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Tribute to Prof. Manfred Rätzsch

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TRIBUTE TO PROF. MANFRED RÄTZSCH

Manfred Rätzsch studied in the University of Greifswald and the University of Leipzig from 1952 to 1958. He achieved his Ph.D. degree for his thesis on precision calorimetry.

In 1963 to 1967 he participated in the development of new industrial production processes in the former German Democratic Republic. The thermic chlorination of methane was introduced under his supervision. He contributed to the improvement and development of the industrial production of high-pressure polyethylene in the Leuna-Werke as well as to the development of modern procedures for the radical polymerization and copolymerization of ethylene.

Together with his intensive work on industrial development, mainly the production of polymers, he took part in the pedagogical and scientific activities of Leipzig University.

In 1965 he habilitated with his thesis "Radical-Initiated Polymerization and Copolymerization of Ethylene under High Pressure."

In 1968 he became a professor of TH Leuna Merseburg and in 1979 he became a full member of Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic. In 1981–1991 he was a director of the Institut für Technologie der Polymere Dresden and in 1991 he became head of the Research and Development Department of PCD Polymere Ges.m.b.H. Linz.

His scientific research is oriented toward many important fields of chemistry and physics of polymers, such as radical and stereospecific polymerization and copolymerization of ethylene, radical dispersion polymerization, analogous changes of polymers, modification polymers, grafting (seeding) of polymers, high performance polycondensates, and reaction injection molding of polymer blends.

He has published more than 200 papers in renowned journals and delivered dozens of main lectures at international symposia and conferences. He is a member of the editorial board of several well-known polymer journals.

Prof. Rätzsch has made a significant personal contribution to the development of macromolecular chemistry in the former German Democratic Republic from the point of view of academic research and by bringing theoretical knowledge, mainly about polymers and copolymers of ethylene, to new industrial processes.

The Slovak Chemical Society highly appreciates his approach and personal interest in Slovak polymer chemists. It was through his merit that a number of effective joint projects of German and Slovak chemists was accomplished, resulting in numerous scientific publications.

For his outstanding contributions to knowledge about macromolecular science and for his development of international scientific cooperation with Slovak macromolecular chemists, the Slovak Chemical Society awards an honorary membership in the Slovak Chemical Society to Prof. Manfred Rätzsch.

Eberhard Borsig
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