

OUT!

Against War

Chicago-area Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered People and allies against war on Iraq

A full-scale war on Iraq is against the interests of most people in the world, including most LGBT people in the United States:

- ✓ **More than 100,000 people were killed in the last U.S.-led war on Iraq. In fact, it was not a "war" at all, but a systematic slaughter of defenseless civilians and mostly conscript soldiers by a vastly superior military machine.** A new ground war taken into the heart of Iraq's cities would likely kill many more, including U.S. personnel. While cynically urging Americans to "support our troops" during the last Gulf War, the government showed its own "support" by refusing to adequately compensate the thousands of vets suffering from Gulf War Syndrome, or even acknowledge that the Syndrome exists.
- ✓ **The Bush Administration claims war is necessary to stop Saddam Hussein from using weapons of mass destruction, yet with the U.S. military budget almost equal to that of the rest of the world's combined, it is absurd to suggest that Iraq poses a serious threat to the United States.** Hussein would not use such weapons against the U.S., if for no other reason than that it would provide Bush with the perfect excuse to destroy his regime. Bush's talk about weapons of mass destruction is a red herring. The Reagan and Bush, Sr. administrations were happy to provide funding, military support and political cover to Hussein when he used such weapons while he was a U.S. ally, such as during the 1988 gassing of the Kurds and the gassing of Iranian troops during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.
- ✓ **A new U.S. war will indirectly kill people in our community here at home by diverting necessary funds away from already scaled-back social service programs.** For example, programs that prevent HIV+ people from losing their homes and provide other life-saving services are already facing severe cutbacks during the current recession as a bloated military budget is given precedence over everything else. Just this year we've seen huge cutbacks at Horizons Community Services and the Howard Brown Health Center, while three AIDS service agencies collapsed into one in order to save money, and the entire \$2.5 million State of Illinois budget for AIDS minority outreach was wiped out. Even without war, looming budget deficits at the city, state and federal levels will mean further attacks on our social services. Spending hundreds of billions, *perhaps up to \$2 trillion*, on a war and occupation of Iraq will probably obliterate many social programs, making the current round of budget cuts look paltry when compared to what comes later.
- ✓ **A new war on Iraq is immoral.** Even without full-scale war, the devastating sanctions on Iraq have killed more than 1 million people in the past ten years, most of them children who have starved to death or died of preventable diseases. When questioned by a reporter about the 500,000 Iraqi children dead due to the sanctions, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright said "It's a hard choice, but we think the price is worth it."

The question is, "worth it" for what, and for whom? United States power over huge areas of the globe? Profits for a wealthy few guaranteed by such power over the world's resources?

Most of the world's peoples overwhelmingly oppose Bush's war, even if some of their leaders can be bribed or coerced by US military and economic might into supporting it. Opposed by the vast majority, yet promoted by wealthy and powerful elites here and abroad, a new war would be profoundly undemocratic, and would surely fuel more outrage and probable retaliation against the American people.

A generation ago, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s early opposition to the Vietnam War brought on him the scorn of many. But opposing the war was the right thing to do. King realized that his choice was to support his community by winning desperately needed anti-poverty programs at home, or support the U.S. war in Vietnam. The more he examined the U.S. war to dominate Southeast Asia, the more he saw that the war was immoral in its own right. King saw a war fought to extend U.S. power in the world at the expense not only of the Vietnamese, but of most Americans.

Today, we in the LGBT community have a similar obligation to support our community, and other communities at home and abroad, by opposing Bush's war on Iraq. The combined voices and actions of many people around the globe was the power that stopped the immoral Vietnam War. That is why we, the undersigned, urge you today to support the struggle against an immoral war on Iraq.

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To find out how you can get involved in the anti-war movement, please call 888.471.0874 or e-mail CABNstopthehate@aol.com