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US Record Stores to Phase Out “Foreign Music” Under Homeland Music Plan

Washington, D.C. -- April 1, 2005 -- Six of the largest US music store chains have signed on with a government-sponsored project to emphasize “terrorism-free music.” Announced at a joint press conference this morning with Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, the Homeland-Overseas Music Enterprise (HOME), spearheaded by the department of Homeland Security, is billed as an attempt to stem the tide of foreign music entering the United States. The six stores are:

- Best Buy
- Hastings Entertainment
- Tower Records
- Trans World Entertainment (FYE, Strawberries & Coconuts stores)
- Virgin Entertainment Group
- Warehouse Music

The Homeland-Overseas Music Enterprise leaves implementation details up to the individual retailers, but provides general guidelines, including doing away with “world music” or “foreign music” sections, limiting purchases of music from overseas distributors without a US partner company, and eliminating purchases of all music from nations on the US State Departments list of countries supporting terrorism.

Chertoff explained that HOME was an essential tool in the effort to mobilize Americans against the threat of terrorism. “As the President reminds all of us, it is his most important job, and the most important job of the federal government: protect the American people and our way of life from terrorism. The Department of Homeland Security has uncovered evidence that financing and recruiting wings of some terrorist organizations are turning to the music industry, which has until today been outside the scope of the Department. HOME will help eliminate music from the most potentially dangerous sources, and will ensure that the music Americans enjoy is not harming the national interests of the country they love.”

In addition to a change in the labeling of sections at their favorite record stores, consumers can expect to see stickers on individual CDs trumpeting the stores’ participation in the project. While samples of these stickers were not provided to the press, they are expected to convey the message, Chertoff said, that “the music in your hands supports America, not terrorists.”

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