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Employers Can Monitor Employee Computer Use at Work

Communicating by computer has become the cheapest and fastest way to send and receive information, making computers in the workplace a business necessity. Because many employees now have ready access to a computer at work, personal e-mail and Internet use on company time can become a concern for some employers. Many of these employers have responded by purchasing electronic equipment that allows them to monitor their employees' computer activity.

A survey completed in 1998 revealed that 20 percent of companies monitor their employees' e-mail. Unfortunately, many employees are unaware that their personal e-mail and Internet use at work can be monitored/viewed by their employer. Other facts that are not common knowledge to the occasional user include:

1. "Delete" does not permanently remove the information from your computer.
 - a. Information is typically stored by companies on backup tapes in case of a system failure.
 - b. Even a personal computer maintains "deleted" information on the hard drive until it is overwritten at some later date.
2. A user password only protects information against the wandering eyes of other employees, not the employer.
3. E-mail sent over the Internet proceeds through numerous computer systems on the way to its destination. Each of these systems copies the contents of the message.
4. Marking an e-mail "private" does not ensure that it will remain confidential.
5. With the new technology, personal e-mails are easier for an employer to monitor than personal phone calls.

Employer justification for monitoring ranges from the protection of intellectual property to the preservation of company resources. To be sure, confidential material should not be sent via e-mail unless steps are taken to ensure that the information remains confidential (i.e. encryption). An employer's right to monitor its employees' personal e-mail and Internet use is less certain.

Regarding similar issues, employers have not expected employees to check their right to personal privacy at the employer's doorstep. Most employers allow (or tolerate) the occasional personal phone call or non-work-related office conversation. It would be an unreasonable request for an employer, after providing its employees with Internet and e-mail access, to not allow similar latitude in its computer use.

A complete ban on personal computer use, or worse, covert monitoring of computer activity, would likely have an adverse effect on employee morale. Employer computer monitoring has also been linked to decreased productivity, increased employee tension and anxiety, and depression.

Because e-mail and Internet use is a somewhat novel issue, few companies have a stated policy regarding use vs. abuse. However, an employer cannot reasonably expect employees to follow rules that do not exist. The employer should draft a clearly written policy regarding permissible e-mail and/or Internet use.

An effective e-mail/Internet policy can maintain a secure workplace and still respect an employee's right to privacy. The policy should include an explanation of the employer's reasons for monitoring. Employers must have a legitimate business purpose of renovating what would otherwise be considered the private domain of its employees.

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Workplace Humor

Ouch!

"Many years before OSHA," says Charles T. Jacobs (UAW Local 14) of Toledo, Ohio, "a journeyman tool and die maker I worked with would run up to new apprentices with his finger smeared with iodine, sticking out of a small cotton-lined box, with the rest of his hand covered with a shop rag. 'I've just had my finger cut off,' he'd cry out in agony, usually getting a look of horror. That is, until one kid said, 'Let me see that thing,' and stuck his sharpened scribe deep into the displayed finger in order to pick it up and examine it more closely without touching it."

'Hey, Boots!'

Management at our company kept restroom doors open where Jack Williams (UAW Local 25) worked in Hazelwood, Mo., to make sure workers didn't overstay their visits. One day some employees got a pair of boots and stuck them inside a stall the foreman could see from the outside. As word filtered through the warehouse, workers found reason to be in the area as the foreman timed the worker's stay, walked in, and put the boots on notice for loitering. Loud laughter broke out behind him, forcing further investigation and his rapid departure with pair of boots in hand. From that day forward, he was known as "Boots," of course.

Bovine Options

"A farmer bought a new car and was astonished at all the extras on the bill of sale," says Maxine Harvel (wife of UAW Local 1250's Charles L. Harvel) of Cleveland, Ohio.

"Weeks later the car sales-

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How to Save Gas

Fuel prices are up, and government experts are warning of "an increased potential for gasoline price volatility." In other words, don't expect any relief at the pump as winter goes by. Buying a fuel-efficient car is the smartest move, of course. But there are simple things you can do to get better gas mileage with your current vehicle. Here are eight ways to save on gas:

1) Keep starts and stops smooth. Nailing the pedal to the floor in "jackrabbit starts" wastes gas. Abrupt stops also waste fuel and cause extra wear and tear.

2) Perform routine car care. Dirty air and oil filters, worn spark plugs, neglected oil changes and problems with the emission-control system can reduce fuel economy. Change your oil and check the filters every 3000 miles for peak performance.

3) Maintain tires and keep wheels aligned. Low tire pressure is dangerous and costly. It creates a drag on the engine, prematurely wears out tires, and burns more gas. Misaligned wheels, worn wheel bearings or dragging brakes also can reduce fuel economy by 10 percent.

4) Buy the right octane. Most cars work fine on regular gas (unless you hear engine knock). But you should use the octane the car maker specifies.

5) Use your air conditioner wisely. Running your air conditioner greatly increases gas consumption. Don't do it if fresh air will cool the engine sufficiently. On hot days, park in the shade and open the windows for a few minutes when you get in to let hot air escape.

6) Stay out of traffic. Stop-and-go traffic takes a drastic toll and fuel usage. If at all possible, plan your trips to avoid periods of peak traffic congestion. Also try to avoid unnecessary idling, which burns more gas than turning off and restarting the engine.

7) Drive smart. First, keep you speed down. Going 65 miles per hour uses about 15 percent more fuel than going 55 miles per hour, and going 70 to 75 miles per hour may consume 25 percent more. Second, keep a constant speed. Use cruise control if you can. Finally, use overdrive if you have it. (Most cars with automatic transmissions do.) That way, the car will shift into gas-saving mode at about 50 miles per hour.

8) Plan your errands. Taking frequent short trips will guzzle gas. Instead, try to combine errands with your daily commute. Pick up your dry cleaning on the way home from work, for example.

The Ironworker, 1750 New York Avenue, NW, Ste. 400, Washington, DC 20006.

Employers Can Monitor Employee Computer Use at Work

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The policy should prohibit accessing adult sites or other material that could be deemed offensive. In addition, unlawful conduct must be prohibited in order for the employer to avoid potential liability. Possible disciplinary action for a violation of the policy should be spelled out as well. The single most important step in creating an e-mail/Internet policy is gaining the employee's consent to monitor. The only foolproof way for an employer to avoid legal liability when monitoring is to obtain the employee's consent before the monitoring begins. Finally, it is wise for the employer to circulate regular reminders regarding the policy.

Employees can protect themselves by assuming that any e-mail sent from a company computer will be read by more than just the intended recipient. Employees should avoid saying or viewing anything that another might find offensive. In addition, employees should not reveal confidential or truly personal matters when utilizing e-mail through the company computer. Although federal law prohibits employers from monitoring union activity, it is wise to avoid sending confidential union information through the company computer. If your company doesn't have a policy, ask for one so that you can be sure of where you stand.

Because a violation of an e-mail/Internet policy will likely involve disciplinary action, the implemen-

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Employers Can Monitor Employee Computer Use at Work

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tation of a policy should be addressed as a mandatory subject of bargaining. A balance between an employer's right to monitor and an employee's right to privacy can be reached if each party makes an attempt to understand the other party's perspective and both work together in forming a resolution.

PACE International Union, P.O. Box 1475, Nashville, TN 37202.

Tough Economic Decisions in 1993 Are Paying Off

The U.S. jobless rate is now 3.9 percent--the lowest in 30 years--compared to seven percent when President Clinton took office.

Not only is unemployment low, but gains in average real earnings in private industry, which began increasing in the second half of the 1990s, have erased the losses since the beginning of the Reagan-Bush era (though they remain four percent below 1979).

The economic boom derives in large part from tough decisions made by the Clinton administration and the Democratic Congress in 1993 to reverse the unprecedented deficits of the Reagan-Bush years by raising taxes--mostly on the wealthy--while providing low-income workers billions in earned tax credits.

Clinton's formula convinced the Federal Reserve to keep interests rates relatively low. That together with the technology boom in computers and the internet have fueled the economic good times.

But Clinton's party paid a high price for raising taxes on richer Americans. Inflamed by wealthy commentators like Rush Limbaugh, voters threw the Democrats out of control of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and put Newt Gingrich and Bob Dole (and later Trent Lott) in charge.

Now there is a danger that the Federal Reserve may choke off this boom fearing that low unemployment will lead to higher wages and then higher inflation.

However, because of the steady 2.5 percent growth in productivity, employers have room to raise wages without raising prices.

"Given the productivity we're getting, the wage increases we've been seeing aren't enough to put upward pressure on inflation," says Marty Baily, chief White House economist.

It would be a mistake to stop the economic boom now. The unemployment rate for African-Americans (though twice the rate of white unemployment) is the lowest since the government started keeping track in the early '70s. The unemployment rate for women is the lowest since 1953, and more than half of the nation's 60 largest cities have unemployment rates of three percent or less.

Today with the economy in good shape, the country can easily afford to address neglected problems: lack of health care coverage, especially for children, young workers, and early retirees; an aging population in need of long-term care, good nursing homes, and affordable prescription drugs; and the long-term educational needs of the country. However, a downturn would hurt efforts to face these issues.

Solidarity, 8000 E. Jefferson, Detroit, MI 48214.

Wal-Mart: A Working Woman's Nightmare

Clocking in at Wal-Mart for women employees means clocking into second-class citizenship on the job, including the risk of harassment and discrimination.

Wal-Mart was ranked last in a survey of women-friendly retail chains--cited for "offering no advancement, recruitment, or training programs targeted directly at women."

Wal-Mart women earn poverty-level wages, and most of the more than 60 percent of employees who don't participate in the company health plan are women.

The nightmare doesn't end there. After a jury awarded \$2.3 million to two women who had been sexually harassed by a manager, the court said, "...apparently Wal-Mart was aware of this [harassment], since [the manager's] conduct was witnessed by high-level supervisory personnel."

After a string of discrimination cases, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission said, "[t]he common thread [in the cases] was evidence that Wal-Mart made little or no attempt to train its managerial employees in compliance with the federal antidiscrimination laws."

Act Now!

* Let Wal-Mart women workers know that forming a union can provide effective tools to end unfair

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Workplace

Humor

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man asked about buying a cow. The farmer provided the bill of sale: One basic cow, \$834; two-tone finish, \$135; four barrel stomach, \$123; genuine cowhide upholstery, \$137; product storage dispensary, \$69; four spigots, \$30 each; dual horns, \$63; automatic fly swatter, \$37; field fertilizer device, \$132. Total price: \$1650."

Just Like a Boss

All foremen and forklift operators at the Burlington, Iowa, plant where Tom Jacobson (UAW Local 807) works use two-way radios to communicate. He recalls when "a foreman from another department couldn't find some parts and was loudly complaining using abusive language, to my foreman over the radio. From a distance I could see the problem. I called on the radio and told him to look down, as he was standing on the parts in question. He never said another word, just sheepishly walked away."

Words of Wisdom

"There can be no democracy unless it is a dynamic democracy. When...people cease to participate...then all of us will wither in the darkness of decadence."

--Saul Alinsky

HIV/AIDS Impact on the World of Work

Situation in Africa is Catastrophic

About 33.6 million people were living with HIV as the 20th century came to a close, many of them between the ages of 15 and 49, according to an ILO study (*HIV/AIDS: A Threat to Decent Work, Productivity and Development*, is available on the Web at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/travel/aids/index.htm>) distributed at the International Labor Conference.

During a one-day special session at the conference, delegates reviewed the scope of the problem and adopted a strategy for tackling HIV/AIDS in the world of work. They also heard firsthand about the stigma and discrimination that befall workers infected with the virus.

The ILO study found that HIV/AIDS is a threat to workers' rights, development, business performance, gender equality, and child labor. The report notes that the epidemic will have a significant impact on the composition and quality of the labor force in terms of age, skills, and experience, and will lead to more child labor and undo hard-fought gains in the advancement of women. Employers, at the same time, will face increased health care, training, and recruitment costs, as well greater absenteeism.

The pandemic nature of the virus means that its impact has placed stress on all aspects of society, including health care systems and the world of work.

The report stresses that the situation is catastrophic in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the ILO estimates that there will be 24 million fewer workers by 2020 as a result of the AIDS epidemic.

At the conference, Mercy Elizabeth Makhalemele, founder of the National Women's Alive AIDS Network of South Africa, told the audience that people with AIDS are "stricken by unemployment, not necessarily because we cannot work, but because we are carrying the virus that nobody wants to understand... Work is not about what you have, work is about knowledge and ability, and if a person has got those two things I do not see why they should be deprived of work."

Makhalemele lost her previous job after she told her employer about her HIV status. She has also buried her husband and a baby--both victims of the disease. She stressed that HIV/AIDS is "a human rights issue" and added that "my rights have been abused...I can be poor, I can be hungry, but I have my dignity and I understand my human rights.

"I think it is very important for people living with HIV in the private sectors in the world of work to understand their rights too," Makhalemele said.

Following Makhalemele's remarks, the executive director of the Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS stated that "tackling AIDS in the world of work is an essential addition to the global response to AIDS."

Peter Piot outlined some of the impacts of the epidemic, including the fact that AIDS is "single-handedly wiping out decades of investment in education and human resource development."

Conference delegates also heard from Namibian President Sam Nujoma, who has urged the ILO to step up its efforts to combat the AIDS crisis in Africa.

Representatives from governments across the continent, along with business and work groups, had gathered in Namibia's capital to develop the foundation for an action plan to respond to the impact of HIV/AIDS. Among its provisions, the Windhoek platform calls upon the ILO to "strengthen its activities in fighting HIV/AIDS in the region through improved knowledge, vigorous advocacy, and expanded services."

Tackling HIV/AIDS at Work

In response to the global AIDS crisis, the ILO signed a cooperation agreement with UNAIDS. In addition, delegates to the International Labor Conference adopted a resolution calling on the ILO to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS and to support the needs of workers living with the disease.

The resolution urges the organization to expand its capacity to deal with the problem of HIV/AIDS in the world of work. It instructs the ILO to:

- Undertake research and surveys to determine the implications of HIV/AIDS for the world of work.
- Document and disseminate all useful information on national experiences, including examples of best practices.
- Engage in advocacy and training.
- Strengthen the capacity for governments, business, and labor to formulate and effectively implement policies, programs, and activities at the national and enterprise levels.

The resolution also calls upon governments to develop and implement social and labor policies to mitigate discrimination and other impacts of HIV/AIDS, to mobilize resources to fight the epidemic, and to strengthen occupational safety and health systems to protect at-risk groups.

Earlier this year, during the opening session of a U.S.-African Trade Union Summit on HIV/AIDS at the White House, Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman announced that the U.S. Administration would seek \$10 million in new funds to launch an international education and prevention program to combat HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

How Much Do You Know About Social Security?

Did you get a call about Social Security from the Gallup Organization last year? If so, you weren't alone. People in 4,000 households nationwide were contacted to find out how much they know about Social Security. And the results? The results indicate that 55 percent of the public is knowledgeable about Social Security and has a solid understanding of the basic programs and concepts. For example, 89 percent knew that Social Security pay benefits to workers who become disabled; 81 percent knew that Social Security taxes paid today are used for today's retired people; and 77 percent knew that Social Security is the largest source of income for most elderly Americans.

The survey was developed for Social Security by the Gallup Organization to measure the public's current knowledge of the Social Security programs. Getting an accurate measurement of what the public knows about Social Security is the first step toward achieving one of the agency's strategic goals, strengthening public understanding of the Social Security programs. The goal calls for ensuring that 90 percent of Americans are "knowledgeable" about Social Security by the year 2005. To determine the knowledge level, Social Security and Gallup developed a list of 19 questions and statements with 13 out of 19 correct answers (68 percent) defined as knowledgeable. To find out how your knowledge of Social Security stacks up, take the quiz.

1. Social Security provides retirement benefits (Agree, Disagree, Don't Know)
2. Social Security provides benefits to the families of workers who die. (Agree, Disagree, Don't Know)
3. Social Security pays for the food stamp program.
4. Social Security pays benefits to workers who become disabled.
5. Social Security is paid for by a tax on both workers and employers.
6. Social Security benefits go up automatically with the rise in the cost of living.
7. What is the youngest age someone can retire today and start receiving full benefits?
8. Is the age for full retirement benefits: a. Fixed, or b. Will it rise in the future?
9. What is the youngest age someone can retire and still receive some Social Security retirement benefits?
10. Do all people who receive Social Security retirement benefits: a. Receive the same amount, or b. Does it depend on how much people earned when they were working?
11. Were Social Security retirement benefits, by themselves, designed to provide enough money for retired people to live on? (Yes, No, Don't Know)
12. The percentage of older Americans will about double between now and the year 2032. (Agree, Disagree, Don't Know)

Answers:

1. **Agree.** Social Security pays monthly retirement benefits to about 30 million retired people.
2. **Agree.** Social Security pays monthly survivors benefits to more than seven million people, including almost two million children.
3. **Disagree.** The food stamp program is financed out of the general funds of the U.S. Treasury.
4. **Agree.** Social Security pays monthly benefits to four million people under 65 who became disabled.
5. **Agree.** The FICA tax rate is 7.65 percent (6.20 for Social Security, 1.45 percent for Medicare) on wages up to \$72,600. There is no limit on Medicare taxes. Employers pay the same amount. Self-employed people pay both.
6. **Agree.** Adjustments are based on changes in the Consumer Price Index for urban production and clerical workers from the third quarter of the next. The increase for 1999 was 1.3 percent.
7. **65.**
8. **b.** Rise in the future. The age for full retirement benefits is being raised gradually and when the change is fully phased in, people born in 1960 and later will have to be 67 to get full retirement benefits.
9. **62.** If you're retiring this year, your benefits will be reduced by 20 percent to take into account the longer period of time you'll be receiving them.
10. **b.** It depends on how much people earned when they were working. Higher wage earners receive larger benefits, up to a maximum this year of \$1,373 per month for someone retiring at 65.
11. **No.** Plan to supplement your Social Security benefits with income from pensions, savings and other investments.
12. **Agree.** Today there are about 35 million Americans over the age of 65. By 2030 there will be about 70 million or 20 percent of the population.

Don't Make a Mistake on Election Day

How our labor laws are administered by government agencies, and how they are interpreted by the courts depends on the person in the White House. The message is very simple: if George W. Bush is elected President this November, fairness and justice under our labor laws will be lost for many years. Compare our experiences during the 12 Reagan-Bush years, with the eight years under the Clinton-Gore Administration.

The Reagan-Bush Years

The people appointed to the federal government agencies that administer the labor laws had a clear anti-union, anti-worker bias. For example, the Labor Department issued new regulations that gutted major parts of the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contracts Act. The Labor Department also virtually stopped enforcing the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Workers were left without protection as the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), there was a stream of anti-labor decisions by the Republican Board. Many of them reversed earlier cases that had been in effect for many years.

By the time Bush left office, Reagan and Bush had appointed well over half the federal judges. They appointed five of the nine Justices on the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Clinton-Gore Years

The most pro-worker, pro-union Administration since the 1960s.

The people appointed to the NLRB, the Department of Labor, and other key government agencies have been friendly to labor and have aggressively enforced our worker protection laws.

At the NLRB today, there is a favorable 3-2 majority, and the General Counsel of the Board is a former union lawyer.

The Clinton Labor Department reversed the Reagan Labor Department's attack on Davis-Bacon by issuing new regulations that undid the damage of the Reagan regs.

We have faced a hostile Congress since 1995, and only the help of this Administration, and particularly the use and the threat of Clinton vetoes, has prevented the enactment of a host of anti-worker laws that the Republicans favored.

With the appointment of many new federal judges by President Clinton, there is a better balance of the courts. Also, he has made two labor-friendly appointments to the Supreme Court.

What May Happen if Bush is Elected

At the NLRB, he will be able, immediately after taking office, to name a new General Counsel and to appoint three of the five Board Members. There will be an immediate anti-labor Board majority.

At other federal agencies, such as the Department of Labor, OSHA, etc., we would get a repeat of the experiences of the Reagan-Bush years.

In the courts, many new hostile judges will be appointed.

In the Supreme Court, five of the nine Justices were appointed by Reagan and Bush. In most labor cases, we can count on only three, or at most four, votes. Three of the nine Justices are 70 or older, and experts predict that the next President may appoint three new Justices. That's enough either to give us a friendly majority on the Court for the first time in years, or to stack it against us for decades.

The Bottom Line

In a Bush, Jr., Administration, labor and workers will face the same attacks on their rights that we faced under his father and Reagan. And if a Republican Congress is returned, we will have no source of protection in the federal government, and must expect a series of anti-labor laws. Therefore, it is imperative that on November 7th, we go to the polls and elect worker-friendly friends.

The Ironworker, 1750 New York Avenue, NW, Ste. 400, Washington, DC 20006.

Compare Party Platforms to See Where Democrats, Republicans Are Headed

It has often been said political party platforms are quickly filed and forgotten. Maybe that shouldn't be true this year. That's because, given the control presidential nominees Al Gore and George W. Bush exerted over the Democratic and Republican platforms, a close reading of the two gives important signals about where the parties want to take the country. They're starkly different. Here are some examples:

TRADE

Democrats: "We believe globalization will work for all Americans only if there are rules of the road...that promote both a strong economy and our basic values."

"That means trade agreements contain provisions that will protect labor standards as well as open markets in other countries. Al Gore

will insist on and use the authority to enforce workers' rights, human rights and environmental protections in those agreements."

"The president should be able to negotiate trade agreements...and should include workers' rights, human rights, and environmental protections in those agreements. At the same time, Al Gore will challenge companies to ensure labor protections and worker safety at their overseas operations."

The platform also pledges Gore would negotiate with trading partners to cut automotive trade imbalances and use all of our trade law weapons. In its education section, the Democrats advocate a new worker training tax credit "to help workers get skills they need for the new economy," and extend unemployment insurance to let workers finish such retraining.

Republicans: "We propose to launch a new and ambitious round of multilateral negotiations focused solely on opening markets, give the next president fast-track negotiating authority (and) a Free Trade Area of the Americas to take advantage of burgeoning markets at our doorstep."

The GOP pledges "vigorous" trade law enforcement and says Bush will negotiate cuts in foreign tariffs and trade barriers to U.S. "autos, heavy machinery, textiles, and other products."

EDUCATION

Democrats: "By the end of the next presidential term, we should have a full qualified well-trained teacher in every classroom of every school...and every teacher should pass a rigorous test to get there. Teachers should be answerable for what goes on in their classrooms," with mentors to help them.

The platform strongly supports expanding public school innovation and training more teachers.

"What America needs are public schools that compete with one another and are held accountable for the results, not private school vouchers that drain resources from public schools and hand over the public's hard-earned tax dollars to private schools with no accountability," it declares.

Republicans: No specific mention of vouchers. "We advocate choice in education., not as an abstract theory, but as the surest way for families to free their youngsters from failing schools."

WORKERS' RIGHTS AND POLITICS

Democrats: "Workers' freedom to choose a voice at work is a fundamental right that must never be threatened, never be obstructed, never be taken away," the Democrats assert.

After listing GOP anti-worker bills President Clinton vetoed, they add: "Al Gore will protect our wage and hour laws, including the 40-hour workweek and over-time requirements, and stand firm in support of the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act. He has proposed reforming government contracting rules to ensure taxpayer dollars do not go to companies that break basic labor laws."

"We have fought to protect the right of working families to participate in the political process when it was under attack."

Republicans: "Governor Bush's agenda for more honest and open politics...will stop abuses of corporate and labor soft money contributions to political parties, enact 'paycheck protection,' (their quotes) ensuring that no union member is forced to contribute to anybody's campaign."

"We affirm the right of individuals to voluntarily participate in labor organizations. We therefore support the rights of states to enact right-to-work laws."

As for the issue of government contracts to labor law breakers, the GOP flatly declares, "We will revoke the illegal executive order excluding millions of workers from federal contracts."

JOB SAFETY AND HEALTH

Democrats: "We are fighting for a new ergonomic standard and whistle blower protections."

Republicans: "We will withdraw OSHA's proposed ergonomics standard, ban its bureaucracy from the homes of telecommuting workers, and change the agency from an adversary to a partner for safer productivity."

WAGES

Democrats: "We must bring all Americans who are willing to work into the circle of prosperity by extending the Earned Income Tax Credit, again raising the minimum wage, vigorously enforce protections against job discrimination, and reassert our belief in an equal day's pay for an equal day's work."

Republicans: "We will halt the IRS -discrimination against independent contractors," referring to a business push to have more workers declared "independent contractors" not covered by the labor law. Proposed IRS rules may halt business' goal.

Did You Know?

Traffic Congestion

Traffic congestion is growing nationwide and will continue to worsen in the years ahead as our nation's population increases and highway travel continues to increase. Over the past three decades, highway travel in the United States has increased by 131 percent and the population has increased by 32 percent, while road mileage has grown from 3,730,082 miles in 1970 to 3,944,601 miles in 1997, an increase of just 5.7 percent (U.S. Department of Transportation; U.S. Census Bureau, 1990.)

The U.S. Census Bureau (1990) estimated that the population of the United States will grow by 60 million people between 1995 and 2020.

Traffic congestion costs motorists more than \$72 billion a year in wasted time and fuel costs, according to the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI).

We must build new and wider roads and bridges and develop other modes of transportation.

Your Voice at Work

Declaring that the time has come to "help all working men and women exercise their rights," AFL-CIO President John Sweeney told the International Labor Organization meeting in Geneva Switzerland, there should be unprecedented solidarity to advise all workers of their rights. The AFL will make the ILO's declaration on workers' rights a major part of its global fitness campaign.

Making Music

Probably everyone knows that the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), also AFL-CIO, represents the musicians who make the music we hear live, on radio and television and on tapes and disks.

But, which union represents the people who make the instruments AFM members play to make that music? Members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Locals 364, 612 and 19 in Indiana and Michigan make a whole range of musical instruments. They carry the brand names Bach, Beuschner, Bundy, Selmer, and Yamaha.

The instruments include: baritone horns, bassoons, clarinets, cornets, flugelhorn, flutes, harmony clarinets, marching brass, oboes, piccolos, saxophones, trombones, trumpets, and tubas, the UAW reports.

No, No Zebco!

The ZEBCO Fishing Reel Company is moving its production of fishing reels and other tackle from Tulsa, Okla., to China.

The action eliminates the jobs of 400 members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 514, which won extensive packages for the workers after the company refused pleas to change its mind.

The Tulsa plant was the only unionized producer of fishing reels in the U.S., the TWU reported.

Plumbers' Label Goes Va-Va-Room!

The Plumbers, Pipefitters and Sprinklerfitters Union is now a sponsor of star NASCAR driver Rusty Wallace. The sponsorship puts the union's logo/label on Wallace's uniform and on his #2 Ford Taurus racing car. It also means the union can use his name, picture, and voice in ads and commercials promoting the union and that he can be featured in events promoting the union. NASCAR racing is the fastest growing sport in America and is especially popular in the South.

Top Steelworker Hails Report on Steel Crisis

A new report by the U.S. Commerce Department "documents, chapter and verse, the predatory practices" that U.S. trading partners used during the 1998 steel-dumping crisis, "and continue to engage in," United Steelworkers (USWA) President George Becker said.

While praising the "Report to the President on global Steel Trade...", issued in July, Becker also called for immediate action to make U.S. trade laws stronger and to enforce them more vigorously. He also expressed confidence that Al Gore would as President provide "the kind of leadership we need."

Documenting "the 30-year history of repeated unfair trade actions," the report points to significant damage to U.S. Steelworkers, the U.S. steel industry, and communities by several countries, including Japan, Russia, Korea, Brazil, and others.

Wal-Mart: A Working Woman's Nightmare

(Continued from page 3)

management practices so that any woman who feels she's been passed over for promotion or other career opportunities can fight discrimination immediately through grievance and impartial arbitration processes, in addition to filing a lawsuit.

Tell Wal-Mart management to end unfair treatment of women workers.

Tell Wal-Mart management that women workers that women workers don't want the run-around when it comes to promotion and raises.

Let all workers at Wal-Mart know how union representation can end unfair employment practices and provide job protection.

Tell Wal-Mart management union members nationwide will be monitoring their actions and holding them accountable for unfair treatment of employees.

Union Label & Service Trades Department, 815 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20006.

Four Steps to Winning in November

1. Find out what issues are important to your co-workers.

2. Get your co-workers registered to vote.

3. Educate your co-workers on the issues and on the records and positions of candidates.

4. Get out the vote in your hometown.

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