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ABSTRACT:

CLASS ANALYSIS:

THE ANTI-IRAQ-WAR MOVEMENT IN THE US

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Every great political struggle is a class struggle. F. Engels

An analysis of the class basis and character of the movement against the US invasion and occupation of Iraq is presented. The narrow historical precedents for such mass anti-war movements emerging before hostilities---in spite of pervasive jingoist state propaganda---are compared to the 1898 “Spanish-American” War, WWI, Vietnam, etc. Two major forms of the movement, each highly successful, are examined: (i) mass demonstrations organized by various local and national peace groups, and (ii) efforts to force city councils to pass anti-war resolutions. Examination of class, ethnic and racial demographic factors reveals that, while the former reflected primarily “middle-class,” and/or white opposition, the latter, especially in the large urban centers, reflected the high levels of minority and other urban professional, working-class and poor opposition to the war (e.g., 61-85% of Black Americans), impinging upon local city-council representatives. (The related democratic movement to force city councils to pass anti-Patriot-Act resolutions is yet more broadly based.) The contrast between the rubber-stamp Congress v. the anti-war city councils also reflects the very different class backgrounds of these national v. local officials. An initial analysis of national anti-war organizations also reveals the appearance of new professional and high-tech bourgeois class forces, emergent on the basis of the 1990's e-technology boom, (e.g., Move-on.org), which naturally gravitate to the left-wing of the Democratic party and bring it new e-networked mass participation evolving as a significant anti-Republican force in the 2004 elections. Finally, the intensity and size of the pre-war movement reveals the increasingly progressive and oppositional character of global civil society, as the unintended flipside of the capitalist globalization and 'connectivity' of the Information Society. Especially the local peace and anti-war organizations, using extensive e-networks for ideological and organizational work, reflect a nascent organizational expression of the independent class political will of the people---which is otherwise sorely missing in present-day de-proletarianized US society

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