

September 6, 1979

TO: J. T. Burgess

FROM: R. J. Campion 

You asked for comments on the API's background paper on CO₂ effects, for Bill Slick's use with the EITF.

- We support the API conclusion that no industry research on CO₂ ("Greenhouse") Effects be initiated at this time. This is consistent with our prior recommendation in July (see attachment). The API should continue to monitor, through the EAGC's Air Quality Committee, both government and academic research activities in this area.
- It is unlikely that there will be congressional or regulatory action on CO₂ effects within the next year. There are many hearings on various energy development bills that include discussions of the Greenhouse Effect, as coal combustion does produce more CO₂/BTU than petroleum, and fears have been expressed that synfuel development and coal industry expansion will exacerbate the CO₂ "problem." We do not believe this argument will delay or halt any synfuel legislation. Our Washington office concurs in this assessment of the legislative/regulatory outlook.

Two corrections are in order to the API background paper:

- on page 1, Background, the statement is made that "...the CO₂ level is increasing at the rate of three to our percent annually..."; this is somewhat misleading since it refers to an acceleration of the buildup and not an absolute percentage, i.e. the absolute annual increase is about 1 ppm in a 300 ppm total.
- in the same sentence, "...a warming of the atmosphere...may be noticeable within the next twenty years." We are now in a cooling phase, due to normal cyclic climatic behavior, and will not revert to a warming trend until 1990. It is not likely that any "warming" effects of CO₂ will be apparent until at least the year 2000, and probably beyond this time. At that point, these "warming effects" would be superimposed on a cyclic warming trend (non-CO₂ related) which would be additive, worsening the effect. Therefore, it is unlikely this effect will be "noticeable within the next twenty years."

The publication of a comprehensive AAAS/DOE Report is imminent that will address these issues in depth. This report should be reviewed carefully by EUSA/Carter and by API. We will let you know as soon as it becomes available.

RJC:F

Attach.

c w/a: S. R. Dodson
W. C. Gilbert
M. B. Glaser
C. W. Goodyear
L. Kronenberger
W. W. Madden
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