

IN MEMORIAM MAURICE ARNAL

Maurice Arnal died in August only 56 years old. He used to be the head of Department for Nutrition, Food and Safety Alimentation – INRA with which the Institute for Nutrition of Biotechnical Faculty – University of Ljubljana has been collaborated for several years. Maurice Arnal has been studying the Biochemistry and getting his degree of engineer in Lyon at National Institute of Applied Sciences (Institut National de Sciences Appliquées de Lyon – INSA). He accepted the invitation of National Institute of Agricultural Researches (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique - INRA) in 1966. In the laboratory for nutrition, in which metabolism of proteins was researched, he was incorporated quickly. He was a disciple of professors Laviolette and Pacheco and was soon acquainted with work processes and methods used in their research work. He studied and evaluated them and soon proposed some improvements of those methods. His achievements echoed abroad and he was rewarded a prize. He started to collaborate with big research groups from this area in North America and Great Britain. He was lucky to choose collaborators and so his group became one of the most known research groups in this area. In 1982 he joined the commission for physiology at National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique - CNRS). Owing to his wide knowledge he was aware that animal nutrition at INRA should be changed and renovated as well as directed to human nutrition. He was sure that agricultural research should be harmonised and qualitative attitudes of agricultural production stressed.

Knowing others' experiences it was his idea to establish the Department for Nutrition, Food and Safety Alimentation. (Departement de la Nutrition, Alimentation et Sécurité Alimentaire). Mr. Arnal was its head in 1993. His aim was to establish French Research Centre for Human Nutrition and especially the Research Centre for Human Nutrition in Auvergne. He succeeded and an admirable centre was built, equipped and officially opened in 1992. Mr. Arnal became the head of centre.

While he worked for INRA, Mr. Arnal published in collaboration with his colleagues 62 original scientific papers and 16 review papers. Those who work on synthesis, breakdown, and turnover of proteins either in young or older organisms in connection to various levels of energy, fasting in different animal species and in human of both sexes, come across his name. He took part in several researches on the effect of hormones, especially insulin on nitrogen metabolism in healthy individuals and those stricken by diabetes. He also researched protein lost and new synthesis of proteins in patients stricken by cancer and treated ones. He was interested in effects of sepsis on metabolism of proteins in various tissues. He also took part in investigations on animal and human needs for amino acids in different periods of age. And it could be still continued.

Despite his several duties, research work and care for the department and centre he contributed to the association of researches from INRA, University of Auvergne, University Hospital Centre (Centre Hospitalier Universitaire - CHU), from Jean-Perrin Centre at National Institute for Health and Medical Research (Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale - INSERM), which he succeeded in co-operation with his colleagues. They associated their work of researchers and physicians in common projects and were rewarded a prize: nutritional researches became an important part of national and regional plans. Therefore, we cannot be surprised that his colleagues from the Department for Nutrition, Food and Safety Alimentation were deeply stressed by his death and they mourn. We understand them in their sorrow because we know they loved and estimated him. We know that Mr. Arnal's dedication to work, his motivation and conviction cannot be forgotten.

Mr. Arnal remained a modest person. He always found time for guests and visitors to the department if only he was there. It might have been only a cup of coffee during the conversation in his simple office if he was in short with time and lunch when he could. He liked the idea of co-operation between the Laboratory for Nitrogen Metabolism in Theix and Institute for Nutrition of Biotechnical Faculty of University of Ljubljana and he supported it. A few of our students worked in the laboratory with the Mr. Arnal's colleagues. They gained new expert knowledge, learned new research methods and effective way of work.

Mr. Arnal wished that Research Centre for Human Nutrition became one of the leading centres in the world, which was not his hidden wish. He expressed it at the meeting of the international visiting group, two years ago. We do hope it becomes true.

When alive, Mr. Arnal had already had a leading position in the world of nutrition. In 1996 French Institute for Nutrition awarded him Prize for Research Work. In the beginning of this year Academy for Science, Literature and Arts from Clermont awarded him the Mege prize.

INRA lost one of its scientific pillars and his colleagues a real and trustful friend.

Editor