educated doctors. Secondly, patients who can afford to pay full market prices for their prescribed medicines should do so, while those who cannot would be exempted, or subsidised through pre-payment certificates.

Its author, David Green, has obviously undergone a series of political and economic metamorphoses since his days as a Labour Party activist, and his discussion has the refreshing naivety of a recent convert. Those with longer experience in evaluating medicines and administering drug budgets know that there are no simplistic answers to the problem of drug costs, therapeutic innovation, and the complex relationships between government, pharmaceutical industry, prescribing doctor and patient. Nevertheless, progress depends upon wide discussion of radical proposals by interested parties, and this short readable paperback from the Institute of Economic Affairs Health Unit will be read with interest and profit by all who are involved in developing or implementing health care policies.

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Soviet Medical Reviews. Section B Physicochemical Aspects of Medicine Reviews – volume 1, edited by Y.M. Lopukhin and N.I. Pirogov. Pp. viii+426, illustrated. SMR Harwood Academic Publishers, Switzerland, England, France, USA, Australia, 1987. £225.00.

This is the first volume of one section of a series of Soviet Medical Reviews devoted to subjects within the general area of physicochemical aspects of medicine. The preface states that the purpose of the series as a whole is 'to make accounts of recent medical advances in the USSR more readily and rapidly accessible to the scientist who does not read Russian'. Other sections of the series are intended to review Soviet advances in the fields of cardiology, haematology, immunology, virology and oncology.

This volume demonstrates the extent of research which is taking place in universities in the USSR into various aspects of physicochemistry and its interfaces with medical science. It covers subjects as diverse as mathematical modelling for immunology, a bone-marrow derived mediator which stimulates antibody production, the physicochemical mechanisms by which biomembrane barrier function may be impaired in disease, the crucial role of lipids in the function of hepatic microsomal systems, a trophoblast-specific beta-glycoprotein, changes in chromatin with age, and the biological role of DNA endonucleases.

This attempt to lift the language curtain which hinders our access to the results of medical research in the Soviet Union is welcome, and other volumes are awaited with interest.

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Therapeutic Factors in Group Psychotherapy, edited by S. Bloch and E. Crouch. Pp. xii+342. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987. £8.95 (paperback).

This paperback edition stems from a review of the subject published in 1981, and constitutes an expansion of the author's ideas. At the outset they identify 10 specific psychotherapeutic factors, a distillate of intensive study covering all areas of group activity. In subsequent chapters they assess these factors in the context of theory and research; concurrently they indicate landmarks, from the pioneering psychoanalytic work of Foulkes and Slavson (among others) in the mid-40s, to the systematic classification proposed by Corsini and Rosenberg in the mid-50s and developed by Yalom in his publication of 1970. His model of learning from interpersonal action has much influenced the authors in their own classificatory work, and is closely examined. The final chapters concern contemporary models, i.e. groups of factors.

The overall impression gained is that the component elements have been meticulously examined, but in so doing the overall psychotherapeutic *process* has been lost, and evades examination. In this connection the full implication of transference is given insufficient weight; true, it is a psychoanalytic concept but it refers to a phenomenon that affects all human relationships and cannot be replaced satisfactorily by alternative concepts. Similarly, regression and repetition-compulsion, phenomena which arise in any therapy situation, group or individual, are not mentioned at all.

The author's pessimism about therapeutic achievement is based on a publication 10 years old, and would not reflect the attitude of present day group analysts.

This publication is unsuitable for novices, but should interest the experienced clinician and especially the researcher, not least for the comprehensive research data contained in the appendix.

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