

You Cannot Set the Clock Back

The Women's Liberation Movement has invaded almost all the countries of the world but in a highly uneven proportion. The volume of material published about women's status and needs in the principal languages of humankind is really amazing. It covers developing as well as developed areas. In Algeria, Woman's Day, (the 8th of March), was celebrated for the second time in 1982 while in France it was celebrated only for the first time on that same date. In both countries, the women's movement seems to have had a simultaneous start. Though Simone de Beauvoir's «Le Deuxième Sexe», was published in the forties, feminist activity among French women assumed a serious role only 15 years ago. But while results are very slow to appear in undeveloped countries like Algeria, they are obtainable at a much faster rate in developed countries like France.

In an inquiry made by the journalist Sylviane Stein and published in "L'Express", 19 March 1982, French women have succeeded, within the last ten years, in obtaining the same right to work as men (1972), the right to abortion and to the use of contraceptives (1974), and the right to raise a suit against a rapist (1979). Also they enjoy the freedom of joining together marriage, maternity and work. Work for them is not a pastime or an outlet to the outside world but mainly a source of livelihood and a means of increasing the family income. Under the new socialist régime, additional gains may be obtained but women will not be satisfied with mere hopes and promises. They have moved from the stage of theorizing and arguing to that of the practical questions of every-day life. Their claims are based on figures and statistics. These claims revolve around the right to occupy leading positions, to have equal pay for equal work and an equal right to promotion. Andrée Michel, a sociologist at the National Center of Scientific Research, declares that women are underpaid, overworked and exploited. They perform 75% of housework activities and 34% of remunerated work, while men perform 66% of remunerated work and an insignificant share in housework.

In Lebanon, which may be taken as a specimen of Third World developing countries, women's problems are much more complicated when compared with those of the First World. First and foremost, there is the question of secularizing and unifying the laws of personal status which are still subordinated to the legislation of religious authorities. The confessional distribution of political and administrative functions is another obstacle in the way of women's involvement in politics.

Another difference between developed and developing countries is that the latter still have a class of privileged, idle women who are waited upon by maids, while, in developed countries, housemaids are a rarity. On the other hand, housemaids in Third World countries are more available to working women. Other work problems are about the same for women in both groups. They are all seeking the facilities that would alleviate their double burden and, for housewives, the right to social and old age securities.

This brief comparison will perhaps show that the struggle is more tough, more complex and of a longer span for Third World women who are still short of studies and statistics that could support their claims and convince their countries of the authenticity of their needs. It seems clear, however, that both groups are intent on continuing the struggle in spite of huge difficulties, for it is impossible to set the clock back. The achievements realized by women of the first group within the last 15 years serve as encouragement and spur the women of the second group to walk in their sisters' steps.

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Anas Barakat Baz

A woman who realized her dream of giving medical help to secluded women who could not be seen by male doctors



The early twentieth century in Lebanon and the neighboring countries saw the spread of western influences and life style among the educated classes, which were reflected in the prevalence of Victorian reserve blended with romantic idealism. Poets and writers like Nikula Fayyad, Felix Faris and others, idealized women in their writings. Love in its platonic or sexual form was etherealized, spiritualized and raised to the altar of sacredness. Woman's freedom meant freedom of love and marriage but not sexual freedom. A woman should be respected, protected and provided for but she should not be allowed to work, even when she had no one to support her. Educated women of the period followed this conservative ideal. They produced writers and artists; they founded voluntary welfare associations; but rarely did a woman of the middle class care to practice a permanent profession. It was only among the working classes that money-earning jobs were taken up.

Exceptions to the rule, however, were not totally absent. A young girl belonging to the middle class, called Anas Barakat, dreamt of studying medicine and becoming a career woman. She longed to help those female patients who were condemned to suffer and die because male doctors were not allowed to enter their apartments. Anas had received, at the British School for girls in Beirut, a solid secondary education and she waited for an opportunity to realize her dream. The opportunity came in 1901, when one of her sisters decided to go to America to join her husband. Anas was 27 but she had an iron will and an overflowing energy and was readily accepted as a medical student at the University of Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A. Within 4 years of study, she obtained a medical degree, after which she specialized in gynecology and practiced her profession in several hospitals. Back in Lebanon in 1908, she was entrusted with the task of directing St. George's hospital in Beirut, which she did for 4 years. In the meantime, she opened her own clinic and persuaded her sister Zahiyya to study pharmacy in America. After her return to Lebanon with a pharmacy degree, the sister opened two pharmacies, one in Beirut, the other in Dhour-Shweir.

Dr. Barakat now realized her dream of giving medical care to women who were deprived of it but she did not limit her interest to medical work. She was an active member of welfare associations which

flourished at the time and she sponsored the creation of a women's society called "As-Sidq" (Honesty). Her patronage of girls' schools materialized in the prizes she offered in her name to honor students in the schools of "Nour-al-Hayat", "The Greek Orthodox School", "The Three Moons School" in Beirut, and the "Sirāt School" of Aley.

It was on the occasion of a medical lecture she gave at a meeting of a welfare association, in 1915, that she met the man who was to become her husband. Jirji Baz was a writer and journalist, an ardent champion of woman's emancipation. He had founded a women's magazine called Al-Hasna, (recently revived in Beirut), in which he persistently defended woman's rights and supported her claim for education and work. His intense feminist zeal had won him the title of "Woman's Supporter". Anas found in him a kindred soul; they were married after a short period of betrothal during which they occupied themselves with the translation of the memoirs of Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor and philosopher. Their marriage, and the birth of two sons, only spurred them to double their cultural and social activities. As a token of his admiration for women, Mr. Baz wrote a book called **A Crown for Woman's Head**, in which he compiled biographies of historical women who had achieved distinction and contributed to the welfare of humanity. He dedicated it to his wife. Anas took a cultural trip to the States for further experience. Her fame as a successful gynecologist and expert in women's psychology spread in the Arab world. The American University of Beirut adopted her as one of its graduates. The Lebanese Government honored her with the Golden Medal. Her example was followed by many ambitious young women who took the daring step of studying medicine twenty years later. The pioneer woman writer, Salma Sayegh, dedicated to Anas her first collection of essays, **An-Nasamāt**, with the following dedication: "To dear Anas, who has made a rapid ascent to the summit of human idealism, who has illuminated our struggle for freedom and taught us to serve with love and knowledge".

(Information mainly obtained from an Arabic article by Emily Nasrallah, published in the women's magazine Feyrouz, Feb. 1982.)

Family Planning in the Arab World

Family Planning is now a matter of prime importance for world leaderships and organizations in all developed countries. It has been gaining ground in many developing countries as well. Population Studies ⁽¹⁾, no. 58, 1981, gives interesting information about successful family planning programs in Korea, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and other Third World countries. Recently the IPPF published a two-volume book on family planning in Islam, using the opinions of religious jurists to prove that Islam is not against family planning.

An interesting development in this field has been the extension of family planning activity to cover family welfare as a whole, including the ways to keep the family unity and to ensure democratic relations and genuine cooperation among its members. Extensive studies along this line have shown the importance of the economic factor in orienting the policy of family heads regarding child bearing. Projects involving women in economic production, their participation in various activities outside the home, and their access to valued resources and their control over them are considered to be appropriate substitutes for a large family.

Among Arab countries, Egypt has been leading the way in family planning programs. The large number of studies performed by its specialized investigators, the growing number of organizations involved directly or indirectly in F.P. activity, the "Population Studies Quarterly Review", regularly published by the Population and Family Planning Board in Cairo, allow this country to play a leading role in this respect and to be a source of guidance to other Arab countries. In other parts of the Arab world the family planning movement is still at its elementary stage. In Lebanon, it has been hampered by the war conditions; in other countries by political unrest, by problems of illiteracy, and by general underdevelopment. It is encouraging, however, to notice the growing attention given to family planning in Bahrain and other Gulf states, as shown in a subsequent article of this issue.

(1) Published in Cairo, Egypt.

Small Industries and the Population and Development Project (PDP) in Egypt⁽¹⁾

"It is now realized that an isolated family planning programme is not the total solution, rather fertility behavior is a reflection of the socio-economic structure and its pattern of change."⁽²⁾ Since children in developing countries are considered a source of income and a form of power, it seems necessary to formulate a population policy which would provide an alternative source of income, status, security, and emotional needs for women. In accordance with this policy, the Population and Development Project (PDP) was created in Egypt in 1977 with the aim of involving women in various **socio-economic development projects**. The author of this article, Ahmed Abdel Fattah, gives us first hand information about PDP, a project of which he is director.

The PDP grew out of studies which revealed the need to transfer the responsibility for implementation of family planning to the local level. The researchers were convinced that "a program actively involving the people themselves would be more acceptable to them."

The PDP started with support from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. Since 1980 the U.S. Agency for International Development has joined in this support.

A Rural Project

The PDP is principally a rural program because

the need in terms of population problems is greater in rural than in urban areas.

The program has three objectives: 1) reduction of population growth through increase in family planning practice, 2) upgrading women's education and employment and general production of individuals and families, 3) reduction of rural urban migration by raising the standard of village life and associating local communities in socio-economic projects.

Support of Small Industries

This support constitutes a powerful tool for upgrading socio-economic standards in rural communities. The PDP community assistance fund has supported 815 social and productive projects in 12 **governorates** from 1979-1980, in the form of interest free loans. People's participation contributed an additional 25-50% of these amounts. Loan repayments go into a revolving fund which will be reinvested during the next 5 yrs. The total budget of socio-economic projects is estimated at LE 10 million, of which the people's contribution is LE three million.

Prerogatives of the PDP

1. Advisory committees are elected in each village, thus increasing the scope of democratic participative leadership. Together with regional and central coordinators, the PDP has an efficient and effective infrastructure capable of promoting the establishment of small industries.
2. The program is supported by individual experts

⁽¹⁾ Condensed from an article by Ahmed Abdel Fattah, in **Population Studies Quarterly Review**, n^o. 58, Cairo, July/September 1981, pp. 37-42.

⁽²⁾ Quoted by Asfia Duza, **Population Studies** Op. Cit. p. 3.

and specialized institutions such as the National PDP Advisory Committee, which is responsible for strategies and policies capable of pursuing the PDP objectives.

3. The PDP has its own financial resources: the UNFPA, and the USAID; and has recently requested support from the Egyptian government.
4. The PDP encourages people's participation financially and managerially.
5. Emphasis is put on the upgrading of women's status through increased education, participation in public life, decision-making in the family and community and increased income and productive skills.
6. The program is highly interested in linkages

between productive economic projects and social projects.

7. The program supports several kinds of economic projects at the village level, particularly the small industries.
8. The PDP uses an experimental approach supplemented by action research which is capable of exploring questions related to the development of small industries, their production and marketing.
9. The PDP has interest in orientation, training and the provision of technical advice for personnel.
10. The program supports projects which are well prepared and documented.

Using the Experience of Other Countries in Development Projects Related to Family Planning⁽¹⁾

In an effort to appraise the nature of women's involvement in socio-economic projects, an overview of selected projects in different countries has been made by the Population and Development Project (PDP) in Egypt. Countries covered include: Korea, India, Bangladesh, Srilanka, Columbia, Mauritius, Pakistan, Costa Rica and Israel. A review of the activities of the women's projects in the above countries shows how varied they are in terms of their genesis and dimension. Some of them have grown out of existing and ongoing projects at the national or local levels, while others were formed with specific objectives of involving women in socio-economic projects and/or family planning activities; some are essentially voluntary efforts, while others are sponsored by their government; some grew spontaneously in the process of community activities, while others developed as a result of planned efforts. These projects in different countries can be broadly categorized as follows:

- a) Productive and income generating projects like: sewing, knitting, embroidery and weaving; jam, syrup and chutney making; baking; poultry raising; doll and puppet making; shoe manufacturing; slate, pencil and chalk making; rope making; bamboo, cane and jute products; carpentry; furniture, door or floor making; tile and brick making; metal workshop; construction; kitchen gardening; orchid growing; soap making; toy and educational toy making; grocery, business and credit union management.
- b) Family and child care.
- c) Health and nutrition.
- d) Sanitation and environment.
- e) Community development.
- f) Recreation.

which include: society's image of women, women's perception of themselves, and women's response to challenges of social change and the problems they encounter.

2. A systematic inventory of development projects for women must be drawn up.
3. Because women do not form a homogeneous group, it would be necessary to assess the suitability of different groups of women to different types of programmes.
4. Women from better-off sections of the community should be attracted to certain types of income generating projects which readily attract relatively poorer women.
5. Programme designers should not restrict their attention to attracting young and unmarried women. They should also give attention to young mothers and housewives.
6. It would be very important to watch that young children, specially from the poorer sections, are not attracted to income generating activities at the cost of schooling.
7. Efforts should be continued to develop new appropriate projects.
8. Voluntary workers are not always available and most of them do only part time work. Full time paid workers are vital for the effective running of programmes.
9. Success of programmes will be enhanced when collective work, traditional cultural symbols, roles and activities are kept in view; for example, the integration of important customs like Mother's Day in family planning goals and the involvement of men in certain aspects of the programme.
10. Some formal or informal social control is necessary to start any outside work for women.
11. Functional literacy among women should be enhanced as a receiving basis for the projects.
12. The participation of women in various roles outside the home should be encouraged as a stable norm rather than as a temporary fad.

Implications for the Egyptian Context

1. It is necessary to build up a comprehensive profile of contemporary Egyptian women, particularly rural women, in the form of studies

⁽¹⁾ Excerpts from an article by Asfia Duza, on "Women's Involvement in Socio-economic Projects Related to Family Planning", published in **Population Studies**, Op. Cit. p. 3-27.

Social Welfare Activities in Bahrain:⁽¹⁾ Problems of Family Planning⁽²⁾

In 1978, a five-year plan for social welfare and development was initiated by the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs. A new plan for 1983-85 will be soon laid out. Among the questions that have recently occupied the planning committees is that of family-planning and parental awareness in response to the changing social status of our times. The last issue of **Al-Nashra ad-Dawriyya**, bulletin of the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs, has published three important articles relating to the above general topic. The first is a field study on the evaluation of the efficiency of "Parental Awareness Programs" used in Bahrain; the second, an Arab panel on parental responsibility and the third, a training course in the use of audio-visual aids for social development projects. This article tries to condense the contents of the first two items.

I. Field-Study

On May 15-22, 1982, a field-study was made by women experts in the role of the demographic element in development with the cooperation of the Unit of Social and Statistical Research. The aim was to evaluate the efficiency of the Program of Family Awareness and its influence on local communities after two years of active service.

Questions raised regarding the beneficiaries of the programs were the following:

1. Are they better informed about the problem of family-planning and its importance?
2. Have they adopted a new attitude?
3. Did the wife's conviction help to change her husband's attitude?
4. Did it lead to an actual practice of birth control?
5. If the effect was limited to pure information, what is the cause of the restraint?

The sample chosen for study consisted of women, 18-35 years old, who attended sewing classes organized by the Social Development Section and were present at the sessions on "Family Awareness".

The information gathered in the field-study included:

1. The intellectual level of the sample
2. The marital status: single, married, divorced, widow
3. Social and economic standing
4. If married, husband's occupation
5. Age at marriage

6. Number of pregnancies, their spacing.
7. Number of children
8. Living conditions

Other questions included the opinions of the sample members regarding the proper age for marriage, the ideal number of the family, knowledge about contraceptives, and attitude toward birth control.

II. Report of an expert in family-planning on a demographic project in Bahrain.

Miss Boushra Jabre, an expert in family-planning, reported on the activities of the group in charge of the 3 year project (1980-1982) of "Strengthening the demographic element in the social development programs of Bahrain". The project, she said, was financed by UNESCO, the UN. Fund for demographic activities and the Bahraini Ministry of Social Affairs. In her introduction, she stated that 60% of Bahraini women allowed less than a year's spacing between childbirths.

Aim of the Project

The aim of the project was to awaken in families an awareness regarding their parental responsibilities, to inform them of contemporary changes in living conditions, to help them acquire the necessary skills to face the present changes and to plan a better future for themselves and their children.

Execution of the Project

The execution required the training of employees taken from the ranks of those who had received some instruction and experience in the social field: social researchers, local pioneers, members of voluntary associations.

In launching the project, the following methods were used:

- Getting acquainted with the problems on hand.
- Classifying and analyzing the problems.
- Taking decisions and planning solutions.

Nature of the training courses

The training courses included:
Individual and group studies based on personal experiences.

Group work forming a sort of laboratory for suggested methods.

Application and evaluation of training activities.

Activities of local pioneers

The activities of local pioneers consisted of:

- Holding meetings with parents.
- Persuading them to attend courses.
- Visiting service centers.
- Giving direct information on family-planning.

⁽¹⁾ See **Al-Raida**, nov. 1, vol. V, n^o. 22, p. 8

⁽²⁾ Abstracts and excerpts from **al-Nashra ad-Dawriyyah**, a quarterly bulletin published by The Ministry of Work and Social Affairs in Bahrain, n^o. 29, April-May-June 1982.

Voluntary Associations

Four associations are carrying out programs of "Family Awareness", under the guidance of trained employees.

Social researchers

They conduct information sessions for village women sponsored by local pioneers.

They contact families with financial difficulties and help them solve financial and other problems.

Cooperation with other organizations

1. With public health nurses.
2. With students of arts and crafts.
3. With Family-Planning and Family Welfare Associations.

Positive results of the experiment

As the experiment draws to an end (in 1983), it is possible to report the following positive results:

1. The introduction of the programs of Family Awareness into all the Bahraini towns without any objection.
2. The arousal of the interest of all social workers and employees in adopting the programs.
3. The preparation of instruction material for the different topics of family awareness.

Limitations of the Project

The limitations of the project are:

1. Only women were able to benefit from the programs. Though it is usually men who make the final decisions regarding family-planning, it was found impossible to address the Family Awareness Programs to them.
2. The same difficulty was met in trying to reach the large public.
3. The absence of an official demographic policy led to the scattering of activities and the limitation of their effects.

III. Arab Panel on "Parental Responsibility"

The first Arab Panel on parental responsibility was held in Bahrain on May 25-27, 1982. It was organized by the Bahraini Association for Family Planning and Welfare, with the joint cooperation of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). It was attended by delegates of IPPF from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Arab United Emirates, Syria, Lebanon, the Royal Hashemite Kingdom, the Yemenite Arab Republic, Tunisia, Maghreb and Sudan.

The aim of the panel was to study the Arab public and private experiments in handling the demographic problem in the Arab world, to note their positive results and to suggest ways of utilizing them. Most of the participants reported on the experiments and programs of their respective countries in family-

planning and parental responsibility using the following topics:

- Role of the voluntary sector.
- Demographic policy and family-planning.
- Official programs in Bahrain and Tunisia.
- Societies' programs in Sudan.
- Family-Planning Associations in Lebanon and Maghreb.

A number of documents and publications on the above topics were made available to the delegates.

Recommendations of the Panel

The final recommendations of the panel are:

1. Policy-making and administration of service concerning family-planning is a state responsibility.
2. Policy-making should be based on field-studies scientifically prepared by specialists.
3. The private sector should have a pioneering role in shaping the given idea, publicizing it, and preparing the way for its adoption by the public.
4. Educational programs are important in arousing the interest of young people and adults in information about social problems, including planned parenthood.
5. The information given must be adapted to the various stages of people's lives.
6. Problems of demography, unemployment, social welfare, care of the orphans and the aged, and other similar problems should receive special care in governmental plans and budgets.
7. A local committee should be created for the purpose of promoting and coordinating all social activities and projects in the Arab countries and organizing more panels in the future about this topic.

Nobel Prize for Peace

October 1982 — Alva Myrdal⁽¹⁾, a Swedish writer who for 20 years has led a movement for peace and disarmament, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace jointly with a Latin American writer, Alfonso Garcia Robles. She is the third WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) member to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Jane Adams, first international president of WILPF and a pioneering social worker, won the prize in 1931; Emily Greene Balch, first international secretary of WILPF, won the prize in 1946.⁽²⁾

(1) See *Al-Raida*, Nov. 1, 1982, vol. 5, no. 22, p. 3.

(2) *Peace and Freedom*, vol. 42, no. 9, Dec. 1982, p. 24.

Woman's Participation in the Economic Development of Lebanon and the Arab Countries⁽¹⁾

Dr. Huda Zurayk discussed in her paper the methods to be used in supporting woman's participation in the economic development of Lebanon and the Arab countries and gave the following points:

1. Necessity of evaluating woman's work within and outside the home;
 - Part-time work outside the home;
 - Economic activities within the family, such as food preparation, gardening, sewing, embroidery;
 - Seasonal work in the field;
 - Irregular work outside the home.
2. Necessity of changing the old method of a general statistically inaccurate report by resorting to the "multivariate techniques of analysis" which bring out the complex relations between variants and the way of testing them. The more recent statistical methods cover all the aspects

of the study and form a sound basis for effective demographic strategies.

3. Necessity of woman's employment in countries suffering from extensive male emigration, like Lebanon, and from shortage in the labor force, like the United Arab Emirates.
4. Necessity of taking into account the following changing conditions affecting woman's status and her work in the family: the tendency to limit the number of children, house duties made easier through technology, growing number of nurseries and kindergartens, and desire of educated housewives to participate in outside activities.

Conclusion:

Arab countries should take the above points into consideration and adopt effective national strategies which will help and encourage woman's integration in development and participation in economic activity. To be effective these strategies should be based on **accurate statistical information** and help to change the people's mentality regarding woman's work.

⁽¹⁾ Condensed from a paper presented at the Second National Conference for Demographic Policies, organized by the LFPA, 1-3 April 1982. See Al-Raida, Nov. 1, 1982, vol. V, n^o. 22, p. 10.

The Lebanese Family Planning Association (LFPA) Discusses the Woman's Status in Lebanon

A panel discussing the present status of the Lebanese woman and pointing out priorities in her demands and duties, was held in Beirut on 4-6 November 1982. The participants consisted of LFPA representatives and delegates of women's social organizations in Lebanon. A few papers were presented, some of which will be summarized in subsequent issues.

Projected Recommendations

The recommendations proposed by the Panelists defined the present status of the Lebanese woman as "Lacking all the prerogatives allowing her full participation in development". Legal, social and educational discrimination against woman prevents her normal evolution. UNO agreements regarding woman have not been observed by the Lebanese government. Female illiteracy, traditional socialization of children, lack of health education among women contribute to the perpetuation of their retarded condition.

Recommendations include the following:

1. Creation of adequate and progressive vocational schools for girls and boys.
2. Revision of the programs of civic education in school curricula.

3. Increasing the number of nurseries and social welfare centers.
4. Encouraging the creation of cooperatives for domestic rural industries.
5. Adoption of the field-workers experiment by the various women's organizations and the Social Welfare Centers, on condition that training courses be previously arranged for the candidates.
6. Abolition of all discriminatory laws against women on the civil, penal and educational levels.
7. Unification of the personal status laws through a secularization project including the establishment of civil marriage.
8. Introducing adequate protective measures for the working woman in the Labor Code.
9. Creating a social welfare service for war orphans.

Finally, a noteworthy contribution of the LFPA was the preparation of a project for training experts in an intensive home economics program for young women in the Central Bekaa district.

Demographic Structure of the Lebanese Population⁽¹⁾

Under the above title, Dr. François Farah, of the Lebanese University, gave a lecture in which he made use of statistics showing certain anomalies in the Lebanese "age pyramid".

During the war, he said, the emigration of males between 20 and 40 led to a decrease in the number of the active group, i.e. those whose ages range between 15 and 50.

Compared with the number of women between 20 and 25 and even between 30 and 35, the number of men of the same age group presents a ratio of 10 men to 13 women.

Another anomaly lies in the number of the Lebanese of the first age group, i.e. those less than 15 of age, who in 1973 numbered 42% of the population,

while in 1975 this group did not exceed 23% in France, 21.5% in Sweden and 20.8% in Germany.

The Lebanese belonging to the second age group, the one between 15 and 64, numbered in that same year 52.4%, while in France those of the same age group reached 63.5%, in Sweden 65% and in Germany 64%. Since that time no significant change in the above statistics has taken place in Lebanon. Compared with the percentages given by developed countries, the Lebanese figures indicate (1) a high fertility range and (2) because of the reduced number of active population, a low percentage of productivity, leading to a low standard of living.

Dr. Farah concluded by recommending that the LFPA be given the opportunity to play an efficient role in planning and carrying out solutions for this and other demographic problems in Lebanon.

(1) Given at the Second National Conference on Demographic Policies. See p. 10 of Al-Raida, no. 1, 1982, no. 22

Women in China: Equal opportunities, many gains

In the old China, most women had to submit to their breadwinner husbands at home and contend with having neither a personal identity nor a role in society. So painful is their memory of the past that, since their liberation, they do not like to be called by their husbands' names anymore.

Most Chinese women now work outside the home and are no longer homemakers but contributing providers for their families.

Half of the three hundred million peasant workers in the countryside are women earning their own living. In the cities, 24 million women (30.8 percent of all government workers) work for government organizations and state-owned factories.

The government has provided state-subsidized nurseries and kindergartens for 70-80 percent of all the small children of working mothers. Sharing household work and parent responsibility is popular among working parents today.

Discrimination against women still exists in many employment departments, in factories and hospitals, on the ground that they have an extra burden at home. But it is being fought by women's supporters who think that every woman has the right to gain a livelihood and to get rid of the potential undermining factor to a stable city life. The All-China National Women's Federation wrote to the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee: "Women workers have become an indispensable part of the work force."

In the old society, women were usually hired in traditional women's jobs such as clerks, nurses, teachers, shop assistants and textile workers, all relatively lowpaying jobs. Now Chinese women have

made substantial inroads into nearly every occupation. They dominate in hospitals and medical schools. More and more women pilot planes and captain coastal and inland ships. Women bus drivers are a common sight in the cities. There are two women ambassadors, 13 minister-counsellors and counsellors; many of them are commercial and cultural attachés in Chinese embassies abroad.

Now more emphasis is being put on the professional training of women workers. They constitute 42 percent of the 680,000 trainees in technical schools. One third of the nine million spare-time college and spare-time technical school students are women workers.

In the field of management, many women have shown outstanding ability which won them rapid promotion. A fair number of women were elected members of the National People's Congress in 1978. Some occupy high government offices as vice-chairmen of the Standing Committee of the Congress, as ministers, vice-ministers and vice-bureau directors, vice-governors of provinces and vice-mayors of municipalities.

In the field of science, the government gives special attention to the training of women. In Qinghua, the best science University of China, 16.5 percent of the students are women. Most of them major in architecture, chemical engineering, mathematics, physics and chemistry. A number of women scientists have achieved distinction in modern fields such as astronautics. The most famous is Wang Shiren who was one of the engine designers for China's first satellite, launched in 1970. Another distinguished scientist is Zhang Min, an assistant researcher in the Shanghai Metallurgy Institute. Xu Qian, a woman graduate of Qinghua University, was one of China's first to major in oil refining.

Last year, the Chinese women's volleyball team was able through hard work and an admirable esprit de corps, to capture the world cup in this game.

(1) Condensed from an article published in the magazine, "China Reconstructs," March 1982, by staff reporter Tan Manni.

New Horizons for Saudi Arabian Women

Studies about Saudi Arabian women are very scarce if they are not totally inexistent. Rumors say that complete segregation between the sexes is required, female illiteracy is very high, early marriage is the rule, opportunities for work are closed to women.

Ms. Salha Abdin, in an article published in the Arabic edition of the magazine "People" (An-Nas), vol. 9, no. 1, 1982, tries to clarify the picture offered by public opinion and to present certain facts about women in Saudi Arabia.

In order to understand social conditions in that country, she says, we should remember that it is the birthplace of Islam, that Moslems everywhere look up to it as a source of religious and spiritual guidance and, lately, because of its oil reserves, as a source of financial aid. Unlike many other Moslem countries, Saudi Arabia tries to cling to the original Moslem civic and penal laws in their integral form and to follow a slow pace in taking any evolutionary steps.

There are in Saudi Arabia more than a million foreign residents while the native population is evaluated at 7 million. Foreign influence is sure to spread and the government has to watch and regulate that tide in order to prevent any harmful effects that might result from it.

Marriage

The government policy encourages marriage with the aim of increasing the population. The signing of the marriage contract allows the betrothed to visit and get acquainted with each other. If, during the period of betrothal, disagreements between them arise to show that their life together would be impossible, they may separate without consummating the marriage.

Payment of the Mahr, or brideprice, is obligatory for the bridegroom. Lately, the exorbitant sums required by the bride's parents have deterred young men from marriage. The government has been working out a national plan for reducing the rate of the Mahr and providing needy candidates with money; not only for paying the brideprice, but also for the wedding and house furnishing expenses.

Sexual Segregation

Sexual segregation is observed in Saudi Arabia as a religiously ordained principle. It is applied in schools and universities, in business circles, and in all public places. Women may go out for work or prayer provided they are veiled. At school they are segregated as soon as they reach the secondary stage.

Women's Education

The government's policy, as declared in 1970, stated that the aim of women's education is to prepare

them to be good wives, mothers, and successful housekeepers. However, they could be encouraged to practice certain occupations that agree with their nature such as teaching, nursing and medicine.

The first school in Saudi Arabia was opened in 1936, the first institute for higher education in 1949-50. Only boys were admitted to those schools.

In 1959, girls' schools were started under the supervision of a committee responsible to the Mufti (professional jurist of the Kingdom).

The demand for girls' education was great. Between 1960 and 1980, the percentage of female students rose from 8% to 55%. Higher education for women is available in two universities which have annexes in several cities of Arabia. There is also adult education for women, normal training institutes, weaving centers, and schools for handicapped women.

Education is not compulsory but it is free for all students at all levels. Public or governmental schools receive 94% of the students. Sixteen percent of the public budget is allotted to education.

Women students who go to study abroad through government help must be accompanied by a male relative, a brother, or a husband.

Women and Work

Women's work outside the home is still at its elementary stage. The large demand for it obliges employers and government people to employ foreign women in administrative, medical, educational, and other responsible positions. Every year about 800 women graduates from the various women's colleges in the country are readily employed in responsible posts where their work is accompanied by the necessary training. Banking has recently been admitted as a new occupation for women. Women's banks, administered by women specialists in economics and accounting, have been created in Jedda, Riyadh and soon in other towns of the kingdom.

There are no public libraries for women. Educational centers and women's associations are trying to make general culture accessible to women through audio-visual methods and televised lectures borrowed from men's colleges. Further knowledge is more available to them in the traditional fields of administration, secretarial or office management and medicine.

Health Improvement

The government's interest in health improvement aims primarily at an increase in the population and in the labor force.

While the birthrate is estimated at 50 per thousand each year, and the rate of general mortality attains 20 per thousand, the rate of child mortality reaches 152 per thousand, a very high proportion indeed.

In rural areas, most deliveries take place in homes and are administered by traditional midwives. However, recent information given by the Ministry of Health shows a certain rise in the number of deliveries performed at hospitals. Between 1973 and 1977 the number of hospital deliveries was doubled and the proportion of child and prenatal mortality was reduced by more than half.

Abortion is allowed only through medical advice when it is a means of saving the mother's life. Sterilization of women is not forbidden though the demand for it is very low.

Family Planning

No statistics are available regarding average fertility but it is supposed to be quite high among Saudi women. So far no governmental plans have been made regarding birth control and family-planning. Considering the high mortality rate of children and the ill-health of mothers often caused by successive, unspaced births, such a step seems necessary. In spite of the large sums spent on health care facilities for mothers and children, no family planning service has been established. Cooperatives and women's associations do not show any activity in this respect.

The government forbids the importation of contraceptive devices, probably out of fear that the free distribution of such devices might encourage immoral conduct. On the other hand, contraceptive pills prescribed by doctors are easily and freely obtainable by married couples. The popularity and extensive use of the pill might provide a ready ground for its being officially admitted.

Recently, two positive steps have been taken toward the improvement of children's health. The first is compulsory vaccination of children before they are admitted to school. The second is the encouragement of breast-feeding by government authorities.

Women's Associations

Public participation in national development is reflected in the growing number of women's organizations involved in voluntary welfare activities.

In Jeddah, the first women's association created in that city concentrates its efforts on general services to women. It has organized for working women a number of facilities such as day care centers and nursery schools; for adult women, courses in typing, weaving, languages, manual work. Talks and lectures are offered on religious topics, nutrition, and child care. The budget of the association is about two million dollars, mostly contributed by the government. There are now, in various parts of the country, ten women's voluntary associations which have just started their activity and which await further consciousness on the part of their members in order to become full-fledged contributors.

(Condensed from *An-Nas*,
vol. 9, no. 1, 1982, p. 20)

Role of the Kuwaiti Woman in Development Administration ⁽¹⁾

The State of Kuwait enjoys a large capital provided by the oil revenues but its work force is much below its need. As a result, the state is obliged to employ a heterogeneous group of foreign specialists to fill its need for development administrators. The mobilization of university women graduates to participate in meeting this need seems quite appropriate.

Women Graduates of Kuwait University

Between 1975 and 1980, the number of women who graduated from the technological institutes affiliated with the Ministry of Education (Normal Training Institute, Institute of Commerce for women, Public Health School) reached 2668, while that of men who graduated from technological institutes reserved for male students attained only 1542; which means that women comprised 63% of the total, and men 37%.

It is expected that in the early eighties Kuwait will face an alarming shortage in administration leaders. The Planning Council presumes the need for 2550 general directors and 4000 executive heads.

Women's Participation

So far, women's participation in administration has taken two forms: first, a highly limited role in the government sector which includes general directors and executive officers; second, a wider involvement in social activity which should allow them to participate in development administration. This involvement takes the form of women's societies and organizations which could extend their influence to state structures and organizations but, so far, have restricted their activity to the holding of tea-parties and dead-end conversations.

Women's Work in Government Administration

1. Their participation in 1972 reached 11,9% of the total work force in the Government sector, 18,2% in 1976.

⁽¹⁾ Condensed from an article by Dr. Nasef Abdul Khâleq, in *Journal of the Social Sciences*, (Kuwait University), vol. 9, n°. 4, Dec. 1981, pp. 7-35.

2. The majority of women employees, 43,2%, are concentrated in the educational field and, next, in that of public health.
3. The largest number occupy technological posts where they numbered 4603 in 1976 and formed 54,2% of the total number of women working in the government sector.
4. Women's participation in Government positions in 1976 did not exceed 18,2% of the total number of Government employees.

Women's Participation in the Public Administration Sector

This sector comprises the Kuwaiti Air Lines, Social Insurance, Central Bank of Kuwait, National Oil Company etc.

Kuwaiti Women graduates of the School of Commerce, Economics and Political Science represent 53% of the total number of graduates of the above school employed in this sector.

Obstacles to Women's Participation in Development Administration

The total participation of Kuwaiti women in the labor force is reckoned at 3% of the whole and in the upper echelons of administration, it does not exceed 1%.

There are two major factors behind this retardation. **First** is the traditional socialization of women which emphasizes sexism and servitude. "Woman's place is at home and she should devote herself to the home." This common slogan, frequently repeated, is contradicted by a study made in 1979 showing that one hundred thousand of housewives do not perform any work because they entrust their duties to housemaids. The number of unmarried women between 18 and 30 is 45%. In the absence of house duties, these women need an outside job to occupy them. Woman's traditional socialization results in creating in her an attitude of inferiority and self-abasement and in promoting the idea that "a girl's worth is measured only by her attractiveness to the opposite sex."

Second is the unfair attitude toward women on the part of both government and society. The labor code does not encourage woman's work by recommending the creation of nurseries for the children of working women. The labor code does not provide working women with a half paid maternity leave for a sufficiently long period, after which they may recuperate their work, and there is dissemination of inexact ideas about women's incapacity for work because of their "unstable temperament," "lack of dependability," "cycles of emotionality due to menstruation," and so on. Recent studies have shown the falsehood of such beliefs and that men are subject to the same cycles of emotionality and instability as women.

Recommendations

In view of the above facts, the author of the study recommends:

1. Increased representation of women in Social Welfare Committees, Councils of City Quarters and Civil Service, Social Insurance, Planning Committees, Administration of Cooperatives, Sports Unions, etc.
2. Amendment of laws concerning women in the Labor Code.
3. Opening new channels for female work.
4. Giving Kuwaiti women the right of suffrage and election for Parliament.
5. Using information media as a means of influencing public opinion in favor of women's promotion to administrative positions.
6. Urging women's associations to revise their constitutions and programs with the aim of effecting actual participation in social activities and helpful contact with research centers and cultural institutions.
7. Creating a research center for studies regarding the family.

Kuwait denies Suffrage to Women

In January, 1982 the Kuwaiti Parliament rejected a proposal to allow women to vote and declared that the "time is inopportune for receiving the idea in the light of well-established traditions." Only male, literate Kuwaitis over the age of 21 can vote in elections for Parliament, a law which reduces the number of voters to 13,000 out of a population of 1.3 million.

A telegram of protest against the Parliament's decision was sent to the Speaker of the House by the Kuwait Women's Social and Education Society stating that Kuwaiti women have achieved a more progressive status than those of neighboring countries. Many of them study abroad or hold key posts in the ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs, Health and Social Affairs.

Badriya al-Awadhi, Dean of Faculty at Kuwait University, thinks that "it was schizophrenic to allow women to hold high executive posts but deny them the right to vote."

(Asian Women, September 1982, p. 19)

A Victory

The Women's Liberation Movement in Algeria has forced the government to withdraw the proposed "Family Code" which would have legalized polygamy and treated women as minors under the law. Women held mass demonstrations, demanded public debate, and presented a 10,000 signature petition to the Assembly. Women who had been active in the struggle for Algerian independence demanded to know how a "socialist" government could propose such a blow to women's rights.

(Manushi, no. 12, 1982, p. 35)

The Women of the United Arab Emirates

by Linda Usra Soffan

Published by Croom Helm, London in 1980 and in the USA in 1980 by Harper and Row Publishers. 104 pages and glossary, appendices at the end.

Linda Usra Soffan grew up in a first generation Muslim Arab family in the United States. Through her personal experiences and through her readings she was motivated to undertake a research on Arab women in the Gulf region especially. She hopes that any information which adds to the existing body of literature on Arab women will help to have a more realistic and objective image of women in the Arab world. This she considers a service to the Western world in dispelling many myths surrounding in particular the special group of women in the Emirates.

In her study, Linda Soffan examines the factors which have influenced and continue to affect the position held by women in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) today. A basic premise that she holds in her book is that Islamic law has granted women rights and privileges in the spheres of family life, marriage, education and economic pursuits — rights which aim at improving their status in society in general. The author claims that it is through the misinterpretations of various religious scholars influenced by a number of local traditions and social trends that women have not been given their rights. In her study the writer tries to examine to what extent UAE society has moved away from strict adherence to Koranic religious rules and has allowed local traditions regarding women to take precedence over Islamic law.

Lack of research on this subject has led the author to obtain her information through interviews with various local officials and important private citizens throughout the seven states of the Emirates. In addition, she has devised a standardized set of questions with a wide range of issues! The results from this questionnaire provided the basis for an examination of the role and status of women as they are related to religious, social and economic factors.

In the chapter on Islamic law regarding women the author asserts that inequality of sexes, the inferiority of women, and their low position in society are not due to Islam but rather to the difficulty of incorporating radical ideas on women into tribal customs. She admits the fact that with modernization, tribal practices and customs have begun to break down in the Arabian Gulf. The basic social structure has changed. Extended families have become small, nuclear families; opportunities for formal education have been given to women for the first time; employment opportunities in the labor market in a variety of occupations have been granted. A new awareness has come to women through new systems of communication (i.e. television, radio, newspapers and modern forms of transportation).

In the chapter on "Marriage and Family Life in the

UAE", the author discusses the fundamental changes that are taking root, beginning with equal educational and social advantages for women. As women assume roles outside the family and contribute to the building of their society, so their position within the family is elevated. More and more daughters are less willing to accept whatever marital mate is chosen by their parents. A marriage based on their own consent is apt to give them more stability. An improvement in their status and functions as wives and mothers is inevitable, and incompatibility in the marriage and problems in the family unit will occur less frequently.

In the chapter on "The Role of Education", the author discusses the improvement brought about in the lives of women through the introduction of education for girls. She gives credit to the efforts of Shaykh Zayid, President of the Union and ruler of the wealthiest state, and his wife Shaykha Fatima who have encouraged the rapid spread of education and generously provided funds for any student willing and able to study abroad. The building of a local university has helped women to receive higher education. It is the writer's hope that educated women will apply their knowledge to the building up of UAE society.

In the chapter on "The Role of Women in the UAE Economy", the author discusses the economic independence traditionally enjoyed by women of this area. She traces the origins of this salutary practice to two very strong tribal traditions as well as Islamic laws observed in the UAE: the right of women to inheritance and the right of women to control their own earnings. In spite of this relatively good economic situation of women in Muslim societies, many middle-class females desire to work. When UAE women were questioned concerning their willingness to work, assuming they were in a situation where they would never be wanting for money, the most common response was that a woman works to gain status and a sense of self-worth and not for economic reasons. Most UAE working women are concentrated in the so-called 'feminine' occupations relating to education, health and social planning. There is hope, however, that women will begin to be more visible in other professional fields. Prospects for higher levels of participation in the labor force are clear, even though women's levels of participation in the labor force are still very low. One important point is that neither religion nor government keep women from becoming economically active.

In her conclusion, the author states that the UAE woman has held a relatively high status in her roles as a family person, an educated person and an economically active person, primarily because of strict adherence to Qur'anic law and traditions. She expects that because of this higher status, UAE women will have a

less difficult time in further strengthening their position in society than other Arab women have. She adds that much credit goes to local leaders for their support of women's rights.

The book has several appendices at the end including suras from the Qur'an relating to women, educational statistics on total enrollment of male and female UAE students and their specialization. Also a table showing employment of women in government ministries.

"The Women of the United Arab Emirates" certainly enlightens the reader on the present status of women in the Emirates. The main theme of the study runs through all the chapters, giving sufficient detail to convince the reader that it is not Islamic law that has kept women behind in these Emirates. On the contrary, when strictly applied, it has helped them in their advancement. The author tries to dispel the myth that Islam is a religion that hinders the progress of women in modern times.

As the author confesses, she hasn't had the opportunity to draw her data from research findings, as there has not been any research conducted on the women in the Emirates. This is the reason why there is a subjective approach to the data collected from questionnaires and interviews. This is a more expository essay on the Arab women in the Emirates than a detailed analysis of research findings. It has passages that are rhetorical, written with vehemence and conviction. They serve a purpose, however, in creating interest in the status of women in the UAE.

Azadouhi Kalaidjian (Simonian)

Famille et Travail Domestique Éléments d'Approche Théorique (The Family and Domestic Work)

Aim of the study:

The study attempts to analyze domestic work in the family, its social necessity, and the consequences of its particular assignment to women.

Hypothesis:

The material basis of oppression inflicted on women is the result of the sexual division of labor resulting in woman's imprisonment within the home. Housework is considered exclusively a woman's work. It has a private character and is carried out within personal and affective relations. It is not considered as real work, hence it is not remunerated.

The study thus proposes:

1. To oppose the idea that housework is a sexual characteristic linked to woman's biological function.
2. To show the social, economic and ideological role of the family which revolves around woman's housework.
3. To bring out the relation existing between the family and the sphere of direct production.

Recently sociologists and economists have been
(Continued on page 14)

(1) Mémoire de licence, presented and defended by Mme. Bousalah Daïlla, Université d'Oran, Institut des Sciences Sociales, Département de Sociologie, September 1981.

United Nations' International Activities

1. Day of Peace

The third Tuesday of September of every year has been set aside by the UNO to be observed by the world's peoples as a "Day of Peace".

2. A University for Peace

The University for Peace has been recently founded in Costa Rica under the auspices of the U.N. General Assembly. The first members of the University Council were inaugurated in March 1982. The Council will eventually have 25 members representing the five world areas and various U.N. organizations.

(Peace and Freedom, vol. 42
no. 9, Dec. 1982, p. 15)

3. 1983, World Communications Year

On Nov. 19, 1981 the UN General Assembly

proclaimed the year 1983 World Communications Year, (WCY). The UN resolution A/36/40 states that the purpose of the year is "Development of Communications Infrastructures". In order to ensure the harmonious development of these infrastructures by effective coordination at the national level National Coordination Committees for WCY will be set up in member states. They will represent the following sectors: common carrier telecommunications, broadcasting and television, aviation, shipping, transport, meteorology, agriculture, education, postal services and industry. WCY will provide the opportunity for all nations to undertake an in-depth review and analysis of the policies on communications development and stimulate the accelerated development of communications infrastructures.

The entire programme of WCY activities is to be financed on the basis of voluntary contributions.

(Asian Women, June 1982, p. 12)

rejecting the notion of the non-productivity of housework. We claim that housework contributes indirectly to the **production** of capital.

Various studies have emphasized the multiple roles of working housewives. They are the producers of the future work force and hold responsibility for their upbringing. They are depended on for the transformation of raw materials into consumable products and for the production of certain commodities like foods, clothes etc. within the family.

Although housework differs in kind and quantity according to social classes, women who perform the housekeeping tasks sacrifice their autonomy and their energy because they accomplish them freely. In return marriage offers them security and comfort, without which they cannot exist. Security and comfort, however, are sometimes an illusion since divorce or repudiation may leave women helpless.

A class struggle

Women's condition results from a whole condition of the social system which legitimizes it. Women's struggle is not different from that of the laboring class; women represent one of the exploited social forces.

In handling the subject of housework, therefore, two theses have been presented: making it salaried, or allowing the housekeeper to do outside work. Both of these propositions presuppose the following argument: if they do not work outside, they remain dependent on their husbands; if they do, they will have to carry a double burden. Those who claim a salary for housekeepers consider every activity of women, including sexual service which produces the labor force, as a contribution to the needs of the capitalist system.

Point of the researcher

It is inadmissible to claim a salary for housework because it would lead to a reinforcement of the sexual division of labor in the sense that salary confines women to the home and confirms their segregation from society. On the other hand, if housework remains a free activity, it may be easily assimilated with extra work on the theoretical plan. The assimilation is however wrong because it is not remunerated and not directly productive, though it has an indirect productive value.

The appropriation of women's work by men is based on the historical domination of the former by the latter. Women work at home in return for their maintenance, protection and social position. Men have a more important right regarding the children because they carry their name. The sexual obligation is not always linked with reproduction. It may be for men a form of relaxation.

Right to work

Women's and children's integration in industrial activity brought dangerous results because it provided

cheap labor for industry, while it confirmed the disappearance of the economic role of domestic work, the number of jobs which women had access to was highly limited. Women were obliged to perform a double task.

On the other hand, if the outside work done by women is of the same nature as their housework, it would bring only a partial amelioration of woman's status. Outside work can be of value as a factor in the improvement of woman's condition when it gives her the opportunity for education, promotion, and social recognition. Transcendence does not mean resignation or escape, but a remodeling of interpersonal relations within the family in an egalitarian spirit.

In Marxist theory, domestic activity is not considered as real work because it is non-productive. The feminist movement has already denounced this Marxist blunder.

The role and function of the family in general

The family tends to perpetuate the existence of the prevailing social system. It is the place of production and reproduction of the work force, i.e. future workers. It is not a static, isolated institution, but an intrinsic part of capital. To maintain the present structure of the family, benevolent associations and all other forms of social relief have been created.

At the root of women's oppression is the class inequality which links the domination of the monogamous family to the domination of private property. Services such as the upbringing of children and preparation of food are performed by the family at a low cost. Products made for domestic work and services freely performed allow low income families to subsist more or less tolerably. On the other hand, family solidarity helps to solve financial problems through mutual aid and thus to maintain a certain equilibrium which serves to prevent public interventions and social explosions.

The role of the family thus appears not only as a security value but also as an indispensable place for the stifling of social contradictions, so frequent in the families of laboring classes.

Domestic work in different class families

Domestic work is subjected to outside pressures and exigencies which make of it an important element in the reproduction of class families, of the division of labor, and hence of the existence of conditions of the capitalist system.

In bourgeois society family life is controlled by a number of norms dictated by the social environment in which the family lives: receptions, parties, possession of property, standard of living, standard of children's education, etc. Those who fail to follow these norms may be in danger of losing their social prestige. In principle, it is women who are responsible for the maintenance of this prestige.

In families of laboring classes women

through their free housework ensure the reproduction of the labor force produced by their husbands and consequently the perpetuation of the work system or order.

A woman's work at home is determined by her husband's position. Her budget depends on the salary he receives, her hours of work and rest are modeled after his own hours.

Social consequences of the allocation of housework to women

Women's work at home, which is essential for the perpetuation of a traditional social order, is the main obstacle for their work outside the home. If they are actually involved in any job, housework will equally be the main obstacle to their development and promotion. It clearly explains the discrimination imposed on them by employers.

A working housewife is expected to reconcile both types of work in such a way that her outside work will in no way injure her family duties. She is also obliged to pay those who replace her in performing the house duties which she formerly performed without pay.

It is true that modern technology has in a way relieved housekeepers of a number of chores but in return, it has increased the profits of industrial and commercial people.

In conclusion, a woman who desires to be recognized as a citizen with full rights has to pay heavily for it. The biological function of women is overvalued as their exclusive privilege but at the same time it is to them a source of intellectual inferiority and of social underdevelopment, and a form of self-sacrifice.

Critical analysis of the different approaches of the Algerian family.

The author presents two studies dealing with the Algerian family. The first by M. Boutefnouchet, "La Famille Algérienne — Evolutions et caractéristiques récentes," Algiers, 1979, draws a parallel between women of the traditional type and those of the modern type in Algerian families. In both types no true evolution exists. Woman's traditional work has not changed her traditional status. She is still considered first and foremost as a wife and mother, this condition being the only protection for her against anti-social elements which are harmful to the Algerian personality.

According to Boutefnouchet the following improvements have taken place in family relations:

Spread of the nuclear family.

More equalitarian relations between married couples.

Better understanding of children's education.

Outside work open to women.

In spite of the above changes, the author confirms the great difference between male and female roles. Girls have less chance for education than boys. Family ties are more repressive to them. Even if they are allowed to work, they have to submit to paternal or fraternal authority or to the husband's will. Outside

employment does not liberate them from housework and family duties. It is evaluated solely on an economic basis.

Article by Larbi Touat (Revue Algérienne des sciences juridiques et économiques no. 3, 1974).

In the second study on the Algerian family, Touat says that the family is rarely a production unit. He limits his analysis to a model family in which the wife and children try to have an independent economy and to keep their gains for themselves while the father alone is responsible for the whole family. Solidarity and individualism thus grow under the same roof and equilibrium is destroyed. The change that must be sought, he says, is an economic equilibrium which does away with conflict and individualism. He advocates the action of the state to put an end to these anomalies.

Both Boutefnouchet and Touat commit the mistake of taking one type of family for a basic study and overlooking other types.

Conclusion

Mme. Dalila Bousalah concludes by pointing out the contradictions existing in the National Charter where the status of the Algerian woman is subjected to the bipolar vision of wife and mother and only incidentally that of worker and producer. Women's rights and sexual equality are always an object of reserve or neglect.

According to the Charter, Arabo-Islamic traditions which glorify the mother and wife as guardian of these traditions must be expressly maintained. They should not suffer from the possibilities offered for women's participation in social life. Salaried work should by no means impede women's role in the family.

We cannot deny, however, that the stabilizing factors surrounding the family concept meet with more and more objection. In intellectual circles, women claim an effective role in political and social activities and a more equalitarian family status.

In the laboring classes, women are preoccupied with problems of survival connected with repudiation, pensions, salaried work, and social and inheritance rights.

There is a flagrant contradiction between the proclamation of women's right to work and the absolute necessity of preserving the traditional values of the patriarchal family: female modesty, submission, self-sacrifice, and a status of the eternal minor and follower.

The promotion of women requires a transformation of social structures with a new definition of woman's status in family and society. This means a strengthening of affective equalitarian relations between couples. The transformation will demand the solution of many socio-economic and socio-cultural problems, including the recognition of woman's right to occupy positions compatible with her capacities and the fair and equitable employment of unprivileged women in charge of families. It will also mean a change in the mentality of parasitic wives, which calls for new methods of analysis and social reorganization.

CW, The Churchwoman: An Issue on Peacemaking

The **April-May 1982** issue of CW, The Churchwoman, is largely devoted to peacemaking efforts in the world today.

The first of the nine articles dealing with this topic gives extracts from a homily for peace Sabbath by Marjorie Truite, Director, Ecumenical Citizen Action of Church Women United, who says in a paragraph:

"Seduced into believing that an arms build-up will bring peace... our idols have become military solutions and weapons systems... How can a people who stand at the threshold of being able to destroy themselves still have hope? Fear perpetuates dependency upon military arms and nourishes lust for power. Fear attaches us to possessions and limits our capacity to risk."

"Education for Peace", by Sister Anna Marie Erst, S.H.C.S., emphasizes "the need to stress the values and attitudes our society must possess to be a just society. Without justice, true peace is impossible."

As Peace Education Director for the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace in the Irish Republic, Sister Anna Marie Erst has developed a peace program for schools with the help of teachers. The following is a brief outline of the process she has applied:

1. Publishing booklets on such topics as human rights, community building, violence and non-violent alternatives.

2. Teacher seminars and study nights for parents were held to acquaint them with the peace program and help them realize the importance of their roles in instilling into their children a sense of true values.

3. Publication of quarterly periodicals for both primary and post-primary students. A good portion of these was the work of students.

4. Organization of an annual competition on the theme of justice and peace.

5. Discussions developing the basic concepts of human rights, violence and forgiveness. Those who respond to oppression with violence in turn become oppressors.

Another section of the issue is entitled: "Some Things to Do."

Here are some suggestions:

1. Add your name to the million being sought by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in their STAR (Stop The Arms Race) campaign. Send your name and \$1 (or more) to Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1213 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa 19107. From the

same address you can secure a comprehensive bibliography of WILPF publications.

2. Sign the World Peace Pledge: "In the light of my faith, I am prepared to live without the nuclear weapon in my country." Send your signed pledge to: "Covenant Peace Making Program", Fellowship Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, N.Y. 10960.

Women of Vietnam

Published in French and English by "Viet Nam Women's Union of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam," this monthly illustrated magazine devotes its 34 pages to varied and inclusive information on women's liberation movement and its progressive march in that country. Reports on their individual and collective activities in the fields of higher education, art, child welfare, national celebrations, and international relations constitute the bulk of the publication. Poems, stories and reportages give a note of variety to the well-organized contents, and we can detect an effort to enhance local color and individual touch.

Beirut University College Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World. Founded 1973

Aims

Exchange information on Arab Woman.
Develop awareness of her condition and status.
Appreciate her role and its effect in social development.

Activities

Documentation
Research
Publications

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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

IWSAW STAFF

Dr. Julinda Abu Nasr — Director
Nuha Azar — Executive Secretary
Aida Bitar — Administrative & Research Assistant
Irene Lorfing — Researcher
Rose Ghurayyib — Editor of Al-Raida, writer of unsigned articles in it.

YEARLY CONTRIBUTION

Lebanon: L.L. 35 per year.
Other Countries: \$15 per year
plus \$3 to cover postage.