

Special Edition-**THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY NEEDS TO UNITE!**

I recently read an article by Lane Kidd, the President of the Arkansas Trucking Association, and I believe that Lane “nailed” the trucking industry’s problem. Lane indicated:

- “In the old days, when a bad legislative proposal and regulation arose, it could be averted or watered down by simply hiring a handful of shrewd lobbyists to derail it.”
- Those days are gone, “along with the cigarettes.”

Unfortunately, as Lane stated in his article, the public rules!

- Over the last several years, every segment of our economy has collapsed.
- The auto industry collapsed.
- The financial institutions collapsed, and;
- The insurance industry collapsed.

The government rose to the occasion, pointing their fingers, at everybody but themselves. Isn’t the government supposed to regulate;

- The financial institutions?
- The insurance companies?
- The auto industry?

Isn’t that what was supposed to happen?

- The economy and the trucking industry are in the toilet; because of;
- The political situation.

Anytime, there is a fatality by a truck. There is a public persona;

- The trucking industry needs to be regulated;
- The public’s perception is that the trucking industry, is “ a bunch of crazy truck drivers driving down the road that are not regulated.”

As we all, know that is the farthest thing from the truth.

- Trucking is as Middle America as it gets, and;
- Trucking moves 87% of all product and is highly regulated.

Yet, the perception of the trucking industry has caused some of our industry problems.

- We are not the darlings of Wall Street or government, and;
- Trucking businesses with less than perfect credit have been virtually shut out on being able to obtain any financial assistance due to the economic crisis.

The government bailed out banks; the auto and insurance industry, and Wall Street; but they didn’t bail out the trucking industry. They made matters worse!

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In the State of California:

- It is an absolute nightmare to operate trucks, due to the new EPA guidelines.
- **Nationally, IRS is attacking the Independent Contractor model, which is tantamount to attacking the free enterprise system, and;**
- By attacking the free enterprise system, you are attacking the trucking industry.

How do you create jobs, if you put hard working people out of business? The government states that the unemployment is getting better.

To a certain extent, that is true.

- When you hire more Government employees, and;
- **You instruct those Government employees to go and create more tax dollars; the tax payer becomes the recipient of those orders.**
- **Now, the IRS is cracking down more on individual taxpayers. Approximately, 40,000 more tax returns were audited in the fiscal year ending 2009 than in 2008.**
- **That number has more than doubled since 2000.**

For 2010, the tentative Federal Tax Enforcement Budget is up nearly 10% from last year. Why? Because the government is broke!

In reference to the trucking industry, we need to take a stand.

- The trucking industry needs to bond together.
- They need to actively change the public's opinion.

If that is not done, our industry will never be the same. For the last several years, it has been economically hard on the trucking industry.

- The American people are angry.
- They want to lash out at anybody they can.
- **One of the biggest "whipping post", for the general public, is the trucking industry, and;**
- That is due to public perception and opinion.

The general public does not recognize that:

- There are many families involved in the trucking industry;
- Those families come from all walks of life, and;
- They are very hard working people.

For many family owned trucking businesses, they are trying to build a better life for themselves and their families to survive.

- They are in a business that is very hard to control cost.
- They are in a "pennies" business.

Unfortunately, trucking is also in the public opinion business, and that directly affects our transportation destiny.

In closing, the trucking industry can decide its own fate, and that is:

- **We can collectively spend the money, as Lane Kidd, stated in his article to change the public's opinion, or;**
- **We can simply do nothing,** and let the public opinion, drive us out of business.

It is important to recognize that the trucking industry was built on the free enterprise system and the independent contractor is part of that system. Who in their right mind would attack the independent contractor model?

- It is like attacking the Pope.
- **Independent contractors have been a part of the trucking industry for years;**
- Grant it, there are some mavericks in the industry, that need to be weeded out, but;
- **The majority of the independent contractors have helped our industry and this Country to grow to what it is today, and now the government is attacking the very system that helped foster economic growth.**

What has the trucking industry done so far to protect themselves – not much! Not because the trucking industry does not want to do anything, **but it's because the people that participate in the Associations aren't providing the funds necessary to drive the machine. If you want to control your own destiny, you are going to have to get behind "the machine", and fight for your rights.** It is nice to say, that you don't agree with what the government is doing, and you don't agree with their approach, **but do something about it!**

1. Contact your local trade Association
 2. Contact your Trucking Association
- **Work with the Associations and pledge your commitment to fight this atrocity.**

Arkansas has been devastated by the recent Independent Contractor ruling by the Arkansas Supreme Court. It is a crock of "whooley", but it happened.

- **This sets the precedents for other such travesties that may take place.**
1. Create a machine.
 2. Fund the machine.
 3. Drive the machine, and;
 4. Control your destiny!

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: It is immutable law in business that words are words, explanations are explanations, promises are promises- but only performance is reality. (Harold S. Geneen)