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To Professor Meinhart H. Zenk of the University of Halle, on the occasion of your seventieth birthday, this issue of *Phytochemistry* is cordially dedicated to you in respect and admiration by the editors, former students, colleagues, and friends from around the world.

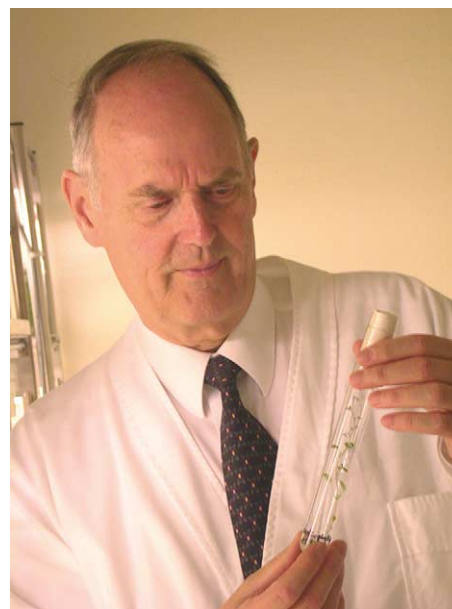
*Alles prüfe der Mensch, sagen die Himmlischen,
Dass er, kräftig genährt, danken für alles lern
Und verstehe die Freiheit
Aufzubrechen, wohin er will.*

(Friedrich Hölderlin: *Lebenslauf*)

You have understood your academic freedom as an imperative to explore plant secondary metabolism and chase its enzymes [Zenk, M.H., 1995. Chasing the enzymes of alkaloid biosynthesis. In: Golding, B.T. et al. (Eds.), *Organic Reactivity: Physical and Biological Aspects*. Chem. Soc. Press, pp. 89–109], and your harvest has been rich beyond expectation. Ten years ago, on the occasion of your 60th birthday, the late Jeffrey Harborne, then Editor-in-Chief of *Phytochemistry*, congratulated you on being the first biologist ever to receive the Liebig Denkmünze of the Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker—you are still the first and only! But who would have thought that you were to be announced a leader in *ecology* research, for your pioneering work on phytochelatins, the heavy-metal-binding peptides of plants (*Citation Records Indicate Leaders in Ecology Research*. 1994. *The Scientist*, 8, 15)?

Of the honours bestowed on you in the seventh decade of your life, only the Bavarian Maximilian's Order of the Sciences and Arts, limited to a select 100, is mentioned here, because local recognition can be more dear to the heart than international acclaim...

We salute you on the happy occasion of your 70th birthday and wish you many more happy moments in



unraveling the secrets of the most talented chemists on earth: *plants*!

Nikolaus Amrhein
ETH-Zürich

Elmar Weiler
Ruhr-Universität Bochum

PS: Few, if any, of the readers of *Phytochemistry* may be aware that there is a protein with the acronym “ZENK” which is induced in the forebrain of canaries and zebra finches upon song presentation (C.V. Mello et al., 1992. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 89, 6818–6822). So ZENK is near you whenever you hear a bird singing.

The credit for the picture should go to: Dr. Victor Klimyuk, Research Director, Icon Genetics, Halle.