



Letters, unlike papers and technical notes, are for the rapid publication of both fact and opinion on technical subjects and are therefore not subjected to the referee review process.

## PRIOR PUBLICATION POLICY

Dear Sir:

I note with interest the policy of *Nuclear Applications* to refuse publication of any article or note that is substantially the same as a summary published in the *ANS Transactions*. I wish to voice objection to a policy which can only reduce the quality of the material presented at the national meetings and the number of contributions to your journal.

The *Transactions* are read largely by those in attendance at the meetings. They are not standard library items. They include completed works, progress reports on projects of interest, tentative speculations, etc. Therefore, many (indeed most) of the papers would never be published in any other journal. The net result is that a completed work that is published in the *Transactions* alone is risking utter oblivion. Rejection of such papers by *Nuclear Applications* could lead to two undesirable situations: 1) withholding complete presentation of a good work at the meeting, and/or 2) deliberate padding of an inherently brief paper to disguise the fact that its scientific content is the same as a *Transaction* summary. Both abuses can arise from the most laudable professional intentions, namely, the desire to present one's work at a well-attended meeting, and to get a readable version of the completed project into a readily accessible scholarly journal.

I suggest that the Publications Committee consider revisions of the policy. Here are two alternatives:

1) Treat the *Transactions* in the same way that American Chemical Society (ACS) treats its Pre-

Prints. I believe that papers from the latter may be published without change in appropriate ACS journals. Similarly *Transaction* summaries could be republishable in *Nuclear Applications* or *Nuclear Science and Engineering*, provided they are completed works of obvious merit.

2) Make the *Transactions* equivalent to the *Bulletin* of the American Physical Society; summaries in the latter are about 100 words.

Joseph Silverman

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*Editor's Note: Prof. Silverman refers to the "prior publication policy" formulated and adopted by this journal with the concurrence of the American Nuclear Society Publications Committee. This policy prohibits our accepting for publication material which, prior to the date, of its appearance in Nuclear Applications, will already have received a distribution amounting to 10% of the anticipated circulation of Nuclear Applications. Where the technical content of material offered Nuclear Applications is no more extensive than what already appears in Transactions, publication in the latter precludes acceptance by Nuclear Applications.*

Dear Sir:

I think the key point is whether or not *ANS Transactions* is a standard library item. Naturally we think it is. It is now in its eighth year of publication, over 600 libraries subscribe to the book (and its subscription list is still growing), and it frequently gets

quoted as a reference. I cannot think of three better criteria for the book's being considered as part of the permanent nuclear literature.

This point being established—at least to our satisfaction—we can reflect upon other publication policies. I cannot imagine Dr. Silverman or any other competent worker feeling that a *Transactions*-type summary is all that is needed to present his work to the scientific world—if his work is worth describing it should have a full paper in a journal. Thus we have two points pushing us towards *Nuclear Applications* policy on repeat publication of *Transactions* summaries:

1. The material is already in the accessible literature
2. Any further publication should include the details, explanations, procedures, etc., that cannot be fitted into a 600-word summary.

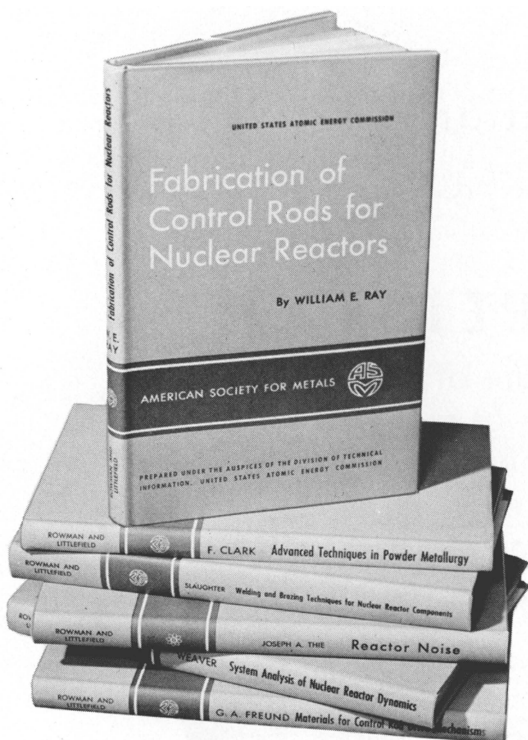
Dr. Silverman also proposes a change in our method of handling meeting papers. The ANS Publication and Program Committees are forever discussing this

topic, but we always end up by finding ourselves back to our present policies. The 600 words enable us to feel surer of the merits of a paper than a 100-word summary would—you can fool a reviewer for 100 words, but it is harder to keep up the pretense for 600. And I think we can assure Dr. Silverman that our journal reviewers are adept at spotting padded *Transactions* papers submitted to them. All in all, we feel that *Transactions* and its association with Society meetings and full-paper journals works well. We can publish summary or progress-report material rapidly in a book that sums up the technical work going on in the industry twice a year. We can encourage a helpful and successful meeting by having the papers reviewed in sufficient depth. We can allow the full work to be published, and we can do away with any duplicate publishing of the same material for meetings and for journals.

To sum up: I think *Nuclear Applications* policy on prior publication is satisfactory.

Malcolm D. Ferrier

American Nuclear Society  
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