

<<<<< JOB DESTRUCTION NEWSLETTER No. 1973 -- 2/04/2009 >>>>>

President Obama continues to surround himself with champions of free trade and open borders. Fortunately Tom Daschle was forced to withdraw -- and I say fortunately because he is a pivotal figure in the H-1B fiasco. I believe that's one of the reasons that Obama wanted him in the cabinet. Obama's cabinet and other government appointments are transforming the executive into a solid block of H-1B advocates who want to expand the program.

Sen. Judd Gregg secretary of commerce is as bad as it gets. Obama might as well have appointed Bill Gates. Gregg gets a failing grade of F on guest worker visas from Americans for Better Immigration:

<http://grades.betterimmigration.com/testgrades.php3?District=NH&VIPID=519>

I wanted to punch him in the face as I watched a 5 minute video of Sen. Gregg at the Cato website (link below). Among other things he wants to raise the number of H-1B visas to 150,000.

Greg parrots the industry line on H-1B. One of his favorites is to repeat the claim by Bill Gates that every H-1B creates 5 jobs for Americans. Ron Hira asked the right question for Computerworld:

The five-jobs-per-H-1B-worker claim, said Hira, "is so absurd that Mr. Gregg should be laughed out of the room. This is the kind of thoughtful leadership that Mr. Obama is bringing us?"

Ron Hira wrote a stinging article for EE Times where he said:

"Obama Administration has been in office just a few weeks now, but we already know how it will address the offshoring of engineering jobs. It will promote it.

Be sure to read the last part of Hira's commentary because that's the most important.

Unfortunately Gregg isn't the only bad appointee. Diana Farrell was appointed by Obama for the National Economic Council and as deputy economic adviser to the president. She has worked for the McKinsey Global Institute for a long time. In 2004 Farrell said:

"People in the US are looking at it as a job issue. They are not economists and therefore, they don't necessarily see the whole picture. What's going to happen is that offshoring is actually

going to benefit US businesses even more than India."

Larry Summers and Ron Kirk are two other stinker appointments by Obama. Summers will lead the president's National Economic Council and Kirk will be the chairperson. So, Obama is stacking his entire administration with pro H-1B, pro free trade, and anti-worker dregs from industry and the Clinton and Bush administrations.

Last night Lou Dobbs had an excellent report on Gregg and it is available at the CNN site. Ron Hira appeared on Dobbs so he has really been hitting the road to get the word out.

DOBBS: Well this may be what we're going to see from the Obama administration. That's a shame, because it's intellectual dishonesty. It is absolute arrogance to continue to repeat the policies of the past. Larry Summers, all of these folks very capable people, that are absolutely part of the Rubin legacy.

It's devastating what's happening here. The millions of people, working men and women who worked and supported and voted for Barack Obama for change in the direction of trade policies have to be extraordinarily disappointed, but fundamentally, if there is no change on the part of our elected officials, on the top policy choices, on free trade, on outsourcing, and focusing on manufacturing, how to incentivize it and how to build our middle class, rather than destroy it, this administration will be remembered for something besides change and a disbelief in the change they brought, but rather the legacy will be further destruction of this economy, and that is intolerable to all of us. Bill Tucker, thank you very much.

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<http://www.cnn.com/video/?/video/bestoftv/2009/02/04/tucker.gregg.commerce.cnn>

Video: Lou Dobbs and Bill Tucker, Gregg at Commerce

[http://www.cato.org/weekly/index.php?vid\\_id=64](http://www.cato.org/weekly/index.php?vid_id=64)  
Video of Sen. Gregg

[http://americaneconomicalert.org/blogger\\_home.asp?Prod\\_ID=37#3148](http://americaneconomicalert.org/blogger_home.asp?Prod_ID=37#3148)  
Secretary of Outsourcing

[http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578\\_3-10155763-38.html](http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578_3-10155763-38.html)  
What Judd Gregg bodes for high tech

<http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9127276>

H-1B, offshoring supporters get key Obama Administration posts

<http://www.eweek.com/c/a/IT-Management/Commerce-Nominee-Favors-H1B-Visa-Expansion/>

Commerce Nominee Favors H1-B Visa Expansion

<http://www.eetimes.com/news/latest/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionId=DFOR1WWH1LFYGQSNLCKHA?articleID=213001145>

Opinion by Ron Hira: The Obama administration promotes outsourcing

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<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0902/03/ldt.01.html>

LOU DOBBS TONIGHT

Daschle Withdraws; Is this Change?; Americans First?; Where is the Stimulus?

Aired February 3, 2009 -

DOBBS: A straightforward response from the White House. It is also a day of considerable irony, as you suggest, and that he has appointed a man and Senator Judd Gregg who would have destroyed the Department of Commerce just 13 years ago, but there's also sure to be a great attendant, some concern and some controversy here over Gregg, because he is also a wild-eyed free trader at any cost advocate. He also is a great support of CAFTA, of NAFTA and H-1B visas which is antithetical frankly to the position the president took during his campaign.

LOTHIAN: Clearly differences between what he believes and what the president believes. And I think that's why you heard the president say that he -- there are some big differences between Mr. Gregg and himself. He joked saying that the first big difference is that he didn't -- he wanted someone else for president, but it's much deeper than that.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BILL TUCKER, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Senator Judd Gregg is a controversial pick to lead the Commerce Department. Groups who believed President Obama would usher in a new trading policy are bitterly disappointed. Global Trade Watch responded saying quote, "Senator Gregg as commerce secretary certainly is not the change we can believe in." The U.S.

Business and Industry Council representing 1,850 small and medium-sized businesses calls the appointment baffling. ALAN TONELSON, U.S. BUSINESS & INDUSTRY COUNCIL: He is a free trade purist. Judd Gregg has never, ever met an outsourcing focus trade agreement that he hasn't loved. He's voted for all of them enthusiastically.

TUCKER: Our trade deficit through the end of November of last year \$630 billion. Other groups are disturbed at Gregg's staunch support of more guest workers. In 2000 he voted to raise the cap on H-1B visas. Then in 2007 he authored legislation that would have more than doubled the size of the H-1B visa program to 150,000. Gregg is also a strong proponent of outsourcing and in the opinion of many worker activists it would be a serious mistake to ignore his stance on those issues.

RON HIRA, ROCHESTER INST. OF TECHNOLOGY: Commerce plays a very important role in all of these kinds of issues and is a big voice representing big business within the administration.

TUCKER: Gregg's trade and outsourcing views appear contrary to statements by President Obama, but Gregg's appointment is consistent with others made by the president. Ron Kirk, the trade representative and the president's chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, are strong NAFTA supporters as is Larry Summers who leads the president's National Economic Council and Economic Council member Diana Farrell is an outspoken proponent of outsourcing.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

TUCKER: It would be interesting to learn what President Obama meant this morning when he introduced Judd Gregg as his commerce secretary nominee by saying they have disagreements, because, Lou, it would appear that on many, many issues, in fact, Senator Judd Gregg is in alignment with President Obama and certainly his administrative picks so far.

DOBBS: Well this may be what we're going to see from the Obama administration. That's a shame, because it's intellectual dishonesty. It is absolute arrogance to continue to repeat the policies of the past. Larry Summers, all of these folks very capable people, that are absolutely part of the Rubin legacy.

It's devastating what's happening here. The millions of people, working men and women who worked and supported and voted for Barack Obama for change in the direction of trade policies have to be extraordinarily disappointed, but fundamentally, if there is no change on the part of our elected officials, on the top policy choices, on free trade, on outsourcing, and focusing on manufacturing, how to incentivize it and how to build our middle class, rather than destroy it, this administration will be

remembered for something besides change and a disbelief in the change they brought, but rather the legacy will be further destruction of this economy, and that is intolerable to all of us. Bill Tucker, thank you very much.

Well coming up here next, lobbyist links and tax dodges, is this the change we were promised? I'll be joined by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist David Cay Johnston and how fast will \$9 billion and high speed Internet spending create jobs? Oh you're going to love this, all part of that stimulus stuff. That's next in "Lou's Line-Item Veto". Check your blood pressure because it just gets worse and worse, folks.

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[http://americaneconomicalert.org/blogger\\_home.asp?Prod\\_ID=37#3148](http://americaneconomicalert.org/blogger_home.asp?Prod_ID=37#3148)

Secretary of Outsourcing

Monday, February 02, 2009

I knew that Senator Judd Gregg, the New Hampshire Republican widely reported to be President Obama's leading candidate to head the Commerce Department, was a staunch supporter of outsourcing-focused trade policies. But until I checked his record, I had no idea how staunch. And for how long!

Gregg began representing the Granite State in the Senate in 1993 -- the year NAFTA was approved. He began voting with the outsourcers then and he's continued ever since. Most Favored Nation status for China, WTO membership for the People's Republic, the Uruguay Round world trade agreement, fast track, CAFTA, free trade with sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean Basin, Vietnam, Peru -- you name it on the outsourcers' agenda, and Gregg has been for it.

To put the icing on cake, he's a major Open Borders proponent, too. The only significant exceptions to this dismal record have been support for County-of-Origin labeling for food products, and for economic sanctions against the brutal military junta in Burma.

Even recognizing that President Obama has not exactly been a full-throated critic of these trade policies, the gap between his record and views and those of Gregg's is yawning -- especially on NAFTA and on China.

At the same time, Gregg's nomination would be consistent with Obama's presidential record of appointing strong supporters of outsourcing-focused trade policies to key trade-related positions in his administration -- like U.S. Trade Representative, which will presumably be held by nominee Ron Kirk, and the White House National Economic Council chair and Chief of

Staff post, filled by Larry Summers and Rahm Emanuel, respectively.

As Mayor of Dallas, Kirk was a backer of NAFTA as well as of breakneck trade expansion with China --though clearly he didn't eat, drink, and sleep trade policy. Summers, a Clinton-era Treasury Secretary, has been a primo globalization cheerleader since Day One. And Emanuel, a key Clinton White House staffer, was assigned to push NAFTA through Congress whatever phony promises had to be made and whatever misleading statements had to be issued.

Of course, Obama will remain The Decider of U.S. trade policy's basic direction. And he's clearly a believer in the strategy of hugging one's rivals tight. But as a result, many of the biggest battles over trade policy's heart and soul might be fought inside his administration. At a time when major changes on this front are urgently needed to get the U.S. economy back on a healthy growth path, that could become a recipe for dangerous delay.

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[http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578\\_3-10155763-38.html](http://news.cnet.com/8301-13578_3-10155763-38.html)

February 3, 2009 12:17 PM PST  
What Judd Gregg bodes for high tech

Commerce Secretary-designate Judd Gregg (center) speaks Tuesday at the White House, accompanied by Vice President Biden and President Obama.

(Credit: White House photo by Pete Souza)  
Republican senator Judd Gregg on Tuesday officially became President Obama's nominee for secretary of commerce, bringing a pro-business and pro-law enforcement record to a cabinet position with significant influence over the new administration's technology policies.

In remarks at the White House, Obama called the New Hampshire senator "an outstanding addition to the depth and experience of my economic team, a trusted voice in my Cabinet, and an able and persuasive ambassador for industry who makes it known to the world that America is open for business."

A review of Gregg's actions as senator shows that his record on technology policy is mixed. His skepticism of Internet taxes and support for more H-1B visas has made him a frequent ally of the tech industry, but he was the first -- and only -- senator to call for a global ban on secure encryption products after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

The U.S. Department of Commerce oversees the administration's position on Internet regulation, the patent office, and tech-related standards including an algorithm used in digital signatures. Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration calls itself the "president's principal adviser on telecommunications and information policy issues." In addition to its traditional involvement with Internet governance, NTIA is responsible for overseeing the coupon program for digital TV converter boxes.

Because Commerce oversees regulations relating to the Web posting and export of encryption code, Gregg's pro-surveillance views are causing a bit of nervousness in Washington circles. On the Senate floor on September 13, 2001, while the World Trade Center complex was still smoldering, Gregg said: "This is something that we need international cooperation on and we need to have movement on in order to get the information that allows us to anticipate and prevent what occurred in New York and in Washington."

Gregg said that encryption makers "have as much at risk as we have at risk as a nation, and they should understand that as a matter of citizenship, they have an obligation" to include decryption methods for government agents. Gregg, who previously headed the appropriations subcommittee overseeing the Justice Department, then told the Associated Press he was writing legislation "to give our law enforcement community more tools."

That proposal echoed legislation approved by one House of Representatives committee four years earlier, which would have made it a felony to distribute or sell encryption products unless they provided police with "immediate access to plaintext." That would have prohibited the distribution of Web browsers with built-in SSL encryption, operating systems with disk encryption, and software using standard Internet protocols including IPsec and SSH.

A month later in October 2001, without explanation, Gregg abandoned the legislation he was drafting.

"We are hopeful that as Commerce Secretary, Sen. Gregg will not revive the discredited idea of limiting the use of strong encryption," Greg Nojeim, senior counsel at the Center for Democracy and Technology, said on Tuesday. "Requiring a backdoor in encryption systems to help the government conduct surveillance would create vulnerabilities that would ultimately make us less, not more, secure."

A friend of the business community

In other areas and in other ways, though, Washington representatives of the high tech industry say Gregg is a solid choice.

The Business Software Alliance said the senator "has the potential to be an outstanding Secretary of Commerce." The Information Technology Industry Council said: "He has been a strong proponent of opening overseas markets to U.S. exports, he backed a permanent R&D tax credit and has voted favorably on litigation reform."

Gregg has been a friend of the business community, receiving a cumulative score of 88 percent in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's most recent congressional scorecard. (By comparison, Obama received a 42 percent rating, and Vice President Joe Biden a mere 35 percent.) On CNET's 2008 scorecard that rated a broader range of votes including ones relating to gambling and wiretaps, Gregg received a 50 percent.

He has been a champion of eliminating any limits on H-1B "guest worker" visas, telling Microsoft's Bill Gates in 2007 that he "agreed 100 percent" that there should be no limits on them. Gregg acknowledged that his colleagues would not be inclined to support such a radical proposal; he introduced legislation last year raising the limit on H-1B "guest worker" visas from 65,000 to 115,000 and the advanced-degree exemption to 30,000 visas for the next three years.

Gregg has also suggested making it illegal to sell someone's Social Security number without their consent, and has consistently supported efforts to restrict Internet taxes.

The news of Gregg's nomination comes a day after the Senate confirmed Eric Holder as attorney general. Holder supported laws mandating Internet traceability, limits on domestic use of encryption, and restrictions on free speech online; during his confirmation hearing last month he said the president has inherent wiretapping and surveillance authority that "cannot be infringed by the legislative branch."

CNET's Stephanie Condon contributed to this report

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<http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9127276>

H-1B, offshoring supporters get key Obama Administration posts

Commerce nominee Judd Gregg believes H-1Bs help create jobs for U.S. workers

Patrick Thibodeau

February 3, 2009 (Computerworld) WASHINGTON -- President Barack Obama has

filled some of his top White House posts with people who not only support expanding the H-1B visa program, but also see offshore outsourcing as a plus for the U.S. economy. That group includes the president's new pick to run the Commerce Department, Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.).

But another one of Obama's choices, Diana Farrell, may be just as important in shaping White House policy. The former director of the McKinsey Global Institute, McKinsey & Co.'s economics research arm, Farrell has been tapped to serve on the National Economic Council and as deputy economic adviser to the president.

McKinsey, a management consulting firm, has published research that argues that offshore outsourcing to low-wage countries brings "substantial benefits" to the U.S. Its studies and reports have been cited by the tech industry in support of the H-1B visa program.

Farrell may have the president's ear, but it's Gregg, as Commerce Secretary, who may well become the White House lead for expanding the cap on H-1B visas, a position Gregg strongly supported in the Senate. Obama voiced support early in his campaign for increasing the 85,000-visa cap, which includes 20,000 visas set aside for advanced-degree graduates from U.S. universities. But he has not addressed the issue in recent months.

In a talk last April at the Cato Institute, a libertarian policy research group, Gregg pointed to comments by Bill Gates that for every H-1B worker who comes to the U.S., five jobs are created. Gates, who was still Microsoft's chairman at the time, had made the comments the month before, during an appearance before a U.S. House committee.

"It's not like... we are taking jobs from Americans, which is what you hear from labor unions. We're actually creating jobs by bringing bright people into this country," Gregg said in a video on the Cato Institute's Web site.

Many in Congress are divided on the H-1B issue, Senate Republicans especially. For instance, Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) believes H-1B workers are being used to displace Americans.

Gregg acknowledged that there has been some abuse in the H-1B program, "especially involving Indian-related companies and their basic flooding of the market in this area and then having people return to India with knowledge that they gained here." But, he argued, that's an issue "that can be corrected fairly easily with minor adjustments in the program."

Indian offshore firms are the largest users of H-1B visas and consider it critical to their delivery model for moving IT functions offshore. It's a

point they have made repeatedly in U.S. Security and Exchange Commission filings.

Some observers are critical of Obama's appointments. Ron Hira, an assistant professor of public policy at the Rochester Institute of Technology and author of Outsourcing America, said the Gregg and Farrell picks indicate that Obama "is either ignorant or naive about the real job market for American IT workers. He is doing his level best, with these appointments, to undermine American workers and their livelihoods."

The IT job market has been shrinking, and most major IT vendors have announced layoffs. Among them is Microsoft, which is laying off 5,000 workers.

The idea that five new workers are hired for each H-1B position came from a report by the National Foundation for American Policy in Arlington, Va. Released just before Gates' spoke last year, the report analyzed publicly accessible Web-based help-wanted ads and H-1B use.

The five-jobs-per-H-1B-worker claim, said Hira, "is so absurd that Mr. Gregg should be laughed out of the room. This is the kind of thoughtful leadership that Mr. Obama is bringing us?"

Tech industry groups praised Gregg's appointment in statements. TechNet, a bipartisan political network of tech-centric CEOs, said Gregg "will no doubt be a strong ambassador for America's workers, businesses and our dynamic economy."

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<http://www.eweek.com/c/a/IT-Management/Commerce-Nominee-Favors-H1B-Visa-Expansion/>

Commerce Nominee Favors H1-B Visa Expansion  
By Roy Mark  
2009-02-04

Sen. Gregg Judd would bring a record to the Department of Commerce that unabashedly endorses an expansion of H1-B workers for the technology industry. That support, though, doesn't necessarily mean either the U.S. House or Senate will move to expand the H1-B visa cap.

In Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.), President Barack Obama's new nominee to run the Department of Commerce, the tech industry has found their man when it comes to expanding the H1-B visa program. The 61-year-old senator is an unabashed fan of the program.

A favorite of American technology companies, the H-1B program is a temporary work visa program allowing American companies and universities to employ foreign guest workers who have the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree in a job category that is considered by the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services to be a "specialty occupation." The idea is to help companies hire foreign guest workers on a temporary basis when there is not a sufficient qualified American work force to meet those needs.

Gregg co-sponsored the H-1B Visa Program Modernization Act of 2007, which would have increased the current H1-B visa cap of 65,000 to 150,000. The unsuccessful effort would have also authorized a 20 percent increase of that 150,000 cap in any fiscal year succeeding a year in which the cap was met.

"One of the main concerns I hear from businesses in New Hampshire and across the nation is a need for more highly skilled workers and that current law is stymieing their ability to hire the workers they desperately need," Judd said when introducing the legislation. "In today's competitive global markets, the U.S. must be looking for ways to stay ahead and these bills offer effective, common sense ways to do just that."

Gregg also voted against a bill introduced by Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) to ensure that employers make efforts to recruit American workers before hiring foreign workers in addition to opposing legislation by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) that would raise the fees from \$1,500 to \$10,000 for employers who wish to import H1-B high-skill non-immigrant workers. The increased funds would be dedicated to scholarships for American high tech students.

"Helping the high tech industry tap into highly skilled talent from around the world and address well-documented labor shortages not only keeps our economy strong, but creates U.S. jobs and deters employers from sending work elsewhere," Judd said.

Gregg's unabashed support of expanding the number of the H1-B workers in the United States, though, hardly means an increase in the current cap is in the offing from the 111th Congress. Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), a frequent critic of the tech industry's use of the H1-B visa system, has already staked out ground opposing the expanded use of H1-B visas.

After Microsoft announced it was laying off some 5,000 workers, Grassley promptly fired off a letter to Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer wanting to know if the company will be retaining H1-B workers rather than similarly qualified American employees.

"My point is that during a layoff, companies should not be retaining H1-B or other work visa program employees over qualified American workers," Grassley wrote in a Jan. 22 letter to Microsoft. "Our immigration policy is not intended to harm the American work force. I encourage Microsoft to ensure that Americans are given priority in job retention. Microsoft has a moral obligation to protect these American workers by putting them first during these difficult economic times."

In October, a report issued by the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services found that the H1-B program has more than a 20 percent violation rate. The fraud identified in the report included jobs not located where employers claimed, H1-B visa holders not being paid the prevailing wage, forged documents, fraudulent degrees and "shell businesses." Nevertheless, the tech industry, led by Microsoft, continues to seek an increase in the H1-B cap.

Even before the report was issued, Grassley, Durbin and Sanders were seeking reform of the H1-B visa program. A bill introduced by Grassley and Durbin would require employers to make a good faith effort to hire American workers first. Employers would also have to show that the H1-B worker would not displace an American worker.

The bill would require employers to advertise job openings on a Department of Labor Web site before submitting an H1-B application. In addition, the bill would give the Department of Labor a mandate to conduct random audits of any company that uses the H1-B program and would require annual audits of companies with more than 100 employees that have 15 percent or more of those workers on H1-B visas.

"This is about protecting the American worker," Grassley said in a statement accompanying the bill. "We're closing loopholes that employers have exploited by requiring them to be more transparent about their hiring, and we're ensuring more oversight of these visa programs to reduce fraud and abuse. A little sunshine will go a long way to help the American worker."

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<http://www.eetimes.com/news/latest/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionid=DFOR1WWH1LFYQSNLCKHA?articleID=213001145>

Opinion: The Obama administration promotes outsourcing

Ron Hira

(02/04/2009 9:30 AM EST)

We know from a recent EE Times survey that offshoring is the No. 1 career concern for EEs. The Obama Administration has been in office just a few weeks now, but we already know how it will address the offshoring of engineering jobs.

It will promote it.

EE Times, the Wall Street Journal and InformationWeek all recently published important stories on IBM's layoffs and the company's links to offshoring. IBM is now using the euphemism, "resourced actioned" to describe layoffs. The most remarkable aspect of the story was IBM's ability to take the Fifth Amendment on questions about the geographic distribution of layoffs, and even refusing to publicly state the number of U.S. workers it has.

Here's what the Journal published on Jan 27: "IBM Chairman Samuel Palmisano told workers in an e-mail last week that worldwide employment topped 400,000 at the end of 2008, up from 386,000 at the end of 2007. He didn't break out U.S. employment, and IBM spokesmen declined to do so."

Ron Hira

IBM's unwillingness to publicly disclose its massive offshoring operations is no surprise, especially as it lobbies Congress and the Obama Administration for billions in taxpayer handouts as part of the economic stimulus package now being debated by Congress. What is remarkable is that the company is able to get away with it in the current job market with this President and this Congress.

InformationWeek reported on a new initiative by IBM, called Project Match, which is supposed to connect displaced U.S. workers with job openings in low-cost countries like India. But the catch here is, of course, that U.S. workers would be paid Indian salaries. How many U.S. workers can take those jobs and still hope to retire back in the U.S.? The answer is none.

So, where is President Obama, the politician who campaigned against outsourcing? The EE Times story that detailed the stealth layoffs and reactions of IBM workers, appeared on the same day that the President was chumming around with IBM's CEO Palmisano. Here's what President Obama said about why he invited to the White House Palmisano and nine other CEOs who are offshoring jobs:

"They make things, they hire people," the President said of the meeting participants. "They are on the front lines in seeing the enormous problems in the economy right now. Their ideas and their concerns have helped to shape our recovery package in order to get this economy back on track."

Can President Obama really be this naive? Or is it simply that he doesn't believe offshoring matters?

There is clear evidence that the latter is the case. On the very same day he was meeting with "CEOs [who] outsource American jobs"--a phrase he repeatedly and derisively used during his campaign, he named McKinsey's & Co.'s Diana Farrell to his National Economic Council, the inner circle of economic advisors in the White House. Farrell has done more to promote outsourcing than nearly anyone else in America.

Farrell was the lead author of the infamous "Offshoring: Is it a Win-Win Game?" Now she'll be operating at the highest levels of the Obama administration. Her phony "study" did more damage than any other in the debate over offshoring. And her propaganda was used to mislead the American public about the true impact of offshoring.

Moreover, Farrell's firm made millions of dollars consulting with companies, advising them to accelerate their offshoring. And she publicly made the rounds to convince policymakers and the public that offshoring was good for them and the country. It's also no coincidence that the IBM and Nasscom, the Indian IT outsourcing industry association, were major McKinsey clients. They benefited from McKinsey's lobbying as well as its consulting services.

This week (Feb. 3), President Obama nominated Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) to be the next Commerce Secretary. Gregg is a staunch proponent of outsourcing and expanding the H-1B visa program, destroying even more job opportunities for American engineers.

During the campaign, then-Senator Obama pledged to put American workers ahead of corporate profits. Now we know that this was simply a bad joke. A joke that all of us, except the CEOs, will pay dearly for in the years ahead.

The larger issue though is why President Obama can get away with these inexcusable and hypocritical actions? It's really quite simple: American workers have no real representation in Washington. While unions, like Alliance@IBM are doing yeoman's work on labor issues, it's simply not enough because their ranks, and therefore their resources, are too small.

Think about it for a moment: Who represents American engineers' interests in Washington? Sam Palmisano? Diana Farrell? President Obama? Do you think the President even raised the issue of offshoring with Palmisano?

Professional societies like IEEE are global institutions and are unwilling to do what's necessary to lobby on behalf of its U.S. members. I know, I've been active in IEEE's policy activities for years.

It's time for each individual to do his or her part if real change on jobs is to be achieved. Our leaders, politicians, university presidents and CEOs have little or no interest in helping engineers. You must help yourself, and that means becoming politically active. The offshoring of U.S. jobs isn't a partisan issue; both Democratic and Republican politicians are actively working against your career interests.

The first step is to begin communicating with your elected representatives about your interests and concerns. It's as simple as writing an e-mail. Then begin to organize and communicate in larger numbers through your local institutions, whether it is a professional society like IEEE or your place of worship.

This is not a time to mourn, it's time to take action.

-- Ron Hira is an assistant professor of public policy at Rochester Institute of Technology and author of "Outsourcing America"

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