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A Tribute to Joseph L. McCarthy on His 70th Birthday

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A Tribute to Joseph L. McCarthy
on His 70th Birthday

During the past 43 years, Joseph L. McCarthy has contributed greatly to the fields of wood chemistry and pulp and paper technology. As teacher, colleague and forceful leader he has touched the lives of many contemporary students, researchers, engineers and scientists worldwide.

After finishing his B.S. in chemical engineering at the University of Washington in 1934, McCarthy was introduced to lignin chemistry when he joined as a graduate student the laboratory of Professor H. Hibbert at McGill University. Upon receiving his Ph.D. in organic chemistry in 1938, he served as Director of Research at Fraser Companies Ltd. in Canada for two years. In 1941 he returned to the University of Washington to join the Chemical Engineering faculty. He has remained faithful to his alma mater, serving her both as Professor and as Dean of the Graduate School. During the 16 years of his deanship (1959-75) the University doubled in size, and McCarthy has the distinction of having signed more than half of all graduate degree diplomas ever awarded by that University.

His scientific accomplishments are reflected in about 100 publications and patents, and his work is best appreciated if one considers the state-of-knowledge of

wood and pulping chemistry 50 years ago. In the thirties, the aromatic nature of lignin was still controversial, and it was not until the studies of K. Freudenberg, E. Adler and K. Kratzl that the concept of lignin, as a random network polymer of p-hydroxy cinnamyl alcohol, took hold. It was against the background of the European synthetic organic chemists' work that McCarthy advanced the understanding of the macromolecular properties of lignin and the technology of spent sulfite liquor. It is largely due to McCarthy's studies that lignosulfonates have captured a commanding place among industrial surfactants, a position reflected in sales of nearly 1.5 billion pounds in 1983.

In 1970 McCarthy was elected as a Fellow to the International Academy of Wood Science, and in 1979 he received the Johan Richter Prize for Research, and the Annual Award of the Pulp Manufacturing Division of TAPPI.

Besides being an innovative and energetic contributor to the science and technology of wood, Joe has been an influential advocate of the role of education, science and the arts in society. He has served as President of the Association of Graduate Schools in the Association of American Universities, and as Chairman of the Board of the Council of Graduate Schools of the United States. He was one of the five original incorporators of the Pacific Science Center Foundation, has served as its President and Board Chairman, and is currently a member of the Center's Presidents Council. He is a former Trustee of the Seattle Art Museum and currently serves as Trustee of the Seattle Opera Association and of the Lakeside School. In 1983 McCarthy was appointed to the National Advisory Committee of the Chemical and Processing Engineering Division of the National Science Foundation.

Over the years, it has become apparent to many of his friends that McCarthy relaxes by touring Europe annually and the Far East frequently, and by challenging his professional colleagues to controversial ligno-talk and tennis.

In dedicating this issue of the Journal of Wood Chemistry and Technology to Joseph L. McCarthy on the occasion of his 70th birthday, we join in expressing our admiration for him, our appreciation for his work and our gratitude for his friendship. We wish Joe and his wife Jane many more healthy, happy and productive years to come; continuing according to his own motto: "Don't do it unless it's fun!"

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