

Dear colleagues.

I am particularly honored to be here and to hear such emotional talks about Professor Arpad Somogyi, and therefore, I hope you will understand the same feelings and high emotions even more coming from your neighboring Croatia, myself, our group, and our Medical Faculty.

There are at least two issues why we are particularly grateful to Professor Somogyi. Note, that this is not attacked Ukraine at the present time, this is Croatia, 1991, and town Vukovar. After 3 months long siege, despite strong resistance, the whole town was destroyed and people expelled.

No need to indicate how terrible was the situation, since the town was surrounded completely by huge forces of the Yugoslav and the Serbian army.

In such a terrible situation, Croatia, attacked as a whole, was struggling for her life. At the same time, in particular, the town of Dubrovnik was severely attacked, and heavily damaged, but resisted.

Going back to Vukovar, note, that the hospital was a particular target, damaged heavily, but in the shelters, there was a huge number of the wounded people. Note, that most of them, practically immediately after overwhelming the Croatian defense, after only two days, were brutally eliminated. It was the largest massacre of the Croatian war of independence.

In such a desperate situation while struggling for her life, Croatia was looking for essential help and survival. As a particular attempt, our Medical Faculty, nominated two doctors from Vukovar Hospital, the chief of surgery, Dr Juraj Njavro, and the director of the hospital for the Nobel Peace Prize, Dr Vesna Bosanac. Note, that this Prize is for the people who have conferred in the preceding year the greatest benefit to humankind. Indeed this was the permanent curing such a huge number of people, including the wounded soldiers of the aggressor side – all continuously under the most terrible circumstances. As a particular task, I was chosen to run the project.

Indeed, in a very short time, I have to emphasize here the essential contribution of the Hungarian scientists Professors Szabo, Mozsik, and Gyires, where Professor Somogyi had an important role, we organized a huge worldwide support of the scientific community for these two Croatian doctors who were defending their homeland most humanly by providing the continuous medical care in the most terrible events.

No need to indicate how much I was personally attached to the persons of these two doctors, Njavro and Bosanac, and the enterprise as a whole. The support was growing, and finally, we were very close to winning the Nobel Peace Prize but we were not chosen as the winner. However, given Croatia is now a recognized member of the European Union, and NATO, the main task was fully achieved. And to emphasize, this was at that time an essential project, and I can not explain enough, how much we appreciate the given help, and contribution of Professor Somogyi, in particular.

Moreover, although the remembering and gratitude for the human help of Professor Somogyi are pertinent, there is also another issue and our additional gratitude that should be emphasized as well.

This is regarding his scientific contribution and influence.

Noteworthy, Professor Somogyi had a brilliant career. There, we would point out, his work in the stress research along with Professor Selye, and in this, a particular review stress paper as the most prominent highlight of the significance of Hans Selye, the most prominent issue of the stress since the very beginning, and attempts to achieve the effective resolution of the stress and stress response.

You can see how the article begins - We former students ..... feel the obligation to remind the scientific community. Meaning they feel a strong responsibility and obligation to defend and extend the legacy of their mentor.

There, they act as eyewitnesses, hard work to emphasize the credibility of the findings, always emphasizing the role and importance of the main mentor, Professor Selye, giving quite specific details of the stress concept and the importance of the stress response. What we can see also in this essential report, there is very little about their contribution, giving convincing evidence of the particular modesty of the all authors and thereby significance as real scientists and strong supporters of the original concept. Thus, as you can see from the given figure, thanks to them, the original concept now the essential one in physiology understanding, adrenal gland-hypophysis-hypothalamus, was formed. But the most important point is that such a holistic concept made a strong theoretical and practical base for the new vistas that will come later. Noteworthy, they provided an open door to likely override all conceptual and practical shortcomings that could be not avoided in any of such essential breakthroughs in physiology and pharmacology.

Therefore, in addition to the numerous studies of other groups, we have to emphasize for our reports that all of our studies from the very beginning till the very last papers that you will shortly see are presented because of this concept and based on this concept, and presented findings in these founding reports of Selye, and his collaborators.

Thus, you will see why we are thankful to Professor Selye and his collaborators, to Professor Somogyi in particular, given the stress concept as a major general concept that should be implemented in any system and organ protection to reestablish body homeostasis. However, because of this particular occasion, we would skip to defend or specifically explain all of the pleiotropic effects of the stable gastric pentadecapeptide BPC 157 quite largely reviewed and presented in original papers. But, we should mention that all of these beneficial effects were obtained using Selye's stress concept, but in a particular novel way.

In conclusion, we are particularly grateful to be invited to this memorial conference. As you have heard, an untold story about the huge human contribution of Professor Somogyi is now told. Also, as you will hear, his scientific work will strongly help us in the future development, and stress concept implementation. Once again, thank you very much for sharing your feelings and memories with us as well.