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# Breaking the Impasse in the War On Drugs

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Finally, apart from a couple of pages on the SLBM forces, a person new to the field might conclude from reading Snow's work that the United States has no navy or at least that its navy has few functions or components worthy of note. In this regard, the text virtually ignores the 600-ship navy, carrier aircraft operations, ASW capabilities, amphibious warfare, and a good deal else.

Too much should not be made of the criticism here. This book covers a wide assortment of important subjects in a creditable manner. Still, for this reader, the extremely severe compression of the material is at best a mixed blessing.

JOSEPH M. SCOLNICK, JR.  
Wise, Virginia

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Wakin, Malham M. *War, Morality, and the Military Profession*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1986, 521pp. \$17.95

This is a revised edition of an anthology originally composed by Colonel Wakin to meet the needs of the philosophy program at the U.S. Air Force Academy, but its usefulness is not confined to Colorado Springs. The editorial matter will be helpful in the classroom, but the lasting value of the book is the selection of first-rate articles on its two major themes: the moral character of the military profession and the morality of war. The first section makes the important point that moral values are inherent in the military profession and are not

merely external constraints on it. The second section provides a cogent progression of thought from the sources of just-war theory and pacifism, through the moral prohibition of the taking of innocent lives, to the contemporary debate over nuclear deterrence. The contemporary problem that does not get explicit treatment is the question of proper responses to terrorism, though the material on killing the innocent is clearly relevant to our moral evaluations of terrorism. The book would be much helped by the addition of a bibliography and representative essays by Paul Ramsey and James Johnson, who have been the most significant recent Protestant exponents of just-war doctrine. The essays in the book are of current interest, but they will also prove to be of lasting value. Bringing them together in this form should help academic moralists and reflective officers to understand each other better.

JOHN LANGAN, S.J.  
Washington, D.C.

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Wisotsky, Steven. *Breaking the Impasse in the War On Drugs*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986, 279pp. \$35

"The War on Drugs is clearly stuck, mired in paramilitary rhetoric that obscures understanding while worsening the problem. Enforcement does not work to control supply. Therefore we must intensify enforcement. That creates terrible black-

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market pathologies at home and abroad. Therefore we must intensify enforcement even more, further worsening the consequences. This vicious circle represents a complete failure of courage and intelligence, perversely working against our own self interests." With these damning words, author Steven Wisotsky summarizes the central thesis of his impressive new offering, *Breaking the Impasse in the War On Drugs*. In Wisotsky's view, the U.S. enforcement-oriented campaign to eliminate the "drug problem" in our society is not only an abject failure, but actually serves to perpetuate the societal ills it so vigorously strives to cure. Consequently, this enormously expensive and increasingly militarized effort is inevitably doomed to fail.

Needless to say, Wisotsky's unwelcome conclusions are hardly likely to find much support in the passionately antidrug atmosphere of our time. Yet proponents of the popular enforcement crusade will be disappointed to discover that the author of this decidedly pessimistic verdict is no crackpot cultural dropout with a personal axe to grind. On the contrary, Steven Wisotsky is a professor of law at Florida's Nova University, an experienced member of both the state and federal bar, and author of numerous scholarly articles on a variety of legal topics. Moreover, as a thirty-year resident of South Florida, the book's author has lived and worked at the vortex of this Nation's massive drug enforcement effort for all of his adult life. Small wonder then, that Wisotsky would

choose to devote much of the past 5 years to teaching an annual law school seminar on drug law enforcement and would come to organize and edit the proceedings of last year's Nova University symposium on the war on drugs. Thus, when Mr. Wisotsky delivers his latest literary broadside against the current drug law enforcement scheme, he does so from the secure position of a legal scholar who has taken the time to do his homework first.

The results are impressive. Working from the premise that marijuana has already become a fully integrated feature of contemporary American society, Wisotsky chooses to focus on the booming cocaine industry to make his case. Relying heavily on government studies and reports, the author first provides an overview of the mushrooming black market in this drug, then proceeds to detail the many facets of the United States' determined campaign to eliminate its use. While these expositions do make interesting reading, the real meat of Wisotsky's work lies in the several chapters which follow. There the author hammers home the message that the war on drugs carries with it an enormous human cost, a cultural debit far more significant than the billions of dollars which the taxpayers must annually surrender to the cause. Indeed, Wisotsky argues that the real cost of the contemporary war on drugs is measured in terms of an assault on civil rights, a growth of domestic "Big Brotherism," tax evasion, corrosion of the work ethic, corruption of public officials, vio-

lence, disrespect for the law, corruption and destabilization of neighboring nations, and the emergence of the disquieting phenomenon of "narcoterrorism" throughout the hemisphere.

Wisotsky makes a convincing argument for radical reform of our entire drug law enforcement system. Still, his work is not without its rough spots. Conservatives will surely bristle at the suggestion that recreational drug use is not necessarily a bad thing, and pragmatists will bemoan the author's failure to provide solutions to the myriad problems likely to arise in the event that the present enforcement scheme is discarded. Moreover, much of the "latest" statistical information presented seems somewhat dated. While Wisotsky freely admits the presence of this built-in hazard in dealing with a topic as current as today's headlines, one must also note that fully three-quarters of the source material cited by the author is more than 5 years old. Finally, some readers will find Professor Wisotsky's style a bit too academic for their taste (this is the author's first work intended for general readership) and almost everyone is sure to be puzzled by his inclusion of a series of supply and demand curves far better suited to a first-year text on economics.

In the end, however, the several shortcomings outlined above do not significantly detract from the underlying validity of much of what Wisotsky has to say. There certainly can be no doubting that the United

to combat the production, importation, sale, and use of illicit drugs. Every day seems to bring news of still another "record" drug seizure or arrest, and our prisons are literally filled to overflowing as a consequence. Yet the harsh reality of the situation is that—in spite of our most strenuous efforts to prevent it—the supply of drugs is growing, their price is falling, and their availability in this country is running at an all-time high. Something is clearly wrong here.

More than a century ago Carl von Clausewitz cautioned that "no war should be undertaken . . . without first obtaining an answer to the question 'what is to be obtained by the same,'" and then using the goal thus arrived at to determine "the value of the sacrifices by which it is to be purchased." If Professor Wisotsky is to be believed, then the United States has neither a coherent goal for its war on drugs nor a genuine appreciation for "the value of the sacrifices" which the American people are being asked to make in its name. At the very least, this thought-provoking book demands the initiation of a thorough review of our current drug law enforcement policy, a policy which its author plainly believes is doing much more harm than good. Steven Wisotsky has posed some painfully probing questions for both the elected officials and voting public of this Nation. The search for answers cannot begin too soon.

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