



The Chemical Consultant

Association of Consulting Chemists and Chemical Engineers, Inc.

Scientific, Engineering, Business & Management Consultants

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FUTURE MEETINGS

TBA

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

The Association of Consulting Chemists & Chemical Engineers (ACC&CE) is a network of senior-level consultants with a broad range of functional expertise and many years of experience in the chemical and allied industries.

The purposes of the organization are:

To furnish support to its members as they conduct their consulting practices.

To offer prospective clients a “clearing house” which they can use to find the most qualified consultants or team of consultants whatever their particular problem may be.

This newsletter is intended to support those purposes as well as to educate prospective new members and prospective client organizations about ACC&CE, and how we can be most helpful to them.

The ACC&CE has an interactive website – www.chemconsult.org, that allows prospective clients either to input their problem or to search for those consultants most skilled in their area of concern.

IN THIS ISSUE

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This issue includes a message from President Richard Goodman, describing an initiative he has taken aimed at strengthening and expanding the association.

Also appearing is an article submitted by one of our long-term members, Jim Divine, in response to my last column related to crude oil prices and supply and demand. We recognize we are not experts, but our views as experienced, educated and engaged chemists and engineers are worth airing.

Articles by Tom Brumfeld on proposed patent legislation and by John Bonacci on Jobs are also included in this issue

As always, we welcome and even urge comments and alternative views from our readers.

Thanks.

Joe Porcelli, Editor

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

After one of the more awful winter seasons we are grateful for the arrival finally of spring. Spring is a good time to update the membership on the status of the association. To reiterate what I said in February: "With the changes and economies instituted for fiscal 2010-2011 ACC&CE is secure in the very short term for about another year. However, membership continues to shrink and long term viability requires increasing our membership. We still solicit from all members ideas and actions which will bring more members into the fold."

One action we have taken is to continue the initiative of having the American Chemical Society look into credentialing Chemical Consultants and having the ACC&CE be involved in the process. We have made high level contacts in the ACS governance hierarchy and received encouraging feedback. We will continue to keep you, the membership, updated when any tangible initiatives are taken. We are also seeking responses from the membership as to whether dramatically reducing dues would have a salutary effect on growing the membership. The idea of meeting with the North Jersey Section of the ACS has not yet panned out as they have decentralized their meeting schedules.

Wishing everyone a happy spring and holiday season.

Richard M. Goodman

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Living with Cyclical Oil Prices—A Response from a Member

By James Divine (Certificate #769)

Absenting any major disruptions I think the noise in the data would continue to hide some slow increases. On the other hand, as I note below, I suspect there are major disruptions ahead. In all probability that means increases in prices but it depends on whether production is maintained or not.

Rather than China forcing a big price drop, I think they will continue their turning to nuclear. Then as the price of oil increases, they will use some of that power to convert their coal stocks to liquid fuel. In addition, they will fuss with and maybe work with Japan and Taiwan and exploit the oil in the East China Sea and the Sea of Japan. Who knows, they might even figure out how to make use of Russia's declining capabilities to get Siberian oil. Of course, they may also figure out how to transport from the Mid-East. This would mean their costs would be controlled. I would suspect they might be behind some to the current troubles but they appear to be concerned activities in Tunisia and Egypt could blow up in their face.

I would not be too surprised to see major disruptions in the near future in Mid-Eastern supplies. That whole region is ready to blow up. Africa is in too much turmoil to be a major producer in the near future. All of this suggests major changes in oil supplies and major changes in prices. I am not as concerned about revolutionary governments refusing to sell to the west because if they don't, they don't make money. China, while growing, cannot yet use as much petroleum as we do.

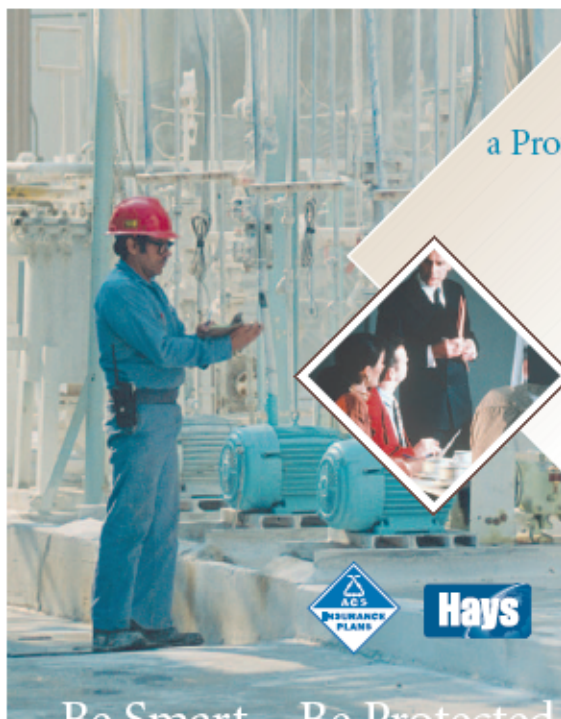
Our best bet is Canada and our own resources. Mexico is probably good unless the next election goes bad.

As far as price controls and taxes, I am leery of controls or other limits put in place by bureaucrats - they work for a while but as conditions change the controls get locked into place and become very harmful. Taxes are ok if they are a percentage of the base gas price (rather than a fixed amount like the current gas tax) and if we could figure out how to keep the crooks (that's an euphemism for politicians) from getting their fingers in the pie and using the money for other purposes (the current condition of our highway system shows the effect of this).

I've seen the data somewhere but it would be interesting to compare our sources of petroleum, foreign and domestic, and how we use it. I was reading a note today and someone in this country was noting that on a recent trip in his European built turbo-diesel, he got 57 mpg which is better than all the fancy hybrids.

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Editor's Note—Jim submitted his article on February 17—obviously, a lot has happened since then which may or may not cause him to modify some of his thoughts. Hopefully, this will lead him to consider another article for the next newsletter. Hopefully, others of you have views worth sharing.



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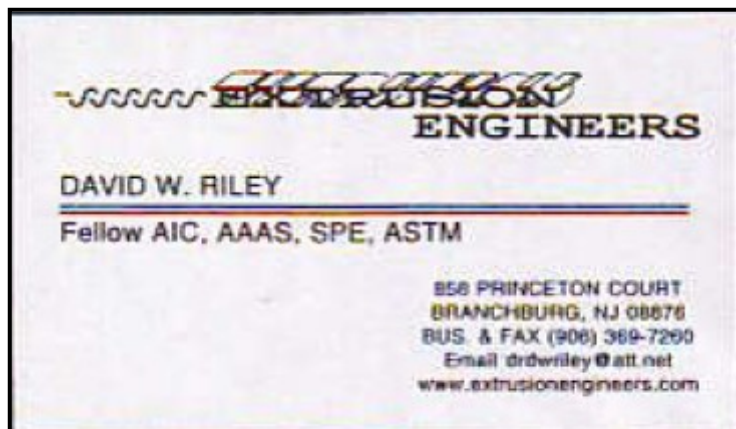
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Congressional Hearings On Changes To U.S. Patent Law Threaten Rights Of Inventors

This item has been submitted by Tom Brumfeld (Certificate #907)

More and more dangerous effects of the proposed changes to U.S. patent law (S. 23, H.R. 1249) keep emerging, especially since the hearings failed to hear from any real inventors. The proposed bill is unconstitutional, an attack on our national security and an offense against the rule of law. By awarding patents to the first to file an application with the bureaucracy instead of to the first to invent, the proposed bill will deprive inventors of their constitutional property right set forth in Article I, Section 8. of the Constitution. U.S. law has always awarded patents to real inventors, not to paper-pushers.

An important letter sent to House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, from the 15-member Inventors Network of the Capital Area describes how the proposed patent bill "threatens all individual and corporate Research & Development in America, the backbone of our national defense and economic security."

Here is how this racket will work.

Inventors don't usually give birth to their inventions like the Greek goddess Athena, who was born fully grown and fully armed out of Zeus' head. The Wright Brothers required many experiments as they tried wings with different angles before they were ready to patent heavier-than-air flight. The proposed patent bill will enable Chinese hackers to steal U.S. innovation secrets while they are in development, then file an application with the U.S. Patent Office under first-to-file, and thereby own new U.S. technology instead of merely stealing it. Owning the patents will enable China legally to take away ownership rights and profits from Americans who actually invent new technologies. Defense technologies would be a prime target of this threat. The first-to-file provision of the Patent Act would become the most effective weapon in China's arsenal and would threaten our national security in a new and ominously dangerous way.

National security expert Adam Segal testified before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations about the dangers from Chinese cyber-espionage, massive theft and piracy, and the policy called "indigenous innovation," which requires technology transfer in return for market access. He said, "It is clear that the United States must do more to defend itself."

Since 1870, U.S. law has provided a grace period of one year between the date the invention is disclosed and the date the patent application is submitted. This grace period gives an inventor a year to perfect his invention, to sort out better from inferior features, to raise capital, to gather partners and to field test the invention before the deadline for filing a patent application.

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JOBS

This article is one of four submitted by John Bonacci (Certificate #821)

Well, with all the talk over jobs, we don't hear any real details. At least none in the regular media or that have some specificity in them. What is some of the jargon, even if partially true?

Jobs are in small business
Taxes must be lowered for someone
There are too many jobs in the public sector
Etc. etc.

We also hear that stimulus or the most recent one was ineffective. That has to be addressed because there have only been two ways that America HAS EVER COME OUT OF RECESSIONS OR DEPRESSIONS. One is to wait it out for a long time and let nature take its course. This has multiple sub-means like a paradigm shift or just plain time slowly allowing people to adjust from personal suffering. A second way is for a third party to intervene intentionally by providing money as a stimulus. Yes, that is usually the government, at least in a democracy form of government. Of course more autocratic governments can do the same thing except which benefits of the most will change.

Lets explore a rational analytical way of getting to some discrete actions.

1. Review the past 2 through 10 years categorizing where jobs were lost or where there were significant shifts. The lists should be specific by listing manufacturing business areas, plant closings and why, technology changes, company going out of business, etc.
2. Develop the reason for these changes that was given and present some support
Evaluate what it would take to restart these jobs, i.e. actions or events followed by actions

A panel of experts can then be assembled to critique this report and figure out which strategies make more sense to restore jobs and, if necessary, create new jobs. I would expect that a consequence of this type of effort and analysis would help us to understand what is needed to be at various unemployment levels at numbers like 9%, 8%, 7%, 6%, 5%, 4%, 3%, etc.

At that point government has to come to play and determine what will occur without government action or with various levels of action.

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