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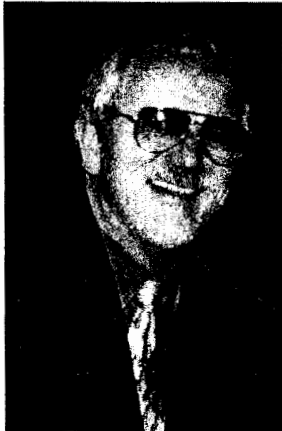
Law Enforcement Against Prohibition

Jack A. Cole

Executive Director

jackacole@leap.cc (781) 393-6985 www.leap.cc

“This is Not a War on Drugs—it’s a War on People.”



Jack Cole knows about the war on drugs from several perspectives. Cole retired as a Detective Lieutenant after a 26-year career with the New Jersey State Police. For twelve of those years Cole worked as an undercover narcotics officer. His investigations spanned the spectrum of possible cases, from street drug users and mid-level drug dealers in New Jersey to international “billion-dollar” drug trafficking organizations. Cole ended his undercover career living nearly two years in Boston and New York City, posing as a fugitive drug dealer wanted for murder, while tracking members of a terrorist organization that robbed banks, planted bombs in corporate headquarters, court-houses, police stations, and airplanes and ultimately murdered a New Jersey State Trooper.

After retiring, Cole dealt with the emotional residue left from his participation in the unjust war on drugs by working to reform current drug policy. He moved to Boston to continue his education. Cole holds a B.A. in Criminal Justice and a Masters degree in Public Policy. Currently writing his dissertation for the Public Policy Ph.D. Program at the University of Massachusetts, his major focus is on the issues of race and gender bias, brutality and corruption in law enforcement. Cole believes ending drug prohibition will go a long way toward correcting those problems.

Cole has taught courses to police recruits and veteran officers on ethics, integrity, moral decision-making, and the detrimental effects of racial profiling. He has also presented papers at international conferences and spoken on drug policy reform in the European Parliament, as well as over 300 times to students, educators, professional, civic, benevolent, and religious groups in Australia, Canada, Central America, Europe, New Zealand, and across the United States. Cole is passionate in his belief that the drug war is steeped in racism, that it is needlessly destroying the lives of young people, and that it is corrupting our police. Cole's discussions give his audience an alternative prospective of the US war on drugs from the view of a veteran drug-warrior turned against the war.

To book a speaker contact

Mike Smithson, Speakers Bureau Coordinator

speakers@leap.cc

fax: (315) 488-3630 cell: (315) 243-5844

ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY
DATE: 3.10.05 EXHIBIT D PAGE 1 OF 3
SUBMITTED BY: Jack Cole



Law Enforcement Against Prohibition

27 Austin Road, Medford, MA 02155

info@leap.cc

(781) 393-6985

http://www.leap.cc

LEAP

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About LEAP

After nearly four decades of fueling the U.S. policy of a war on drugs with over half-a-trillion tax dollars and increasingly punitive policies, our confined population has quadrupled over a 20 years period making building prisons this nation's fastest growing industry. More than 2.2 million of our citizens are currently incarcerated and every year we arrest an additional 1.6 million for nonviolent drug offenses—more per capita than any country in the world. The United States has 4.6 percent of the population of the world but 22.5 percent of the world's prisoners. Every year we choose to continue this war will cost U.S. taxpayers another 69 billion dollars. Despite all the lives we have destroyed and all the money so ill spent, today illicit drugs are cheaper, more potent, and far easier to get than they were 35 years ago at the beginning of the war on drugs. Meanwhile, people continue dying in our streets while drug barons and terrorists continue to grow richer than ever before. We would suggest that this scenario must be the very definition of a failed public policy. This madness must cease!

The stated U.S. drug policy goals of lessening the incidents of crime, drug addiction, and juvenile drug use, while stemming the flow of illegal drugs into this country, have not been achieved. This failed policy of fighting a war on drugs has only magnified our problems but the U.S. still insists on continuing the war and pressuring other governments to perpetuate these same unworkable policies.

With this in mind, current and former members of law enforcement have created a drug-policy-reform group called LEAP. The membership of LEAP believe that to save lives and lower the rates of disease, crime and addiction, as well as to conserve tax dollars, we must end drug prohibition. LEAP believes a system of regulation and control is far more effective than one of prohibition.

The mission of LEAP is to reduce the multitude of harms resulting from fighting the war on drugs and to lessen the incidence of death, disease, crime, and addiction by ultimately ending drug prohibition.

LEAP's goals are: (1) To educate the public, the media, and policy makers, to the failure of current drug policy by presenting a true picture of the history, causes and effects of drug use and the elevated crime rates—more properly related to drug prohibition than to drug pharmacology—and (2) To restore the public's respect for police, which has been greatly diminished by law enforcement's involvement in imposing drug prohibition.

LEAP's main strategy for accomplishing these goals is to create a constantly enlarging speakers bureau staffed with knowledgeable and articulate former drug-warriors who describe the impact of current drug policies on: police/community relations; the safety of law enforcement officers and suspects; police corruption and misconduct; and the excessive financial and human costs associated with current drug policies.

LEAP is a tax exempt, international, nonprofit, educational entity based in the United States that was modeled after "Vietnam Veterans Against the War." They had an unassailable credibility when speaking out to end that terrible war and LEAP has the same credibility when its current and former drug-warriors speak out about the horrors of the war on drugs. LEAP's message both catches the attention of the media and rings true to many other drug warriors who are questioning current U.S. drug policies.

LEAP's Board of Directors is made up of Jack Cole, who retired as a lieutenant after 26 years in the New Jersey state police—14 years in their narcotic bureau; Peter Christ a retired police captain from a department in New York state; Edward Ellison, a retired detective chief superintendent in the London Metropolitan Police Department in England, who was the operational head of drug task forces for Scotland Yard; John Gayder a currently serving police officer with a department in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada; Eleanor Schockett, a retired Florida Circuit Court Judge; and Howard Wooldridge a former police detective from a department in Michigan.

The LEAP Advisory Board is also composed of esteemed and respected current and former members of law enforcement.

Membership in LEAP is open to anyone who has been formerly trained in methods of law enforcement, crime prevention or detection, and given the authority to maintain the peace, safety, and order of the community by any national, state, or local government agency (this includes but is not limited to local, state, and federal police, prosecutors, and judges, as well as corrections, probation, and parole officers).

In addition, the category, "Friends of LEAP," was created for those who have never been part of law enforcement but who wish to support our work of ending prohibition. However, only current and former members of law enforcement can be speakers for LEAP.

In two years we went from five founders to a membership of over 2,000, with 85 speakers, living in 34 of the United States and in 7 other countries. All LEAP speakers are former drug-warriors—police, parole, probation and corrections officers, judges, and prosecutors. LEAP has members and supporters across the United States and in forty-five other countries, which is fitting since U.S. drug policy has ramifications that affect the entire world.

LEAP presents to civic, professional, educational, and religious organizations, as well as at public forums but we target civic groups; Chambers of Commerce, Rotaries, Lions and Kiwanis Clubs, etc. The people in these organizations are conservative folks who mostly agree with the drug-warriors that we must continue the war on drugs at any cost. They are also very solid members of their communities; people who belong to civic organizations because they want the best for their locales. Every one of them will be voting in every election. Many are policy-makers and if they are not, they are the people who can pull the coat tails of policy-makers and say, "We have someone you must hear talk about drug policy."

After making more than nine hundred presentations where LEAP calls for the government to "end prohibition and legalize all drugs—legalize them so we can control and regulate them and keep them out of the hands of our children," we have discovered that the vast majority of participants in those audiences agree with us. Even more amazing is that we are now attending national and international law-enforcement conventions where we keep track of all those we speak with at our exhibit booth; After we talk with them, 6% want to continue the war on drugs, 14% are undecided, and 80% agree with LEAP that we must end drug prohibition. The most interesting thing about this statistic is that only a small number of that 80% realized any others in law enforcement felt the same.

LEAP's immediate goal is to achieve a large membership of law enforcement officials representing all of the many countries detrimentally affected by current drug policies. The impact on the media and policymakers will be enormous when thousands of members of law enforcement ban together to demand an end to drug prohibition.

At LEAP, we understand that advocating changes to current drug laws may expose members of law enforcement to social discomfort from your peers and possibly discipline or other censure from your employer. When you choose to support LEAP, you must also decide if you want others to know about your support. If you wish to remain an anonymous supporter of LEAP, rest assured that we will never "out" you to your employer or anybody else. We will never make your name and address available to any advertiser or other organization. We employ strict measures to ensure your support of LEAP remains confidential.

On the other hand, if you wish to participate actively and publicly in drug policy reform, we are in need of people around the globe who will spread our message and help recruit more members. If you choose to be a LEAP local representative your name and contact information will appear on our website and publications. There is strength in numbers and by publicly declaring your advocacy for using common sense in formulating drug policy you will encourage others to do the same. Before long, people who share our desire for change will be contacting you to form local networks and alliances.

Please consider "going public."