

Portland Peaceful Response Coalition

(503) 344-5078

PO Box 5112
Portland, OR 97208-5112

For Immediate Release

<p>Event: Weekly peace rally and march marks country's independence, renewing call for work to restore the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.</p> <p>Date: Friday, July 4th, 2008</p> <p>Time: 5:00 PM</p> <p>Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square, SW Yamhill & Broadway, downtown, Portland</p>	<p>Contacts: Portland Peaceful Response Coalition (503) 344-5078 pprc@riseup.net www.pprc-news.org</p>
---	--

Weekly peace rally and march marks country's independence, renewing call for work to restore the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

"Of course we like fireworks, we think their just dandy for all the Yankee Doodles out there, but we think if you're a real patriot, you ought to be working and actively opposing the Bush administration polices that have amounted to the most serious attack on the fundamental principles and essence of our 232-years-young republic," said William Seaman, a Portlander who has been attending the regular Friday peace rally at Pioneer Courthouse Square. "Of course the Constitution itself is a bit younger than that, but it surely embodies the essence of what deserves our support and respect, and the Bill of Rights especially has been badly subverted by the high crimes and misdemeanors committed by the current regime in the White House."

The rally and march will focus on the role of dissent and activism in bringing about the laws and legal rulings that have secured the freedoms that many people celebrate on July 4th. "We should never forget that when the Constitution was adopted, slavery was a legal and protected institution in the United States, the Constitution recognized black persons as only 3/5 of a citizen, slaves and women did not have the right to vote," explained Seaman. "There were many struggles that lay ahead, struggles to make real the rights enshrined in Constitution, to make those rights equally real and effective for everybody, not just white men, and not just landowners, and we today face many of the same challenges."

Many of the people attending the Friday rallies and marches point to the way corporations and concentrations of wealth have corrupted the electoral process as one

of the gravest threats to country. “The founders of the republic would never have dreamed of a day when courts would rule that a corporation, a legal construction, would be granted the same rights as human beings,” said Seaman, “and yet today those corporations have become the most destructive corrupting influence on our political process, on our struggling and now-marginal democracy.”

Attendees at the weekly rallies cite the use of torture, the detentions and abuses in Guantanamo, and the illegal warrantless wiretapping as symptoms of the decline of the rights and protections envisioned by the authors of the Bill of Rights. “Use them or lose them,” said Seaman, “every time we step out onto the street with a protest sign against this illegal and criminal war in Iraq, every time we speak out against the use of torture and extraordinary rendition, every time we organize to defend the rights of all people here and abroad, we’re a part of the great tradition of struggle that secured all of the rights we identify as being the best and most valued part of what this country ought to stand for in the world.”

The week rally gathers each Friday at 5:00 PM at the southwest corner of Pioneer Courthouse Square, and SW Yamhill & Broadway in downtown Portland. To find out more about the Friday rally and the other work of the Portland Peaceful Response Coalition, call (503) 334-5078.

- END -