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In memoriam Professor Jiří Fábera, corresponding member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences

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IM MEMORIAM PROFESSOR JIŘÍ FÁBERA,  
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK  
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

A prominent Czechoslovak mathematician, Professor RNDr. JIŘÍ FÁBERA, CSc., Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Professor of the Czech Technical University, Director of the Mathematical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and Head of Department of Mathematics at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Czech Technical University, died in Prague after a short severe illness on 18 June, 1978 at the age of mere forty eight years.

Jiří Fábera was born on 21 April, 1930 at Božanov in Eastern Bohemia in a family of a forester. He started his secondary school studies in 1941 in Broumov and completed them by the leaving examination in 1949. In the same year he was admitted to the Faculty of Science of Charles University, Prague. He started studying mathematics and physics, and in the last two years specialized in mathematical analysis. He graduated from the University by passing the state final examination in 1953 and joined the Department of Mathematics and Descriptive Geometry at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Czech Technical University in Prague as a lecturer. With great enthusiasm he set about work in both the education and research. In 1956 he was appointed Senior Lecturer, but already since 1955 he was regularly put in charge of mathematics courses. Besides, during the years 1962 through 1965 he was member of staff of the so-called Free Department of the Advanced Mathematics Studies at the Czech Technical University; within the frame of this activity he delivered courses in set theory, general topology, theory of measure and integral in Euclidean spaces. He delivered special lectures for gifted students at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering during the years 1966–1970, namely from functional analysis, tensor algebra, and theory of coding. The lectures of Jiří Fábera were always carefully thought out and planned so that the students were able to understand even the most modern and complex mathematical disciplines: that was the reason why J. Fábera was so popular among his students. He paid a special attention to a modernized and more exact approach to the presentation of mathematics and was author or co-author of a number of university textbooks and lecture notes.

On the other hand, Professor Fáběra always devoted himself with great enthusiasm also to general problems of the educational process. Thanks to his deep personal concern for the new Czechoslovak system of education he succeeded in attracting to it a number of his fellow workers both at the University and the Academy.

After being awarded the scientific degree of candidate in physico-mathematical sciences he was appointed Reader in 1966. After a one-year stage at the Mathematical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences he was appointed Head of the Department of Mathematics of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering in 1970 and in the same year he was elected by the Scientific Board of the Faculty into the office of Vice-Dean for political education. On 1 September, 1972 he was appointed Full Professor of Mathematics at the Czech Technical University.

On 1 June, 1976, Prof. Fáběra was appointed Director of the Mathematical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, continuing at the same time his work as Head of Department of Mathematics. The Mathematical Institute was not a strange place for him: since 1962 he had collaborated closely with its former director, Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Professor Vladimír Knichal who influenced considerably his future professional interests, and was in good relations, both professional and personal, with many members of the Institute. That helped him to find quickly his right place in the Institute. In his office he played an important role in forming the profile and line of research of the Institute. He succeeded in continuing the former good traditions of the Institute, one of the characteristic features of his activity being the creation of considerably tighter and deeper relations with the universities and of more profound interest in the problems of education. His experience and the style of work that he had brought with from the University had an expressively positive effect onto the activities of the Mathematical Institute. Prof. Fáběra held offices also in the Academy: he was appointed Chairman of the Czechoslovak National Committee for Mathematics and member of the Scientific Board for Mathematics of the Academy. In December 1977 he was elected Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.

In spite of the enormous amount of work he undertook, Prof. Fáběra always found time to engage in socially important tasks. He took an active part in political activities at the University and later also in the Academy in various offices in the Communist Party and in other organizations. For his activities and merits in the fields of science, education and society he was awarded Golden Medal of the Czech Technical University, Second Degree Felber Medal, Memorial Medal of the Slovak Technical University at Bratislava, Memorial Medal of the Faculty of Nuclear and Engineering Physics, First Degree Medal of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of Charles University.

Scientific papers published by Jiří Fáběra offer just an incomplete and imperfect picture of the span of his scientific interests and professional activities. His work extends not only to a number of branches of mathematical analysis but also to algebra and other mathematical disciplines. His papers may be divided into three



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groups. First, he was engaged in algebraization of the abstract theory of measure and integral; this was also the topic of his habilitation paper. In this paper he studied Cartesian multiplication of measure functions on Boolean  $\sigma$ -algebras; he proved that generally it is impossible to define an analogue of the Cartesian product of measures. His results in this field have contributed considerably to the development of the problem of introducing measures on Boolean algebras. It is natural that from the abstract measure theory he proceeded to another group of problems: instead of a Boolean  $\sigma$ -algebra of sets it is possible to consider more general structures — e.g. the lattice of subspaces of a vector or a Hilbert space. Such a generalization is not formal and is of importance in the quantum mechanics where even structures more general than lattices are considered. A naturally arising question is when such a structure can be imbedded into a Boolean algebra — the problem of hidden parameters in quantum mechanics. These topics are dealt with in some other papers by J. Fáběra. The work and results in this direction formed a starting point for a research project of functional-analytical methods in quantum theories. The leader of this project was Prof. Fáběra himself who, in order to stimulate the work in this direction, in 1971 founded a seminar at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering which helped to train a number of young mathematicians in creative research work. Many ideas and suggestions of J. Fáběra were developed by his fellow workers, and thus Prof. Fáběra initiated tens of scientific papers. In this field he manifested his wide scope of knowledge and exceptional organizer's abilities. The last field of interest of Jiří Fáběra was closely connected with his work at the Faculty: the Fourier integral and its application to the study of signals. He studied the problem of defining the spectrum of a signal by the Fourier Transform and the domain of applicability of the so-called Kotelnikov Theorem. Also this investigation, developed in his thesis, was a source of inspiration for a number of works by his colleagues.

As a prominent organizer of the Czechoslovak mathematical life, Jiří Fáběra was involved in many other activities. Let us mention at least his contribution to the publishing of mathematical literature as translator and editor, his extensive work as a referee and reviewer, membership in the Board of National Research Projects in Mathematics, leadership of two projects included in the National Basic Research Programme e.t.c.

Jiří Fáběra was a sociable man of optimistic and friendly character. He always used every opportunity to offer advice and help, regardless of whether a colleague approached him with a professional or a personal problem. We should not omit the fact that he was a loving husband and an understanding father of three daughters. His deep affection for music and theatre, especially opera, played an important role in his life: in his young days he even seriously considered the life career of an opera singer. He balanced his mental and artistic interests by his liking to hunting, even if the lack of time prevented him from devoting much time to this hobby of his.

Both the Czechoslovak education and science, and in particular the Czechoslovak mathematics, has suffered a severe and hardly repairable loss. For a long time will his

family, as well as the wide circle of his fellow workers, miss the devoted husband and father, a fair friend and experienced teacher, an industrious worker and high-principled man, Jiří Fábera.

*The staff of Mathematical Institute,  
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and Department of Mathematics,  
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