

## ▼▼▼ DATELINE: HOUSTON

### 'United Colors' subgroup of Queer Nation calls for action on hate crimes



*United Colors, a Queer Nation affinity group, held a press conference to call for city and state action on hate crimes at Mayor Bob Lanier's home las Friday*

In the wake of two racially motivated slayings in Houston in recent weeks, United Colors, an affinity group of Queer Nation devoted to issues affecting people of

color, renewed again the gay activist organization's call for action against hate crimes on Friday, Jan. 24. The group held a press conference in front of Mayor Bob Lanier's River Oaks home, calling on the mayor to take a leadership role in the fight against bias related crime.

Unfurling a Queer Nation banner on the sidewalk in front of the mansion's front yard, members of the group said they were calling on Lanier to "use the power and prestige of his office" to lobby city and state officials to enact more stringent hate crimes legislation, specifically a bill that would enhance the law to carry stricter punishment for crimes of hate.

"In the past seven months, several Houstonians have been brutally murdered in hate crimes—Paul Broussard, Phillip Smith, Camilo Romero, Alton Ray Anderson and Carl Ray Hardy. There are other murders and instances of violence that have occurred as the result of race, religion or sexual orientation (that) have not been labeled as hate crimes," said Tracey

Brown, a spokesperson for the group. "Gay and lesbian people understand what it is like to live in fear of sudden, irrational violence and death caused by prejudice," Brown said in explaining the gay group's continued involvement with issue.

Another United Colors spokesperson, Michael Crawford, suggested the spread of hate crimes in Houston is a local reflection of a prevailing national attitude "that people who are different just don't matter." Perhaps the greatest need, said Crawford, is the teaching of tolerance and understanding of diverse cultures on a community wide level—in schools, churches, governmental areas and at home. The group called for public officials and other community leaders to set an example of such understanding.

Informed of the demonstration in advance by reporters, Lanier pointed out that he is working on programs to expand police protection city wide, and reportedly suggested that activist groups should give him more time to work on the issues.

## ▼▼▼ DATELINE TEXAS

### Next national meeting for 1993 March on Washington to be held in Texas



*Houstonian Debra Bell was named media chair of the 1993 March on Washington*

cluding Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma—was scheduled in Dallas this weekend. The meeting's agenda include reports from the national meeting, and it will be held at the Dallas Gay/Lesbian Community Center on Saturday (Feb. 1).

The national meeting is scheduled to be held at on the weekend of May 9-10, 1992.

Deborah Bell, a regional organizer for the "March Mobilization" and the only Houstonian to attend the meeting Jan. 17-18, said the turnout goal for the newly named "1993 National Gay/Lesbian/Bi March on Washington for Equal

tended the recent California meeting, probably because of the costs involved, she said.

Bell said the national meeting went well, but was occasionally slowed down in the process. The voting was conducted using modified consensus process, to avoid overriding minority concerns by the majority. Under the system, when a proposal is made, anyone disagreeing or "breaking consensus" is allowed to present their position; then the floor was opened to pro-con discussion, followed by another vote. A two-third majority was required to pass a proposal.

"In my opinion, the process was not

the term "transgenderal" in the name of the march after much discussion and compromise. However, Bell said, "The (march's) platform includes efforts to recognize the needs of all sexual minorities."

Bell said in her opinion some of the words included in the long name—including the addition of "and Liberation" and a proposal to also add "Action"—might have been equally well addressed in the list of demands for the march or the direct actions planned to coincide with the event. However, she noted that as co-chair of the March organization's media committee, she will support whatever decisions are reached