



James Wise

Gas station owner James Wise talks about the recent shortage, and his religious convictions

When President Carter went on the air last spring and talked about energy, he told us exactly what was going to happen, and when. We just weren't listening. The network commentators dismissed that first part of his talk as sermonizing, but the message was there.

"President Carter cut the gasoline allocations for two reasons; one—in order to get the peace treaty signed in the Middle East, he made a gasoline commitment to both Israel and Egypt; and two, he wanted to keep the OPEC countries from raising the prices of crude oil. He knew what was up, and he was doing the only thing he could do in both cases. The bottom fell out for him when the trouble started in Iran and because Congress won't give him what he wants. It's Congress' fault, not Carter's. He's a sincere, honest man who keeps telling us the truth.

"The oil companies have been telling us the truth all along, too. They had plenty of oil and gas all along, but not because they were hoarding it. They just weren't allowed to give the stations any more than they were already giving them. And the tankers were sitting out in the bay—full. They weren't sitting there because the oil companies were hoarding gas: there just weren't any empty storage tanks anywhere."

Arco gets only 2% of its crude oil from Iran, so the trouble there did not affect that particular company

much, according to Wise. But because of its greater inventory of crude oil, Arco was directed to turn over 40% to an independent oil company to be converted into gasoline for Israel and Egypt.

How much less gasoline do Wise's stations receive under the new allocation rules? The standard formula is 15% less than the 1977 allocations. "My Route 30 station used to sell 180,000 to 190,000 gallons a month," Wise says, "depending on the time of year. Now my monthly allocation there is only 76,000 gallons a month."

Does that mean fewer gasoline profits for station owners? It does, but the problem doesn't end there. Mechanical repair profits are down too. Closed or empty pumps and shorter station hours bring in fewer cars, and mechanics have less work. "People just aren't putting the mileage on their cars that they used to. So fan belts don't break, hoses don't wear out," Wise says. "We can't check the oil if the cars aren't coming in, so we don't have as many oil changes." Wise leans forward to make an important point. "I'm not angry about it though. Oh, sure, I get frustrated sometimes. But I think Carter did what he had to do. It's better than having our sons and daughters going off to be killed in a war in the Middle East. And I try to explain what's been happening to people

who come into my stations. Most of them won't listen to the truth: they just keep blaming the oil companies. That's frustrating to me."

Why don't we turn more of our domestic crude oil into gasoline? One of the problems is that prices are frozen on barrels pumped from wells drilled before 1972. And some oilmen are apparently skirting that problem by taking some interesting measures. Wise illustrates his answer with the following story:

"There was a national Lions convention not long ago at Host Farm. An Oklahoma oil man in a big Cadillac pulled into my Route 30 station to get gas. We got to talking and he said he's got more oil than he knows what to do with, but a lot of it was coming from wells drilled before 1972 and the price was frozen. 'I wasn't going to sell my oil at those prices,' the oilman said, 'so I poured concrete down every one of those wells.' He tried to angle-drill into them later, but was caught, so all of that oilman's oil is still in the ground."

Why, then, does there seem to be more gas available everywhere? "The odd-even system in Pennsylvania is working," Wise explains patiently. "And people are staying home more, not traveling as much. They're using those pools they haven't used for years and having backyard barbecues."

"I've gotten some increases in allocations to my Oregon Pike station, for example," he goes on, "because we sell a lot of gas from there to emergency vehicles: police, doctors, ambulances, lawyers, state workers, and farmers. I got 16,000 gallons more than my original allotment in June, but it doesn't renew automatically. I have to reapply to the Governor's Council—the Department of Energy—every month, and in July I was able to get 7800 gallons more."

One gets the feeling from talking with this man that his patience comes from deep within. And his face brightens into a wide smile when he talks about that:

"I was born in Lebanon and my dad had a service station in the 1940's and 1950's. When I came out of the service in 1960 I came to Manheim. My wife and I had sort of been going from church to church, not really finding what we felt was right for us. Then four years ago we were down to our last \$13 and I wasn't sure what we were going to do. I went to bed and prayed.

Suddenly, upstairs in bed, I got a sign I know was from God. There in the dark I saw, very clearly, an Arco

sign in front of me. I couldn't believe it; I called downstairs and asked if anybody knew if there was an Arco station for sale anywhere. We looked in the paper and there was an ad for the Oregon Pike station. I made arrangements to buy it: that was the beginning. They asked me to buy the Mount Joy station in February and the Route 30 station in March."

The smile on his face broadens even more. "My wife and I took the Way Ministries class—Power For Abundant Living—and our religious beliefs have found a home too. We just keep applying God's principles to everything we do. I put God at the head of my business and my life. He's been awfully good to us."

How does Wise feel about the government controls being placed on his business? "Control is the beginning of problems," he says. "It's time to wake up and see that controlism is one step away from socialism. If someone can tell me how much profit I can make, how far away is someone telling each of us how much we must pay for clothes, even hamburger. We're in trouble."

And what is James Wise—businessman, consumer, private citizen—going to do about it? "I don't know what to do. As individuals we don't have much power. I guess the first thing is to hope that we get more of the right people in government. Then I think everybody should get thankful and analyze all the good things about living in this country. I wish we could all just love one another."

"To make the oil thing work, I think the answer is 'a bushel of wheat for a barrel of oil.' We've got to get smart and stop giving away our resources and instead use them to trade for what we need."

"The gasoline is there. Some people think that 'open market' gasoline is one answer. I can call a phone number in Baltimore anytime and get all the gas I want in a hurry. But I don't think that's any answer at all."

If Congress would give President Carter what he wants, our country would move so far ahead in six months! If they don't by October 15 we're going to be in a recession we'll never recover from. Controls are the beginning of it." Wise's face brightens again and he sits up straight. "But I don't think God is going to let that happen to us."

For James Wise—husband, father, businessman... and believer—that is his philosophy for everything in his life. He beams again from ear to ear. "It works," he says.

by Lorna Simmons Nolt

"I'm going to tell you the truth, the real reasons behind this summer's gasoline shortage. President Carter isn't lying to us, the oil companies aren't lying to us: they're both telling the truth, and I want people to know."

If anybody knows the truth, James Wise—businessman, owner/operator of Arco service stations in Mount Joy and on the

Oregon Pike and Route 30 East—certainly ought to. He's been working in and around service stations most of his life.

Leaning forward in a chair in his living room in Manheim and choosing his words carefully, Wise explains:

"the shortages and the lines in June didn't just happen without anybody telling us—the public—that it was going to happen."

CVE party slated

The Mount Joy American Legion Building will be the site of the 6th annual CVE party on August 25th, starting at 7:00 PM.

Tickets will be available at the door for \$5 each. Only people aged 21 and over allowed. Food, drink and entertainment will be provided.

Marietta storm sewers to be repaired with federal dollars

Last week Marietta's borough council adopted plans for reconstructing storm sewers, advertised bids for street construction, and considered renewing the trash collection contract with United Disposal.

Dan Lake, the borough engineer, reviewed the proposed plans for the reconstruction of storm sewers. About \$100,000 will come from the federal government in October to help pay for this federally-sponsored project.

The plan includes the cleaning of storm sewers under the railroad tracks and replacing defective ones. Man holes, which will allow cleaning the pipes with shovels in the future, will be installed.

The cleaning project, to be completed in several "phases," will most likely start next spring.

Street repairs—on Pine, S. Mulberry, Biddle, and

Gay Streets—were advertised for bids, but none were submitted. Council will readvertise, and the bids will hopefully be opened at the September meeting.

Property owners will be required to construct curbs in these areas if they don't already have curbing.

The street repairs will include regrading, filling old sewer lines, etc. The Street Committee may order some changes during the repairs.

A representative of the United Disposal Co. talked with the Council about renewing the contract, which expires at the end of this year. Once a week pickups may be instituted next year, and container sizes and numbers per household may be limited, to reduce the costs of collection.

The spokesman said that Monday and Thursday collections are now on a regular basis.

The new fire pumper

has arrived, and arrangements were made to borrow a sum not over \$44,000 (at 5.4% interest) to pay for it. \$24,000 has already been paid on the pumper. This down payment came from revenue sharing funds.

Harold McKain, chairman of the Property Committee, confirmed the specs and recommended finalizing the purchase.

Sam Zuch will prepare guidelines for the use of the vehicle.

Council rejected the Dept. of Transportation's proposal for snow and ice removal but will ask them to inspect the four bridges in the borough.

An ordinance was voted in that requires each house in the borough to have a house number displayed at the entrance. The housing inspector will enforce the ordinance.

A no parking zone will be established on N. Waterford Ave. from Fairview St.

south.

A bid of \$1000 was accepted from Barclay, Inc. for the maintenance of the park. Permission was given to the Donegal Braves to hold football practices there.

A bid of \$1,100 or less was accepted for rebuilding a police cruiser's engine.

Larry Waltz submitted his resignation as police officer. Seven applications for the position have been received.

Housing Committee chairman Dave White reported that HUD has approved a grant of \$27,000 to Marietta for buying land in the new park across the tracks. Also, another \$20,000 have come in for the restoration of the Community House.

The annual audit has been prepared by Groff and White.

Francis Allum was appointed to the borough sewer authority.