

**DBQ****PROHIBITION**

## CHAPTER 22

**Directions:** The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-Q *and* your knowledge of the period referred to in the position. High scores will be earned only by essays that both cite key pieces of evidence from the documents and draw on outside knowledge of the period. Some of the documents have been edited, and wording and punctuation have been modernized. Be sure to:

1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about this topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
2. Now, read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to make brief notes.
3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the question.
4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. The essay should be logically presented and should include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge outside of the documents.

**Question:** In the twentieth century prohibition spread by states' passing local option laws, which permitted a unit of local government, such as a county, to prohibit the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages. After an intensive campaign by the Anti-Saloon League and other prohibitionist organizations and reform groups, national prohibition was achieved by the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution in 1919.

What accounts for the success of the prohibition movement in the United States during the era of progressive reform, 1900-1919? Consider the social composition of the prohibitionists, their motives, strategy and pressure-group tactics, and the relationship of prohibitionism to progressive reform.

**Document A**

Source: Carry A. Nation, *The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation* (1908)

“The first thing that struck me was the life-size picture of a naked woman, opposite the mirror. . . . It is very significant that the pictures of naked women are in saloons. Women are stripped of everything by them. Her husband is torn from her, she is robbed of her sons, her home, her food and her virtue, and then they strip her clothes off and hang her up bare in these dens of robbery and murder. Truly does a saloon make a woman bare of all things! The motive for doing this is to suggest vice, animating the animal in man and degrading the respect he should have for the sex to whom he owes his being, yes, his Savior also!”

**Document B**

Source: Resolution adopted by the House of Delegates at the annual meeting of the American Medical Association (June 4-8, 1917)

“WHEREAS, We believe that the use of alcohol as a beverage is detrimental to the human economy, and

“WHEREAS, Its use in therapeutics, as a tonic or a stimulant or as a food has no scientific basis, therefore be it

“Resolved, That the American Medical Association opposes the use of alcohol as a beverage; and be it further

“Resolved, That the use of alcohol as a therapeutic agent should be discouraged.”

**Document C**

Source: Thomas D. West, a businessman, “Back with the Saloon as a Safety First Measure,” *Survey* (December 20, 1913)

“There are three distinct conditions that demand special consideration, anyone of which would justify refusing licenses to saloons seeking to be near industrial plants:

“First, saloons should be kept back from all industries that have work of a hazardous character. . . .

“Second, industries that are called upon to work men at night time especially should be free from the danger of quarreling, trouble, strikes and accidents due to the existence of near-by saloons.

“Third, all saloons should be refused licenses wherever girls and adult women who pass them must traverse lonely or squalid districts in their journeying to and from their homes.”

**Document D**

Source: *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, a leading business periodical (March 29, 1919)

“[It is a] singular component of reform that nothing is so important as the task in hand, whether it be the manufacture and sale of intoxicants, or the eight-hour day, or daylight saving, or the removal of signboards from vacant lots. . . . The moral of it all is . . . that we cannot preserve either our liberties, our institutions, or our peculiar form of government, if we are to let self-appointed guardians of the public weal seek the cover of general law for the purpose of obtaining their self-satisfying ends. This prohibition measure and mandate is but one of these ends. It is . . . a theory of the proper social life. In precisely the same manner theorists are seeking to control individual life in commerce.”

## Document E

Source: Charles Stelzle, *A Son of the Bowery* (1926)

“It was in the saloon that the working men in those days held their christening parties, their weddings, their dances, their rehearsals for their singing societies, and all other social functions. . . . Undoubtedly the chief element of attraction was the saloon-keeper himself. . . . He was a social force in the community. His greeting was cordial, his appearance neat, and his acquaintance large. He had access to sources of information which were decidedly beneficial to the men who patronized his saloon. Often he secured work for both the working man and his children.”

## Document F

Source: Governor Ben W. Hooper of Tennessee, speech accepting renomination (1912)

“When I appeal to the people for a legislature free from saloon domination my appeal is not based alone upon grounds of temperance and morality. I want to say to the business men and taxpayers of this state that no valuable reform measure of any character can be secured at the hands of a legislature controlled by the whisky power. Why do I say this? Because the saloon lobby will always be found in alliance with every other corrupt and evil influence that infests the legislative halls. It cannot win alone. It wins in combination with other interests, political and financial, which have legislative axes to grind. It finances the combination and thus controls the component parts.”

## Document G

Source: Clarence Darrow, lawyer, speech on the topic: “Should the United States Continue the Policy of Prohibition as Defined in the Eighteenth Amendment?” (December 14, 1924) From *Verdicts Out of Court*, Arthur and Lila Weinberg (eds.) Chicago: Quadrangle Books, © 1963.

“Now, I don’t believe in encouraging prohibitionists. There isn’t anything that they would stop at. They would pass a law to make you go to church—as they have done. They did that in New England, and they picked out the church. They would send you to jail if you didn’t go to it. And then they passed a law against your sleeping in church—and that took all the pleasure out of religion.

“I say that nobody in their right senses would trust their individual liberty to the people who believe in that sort of legislation. . . .

“Now, suppose we admit, for the sake of the argument, that sixty per cent of the people of this country would vote dry. If sixty per cent of the people do not believe in something that the other forty per cent believe in, should they send the forty per cent to jail for what they do?

“The Anti-Saloon League . . . have an organization; and . . . if a man were ‘dry,’ even though he might be a thief, a crook, or the worst enemy the world ever had, every blooming fool fellow who belonged to that League would vote for him. If he were a statesman, a philosopher, a historian, a wise man, but took a drink, he would have to go. So they loaded up the Congress of the United States with nincompoops, with brainless people who would take their commands and sell their souls for votes—and they voted this country dry while these congressmen had liquor salted away in their cellars.”

## Document H

Source: A Chicago minister, as quoted in *American Issue*, a pro-prohibition newspaper published in Milwaukee (June 26, 1903)

“Yes, deliverance will come, but it will be from the sober and august Anglo-Saxon south, unspoiled and unpoisoned by the wine-tinted, beer-sodden, whiskey-crazed, sabbath-desecrating, God-defying and anarchy-breeding and practicing minions from over the sea and from the vast and virile country-sides where the bible is not yet effete, nor Christ a myth.”

## Document I

OCCUPATIONS OF PROHIBITIONIST LEADERS, 1890-1913  
AND THEIR FATHERS

OCCUPATIONS	PER CENT OF PROHIBITIONIST LEADERS	PER CENT OF FATHERS
farmer	3.7	53.4
clergyman	37.2	26.7
businessman	17.2	9.2
lawyer	15.9	3.1
temperance or social worker	8.6	0.8
journalist	5.0	1.5
teacher	4.4	2.3
lecturer	3.7	0.0
physician	1.5	1.5
clerk or salesmen	2.3	0.0
skilled laborer	0.5	1.5

Note: Statistics based on 616 male and female leaders of the Prohibition party and Anti-Saloon League, and 131 of their fathers. Statistics compiled by the historian Jack S. Blocker, Jr., and presented in his book, *Retreat from Reform*, © 1976. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, Greenwood Press, Inc.

## Document J

RESIDENCE OF PROHIBITIONIST LEADERS  
COMPARED TO TOTAL UNITED STATES POPULATION, 1910

RESIDENCE	PER CENT OF PROHIBITIONIST LEADERS	PER CENT OF UNITED STATES POPULATION
Places of 100,000 and over	37.8	22.1
Places 2,500-99,000	44.4	24.3
Places under 2,300	17.9	53.7

Note: Statistics based on 616 male and female leaders of the Prohibition party and Anti-Saloon League, and 131 of their fathers. Statistics compiled by the historian Jack S. Blocker, Jr., and presented in his book, *Retreat from Reform*, © 1976. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, Greenwood Press, Inc.

## Document K

Source: John S. Gregory, "A Saloonless Nation by 1920," *The World's Work* (June 1915)

"Here, then, in an age especially marked by religious doubt and materialism, we have a movement, already immensely successful, which represents pure religious exaltation. Every step it takes it regards as an act of Divine intervention.

"But the national prohibition cause implies more than a Divine assault upon the Powers of Evil. It represents an attempt of the rural communities to regenerate the towns. Kansas is warring on the wickedness of New York; North Dakota and Oklahoma propose to purify Pennsylvania. The liquor problem in this country at the present moment is largely a city problem. . . .

"Two thirds of all the saloons in the United States are found in ten states—and these are the states that have the largest cities. In fact, a large centralized population is economically essential to the success of the liquor traffic."

## Document L

Source: William J. Cary, Republican congressman from Wisconsin, speech in the House of Representatives (February 8, 1913)

"The campaign in favor of this [prohibition] legislation has been a long and bitterly contested one. For over ten years every resource of a clever and persistent lobby has been used to influence the membership of this House in favor of this most iniquitous legislation. Salaried agents and organizers . . . have been instructing various churches, organizations, clubs and individuals in all kinds of methods of reaching their Congressmen and Senators, and seeking by petition, letter and frequently by open threat to influence members in favor of this sort of legislation."

## Document M

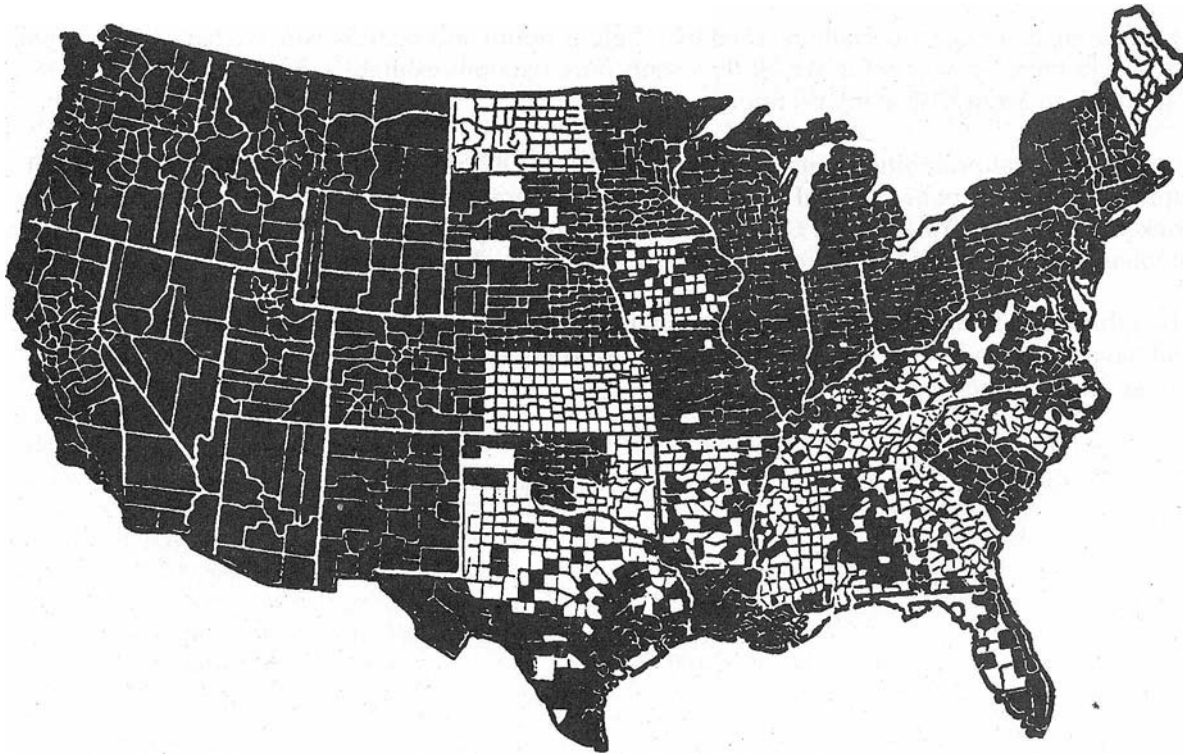
Source: Richards, cartoonist, Philadelphia *North American* (April, 1914)



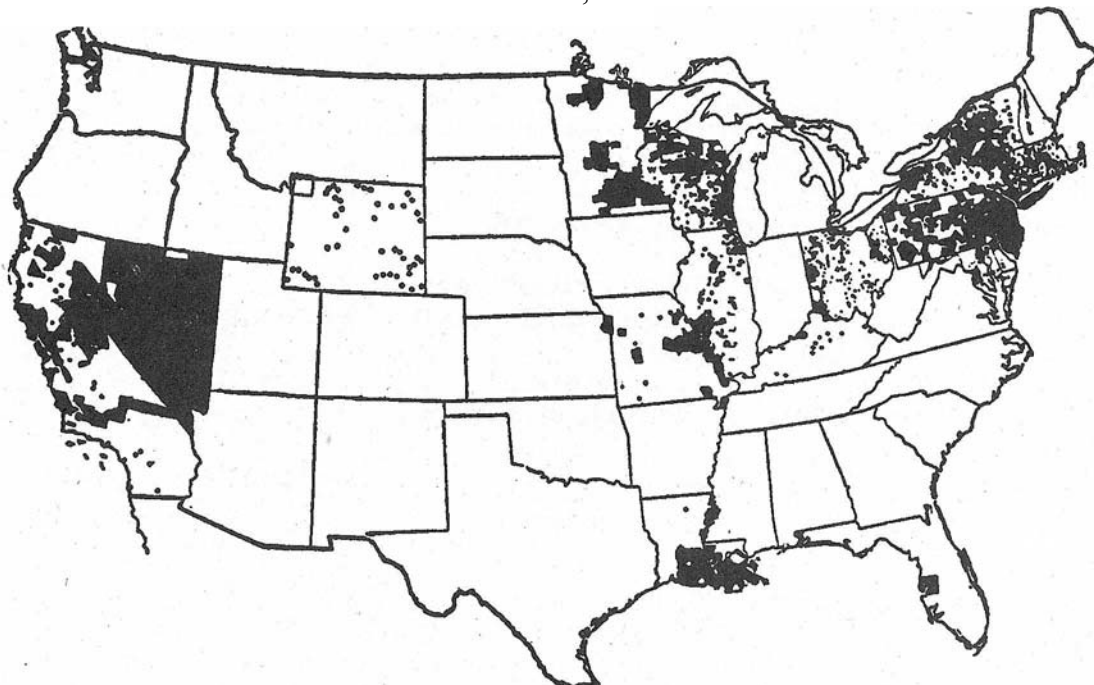
PROPERLY SHOCKED

Document N

“WET” AND “DRY” MAP OF THE UNITED STATES  
JANUARY 1, 1904



“WET” AND “DRY” MAP OF THE UNITED STATES  
MARCH 1, 1917



White—Prohibitionist (i.e., “Dry”) Areas  
Black—License (i.e., “Wet”) Areas

**Document O**

Source: F. P. Stockbridge, "The Church Militant against the Saloon," *The World's Work* (October 1913)

"Whenever a polling list comes out, either for a primary or an election, the names for every ward are given to these 'Captains of Ten,' ten names to every captain. Within a day or two there is a report in the Anti-Saloon League headquarters on every voter in the city. . . . such details about every voter as to whether he has a telephone, has registered, and is a church member; his attitude on county local option and the League regards this as important-what newspaper he reads.

"This is practical politics. This kind of minute information about the individual voters is the secret of the success of every successful political organization."

**Document P**

Source: Rev. John Haynes Holmes, "Why Not into Other Fields?" *Survey* (September 23, 1911)

"Now, whatever we may think about prohibition as a public policy, we must all agree in paying tribute to the efficiency and courage of the churches in their conduct of this relentless fight. Our very admiration for them in this regard, however, only serves to stir up in our minds the insistent question as to why the churches limit their endeavors for social betterment to this one particular field. Why are they not equally united and enthusiastic and untiring in battling for the prohibition of child labor, the prevention of tuberculosis, the prohibition of the twelve-hour day and the seven-day week, the prohibition of tenement-house and sweat-shop abuses, the prohibition of prison abominations, the prohibition of international war, and so on indefinitely? Why, in short, must the churches restrict their political and social activities to such traditional evils as gambling, liquor selling, and prostitution, and remain indifferent to these other more recent but no less terrible forms of injustice and distress?"

**Document Q**

Source: Frederick Davenport, "The Persistence of the Pioneer Conscience," *The Outlook* (June 16, 1915)

"I saw in Minnesota a most unbiased and significant and bona fide letter from a brewer in Oregon. Oregon has just gone dry. The brewer in Oregon was writing to a large brewing corporation in Minnesota requesting them to buy his surplus hops. In the most straightforward and open manner he related the woes of the business in the West. . . . And these were the dangers against which he warned the brewers of Minnesota: woman suffrage, the initiative and referendum (by which the people start trouble themselves without intervention of the Legislature) . . . and, finally, the low character of the saloon-keepers who had been their selling agents!"

**Referencing the Documents:**

1. John Smith, in *History of Virginia*, said: ". . . ."
2. In Document A, John Winthrop, the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony agreed with. . . .
3. In the Wage and Price Regulations in Connecticut, . . . (Document E).