

## Dr. Ing. Štefan Bauer, DrSc. (1922—1996)



Dr. Ing. *Štefan Bauer*, DrSc., the previous director of the Institute of Chemistry, Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, passed away after a long illness on January 14, 1997, few months before his 75th birthday. He was born in Klátova Nová Ves on May 10, 1922 in a family of agronomist. He graduated from the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava in 1946 as engineer of chemistry. After graduation he accepted a position at the Agriculture Central Control and Testing Institute in Bratislava. After five years he started his scientific career as a research worker at the Institute for Pharmacy and Biochemistry, which was in 1953 transformed with the creation of the Slovak Academy of Sciences into the Institute of Chemistry. In this period his scientific growth was greatly influenced by his stay in the Basel laboratory of Professor *T. Reichstein*, the Nobel Prize winner in chemistry of steroids, and later by his stay in the group of Professor *F. Micheel* in Münster. He led a team which elaborated a new technology of isolation of helveticoside, a cardiac glycoside, which became a new product of the pharmaceutical works Slovakofarma.

Later he excelled by a new chemoenzymic procedure for preparation of l-ephedrine used for preparation of a variety of drugs. The l-ephedrine production still continues in the Research Institute of Antibiotics and Biotransformations in Roztoky near Prague in the Czech Republic.

In 1962 Dr. Bauer was appointed the Director of the Institute of Chemistry. In this position he influenced the orientation of the Institute research activities towards chemistry and biochemistry of carbohydrates as one of very perspective fields of science. The presence of the Czechoslovak yeast collection at the Institute provided him with model systems to investigate structure, function, and biogenesis of surface polysaccharides of yeasts, some of which are related to pathogenesis in humans. The new building to which the Institute was moved in 1962 was an opportunity for Dr. Bauer to create several new biochemistry groups and to expand the analytical department. His merit in the qualitative growth of the Institute and its international recognition was enormous. He always emphasized that citation of our work in papers of foreign research groups is one of the most important factors to build the international reputation of the Institute.

As a practical man he also considered important that investments into research must return in the form of new useful products and technologies. This was the main reason why he insisted on building of a pilot-plant facility for production of rare saccharides and their derivatives. Now, when the "technicum" is the main source of the Institute income, we can appreciate his early wise decision.

As a result of a general recognition of his scientific and organizational abilities, together with his optimistic and communicative character, in 1972 Dr. Bauer was elected the President of the International Steering Committee for Carbohydrate Chemistry of IUPAC with the privilege to organize the 7th International Symposium on Carbohydrate Chemistry and Biochemistry in Bratislava in 1974. After this great event, Dr. Bauer served for two years in the Advisory Editorial Board of the reputable journal *Carbohydrate Research*.

Shortly after the Symposium, Dr. Bauer retired from the directorship of the Institute of Chemistry "on his own request", as it was usual in this sad "normalization" period of our history. Together with the position of the Director he also lost his lab and office, and the internationally successful project on biogenesis of yeast cell walls led by him was discontinued. Many of us would fall into passivity and resignation after such a bitter experience. However, Dr. Bauer did not lose his optimism and humour even in these difficult times. He used all his capabilities and energy for establishing a new progressive field, biotechnology. He became enthusiastic about bioconversions of wood and agricultural wastes into single cell proteins and ethanol. In the years that followed, he contributed significantly to the development of processes for fermentative production of fungal cellulases.

Dr. Bauer always regarded the care and support of young scientists as his primary responsibility. Under his guidance 17 graduate students were awarded the doctorate degrees. He taught them to individual performance and selfconfidence, and supported their scientific growth even after the degree "was in the pocket", and supported them in their private life. Under his leadership it was an unwritten rule that a fresh PhD. awardee was sent for

a year to a foremost foreign research group, which was not so obvious at that time. Many of his former students became internationally recognized scientists and successful managers at home and abroad.

Despite of all his merits for progress of science in Slovakia and his participation in the creation of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, and in spite of his involvement in different organizational structures of this body and extensive publication activities, Dr. Bauer was never appointed Academician or the Corresponding Member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. In his time, these titles were given only to those who fulfilled the "complex" criteria, and he always lacked something in this "complexity"

The death of Dr. Bauer is a great loss for Slovak science and scientific community. His merits for the development of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and chemistry and biochemistry of carbohydrates in Slovakia and previous Czechoslovakia will never be forgotten. He will remain deep in the memory of his colleagues, students, friends, and followers.

*P. Biely and V. Farkaš*

## In Memoriam Magdaléna Čaková, Editor of the Journal *Chemical Papers*

We very regret having to announce that the Editor of the journal *Chemical Papers* in the years 1988—1993, *Magdaléna Čaková*, died after a long, serious illness on 2nd January, 1997. Everybody who knew her appreciated her broad knowledge in the chemistry and physics and her precise editorial work. She will remain in our memory.

*Collective of workers  
of the Editor's Office*