

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Event: Friday rally and march protest nomination of pro-torture lawyer as Attorney General, urges calls to Oregon delegation to oppose Alberto Gonzales.

Date: Friday, December 3rd, 2004

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square

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Friday rally and march protest nomination of pro-torture lawyer as Attorney General, urges calls to Oregon delegation to oppose Alberto Gonzales.

The *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition's* Friday rally and march joins with the *Center for Constitutional Rights* and other human rights advocates in opposing the Bush Administration's nomination of Alberto Gonzales to replace John Ashcroft as Attorney General. "Gonzales is the lawyer who provided the legal advice promoting the use of torture by this criminal administration, calling the Geneva Conventions "quaint" and "obsolete" and thereby laying the groundwork for the crimes in Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib," said William Seaman, a volunteer with the PPRC. "We are urging folks to call their Senators and Representatives in Washington, DC, to demand they oppose the nomination of this war crimes advocate."¹

"The Bush administration is intent on taking this country back to the Middle Ages, to the days of the Inquisition when "truth" was defined by the Church and enforced with instruments of torture," said Seaman. "The Geneva Conventions were adopted by the world after witnessing the atrocities of World War II, and yet the man nominated by Bush as Attorney General is intent on dragging our country back to the policies of outlaw, fascist regimes."

As Counsel to President Bush in early 2002, Gonzales led the legal effort to justify the Administration's evading treaties and laws in the treatment of detainees, searching for a way to avoid prosecution for war crimes. He relied on a notorious Justice Department memo to rationalize casting aside human rights protections provided by the Geneva Conventions regarding prisoner interrogations. Gonzales' legal advocacy led directly to the abuse and torture scandals that have badly damaged the country's reputation, perhaps irreparably.

"Making Alberto Gonzales the Attorney General of the United States would be a travesty," said Michael Ratner, President of the Center for Constitutional Rights. "It would mean taking one of the legal architects of an illegal and immoral policy and installing him as the official who is charged with protecting our constitutional rights. The Gonzales memo paved the way to Abu Ghraib."

1. See <http://www.ccr-ny.org/v2/reports/report.asp?ObjID=7Sji957UtN&Content=463>