

Fake patent claims

A vital key to the integrity of the patent system of the United States and to the accuracy of advertising claims about patents is the law prohibiting false claims about patent ownership. The pertinent statute is 35 U.S.C. 292, "False Marking."

But, the penalty for false marking is a mere \$500, and there has never been a prosecution under that statute!

The patent rights of all inventors are therefore at the mercy of those who claim with impunity that they too have patents, when in fact they do not. And merchants, consumers and the advertising media are at the mercy of those who make false and misleading claims about patents.

Remedies:

► Urge prosecution of existing complaints. Three complaints have been filed with the United States Attorney, Mr. Jamie Boyd, 655 E. Durango, San Antonio, Texas 78206. Write to Boyd or the Attorney General of the United States, Department of Justice, Washington, D. C. 20530.

► Urge your US Senators and Congressmen to introduce and to back legislation to increase greatly the penalties for violation of the False Marking statute.

► Encourage compliance with existing law by requiring proof of patent ownership before accepting advertising claims about such ownership. And be sure all advertising distinguishes clearly between design patents and utility patents. Only owners of utility patents (seven-digit number) can claim utility benefits for their invention. Design patents (designated by D followed by six-digit number) claim distinctive appearance, but not distinctive utility benefits.

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12/22/80

Scientists in defense work

There seems to be a prevalent view among academic scientists that there is something intrinsically wrong with physicists and others working in the so-called defense industry. Most recently, this view showed up in Donald McNeill's letter, "Silencing Dissidence in the US," in September (page 11). I have just recently received my MS in physics from The University of Toledo and am now working for a company contracted to work on various technical problems for the US Air Force—and I

am *not at all* ashamed of it! No, I'm not woking on the "forefront of physics" but the work is just as challenging, interesting and (possibly more) worthwhile as anything that McNeill and the rest of his "ivory tower league" is working on.

Specifically, McNeill was concerned with the arrest of Andrei Sakharov by the Soviet government and supposed parallels in our government. I agree that Sakharov's arrest is a disgusting thing to occur. Russia's a rotten place to live. That's why I'm not ashamed to be helping our Air Force build weapons; *I don't want to live under Russia's domination!* And if our government is indeed showing signs of becoming like Russia's, it's much easier to fight our government from within, using methods available to us, than to fight Russia from a position of inferiority. If it's so bad for dissidents in this country then why isn't McNeill in our equivalent of Siberia because of his expression of negative views concerning our government's policies? Could it be that our government has different motives in its "censorship" than Russia does in its oppression?

Concerning the MX missiles, yes, its construction may indeed cause more missiles to be aimed at us; but standing up to a bully never was a way to make him happy. It does, however, if done properly, usually make the bully behave himself. Furthermore, if it wasn't for McNeill's friend Sakharov, Russia might not have those missiles to be aiming at us; Sakharov isn't exactly a saint.

McNeill seems to think that we should just go on discussing science and technology with the Russians as if they're just little angels. There is an inherent connection between science and technology; it's one thing to discuss the charge on some newfangled fundamental particle with a Russian scientist, but it's quite another matter when that scientist's government takes an interest in particle physics in general and starts building particle beam weapons! It is becoming increasingly evident that our selling technology to Russia, either indirectly or directly, for "peaceful purposes" has led to the build-up of Russia's war machine. What have we got in return? I have nothing against the Russian scientists, *per se*, it's their government I don't like.

If McNeill or anyone else thinks I'm paranoid, all one has to do is consider Russia's actions since World War II: Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, . . . , Afghanistan. (I'm not up on world politics—it bores me—have I left out anyone?) It is too dangerous to assume that the Russian scientists, just because they are such nice and interesting people to talk to personally, are not helping their government to build

weapons—either directly or indirectly. I would be very happy if my job should become obsolete—that's in spite of the fact that without the defense industry, jobs for scientists would be significantly harder to find. But if the scientists in this country are to be persuaded to stop building weapons, the Russian scientists must *first* be so persuaded.

References

1. Industrial Research & Development, 22, p. 51-54, 56; 1980

GLENN H. STUMPF II

12/22/80

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THE AUTHOR COMMENTS: As Glenn Stumpf observes, war, science and technology are related. They have been since ancient times. After the War Department became the Department of Defense, however, that relationship changed. I'd like first to consider how strategic weapons budgets have been initiated in the US and then to discuss some of the consequences of our government's increasing reliance on military solutions.

No one can deny the need for armed forces to defend this country; however, a study by the Boston Study Group three years ago (*Scientific American*, October, 1978, p. 48) showed that the US could reduce its military expenditure by 40% and still prudently meet its needs. The present burst of military spending is not well justified by the few bits of information doled out by our intelligencers. Why exclude the arms budget from the current reductions in federal government costs?

Distorted estimates of Soviet military expenditure are no excuse. Governments occasionally revalue their own currencies, but the Russian ruble was recently revalued by the US to justify a larger arms budget. The official Soviet rate is \$1.50 for the ruble; it can be bought for about 50¢ in Western Europe, and the C.I.A. wants us to believe it is worth about \$2.00. Such a flattering revaluation might lead one of us three-foot-high Americans to conclude that those Russians are ten feet tall. I am inclined to accept the judgment of world trade on the ruble's value and to rely on my own observations that the Russians are about the same height as we (and probably not yet at strategic "parity").

One might also recall the distinguished career of the "gap" in American politics since World War II. In the beginning, the Soviet A- and H-bombs were surprises for us because of our ignorance and disdain of Russia. (Some smart physicists knew the Russians could construct bombs in five years and urged substantive agreement with them before an arms race got entrenched. The incentives offered for