

## MVDr Karel Rašín is dead

One of the founders of Czechoslovak modern parasitology, the bearer of the Order of Labour Karel Rašín died on November 3, 1974, aged 76. His professional career and scientific achievements were outlined in the article devoted to his 75th birthday and 50th anniversary of his research activities, which appeared in the last year's (*Folia parasitologica (Praha)* 20: 382, 1973). It should be added that there have been few specialists able to achieve successful results in many related disciplines, not in the former polyhistorian sense but in view of the full involvement in advanced research activity, as is the case of Dr. Karel Rašín.

In applied zoology he conducted a pioneering research in life cycles of helminths of fishes and birds; as early as 1925 promoted ecological trends in helminthology and 45 years ago introduced advanced Soviet methods in the research of hosts, particularly Skryabin's helminthological dissection. He showed that a solid work in parasitology with demonstrable and applicable results could be done only simultaneously with field and laboratory investigations.

His demonstration of toxoplasmosis in the hare in 1949 was undoubtedly an impetus for a deeper research of zoonoses as well as other infectious diseases which may circulate among wild and domestic animals and eventually jeopardize the health of man.

His long-time activities in the development and production of vaccines in Bioveta at Ivánovice na Hané did not divert his attention from the problems of wild, free-living or protected animals. Successful sanitation measures of the State Veterinary Administration in Czechoslo-

vakia which have aroused interest and respect abroad, would be unthinkable without these fundamental studies. As a result, the sanitation of domesticated animals exposed seasonally to the open environment regularly increased the resistance of all susceptible hosts in biocenoses against parasitoses. In mass production forms of animal husbandry all these problems have come still more forward.

The present efforts for planned securing of a healthy landscape, made by many research centres and in which the Czechoslovak science achieved considerable success, were also initiated by Rašín. His latest studies on the importance of *Ondatra zibethica* as carrier of adiaspiromyco-sis and tularemia and particularly his experimental demonstration of the key importance of the vagrant domestic cat or the cat that got wild and in close contact with toxoplasmosis, and his proposals to use vaccines for prevention, have been undoubtedly very valuable and suggestive.

Rašín's work has become a basis for the collaboration within the Council of Mutual Economic Aid and has so effectively influenced the development of Czechoslovak parasitology, epizootiology, microbiology, immunology and pathology that it justly won him the Order of Labour in May 1974.

The parasitology in Czechoslovakia and abroad, particularly the Soviet parasitology, will keep the scientific heritage of MVDr Karel Rašín as an inspiration for a further development of economy, public health and protection of rich and highly productive landscape for the sake of a healthy human population.

Prof. MVDr. V. Dyk, D. Sc.