

Kondolence adresované Katedře anglistiky a amerikanistiky FF MU

from
The Lord Quirk FBA



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8 May 00

Dear Dr Hladký,

Gabi and I were deeply shocked and saddened by the message you left on my answering machine and I made several telephone calls (eg to Jan Svartvik) in a vain attempt to get more information. By a cruel irony, just before getting your message, I had been reading with amusement and customary admiration Jan's article in the latest *Brno Studies* about dogs having to be carried on the escalator.

Please convey to the family our profound and affectionate sympathy in their awful loss.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dr Josef Hladký
Dept of English
Masaryk University
A. Nováka 1
66088 Brno

Professor Randolph Quirk

I have just heard about the death of Professor Firbas. Please be assured that all who knew him in Vienna appreciate the extent of your loss: we admired him greatly and thoroughly enjoyed his visits to us. We will try to include an appropriate tribute in a forthcoming number of our departmental Journal.

Quite irreplaceable.

Deepest sympathy,
Bryan Jenner
Institut für Anglistik, Wien

Dear Prof. Hladký,

I was shocked and extremely sad to learn that Prof. Firbas, my good friend, passed away. Though we met only once at Harvard in 1997, we kept correspondence and he gave me much valuable help in my study of the Prague School. His death is not only a great loss to me, but also to the linguistic circle as a whole. The only thing that one may feel a bit relieved is that his ideas have been widely appreciated, discussed, applied, and developed. In that sense, he will always be with us. At this sad moment, please allow me to extend my condolences and sympathy to Firbas' colleagues and wish the Firbas Festschrift volume under your editorship to be a worthy souvenir of him (I expect a photo of him will be included in the volume).

Sincerely yours,
Jun Qian
English Department
Peking University, Beijing

Dear Professor Hladký,

It was with great sadness that I received the news of Jan Firbas's death. He was a great friend and a great scholar.

Please accept my most heartfelt condolences, in my own name as in that of my husband Enrique Hidalgo, and children. I also speak for the members of my Department at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid who were privileged to meet Jan and engage in discussion with him on the occasion of his visit to Madrid.

Please convey our condolences to the members of the Department of English and American Studies.

With best wishes,
Angela Downing

The Linguist (July 2000)

Jan Firbas
by Peter Newmark

Jan Firbas died in Brno on 5th May. My most dear friend, who was so kind and honest and mild, was an inspiration to me, as well as to so many of his friends and colleagues. For over fifty years he built up in Brno, in the Czech Republic, what was acknowledged to be the finest university department of English in Europe. In his work on Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP), he made significant and original contributions to the understanding of translation. Above all, he demonstrated the importance of “sonorized” speech in translation; both the tone of the voice and the order of the words in a spoken sentence, in indicating the position of the emphases (word-order, italics, intensifiers) of a written sentence, the non-literary as important as the literary, and its translation; by showing that a part of a sentence could be context-independent as well as -dependent, he relativized the role of context, without ever underrating it. (Culture has a similar role.) Further, he introduced the concept of “potentiality” into translation, showing that where a sentence is ambig-

uous in a segment of the original text, its clarification in the context or the “narrow scene” must go hand in hand with a similar procedure in the translation.

This true scholar, in spite of dire threats, never joined “The Party”, the infamous Czech Communist Party. A humanist and a Christian, his serenity was a joy to share.
