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NSPS Update

Defense Department Appeals Sullivan Ruling

The Defense Department has appealed the ruling of Judge Emmet G. Sullivan that struck down significant portions of the controversial National Security Personnel System (NSPS) earlier this year.

Metal Trades Department President Ronald Ault deplored the Pentagon's refusal to "face reality and admit that this is a flawed and wrong-headed policy." In a statement issued in response to DOD's appeal, Ault said:

"This is just one more stubborn effort by the administration to hold on to an illegal and wrong-headed personnel program. The Metal Trades Department is disappointed but not surprised that DOD has appealed Judge Sullivan's findings. It's clear from the content that the authors of NSPS believe that they are above the law. That's one of the reasons that Judge Sullivan enjoined the Pentagon from implementing significant portions of their plan. Any reasonable interpretation of Judge Sullivan's findings will support his conclusion that DOD exceeded its authority in the sections of NSPS dealing with collective bargaining and employee due process rights."

Ault went on to say that despite DOD's protests to the contrary, Sullivan's decision focuses on serious constitutional violations, not mere technical problems with NSPS. He criticized the Pentagon for its "awesome disregard for fundamental constitutional rights."

Judge Sullivan's February 27th decision enjoined DOD from implementing provisions of the NSPS dealing with collective bargaining, due process, third-party reviews and adverse actions. Immediately after Sullivan issued his order, DOD declared its intention to proceed on schedule with its plans to implement the so-called "pay for performance" plan.

Judge Rosemary Collyer, in a similar case testing the validity of a controversial personnel system for the Department of Homeland Security, struck down those rules on similar grounds. DHS appealed that decision.

The Metal Trades, as a charter member of the United Defense Workers Coalition (UDWC), has roundly condemned the entire plan and the flawed process DOD

has used to implement it. MTD and the 36 unions of the coalition charge that the Pentagon had violated the intent of Congress, refusing to acknowledge the role of unions in the development of the plan. The unions also contend that DOD is hiding the true cost of the program, estimated at more than \$7 billion, and diverting operational funds away from valid military and security programs in order to cover those costs.

Combat Veteran Blasts DOD For 'Betrayal' of Workers

Veterans of the war in Iraq have been betrayed by civilians in the Department of Defense intent on enacting the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) which "attacks the rights of veterans, the very veterans who volunteered to lay their lives on the line for our national security," charged Don Bongo, a vice president of the Hawaii Metal Trades Council and a recently-retired veteran of the Iraq war.

DOD's claims that it has not changed veterans preference rights are simply not honest, Bongo said, because changes in DOD's Reduction-in-Force procedures will effectively block veterans from bidding for jobs which they had previously held and for which they are obviously qualified.

He dismissed DOD's arguments that bumping procedures are an "inconvenience" to management and should therefore be dropped.

Likewise, he said, the "pay for performance" scheme that is part of NSPS will penalize veterans—especially disabled returning veterans—because front-line managers who already have difficulty with the current performance appraisal system are not equipped to implement a much more complex system without more training and preparation than DOD is planning to provide.

He described NSPS as a "failed and corrupt" system...its lofty title designed to "sell a bad system to the American public."

Save the Dates

Metal Trades Conf Set for Las Vegas Oct 17-19

The annual Metal Trades Conference is scheduled for October 17-19 at the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas. Under the theme "Building Our Union," the program will feature updates on ongoing Department activities—representation issues, contract negotiations and reports from each Metal Trades Council. The agenda is now under development. Watch future editions of the Metal Letter for further details.

Deadline for hotel registration is Monday, September 18, 2006.

Politics and Fear Mongering

Ron Ault, President

Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO

650,000 American workers face the loss of workplace rights—including the right to meaningful collective bargaining with their employer under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS). Three years ago, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld convinced the majority party in Congress to pass NSPS to stifle the voice of civilian workers. As DOD has developed this system, they have tried to strip all DOD workers of any protections against management abuses, and muzzle employees from any input on hours of work, travel, work shifts, fair and equitable assignment of overtime and other essential elements of the employment relationship.

Even worse NSPS substitutes a hand-picked National Security Labor Relations Board appointed at the sole discretion of DOD Secretary Rumsfeld, to hear employee appeals of managers' actions.

Here is how NSPS would work if Rumsfeld got everything he wants: The Defense Secretary would retain all rights to hire and fire; he would appoint the judges who would evaluate his actions (and he pays the judge's salary) to hear any cases brought against him...Does that sound fair to you?

This is the very same National Security Personnel System the Bush Administration wants to install at the Department of Homeland Security for better managerial "flexibility" to avoid mission delays and the inconvenience of discussing such matters with employee labor organizations.

Hmm, isn't FEMA part of the Department of Homeland Security? NSPS will turn DOD into the same kind of organization as FEMA... and we all witnessed on live national television during Katrina and Rita, just how well FEMA's managers handled their critical mission. So the Administration's answer to inept management is to eliminate the rules so they can't be held accountable for violating them....and the sole justification Secretary Rumsfeld gives for stripping workers of their rights is NATIONAL SECURITY.

OK, Secretary Rumsfeld, convince me....you claim that union representation for civilian DOD workers is a threat to national security but you saw nothing wrong with contracting out the management of six major East Coast port operations by a state-owned business of the United Arab Emirates, ignoring the long-standing links between the UAE and global terrorism, black market



smuggling of nuclear materials and technology. That, you say, poses no threat whatsoever to national security? No way!

President Bush endorsed the takeover of shipping operations at six major U.S. seaports by a state-owned business in the United Arab Emirates. He pledged to veto any bill Congress might approve to block the agreement. What is wrong with this picture?

With all branches of our government firmly under control of the same political party and no meaningful system of checks and balances... America is for sale to foreign ownership at wholesale discount prices...and national security is the buzzword of the shell game.

Mobile Organizing Summit Targets Gulf Coast Yards

The Metal Trades Department launched a Gulf Coast organizing campaign in late March with a summit attended by more than 30 representatives of MTD affiliates. Along with the unionized yards operated by Northrop Grumman, the Gulf Coast is also home to more than half a dozen large non-union building and repair yards which have seen their activity level rise dramatically under the Bush Administration. The union campaign responds to inquiries from scores of workers hoping to improve their pay, working conditions and benefits at those non-union yards.



Delegates at work during the Mobile organizing session.



More than 30 representatives from MTD affiliated unions attended the Gulf regional organizing meeting in March.

Metal Trades Sees NSPS, Pentagon Mismanagement as Twin Security Threats

Metal Trades Department President Ron Ault has charged that the Pentagon's blind determination to implement the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) is pinching funding for a range of operational requirements and threatening the nation's security.

Ault attended Senate field hearings convened by Hawaii Sen. Dan Akaka in mid-April where, he said, Sens. Akaka and Ohio Republican George Voinovich heard management witnesses admit that DOD intends to divert funds from operating and mission budgets to pay for the cost of implementing NSPS.

Earlier this year the effects of that fund diversion became apparent at

the Portsmouth (NH) Naval Shipyard as Portsmouth Metal Trades Council President Paul O'Connor and the yard's now retired Commander Capt. Bill McDonough aired their concerns about a reduced workload there. The Navy has cut back on submarine construction and is skipping scheduled maintenance work on those it has.

The ripple effect of those decisions has sparked layoff plans at General Dynamics Electric Boat in Groton, Connecticut, and has led to speculation at the Portsmouth Yard about layoffs there.

Despite pressure from Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Rep. Rob Simmons (R-CT), the Navy continues to defer ship

construction plans for the foreseeable future, making the strategic goal of a 313-ship Naval fleet an even more elusive target.

Bipartisan Support Has Been Crucial For Metal Trades

The White House and Republican leaders in the House and Senate "have injected fierce partisanship in legislative and political affairs since George W. Bush took office in 2001," said Metal Trades Department President Ron Ault. "That narrow-minded approach has hurt Democrats and moderate pro-labor Republicans alike," he added.

Ault issued a call to all Metal Trades Councils to use discretion and good judgment in evaluating candidates for primary and general elections.

"Some good folks have walked a tightrope to support shipyards, jobs and unions against the grain of their party leaders. It won't do us much good to win control of Congress for Democrats if we lose the few stalwart Republicans who have had the courage to stand up to the president and their own party," Ault said.

Simmons Urges Taiwan to Consider Subs by Electric Boat

Rep. Rob Simmons (R-CT) headed a congressional mission to Taiwan in late February where he met with Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian to encourage the island nation to purchase eight diesel-powered subs from the Electric Boat Corporation. Simmons was armed with letters from Metal Trades Department President Ron Ault and Ken DeLaCruz, president of the Metal Trades Council at Electric Boat.

Simmons made a speech in Taiwan's capital, Taipei, to the American Chamber of Commerce urging both the party in power and the Taiwanese opposition party to support the purchase.

The White House approved the sub sale in 2001, but Taiwan's government has been slow to make the funds available for the project.

New Pact at Tidewater

The Tidewater, Virginia, Metal Trades Council recently concluded a new three-year agreement with the TVEMYC Portsmouth Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Mid Atlantic. Council President Quintin Jones led the bargaining team consisting Nelson Trotter, Jr., Wayne E. Jones, Larry Cuffee, James E. Young, Jeffrey Collis, Regina Davis, James Brown, Michael Williams and Donald Cook.

Ault Elected to Nuclear Board

Metal Trades Department President Ron Ault has been elected to the board of the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), an organization committed to the development of safe and economical use of peacetime nuclear energy. Ault replaces BCTD President Ed Sullivan who is term limited on NEI's board. Service on the NEI's board is limited to two terms.



Chandler Van Orme of NEI congratulates MTD President Ron Ault as Ault joins the board of the Nuclear Energy Institute.

Coast Guard Gets Challenge Over Aker's Non-Compliance With Jones Act

The Metal Trades Department has requested an investigation by the Coast Guard to determine if Aker Shipyard of Philadelphia is in compliance with the Jones Act. Aker, which took over ownership of the Philadelphia company from Kvaerner two years ago, recently began construction of a line of some 10 ships it plans to lease under its name.

The Philadelphia Metal Trades Council reports that Aker is importing virtually all the vital components for its new line of Veteran Class MT 46 Product Tankers from Hyundai Mipo Dockyard of Korea as part of a partnership agreement between the two yards. The process leaves Aker's U.S. workforce with little more than a "paint by numbers" role in the vessel construction.



Ault chats with workers at Aker's Philadelphia shipyard.

Attorneys for the Metal Trades Department filed a formal Coast Guard inquiry in May. The Department has also initiated discussions with key members of Congress to spark a congressional inquiry.

According to leaders of the Philadelphia MTC, parts for the first of the line of Veteran Class MT 46 Product Tankers arrived in 300 containers from Korea earlier this year.

The Jones Act and other maritime laws require that shippers use U.S.-built and owned by U.S. Citizens to haul commodities between U.S. ports. MTD maintains that Aker's production arrangement with Hyundai violates the terms of the Jones Act.

Aker is importing steel bulbous bows and stern tubes directly from Hyundai, and pre-fabricated, made-in-Korea components for the Jones Act double hull tankers the shipyard is building.

"Aker's practices are putting other U.S. shipyards at a serious competitive disadvantage. We have it on good authority that the ship Aker is now building comes right out of boxes brought in from Korea," declared MTD President Ron Ault.

Ault charged that Aker is also violating the terms of the agreement with the city of Philadelphia and the multi state regional authority that brought Kvaerner and Aker into the Philadelphia Shipyard in the first place. Under the terms of that agreement, the shipbuilder was granted more than \$500 million worth of subsidies—cash and a very favorable lease treatment for taking over the old Naval Shipyard in Philadelphia in return for employment and training programs for local craft workers.

The union is charging that Aker has put certain hitech equipment originally bought with tax payers money up for sale.

The partnership between Hyundai and Aker violates the company's commitment to the U.S. workforce, treating them like robots, Ault said.

"This is nothing more than a 'paint by numbers' prefabricated Korean 'kit' ship," Ault said. "We are talking about 300 shipping containers of prefabricated ship assemblies and components from Korea and Germany instead of American-made ship components by American workers. It isn't like we can't do this work. We built the first four ships for Matson Lines, proving we can build American Jones Act ships in Philadelphia. Now, they are bringing in everything already pre-assembled right down to things as simple



Uncrated components for Aker's first MT 46 product tankers scattered across the Philadelphia yard include miles of pipe and large chillers for the ships HVAC systems

as ladders and piping."

Aker's forerunner, Kvaerner Shipbuilding, was granted subsidies to bring commercial shipbuilding back to the Philadelphia region. The pact includes a \$1 per-year lease on the old Philadelphia shipyard grounds. Under the terms of that deal, the company agreed to rehire shipyard workers displaced with the shutdown of the Navy Shipyard and to set up apprenticeship programs to train local workers.

Leaders of the Philadelphia Metal Trades Council say that Kvaerner has brought in foreign shipyard workers to "train" U.S. workers in how to bolt and weld together the pre-fabricated parts. However these foreign workers usually are given a section of the ship to complete at the Philadelphia yard without any US workers being assigned to that project.

Promoting U.S. Economic Security:

Members Urge Support of Commercial Shipbuilding

Senators Trent Lott (R-MS) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA), and Representatives Jo Ann Davis (R-VA) and Susan Davis (D-CA), joined by their colleagues in the Senate and House, submitted letters to the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittees of the House and Senate in support of appropriating \$30 million for the Title XI Ship Loan Guarantee Program. The Title XI Program is one of the last financing mechanisms in this country that promotes commercial shipbuilding in the United States.

Maintaining the commercial shipbuilding industrial base is vital to the survival of the U.S. naval shipbuilding industry – allowing the country to maintain a skilled workforce, competitive supplier base, and reducing the overall cost of ships. Despite all the “free trade” rhetoric used by elected officials, the U.S. shipbuilding industry is still forced to compete with the subsidized and/or government owned shipyards of Europe, Japan, South Korea, and China. Title XI is one of the few programs that prevents complete dependence on foreign countries for US commercial ships and military sealift.

The following Senators and Members of Congress have consistently supported measures that will keep the U.S. shipbuilding industry competitive by supporting Title XI and related measures in Congress—

Senators: Trent Lott (R-MS), Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Daniel Akaka (D-HI), George Allen (R-VA), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Lincoln Chafee (R-RI), Susan Collins (R-ME), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Daniel Inouye (D-HI), John Kerry (D-MA), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Jack Reed (D-RI), Rick Santorum (R-PA), Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), Arlen Specter (R-PA), David Vitter (R-LA), and Ron Wyden (D-OR).

Representatives: Jo Ann Davis (R-VA), Susan Davis (D-CA), Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Gary Ackerman (D-NY), Tom Allen (D-ME), Robert Andrews (D-NJ), Richard Baker (R-LA), Tim Bishop (D-NY), Jo Bonner (R-AL), Robert Brady (D-PA), Corrine Brown (D-FL), Henry Brown (R-SC), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), Tom Davis (R-VA), Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Norm Dicks (D-WA), Lane Evans (D-IL), Randy Forbes (R-VA), Gene Green (D-TX), Melissa Hart (R-PA), Steve Israel (D-NY), William Jefferson (D-LA), Bobby Jindal (R-LA), Walter Jones (R-NC), Jim Langevin (D-RI), Rick Larsen (D-WA), John Larson (D-CT), Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ), Stephen Lynch (D-MA), Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), James McGovern (D-MA), Mike McIntyre (D-NC), Charlie Melancon (D-LA), Mike Michaud (D-ME), Chip Pickering (R-MS), Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD), Tim Ryan (D-OH), Allyson Schwartz (D-PA), Joe Schwarz (R-MI), Bobby Scott (D-VA), Rob Simmons (R-CT), Ted Strickland (D-OH), Bart Stupak (D-MI), Gene Taylor (D-MS), Bennie Thompson (D-MS), Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH), and Joe Wilson (R-SC).

Shipbuilders Urge Pentagon to Stop Outsourcing Our National Security

While the outsourcing of America’s port operations has received much attention, an even larger hole in our national security armor is being ignored. The Department of Defense has been outsourcing dedicated defense auxiliary (sealift) fleet missions to foreign-built and foreign-owned ships.

The auxiliary fleet is a dedicated fleet of ships that is owned or under the long-term control of the Department of Defense to transport ammunition, fuel, weapons, tanks, helicopters, and other essential military cargo, at a moment’s notice, to our forward deployed troops around the world.

While DOD has historically bought auxiliary ships built in American shipyards, over the past six to seven years it has begun an aggressive outsourcing program by leasing foreign-built and

foreign-owned ships to meet these sensitive military missions. DOD currently plans to lease some 20 foreign-built ships for a period of 10 years or more by using five-year leasing contracts. These 10-year leases (arrived at by using multiple 5-year lease contracts) are de facto purchases of foreign-built ships in circumvention of U.S. law, which requires all ships for our military to be built in the United States.

Senators Trent Lott (R-MS) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA), and Representatives Jo Ann Davis (R-VA) and Gene Taylor (D-MS), along with several of their colleagues in the House and Senate, have been working to stop this growing threat to U.S. national security and defense industrial base.

The practice by the Department of Defense has been to lease used, foreign-built commercial ships that have been

converted to meet military requirements. Because these converted commercial ships may be 10 or more years of age with limited remaining commercial value, foreign ship owners have found a lucrative market from proceeds received from U.S. taxpayer funded leases to finance the construction of new commercial ships in China and South Korea. So in effect, the U.S. taxpayer is subsidizing shipbuilding in foreign countries to the detriment of U.S. shipbuilders.

Legislation authored by Davis and Taylor in the House of Representatives would stop the de facto purchase of foreign-built ships by limiting the term of such leases to no more than two years, and encourage construction of defense auxiliary ships in the United States—as current law requires.

Department Challenges DOE Pension and Health Care Changes; Switch to 'Market-Based' Plans Undermines Benefits, Bargaining Rights

The Department of Energy is attacking pension and health benefit rights of contractor personnel with a new policy that would do away with defined benefit pension plans and cheapen health care coverage. The move would affect thousands of workers employed by private contractors who manage and operate DOE sites.

In a policy announced on April 27, DOE said starting in March 2007, it will no longer reimburse contractors for costs of defined benefit pension plans. Instead, DOE will require contractors who operate and manage DOE sites to set up so-called "market-based" programs—meaning plans that shift cost and risk to employees and their families.

Traditional defined benefit pension plans provide a higher level of benefits, greater security and lower costs to employee participants. Changes in medical coverage would shift greater costs directly

to employers.

DOE says that it wants to make the change "to improve the predictability of contractor benefit costs and mitigate the growth of the Department's long-term liabilities of for these costs." In other words, they want to save money by shifting the costs to workers.

DOE Secretary Samuel Bodman says the idea is to "manage resources in a cost-effective way" balanced "with the needs of our contractor community..."

Although the Department claims it will grandfather current employees and retirees, Metal Trades Department President Ron Ault challenged those assurances. "There is nothing to prevent contractors from terminating current plans and pulling the rug out from under employees covered by those programs. Clearly, DOE won't act to defend the rights of the employees."

DOE says it will measure contractor plans against some "benchmark" costs of market-based plans and reject those that exceed the benchmark costs by 5 percent or more.

"In addition to the jeopardy this raises for current employees, it also takes away the bargaining rights of unions representing workers under new contracts. We are convinced that DOE doesn't have the right to do that," Ault said.

Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), ranking member on the Health, Education Labor and Pensions Committee in the Senate, said the announced policy is an "outrage." He said the federal government "should be a champion for secure retirement and quality health care for all workers, instead of leading the race to the bottom." He called on Bodman to reverse the policy announcement.

Rep. George Miller, Kennedy's counterpart on the House Committee called the announcement an "incredibly troubling precedent" and charged that the White House is encouraging employers to dump traditional pension plans. Miller said the policy will also "encourage employers to switch" from traditional, defined benefit plans to 401(k) or other defined contribution plans. "In effect, this could push companies to terminate their plans altogether, affecting the retirement benefits of both old and new workers."

Ault urged Metal Trades-represented workers to write their lawmakers in the House and Senate and urge them to oppose the DOE policy.

MTD Keeps CTW Unions Linked With Solidarity Charters



The Metal Trades Department was among the first major AFL-CIO national components to issue Solidarity Charters with unions that had resigned from the AFL-CIO late last year. The Department welcomed units from the Teamsters, Service Employees, the UFCW and the Carpenters after top officials of those unions signed the charters. Those Solidarity Charters cleared the way for local Metal Trades councils to accept affiliation from individual local unions—authorizing the appointment of stewards, participation in dues check offs and enabling representatives from those disaffiliated unions to vote and hold office within local councils—conditioned on their payment of appropriate representation fees.

Columbus, GA MTC Wins Ft. Benning Unit

The Columbus Metal Trades Council recently organized a unit of 227 workers who perform small arms repair and overhaul and motor pool services for the U.S. Army at Ft. Benning, Georgia. The workers voted by a better than two-to-one margin for representation by the Council.

Arbitrator Rescinds Suspensions For Electricians at Arnold AFB

Arbitrator Mollie H. Bowers ordered Arnold Engineering Development Center (ACS) in Tullahoma, OK to expunge three-day suspensions it issued to two electricians. She found management did not have just cause to mete out the discipline.

Bob Smith, IBEW's Chief Steward at ACS, reports that the suspensions grew out of an incident triggered when lightning knocked out power to a work site, triggering alarms. The first individual assigned to check out the problem tried but could not reset the alarms. He called for assistance from the fire prevention officer. The fire officer who responded, in turn, contacted the operations center for additional assistance and the two electricians were dispatched. Both electricians are experienced craftsmen.

Management claimed that the fire officer directed the electricians not to remove the power source and not to cut off power. Meanwhile, the first-responding employee, who was not an electrician, went to perform other safety procedures related to the problem. In the process of taking those steps, carbon monoxide gas was released into the facility.

At about the same time, the electricians began removing the battery back-up system—a procedure that had nothing to do with triggering the CO2 release. A subsequent investigation would later prove that fact. However, management didn't wait for the outcome of the investigation, charging the electricians with violating safety procedures and insubordination. Each electrician was issued a three-day suspension.

Management's case was weakened further when the investigation indicated that the fire suppression system was improperly installed in the mid-1990s, and testimony in the arbitration showed that management was under substantial pressure from Air Force management because there had been a number of system malfunctions involving CO2 releases prior to this incident, and not under emergency situations. Furthermore, the fire chief was dismissed some time after the incident.

"There is no evidence or testimony which demonstrates that anything the grievants did made the situation...unsafe or made the situation more unsafe once they intervened," Bowers wrote, noting however, that management "proceeded to take disciplinary action before they had received a full and fair investigatory report of the incident."

Exonerating the grievants on the unsafe work practice charge, Bowers went on to note that the two could not be guilty

of insubordination because there is no policy, procedure or rule that would confer authority to fire personnel to direct electricians work. She criticized the company for failing to establish a "clear line of authority" in such matters.

Bowers also said the company's witnesses lacked credibility to counter testimony from the "experienced electricians who did what they normally do in comparable situations. This behavior does not constitute just cause for discipline."

Bagwell Resigns Amarillo MTC, Takes Education Post With IAM



Henry Bagwell

Long-time Amarillo Metal Trades Council President Henry Bagwell resigned his post effective April 1, 2006 to accept a full-time position with the International Association of Machinists. Clarence Rashada will succeed Bagwell as president at Amarillo. Jaren Cartrite will move up to Rashada's vacated post as Council Vice President.

"I leave the council in good hands," said Bagwell in announcing his resignation. "It's been an honor to serve."

Bagwell said he had always received 100 percent support from his executive board and members. He urged the council to "keep up the fight" and vowed to stay in touch.

At the Pentagon: Paying Contractors for (Non) Performance

The Pentagon recently issued a policy memo directing managers to end the practice of handing out generous bonuses to contractors who fail to perform.

Published in the Federal Register and outlined on March 29th in a memo from James I. Finley, the policy grew out of stinging criticism from a 2005 Government Accountability study of 93 contracts that showed DOD paid out \$8 billion in special award and incentive fees, often without regard to performance.

Some projects that were behind schedule, over budget and fraught with significant technical problems earned bonuses, according to a report published by the Washington Post.

Finley's memo vowed DOD will do a better job of monitoring contractor performance and limit the payment of unearned award money to future phases of a project.

"Clearly, satisfactory performance should earn considerably less than excellent performance otherwise the motivation to achieve excellence is negated," Finley's memo said.

MTD Affiliates Display Their Craft at Annual Union Industries Show

Representatives from the HAMMER training facility in Richland, Washington and CHM2Hill were on hand for the big America@Work, Union Industries Show held in Cleveland in early May. Thousands of families visited the massive display of union-made goods and services to see live craft exhibits and product displays of goods and services produced by workers represented by AFL-CIO unions. AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Rich Trumka welcomed early-bird visitors to the Show at the ribbon cutting on Friday, May 5.



Storm Recovery Remains Top Priority for Metal Trades Dept.

The Metal Trades Department continues to focus on recovery in the Gulf region. Some nine months after working families in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas began the difficult task of putting their lives back together in the wake of the most deadly combination of storms to ever hit the U.S., the labor movement has reaffirmed its commitment to play a significant role in the regional recovery.

“It makes me angry to hear folks say they are ‘tired’ of hearing about Katrina, Wilma and Rita. I’m sure our brothers and sisters in the region are weary of the storms and their aftermath, too. But, the victims don’t have a choice. Those three storms are going to be constant companions for the people of the Gulf region for at least a generation,” predicted

MTD President Ron Ault.

Ault has pledged to work with an ad hoc labor and management organization that is developing a long-term re-development plan for the area. The diverse group includes the Building & Construction Trades along with the AFL-CIO and several individual unions, the Urban League, real estate and financial organizations, Gulf cities, universities and public interest groups, such as ACORN and Volunteers of America.

By June, the coalition hopes to unveil a comprehensive, long-term plan to supply housing and infrastructure, job training and an economic plan to stabilize the region’s economy, create good jobs and sustain an ongoing partnership between labor and management.

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