

WAR AND PEACE



FIGHTING WORDS

National leaders, politicians and VIPs share their perspectives on the war

by Rex Wockner

"The Human Rights Campaign has no formal position on the war. We truly view it as beyond our mission. On a personal basis I have been haunted by the images of so many losing their lives. Every slaughter of a human being—whether Iraqi, British or American—is searing and devastating. I spend a great deal of time thinking about the gay and lesbian soldiers who are risking their lives in this battle while living under a kind of 'verbal burka.' ...As we purport to bring democracy to other lands, we would do well to examine a policy that is inhumane to our gay and lesbian servicemembers."

—Elizabeth Birch (above), Human Rights Campaign executive director

"As someone who loves this country and the aspirations of liberty upon which it was founded, I find this war to be extremely disturbing.... But I am far more disturbed by the domestic actions that the Bush administration is taking under the

guise of war—actions to curb our constitutional rights and civil liberties, actions that threaten the very bedrock of our democratic society, actions which certainly threaten the GLBT community and our fight for freedom. I worry about the fate of our nation and, particularly, GLBT people in this environment. I deeply and sincerely hope that the too-silent majority will rise up against this administration that thinks it is a law unto itself."

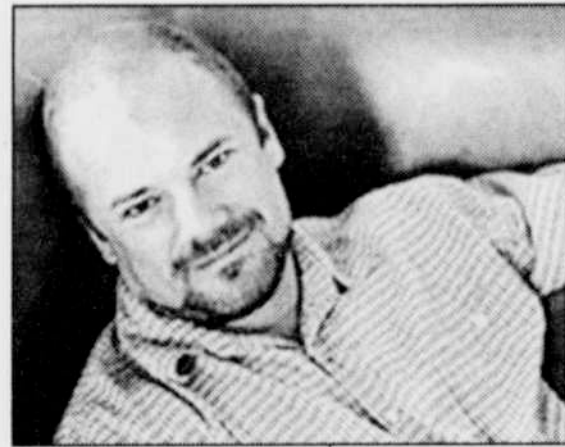
—Lorri L. Jean (right), National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director



"This war is a direct product of U.N. resolutions calling for the disarmament of Saddam as a condition of the truce at the end of the 1991 war. It is also a result of Bill Clinton's decision in 1998 to change U.S. policy toward regime change in Iraq rather than containment. He was right to do so, and I don't recall gay leaders criticizing him when he did.... I'm stunned that so many gay 'leaders' effectively support a homophobic fascist dictator rather than a Republican president. Sadly, it says a lot about their priorities and their loss of a moral compass."

—Andrew Sullivan (above), author

"I'm scared, anxious, angry and afraid. Scared, because extremism in all forms is rising around the world and the next terrorist attack could be in Washington, D.C., where I live. Anxious, because I'm worried about my family and relatives who live abroad. Angry, at our president who's convinced that the world is out to get him and that death and destruction are the only ways to stay safe. And I'm afraid, that this war is only increasing anti-Muslim, anti-Arab and anti-



immigrant sentiments in the United States."

—Faisal Alam, founder and director of Al-Fatiha Foundation, a queer Muslim organization

"Like most Americans, I support Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. war on terrorism, President Bush and, most importantly, the courageous men and women in the U.S. and coalition armed forces.... In 2003 the United States has the difficult but necessary responsibility to counter evil dictators who deny personal rights and freedom to citizens, repeatedly snub United Nations resolutions, have the capacity to manufacture and desire to use weapons of mass destruction and have a history of invading neighboring nations and using chemical weapons to kill ethnic minorities."

—Patrick Guerriero (right), Log Cabin Republicans executive director

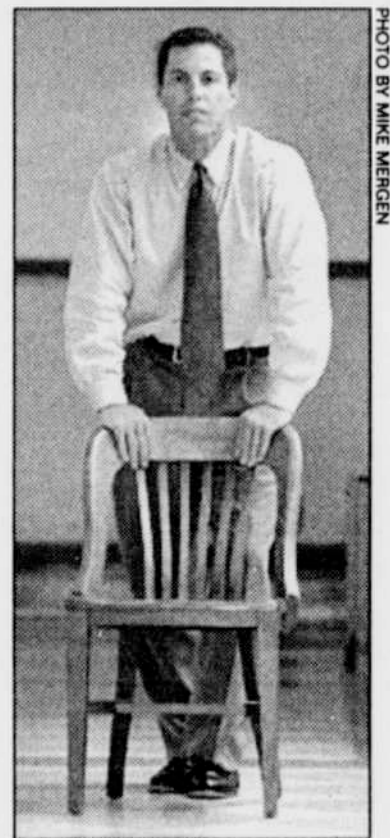


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