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War on Drugs: the Definition of Insanity

Bob Bauman (September 27, 2010)

The late Albert Einstein defined “insanity” as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

No better description can be found than that to describe the U.S. government’s, (or should I say American politicians), so-called “war on drugs.”



By any reasonable and logical standard this “war” has failed miserably.

- * It has not stopped drug use, which, along with increased demand, has grown every year.
- * It has caused massive political disruption and violence in many countries, such as Columbia and Mexico and in many American cities
- * It has created insatiable multi-billion dollar annual expenditures fattening police departments at all levels, local, state and federal, supported by the evil of civil forfeiture.
- * It has served as the false justification for restricting personal and financial privacy and demolishing constitutional rights, including the right against unreasonable search and seizure guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment.
- * It has made the U.S. the highest per capita nation in the world when it comes to people locked away in jail; higher than Soviet Russia or apartheid South Africa.

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Cost in Liberty and Dollars

[I have written before](#) about the failed war on drugs and recommended that drugs be legalized and controlled, much as alcohol is now handled by laws.

In a new [Cato Institute](#) report, authors Jeffrey A. Miron and Katherine Waldo estimate that legalizing drugs would save roughly \$41.3 billion per year in U.S. government expenditure on enforcement of prohibition.

The report also estimates that drug legalization would yield tax revenue of \$46.7 billion annually assuming legal drugs were taxed at rates comparable to those on alcohol and tobacco.

At a time when millions of Americans are said to be clamoring for reduced government spending, an end to deficits and balanced budgets, one policy change that can reduce deficits is ending the drug war.

Legalization means reduced expenditure on enforcement and an increase in tax revenue from legalized sales.

Read [The Budgetary Impact of Ending Drug Prohibition](#), by Jeffrey A. Miron and Katherine Waldock.



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About the Author

Robert E. "Bob" Bauman, legal counsel to The Sovereign Society, serves on its board of directors and was the founding editor of The Sovereign Society Offshore A-Letter, more than a decade ago.

Society members and many others know Bob as the prolific author of many articles, reports and books. His writings have appeared in The Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, National Review, Human Events and many other publications.

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