

Sisters and Brothers,

I have to comment on the recent State of the Union speech from President Bush on January 31, 2006. I find the message uninspiring and empty considering the issues our great United States faces in the future. The message I received was same-o, same-o for our course as a nation. I come away disappointed with the speech. I expected innovation and, just maybe, some aspirations for our nation to reach for. I expect a President to reach out to our nation and set goals that seem unreachable. He should set challenges for all people. I heard no dramatic statements other than "our addiction to oil". One has to question drilling in the Alaska wildlife reserve if the President wants to curb "our addiction".

I heard: Continue to follow the same course as we have been. All is OK at the helm.

This is what disturbs me the most. The speech did not include: The rising cost of healthcare, 7 million more uninsured Americans since 2000, the loss of high paying jobs to outsourcing, unsecured borders of our country, the Medicare Part D issues, the lobbyists paying off some of our representatives in Washington, pension plans being taken away from workers, the skyrocketing costs of those pensions being turned over to the government, \$10 BILLION profit for Exxon/Mobile for the last QUARTER of 2005 (No typo folks, just the last quarter), and my list could go on and on.

A few facts on the EXXXXXXXXXXXXXX(EXCESS)XXXXON profit: President Bush is defending the profit as the market forces are best left alone. It equals \$116 million dollars a day profit for each day of the last quarter. The total Exxon annual profit of more than 36 BILLION is larger than the total revenue of Caterpillar, Inc. The annual revenue of Exxon qualifies it as the 17th biggest economy in the world, ahead of Switzerland with 7.5 million population. Just a few facts for you to consider.

After the speech, I am empty, desiring more out of the President. He came on board being the unifying outsider moving to Washington. He has proven, over 6 years, he is not that. Not even close. All I see is partisanship, us against them, and division for another year. President Bush, I ask you for, a better direction for our nation, a plan to unify our nation, recognition of other issues that face our nation, and movement away from the your way or the highway attitude expressed in Washington. Thank you.

Breaking news: United Airlines emerged from bankruptcy on February 2, 2006. I mention this because our members of the Machinist Union work for United Airlines. These members all took job cuts, wage cuts, pensions eliminated, and huge benefit cuts. All of this took place through a bankruptcy court. In the meantime, the 400 top executives will share in \$400 million in stock options with the CEO getting \$40 million of those options. If this is not a crime, it should be. The workers get the shaft and the execs walk away with the cream. The administration in Washington and our Congress does nothing but support this type of ripoff of our jobs, pensions and wages. We deserve a change of direction, however, it is clear to me it will not be until election time that this will happen. This direction and course will continue, unabated, until we get sick enough

of these happenings and change the politicians in charge. I am there already! Thanks for listening and reading this far.

I have included an article on our Midwest Territory General Vice President Jim Brown on Vice President Cheney's planned visit to a Harley-Davidson plant.

IAM Vice
President Jim
Brown
Throttles
Cheney over
Harley Visit

"Is Vice President Cheney coming to the Harley-Davidson plant to announce a change in the administration's trade policies that have cost so many U.S. workers their jobs?" asked Midwest Territory GVP James E. Brown about a planned visit by the Vice President to the legendary motorcycle maker's facility in Kansas City, Missouri.

"Maybe the Vice President is here to reassure workers at

Harley that they will not be the next victims of tax and trade policies that actually encourage companies to troll the globe for the cheapest labor and the lowest environmental standards," said Brown.

"Despite Bush administration policies and the lure of cheap labor overseas, the IAM and Harley-Davidson are successfully preserving a brand name and a product that truly deserves to be called an "American classic," explained Brown. A spokesperson for the Vice President claimed the factory is a good example of how the president's economic policies help America's workers and businesses.

"It would be more fitting for the Vice President to acknowledge this administration's epic record of failures that to take credit for a success story that has



flourished in spite of the administration's policies, rather than because of them," said Brown.

Members, It is Scholarship Contest time again for the IAM District 66 High School Seniors:

DISTRICT LODGE NO. 66

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR 2006

Once again, it is time for the annual Scholarship Program. Listed below are the criteria for applying for this program. It is open to **all** High School Seniors that are children of any IAMAW Lodge that is affiliated with District Lodge No. 66. This includes **Lodges 21, 1030, 1115, 1771 and 2191.**

Listed below is the criteria for the Scholarship Selection:

1. Two (2) \$500 scholarships annually.
2. One for a female student and one for a male student. If we do not have one of each, then it will be given to two female or male students.
3. Only seniors in High School that are the children of Machinist Union members and those that are seeking post high school education are eligible.
4. An essay must be written and **must be based on how Unions have been important to your family and your community** to be considered for the Scholarship. Information should be gathered from your parents or relatives and the struggles they may have faced in their jobs. The essays must be at least 500 words in length. **Please note: Essays written from Labor History Books, encyclopedias, etc., will NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
5. Essays should be sent to: District Lodge 66, Attn: Carla Easterday, 1307 Market Street, La Crosse, WI 54601. The secretary will code the applicants and separate according to gender. After coding is complete, the Scholarship Committee will review the essays.
6. After a review of the competency of each essay, a selection process will follow and the winner will be the essay that best meets the requirements stated above.
7. One half of the scholarship will be paid directly to the school in the first semester in which the individual is enrolled. The second half will be paid during the second semester and also sent directly to the school. Selections of essay winners will take place at the April meeting of the

District Lodge. **The essays must be in at the District Lodge 66 office by Friday, April 14, 2006.**

The Selection Committee will be delegates that hold 3-year terms in the District Lodge. I urge all Union parents, affiliated with District Lodge 66, with high school seniors in their family, to encourage their daughter or son to enter this contest for consideration of a scholarship.

Winning essays will be published in the Union Herald.

ESSAYS MUST BE TURNED IN TO THE DISTRICT LODGE NO. 66 OFFICE BY: FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2006.

GOOD LUCK! Rick Mickschl, DBR, IAM District 66