



RESISTOR

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IBM BOSSES BUY BLACKLIST IN ENGLAND

The blacklist. Just the word brings back memories of men and women being put on lists and denied jobs because of their politics, because they believed in unions or because they wouldn't take managements bull. Something from the "old days" right? Wrong!

In England this past summer where IBM has 18,000 employees, IBM was caught buying a blacklist from a right-wing private employment screening agency called the ECONOMIC LEAGUE. The ECONOMIC LEAGUE with a staff of 62 people gathers names from sources such as union or political newspapers, and from open political meetings, and is used to screen politically suspect job hunters. The widely discredited list is estimated to have 200,000 names on it.

Documents obtained by DATALINK, a computer trade journal, show that IBM paid the LEAGUE for its service. When IBM was questioned by DATALINK about whether it screens potential employees, management denied 3 times that it used such practices. IBM Director of Personnel John Steele told DATALINK he had no dealings with the ECONOMIC LEAGUE and had only read newspaper reports of its activities.

But a personal letter to Steele from LEAGUE contact John Udal spells out meetings and phone calls between IBM personnel Manager Steele and Udal.

In his letter enclosing an invoice, Udal refers to a meeting in September 1986 and discussions to extend the services of the League. IBM Personnel Manager Steele then authorized an IBM pay slip of 5,000 English pounds (roughly \$8,000) for the invoice. Copies of the invoice and the IBM pay slip in DATALINK clearly showed that IBM Management was lying. IBM management then turned around and admitted in a company statement that it had used the services of the ECONOMIC LEAGUE. Following the uproar over it's lying, the company issued a statement saying its services with the League had run out and that it would not renew.

Other companies such as McDonald Douglas stated "as far as we are concerned we would never resort to hidden lists to discriminate against any prospective job applicants." LOGICA a computer company stated "it's a matter of ethics and LOGICA wouldn't do it."

Of course some companies would do it, but why has IBM joined them? Is IBM screening for peoples political views here in the US or in other countries? Does IBM management believe a persons politics determines how well he or she will do a job? Does IBM management feel that people of certain "politics" might question managements actions in the workplace. Heaven forbid that should happen! And why in a special opinion survey this past summer in which an unknown number of employees participated, did IBM ask people to rank social and political issues. The issues ranged from the Federal deficit, foreign trade and pornography to Nuclear war, the plight of the farmers and the homeless. Whatever the reason, IBM management should be told loudly that a persons politics is NOT managements business.



*
* "Thank goodness those days *
* are long gone. Say, did *
* you hear someone chuckle?" *
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DID YOU GET YOUR FAIR SHARE?

A recent article in ELECTRONIC BUSINESS reports that IBM employees each contributed \$127,000 in revenue to the company in 1986, a 2.9% increase. We easily beat out every other high-tech company. Consider also that worker productivity in the U.S. has risen an average of 4% each year since 1981, outpacing the other industrial nations. But the cruncher is this: While Americans are working harder, we are earning less. According to research by the AFL/CIO, American workers are being paid at 1962 levels. Using 1985 dollars as a base, weekly wages, adjusted for inflation dropped 14.4% between 1975 and 1985. This year alone real hourly compensation fell by 5% in the 1st quarter, the largest quarterly drop since 1951.

IBM executives probably didn't even worry about such trivial matters. 130 of our executives split \$5million in bonuses for 1986 performance. But wait a minute, wasn't 1986 one of our worst years in history?

Local workers meanwhile are praised by the Broome County Industrial Development Agency as being stable, productive and loyal. Broome county workers were also praised for being 27.6% more productive than the national average. And loyalty? That got us the LOWEST average hourly salary for production workers in all of New York State according to the state department of labor. One other note on loyalty. The IDA also states "the local labor force has a well earned reputation for loyalty. Only 8% of the manufacturing workforce is unionized." So how much meat does loyalty put on the table?

DRUG TESTING IN THE WORKPLACE

As mentioned in the article on blacklisting, IBM Endicott had some employees take a special opinion survey. The questions were not your usual opinion survey questions and the results have not been released, not even to those who took the survey. Besides questions on politics, there were questions such as whether or not employees should be randomly tested for illegal drug use.

Drug testing of workers, commonly done by urinalysis, is a hot subject these days. Many organizations from Trade Unions to Insurance companies feel drug testing of workers is economically and practically unfeasible, and downright dangerous.

Drug testing in the workplace has become a major threat to the privacy, independence and economic stability of workers. If we allow random searches of our body fluids by corporations, we might just as well allow random searches of our homes. It's that simple.

Another problem with drug testing is that the tests themselves can be unreliable. The most commonly used, because it is the cheapest, has incorrect results 67% of the time. Even the most expensive one has an error rate up to 10%. You might think "well, I don't use illegal drugs so I don't have to worry". But many other substance common in every day life will show up on your test as being an illegal drug. Herbal teas for instance give a false reading for cocaine, over the counter cold and allergy remedies will test positive for amphetamines, and cough medicine and poppy seeds will test for opiates.

Drug test will also give the company information on what drugs you are taking for legitimate medical treatment for illnesses you might not want the company to know about, such as depression, high blood pressure, or other medical problems.

Testing does not have the capability to distinguish whether an illegal drug was used at work. Some drugs such as marijuana can stay in the system as residue for weeks after someone has quit, thereby giving a positive reading.

Drug testing in some companies have already been used to intimidate and harass workers who are outspoken towards management, and has become just another means of control of employees.

The only legitimate concern of management is whether or not an employee is doing his or her job. The direct assessment of job performance, not drug testing, should be the principal means to establish a workplace free of drug-related problems.

LET'S SEE, YOUR SAMPLE CONTAINS TRACES OF ASBESTOS, FREON, CARBON MONOXIDE, BERYLLIUM, DBCP, AND PERCHLOR... NO ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES... YOU'RE CLEAN!!