

A tribute and an introduction to Professor Horák's paper

75th Birthday of Professor Josef Horák

On 28 September 2009, Professor Josef Horák, DSc celebrated his 75th birthday in full creative swing as the senior scientist at the Department of Organic Technology of the Institute of Chemical Technology Prague (ICT).

This distinguished Czech chemist and internationally recognised scientist graduated from ICT in 1957, where he also received his PhD degree in 1962, and DSc degree in 1976 (the highest title in the Czech Republic for merits in the field). In 1979 he became full professor at the Institute, where he had mainly been teaching organic technology, heterogeneous catalysis, reaction engineering, toxicology, and ecology. He mentored many a graduate (MSc degree) and postgraduate students (PhD degree).

His lifelong research has been focused on chemical reaction engineering. Professor Horák's scientific achievements have been published in more than 150 scientific papers, review articles, and books. He greatly contributed to the development of kinetic engineering and played the key role in defining the scientific profile of the Department from the 1960s to 1980s.

Professor Horák is a "chemist's chemical engineer", always ready to help his fellows with encyclopaedic knowledge. Today he provides expertise in safety in chemical industry (mathematical models, analysis of



disaster scenarios, risk assessment) and safe control of exothermic reactors (early warning systems and modelling). He is one of the rare scientists who has been incorporating fundamental research into industrial applications.

Professor Horák was the President of the Czechoslovak Chemical Society (1990); he is a honorary member of the Czech Society of Chemical Engineering, and long time editor-in-chief of the journal *Chemický Průmysl* (Chemical Industry) and also of *Chemické Listy*. He is a member of various university and government bodies.

Not only is his knowledge of chemical engineering legendary, but also his energy and charisma.

His lively wit, assertive attitude, warmth, and mental acuity are known to all. Selflessly, he always gives precedence to his colleagues over his own needs. He is always cheerful and bursting with ideas.

His hobbies are many, including his love of papers and posters that show the funny side of the scientific life (like the paper presented here), fishing, history of the Second World War, climbing, and playing the violin.

As his student (of long time ago) and as his close co-worker (of not so long ago), I wish Professor Horák a happy birthday and many happy returns in the years to come, filled with his never-ending enthusiasm and optimism.

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