Like the good statesman he was, he begins by acknowledging the solid achievements of the National Health Service, as we all should do but generally do not. He quotes an American critic as saying that 'the National Health Service is something magnificent in scope and almost breathtaking in its implications' and that it 'cannot very well be excluded from any list of notable achievements of the 20th Century'. This established, Brain discusses the cause of our present dissatisfaction, and here the master's skill in selecting essential philosophy and omitting the massive details is demonstrated. First, the tripartite division of the National Health Service, leading to the isolation of general practice from hospital practice, is logically condemned, point by point, until the question of the continuance of general practice in its present form is reached. These are not new problems; but there follows the main theme of this essay: the lack of objective data about many aspects of the National Health Service and the need to establish a research unit to collect and analyse such data. Financial frustrations, the implications of differentials, and the injustice to university teachers are considered. Finally, Lord Brain makes some suggestions for fundamental changes in the National Health Service which should be carefully studied in the original.

This contemplative essay by the greatest medico-politician of our time is strongly recommended.

L. G. NORMAN

Principles of Radiation Protection. Health Physics. By D. J. Rees. (Pp. 242; 70s.) London: Butterworths. 1967.

It is unfortunate that this book, though published in 1967, obviously reached the printers before the publication of the recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection 1966 (I.C.R.P. 9) which modified the concept of the maximum permissible dose of radiation. It has also reduced the maximum permissible dose and in addition makes recommendations about the recording of doses depending upon

whether they are received from 'controlled' or 'uncontrolled' sources of radiation. Otherwise the book is a useful summary of material published in this country or by the International Atomic Energy Agency over the past 10 years. The appendices gather together a considerable amount of useful data not otherwise readily available in one source.

Some points of criticism. The book barely mentions the means of controlling contamination of surfaces by radioactive materials, or air contamination. This is one of the major problems facing health physicists in research establishments and in any industrial organization using unsealed sources. Symposia on this subject have been held recently both in this country and in the United States. There is no mention of the use of thermoluminescent devices for the measurement of extremity doses.

The field of health physics has developed enormously over the past few years and it is not possible to cover all facets of the subject in a book of this size. For this reason some aspects of importance are barely mentioned.

J. A. BONNELL

NOTICE

XVI International Congress on Occupational Health

The XVI International Congress on Occupational Health will be held in Tokyo from 22 to 27 September, 1969.

For information apply to: Professor Susumu Harashima, Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, School of Medicine, Keio University, Shinanomachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan.