



**CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION CHICAGO**

*Educating for Democracy*

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<http://www.crfc.org/summit2003.html>

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**STUDENTS, POLICYMAKERS DISCUSS TERROR RESPONSE AT LAW DAY SUMMIT**

April 29 – CHICAGO, IL. Although the war to topple Saddam Hussein is over, the campaign against another terrorist attack on American soil is still being fought. Balancing that campaign with civil liberties is the focus of federal policymakers and 175 delegates representing over 1,300 students at 20 Illinois high schools during the Illinois Youth Summit on May 1, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM, in Room 2525 at the Dirksen Federal Building in Chicago.

The Summit, organized by the Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC), addresses three current policies in the “war on terror”: increased surveillance powers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Defense Department’s Total Information Awareness program, and the possible use of torture on suspected terrorists. “It is very important that CRFC helps students discuss these difficult issues, because all of us need to think about - and talk about - how we preserve our rights as we work against those who would destroy them,” said U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, who will meet with the students in Chicago. Joining Fitzgerald at Dirksen will be: Douglas Cassel, Northwestern School of Law; Harvey Grossman, ACLU; Nancy Bothne, Amnesty International, Maggie Hickey, U.S. Senator Fitzgerald’s Office; Travis Carlisle, FBI.

“The Youth Summit promotes a thoughtful discussion of topics that students feel are important and vital to their future,” said U.S. Sen. Richard J. Durbin, who will participate via

video-teleconference from Washington. Other participants from Washington include U.S. Representative Janice Schakowsky; Michael Scardaville, Heritage Foundation; Barry Sabin, U. S. Department of Justice; Lara Flint, Center for Democracy and Technology; and Victor Bernson, U.S. Department of Defense. The DC panel will be moderated by J. Robert Flores, administrator of Office of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Department of Justice.

The Summit also will feature a presentation on the importance of democracy by Mubarek Tashpulatova of The Tashkent Center of Public Education in Uzbekistan. "Soviet and other totalitarian societies are characterized by fear," said Tashpulatova. "A government of a nation that begins to operate independently of the messy realm of human interaction is a nation that will undertake witch hunts, denunciations, and abuse power."

"For nearly a decade, the Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago has offered Illinois students a valuable, hands-on learning experience unlike any other they are likely to experience in or out of school," said U.S. Senator Peter Fitzgerald, a supporter of the Summit. In addition to study, Summit students conducted a survey on these policies, and results from nearly 1,600 respondents showed a general skepticism.

Less than 40% of respondents favored torturing suspected terrorists, "rendering" suspected terrorists to other countries, or even depriving them of sleep, although 45% were in favor of creating a non-lethal "torture warrant" as proposed by Harvard Law professor Alan Dershowitz. Only 42% felt that the federal government should develop the Total Information Awareness (TIA) project, now currently suspended by the U.S. Senate, although nearly 30% were unsure. While 69% thought that FBI agents should be able to monitor public meetings in order to prevent terrorism, only 43% thought that they should be able to attend religious observances and institutions. (Full results are on-line at <http://www.crfc.org/summit2003survey.html>.)

Students also conducted service projects by teaching these issues to their peers and to younger students. At Senn High School in Chicago students videotaped three public service announcements on the issues for viewing in their school and community. Students at Woodruff High School in Peoria surveyed the tenth and eleventh grades at their school, developed a lesson plan for selected classes, and organized a "Town Hall" with selected classes. Stevenson High School students in Lincolnshire taught seventh and eighth graders at neighboring Aptakisic Jr. High School. "Our visit to Aptakisic proved that not only were we teaching younger students, but we were teaching ourselves as well," said a Stevenson student.

The Summit is hosted and co-sponsored by the U.S. District Court. The Summit is also co-sponsored by the Illinois State Bar Association and the law firm of Sidley Austin Brown & Wood. Funding for the 2003 Illinois Youth Summit is provided in part by the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA) and the McCormick Tribune Foundation. The views and statements expressed as part of the Summit site do not necessarily reflect those of the IVPA, the McCormick Tribune Foundation, or any other supporters of the 2003 Illinois Youth Summit.

Non-profit and non-partisan, CRFC has supported elementary and secondary schools in their fundamental task of educating students for constructive participation in our democratic society since 1974. In addition to the Summit, CRFC serves K-12 students and teachers through initiatives in Chicago, throughout Illinois, and across the United States, and sponsors democracy education partnerships between classes in Illinois and other parts of the world.

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