

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Event: PPRC Friday Rally and March call on *Newsweek* and other Corporate Media to Retract Lies and False Reports that Contributed to Killing of 100,000 Iraqis.

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Date: Friday, May 20th, 2005

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square

PPRC Friday Rally and March call on *Newsweek* and other Corporate Media to Retract Lies and False Reports that Contributed to Killing of 100,000 Iraqis.

The *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition's* Friday rally and march will focus on the recent controversy over *Newsweek's* publishing of a report that US interrogators in the Guantanamo detention facility desecrated the Quran. The publication sparked huge protests in many predominantly Muslim countries including Indonesia and Pakistan. In Afghanistan protests linked to the *Newsweek* article led to the deaths of seventeen people.

“The editors at *Newsweek* should certainly be held responsible for shoddy journalism, such as single-sourcing this particular story, but ultimately those transgressions are not the scandal here,” said William Seaman, a volunteer with the PPRC. “The real culprits in this scandal are the US personnel who have been deliberately using the ethnic and religious character of the detainees as a part of abusive interrogation tactics, and more specifically the kingpin criminal bosses are Donald Rumsfeld, Commander Ricardo Sanchez and others who specifically authorized the use of these forms of torture and abuse.” The *Center for Constitutional Rights* and the *American Civil Liberties Union* have posted documents on their websites, obtained through *Freedom of Information Act* requests, that show Rumsfeld and Sanchez having officially approved the use of many of the abusive practices that have led to protests worldwide.¹

“All of the allegations of abuse of detainees and specifically the desecration of copies of the Quran have been corroborated time and time again, both by independent observers and by former detainees,” said Seaman. “The people responsible for these abuses, and for the deaths and injuries resulting from protests of those abuses, are the people who set the policy that allowed and encouraged those abuses in the first place, the architects of this phoney ‘war on terror’, Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, George Bush and the

¹ See www.aclu.org and www.ccr-ny.org for details.

rest of the members of the current outlaw administration.” Seaman said that the focus on *Newsweek* was a classic example of ‘shooting the messenger’.

“The tragic irony of this latest media scandal is that the substantial lies and inaccuracies and shoddy journalism that *Newsweek* and other corporate media are guilty of, the lies about weapons of mass destruction and Iraqi links to al Qaeda, lies that led to the deaths of upwards of 100,000 innocent Iraqis and over 1,600 US soldiers, have never been retracted or corrected by *Newsweek*, and have barely been acknowledged by the other corporate media complicit in the propaganda campaign that led to this war and occupation,” said Seaman. “The current campaign by the Bush Administration to pin the blame for this scandal on *Newsweek* is more of the same, and the corporate media is lapping it up and broadcasting it out.”

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