

Dear colleagues,

Spring liveliness has had a positive effect on our editorial portfolio. That's wonderful news, considering that this year, we have firmly decided to maintain our schedule, which means we will be releasing all of this and last years' issues. In that vein, we hope that the ice that the spring has melted will be supported by a powerful summer stream of issues following the Andrianov Conference that, in turn won't dry out in autumn thanks to the Nesmeyanov issue and won't freeze by December, since this is when our activity peaks. This is yet another time when our respected greats are lifesavers.

Speaking of which, this year is rich with anniversaries. Apart from the aforementioned Academy members K. A. Andrianov and A. N. Nesmeyanov, we can't forget another date—March 13th was the 100-year anniversary of the Academy member N. S. Enikolopov, with whom I was fortunate enough to work together. At the time, his scientific interests had seemed infinitely far from my own, yet now it feels as if almost everywhere his influence can be traced. The main lesson he had taught was to constantly question oneself whether the results we are submitting for publication are of proper academic quality.

It happened like this. I had brought our first article on dendrimers (the name they had gotten after the article had been reviewed in CA, while in "Doklady Chemistry" (DAN) we still called them "Volume-growing polymethylsilsesquioxanes") that I intended to submit to DAN. N. S. Enikolopov was clearly irritated; he didn't like approving articles the contents of which he didn't understand and was very protective of his professional reputation. He asked, "Are you aware that only discoveries are published in DAN?" I tried to exude confidence with everything in me, and N. S. Enikolopov was left with little choice. Then he lectured me on what the academic institutes should devote themselves to and what they shouldn't be doing. I can just picture his reaction to the majority of current projects and publications, where a long list of articles in top foreign journals serves as a proof of the subject's importance.

You might ask, what then should serve to guide young scientists today if not the publications in JACS? My answer—the program of fundamental research that is the LAW and whose budget is maintaining our institutes. "So what, can't we even reference JACS anymore?" Why, of course we can, it's only that we used to reference them when reporting on how we have surpassed their results.

It's long past time our scientific councils filled their activity with true value and made the editorial boards of their scientific outlets more current. These scientific councils, formally, are the founders of scientific conferences, and the keynote speakers there should be the representatives of our gifted younger generation, who should speak not of their own achievements but instead of the prospects of their scientific councils' fields of study. Then, to establish the importance of the subject of study, it will be sufficient to say "as was stated in the conference conclusions, the research in this area is

vital and much-needed in such and such area of science and technology and are on the priority list of subjects for further study approved by the scientific council..."

Some would say that this is highly reminiscent of the old "the party tells us to..." to which I will respond that there wasn't anything necessarily bad in the program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in relation to science and technology, as well as scientific councils. The key point, however, is to cancel the supremely unwise formal indicators of the number of publications in high-rated journals, whose ratings we ourselves are maintaining through endless referencing in accordance with their rules. If people want to get recognition—by all means, let them keep getting published there and grow h-indexes, but this should not have any bearing on the institutes' reports. Studies funded from the budget should be published in academic journals. That much is only too clear and logical, yet our science authorities still want us to draw water to someone else's mill and hardly think about supporting our own journals.

This doesn't have to denote a complete break with the international information environment. For one, all our journals are translated into English, and for another, we can publish reviews and highlights of current trends; however, the first publication should always be in a Russian academic journal. Perhaps then the ratings of DAN, Bulletins of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russian Chemical Reviews, and—since we're dreaming here—INEOS OPEN will go up and finally take their proper place.

The Russian Academy of Sciences is the highest expert board of our country, as stated by our laws. Perhaps it's time for our employers and normative-creators to understand the letter and spirit of the law regarding the RAS? I'm writing this, and instantly I'm scared of what else they can come up with. However, one must hope for the best, and for now, let's go back to our history.

Following the first ten years of its existence, INEOS had presented "The Methods of Organoelement Chemistry" as a report on its work. In the following five years, 19 volumes had been published, summarizing the creation of a new field of science—organoelement chemistry.

This brought on the beginning of a new era—the era of synthetic food, the area in the development of which INEOS and its synthetic food department staffed with many bright scientists had played a big role. Unfortunately, after A. N. Nesmeyanov had passed away, there was no one to organize and anthologize these revolutionary findings. The legacy thus had taken shape through the brilliant report A. N. Nesmeyanov had made during the Mendeleev Congress, a small brochure following that report, and a great many remarkable publications on the various fundamental aspects of the process of creating synthetic food.

Artificial caviar, Podolsk sausage, and other such delicacies were only the showcase, applicable parts of his program, yet it was that part that had attracted the attention of producers, while the fundamental aspects hadn't gotten any attention or

understanding. The program was oriented toward the methods of synthesis of the vital amino acids in their natural stereo-configurations and the simplest proteins based on them. Unique methods of amino acid synthesis as well as the basis of stereo-specific catalysts were created. The key principles of aroma formation were formulated; the methods of cleansing and separating stereoisomers were presented. Shards of enormous humanistic project had continued to develop, but without the unifying focal point that A. N. Nesmeyanov had embodied.

Yes, it is said that the program was far ahead of its time. That's true. Many things are said by people, for instance, that this had been a whim of a vegetarian who dreamed of tasty food based on Tolstoy's principles. It would be even less wise to actually argue with such notions and therefore lift the unfortunate minds that created them to the level of actual opponents. They have simply not listened to that historic speech, nor have they read the brochure, and have only consumed hearsay and primitive logic constructions.

Yes, that program was ahead of its time, but that's what the academic science SHOULD be. We should include that brochure in the mandatory program for the PhD exam for all fields at INEOS RAS so that, with its help, the younger generation could study the nature of relevancy, fundamentality, and scientific groundwork. Those are the parts of the scientific projects and publications that require reflecting upon at the earliest stages of the scientific process, or else they are in danger of losing their meaning.

Unfortunately for that branch of research, all the famous successors to the INEOS directorship were burdened by completely different ideas and projects. It was the beginning of the era of transforming everything, and the great project was abandoned, not having been realized even by a quarter. However, our present moment is curious in that sense—it is exactly now when the programs of fundamental research are being revised that may be the right time to think over the legacy of our founding father. It's not a coincidence that we've mentioned so many times already how he had been ahead of his time. Perhaps it's time to continue this project using modern means. If one rereads the brochure carefully, it becomes clear that he had foreseen this, too, with his visionary mindset of a scientist, an artist, and a humanitarian.

Sincerely yours,

Editor-in-Chief

Prof., Full Member of RAS

Aziz M. Muzafarov