

WOMAN

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Struggle

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STERILIZED AGAINST THEIR WILL

Black women in Namibia are being sterilized without their knowledge or consent, says a Namibian health worker.

Airah Schikwambi, a health worker now in exile with the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, told a recent international seminar on health in Namibia that a number of women in SWAPO refugee camps had become infertile after having caesarian sections in hospitals in Namibia.

It appeared that sterilization had been carried out on the women without their knowledge or consent, says Ms. Schikwambi.

She also claims that injections of the contraceptive, Depo-provera, were given by the Namibia health authorities without informing the women concerned.

Outwrite #23, March 1984

WOMEN TAKE ON THE MULTINATIONALS

The Women's Liberation Movement in Mauritius, Muvman Liberasyon Fam, is launching a campaign against baby food multinationals in that country.

Campaign strategies include: a survey on women's attitudes towards satwa, a traditional weaning food; a demonstration on how to prepare satwa and production of this food for the local market; consciousness raising work on the problems of bottle-feeding; and a campaign for respect of the WHO Code on marketing breastmilk substitutes.

Muvman Liberasyon Fam Newsletter, February 1984

BLAMING THE VICTIM?

In Fairfield, California, USA, a 12-year-old girl was held in solitary confinement for nine days after she refused to testify as to whether she had been sexually molested by her stepfather, a military physician.

The girl and her mother had been advised by a counsellor that they

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would have to report the girl's charge against her stepfather to the authorities.

The judge in the case ordered the girl to be confined to a small cell in Juvenile Hall with no visits from her mother or lawyer. Said he, "She is a member of society. She is not being beaten or tortured. She has been told to go to her room, as society requires of her, until she tells the truth."

When she persisted in her refusal to testify, the judge ordered her to a foster home. The charges against her stepfather were dropped for lack of evidence.

Meanwhile, some California lawyers have expressed concern that the case will discourage other girls or women from seeking counselling for fear that they too would end up in jail.

Off Our Backs January 1984

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR GREEK WOMEN

A new equality law has been passed in Greece.

The law forbids employers from discriminating directly or indirectly on the grounds of sex or family status. It also states that women workers should be paid the same wages as their male counterparts doing similar work of equal value.

It bans sexist advertising and provides that employers found guilty of discriminatory practices should be heavily fined. Equal access to training is also guaranteed.

However, the law does not cover workers in the public sector - an omission that was made, argues the government, because public service employees already have equal rights.

Outwrite #23 March 1984

SECOND CONGRESS ON WOMEN

The Second International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women takes place in Groningen, the Netherlands, from April 17 - 21 this year.

Under the theme, "Women's Worlds: Strategies for Empowerment," the Congress will examine women and: communication, the arts, medicine, management, public leadership, science and technology, work, agriculture, social welfare, law, changing family patterns, religion, housing, education, and philosophy.

The Congress will feature interdisciplinary symposia, panel discussions, research sessions, poster sessions, and keynote speakers.

Further information may be obtained from: the Congress Secretariat, Second International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Sociological Institute, University of Groningen, Grote Markt 23, 9712 HR Groningen, The Netherlands.

Media Report to Women Vol. XI No. 6 Nov.-Dec. 1983.

STUDY OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

In the USA, a study of the role of women's organizations in changing public policy during the UN Decade for Women is currently being carried out by the Women, Public Policy and Development Project of the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

The work leading up to the study will include a collection of information on women's organizations and projects of the Decade; a series of conferences assessing the impact of these organizations on the status of women and national and local development; and publication of conclusions.

Planning for non-government organizations' activities at the 1985 UN conference on women, and forming strategies for follow-up to this conference will also be part of the study.

The first publication coming out of the study, Looking to the Future: Equal Partnership Between Men and Women in the 21st Century, contains information on the two past international conferences on women, and on the preparations for the 1985 end of Decade conference.

Information on ordering this publication, and on the study, is available from Ms. Arvonne Frazer, Project Director, Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota, 909 Social Sciences, 267 19th Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

TAICH News No. 71, October 1983.

NEW BOOK FROM IPPF ON BREAST-FEEDING

Breast-Feeding, Fertility and Contraception is the latest addition to the medical publications series of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

The book discusses the advantages of breast-feeding, including the adequate nutrition of the infant, protection against infection, and emotional responses as in mother-infant bonding. It also covers the role played by breast-feeding in birth spacing, as well as the importance of other forms of contraception to ensure adequate family planning.

The nutritional demands of the mother are set out in detail.

A section of the book discusses the pros and cons of bottle-feeding and analyses the working of the WHO Code on marketing breast-milk substitutes. A list of those countries which were implementing the Code fully or partially in 1983 is included.

The IPPF expects the book to be of value to health workers in many different spheres.

IPPF Release, January 1984.

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