

Professor Vratislav Schreiber, M.D., D.Sc. Celebrates His 80th Birthday Anniversary



On June 29 of this year, Prof. Vratislav Schreiber M.D., D.Sc. celebrates his 80th birthday. Prof. Schreiber is a foremost Czech endocrinologist and for many years he has been a member of the Editorial Board of the *Physiological Research*. His merits are not based only on his findings in the field of endocrinology, but he is also well-known for his popularization of science, as the first professor of clinical physiology in the Czech Republic, as one of the founders of the Czech Learned Society, chairman of the Czech Endocrinological Society and as the first Czech scientist to be awarded by the prestigious Premium Bohemiae Prize.

Prof. Schreiber studied medicine at Charles University in Prague, graduating in 1950 when he had already completed his first scientific work and published 15 papers, including a monograph on the diencephalo-pituitary system. He even produced scientific work during enforced prolonging of his military service and later, of course, at the Third Medical Clinic of the Faculty of Medicine of Charles University, his life-long working place. The clinic was headed by Prof. Charvát, the founder of the Czech endocrinological school and the Czech Endocrinological Society.

In carrying out every-day clinical tasks and obligations, his inventiveness and hard work soon led to the discovery of thyrotropin releasing hormone (TRH) and he became one of the pioneers of experimental neuroendocrinology. He completed the first stages of demonstrating the existence and isolation of TRH before Schally and Guillemin (who received the Nobel Prize for this discovery) and was named amongst these foremost

scientists in the biographies devoted to these well-known scientists (1). He was awarded a state prize in 1964 for his discoveries in the field of releasing hormones and again in 1986 for the work on endogenous digitalis-like substances promoting sodium excretion.

Prof. Schreiber was appointed an Assistant Professor in 1963 and defended his D.Sc. thesis in the same year. He became a Professor of Clinical Physiology in 1968 and was elected Vice-Rector of Charles University in the same year; however, he resigned from this position following the occupation of the country by the Soviet Army. Since 1981, he had been the Chairman of the Czech Endocrinological Society for 20 years. He was a corresponding member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, founded the Medical Science Council and was a founding member of the Czech Learned Society and a leading personality in popularization of life sciences in the media. He is the author of nearly 500 scientific reports, of which more than one hundred were published abroad. He has written six monographs, of which mention should be made of "Stress" 1958, and the three re-editions of the continuously up-dated "The Pathophysiology of Glands with Internal Secretion" in 1970, 1979, and 1987, numerous chapters in monographs, written by collectives of authors, six textbooks, several teaching texts and popular science books. In the year 2002 he was awarded the prestigious prize "Premium Bohemiae" and in 2003 by the State Order of Merits. Above all, he is a wise teacher of many young scientist, especially endocrinologists.

(1) MAITES J, DONOVAN BT, MCCANN SM: *Pioneers in Neuroendocrinology II*. Plenum Press, New York 1978, pp 369-381.

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