

Speak Out

Thankfully, I don't expect much when it comes to *Just Out's* political analysis, and I am rarely disappointed.

JACK DANGER
Portland

The truth

TO THE EDITOR:

In many ways I know how I felt about Measure 36, and I know my reasons as to why I voted against it. The biggest impact that I felt Measure 36 would have to me was that it would assert the hatred of my existence.

Although I had this thought running through my head, I can't express the actual sadness I felt on the morning of Nov. 3 when thought became reality. I woke up with an odd feeling, like the world outside had somehow changed, and the city and state that I had grown to love had somehow become a little more surreal as I stepped out my front door that morning.

It didn't become clear to me as to why I felt this way until I called my mother in eastern Washington to talk about the election. It wasn't the loss of John Kerry that was difficult to discuss, but rather Measure 36. I don't talk much politics with my mother, but I had mentioned the measure to her during the past few months.

That morning, when she asked me what the measure was going to actually do, I broke down. It was at that point that I realized I had legally become a second-class citizen. How awful to realize that your home and your country endorse the fact that you are not afforded the same rights as any other American. Tears started welling as I explained to my mother how this law didn't just affect straight and gay partners, but it also affected me as a single gay man.

This was the start of an epidemic of hate championed by legal conformation. I didn't realize how I would really feel about this until it was over. I never thought the day would come that I would feel isolated from my sense of freedom, country and the right to exist like anyone else.

Some conservatives might say that this statement is not true and that they are only trying to protect the sanctity of marriage. If that is so, then let's allow civil unions to be recognized with the same rights as marriages.

If they truly aren't doing this out of hate and only to protect the definition of marriage, then afford us the same rights of those who can be married under some sort of legal status. By not allowing us those same rights, they are telling us and the world that we don't deserve those rights. Until the day comes that gay people are afforded the same rights, segregation legally exists in the state of Oregon.

TIVO SALAZAR
Portland

An open letter to Measure 36 supporters

TO THE EDITOR:

To the Yes on 36 voters: You may have won the WAR, but not the BATTLE.

DAVID W. HARTSOOK
Portland

The morality mandate?

TO THE EDITOR:

Whose morality, whose God is right for America?

The Christian right assumes that the reelection of Bush sets a mandate for their morality. They assume this puts their version of truth about God, guns, gays and country, prayer in public schools, abortion, social welfare and stem cell research as their exclusive conservative mandate for Christian change in the taking back of America.

Didn't our founding fathers start a revolution to break away from the Church of England's control over the colonies and the daily lives of its people? As Americans, is not our duty to stand up and fight injustice and the separation of church

and state, to set a higher standard for all Americans whether Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Catholic, agnostic or even the atheist? I have to say it is neither the government's nor the politician's place to choose whose God rules America.

We Americans need to be wary of any one group claiming its beliefs as the law of the land and setting its agenda as what is right for America. We are a country of many religions, faiths, social and political beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, traditional and nontraditional families. We all make up the great American melting pot.

Just because the Christian right has won the presidential election does not mean that they can go unchecked and determine what is right for America. They won this time, but what happens next time if we elect a conservative Muslim to office? Would they like conservative Muslim beliefs being taught as law without tolerance in our daily lives or our public schools? How about the forcing of women back to second-class citizens only allowed in public with the permission of their male family members and their heads covered? Would it then be OK to rewrite the Constitution forcing their Muslim beliefs on all of America, making America a Muslim state under Muslim law? I think not!

Religious extremism is the very thing we are fighting in this war on terror—the Islamic fundamentalists who are trying to force their religious views on the world. Two wrongs do not make it right even if you claim to have God on your side.

RICK RAYMEN
Portland

Don't forget the progress we have made

TO THE EDITOR:

The passage of Measure 36 was devastating for a lot of reasons, but mainly because it lets us all know that—despite the show of national solidarity after 9/11, our sense of unity

Continued on Page 7

•••

Reviewing the 2004 election results almost forms the outline for a doctoral dissertation, but I'll offer a short review.

It's now clear the issues of gay marriage and abortion rights motivates the Bible-thumping evangelicals living in the exurbs (Wilsonville, Vancouver, etc.) to turn out and vote. Never mind the fact that these evangelicals are hypocrites—they don't care about 45 million Americans without health insurance, they don't care about the hundreds of thousands of innocent women and children being killed by U.S. troops in a foreign land. This block of voters delivered Dubya those 3.5 million votes that won the 2004 election on the national level. (By the way, let's make it a rallying cry right now: 51 percent of the vote is NOT a mandate, and don't let anyone get away with saying that—51 percent is BARELY a majority! A 'mandate' requires 60 percent or more of the vote to be considered as such!)

Considering the big issues on the national and international stage right now, I would much rather have won on the national level than locally.

I mean, do you realize that the U.S. economy is teetering toward collapse in the next few years? Consumer debt is at record-breaking levels. The Republican-controlled Congresses since 1995 have borrowed a staggering \$7.4 TRILLION from China, South Korea and Japan to keep federal spending at record-breaking levels. (The vast majority of this federal spending

goes toward corporate welfare. For example, the Republicans have our defense budget at \$432 BILLION—twice what it was during the height of the Cold War!)

The U.S. trade deficit is at a record-breaking level, and the U.S. dollar is at record lows throughout the world! And the U.S. gold supply in Fort Knox hasn't been audited/counted since 1958! The ONLY thing keep our economy afloat right now is more spending with borrowed money, both by consumers and the federal government. (This leads into explanations/scenarios as to why Bush wants to privatize Social Security: to shore up debt-ridden Wall Street for a few more years.)

Personally, I believe the Democratic Party ought to adopt these positions on gay marriage and abortion rights: Leave it up to the states. The Republicans have always advocated states' rights (albeit to condone racial and female gender oppression), but there are quite a few states that are progressive and willing to advance the causes of gay marriage, abortion on demand, livable wages, etc.: New York, Illinois, New Jersey, Vermont, Massachusetts and California. Want an abortion or a government-sanctioned gay union? Go to one of these forward-thinking, progressive states. Want livable wages? Relocate to a progressive state.

One more word, if I may. I was an adult during the 1970s, so I remember how the Republican Party suffered HEAVY losses in the 1974 and 1976 elections after the Nixon/Watergate debacle. Don't panic, because soon enough the

Republicans will abuse their positions of power or go so far right that they'll alienate the vast majority, and then they'll be voted out or indicted, imprisoned and forced to resign from office.

DAVID MINDRUP
Portland

•••

I feel sad and disappointed, but I don't consider the election results a national "setback"—more a wake-up call about where we really are and where most of the country is. Our local community worked hard and made a difference. Now we need a new national strategy and a new way of talking about ourselves and to continue the work of shaping a culture that more fully embraces us.

DAKOTA INYOSWAN
Portland

next issue As local and national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organizations regroup and reorganize for the struggles ahead, what do you see as priorities for community organizing in the coming months? How would you go about implementing your ideas? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

NW WOMEN'S DIRECTORY

The only local directory of woman-owned or managed businesses

Women make 80% of the purchasing decisions.

Make it easy for them to choose you.

GET LISTED

360.750.1622
www.womensdirectory.com

FIND US IN OVER 65 LOCATIONS



BB2

"Fun Gifts for fun people"

503.228.9166
2047 East Burnside
PDX. 97214



"Eugene's Feminist Bookstore For 30 years."

MOTHER KALI'S BOOKSTORE

Celebrates the COURAGE, COMPASSION, & COMMITMENT OF OUR COMMUNITY IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES.
Keep Hope Alive!

Feminist, LGBTQ, Pagan & Multicultural Books, Music, DVD's, Jewelry, Statuary, Flags & Banners, Tarot, Candles, Incense, HUGE SELECTION of PRIDE ITEMS!

Open M-Sat 10-6
www.motherkalis.com
Phone: (541) 343-4864
info@motherkalis.com