

Palestinian camps. These employ poor Palestinian and Lebanese women, chiefly those from the families of martyrs. The aim is to encourage these women's participation in the revolution, while giving them the opportunity to support themselves and their families. The PFLP is working to develop these activities and extend them to most areas where there are Palestinians living.

SUPPORTING THE FAMILIES OF MARTYRS AND PRISONERS

The PFLP's social committees everywhere show special concern in caring for the families of our martyrs in a thorough and correct way. As soon as any PFLP fighter is martyred, representatives of the social committee visit the family to give condolences, having in mind their social and economic situation and political sentiments. The social committee makes all needed preparations for the martyr's burial; it pays for the burial expenses and provides whatever is necessary for ceremonies up to the 40th day commemoration.

The martyr is listed in the records of the PLO's institution for martyrs and prisoners. The PFLP's social committee continues to pay the martyr's salary to the family, including increments that the martyr would have gotten with promotion if he had lived. The committee visits the family at least five times each year on religious holidays, May 1st, Martyrs' Day and the PFLP's anniversary. The martyrs' families receive monetary gifts based on their economic needs. The social visits aim to consolidate relations with these families, keeping them informed about political developments and recruiting them into the PFLP's mass organizations.

The social committee keeps a file on each family, updating it annually to make sure that the martyr's salary is enough to sustain the family. The social committee provides health insurance to the martyrs' families, so that they receive the medical care they need free of charge. The social committee also encourages nationalist and humanitarian institutions and individuals to adopt martyrs' children financially. Each year, on Martyrs' Day, the social committee arranges a commemoration for the martyrs.

The same services are provided to the families of prisoners and detainees - salary, health insurance, regular social visits, presents and honoring them on the annual Palestinian Prisoners' Day.

MEDICAL WORK

The medical field has the greatest potential for humanitarian work among the PFLP's various social services. Our masses, dispersed in different countries, live in conditions that are far from ideal in terms of health.

Overcrowding, poverty, the absence of education in health and hygiene, and the dirtiness of the camps, all contribute to general poor health and the spread of disease. Despite limited capacities, the medical aspect of the PFLP's social work is constantly improving.

The PFLP had established a clinic in every Palestinian camp in Lebanon. Some camps have medical centers, including a dental clinic and X-ray laboratory. In the camps near Tripoli in North Lebanon, there is a clinic and a polyclinic. In the camps near Beirut, there are clinics in Burj Al Barajneh, Shatila and Mar Elias camps. In the Baalbeck area of East Lebanon, there is a clinic in Al Jaleel camp. In South Lebanon, there is a clinic and medical center in Ain Al Hilweh camp, a clinic in Miyeh Miyeh camp, and a clinic and medical center in Rashidiya camp.

In Syria, there is a clinic and dispensary in Yarmouk camp. The PFLP is not now operating other clinics in Syria, partly due to the fact that basic medical needs are generally covered here by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (P R C S). Moreover, the PFLP has chosen to concentrate its capacities in Lebanon, where the constant state of war has created a more dramatic need.

In general, the PFLP's clinics are not intended as an alternative to those of the PRCS. The PFLP's clinics play a supportive role, in the light of the fact that PRCS resources have historically been distributed in accordance with the PLO leadership's priorities. At times, in accordance with the political situation prevailing within the PLO, there has been good cooperation. A good example was during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The PFLP's clinics and entire medical staff were put at the disposition of the PRCS. However, with the onset of the PLO's current crisis, the situation became more difficult. With the right-wing leadership's control of finances, the amount of money allotted to the PRCS's work has decreased in places where the need is great.

The PFLP's clinics are open to all, free of charge, regardless of political affiliation. Medicine, when available, is given free. Through the PFLP's medical committee, full health insurance is provided to all members and their families, as well as to the families of martyrs and detainees. The PFLP's clinics are open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. In states of alert and emergency cases, they are open 24 hours a day, every day. Normally, thirty to forty patients are treated a day on the average, depending on the conditions in the camp where the clinic is located. In war times, the count is much higher.

PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

The PFLP's medical committee works in the preventive field as well as the curative. It conducts educational seminars in cooperation with mass

organizations, such as the Palestinian Women's Organization and the Palestinian Youth Organization. These cover topics such as first aid, baby care, family care, in addition to educational seminars for the fighters. The medical committee provides vaccinations for children, free of charge.

In Lebanon, the PFLP's medical committee works closely together with the medical facilities of the Lebanese National Movement, providing doctors, nurses and medicine when needed. In cooperation with the Red Cross of the socialist countries, the PFLP's medical committee provides treatment for cases that cannot be treated locally. This includes any member of the PFLP and their families, any fighter and their families, and the masses in general.

Besides extending medical treatment, the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, assist the medical work in other ways, providing medicine, training doctors and nurses, and donating funds for building clinics. The medical committee needs all the help that can be provided. Every tablet of medicine is necessary. As yet, many fighters don't have a first aid kit, which they should have, for this could save their life in an emergency situation. The medical committee has definite information that medicine sent to the PFLP sometimes rots in the depots of Arab countries before reaching its destination. Many times, medicine that has been donated never arrives. This is due to political reasons, which affect even this humanitarian aspect of the work.

The PFLP's medical committee provides scholarships for Palestinian youth wanting to be trained as doctors. Many return after their studies to devote their work to their cause and people, working with the PRCS or PFLP medical facilities, but there is still a need for more medical personnel in all Palestinian camps.

The medical committee also sends doctors to specialize in various fields of medicine. All specializations are needed. In the interim before all these cadres have completed their specialization, the medical committee has established contacts with specialists (gynecologists, surgeons, eye doctors, etc.) to which patients can be referred by the PFLP's own clinics. The fees are then paid by the medical committee.

The medical committee has a supervisory role in relation to all the other social and mass organizations of the PFLP. Medical cadres make regular visits to the nurseries, kindergartens, military training centers and hostels for the fighters. They supervise the hygiene in washrooms and kitchens to keep them up to standard. They regularly visit military bases to attend to the fighters' health needs.

The main obstacle for the work of the PFLP's medical committee is financial limitations. Thus, the committee welcomes all donations and all forms of support - medicine, equipment, medical personnel, etc. ●