Jacques Flesselles

Jacques Flesselles, scientist, engineer and General Secretary of the Cooperation Centre for Scientific Research relative to Tobacco (CORESTA), Paris (1982–1984), died on 21st September 1987. He was 53. After reading engineering and graduating from the Ecole polytechnique, he joined SEITA (Société nationale d'exploitation industrielle des tabacs et des allumettes) in 1956. He spent the main part of his career actively in the research field, at first in SEITA's research centre at Fleury-les-Aubrais where he was appointed its Director of Technical Research in 1975.

His tobacco interests were wide-ranging, but his first and probably enduring ones were associated with the processing and manufacture of tobacco. Areas he paid particular attention to were the control of tobacco moisture content and its effect upon processability, and an all embracing fundamental study into the operation of cigarette machinery and its influence upon tobacco and cigarette quality. Jacques Flesselles brought to tobacco research his considerable talents, especially his appreciation for the need to apply modern statistical methods. This was essential to help resolve the difficulties thrown up by the inherent variability of the raw material and its processing.

He was one of the first to see the need for better measuring techniques. This led him into the area of development of new and improved instrumentation to measure the properties of cigarettes and filters. He successfully met this challenge whilst the product was undergoing rapid change and development, and furthermore when the pressures upon tobacco scientists to extend their knowledge were considerable. It was from this work that Jacques Flesselles emerged as a research scientist with some exceptional qualities, to which he also added the ability to contribute to the teaching and

training of SEITA's technical staff. At a later date he played a major role in setting up the instrument manufacturing company SODIM and was appointed an expert and reporter by the European Economic Community for a study on the determination of tobacco moisture. In 1979 he left Fleury-les-Aubrais and joined SEITA's head office in Paris, the city of his birth.

Jacques Flesselles published many scientific papers and contributed to the writing of four books. He was a regular contributor at international symposia and scientific meetings — notably CORESTA, TABAK-KOLLOQUIUM and ISO. His presentations always attracted a discerning audience of his peers. He became a member of the Editorial Board of this journal, where his experience and keen appreciation of scientific matters was greatly valued.

It was in the international arena that he also established an enviable reputation and became a first-class representative of his country and of course SEITA. This led to his appointment as General Secretary of CORESTA in 1982 following the retirement of Pierre Ray. This was a fitting recognition of a long and devoted association with CORESTA from as early as 1966, when he was Secretary of the Technology Group. He became Chairman of its Scientific Commission in 1978, and was a strong advocate of the application of scientific discipline in the work of CORESTA. He was very eager to push ahead with its future development regardless of the difficulties. He was particularly keen for the various scientific groups of CORESTA to co-operate more effectively and to undertake joint endeavours. It was unfortunate that after only two years as General Secretary he had to take things easier for health reasons.

I personally had the pleasure to work with Jacques Flesselles during part of his period with CORESTA and I

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will always remember his enduring friendship and how much we all benefited from his guidance and leadership.

No tribute to Jacques Flesselles would be complete without recalling his Gallic sense of the occasion. He would always make the most of the opportunity afforded through visiting countries, on behalf of COR-ESTA, to speak at some stage in their native language and to be humorous into the bargain. This example set a precedent hard to follow. In Jacques Flesselles' un-

timely death we have lost a distinguished character and gentleman.

He was a graduate of the Ecole d'état-major and an "ancien auditeur de l'Institut des hautes études de Défense nationale". He was also a lieutenant-colonel in the army reserve and had only just received the distinction of Officer of l'Ordre national du Mérite from the Defence Minister. His widow and three children survive him.

David T. Westcott