

The only other problem, for the general reader, is the sheer inclusiveness of the argument. Because Nardinelli has apparently absorbed all the extant literature on the subject of child labor in the Industrial Revolution, he sometimes deals with arcana that could be of interest only to fellow academics. But, on the other hand, he covers many areas about which solid information is urgently needed. He shows that anecdotes by themselves reveal little without an understanding of which direction the trends are going, and what the historical context is; and he unveils that context. Despite its rather dry tone, *Child Labor and the Industrial Revolution* is a clear and important contribution to setting capitalism's historical record straight. □

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THE CRISIS IN DRUG PROHIBITION

edited by David Boaz

Cato Institute, 224 Second Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003 • 1990 • 148 pages • \$8.00 paper

Reviewed by William H. Peterson

Prohibition is an awful flop.

We like it.

It can't stop what it's meant to stop.

We like it.

It's left a trail of graft and slime,

It don't prohibit worth a dime,

It's filled our land with vice and crime.

Nevertheless, we're for it.

So wrote Franklin P. Adams (as recalled by contributor James Ostrowski in this volume) kidding the 1931 report of the Wickersham Commission, a blue-ribbon panel of eminent Americans appointed by President Hoover. Hoover and the nation were perplexed by the wholesale defiance of law, the mushrooming of speakeasies, the rise of the Mafia, the wave of organized crime that swept over America in the 1920s.

Amazingly, the Wickersham Commission concluded that, although "there is as yet no adequate observance or enforcement" of Prohibition or the 18th Amendment, the Government should "substantially" increase appropriations and crack down harder on the law-breakers. Nonetheless, proponents of legalization won the struggle: in

1933, just two years later, the 18th Amendment was repealed and Prohibition was dead.

Ostrowski, the head of Citizens Against [Drug] Prohibition, is right to review the story of [alcohol] Prohibition and point up the wisdom of Santayana that those who don't know history are condemned to repeat it. For today President Bush, like the Wickersham Commission of yesteryear, escalates the War on Drugs, seeking appropriations of \$11.7 billion in Federal anti-drug funding for fiscal 1992, an increase of 11 percent over 1991.

James Ostrowski is one of 28 leading critics of drug prohibition gathered in this timely and most important Cato study. They cover the opinion spectrum from left to right, from Anthony Lewis, Richard Cohen, and Hodding Carter III to Charles Murray, Milton Friedman, and William F. Buckley Jr. They include the editors of *The Economist*, Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, New York State Senator Joseph Galiber, Hoover Institution economist Thomas Sowell, and Princeton University Professor Ethan Nadelmann.

The critics see the government's intervention of prohibiting drugs bringing on the Law of Unintended Consequences with a vengeance: a sharp increase in street crime, the spread of AIDS (through exchanging contaminated needles), the swelling of our prisons with drug offenders, children lured into drug dealing, destruction of inner-city communities, a further decline in respect for the law, the corruption of law enforcement officials from Latin America to the ghettos of Harlem and Watts, Chicago and Washington, D.C.

To be sure, legalization wouldn't solve the drug problem entirely. But, notes editor and Cato's executive vice president David Boaz in his introduction, legal drugs are getting weaker—low-tar cigarettes, nonalcoholic beer, wine coolers. He points out that 41 million Americans have quit smoking, and sales of spirits are off. Too, as Americans become more health conscious, they are turning away from drugs. Boaz feels drug education would do more to encourage the trend if it were separated from drug enforcement.

Professor Nadelmann argues there would be no dramatic increases in drug use after legalization. He cites evidence from the Netherlands, the American states that have already decriminalized marijuana, Asian countries when drugs were legal, and 19th-century America—where all drugs were legal.

How would legalization be implemented? Back to editor Boaz. He suggests the nation might apply "the alcohol model." Thus marijuana, cocaine, and heroin would be sold only in specially licensed stores, perhaps in liquor stores, perhaps in a new kind of drugstore. Warning labels would be posted in the stores and on the packages. It would be illegal to sell drugs to minors. It would be illegal to advertise drugs on television "and possibly even in print." It would be illegal to drive under the influence of drugs,

and there would be added penalties for committing other crimes under their influence, as is the case with alcohol.

Such concessions from well-known libertarian Boaz indicate how much the War on Drugs has backfired, how much America needs to debate here and now the question: "Does Prohibition Create More Problems Than It Solves?" ☐

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LIBERALISM: IN THE CLASSICAL TRADITION



Ludwig von Mises

LIBERALISM: In The Classical Tradition by Ludwig von Mises is a book-length essay that sums up the ideas and principles of classical liberalism as they apply to the twentieth century. First published in Germany in 1927, it was published in the United States under the title *The Free and Prosperous Commonwealth* in 1962 and reissued in the mid-seventies by The Institute for Humane Studies. It was republished by The Foundation for Economic Education in association with the Cobden Press in 1985, and has recently been reprinted.

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