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SPIES, TRAITORS, AND SABOTEURS: FEAR AND FREEDOM IN AMERICA

Exhibition Opens at the Chicago History Museum on April 8, 2017

CHICAGO (March 1, 2017) – The Chicago History Museum presents “Spies, Traitors, and Saboteurs: Fear and Freedom in America,” an exhibition that reveals nine major events and periods in U.S. history when the nation felt threatened by those within its borders, opening Saturday, April 8, 2017.

“Grounded in 19th and 20th century history, the charged content in the exhibition challenges each of us to consider how to strike the right balance between security and freedom in the 21st century,” said Peter Alter, Director of the Studs Terkel Center for Oral History at the Chicago History Museum.

The exhibition illustrates the evolution of public opinion, the impact on citizens, the response by U.S. law enforcement, counter intelligence, and homeland security, and the challenge of securing the nation without compromising the civil liberties upon which it was founded.

Events and periods include:

- **The City of Washington Captured and the White House Burned – August 24, 1814**

During the War of 1812, the City of Washington was captured and the White House, Capitol, and other major public buildings were torched by British troops—aided by information provided by a few Americans.

- **Manhattan Hit by Massive Explosions in New York Harbor – July 30, 1916**

German secret agents, aided by American collaborators, blew up a munitions depot in New York Harbor, showering Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty with shrapnel and debris. Acts of German sabotage on America soil like this contributed to America’s entry into World War I, and inspired the passage of the 1918 Espionage Act, still in effect today, and what would become the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

- **Anarchist Bombs Target American Leaders – June 2, 1919**

When the home of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer was bombed by an anarchist and plots for more bombings were revealed, both the public and the government clamored for tighter law enforcement and more restrictive legislation for immigrants, resulting in the roundups, deportations, and public outrage associated with the now infamous “Palmer Raids.”

- **30,000 Ku Klux Klan Members March Down Pennsylvania Avenue – August 8, 1925**

The nation’s most notorious hate group, Ku Klux Klan, has risen repeatedly over the course of the nation’s history. Each time, the group changed, evolving from small vigilante groups inflicting terror on former slaves after the Civil War; to a politically powerful organization of four-million members in the 1920s expanding its targets to include immigrants, Jews, and Catholics; to the violent groups of the 1960s attacking African Americans and civil rights workers.

- **American Helps Japanese Pilot Terrorize Hawaiian Island after Pearl Harbor Attack – December 7, 1941**

A Japanese pilot returning from the Pearl Harbor attack, crash-landed on the Hawaiian Island of Nihau, and with the support of a Japanese American, took hostages and terrorized the community. This

incident, little remembered today, perpetuated fears about Japanese Americans—fears that ultimately led to the unprecedented incarceration of thousands of innocent American citizens.

- **Kremlin Launches one of the first Cold War Attacks Against the U.S. – April 1945**

Near the end of WWII, the Kremlin harshly condemned American Communists for softening their commitment to a worldwide communist revolution. The Communist Party of the United States snapped to action, ousting its moderate leader and reestablishing itself as a highly militant and subversive organization—and fueling America’s fears that American Communists would become Stalin’s tool for the overthrow of the U.S. government.

- **Radical Group Explodes Bomb in the U.S. Capitol – March 1, 1971**

Protests over the war in Vietnam War and civil rights turned violent during the “days of rage,” and extremist groups, such as the Weather Underground and the Black Liberation Army, took action.

- **Massive Bomb Destroys the Federal Building in Oklahoma City – April 19, 1995**

The Oklahoma City bombing, the deadliest act of terrorism on U.S. soil in the 20th century, awakened Americans to the threats posed by domestic extremists—especially the virulently anti-government right-wing groups.

- **Beyond September 11th – Terrorism Today**

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, initiatives by the U.S. government to identify terrorist elements in the country have changed the lives of all Americans.

The exhibition will support these stories with historic photographs, themed environments, interactive displays, film, artifacts and video. An audio tour further enhances the guest experience. Exhibit highlights include:

- **A timeline** that traces over 80 acts of terror that have taken place in the U.S. from the 1776 to today, including the Revolutionary War plot to kidnap George Washington, the events of Bloody Kansas prior to the Civil War, John Brown’s Raid on Harpers Ferry, 1960s Church bombings in the South, and the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001.
- **APL Badge and ID Card (1917)** – carried by Operatives of the American Protective League (APL) who spied on their fellow Americans on behalf of the U.S. Justice Department during World War I.
- **Anarchist Globe Bomb (c. 1886)** – presented as evidence in the trial of the men tried in connection with the Chicago Haymarket riot (replica).
- **Fragments of the Planes that hit the World Trade Center (2001)** – recovered following the attacks on September 11, 2001 and used as evidence by the FBI in their ensuing investigation.

The exhibition first opened at the International Spy Museum, the only public museum in the United States solely dedicated to the tradecraft, history, and contemporary role of espionage, on May 2004 and began its tour around the U.S. in February of 2006. The Chicago History Museum is proud to be the final stop for the acclaimed exhibition.

The exhibition is supported by lead sponsor the Pritzker Military Museum & Library. For more on “Spies, Traitors, and Saboteurs: Fear and Freedom in America,” and the Chicago History Museum’s programs and exhibitions, visit chicagohistory.org or call 312-642-4600.

ABOUT THE CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

The Chicago History Museum, a major museum and research center for Chicago and American history, is located at 1601 N. Clark Street. The Museum can be reached by CTA buses 22, 36, 72, 73, 151, and 156. Parking is conveniently located one block north of the Museum at Clark and LaSalle Streets (enter on Stockton Drive). Admission includes our audio tours: \$16 adults, \$14 seniors/students, free for children 12 years and younger. Please call 312-642-4600 or visit us at chicagohistory.org. To learn more follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). The Chicago History Museum gratefully acknowledges the support of the Chicago Park District on behalf of the people of Chicago. The Chicago History Museum is a 2016 winner of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service, the highest award given to these institutions for their community engagement and having an impact on the lives of individuals, families, and communities.