... I think first that by our teaching and research we may show students that general practice is alive, a changing, challenging, and satisfying discipline with an assured future for those whose qualities of head and heart suit them for it. Second, I like to think we can demonstrate to our academic colleagues that our standards of excellence in teaching, research and patient care are similar to their own when applied to other problems. Third, and most difficult of all, we have an obligation to try to conceptualise more accurately and precisely the roles of the general practitioner of the future. For example, the future meaning of the expression 'personal doctor' and 'doctor-patient relationship' must be examined, explored and charted along the lines so ably pioneered by Balint.

... I believe that medical practice in all its forms, but especially in general practice, is a first rate career.

REFERENCE

Professor R. Scott,
*James Mackenzie Professor of General Practice, University of Edinburgh, Scotland*

**Academic Departments of General Practice**

... It (The National Health Service Act) widened the gulf between the specialist and the generalist. Academic teaching and research were almost exclusively centred on the hospital and the gulf, which was at first an administrative one, began to assume academic, professional and economic features which tended to intensify the problems of communication and understanding between these two major branches of the profession.

... My own view is that teaching and research in general practice must be securely based on internal medicine and its supporting laboratory and para-clinical disciplines. A department of general practice is merely an extension into the community of the teaching and research interests of medicine. I, therefore, prefer the full title incorporated in the ordinance constituting the James Mackenzie Chair in Edinburgh University, i.e. 'medicine in relation to general practice'.

... Formal lectures have been abandoned. The weekly seminar is thus the only vehicle by which the practical experience of each individual student can be integrated and systematized. ... In the final year of our curriculum each student is free to decide on an elective period of study covering a space of two months. A substantial number volunteer for a further period in general practice.

... I do not regard the work of an academic department of general practice as being concerned with a special kind of medical activity situated somewhere at the periphery of the medical school. I do not see how it can be conceived as other than part of the mainstream of medicine.

Whatever may be the arrangements made by any particular school, I would conclude that in bringing together the personnel required it would be important to bear in mind that the major activities of such a department will be such as to cause it to lean very heavily on three groups of disciplines. First and foremost, is medicine itself, and especially internal medicine and supporting laboratory disciplines; second, the group of skills and knowledge concerned with epidemiology, including biometrics, and the computer sciences; third, the behavioural sciences and in particular sociology, social and industrial psychology and social anthropology.

**REFERENCE**