



Photograph by Fabian Bachtrach.

M. L. Haider

Michael L. Haider

1904–1986

By Walker L. Cisler

Michael L. Haider, chairman of Exxon Corporation from 1965 to 1969, died on August 14, 1986, at his home in Atherton, California.

Born on a farm in Mandan, North Dakota, on October 1, 1904, Michael Haider was one of eight children of a wheat rancher and his wife. He was a 1927 graduate of Stanford University with a B.A. in chemistry. He joined the Exxon organization in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1929 as a chemical and petroleum engineer with Carter Oil, one of the company's affiliates. He became chief petroleum engineer and then headed all phases of engineering work for Carter before being transferred in 1938 to Exxon's research organization in New York as manager of production engineering and research.

In 1945 he joined the corporation as executive assistant in the Producing Department and a year later moved to Toronto as manager of the Producing and Exploration Department of Imperial Oil, Limited, a Canadian company in which Exxon held a 70 percent interest. He was elected a director of Imperial in 1948 and vice-president in 1950.

Mr. Haider returned to Exxon's corporate headquarters in New York in 1952 and served for two years as deputy coordinator of the company's worldwide producing activities. He then became president and a director of International Petroleum Com

pany, Limited, which was responsible for Exxon's operations in parts of South America.

In 1959 he was elected a director of Exxon Corporation, a year later became vice-president and director with responsibility for Latin America, and in 1961 was elected executive vice-president and a member of the Executive Committee. In 1963 he was elected president and vice-chairman of the Executive Committee, and in 1965 he became chairman of the board, chief executive officer, and chairman of the Executive Committee, a position he held until his retirement in 1969.

Mr. Haider was a founding member of the National Academy of Engineering. He was a past chairman of the American Petroleum Institute and a past president of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers. He was director of the Economic Development Council of New York City; a trustee of the Committee for Economic Development; and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the National Petroleum Council, and The Business Council.

He was a former chairman of the Radio Free Europe Fund; and a former member of the board, cochairman of the Development Committee, and a member of the Finance Committee of The Metropolitan Opera. He was also a director of the First National City Bank.

He held honorary degrees from the University of Miami, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and C.W. Post College of Long Island University. Mr. Haider was elected to the Instituto de Cultura Hispanica of Spain in 1962 and was awarded the Gran Cruz de la Orden del Merito Civil (Great Cross of the Civil Order of Merit) by the Spanish government in 1969. In April 1968 he received an honorary doctor of engineering and the Engineering Centennial Medal from PMC College in Chester, Pennsylvania. In 1969 he received The John Fritz Medal, granted jointly by the five professional societies representing mining, civil, mechanical, electrical, and chemical engineers, and was a member of Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society.

In 1969 he received the Cavaliere de Gran Crose, the highest recognition of the Italian government. In 1970 he received the

Charles F. Rand Award from the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers.

Mr. Haider was survived by his wife of fifty-eight years, Alice, one daughter, and three grandchildren.

As chief executive officer of one of the world's largest corporations, Mr. Haider was one of the pioneers in the globalization by U.S. corporations in overseas markets. He earned a reputation as an innovator who got things done. He undertook many jobs where changing times and situations called for changing business methods. He was a longtime sailboat enthusiast, mainly at Cape Cod, summer home of the Haiders, their daughter, and their daughter's family. He also had an interest in archaeology and Peruvian and Columbian artifacts.

Mr. Haider will best be remembered as a distinguished petroleum engineer and outstanding executive, whose skill and experience in research, exploration, and production greatly contributed to progress of the petroleum industry throughout the world, and whose imaginative leadership as chairman and chief executive officer of one of the world's great corporations earned him the respect and admiration of the entire business community.