only modest progress has been made in advancing the lot of African women.

The conference attended by some of the best female minds on the continent, was not all condemnatory of African governments which are all male dominated. They conceded that in the last decade “African governments have slowly started to show an increasing tendency to see the political and socio-economic participation of women as a key factor and catalyst in the processes . . . that gender and encourage equality, health and development.”
Lesson for
wolves in
Parliament

By ANTHONY JOHNSON
Political Correspondent

Male parliamentarians will be offered courses, from next year, in what constitutes sexual harassment, Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr Frene Ginwala, said yesterday.

She confirmed that complaints had been made by women MPs and parliamentary staff members about the sexist conduct and harassment by male parliamentarians from a variety of parties.

Because some offenders maintained that they were not clear what sexual harassment entailed, courses would be offered to educate them.

"If transgressions still occur after this, we will be very strict with the culprits," Dr Ginwala said.

Some women MPs have submitted that it is no longer safe to visit parts of the parliamentary complex.

Dr Ginwala emphasised she did not believe that problems of sexual harassment were any greater in Parliament than in any other institution or company.

"What we are saying is that we are going to do something about it."

One of the steps to be taken was to change the composition of the male-dominated rules committee which would hear complaints.
**Minister of Health has no easy path to tread**

**Tough call for Dr Zu**

A WEEK after restrictions on tobacco advertising were made public, Health Minister Dr Nkosazana Zuma was awarded Woman of the Year award by the Union of Jewish Women. She spoke to MAUREEN ISAACSON recently.

A an occasional smile wraps the 'Minister of Health in the air. Then it withers quickly with a compromise and a comment that will surprise anyone who expects her to be a jumped-up Rima Verrier poised to whack the tobacco industry and all who oppose its funne.

Somewhere out there, after last week’s Government Gazette announcement, cigarette ads are eager for space with health warnings. Everywhere, new primary health care structures are on the way.

Insiders her inherited Civilian office in Pretoria, she is considered by some for the new South African flag, Dr Nkosana Zuma (45) sits in a floral chair. Her earrings and blouse are green, her hair exuding a frisson of confidence.

**A WOMAN OF OUR TIMES: Implementing existing laws and taking health reform to the limit with primary health care structures**

**Chief concerns of Minister of Health Dr Nkosazana Zuma.**

She is still firmly holding the cudgels for Si

**It’s just as well she is in fine fettle. A healthy woman is what is needed to heal a sick country.**

**One should look at patients beyond the broken leg and heart for the person as a whole.**

**WHERE is the stamina and the energy that drives this trailblazer? She is not to be mistaken. Her gestures are few.**

To prove her potency is to see the implementation of the health scheme that since September has given heart to the nation. 5,000 primary schools throughout the country, it is in the urgent appeals to onerous failures to bridge the gap that next year's 5 percent tax reduction on academic hospitals and the disappointingly low increase in health spending will create.

Already there are results. Already the poorest moms and under-six-year-olds who receive free State health care could be losing Dr Zuma’s health. The problem is in the Cabinet mind: why only a third of the Revenue cuts have been a turning point for those benefitting from the R1 billion National AIDS Fund. Nobody — except the pharmacists on the continent — seems to be complacency, because the problems of scarce medicine costs are being addressed.

Zuma’s entry into this Ohio has been the highlight of her life, she says. “It is the beginning of trying to address things I have thought for all my life. It enables me to be able to participate directly in people’s lives.”

Her daunting CV lists legal activism among her research interests. A discrepancy between “ministerial and personal opinion” prevents her from making a statement on abortion, despite the fact that it has repeatedly been reported that she is pro-choice. “It is common knowledge what I think,” she says.

Also on her agenda is the women’s health care models based on Natal’s Pietermaritzburg Women’s Health Care Centre, the district model providing the basis of the country’s new health care system.

Pietermaritzburg is where she was born in the oldest of eight, daughter of a schoolteacher and housewife. Appropriately, it is where she matriculated. In 1973, five years into her medical studies at Natal University of Durban, Zuma went into exile, graduating from Bristol University and later studying in the United States.

Zuma is 45, and her CV lists several positions at the University of Liverpool. Zuma’s post almost good-byes to chairing the ANC Women’s League, southern Natal region, but no way have the cudgels for the national been dropped.

“Are we making progress as far as feminism is concerned? What do you think?” she asks.

*HEN she answers “In general, people realise that South Africa is made up of men and women — but we cannot relax, there is still a lot to be done.”*
firmly holding the cudgels for SA women

As well as being in fine healthy woman is what is to heal a sick country.

... and falling in love. A decision made a year ago, it has re... what I think," she says. Also on the research list are primary health care models based on Natal's Pholole Health Care Centre, the district industrial provision of the heart of the country's new health care system. Pholole is where she grew up, the oldest of eight, daughter of a schoolteacher and housewife. Amantani... in is where she matriculat... ed. In 1978, five years into her medical studies at Natal's University of Dur... ban. Zuma went into exile, graduating from Bristol University and later spent... time at the University of Liverpool. Zuma's post mentor... to existing the ANC Women's League, southern Natal region, but no way have the cudgels for the white... terror been dropped. "We are making progress... for us... but... How do you think?" she inquires.

"One should look at patients beyond the broken leg and care for the person as a whole." High on her agenda is what she refers to as "a culture of caring". This will be an integral part of the service provided by the one-stop health centres with efficient referral systems, which is what she means by primary health care. Zuma would like to see health workers "look at patients beyond the broken leg and care for the person as a whole". Despite clearly obvious health problems, the country's progress is not fast. While neither the private sector and traditional healers are to be co-opted into the formal structure of the department, they can co-exist. The private sector is here to stay, it is not about to be nationalized," says Zuma, that million-dollar smile breaking through. She is keen to encourage the private sector to co-operate and work closely with her department. Time forces us to teach Zuma at her word when she says she is religious "in the sense of taking justice and wanting everyone to have a fair chance in this world."

In a fairly relaxed person, I'm here but not, if that makes sense to you."

Tell that to her critics, who see her approach to tobacco advertising as just another version of boodskap. Zuma says these reforms were passed by the previous government in 1993. She says she is "trying simply implementing them". "It will be controversial anyway, whatever I do they will not like."
No equality for women in SA

Improving women's position appears to be low on CNS's agenda

Thursday December 22 1994 SOWETAN

By Sizilele Komoe

Women have not yet learned to stand on their own two feet. They were in factstrips from where they strayed without any significant impact.
Women MPs complain of sex harassment – Ginwala

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

SEVERAL women MPs and parliamentary staff have complained of sexual harassment by men MPs, says the Speaker, Frere Ginwala.

Alleged perpetrators were “from more than one party,” Dr Ginwala said.

Women MPs had said there were parts of the parliamentary complex where they feared to go.

The issue was being treated with the greatest seriousness.

Dr Ginwala said there was a problem in getting women to lay formal charges so that complaints could be heard by the parliamentary disciplinary committee, and a further problem was that women MPs were uneasy about giving evidence to the committee because it was male-dominated.

The rules committee had been asked to review the composition of the disciplinary committee, Dr Ginwala said.

The matter had been raised at a meeting of the rules committee, which was open to the Press and so there was no question of a cover-up.

Democrat Party whip Dene Smuts said she had been aware for some time of allegations of sexual harassment.

She said she supported moves to increase the size of the disciplinary committee, suggesting it should be doubled to have as many women as men. This was necessary “because of the inequity in power relations between the genders.”

Sexual harassment was unacceptable and if the claims were proved true, this would impinge on the dignity of parliament.

Ms Smuts said she hoped complaints concerned only sexual harassment and nothing worse.

Asked whether certain names had been mentioned more than once, Ms Smuts said she had heard the name of one alleged offender, but could not recall whether she had heard it more than once.

Many people had been disturbed by reports two months ago of an attempted rape at a parliamentary residential complex, where alleged victims had declined to press charges.

“The question arises whether the young women concerned felt discouraged, assuming the reports were correct, that those involved were senior political office bearers.”
Iron velvet

Women are breaking the mould — and the parliamentary fashion drought

Women, says President Mandela, have done so well in parliament that he wants his party’s national executive committee to be 50% female.

Thanks largely to the one-third quota reserved for women on the ANC’s election list, the number of women in parliament — and the provincial legislatures — has risen dramatically (see graphics). It seems the new government is serious when it says SA must, in addition to being “democratic and nonracial,” become a “nonsexist” society as well. Gender awareness permeates the RDP and women’s interests are routinely mentioned in all major policy statements.

“The ANC’s women’s quota has really worked,” enthuses former Deputy Minister of Justice Sheila Camerer, one of the National Party’s 10 women MPs.

Is this not mere tokenism, however, “prisoners of the male caucus.”

While Germany’s Social Democrats have long had a 40% quota for female candidates, Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s conservative Christian Democratic Party, which resists, has given in: one out of every three places on the party electoral list is now reserved for a woman — in some ways more radical than having women candidates bunched together about half way down, as on the ANC list. With women constituting just over 25%, SA is now placed 7th in the world in terms of the number of female representatives in parliament — ahead of the UK and the US. Before the election SA was bottom.

Although the women are functioning as an informal group in parliament, they have not formed into a lobby to promote their cause.

Unlike the men, they are developing working relationships in parliament and are less adversarial. Their grouping does not affect party political affiliation, since the parties support a focus on women’s issues.

The first co-operative effort by the women in parliament to bear fruit was getting Women’s Day — August 9 — declared a public holiday. The second is aimed at the establishment of a Commission on Gender Equality.

The ANC committed itself during the constitutional negotiations to a policy of equality for women both in principle and in practice. The Democratic Party in 1990 backed the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw), which the Nats also signed last year. It was at the Kempton Park talks that ANC women started the ball rolling on a women’s charter. This drew together all women under the Women’s National Coalition, which aimed to entrench equality for women in the new constitution.

Is the presence of more women in parliament a good thing? Yes, says Frelie Ginwala, the Speaker and a driving force in the women’s movement in SA. “It's a question of justice and equality,” says Ginwala, referring to the fact that over 50% of the population is female. “Decision-making has to be based on the best information, not just technical data. To make decisions that are in the best interests of SA, women’s experience has to be fed into the process.”

On the issue of quotas, Ginwala says that without specific mechanisms there is no way to ensure participation. And on the question of merit, she counters: “We tend to select essentially in our own image (culture, school tie) and end up with self-perpetuation of that image. To break this, you need quotas or another mechanism.”

Going further, Ginwala says it’s not enough to open doors, because women have to function in a male-designed environment, where it is inevitably the woman who has to worry about things like fetching the children from school and making sure there’s food in the house. Which is why women on the ANC list insisted that if they were going to function as MPs, then child care facilities would have to be made available. They are now tackling the parliamentary gym (designed for men) and trying to change the “very Edwardian and stodgy” menu in the dining rooms.

The sea of middle-aged men that was parliament has changed, says a (female) parliamentary correspondent. It’s wonderful, she goes on, to have so many women there. Apart from reining in cruder aspects of male attitudes, the female presence has brought colour to the corridors; one sees children around the complex and women MPs sometimes coming up the stairs carrying the groceries. According to Marcus, women also make parliament more human, where once it was a stiff
STATE OF THE NATION

Something on which to build

In a year that saw everything that apartheid stood for overturned — in spirit, if not reality — the most remarkable fact is that this revolution occurred so peacefully.

It was in 1993, really, that the wings of terrible violence brushed too closely over everyone: Chris Hani’s assassination, particularly, seemed to reveal the savagery of underlying racial hatreds. This year a great Afrikaner, Johan Heyns, fell to an assassin’s bullet — but this deed, however baleful, did not presage a slide into civil war.

The Government of National Unity has in its initial work proved itself a binding force for most South Africans. Where its decisions irk particular constituencies, redress, by and large, is seen through the institutions of government itself rather than through the former spite and rage of “struggle” politics.

Among the initial achievements of the unity government is widespread consensus on the need to enhance prosperity, however inadequately expressed through the Reconstruction & Development Programme.

It is, of course, the issue of funding that preoccupies businessmen most: their pockets are seen as deepest, even if they are not. The return that this class wants is stability and growth, without which taxation will break its back. Complementary to that, affirmative action — and what is termed affirmative capital — has to be implemented with a sharp eye on the obverse dangers of skills erosion, emigration and what in wartime is called defeatism.

The mere fact that the general election went off well — or as well as could be expected — led to an immediate diminution of violence, except in KwaZulu-Natal.

The steadfastness with which people waited patiently to vote in April, and the stunning goodwill of the election, led to an emotional buoyancy which has not yet dissipated.

Growth returned to the economy as a whole — above 2% this year, in all probability, and more predicted in 1995. Corporate profits, for the first time in years, are stirring. Billionaire philanthropist Georg Soros committed R200m in start-up funds for the ambitious housing programme that lies at the heart of the RDP, and a further R200m guarantee facility. Some famous brand-names are returning — among them IBM and Ford.

Some of this is due to our unique fortune in having Nelson Mandela as both the symbolic and working head of the nation. Whatever he may say about his personal failings, the world perceives Mandela as the secular saint that an age of unbelief has been looking for. He is the pivot of our stability.

There is also a continuity of talent and imaginativeness within the ANC: once in office they proved to be a far cry from the hectoring commissars we feared. Some even admit to mistakes and increasingly speak the language of the market.

Of course there are dangers. Unemployment is running at an estimated 46%, and while this figure does mask considerable activity in the informal sector, there are among the unemployed those who are desperately poor. That is why crime and begging have become, in effect, an extension of the informal sector.

For years to come, the ranks of the disconsolate will be swollen by school-leavers who will enter a hard, cold, unforgiving world.

That, in turn, is why the RDP’s primary intent should be less in the material goods it seeks to furnish and more in sustainable economic growth.

Many people will have to become at least moderately patient with their lot to ensure that the social change we witness every day remains manageable. It may not be so if trades union extravagance and racist recidivism become the focus of political endeavour. Nor will it be so if crime and violence are not brought swiftly under control.

There are three reasons why we can hope for evolutionary progress towards stability and prosperity.

Firstly, there are indications that core elements of the RDP can be implemented from existing and foreseeable resources. Minister without Portfolio Jay Naidoo last week announced that business plans for the programme are close to completion and that next year R6bn would be available to fund the upliftment process, R1bn by way of foreign grants. That, coupled to growth in the economy, provides a good basis for corporate planning after an interregnum of deep uncertainty.

Secondly, those who still believe that the true revolution still lies ahead — to be bought with more conflict and renewed struggle — have for the moment been silenced.

Clear signs of a large and growing black middle class without revolutionary aspirations suggest that sensible economic and social policies will command increasing support.

That leads into the third positive factor, which could be the most important when assessing our immediate prospects. This is that within a free SA, everyone is free.

The burden of guilt and circumspection that entangled our dealings — and our lives — under apartheid has been lifted. The result, if we are honest, is a definite joie de vivre.

Any celebration of this must needs be muted: but a celebration it is.
and silent place where a suited male fraternity crept around the corridors. "It's a people's parliament, we're in touch with how people live."

Marcus says the women have been hardworking with a fresh approach. But our female correspondent says the women have all been disappointing so far, though some may be doing well behind the scenes: "The movers and shakers remain men."

The old parliament had only eight women MPs, one in Cabinet (Rina Venter at Health) and one Deputy Minister (Sheila Camerer). After the general election in April, the number of women in parliament shot up to 101 in the 400-member assembly and 16 in the 90-member Senate.

Of 27 Cabinet Ministers in the Government of National Unity, two are women — Nkosazana Dlamini (Health) and Stella Sigcau (Public Enterprises). There are three women Deputy Ministers: Winnie Mandela (Arts, Culture, Science & Technology), Thoko Msane (Agriculture) and Sankie Nkondo (Welfare). The Speaker's chair is occupied by a woman. And the first woman ambassador named by the new government is Barbara Masekela (Paris), formerly with the ANC's cultural desk and then in the President's Office.

Highly regarded in the ANC, Zuma brings dignity and sensitivity to the health portfolio. This seems to have earned her high marks all round as a Minister, despite misgivings over the ideological direction of her policies. The wife of ANC KwaZulu-Natal leader Jacob Zuma, she was a regional chairwoman of the Women's League in that province. A former deputy president of the SA Students Organisation, Zuma went into exile in 1976. She has a science degree from Zululand, qualified as a medical doctor at Bristol.

While she exudes a certain authority, Stella Sigcau is described by some as dour and jolcklustre. Sigcau manages to keep a rather low profile in spite of the importance of issues like privatisation for her portfolio. A former prime minister of Transkei, removed from office in the coup led by Bantu Holomisa, Sigcau was part of the traditional leaders' delegation at the World Trade Centre. It will be interesting to see where she stands in the looming confrontation between traditional leaders and the women's lobby.

Of the Deputy Ministers, Winnie Mandela, who has recently been polishing up on her science and technology, is of course quite remarkable. While her colleagues each have one bodyguard, Winnie — whom you cannot fail to notice as she sweeps into the assembly in her latest stunning outfit, men melting around her — usually has four in a phalanx around her. A law unto herself, she has an incredible swagger, huge charisma and, even when reading department-prepared speeches, cannot help being controversial. Privately it's surprising how many not of the ANC find her kind and charming.

While Winnie's pet hate may be the Democratic Party's Tony Leon, her great rival for the title of Mother of the House is Adelaide Tambo (widow of former ANC president Oliver Tambo), the Grande Dame who reigns with the Queen Mother's equanimity but not her charm.

It's worth noting that women who have risen, and in some cases conquered, in the male domain have had to be twice as driven, capable or fortunate as men: Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, Helen Suzman are good examples. Countries as diverse as Canada, Turkey, Pakistan, Israel, Bangladesh and Norway have had women prime ministers — and not as a result of quotas. In some cases, possession of an all-important name (Gandhi, Butto) has helped: the Mandela name could in certain circumstances yet carry the day for Winnie.

Sankie Nkondo (Deputy Welfare) and Thoko Msane (Agriculture) have been virtually invisible. Nkondo, a women's rights activist and former journalist, has a BA (Turfloop) and MA (Lusaka). A member of the ANC's NEC, she has been in exile, a member of MK, chief representative in Germany, lived in Nigeria and once served as Thabo Mbeki's deputy. Msane seems highly regarded in the ANC, but many say she's highly disorganised.

Msane, another women's rights activist, is well regarded by her boss at Agriculture, Kraal van Niekerk, and is said to be hard working and intelligent. While it would be hard to imagine her presiding at an Agricultural Union bash, she hasn't yet moved the House, but performed creditably in her budget speech.

There isn't as yet a woman Director-General, though the Department of Health could appoint the first in Zuma's formidable adviser, Olive Shisana.

Of the National Assembly's 25 select committees, seven are chaired by women, all ANC, except for the PAC's Patricia de Lille, who heads the select committee on Transport. De Lille, sometimes provocative, seems to serve well, given the limited speaking time for the PAC. The irony is she dresses like a middle-aged librarian.

The most important parliamentary committee headed by a woman is the joint standing committee on finance, chaired by Gill Marcus, formerly a big wheel of the ANC's department of information under Parlo Jordan. Marcus has earned respect across party lines, despite a self-confidence that some feels borders on arrogance. Though not an economist ("which means I can ask all the right questions"), she is obviously intelligent and has mastered her brief.

The other women who chair select committees are:

- Janet Love (Agriculture, Water & Forestry). Love ("she gives white men hell") is a former exile, ex-Wits/Nusas; she worked for ANC labour body Sactu, returning clandestinely to join the underground Operation Vula in 1988. She was part of the Codesa secretariat, is seen by some as highly ambitious, while to others she is definitely going places.

- Manto Tshabalala (Health) is from Natal, was a founders member and deputy secretary of the ANC's health department and worked as a doctor in ANC military camps. Tshabalala took a BA from Fort
Hare in 1962, and an MD in 1969. She has scarcely made an impact in parliament.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (Public Service & Administration) is from Manzini. She is married to ANC Chief Whip in the Senate, Bulelani Ngcuku. Mlambo-Ngcuka took a degree in Lesotho and worked for the ANC's youth and education sections.

Mary Xingwana (Sport & Recreation) and Edith Sothuma (Trade & Industry) have yet to make any impact.

Of the Senate's 12 select committees, two are chaired by (ANC) women: Cheryl Laubsberg (Finance & Public Accounts) and Joyce Kgosi (Housing & Public Works).

There are two ad hoc select committees headed by women: the SA Law Commission on Surrogate Motherhood (Priscilla Jana) and Parliamentary Childcare Facilities (Patience Sonjica).

Speaker Ginwala also chairs the important Rules Committee of Parliament.

Ginwala, like Marcus and some of the other women, is the kind of woman who probably would make the grade regardless of any quota. She has natural leadership qualities, is dignified, level-headed and intellectually on top of any situation. The male members — some of whom mutter about her femininity, find her arrogant and have tried to trip her up — shut up and fall into line. She has brought a new, informal style to parliament.

Feminists enjoy Ginwala's apparent dislike of the fact that men dominate the committees under her and that she is slowly changing parliament from being a "men's club." More important, we hear, is that Ginwala wants to get to the bottom of an allegation of serious sexual harassment by a male ANC MP (which does not involve a woman in parliament).

Applicable to everything: except for some of the ANC's white women — who dress «as though they've escaped from a Soviet camp» — most of the female MPs enjoy sartorial glamour.

If they haven't stood out up to now, among the women to watch for the future are (from the ANC, in no special order):

Mavivi Manzini (strong on women's and rural issues, a bit strident);

Baleka Kgotsi-Hle (a good parliamentary operator who was part of the ANC negotiating team; was offered ambassadorship to Rome but declined for family reasons);

Naledi Pandor (daughter of Inkhatha's Joe Matthews: an educationalist, authoritative, bright, striking to look at and speaks well);

Linette Simelane (daughter of Walter Sisulu, able, discreet and Chanel-chic);

Cheryl Carolus (declined a place on ANC list to work for the party, former UDF Cape leader who should rise in the hierarchy);

Melanie Verwoerd (granddaughter of Hendrik Frensch, local government specialist who has disturbed the Stellenbosch community over new municipal boundaries, self-important and morally triumphant, described as "cold as sago pudding");

Pregs Covender, Geraldine

A self-confessed old male chauvinist MP has this to say about women in parliament: "Ag, it's the Mavvis and Baiekas competing with each other over silly clothes. There's nothing exceptional about most of them." But that's unfair. Seven or eight months is probably not enough for most MPs, male or female, to get to learn the ropes. And the criticism must not be ap-

Molekot-Fraser, and perhaps Brigid Mbandla, a stalwart with high integrity who sometimes bungles her approach to caucus strategy.

At provincial level, the two women (both Gauteng and ANC) who've had the limelight thrust upon them because of their tricky portfolios are Jessie Duarte (MEC for Public Safety & Security) and Mary

Members of Provincial Legislatures

Gauteng 214
Northern Transvaal 76
Eastern Transvaal 54
North-West 96
Western Cape 14
Eastern Cape 26
Northern Cape 16
Orange Free State 15
KwaZulu/Natal 57

Metcalfe (Education)

Among the Inkatha women in parliament — arguably the most formidable women's team — there's Susanne Vos (able, writes many of Mangosuthu Buthelezi's better speeches);

Faith Guta (a lively character, has experience from the old KwaZulu legislature and is not afraid to lay into the ANC);

Harriet Ngubane and Ruth Robinszitz (a medical doctor by training, tends to get on her high horse and is almost as hated by the ANC as Tony Leon).

Dene Smuts of the DP is an exceptionally able politician, even if some men regard her as too self-righteous and intellectually arrogant.

Among the competent Nat women is Tertius King, an academic who sat in the constitutional talks; the striking Sheila Camerer who has developed well as a politician but is a little self-conscious.

The Freedom Front and African Christian Democratic Party have no women MPs.

The presence of a substantial block of women in parliament has clearly brought a new dimension and made it a livelier place. Perhaps the men in the House and beyond will become more sensitive to women's concerns — and perhaps they won't. As women in politics know very well, when it comes to male chauvinism, there are no party barriers.
HE APPOINTMENT of Africa's first woman vice-president has focused attention on why so few African women enter politics and only a much smaller minority reach high office.

Two recent international meetings — the UN Population Conference in Cairo in September and the Fifth African Regional Conference on Women in Senegal last month — put women's liberation and empowerment at the forefront of their concerns.

But both took place on the world's poorest continent, where half the population of women are stifled by cultural and sexual taboos. No one expects the conferences to provoke rapid change.

"Women politicians in Africa have to fight prejudices in society and an environment not conducive to success," said Maria Nzomo, a Nairobi University senior lecturer in political science.

"The idea that women are less capable has long been in society. They also face more hardship as they lack enough funding," she said, noting that traditionally African women are barred from owning property.

Beset by poverty, sub-Saharan Africa has the world's biggest number of people under the international poverty line — women are well aware of the host of hurdles to a political career.

Many say they are forced to toe the party line of their male opposite numbers who wheel and deal in the political arena while women take a socially accepted backseat as merely token leaders.

In South Africa, history was made when Dr Frene Ginwala was elected the first woman speaker in Parliament, one of the few women speakers in the world.

On being named Uganda's and Africa's first woman vice-president last month, Specioze Wandira Kazibwe said "women in Uganda should know that privileges accorded us by government will have to go with responsibilities...I am ready to show my worth."

Kazibwe retained her previous position of minister of gender (women's) and community development, a rare portfolio in Africa.

Male newspaper commentators in Uganda's capital Kampala praised President Yoweri Museveni's decision to appoint Kazibwe, saying he had sewn up the women's vote for elections next year.

"At campaigns, women are jeered at and depicted as frustrated divorcees in politics as a last resort. African women don't like to vote or study politics," said politics student Mary Mwangi. "Men feel you will steal the political spotlight and because we are so few they throw mud and slander us," said Agnes Ndetei, a parliamentarian and the foremost woman in Kenya's opposition.

"But none of us have defected (to the ruling KANU party) because we believe in what we are doing," she added.

Libel suits to equality are increasingly paid by leaders in Africa because of increased solidarity among women demanding a greater say in the continent, but gains are few and far between.

Tanzania's founding president Julius Nyerere was embarrassed this month as chairman of a two-day conference in Nairobi on Africa's political and economic agenda for the year 2000 when a woman complained to him about the handful of women present.

Conference organisers, asked by Nyerere to explain, said more women had been invited but many had failed to turn up.

A hard blow

Women's development and progress in politics received a hard blow in April with the killing of Rwanda's Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, who fought against ethnic repression and an end to women's oppression in the tiny central African state.

Uwilingiyimana (41) entered politics in 1992 shortly after then President Juvenal Habyarimana bowed to the wind of change sweeping across Africa and allowed multi-party politics.

A dynamic, shrewd woman who preached tribal tolerance in a nation where ethnic allegiance is seen as all-important, she led a tough fight against women being depicted as the weak sex who should be shut out of public service.

At a political rally in the capital Kigali, Habyarimana singled out his prime minister by shouting: "You, woman!"

Uwilingiyimana stood and replied: "Don't call me that. I am not your wife."

Only the second African woman to serve as a prime minister, Uwilingiyimana was slaughtered by members of the presidential guard on April 6 despite being under the escort of UN guards.

The three-month bloodbath that followed the assassination of Habyarimana killed up to one million people across Rwanda.

In neighbouring Burundi, Sylvie Kinigi was appointed prime minister only on the eve of the killing of President Melchior Ndadaye by renegade Tutsi troops in October last year.

Diplomats said she reluctantly accepted the post as she had felt she could achieve more by remaining the civil service head in charge of economic planning in the prime minister's office.

An elegant, soft-spoken but straight-talking young woman, Kinigi abandoned her political life and now works for Burundi's Commercial Bank.

"I am not outside of politics but I have left the political scene," said Kinigi, a now largely sidelined campaigner for tolerance in a country almost boiling with the opposite.