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## INTRODUCTION

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FOSDICK AND SCOTT'S *TOWARD LIQUOR CONTROL* HAS DONE MORE TO SHAPE modern American alcohol policy than any other book except the Bible.

Attempting to describe what *Toward Liquor Control* teaches reminds us of a 1980's television commercial for Prego spaghetti sauce with its tagline "It's in there." What about meat? It's in there. What about spices? It's in there. And so on.

For anyone who has ever wondered how America's alcohol regulatory systems were created, how they have worked, and why they have stood the test of time, "It's in there" best summarizes *Toward Liquor Control*. Ask a series of questions about important historical and recurring alcohol policies and the answer is the same: "It's in there."

Does *Toward Liquor Control* explain why Prohibition failed? It's in there. What are the dangers of bootleggers and lack of respect for the law? In there. Does it explain why alcohol manufacturers should not own retailers? Does it discuss alcohol taxation? State run liquor stores? Why lower alcohol products like beer and wine should be regulated differently than hard liquor? Political activities by the alcohol industry? The need for strong and independent state alcohol regulators? Tied house laws? Alcohol advertising? The problems of drunk driving and growing use of specialty mechanical operations? The need for, but limits of, education relating to alcohol and its use? It's all in there. Items that this book addresses are still relevant to modern policy debates.

And even items that are not specifically mentioned in *Toward Li-*

*quor Control* are “in there.” For example, this book serves as a road map for many modern issues facing policy makers even beyond alcohol. Whether it is regulation of newer types of alcohol products, marijuana legalization, or the limits of education campaigns, *Toward Liquor Control* serves as a fountain of knowledge and direction for all who drink from its pages.

Because of its historical importance and its timeless relevance, this book is a must read for anyone interested in today’s alcohol regulatory system. It was commissioned by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who admitted that Prohibition, his preferred policy, embodied in the 18th Amendment, was a failure; but rather than throwing up his hands, he rolled up his sleeves and funded this seminal work to serve as a blueprint for what would happen when alcohol was again legal.

As Rockefeller notes in his foreword, “Except to ask Mr. Fosdick and Mr. Scott to make the investigation, I have taken no part in the matter.” And he made great selections with Raymond B. Fosdick, a practicing attorney who was already an expert on police and international matters and Albert L. Scott, an engineer, who was active in social and religious movements including Alcoholics Anonymous.

Fosdick and Scott published *Toward Liquor Control* in 1933, just as the 21st Amendment was being ratified. Their comprehensive study arrived just in time to bridge the divide between “wets” and “drys” as they created a new alcohol policy. It helped create a permanent peace between these groups whose members had battled for decades in local municipal elections all the way to presidential platform committees. Alcohol was the defining political issue for countless elections and many parts of the country had swung between dry and wet like a piano metronome with the loser stewing and plotting their next attempt to swing the debate their way. *Toward Liquor Control* broke this metronomic cycle by creating a new template to shape future political, legislative and economic debates about alcohol and its role in society. Stability was a new concept to be tested.

*Toward Liquor Control*’s four main themes remain relevant today:

- It expresses strong support for the state serving as the seller of alcohol over the license system. The book asserts that a state run system would prevent the gradual erosion of alcohol controls by those with economic interests in the alcohol business.
- It strongly pushes for trade practice regulations and the prevention of vertical integration in the alcohol market. Alcohol regulation should also ensure the continued absence of the saloon from American social life.
- It notes that states must use their control systems to steer society to lower alcohol form of products. Liquor is to be tightly restricted; lower forms of alcohol such as lower alcohol beer and wines are to have less restrictive regulations. It notes that the return of beer early in 1933 did not create problems and should serve as a model for lower alcohol products; and
- It notes the limits of theoretical and utopian ideals as a way to regulate society. There must be political support the authors concluded:

*Forty eight states are attempting to set up a new method of control. In the last analysis, there is but one fundamental rule to be followed-and all other rules are corollaries: If the new system is not rooted in what the people of each state sincerely desire at this moment, it makes no difference how logical and complete it may appear as a statute – it cannot succeed.*

There are many other important points relating to the proper level of taxation, both of the product and the industry, education, the best type of license systems, political influence by the alcohol industry, and education programs by government entities. Many of these points remain relevant and timely discussion items to this date.

However, it must also be noted what is not in *Toward Liquor Control*. Many important regulatory functions were developed after this book as state governments put the theories of *Toward Liquor*

*Control* into practice by standing up strong working alcohol regulatory systems. The state governments later created systems and eventually the use of words such as “three tier” and “wholesaler” grew out of these next steps. Obviously this 1933 book could not predict specific modern alcohol debates about the internet, new alcoholic products, ignition interlock devices or other policy debates that have commanded attention recently. However, its general guides do offer assistance even in today’s debates.

*Toward Liquor Control* makes the case for the system that has become today’s successful, state-based regulatory system. This book takes the important perspective that regardless of the authors’ personal opinions, alcohol will now be legal—so how does society make sure this historically problematic and controversial issue is regulated? How does a society regulate an industry that has a proven track record of being irresponsible? How do you regulate a product that in moderation produces social ease and possibly even some medical benefits, while in excess causes serious societal and physiological harm? How do you apply laws of economics to a product, unlike other consumer goods, whose ubiquity and low price are causes for concern? Fosdick and Scott anticipated these recurring problems and provided a road map to provide guidance to policy-makers, regulators, control advocates, industry stakeholders and the public.

The book asks and answers a number of important questions that were important in 1933 and remain important today. The Center for Alcohol Policy believes that this book has been out of modern policy discussions far too long. The Center seeks to get this important work into the hands of academics, policy makers, regulators, and anyone else interested in debates about alcohol. The same issues identified by Fosdick and Scott in the 1930’s are still being discussed today. The Center for Alcohol Policy is pleased make this book widely available. We hope it contributes to both a better understanding of existing state alcohol policies as well as informing the ongoing debate over the future of those policies.

We strongly believe that you should read *Toward Liquor Con-*

*trol*, draw your own conclusions and marvel at its relevance today. We believe that no matter what your perspective or policy interest, when searching for answers you will agree, “It’s in there.”

*Sincerely,*

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