

◆ The New Jersey Peacemaker ◆

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New Jersey Peace Action and New Jersey Peace Action Education Fund, formerly SANE/Freeze, founded in 1957, are committed to working through grassroots citizen action to abolish nuclear weapons, promote an end to domestic and international weapons trafficking (including abolition of Hand Gun violence), demilitarize the federal budget, and teach non-violent conflict resolution.

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TURNED AWAY BY CHURCHES, SOUP LUNCH GOES ON

The big news about the 2003 soup lunch is that it took place at all. Despite cancellation of two successive venues in the week leading up to the event — first by St. Catherine of Siena, a Catholic church in Cedar Grove, then by St. Paul's, a Baptist church in Montclair, the event went forward at the Columbia High School cafeteria in Maplewood.

Given the theme of this year's event—the suppression of civil liberties at home that has accompanied the war on terrorism—it would have been truly ironic if we had been forced to cancel because some people did not agree with the views of our keynote speaker, Ronald Kuby. Kuby, a civil rights lawyer who was the law partner of the late William Kunstler, is the liberal half of WABC radio's talk show, "Curtis and Kuby."

We could not, and did not, allow that to happen, though we had to scramble—twice—to find and publicize an alternate venue, one that was far more costly than the churches that have hosted us in the past.

Kuby's words and those

of fellow speaker Larry Hamm, head of the People's Organization for Progress, drove home for the 300-plus attendees why it is so important that dissenting voices, like ours, not be silenced.

As Kuby pointed out, the increasing efforts to shout down the peace community are a measure of our success.

He made several other key points. 1. Though we need to protect ourselves in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, the long-term solution is to stop making people want to kill us. 2. There is no war-time exception to the bill of rights. 3. Liberty and security are intertwined and efforts to keep us safe by undermining liberty will backfire by eroding the loyalty that is inspired by a tolerant, secular society. 4. The rushed-to-passage Patriot Act has not made us safer and it is crucial that there be rational consideration of how best to protect our society. 5. Not all parts of the Patriot Act are equally bad. The worst are those that abrogate the judicial process, and the protections needed to make sure the system works properly. Instead, we have people held indefinitely, without charges, lawyers or public hearings.



STIRRING THE SOUP:
Controversial speaker
Ron Kuby

Hamm, who squeezed in an appearance at the soup event, between talks to other groups, spoke of the many people "laboring in the vineyards for peace and justice" and the need for all of us to join forces and work together. He named some of those present—"civil liberties warrior" Frank Askin, Jane and Bruce Franklin, for their efforts to lift the Cuba embargo, Sylvia Zisman, for her work against depleted uranium weapons, Fr. John Nickas of St. Peter Claver R.C. Church in Montclair, for hosting peace and justice events, and NJPA director Madelyn Hoffman, the

SAVE THE DATE!

April 25, 2004

NJPA Annual Dinner

with

GREG PALAST

author of

"The Best Democracy
Money Can Buy"