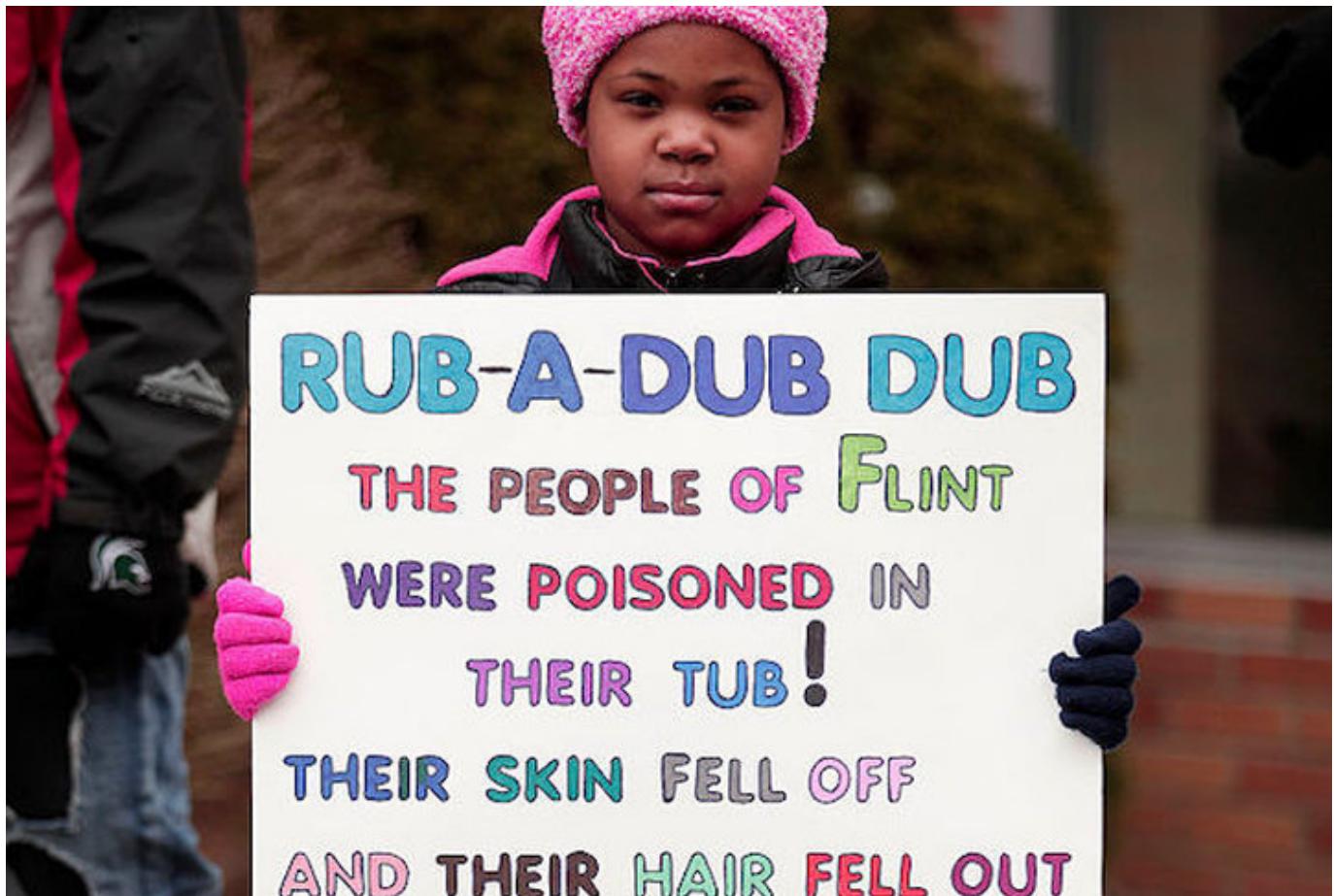


GM and Intel aren't heroes

written by Stephen Millies

March 12, 2022



In Flint, Michigan, thousands of children were exposed to poisoned water.

President Biden wants to be seen as a dragon slayer of wealthy Russian oligarchs. But he praised immensely richer and more powerful U.S. oligarchs in his March 1 State of the Union speech.

While conducting the “Hate Russia” war rally before Congress, Biden called out Intel’s CEO Patrick Gelsinger and asked him to stand. Most of the assembled flock of representatives and senators applauded. They envy the boss with his [\\$116 million pay package](#).

The president hailed computer chip maker Intel, saying it was “the American company that helped build Silicon Valley.” [Biden claimed](#) the outfit was going to invest at least \$10 billion “20 miles east of Columbus, Ohio” and will employ 10,000 people there.

One thing is certain: none of them will be union jobs. Intel fights organizing drives as viciously as Amazon does.

Why isn’t Intel building the facility inside Columbus itself or at least within Franklin County, where Columbus is located? The company with [revenues of \\$79 billion last year](#) is instead investing its money in adjoining Licking County.

Part of the reason could be that while [Franklin County](#) is 24% Black, African Americans in [Licking County](#) account for just 4% of its population.

High Tech in the United States is a racist and sexist cesspool. Back in 1998, Joel Dreyfuss described Silicon Valley’s discrimination in Fortune magazine as the [“Valley of Denial.”](#)

Intel’s hiring practices [haven’t improved much](#) since then. Even though many of the corporation’s U.S. plants are located in areas with large Latinx populations, just 10% of its U.S employees in 2019 were Latinx.

Only 4.9% of its U.S. workers were Black. Women were a mere 27.4% of Intel's global workforce.

Despite this bias, Black scientists and inventors were pioneers in the computer field. Roy Clark set up Hewlett-Packard's first software development lab in 1965. Marc Hannah's Ph.D. thesis was the basis of starting Silicon Graphics.

Dr. Mark Dean - who became IBM's director of advanced technology development - holds three of the nine patents which made desktop computers available for personal use. Dean designed the ISA systems bus, which allows the linking of printers and modems with computers.

Dr. Sandra Baylor helped develop the prototype for "Deep Blue," IBM's chess machine.

More auto workers fired

President Biden also praised Ford and GM for investing billions in electric cars. The man in the White House didn't mention that electric vehicles will require fewer parts, which means fewer jobs.

GM is no hero in Flint, Michigan. When the Black-majority city was the center of GM's manufacturing empire, Flint had the highest median income in Michigan. But since GM shut down nine of its 10 local plants, Flint became desperately poor.

It's now the poorest of all U.S. cities with populations over 65,000. Sixty percent of Flint's children live in poverty.

GM is just as guilty of poisoning Flint's children with polluted water as is former Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder. It was the loss of Flint's tax base because of GM's cutbacks which was the excuse to pump filthy water from the Flint River.

GM's flight from Flint reflected the determination of U.S. heavy industry to get away from their dependence on Black labor. Back in 1968, Black workers accounted for a quarter of the employees in auto plants and steel mills. ("Organized Labor and the Black Worker 1619-1973," by Philip S. Foner.)

These workers were a vital part of the liberation movement. The League of Revolutionary Black Workers was formed in Detroit. The Black Panther party had a caucus in Fremont, California's GM plant, which is now a non-union Tesla factory.

Ford's Rouge plant was once the world's largest factory complex, with its own steel mill and glass works. By 1974 half of the workers there were Black, including 65% of those on its assembly lines. ("Black Workers' Struggles in Detroit's Auto Industry, 1935-1975," by Kuniko Fujita.)

Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin isn't responsible for any of the jobs that were stolen in Flint or elsewhere. When Russia and Ukraine were part of the socialist Soviet Union, everyone there had a job.

Socialist Ukraine, particularly its Donbass region, was a center of heavy industry in the Soviet Union. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund urged that it be shut down, just like what happened in the United States.

Since 2014, workers in Donbass have been fighting a Ukrainian regime that came to power with the use of fascist thugs. These criminals have killed over 14,000 people in the Donbass republics.

Our struggle isn't against the Russian Federation but against the hundreds of billionaire oligarchs and banksters here in the U.S.

Stop the war against the Donbass and Russia. Start more struggles against the rich.

