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Interview with Professor Ken Foster

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Degrees: B.S., Physics, Michigan State University, 1967; Ph.D., Physics, Indiana University, 1971

Profession: Professor of Bioengineering at the University of Pennsylvania

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Newsletter: To start with can I ask you please to give us an overview on your academic background and interests?

K. Foster: I am a professor of bioengineering at the University of Pennsylvania. My research interests relate to biomedical applications of nonionizing radiation from audio through microwave frequency ranges, and health and safety aspects of electromagnetic fields as they interact with the body. I am also interested in ethical and social implications of technology, and teach a course in engineering ethics.

Newsletter: You are very well known to our SUTA members and to our readers through your courageous engagement in opposing IEEE restrictions against IEEE members from embargoed countries including Iran. Can you please share with us your motivation in taking part on that campaign?

K. Foster:
I have been a longstanding member, and now, fellow of the IEEE, was formerly president of one of their societies (Society on Social Implications of Technology). IEEE

Continued on the next page
actions were taken on the basis of their lawyers' very conservative recommendations- but other societies have also asked their lawyers to review the situation, and they came to very different conclusions than the IEEE. As you know I was supporting SUTA efforts to fight against these restrictions and I have participated in a joint interview with Dr. Hojabri and Dr. Adler, former IEEE president which was broadcasted by BBC and Voice of America. I must say that I am very pleased that the Department of Commerce has reversed its policies in part due to protests by scientists and engineers and academic publishers, but probably in response to lawsuits (including one filed by Shirin Ebadi), and the IEEE has removed its restrictions on publication. This issue has been resolved, it appears, and it is time to move on to other concerns.

Newsletter: In several occasions and in a recent joint publication together with Dr Lerch you have expressed your observations regarding the productivity of US Science as compared to other areas of the world like Europe or Asia. Can you please share with us your view on this subject?

K. Foster: The publication you mentioned is available online at http://repository.upenn.edu/be_papers/60. As World War II drew to an end, Americans might have been forgiven for a mistaken impression that science began and ended in the U.S. That at time, the United States generated by far the largest fraction of the world’s Science & Engineering literature, and was the sole proprietor of advanced technologies with important “dual use” in military and civilian applications. This is changing, as other parts of the world (notably Europe and Asia) are making heavy investments in science and technology. The changing productivity of U.S. Science & Engineering enterprise vis-à-vis the rest of the world can be seen clearly in the bi-annual Science and Technology Indicators, published by the National Science Board.

In terms of numbers of papers, productivity of the U.S. Science & Engineering community has remained essentially flat for the past decade, whereas that of Western Europe, Japan, and other Asian countries has increased substantially. In 1945, U.S. scientists and engineers published about 80% of the world’s S&E literature; they now account for less than one-third of the world’s scientific papers. In part because of their increasing investments in science and technology, and in part because of the current political situation, Asia and Europe are becoming increasingly attractive destinations for science and engineering students from around the world and the United States is becoming less attractive to many international students and researchers. Columnist Thomas L. Friedman has called this first process the “flattening” of world, and it is clearly taking place in science and technology as well as in other economic activities.

Newsletter: Do you see any geographical shifts taking place in the focus of research in certain areas of science or in general?

K. Foster: It varies depending on the field.

In high energy physics and materials research, for example, major research facilities have been established in Europe and Asia, and the focus of research on certain topics in these fields has shifted out of the United States. In my own field, biological effects of nonionizing radiation, most of the research is presently being done outside the United States. This process will continue. European and Asian firms now have the option of investing in new research facilities outside the U.S., where they will find a ready supply of highly educated technical personnel and vibrant research programs.

Newsletter: Scientists & engineers coming from other countries have contributed significantly to the development of science & technology within US. Do you observe any new trend in this area?

K. Foster: Since the early 1980s, the number of U.S. white males earning doctoral degrees each year in science and engineering has been declining. Tragically, similar declines are seen in the numbers of doctoral degrees earned by white female and U.S. minorities as well. The United States has increasingly relied on international students and researchers to replenish its supply of scientists and engineers. Now, because of visa restrictions on international students (particularly students coming from Muslim countries) these numbers are in drastic decline. It is also increasingly difficult for scientists and engineers from other countries, in particular China, to visit the United States to attend meetings or work in U.S. government laboratories in which weapons related work is done (even though their work may involve unclassified projects).

Newsletter: In which extent the recent measures introduced by US Administration influence this trend?

K. Foster: After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, the U.S. government passed several major new laws, and dramatically ramped up the enforcement of older laws. Two areas affect international scientists and engineers in particular. The first one is in the area of Visa Control.

Two major initiatives, the Visas Mantis and Visas Condor directives, deserve special mention. Visas Condor, which started in January 2002, checks the name of a visa applicant against U.S. government databases in an attempt to screen out terrorists seeking to enter the country. It primarily affects Muslim men between ages 16 and 45, from 26 predominantly Muslim countries. This creates delays, even for legitimate visitors. A different program, the Visas Mantis system, established by the State Department in 1998, is designed to prevent the entry of persons who might attempt to export sensitive technology illegally from the United States. The program was initially intended to stem the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but it has been broadened tremendously over the years to address a host of other concerns. This program has been applied to visitors from countries designated by the U.S. as State Sponsors of Terrorism (presently Korea, Cuba, Syria, Sudan, Iran and Libya), and to nationals of countries designated as “sensitive.” Under Visas Mantis, visa applications of scientists...
Interview with Prof Ken Foster …

are sent to Washington for a check against a “technology alert list” (TAL) of dual-use or other sensitive technologies. After the Sept. 11 attacks, there has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of visa applications from foreign scientists that are being sent to Washington for review – from 1000 in 2000 to 20 000 in 2003. Many visa applicants will trigger a Visas Mantis review even though their work poses no security threat to the U.S. I recently had to write a letter in support of one of my undergraduate engineering students. She went home (Thailand) for the holidays and had difficulty obtaining a visa to re-enter the United States because her major (bioengineering) raised questions with a consular officer. There are many stories of international scientists returning home for brief visits for personal reasons, and not being allowed back into the U.S.

And the second one is in the area of “export controls”, including controls on what the government considers to be “sensitive but unclassified” information. The statutory basis for such controls derives from the Export Administration Act and Arms Control Act. This Act regulates “deemed exports” defined as the release of controlled technology or technical data that conveys information to a foreign entity or individual in the U.S. The lists of controlled technologies are extensive and very broadly written, so that whole areas of engineering might be considered by government regulators to require “deemed export licenses”. And “export” is very broadly defined. A professor who gives a talk about a controlled technology at an international meeting or even at a domestic meeting if overseas visitors are present, or merely shows an overseas visitor around the lab, might require a deemed export license. Until recently, universities have mostly escaped from the need to obtain deemed export licenses due to an application that applies to fundamental research that is intended to be published in the open literature. However, the government’s definition of fundamental research is narrowing. Moreover, the government is proposing to require deemed export licenses for the use of equipment that might have dual uses – high-tech oscilloscopes, fermenters, advanced computers, etc. Even more worrisome, the government is proposing to require deemed export licenses for US citizens who were born in countries such as Iran – and the government is proposing to extend these controls to universities.

The day may soon be approaching where universities will require students to wear color-coded badges indicating levels of clearance based on country of birth.

So where would that leave the many Iranian-born researchers and professors in American universities? Fortunately, these rules have not passed yet, but this is an important area for discussion and protest by the international scientific and technical community.

I agree that the U.S. has a legitimate interest in preventing its own technology from being used against it, and I am completely in support of efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation. But the proposed rules of the government are not likely to increase U.S. security, and they will do a lot of damage to its science and technology base. And there is a moral issue. To their great credit, U.S-based science and engineering organizations have worked for many years towards the globalization of science, and towards the education of scientists and engineers around the world. We should not allow bureaucratic over-reaching by the government to cause us to pull back from these efforts, which brought great benefit to societies around the world.
شاخه کالیفرنیا جنوبي شرکت در جشن مهرجان

شاخه کالیفرنیا جنوبي انجمن دانشگاه صنعتی شریف سواب، به تابعی از طرف انجمن در روزهای یک و دوم ماه اکتبر ۲۰۰۰ در جشن مهرجان که هر ساله در این زمان توسط انجمن منصوب به ارتباط اریج کانی (نیبیا) در منطقه برگزار می‌شود، شرکت کرد. مهرجان عید است که برای تقدیر از مشارکت در جشن دانشگاه‌های مختلف و بازی‌های ملی، انجمن‌ها و نهادهای دیگر در فصل بی‌پایان انجام می‌گردد. مهرجان در سال ۲۰۰۰ شرکت بیش از ۲۰ هزار نفر نبود، این هماهنگی یک فعالیت غیر انتفاعی است و در این حین حاکم صرف بزرگ‌تری برای تبلیغ مفهومی از این فنی و فراهم‌آوری این همکاری خود به دیگر انجمن‌های فرهنگی، با توجه به نیازهای منطقه موجب می‌شود و در این زمان همکاری با استاندارد دانش‌الهای دیگر انجام بگیرد.

شاخه کالیفرنیا جنوبي حضور بهتر در جشن مهرجان داشته و ۲۰ نفر دانش‌الهای به‌صورت درون‌سرگرمی داشته و بهبود انجمن در این مدتی دیده نشده. در این هماهنگی نشان دهنده شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده که این حضور همگنی نشان دهنده شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده که این حضور همگنی نشان دهنده شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده که این حضور همگنی نشان دهنده شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده که این حضور همگنی نشان دهنده شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده.

شهادت، شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده که این حضور همگنی نشان دهنده شرکت بیش از ۱۰ هزار نفر بوده.

دکتر زاهد شریفی اسیاسی، رئیس انجمن سوئیس
دومین گردشگری شاخه غرب کانادا- شمال غرب آمریکا

اختماً صلحی راد در حال سخنرانی

آغاز شرکت‌های غرب کانادا- شمال غرب آمریکا

جشن خبرنامه سالنامه کالیفرنیا جنوبی

اعضا و دوستان انجم سوتا در گردشگری ۵ نوامبر شاخه کالیفرنیای جنوبی در نیویورک بیج

نشستن شاخه تورنتو

اعضا و دوستان انجم در منطقه تورنتو روز ۲۳ نوامبر ضمن صرف شام در یکی از استقامت‌های این شهر و تحیدید دیدار در جریان فعالیت‌های کودک و انجم سوتا قرار گرفتند.

شام سالانه فارغ التحصیلان دانشگاه فنی دانشگاه تهران

دانشکده فنی دانشگاه تهران

روز سه شنبه ۵ نوامبر ۲۰۰۵ شام سالانه فارغ التحصیلان دانشکده فنی دانشگاه تهران در هتل شهر لوس Westin انجلس برگزار شد. دکتر هرزی، عضو هیئت مدیره انجمن سوتا، از سوی انجمن سوتا در این جلسه شرکت کرد. آقای مهندس حسین شکوه، رئیس انجمن التحصیلان دانشکده فنی و عضو کمیته برگزار کننده گردشگری ۲۰۰۴، گزارشی از نداردکار، گردشگری افزایه داد و از حاضران در مراسم شام دعوت کرد، در این گردشگری شرکت کنند.
نتایج انتخابات IEEE با پرایور خانم Lea Jamieson به عنوان ریس سال 2017 این انجمن.

از جمله های ارسالی ساختاری گر، امریکا و انجمن ساختاری عمومی در دانشگاه یک نشست سیفینگی رزی بین بین ساختاری مورد نظر در دانشگاه علوم و علوم انسانی رزی برگزاری شده‌است.

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