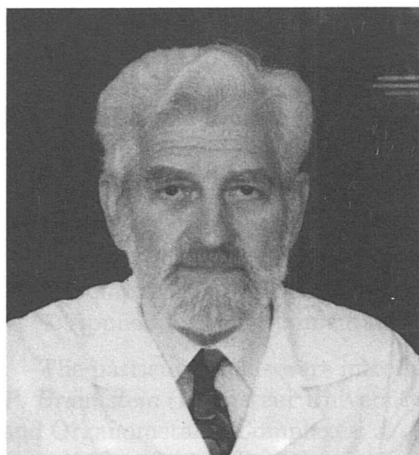


In Recognition of Ing. K. Babor, CSc., on his Seventieth Birthday



Karol Babor was born on March 26, 1928 in Bratislava as the fifth child. His father, the former neurologist, was at the time of Karol's birth Professor at the Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University, heading the Institute of Biology until his retirement in 1947. Karol married Mária, née Zatková, in 1950. They brought up 3 daughters and a son who gave them 7 grandchildren. He received his elementary and secondary education in his native town. His interest in chemistry led him to enter the Faculty of Chemistry, Slovak Technical University where he graduated in 1951 as engineer of chemistry. Already as a university student he joined the staff of the Research Institute of Pharmaceutical Works which was to be the core of the later established Institute of Chemistry of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. To this Institute he has remained loyal till present. In 1958 he defended his CSc. thesis on synthesis of pharmaceutically active model substances related to senecio and erythrophloeum alkaloids. Since then he has been majoring in the field of polysaccharides. His main point of interest was the chemistry of α -glucans, theoretical study and

practical applications of starch and its derivatives.

He performed important studies on periodate oxidation of starch and its components and elaborated an oxidation method generally applicable to structural studies of polysaccharides having free vicinal hydroxyl groups in their sugar constituents. Moreover, the results of these studies were utilized in industrial production of starch dialdehydes as agents in tannery, photography, and paper industry.

He made a long series of analytical and structural researches into starches of various origin, revealing thus the similarities and differences between their primary structures which influence the physical properties of starches, important for industrial processing of these materials.

His further scientific activity concerned chemical and enzymic modifications of starch and synthesis of starch derivatives for special applications in medicine and nutrition. Along with this work he extended his study to starch-degrading enzymes, particularly to their immobilization on solid supports in order to achieve more effective production of amylose and amylopectin fractions with defined physical and chemical properties, necessary for further modifications. The main scientific contribution of Ing. Babor was the evidence for the nonhomogeneous distribution of unequally long inner chains of the amylopectin molecule into the loci of dense branchings and thereby characteristic of the amylopectin structure of various plants.

He is an author of 55 scientific papers with 111 citations, 3 monographs, 7 patents, lectures at domestic and international scientific meetings, and special popularizing articles. He cooperated with Comenius University and the Slovak Technical University. His lectures on chemistry and stereochemistry of saccharides to university students and on saccharides in food chemistry to postgraduate courses were highly appreciated. K. Babor has been active as referee, consultant, member of the Board of Examinators for final exams, and author of successful educational motion pictures. He took active part in organization of international symposia on starch as well as of other symposia organized by the Institute of Chemistry. In 1967 he was appointed the Secretary at the Institute and after 1989 he was the director for 2 election cycles. He is an honourable member of the Slovak Chemical Society and in recognition of his scientific and educational activities he was awarded The Dionýz Štúr Medal.

Throughout his career K. Babor took a deep interest in organic nomenclature and played a leading role in development of carbohydrate nomenclature. He was appointed to Slovak Committee for Nomenclature and became an external expert in the IUPAC Nomenclature Board, that is in charge of standardizing terminology in the carbohydrate field.

It is necessary to recall the major role played by K. Babor for about 27 years as editor in *Chemické zvesti*, the only chemical scientific journal in Slovakia, constituted in 1947 and edited for many years by the Institute

of Chemistry. In this capacity he interacted with hundreds of researchers and became a familiar friend and unprejudiced critic to numerous scientists, who benefited from his meticulous editing of their manuscripts, which he handled with swiftness. His incisive revisions brought clarity and impact to countless texts that passed through his hands. There are few authors who did not recognize the excellence in the presentation of their work thanks to the unstinting effort of Karol Babor. He helped a lot to overcome the organizing difficulties arisen at the time of transformation of *Chemické zvesti*, published in Slovak and Czech languages, to *Chemical Papers*, first published in English, German, French, and Russian, later on exclusively in English language. His scientific erudition, communicative and tolerant nature, respect for his colleagues, and ability to help constructively and tactfully was of much benefit especially to young authors. We hope that his interest in editorial work will endure for the years to come.

Karol Babor is a warm, affectionate, friendly, and kind person, a family man, modest and unassuming, with clear mind and balanced views, who is liked by many and whose advice is very often sought. We wish him good health and satisfaction in personal life. May his years ahead be creative and joyful.

A. Kardošová and M. Zikmund