

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE ...

July 7, 2003

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and Sunny Miller or Susan Callahan at Traprock Peace Center, 413 773-7427
<http://traprockpeace.org>

Who: Frank Serpico, Robert Pura, Atty. C. William Michaels, Atty. Bill Newman, Atty. Mahsa Khanbabai, Prof. Christopher H. Pyle, Sut Jhally, Sandra Boston, Leo Hwang-Carlos, Louis Battalen, Irvine Sobelman, Ezzell Floraniña,

What: "Protecting Our Civil Liberties: The Core of Democracy"

When: Friday and Saturday, July 25 & 26

Where: Greenfield Community College - 1 College Drive, Greenfield

As Families prepared to celebrate July 4 or attend summer concerts, committee members of the Greenfield Community College Response Initiative and Traprock Peace Center have been sharing news about the regional conference, "Protecting Our Civil Liberties: The Core of Democracy" planned for Friday and Saturday, July 25 & 26 at Greenfield Community College.

On Friday, July 25 there will be an opening reception in the GCC cafeteria at 7 pm, featuring music, light refreshment, introductions to many of the presenters and special guest Frank Serpico, a former NYC detective, whistle blower, and advocate for high principles in public service. Serpico's story was made famous by the movie titled, "Serpico." As an honest detective in a police department corrupted by kick-backs from drug dealers, he survived a shoot out to testify and try to reform one of the nation's largest offices of law enforcement.

On Saturday July 26 the program begins with coffee, tea, or late registration at 8:30 a.m., immediately followed by welcoming remarks by College President Robert Pura and Frank Serpico.

Morning panelists will outline pressing challenges to civil rights, the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Constitution. Prize-winning journalist and professor of politics Christopher H. Pyle will address the problems of past, present and proposed surveillance, called total information awareness. His morning workshop advocates for more intelligent anti-terror policies, explaining that current law provides woefully inadequate checks against inevitable abuses. Pyle worked with Senator Sam Ervin, Jr.'s Judiciary Sub-Committee on Constitutional Rights, and the Senate Committee on Government Relations. He helped write the Privacy Act in 1974. His articles have been published in hundreds of newspapers including the New York Times, LA Times, Washington Post, Washington Times, and Wall Street Journal.

Attorney Bill Newman is the Director of the Western Mass Regional Office of the American Civil Liberties Union. Newman is a speaker who deftly uses wit and humor while addressing a wide-range of issues from military tribunals to the loss of basic, legal due process. C. William Michaels of Baltimore, author of *No*

Greater Threat, America After September 11th and the Rise of a National Security State, teams up with Newman to demystify the PATRIOT Acts I & II, Homeland Security and Presidential directives that undermine constitutional rights. Michaels is a co-founder of Pax Christi in Baltimore. He calls upon citizens and religious communities to consider the 12 characteristics of a national security state and asks them to examine where our nation is headed.

Mahsa Khanbabai, pro-bono attorney for the Political Asylum/Immigration Representation (PAIR) Project in Boston, will discuss illegal detentions & the targeting of international neighbors. Khanbabai was born in Iran, raised in western Massachusetts and graduated cum laude from Albany Law School in 1998. She is a member of the Massachusetts Governor's Advisory Council on Refugees and Immigrants and has dedicated her career to immigration and naturalization issues.

Sut Jhally, professor of communication at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and founder and executive director of The Media Education Foundation in Northampton presents a morning workshop on Fear, Fallacy, & the Media, Spinning & Un-spinning the Fictions. He is one of the most popular teachers at the University of Massachusetts. Over the past ten years, Jhally has been the executive producer of more than twenty videos produced and distributed by the Media Education Foundation. He is co-editor of Cultural Politics in Contemporary America and has written broadly on issues of popular representation.

After lunch a panel of workshop presenters will each introduce skills and solutions addressed in six 'How-to' WORKSHOPS, from 2-3:30.

Irvine Sobelman - **Town by Town, Resolutions for Constitutional Rights.**

Sandra Boston - **Speaking Up for Civil Liberties--Smart Skills for Dialogue**

Leo Hwang Carlos--**Writers' Workshop for Civil Liberties**

Ezzell Floraniña-- **Theater Improv for Civil Liberties**

Louis Battalen--**Libraries and Intellectual Freedom, Will they Endure?**

Advocacy 101--How to make a difference, presenter TBA

Organizers anticipate a wide variety of presentation styles, blending historical review, narratives, up-to-date accounts, question & answer, hands-on practice, collaborative planning, role plays, discussion in pairs or small groups, and creative expression.

Eleven local and national groups have joined G.C.C. and Traprock as co-sponsors: Interfaith Council of Franklin County, W. Mass A.C.L.U., Pax Christi USA, All Soul's Church Social Action Committee, Conscious Communications Institute, Amherst Human Rights Commission, Peace Development Fund, Charboneau Learning Center, Pax Christi USA, SAGE Committee, World Learning/School for International Training, and W. Mass A.F.S.C. More co-sponsors are welcome.

This program is wheelchair accessible. First registrations received will have first choice of workshops, and those received before July 17 will be given a voucher for lunch on campus. The Friday reception is \$10,

Saturday is \$25 or both days for \$30. Students and low-income neighbors can register for both days at \$20. For more information call Sunny Miller or Susan Callahan at Traprock Peace Center, 413 773-7427. Conference registration forms will be available at all Massachusetts libraries and are now on line at www.traprockpeace.org and www.gcc.mass.edu.

Greenfield Community College can be reached from Route 91, Exit 26. Take Route 2 West 1/2 block and proceed north 1/2 mile. See the GCC sign on the left. Take College drive to the main building. Information tables will be up the steps at the main building, just inside to the right.

Additional information on presenters:

Sandra Boston, Greenfield, MA, founder of the Conscious Communications Institute, teaching smart skills for dialogues that address fears and conflicts;

Leo Hwang-Carlos, MFA U-Mass Amherst, GCC Instructor of English, leads a workshop in creative writing for Civil Rights;

Louis Battalen, Director of the Arms Library, Shelburne Falls, and member of the Mass Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee convenes a working group.

Irvine Sobelman, of Northampton is co-fonder of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee, bringing news of the variety of resolutions adopted by cities and towns across the U.S.

Ezzell Floraniña, Performer, director, uses the improvisational techniques of Augusto Boal & others, to empower personal & public voices.

Biographical sketches, photos, quotes, and writing samples will be available for advance feature stories.

Saturday July 26

8:30 Coffee, Tea, and Seating, or late Registration

8:45 Welcome to GCC--President Robert Pura, comments questions and answers with Frank Serpico,

9:30-10:45 - Panel--Challenges to Civil Liberties

Christopher H.Pyle (on the problems of past and present surveillance- Total Information Awareness)

Bill Newman, A.C.L.U. Laws & Executive Orders, Real Threats to Real Freedom

C. William Michaels, 12 Characteristics of a National Security State

Mahsa Khanbabai, Illegal Detentions & the Targeting of International Neighbors

Sut Jhally, The Consolidation of Power, Through the Manufacturing of Fear

11-12:20 - MORNING WORKSHOPS FURTHER DEFINE CHALLENGES & PROPOSE APPROACHES

Patriot Act I &II-- Bill Newman and C. William (Chuck) Michaels

Watching the INS, (BICE) Speaking Up for International Neighbors- Mahsa Khanbabai

Fear, Fallacy, & the Media, Spinning & Un-spinning the Fictions - Sut Jhally,

Toward a More Intelligent Antiterrorist Policy Chris Pyle--

12:30-1:15 LUNCH - Presenters and all who register before July 17 will be served

lunch in the cafeteria on Saturday, others will find food off campus.

1:15-1:45 Panel on Solutions, Head table in the cafeteria--Afternoon workshop

presenters each give a 3-minute intro, which could include a brief skit, poem, or inspiring news.

2-3:30 How-to WORKSHOPS

Sandra Boston--Speaking Up for Civil Liberties--Smart Skills for Dialogue

Leo Hwang Carlos--Writers' Workshop for Civil Liberties

Ezzell Floranina-- Theater Improv for Civil Liberties

Louis Battalen--Libraries and Intellectual freedom, Will they Endure?

Irvine Sobelman--Town by Town, Resolutions for Constitutional Rights

Advocacy 101--How to make a difference, presenter TBA

3:30-4 SNACK, or Caucus, Visit literature tables, book signing

4-5:15 PLENARY, Focus on Action Planning - Bring any proposals. Build support.

5:15-5:30 CLOSING CIRCLE, acknowledgements

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