

OxyContin is a New Target in the War on Drugs

David Spakowicz, New Wisconsin Drug Czar, Will Bust You for Selling or Using OxyContin

By Michael Thompson

Wisconsin's new drug czar, like other drug czars, is eager to put people in prison. David Spakowicz, appointed as director of the Wisconsin Justice Department's Narcotics Bureau, says he even will imprison people for abuse of OxyContin, a prescription drug. "We see a lot of kids get addicted to OxyContin," David Spakowicz told The Chicago Tribune in an interview. "They divert them generally from other prescriptions to already legally prescribed people. They see that mom or dad might have had some Oxy in their medicine cabinet that they didn't use, because they had a back injury. All of a sudden now they're selling it to their friends. And with OxyContin we've seen within the last about year and a half, though, the price of Oxy on the street level has doubled. It used to be 50 cents a milligram. Now it's a dollar a milligram. So for a 40-milligram Oxy, what used to cost a person \$20 now costs them \$40. Unfortunately with that, we're seeing that a lot of younger people can't afford that, so they're switching to heroin, because it's less expensive."

Therefore, abuse of prescription OxyContin is similar to abuse of illegal drugs. People get hooked, and so they commit robberies and burglaries in order to find the money to feed their habits. On the selling side, there are gang wars in order to protect turf.

There has been a so-called War on Drugs in the United States for several decades, long before OxyContin entered the picture. Has the War on Drugs succeeded? In other words, are there people who want to buy drugs, but can't find the drugs because the War on Drugs has been so successful? It seems that anybody who wants some OxyContin, or some heroin, or some crack cocaine, or some powder cocaine, will find what they want, sooner or later. This is true in spite of the efforts of all of the drug enforcers, such as David Spakowicz in Wisconsin.

The United States now has 2.4 million people in prison, a far higher rate than any other nation. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, one-third of these inmates are behind bars for drug possession or small-time drug sales. The proportion of ethnic minorities is 10 times higher than the proportion of whites.

David Spakowicz says, "Every day that I can disrupt an organization or arrest somebody that is dealing any kind of controlled substance and have them go to jail, that stops that. ... The day that we give up is the day that they win, and we won't let that happen."

But aren't they winning already? If you want some OxyContin or some heroin, regardless, you should have no trouble finding it. Is the War on Drugs successful, and does the War on Drugs represent justice?

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1322403/oxycontin_is_a_new_target_in_the_war.html?cat=5