THESIS: THE US SHOULD NOT ALLOW MORE LENIENT WORKPLACE-POLLUTION (THAN PUBLIC) STANDARDS, BECAUSE OFTEN WORKERS (1) ARE NOT FULLY INFORMED ABOUT HIGHER RISKS; (2) IMPOSE THE RISKS ON INNOCENT PEOPLE, SUCH AS FUTURE GENERATIONS; (3) RECEIVE NO COMPENSATING WAGE DIFFERENTIAL (CWD) FOR RISKY JOBS; (4) HAVE FAULTY PREFERENCES FOR RISKIER WORK; AND (5) OUGHT NOT BE ABLE TO TRADE THEIR HEALTH FOR MONEY.
ARGUMENT 1: THE US SHOULD NOT ALLOW MORE LENIENT

WORKPLACE STANDARDS, (1) BECAUSE WORKERS OFTEN ARE NOT
FULLY INFORMED ABOUT HIGHER RISKS, AND INDUSTRY OFTEN
COVERS UP THE RISKS (GAO 1999).

OBSERVATION 1: ARGUMENT 1 IS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE UNIONS
AND GOVERNMENT REGULATORS CAN INFORM WORKERS OF THE
RISKS, AS CONGRESS RECENTLY DID, IN THE CASE OF NUCLEAR
WORKERS (CONGRESS 1999).

RESPONSE 1: OBSERVATION 1 IS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE US UNION
MEMBERSHIP IS ONLY 14-16 PERCENT (MILLER 1999, PP. 57-59), AND
GOVERNMENT OFTEN FAILS IN ITS REGULATORY CAPACITY (GAO 1999).


R2: It is questionable because human rights take precedence to economics, and because European nations also do risky work, but with very stringent workplace standards (Newton 1996, pp. 135-149).

A3: The US should not allow more lenient workplace standards, (3) because often there is no CWD for workers in environmentally risky occupations (Leigh 1995, pp. 3-7, 215).
O3: A3 IS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE MANY ECONOMISTS SAY THERE IS A COMPENSATING WAGE DIFFERENTIAL, ALTHOUGH IT VARIES FROM OCCUPATION TO OCCUPATION (VISCUISI ET AL. 2000).

R3: O3 IS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE ALTHOUGH THERE IS AN AVERAGE CWD, DISAGGREGATING CWD DATA SHOWS IT EXISTS ONLY FOR UNIONIZED, COLLEGE-EDUCATED, OR MALE WORKERS (SHRADER-FRECHETTE 2002, CH. 7).

A4: THE US SHOULD NOT ALLOW MORE LENIENT WORKPLACE STANDARDS, (4) BECAUSE WORKERS OFTEN HAVE FAULTY OR
IRRATIONAL PREFERENCES FOR RISKIER WORK (BROOME 1999, PP. 192-198).


R4: O4 IS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE WORKERS OFTEN ARE FORCED INTO JOBS, NOT BECAUSE OF REAL PREFERENCES BUT BECAUSE OF LOW SKILL LEVELS (LEVENSTEIN AND WOODING 1997).


R5: O5 IS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE EVEN THE COURTS recognize that WORKER PROTECTION SOMETIMES OUGHT TO TAKE paternalism and
PRECEDENCE OVER COMPLETE WORKER AUTONOMY (SELLARS 1997, P. 47).

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