

I was on the faculty at New York University at the time Mike Cefola submitted his thesis for his doctorate and was one of the examiners of that thesis. Several of us, equally and similarly troubled, got together and said substantially, "Oh, my God! What do you do with a thesis like this?" The thesis was addressed to the question of the limits of extension of microchemistry. That seemed to us to be an essentially speculative document which didn't qualify properly as a Doctor's thesis. However, since Benedetti Pichler had given his blessing, and he was the faculty supervisor involved, we felt that we couldn't properly reject the subject. So we approved and accepted it. Thus Cefola got his degree, and Seaborg got Cefola because the thesis was far more important than we realized.

Another incident involves Louis Werner and Burris Cunningham. Now, in the course of my work here at the Met Lab, I became Chairman of the Building Committee. It followed, as the night the day, that I was asked to assume some responsibility for the first chemistry building at Oak Ridge, where Lou Werner was supposed to go. We planned a big microchem room—big enough to contain people like Lou (already 7 or 8 feet tall at the time) and people like Mike Cefola at his present girth.

There was the inevitable complaint from Oak Ridge, "Why do you need such a big room for microchemistry?" And I said, "This is for microchemistry, not for *micro chemists*. You should see the size of the chemist who is to be in charge". The point won its way.

We did have security here at the Met Lab and very fine security, I later discovered. Also we had a sort of security which protected itself from "unnecessary" information at times.

I think it was Leonard Trieman who visited a friend at Northwestern University and was asked, "Say, what is this about the critical mass of plutonium?"

Well, poor Leonard wasn't ready for that one at all. Remember this was during World War II. Not only was the word "plutonium" very, very secret, but the idea that we were talking about the critical mass of any element was certainly a highly "secured" bit of information even though the words "critical mass" were hardly likely to be interpretable to an outsider. Leonard couldn't do anything but ride with the punch. "I haven't the vaguest notion of what you're talking about. Tell me why you're asking it and maybe I can figure it out."

And his friend explained, "Well, I was riding on an elevated train on 63rd Street. Two fellows in the seat ahead of me were talking about it. I didn't see who they were".

Leonard's next ploy was, "Why do you ask me?"