

Voice of Iraqi Workers

Nr.3

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In an international Workshop of the workers trade Unions in Amman-Jordan:



The Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq and the Union of Unemployed in Iraq, reflect to the international Labour Organisations an actual image of the Workers movement in Iraq. 22.12.2003

Between 17-19th. December. 2003, an international Workshop was held in Amman-Jordan by the International Labour organization- Arabic Office in cooperation with the international confederation of the free trade unions- ICFTU to discuss the future perspectives of the workers trade movement and the ways to establish free trade unions in Iraq. More than 23 delegations have attended this conference from various regions of the world.

A delegation of the Federation worker Councils and Unions in Iraq - FWCUI and the union of unemployed in Iraq -UUI including; Falah Alwan, Qasim Hadi and Akram Mahmoud participated in this conference.

Also the representatives of the so called (General Federation of the Worker trade unions in Iraq) which is the old trade union of Baath Regime , the delegations of the Kurdish ruling forces in Iraq, and To P.2

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The Occupation Troops Crack Down on Unemployed Protests in Iraq. P.6

~~Iraqi People is the Victim of the War of the Terrorists.~~

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Condemn the Criminal Acts against the Unemployed Workers in Al-Simawah

“Al-intifadah Al sha’baani-ah” terrorist group commits a massacre against innocent protesting workers in front of Al-simawah municipality building at 3.1.2004

According to the announcement of the chief executive in Al-Simawah municipality regarding providing jobs for the unemployed workers, a large crowd of unemployed workers rallied towards the municipality building. The break of promises previously made by the municipality chief executive regarding providing jobs for the unemployed and his latest announcement that there were no more jobs available had caused angry and violent reactions from the crowd. This had resulted in the throwing of stones at both, the chief executive and his building. A vicious reaction came from members of the so-called “Al-intifadah Al sha’baaniah” who have their headquarters adjacent to the municipality building. This group’s criminal response has a significant

meaning of the degree of criminality and brutality this terrorist group holds towards the people and the carelessness they had explicitly shown to workers’ lives. “Al-intifadah Al sha’baaniah” members had opened fire on the protesting unemployed workers immediately killing four of them and wounding many others.

The Union of the Unemployed in Iraq - UUI, while condemning and denouncing this brutal and criminal act against the hungry workers, calls upon all political forces, labor unions, humanitarian and egalitarian organizations, and all freedom lovers around the world, to stand up against these suppressive actions towards the just protests of the unemployed workers of AL-simawah.

We demand the immediate commencement of investigation from the authorities so that the criminals would be brought to justice and to ban their activities and shut-down all the offices of such terrorist organizations.

We also condemn the Civil

Administration and the ruling authorities for not fulfilling the demands of the unemployed and their careless and unserious handling of the crisis of unemployment in Iraq which would eventually cause more loss of control over such large protests.

We would like to offer our condolences to the families of the victims and the hope for a fast recovery and safety for those injured in this protest.

Long Live Workers’ Protest!

Long Live Workers’ Unity!

Shame and Disgrace for the Criminal Enemies of Workers!

**The Leading Committee
Union of the
Unemployed in Iraq
–UUI
6.1.2004**

From P.1 In an international Workshop of the workers trade Unions in Amman-Jordan;

a delegation representing the parties in the Iraqi governing council led by Rasim Awadi took part in this workshop. The conference commenced with a speech of the president of the Jordanian workers trade unions then ICFTU General Secretary, Mr. Guy Ryder, who led this international delegation made a speech to open officially the agenda of the conference. It’s surprising to mention that the delegation of the political parties in the Iraqi governing council presented an appeal to ICFTU and leading committee of the conference to not sit together on one board with the other delegations of the Iraqi trade unions at the same time other Iraqi delegations also appealed to meet alone with leading committee of the conference. Nevertheless the delegation of workers councils and trade unions -WCUI and UUI protested in an appeal against this request for secret meeting to discuss the workers issues and demanded open and public discussions in the conference.

This appeal from WCUI has diverted the attention of other delegations there and with great interest; they followed the reports of WCUI which included the main obstacles in front of the workers unions’ movement and the tragic living conditions of Iraqi workers and the proposal of the WCUI to overcome these conditions and obstacles.

The representatives of WCUI met with different delegations in this conference and presented a documentary film about the situation of Iraqi workers and a short Film as an example of free and direct elections of worker unions under supervision of the WCUI to Mr. Guy Ryder, president of ICFTU.

WCUI exhibited these films to other delegations which diverted their attention to the situation of Iraqi workers and activities of WCUI.

Different delegations of workers unions asked WCUI and UUI to continue contacts and relationships with them and they promised to invite WCUI and UUI to the future international and Arabic meeting of worker trade unions .

The Federation of the Worker s Councils and Unions in Iraq

22.12.2003

A Report on: The Conference of the Workers' Councils and Unions in Iraq-FWCUI

On December 8, 2003, the founding conference of the Federation of Workers' Councils and Unions was held in Baghdad in the presence of tens of representatives of councils and trade unions from across Iraq.

The conference commenced with a minute of silence to remember those who lost their lives for the liberation of the working class. Falah Alwan delivered the opening speech. Alwan pointed out that the Iraqi working class can play a crucial role in deciding the political future of Iraqi society only if it can emerge as a powerful force. He said developing political power depends in the first place on the level of unity and organisation of the workers' ranks.

Next, Qasim Hadi, the president of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq, addressed the conference and also emphasized the necessity of unity among workers, employed and unemployed. He also stressed that achieving unemployment benefits would strengthen the workers' ranks and their unions.

Akram Muhammad delivered a speech on behalf of the Union of Unemployed in the Iraq-Suleimaniyah branch. He said "with this conference we aim to give a signal to our fellow workers and the Iraqi society to come and join us." He added, "We the workers and freedom-loving people of Iraq are able to overcome all religious, ethnic, and tribal obstacles and divisions and forge

ahead toward class unity." Other speakers also emphasized the necessity of workers emerging as a united and organized class force in order to achieve their objectives.

Shemal Ali, the member of the Political Bureau of the Worker-communist Party of Iraq concluded the speeches. He pointed to the importance of the conference in developing a united working class struggle. Ali said this struggle was for the liberation of the society from capitalist exploitation and to save the masses from the current horrible situation and the dreadful and grim scenario whose first chapter had already unfolded in Iraq.

The conference participants then discussed the topics of its agenda. The attendees discussed and endorsed a list of the most urgent demands of the working class in Iraq and a draft for a progressive labour law and legislation. The conference endorsed all proposed drafts with some simple alterations to be added by the leading body of the Federation after the elections.

The conference also passed other resolutions including:

1. Demanding the immediate withdrawal of the occupation forces and that the United Nations undertakes the responsibility to provide security and stability in Iraq and give the masses in Iraq the opportunity to form an authority, which represent people and their aspirations.

2. Launching a campaign local-

ly and internationally to disband the so-called General Federation of Trade Unions in Iraq led by the Baathist- Jameel Salman al-Jboury and to hand over the belongings and the building of trade unions to workers and their legitimate unions.

3. Inviting all other freely elected trade unions and labour organizations to join the Federation of Workers' Councils and Unions in Iraq or cooperate with it for the sake of working class unity and to combat the Baathist organizations which appear and act under misguiding names. This unity can be built around issues, such as, calling for common strikes and organizing demonstrations.

In the end, the leading body of the Federation of Workers' Councils and Unions in Iraq was elected and the results were as follow:

- 1.Falah Alwan
- 2.Qasim Hadi
- 3.Akram Muhammad
- 4.Aoffi Mathi
5. Rashid Ismail
- 6.Naim Shlaka
- 7.Raji Suheil
8. Hakim Hassan
- 9.Moamar Majid

Falah Alwan, the newly elected president of the Federation, ended the conference with closing remarks in which he officially announced the establishment of the Federation of Workers' Councils and Unions in Iraq amid a warm ovation from the attendees.

From P.7: The Union of the Unemployed, and its Role in the Shaping of Iraq's Political Milieu.

Without blocking the roads of Baghdad with thousands of people, disturbing the reactionary plans of the GC of turning Iraq into a launching pad for Islamic terrorism against workers and women, and pushing the US forces into seriously considering Iraqi people's political will, thus leaving Iraq, the union would be missing a historical opportunity.

Without a strong plan of action, business would still be "as usual" for the reactionary bourgeoisie, and life would be even more miserable and unbearable for the masses of Iraq than ever before. With the new "appointed" government expected to emerge in June 2004, Iraq is being pushed by the US and its Islamist and ethnocentric allies to the edge of an abyss. The UUI must play its role in bringing the people to the field.

The UUI along with the workers' political party; the Worker Communist Party of Iraq, the specter of the "dark scenario", prepared by the US and its local allies, would still be hovering over the lives and destinies of millions of Iraqis for an extended unknown period of time. Let's work to alter the dark scenario, let's work for the prosperity, freedom and equality for all the deprived people in Iraq.

Issam Shukri

International Relations Coordinator for the UUI, and a member of the Central Committee of the Worker Communist Party of Iraq- WPIraq.

An Interview with Khasraw Saya and Aso Jabbar on the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq .

15.January 2004

On December 18, 2003, the network of representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq was established on a proposal from some members of the Worker-communist Party of Iraq. This network has started working abroad in Canada, Australia and many European countries. To learn more about the objectives and different activities of this network, we conducted the following interview with Aso Jabar, spokesperson of the UUI network and Khasraw Saya, the coordinator of the network.

Question: From where did the idea of establishing the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq come, and what policies is it based on?

Khasraw Saya: Establishing the Union of Unemployed in Iraq was the first sign that the Iraqi working class was coming to the fore after the collapse of the Ba'ath regime. It represented a different voice opposed to war and was committed to exposing the tragic conditions, which control the lives of the Iraqi people. The Union of Unemployed in Iraq represents a unique movement and shining torch amid the dark scenario brought about by America and various Islamic and ethnocentric pro-US groups. This scenario has forced the Iraqi masses to experience widespread honor killings, terrorism, lack of security, and an alarming collapse of the pillars of civil society. The organized and united struggle of all sectors of the working class in Iraq faces extremely difficult conditions because of this scenario. The political uncertainty in Iraq has caused a significant regression of the working class's struggle. Amid such conditions, the Union of Unemployed in Iraq has emerged as an independent voice different from both the Islamist and pro-US camps. Having led tens of protests and demonstrations of unemployed people in various parts of Iraq, the Union of the Unemployed surfaced in an emancipatory and modern way. Throughout these civil gatherings and

demonstrations, the UUI has expressed the voice of workers and toilers as an undeniable class reality to all political forces in Iraq and has launched a massive political struggle for jobs and unemployment benefits. We believe this troubling class reality in Iraq is grounds enough for every communist and labor activist abroad to represent the demands and objectives of this movement. Based on this belief, we have established the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq in many European countries, North America and Australia to convey the political and class reality of Iraqi society to the world. We are especially exposing the right-wing bourgeois media in the West that from the outset has portrayed Iraqi society as tribal, nationalistic and Islamic. The western media depicts Iraq as a society where only Talabani, Barzani, Baqir al-Hakim, Jalabi, the heads of Zober and Khals tribes and remnants of the monarchy are active, and that there is no room for the movements which belong to workers, women, the youth, and the secular-civil society. The right-wing bourgeois media has been presenting the US's alternative that intends to impose another "loya Jirga" similar to Afghanistan on the Iraqi people. We know how they established the "Governing Council" as a center where various ethnocentric, Islamic and tribal gangs along with remnants of the former Ba'ath regime come together under the pretext of democratizing Iraq from above.

Therefore, what we want to achieve through the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq is a policy, which represents the real picture of Iraqi society as a capitalist society. Iraq is a society where its citizens are civilized, and whose lives are integrated with modernity and secularism. It is society where the class struggle between workers and capitalists is the axis of every political conflict and every movement. Workers, women's and youth movements who have absolutely no relationship with these backward ethnocentric and Islamic

parties, often opposing them, occupy the center of a political arena in Iraq where thousands of activists surface every day. With no doubt, representing such a genuine picture of Iraqi society will draw extensive support from the freedom-loving people, political parties and labor organizations in Europe and America. The Union of the Unemployed in Iraq can channel this support in the interest of a secular, modern, democratic and humane future for the Iraqi people. For this purpose, we established the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq as a tool to struggle for freedom, worker's rights, and social welfare in Iraq.

Q- You work under the name of The Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq. Does that not mean neglecting other sectors of the working class? Do workers who belong to other sectors in Iraq have any room in your agenda?

Khasraw Saya: Representing the Union of Unemployed in Iraq does not amount to neglecting the cause for representing the demands and interests of the entire working class before public opinion in the West. We want to make it especially clear that the interests and struggles of workers'-employed or not- are one and inseparable.

However, when we place the Union of Unemployed in Iraq above other sectors of the working class in our communiqué, it is because of the role that the Union of Unemployed in Iraq has played and will play amid our current situation. First, let me add in this regard that the US war on Iraq did not simply result in overthrowing Saddam's regime but rather destroyed Iraqi society. The U.S war on Iraq disrupted the masses' economic and civil activities and resulted in unprecedented levels of unemployment, leaving millions of people to face the danger of starvation and difficulty in securing their daily livelihood.

Continue on P.5

From P.4**An Interview with Khasraw Saya and Aso Jabbar on the Network of Representatives of UUI .**

The phenomenon of unemployment and the unemployed movement's struggle for jobs and unemployment benefits is a reflection of this harsh reality. It is a serious predicament, which forces itself on the Iraqi working class. It has also become a political and organizational reality within this class. Its effect on the workers movement has reached such a level that the Union of Unemployed in Iraq and other emerging organizations, which raise the issue unemployment can easily organize and unite the majority of workers who are ready to fight back. Obviously, this millions-strong force grants it a special political and emancipatory position with regard to other sectors of the workers' movement. Secondly, the Union of Unemployed in Iraq was able to attract hundreds of thousands of members and organize tens of demonstrations and mass protests under clear class slogans in a short period. The UUI has been the first event for Iraqi workers in their struggle against the political situation, which transpired after the war. This struggle has been a sign of the vanguard role that the unemployed sector of the Iraqi working class has played, a role that cannot be marginalized by other sectors of working class and their leaders. Therefore, I can say that based on its political influence and significant role, the Union of Unemployed in Iraq and the unemployed movement is not only a symbol of the Iraqi working class's struggle but was the first attempt by this sector to establish workers councils and trade unions in other industrial fields. For us, representing the Union of Unemployed in Iraq implies representing the entire Iraqi working class and their demands.

Q- What are the objectives of this network and what form do its activities take? What kind of organization is it and what means are employed to reach its objective?

Aso Jabbar: In general, our objective for establishing the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq is empowering workers and their respective organizations within the current political equations in Iraq. Our goal is that the workers and deprived masses of Iraq play a crucial role to shape the future of political power in Iraq in their own interests. Obviously, this objective can be achieved by attracting the broadest international support and solidarity with the workers, deprived people, and progressive organizations in Iraq. We believe that the Iraqi masses are not alone but are part of a greater international force, which consists of workers and freedom-loving people worldwide.

Workers and freedom-lovers of the world face this war and both terrorist poles; America's New World Order on one hand and political Islam and various Arab ethnocentric groups on the other. If this international force supports the Iraqi workers and remains in solidarity with them, without a doubt, the Iraqi masses will have a bright and humane future. In this respect, we struggle to expose both the role of the US and the Islamic and ethnocentric parties in Iraq. Our objective is to exert more pressure on them to recognize the workers and unemployed people's demands so that the future law and government in Iraq recognize these demands. We are trying to communicate the reality of life and daily struggle of unemployed people, workers' councils and the labor movement in Iraq to the international public as a lively movement full of progressive and humane potentials. As such, we hope to attract the attention of trade unions, personalities, political parties, human right organization and all those concerned about the future of the Iraqi people worldwide.

With regard to the activities of the Network of the Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq, they take on a campaigning form. Our

campaign aims to involve and rally the support of decision-making centers, public opinion, media channels, and organizations of all kinds throughout the West. In each period, depending on the circumstances of the working class struggle in Iraq, we will address and prioritize daily issues that are urgent and on the agenda of workers and unemployed organizations in Iraq. Establishing the Network of Representatives of the UUI depends mainly on a coalition of activists who are knowledgeable about the class dynamics and labor relations, which face workers in Iraq and abroad. These activists are able to campaign and rally support from the media, public opinion, humanitarian groups, and civil institutions in various country. The tools and material of activity of this network are many. In addition to issuing statements and press releases, we also distribute a newsletter in English. We have designed an informative website in both Arabic and English to accommodate reporting and raising awareness on behalf of the struggle of the working class in Iraq. Our website serves as a forum to contact activists from this network and as a guide for anyone who wants to contribute to our class struggle in Iraq. In short, our means of operation include forming a network of reporters, holding press conferences and regular meetings and widening the Network of Representatives to involve all European countries, Australia, and Northern America.

Q- What are the conditions of membership in this network? Can other organizations become members?

Aso Jabbar: Simply put, any person who supports the announced objectives and who is already working towards them can be a member of this network. In the same light, any political party, labor or civil organization that supports our announced objectives can become a member of the Network of Representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq, become a representative of this network, and take responsibility for its objectives.

Jobs or US\$100 a month as unemployment insurance for every unemployed person

The Occupation Troops Crack Down on Unemployed Protests in Iraq !!

January 2004

Thousands of unemployed people demonstrated in the last few days in the southern cities of Basra, Imara and Kut asking for jobs and food. Many media outlets described the latest demonstrations as the "uprising of the unemployed people". These ongoing demonstrations which are gradually increasing in size, the violent response from the occupying forces and local police, and the widespread anger for the appalling condition the masses are kept in herald many more mass protests in coming days.

-On Saturday, January 10, 2004, the British troops and local police killed 6 and wounded 8 Iraqis during a mass protest by unemployed people in the southern city of Imara. Six protesters lost their lives in this peaceful protest when the British troops and local police responded with live ammunition. The weekend demonstrators were demanding jobs or unemployed benefit in form of basic raw food material.

-On Monday, January 12, 2004, hundreds of the unemployed people gathered again in front of the Governor's building. The demonstrators expanded their demands after the weekend clashes to include improved services, electricity, gas, and compensation for the families of victims. In Addition to jobs or raw food they also demanded a new gubernatorial election and elimination of the riot police and the "emergency battalion."

The current governor, Ryaad al-Mahood, is believed to have encouraged the local police to shoot at the demonstrators gathering in front of the government building last Saturday. Two other members of al-Mahood family were directly implicated in Saturday's shootings. Ryaad al-Mahood is the brother of Karim al-Mahood Mohamadawi, a member of the Governing Council. Mondays' demonstration dispersed quickly when heavily armed British forces arrived at the scene. The residents of

this city also distributed a statement presenting their demands and requested that the murderers who shot at the demonstrators, killed and wounded eight people be brought to justice.

-On Monday, January 12, 2004, hundreds of unemployed people took to streets in the city of Kut for a second successive day. The demonstrators gathered in front of the Ukrainian air base in the eastern part of the city. The Ukrainian forces used tear gas and fired warning shots in air to disperse the demonstration and also physically attacked at least one demonstrator. The demonstrators then marched to the governor's building and occupied it for a while.

-On Tuesday, January 13, 2004, again hundreds demonstrated in Kut demanding jobs. Several people were injured as a result of being fired upon when demonstrators clashed with the local police and the Ukrainian troops.

The US troops killed seven Iraqis on Sunday, January 11, 2004. The occupying forces have justified this crime by claiming that those killed were stealing petroleum.

-On Monday, January 12, 2004, tens of former employees of the Iraqi Airlines demonstrated in front of the former Conference Palace in Baghdad where the Coalition Provisional Administration is located. They demanded that Iraqi Airlines should resume its flights and that the US forces have to evacuate Baghdad airport. The demonstrators held a banner reading "the employees of the Iraqi Airlines ask the occupation forces to let work begin in civil airports."

Union of Unemployed in Iraq
15.1.2004

The national Unemployed Centres in UK supports the Union of Unemployed in Iraq UUI and the Worker Movement in Iraq.

The national unemployed centres combine covering the TUC unemployed workers centres in England salute the unemployed union of Iraq. We welcome the formation of a provisional council of trade unions and a movement for freedom of Iraqi women. We call on every trade union in Britain to give the maximum financial and practical support to our Iraqi comrades. The unemployed union of Iraq is calling for benefits to be paid to the unemployed, wages for workers laid off because of the war and a leading role in the distribution of relief to the poor and starving. All trade unionists should endorse and promote the program of UUI ideology and financially with the backing of trade unions world wide. The US lead coalition provisional authority will have to listen to the UUI.

Kevin Flynn
Campaigning for Full Employment and Quality Jobs

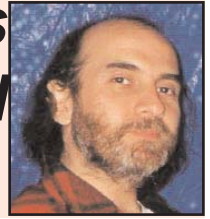
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January 2004

The Union of the Unemployed, and its Role in the Shaping of Iraq's Political Milieu.

16.01.2004

By: Issam Shukri



The Union of the Unemployed in Iraq UUI is a protest organization for the unemployed workers in Iraq. It was established by a group of workers and political activists shortly after the toppling of Saddam's regime in Baghdad on May 1st. 2003.

The union was founded by a group of 20 unemployed revolutionary workers gathered in the looted and abandoned building of the previous infamous Ba'athist "General Federation of Trade Unions in Iraq". In a democratic process, they had elected their leadership committee, which, in turn, had elected Qasim Hadi to be its leader. The committee had immediately put forward the demands of the unemployed and its mission statement.

Since that date, UUI has been involved in a series of struggles for the cause of millions of unemployed women and men in Iraq, who found themselves in the middle of a horrifying and unprecedented chaos and destruction caused by the US war machine. Its demands were "Jobs or Unemployment Benefits for All". Through out these struggles, the UUI has presented itself as an exemplary of Iraq's civil society; progressive, civilized, well-disciplined, however, militant and aggressive. After long and crushing years of US-imposed economic sanctions, long and painful years of Ba'ath suppression and tyranny, appalling wars and bombings by the US forces, all means of struggle, and even merely of survival, seemed to be vanished. The UUI was the essential answer to the new Islamic/nationalist bourgeoisie's exploitation of the working class in Iraq backed by the US/ British occupying forces.

The struggles off UUI were revolving around the demand of unemployment benefits for all workers in Iraq, but not restricted to it. In the 1st round of demonstrations organized by the increasing number of members, the union demanded jobs and living security for workers. Then the

demands were sharpened to be precise and more focused. 100 US dollars then appeared as a minimum monthly compensation for the unemployed in all of Iraq, and the control of the union over the issue of unemployment was also forwarded to the US authority (CPA - Coalition Provincial Authority).

The UUI has launched 13 demonstrations in Baghdad, and 7 in the other governorates of Iraq, and had organized sit-in protests in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Nasiriyah, with the first one lasting for 45 days. The UUI had also gone into 3 sessions of negotiations with the CPA (US civil administration) and 13 interviews with it. It had finally decided to withdraw from these negotiations after reaching a conclusive conviction that the American side is not serious about achieving any of the UUI demands. After a continuous pressure, the Ministry of Labor had asked to work with the union in order to achieve a mutual solution to the crisis.

But the UUI, however, does not merely consider itself as an economically driven organization. It played an important role in shaping the political sphere in Iraq through its continuous intervention in the political events and its analysis of the situation based on its progressive workers platform. It also played, and still is, a vital role in stopping the slipping of Iraq's civil society into tribalism and religious fanaticism supported by the occupiers. Shortly after its first few demonstrations, the people of Iraq in general started, directly or indirectly, to talk about the union and its "just" cause. The union was the social radical and egalitarian force that opposed not only the US occupation and its puppet "Governing Council", but also the "dark scenario" which has been cooked foot over toe in the kitchens of the Islamists and other rotten fascists and nationalists in Iraq.

The media, national and international, started to highlight the union and presented lengthy reports about its struggles with a lot of sympathy. It started

to talk about poverty and robbing people's wealth by the Americans and their allies, rather than about the ugly religious bloody ceremonies!, about the destitution of Iraqi workers rather than the divisions of Sunni and She'ites, about the emerging forces of radicals and secularists in Iraq rather than the rise of ethnic hatred and fascism nurtured by the PUK and the "National Turkman Front" and the "Muktada al Sadr Group"; the ancestors of the old Ba'this.

Journalist, women and men, from all around the world, joined the UUI in its struggles; they sat at the front line with them on the burning asphalt of Baghdad streets, dehydrated as they were, with the knives and guns of the US soldiers pointed at their chests, they called the unemployed unionists: heroes and saviors of Iraq.

World organizations sent their sympathy and delegates to join the struggles. Hundreds of articles and letters of support were written in defense of the workers of Iraq from around the world. The GC (Governing Council) after weeks of neglect was obliged to admit the severe problem of unemployment and was frantically scratching their heads for ways to solve the pressing problem. At least they were pretending to be, all under workers pressure. The whole scene in Iraq changed dramatically.

Today, the UUI has grown to include around 250,000 registered members in its ranks

across Iraq. And with the soaring unemployment rate of 70%, the UUI role seems to be as vital and crucial as ever before. Recently, tens of protests have been waged in Baghdad and other cities of Iraq and tens of people are being shot and killed by the occupying forces as well by the Islamists and the Iraqi police. UUI must lead these protests and steer them towards achieving its demands. The union today needs new tactics and strategy to draw thousands of its unemployed members to the streets again. **continue on P.3**

Establishment of the Network of the representatives of the Union of Unemployed in Iraq- UUI abroad

Press Release from UUI - Representative abroad
December 19. 2003

Through this press release, we would like to inform you that we established the network of the representatives of UUI abroad and we declare the following objectives for our network;

-To present the situation and struggle of unemployed people , Worker movement ,worker councils and trade unions in Iraq to the public opinion abroad ,the labor organizations and trade unions ,human rights organizations and political figures and parties and to all those groups who engaged for a bright future for the Iraqi people. We struggle also to announce the Union of Unemployed in Iraq, its struggles, alternatives and its leadership on a great social range in order to shape a wide broad radical worker movement in Iraq and announce its perspectives to the public opinions.

-We work to denounce and disclose the policies of USA and all nationalist and Islamic groups and parties in Iraq and their roles and through this way to press the ruling forces in Iraq to respond to the demands of workers and unemployed people and their organizations in Iraq.

-We seek solidarity and support to the cause of UUI and workers organizations in Iraq both politically and financially and we work to represent them on the international level and with international organizations and in this way to support the workers of Iraq in order to take an active role in the determination of the future of Iraq.

We call all the trade unions, political parties, human rights organizations and freedom loving people worldwide to support and strengthen the struggle of workers, UUI, workers councils and trade unions in Iraq and to support their demands.

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For a progressive Labour Law in Iraq

1. Full and unconditional freedom of worker organization.

2. Complete and unconditional freedom of strike. Strikes do not need the prior permission of the state or any state authority. Full payment of wages during the period of strike. Equal right of access to the media for strikers to put their case and respond to the claims of the state and employers. Banning strikes under any pretext such as "national and patriotic interests", "state of emergency", "war", etc, would be illegal.

3. Prohibition of employing strike-breakers or police or army personnel to replace strikers, in all enterprises, state or private.

4. First of May to be a public holiday, as the International Workers' Day.

5. . A minimum wage, set by workers representatives and determination of the minimum annual rise in wage levels by collective bargaining at the national level between representatives of workers' organizations and representatives of employers and the state.

6. Equal pay for women and men for similar work.

7. Adequate unemployment benefit, according to the last pay received, for every unemployed person over 16 who is ready for work. Adequate unemployment benefit and other necessary allowances for all those who for physical or psychological reasons are unable to work.

8. Ensuring a safe and healthy workplace and minimization of work hazards, without regard to cost, by applying the most advanced facilities and resources in use throughout the world. Regular medical observation and check-ups against occupational hazards and illnesses, by medical establishments independent of employers, and financed by employers and the state.