

Important anniversary of Vojtech Bárdoš, M. D., D.Sc.



This year Vojtech Bárdoš, M. D., D.Sc., leading scientific worker of the Institute of Parasitology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, and one of the prominent Czechoslovak virologists who has devoted the major part of his creative activities to the research of main Central European viroses with natural foci character, has celebrated his 65th birthday. His extraordinary gift for making discoveries and his sense for team work with medical entomologists and theriologists helped him accomplish a number of generally recognized priority findings, which demonstrated the importance of natural focality of some viroses in Europe and which secured him a permanent place in the world history of research of viroses transmitted by arthropods and of their localization in nature.

He was born 30 September 1914 in Trenčín

where he completed his secondary school education in 1932. During his studies at the Medical Faculty, Comenius University in Bratislava he showed an early and unusual interest in bacteriology and pathologic anatomy, working at the Institute for Pathology and Anatomy affiliated to the Faculty. After graduation (1938) and a short practice as a district physician in Rimavská Sobota he founded a Bacteriology Laboratory in Prešov and organized antiepidemic service. In this period (1941—1944) he devoted his energy to malaria mapping in East Slovakia and initiated antimalaria measures and abatement programme to prevent outbreaks of spotted fever. In 1944 he took part in the Slovak national uprising and after crossing the front line became the first epidemiologist of the 1st Czechoslovak Army Corps. On 15 February 1945 he was put in charge of the hygiene and anti-epidemic department at the then Board of Public Health in Slovakia. In 1952 he transferred to the newly established Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology in Bratislava, where, in the capacity of Deputy Director he organized a virological department focused on infections of the central nervous system. In 1962 he received his Doctor of medical sciences degree from the Institute of Microbiology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague. In 1965 he was assigned by the Government to act as medical consultant with the World Health Organization. In 1971 he was invited by the Director of the Institute of Parasitology, Czecho-

slovak Academy of Sciences, to study the problems of natural focality of arbovirus diseases and he has been working at this Institute to date.

The scientific yield of Dr. Bárdoš is very rich. As sole author or co-author he wrote over 100 papers, including two monographs. Of great importance is his monograph "On the ecology of arboviruses in Czechoslovakia" (In Slovak), Publ. House of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava 1965, 198 pp.

His scientific activities may be roughly divided into several stages, connected with his specific work in different periods and localities. Of particular interest to parasitologists are his organizational activities connected with the liquidation of malaria in East Slovakia where he headed the antiepidemic control measures often cited in literature. Important are his analyses of several epidemics of transmissible diseases in which he made outstanding contributions not only to Czechoslovak epidemiology but to the general knowledge as well. It was the control measure against spotted fever in Slovakia in the summer of 1945, the analysis of Q-fever outbreak in sheep breeders and in a wool factory, the analysis of an epidemic of seasonal meningitis in the Rožňava district followed by the Rožňava epidemic of tick-borne encephalitis with the indication of the route of transmission (fresh goat milk) etc.

The publications concerning epidemiological and virological problems of tick-borne encephalitis belong to the very frequently cited works of Dr. Bárdoš. He isolated the first tick-borne encephalitis virus strain (strain 0) in Slovakia, proved the protective effect of normal human gammaglobulin against the tick-borne encephalitis virus, experimentally induced peroral infection with the tick-borne encephalitis virus in a model animal, demonstrated the importance of goat milk for the rise of alimentary infections with the tick-borne encephalitis virus in particular families etc. He conducted epidemiological analysis of tick-borne encephalitis epidemic in Rožňava which had spread due to consumption of unboiled milk.

His original approach to the knowledge of viroses with natural foci character and transmitted by arthropods resulted in achievements of high scientific priority, namely in isolations of the viruses Ťahyňa and Čalovo (in collaboration with Dr. V. Danielová of the Institute of Parasitology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences) hitherto unknown to science. These studies, carried out by himself or with collaborators, proved the medical importance of the virus Ťahyňa, provided information on its distribution in Europe, the first proof about the presence of the virus Ťahyňa in mosquito larvae, the elucidation of constant patterns in the circulation of the virus Ťahyňa in Czechoslovak conditions etc. Recently he demonstrated that the virus Tettnang was not an arbovirus but the virus of mouse hepatitis.

No less important are the activities of Dr. Bárdoš as medical consultant with the World Health Organization. From 1965 to 1970 he worked in different state public health institutes in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Burma and twice visited India in that capacity. In the countries visited he founded virological laboratories which directed their research to the studies on diseases with distinct natural focus character and trained a number of co-workers who began publishing.

In recognition of his meritorious services in the development of Czechoslovak public health Dr. Bárdoš was honoured with several awards: "For Distinction in Labour", "For Labour Valour", with the medal commemorating the 30th anniversary of liberation of Czechoslovakia etc. He was also presented with a number of scientific commemorative medals, both Czechoslovak and foreign, including two Soviet and one French medal.

Dr. V. Bárdoš reached his 65th birthday in the prime of his life and in full vigour of his creative abilities. On this occasion his co-workers, pupils and the editors of *Folia parasitologica* wish him many happy returns of the day and every success in his work and personal life in the coming years.

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