

DEA Exhibit at Museum of Science and Industry Ignores Costs of Prohibition

Groups of concerned citizens have developed a response and supplementary material countering the upcoming DEA exhibit at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. They say the exhibit exploits the war on terror, while ignoring the role of the DEA and prohibition in creating obscenely high profits for criminal traffickers and increasing the dangers of drugs to American citizens.

Chicago, IL (PRWEB) August 7, 2006 -- Chicago-area residents are asking the Museum of Science and Industry not to display a government exhibit linking drug use to terrorism. These citizens say that the Drug Enforcement Administration Museum exhibit, from August 11-December 3, 2006, hides the true link between drugs and terrorism: drug prohibition itself.

According to Pete Guither, a drug policy reform researcher and editor of Drug WarRant: "This is a blatant publicity effort by the DEA aimed at tying its budget to the war on terror. It's also desperate and hypocritical. The DEA has received a failing grade from the White House Performance and Management Assessments for their taxpayer funded war -- a war that actually makes criminal drug trafficking obscenely profitable."

Jack Cole, Executive Director of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP -- an organization of current and former cops, judges, prosecutors, prison wardens and others who all believe in ending prohibition) says: "If you ended prohibition today, there wouldn't be any of those drug lords making a penny on drugs tomorrow." Retired police captain (and LEAP co-founder) Peter Christ adds: "America's drug use is a serious problem, but in reality it is America's drug policy that creates the underground economy that supports terrorism."

Drug WarRant, along with local chapters of Students for Sensible Drug Policy (a nation-wide group that educates about the harms of the War on Drugs and promotes an open discussion of alternative solutions), has organized a response and supplement to the DEA exhibit, including a website and materials to be distributed by volunteers, along with other events to take place throughout the run of the exhibit.

The counter-exhibit, (available at <http://www.DEAtargetsAmerica.com>) highlights the parallels between the lawless days of alcohol prohibition under Al Capone and today's drug prohibition. As noted at the website, even the FBI acknowledges Al Capone's rackets were "spawned by enactment of the prohibition amendment."

None of the groups or individuals involved in the response advocates illicit drug use. In fact, they believe that the DEA and prohibition add to the problems of drug abuse by putting the control, safety, and age regulation in the hands of criminals. They point to the recent Chicago-area deaths from fentanyl-laced heroin as a grim echo of the startling number of Chicago residents who died from tainted alcohol during alcohol prohibition.

Drug WarRant and Students for Sensible Drug Policy hope to counter what they consider to be a one-sided exhibit, and to engage the Chicago community in a dialog to discover more effective alternatives to the failed drug war. As they note on their website: "The drug war is a great deal for traffickers, terrorists, and especially the DEA, but not for communities dealing with the war's violence, or the American citizens who pay the bill."

According to Jeanne Barr, history teacher at Chicago's Francis W. Parker School: "As educators, we look to the MSI to enlighten the community, not to promote political propagand that selects self-serving elements of truth out of a more complex whole. It's not good science, and it's not good history. Da Vinci and the DEA



under one roof? What are they thinking?"

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