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EDITORIAL

The Aboriginal Child was born in May, 1973. This year he goes to school.

What lies in store for him? To what extent will the school and the teachers who will shape his day - and his future - help him to become what he is capable of becoming? How welcome will he be made to feel in this new environment: how welcome as an individual with his own unique blend of talents, of comparative strengths and weaknesses, how welcome as an Aboriginal individual?

We share with you our hopes for him. We would hope his teacher

- . receives him as a learner, believing him to be capable of achieving the whole range of the school goals and knowing that the arts and skills of teaching are to stimulate and to tempt each child forward along the path of learning;
- . enjoys his presence;
- . nurtures his growing self-hood, and offers him the support he needs to discover his potentialities, to continue to build a positive and constructive image of himself, so that he may value himself and others;
- . accords a fundamental respect to his parents, to the specific Aboriginal community to which he belongs and to the various Aboriginal cultures which constitute an important and a unique component of the culture of Australia;
- . establishes a classroom climate of warmth, challenge and support, in which all children grow to delight in diversity and to prize not only those who resemble themselves, but also those who, in a variety of ways, differ from them.

Like his parents, we send him off with such high hopes!

1979 is the International Year of the Child. International years offer a spotlight and a promise. Throughout the year there will be sponsored a variety of activities designed to make all of

us more conscious of the children for whose welfare we bear, both directly and indirectly, a responsibility. But a heightened consciousness, of itself, achieves little. If it leads to a reassessment of our role and contribution, if it leads us to new commitments, to a search for new skills in fostering the educational and personal well-being of children, then the International Year of the Child will fulfil its promise, the results of which will continue to be discernible in subsequent years.

As Australia joins with the international community throughout the year in its endeavours on behalf of children, it must ensure that its hopes and its actions embrace the Aboriginal children of Australia. Their needs and rights are at least as urgent as those of other children - for many, recognition and acceptance by the school and its staff are most urgent.

As we wish you success in your work this forthcoming year, we would particularly ask you to welcome into your classroom this Aboriginal child.

B. W. Lott

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