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Preface

The following articles, dedicated to Professor Robert Simha, were submitted on invitation by the Editor of the Journal, Professor Greg McKenna, as a part of the 95th birthday celebrations of Robert Simha. These started on October 17–18, 2007, with a special symposium on polymer physics at the National Research Council Canada, Industrial Materials Institute (NRCC/IMI), organized by L. A. Utracki and K. C. Cole, and, formally, they will end next year with publication by Wiley of a book on Polymer Physics. The organization of these events was only possible with help and direct participation of Robert Simha and his colleague at the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), Professor Alex Jamieson. During the symposium several of Robert's ex-students (e.g., Professors H. Brenner and J. L. Zakin) and collaborators (e.g., Professors A. Abe, H. W. Kammer, G. Consolati, F. H. J. Maurer, S. Nazarenko, C. Lacabanne, M. R. Kamal, etc.) presented papers as well as eulogies. Our intention was to commemorate his outstanding and continuing contributions to polymer physics, which extended to the very last of his days—yes, sadly Professor Robert Simha passed away on the 5th June, 2008.

During his long and productive life there were several festive celebrations of Simha's birthdays, organized at CWRU and illuminated by the presence of many prominent researchers from around the world. The first two events were held at the Department of Macromolecular Science & Engineering, CWRU, Simha's academic home since 1968. In 1977, on the occasion of Simha's 65th birthday, Professors Anne Hiltner and Alex Jamieson organized a Symposium on Statistical Approaches to Macromolecular Systems, from which 30 contributions were published in two issues of Volume 18 of the *Journal of Macromolecular Science, Part B Physics*. These included papers by Maurice Huggins, Gunter Rehage, Ray Boyer, Alex Silberberg and Walter Stockmayer. Subsequently, in 2000, to celebrate Simha's approaching 90th birthday, we held a Mini-Symposium on Structure-Property Relationships in the Amorphous Polymeric State, consisting of pre-



sentations by Simha, Frans Maurer, and John Curro, a poster session, and a banquet at which the after-dinner speech was delivered by Ian Cowie. During these many years at CWRU, Robert Simha has been an inspirational figure to students and faculty, as motivational teacher, esteemed scientist and cherished colleague.

There was a very good reason why the celebrations of the 95th Simha's birthday moved from Cleveland to Montreal. Robert Simha has been a part of the NRCC/IMI activities from the very beginning—he spent several months at IMI helping us in establishing the research program on polymers and their mixtures. During the first symposium organized in Spring 1981 on the Thermodynamics of Liquids and their Blends, the famous creators of the S-S hole-cell theory, Robert Simha and Thomas Somcynsky, were the key speakers. The importance of this 40-year old theory (developed in 1965–1966) is evidenced by several articles in this issue that use it as a base for the interpretation of diverse physical phenomena in polymeric systems.

Over the years, Robert Simha has been frequent speaker during international symposia that IMI has organized on Polymer Blends, Composites, Foams and Nanocomposites. It was

during these events that he presented extensions of the S-S theory to polymer blends (work with R. K. Jain), to polymer composites (with R. K. Jain and S. C. Jain) and to solubility of gases in polymers (with H. Xie)—these were the guiding documents for our technological developments. Recently, he participated in the NSERC strategic project on Polymeric Nanocomposites shared by IMI and McGill University.

Robert Simha has been vital contributor to NRCC/IMI activities during the 28 years of its

existence as a speaker, advisor, co-author of many publications and inspiring example to follow. He enriched the lives of many and is dearly missed.

Leszek A. Utracki, NRCC/IMI

Alex M. Jamieson, CWRU

Montreal, September 2008