

THE PROTECTION OF MOTHERHOOD

A number of steps are being taken in Greece to support the working mother. The protection of motherhood is a vital factor for the progress of any country. To help the working mother in the cities as well as in the rural areas the government has built many day care centers and has scheduled the construction of even more — a necessary step to ease the burden women face.

The Deputy Minister of Social Welfare has issued a decision according to which day care centers in rural areas are to stay open during the summer to assist Greek farmwomen who work on the land. The children of Greek farmwomen are no longer forced to accompany their

mothers when they work in the fields. (Three hundred day care centers are now operating in rural areas during the summer period.)

In 1981 there were 741 day care centers in the state network. Recently 181 new centers have been opened. A Day Care Center Founda-



Children at a Halloween party in one of the national day care centers.

tion was set up in Larisa to look after the children of women working in the civil service.

"PIKPA", a state institution which shelters unwanted and abandoned children as well

as the mentally retarded, has constructed 381 new day care centers for children and 20 for the care of infants.

For the first time in Greece, summer camps have been operating for children, who,

are handicapped and mentally retarded, as well as for the aged.

The Athens and Thessaloniki Foundations have opened 7 new day care centers. The standing orders for the National Day Care Center Network were amended in order to improve the quality of services provided and buildings to house 78 new day care centers were brought under the State Investment Program.

Action Planned for 1984

The foundation and operation of 200 new national day care centers is scheduled for 1984. In addition, a Bill will be presented to Parliament con-

cerning the protection of motherhood. This bill foresees an increase in maternity leave in the private sector from 12 weeks to 16, as in the public sector, and provides for proper facilities in the upbringing of children. The bill is presently in the hands of the Minister of Social Security.

The protection of motherhood has been one of the major targets of the Greek women's organizations. Through their struggles and with the support and co-operation of the government progress is being made. The working mother has gained the support necessary for her own personal development as well as that of her children.