

24 June 2003

Pride 2003:

The First Annual Open Letter to the Queer Community from the Chair of the National Lavender Green Caucus

Dear Friends:

A year ago, this nation was faced with a crucial test: to respect liberty and justice or to use our overwhelming military force to invade and occupy a sovereign nation; we failed that test. And while the Democratic Party and the Republican Party lined up behind President Bush to launch the first pre-emptive military assault in the history of the United States, the Green Party, alone of the major parties in the United States, unequivocally condemned the movement towards war. And, the National Lavender Green Caucus (NLGC) was the only gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered political caucus of a major party to vocally and unabashedly advocate for peace, justice, and respect for international law.

Now, a year later, the United States finds itself in the worst recession since the elder George Bush held court in the White House. The unemployment rate is skyrocketing, the national deficit has made record gains, the economy is stagnant, fear of deflation has replaced inflation, and our few remaining social support networks are being dismantled as much of the nation simply watches.

But our descent into degradation and hopelessness can stop. You have a choice: continue to rely on the Republicans and Democrats and their pro-war agenda and their failure to unequivocally support the full legal equality and human rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals or to give your support to the Green Party of the United States. The Green Party of the United States, without reservation, supports the full equality before the law of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals in all aspects of life ranging from marriage and adoption to employment and immigration. NLGC is the voice of queer Greens in the party.

And now Pride season is on us. This is a time of year when queer individuals take time to celebrate our sexuality and the liberation efforts that have brought us a long way on the path to equality. Each year we commemorate the three-day rebellion of transgendered folks and people of color at the Stonewall Inn that sparked a global movement for equality. The National Lavender Green Caucus, in partnership with progressive queer organizations across the nation, are urging a return to our radical political roots and have declared this Pride to be a celebration of peace and a statement against war led by the United States and its Western allies. We are encouraging gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals to march proudly in Pride parades and in festivals from coast to coast while carrying banners of peace. We also encourage you to demand an end to U.S. military aggression and a commitment by the United States government to address the economic and social crises facing us here at home.

This Pride season is an opportunity for all of us to recommit ourselves to a radical transformation of the political and social fabric of this nation. We are living in the most powerful nation to have ever existed in the history of the world, and yet so many of us feel powerless to change the path that this nation is taking. I encourage you all to think critically about the meaning of Pride and the lesson taught to us by those men and women and trans folks from 34 years ago: a few can spark a revolution for the many.

We need to carry Pride with us all year long, including to the ballot box. With more than 170 candidates

elected nation wide, there is a strong grass roots wind of change blowing. And the color of grass is
Green

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Sincerely Yours,

W. Brandon Lacy Campos, Chair

National Lavender Green Caucus

camposvive@hotmail.com