Preface

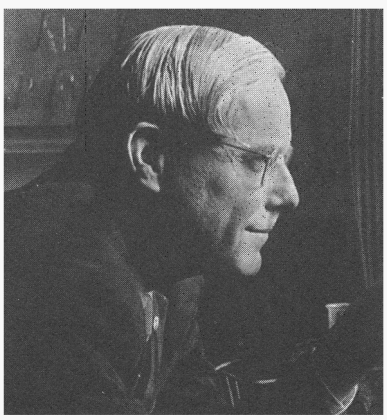
This issue of Pure and Applied Chemistry contains the texts of invited lectures, both plenary and section, which were delivered during the 17th IUPAC International Symposium on the Chemistry of Natural Products, held in New Delhi, India, from Feb. 4 to Feb. 9, 1990. In addition, there were over ninety oral communications and some 250 poster displays and discussions. The Symposium was attended by over 700 participants, including 420 from India. As many as 32 countries were represented.

An important function of IUPAC, through its Divisions, is to organize symposia on chemical topics of contemporary interest. Chemistry of Natural Products was identified as one such area way back in 1960, when the first symposium in this series was organized in Canberra, Australia. These symposia have since then been organized biennially in different parts of the world. An earlier symposium was held in India (New Delhi) in Feb. 1972, exactly eighteen years ago.

Chemistry of Natural Products, which has been central to the development of organic chemistry, is still a vibrant area of interest to organic chemists. Over the years, and especially since 1950, the subject has continuously evolved to cover several interdisciplinary areas, and now effectively overlaps molecular biology. These developments have been reflected in the several symposia since their launch in 1960. The present symposium, held in New Delhi, had an additional feature, in that it had been organized around a central theme "Natural Products Chemistry and Its Social Relevance". This theme was selected with a definite purpose. In recent years, chemistry has come in for attack from media, especially in developed countries, for its supposedly negative aspects, which have been exaggerated, without even mentioning the benefits, which the society enjoys because of chemistry. The Chemistry of Natural Products has much relevance to the society needs and the present symposium was organized to highlight three such areas: human health, agriculture, and personal sophistication.

I would like to mention here the founding in 1983 of a registered charitable trust in India "National Organic Symposium Trust (NOST)". The main objective of the Trust is to organize on a regular basis lectures, symposia, seminars and conferences in India on various aspects of organic chemistry. Funds have been raised by the Trustees from donations from chemical industry, research organizations and educational trusts. The 17th Symposium on Natural Products has been organized by the Trust. The Trustees are senior organic chemists in India; the present composition is given hereunder:

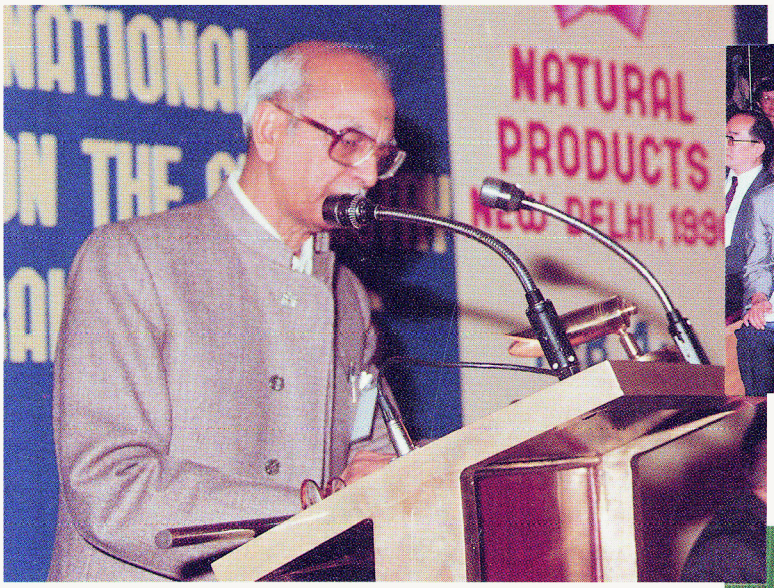
Board of Trustees: President: Sukh Dev; Vice President: S. Swaminathan; Secretary: Nitya Nand; Members: S.C. Bhattacharyya; T.R. Govindachari. **Council:** Chairman: G. Mehta; Convener: K. Nagarajan; Members: M.V. George; U.R. Ghatak; T.R. Kasturi; S.V. Kessar; S. Ranganathan.



Holger Erdtman

An opportunity is taken here to commemorate Professor Holger Erdtman, who died at the age of 87 on December 13, 1989. He was the President of the IUPAC Section on Organic Chemistry (1959-63) when the first symposium in the series was held in Australia in 1960. Prof. Erdtman organized the 4th Symposium in Stockholm (Sweden) in 1966.

SUKH DEV
Chairman, Organizing Committee

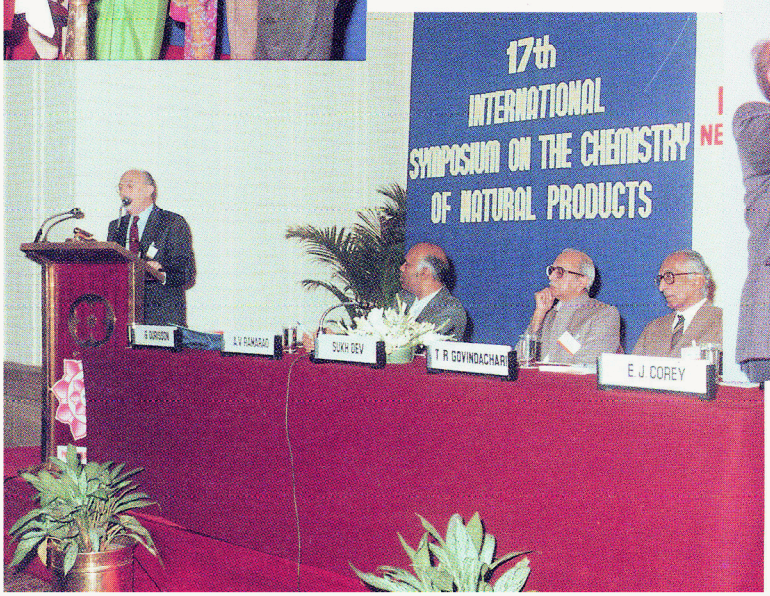


What is Carl Djerassi *(right)* narrating to Shô Itô *(left)* and Atta-ur-Rahman *(middle)*; chemistry or an episode from his novel "Cantor's Dilemma"?

The Symposium President, Sukh Dev *(above)*, welcomed the participants and invited E.J. Corey to perform the opening ceremony in the traditional Indian style by lighting a ceremonial lamp *(below)*; A.V. Rama Rao is the interested onlooker - ready to give a helping hand.

The lack of wine does not appear to dampen the appetites of Camille-Georges Wermuth *(left)* and Kenneth Rinehart *(middle)* at the sight of exotic Indian food.

IUPAC



Koji Nakanishi cuts the tie of a reluctant Guy Ourisson into two - and rejoins it. Obviously Nakanishi has diversified from splitting and fusing molecules. Nakanishi gave masterly performances of several of his magical feats to the utmost delight of symposium participants.