

### III. OBITUARIES

#### PROFESSOR RYSZARD RĄCZKA (1931-1996)

Ryszard Rączka died on August 26, 1996. At the time he was the Chairman of our Scientific Council.

Ryszard was born in Warsaw in 1931, where he was also educated. His stay at Warsaw University was interrupted in 1953 for political reasons that are difficult to understand in a free society. However, he finally completed his studies and spent two years at the Dubna Nuclear Institute near Moscow. Since 1965 he was closely associated with the International Centre of Theoretical Physics in Trieste. Here began his collaboration with Asim Barut, resulting in work on the geometrical modelling of relativistic particles. This developed into a comprehensive study of the use of group theory in physics. Ryszard co-authored the important book *Theory of group representations and applications*, in 1977. This monograph was a standard reference book for a long time and was reprinted in 1988.

Ryszard's later work was in field theory and particle physics. He was intellectually ambitious, hoping to improve on perturbative QCD by formulating a superior, nonperturbative model. He visited France, Germany and Italy on a regular basis, establishing broad collaborations between Poland and Western Europe. In particular, he organized a series of Polish-German symposia on fundamental interactions.

Although Ryszard's research and especially his book with Barut will keep his name alive for a long time to come, many people will remember him foremost as a splendid person. Although persecuted in his youth, he was completely devoid of spite. He had deep feelings of sympathy for the suffering of others and often managed to help. As head of the Nuclear Theory Department under martial law he tried desperately to keep our group together. Against all odds, he was partially successful.

Ryszard Rączka was that rare combination, a first rate scientist and an active, humane man.

