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# Repeal Doesn't Make Wrongs Right

ONE way to reduce law-breaking is to repeal or nullify laws that are being broken. Whether such a practice is beneficial to the public is a question, but there is a trend to do this.

A recent pronouncement along this line came from a local spokesman for Public Inebriation Alternative, who said: "The basic goal of PIA is to free the criminal justice system of public drunks and we don't feel officers should spend their time arresting drunks, a victimless crime."

People who have been crippled by drunken drivers or who have had relatives killed by intoxicated persons would hardly agree that public drunkenness is "a victimless crime."

Because most people consider the practice and solicitation of prostitution to be detrimental to society and public morals, there are laws against both. When Oklahoma City police stepped up enforcement a few weeks ago, prostitutes complained that their "rights" were being abused. They want the law ignored

or repealed.

A number of states have "decriminalized" use of marijuana by changing laws and others have just stopped enforcing the laws they have. Courts sometimes refuse to impose penalties.

The Civil Service Commission has stopped asking applicants whether they are Communists and won't consider use of marijuana a bar to federal employment. The attitude seems to be "the laws are hard to enforce, so let's ease up on them."

It is illegal for foreigners to enter the United States except through established procedures, but many evade the rules. Proposals have been made to allow all aliens who came in illegally before 1970 to remain here and become legal residents. This is easier than to enforce the laws.

Many rules that once maintained discipline and dignity on college campuses have disappeared. Even serious scholastic offenses, such as cheating on exams, seldom incur harsh penalties that used to be automatic.

Morality has become optional at many universities, as educators disregard rules that they find hard to enforce.

"Nowadays, the prevailing myth is that the root of all evil is unemployment," says Fortune magazine. "There is something touching about the belief that crime, rioting and looting are the bottom artifacts of unemployment."

This widespread notion is used as an excuse for pampering criminals through light sentences and easy paroles.

A New York federal judge said recently: "The almost wholly unchecked and sweeping powers we give to judges in the fashioning of sentences are terrifying and intolerable for a society that professes devotion to rule of law."

We don't improve society by repealing laws just because they are not popular with law-breakers or those who patronize them. Without law enforcement, freedom is in danger.