A large Dutch conglomerate, KBB, bought FAO Schwarz this year. At the same time, FAO Schwarz started a purge against its workers, firing any employee it sees as undesirable. In the last five months, FAO Schwarz has fired workers:

* who support their Union. Two separate charges are pending against FAO Schwarz at the National Labor Relations Board for retaliating against workers for supporting their Union.

* who suffer from AIDS. Greg Knowles, a loyal employee who was offered a promotion to management declined the position, telling FAO Schwarz that he was suffering from AIDS which would limit his ability to perform the job. Within six weeks, Knowles was fired.

**THIS CHRISTMAS DON'T REWARD FAO SCHWARZ'S CRUELTY!**

DON'T BUY TOYS FROM SCROOGE!
Why are the Human Rights of Employees Being Violated at the San Francisco Hilton & Towers?

Why Won’t the Management or Human Resources Employees Address These Issues?

Instance: Woman told by co-worker to fellate him. The man was given only 3 days off as a consequence. This was a reward to the offender for humiliating a co-worker.

Instance: HIV positive man, after coming back to work from a hospital stay was told by his supervisor that his HIV status was a problem from a corporate stance. This is in violation of the ADA and insulting in San Francisco.

Instance: A gay man left Hilton in San Francisco because of the homophobic atmosphere created by management. Outrageous!

Instance: Gay men are denied promotions by homophobic management. Unacceptable.

Instance: Women, HIV positive persons, minorities and gay men are being abused! When they step forward, the Human Resources department and management makes them feel even worse.

Hilton wants each of these people and many others to believe they are alone and isolated, with no protections. That is a lie. There are laws, we have communities. The employees of Hilton in San Francisco are asking for your assistance.

If there are human rights violations at your workplace or anywhere, scream your head off. Make sure you are heard.
What can you, your organization, your office do to help?

1) Call Hilton's toll free reservation line at 1-800-445-8667 and ask about these violations.

2) Put this information on your web page, or in your newsletter -- encourage people to ask the hard questions when they call 1-800-445-8667.

3) Pass this information on to others in the U.S. who have web sites and ask for their help.

4) Call San Francisco Hilton & Towers at (415) 771-1400. Demand answers. Call and call often.

5) If you or your organization currently have reservations at the Hilton, cancel them. Take your business elsewhere until conditions change.

Together we are powerful!

Please Help.
The Galaxy Carpet Company of Chatsworth, GA, has instituted a corporate employee health insurance policy that discriminates against PWA's. Galaxy is one of the largest carpet manufacturing companies in the U.S.

Exception #4 of this policy limits lifetime medical reimbursements for people with AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases to $10,000 (ten thousand dollars)! The limitation will be waived "if ... the infection or disease process described was involuntarily acquired by means other than sexual contact or drug abuse". Employees suffering from other diseases are not subject to any such limitations.

This action by Galaxy is part of a pattern of discriminatory health insurance policies being issued by corporations. We must fight these policies as they appear in order to discourage other corporations from attempting the same kind of discrimination.

In 1988 Circle K Corporation instituted a policy with similar provisions. That policy was rescinded after pickets, boycotts, negative media coverage, and legal action.

WE DEMAND THAT GALAXY IMMEDIATELY RESCIND THIS HEINOUS POLICY!

We sent Galaxy a letter demanding that they rescind this policy and gave them a week to reply. Their response was to promise "a study" and "subsequent...recommendations as changes are appropriate." We know what changes are appropriate.

WE DEMAND THAT GALAXY STOP DISCRIMINATING AGAINST PEOPLE WITH AIDS!

Galaxy’s mealy-mouthed response was: [we are] "sure you understand the importance of making sound decisions after reviewing all ramifications." They obviously believed there would be no ramifications from discriminating against people with AIDS.

Let's show them some ramifications.

WE DEMAND THAT GALAXY IMMEDIATELY RESCIND EXCEPTION #4 TO THEIR EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY!

USE YOUR TELEPHONE TO HELP FIGHT AIDS DISCRIMINATION
INSTRUCTIONS FOR TELEPHONE ACTION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 8 AM - 5:30 PM (EASTERN TIME)

We ask that you make TWO PHONE CALLS: The first should go to either Steve Silverman, President and CEO of Galaxy Carpet, or to Jack Pounds, VP and Director of Human Resources. This call will get our message across at the highest possible level. Reach them by calling 1-800-366-6070 or, if busy, 1-800-366-4252.

The second call will go to the order desk at 1-800-669-6060. This call will be the one that hits Galaxy where they live - the POCKETBOOK. Because this week is a major buyers market, your call will tie up their orders. The purpose of this call is to tie up the lines as long as possible so that business as usual STOPS.

SUGGESTIONS - WHAT TO SAY

> TELL THEM WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY.

> TELL THEM WHY YOU OPPOSE THIS POLICY.

> TELL THEM THIS IS NOT "JUST" AN AIDS ISSUE, BUT A BASIC HEALTH CARE ISSUE; IF GALAXY CAN LIMIT PAYMENTS ON AIDS OR STD'S THEY CAN LIMIT PAYMENT FOR OTHER ILLNESSES AS WELL (especially important when talking to non-executive employees you may speak to: make issue hit home for them.)

> DEMAND THAT GALAXY RESCIND EXCEPTION #4 (limitations on AIDS and STD coverage) TO THEIR EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY IMMEDIATELY!

Please keep this sheet; we may ask for another phone action to keep up the pressure on Galaxy.

If calling from outside New York, please let them know where you're calling from.

This phone zap was called by ACT UP/NY.

FAX NUMBER DIRECTORY

TELL WHOEVER YOU TALK TO THAT YOU ARE FROM ACT UP

GALAXY CARPET CO., INC.
PRESIDENT & CEO - STEVE SILVERMAN
1-404-695-0904

San Francisco.

Call 415/556-9237 for more info.
Congress is considering allowing discrimination against people with HIV infection who handle food on their jobs (the Chapman amendment to the Americans with Disabilities Act). This amendment is based on unfounded fears and runs counter to all public health guidelines.

The Marriott Corporation, one of the largest hotel corporations in the United States, has supported this limitation. Marriott is the headquarters site for the Sixth International Conference on AIDS, which seeks to translate sound scientific findings into reasonable public policy.

By refusing to take a strong stand against the food handler amendment (the Chapman Amendment), Marriott continues to support irrational perceptions about HIV transmission that were resolved long ago. HIV is not transmitted via food handling. The Marriott has chosen to ignore this fact.

Until the Marriott Corporation joins in opposing these infringements on the rights of people with HIV, we urge conference participants to boycott all food services -- restaurants and room service -- at the Marriott.

To support the boycott:

- Do not order room service or eat in Marriott restaurants.
- Hang this sign on your door.
JACK WELCH
PRESIDENT AND CEO
GENERAL ELECTRIC CORPORATION
3135 EASTON TURNPIKE
FAIRFIELD, CT 06430

AIDS DISCRIMINATION
Jack Welch
President and CEO
General Electric Corporation
3135 Easton Turnpike
Fairfield, CT 06430

To the President and CEO of General Electric Corporation:

I have been made aware of the unfair firing and harassment of one of your employees. The management at GE Capital Computer Leasing in Emeryville, California fired Jonathan Burrows after finding out that Jonathan is HIV positive. To observers, it appears that GE controls insurance costs by dumping employees who suffer from serious medical conditions. Is this how GE compensates for loyalty and hard work?

This will influence purchasing decisions I make. I cannot support any organization that discriminates against its members based on medical disability. Therefore, when I need to buy light bulbs or any other product or service offered by General Electric, I will patronize GE's competitors.

Sincerely,

Address:
News from
Congressman Gerry Studds

For Immediate Release
Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Further Information
Brendan Daly
(202) 225-3111

HOUSE APPROVES DISCHARGE OF HIV+ SERVICE MEMBERS
STUDDS DENOUNCES MEASURE AS "UNNECESSARY, UNWISE AND UNJUST"

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The House of Representatives today approved legislation which would require the discharge of all members of the Armed Forces who test positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The provision was included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996. A previous version of the bill containing an identical provision was vetoed by President Clinton on December 28.

Congressman Gerry Studds (D-MA), who has led the fight against this provision, made the following statement during the floor debate:

"Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my disappointment and dismay that the conferees have chosen to retain section 567 of this bill, which would require the discharge or retirement of military personnel who test positive for HIV.

"As the President acknowledged in his message vetoing the first conference report, this is a blatantly discriminatory measure which exalts ideology over common sense. It is justified by neither the need to ensure military readiness nor any other legitimate legislative concern.

"The Department of Defense has consistently opposed this provision on a number of grounds. First, the number of service members who test positive for HIV is less than one-tenth of one percent of the active force and does not pose a significant problem for our military.

"Second, these service members are experienced, highly trained and physically fit, and it will not enhance readiness to deprive the Armed Forces of their services.
"And third, if and when their medical condition renders them unable to carry out their duties, current law already requires that these service members be separated or retired. Moreover, current law gives the Secretary of Defense full authority to discharge even asymptomatic individuals should he determine that their retention would adversely affect the military mission.

"The truth, Mr. Chairman, is that this measure is not about military readiness. Had it been so, it would not have singled out service members with one particular medical condition, but would have mandated the discharge of all who are non-worldwide assignable due to a medical condition, whether they suffer from asthma, diabetes, cancer or heart disease. That would have been no less gratuitous, but it would at least have had the virtue of consistency.

"Why, then, are only service members with HIV to be discharged? The answer is inescapable: the proponents of this measure believe that people living with HIV/AIDS do not deserve the same consideration and compassion afforded those with other medical conditions.

"Nor is it too far-fetched to suggest that, for some, this provision is really a proxy by which they hope to bring about the discharge of HIV-positive service members who happen to be gay. The shifting demographics of this disease make it less and less likely that they will actually achieve this result, but there are undoubtedly some gay service members who will be discharged under this provision who up to now have managed to weather the unending waves of persecution to which they have been subjected.

"Finally, Mr. Chairman, I object to what is perhaps the most mean-spirited aspect of this provision: it not only deprives these men and women of their careers, but by requiring their discharge rather than providing for their medical retirement, it denies them continued medical care at Department of Defense facilities. The bill allows these service members all of 30 days of transitional care before consigning them to Veterans Administration facilities -- most of which are ill-equipped to serve their needs. What is more, those who are enrolled in military medical research would no longer be eligible to participate as volunteers.

"This an unconscionable way to treat people who have honorably served their country. It also places in jeopardy one of the most important clinical vaccine programs in the world. Given the human and strategic significance of the advancing pandemic, this is unforgivably shortsighted.

"In short, Mr. Chairman, this provision is unnecessary, unwise, and unjust. I urge the House to reject the conference report."
Service Employees International Union "POSITION PAPER"

on the Centers for Disease Control Guidelines regarding testing and restricting healthcare workers. (7/17/91--J. Howley)

CDC GUIDELINES

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control has issued "Recommendations for Preventing Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Hepatitis B Virus to Patients During Exposure-Prone Invasive Procedures" (MMWR, 7.12.91). On the positive side, both the CDC and HHS Secretary Sullivan's statement emphasized that the risk of provider-to-patient HIV transmission is zero in most patient contacts and extremely small even in the case of "exposure-prone invasive procedures." Also, the CDC:

- Opposed mandatory testing and stated that compliance with recommendations "can be increased through education, training, and appropriate confidentiality safeguards."

- Strongly recommended strict adherence to universal precautions and hepatitis B vaccination for all HCWs.

- Called for work on new devices/techniques to prevent blood contact.

Other key CDC Recommendations which may threaten rights of healthcare workers are:

- Call for identification of "exposure-prone" invasive procedures by professional organizations and that HCWs who perform those procedures should know their HIV antibody status. CDC needs to follow-up quickly or else institutions may make this list over-broad.

- HCWs "who are infected with HIV or HBV (and are HBeAg positive)" should not perform exposure-prone procedures unless they have sought counsel and permission from an expert panel. These panels are to be supervised by public health authorities and include the personal physician, an infectious disease specialist, and an expert on the procedures.

- While the expert panels "must recognize the importance of confidentiality and the privacy rights of infected HCWs," the involvement of employer representatives and officials undermines confidentiality.

- CDC imposes strict rules for HCWs while leaving duties of institutions voluntary and vague.

CDC has taken the additional and controversial step of requiring the HIV-infected HCW to inform the patient prior to performing exposure-prone procedures, in all cases. Mandatory disclosure will mean work restrictions for HCWs performing "exposure-prone" procedures. Some may conceal their status, undermining the recommendations. SEIU is opposed to mandatory disclosure or testing.
CDC GUIDELINES

Fairness demands that:

■ Employers must protect the confidentiality of HIV-infected HCWs and retrain those whose work is restricted with no loss of pay or benefits.

■ Employers must pay for the hepatitis B vaccine and confidential HIV testing and counseling for all HCWs who request it.

The Senate is considering a Helms proposal to impose criminal penalties on HIV-infected HCWs who perform invasive procedures. SEIU is urging:

■ Senators to vote against the Helms amendment maximum protection to workers and patients alike.