

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Event: Portland Peaceful Response Coalition challenges John Kerry to oppose the wars and occupations, protests George W. Bush's criminal wars and occupations.

Contacts: (503) 344-5078
pprcnews@yahoo.com
www.pprc-news.org

Date: Friday, August 13th, 2004

Times: John Kerry Rally:

Waterfront Park: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

George W. Bush Campaign Stops:

Terminal 6: 10:30 a.m.

Southridge High School: 12:00 p.m.

Place: Friday Rally & March: 5:00 p.m.

Pioneer Courthouse Square

Portland Peaceful Response Coalition challenges John Kerry to oppose the wars and occupations, protests George W. Bush's criminal wars and occupations.

The *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition's* Friday rally will look back on a day of campaign stops by the Republican and Democratic candidates as volunteers from local peace & justice groups take part in demonstrations calling for an end to wars and occupations. "While the crimes of George W. Bush continue to be the focus of our local work against the US wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, we will also be sending a critical message to John Kerry's campaign for regime change," said William Seaman, a volunteer with the PPRC. "Where is the voice calling for an end to the US occupation of Iraq and to bring the troops home if it doesn't come from the majority of Americans who recognize that the attack on Iraq was not just a mistake but immoral and a crime?" Seaman said that there will be people who choose to attend the Kerry rally, possibly barred at the gate, who will attempt to bring a message of peace to the Democratic candidates for the White House. He said there would also be protestors to greet George W. Bush at his campaign stops.

George W. Bush is expected to arrive at Port of Portland's Terminal 6 at 11:10 a.m. for a 11:15 a.m. campaign stop. He is expected at Southridge High School in Beaverton at 12:30 p.m.. "Bush's war and occupation in Iraq have already lead to the deaths of over 930 US soldiers, thousands more wounded, and well over 10,000 innocent Iraqis killed," said Seaman. "Today the US military stands poised for an assault on Najaf where it is reported that over 300 Iraqis have been killed, unknown numbers injured, and no clear picture of how many of those casualties were civilians." Seaman said that regardless of the outcome of this latest assault, it was clear that resistance to the US

occupation would continue. “The root problem in Iraq today is the US occupation, with the brazen war-profiteering of the Halliburtons and the Bechtels and the installation of a corrupt and brutal puppet regime,” said Seaman. “The first step out of this quagmire is to get the blood-soaked fingers of US corporations off Iraq’s oil resources, off Iraq’s banking system and out of Iraq’s economy.” Seaman said that the US presence in Iraq will only continue to evoke resistance as Iraqis struggle to gain control over their lives and their country.

Local peace and justice groups are building towards a large-scale rally and march in early October, one month prior to the presidential vote. “Since neither presidential candidate has a strong pro-peace message, since neither candidate is calling for bringing US troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan, there’s an urgent need for people to come together to express those views loud and clear,” said Seaman. “We hope to contribute to the process of regime change here at home, and we feel the way to do that is to give voice to a strong message for peace, and a strong message calling for an end to the US occupations.”