

PEACE OUT

Queers lend their voices to the growing opposition to war

Story and photos by Jim Radosta

Without a doubt, the biggest news story of 2002 was the ongoing U.S. threat of war on Iraq.

The aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks has had a direct impact on the sexual minorities community—qualified Arabic linguists booted from the military because they are gay, binational couples torn apart by the government's crackdown on immigration, survivors enduring unfair disparities in relief assistance. The impending war has provoked a strong reaction throughout the region, but queers especially seem to be taking notice.

"The current administration's foreign policy of 'kill first, think second' is not acceptable to me, and judging from...anti-war protests here in Portland and other large cities around the world, I'm not the only one who feels this way," says Dan Yonker of Basic Rights Oregon. "I believe strongly in the power of grassroots organizing and democracy and the changes that we can make together."

Douglas Hopper of Clackamas County Sexual Minority Youth Connection said he was impressed with the significant queer presence during a peace rally Nov. 17 at Pioneer Courthouse Square. However, "it's problematic to expect the queer 'community' to do anything. There are so many different kinds of people who are GLBTQ: radical leftists, Log Cabin Republicans, anarchists, military employees, God-fearing Christians, just to name a few. I would encourage everyone who is truly against the war on Iraq—queer or not—to speak up, start conversations, intelligently vote, pay attention to alternative media, march and rally people together." □



Thousands attended a peace rally Nov. 17 at Pioneer Courthouse Square

The war has given many queers yet another reason to oppose the Bush administration



Diana Courvant (left) of Survivor Project and Wendy Howard



Myriah J. Day (left) and Christa Orth of Pride at Work Oregon



The Rev. Cecil Prescod of Brother to Brother



Lizzy Tanzer of Alternative Sound



Beth Burns (left) and In Other Words founder Catherine Sameh



Bonnie Tinker of Love Makes a Family



Ann Hinds (left) of Outside In and Kristan Aspen of the Lesbian Community Project