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YALE'S MISGUIDED RETREAT

IN DECIDING TO OMIT THE IMAGES FROM A BOOK IT IS PUBLISHING ABOUT THE CONTROVERSY SPARKED BY DANISH CARTOONS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD, YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS HAS HANDED A VICTORY TO EXTREMISTS. BOTH YALE AND THE EXTREMISTS DISTORTING THIS ISSUE SHOULD BE ASHAMED. I SAY THIS AS A MUSLIM WHO SUPPORTED THE DANISH NEWSPAPER

JYLLANDS-POSTEN'S RIGHT TO PUBLISH THE CARTOONS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD IN LATE 2005 AND AS SOMEONE WHO ALSO UNDERSTANDS THE OFFENSE TAKEN AT THOSE CARTOONS BY MANY MUSLIMS, INCLUDING MY MOTHER. AFTER A WHILE, SHE AND I AGREED TO STOP TALKING ABOUT THEM BECAUSE THE SUBJECT ALWAYS MADE US ARGUE.

FOR MORE THAN TWO MONTHS IN 2006, I LIVED IN COPENHAGEN, WHERE I DEBATED THE ISSUE WITH DANES -- MUSLIM AND NON-MUSLIM -- INCLUDING FLEMMING ROSE, THE CULTURE EDITOR OF JYLLANDS-POSTEN, WHO COMMISSIONED THE IMAGES, AND NASER KHADER, DENMARK'S FIRST MUSLIM PARLIAMENTARIAN, WHO LAUNCHED THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC MUSLIMS GROUP JUST AS THE CONTROVERSY UNFOLDED.

SPEAKING AT A CONFERENCE THAT KHADER HOSTED AT THE DANISH PARLIAMENT A YEAR AFTER THE CARTOONS' PUBLICATION, I WARNED OF TWO RIGHT WINGS -- A NON-MUSLIM ONE THAT HIJACKED THE ISSUE TO FUEL RACISM AGAINST IMMIGRANTS IN DENMARK, AND A MUSLIM ONE THAT HIJACKED THE ISSUE TO SILENCE MUSLIMS AND FUEL ANTI-WESTERN RHETORIC.

SADLY, BOTH GROUPS ARE CELEBRATING YALE'S DECISION BECAUSE IT HAS PROVEN THEM "RIGHT."

THE CONTROVERSY THAT MANY MIGHT RECALL AS "DANISH NEWSPAPER PUBLISHES CARTOONS OF THE PROPHET; MUSLIM WORLD GOES BERSERK" WAS ACTUALLY MUCH MORE COMPLEX. WHAT OCCURRED ACROSS MANY MUSLIM-MAJORITY COUNTRIES IN 2006 WAS A CLEAR EXERCISE IN MANUFACTURING OUTRAGE. CONSIDER:

JYLLANDS-POSTEN PUBLISHED THE CARTOONS IN SEPTEMBER 2005. THE WIDESPREAD PROTESTS IN MAJORITY-MUSLIM COUNTRIES THAT EVENTUALLY LEFT MORE THAN 200 DEAD DID NOT START UNTIL ABOUT FOUR MONTHS LATER. INDEED, WHEN AN EGYPTIAN NEWSPAPER REPRINTED ONE CARTOON IN OCTOBER 2005 TO SHOW READERS HOW A DANISH NEWSPAPER WAS PORTRAYING THE PROPHET, NO BACKLASH WAS HEARD IN CAIRO OR ELSEWHERE.

JYTTE KLAUSEN, THE DANISH-BORN AUTHOR OF THE YALE PRESS'S FORTHCOMING BOOK, "CARTOONS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD," RECOGNIZES THAT LAG. ACCORDING TO YALE PRESS'S WEB SITE, SHE ARGUES THAT MUSLIM REACTION TO THE CARTOONS WAS NOT SPONTANEOUS BUT, RATHER, THAT IT WAS ORCHESTRATED "FIRST BY THOSE WITH VESTED INTERESTS IN ELECTIONS IN DENMARK AND EGYPT, AND LATER BY ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS SEEKING TO DESTABILIZE GOVERNMENTS IN PAKISTAN, LEBANON, LIBYA, AND NIGERIA."

I'M PERPLEXED WHY KLAUSEN AGREED -- EVEN "RELUCTANTLY" -- TO YALE'S DECISION TO PULL THE CARTOONS. IRONICALLY, SHE TOLD THE GUARDIAN THAT SHE WANTED TO PUBLISH THE CARTOONS TO MAKE THE CASE "THAT SOME OF THEM ARE ISLAMOPHOBIC, AND IN THE TRADITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM" -- THE LATTER A VIEW THAT WOULD HARDLY INFLAME MANY MUSLIMS.

YALE ALSO CUT FROM THE BOOK IMAGES OF THE PROPHET MEANT TO ILLUSTRATE THE HISTORY OF THE DEPICTION OF MUHAMMAD IN OTTOMAN, PERSIAN AND WESTERN ART. SUNNI MUSLIMS OBSERVE A PROHIBITION ON DEPICTIONS OF THE PROPHET -- BUT SINCE WHEN HAS YALE? IT SAYS IT PULLED THE IMAGES ON ADVICE FROM ISLAMIC AND COUNTERTERRORISM EXPERTS THAT THEY COULD INCITE VIOLENCE, BUT AT LEAST ONE AUTHOR AND EXPERT ON ISLAM, REZA ASLAN, HAS CRITICIZED THE MOVE AS "IDIOTIC" (HE ALSO RETRACTED A BLURB HE HAD WRITTEN IN SUPPORT OF THE BOOK).

THE COWARDICE SHOWN BY YALE PRESS RECOGNIZES NONE OF THE NUANCE THAT FILLED MY CONVERSATIONS IN COPENHAGEN NOR DISCUSSIONS I HAD WITH MUSLIMS IN QATAR AND EGYPT DURING THE CONTROVERSY. MANY TOLD ME THEY WERE DISMAYED AT THE DOUBLE STANDARDS THAT STOKED RAGE AT THESE DANISH CARTOONS YET DID NOT QUESTION SILENCE AT ANTI-SEMITIC AND RACIST CARTOONS IN THE REGION'S MEDIA.

DOES YALE REALIZE THAT IT HAS PROVEN WHAT FLEMMING ROSE SAID WAS HIS ORIGINAL INTENT IN COMMISSIONING THE CARTOONS -- THAT ARTISTS WERE SELF-CENSORING OUT OF FEAR OF MUSLIM RADICALS?

YALE HAS SIDED WITH THE VARIOUS MUSLIM DICTATORS AND RADICAL GROUPS THAT USED THE CARTOONS TO "PROVE" WHO COULD BEST "DEFEND" MUHAMMAD AGAINST THE DANES AND, BY EXTENSION, BURNISH THEIR ISLAMIC CREDENTIALS. THOSE SAME DICTATORS AND RADICALS WHO COMPLAINED OF THE OFFENSE TO THE PROPHET'S MEMORY WERE BLIND TO THE GREATER OFFENSE THEY COMMITTED IN THEIR DISREGARD FOR HUMAN LIFE. (INDEED, SOME OF THOSE PROTESTERS EVEN HELD BANNERS THAT SAID, "BEHEAD THOSE WHO OFFEND THE PROPHET.")

WHEN A GROUP OF DANISH IMAMS FLEW TO THE MIDDLE EAST IN LATE 2005 WITH "OFFENDING IMAGES" OF THE PROPHET -- SOME CARTOONS FROM THE CONTROVERSY AND OTHER IMAGES TAKEN FROM THE WEB SITES OF EXTREMIST GROUPS -- THE TIMING WAS RIPE FOR THE BANDWAGON OF OUTRAGE TO ROLL: THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD HAD BECOME THE LARGEST OPPOSITION GROUP IN THE EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENT. IN JANUARY 2006, HAMAS HAD JUST WON THE PALESTINIAN ELECTIONS.

ONE BY ONE, REGIMES AND ISLAMISTS COMPETED IN OUTRAGE, WHIPPING UP A FRENZY THAT AT TIMES SPIRALED OUT OF CONTROL.

UNFORTUNATELY, THOSE DICTATORS AND RADICALS WHO WANT TO SPEAK FOR ALL MUSLIMS -- AND YET CARE LITTLE FOR MUSLIM LIFE -- HAVE FOUND AN ALLY IN YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

AM I NOT A WOMAN?

HOW TO PERFORM A GENDER TEST.

INDIAN RUNNER SANTHI SOUNDARARAJAN MAY BE STRIPPED OF HER ASIAN GAMES SILVER MEDAL, AFTER THE INDIAN OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCED MONDAY THAT SHE HAD FAILED A GENDER TEST SHORTLY AFTER COMPETING. IS A "GENDER TEST" AS SIMPLE AS IT SOUNDS?

YOU CAN'T TELL FOR SURE IF AN ATHLETE IS A MAN OR A WOMAN JUST BY GLANCING AT HIS OR HER GENITALIA. THAT'S BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE ARE BORN WITH AMBIGUOUS SEX ORGANS, AND OTHERS HAVE A VISIBLE ANATOMY THAT DOESN'T MATCH UP WITH THEIR SEX CHROMOSOMES. FEARS THAT MALE OLYMPIC ATHLETES MIGHT BE COMPETING AS WOMEN LED TO MANDATORY PHYSICALS FOR FEMALES IN THE 1960S, WHICH SOON GAVE WAY TO CHROMOSOME-BASED GENDER TESTING. OFFICIALS COLLECTED MOUTH SCRAPINGS AND RAN A SIMPLE TEST FOR THE PRESENCE OF TWO X CHROMOSOMES. THE METHOD PROVED TO BE UNRELIABLE, SINCE IT'S POSSIBLE FOR A BIOLOGICAL MALE TO HAVE AN EXTRA X CHROMOSOME (XXY) OR A FEMALE TO ONLY HAVE ONE X CHROMOSOME.

THE GENDER OF AN EMBRYO IS DETERMINED DURING ITS EARLY DEVELOPMENT. IF CERTAIN SEX-DETERMINING GENES ARE PRESENT, THE FETUS WILL DEVELOP TESTES, WHICH IN TURN PRODUCE TESTOSTERONE. IT'S THE TESTOSTERONE THAT MAKES THE FETUS INTO A BOY. THE GENES THAT ARE IMPORTANT FOR THIS SWITCH ARE GENERALLY LOCATED ON THE Y CHROMOSOME. BY THE 1992 WINTER GAMES, OFFICIALS STARTED TESTING FOR ONE OF THESE GENES, CALLED SRY—IF YOU HAD IT, YOU COULDN'T COMPETE AS A WOMAN.

THAT TEST DIDN'T WORK, EITHER. HAVING THE SRY GENE MATERIAL, OR EVEN A Y CHROMOSOME, DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE YOU A MAN. SOME PEOPLE BORN WITH A Y CHROMOSOME DEVELOP ALL THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A WOMAN EXCEPT INTERNAL FEMALE SEX ORGANS. THIS CAN RESULT FROM A DEFECT IN ONE OF GENES THAT ALLOWS THE BODY TO PROCESS TESTOSTERONE. SOMEONE WITH THIS CONDITION (KNOWN AS "ANDROGEN INSENSITIVITY SYNDROME") MIGHT BE XY, AND SHE MIGHT DEVELOP TESTES. BUT SHE'LL END UP A WOMAN, BECAUSE HER BODY NEVER RESPONDS TO THE TESTOSTERONE SHE'S PRODUCING. OTHER SIGNS OF AIS INCLUDE HAIRLESS GENITALIA AND THE ABSENCE OF MENSTRUATION. (THERE ARE REPORTS THAT SOUNDARARAJAN HAD "NOT ATTAINED PUBERTY YET.")

SINCE TESTOSTERONE HELPS IN BUILDING MUSCLE AND STRENGTH, A CASE OF ANDROGEN INSENSITIVITY SYNDROME WOULDN'T GIVE AN XY-FEMALE ATHLETE ANY KIND OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE; IF ANYTHING, IT WOULD BE A LIABILITY. SEVEN OF THE EIGHT WOMEN WHO TESTED POSITIVE FOR Y-CHROMOSOMAL MATERIAL DURING THE 1996 SUMMER GAMES IN ATLANTA HAD SOME FORM OF AIS. THEY WERE ALLOWED TO COMPETE.

BY THE LATE 1990S, THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE TURNED TO A MORE COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION BY A PANEL OF SPECIALISTS TO ACCOUNT FOR ALL THESE AMBIGUITIES. THE PANEL NOW INCLUDES GYNECOLOGISTS, ENDOCRINOLOGISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, AND EXPERTS ON TRANSGENDER ISSUES. THE EXAMINERS STILL TEST FOR THE Y-CHROMOSOMAL GENES; GYNECOLOGISTS PERFORM PHYSICAL EXAMS; ENDOCRINOLOGISTS DIAGNOSE GENE DISORDERS AND RESULTING HORMONAL CONDITIONS; AND ATHLETES MAY BE GIVEN PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION.

MANDATORY GENDER TESTING OF OLYMPIC ATHLETES WAS STOPPED ALTOGETHER IN 1999, BUT OLYMPIC AND IAAF RULES ALLOW FOR GENDER TESTS IF AN ATHLETE'S GENDER IS CHALLENGED BY ANOTHER ATHLETE OR TEAM, OR EVENT OFFICIALS. (SOUNDARARAJAN'S SCREENING IS SAID TO HAVE ORIGINATED WITH SUCH A PROTEST.) SOME ATHLETES ARE CALLED IN FOR A COMPLETE EXAM AFTER THEY GIVE THEIR URINE SAMPLE DURING A DOPING TEST. OFFICIALS WATCH THE WHOLE PROCESS TO MAKE SURE THE ATHLETES DON'T SWAP IN SOMEONE ELSE'S PEE, SO THEY CAN FLAG ANYONE WHOSE GENITALIA DON'T APPEAR CONSISTENT WITH HIS OR HER STATED GENDER.

ATHLETES WHO HAVE UNDERGONE SEX-REASSIGNMENT ARE ALLOWED TO COMPETE ALONGSIDE THEIR NEW GENDER, PROVIDED THEY FOLLOW REGULATIONS.

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ABROAD

MALI WOMEN'S RIGHTS BILL BLOCKED

THE PRESIDENT OF MALI HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HE IS NOT GOING TO SIGN THE COUNTRY'S NEW FAMILY LAW, INSTEAD RETURNING IT TO PARLIAMENT FOR REVIEW.

MUSLIM GROUPS HAVE BEEN PROTESTING AGAINST THE LAW, WHICH GIVES GREATER RIGHTS TO WOMEN, EVER SINCE PARLIAMENT ADOPTED IT AT THE START OF THE MONTH.

PRESIDENT AMADOU TOUMANI TOURE SAID HE WAS SENDING THE LAW BACK FOR THE SAKE OF NATIONAL UNITY.

MUSLIM LEADERS HAVE CALLED THE LAW THE WORK OF THE DEVIL AND AGAINST ISLAM.

MORE THAN 90% OF MALI'S POPULATION IS MUSLIM.

SOME OF THE PROVISIONS THAT HAVE PROVED CONTROVERSIAL GIVE MORE RIGHTS TO WOMEN.

FOR EXAMPLE, UNDER THE NEW LAW WOMEN ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED TO OBEY THEIR HUSBANDS, INSTEAD HUSBANDS AND WIVES OWE EACH OTHER LOYALTY AND PROTECTION.

I HAVE TAKEN THIS DECISION... TO ENSURE CALM AND A PEACEFUL SOCIETY, AND TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING OF OUR FELLOW CITIZENS

PRESIDENT AMADOU TOUMANI TOURE

TO LOVE, HONOUR AND OBEY IN MALI

WOMEN GET GREATER INHERITANCE RIGHTS, AND THE MINIMUM AGE FOR GIRLS TO MARRY IN MOST CIRCUMSTANCES IS RAISED TO 18.

ONE OF THE OTHER KEY POINTS MUSLIMS HAVE OBJECTED TO IS THE FACT THAT MARRIAGE IS DEFINED AS A SECULAR INSTITUTION.

TENS OF THOUSANDS HAVE TURNED OUT AT PROTESTS IN BAMAKO IN RECENT WEEKS AND THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE LAW ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

IT IS A POLITICAL DEFEAT FOR PRESIDENT TOURE, WHO WAS A STRONG BACKER OF THE NEW LAW.

IT HAS ONLY BEEN THE CONTINUING ANGRY PROTESTS BY MUSLIM GROUPS THAT HAVE FORCED HIM TO SEND THE LAW BACK TO PARLIAMENT.

IN HIS STATEMENT ON NATIONAL TELEVISION THE PRESIDENT WAS FORCED TO ADMIT THAT THE POPULATION IS YET TO BE CONVINCED BY THE NEW CODE.

"AFTER EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE VARIOUS STATE INSTITUTIONS, WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, WITH THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION, I HAVE TAKEN THIS DECISION TO SEND THE FAMILY CODE FOR A SECOND READING TO ENSURE CALM AND A PEACEFUL SOCIETY, AND TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING OF OUR FELLOW CITIZENS."

IT WAS CLEAR FROM HIS SPEECH THAT THE PRESIDENT ALSO THINKS THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF FALSE INFORMATION CIRCULATING ABOUT THE CODE AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL NO DOUBT ALSO TRY TO ADDRESS THIS IN THE COMING WEEKS.

THE HEAD OF MALI'S HIGH ISLAMIC COUNCIL SAYS HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION.

WOMEN'S GROUPS ARE HEARTBROKEN - THEY HAVE BEEN TRYING FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS TO GET THE LAW CHANGED.

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WOMEN DESERVE 2 BE TREATED AS EQUALS NOT AS SLAVES.

FELIX MUSONDA, CHINGOLA, ZAMBIA

I THINK THE PRESIDENT IS IN THE RIGHT POSITION TO PUT THIS LAW UNDER SERIOUS REVIEW. ITS TRUE WOMEN NEED THE RIGHT BUT NOT TO THIS EXTENT, THIS RIGHT HAS TO BE CHECKED. THEY STILL REMAIN A MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY AND DESPITE ALL EFFORTS THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT THEIR POSITION IN THE SOCIETY THAT CANNOT BE CHANGED.

MAGDALENE SIRRI, DOUALA, CAMEROON

THIS IS DISGRACEFUL - WHAT A BUNCH OF WEAK COWARDS THESE MEN ARE - HIDING BEHIND RELIGION "IDEALS" TO USE WOMEN FOR WHATEVER THEY WANT AND KEEP THEM SUBSERVIENT. HOW PATHETIC THEY APPEAR, AND HOW FRIGHTENED !! THEY ONLY HURT THEMSELVES AND THE SOCIETY AT LARGE, IN THE END. I FEEL SORRY FOR THE WOMEN AND THE MEN.

A HOWSON, BOSTON, MA

I THINK THESE WHOLE THING ABOUT 'WOMEN'S RIGHT' IS JUST AN ATTEMPT TO TURN THE ORDER THINGS UPSIDE DOWN. IF THEY SAY THAT A WOMAN DOES NOT NEED HAVE TO OBEY HER HUSBAND, THEN IT IS LIKE SAYING THE CITIZENS OF A COUNTRY DO NOT NEED TO OBEY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNTRY AS SYMBOLISED BY THEIR LEADER. IN A PLACE WHEN THERE IS NO NEED FOR SOMEONE TO OBEY THE OTHER, CHAOS IS THE RESULT. ISLAM DOES NOT OPPRESS WOMEN SO THEY DON'T NEED FREEDOM!

OLATUNDE OLOYEDE, LAGOS, NIGERIA

I THINK THE PRESIDENT HAS TAKEN THE GOOD DECISION BY SENDING THE NEW LOW IN SECOND READING.

DIAB, BAMAKO, MALI

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD STAND BY THAT LAW. WOMEN NEED 2 BE FREE FROM THE SLAVERY THEIR RELIGION PUTS THEN IN. WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO AND BECOME WHAT EVER THEY WANT. THIS MUSLIM MEN SHOULD KNOW BETTER.

PAMELA MARTIN, ABUJA, NIGERIA

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD HAVE BEEN MAN ENOUGH. I CAN NOT THINK WITH ANY STRETCH OF IMAGINATION THAT IN THIS DAY AND AGE SOME PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE WOMEN AS SUB HUMANS WHEN IN FACT, WOMEN ARE PROVING TO US MEN THAT THEY ARE EQUALLY CAPABLE AS WE ARE. PLEASE MALI, UNSHACKLE YOURSELF FROM THIS ARCHAIC MENTALITY OF KEEPING WOMEN AS DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

BALLAH, MONROVIA

I'M VERY PLEASE FOR THE REFUSAL OF THE PRESIDENT, BECAUSE IT IS NOT ALLOW IN ISLAM, WOMAN SHOULDN'T EQUAL TO A MAN RATHER AS HER HUSBAND, IN ISLAM RELIGION A WOMAN IS ALWAYS BEHIND A MAN.

ABDOURAHMAN SEY, DAKAR, SENEGAL

THIS CHANGE ONLY REFLECTS THE SENSITIVITY OF MALIAN'S GOVERNMENT. NEVERTHELESS, CIVIL RIGHT GROUPS, WOMEN GROUPS SHOULD NOT RELENT BY THIS OUTCOME. SOMEDAY THEY SHALL OVERCOME.

KUNLE, NIGERIA

THIS KIND OF LEADER THAT WE NEED IN AFRICA, THE ONE WHO LISTENS TO THE VOICE OF THE CITIZENS HE/SHE LEADS. BRAVO PRESIDENT AMADOU TOUMANI. YOU ARE THE MAN.

KAKAKI, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

WHEN THE STATUS OF WOMEN IS STRENGTHENED, THE SOCIETY AS A WHOLE IS IMPROVED AND ENRICHED. I BELIEVE PRESIDENT TOURE SHOULD HAVE STOOD HIS GROUND. REVISITING THE ISSUE WILL NOW BE MORE DIFFICULT AND THE OPPONENTS OF EQUALITY MORE EMBOLDENED.

PATRICIA REARDON MD, SCOTLAND, CT USA

THIS IS A DISAPPOINTMENT THOUGH POLITICALLY EXPEDIENT GIVEN THE WAKE OF THE USUALLY SMALL % BUT LOUD NARROW MINDER INTERPRETS THAT CONSTANTLY MISREPRESENT THE NOBLE TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD, PEACE BE UPON HIM. THE QUR'AN ITSELF IN FACT AND SPIRIT GIVES EQUAL PROTECTION AND RIGHTS TO BOTH GENDERS. IT IS UP TO THOSE IN AUTHORITY IN ANY AGE TO ENSURE THE APPLICATION OF ITS NOBLE AND SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS. AND THE PROPHET IN HIS TRADITIONS IS MANY TIME REPORTED THE LOFTY POSITION OF MOTHERS AND WIVES IN THE SOCIAL ORDER. MY PRAYER IS THAT THEIR CONGRESS WILL OVERRIDE THE PRESIDENT'S LACK OF LEADERSHIP IN THIS INSTANCE. AND NOT TO BOW TO THE CONTINUED RANTS OF THE REACTIONARY MINORITY IN THEIR COUNTRY. MUSLIMS ARE NOT MONOLITHIC BY ANY MEANS AND WHAT IS OBVIOUS TO THE MAJORITY SHOULD NOT BE STIFLED BY THOSE WHO CLAIM HOLY SUPERIORITY BY DECREE OF THEIR UNDERSTANDING.

MUHAMMAD ALI-SALAAM MAHMOUD DESOUSA, CABO VERDE | USA

I THINK THIS LAW IS SO CONTROVERSIAL THAT IT MUST BE ABANDONED BECAUSE YOU CAN NOT JUMP SO HIGH WITH VERY TRADITIONAL AND ALMOST UNEDUCATED SOCIETY WITH VERY HIGH ILLITERACY ESPECIALLY AMONG WOMEN THE SUPPOSED STAKE HOLDERS. BY TRYING TO ADOPT SUCH LAW THE PARLIAMENTARIANS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS ARE PROVOKING THE SENTIMENT OF MUSLIM AND PLAYING IN THE HANDS OF THE FUNDAMENTALIST GROUPS. I AM AFRAID THIS LAW TO BACK FIRE AND RESULTS IN CREATING MORE CONSERVATIVE GROUPS ON THE EDGE LIKE (BOKO HARAM) OF NIGERIA. CHANGING SOCIETY IS NOT AN EASY THING AND CAN NOT BE DONE THROUGH JURISDICTION ONLY AND THE VERY POSITIVE THING IN MALI THAT IT IS A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY AND CHANGE CAN COME BY TIME WHEN THESE VALUES OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND EQUITY REGARDLESS OF THE GENDER ARE DEEP ROOTED IN THE SOCIETY AND WHEN MORE ENLIGHTENED INTERPRETATIONS OF ISLAM ARE GIVEN CHANCE.NO EASY WALK TO SOCIETY CHANGE.

MOUSA, SUDAN, PORT SUDAN

ITS IS A GOOD IDEA FOR THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE THAT STEP. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, WOMEN NEED TO BE PROTECTED AND WELL TAKING CARE OF. EVERY HUMAN CAME THROUGH A WOMAN. BUT IT SHOULD BE DONE IN A WAY THAT THERE WON'T BE CRISES IN THE COUNTRY. WHEN CRISES STARTS IT IS HARD TO STOP IT. COMPARE WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SUDAN NOW. THE PRESIDENT IS A WISE MAN. IT SHOULD GO THROUGH THE SECOND READING AND LETS SEE WHAT THEY HAVE FOR THE COUNTRY.

KINGSLEY ITIOSE, BENIN, EDO STATE, NIGERIA.

IT IS TIME FOR THE MEN IN MALI TO REALIZE THAT WOMEN ARE HUMAN BEINGS WHO DESERVE EQUAL RIGHTS TO RESPECT IRRESPECTIVE OF HOW GOD CREATED A MAN AND A WOMAN.

NELSON OMOYA, KITGUM, UGANDA

AM SORRY TO SAY THIS MR. PRESIDENT, BUT I THINK YOU SHOULD NOT ALLOW YOUR POLITICAL SELFISHNESS TO MISLEAD YOU SO AS TO AM ABANDON THE CAUSE OF WOMEN IN MAIL, BECAUSE YOU KNOWN VERY WELL HOW WOMEN ARE MISTREATED IN AFRICA AND FOR ONCE LET THEM ALSO ENJOY SOME OF THE RIGHTS OUR SO-CALLED AFRICAN MEN ARE ENJOYING.

FATOUMATA BALDEH, KANIFING, THE GAMBIA

LET'S HOPE PRESIDENT TOURE KNOWS ABOUT ROBERT THE BRUCE AND HIS SPIDER, AND CAN BE LIKEWISE INSPIRED NOT TO GIVE UP. SOME CHANGES ARE SO MAJOR THAT THEY MUST BE CARRIED OUT IN STAGES, EVEN THOUGH, IDEALLY THEY SHOULD TAKE PLACE OVERNIGHT. IT'S A PITY THAT REACTIONARY GROUPS ARE SO AFRAID OF THE FUTURE. IT WILL COME!

SUE MARTIN, MALMBERGET, SWEDEN

I AM MALE FROM NIGERIA & I DO UNDERSTAND THE POLITICS GOING ON HERE IN AFRICA, ITS ALL ABOUT COMPLEX, FEAR & WANTING TO BE THE BOSS & BULLY IN THE HOUSE. TALK ABOUT RELIGION, IN THE BEGINNING THE ALMIGHTY GOD CREATED MAN & WOMAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE, THEN WHO TOLD MAN THAT HE IS SUPERIOR TO THE WOMAN. ITS A SHAME THAT AFRICANS REFUSE TO GROW. WAS IT ONLY THE MEN THAT VOTED FOR THE PRESIDENT? THE WOMEN VOTED FOR HIM ALSO. IF HE PASSES THE LAW, HE WILL BECOME A HERO & SET A GOOD PRECEDENCE FOR OTHER AFRICAN SHAMELESS LEADERS.

MR KOKO MEEKY, LAGOS, NIGERIA.

THIS LAW REALLY NEEDS TO BE AMENDED. WOMEN WERE CREATED TO BE A SUPPORT OF THE MAN HENCE THEY NEED TO ACCORD THEM WITH THE MAXIMUM RESPECT NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE. IT IS VERY WRONG FOR WOMEN TO BE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO DISOBEY THEIR HUSBANDS. ANY WOMAN WHO THINKS SHE CANNOT OBEY HER HUSBAND SHOULD REMAIN UNMARRIED.

MAVIS AGBAKLI MAWUSE, OBUASI, GHANA

IN ORDER TO KEEP THE PEACE AND ENSURE ORDER THROUGHOUT SOCIETY, IT IS BETTER TO FOLLOW THE REASONING AND THE OPINIONS OF THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION, RATHER THAN IMPOSE A DEMOCRATIC LAW FROM ABOVE. WESTERN-INSPIRED LAWS APPARENTLY CREATE HAVOC AND DISORDER, AND POTENTIALLY BLOODSHED AND CIVIL WAR. I MUST REJECT THIS.

ERIK, KINSHASA, DRC

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FAMOUS QUOTES

KEVIN LOWE

(I WAS UNABLE TO LOCATE ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION ON KEVIN LOWE.

"THERE'S NO SHAME IN IGNORANCE, ONLY IN PERSISTENT IGNORANCE."