

*“Quando nasci já estavam inventadas todas as ideias para salvar o mundo. Só faltava salvar o mundo”. (When I was born, all the ideas to save the world had already been invented. All that was left was to save the world)*

— ALMADA NEGREIROS

*“...julgo que a produção cultural contemporânea está bastante à margem daquilo que iria ao encontro da indisfarçável inquietação que nos dói”. (... I think contemporary cultural production is far from what would address the undisguisable disquiet that hurts us)*

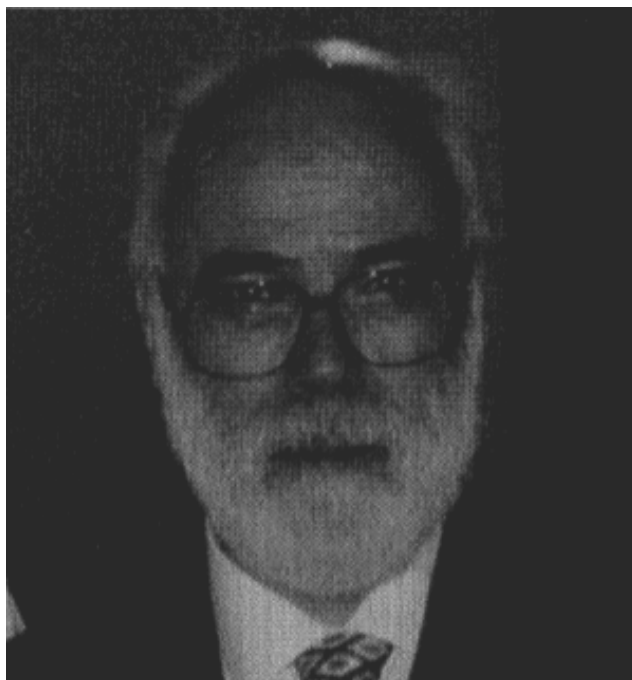
— A. ALÇADA BAPTISTA

Director of the Journal *MEDICINA INTERNA*,  
Esteemed colleague and friend, Barros Veloso,

Here I am, as (ref. our telephone conversation) the painter before the blank canvas, struggling with the duty to respond positively to the request-order of an editorial for another issue of our journal – a child in whose laborious birth we participate and which, with your support, has now developed and, almost without even crawling, has taken its first steps, got to its feet and already wants to start running... Little did it know that the choices of the world and of life were already threatening to surround it, but I am certain that the “Society”, aware of its obligations, will know how to defend and stimulate it.

As for the content of this issue of *Medicina Interna*, the knowledgeable and discerning requirement with which it takes the decision to publish, we leave the readers to enjoy and judge it for themselves.

We congratulate ourselves on the inauguration of the new, dedicated headquarters of the S.P.M.I., the project-program of which includes, among other objectives, that of providing adequate conditions for the work of directing, writing, and editing the journal. But this subject does not make for an editorial.



Perhaps an editorial created by and for internal physicians should certainly emphasize two recent phenomena, one in the public sphere and the other restricted (or not) to the medical community.

Starting with the second phenomenon, the growing enthusiasm for new concepts and methods of practice, or rather, the decision in the medical act, who am I to offer my measured and critical opinion on the subject? For now (forgive me the pretension) all I can do now is recommend the reading of two articles that my good friend and colleague Barros Veloso has just published in an important seminar in our field, and in a publication, also weekly, that is circulated among Portuguese physicians (incidentally, it would be good if these articles were all published in our journal). At first, we will face another way of saying that it is from that ambition of scientific rigor that we learn to cultivate as the basis of the practice of our art.

The other phenomenon to consider is the apotheosis of the means of social communication on the alleged corruptibility of physicians and the reactions – here for us, in my view, not always the happiest – of various entities affected.

Also, for us here, I would venture to say that things like these indicate that society is beginning to consi-

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\*Speech given at the opening of the 1st Luso-Chinese Congress on Clinical Practice and Internal Medicine in Macao

der physicians as men, which above all, they are. And everybody will benefit if physicians are considered as mere human beings, men and women who give themselves to the relief or resolution of the suffering of others, men and women who are permanently concerned with preparing themselves, and keeping themselves prepared for the best professional exercise of their art.

It follows, then, that it will be understood that I continue as the painter mentioned at the beginning, pacing up and down in front of the blank canvass - that is, in this case, without material that would be justified in an editorial for the issue of the journal that my illustrious colleague – and good friend above directs.

Thus, I sign with friendship, but not without making it clear that I authorize the publication of this letter, if it is deemed appropriate... (In this case, I request that you maintain, by way of allographic epigraph, the citations that I indicated at the beginning of this letter). ■

Porto, February 1998



Carlos Soares de Sousa