

THE BULLETIN

OF THE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

COLLEGE NEWS

PRESIDENT'S PRESS

Everyone knows that on President Truman's desk was a notice, "The buck stops here". The President's responsibilities in this College are not quite so awesome, but already I have faced a few things that had to be done "off the cuff". All organizations whose principal officers are part-time with onerous and not easily movable duties elsewhere find it difficult to obtain formal consultations quickly and efficiently. Of course, the full-time staff is of enormous help in this connection; they act as our memory of what has been done before and can suggest how things can be facilitated now. Luckily, harmonious relations exist between the honorary officers and the full-time staff; there are no signs of the uneasy tensions that often exist between members of the Government, who are also part-time, and the civil service.

Much has been achieved in the College's first seven years, thanks to the devoted labours of former officers and committee members. There is a good new relationship with the profession as a whole, though I still occasionally meet physicians and surgeons who wonder enviously how we sprang into being with the full panoply of Royal status. It seems that few had heard of the RMPA—which suggests how wise those were who pressed for this change of title and status.

The increasing number of medical Colleges does, of course, increase the danger that Government could divide and rule the profession. Things are not quite as simple as in the good old days when the Ministry of Health could ring up the PRCP or PRCS and expect to get an opinion that could reasonably be

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