

VAN DIE REDAKSIE

EDITORIAL

Erkentlikheid

Now is the winter of our discontent
made glorious summer by this sun of York.

Shakespeare: *Richard II.*

Om te kla is nodig en maklik, maar onthou 'n mens altyd om dankie te sê? Dikwels val ons verstoë op dowe ore, maar as ons gelyk gegee word moet ons nie vergeet om erkentlik te wees nie. Die salarisse van mediese personeel in diens van die verskillende owerhede is 'n strydpunt wat jaar na jaar op die sakelyste van die verskillende komitees van die Mediese Vereniging verskyn, en pogings om die lot van ons voltydse kollegas te verbeter duur onverpoos voort. Hier en daar maak ons vordering, maar dit gaan, helaas, maar stadig. Nou en dan, egter, is daar 'n ligstraal en dit is ons plesier om so 'n sukses hier aan te kondig.

Die Aanstellingskomitee van die Federale Raad het by die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Raad aanbeveel:

'Dat . . . die Minister van Binnelandse Sake en ook die Minister van Gesondheid meegedeel word dat die Mediese Vereniging van Suid-Afrika met waardering kennis neem van die aandag wat gegee is aan sy verstoë vir die vergoeding vir buitengewone lang werksure van geneeshere in Owerheidsdiens, en sy dank teenoor die betrokke Owerhede uitspreek vir die reëling waarby op 'n sessiebasis vergoeding vir gereelde ekstra werksure betaal word . . .'

Die Uitvoerende Komitee het hierdie aanbeveling van die Aanstellingskomitee aanvaar.

Dit is aangenaam om dankie te kan sê en om te weet dat onderhandelinge nie immer net 'n skynspel is nie. As ons die owerhede van die grondigheid van ons versoeke kan oortuig sal hulle luister. Hiervan het ons nou bewys. In dié opsigte waar ons nog nie sukses behaal het nie, ten spyte van ons onwrikbare geloof in die regverdigheid van ons saak, sal en moet ons voortgaan om verstoë te rig, en hoe geslaagd ons pogings gaan wees sal afhang van ons eie vermoë om ons saak te stel. Die ore is daar om te luister—dit is ons wat die regte taal moet gebruik.

Ons kan dit egter nie daarby laat nie, en dit is nodig om die res van die aanvaarde aanbeveling van die Aanstellingskomitee ook aan te haal:

' . . . Dit het onder die aandag van die Mediese Vereniging gekom dat die Mediese Superintendente alleenlik ten opsigte van kliniese werk vir die gereelde werksure in aanmerking kan kom. Dit is die mening van die Vereniging dat vergoeding van gereelde werksure van langer as die neergelegde 44-uur werksweek aan alle geneeshere wat direk of indirek met die lewering van geneeskundige dienste te doen het, betaal moet word. Die Vereniging wil derhalwe versoek dat die reëling ten opsigte van mediese superintendente in heroorweging geneem word.'

Die laaste deel van die besluit is pertinent en belangrik en die onderhandelings moet voortgaan, maar intussen bly die 'dankie' staan.

How Different Are We?

Every so often one notices that an individual presumes for himself that which he does not permit another. Or he practises differently from what he preaches. Human nature being what it is, this is not surprising, but, on the other hand, it does not justify the attitude. It demonstrates a misconception aptly illustrated by the common malapropos that the exception proves the rule instead of proofing it.

One of the basic reasons for existing is to make a living. This implies the obtaining of the wherewithal to be with-it so that some other even more basic reasons for existing can be attended to. These include not just travelling seventy years through life, but also mental growth and 'ripening' of personality by growing wiser and worthier against one's background and against others. If a person never shows any profit, be it tangible or preferably spiritual and intellectual, that person is drifting and not steering a course with any true meaning—a buttless butt.

Medical people are also, to the disbelief of some, human ordinaries of common extraction, serving the common goal, working and developing towards a universal end. They live in a certain country and must abide by the common law purporting to be for the common good—like paying income tax and suffering the energy crisis. They are members of a society and must observe the existing ethical codes and accepted mode of living — like conserving human dignity and life, and being subject to monogamy and communality. They must work among the people realising that, in common with the Cabinet Minister and the refuse-remover, they are but servants. They may be servants with equal social rights, but they have the same social responsibility—as any other person. As members of a geographical com-

munity and a sociological milieu we must live according to codes which are the result of the efforts of our forebears, created for the smooth functioning of our specific way of life.

As a member of his chosen profession, the doctor must subscribe to the ethical norms of this profession as it relates to his function as medical man and to his brethren, cognisant of the fact that his function is mostly that of a sick-comforter, and that to his peers applies the very simple rule of 'do unto others'. If every doctor observes just this one basic concept, no colleague will ever need to approach the Council, the Association or the *Journal* with nauseating instances of supersession, disparagement and the like. Do we not too often see ourselves as God's gift to humanity, with our personal selves the most deserving? This 'holier-than-thou' attitude is often evident when the academician deals with his fellow-specialist, even more so when the specialist talks down to the GP, and mostly when the GP treats a patient previously seen by the 'opposition'. It is enlightening when one listens to a freshly trained idealist discussing his fraternal reception in his first practice; also striking when one hears the senior man discussing the youngsters of today.

There is no contra-indication to the hallowed practice of 'retiring to the mountain' on Christmas or New Year's day, or any other time when life pinches, to reappraise the present, relive the past and plan the future—not only to smoke or imbibe less, or to become more of a do-gooder, but to reaffirm that you are not so different from others that you deserve something from your family, your profession, or from anybody. You are a very ordinary human being earning your living as a public servant—and proud to do so.
