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**Portable Processor**

Word processing is rapidly becoming one of the most popular applications for microcomputers. New machines are being designed with features specifically geared to this function. These include 80 column screens (to display the full width of a typed letter), built-in disk drives (sometimes a word processing disk is even included in the price) and programmable function keys which are used to manipulate the text. Some machines, like the Ajile pictured here, are designed to be portable — ideal for journalists or jet-setting executives!

# Word Perfect

**With the right software, your micro is transformed into a word processor, editing, organising and storing your words and even correcting your spelling mistakes**

Word processing is one of the most useful tasks that can be performed on a microcomputer. But the phrase 'word processing' has hindered public understanding of this powerful tool. 'How can you process words?' is the usual reaction.

Until very recently tube and bus advertisements offered 'word processors for your office'. What these ads neglected to say was that their expensive hardware was no more than a microcomputer specially adapted to run word processing programs. Word processors are less flexible than the ordinary microcomputer, because they can only perform one task.

Perhaps the kind of program that the phrase 'word processing' describes should have been called 'computer-assisted typing'. With the

addition of a printer, most home computers can now run some form of word processing or text editing program. But it is not until computer owners try word processing for themselves that they realise how useful such a program is.

When used as a word processor, a computer displays words on the screen as they are typed in, just as a typewriter prints them on paper. The larger microcomputers can display 80 characters across the screen, representing your 'page'. On smaller computers the user requires more patience. He has to put up with a much narrower screen and on some models has to allow for the lack of lower case (small) letters. The user also has to remember that the smaller machine can only store a limited amount of text.