

# WOMEN FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD MEETING IN ATHENS

The Zappeio conference center in Athens was the scene this month of a three-day conference on women in public administration, the first of its kind in Greece. Women are now taking over positions which were once thought to be the exclusive preserve of men in the business world, the sciences, and public administration.

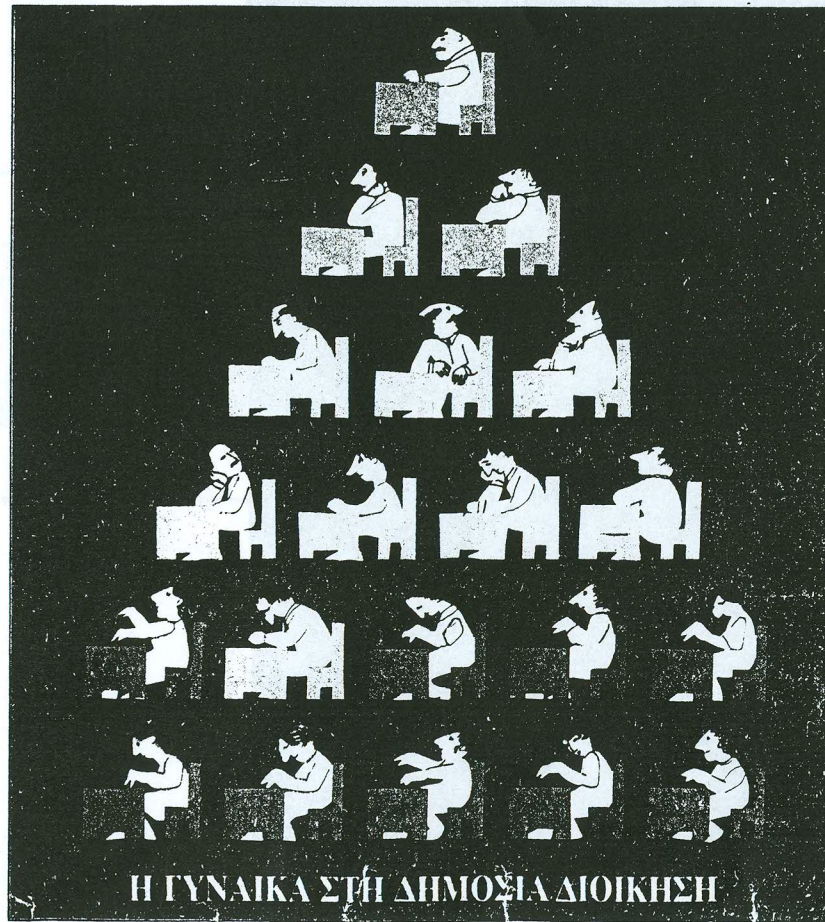
**S**tatistics given at the conference showed that despite the rapid progress made by women, they are still in a socially inferior position to men. And the reasons for that seem to be the prejudices which keep the women at home, the lack of equal opportunities and unfair treatment at work.

The conference, which was organized by the Ministry to the Prime Minister's Office, the Council for Sexual Equality and the Civil Servants' Union, was opened by Apostolos Lazaris, Minister to the Prime Minister's Office:

"As minister responsible for the public administration, I feel rather as if I'm on trial here," he said. "Every morning when I go into my office I come face to face with the poster for your conference, showing the staff hierarchy with the women at the bottom and the men at the top - and I'm very much afraid that the poster is all too close to the truth."

Chrysanthi Antoniou-Laiou, Chairperson of the Council for Sexual Equality and adviser to the Prime Minister, had harsh words for the ministers, too:

"When trying to implement equality in the public sector we frequently run into difficulties. Even ministers find it hard to swallow the idea. But



A poster depicting the socially inferior position of women in Greece today, used to publicize

a matter of government policy."

Ms Antoniou-Laiou announced that a Bill doing away with inequalities in pension arrangements for men and women is shortly to be brought before Parliament. Attempts are also being made to deal with the question of the Civil Service Lists, on the basis of which promotions are made and in which men precede women irrespective of their performance in the entrance examinations taken by all who enter the Service. Alterations are to be made in school hours and working hours and the regulations dealing with placing and transfers of couples working for the Service will be amended.

**I**n Greece today, there are women serving as general secretaries of ministries, as prefects (local governors) and at the head of state enterprises.

Evdokia Serreli (36) is one of these women - as General Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, she is the only woman ever to have held such a post in Greece.

She and the eight women prefects have gone a long way towards shattering the myth of women's inefficiency in senior positions.

But in the higher ranks of

only 30% of the jobs are held by women (the figure in 1974 was 15%). Only one in ten of the civil servants on Grade 2 (the grade scale runs backwards, 1 being the highest) is a woman. And the percentage of heads of directorate who are women is even smaller. There has been a slight improvement in the number of women department heads and also in the number of women holding university degrees (33% as against 25% in 1974).

In pre-school teaching, 100% of the staff are women. This figure falls to 62.2% in secondary education, 29.8% in Craft Schools, 27% in Technical Colleges and only 3.1% in the universities.

In 1983, 65% of the civil servants with university degrees and tenure on Grade 8 were women, and only 11% of those on Grade 2.

At the real decision-making centers, women are conspicuous by their absence. Of 34 important committees and councils in the eight basic ministries, 25 are composed entirely of men! And the other 9 have no more than a token female presence of 15.20%.

Although female participation in public administration has been increasing, there has been no increase in women's participation in the

