

Editorial

Cassandra, a celebrated British journalist, once said that it was the public responsibility of the press to "publish and be damned". For many years, and in many countries, journalists and their employers have responded to this challenge with varying degrees of success in the face of libel laws, repressive governments and apathetic readers. The cause of social justice has been upheld time and again by the explosive power of public disclosure on a massive scale. Too often we dismiss newspapers as sensation seeking and ruthless in their pursuit of a good story, while overlooking their social roles as commentators on significant contemporary issues, providers of a forum for minority viewpoints and exposers of petty bureaucratic tyrants. That some are sensational and biased should not blind us to their potential as allies when all over Australia governments, State and Federal, are seeking to sweep child and family welfare issues under the carpet. An informed and responsible press is an essential attribute of a democracy.

It was with these sentiments in mind that this Journal recently announced the establishment of an award of \$750 to be made annually to the professional journalist in Australia who writes the most significant article on an aspect of

child and family welfare. The Award has been instituted in consultation with the Australian Journalists Association, and will be made according to accepted criteria. The first Award will be made in October, 1979, at the annual dinner of Australian Child and Family Welfare. We hope that this recognition of the important role of journalism will be reflected in a high standard of presentation of issues in the field of child and family welfare.

Readers will notice that this issue appears under the sponsorship of L. & S. Educational Services. At a time of escalating costs we are grateful to L. & S. for supporting us, and proud to be associated with a company producing high quality educational material. The use of well-designed teaching aids incorporating well-researched material based on modern theories of education is a long way from the "Chalk and talk" of the traditional classroom of our childhood.

We hope that future issues will also attract sponsors.

As you no doubt have noticed this is a double edition of the Journal, and the committee also apologises for its late appearance.

Cliff Picton