The Periodical Observer

In 1995, the upstart John Sweeney seized the helm of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) with talk of a new beginning for organized labor. But the labor movement is still in trouble. A decades-long decline in union membership was briefly stemmed in 1999 but resumed in 2000. Only about nine percent of private-sector workers—and 13.5 percent of the total work force—now carry union cards. There have been other blows. Al Gore’s loss in the presidential election cost labor a champion, as well as a number of pro-labor measures pushed by the Clinton administration. And

Economics, Labor & Business

Labor’s Pains


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Good-bye Glass Ceiling?


There are more cracks in the corporate glass ceiling than most social commentators have noticed, and pay equity is now pretty well established in the executive suites, the authors of this statistical study of 1,500 companies conclude. That’s the good news. The bad news is that women occupy less than four percent of the top jobs in corporate America—though that percentage tripled in a recent five-year period.

In what they describe as “the first detailed description of the relative position of female top executives in the 1990s,” the authors found a lot of change. Only 5.4 percent of the firms studied had a woman among their top five exec-