



Media Advisory for Tuesday, June 7, 2005

Contact: Emilie Karrick, USLAW Media Coordinator, 202-862-9888
Gene Bruskin, USLAW Co-Convenor, 202-297-0198

Leading labor journalist to hold briefing on Iraqi oil workers following recent trip to Basra *David Bacon also to preview upcoming U.S. visit of six Iraqi labor leaders*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – David Bacon, a leading U.S. labor journalist, will hold a telephone press briefing at noon (EDT) Tuesday to report on issues facing Basra oil workers. Bacon just returned from a trip to Southern Iraq. Bacon, who has written numerous articles on the labor situation in Iraq, is producing a documentary on the oil workers and reporting on their ongoing efforts to resist the privatization of the Iraqi oil industry and to fully restore labor rights. .

“Working people in Iraq are largely invisible in this country,” Bacon said just after his return from Basra Thursday. “Life as it’s experienced, the problems of working Iraqis are not on our radar screen.”

While in Basra, Bacon visited oil workers in the refineries there and attended a conference of the General Union of Oil Employees (GUOE) that mobilized workers to resist the U.S. government’s push to privatize Iraqi industry. “The GUOE staunchly opposes privatization because it could cause increased job loss in a region where the unemployment rate is already close to 70 percent,” Bacon said. In addition, many Iraqi workers feel oil revenue is a vital funding source for the country’s rebuilding process and represent the collective wealth of the nation that should not fall into foreign hands, according to Bacon.

Bacon will discuss these issues and announce details of an upcoming U.S. visit of six Iraqi labor leaders – including two representatives of the GUOE. Hosted by U.S. Labor against the War (USLAW), the six labor leaders will arrive in Washington June 10. They will be in the U.S. for two weeks - with plans to travel to 25 cities to meet with U.S. workers, union officials, members of Congress, antiwar and social justice activists, religious and community leaders and the media.

WHO: David Bacon, Leading U.S. Labor Journalist

WHAT: Iraqi Labor Phone Press Briefing

WHEN: Noon (EST), Tuesday, June, 7, 2005

WHERE: **Contact Emilie Karrick at 202.862.9888 to participate in the call**

U.S. Labor against the War (USLAW) is a national coalition of 112 labor organizations representing more than four million union members. USLAW aims to protect its members and the lives and livelihoods of working people everywhere. The group advocates, educates and mobilizes the U.S. labor movement to work for a just foreign policy, bring about an end to U.S. occupation of foreign countries, facilitate a redirection of the nation’s resources, build support for U.S. troops and their families by bringing the troops home now, protect workers' rights, civil rights, civil liberties and the rights of immigrants, and stand in solidarity with workers and their organizations around the world.

For more information visit www.uslaboragainstwar.org

