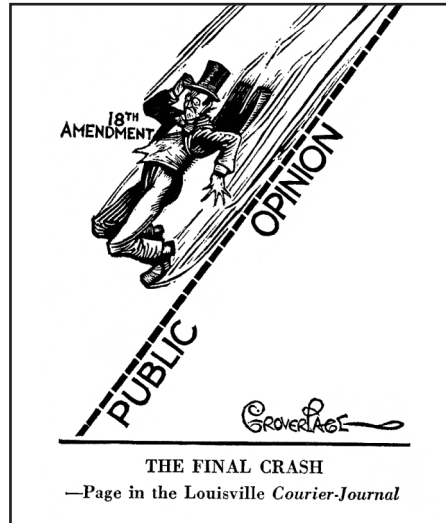


**CARTOON** **9**

**Civics Political Cartoon Activity**  
**Changing Public Opinion**



Grover Page, Louisville Courier-Journal/Brown Brothers

**UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL CARTOONS**

Study the political cartoon and then answer the questions below.

1. The Eighteenth Amendment established Prohibition, which outlawed the sale of alcoholic beverages. By the time of its passage, more than half of the states already were “dry,” meaning the sales of alcoholic beverages were not legal in those states. Why did the federal government become involved?

---

---

2. Why is both the public support for the Eighteenth Amendment and for Uncle Sam slipping so quickly?

---

---

3. Can you think of other laws that are or have been difficult for the government to enforce?

---

---

**ACTIVITY**

For one of the laws you mentioned in item 3 above, think of how the law could be enforced, and write a paragraph describing this enforcement method. Be sure to suggest possible penalties in your paragraph.

## Discussion Guide

The 1919 passage of the Eighteenth Amendment was brought about by a coalition of what we today would call “special interests.” These special interests included state governments of “dry” states seeking an evenhanded application of Prohibition against adjacent wet states. They also included evangelical churches, business people hoping it would signal the end of “blue (hungover) Mondays,” and some of the founding segments of the women’s suffrage movement. The Women’s Christian Temperance Union, for example, joined forces with the suffragettes in the early 1900s, and in 1920 the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote. While Prohibition was in force, the federal government made more than half a million arrests and secured more than 300,000 convictions for violations of Prohibition. Nonetheless, smuggling increased over the Canadian and Mexican borders, from Cuba, and a fleet of ships anchored outside the three-mile limit of American waters. The manufacture of industrial alcohol was permitted (the Eighteenth Amendment only outlawed alcohol used as a “beverage”), and it often was converted into a far more lucrative form. Saloons were replaced with barely hidden “speakeasies” in almost every city. An entire criminal class, organized as never before, sprang up throughout the country. When the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed in 1933, this element then turned to gambling and drugs, the effects of which reach us today. For years, regardless of its unpopularity, the major political parties were powerless to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment, as they contained elements that supported both sides of the issue. For example, a federal commission reported to President Hoover in 1931 that Prohibition was unenforceable, but still should be enforced. Finally, following the landslide victory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the newly elected Congress in February, 1932, recommended the Twenty-first Amendment to the states. It was ratified by December 1933, and Prohibition was history.