



Zahia Salman Promoter of Child Welfare in Lebanon

In the field of child welfare, Mrs. Zahia Salman's name represents a highlight. Ever since the foundation of the Lebanese Child Welfare Association in 1936, she has striven to organize and pool the efforts and means of both government and non-governmental organizations through private initiative as well as through legislation.

At the beginning, her main concern was to point out the importance of the preschool age in forming the future citizen. Through her initiative, the first day care centers were established in Lebanon in 1937 and supported by the Lebanese Child Welfare Association.² These centers were also used to educate mothers as how to feed, clean and raise their children in a proper and healthy way.

One of the projects that cater to the needs of unprivileged youth was a study in which she proposed the establishment of a girls' reformatory to house delinquent girls instead of putting them in women's prison. This proposal has been accepted and is being studied by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Among her many accomplishments, the following are most noteworthy:

- Instituting Child's Day in Lebanon, 1937. This day falls every year on the 22nd of March and has been extended into "Child Week". Mrs. Salman founded the National Committee for Child's Day, of which she became president.
- Participating in the foundation and activities of several associations, including The Lebanese Protection Association, The Lebanese Committee for Fighting Illiteracy and The Family Planning Association.
- Membership in the Women's League, the International Council for Women, the International Union for Child Welfare and the Asiatic Women's Council Headquarters, London.
- Representing Lebanon at a large number of national

and international conferences on child welfare.

- Vice-presidency of the National Commission for the IYC.

In recognition of her multiple services, the Lebanese Government has granted her the Medal of Golden Merit, 1948; the Cedar Merit (officer's grade), 1958; the Public Education Medal, 1963; the Cedar Merit (commander's grade) 1969; the Golden Merit of Lebanon, 1974.

She also holds two decorations (1963, 1974) from the International Organization for Peace, Arts, Education and Civil Rights, head-quartered in Paris.

In spite of fifty years of relentless activity, Mrs. Salman refuses to lay down arms and insists on continuing the struggle which the present circumstances require in Lebanon.

Equal Rights to Social Security Between Sexes in Belgium⁽¹⁾

According to the Belgian official bulletin, the husband will have the choice from now on (June 1980), to remain at home as housekeeper and benefit from social security granted to his working wife.

Before now, the husband performing house duties had no right to social security unless he was unable to do outside work. In 1978, the European Economic Council urged Belgium to give up sexual discrimination regarding social security. The husband's right was recognized last summer by two Belgian courts which confirmed the claims of two husbands to social security while the S.S. Fund had denied it to them.

1. Al-Anwar, Beirut, June 1980.

(1) From an Interview by Nagla Husni (IWSAW).
(2) Al-Raida Vol. II, No. 8, May 1979, p. 5.