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## News Update

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News Update for Monday, February 6, 2006

**History Lesson on Contract Negotiations:** *The Wall Street Journal* took a hard stand in defense of FAA's contract negotiations with the National Air Traffic Controllers (NATCA) Association in an editorial in the February 6 edition.

Past administrations, legislators and union management don't come off looking well in the editorial. The *Journal* took to task the Clinton administration for giving NATCA the right to bargain over pay and benefits, something rare in government. The paper noted that House Republicans have received campaign donations from NATCA in recent elections, while Senate Democrats are introducing legislation that would essentially change negotiation framework in mid-stream. The paper also noted that the lobbying firm of a former Republican National Committee chairman has even been hired by NATCA to push its issues on Capitol Hill.

The *Journal* also opined that NATCA's huge lobbying fund is based on employees' wages that come from taxpayers' dollars. "NATCA's taxpayer-financed member dues are going toward lobbying Congress to produce a new contract that ... further milks taxpayers," the editorial said.

Short of privatization, the *Journal* called for Congress to "face down" the union and what it terms its excessive demands.

— Jim Tise, Internal Communications

Updated: 9:05 am ET February 9, 2006