

Greetings:

At the right is a reprint of a letter I sent to the Editor of the Tucson Citizen. I appreciate their printing it on their editorial page on Mar 13th. A like letter which I sent to the NY Times went unpublished.

In this letter, I attempt to point out the huge stakes for which the oil industry is playing. Each penny they increase oil prices to American consumers - whether for gas, for heating, for power, for countless products using petroleum - adds a cost of \$7,560,000 per day more or about \$2,700,000,000 more annually. I repeat these figures on the added cost for each 1¢ of price rise since they are so tremendously significant and they should be impressed on every consumer.

We should look for leadership from the Carter Administration that will make us aware of the way we are being bled by a rapacious industry that knows no loyalty to anything but its own bloated profits. It does not even see that it is threatening to destroy the value of the dollar and bring disaster to our economy.

Compare these figures on the cost of 1¢ more for a gallon of oil with other figures released by Carter men in conferences headlined in the news. On Thursday of this week, Inflation-fighter Alfred E Kahn, testifying before a Senate Banking sub-committee as spokesman for the Carter Administration, asserted that a 10% pay raise for the Teamsters Union would cost consumers \$1.2 billions a year in higher prices. This sum which appeared in dramatic headlines in the press is less than half the cost to our consumers of a 1¢ increase in oil prices. Yet the raise for Teamsters is headlined while the 1¢ raises happen every few days and neither the President nor his muscle bound Energy Secy Schlesinger seem to take any action.

This is no brief for the Teamsters Union and its abysmal leadership or the corruption said to attach to its finances and pension funds. But the drivers, at least, are earning their wage. Barrelling along hours on end with huge trucks and trailers never has been a tea-party. If they ask for better wages, perhaps they do have a case. But price hikes by oil executives are an unconscionable disaster.

It is time our nation was mobilized to defend itself in this energy crisis. We do not have to be at the mercies of oil executives and OPEC shieks. Energy can be produced quickly and practically from many sources. Electricity can be produced in many ways and electric powered vehicles and machinery are long proven efficient. We should be energy sufficient - independent and not subject to a calamitous drain on our economic health.

In previous crises, our Presidents found solutions. Lincoln kept firing generals until he found a Grant who would bring victory. Roosevelt sought out the men to produce 50,000 planes a year and a mass of war production to arm us and all our allies in overwhelming our enemies. Carter should not do less.

--- Joseph Zashin

Figure it out ^{TUCSON}
CITIZEN
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A barrel of oil contains 42 gallons. At our average daily use of 18 million barrels, this comes to 756 million gallons per day. Each time the price is boosted one cent, it costs American consumers \$7,560,000 more per day. It comes to about \$2.7 billion more annually for each one cent rise in price.

If prices rise 10 to 20 cents per gallon as predicted, it will cost us \$27 billion to \$37 billion more per year.

At 60 cents per gallon, our cost is over \$160 billion per year - and the price is well beyond 60 cents now.

At \$1 per gallon, the cost exceeds \$270 billion per year. This would shoot inflation through the roof and threaten to bankrupt the economy.

The oil industry is heading for \$1 per gallon and will not stop there. See prices abroad. We must realize the huge stakes they shoot for - hence the subterfuge, the inventory juggling and phony scarcities.

Let us insist that the government mobilize us to use alternatives to oil. And not gas or coal dominated by the same predatory monopolies. Turn to solar energy and the many ways to produce electricity. Electric vehicles are practical and can serve most daily uses.

Reduce oil demand and the oil industry and OPEC will return to sane levels. We should start now.

JOSEPH ZASHIN

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