Laudatio: Prof. Dr. Hermann Heimpel

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Prof. H. Heimpel is one of the co-founders of the journal ONKOLOGIE and was a member of the scientific advisory board for a period of 13 years (1978-1990). In hindsight, through his own efforts in forming a new concept for this journal during the years 1990-1991 as well as his advice and recommendations, he helped to make ONKOLOGIE both an international and an interdisciplinary organ for clinical oncology. We therefore would like to take this opportunity at the time of his retirement in October 1995 to honor his person. Heimpel was born on September 29, 1930, son to Hermann Heimpel, a Professor of History, and his wife Elisabeth. After his schooling in Leipzig, Strassburg and Hinterzarten/Schwarzwald he studied medicine in Göttingen, Heidelberg, Innsbruck and Freiburg/Br. from 1950 to 1956. In 1957, he took his degree in Freiburg on Pharmacological studies of the renal circulation. From 1957 to 1959, he performed his internship in Chicago, Ill., and worked in a country practice in Germany. From 1959 to 1966 he was as a resident at the Medical University Clinic of Freiburg headed by Prof. Ludwig Heilmeyer. His 'Habilitationsschrift' in 1965 was on the subject of ferrokinetics. In 1967, together with F. Wendt, Heimpel reported cases of congenital dyserythropoietic anemia, which they classified as a further hereditary disturbance of erythropoiesis. Using cell kinetic methods, Heimpel and W. Queißer later clarified the role of ineffective erythropoiesis as the cause of the anemia. In 1967, he followed his by then retired teacher, Prof. L. Heilmeyer, to Ulm. Heilmeyer had made it his job to build up a new medical college there. After its opening, Heilmeyer took up the office of founding headmaster. As assistant medical director, the first thing Heimpel did was to form the Department of Internal Medicine and Hematology. In 1969, he was appointed Professor in his field, senior physician, and later given the title 'C4-Professor'. In close cooperation with the Center for Basic Clinical Research headed by Prof. T. M. Fliedner who was especially appointed to Ulm, a potent hematological research group was formed soon to be internationally recognized. The professional and scientific activities of Prof. Heimpel in the field of clinical hematology are manifold. He was one of the initiators of the South German Hemoblastosis Group (SHG) founded in 1970. From 1980 to 1986, he was speaker of the German Working Group for Bone Marrow Transplantation, and for many years was the penpushing editor of the journal Blut (now called Annals of Hematology). Since 1978, he has worked for the 'Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft', first as a medical expert and later (1983-1989) as a member of the Senate and Authorizing Committee for 'Sonderforschungsbereiche'. Prof. Heimpel also took on many functions in academic areas. From 1983 to 1990, he was presiding member of the 'Medizinische Fakultätentag', 1983-1986 Dean of the Faculty of Clinical Medicine of the University of Ulm, and was chosen as Prorector of his University in 1989. It should not be forgotten that Prof. Heimpel was always an

enthusiastic academic teacher and it must be added that he was chairman of the Teaching Commission at the University of Ulm for many years. In 1990, Prof. Heimpel was elected President of the German Society for Hematology and Oncology (DGHO), a position he terminated recently.

Scientifically, with his ever large and competent team, Prof. Heimpel was active in almost all fields of classical clinical hematology. He made his name in the international scientific community with his studies on the pathogenesis and therapy of panmyelopathies, drug-induced agranulocytosis, and further development in bone marrow transplantation, to name but a few. He was involved in the initiation and planning of cooperative treatment studies where it can be said that he acted as mentor for the studies set up by the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology on acute lymphatic leukemia and chronic myeloid leukemia – both subjects initiated by the SHG. Another of his vast fields of interest was chronic myelo-proliferative disease, as can be seen in the review article on polycythemia vera published in this volume. Prof. Heimpel's personality could not help but impress all those who ever met him, whether departmental co-worker, fellow doctor or patient. Blessed with an exceptional perceptiveness, an excellent analytical intellect, and an amazing quickness of mind, he was, and still is, in a position to deal with both clinico-scientific and medical problems. Thanks to these qualities, Heimpel was a pioneer of what soon came to be known as the 'Ulm spirit': openness to intellectual stimulus, acceptance of other ways of thinking, and positive motivation connected with a collegial style of leadership. All those who have experienced Heimpel giving one of his carnival jester's speeches in his home dialect 'Uff Sächsisch' or at one of his 'ladies speeches' during the evening festivities at hematology congresses, have got to know that the witty and humorous side of his nature comes directly from the heart. We wish Prof. Heimpel good health and unlimited creativity for many years to come.

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