Fear of Defeat Pushes Bush to Prolong the War

By Michael James

The destruction, suffering and death in Iraq seem beyond comprehension. Bourgeois commentators, frantically searching for an explanation, have recently been questioning the character and mental health of George Bush.

A recent article in New York magazine called “The Deniers’ Club,” for example, blames “the psychological defense mechanism of denial” for “the unholy hell we’ve unleashed” in Iraq. The author, Kurt Andersen, throws a diagnostic wide net. “Concerning the war,” he wrote, “the president and a significant portion of the country seems to be in denial together....” But it is not just denial that the writer for the fashionable New York magazine diagnoses. He also blames the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq on arrogance. “Pathological denial and pathological arrogance combined to produce the tragedy of Iraq,” he contends.

Andersen goes on to admit that he backed the war until seeing “That it would be prosecuted with such relentless incompetence....” This is a perfect example of the moral bankruptcy and degeneracy of American capitalism and its supporters. Andersen apparently would have no qualms with a competent invasion and occupation.

Anna Quindlen of Newsweek, never one to miss a chance to bark up a wrong tree, also looks to presidential mental pathology as an explanation for the criminal atrocities in Iraq. She does not diagnose denial or arrogance but identifies the troublesome trait as “masculinity, American style.”

Quindlen claims to know why Bush does not acknowledge the error of U.S. policy and withdraw from Iraq. She links the continuing U.S.

Study Shows Continued Effects Of Racism On Black Youth

By Ken Boettcher

Cold, hard statistics reflect the continuing effects of institutionalized racism in the United States. The study’s evolution from a threshold society to advanced capitalist nation. Little has been documented, however, about the lingering psychological effects of racism on its victims. A time when official wisdom often claims that racial barriers no longer exist.

A study released in February by the University of Chicago Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture seeks to change that, at least for black youth. Entitled “The Attitudes and Behavior of Young Black Americans,” the first study reported the cold, hard statistics:

• “21 of 1,000 black males and 7 of 1,000 Hispanic males ages 18–19 were in a U.S. prison, compared to 70 of 1,000 black males and 23 of 1,000 Hispanic males ages 20–24.”

Other statistics showed that blacks are far more likely to be victims of violence, contract AIDS and become pregnant as teenagers. Facing the grim reality of their life under capitalism, more than 60 percent of black youth questioned in the nationwide study of 1,500 blacks, whites and Hispanics 15 to 25 years old said they felt racial discrimination makes it harder for blacks to get ahead. Fifty-four percent said the education blacks receive is poorer than that received by whites. Only a tiny percentage of any of the three groups thought they stay likely racism would be eliminated in their lifetime—11 percent of black youth, 12 percent of Hispanic youth and 4 percent of white youth. (Continued on page 6)
International Women’s Day—

The Courageous
Elizabeth Jennings

By B.G.

On March 8 Socialists the world over salute the achievements of women in the international struggle for social equality by celebrating International Women’s Day, established in 1910 by the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen, Denmark.

The struggle of women for social equality often encounters prejudices linked to race and class as well as gender, resulting in a jumble not always easy to sort out. As an example of this mix from the early days of the United States to the present, we present the story of one courageous African American woman who challenged segregation on the transportation facilities in a certain city in this supposed land of freedom.

She was 24 years old, a hard-working schoolteacher, but also the daughter of a well-known preacher and capitalist. She was born and raised in the United States, but was denied equal treatment because of her gender and her race and in spite of the political state, significant social and economic gains won’t be made in the lifetime of today’s black workers and their children.

The roots of racism are watered by the poverty and unemployment produced by capitalism, its competition for jobs and limited opportunities, and racial myths and stereotypes continued by reactionary pundits and politicians of the very economic system that makes these things necessary: capitalism.

“Race” has long provided capitalism with an excellent tool for keeping workers divided and fighting amongst themselves for those limited opportunities. The political state is now in the process of strengthening the tools it uses to repress workers and enforce the privileged position of the capitalist class. Why would it give up one of its best tools?

Far better for workers of all colors to work together to build a classconscious and classwide movement that can unite them against their exploiters to forever end the system that breeds racism—before the capitalist state and its sponsors can implement their authoritarian plans for social “improvements.”

The responses of black youth in particular showed “They do feel quite alienated...like secondary citizens at times,” said Prof. Cathy Cohen, who conducted the study at the University of Chicago.

Cohen, quoted in an Agence France Press article posted at Yahoo! News, concludes, “We have a decision to make: are we going to put off dealing with this issue until it explodes or are we going to engage and think creatively about how to...expand how we think of the responsibilities of the state.”

Presumably, Cohen is suggesting that the capitalist political state can play a positive role in correcting the racial inequities the system fosters. While that might not be impossible the likelihood is that the kids have it right: if left to the political state, significant social and economic gains won’t be made in the lifetime of today’s black workers and their children.

Slavery was gradually eliminated by law in the North, long before the Civil War, but white prejudice against blacks remained long after the legal freedom of African Americans in the North was achieved, just as it continues today.

Let us continue to be ever vigilant against oppression and discrimination wherever they occur. Keep the torch of freedom burning brightly, lighting the way for the future generations to come! Wiping out class lines by establishing the Socialist Industrial Republic of Cooperative Labor is the key to wiping out the conflicts and prejudices that class divisions breed.
Anti-Immigrant Propaganda Bolsters the Ku Klux Klan

By Ken Boettcher

ries by capitalist politicians, pundits and U.S. Klan members against “illegal immigration” and for “immigration reform” have never had a lasting effect on the problem of long-term unemployment under capitalism—a crisis of capitalism that serves to “justify” their riots and raves against immigration. Their demagoguery does bear fruit, however—as recent evidence attests.

In February the Anti-Defamation League issued a report entitled “The Ku Klux Klan Today.” It catalogs evidence that the Klan has “witnessed a surprising and troubling resurgence by exploiting fears of an immigration explosion, and the debate over immigration has in turn helped to fuel an increase in Klan activity, with new groups sprouting in parts of the country” that haven’t recently seen much Klan activity. (The whole report is available at http://www.adl.org.) According to the report, the Klan is increasingly cooperating with other white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups to build an anti-immigrant movement. In an article entitled “their efforts, CNN.com cited figures from the Southern Poverty Law Center, a foe of the Klan. “Between 2000 and 2005,” said Mark Potok of the SPLC, “hate groups mushroomed 33 percent and Klan chapters by 63 percent.” SPLC estimates put today’s Klan membership at up to 8,000 members in 150 chapters nationwide.

It’s not the first time the Klan and groups like them have grown by targeting immigrants. As Brian Levin, director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University at San Bernardino, put it for CNN.com, the Klan “reached peak membership at more than 4 million in the 1920s by focusing on immigration.” “Newcomers from Ireland and Germany,” Levin said, “were portrayed as Catholic usurpers invading the United States, taking jobs from native-born Americans and undermining national fabric.” Today their target is, increasingly, immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries. Their cross-fertilization with other white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups and their use of the Internet to spread their propaganda deepens the threat that these racist and demagogues in Congress and the punditocracy who want to keep the working class divided and weakened. For the thugs of the Klan, other white supremacists and neo-Nazis, it is a means of seeking power to build an ugly system of oppression most sentient beings long ago rejected.

It is increasingly imperative that workers realize the real nature of the immigration debate and anti-immigrant propaganda, and work for a real solution to unemployment. The abolition of capitalism and class rule and the establishment of a socialist society of peace, plenty and freedom for all.

From My Lai to Haditha—Nothing New About U.S. War Atrocities

By Michael James

It was March 16, 1968, when American soldiers opened fire on peasants in a hamlet called My Lai in the village of Son My. The monument that the Vietnamese have erected there says that 504 inhabitants were murdered. Neil Sheehan, author of a book on the U.S. war against Vietnam, entitled A Bright Shining Lie, wrote that the victims were “old men, women, boys, girls and babies.” Sheehan de-scribed the massacre:

“Soldier missed a baby lying on the ground twice with a .45 pistol as his comrades laughed at his marksmanship. He stood over the child and fired a third time. The soldiers laughed at his marksmanship. He stood over the child and fired a third time. They shot the water buffalos, the pigs and the chickens. They threw the dead animals into the wells to poison the water. They tossed satchel charges into the bomb shelters under the houses. A lot of the inhabitants had fled into the shelters. Those who leaped out to escape the explosions were gunned down. All of the houses were put to the torch.”

Why remember My Lai? Because American war crimes are continuing, from Abu Ghraib to Guantanamo, from the murder of 24 Iraqi civilians in Haditha to the rape by U.S. soldiers of 14-year-old Abir Al-Janabi. They went on to murder Abir, her 7-year-old sister Hadil, and 14-year-old Abir Al-Janabi. They went on to murder Abir, her 7-year-old sister Hadil, and 14-year-old Abir Al-Janabi. They went on to murder Abir, her 7-year-old sister Hadil, and 14-year-old Abir Al-Janabi. They went on to murder Abir, her 7-year-old sister Hadil, and 14-year-old Abir Al-Janabi. They went on to murder Abir, her 7-year-old sister Hadil, and 14-year-old Abir Al-Janabi. They went on to murder Abir, her 7-year-old sister Hadil. It was March 16, 1968, when American soldiers opened fire on peasants in a hamlet called My Lai in the village of Son My. The monument that the Vietnamese have erected there says that 504 inhabitants were murdered.

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The Bush administration’s refusal to sign the “International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances” should have been no surprise. The Human Rights Council of the United Nations approved the treaty last June and the U.N. General Assembly adopted it in December. Fifty-seven nations endorsed the treaty in a vote on Feb. 6.

As a press release from the American Civil Liberties Union put it, “The accord sought to bring an end to forced disappearances, used by dictatorships to retake armed forces, and to prevent such practices in the future.”

It’s provisions would snag plenty of CIA agents and U.S. government officials. Since the 2001 terrorist attacks, hundreds—if not thousands—have been kidnapped under the guise of “enhanced interrogation.”

But to think that such actions, or the treaty, can end such abuses, is naive. It is important to note that the U.N. treaty culminates nearly a quarter century of efforts, based solely on an internationalized program of mass kidnappings and tortures, the infamous “Operation Condor” that operation involved CIA Director George Bush Sr., Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the governments with South American dictators in a murderous wave of “disappearances” of political opponents to U.S.-supported military regimes in Chile, Argentina, and elsewhere across the Americas.

That historic-though, that of the whole 20th century—makes it plain that such atrocities will never be permanently ended by the political states from which they spring. For that the political state itself must be swept out of existence and replaced with a new kind of government. Workers themselves must accomplish that task. They must take, hold and collectively operate the means of life, building a new kind of government that democratically administers production with one goal—the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness for all. Only such a government can completely eliminate the bloody excesses(4,8),(995,992) of the historical political state.

George Becker

Upon his death on Feb. 3, an article on Tompaine.com eulogized George Becker, president of the United Steel Workers union from 1997 to 2001, as “A Tough-as-Steel Workers’ Champion.” In fact, Becker was no champion of workers. He was a champion only of the kind of unionism that has utterly failed to improve the condition of workers as a class, and which promises only further failure to do so in the future.

Becker, like his contemporaries at the head of other affiliates of the AFL-CIO, presided over a procapitalist union at a time of rising international competition from companies with newer productive machinery or techniques than those in the United States, or with otherwise lower labor costs. The USW, like its brethren, took seriously its role as a “guardian” of conditions that ensure unionists and their leaders, like George Becker, accept capitalism.

Throughout all the concessions and consolidations that resulted, misguided of labor, Becker never explained or even seemed to care how they could fight to win the class struggle by organizing workers rather than jobs on an industry-wide and classwide basis, with the objective of abolishing capitalism and establishing a workers’ democracy. Workers themselves must accomplish that task. They must take, hold and collectively operate the means of life, building a new kind of government that democratically administers production with one goal—the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness for all. Only such a government can completely eliminate the bloody excesses of the historical political state.

K.B.

Socialism is the collective ownership by all the people of the factories, mills, mines, railroads, land and all other instruments of production. It satisfies human needs, not as under capitalism, for sale and profit. Socialism means direct control and management of the industries and services by the workers through a democratic government based on their nationwide economic organization.

Under socialism, all authority will originate from the workers, integrally united in Socialist Industrial Unions. In such workplaces, the rank and file will elect whatever committees or representatives are needed to facilitate production. Within each shop or office district of a place the rank and file will participate directly in formulating and implementing all plans necessary for efficient operation.

Workers elected in the ranks of shop stewards, the workers will also elect representatives to a local and national council of their industry or service—and to a central congress representing all the industries and services. This All-Industrial Congress will plan and coordinate production in all areas of the economy. All persons elected to any post in the socialist government, from the lowest to the highest level, will be directly accountable to the rank and file. They will be subject to removal at any time that a majority of those who elected them decide it is necessary.

Such a system would make possible the fullest democracy and freedom. It would be a society based on the most primary freedom—economic freedom.

For individuals, socialism means an end to economic insecurity and exploitation. It means workers cease to be commodities bought and sold on the labor market, and forced to work as appendages to tools owned by someone else. It means a chance to develop all individual capacities and potentials within a free community of free individuals. It means a classless society that guarantees full democratic rights for all workers.

Socialism does not mean government or state ownership. It does not mean a closed party-run system without democratic rights. Those things are the very opposite of socialism.

“Socialism,” as the American Socialist Daniel De Leon defined it, “is that social system under which the necessities of production are owned, controlled and administered by the people, for the people, and under which, accordingly, the cause of political and economic despotism having been abolished, class rule is at end. That is socialism, nothing short of that.” And we might add something more than that. “To win the fight for socialism,” he wrote in his autobiography, “is not socialism—it is not socialism—no matter who says different. Those who claim that socialism existed and failed in places like Russia and China simply do not know the facts.

Socialism will be a world in which the things we need to live, work and control our own lives—the industries, services and natural resources—are collectively owned by all the people, and in which the government does not own, control and administer within the industries and services the government. Socialism means that government of the people, for the people, and by the people. Workers become a reality because all industries and services, and the government, are all run by the workers. Workers run the factories, the offices and the stores.

To win the struggle for socialist freedom requires enormous efforts of organizational and educational work. It requires building a mass movement—organized on the basis of the power of the capitalist class on the political field and to educate the majority of workers about the need for socialism. It requires building Socialist Industrial Unions to unite all workers in a class-conscious industrial force and to prepare them to take, hold and operate the tools of production.

You are needed in the ranks of Socialists fighting for a better world, to end poverty, racism, sexism, environmental disaster and to avert the still present threat of a catastrophic nuclear war. Find out more about the Socialist Labor Party and join us to help make the promise of socialism a reality.

K.B.
Sacco and Vanzetti Anniversary Nears—

Two Innocent Immigrants Condemned to Die

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the double judicial murder of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Their electrocution on Aug. 23, 1927, at Charleston prison in Massachusetts, was one of the most infamous cases in American legal history.

Sacco and Vanzetti, Italian immigrant workers, had been brought to trial in 1921 on the charge that they had committed armed robbery and held up the previous year at South Braintree, Mass., during which the company's paymaster and an armed guard were killed. In the course of the trial, however, it was made quite evident that the real "crime" of which they were accused was that of being professed anarchists.

The trial was held in the hysterical atmosphere of the post-World War I "red scare." Both the judge and the prosecutor repeatedly played on prevailing anti-radical sentiments in their handling of the defendants and the jury.

The conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti was obtained by introducing bought-off prosecution witnesses and by resorting to just about every crooked tactic ever used by a prosecuting attorney. To none of this did presiding Judge Webster Thayer offer the least objections; instead, he abetted.

From start to finish, the trial so flagrantly contravened due process that it provoked widespread indignation and protest demonstrations. Funds were raised to wage a battle for reversal of the verdict or a new trial. The appeals court fight terminated in a final defeat when, on April 5, 1927, the Massachusetts Supreme Court unanimously denied a defense motion for a new trial. The following editorial on that decision by Weekly People editor Olive M. Johnson appeared in our issue of April 23, 1927:

SACCO AND VANZETTI
(Weekly People, April 23, 1927)

Feelings convicted them. Guilty or innocent there is no question but that these two men were rushed to conviction on the crest of the "red" hate wave which followed the war, the Russian Revolution and the mad scare of "radicalism" and socialism which the revolutionary wave which swept Europe brought in its train. And now that the law has got them in its clutches it refused to let go or even to retry the case for evident, that the case will serve to throw discredit upon or shake the law itself.

Those interested in justice for Sacco and Vanzetti ought therefore to be the last to appeal to feelings in their case. And yet—

Who can read the reports of last Saturday's dreadful hour in court of these two men, without feeling overwhelmed in their favor—even overwhelmed even if the law in the case had established the clearest and most unbreakable chain of circumstantial evidence, which it certainly has not, let alone the new evidence and the new doubts which it has refused to consider? Criminals, thugs, highwaymen, murderers do not speak and act like these men. If Sacco and Vanzetti are guilty of the crimes of which they are convicted, they should not be sentenced to death then, in the name of science, they ought to be allowed to live, segregated and under observation, for surely they would present the strangest problem to modern penology that the world has ever seen. Radicals have been guilty of murder more than once. Anarchists, nihilists and various kinds of physical fusticists have killed in social revenge and been convicted. But let it be noted it is not a "radical murder." It is possible in any creed that they might have, of which these two men are convicted.

It is highway robbery accompanied by murder; seven years persecuting them still consider us guilty....I know the sentence will be between two classes, the oppressed and the rich, and I know there will always be collision between these classes....I've never been guilty, never, not yesterday, not today, not forever.

And Vanzetti spoke, quietly, philosophically, sometimes smiling as if he saw humor in it all:

"What have we suffered these seven years? A great deal, perhaps; we had to--We were only sentenced to seven years. We have plenty of time to prepare our case for the supreme court."

Looking calmly at Judge Thayer he said:

"We know that you have spoke yourself and have spoke your hostility against us, and your despiemment against us with friends of yours on the train, at the University Club of Boston and the Golf Club of Worcester."

And in conclusion:

"I would not wish to a dog or to a snake to suffer what I have to suffer for things I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical and indeed I am a radical....I have suffered more for my beloved and for my family than for myself. But I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do what I have done already."

Criminals, thugs, murderers do not speak so. Even the most hard-shelled capitalist reporters have sinned but I never commit crime. I have never been guilty, never, not yesterday, not today, not forever.

Not only our reason but our feelings, all our senses, rebel and refuse to accept the horrible sentence that followed that he stood gap-- his eyes averted" he spoke the horrible sentence. After the passage of electricity through your body; first to Sacco and then to Vanzetti. The reasonable legal doubt has been strong throughout. But there is something stronger, even more compelling in favor of these two simple workingmen.

As long as even a shadow of a doubt hangs over the Department of Justice and the court, how is it possible for any patriotic citizen if he be decent to rest until that shadow is removed?!

Resolution on Sacco-Vanzetti Case

WHEREAS, Sacco and Vanzetti have for six years been incarcerated in a Massachusetts prison for alleged murder and are now under a sentence of death, the execution to take place during the week of July 10, 1927; and

WHEREAS, Grave doubts exist as to the guilt of these two men; and

WHEREAS, The conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti took place under circumstances that clearly point to the fact that they were victims of the anti-Red mania fostered by the politicians in control of state and federal governments during the years of the war, and the years immediately following it; and

WHEREAS, The antiquated judicial machinery in this country is such that it is impossible for Sacco and Vanzetti to secure a proper review of the evidence used to convict them, and a careful consideration of such new evidence as has since been brought to light; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we demand of the Governor of Massachusetts, the Honorable Alvin T. Fuller, that he exercise his power to pardon Sacco and Vanzetti, thus opening the way for a thorough investigation of all the circumstances, testimony (Continued on page 7)
occupation of Iraq with testosterone and calls in a Georgetown professor, Deborah Tannen, for support. “The masculine approach in our culture is never to apologize because it indicates weakness,” according to the good professor.

And so, the war is being attributed to denial, arrogance and masculine pride. These writers are mystifiers and bewilders. They serve capitalism well by offering up truly lame explanations for capitalism’s crimes. They reject a systemic analysis, refusing to acknowledge that capitalism means war, endless war.

Bourgeois writers also perpetuate the propagandist notion that there is a fundamental benevolence, decency or morality to U.S. actions. By failing to question capitalism, Quindlen concedes a benign legitimacy to U.S. foreign policy. She thinks it is only human shortcoming such as arrogance or masculine pride or denial that lead to good-intentioned excess or errors in U.S. conduct.

And talk about denial, Quindlen actually seems to think that the president could somehow develop a conscience and suddenly withdraw from Iraq while issuing an awkward but heartfelt Texas rancher-“aw, shucks, gee whiz, gosh darn it, we meant well” type of apology to the Iraqi people. She lamented the fact, this time by quoting George McGovern and William Folk, who said: “Alien to Americans is the idea of making amends for our actions; we do not like to admit that we have been wrong.”

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, of all people, recently served up the truth about U.S. actions regarding Iraq. “Iraq is worth the investment” in American lives and dollars, the Associated Press quoted her as saying.

The People’s March-April 2007

Prolong the War

...Ethanol

which the oxygen is depleted by nutrient-rich runoff from the Mississippi River.

...Pfizer

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Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, of all people, recently served up the truth about U.S. actions regarding Iraq. “Iraq is worth the investment” in American lives and dollars, the Associated Press quoted her as saying.
Vietnam and Iraq

A recent article in *The People* stated Iraq’s oil is keeping U.S. troops there. You failed to mention what kept U.S. troops in Vietnam (and other areas) for so long and tenaciously in Vietnam. The Spratly oil is not as plentiful or easily accessible as the oil in Iraq, of course, but it would be there as a reserve in case of trouble with other and more abundant sources and as those sources began to decline. “Peak oil” is not a new idea or a new discovery. Since the Vietnam War a new appreciation of the potential of other sources, such as those in the Caspian Sea region, have overshadowed the Spratly deposits, but the United States and China still have their eye on them.

Molly Ivins Missed the Mark

Molly Ivins, who was well known for her disre-
Ethanol Better for Profits Than for the Environment

By Bruce Cozzini

The principal environmental advantage of corn ethanol is that burning it contributes less to the burning of carbon dioxide (thus less carbon dioxide in the atmosphere). The carbon in ethanol comes from carbon recycled in plant growth. Even that, however, may be an illusion. Critics like the Cornell professor David Pimentel note that ethanol production requires about 29 percent more energy than it can generate. (Chemical and Engineering News, Dec. 4)

Profits, however, are sizable. Including the 51¢ a gallon subsidy interest on ethanol (plus federal corn subsidies of another $800 million to $1.4 billion), profit margins in 2006 were above 30 percent, according to Citigroup, which expects profits to remain above 20 percent for the next decade. But these rosy predictions, circulated in rural areas, should be taken with a grain of salt. According to Chuck Hassebrook, of the Center for Rural Affairs in Lyons, Neb., in what has been a time of economic struggle, the ethanol plants produces one-fifth of production, and expects to increase by production to 50 percent by 2008. So much for the capitalist goodies. What about the real costs? Already it is estimated that ethanol production could account for as much as half of American national energy needs. New ethanol plants are under construction. (The New York Times, Jan. 7) The demands on corn have been underestimated. While Citigroup in Chemical and Engineering News estimated a rise in corn prices from $2.58 to $2.90 per bushel, December spot prices, according to the Times, rose to nearly $4 per bushel. Such increases will show up in increased prices for food. Already there have led to price increases in Mexico in the past year that have doubled the price of tortillas, a staple food for millions of poor Mexicans, as the Times reported on Feb. 1.

While Citigroup in Chemical and Engineering News noted, “highly concentrated corn production would change Midwest farming, ending crop rotation, putting set-aside conservation lands into production, and encouraging the use of more herbicides and fertilizers.” In larger perspective, Pimentel says that corn “eroses more soil, uses more nitrogen fertilizer, and produces more water than any other crop. Corn is the prime cause of the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico, which is the size of New Jersey.” This refers to the area off the coast of Louisiana in

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Pfizer Dumps Thousands To Avoid Potential Losses

By B.B.

Pfizer Inc., the largest global pharmaceutical manufacturer, is cutting 10,000 workers from its payroll in an effort to combat competitive challenges from generic drugs and to minimize anticipated declines in sales and profits. Three research sites in Michigan and two production in New York and Nebraska will be closed along with facilities in Germany, Japan and France in an effort to stance a loss of $42 billion in sales revenue.

Part of the sales Pfizer anticipated but won’t fully realize were from tacrolimus, a cholesterol controlling drug that has been linked to enough medical complications and patient deaths to force its removal from the market. Pfizer also anticipates losing patent protections over Lipitor, another of its cholesterol controlling products, by 2010. “Other patent expiration dates will see new “blockbuster” products over which it expects to be less profitable,” AP reported that Pfizer plans to cut “about 20 percent of its U.S. sales representatives—some 2,200 people...” (Jan. 20) A Bank of America analyst suggested Pfizer would save $800 million by cutting another 30 percent of the international sales force of about 24,000 workers.

As usual, little was said about the human consequences of job cuts and, tragically, workers are not organized to resist. While the AFL-CIO has condemned the high salaries of corporate executives, it has shown itself useless to do anything besides grumble. Consider its activities regarding Pfizer as recent as last April. The AFL-CIO New Unionists, members, it said, held a rally in Lincoln, Neb., against a pay increase granted to Pfizer CEO Henry McKinnell. “Give It Back Hank!” was the slogan union members carried on their placards. The protest was to expose the Pfizer CEO’s greed for having received “$6.52 million a year or a lottery-winning-sized lump sum payment of $83 million” and to deliver to assembled stockholders the message that he has not been a “fair” exploiter of Pfizer workers! He was taken to task for presiding over the plummeting of Pfizer stock value, by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka, who pilloried “outrageous CEO pay and pensions” as hurting “working families, whose life savings and retirements are invested in companies like Pfizer.”

Outrageous as McKinnell’s cut of the pillage extracted from Pfizer workers may be, is nothing new among this gentry nor would a reduced amount make the workers better off. What would make them better off is the receipt of the full value of what they produce rather than wages masquerading as a “fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work,” the flag under which business unionism flies.

Indeed, the Pfizer workers produce all of the value contained in the commodities Pfizer produces and the capitalist class sits idly by and rakes in the lion’s share while the company pays workers a “living wage.” Had the AFL-CIO brought this robbery to light that would be something. That might even have made headlines in the capitalist press. Instead, the union bureaucrats would endorse the system of exploitation and collecting dues as their reward for loyalty to the system. As Daniel De Leon observed, the appraisal “labor” provides a “strategic power for evil on the part of the labor leader and has so far been effective.” Hence the reason that little has been said in

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