

increased, allowing women to demand equality in wages and benefits. This also advanced women's participation in syndicates, and the founding of new associations and committees, such as the Women's Work Committee, the Working Women's Committee and the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees.

Social activities

Palestinian women have managed to change some of the old traditions, such as the wearing of veils and adornment, and choosing a husband. Women were active in starting youth centers, clubs, summer camps, kindergartens, nurseries, literacy campaigns, political and cultural debates, and nursing and first aid courses. Women have given great attention to the families of martyrs and prisoners, and formed various committees to this purpose. A noticeable social phenomenon is marriages between Palestinians of the 1948 occupied territories and those of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Another such phenomenon is refusal to marry outside the occupied territories, especially if this would impose emigration. Women have also defined social relations on a correct basis, promoting discussion of important political and economic questions, rather than gossip and talk about the latest fashions. Through all of this, women have managed to gradually change the old view of women as being only fit for housework.

Cultural activities

Women have played a great role in raising cultural awareness among the Palestinian people and protecting the national heritage. Many committees were formed to preserve traditional handicrafts, and magazines are published, such as *The Heritage and Society Magazine*. Women have engaged in literary activities, writing stories and poems, and working in the press. Women have contributed to art through paintings and sculpture. They participate in folkdancing and song groups, and have been active in the initiation of theater groups. Women have also devoted attention to organizing libraries and engaged in literary, historical and social research.

Conclusions and tasks

Through this preliminary survey of the struggle of Palestinian women, we can conclude the following:

1. The struggle of Palestinian women is directly linked to the overall situation of the Palestinian people's cause and revolution. It is affected by the crises, wars and conspiracies from which our people suffer, and especially by the Zionist occupation, which has left its mark on every aspect of Palestinian society.

2. The number of working women, their participation in syndicates, and their initiation of associations and committees, is on the increase.

3. There is responsiveness to academic and professional education.

4. The leadership has passed from national bourgeoisie to politically educated and working women from the lower strata of the petit bourgeoisie. Related to this, the nature of women's activities has changed from being charity-oriented to more comprehensive struggle.

5. Despite relative development, the man's view of the role of women is still superficial. Men still try to confine women to housework, which limits her freedom and paralyzes her abilities.

6. Despite the attention of some leftist organizations to support the women's struggle, this is below the required level. The organizations' intentions are not reinforced by programs based on comprehensive study of women's problems and the means for resolving them. This retards the advance of the women's movement and the emergence of women with leadership experience, capable of holding key positions in the associations in the occupied territories.

7. Women's participation in the military field has been limited to a number of vanguards.

8. Energies are scattered among a great number of women's frameworks.

The Palestinian revolution in general, and women in particular, have urgent tasks in order to promote the advance of the women's struggle in the occupied territories:

1. Ideological struggle against old customs and beliefs regarding women and their role and against the laws of the reactionary Arab regimes and the Zionist occupation which perpetuate a backward attitude towards women (those governing inheritance, wages, polygamy, divorce, etc.). The revolutionary organizations must adopt women's issues through proper study of their situation and struggle experience, in order to develop this experience and spread awareness of their real role in the society.

2. Programs must be drawn up, based on thorough study among women, to provide proper solutions for daily problems through child care and employment opportunities, especially in productive fields, and for the training of women cadres.

3. Unifying efforts must be made to avoid political divisions within mass organizations. Also, quality must be given priority over quantity when establishing committees and service facilities, such as kindergartens.

4. Developing existing projects and starting more productive cooperative projects, as this would reduce unemployment and in turn emigration, while recruiting more women into the labor force.

5. Linking the women's question to the national question on the basis of a progressive orientation; pressuring the national progressive forces to devote greater attention to women's issues.

6. Concentrating efforts to increase women's participation in the struggle against the Zionist enemy, especially the armed struggle.