

COUNCIL REPORT

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT?

"Under New Management" is not quite the term to use in announcing some changes in the auspices of "Australian Child and Family Welfare". But from this issue, there is a significant change.

"Australian Child and Family Welfare" has always been the quarterly journal of the Child and Family Welfare Council of Australia. Until now it has been published by the Children's Welfare Council's behalf. To fully reflect its national character, and as part of the establishment of a National Secretariat of the Council, the journal is now published by the Child and Family Welfare Council of Australia.

The Child and Family Welfare Council of Australia? Established in 1971, the Council is a national co-ordinating body representing the voluntary child welfare and family welfare organizations in Australia. The Council has its membership in all States and Territories, and through its state organizations represents over 500 voluntary child welfare agencies. Associate membership is also open to agencies and individuals.

The objects of the Council include:

- ★ To increase knowledge and advance popular understanding of the needs of all children and the opportunities and the services that are essential to their health, growth and well-being.
- ★ To encourage and develop services designed to conserve and strengthen home life and parental care for children, and to help the child welfare agencies and the communities of the nation to provide essential social services for children and their families.
- ★ To initiate discussion, consultation and co-operation between

voluntary and statutory organizations engaged in work for the welfare of children and/or young persons and their families.

The Commonwealth Government has made an annual grant of \$20,000 to the Council, which has made possible the appointment of the Council's first full-time Executive Director.

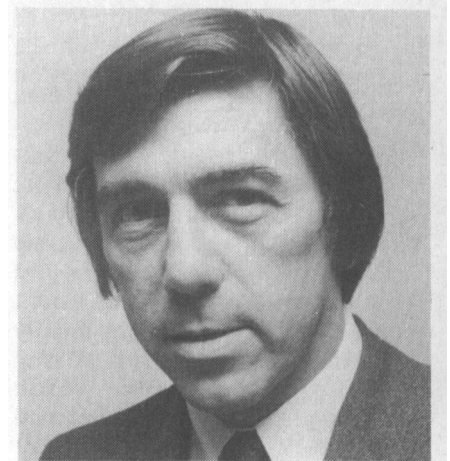
On April 11th this year, the Minister for Social Security, the Hon. Margaret Guilfoyle, launched the National Secretariat of the Council at a special gathering at the National Library in Canberra.

Senator Guilfoyle said that the purpose of the Commonwealth grant was to enable the Council to undertake activities including the engagement of professional staff, that promote consultation, liaison and co-ordination between the Council, its constituent organizations and government bodies on matters relating to the child and the family. The grant would also enable the Council to promote educational and other programmes relating to the child and the family and to undertake other activities that may assist the Office of Child Care to improve the planning and delivery of children's services and family support services. Specifically, the Council would undertake a national study of approved children's homes.

"From those objectives you will understand that we hope to have a close and continuing association with your federal secretariat and we hope that the exchange of information that comes from you will be of valuable assistance to the Office of Child Care and to the government in the way in which it may plan its programme in the future," the Minister said.

What is to be the role of the Council? The danger with an organization such as the Child and

Council now Publishers of Journal



Graeme Gregory
Executive Director

Family Welfare Council is that it could remain with "the child" and "the family" — two gross generalizations. The test of the efficacy of the Council and its members is what it actually achieves in the life of actual children and actual families in the Australian community. Another danger is that we become merely a co-ordinating body whose function is to co-ordinate the co-ordinators. Again, the measure of our success is not how many members we have, how many State bodies are affiliated with us, but what we achieve for children and families.

I suggest that informed child advocacy on behalf of all children should be the Council's prime goal. If our concern is primarily for *all* children, then naturally we will be concerned with children separated from their families, just as we will be concerned about children in families where disruption is occurring, but who remain at home. We will also be concerned with children in families that apparently function happily and wholesomely. We will be concerned with changes in what the term "family" describes, for this *is* changing.

As we understand more about family functioning, what the family provides for the child, so we will be able, if we wish, to provide more effective services that build up the quality and strengths of the family, more effective services to the vulnerable family, and more effective substitute experiences for the child separated from his own family.

It is this type of understanding and the sharing of it, that I believe could become a major task of this Council.

The Child and Family Welfare Council invites participation in its work from organizations and individuals. In particular, we are looking for an enlarged membership, and I would welcome enquiries in this regard.

GRAEME GREGORY,
Executive Director.

TANDBERG HAS A COMMENT



IYC Committee appointed



Inaugural meeting of the IYC National Committee of Non-Government Organisations, held in Sydney on June 12.

An International Year of the Child (IYC) National Committee of Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) has been appointed by the Minister for Social Security, Senator Margaret Guilfoyle. Twenty national organizations are represented on the Committee, which is chaired by Mr. Greg Taylor of the UNICEF Committee of Australia.

This National Committee will work closely with the Committee of Commonwealth Ministers which has been established to co-ordinate the national response to the International Year of the Child and the Commonwealth/State Ministers Committee which will ensure close co-operation between the Commonwealth and the State Government in respect to planning for the IYC. Most importantly, however, the National Committee will be asked to stimulate and co-ordinate activity in the non-government sector. Organisations invited to take part in the Committee's work are therefore those which are national in their focus and have the capacity to involve a wide range of other groups and individuals in working towards the IYC.

Included in the membership of the Committee is the Child and Family Welfare Council of Australia, represented by its Executive Director, Graeme Gregory.

A Secretariat has been established for the Committee, with Mrs. Helen L'Orange as Executive Director. The address of the Secretariat is:

1st Floor,
117 Clarence Street,
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000
Telephone: (02) 290 8351, 290 8352