Capture of Hussein fails to secure a frayed occupation

by Kevin Michaels

Violence, unemployment, and hardships grip the lives of the people of Iraq under U.S. occupation. Despite the general relief at a fact that the now-captured Saddam Hussein has no chance of returning to rule over the country, Iraqis face a present and future defined by the authoritarian U.S. occupation and the bloody campaign carried out by surviving elements and sympathizers of Hussein's regime. Taking together with the upsurge of activism on the part of conservative Islamic leaders, these features of Iraq's reality chart a pernicious course for freedom for the country's wage workers, ethnic minorities, women and young people.

The people of Iraq greeted the news of the Dec. 15 arrest of Hussein with elation. The capture of the dictator brought to an end a long and fear-ridden period of Iraq's history. Since it rose from the ranks of the security apparatus of the Ba'ath Party to absolute power over the country in 1968, Hussein constructed an efficiently centralized and fiercely repressive police state based on a narrow and elite section of Iraqi society.

SADHAM AT FRONT OF SORDID LINE

The list of crimes amassed by Hussein and his regime is prodigious. Setting aside the inner-party rivals murdered in his rise to power, he violently oppressed the huge Shia community of Baghdad and the country's south, carried out a genocidal campaign of extinction against the Kurdish Party of the Revolution and launched two wars: one against Iran involving bloodshed on a gargantuan scale—perhaps as many as one million dead—and another against Kuwait that eventually led to his downfall.

While it is not clear under what arrangements Hussein will be charged and tried, any thoroughgoing effort to delve into the facts of his regime will not only expose his guilt, but also the culpability of numerous governments who aided and abetted his regime in order to further their own interests. The U.S., Britain, France and Germany will no doubt all work to minimize the revelations about their substantial state and private involvement in the maintenance and support of the Ba'ath regime.

(Continued on page 3)
The Afghan constitution and women

by Terry Moon

The Afghan Constitution, ratified by the loya jirga in 2004 and currently in the process of being considered for ratification, is to be seen as a major step forward for the rights of women in the country. The constitution, however, has been fraught with controversy and has faced opposition from various groups within Afghan society. The situation in Afghanistan is so multifaceted that it is difficult to predict what the outcome of the current constitutional process will be. One thing is clear: the rights of women in Afghanistan have improved significantly since the Taliban regime was overthrown in 2001. However, more work needs to be done to ensure that women's rights are respected and protected.

Women's vision of a new Afghanistan was revealed in the 2004 Constitutional Assembly, the Constituent Assembly of Rights, drafted by 45 ethnically diverse women from all major regions of Afghanistan. The nine-page draft article was debated by all and unanimously agreed upon.

Here we can only list a few of its 16 demands: Mandatory education for all; opportunity for schooling and opportunities for all women for higher education; provision of up-to-date health services for all; compulsory registration for women with the police; personal freedom of movement for women publicly and in the home; freedom of speech; freedom to vote and run for election to office; full inclusion of women in the registered workforce; the granting of a reasonable age set at 18 years.

For Afghanistan to come will only be from women and others who are fighting the U.S. and their own internal rulers with their minds and determined to create freedom.

Cross-border march

The International Human Rights March of Women spent three weeks (Dec. 20 to Jan. 10) walking through Israel and Palestine. Between 100 and 150 women participated. The March was an addition to Palestinians and Israelis, some who joined intermittently. Along the way, the women witnessed and often experienced the brutal heart of the occupiers—cruel settlements, prisons, concentration camps, the 'security' wall, refugee camps, and—the Israeli side—areas of terrible suicide bombings.

The women demanded that Israel be taken to the World Court.

The law is defined by Mary Jo Grey

Women in two different states have seen victories over anti-woman forces trying to whistleblay away their right to control our own bodies. On Dec. 29, a federal jury in Philadelphia ruled against a state law that required women to be notified by their doctor at least 48 hours before an abortion. The Philadelphia judge in the case, Susan W. McCaffery, said that the law was unconstitutional. The doctors had argued that the law unconstitutionally intrudes into medical decisions and prevents women from accessing healthcare.

The decision was hailed as a significant victory for women's rights, as it is the first time a court has ruled on the constitutionality of such a law. The case was brought by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of two Philadelphia women who were denied access to abortion care because the law required them to be notified 48 hours in advance.

The victory is a significant step forward for women's reproductive rights in Pennsylvania and beyond. It is also a reminder of the importance of access to abortion care for all people, including those who are low-income and those who face other barriers to healthcare.

More importantly, the decision is a victory for the principle of reproductive freedom. As the judge wrote in her opinion, "The freedom to make decisions about one's body is a fundamental right that is essential to the exercise of other rights and freedoms. It is a right that is protected by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Pennsylvania."

In the aftermath of the decision, anti-choice groups quickly issued statements expressing their disappointment and promising to appeal the ruling. However, many women and pro-choice activists celebrated this victory as a significant step forward for reproductive rights.
ens to $30, then $45 and $90 per week within three years, with an initial contribution co-payment to $10, $20 and finally $30 over the three-year contract for every employee. The hospitalization portion maximized that a $20,000 hospital bill would be responsible for up to $10,000—half of the entire bill. The concept was a cost-saving chemotherapy treatment!

However, at one time, some employees of Ralphs were resentful that they were asked to stop picking up the tools and to go to work at other stores. A striker explained that working at Von's when we are striking against Ralphs. We don't see our union to come at all as we come from the East Coast with paid hotels and rental cars to come to L.A., to stand with us in peace and justice. I can do that myself. We never see that these problems come in our talks. They are not going to get my sign that says "Boycott Ralphs.""

Another point was in the grocers and the union have begun, but not in the other companies which only has one objective—-to increase profit by increasing the maximum production at minimum cost from the workers. The workers are walking on the sidewalks eight hours a day, making sure that the company is not uncertain about their future but determined to win. —Mont

Protest Fred's at zoo

MEMPHIS, TENN.—On Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day, one of the most powerful organizations and in support for the struggles of Black workers.

HMO CHIEFS WRITE THE LAWS

Anyone with faith in the power of legislation only has to look at the current Medicare Prescription bill sponsored by the Congress. Written by the HMO industry to destroy Medicare as we know it. Laws that can't sabotage, capitalists spend huge amounts of corporate money in Washington and large law firms in California. (Continued from page 1)

Ongoing L.A. grocery strike

LOS ANGELES—While Steve Burd, Von's (Safeway) CEO, is under investigation for sudden changes in stock options before the strike began last October, leaders of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) are uncertain about the state of current talks between management and the union. The welfare of today's workers is health care, but the underlying benefit is the growing demand for two-tier pay. "I am sure that we will find a way to get rid of the two-tier pay, get rid of the 57th hour, if they can replace them with the same pay, the same job, then they have explained one worker. 'Management wants to hire box boys without benefits and pay them $5 an hour, and to hire two years with the excuse that these employees life with their families and never want to see them have some to support a family.' Another management position is to get rid of old employees is to grade newcomers higher on a wage scale. But we got to have a review procedure. Management is trying to cut the time-and-a-half pay for Sunday-day work. They also want to take away the ability to work overtime. They do away with the 85 formula for retirement—combined age and length of service equals 85—and replace it with a formula that is 75 percent higher than his $30 million long someone has worked. The management proposal would mean that any retirement benefits by freezing future benefits earned.

The proposal that strikers are rejecting would increase the employee's contribution to health benefits perishables such as vegetables.

But then the Teamsters union said its members would not cross the picket line even if people would have to help their families in a moment of crisis. No doubt, this move emboldened the company executives to think that their threat to break the spirit and determination of the striking workers.

COST OF RETREAT

The Teamsters withdrawal of picket support couldn't have come at a worse moment. If we lose this crucial battle, many workers would begin to wonder what's the point of having a union, if it can't protect the health care of their families. We have come about as a result of years of struggle and sacrifice by previous labor activists.

Nearly 20 years ago, in 1986, a SEIU Local 250 strike against two-tier-wage demands at Kaiser Permanente, the nation's oldest and largest HMO, lasted eight weeks with the support and solidarity from our colleagues in the California Nurses Association. But Kaiser management walked out, declaring that our own union leaders decided to end the strike. They announced that Kaiser's strategic goal was to have managed care. That the International was threatening receivership. Later on, one of the other than the president of the AFL-CIO, who was then the head of the hospital, and pulled the rug out from under nurses which strike. This is a battle that we must win, said one of the strikers who worked with the company. We have joined. Since then, SEIU and CNA have been rival unions as both union bureaucrats have been competing for the membership of workers in the healthcare industry.

SEIU and CNA leaders have seldom been seen on shop floors, as both unions emphasized lobbying Congress and State Assembly politicians. Both unions have been instrumental in passing legislation mandating minimum standards in the healthcare industry, recommending safety-neddles with self-locking devices, and other regulatory agency related measures. However these laws have not been effective because they have failed to healthcare system which has been systematically disadvantageous to Black workers.

Black challenge to IBEW leadership

NEWARK, N.J.—This March, Black telephone workers at Von's (Safeway) in New Jersey are organizing to create labor activists. Nearly 20 years ago, in 1986, a SEIU Local 250 strike against two-tier-wage demands at Kaiser Permanente, the nation's oldest and largest HMO, lasted eight weeks with the support and solidarity from our colleagues in the California Nurses Association. But Kaiser management walked out, declaring that our own union leaders decided to end the strike. They announced that Kaiser's strategic goal was to have managed care. That the International was threatening receivership. Later on, one of the other than the president of the AFL-CIO, who was then the head of the hospital, and pulled the rug out from under nurses which strike. This is a battle that we must win, said one of the strikers who worked with the company. We have joined. Since then, SEIU and CNA have been rival unions as both union bureaucrats have been competing for the membership of workers in the healthcare industry.

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IBEW Local 827 is a statewide local divided into six geographic regions. Each region or unit elects one member to the statewide executive board. Each union has been instrumental in passing legislation mandating minimum standards in the healthcare industry, recommending safety-neddles with self-locking devices, and other regulatory agency related measures. However these laws have not been effective because they have failed to healthcare system which has been systematically disadvantageous to Black workers.

One key objective of the BTWFJ was to get Black workers more involved in the life of the union. They invited Black workers to their executive board meetings and eventually got some Black workers elected to the board of directors.

One of the sanitation workers from the 1968 strike who went on to become a leader of the BTWFJ was a Black worker. The black worker's participation was instrumental in getting Black workers to fight for unity with all workers, at home and abroad.


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liem system turned the South into an immense shop and still hold the tenant and cropper in a vice. The cropper has neither control or the nature of his crop nor marketing it by over the early period of labor power, and must part with half of the crop for “furnishings.”

Although the agrarian question is still relevant to the lens of the Negro Question, the proletarianization and urbanization of the Negroes have produced new factors, which we shall consider now.

The Negro has been an integral part of the economy in heavy industry, and also the early days of Southern industrialization. He was a militant member of whatever unions that took root, the Western Regional Workers, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) claimed one million members, 100,000 in its 1910 peak. The most important of the IWW unions among Negroes were precisely (in this prejudice-

The proletarian Negro is not the owned plantation hand. He is literate and has discursive rights, the might of a cohesive group, organized by the very process of production. He is and feels himself a potent factor of industrial productivity by his own brethren in industry. The relationship in the most con-

The economic survivals of slavery manifested themselves in the very question of the Negro Question. They give the Negroes a social and political structure of a Russian serf, as well as in the country. Wage differentials exist in-

But among the millions suffering on the planta-

UNIONIZATION, PROLETARIANIZATION

In the North too, the proletarianization and trade unionization of the Negroes made it possible for him to aspire to the status of the white proletarian arid did not dissolve his struggle for elementary democratic rights into the general struggle. 

First, in the trade unions he must fight as a Negro for his place as a worker. Wage differentials, seniority, all the phenomena of the iron and steel worker, all this, then, outside of the trade union, lie is ghettosized...

It is precisely in the Northern urban centers that the potential revolution of the Negroes is to be found. In the South receive their sharpest political expression. Capitalism, in dragging the Negroes from the South, cannot pre-

The ghettolike existence, the social and political status of the Negroes, as well as their economic, is that the whole struggle against bourgeois society.

The urbanization and proletarianiza-

Unionization, proletarianization of the Negroes against the national oppression which the semi-feudal rural relations in the South not only generate but are able to keep in subjugation.

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The ghettolike existence, the social and political status of the Negroes, as well as their economic, is that the whole struggle against bourgeois society.
The fate of totalitarianism: Marxist-Humanism in conversation with Orwell, Sartre, and Adorno

By Tom More

In 1984, George Orwell projected the future of totalitarianism, and his Animal Farm had the Soviet Union in mind. Projecting the logic of totalization to the end, he foresaw Winston's momentary revolt crushed, clinical, surgical, machine-like precision.

With the ingenious novelistic device of newspeak, Orwell suggests the diminishment of language to the vanishing point. With newspeak and the ensemble of melancholy, the essence of technocratic manipulation and domination, what is annihilated is the consciousness of freedom: Absolute Totalitarianism.

Theodor Adorno, whose centenary was marked in 1984, holds an undeniable significance, inasmuch as Adorno foresees in common with Adorno. But so chilling is the novelistic predictive power of negativity without also destroying itself? The signs of the new society are all around us. But the collapse of the Soviet Union, the intensification of capitalism, and the real subsumption of global political economy under the commodity form, the globalization of capital, has little or nothing to do with people being free. Freedom that explodes as the power of the negative?

In conversation with Hegel, Dahl suggests that under the conditions of capital, the human intention, that is, the intention to present the Absolute Subject to the world, is rendered coherent with its own deepest philosophical tendency. A fourth voice needs to enter the philosophical conversation with Orwell, Sartre, and Adorno. If Dunayevskaya criticizes philosophers as great as Marx and Hegel for their inability to comprehend the modern state, the work of the philosopher is to determine for ourselves, without our own power and freedom, and not to be determined by capital.

The signs of the new society are all around us. But Sartre, starting through his hotel window at working people working on the ground, might have a skewed vision of what was at play. If only he had gone down to talk to them! If only Adorno had listened to the students instead of calling the police. If only Orwell hadn't become the project of Christopher Hitchens and a strange darling among neoconservatives.

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The unique discussion, in the December issue of N&L, of the struggle for women's reproductive freedom, workers' rights in Iraq—justopposed in the same issue with Dunayevskaya's analysis of the U.S. invasion of Grenada—showed convinc­ eng results for the anti-war movement today. The essay on the war criticises the insufficient, unfinished critique of others on the Left who fall prey to the same anti-revolutionary forces. Today there are many against the war—some because they oppose the Middle East war; others because they oppose the U.S. military and its technique, including the U.S. local war, the Middle West war, and the economic war. The essay on the war criticises the insufficient, unfinished critique of Dunayevskaya's development of the different forms of organizing and philosophy. This essay is a call for the need for a new philosophy to address the new era's need.
RACE, PHILOSOPHY AND THE NEEDED AMERICAN REVOLUTION

This message is for John Alan: I am a Marxist-Humanist and a long-time fighter for freedom. I want to congratulate you for your book on *Diachronies of Black Freedom Struggles*, which is not for News & Letters only nor only for the Black people. But for all the people who your sentences to my Black people, but for all the people who

Marxist-Humanist and a long-time back to us.

Black history and brought its beauty yevskaya to dig deeply enough into phi­

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The question is can it be changed?

...from slave conditions, but what he was

Copyright in question has the name it was given.

There was an emotional gathering here in Los Angeles to protest against the building of the wall between Israel and Palestine that annexes nearly half of the West Bank and makes the Pales­

inians live on 12% of what was historic

come together, Jews and Palestinians, to

come together, Jews and Palestinians, to

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where people used to de-husk coconuts, dry their fish, gassed in front of them), and the rest of them were tricked off the Islands first, then those who were not Diego Garcia. The struggle for a nuclear arms-free Africa to be signed, the treaty is one of the biggest military bases in the world. Maybe companies raking in money from defense contracts, different “grades and ranks of military men, where people were inflicted on them by the United Kingdom, the colonizers, cupboards, their hearths, their vegetable gardens, their enclosed. Never to return to their houses, their bedside. Never to return to put flowers on the graves of their relatives and ancestors.

Two thousand Chagossians, who had lived there for generations were forcibly removed over the period 1965-1973, and dumped on the dockside in Port Louis, Mauritius. For a few years, they lived a shabby, shabby life. Discouraged. Never to return to their houses, their bedside cupboards, their vegetable gardens, their past actions there, in order to extricate “trade advantages,” either for sugar or textiles, either quotas on the Indian and Asian market, or any other related trade agreements, so important today with the World Trade Organization and free trade agreements, intersect with the Diego Garcia struggle.

We intend to go to Diego Garcia to confront the U.S. armed forces.

**Haiti's struggle for freedom continues**

Haiti is Latin America's first Black republic, established as a beacon of social revolution against France. The struggles of its 'Black Jacobins' brought into being the French Revolution of 1789-92, to the Americas. The Haitian Revolution inspired liberation movements throughout Latin America, such as Simon Bolivar and Jose Marti against Spanish rule in the Caribbean. Today the Haitian masses continue to try to free themselves from their masters—both internal enemies and the external power of U.S. imperialism. In December thousands of Haitians took to the streets in the largest and most powerful demonstrations of the nation's history. In various parts of the country the protesters confronted the police and military forces, and several assistants were killed in confrontations against the policies of President Jean Bertrand Aristide. Aristide's government has been forced, support, especially from the working class and the poor.

Large-scale demonstrations have also been held in support of Aristide. His opponents were defeated against two independent radio stations and one of them, Radio Metropole, was forced to shut down due to ongoing threats. Haiti is increasingly becoming a nation divided into two.
knowing immediately that it would threaten their lives. NAFTA went into effect on Jan. 1, 1994, uniting Mexico, the U.S. and Canada into one common market. Indigenous communities in China were in rebellion against global capital. In the U.S., however, much of the debate over NAFTA then turned on whether it would result in unemployment.

Now, on NAFTA's tenth anniversary, it is certain that one impact NAFTA has had on jobs is a qualitative change in the nature of manufacturing jobs. Moving in great numbers to Mexico where workers were being paid 72 cents an hour, United States firms setting up shop in Mexico was at least supposed to help close the gap between U.S. and Mexican workers. Instead, Mexican labor costs have risen to 78 cents an hour. This has lost one in six jobs in its manufacturing sector where women make up most of the workers.

BILLS OF GOODS

The threat of relocation hangs over workers remaining in manufacturing in the U.S. and serves to keep wages and benefits as low as possible. Many laid-off manufacturing workers have drifted into service sector jobs paying a fraction of previous wages and lacking benefits. The daily news is peppered with stories of workers losing $22 an hour job and feeling lucky to land a minimum wage job with no benefits.

NAFTA was just the first of a series of new world trade regimens that include the World Trade Organization and now a proposed extension of its area under the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Each of these has engendered massive demonstrations all over the world, as workers see the effects of the new economic arrangements affecting every aspect of their lives from the workplace to their homes. Capitalist production has made that single party totalitarian state, China, the world's sweatshop. It matches the horrors, but this time on an unprecedented scale, of the Dickensian conditions of labor, that prompted the first reforms within 19th century capitalism. The New York Times dubbed world from people asking where people like me and my wife, Yu Ping, and Tang Li, the "disembumer of capital in the world."

Now China is the U.S.'s number one manufacturing competitor, composed of millions of low-paid Chinese and other low-cost producers in Asia. In the U.S. service sector and even professional high-tech jobs are moving abroad. Mexican workers are working alongside of them in Mexico. In this new world economy, workers are being forced to take shortcuts to keep their jobs. They are living with the threat of losing their livelihood, their pension, their healthcare or even their lives. Wal-Mart, with its pervasive use of Chinese manufactured goods and a non-union minimum wage workforce is just one example. The U.S. government is hell-bent on making workers pay huge co-payments for their health benefits. It just demands that he abolish the "three strikes" law, which continues to shrink. Now Ghina is the U.S.'s number one manufacturing center.

On strike since Oct. 11 because grocery chains seem hell-bent on making workers pay huge co-payments for their health benefits. In the U.S. service sector and even professional high-tech jobs are moving abroad. Mexican workers are working alongside of them in Mexico. In this new world economy, workers are being forced to take shortcuts to keep their jobs. They are living with the threat of losing their livelihood, their pension, their healthcare or even their lives. Wal-Mart, with its pervasive use of Chinese manufactured goods and a non-union minimum wage workforce is just one example. The U.S. government is hell-bent on making workers pay huge co-payments for their health benefits. It just demands that he abolish the "three strikes" law, which continues to shrink. Now Ghina is the U.S.'s number one manufacturing center.
The members of the Governing Council have degrees in later this year. Ayatollah al-Sistani continues to press in July. The US. wants a government chosen by prominent Shia ayatollah Ali Husseini al-Sistani, who original scheme called for the drafting of a national involv...
Mad cows are in the U.S. food supply. "The risk is extremely small," says Dr. Paul Brown of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Brown claims the number has risen. Paul Brown, med­
to light, Motto: don't look, don't find. Consider:
assumption.
tingusser from CJD. Experiments cast doubt on that 20,000 cows a year but can't even document that
ability of a mad cow outbreak.

Deaths from mad cow disease. The first appointee named is William Hueston, who Medical director of the National Institutes of Health, declared: "No one has looked for CJD systematically in the U.S.
but have been killed off by "man-made" human disease. This is an ideology of production subordinate to ecological health and human development.

Disease is an option, an ideology of production subordinate to ecological health and human development.

—Franklin Delany

Youth and Howard Dean

Maligning the Bush administration is that Dean appears to be doing pretty well. The appeal of a fundamental change in America, its politics and society is something that Dean taps into in order to gain support from many opposed to Bush and also those disenfranchised who want to vote for someone but have been unable to do so far. This appeal goes directly to the heart of many of those who are not exclusively but largely opposed to Bush and also those disenfranchised who want to vote for someone but have been unable to do so far. This appeal goes directly to the heart of many of those who are not exclusively but largely opposed to Bush and also those disenfranchised who want to vote for someone but have been unable to do so far. This appeal goes directly to the heart of many of those who are not exclusively but largely opposed to Bush and also those disenfranchised who want to vote for someone but have been unable to do so far. 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in a dramatic turnaround, India and Pakistan agreed to serious peace negotiations at a Jan. 6 meeting. Pak­ istani President Pervez Musharraf said he was ready to end support for "terrorism in any manner," here including the Taliban. It was the first time Khan in Kashmim, where over 40,000 have died in a guerrilla war against India, has spoken in such terms. The war, an an­ role in this Muslim-majority state. For his part, India today is ruled by the Bharata Janata Party (BJP) of Hindu nationalist leaders, who are both at home and abroad; the peace diplomacy with Pakistan. Vajpayee hopes his peace diplomacy can help him to win an­ slide in elections this spring. With the secular Congress Party in a shambles, the BJP hopes to win a two-thirds majority in parliament, which would allow it to rewrite India's secular constitution.

General Musharraf is hardly riding a wave of popular support. Until September 11, 2001, he represented the most hard-line wing of Pakistan's mil­ itary-intelligence apparatus, both in the "jihad" in Kashmir and in supporting the Taliban and elements of Al Qaeda. In 2001, Musharraf reversed his support of the Taliban under overwhelming U.S. pressure. Since

Argentina factories

Two years after the economy collapsed, 170 factories employing 10,000 workers remain under worker occup­ ation. The regime's (recuperative) trade unions are very pop­ ular, especially among the working class. Typically, workers have taken over all functions, including man­ agement, sometimes with the technical help of one or two more educated specialists, usually left intellectu­ als. In some cases, the salaries have doubled. In most cases, all earn the same salary, which is higher than it was under traditional management.

In other cases, as at the Chavilvert printing company, which now prints government newspapers. If the workers were sent to dislodge the workers, however, they suc­ ceeded in ousting the successor neighborhood. At the Ghelco company, workers kicked out 29 managers, whose salaries had accounted for 80% of the firm's payroll! At first, the workers had for 80% of the firm's payroll! At first, the workers had moved to dislodge the workers. At the Ghelco company, workers kicked out 29 managers, whose salaries had accounted for 80% of the firm's payroll! At first, the workers had difficulties with accounting and commercial law, but they have been up and running and have recovered 40% of its previous.

"Our secret is solidarity," said Ghelco workers' rep­ resentative, General Musharraf. Since 2000, some 2,200 Palestinians and 800 Israelis have been killed during the Second Intifada. The Israeli government has resorted to indiscriminate attacks on civilians areas with tanks and planes, also building a racist wall that cuts deeply into the West Bank. Palestinians have repeatedly targeted civilians with their suicide bombings. All of this has been con­ demned by international human rights groups.

The U.S. media trumpets reports of Palestinian vie­ lence, which has declined considerably in recent months, but it ignores or downplays the strangulation of Palestinian communities by the Israeli government.