

In 1916 Marconi came forth with another fundamental discovery, in the course of his attempts to serve the Italian Government during the war. This was the directional effect of short waves and their extraordinary range. It is now a common place for amateurs to correspond with one another over more than half the globe with only a power of two or three watts, thanks to this peculiar property of the short waves. Marconi had fitted up his yacht *Elettra* for these investigations and during his voyages he first discovered the fact that wireless waves carry farther at night than during the day. He was still engaged in further researches at the time of his death.

The uses to which wireless has been put and can be put during peace and war cannot be enumerated here. But we must not forget that Marconi himself was strongly against the use of scientific inventions for destructive purposes. Although he placed his vast resources and experience at the disposal of the Italian Government during the Abyssinian War, we would still cherish his sentiment that the utilization of scientific genius for the barbarous and horrible

purposes of war might ultimately result in the destruction of all that is worth while in our inheritance from the past.

Plenty were the honours Marconi received. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1909, the Albert Medal of the Royal Society of Arts, and the Franklin and John Fritz Medals. He was nominated a Member of the Italian Senate and became a Marchese. He represented his country at the Peace Conference in 1919 and later at the Commission of Mandates. The honours showered on him by learned societies are too numerous to mention. In 1905, he married the Hon. Beatrice O'Brien and had one son and two daughters by her. In 1924 this marriage was dissolved, and in 1927 he married the Countess Bezzi-Scali by whom he had a daughter.

As long as his inventions continue to bring solace to troubled humanity, so long will his name be blessed. And if the perverse genius of man utilizes the fruits of his labours for destructive purposes, may we not expect that his spirit will send out an unmistakable reproof?

NEWS

CALORIE-AND-CHOLESTEROL-FREE SPE

.... "It sounds too good to be true: a product that allows you to stay slim even while you're devouring the most sinfully rich foods. But Procter & Gamble's olestra—a calorie-and-cholesterol-free substitute—promises just that. While the substance is probably at least a year or two from completing its government review, it is capturing the imagination of marketers, health researchers, and anyone who dreams of consuming ice cream and potato chips without paying the price. What's more, research shows that the fat substitute—known by scientists as sucrose polyester, or SPE—also eliminates some cholesterol already in the body. That could make olestra or similar substitutes a still bigger diet breakthrough. And because SPE apparently passes through the body without being absorbed, it may pose fewer health questions than a product like the

sugar-substitute aspartame, which is taken into the bloodstream.... With SPE, 'food would become low-calorie by definition just if it's cooked or fried' in the substance, says David Williams of the New England Consulting Group in Westport, Connecticut.... Still, there are areas for concern that the Food & Drug Admin. will have to address. One of the first questions: Does any amount of the SPE—no matter how minute—get absorbed by the body? If so, safety issues could become more complex.... Another concern is whether SPE removes certain fat-soluble vitamins from the body." [(Jolie Solomon & Richard Koenig in *Wall Street Journal* 11 May 87, p. 29.) Reproduced with permission from Press Digest, *Current Contents*®, No. 25, June 22, 1987, p. 8. (Published by the Institute for Scientific Information®, Philadelphia, PA, USA.)]
