

In February, the Israeli occupation army staged a new week-long invasion north of its self-proclaimed 'security zone' - killing 17 Lebanese citizens, terrorizing over 20 villages and detaining over 2000 southerners. The Israeli air force has staged three bombing raids in 1986, against Ain al Hilweh and Miye Miyeh, outside of Saida. The most recent, on April 7th, was particularly massive with six US-made jets making six bombing runs, dropping 220 kg high-explosive bombs and firing air-to-ground missiles. The Zionists declared that the targets were «terrorist bases», but

among the 10 people injured were an eight year old girl and a six year old boy.

Saida itself has been hit by several car bombs - on February 5th and another on April 10th which killed three citizens and injured 35. Another car bomb exploded in Ain al Hilweh, killing four schoolchildren and three other people. Local sources thought that it was actually headed for Saida's center, but was stopped early and exploded in the camp. These attacks are in addition to continued shelling of southern villages by the Israeli and South Lebanon Army forces, and the ongoing battle bet-

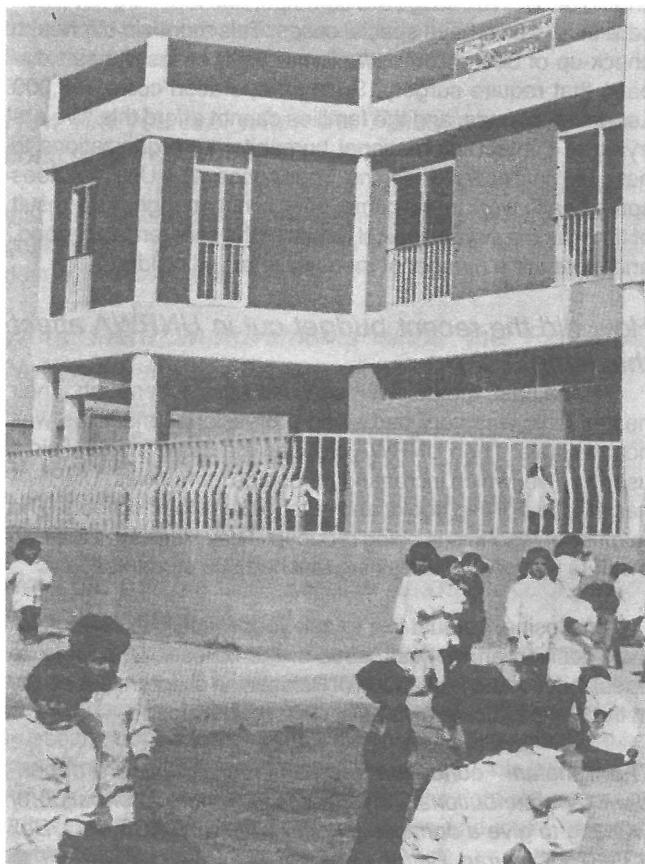
ween nationalists and fascists at the frontline between Jezzine and Saida.

In the face of all this actual and anticipated aggression, there is no reason and no room for internal Lebanese nationalist, or Lebanese-Palestinian battles. A free and democratic Lebanon can only be achieved by the national and democratic forces' struggle against the opponents of this goal. It will never be achieved by squabbling among the national forces, each trying to improve its own position at the expense of others.

Visit to Ain al Hilweh

In late February, a member of the «Democratic Palestine» staff visited Saida and the two nearby Palestinian camps, Ain al Hilweh and Miye Miyeh. Following are interviews with residents of the camps and activists involved in various forms of mass work.

Ghassan Kanafani Kindergarten



Um Nizar, director of the Ghassan Kanafani kindergarten in Ain al Hilweh, is a 35 year old Palestinian woman, mother of four children, ages 10 to 18. For many years she has worked in the Ghassan Kanafani Cultural Foundation. We interviewed her in Ain al Hilweh in late February.

Will you give us an idea about the Kanafani Foundation and the kindergarten?

After the martyrdom of Ghassan Kanafani in 1972, his Danish wife and his friends established a cultural foundation in his name. In particular, they had the Palestinian children in mind, since Ghassan had great love for children and wrote many stories for them. In 1972, the first kindergarten of the foundation was set up in the Badawi camp (North Lebanon). It was very simple and served 100 children. The second kindergarten was set up in Ain al Hilweh with 50 children. Later several other kindergartens were started in other camps.

In Ain al Hilweh, we started with a small rented house, then expanded until reaching our current state. Today we have a building designed especially as a kindergarten. It is in the shape of a hexagon on an area of 1500 m². We have 300 children, divided in two shifts - morning and afternoon. We have six rooms with 25 children in each. Our staff consists of 16 educational personnel and a supervisor, three cleaning ladies, a bus driver and a gardener. Activities include free play outdoors and indoors, science lessons, story reading, music and dramatics. We give a full nutritious meal with every shift. We attend to the health of our children. There is a monthly health check-up and we make sure that the children have been vaccinated. We take care of the social and psychological aspects as well. We become like the children's second parents and try to give them a better life than is possible at home.