

absence of the imprisoned men. They had to work to provide for their families. The majority of women were ready to work secretly for the revolution. Women carried messages, money and weapons. Most women, regardless of their age, participated in this. They were very effective and ready to die in the fight against the enemy. They distributed leaflets and carried letters to the leadership. Women were the lifeline of the revolution.

What is the present situation of women in the camp?

After the return of the revolution, it is much better. The revolution helps in solving economic difficulties to some extent, but not totally due to the skyrocketing inflation. Women also want to give more to the revolution, but those who are not educated don't know how. That's where the role of women cadres comes in. We work by involving ourselves in the problems of the women and providing the most effective solutions. Generally, more Palestinian women are ready to enter the labor market now, to help the men provide for the family, because of inflation. I would like to mention that the rightist leadership's corruption of our people, by giving them money without their working, serves to keep women inactive. Most educated women don't participate in that corruptive policy; they want to be productive.

What importance does the PFLP put on women's work and how do people react?

The PFLP stresses the importance of work among women and their role in the revolution. The Palestinian Women's Organization, as a mass organization, is a manifestation of that policy. The PFLP puts a lot of efforts and resources into furthering women's role and organizing. The PFLP's women comrades enjoy a great deal of respect among the masses. They represent the educated women who are concerned with the active women supporters in the camp.

What problems do you face in your work?

The most common problem is widespread illiteracy among Palestinian women. We try to solve this by mass literacy campaigns organized by the Palestinian Women's Organization. Another problem is the limited education young Palestinian women receive because of backward traditions in our society. Another common problem is the oppression of women by men. Some men forbid their wives and sisters to go out and participate in activities.

What was the reaction to the Zionists' leaflets warning the masses not to cooperate with the revolution?

This was a form of psychological warfare against our people. The women generally understand this and are not afraid of these methods. The majority of our women have stressed the importance of keeping the revolution's offices in the camps and among the people.

On the Frontlines

Abu Galeb, PFLP military commander in the Sidon area, member of the Palestine National Salvation

Front's military leadership in the South and liaison officer between the Palestinian forces and the Lebanese nationalist forces.

How are the relations between the Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist forces in the area?

The relationship here is a model one, based on clear designation of the tasks of the Palestinian forces. The Sidon area is the ideal of Palestinian-Lebanese relations. This is the result of clear awareness, especially on the part of our comrades in the Popular Nasserite Organization, led by comrade Mustafa Saad. There is fully organized cooperation, with joint committees for political, military, security and mass affairs, between the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) and the Lebanese National Unity Front. We have a common understanding. We stress our satisfaction with the level and form of cooperation.

What is the situation on the front lines facing the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army?

These front lines, especially the axis at Kfar Falous, are directly tied to the overall political solution. In view of the enemy plans for sectarian division in Lebanon, the Jezzine area has vital importance, because most of the people who live there are our Christian brothers. Jezzine's importance is the reason for the status quo on the front lines; there is ongoing fighting, but without any decisive change in the military situation. This area is a card that 'Israel' holds on to through its puppet Lahd of the SLA. Sometimes the clashes are escalated, and the nationalist areas are shelled, like Sidon. The front lines heat up when the enemy tries to reduce pressure on the fascist forces of Gemayel in East Beirut.

This front ranges from Ain al Meer to Kamkha, facing the enemy from Kfar Falous to Jezzine. The nationalist side of the front lines is controlled by the Popular Liberation Army (Forces of the Martyr Marouf Saad), with the support of the PNSF forces. We have given a great deal of sacrifices on this front. We have been expecting that the Israelis would push Lahd to occupy the coastal road. That's why our forces are on alert. We are satisfied with our military preparedness. 'Israel' and its puppets will have a different battle from what they have been used to.

How is the security situation in Ain al Hilweh?

This issue has not been completely solved, but the security situation in the camp is acceptable. It is stable which fulfills the demand of our people in the camp. There are several reasons for the delay in solving the security issue to our satisfaction. After the forced withdrawal of the Zionist army, we were faced by the fascists in the area (specifically Geagea's April 1985 attack.) We had to concentrate a big force to defend the camps, and we entered a battle that we won. Another reason is the situation in the camps in Beirut. We must also mention that Arafat's rightist leadership doesn't want us to attain optimal security. They try to ignite the situation. Still, the PNSF has control over the situation in the camps in the Sidon area. We have a project for establishing a deterrent force responsible for security in the camp. This force is nearly ready and will be on the ground before the end of March. Also, the PNSF has a security committee to solve problems and close gaps. It is working well.

