

World Campaign for Peace

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) organized on March 8, 1982, under the slogan «STAR» (Stop The Arms Race), a campaign for peace led by women delegates from all parts of the United States. Carrying a message which contained the signatures of a million women pacifists, they marched to the White House where they delivered the message to President Reagan and later left the States to join their European sisters in delivering the message to NATO headquarters.

Shortly before, in September 1981, a conference on women's role in peace and development was held in Manila under the auspices of the Asian Women's Institute. It was attended by 45 participants, representing mostly Third World countries⁽¹⁾.

In New York, a huge demonstration for peace including 550,000 anti-nuclear pacifists coming from every part of the world, paraded on June 13, 1982. Starting from the seat of the United Nations where a conference on disarmament was taking place, they marched to Central Park, where a giant stage, three storeys high, had been set up.

A massive mobilization of women and men for putting an end to war has thus been started. Its success will depend on how many countries in each continent are willing to respond actually and sincerely to this movement. It is true that the idea has already won idealistic adherents and enthusiastic supporters everywhere. But there are, on the other hand, those who suspect the existence of subversive aims in the minds of some promoters of the peace campaign. They are afraid that disarmament, if undertaken by only one group of nations, might give the other group the chance to increase its armaments and thus be better prepared for attacking the pacifists. This means that the movement for peace and disarmament should be global and simultaneous; otherwise it would result in an imbalance of power and favor aggressiveness among those who support it only by word but not by deed. It was probably this contradiction which made of the Middle East a battlefield for antagonistic nations during the last twenty years.

During the last 150 years, independent women's organizations have been active in promoting the cause of peace. It was a woman pacifist, Bertha Suttner, who persuaded Alfred Nobel, in 1894, to establish an international prize for peace⁽²⁾. But the women's movement cannot be of real help unless it becomes global. It is perhaps this idea which made Robin Morgan, the American feminist author, to follow up her work, «Sisterhood is Powerful», by another one called «Sisterhood Is Global». The step has been inspired by a visionary mind, moved by the idea that, only through reaching a universal dimension, may a project or movement be said to have achieved real power.

(1) See Al-Raida, August 1, 1982, no. 21.

(2) See Al-Raida, Aug. 1, 1980, no. 13, p.9

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Dr. Saniyya Habboub: Fifty Years of Devoted Medical Service

The Muslim Cultural Club in Beirut celebrated on May 19, 1982, the fiftieth anniversary of Dr. Saniyya Habboub's activity in the medical field.

She was the first Lebanese woman to travel abroad for the sake of studying medicine. After receiving her primary and secondary education at the British School and American School for Girls respectively, she moved to the American Junior College for Girls (presently BUC) and was one of its first three graduates in 1925. Having decided to study medicine, she moved to the American University of Beirut, but the necessity of wearing a veil and of contacting boys in a narrow-minded environment made her decide to continue her studies in the United States. She received her medical degree at Western College, Cincinnati, from where she moved to Philadelphia University where she specialized in Gynecology, and became the object of friendly attention from both administrators and professors. On her graduation day, as a form of tribute paid to her by the University, Dr. Philip Hitti, the Lebanese historian and professor at Princeton University, was invited to give the commencement address. Dr. Hitti mentioned in his address that he felt honored to have such a prominent compatriot. Before leaving the University, Dr. Habboub showed her gratitude by endowing it with a scholarship in her name, representing the sum she had collected after delivering a series of lectures in the States on various topics. Her name is engraved on a marble pillar, next to the names of other donors who have supported the University's task.

In 1932, Dr. Habboub returned to Beirut and opened a clinic at Bab-Edris. Since that time, she has devoted herself to the service and help of patients who flocked to her from every part of Lebanon. Many were those women whose financial condition moved her to treat them freely, reducing their charges to the price of medicines only.

Though she was committed to her profession, she found time to do volunteer work in the Red-Cross Association and to serve as a member on the boards of the Muslim Orphanage, the Maqassed Hospital and other organizations.

While we recognize the role played by educators in guiding Dr. Habboub, we should not overlook the influence of her home environment and the encouragement she received from her father, an enlightened figure who had made of his house a meeting place for eminent scholars from Beirut and other parts of Lebanon.

(Condensed from An-Nahar
11/5/1982)

Should we Lose Faith in Man?

The spreading wave of violence and terrorism, culminating in the threat of a nuclear war, has led many people to lose faith in man and predict the forthcoming extermination of the human race.

«Many People», however, does not mean everybody. Those who take a look into the history of humanity will easily remark that it has been a succession of triumphant exploits and serious regressions. From our long history, extending over millions of years, we may draw two conclusions: first, the slow march of civilization, especially in the early history of man. Second, the steady progress of human idealism and the participation of so many nations in building the human heritage. Rationalism, freedom, culture of beauty and harmony, were chiefly contributed by the ancient Greeks. A keen sense of justice and a strong emphasis on self-discipline formed the main contribution of monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This idea is expounded by the contemporary Egyptian author, Kamel Hussain, who in his book, «Qariat'un Zalimat» (The City of Wrong), affirms that a sense of discrimination between right and wrong is the first trait that makes a man human.

Terrorists may resort to the justification of their mischiefs by saying that they are a form of vengeance for past, unpunished, wrongs. But when terrorism takes the form of blind aggression against the innocent, nothing can justify it. It is then a reversion to wild and irresponsible behavior, resulting in wholesale destruction, despotic rule and general extermination.

We believe in civilized man because the gap between him and those who are still at the primitive stage or behind their time, is so wide that it would seem unthinkable for the former to revert to the low condition into which the latter may sink.

We believe in civilized man because, in spite of the blunders he may commit, he remains the salt of the earth and the hope of suffering humanity.

The forces of evil may be very powerful in our time, but they do not monopolize the scene. No matter how strong their influence may grow, it will only serve as an incentive for greater efforts to rise and outbalance it.

What Can Women Do for Peace?

"As socialist women, we are especially engaged for a peaceful world, not because we are of a more peaceful nature than men but because of our own struggle for liberation arising from our special disadvantages in society. We recognize very clearly the need for basic values such as liberty, social justice and solidarity, which can only become a reality in a more peaceful world."

(Socialist International Women Bulletin No. 1/81, p.2-3)

The idea that women will be able to make a special contribution for peace may be a matter of doubt to many people, but to many others it is a matter of conviction because of the qualities and attributes which have been traditionally cultivated in women and often denied to men such as those of loving, caring and nurturing.

The campaign which the U.N.O. started in 1975 for women's integration in development had as a principal objective not only to utilize women's potential for productive work but also to give them the opportunity for administrative work in which they might prove to be more successful than men in securing peace and general welfare.

In the "Socialist International Women", Bulletin 2/81, two articles on education for peace are worth mentioning because they give practical recommendations regarding this topic. The first article, by Helvi Saarinen and Jean Tansey (pp. 16-17), recommends the following:

1. Developing a spirit of cooperation and solidarity in sports, instead of one of competition and nationalism.
2. Freeing school curricula from all racism, sexual discrimination and religious fanaticism.
3. Banishing violence from films and television programs.
4. Giving more factual information about war, its causes and results.
5. Establishing relations between the sexes, as well as between peoples, based on friendship and cooperation rather than dominance and aggression, since no true friendship can exist between a dominant person and a dominated one.

The second article by Alva Myrdal (pp. 22-23), warns against the idealization of motherhood and the fostering of what has been called "womb mysticism", which, when taken to its extreme, is a reverse form of sex discrimination in favor of women. "We must subject these tendencies", says the author, "to a

thorough going criticism, for the idealization of women leads only too easily to the isolation of women".

A similar danger comes from limiting women's lives, as though "motherhood" were all that counted as meaningful purpose — ideas that are sometimes preached as a doctrine.

"For all their blissfulness, the years with children can be troublesome too... Many young women today are imprisoned in child minding against their own will. But no matter how enriching these experiences are for a period of time, the lack of change of experience of outside interests and opportunities for further education, should never lead to an idealization of this role. There is a very real risk that it could lead to a standstill for women in the long term."

Other important points recommended by Alva Myrdal are:

1. A restructuring of the defence system should mean placing more emphasis on what is really important, namely a more secure protection of our population, i.e. civil defence and local cooperation for survival. For this purpose, a short service period would be required of both young men and young women as a form of defence force to protect our policy of neutrality.
2. Encouraging and generalizing a condemnation of the corrupting and destructive cult of tough manliness, which is fostered within the military forces.

In Lebanon, the horrors endured by the population during the 8-year-war should have created by now a general attitude of abhorrence to war, particularly because it evolved into terrorism in its varied atrocious forms: assassinations, kidnappings, sniping, wholesale massacres, the use of booby-trapped cars and other explosive weapons, destruction, and the burning and plundering of property.

Here as elsewhere we have to fight the destructive cult of tough manliness which persists in the traditional hero-worship of the "abadaye", the tough, aggressive, pugnacious fellow.

More destructive still has been the influence of terrorist political systems and parties which persuade people, through bribery and luring promises, to take terrorism and guerrilla warfare as a profession. To these parties, destruction and assassination become the shortest way to world power and domination. Their adherents may forget that the violence they practice may also result in their own destruction.

The above discussion, though presented by women and meant to awaken women's awareness on the risks of war, does not fail to show that the protest movement is not just an issue for women. Everybody must participate, not least of all men with their heritage of military traditions and thinking.

Major Issues on the Status of Women in Turkey⁽¹⁾

The report prepared in 88 pages on the above-mentioned seminar serves to show three important facts:

1. That Turkish women, in spite of Kemal Atatürk's reforms and the efforts he made in favor of women's emancipation, suffer from an inferior status which may be compared to that of their sisters in the majority of Third World Countries⁽²⁾.

2. That common problems shared by Turkish and Arab women and discussed in the Seminar, make the report about it of special interest to Arab readers as well as to those interested in the status of Third World women as a whole.

3. That a group of highly educated Turkish women and men are deeply aware of the Turkish women's problems and needs, and are convinced of the necessity of working for a change. This group, which succeeded in founding the Turkish Social Science Association, organized in 1978 a seminar on «Women in Turkish Society», followed up in 1980 by another seminar on policy formation. They were responsible for the formulation of recommendations and preparation of the report which the following pages try to summarize.

Introduction

Dr. Nermin Abadan-Unat, president of the Turkish Social Science Association, introduced the report by giving the main topics of discussion handled by the Seminar. She concluded by saying: «Women's position can only be realistically assessed if division of labor, appropriation systems, power diffusion, decision making processes related directly or indirectly to women's status are completely analyzed.»

Seminar Report

It was prepared by Dr. Deniz Kandiyoti, from the Bosphorous University in Istanbul, who stated the Seminar objectives as follows: 1) the identification and critical evaluation of present trends and policies, 2) suggestions and recommendations for the future.

Five critical areas were covered by the participants: economic participation, education, social security, health and legal rights of women.

I — Statistics regarding Women's Work

According to the report, 64% of Turkey's female population reside in rural areas. Eighty eight percent of the female labor force work in agriculture. The work of this group takes the form of unpaid labor which

is only imperfectly recorded in national statistics. Agricultural extension services, credits, setting up of cooperatives are all geared to men. Mechanization of agriculture has decreased the demand for women's labor. The migration of males to urban areas has left many women in charge of households.

Distribution of the female labor force

The total percentage of employed women (excluding unpaid rural workers) is 10.2%. They are concentrated in low wage industries. Ninety-three percent of them are unskilled and uneducated.

The rate of semi-skilled white collar jobs for women is low. They are concentrated in secretarial jobs and the like.

The absence of nurseries and day-care centers makes women's work outside the home extremely difficult.

On the other hand, the ratios of women in the professions compare favorably with those of Western industrialized countries: one lawyer out of five and one medical doctor out of six are women. Their economic position makes it possible for them to employ migrant women as domestic servants, thus enabling them to devote most of their time to professional activity.

The counterpoint of this group of privileged women are the shanty town women who work in cleaning and other domestic jobs on a daily or monthly paid basis without social security.

The largest category of women in urban areas are housewives. Their ratio has increased by 20% between 1955 and 1975 due to internal migration, scarcity of jobs and non-attractiveness of the ones available. In wealthier and more metropolitan strata, women spend lavishly on self-adornment and leisure.

Recommendations

(A) Regarding rural women

1. «Female labor should gain recognition by being properly recorded and their contribution to the G.N.P. (Gross National Product) must be taken into account.»

2. «Women producers in agriculture and traditional crafts should be given support both at the production and marketing ends of their operations.»

3. The desirability of increasing female productivity must not lead to the narrowing of women's options even farther by depriving them of the right to equal opportunity and non-discrimination.

4. Besides the problem of productivity, other problems should receive adequate attention, namely the burden of constant pregnancies, the low age of marriage, the possibility of birth control education and the spread of birth control methods.

(B) Women employed outside the home.

1. They should be given opportunities for techni-

(1) Seminar Report by Dr. Deniz Kandiyoti, Ankara, 1980.

(2) See Al-Raida, No. 1979, vol. II, no. 10, p.9 and Feb. 1980, vol. III, no. 11, p.8, on Cultural Values and Population Action Programs in Turkey by Dr. Cigdem Kagitcibasi.

cal training in diverse and more remunerative jobs. Adult education is recommended, especially for working women.

2. Labor unions must become aware of the needs of female workers.

3. Child care facilities must be provided in adequate numbers; and maternity leaves should be made longer, while the possibility for women workers to return to their jobs is secured.

4. Protection of women working on an irregular basis.

(C) Housewives

1. Recognition of domestic tasks as part of the GNP.

2. Adequate protection of housewives for widowhood, sickness and old age by increasing family allowances or giving them social security.

II. Education

1. According to UNESCO statistics, illiteracy among Turkish women is one of the highest in the world, with the literacy differential between the sexes reaching 35%.

2. Literacy training should be accompanied by the teaching of practical and technical skills.

3. Elimination of sex-typing from textbooks and school curricula, should be a primary concern.

4. Women of secondary and high school levels should be allowed to join technical vocational schools.

5. Courses on sex education and birth control should be incorporated into school curricula.

6. Science education among women must be encouraged.

7. Adult and on-the-job education for parents should train them in the equality of the sexes. It should also help women outside the school system to acquire new skills and to receive on-the-job training and mid-career education.

III. Social Security

Major shortcomings of the system:

1. Inadequate breadth of coverage, the rural population excluded.

2. Inadequate financial resources, since the system is fed by contributions paid directly by beneficiaries and employers.

3. Disparity and lack of coordination among social security systems which have been instituted at different times with different aims and norms.

4. Early retirement of women.

5. Employment of women as clandestine workers and on an irregular basis.

6. Women employed in domestic service do not fall within the scope of organized and insured jobs.

7. Insurance of housewives seems to benefit only the richer women who can pay the premiums required for insurance.

Traditional social security mechanisms:

1. Reliance on family and children as security for old age.

2. Non-productive forms of investment like jewelry, gold, shares in land or in legal ownership of a residence.

Recommendations

They include the reform of the security system to include rural women; the revision of the insurance scheme for housewives; changes in inheritance laws to favor women; development and expansion of institutions for the care of the aged and destitute.

IV Health

Statistics made in 1975 show a relatively high mortality rate among Turkish women aged 15-44. This fact is directly related to their high fertility profiles and the frequency of gynecological pathologies, due to the absence of prenatal care and to the non-hygienic conditions under which 93% of deliveries are performed, namely, in homes by untrained persons.

High fertility rates indicate the low level of use and the inefficiency of birth control methods.

Other factors of female mortality:

Illegal abortion.

Nutritional deficiencies resulting from women's special needs.

Deficient hygienic conditions in general.

Recommendations

Improvement and extension of health services.

Training of midwives and nurses.

Birth control should be made easily and cheaply available.

Legislation on abortion should be changed.

Planning for an effective nutrition program encouraging the production of nutritive foods at a low cost.

Raising the overall level of hygiene and sanitation by establishing clean water supplies and proper sewerage.

V Legal Rights

The legal status of Turkish women presents so many problems that it is impossible to give a clear idea about it in this abridged report. The recommendations reproduced in the original report and briefly related here offer evidence of the numerous injustices imposed on women in the legal field. The following is a brief account of those recommendations:

1. The enforcement of laws regarding a legal age of marriage, civil marriage and mutual consent in marriage should be made a subject of stricter control.

2. The law on «Children Requiring Protection» should be used to extend protection and shelter to children whose labor is exploited, who are suffering

from misuse of custody and who run the risk of becoming prostitutes.

3. The clauses which undermine equality among partners in the marriage union should be abolished as unconstitutional.

4. The civic code clause making women's employment subject to the husbands' permission (clause 159) should be abolished as unconstitutional.

5. The laws regulating employed women's maternity leaves should be unified around a single set of norms. Women should be given the option of extension of leave at the very least on an unpaid basis, as well as the possibility of dividing their leave period before and after delivery, according to their needs.

6. Women's rights for child-care facilities for their pre-school children should be extended to all employees regardless of their legal status (civil servant or worker).

7. The separation of goods as a property system has serious disadvantages for women. This system could be modified as follows: Spouses could retain control over and property of the separate possessions they bring to the marriage. However, those goods acquired after the marriage should be considered as "common goods" and shared in the case of divorce. The Civic Code contains such an optional system on "partnership limited to acquired goods".

8. The payment of alimony in cases of poverty should not be limited to a one-year period as specified by clause 144 but extended until such time that there is an improvement in the spouse's material conditions or until remarriage occurs. Provisions must also be made for the realistic reappraisal of the amount of minimum alimony required to meet rising costs of living.

9. The close connection and complementarity between property regimes and inheritance laws is widely recognized. If the separation of goods were to remain the accepted property regime in Turkey, the

increase of the surviving spouse's share and the exclusion of distant relatives from inheritance would seem essential.

10. Abortion should be made legal, particularly to put a rapid stop to women's death or infirmity following illegal abortion under unsanitary and primitive conditions.

1. Laws which, wittingly or unwittingly, endorse a double standard in sexuality (such as penal code clauses 440 and 441 on adultery, penal code clause 462 on extenuating circumstances for homicide or bodily assault) should be amended and freed of such content.

Conclusion

Dr. Kandiyoti concludes with the following reflections:

While we believe, as many do, that women's status constitutes an intrinsic part of broader issues, we still claim that their problems be treated as a separate issue within overall national development problems.

It is generally admitted that the projects geared to women by international aid agencies are compatible with the goal of increasing overall productivity, hence it is necessary to support all measures that help to increase women's participation in it such as providing them with credit, extension services, marketing co-operatives, education, health, contraceptive services and so on.

The question that may be raised is whether the sectoral allocation of the sexes will remain largely unchanged, i.e. whether women will continue to be relegated to their traditional activities in the fields, in their homes and at their weaving looms.

If productivity is the sole aim of development, how compatible would it be with that of equal opportunity and equality of rights between the sexes?

Feminism in Scandinavia and in the U.S.

While some Americans complain or even ridicule the exaggerated activity of American feminists and deplore the huge sums of money spent on feminist research and publicity, a comparison between this movement and other similar movements in the Western World will show its superiority.

According to Brigitte Grue, a Copenhagen journalist writing in "Aktuelt", Scandinavian women, although among the best educated in the world, are far behind Americans in holding top jobs. As opposed to American women who admire wealth and achievement, Scandinavian women are still handicapped by the fear of progress. According to the Swedish Industrial

Directory, out of 2431 corporation executives only 28 and out of 5000 key decision-makers only 46 are women. The situation is not much better in Norway and Denmark.

In the U.S. career planning for women began to be organized in the 1970's. Fifteen percent of the middle management in the U.S. is female, compared to only 2% in Sweden and even less in Norway and Denmark. Nobody in Scandinavia is studying the problem of careers to women, a subject that has however preoccupied Americans for 20 years.

(From an article in International Herald Tribune, 9 March 1982, p.6)

"Emergence of the Feminine Question in the Discourse of Human Sciences", Algeria

The author begins by raising the following question: Why is it that none of the social sciences was constituted around the topic "family," though it is precisely this topic that we are referred to as an answer to questions regarding women?

She proceeds to say that a product of Western bourgeois humanism, the concept of the social sciences revolves around man. It pretends to be universal and to transcend the differences of class, race, nation and sex. Such a claim has been refuted first, by Marx who declared that when a bourgeois speaks of man he means the bourgeois; second, by ideologies of the Third World liberation movement which denounced the Europeocentrism of Western thought; third, by the women's movement which showed that when a man speaks of man, he means the male sex.

Women are excluded as a subject from the humanities and are systematically relegated to a space located outside the humanities: the family. Woman being always "The Other", the questions she raises are straightway drained into an indefinite, mythical spot. That is why attempts to integrate "the family" into the social sciences have failed. Questions regarding woman's work such as discrimination against her in employment, feminine absenteeism, and disparities in pay, should be treated through descriptive studies and statistics instead of theories.

The function of woman as the means of "producing offspring" seems to be an object of multiple questioning. In spite of the fact that Marxism declares itself as a critic of political economy, many of its statements remain implanted in the field of the latter. The debate about giving birth to children, in other words, the reproduction of the labor force, remains within the control of political economy where it is principally centered on the problem of defining the labor force as a **particular commodity and that of defining its value**. Domestic work and reproduction of the labor force being two intrinsically related activities in economic argument, it becomes necessary to coordinate the debate concerning them. In economic theory, only the reproduction of the labor force finds a place, while domestic work, considered as non-productive of value, is effectively excluded from its field. Because women are not "productive" workers, on the assumption that every woman is a housekeeper, they should be excluded from the working class.

This authoritarian concept has been contested by feminists who try to affirm that domestic work is productive. Women should be rehabilitated as a working class. If they work outside the home, they assume a double task.

So far, the debate between feminists and their opponents has reached deadlock. To solve the problem, its analysis should be developed around something which is not in itself a problem already settled by Marx himself, who denies the productive quality of domestic work.

Here the author inserts the following remark: "Marxism, considered to be the most advanced stage of human thought, is the privileged place in which the women's movement may theorize about the collective practice of women. But Marxism itself needs profound and radical changes because until now it has remained globally masculine. It needs a reconstitution of a theory for women."

The patriarchal system is a more oppressive system than capitalism which constitutes a part of it. The contemporary sociologist Foucault insists on proving the capitalist character of the modern family which draws its essence from the diffusion of power through the meshwork of society. But Foucault neglects to discuss the preceding period and to explain how the division of the sexes and the oppression of women originated. If his system has removed certain myths regarding the stability of the family institution and explained historically the formation of the female status, it still excludes women from its basic questions.

Rosi Braidotti, in an essay published in 1980, criticizes the archaic methods used by feminists in their struggle against a discursive field dominated by rational thought and absolutism. Instead of a direct attack against the strongholds of rationality, they have elaborated ideas which surround these strongholds without confronting them.

If the purely historical and social reality of women were to disappear, the differences between man and woman would be reduced to the purely physiological aspect. Then it would be possible to reestablish humanism and progressiveness in the feminine.

The future will tell whether the Feminine Movement will be able to secure entry in socially validated knowledge. At the moment, this process is only indirect and is the source of inverse, deforming effects. Here we face the problem of the presence or absence of women from places which produce recognized knowledge. It is not only a question of numerical weight but also that of the attitude which they adopt when they are involved in any scientific practice.

(1) Abstract of a document submitted by Fatiha Hakiki, Groupe de Recherche sur les Femmes Algériennes. Document de Travail no. 1, C.D.S.H. Université de Wahan, 1981.

Social Welfare Activities in Bahrain

In several issues of *Al-Raida*⁽¹⁾, we reported on the increasing interest in social welfare projects which distinguishes the State of Bahrain. The last issue, no. 28, of *Al-Nashra al-Dawriyya*, a quarterly published by the Unit of Social Research in the Social Development Section of the Ministry of Social Affairs, reports, in 75 stencilled pages, on the intensive activity displayed in the field of welfare work during the first three months of 1982.

1. The first article relates the program and decisions of the 4th Session of the Council of Ministers of Social Affairs in the Gulf States. The decisions emphasized the necessity of effecting a closer cooperation among those states in the field of social affairs. A follow-up committee was established, whose responsibility was to prepare the program of the Annual Social Work Week in the Gulf States, including the exchange of periodicals, reports and pamphlets issued by the local ministers; the preparation of statistical studies regarding the work potential of each country, its training centers and participation possibilities. The creation of Social Development Centers in each locality was subjected to a number of conditions and obligations, ensuring their integrated and coherent activity.

2. Seminar on the development of local communities in Oman.

The Seminar was held in Muscat, the capital. It was attended by 96 delegates representing the ministries of social affairs in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the Arab League Secretariat and the follow-up Office of the Council of Ministers of Social Affairs in the Gulf States. Delegates of international organizations like ECWA, the U.N. Development Office in Oman, UNICEF, FAO and UNESCO, were also present.

The committees created by the participants included: Health, Agriculture, Women's Affairs, Building, Structural Organization, Education and Information.

A long list of decisions was prepared, confirming the establishment of a National Program for the development of local communities in the Sultanate and the continuation of a coordinated and integrated program of activities consisting of: mutual field visits, financing projects, local participation, improvement of

rural and industrial products, provision of technical and financial assistance to projects representing personal effort and the continuation of technical assistance from U.N. international agencies in the fields of training and programming.

Several documents were presented by delegates of local and regional organizations, relating past experience and future prospects.

3. The said issue also reported on the items of the Sixth Annual Family Festival, which took place in Bahrain on March 21, 1982 and was organized by the following: Women's societies in Bahrain, Social Centers, folkloric music groups, the Institute for the Blind (Ma'ahad-un-Nour) and the Bahrain Red Crescent.

During the festival, a collection of children's books were distributed among Bahraini kindergartens and nurseries. They amounted to 6030 volumes, purchased for 4200 Bahraini dinars.

The Association of Struggle against Smoking, comprising 2200 members, reported on its activities and its participation in the first seminar organized for the above purpose by the Gulf States in November 1981.

4. Reports were also published on the following activities:

A training session for Women Local Pioneers, begun on February 2, to be continued through June 23, 1982. The project was part of the Five Year Plan. It aimed at training 20 pioneers per year along five principal lines: a) leadership and family guidance, b) economic skills, hygiene and general culture, c) field study, d) demographic and family planning problems, e) foods and manual work.

5. The training session organized for housewives between Nov. 16, 1981 and Feb. 11, 1982 (about 2 months), was intended a) to train women directors of the social centers and to guide social researchers in executing local programs for the benefit of rural and semi-urban women; b) to train pioneers in spreading awareness and arousing social interest among the inhabitants; c) to make women aware of the opportunities open to them as homemakers, wives, mothers and producers.

6. Other training sessions revolved around the following:

— Women's role in family guidance and family planning.

— Principles of house decoration, family hygiene, family relations, nutrition, sewing and budgeting.

— Improved methods of local arts such as the production of incense, perfumes, care of flowers and

(1) See *Al-Raida*, Nov. 1978, no. 6 p. 10; Nov. 1979, vol. II, no. 10, p. 14; Feb. 1981, vol. IV, no. 15, p. 12; May 1, 1982, vol. V, no. 20, p. 9; Aug. 1, 1982, vol. V, no. 21, p. 14.

gardens, care of retarded children, hair dressing, cooking, manual work and food canning.

The trainees numbered 21. They all agreed that the session was of great help to them. The majority asked to have it extended.

7. The other welfare projects reported were: the Social Welfare Unit, the Unit for the Elimination of Begging, the Child Welfare Center, the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped and Help of the Elderly.

During the first three months of 1982, 268 Bahraini families received financial help. The sums spent on the elimination of begging reached 2786 dinars during the same period.

A lecture was given on child delinquency by the supervisor of the Child Welfare Center at a training

session organized for the Female Police Section.

As for the help given to the handicapped and the elderly, it consisted of the purchase of wheelchairs and paying those who took charge of training in their use. It also included the distribution of money and gifts and the preparation of 120 slides on the activities of elderly women in the Rehabilitation Center.

The Higher Council for Vocational Training offered 3000 dinars for the Children's Rehabilitation Center.

Finally, on the occasion of the closing of the International Year for Disabled Persons, the National Committee organized, on January 30, 1982, a big reception for workers and participants in IYDP activities under the patronage of His Excellency the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs and other ministers of the State of Bahrain.

Equal Rights Questionnaire in Great Britain

In 1980, **The National Labour Women's Committee in Great Britain** conducted a survey on women's rights which gave the following results:

1. The notion that a "woman's place is in the home" was rejected by over 75% of the respondents who represented women's groupings, women's councils and other women's organizations.

2. Sixty five percent of the Labour Women said that women should not be expected to stay at home even when they have young children.

3. A third of women respondents wanted to be free to choose whether to work or not and without any feelings of guilt.

4. Forty three percent said that wages for housework was a bad concept, a reactionary demand which perpetuates the idea that a woman's place is in the home and which would institutionalize motherhood. Fifteen replies out of 117 indicated support for the concept, 8 of which felt that some allowance could be paid through the tax system.

5. Regarding the question whether attitudes of men towards sharing of domestic duties is changing, nearly 40% answered in the affirmative. About 17% felt that this process was a slow one and not fast enough.

6. The questions on women and marriage came with varied results. Over 50% of the replies stated their acceptance of a continuation of more flexible forms of relationships, pointing out that the traditional marriage patterns discriminate against women in the tax system, benefits, etc. On the other hand it would appear that traditional marriage is still viewed by many as providing the best environment for child rearing and giving stability.

7. Women and work: Over 80% expected women to be in paid employment throughout their working

lives. Over 90% thought that there should be freedom of choice to work for either spouse.

8. Women and education: There was a general agreement on the necessity of encouraging girls "to go in for science and technology at all levels from birth to university." The traditional attitudes of society to the role of women was seen as a major obstacle by nearly a quarter of the responses. It was important "to teach boys and girls that marriage was not the be all and end all but part of life."

9. Portrayal of women in the media: Over 90% of the replies agreed that the media showed prejudice against women.

10. Almost 100% of the respondents called for the equalization of the retirement age for men and women.

The Annual Conference held in 1980 by the Labour Party confirmed the demands and suggestions representing the majority of respondents to the aforementioned questionnaire. Of the 40 recommendations formulated by the Conference members, the following are to be noted:

1. Career teaching and advice should be improved to give girls information and guidance on training and careers available in science and technology.

2. A full programme of adult education should be available at a reasonable cost.

3. Women in the Party should be actively involved in the campaign for peace and disarmament.

(Condensed from "Socialist International Women Bulletin", no. 5, '81, pp.59-67. Published by Socialist International Women, London, England).

What Is the LFPA⁽¹⁾

In his report, Mr. Toufiq Osseiran, General Secretary of LFPA, tried to show that the Association aims to answer an actual need in the social, hygienic and national areas. He insisted on the idea that its function is not limited to the administration of contraceptive pills but covers many other objectives such as:

1. Creating awareness among people in general and especially among the masses, regarding the nature and importance of the family planning movement and the necessity of introducing family education into school curricula and educational centers.

2. Arousing the interest of young people in the movement and preparing an adequate number of them to become leaders in the field.

3. Establishing a permanent contact with government authorities, first for the sake of amending the law regarding the sale and use of contraceptives; second, for introducing family education as a course in school curricula; third, for preparing information programs in mass media through the initiative and direction of the Educational Center for Research and Development; fourth, for developing the services performed by the Ministry of Public Health and General Welfare; fifth, for allowing working women an adequate maternity leave; and finally, for creating a special administrative body to take charge of demographic and family planning activities and problems.

Mr. Osseiran included in his report information about two projects undertaken by the Association. The first was the training of 120 women field workers who attended regular one-month sessions and received medical cards. The function of these field workers is not limited to the diffusion of knowledge regarding birth control. They serve as liaison officers between villagers and LFPA and are expected to inform the Development Centers of the needs of rural people in the way of cultural activities, cooperatives, training in certain skills and so on.

Another project was the creation of camps for young men who joined the work as volunteers and through close contact with villagers were able to study their conditions and discuss plans for meeting their needs.

Mr. Osseiran's report included statistics from field studies prepared by the Association in 1971, 1980 and 1981.

(1) Abstract of a report given by Mr. Toufiq Osseiran, General Secretary of the Lebanon Family Planning Association (LFPA) at the conference organized by the Association on demographic policies in Lebanon.

Emigration and Rural Development⁽¹⁾

Lebanese emigration has been a chronic problem to the country, draining its national potential. It is a last resort for the unemployed and is particularly luring for the underprivileged rural population. It has always taken a mercantile character. Instead of depending on agriculture and industry, emigrants depended on services and trade.

The wide gap between urban and rural areas has encouraged the emigration of rural people who are supposed to nurture strong ties with the soil and to constitute a main source of native culture and national character.

To counteract the tide of rural emigration, the first step is to help the development of the rural sector. For this purpose, four schools have been used on an international basis: First, **Extension Education**, originally developed in America, aimed at extending previous education, encouraging research and giving extension services in the form of agricultural information, domestic science and leadership training in youth. This school was deeply rooted in American culture which it tried to preserve and develop. Hence it obtained little success outside America.

A second school is that of **Social Centers**, which emphasized the creation of buildings as centers of development activity. Social centers flourished in Egypt where the most successful was the regional center of Sirs-el-Layyan. A center was built for every 10,000 inhabitants. Their number reached 172 in 1950. But the inability of the government to cover the necessary expenses and to extend the services to the whole population obliged those in charge to change the centers into concentrated units which were qualified to reach larger numbers of rural people.

A third school is one called **Fundamental Education** which aims at meeting the basic needs of individuals and providing the minimum education required for self-realization. To the teaching of basic knowledge, it adds the teaching of skills which help the individual earn his living and achieve economic independence.

The fourth school is the **Community Development Method** which differs from preceding schools in its emphasis on an intense study of local characteristics and needs, free from preconceived ideas. It insists on independent activity and rejects all outside help if people could have obtained the same result through their own efforts. It recommends cooperative work and mobilization of all possibilities. This last school seems to join together all the qualities of preceding ones and to polarize their influence.

(1) Abstract of a lecture presented by Dr. Mounir Khoury of BUC, at the Second National Conference for Demographic Policies, organized by the LFPA, 1-3 April 1982. See p. 11 of this issue.

More about the Elderly in Lebanon

There are in Lebanon five major institutions that take care of the aged⁽¹⁾ and three resthouses where they are accepted: one at Arayya, another at Bhannes, a third one at Zouq Musbeh (Convent of Christ King). Other new homes are being built for them: one on the hills overlooking the plain of Damour, another called Oznam House, at Batroun.

In a small, developing country like Lebanon, it is easy to explain the limited awareness of the public regarding the problems of the aged. Dr. Mounir Khoury, in his study which was published in a summarized form in the May 1982 issue of *Al-Raida*, pointed out the needs of the existing old people's homes and presented a number of recommendations concerning them.

Recently, however, some signs of a growing awareness regarding the problems of the aged have appeared. An article dealing with this topic has been published in the weekly magazine *Al-Hasna*⁽²⁾. It relates an interview made by reporter Samia al-Muhammad with Dr. Fa'ez Al-Ra'i, probably the only gerontologist in Lebanon. Moved by the glaring need for specialists in this field, he decided to act as a pioneer. For this purpose, he spent several years in France and came back with new ideas briefly expounded in the following paragraphs.

Dr. Fa'ez al-Ra'i tells us that traditional old people's homes exist no more in France (and probably in other Western countries⁽³⁾). Villages for the elderly are being built, like SOS children's villages. These resorts, which in France numbered 60 in 1975, are provided with all kinds of health installations and entertainment facilities. Their residents lead a normal home life and may receive relatives and friends whenever they please.

Dr. Ra'i is in charge of the Red Cross Outpatient Clinic for the Elderly in Jounieh, where they come for free treatment once a week. He is planning to create in Lebanon a village for them. Some religious congregations have shown their willingness to offer the land where the village would be built, but the money required for building remains to be secured. He thinks that every district in Lebanon must have its own village for the elderly and that if every Lebanese paid one pound, the project would be carried out. When asked about his opinion concerning the old people's homes in Lebanon, he said: They are crowded in almost one district of the country. Moreover, they lack the modern equipment and facilities which ensure the comfort and well-being of the aged. They look like prisons where the residents are deprived of social life and have nothing to occupy their time. That is why many of them

die soon after entering these homes. He added that in our country the idea prevails that family life is still flourishing and that the aged receive good care within their families. An inquiry he made showed that only 5 percent of the families he questioned really cared to keep their old people and give them all the care they needed. He affirms that the "times have changed"; young people are eager to lead their own independent life and are not interested in the extended family system. Many would like to send their old parents to old people's homes but are deterred by public opinion which would accuse them of ingratitude.

Anyway, says Dr. Al-Ra'i, whether the elderly remain with their families or are sent to resthouses, they need adequate medical care and a pleasant social atmosphere. If they are able to work, they should be given the opportunity to do it. The company of children will do them good and many of them should be able to take care of children at least a few hours per day. It is true that after the age of 60, there is a general decline in bodily functions, but those who keep moving and using their mental faculties will not suffer from an early decline.

In Lebanon, social security is limited to a small section of the population. We expect it to cover every individual and to include health and old age expenses. When that stage is reached, the projects that are being laid out for the elderly will be easier to carry out.

IYDP (International Year of the Disabled Persons) in Lebanon⁽¹⁾

According to a census carried out by the "Caritas" organization in 1981, there are 11,791 handicapped persons in Lebanon, of whom 9430 live in towns and 5361 in rural districts. The census was taken within a period of three and a half months between 1980 and 1981, in collaboration with school boys and girls.

The handicapped are classified as follows:

Mentally retarded	2676
insane	425
Blind	1226
Deaf and dumb	1173
Mutilated	617
Paralysed	4078
Physically malformed	463
Plurihandicapped	1133
Total	11791

(Le Réveil, 21 Dec. 1981)

(1) See *Al-Raida*, May 1, 1982, vol. V, no. 20, p.12.

(2) No. 1023, June 11-18, 1982, pp.14-18.

(3) See *Al-Raida*, Feb. 1, 1982, vol. V, no. 19, p.15.

(1) See *Al-Raida*, no. 16, May 1, 1981, vol. IV, p.5

The Coming of Age (Part III)

In the conclusion of her book "The Coming of Age", Simone de Beauvoir makes some statements that have validity. She believes that if old age is not to be an absurd parody of our former life, then people ought to go on pursuing ends that give our existence a meaning. Such meaning can be found in devotion to individuals, to groups or to causes, social, political, intellectual and commitment to creative work. Old people should be prevented from turning in upon themselves by keeping aflame passions strong enough to give value to their existence. Often people are advised to prepare for old age by saving money, choosing the place for retirement and cultivating hobbies. Even with these preparations old people will not be better prepared for old age. One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation, compassion. When this is so, then there are still valid reasons for the activity and speech of old people. But Simone de Beauvoir claims that such possibilities are granted only to a handful of privileged people: it is in the last years of life that the gap between them and the vast majority of mankind becomes deepest and most obvious.

The author blames society for the inequality of standards between the rich old and the poor old people. The manual worker for instance, ages earlier than a privileged person. He is the victim of that terrible curse: boredom, as he retires, because he hasn't ever learnt to kill time. His gloomy idleness leads to an apathy that endangers what physical and intellectual balance he may still possess. When he escapes from the fetters of his trade or calling, all he sees around him is an arid waste; he has not been granted the possibility of committing himself to projects that might have peopled the world with goals, values and reasons for existence.

Simone de Beauvoir regards the remedies that have been put forward to lessen the distress of the aged, such a mockery. Even if they are given care and treatment for their health, they cannot be provided with the culture, the interests and the responsibilities that would give their life a meaning. Therefore she condemns society that is only concerned with profit and turns away from the aged worker as though he belonged to another species. She believes that old age exposes the failure of our entire civilization. She wishes the whole man to be remade and the whole relationship between man and man to be recast, if we wish the old person's state to be acceptable. She doesn't want a man to start his last years alone and empty-handed.

She claims that once we have understood what the state of the aged really is we cannot satisfy ourselves with calling for a more generous "old-age policy": higher pensions, decent housing and organized leisure. It is the whole system, she believes, that is at issue and our claim cannot be otherwise than a radical change in life itself.

It is apparent that Simone de Beauvoir has a critical approach to the political systems of different countries, particularly the capitalistic system which she finds responsible for the situation of the aged. When she condemns society for the responsibility it has for the wretched condition of her humble classes of old people, she has in mind the economic and political system primarily.

Certainly, her argument carries weight and has validity. However, I would like to keep that factor aside for a while and try to see what other groups can be held responsible for the situation of the aged. Society is not merely composed of political and economic groups and associations. Organizations for human rights, religious and spiritual groups, associations for women's and children's rights, church affiliated organizations and most of all United Nations sub-committees and various associations, may certainly have a role to play towards the amelioration of the situation of the aged.

Such genuine effort to provide not only improvement in the health and financial condition of the aged, but also cultural activities that give them some meaningful experiences, will definitely have an important influence on the thinking of the political and economic giant organizations and their leaders.

Enlightenment of the public through writing, research and media will also have far-reaching consequences for the situation of the old people. There is an absolute ignorance amongst the various communities in the world as to the real image of how the old live and how they carry their wearisome existence. The more people are made aware of the condition of the aged, the better the possibilities are for improvement.

Associations and even individuals, sometimes can put up centers of recreational and cultural activity for the old. To kill boredom seems to be a major problem that groups have to face if they want to improve the situation of the old. Centers which do not discriminate between the rich and the poor, and which are equally accessible for all classes, ought to provide meaningful experiences for the old.

As a final point, I would like to emphasize the importance of attitudes nurtured in family life towards old age. Love and respect for the old cultivated in the home and family atmosphere, becomes a determining factor in the lives of young people who, in turn, show their loving attitudes and caring concern for the old. When they see in the life example of their parents how respectful and loving they can be for their own parents, young people tend to internalize such values for the care of the old in their own lives. In the future, as leaders in their own communities, they carry on projects and wholeheartedly commit themselves to their success for the improvement of the condition of the old in their community.

The radical change in society for healthier attitudes towards the old should start right at home.

by Simone de Beauvoir,
condensed by Azadouhi Kalaidjian (Simonian)

"La Répudiation"⁽¹⁾

"I would like our men and women to develop a consciousness of our archaic society where deep-rooted stereotypes exert on us too heavy an impact... I have tried to give evidence of the multiple injustices committed against women."

The above paragraph was quoted from Rachid Boudjedra's comment on his novel, reviewed and analyzed by **Gafaiti Hafid**⁽²⁾ who adds, in the foreword which introduces his study, that Boudjedra's works attack taboos which have been avoided by other writers. He does it directly, breaking and going beyond the dams of convention.

Mode of Expression

All through the work, it is a man's point of view that dominates. A woman's standpoint is completely excluded. The narrative takes the shape of superposed levels which make it difficult to distinguish the personal attitude of the author from his pure desire to state the facts.

The hero of the novel identifies with the narrator and gives the image of a neurotic character, detached from the self and from reality; in his narrative he makes no distinction between dream and reality, he mixes delirium with sound expression, past with present and temporal with spatial dimensions.

Central Idea

The story revolves around the domination and alienation of women in a strictly patriarchal society: their economic dependence, insignificant position, the limited space in which they move, their illiteracy, their utter submission to fathers or to husbands, and their almost inexistent sexual life.

In the family of Si Zoubir, the women are subjugated to the laws of a feudal system, represented by the father and his brothers. They are isolated, spied upon and forced to wear the veil. A woman may be repudiated by her husband without reference to any court or judge.

Women of the Story

1. The mother, whose distinctive trait is passivity, is repudiated by the father. This arouses the revolt and grudge of the son Rachid against both the father and the mother who resignedly accepts her fate and is thus reduced to a state of complete humiliation. "Like a fly caught in a dish of melon jam, she struggles to escape but without success." Her passage from the status of a married woman to that of a repudiated woman completely annihilates her socially and morally. Like an abject slave, she proceeds to arrange her husband's second marriage and indulges in shrieks of merriment at the

wedding. Her resignation, however, is of a short duration. A short time later, she develops a serious disease and at the age of thirty, she ends up in a home for the insane.

2. The stepmother is the instrument which the adolescent son uses to prove his virility and to take revenge on his father. Torn with conflicting emotions such as love and hatred, pity and scorn, he feels incapable of self-realization. The stepmother is reduced to a sexual object. Her only occupation is to attract and bewitch men, including her husband. Rachid looks down on her because, at the age of fifteen, she was sold for money which her parents needed.

3. Compared to other women, Céline, the mistress, seems to be the nearest to Rachid's inner world. In spite of his pride, his doubts and suspicions, he was ready to recognize the communication and affection that bound him to her. Yet certain conflicts opposed them to each other: on the one hand, her desire to conquer his obscurity, to deliver him from his demons and to impose on his delirium a certain rationality and on the other hand, his instability and his refusal to be dominated. Céline represents the mature, westernized woman, more self-conscious, more demanding, more independent and consequently, more problematic than common Algerian women.

Women, a physical entity

In Boudjedra's novels, women are considered only through their physique: They are flesh; they are sex; they are wombs. Their animality is emphasized. They are demanded and despised, loved and feared. Sexual relations are described as an occasion for affirming male domination.

A psychoanalytic study

The novel is a psychoanalytic study of a classical oedipian situation. The course of events is dominated by the father, the autocratic and phallographic feudal lord, the charismatic chief of the clan, the rich and omnipotent ruler, who is considered as an ideal and model. The behavior of the son reveals childhood influences which enslave him. He tries to find in the mother a refuge, an ally against the father but she proves to be weak and inefficient. The boy turns to incestual love as a form of vengeance. Women are despised because of their insignificant social position and their helplessness in relation to male domination. Men find in women's feebleness, and in mythical beliefs and superstitions regarding femininity, a reason for justifying their tyrannical behavior. "They are voracious, they are vampires, they are malefic, they should be repressed."

Weaknesses of the novel

1. Its autobiographic and obsessional character restricts its esthetic and creative value.
2. It stresses the frailties and defects of women,

(Continued on page 14)

(1) "La Répudiation" by Rachid Boudjedra, Algerian novelist, éditions Denoel, Paris, 1969.

(2) Centre de Documentation des Sciences Humaines, (C.D.S.H.), Wahan: Document de Travail, no. 12, 1982.

A Survey of the Children's Needs in the Egyptian Republic⁽¹⁾

This survey aims to point out the needs of Egyptian children in the fields of education, guidance, recreation and family relations. Published in 1974, it may serve as a guide to present day researchers and, considering the slow change in the educational conditions of the Arab East, it continues to be of value in 1982.

Absence of Guidance for Children

Proper guidance for children is almost totally absent in both the vocational and the emotional fields.

Fifty percent of teachers said their students lacked adequate preparation for academic study in secondary schools.

Sixty nine percent of technical school teachers said their students needed vocational guidance.

There is a general desire among students to obtain university education, in the proportion of 41-46%. Their main interest is medicine and engineering.

Emotional Problems

There is an equal neglect of guidance regarding the emotional problems of children.

The survey points out the symptoms of worry and fear among children, remorse, feelings of guilt (81%) and fear of failure (57%); the percentage of worry is higher among girls (67%) than among boys (57%), and even higher among children of well-to-do families.

Sex problems seem to be ignored by teachers and parents alike, and questions regarding sex remain unanswered. Adolescents lack information about the causes of changes following puberty, but girls show a higher sex consciousness than boys. Diffidence and difficult expression are a result of repression especially among girls.

Need for Recreational Activities

This need is especially felt in rural areas, where the scarcity of reading books imposes the creation of itinerant libraries.

The survey points out the lack of interest in writing for children. Here it is possible to remark that interest in this field has noticeably increased during the last eight years. New publication houses for children's literature have been created in Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq. A large number of works for children have been produced.

Some recreation is secured through radio, television and sport in the proportion of 18% for boys and 10% for girls.

Boys' participation in house activities is nearly absent: 4% in rural areas, and 5% in urban ones.

Parent-Child Relationship

1. The qualities required of children by parents are: religiosity, obedience, respect of elders and serious effort in school work.

2. Mothers are more influential than fathers in helping children. In general, they are more understanding than fathers.

3. Rural mothers are more indulgent with their boys than with their girls, showing a subconscious belief in male superiority. This attitude is more prevalent among illiterate mothers.

4. Girls are more sensitive than boys and more subject to worry.

5. There is a general lack of understanding between parents and children.

Topics of discussion among parents

1. The future of children; their career; their friends; personal problems of boys.

2. The insistence on boys' education, but little interest in girls' education.

3. More interest is shown in discussion among urban than among rural parents.

4. Sex is a taboo in conversation.

Reward and Punishment

1. Bodily punishment is used at the rate of 49% among urban mothers, and 42% among rural ones.

2. Thirty three percent of rural fathers, 32% of urban fathers resort to bodily punishment in the case of boys; 27% of the former, 26% of the latter in the case of girls.

3. Insult and shouting is common among 17% of urban parents, and 14% of rural parents.

4. Coercion used with boys in early years may diminish as they approach adulthood but with girls it is not diminished.

Attitude Toward Work

1. Children's school work is impeded by: a high absence rate, neglectfulness, simulated sickness, lack of precaution in the use of tools.

2. Low incentive to thoroughness of work due to: interest in promotion more than interest in work; literal execution of orders without regard of change which necessity may require; lack of creativity, lack of persistence, indifference to supervisors' advice.

degradation.

3. The novel is not an authentic representation of male-female relations in today's Algeria, but it stands as a nude and unconventional presentation of reality, a form of liberated masochism.

(1) Abstract of a report published by UNICEF, National Center for Social and Criminal Research, Cairo, 1974.

(Continued from page 13)

overlooking any other qualities they might possess. The hero's morbid attitude toward women is not sufficiently explained or justified. Instead of sympathizing with them, he makes them responsible for their

Development of Rural Pioneers' Role in Egypt⁽¹⁾

A study of "Operative Suggestions for Strengthening the Role of Rural Pioneers in Family Planning and Development" was prepared (in Arabic) by Dr. Haifa Al-Shanawany, at the request of the Supreme Council for Population and Family Planning in Cairo, Research Office, 1981.

This study is made up of three parts. The first gives the history of the Rural Pioneers Project, begun in 1964. It describes the method of choosing the Pioneer, defines her work as a link between the Services Sector and the population, shows her role in the field of awareness and development projects, and points out the handicaps faced by the project.

The second part deals with the role played by the Rural Pioneers in the Population and Development Project. It expands the description of their activities, their training, their program of work, their role in information, the supervision, follow-up and evaluation of their work, their training centers and their distribution among the twelve muhafazats (districts).

The third part gives "operative suggestions for

strengthening the role of Rural Pioneers in family planning and development". It contains directions regarding the pioneer's work in family planning, health care, mother and child welfare, nurseries, arts and crafts centers and other production projects.

The main suggestions are briefly given as follows:

1. Participation of rural pioneers in monthly meetings of the advisory committee of each local unit.

2. Coordination of work and distribution of responsibilities between the pioneers of social affairs and those of family planning.

3. Preliminary training of population and development pioneers should be remunerated for the period of the first three weeks. It should be carried out in the training centers of Social Affairs directorates.

4. Selection of distinguished pioneers for supervision, and the follow-up of a group of pioneers laying out a work plan for them.

5. Encouraging women's clubs and centers affiliated with Social Affairs by securing cooperation between Social Affairs and Population and Development pioneers. Financial help to the clubs could be supplied.

This list is followed by a detailed work plan for rural pioneers in the fields already mentioned.

(1) See Al-Raida, Aug. 1979, vol. II, no. 9, p.12, "Rural Pioneers in the Fiume District of Egypt."

CONFERENCE

Conference of the National Alliance of Lebanese Women

The National Alliance of Lebanese Women held its second conference at the Carlton Hotel on May 8, 1982. It was presided over by Mrs. Linda Matar who said in an opening word that the creation of the Alliance came as a response to the needs imposed by the present circumstances. The aim of the conference was to give a comprehensive view of women's demands in political, legal, economic and educational fields, based on cooperative work between representatives of both sexes and of various communities. These demands will thus be brought, early enough in time, to the attention of the future President of the Republic and will serve to enlighten the Lebanese people regarding the necessity of progressive reforms.

Here is a summary of the most outstanding claims and recommendations presented by the Conference:

1. Elaboration of a unified system of personal status laws to apply to all Lebanese communities.

2. Reform of the electoral law to include, as a first step, the elimination of its sectarian basis.

3. Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in the field of political leadership and in all other fields of employment.

4. Extending social security to cover all citizens, including mothers and children.

5. Extending maternity leave to three months with full pay.

6. Checking the unlimited expansion of monopolies by encouraging cooperatives and establishing a systematic control of prices.

Mrs. Janine Rebeiz proposed the creation of a Ministry of Women's Affairs, directed by women, as a transitional step to the stage of complete freedom from sexual discrimination, the stage to which all women aspire.

"Once Upon a Time in Lebanon"

by Roseanne Khalaf
Caravan Books, N.Y. 1982

The three short stories which this book contains were inspired by nineteenth century Lebanese figures who achieved distinction and fame during that eventful period of the country's history: Emir Bashir, the shrewd and iron-handed ruler; Akhwat Shanai, a famous eccentric fellow, whose creative imagination inspired the ingenuous way of bringing water to the magnificent Beit Eddin palace which the Emir intended to build. Tanyus Shahin, the popular leader who organized a successful revolt against tyrannical feudal lords; Sitt Nazira Jumblatt, the prominent Druze lady who distinguished herself as politician. The stories form a "mixture of history, fact, fancy and folklore", as the author says. Roseanne Saad Khalaf is a Lebanese who has been teaching English and Cultural Studies at the American University of Beirut. To make her stories more attractive, she takes a certain freedom in portraying the manners and way of life of the inhabitants. The lively, imaginative style should appeal not only to young readers for whom the stories are meant, but also to adults interested in historical narratives which throw some light on the eventful past of this spot of the East called Lebanon.

10th Annual Report of World Health Organization

Published in Geneva, November 1981, by the WHO (World Health Organization), the book reports, in 167 pages, on the "Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction".

The introduction points out the general need for information and family services planning care. It shows the differences of opinion regarding the ways to meet the demands. There is, however, a general agreement on the need to increase research on how to make the "best use of current knowledge and technology and the importance of developing new methods."

In 1972, the Member States of WHO established the "Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction". Eighty countries were involved in the Programme, including 54 developing countries. International meetings in 1981 emphasized the necessity of coordination of research in family planning and suggested that world efforts be redirected to concentrate practically exclusively on the development of new contraceptive technology. In response, contraceptive research has been actively carried out. Material on the needs, approaches and mechanisms has been extensively reviewed.

The Report contains a collection of all sorts of reviews dealing with the topic of research on methods of fertility regulation, infertility, institution strengthening and dissemination of information.

The introducer concludes by saying that "it is possible that these various reviews will lead to a better understanding at least of one aspect of the field and to better funding it."

A Radio Program on Health

IWSAW is glad to announce that it has prepared for illiterate and semi-literate women, in simplified Arabic and in the form of dialogues, a set of 36 radio sessions on general health, 10-15 min. each.

The recording of the whole set was made possible through a grant by the voluntary Fund of U.N. Decade for Women. The Economic Commission for West Asia and a committee of medical experts, evaluated and approved the content of the program. It is offered for sale by IWSAW on cassettes at L.L.3000, and on reels at L.L. 5000. For more information, please contact IWSAW.

Due to the war conditions in Lebanon during June, July and August 1982, the suspension of the mail service obliged us to postpone the distribution of the August issue of Al-Raida until November 1982.

AL-RAIDA, IWSAW QUARTERLY

Lebanon:
P.O.Box 13-5053
Beirut University College
Beirut, Lebanon
Cable Address: BECOGE
Tlx: BUC 23389 LE

U.S.A.:
Beirut University College
475 Riverside Drive,
Room 1221
New York, NY 10115

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