

For Immediate Release

Event: Peace group gagged, mouthpiece for defense contractor welcomed at <i>Pioneer Courthouse Square</i> . Date: Friday, February 1, 2008 Time: 5:00 PM Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square, SW Broadway & SW Yamhill, downtown Portland	Contacts: Portland Peaceful Response Coalition (503) 344-5078 pprc@riseup.net www.pprc-news.org
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Friday Rally: *Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc.*, bans megaphones and drums for peace group, becomes megaphone for *General Electric*.

"We have to ask whether the recent moves to regulate our Friday rallies are part of *Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc.*, cracking down so they can guarantee a 'broadcast friendly' environment for their new tenants, the NBC Network affiliate, KGW Channel 8 News, and by extension for *General Electric* which owns NBC," said William Seaman, a volunteer with *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition*. "We asked them why they were bothering us now, after having left us alone for over six years, they said there was nothing new, but this announcement by KGW is hard to interpret as mere coincidence." KGW announced the agreement to start broadcasts from *Pioneer Courthouse Square* in a news story that ran on their website Tuesday evening (Jan. 29).<sup>1</sup> "We're very disappointed that there was no opportunity for public comment about this," said Seaman. "While the City of Portland is about to cite us, imposing fines of up to \$5,000 for public expression in Portland's living room, for something we've been doing for over six years without complaint, the private corporation that manages the square, *Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc.*, is busy turning the living room into an echo chamber for NBC and their corporate masters, the nuclear power broker, mega-polluting, defense contracting criminals, *General Electric*."<sup>2</sup>

The Friday rallies are continuing, and according to PPRC the rallies will continue for the foreseeable future. This week's rally will focus on the moves to grant immunity to telecom corporations that have helped the Bush administration illegally spy on American citizens. "Like the privileges that *Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc.*, is providing to KGW news, the Bush Administration wants to ensure that abuses by the telecom giants will continue and that nobody will be held accountable for the laws broken and the invasion of privacy," said Seaman. "We're calling on our fellow

Oregonians to contact their legislators to oppose the immunity Bush is calling for in the badly named 'Protect America Act', to support the efforts by groups like the *Electronic Frontier Foundation* and the *Center for Constitutional Rights* which are working to restore the protections from warrantless spying."

For more information, please contact PPRC at 503-344-5078.

1. A press release describing the deal with Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc., is available at their website at <http://www.pioneercourthousesquare.org/>
2. For details on the crimes of General Electric, please see "GE: Decades of Misdeeds and Wrongdoing," *Multinational Monitor*, July/August 2001, Vol. 22, Nos. 7&8. For details on the relationship between NBC and its parent company, General Electric, search the archives at the Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting website at [www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org). The most recent report on this topic is "NBC Uninvites Kucinich – Rules changes kept progressive out to GE's debate", January 17, 2008, FAIR Action Alert, <http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=3246>.