

Support of Iraqi Labor

WHEREAS since George W. Bush declared an end to the war in Iraq in April 2003, unemployment among Iraqi workers has reached 70%, causing many families to face hunger and dislocation, and

WHEREAS the U.S. Occupation Authority has frozen Iraqi wages for most workers at \$60/month, eliminating bonuses, profit sharing, and subsidies for food and housing, causing a sharp cut in the income of those Iraqi workers still employed, and

WHEREAS \$87 billion appropriated by Congress (at the expense of public services and jobs in this country) supposedly for the reconstruction of Iraq will not go to raise Iraqi wages or provide benefits to unemployed Iraqi workers but instead will fatten the profits of Halliburton, Bechtel, and other big corporate backers of the Bush administration that got no-bid contracts in Iraq worth billions of U.S. tax dollars, and

WHEREAS shockingly, the U.S. Occupation Authority continues to enforce a 1987 Saddam Hussein-era law prohibiting unions and collective bargaining in the public sector and state enterprises where most Iraqis work, and

WHEREAS the Occupation Authority issued a new decree allowing 100% foreign ownership of Iraqi businesses and the repatriation of profits and announced it intends to sell off factories, refineries, mines and other Iraqi state enterprises, despite the fact that these enterprises belong to the Iraqi people, not to the U.S., and privatization of Iraqi workplaces would lead to massive layoffs at a time when unemployment in Iraq is already at crisis levels, and

WHEREAS the effect of these measures will be to deny workers a voice in what happens to public assets, to their jobs, their incomes, their standard of living, or the structure of Iraq's economy—hardly the “democracy” the U.S. promised when it invaded, and

WHEREAS because workers in the United States have experienced an erosion of our own labor rights to organize and collectively bargain in defense of our jobs, rights and working conditions, we understand what the restriction or losses of these rights mean to working people,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CFT endorse the call for full trade union rights in Iraq, immediate nullification of the 1987 Saddam Hussein law banning unions and bargaining in public enterprises, full respect for International Labor Organization standards, and eliminating any other restriction on the full exercise of labor rights, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CFT join millions of other Americans and hundreds of millions around the world in calling for an end to the occupation of Iraq and return of all U.S. troops to their homes and families now, and let Iraq be governed by its own people, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CFT send this resolution to the AFT for its national convention, and inform its members of the situation through its print and online publications and website, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that CFT support the demand that Congress investigate the suppression of trade union rights in Iraq, planned privatization of the Iraqi workplaces, selling off of the property of the Iraqi people, and corporate profiteering at the expense of both the Iraqi and American people.