

Sunday, November 23, 2008

### **When a new generation arises early Saturday to fight the drug war.**

Â Bill of RightsÂ (From public domain.)Â A marijuana defense client one day suggested I not clump all frequent marijuana users as stereotypical laidback potheads. Knowing that frequent potsmokers come in all different shapes and flavors, I used the stereotype in an effort to figure out why my frequent-potsmoking client was so highstrung.Â Of course, he would have been more highstrung had he not been a marijuana smoker; this was his medicine. Â Are legalization efforts for medicinal and recreational marijuana moving more slowly because of stereotypes of potheads of the variety of Cheech and Chong in Up in Smoke? (What do you think of this clip?) I would hope not. For one thing plenty of medicinal and recreational potsmokers smash such stereotypes. For another thing, even if every potsmoker matched such a stereotype, that would be much preferable to the violence and other damage caused by so many people who abuse alcohol. Â Helping further to smash such stereotypes were the approximately 150 to 200 peopleÂ who appeared before 10:00 a.m. yesterday morning for the second day of the tenth national conference of Students for Sensible Drug Policy at the University of Maryland. When I was in college, it was tough to get me anywhere that early on a Saturday morning. Â I only got to stay at the conference less than two hours, because I was with my young son. However, for a boy as active as he is, I was taken at how attentive he was to the events, for the first half hour. The speakers I heard addressed matters that I mainly had heard before, but these were important talking points for the attendees to know for spreading the word of drug policy reform. Â At the conference, I met and re-met the following folks: Â I re-spoke with Kris Krane, who heads the SSDP. Catch Kris here, debunking any value in parents forcing drug tests on their children. Â First and foremost, for the first time I met fellow blogger Pete Guither of DrugWarRant. Yesterday, Pete entered some blog entries about the SSDP conference as events unfolded. His drive from Illinois to Maryland was slowed by accidents and snow in western Maryland. but he made it. I would have liked to have talked to Pete longer than exchanging some pleasantries, but I was due back home. Speaking of blogs, check out the SSDP's Dare Generation Diary. Â I met Drug Policy Alliance Executive Director Ethan Nadelman, who is a very good spokesperson for drug policy reform. Â I again bumped into Kevin Zeese, who heads Common Sense for Drug Policy. Kevin co-founded the then-named Drug Policy Foundation. Â I also again bumped into my business neighbor Eric Sterling, who heads the Criminal Justice Policy Foundation. Â As an entertainment bonus, I met late-night infomercial huckster Matthew Lesko, who never leaves home without a custom-made suit laden with question marks. It seems that his son is involved in the SSDP.Â Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Drugs at 00:00

Hilarious clip here Jon...I wonder what would happen if an attorney gathered these characters together and had them all sit in court during a pot possession trial? This could be an interesting defense I posit!

Anonymous on Nov 23 2008, 14:35

Thanks for your comment. The linked "Up in Smoke" segment is among the best movie scenes I ever have seen. Jon

Anonymous on Nov 24 2008, 07:19