

News Items

Dr Semyon Gluzman

In December 1980, with approval of Council, Professor Sir Desmond Pond wrote to Dr Semyon Gluzman, a Ukrainian dissident psychiatrist, offering him Membership of the College 'as a medical graduate of exceptional distinction'.

Born in 1946, Gluzman became a doctor in 1969 with a special interest in psychiatry. He declined an offer of a post in the Dnepropetrovsk Special Psychiatric Hospital in the knowledge that mentally well people were interned there solely for 'treatment' of their dissenting views. The commitment to Dnepropetrovsk of Leonid Plyushch, a well-known human rights activist and close friend of Gluzman, proved this to be correct. Gluzman now encountered considerable difficulty in obtaining a job—finally finding work in a Kiev emergency clinic.

About this time the KGB launched a spate of arrests of Ukrainian dissenters. Gluzman refused to testify in the case of one detainee, and, already suspected of being one of the authors of the 20-page samizdat document circulated in 1971, 'An *in absentia* forensic-psychiatric report on P.G. Grigorenko', he was arrested on 12 May 1972. His trial followed in October and he was, inevitably, found guilty of an offence which really only amounted to circulation of samizdat. His sentence of seven years in strict-regime labour camp and three years of exile was harsh—even by Soviet standards.

Gluzman persisted in his protest against psychiatric abuse. Together with human rights activist, Vladimir Bukovsky (interned for a period at the same camp), Gluzman wrote a manual for use by dissenters in their encounters with psychiatrists (*Manual on Psychiatry for*

Dissenters). The authors' main objective was to advise dissenters on how to avoid being diagnosed as mentally ill.

Attempts to publicize Gluzman's plight were at first unsuccessful. The fact that he was sentenced for offences other than the real one, and the pretence by Soviet officials that they knew nothing of him, probably accounted for the poor response. The Royal College of Psychiatrists, under the presidency of Sir Martin Roth, made several attempts to intervene on behalf of Gluzman, culminating in July 1975 with a letter stating that the incarceration of Gluzman, Bukovsky and Plyushch appeared to be 'a perversion of psychiatric practice and a denial of natural justice'. In February 1977 a motion, passed unanimously, condemned Soviet abuses and again called for Gluzman's release.

His labour camp sentence ended in May 1979, and since then he has been in exile in Siberia, which period will end in May 1982. In exile he is not allowed to work as a doctor and has to do menial tasks. He would, no doubt, welcome letters of support from members of the College. [Address: Dr Semyon Gluzman, Iyomenskaya Oblast, Pos. Nizhnyaya Tavda, Do Vostrevovaniya, 626020 USSR.]

The President's letter stated: 'The Royal College of Psychiatrists invite you to become one of our Members. This is in recognition of your work on behalf of psychiatrists and psychiatry. That such work should have led to your present unhappy condition is a matter the College deeply deplors . . . May I personally send you my best wishes and hope that your present difficulties will be resolved and that you will soon be able to be a free and practising Member of this College'.

Dr R. F. Garside

Dr R. F. Garside has recently been appointed Reader in Clinical Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Over the past 25 years

his knowledge of the application of complex statistical techniques towards the resolution of problems of classification of psychiatric disorders has become internationally recognized.

Forthcoming Events

The IIIrd World Congress of Biological Psychiatry convenes in Stockholm from 28 June to 3 July 1981. Plenary sessions and some 50 symposia are planned. Apply to the College for invitation programme. Information: Stockholm Convention Bureau, Jakobs Torg 3, S-III 52 Stockholm, Sweden.

The Institute of Family Therapy has a number of short courses and clinical workshops planned for early in 1981. Topics include structural family therapy and family therapy and statutory responsibilities. Information: Course Secretary, 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1.

The International Congress on Drugs and Alcohol will be held in Jerusalem from 13 to 18 September, 1981. Information: Organizing Secretariat, Drug and Alcohol Congress, PO Box 394, Tel Aviv, Israel.

Applications are invited for an advanced training course in family therapy (1981-82) for experienced therapists currently engaged in family therapy. Closing date for application is 5 March 1981. Information: Executive Office (Training), The Tavistock Clinic, 120 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5BA.