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Fighting Prohibitions: Tools, Tactics, and Strategies

Speech at the 2nd International Conference against Prohibition (“Are guests welcome? Prohibition and the hospitality industry”)

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Abstract

The fight against the Smoking Prohibitionists offers insights into fighting the growing movement to bring the same sort of slice by slice Prohibition to other areas as well.

Prohibitionists generally do not have a flowing spring of public sympathy at the start of their campaigns. They build that sympathy through lies that spread dislike, fear, and eventually hatred toward those engaging in the activities that are targeted. In the case of smoking the power of those lies was greatly magnified by an enormous input of tax money in the 1990s and 2000s.

Free Choice supporters don't have the money of the Prohibitionists, but do have the advantage of having truth and facts that can tear down the lies.

Without money, the most effective way to get that information out to the public seems to be through internet postings, videos, and sites, informational flyers/posters that can be spread to smokers, short and easily read printable booklets that convey enough information to convince people that they truly have been lied to while getting them angry about those lies, and books that can present the case against Prohibitions in a formal and in-depth format that counters the "air of authority" that Prohibitionists often rely on to support unthinking acceptance of their claims.

The primary concern of anti-prohibitionists must always be with accuracy, truth, and openness in our statements and materials so as to best hit the enemy at their weakest point: their lies. Simple and clear examples illustrating such things as the outrageous exaggerations concerning the health effects of ETS exposure and the economic impact of bans can be powerful.