

identify himself by producing his identity card, and by giving his date and place of birth. The reference in the judge's summing up to issues of human rights was probably for our benefit.

### *Comment*

The outcome of the court hearing was probably assured beforehand or the Czech foreign ministry would not have approved our visit. The helpfulness of the Czech authorities may also be connected with Czechoslovakia's application to rejoin the World Psychiatric Association from which the Health Ministry had withdrawn in 1983.

The Czech psychiatrists to whom I spoke were keen to end their isolation and return to the main-

stream of international psychiatry. Readmission to the World Psychiatric Association would strengthen their position.

It is impossible to measure the effect on this family of what they have experienced over the last 20 years. Pleasure at this couple's release from further psychiatric treatment must not be allowed to obscure the needless suffering to which this family has been subjected under the name of psychiatry.

### *Acknowledgement*

I should like to thank Mr Paul Taylor, and Mr Simon George of Christian Solidarity International, for their contributions to this report.

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## Miscellany

### **New publication**

*Dream or Nightmare?: The Closure of Long-Stay Mental Hospitals and Community Care.* 1989. £3.50, plus 55p postage and packing. Available from: The Book Centre, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ (telephone 01-387 3601).

This report, prepared by a Quaker Social Responsibility and Education (QSRE) *ad hoc* group, studies those areas where solutions have been found to the crisis caused by the precipitate closure of mental hospitals and it has a number of recommendations to make about how Quakers (and others) can become involved in ensuring that the community can care for people with mental health problems before a hospital is closed.

### **Friends of Tamil Nadu**

Dr Rathnam Viswanathan has retired from the NHS after 17 years as a consultant in North Wales. On a voluntary basis he is going to establish primary health care facilities in five small villages in his native Tamil Nadu, a state in Southern India, an area of great deprivation. Funds have already been raised by the people of North Wales to buy drugs and medicines to support his work and this campaign will continue.

### **Accommodation service**

*Doctor in the House* is an accommodation service which specialises in providing accommodation for doctors and other medical personnel in private family houses. Further information: Doctor in the House, 19 Sispara Gardens, London SW18 1LG (telephone 01 874 6786 and 01 870 5949).

### **Training packages**

*Community Mental Health Workshop Series* is a set of three workshop packs to help mental health workers, service users and volunteers explore key issues in developing effective community mental health services. The titles of each are: 'Making the Move', 'Working with the Community', and 'Getting the Message' and they can be purchased separately.

Further details of these and other training packages can be obtained from: Pavilion Publishing (Brighton) Ltd, Freepost (BR 458), 89 Havelock Road, Brighton BN1 1ZY (telephone 0273 563279).

### **Silver anniversary**

Launched in 1965 by Dr Frank J. Ayd, *International Drug Therapy Newsletter* is embarking on its 25th year and is the oldest publication of its kind in the history of medicine. Its longevity is a testament to the important role psychoactive drugs have come to play in psychiatry. It publishes reports on new drugs and offers concise background perspectives as well as guidelines for usage.

### **Dr Ashoka Jahnvi Prasad**

We were informed by Dr Prasad that he had been appointed Professor of Psychiatry at St Mary's University, Halifax, Canada and would be taking up his appointment in April 1990 (*Psychiatric Bulletin*, September 1989, 13, 527). We have learnt that Dr Prasad holds no appointment at, and is not associated in any way with, Saint Mary's University.