

Corresponding Member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Miroslav Zikmund, celebrates his 60th birthday



Miroslav Zikmund, Corresponding Member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, a renowned Czechoslovak inorganic chemist will celebrate his sixtieth birthday on December 26th, 1981. He has worked in the field of inorganic chemistry for some forty years and the present state of this branch of science in Slovakia has been influenced by his work in many respects. It was he who helped to develop the teaching of inorganic chemistry at our universities and at the Faculty of Chemical Engineering. With a great deal of personal involvement he contributed first to the establishment and then to the development of inorganic research within the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Organization of scientific meetings, long years of editorship of the journal *Chemické zvesti*, authorship of chemistry textbooks, nomenclature of inorganic chemistry are just a few of his many activities and involvements. It is difficult, if not impossible, to draw a picture of such a complex personality in a few sentences. Each of his above-mentioned activities would deserve special appreciation, but even a thorough study of his work or enumeration of his merits would not be sufficient if we did not mention his personal characteristics. He has been well known for his kindness, his honesty in all his dealings and his willingness to help his friends, colleagues and pupils with unselfish counsel and advice.

M. Zikmund was born in Žilina. There, in 1940, he passed his school-leaving examination at the Grammar School. 1950 he obtained the degree of Chemical Engineering Graduate at the Faculty of Chemical Engineering at the Slovak Technical University. 1967 he received the degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences from the Faculty of Natural Sciences at the Komenský University in Bratislava. In 1960 he defended his dissertation for the degree of "Candidate of Chemical Sciences" at the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

The rather exceptional circumstances under which the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava started its existence caused that M. Zikmund, still a student at this school, took an active part in academic life. From 1941—1944 he became demonstrator and from 1944—1950 Assistant Professor in the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry. In 1950 he was appointed head of this Institute and he held this position till 1953. During this period he lectured, organized courses and wrote the first textbooks for his students. From 1950 on he has been teaching at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the Komenský University in Bratislava and though he has been associated with the Slovak Academy of Sciences from 1953, his participation in the educational and scientific activities of our universities has never ceased.

M. Zikmund was extremely active during the organizing and formative years of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Since 1968 he has been Assistant Director of the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry and Head of the Department of Research into the Syntheses and Crystal Structures in this Institute. Since 1969 he has been Vice-Chairman of the Scientific Committee for

Chemistry of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, and after the chemical institutes became the Centre for Chemical Research in the Slovak Academy of Sciences, he was appointed Assistant Director of this Centre in 1981. He has been devoting his attention to the problems of chemical information, nomenclature and standardization. He was or still is member of various commissions and societies, e.g. of the Slovak Chemical Society and the Socialist Academy. His cooperation with industrial research institutes and his counselling as regards problems of the development of chemical industry are much appreciated by the chemical industry. Last but not least, there is the journal *Chemické zvesti* to which he has devoted much of his energy and efforts. Since the beginning of the publication of this journal in 1947, M. Zikmund has been member of its Advisory Editorial Board. For many years he was editor and at present he is editor-in-chief and chairman of the Advisory Editorial Board. The existence of this journal has been of the greatest importance for our chemical community, especially for young scientists who, under the wise guidance of M. Zikmund, have been taught to write scientific papers or technical reports.

M. Zikmund is Czechoslovak national representative in the IUPAC Commission on nomenclature of inorganic chemistry and member of the American Chemical Society.

Coordination chemistry is the major field of research of M. Zikmund. His works have aimed at the elucidation of relations between the structure and the properties of coordination compounds and at problems concerning the syntheses of these compounds. His work on titanium complexes is remarkable as it required the application of elaborate experimental techniques, and which is even more important, the theoretical approaches used for the interpretation of results thus obtained are novel and original. His recent works on coordination compounds anchored on the surface of inorganic carriers and on their catalytic properties aroused much attention. He holds several patents on the preparation of very pure magnesium compounds.

M. Zikmund has both a wide and deep knowledge of the science of chemistry and he has an exceptional ability to keep abreast with the vast flow of scientific information. He has been using his knowledge in a most unselfish way for the benefit of his coworkers, pupils and our whole chemical community. His outstanding scientific work was recognized in an award of the state distinction "For Excellent Work" in 1973. In 1976 he received the "Honorary Plaque of Dionýz Štúr for Merits in Natural Sciences" and in 1980 he was elected Corresponding Member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. For his activities in the Czechoslovak Chemical Society he was awarded the Hanuš Medal (1971) and the Silver Medal of the Slovak Chemical Society (1980).

As one of his former pupils and as a coworker in many fields I wish to use the medium of this journal, to which M. Zikmund has devoted a large amount of his time and effort, to convey our esteem and gratitude for his outstanding contributions to the science of chemistry in our country. We are grateful for the friendly and wise advice he has always been willing to give. Upon the occasion of his birthday I wish him, also in the name of all his friends and pupils, the best of health and may he continue in his successful work, the results of which he has always used for the benefit of our society.

J. Gažo