

# BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK

Today, as George Bush spends over \$40 million celebrating his inauguration, we silently vigil, joining with Americans across the country with a message to the Bush Administration that we are determined to resist his second term agenda.

## OUR WAR ON IRAQ

The U.S. occupation of Iraq has cost the lives of over 100,000 Iraqis, mostly women and children. A recent UN report released in November found that severe malnutrition in Iraqi children had almost doubled since the U.S. invasion. The toll of dead and maimed American soldiers rises daily.

As women, we are outraged by these policies of war without end that have increased anti-American sentiment around the world and have drained our treasury. We want a world built on a different vision where peace is possible. Perpetual war, greed, disregard for the earth and the generations to come must end.

## OUR BODIES

Our right to abortion, won over 30 years ago has never been more threatened. Bush will have the chance to appoint Supreme Court justices who can overturn the right to Roe v. Wade, which provides safe abortions for women who choose to have them.

Bush seeks to cut the Maternal and Child Health Block Grants that provide health care to women before, during and after pregnancy. The budget would also freeze the Healthy Start program, which has been shown to reduce infant mortality and morbidity.

## OUR ECONOMY

Our communities face cuts in essential public services, schools and health care, while military budgets are being protected and increased. In February, the Bush administration is expected to request an additional \$70 billion for more troops and military bases in Iraq.

Bush wants to privatize Social Security and gamble with our future. More than half of all older women living on their own have no other income but Social security. The Social Security system is not in crisis.

## OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

As part of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, public high schools must give military recruiters access to their facilities and contact information for their students, under penalty of having their federal aid discontinued.

Under the federal government's new formula for determining financial need, an estimated 84,000 college students will no longer be eligible for federal financial assistance during the 2004-2005 school year.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

Here are some suggestions borrowed from activist Medea Benjamin at [www.CommonDreams.org](http://www.CommonDreams.org)

1. **Write letters, call & email local media demanding that they cover the victims of the war.** Make real the human cost of war on both U.S. and Iraqi lives. The public in most countries see the horrible pictures of Iraq war victims but not in the U.S. If the media fail to respond, organize a community delegation to visit them. If they fail to respond to that, organize protests at their office.
2. **Support military families who speak out against the war, and soldiers who speak out and refuse to fight.** Military Families Speak Out ([www.mfso.org](http://www.mfso.org)) is a group of over 1000 families with loved ones in the military. Invite one of them to come and speak to your community group, church, mosque or synagogue. Dissent within the armed forces was critical in the ending the war in Vietnam.
3. **Work against recruitment efforts which target our young people with lies about the great opportunities that await them in the military.** Get more information at [www.objector.org](http://www.objector.org).
4. **Pressure Congress to stop further war funding.** You can keep informed about initiatives to pressure Congress through websites such as [www.moveon.org](http://www.moveon.org), [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org), [www.PFAW.org](http://www.PFAW.org), [www.truemajority.org](http://www.truemajority.org), [www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org)
5. **Reproductive Freedoms:** On Jan.22nd, join the San Francisco Pro-Choice Coalition as we as we stand up for reproductive freedom.

**10 am.- Rally at Powell and Market St. / 11:00- March to the Embarcadero.**

For more information on reproductive rights check out the following organizations:  
[www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org), [www.naral.org](http://www.naral.org), [www.latinainstitute.org](http://www.latinainstitute.org),  
[www.blackwomenshealth.org](http://www.blackwomenshealth.org), [www.now.org](http://www.now.org)

6. **Wear a button that will generate conversation with colleagues and friends**
7. **Begin a neighborhood group, meet regularly and stay current on the local initiatives that affect your community and neighborhood.**

**BAY AREA WOMEN IN BLACK** wears black as a symbol of sorrow for all victims of war and as a way to join in spirit with the more than 200 other Women in Black groups around the world who protest against militarism, violence, oppression, anti-Semitism, and racism, wherever it occurs.

We oppose militaristic and fundamentalist leadership in all countries around the globe, including our own. We are committed to nonviolent resistance against tyranny. We believe all people have the right to security, home, education and freedom.

As a group of Jewish feminists and allies, we stand in solidarity with Israeli Women in Black who have held vigils weekly since 1988 to protest the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, and to mourn the Israeli and Palestinian lives that have been lost. To join our work please contact us through our website.

**[www.bayareawomeninblack.org](http://www.bayareawomeninblack.org)**