

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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Memorandum

To: Principal Officers of State Federations and Central Labor Councils

From: John J. Sweeney, President

Date: April 5, 2004

Subject: Increased Political Attacks on Federal Employees and Civilian Workers in the Defense Department

I am writing to bring you up to date on the Bush administration's escalating attacks on the Federal workforce and, in particular, civilian workers in the Defense Department, and to urge you to continue your work in support of these workers.

On April 20, 2004 the Department of Defense (DoD) is expected to publish regulations that will radically change labor-management relations in DoD. The regulations will allow DoD to:

- Strip up to 200,000 workers of their right to be in a bargaining unit
- Create a phony pay for performance system that will suppress future wage increases
- Eliminate all seniority and veteran preferences in connection with layoffs
- Revoke employee rights to an independent appeal of suspensions and terminations

The list of changes in decades-old worker protections is long and brutally anti-union. DoD's proposed National Security Personnel System (NSPS) is an affront to the democratic principles of free trade unions. Indeed, Bush's effort to wipe out the civil service system is part and parcel of his overall campaign to undermine workers rights everywhere. A coalition of more than a dozen unions is working to stop Bush and the DoD. They need your help. Here is what you can do:

AFGE, the Metal Trades and individual unions are setting up in-state lobby visits with your Senator(s) during the April senate recess, April 10th – 19th. The purpose of these lobby visits is to pressure Senators to oppose DoD's plan and to ask these Senators to co-sign the attached letter to Secretary Rumsfeld. I am asking all labor leaders to help make these meetings a success by drawing into them as many key union leaders as possible. You should be hearing from AFGE or other union leaders shortly.

In addition, as you may already know, AFGE, the Metal Trades and other unions are mass leafleting their members to generate calls to the Senate. In some locations they are also staging actions to give greater voice to their demands. This is a fight that affects every union family and I urge you to do all you can do to help win it.

For more information please contact Ken Grossinger in our Legislative Department via e-mail at kgrossin@aflcio.org or at 202-637-5393.

Attachments

JJS/KG/mdh