

SCIENCE NEWS

Copyright © 1969 by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Reproduction of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS is strictly prohibited.

Subscription rates: 1 yr., \$7.50; 2 yrs., \$13.50; 3 yrs., \$19.50. Special trial offer: 39 weeks, \$3.97. Single copy, 25 cents. \$1.00 per year for foreign postage. Change of address: Three weeks' notice is required. Please state exactly how magazine is addressed. Include zip code.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. Established as Science News Letter® in mimeograph form March 13, 1922. Title registered as trademark U. S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Abridged Guide and the Engineering Index. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulation. UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. North 7-2255. Cable address: SCIENSERV.

ADVERTISING STAFF

Director: EARL J. SCHERAGO
Advertising Sales Manager:
RICHARD L. CHARLES

Address all advertising to Scherago Associates, 11 West 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10036. Sales: New York, N.Y. 10036; Robert S. Bugbee, 11 W. 42 St. (212-PE-6-1858); Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076; C. Richard Callis, 12 Unami Lane (201-889-4873); Medfield, Mass. 02052; Richard M. Ezequelle, 4 Rolling Lane (617-444-1439); Chicago, Ill. 60611; Herbert L. Burklund, Room 2107, 919 N. Michigan Ave. (312-DE-7-4973); Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211; Winn Nance, 111 N. La Cienega Blvd. (213-657-2772).

*Address communications to Editor,
Science News, 1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036*

to the editor

Superconductivity

In making predictions of high temperature superconductivity (SN: 9/20, p. 251), way back in 1964 we fully recognized that it would take at least 5 to 10 years to synthesize even the first macromolecule of the type we wanted. There were some who expected results overnight and these were undoubtedly disappointed, and in that sense their mood changed to pessimism perhaps. For those of us who were more aware of the difficulties, the progress has been quite remarkable because the various formidable barriers, such as the dimensionality problem, screening and others have virtually dissolved under persistent scrutiny and ours has been a mood of growing optimism, not on whether this feat will be achieved but how soon.

One further point—as I heard it, Prof. V. L. Ginzburg's remark was: "A pessimist is an ill-informed optimist," rather than "well-informed." And, secondly, "An optimist is a well-instructed pessimist." Some further instruction remains to be done.

Otherwise Dietrick Thomsen captured rather well something of the present feeling on these matters.

*Dr. William A. Little
Professor of Physics
Stanford University
Stanford, Calif.*

Problem with prophets

The involvement with the future, as Dr. Ramo proposes it in his guest editorial (SN: 10/11, p. 321), sounds like some kind of collective schizophrenia. For such a system of planning really to work, that is, for man to effectively anticipate and act upon that which is only a bare probability, would necessitate a major genetic overhaul for an animal which has heretofore taken collective action only after an actual problem has arisen.

The problem with prophets, at least as they have been employed over the last few thousand years, is that once you start believing in them you have to assign priorities to their dire predictions. For example, there were many times when top priority was assigned to forecasts of doom, and when people went off to the hills to prepare for the end, the crops failed.

*Robert P. Burruss
Chevy Chase, Md.*

ARCHAEOLOGY

A MAGAZINE DEALING WITH THE ANTIQUITY OF THE WORLD

Use the coupon to order a subscription to ARCHAEOLOGY, published 4 times a year, Jan., April, June, Oct., by the ARCHAEOLOGY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA. 1 year at \$6.00; 2 years at \$11.00; 3 years at \$15.00. Your cancelled check will be your receipt.

The illustrated magazine
written by experts for
amateurs and professionals.

- NEWS • EXCAVATION REPORTS •
- ARTICLES • BOOK REVIEWS •

ARCHAEOLOGY, Dept. SC-1
260 West Broadway, N.Y., N.Y. 10013

I enclose \$_____ for _____ subscription(s). Check, payable to ARCHAEOLOGY, must accompany order.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Zip _____

Name on gift card: _____



*Prehistoric rock art
from Anatolia*

Circle No. 50 on Reader's Service Card