

GUEST EDITORIAL

Reviews in the *British Journal of Nutrition*

Many of you will be aware that when Dr Keith Frayn took over the Editorship of the *British Journal of Nutrition* last year, he announced at the AGM that one of the changes he was making was to incorporate review articles as a regular feature from the start of 1997. This issue sees the first of these reviews and starts what we hope will become a regular feature and will be informative, entertaining, and an exciting addition to the Journal.

I have been asked to be the Reviews Editor and I see my role as that of both scout and critic. I will be scout in that I will be constantly on the lookout for new topics to review and people to do them. As a critic I will oversee the substance of the texts but I will call upon you, the membership, to assist both as referees and as correspondents. We are anxious to get your views. If the reviews raise issues with which you disagree, write and tell me. In cooperation with our new publishers (CAB International), we are keen to incorporate readers' letters. If your letters are timely and relevant, we will do our best to publish them. This also applies in the case of our sister publication, *Nutrition Research Reviews*. It is not possible in the case of *NRR* to publish correspondence there, but in the case of *BJN* we anticipate that the monthly publication schedule will allow more flexibility.

As I said above, we will always be on the lookout for topical subjects to review and this is where you, the readership, can assist and steer our selection of topics into the areas you feel are important. Our key word is topicality, which in nutrition is likely also to mean controversy. New ideas can be guaranteed to have their sceptics and it is important to hear these criticisms. You are the people who work in nutrition and your opinions are relevant, so we want to hear them. Nutrition is an enormous subject with ramifications which spread into many scientific fields. We want reviews to cover all the areas where nutritional science is active. Each and every one of you have your own interests in this subject. You know the areas which are expanding and that you find difficult to keep up with, and you probably also know the people who are most active in these fields. Let me know. Furthermore, in making your suggestions don't be restricted by preconceived notions on what *BJN* publishes. If the topic advances nutritional science then we will consider it. There are many specialist journals in the field of nutrition but this does not mean that we will not consider reviews in these areas. Nutrition plays a major role in the fields of cancer and cardiovascular research, infection, parasitism, molecular biology, toxicology, immunology, and so on. Reviews examining the role of nutrition in these fields should appear in the *BJN*, and hopefully it will emphasize to all readers that the *BJN* is a true journal of nutrition research.

We anticipate that most of the reviews will be commissioned, but not exclusively. Should you feel you would like to write a review, it might be helpful if you contact me first, if only to prevent duplication if somebody is already writing something along the same lines. The format will be flexible. The length will be approximately 6000 words with an appropriate number of references, or it may be much shorter and provide only a commentary on a recent article. Reviews may take the form of a standard review of a newly-emerging field, an overview of a complex situation, an aspect of new methodology, etc. We would be particularly interested in receiving reviews on controversial topics or

opinions. In some situations it might be appropriate to obtain reviews from two people with conflicting opinions on the same subject.

Lastly, can I remind you that many of the specialist journals arose because a particular aspect of nutrition became so popular or important that a separate journal was formed. Many aspects of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer etc. are strongly linked to nutrition. Reviews in these areas are highly relevant to nutritionists and your suggestions as how best to get reviews in these areas into the *BJN* will be very welcome.

DAVID I. THURNHAM
Reviews Editor