

legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Finally, they appealed to the UN to provide international protection to the Palestinian people, and to put an end to the repressive Zionist practices.

This conscious initiative was made to escalate the popular uprising and reaffirm its goals of freedom and independence. Meanwhile, Palestinian women are participating side-by-side with men in confronting the Zionist occupation authorities and foiling all political conspiracies, oppression and terrorism which aim at aborting the intifada.

A Palestinian woman, the mother of the martyr, Abdul Salam Eftaha, was asked by a journalist if she would allow her other sons to participate in the intifada. She answered, «As long as I'm alive, I will teach my sons and other youths how to fight. We want to live in peace, and we want the occupation troops to leave our land, and I don't care what the cost will be to achieve this aim.»

Meanwhile, in an interview about the situation in the Palestinian camps with a correspondent in January, 1988, 24-year-old Asma Kharoub said, «It is true that life in the camps is very bad, but when you are face-to-face with your enemy and you do everything to confront him, the situation becomes very good.»

Last August, a *Guardian* correspondent wrote how he saw a little girl, under six, attacking Zionist soldiers and asking them to leave her land and her roof top where they were posted, and to stop throwing tear gas in her bedroom.

## POPULAR RESISTANCE

The previous months have witnessed hundreds of courageous acts by women. In addition to throwing stones and molotovs, and attacking the military authorities' centers, many women have attacked Zionist soldiers with knives or other sharp instruments.

On December 14, 1987, Aisha Ekdah, a 25-year-old handicapped person, attacked an Israeli officer and hit

him in the face with her shoe. She was arrested, but the military authorities in Abasan Al Kubra were later forced to release her after women attacked their center with stones, and refused to leave until Aisha Ekdah was released.

On June 2, 1988, a Jerusalem woman shot at Zionist settlers who were walking in Shamir Park which is near the Knesset. She killed one, and the second ran away before the police arrested her. Likewise, another woman from Maghazi Camp in the Gaza Strip attacked a soldier with a pair of scissors, wounding him seriously.

On September 26, 1988, a military court in Nablus sentenced Rania Tawfiq to five years in prison for stabbing a soldier who was guarding the military governor's office in the city. In the same city, on October 1, 1988, a woman was arrested for throwing boiling water on a military patrol walking the streets of the city, causing serious burns to three soldiers. In the town of Shuweika, near Tulkarem, a woman was arrested for beating a Zionist soldier on his back and neck with a hammer.

In January, in Tarqumiya, near Hebron, Naema Abdul Fattah was arrested for attacking a soldier with an iron bar and trying to take away his weapon after wounding him. Also worth mentioning is in February, 1988, an older woman called two soldiers to her home and then threw dust in their eyes while attempting to take away their weapons.

All of these cases prove the unparalleled courage of Palestinian women in confronting the occupation authorities. They attest to their determination to continue the intifada until the attainment of freedom and independence.

## THE ECONOMIC FIELD

In the intifada's escalation from partial civil disobedience to total national civil disobedience, the Palestinian women have played a prominent role in the boycotting of Zionist products and replacing them with locally produced goods. Women also play an active role

through giving lectures and visiting homes to inform the people about this process. The export of many Israeli products to the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been sharply reduced. For example, during the first year of the intifada, the sale of make-up fell by approximately 70%. According to the Israeli daily, *Yediot Ahranot* (September 20, 1988), most factories and companies, which depend on the West Bank and Gaza Strip for marketing their products, have been negatively affected or unable to expand their production; this applies especially to companies dealing in luxury items, furniture, carpets and women's clothing; their sales have fallen 70%-90%. It is apparent that these sectors are closely related to women.

The occupation authorities have intensified their economic siege against the Palestinian people because of the continuation and escalation of the intifada. The conscious positive response to these measures was self-sufficiency and returning to the land to cultivate it. Naturally, it is the Palestinian women who have been prominent in this field. They have raised slogans in compliance with the UNL calls, for example, «Lentils are the meat of the poor,» «Wheat and oil are the essentials of the home» and «Organization is the result of planning.»

Thus, «victory gardens» emerged with the cultivating of small gardens of green vegetables, onions, tomatoes and other produce. Additionally, Palestinian women are preserving fruits, pickling vegetables, raising chickens and baking bread at home. They have established cooperatives and increased bazaars to sell all sorts of low-priced, home-made products in support of needy families.

Girls have played a prominent role in the voluntary work committees, especially in helping with the olive and citrus fruit harvests, the production of olive oil and the marketing of these products, despite the occupation authorities' new measures aimed at preventing farmers from harvesting their products.