

Women in Algeria... (from p.30)

WOMEN ARE RESTRICTED IN ALL SPHERES OF PUBLIC LIFE

The Kedyai family who live in the region of Reghaia, were woken one morning by the violent knocks on their door. Before they were able to get to the door to see who it was, they heard gun shots and the door came down with a loud thud. The terrorized family saw a group of men enter their home and force the family members to lay face down. The father heard footsteps next to him and felt a person come very close to him. After a few seconds there were the sounds of two gun shots. He closed his eyes waiting for his turn but after a few quiet seconds they left the house. Upon rising he found his two daughters Karima 21 and Amal, 18 shot dead, one had been shot in the heart and the other in the temple. It appears that one of the young girls had accepted a date from a young man who was a policeman. The other girl was killed simply because she was a girl. She too was "punished" for the "crime" of her sister.

After women risked their lives to demonstrate against this reign of terror on March 8 in Algiers, the religious terrorists have taken up the task of murdering women with renewed diligence. Now it is the wives, fiances and sisters of policemen who have become the targets of vicious assassinations committed before the eyes of children and family members. The objective of these attacks is to force the release of imprisoned female FIS members.

Many Algerian women who had the opportunity to flee the country have done so, usually to France. For most of the threatened Algerian population, however, this is not

possible. Besides, there are a number of Algerian women and men who, despite everything, refuse to abandon their country to Muslim extremists. Schoolgirls and students continue their education, some of them camouflaged in Islamic costume, others with uncovered heads and the clothes they have always worn. Women journalists and intellectuals are courageously resisting the FIS by means of articles and even demonstrations in Algiers.

In the Algerian press, the Agony Aunt columns are full of letters from women complaining about what they have to put up with from their hierarchical superior or their male colleagues. Female job seekers also complain about the conditions that are laid down when they apply for a job in the private or public sector.

Naima, Zahia, Nassima, Djamila and Amal are aged between 20 and 28. They all possess a university diploma or a professional certificate. They are unemployed or have quite simply been thrown out of their jobs because they refused to cooperate with the sexual advances of their employers. Naima, aged 26, completed her studies two years ago and has not been able to find a job because, as she says, she repeatedly refused to acquiesce to the "amorous" desires of her various potential employers. Nassima, 25, a divorcee with no children, encountered the same problem but, as she stressed, it was even worse in her case because, "in our society, a divorced woman is considered to be an easy touch."

All of these women need our support in their daily struggle against the physical and moral threats to their existence.▲

Source: Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights Newsletter 49, Jan-Mar 1995, NZ Voorburwal 32, 1012 RZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands, with additions from a news report in The Sunday Chronicle, Cronica de Manila, June, 11, 1995.

WOMEN USED AS WEAPONS OF WAR

Source: Today (Asahi\NYT) July 19, 1995

In front of hundreds of people, former Imperial Army surgeon, Ken Yuasa admitted conducting biological experiments on Chinese prisoners during World War II and having intercourse with sex slaves stationed at Japanese military brothels.

Yuasa, who practices at his clinic in Tokyo's Sugunami Ward attended a seminar July 2-4 on "Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices in World War II." organized by the International Commission of Jurists.

He said he had sex with comfort women-euphemism for sex slaves-four or five times while serving at a military hospital in China.

In an interview with the Asahi Evening News, Yuasa 78, said sex slaves were an integral part of the Imperial Army. "They (the sex slaves) were like weapons, without which Japan could not have carried out war," said Yuasa, who was assigned to a city then called Luan in China's Shanxi Province in 1942.

Oppressed by the military brass, soldiers turned to the comfort women because they had no other way to unleash their pent-up frustration. The women kept them going, he said.

About 100 comfort women-most of them Chinese and Koreans-were in the entire province. He checked some of them for venereal diseases.

About 1000 Japanese soldiers and military police were stationed in Luan and the neighboring area. Up to 90 percent of the troops had use of the brothels, he said.

Sex slaves were placed under strict military control so they could not escape. They were beaten if they were disobedient, he added.

Since the late 1950's, Yuasa has urged Japan to own up to its wartime atrocities.