

Rallies

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rally, and organizers announced a count of 200,000 late in the day.

Protesters began gathering along Market Street about 9 a.m., lining the sidewalks and quickly filling the street. At the Ferry Building, where the first stage was located, music boomed and several speakers rallied the crowd before the official march.

The war "is a big waste of money, and a lot of people will get killed," protester Joe Kriz said. "Why in the hell, when our economy is trashed, why in the hell should we be spending all this money?"

Protesters started marching slowly after a lengthy opening rally. By noon, the crowd had grown so massive that it extended several blocks down Market Street — nearly halfway to the Civic Center Plaza where a second stage was set for more speakers, including actor Martin Sheen and singer-songwriter Bonnie Raitt.

"We want to end our long and shameful silence here today, and in one strong, clear and unified voice, say 'no' to death and war and 'yes' to life, so that we may be made worthy of the long-promised blessings reserved for the peacemakers," Sheen said. "From this time forth, may all our thoughts, words and deeds be a non-violent resistant to all violence, or be worthless."

Washington, D.C.

Tens of thousands of people from all over America braved bone-chilling temperatures in the nation's capital Saturday, participating in the country's largest anti-war demonstration.

The rally and march attracted a wide spectrum of demonstrators, including sign-toting grandmothers, college students, gay activists and parents with babies in strollers. Organizers estimated that more than 200,000 — and as many as 500,000 — people converged on the National Mall. Authorities would not confirm that number, but said the crowds were larger than the anti-war protest in the fall.

Many of the demonstrators and most of the speakers — including Revs. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, Vietnam War veteran Ron Kovic and former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark — were united in questioning Bush's motives for threatening a new war.

"This is a great day for America," said Kovic, who was carried up to the open-air stage. "I lost three-fourths of my body (in Vietnam). You will find strength. You were born to take this country back! No blood for oil."

Portland

More than 15,000 people marched peacefully in downtown Portland on Saturday, and even more gathered in the Park blocks to rally against war and hear from speakers. The Portland Police Bureau did not estimate the size of the crowd, but The Associated Press said 20,000 protesters were present.

The mood rang jubilant and friendly, and the march was led by a colorful, energetic group called the Radical Cheerleaders, whose bright pompoms and playful chants pumped up the crowd.

William Seaman, a volunteer for the Portland Peaceful Response Coalition and a member of the No War Drum Corps, said the crowd was taken aback by its own size.

"It was something quite historic for Portland," he said. "There was an attitude of friendliness; it was a spirit of justice and of community, not just a rally."

Portland Peaceful Response Coalition was one of more than 140 organizations co-sponsoring Satur-



Jessica Richelderfer Emerald

Radical Cheerleaders lead the crowd in anti-war chant, marching to the cadence of the No War Drum Corps

day's events.

Portland Police spokesman Henry Groepper said the day went smoothly, with no reports of vandalism and no arrests.

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William Seaman
volunteer

"We worked to make sure everyone's rights were upheld, including the right to assemble," he said.

Eugene

More than 100 people lined the Ferry Street Bridge on Saturday to protest an impending war in Iraq.

University Honors College professor Henry Alley said he was there to raise awareness and stimulate discussion.

"I'm trying to do what I can to stop what I think is unnecessary," he said.

Retired librarian and new Eugene resident Sylvia Taylor said war with Iraq is a bad idea.

"Peace-building is much better than war," she said.

Corvallis high school students Kirsten Studley and Jessey Gresswell traveled to Eugene because they could not find transportation to Portland.

"We're not mad at Iraq — we're mad at the terrorists, yet Iraqis are the ones who will be killed," Gresswell said.

"I don't like the thought of killing innocent people," Studley added.

Portland and Eugene saw peaceful events, but the anti-war rally in San Francisco was not without incidents and counter-demonstrations.

Between 200 and 500 protesters in the Bay area formed their own rally in undesignated streets, blocking the busy city traffic. Witnesses to the splinter protest said a few people broke windows at the Immigration and Naturalization Services building, spray-painted slogans on other buildings and knocked over newsstands.

Police followed the crowd to a nearby BART station before the protesters dispersed into the station and among the gathering shopping crowd, witnesses said.

A group of about 100 counter-demonstrators, holding signs that said "leftists hate America" and "America's enemies thank you for your support," also gathered on the steps of City Hall.

Cinnamon Stillwell, a Web site columnist, said she was there to support American troops and Bush.

"Our view is reality," she said. "Mostly, we just wanted to show that not everybody in the Bay Area feels the same."

Seaman, the Portland protester, said organizers hope the visible opposition will make a difference.

"Will we succeed? It's difficult to tell. The Bush administration is clearly intent on going to war. We hope they will now look at (these) political demonstrations," he said.

"The international community, as well, may think about the meaning of these demonstrations and become even stronger in their opposition to the war."

Contributing writers: Emerald senior news reporter Jan Montry, from San Francisco; Emerald editor in chief Michael J. Kleckner and Emerald managing editor Jessica Richelderfer, from Portland; Emerald reporter Roman Gokhman, from Eugene; Los Angeles Times reporters David Willman and Charles Piller, from Washington, D.C.

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