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## Another War Yielding Poor Results

Gil Kerlikowske, the U.S. drug czar, claims that cocaine production in Colombia has dropped by almost two-thirds in the last decade ([Letters, March 4](#)). In fact, that figure refers to the amount of land dedicated to coca cultivation. But cocaine producers have increased their productivity. According to the United Nations 2010 World Drug Report, potential cocaine production in Colombia is actually 40% lower than in 1999—a reduction that has been almost fully offset by substantial increases in production in Peru and Bolivia. The fact that the Andean region produced roughly the same amount of cocaine in 2008 (latest data available) as in 1998 speaks to the continuing failure of Washington's hemispheric war on drugs.

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Mr. Kerlikowske compares his war on drugs to efforts relating to smoking reduction and decreasing drunk driving, but ignores the obvious parallel with the "Great Experiment." The prohibition of alcohol didn't work, nor will his programs regarding narcotics, but the waste in lives and money are enormous. The only way to stop the slaughter is to legalize the use of narcotics and accept the consequences, which will be infinitely less in terms of the destruction of life and communities, once the profit motive is removed.

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