

June 19, 2012

President Lee Saunders  
AFSCME  
16 L St. NW  
Washington, DC 20036

“...with liberty and justice for all.”

Dear Mr. Saunders,

I am writing to the 20 largest trade unions and the 20 largest U.S. chartered corporations regarding two simple questions.

Do you or would you pledge allegiance to the flag on behalf of your unions during your annual convention?

Do you think it advisable for large U.S. corporations (eg. DuPont, Citigroup, IBM, Pfizer, GE, Aetna, ExxonMobil) to pledge allegiance to the flag on behalf of their corporations at their annual shareholders meeting? Presently, they do not.

(The above questions will be appropriately rephrased in the letters to the 20 largest U.S. companies)

In an era of corporate globalization at the expense of our economy, serious questions have arisen regarding the lack of patriotism of these corporations that were born in the U.S., rose to profit on the backs of American workers, were bailed out on the backs of American taxpayers, and were saved by the U.S. marines when they got in trouble abroad. Their sense of gratitude to the American people has been expressed by shipping American jobs and whole industries to communist and fascist, serf-labor, regimes abroad. By contrast, workers and their unions cannot and would not use such levers of power to leave their country, nor do they possess the privileges of immense power to get whatever they want from Washington, D.C. Unlike giant corporations, they are loyal to this country and its communities.

It is important to draw this institutional and personal contrast between workers/unions and executives/U.S. multinationals. Your expeditious response is urged in order to release the results publically before the Fourth of July.

Your response to any of the contact points below, as soon as possible, will help develop a national conversation about a basic disconnect in our political economy that adversely affects America's working families. You will be sent the combined results in the near future.

Sincerely,

Ralph Nader

Enclosed: Chicago Tribune Op-Ed