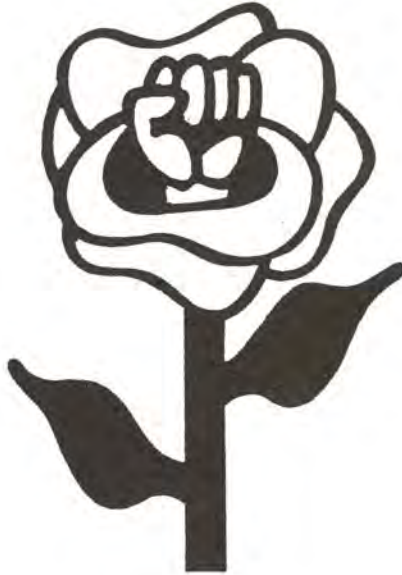


Moroccan Women And The Political Debate



When they discovered that the judge was a woman, the plaintiff and the defendant preferred to settle their case outside the court.

The legal condition for issuing a passport to a married Moroccan woman remains the same: a written authorization from her husband.

Moroccan women's participation in public affairs in general, and politics in particular, are the topics of a national debate.

This debate was stimulated by the declaration of the Minister of Islamic Affairs that **women should not be in power**. He said that women should not be given positions such as president, governor or mayor.

These words infuriated opposition movements and a number of syndicates. Since then, they have been insisting on the resignation of the minister in question. Hence, the Women's Democratic League in Morocco replied that «these declarations date back to the middle ages, they are unacceptable in a modern state and do not conform with human rights pacts.»

The Moroccan Organization For Human Rights condemned the politics of legalizing the absence of women from power in the name of religion. They added that this constitutes an assault against the rights granted to women in the Constitution.

In fact, the Moroccan Constitution of 1972 stipulates «equality between all Moroccan» and that «men and women have equal political rights.» Legally, Moroccan women have the right to vote and to be elected. They play an influential role in political parties and syndicates.

However, in reality, they do not hold positions at decision-making levels. There are no female officials in the Moroccan Government, Parliament, or the Council for Human Rights that was recently created. How can that be, keeping in mind that women account for half of the population of Morocco (25 million)?

The Moroccan Organization For Human Rights called upon Moroccan women to resist the «primitive mentality that persists in the society, the home, the field, the factory, the office and the street.»

Source: «Jadal Fi Al-Maghreb Howl Ishtirak Al-Mara' Fi Al Hayat Al-'Ammah» *Al-Anwar* daily newspaper, 6/6/1990. (Arabic Reference).