

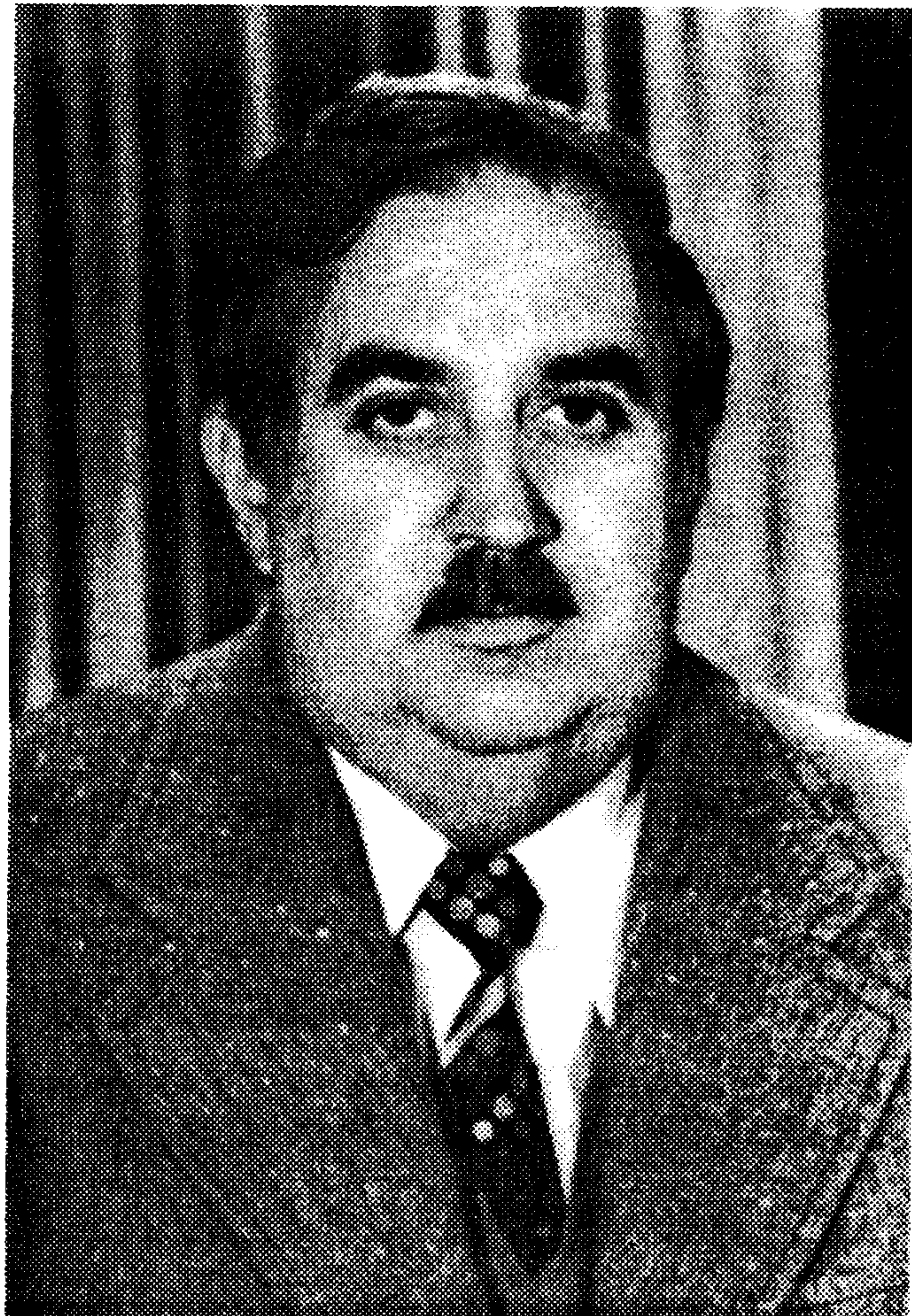
IN MEMORIAM

Milan Mijatov

1933 - 1996

At the end of 1996 (November 19th, 1996) due to a long illness our fellow-astronomer, former Director of the Belgrade Observatory (1977-1981), former editor in chief of Bull. Obs. Astron. Belgrade (Nos 127-131, 1976-1981) and of Publ. Obs. Astron. Belgrade (Nos. 24, 25, 27-31), M.Sc. Milan Mijatov passed away. Faithfully devoting his entire life to astronomy, in spite of the fact that for the past 15 years he was ill and retired, he worked actively to the last moment of his life. The last paper he wrote was meant for the 11th National Conference of Yugoslav astronomers held in October 1996.

Belgrade born, he began his life's path 63 years ago (July 3rd, 1933), the path covered with poverty, but with a great ambition to accomplish something in life, to fulfill some ideals. Such a chance appeared when he graduated from the secondary school in 1952 and entered the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Sciences, to study astronomy. From today's perspective it is not hard to state that a man of such intellect could easily choose and successfully finish a far more profitable profession than astronomy, but tearing himself from poverty was not high on Mijatov's priority list. Instead, he wanted with his whole being to dedicate his life to astronomy. He finished University not before 1962, not because he neglected his studies but because he was pushed by deprivation to start working as a programmer at the Federal Institute for Statistics. That scarcity mainly was caused by the fact that his father was a victim of the World War II. In the meantime he accomplished a training course in programming at the IBM 705 computer machines and went to specialize in France. Immediately after graduating in astronomy, he obtained employment at the Astronomical Observatory in Belgrade (January 1st, 1963) as an assistant in the Absolute Declination Division, where he would spend all his professional life. He received his Master's degree in 1972. Several times he visited the Main Astronomical Observatory in Pulkovo (Russia) where he collaborated with Russian colleagues and participated in numerous national and international astronomical conferences. From Sept. 1975 to Sept. 1981 he was the leader of Belgrade Observatory (from 1977



as Director). He led the Observatory fairly and well during these six years. But unlimited generosity and humanity are not always leadership's best friends. He loved astronomy much more.

In about the same period (1975-1981) he was a successful Editor-in chief of the Observatory's publications.

Crushed by illness, he had to go for a longer remedial treatment and in April 1984 he was forced into premature retirement. Although officially he terminated his employment, he never, to the last moment of his life, discontinued his friendship with astronomy and his colleagues.

For all he had done, Belgrade astronomers undoubtedly owe him a great respect.

Ivan Pakvor