

Editorial

NOW IS THE TIME

AS AN academic body the College has refrained from saying anything that might appear to influence either side in the present conflagration between the government and the family doctors of this country. Quite naturally the College has watched with concerned interest the various moves on both sides. The College in its memorandum of association is committed "to encourage and maintain the highest standards in general practice and to preserve and improve the status of general practitioners". The Charter of the British Medical Association contains much that has already been accepted by the College as necessary if good general practice is to be pursued in the medical world of today.

The decision of the representative body of the British Medical Association to negotiate a new basis on which family practice may continue and flourish is wise and welcome. The College has much that it can contribute to the discussions which are now to proceed. No other body has studied over the years with such singleness of purpose all those facets which are required to shape the complete general practitioner. In the process of selecting its members it has gained an unrivalled insight into those qualities which go to make for good general medical practice. Its enquiries into morbidity, trends of disease, and epidemiology on the one hand and into sociological factors on the other have brought a deep understanding of the patient in illness and in health. Studies of the needs of the family doctor in medical education as an undergraduate and a post-graduate, and of his continuing education through his working life have revealed the increasing need for special opportunities fitted to his requirements. The many papers published by the College and its members on practice organization and practice premises are indicative of the growing awareness that satisfactory work can best be done in good surroundings.

On all these matters the College holds a vast store of knowledge. Now is the time for this accumulated wisdom to be placed at the service of

those who have shouldered the arduous burden of remodelling general practice so that it will continue to be the prime force in the medical care of our people. The awareness that a new framework for general practice must be constructed has been growing for a long time; the Porritt and Gillie committees have said as much, the evidence submitted to the Fraser Working party has shown it. Only in the unexpected avalanche of recent events has there been any degree of surprise. The opportunity now offered is irresistible and must be courageously grasped. We believe that when the negotiators meet round the conference table a great degree of mutual understanding will be found already to have been established. How can it be otherwise when the sole purpose is to find what is best for the patients, the doctors and for British medicine?

REPORTS FROM GENERAL PRACTICE

Enclosed with the *Journal* is the first of a new series of monographs on general practice. Each one will be complete in itself. The report of the working party on Special Vocational Training for General Practice deals with the training of the doctor from the time when he qualifies to his entry into general practice as a principal. Although the recommendations contained in it may appear far-sweeping, they are the result of much thought and represent the views of the council and of the majority of the members of the College.

The second report will be on "The Present State and Future Needs of General Practice" and will be published with the July issue of the *Journal*.

MID-SUMMER DAY PARTY

On Thursday 24 July, 1965 at 5 p.m., a party will be given at the College, 14 Princes Gate, London S.W.7. Official guests will include friends and well-wishers of the College. The weather on mid-summer day may permit of the terrace and gardens being used as well as the house.

Members may wish to take this opportunity to show the College to their families and friends. Tickets per head will cost 12s. 6d. and cheques should be sent to faculty secretaries before 1 June. No further notice of this party will be sent to members.