

32nd Annual

Physics show

at the Joint Meeting of the
American Physical Society
and the American
Association of Physics Teachers

**San Antonio Convention Center
January 30–February 1, 1984**

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letters

cussed energy sources in general. Realizing that he spoke before the discovery of artificial radioactivity (1928, not 1937), his statement

The energy available to him through the *disintegration* of radioactive, or any other, atoms may perhaps be sufficient to keep the corner peanut and popcorn man going, on a few street corners in our larger towns, for a long time yet to come, but that is all. [original emphasis]

is not as subject to criticism as it would be if it had been written in 1937.

There is much that can be criticized in this talk when looked at from the vantage point of 55 years of truly phenomenal developments in physics and astronomy, but I can recommend the eloquence of the presentation as an example also of the disappearance of literacy from scientific writing in those 55 years.

E. RICHARD COHEN
*Rockwell International
Thousand Oaks, California*

7/83

THE AUTHOR COMMENTS: Millikan's statement was cited solely for the purpose of illustrating my contention that even extremely competent and far-seeing scientists tread hazardous ground when they make negative technological predictions. A suitable quotation could have been selected from among the writings of numerous distinguished scientists. Millikan was simply one of the most distinguished.

As to Victor Weisskopf's statement that "Effective anti-submarine detection, if it ever can be done, is several decades off," I prefer to believe those in the anti-submarine warfare community who predict that effective submarine detection systems will be available in the short to mid term. After all, Jules Verne's statement that "what one man can imagine, another man can do" has been repeatedly and amply confirmed.

CARL H. SAVIT
*Western Geophysical
Houston, Texas*

8/83

Corrections

June, page 54—The caption for figure 6 should have included a reference to R. Z. Bachrach, L. E. Swartz, S. B. Hagström, I. Lindau, M. H. Hecht and W. E. Spicer, *Nucl. Instr. & Meth.* **208**, 105 (1983).

September, pages 68–69—Due to a printer's error, credit for the photos was omitted; all color photos were by Sam Treiman.

September, page 101—The OSA annual meeting for 1983 is in New Orleans, 17–20 October; the 1984 meeting in San Diego was erroneously also listed for the same month. □