the effort has such a large footprint, that only desperate times would justify using tunnels to bring them in.

“While subterranean tunnels are not a new occurrence along the California-Mexico border, they are more commonly utilized by transnational criminal organizations to smuggle narcotics,” a CBP official stated after the agency busted a group of 30 immigrants emerging from underground in 2017. “However, as this case demonstrates, law enforcement has also identified instances where such tunnels were used to facilitate human smuggling.”

This shift allows Trump to point to the other purpose of his proposed wall: to keep migrants out. But just as the fences failed to keep out drugs, there is no evidence that a wall would keep out people.

Indeed, the border brings together two failed government wars in one place: the war on illegal drugs and the war on illegal immigrants.

When Congress enacted the first draconian caps on legal immigration in the 1920s, illegal entries became a regular occurrence for the first time. Everyone understood what had created the problem—the ratcheting back of legal immigration—and immediately made the comparison to alcohol Prohibition. In 1926, the immigration commissioner wrote that “as a consequence of more recent numerical limitation of immigration, the bootlegging of aliens...has grown to be an industry second in importance only to the bootlegging of liquor.”

While the war on booze has ended, the wars on drugs and illegal immigrants have continued at full speed. The origins of these efforts have long since receded from the national memory, and people view illegal immigration and drug smuggling like hurricanes: as natural phenomena that the government manages or mitigates rather than causes. But as the effects of marijuana legalization prove, smuggling is not caused by traffickers; it’s caused by government.

**FIXING ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION**

**THE STORY OF** widespread pot legalization contains a clear lesson for immigration policy.

For nearly a century, Americans have been told that illegal immigrants ignore the law and bypass the legal options. But they aren’t ignoring the law. They are acknowledging what it says: that they are barred from coming to this country. And they aren’t bypassing legal options, because no such options exist for them.

Whenever aboveboard options do appear, the problem dissipates. The more unskilled guest workers that the United States allows in legally, the fewer illegal immigrants appear at the border to be caught. In the seven decades from 1949 to 2018, the average Border Patrol agent apprehended 86 people annually in years when guest worker entries were greater than 200,000. In other years, the average was 269 people per year—three times as many. Since 1986, thanks to the lack of a quota on agricultural workers, the total number of legal guest workers in the