

ZAKOPANE SCHOOL ENTERS TELEVISION AGE

PATRICK J. DALY

Chemistry Dept., Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907, U.S.A.

I was enjoying this school very much until yesterday, when I began to realize how foolish I had been in saying "yes" to Rafal Broda's request for a conference summary talk. In fact, I had started to collect key transparencies from some of the early speakers before I fully recognized that the task of summarizing in any useful way the many topics discussed here was plainly beyond my powers. What to do then? Since this year our school was featured on Cracow TV, and since, as many of you know, Rafal is intensely interested in politics, both domestic and international, it seems appropriate to serve up these remarks with a strong political flavoring.

As at a political convention, a keynote address, such as this, should be insightful, profound and far-seeing, and should send you, the faithful, speeding home to your laboratories brimming with enthusiasm and ideas. My aims however are much more modest, and I have few good ideas to squander in this way – but how do I explain this to Rafal? The following political parallel is offered as some justification.

Television debates between the candidates provided the most entertaining moments of the 1988 U.S. election campaign. In one debate between the vice-presidential hopefuls, the young and handsome Dan Quayle made bold to compare himself to the young, handsome John Kennedy of some thirty years back. His opponent Bentsen, a wily experienced campaigner, did not waste the opportunity. "Senator", he said, "I knew John Kennedy; Senator, I have worked with John Kennedy; you, Senator, are no John Kennedy". This last line became a famous catch-phrase, much quoted in the mass media. In similar spirit, Rafal will now have to accept from me the reminder that: "I, Mr. Chairman, am no Ben Mottelson".

Like politicians, we too have had our agenda this week, and the lectures we have heard could all be classified in one or more of the following categories:

1) What we have done for you

Most of our talks described achievements and advances made using "mature" investigative techniques – with results that are generally satisfactorily understood.

2) What we are doing for you

Several of the more engaging lectures could best be described as "work in progress", where the results can thus far only be partly interpreted. This category focussed on important open problems in nuclear physics.

3) What we shall do for you

A few stimulating talks described major new facilities for nuclear science that represent exciting new prospects for our field in the immediate future. Particularly, the new γ -ray detector arrays are awaited with great expectations.

4) How useless/evil our rivals are

While this category can provide lots of fun, it is not much indulged in at a civilized school like this one, although you may have noted a very fine specimen of the kind in the preceding talk. Indeed, it is one of the mysteries of science that the rascals who write chilly reviews of our best proposals and make stupid comments in refereeing our best papers rarely show up at these convivial get-togethers. During the first lecture by Szymanski, a scandal concerning identical bands in both super-deformed and normal nuclei was brought to light, but it stirred little media interest since the blame could not be easily pinned on a particular culprit.

An important invention of our times which is highly popular in political show business is the "sound-bite", which may be defined as "a snappy phrase or sentence suitable for quotation on TV news programs". Now, I can present my summary of important happenings here during the past nine days:

Nine Sound-bites From This School

Inspirational lectures include a few "sleepers"

Free-flowing discussions expand to fill available time

Jovial evenings of fun, song and dance

Clever questioning shows brains not in Sujkowski big toe

Record rainfall suggests motto "Per Pluvia Ad Astra"

Artful Grebosz dramatic masterwork cheerfully butchered

Charismatic Broda is no Quayle, thank goodness

Old models redressed and new models laid bare

Winsome Italian songstress charms; even Santo outshone

While our adopted motto may be "Per pluvia ad astra", there can be no doubt that the real stars of this show are Rafal Broda and his twelve stalwart co-organizers; it is my privilege to express to them the deep appreciation of all the participants in the 1992 Zakopane school. For your excellent arrangements, many kindnesses, and first-rate scientific and social programs, we say "Go raibh mile maith agaibh" (A thousand thanks to you), and we call down on your individual heads the ancient Irish blessing:

"May you be safe in heaven before the Devil knows you are dead!"