

1968: YEAR OF CHANGE
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We head into the coming year with a degree of mixed emotion and misgiving, but also with the anticipation that it will be a year of unusual interest and much change.

Nationally, it is an election year. The fragmentation and splitting into factions of both major political parties that was so foreseeable and predictable four years ago has already come about. The political drums are booming, the image-makers are hard at work, the propaganda and counter-propaganda machines are in action, and the candidates and potential candidates are jockeying for position. The general unrest and confusion, the dissatisfaction and the multitude of issues that defy solution make it certain that this year's political show will be one of the wildest ever.

Locally, the commitment of the medical community toward the improvement and reorganization of services at the Medical Center, in association with the teaching facilities of Emory University Medical School, will call for our continued involvement and added effort. The entanglements, at least in part, of this program with such Government-sponsored projects as study grants, Medicaid and regional medical planning ensure that unforeseen complexities and adjustments are in store. Change seems inevitable and, while it may not come about this year, the trend toward hospital-based practice and salaried, part-time and full-time hospital physicians moves closer.

The mixed emotions on the part of many of us about our local situation are incident to our advancement in years and to the realization that our involvement in the medical problems of practice, hospital and community, continues to increase instead of levelling off or decreasing. In the year ahead, involvement will not only increase, but become considerably more complex. The misgiving lies in the uncertainty of how all of this will turn out.

Many of us have reached that point in our careers when our diminishing enthusiasm for change is augmented by a desire to simplify our lives, reduce our involvement and be left alone. But whether we retreat from action, criticize from the sidelines, participate partially, or tackle new problems with renewed energy and enthusiasm, we can anticipate that 1968 will be an interesting year, not only in national politics, but also an eventful year on the local medical scene.