

Significant anniversary of Czechoslovak parasitology — Academician J. Hovorka is 65

Last year we celebrated the 25th anniversary since the foundation of the Helminthological Institute, Slovak Academy of Sciences in Košice. It is the first institute beyond the USSR territory, whose research is exclusively directed at helminthological problems and following the line of the Soviet helminthological school of Skryabin. This important research centre was founded by Ján Hovorka, Doctor of biological sciences and present member of both the Czechoslovak and Slovak Academies of Sciences. This year we mark the 65th birthday of the Institute's founder and director.

Under the guidance of Academician J. Hovorka, the Helminthological Institute has played an outstanding role in the development of Czechoslovak parasitology, propagating helminthology among the general public as an important

theoretical biological discipline and indispensable basic field for human and veterinary medicine. Under his leadership an excellent working team of scientists has been formed who solve theoretical and practical problems in the research of parasitic helminths. Over fifty helminthologists were trained in this Institute, attained scientific degrees and made noteworthy additions to the knowledge of parasitic worms.

The results of the research conducted in this Institute are well known both in Czechoslovakia and abroad. The staff members maintain close contacts with helminthological and parasitological centres of investigation in the USSR and other countries of the Socialist community, coordinating the research of anthelmintics within the framework of the Council of Mutual Economic Aid and participating in the studies

on helminthoses in Cuba and in the education of new experts in this discipline for the Cuban public health and veterinary services.

Such advances of the newly founded Institute could be guaranteed only by a personality of outstanding scientific, political, scientific-organizational and personal qualities. J. Hovorka took up this task as an experienced administrator and specialist. After graduating from the Veterinary College in Brno he soon became Professor at the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava and later at the newly founded College of Agriculture and Forestry in Košice. In 1949 he was appointed chairman of the preparatory committee for the foundation of Veterinary College in Košice and became its Rector (1949—1952), having advanced to Full Professor of biology and parasitology. At the same time he was involved in the foundation of the State Veterinary Institute and of the Biology Department of the Medical Faculty at the University in Košice.

When new scientific disciplines were introduced to this country in 1953 under the purposeful support of the leading force of our socialist society, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, J. Hovorka was authorized with the establishment of the Helminthological Institute, Slovak Academy of Sciences and became one of the first followers of the Skryabin's helminthological school. On the basis of his extensive theoretical and practical experience he compiled the monograph "Helminthological diagnostics" (Publ. House SAV, 1954, 377 pp.), the treatise "Helminths and helminth-host relationships in ruminants" (Publ. House SAV, 1963, 452 pp.) and others. He published a number of papers dealing with fauna, taxonomy, immunology, therapy, pharmacology of helminths and helminthoses. In an original way he treated epizootologic problems of the invasive cycle of helminthoses, thus making one of the basic contributions to the knowledge on dynamics of the epizootic process in helminthoses. In recognition of these works he was awarded the K. Gottwald State prize in 1969.

Organizational activities of Academician J. Hovorka are also connected with the editing of an international collection of papers "Helminthologia", which started to appear since 1979 as a new international helminthological journal. He also published a series entitled "Helminthoses of Czechoslovakia". He is member of the editorial board of *Folia parasitologica* and of other professional and scientific periodicals.

Since the foundation of the Košice Veterinary College, a second institution of this kind in Czechoslovakia, and since the establishment of the Czechoslovak and Slovak Academies of Sciences he has been actively serving in a number of scientific-organizational posts. For several years he has been a presidium member of the Slovak Board for awarding scientific degrees.

Academician J. Hovorka's work has brought him a wide recognition both in this country and abroad. He was decorated with high state orders, such as "Order of Labour", was elected honorary member of scientific societies in the USSR, German Democratic Republic, Hungarian People's Republic, Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and Cuba. Recently he has received the National prize of the Slovak Socialist Republic.

He was born on 9 February 1914 in Zvolen (Central Slovakia), where he attended secondary school. He began his professional career as Professor of parasitology in 1949, was elected Corresponding Member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in 1953, of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1962, Member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in 1964 and of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1977.

This year Academician J. Hovorka has celebrated his 65th birthday in the prime of his life and in observing this important anniversary we pay tribute to his achievements in parasitology and wish him many more years of scientific and personal successes in the midst of his family, numerous pupils, associates and friends.

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