

MEDIA ADVISORY

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For Immediate Release

Event: Friday Peace Rally Calls on Justice
Department to Prosecute Confessed
Torture Architects.

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Date: Friday, April 24, 2009

Time: 5:00 PM

Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square, SW Yamhill
& Broadway, downtown Portland

**Friday Peace Rally Calls on Justice Department
to Prosecute Confessed Torture Architects.**

Today at 5:00 PM, the weekly Friday rally at Pioneer Courthouse Square will turn attention to the recently released torture memos, calling for investigations to reveal the full truth about the use of torture under the Bush Administration, and demanding prosecutions of those involved directly in torture and those who approved or provided legal justifications for torture.

"We've got video taped confessions from both Dick Cheney and George W. Bush that they approved the torture, and now just the most recent investigation indicating direct roles for Condolezza Rice and Donald Rumsfeld in green lighting these euphemistically-labeled 'harsh interrogation techniques'," said William Seaman of the *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition*. "It's time to prosecute these medieval criminal masterminds and give them the due process and civilized treatment that they so disgracefully denied to the victims of their torture policies."

With evidence and pressure building for a full-scale investigation of the torture practices of the Bush Administration, local peace and human rights advocates are calling for phone calls, e-mail and faxes to Oregon's Senators and Representatives to support the drive to bring accountability to the torturers. "We have to face the facts that the Obama Administration is not going to do this without significant pressure from the citizens of the United States, and that there are also folks in Congress, including some Democrats who were likely briefed about the use of torture, who don't want us to know the full extent of these crimes," said Seaman, "but it is our solemn duty to demand full

disclosure and aggressive prosecutions because that is the only way we can have any hope of preventing these abuses in the future."

Both the *American Civil Liberties Union* and the *Center for Constitutional Rights* have issued calls for urgent action to demand accountability for the torture policies; the PPRC has linked to these actions from their website at www.pprc-news.org "And if the Justice Department refuses to appoint a special prosecutor, if the Obama Administration refuses to even investigate these gross violations of international law, then we must encourage and assist in any way we can other countries in an international initiative to bring these criminals to justice," said Seaman. "Whatever it takes, we might have to extradite Cheney and Bush to Spain for prosecution, or to the Hague for the International Criminal Court, we have to ensure that there is no impunity for torturers."

Referring to statements made by Robert Kennedy, Jr., another PPRC volunteer, Rob Ranta, summarized the need for prosecutions. "It's Civics 101," said Ranta, "Failure to hold those accountable for crimes only ensures that those crimes will be repeated."

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