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“Black Spots:” Breeding Grounds for Terrorism and Transnational Crime

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Publisher's Note

The U.S. campaign against global international terrorism may not end for an extended period of time, if ever. Victory will not be achieved in the traditional sense. There are too many types of terrorist players, too many vulnerabilities within open and free societies, and accessible weapons and explosives technologies (both low and high tech), to assume that low level and catastrophic acts of terrorism will not occur.

Hovering above these existential concerns is the potential for international terrorists to acquire nuclear fissile material, nuclear technology, and possession of a nuclear weapon. Thus, prevention which is based on actionable intelligence is the prime national security objective. Who is the terrorist enemy, what motivates them, and why is this a daunting array of problems for the U.S. and international counter-terrorism communities?

Intelligence acquisition is based on citizens' tips, cooperation among governments, and state intelligence agencies' cooperation which, at best, is uneven. Terrorists' motivations are based on religion, ethnicity, nationalism, politics, and pathology. There are lone wolves, loosely organized cells, insurgencies, and Al Qaeda. Another layer of concern involves finance, communication networks, and societal issues such as poverty. The role of intelligence is to acquire raw information which is synthesized and disseminated to national security operators.

The confluence of these widely varying components is the location—the field operation venue for terrorism activities. Terrorism planning and operations require insulation from interdiction. The terrorist planning and training operations need not be located in isolated places. Osama bin Laden lived for the past five years in the shadow of a Pakistan military installation. Terrorist operations thrive in areas where government interdiction is least likely to occur and where governments tend to be weak.

A good description of terrorism-friendly places is “Black Spots,” which are locations largely untouched by government control. The obvious states where Black Holes exist are Yemen, Somalia, and Mauritania. There are an estimated 600 Black Holes worldwide, and probably more. The fundamental requirement for intelligence gathering is to know where to look for terrorist operations, and, subsequently, acquire fine-focused information regarding the players, their means of communication, and how they operate.

The Global Black Spots—Mapping Global Insecurity (GBS-MGI) Program at Syracuse University since the fall of 2007 has been identifying locations and doing analyses of how Black Spots operate, their output, and predicting their future direction through a series of state case studies. We share with our readers the scope and importance of this unique program.

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The theme of this issue of the *National Strategy Forum Review* is an analysis of “Black Spots”—ungoverned spaces that are the breeding grounds and operational centers for terrorism and transnational crime.

The U.S. has pledged \$20 billion for political stability in North Africa in the wake of recent dramatic regime changes in Tunisia and elsewhere in Africa. The international community has pledged \$20 billion for this purpose. We should be dubious about pledges being converted into money and whether a large expenditure that is not accompanied by clear strategic objectives and detailed plans for implementation will be effective.

The U.S. budget deficit has created the new constraint of affordability. The days of profligacy are over. Yet, the U.S. pledge of \$20 billion for North Africa suggests several U.S. policy concerns: is \$20 billion for North Africa affordable; will this money achieve its goal; what is the clearly defined strategic objective; and how will the money be spent?

The pool of available U.S. money for international political stability is finite. This requires a policy determination regarding priorities how funds will be specifically allocated. North Africa is an urgent international problem. However, there are two parallel matters to be considered: counterterrorism and the political stability of other African states which have the potential to breed the Black Spots that breed terrorism.

As an example, Guinea is located in West Africa and has borders with six states. Guinea emerged from 50 years of political turmoil in the autumn of 2010 when long-time political activist Alpha Conde became president in a fair and free election. Guinea is a fledgling democracy with strong ties to the U.S. A new cabinet and department ministers are in place. One of the first actions taken was to establish a strong anti-corruption task force.

Guinea has very limited financial resources and a hungry population. It is desperately poor, yet it is rich in natural resources. Guinea has the potential to become a stable, U.S.-oriented democracy and a beacon for other West African states. Guinea urgently needs U.S. assistance; however, assistance funds for Guinea are nil. The USAID budget has been cut by 40%, and Africa has a very low priority for U.S. assistance.

There are compelling reasons for the U.S. to re-think its \$20 billion allocation to North Africa and to elevate funding for Guinea:

- Guinea's new administration is engaged in a race against time. Guinea's people are in a desperate survival mode. If the new democracy does not meet its people's minimal expectations, it could revert to political turmoil.
- Guinea has large uranium deposits. The U.S. should consider entering into an exclusive uranium exploration and mining agreement with Guinea.
- Africa has been largely ignored by the U.S. to our detriment.
- There is an opportunity to strengthen democracies in Guinea and other West African states.

The issue is whether U.S. policymakers have acted strategically or acted to put out a fire—an example of *ad hoc*-ism.

Global Black Spots: Threats from Governance without Governments

By Dr. Bartosz Hieronim Stanisławski

On May 2nd, 2011, almost ten years after the infamous terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, U.S. Special Operations Forces conducted a raid killing Osama bin Laden—the leader and the brain of Al Qaeda. The operation was the result of a long and extensive intelligence and military kill/capture campaign in which close coordination between U.S. Armed Forces and intelligence organizations was critical. The raid was executed by the Navy SEALs Team 6—a top level counterterrorist unit trained specifically for these types of strikes. It was a perfect use of a proverbial scalpel, but zooming-in on the location where that scalpel was eventually applied had been anything but easy. It was a result of the long, tedious, and hard work of men and women serving in human and signals intelligence agencies in various institutions of the U.S. government.

The leader of Al Qaeda was killed in a Pakistani city of Abbottabad, home to almost one million residents, located only about 70 miles northeast of the capital city of Islamabad. Interestingly, Abbottabad is also what is sometimes referred to as the “Pakistani West Point”—a town with a military garrison and academy. The very location may offer some hints as to where we do or do not look for criminals or terrorists that attempt to avoid capture; intuitively, a large city like that, so close to the capital, and with significant military presence would not necessarily be on the top of the list of potential places to look for bin Laden. But, when one thinks of it, evasion may be one’s most lethal weapon and evasion is done by putting oneself into the shoes of one’s opponents. The “bin Ladens” of this world do that all the time and they know very well where law enforcement, intelligence, or military organizations are more or less likely to look for them. The sooner their locations can be pinpointed and the sooner they can be captured or killed, the better it is for the law-abiding citizens of the world and their overall safety. We cannot afford to rest on the laurels; it is critical to speed up the cycle of information gathering and analysis on potential and actual locations in which terrorists or criminals may find refuge. The Black Spots approach may be helpful in that process.

Black Spots Analysis as a Methodological Approach

The recent operation to kill bin Laden demonstrates the differences between the applicability of the “failed states” approach and the “Black Spots” approach, which the Global Black Spots-Mapping Global Insecurity (GBS-MGI) Program has been developing. While the analysis of the so-called “failed states” may offer an approximate assessment of where a particular state is heading in terms of its political, economic, or societal stability as a whole, this approach does not focus on places like the “Abbottabads” of this world. From that perspective, Pakistan, for instance, has in recent years been seen as a country that should keep international analysts alerted to the possibility of its collapse. But from the perspective of state power, Pakistan possesses very considerable military (including nuclear weapons) and intelligence (including the powerful

Inter-Services Intelligence organization) resources. The “failed states” approach does not look at locations like Abbottabad,¹ but stops at the state-level of analysis.

The GBS-MGI approach,² on the other hand, does not stop at state-level analysis, but looks deeper into the state and analyzes specific provinces, cities, or even districts of cities that may be outside of effective governmental control. We analyze locations in terms of the presence of alternative social structures that control the particular area (e.g., warlords; crime organizations; insurgent groups; terrorist networks), and we assess those areas in terms of their active potential to produce and export insecurity (e.g., explosives; illicit drugs; terrorist operatives; sensitive know-how; instructions within terrorist networks, etc.) to faraway locations. Three characteristics constitute the critical elements of the definition of what we dub Black Spots:

- Being outside of effective governmental control.
- Domination by illicit organizations.
- Capability to produce and export insecurity.

Our analyses serve numerous functions. First, they offer a situational snapshot of a particular part of the world (that is as zoomed-in as it is possible using open source information/intelligence (OSINT)). Secondly, we trace the developments that have led to the present state of affairs and we try and delineate the future trajectory of the situation. Thirdly, we look at interactions (what we call “insecurity flows”) from, through, and to the area under analysis. We then analyze its connections to other identified Black Spots, which results in additions to our map of the global underworld.

GBS-MGI's work encompasses a rather wide spectrum of analyses often starting at a tactical level, through theater-level analysis, and leading all the way to the strategic regional or global outlook. Importantly, our research is not aimed at being historical in nature (although that is a part of almost any analytical endeavor), but it is forecast- and early warning-oriented. Since we estimate that there are as many as 600 Black Spots world-wide (some of them active, others dormant, still others pulsing), possessing knowledge about such locations and their global reach and interactions may offer insights into the ongoing and future activities of the illicit global underworld.

Global outlook is very important and therefore the GBS-MGI Program tracks and analyzes threatening processes that often circumnavigate the globe, in which cases analyses limited to particular regions would simply be insufficient. At the same time, GBS-MGI emphasizes the

¹ Whether Abbottabad should be considered a Black Spot or not may be a matter of discussion revolving around the questions of (1) whether Pakistani authorities knew about bin Laden's hideout; (2) whether some people within the Pakistani government knew, but acted as rogue elements; or (3) whether Abbottabad represented an area that was less under central governmental control than may be generally assumed. In any case, we do not claim here that this city is a Black Spot, but neither do we see any basis at this moment to exclude it from potentially having been one. The reason is that at the moment the role of the Pakistani government in bin Laden's hiding in Abbottabad, if any, is not fully clear.

² For a more detailed description of the methodology, see "[Mapping Global Insecurity](#)" by Bartosz Hieronim Stanislawski. *National Strategy Forum Review*: Fall 2010, Volume 19, Issue 4.

critical value of the nuances of each particular case. Thus, while observing and analyzing trends, we never lose attention to the context-specific detail, which is pivotal not only in the analytical part of our work, but also in policy recommendations.

Implications of the Recent Turmoil in North Africa and the Middle East

Do major political events and transformations, such as the recent power shifts in Egypt and Tunisia, civil conflict in Libya, protests in Syria, or the unclear situation in the Gaza Strip affect the existence or emergence of Black Spots? They may. For instance, in areas close to protracted or low intensity conflicts, Black Spots may emerge or re-emerge as black market sites for weapons or other needed supplies for the warring factions. Reversely, a state that falls into turmoil may offer fertile conditions for the operations of various illicit actors, since the security controls in such a state become less centralized, less rigid, and more chaotic. For example, there have been reports that some of the border areas between Libya and Algeria have seen significant increase in illicit trafficking since the civil conflict in Libya began. The trafficking networks that have been operating there for a long time took advantage of the recent volatile security situation and increased their shipments of trucks, 4x4 vehicles and, allegedly, weapons. The concern is that some of these items may have been headed to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which raised red flags within the Algerian security apparatus in particular, and within the international security community in general. It is important to keep in mind that the nodes of underworld operations are connected and for that reason recent developments in Libya may affect not only the operations of AQIM, but also of the entire smuggling routes that stretch from the coasts of West African states (e.g. Liberia, Sierra Leone etc.) via the historical city of Timbuktu, Mali, all across the Sahel region of Africa, including its tentacles reaching into Algeria, Libya, or Egypt. Thus, it would not be surprising to see a re-emergence of some traditional Black Spots in the Sahel region of Africa due to the changing security and supply-and-demand conditions. Clearly, strong military presence of the Libyan army on the Algerian-Libyan border was not conducive to a large-scale cross-border trafficking, so once some of the troops were moved from the border areas towards Libya's cities, pressure on the trafficking networks was significantly decreased.

The power shift in Egypt did not seem to have any visible effect on the Black Spots that we have identified in that area. Partially this may be explained by the fact that the transition took place in a smooth and gradual manner. For instance, a Black Spot that we identified as operating in sections of the city of El Arish, which, due to its location, has been the main transfer site of goods transported to the Gaza Strip through the underground tunnels, did not change its operational tempo. It still is the main marketplace for products that are needed in the Gaza Strip including, according to some reports, weapons.

The situation in Syria has not, so far, allowed for an emergence of new Black Spots because the Syrian government remains in control of the situation and has used extremely heavy-handed approaches in dealing with the street protesters and opposition members. A better organized opposition might eventually acquire weapons through some of the Black Spots that have been identified in South-Eastern Turkey, but we have not seen any evidence of that process so far.

This short overview demonstrates the variety of Black Spots that the GBS-MGI Program has been identifying and analyzing: from those that pulsate depending on the supply-and-demand conditions to those that remain relatively permanent over time; from those that are trade-specific to those whose activities may encompass a wide variety of products and services. This variety clearly calls for a more systematic classification within a frame of Black Spots typology, which indeed has become one of the legs of our research and analytical activities.

Can GBS-MGI be helpful to U.S. security operations? Based on informal interactions with intelligence, military, and law enforcement officials, the answer is yes. Our approach is unique because of its unit of analysis and because of the outlook that we propose on the operations of the “global bads” (criminals, terrorists, etc.). Moreover, we tend to look at locations that may become hotbeds of some of the illicit activities before they actually do so. That may offer a significant insight into modus operandi of some of the criminal or terrorist organizations. One of the key challenges that we have been facing and working to resolve is how to make a program like the GBS-MGI that is based at an academic institution establish a consistent working relationship with a non-academic, governmental agency that may use some of the reports that we have been producing. One thing is for certain: in today’s world of diverse state and non-state threats, every source that may support better, more accurate, and timelier intelligence operations is worth incorporating into the overall national security effort.

Conclusion

To give a more detailed overview of the types of locations that have been analyzed in the GBS-MGI Program, in what follows we present seven short case studies of various Black Spots (they are not equivalent of case reports prepared on regular basis by the GBS-MGI Program). These case studies were written by the GBS-MGI graduate research associates and they represent samples from North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia, South Asia, Europe, and North America:

- El Arish, Egypt
- Guinea Bissau
- The Wa State, Burma
- The Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Pakistan
- Mitrovica, Kosovo
- Scampia and Secondigliano, Italy
- Akwesasne Reserve, U.S.-Canada Border

It is very important to keep in mind that locations that have been identified as Black Spots are not areas whose inhabitants are inherently bad people that conspire to bring harm to others; these are areas in which political, economic, social, geographical, and, sometimes, cultural conditions coincide allowing various forms of transnational organized crime and/or terrorists to operate in diverse ways. In most cases, the majority of the inhabitant populations of Black Spots have no choice but to live in the environment in which they find themselves. Sometimes it is sweetened by economic incentives that flow from illicit activities of the area; sometimes it is enforced by the threat of brutal violence. In most cases, it is a combination of both the stick and the carrot that are held in the hands of illicit organizations dominant in the particular area.

This sampling of Black Spot cases demonstrates their variety and related challenges to analysts attempting to locate and identify them. And precisely because of the fact that they are not “all the same,” their study and analysis requires analysts to be consistent in their monitoring, but also remaining flexible and keeping their analytical horizons open in terms of what they look at. While existing patterns need to be recognized and critical definitional elements must be confirmed, the detailed, nuanced, and context-specific information must not be lost in the process. In spite of the recent successes of the U.S. intelligence community, this is no time to rest on the laurels or we will again have to be “catching up” with the threats of the future. U.S. intelligence needs to get serious about studying Black Spots and integrating these concepts into the national security architecture on both strategic and tactical analytical and operational levels.

Dr. Bartosz Hieronim Stanisławski directs the Mapping Global Insecurity-Global Black Spots Research Program, which is a joint endeavor of the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs and the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism (Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University). His work focuses on policy implications of threats posed by illicit, transnational non-state actors; the overlapping of law enforcement and military security matters; and transatlantic security cooperation. He can be reached at: bstanisl@maxwell.syr.edu.

El Arish and the Sinai Peninsula Underworld, Egypt

By Ioana Emilia Matesan and John Gay

If one were to walk along the Egyptian border with Gaza in the Sinai, it would become clear that national borders can be more porous than what they appear to be “on the surface.” Since the closure of the border and the Gaza blockade, as many as 1,200 underground tunnels have been dug to bring in a huge variety of goods, from basic needs and construction materials to finished goods and weapons.¹

Where do all these goods come from? Virtually everything that ends up in Gaza originates in or passes through El Arish, a northern Sinai port town located 45 kilometers to the west.² Given its geostrategic location, the town has gradually become a node of illicit activities, including the plotting of terrorist attacks. What the case of El Arish teaches us is that the law of supply and demand will triumph even when states attempt to control the movement of goods, people, or

¹ “Weapon Smuggling Tunnels in Rafah, May 2004.” Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs; “Rafah’s Subterranean Tunnel City: The Gateway to Hamastan.” *Defense Update Newscast*; “The Egypt-Gaza Border and Its Effect on Israeli-Egyptian Relations.” *Congressional Research Service*, 2008; *Daily News Egypt*, 2009. “Show of Force in Rafah following clashes.” November 12, 2009; “No rest for Gaza’s Sinai Smugglers.” *Sydney Morning Herald*. December 19, 2009; Gisha – Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, “Unraveling the Closure of Gaza.” July 7, 2010; “Construction of Egypt’s Security Wall Causes Collapse of Smuggling Tunnels.” *World Tribune*, Jan 13, 2010; “Gaza Tunnel Smugglers Trade In New Cars.” BBC, Apr 7, 2010; Theodore May. “Gaza’s Great Tunnel Recession.” *Foreign Policy*, Aug 13, 2010.

² “Gaza’s Life Line: The Tunnels.” *Rupee News*, March 13, 2010.

services. El Arish also suggests that human insecurity does not only pose humanitarian concerns; it can also metastasize into forms of insecurity that endanger regional stability.

Challenges to State Security

The El Arish area sees heavy smuggling activity by Israeli and Palestinian organized crime, as well as from some of the Bedouins, whose social connections extend across the border and who have long refrained from identifying as Egyptian. Smuggling networks move an incredible variety of goods into the Gaza tunnels—food, cigarettes, weapons, cars, and on one occasion they reportedly even smuggled a lion.³ Smuggling into Israel is more limited, but human trafficking has now drawn significant international attention. Migrants from eastern Africa and sex workers from Eastern Europe use the Bedouin networks to enter Israel illegally in search of opportunity.⁴ The smugglers have been known to detain the migrants in remote camps, where they are subjected to forced labor, sexual abuse, and torture in an attempt to extort greater tolls.⁵

Several militant groups operate in the Sinai. Hamas reportedly raises some funding via fees on the constructions of new tunnels, and operates several of its own.⁶ Hamas personnel have been detained on the Egyptian side of the border,⁷ and there were fears that Hamas might attempt to enter Egypt during the recent political crisis. A Hezbollah cell was broken up in the Sinai in 2009; Egyptian authorities alleged that the Hezbollah members had been observing Israeli tourist groups and ship movements in the Suez Canal.⁸ A local terrorist group, Tawhid wal Jihad (unrelated to the Iraqi group of the same name) was suspected in a wave of bombings in southern Sinai in the mid-2000s, but analysts have suggested that this organization was rendered ineffective by Egypt's massive crackdown after the bombings.⁹ The group is believed to have been composed of Bedouins who were influenced by the ideology of Al Qaeda.¹⁰

The seriousness of the security issues present in El Arish was confirmed during the recent Egyptian uprising. Protests in places like Cairo saw limited violence, but the Sinai experienced a quasi-insurgency, with rocket attacks on police stations, armed liberation of prisoners, and

³ Brynen, Rex. "Gaza's Tragically Peculiar Economy," *Foreign Policy*, March 16, 2010. See also: Kershner, Isabel. "Israeli Army Says It Found and Destroyed Seven Hamas Tunnels." *The New York Times*, November 1, 2007; Von Mittelstaedt, Juliane. "Tunnels to Egypt Keep Hamas in Business." *Spiegel Online*, August 4, 2008; McCarthy, Rory, "Inside the Gaza Tunnels." *The Guardian*, February 10, 2009.

⁴ "Egyptian Police Kill Sudanese Trying to Enter Israel." *Canadian Press*, September 10, 2010. See also: "Egypt Police Clash with Smugglers along Israel Border." *DPA*, August 18, 2010; "Egypt Detains 16 Foreigners for Killing Smuggler." *AFP*, September 12, 2010.

⁵ "Bedouin Smugglers Abuse Africans Held for Ransom, Israel Group Says." *The New York Times*, February 15, 2011. See also: "Egypt: End Traffickers' Abuse of Migrants." *Human Rights Watch*, December 9, 2010.

⁶ Brynen, Rex. "Gaza's Tragically Peculiar Economy." *Foreign Policy*, March 16, 2010.

⁷ "Egypt Seizes Hamas Official in North Sinai." *Maan News*, September 1, 2010.

⁸ Zambelis, Chris. "Hezbollah in Egypt: the Politics of Conspiracy and Resistance." *Terrorism Monitor*, Volume 7, Issue 16, June 2009.

⁹ Burton, Fred. "Assessing Risks in the Sinai." *STRATFOR*, May 11, 2006.

¹⁰ Zambelis, Chris. "Egypt Attacks May Indicate Emerging Sinai Bedouin Insurgency." *Terrorism Focus*: Volume 3, Issue 19, May 2006.

bombings of a major international natural gas pipeline.¹¹ At the height of the unrest, Bedouin smugglers in contact with *TIME* magazine even claimed to be in control of towns in the border area.¹²

Insecurity Flows

The main insecurity flow is into Gaza. Goods enter illegally through the underground tunnels and through periodic breaches of above-ground border security.¹³ Beyond El Arish, the flows become less clear, but there have been rumors of Iranian-backed goods being landed along the Sudanese coast and moved up the unpopulated Red Sea coast to cross the Suez canal.¹⁴ The routes for human smuggling also follow the Red Sea coast, emerging from Sudan and Eritrea; they then use the major roads to travel through the Sinai and to the border, stopping at the extortion camps in the El Arish area.¹⁵ Contraband and migrants also flow across the Egyptian-Israeli border in the Negev, which appears to be the exclusive domain of the Bedouin networks.

The natural gas pipeline that runs south of El Arish has been severed twice since the uprisings—once on February 5th, and again on April 27th, with a failed attack on March 27th as well. The pipeline supplies 80% of Jordan's and 40% of Israel's natural gas, and took weeks to repair the first time it was severed. Cessation of the gas flow costs each country millions a day, with Jordan in particular being put at risk of an energy crisis.¹⁶

Fertile Conditions

What has led to the increase of illicit activities in El Arish? Perhaps most important is its strategic location at the intersection of North Africa and the Levant. The town is located on the main highway that crosses northern Sinai, and is on an ancient trading route from Cairo to Damascus. In the current international environment, this old trading route links impoverished and war-torn countries like Sudan to prosperous ones like Israel.

¹¹ O'Sullivan, Arieh. "Travelers urged to stay away from northern Sinai." *Jerusalem Post*, February 13, 2011. See also: Katz, Yaakov. "Egypt reportedly losing control of Sinai to Beduin as police abandon posts. Israelis urged to return home for fear that peninsula will become launching pad for terror attacks." *Jerusalem Post*, February 13, 2011; Kessler, Oren. "Egyptian army deploys hundreds of troops to guard Sinai gas pipeline to Israel against attack. Suez Canal workers demand better conditions. Campaigners pressed for probe of Mubarak wealth." *Jerusalem Post/AP*, February 18, 2011; "Egypt Resumes Supplying Natural Gas to Jordan." *BBC Monitoring*, March 16, 2011.

¹² Hauslohner, Abigail. "The Army's OK with the Protestors, for Now." *TIME*, January 29, 2011.

¹³ "Gazans Make New Border Wall Hole." *BBC*, January 25, 2008.

¹⁴ McGregor, Andrew. "Strange Days on the Red Sea Coast: A New Theater for the Israel-Iran Conflict?" *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 7, Issue 8, April 2009.

¹⁵ Fishbein, Einat. "Desert Hell," *Yediot Ahronot*, November 19, 2010. See also: "Egypt: End Traffickers' Abuse of Migrants." *Human Rights Watch*, December 9, 2010.

¹⁶ "Jordan Seeks Help After Egypt Gas Cut." *Ahram Online*, April 28, 2011. See also: "Jordan Rationing Electricity After Egypt Blast." *MSNBC*, April 28, 2011; Udasin, Sharon. "Israel Able to Fulfill Energy Needs, But With Costs." *Jerusalem Post*, April 28, 2011; "Bombing Attempt on Egypt-Israel Gas Pipeline Fails." *Jerusalem Post*, March 27, 2011.

A brief examination of some global indicators reveals just how sharp these discrepancies are. As of 2009, Israel's GDP per capita was \$26,256,¹⁷ whereas Sudan's was \$1,294, and was only \$708 in 2005.¹⁸ While Sudan is in 154th place globally on the Human Development Index, and Egypt is 101st, Israel ranks 15th.¹⁹ Israel has an unemployment rate of 6.2%, the West Bank's is at 26%, and Gaza's is at 45%.²⁰ Gaza's problems go beyond unemployment. In addition to Gaza being one of the most densely populated areas in the world, the enforcement of the blockade and the breakdown in intra-Palestinian relations has created a setting in which "human security in all its dimensions is undermined."²¹ Conflicts between Hamas, Fatah, and Israel have led to many deaths and injuries, as well as the destruction of essential infrastructure. The extent of the shortages caused by the blockade is perhaps best reflected by the fact that when there was a breach of the border at Rafah in January 2008, within six hours, all the Egyptian stores and pharmacies in the area were emptied of all their supplies.²²

Yet one cannot reduce the source of illicit activities in El Arish solely to external insecurity and regional discrepancies in economic and political stability. The presence of insecurity flows is likely due to domestic conditions, and in particular the endemic corruption present in Egypt, the ethnic heterogeneity of the population in El Arish, and the mobility of Bedouin tribes across the Sinai desert.

Corruption is widespread in Egypt, from petty corruption of the police, through the judicial and administrative sectors, all the way up to the highest levels.²³ Bribery is also widespread, with "facilitation payments" when acquiring licenses viewed as necessary by business analysts. The smugglers' ability to operate in an environment of regular checkpoints (a normal occurrence on the Sinai) also indicates that at least some security forces in the area have been corrupted.

The population of El Arish is very heterogeneous because of a large number of Bedouins in the Sinai, the presence of Copts, "Bosnians" (people of European descent who arrived during the Ottoman period) and a large influx of Palestinian refugees. Behind the generic category of Bedouin "is a rich diversity," which includes some fifteen major tribes, some with territory that crosses national borders.²⁴

¹⁷ World Bank Indicators, country indicators available at <http://data.worldbank.org/country>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ UNDP, country indicators available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/profiles/>.

²⁰ UNDP, country indicators available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/profiles/>. See also: "UN Says Gaza Unemployment at 45%." *Maan News*, February 10, 2011.

²¹ UNDP. "Human Development Report 2009/10 Occupied Palestinian Territory: Investing in Human Security for a Future State," p.20. Available at:

http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/arabstates/palestine/NHDR_Palestine_En_2009-10.pdf.

²² Ibid, p. 29.

²³ Businessanticorruption. "Egypt Country Profile: Judicial System." See also: Businessanticorruption. "Egypt Country Profile: Licenses, Infrastructure, and Public Utilities.;" Businessanticorruption. "Egypt Country Profile: Police."

²⁴ "Egypt's Sinai Question." *International Crisis Group*, Middle East/North Africa Report Number 61: January 30, 2007. Page 9.

National and International Responses

In reaction to the challenges posed by El Arish, the Egyptian government has combined punitive measures aimed at destroying possible criminal networks with attempts at strengthening border control and legislation regarding human trafficking.

The harshest government response came after the 2004-2006 string of terrorist attacks (October 7, 2004 in Taba; July 23, 2005 in Sharm el Sheikh; August 14, 2005 on the border with Gaza; and April 24, 2006 in Dahab). Egyptian human rights NGOs claim that over 2,500 people were detained in late November 2004, while Human Rights Watch received additional reports of police harassment and torture.²⁵ Other sources claimed that some residents of El Arish (especially Islamists) were being detained without a warrant and held without charge—a practice common under the Egyptian emergency law.²⁶ This has led to increasing discontent with the police and security forces and increasing suspicion of state authority.

In response to the smuggling into Gaza, the Mubarak government (before Mubarak was deposed) implemented much tougher border measures and more frequent checkpoints. Since the recent revolution in Egypt, however, the number of checkpoints has reportedly declined significantly.²⁷ Egypt also started the construction of a 100-foot underground steel border wall to block the tunnelers.

Egypt has tried to sedentarize the Bedouins, though the efforts at integration have been minimal, and the project has focused on security, not Bedouin development.²⁸ Egypt has also taken more symbolic measures, such as tightening laws against human trafficking. In 2007 it established the National Coordinating Committee to Combat and Prevent Trafficking in Persons, and in April 2010 it established a state fund that provides protection and assistance to victims of human trafficking.²⁹

Most of the Egyptian responses have thus far been reactive and punitive, attempting to incapacitate criminal activities rather than prevent the illicit market from arising in the first place. This has further eroded state legitimacy and authority in the Sinai, a fact reflected in the frequency of protests there, even before the recent power shift in Egypt.

Outside of Egypt, other actors have used El Arish's insecurity in attempts to consolidate their positions. Iran, for example, has exploited the insecurity of the North Sinai by attempting to send weapons to Hamas, while Hamas has used the insecurity as a lifeline—an extreme economic crisis could have loosened its grip on power and made the acquisition of weaponry and

²⁵ Stacher, Joshua. "Rhetorical Acrobatics and Reputations: Egypt's National Council for Human Rights." *MERIP*, 2005. <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer235/stacher.html>.

²⁶ Beinun, Joel. "Popular Social Movements and the Future of Egyptian Politics." *MERIP*, 2005.

²⁷ "Egypt: Never Tip the Army." *Inter Press Service*, February 25, 2011.

²⁸ "Egypt's Sinai Question." *International Crisis Group*, Middle East/North Africa Report Number 61, January 30, 2007.

²⁹ "Egypt: A Human Rights Report on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children." *Protection Project*, 2010. www.protectionproject.org.

funds more difficult, but the tunnels helped alleviate Gaza's problems, and Hamas's tunnel fees and operation of its own private network of tunnels helped it remain in control.

Implications for the United States

Hamas, despite its rhetoric, has never directly attacked the United States. However, it benefits from the instabilities in the Northern Sinai, and its strength, coupled with that of local grassroots terrorists like Tawhid wal Jihad, poses two threats to U.S. interests: first, there could be operations aimed at U.S. allies; second, these groups could contribute to broader insecurity flows that eventually may harm U.S. interests.

The United States' friendly relationships with Egypt and Israel are well known. These relationships mean that large numbers of Americans travel to the two countries; Southern Sinai resorts like Sharm el Sheikh are a popular destination for tourists from all countries, including the United States. Some unfortunate U.S. citizens could thus become victims of one of the region's terrorist groups.

It is also possible that Hamas or Hezbollah could export some of the weapons and expertise that they receive through the El Arish insecurity flows, and that these could end up in the hands of more directly anti-American groups, or of transnational organized crime.

The United States has also had a decades-long interest in an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement, and Hamas has repeatedly attempted to derail such talks; access to more and heavier weaponry could make such an attempt more effective. Another conflict between Israel and Hamas or Hezbollah might not only derail the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace processes—it could also be a source of prestige for these groups and for their associates. This happened after the Israel-Hezbollah war of 2006; anti-American leaders like Hezbollah's Nasrallah and Iran's Ahmadinejad enjoyed a significant boost in popularity and clout after the conflict.³⁰

In conclusion, while the insecurity forms present in El Arish currently do not seem to pose a direct threat to U.S. interests, they have the potential to easily metastasize into regional instability.

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³⁰ Hirst, David. "Weakened Arab System Leaves Leaders Grappling with Loss of Influence." Found in Craze and Huband: The Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Challenge of the 21st Century. Columbia: 2009, page 97.

Washington, DC (though the views in this article are solely his own) and writes for Government in the Lab. He blogs on Middle Eastern affairs at johnallengay.wordpress.com.

The Role of Guinea Bissau in Global Insecurity Flows

By Laura Nash

Introduction

Throughout the 2000's Guinea Bissau quickly developed into one of the main transshipment points for cocaine traveling from production sites in Latin America to the European market. The problem exploded sometime around 2005 and by 2007 record cocaine seizures were reported from Guinea Bissau and West Africa as a whole.¹ The problems in Guinea Bissau are endemic of the problems within the West Africa region, but Guinea Bissau represents both an extreme and an independent case. Many of the problems that led to the explosion of drug trafficking in Guinea Bissau are the same problems faced by other West African states: lack of a functioning police system, corruption, porous borders and a history of conflict. Yet Guinea Bissau faces even more hurdles than, for example, neighboring Senegal. Guinea Bissau's coast is peppered with islands with landing strips left over from colonial days; Guinea Bissau's GDP per capita ranks 208th in the world;² and Guinea Bissau is plagued by a lack of functioning government more so than any other state in the region. It is thus important that when we talk about the drug trafficking problems of West Africa we not only differentiate the problem by state, but that we also identify the specific locales that illicit organizations use and control for their shipments. These locales change over time as illicit organizations often transit from hub to hub. Thus, it is important to be as specific and as surgical as possible when identifying the sources of drug trafficking in the region.

While Guinea Bissau as a whole is often mentioned as a haven for illicit organized crime, sometimes dubbed the world's first "narco state,"³ reports show that the islands off of the coast and the capital of Bissau appear to be the main locales dominated by transnational organized crime. Defining Bissau and the islands as 'Black Spots' helps the international community to combat the criminal organizations using locales within Guinea Bissau as a safe haven from which to operate their transnational drug trafficking empires.

Locales within Guinea Bissau have largely been taken over by transnational drug cartels primarily due to its geographic and political features. As noted earlier, Guinea Bissau's coast is peppered with islands, making effective patrolling of its coast very challenging. The drug cartels are able to operate within these islands relatively unimpeded, with the island of Bubaque being the predominant island reported to be used by traffickers. In addition, it is the closest African

¹ Senegal, Mauritania and Ghana also posted enormous seizures according to the UNODC. See: <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Cocaine-trafficking-Africa-en.pdf>.

² GDP per capita is roughly \$1100 according to the CIA. While lower than states such as Senegal, Guinea Bissau's GDP per capita is roughly equivalent to the other West African states of Niger, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea.

³ <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1637719,00.html>.

state to Latin America, making it an ideal transit point for drug shipments to Europe. The difficulties faced by Guinea Bissau stemming from geographic features are compounded by its political factors. Guinea Bissau's poverty and political turmoil has resulted in an inability to properly attempt to patrol its islands or enforce the rule of law even on its mainland. Thus, Guinea Bissau's unusual combination of politics and geographic features that has caused some of its territories to become Black Spots.

Why and How the Problem Developed

As noted in the introduction, the development of Guinea Bissau's islands and capital city as Black Spots is due to the confluence of political and geographic factors. Without the failures of Guinea Bissau's government or its geographic features Guinea Bissau may have remained largely untouched by the Latin American drug cartels. The three main geographic features driving the choice of Guinea Bissau by drug cartels are her numerous islands, her proximity to Latin America, and her proximity to Europe. The political factors leading to the establishment of organized crime within Guinea Bissau are directly related to its political instability and high poverty. At one point the value of the drugs transiting through Guinea Bissau were estimated to equal the entire state's GDP.⁴

Guinea Bissau's islands are populated by less than 30,000 inhabitants and were patrolled in the early 2000s by only one marine vessel owned by Guinea Bissau. Numerous landing strips remain on the island from Guinea Bissau's days as a Portuguese colony, facilitating the movement of drugs from Guinea Bissau to major hubs in West Africa and Europe. Similarly, its abundant coastline provides for an easy ability for transatlantic ships to traffic drugs into Guinea Bissau for later movement into consumption markets.

Guinea Bissau's government struggles to fulfill its functions due to a past history of civil conflict, a lack of monetary resources, and, recently, political interference from drug cartels. These political factors leave an opening for drug cartels to operate with little obstruction. Military and police officials have reportedly taken bribes to ignore shipments of drugs,⁵ judges have received threatening phone calls,⁶ and, most worryingly, the drug cartels are suspected of assassinating Chief of Staff (Lt) Gen Baptista Tagme Na Waie, which set off retaliatory actions that led to the assassination of President Vieira in March 2009.⁷ This has left the drug cartels operating with near impunity in Guinea Bissau and her waters.

Global Effects of Guinea Bissau as a Black Spot

The ability of Latin American drug cartels to operate fairly freely in Guinea Bissau affects the

⁴ http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-failed-states-shouldnt-be-our-biggest-national-security-fear/2011/04/11/AFqWmjkD_story_1.html.

⁵ "Guinea-Bissau, Assembleia Nacional Popular." *Inter-Parliamentary Union*. 2009. Available at: http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2133_E.htm.

⁶ "Guinea Bissau prosecutor threatened over drugs haul." *Agence France Presse—English*, 2008.

⁷ "Guinea Bissau: Report shows drug traffickers killed former army chief of staff." *Radio France Internationale*, May 16, 2009.

strength of the cartels, the availability of cocaine in Europe, and the security of Guinea Bissau and her neighboring states. It is difficult to ascertain through open source material exactly which Latin American drug cartels are operating in Guinea Bissau (particularly because there has been considerable reshuffling among the drug-trafficking organizations in Colombia in recent years), but there have been reports of a significant increase in the number of Latin Americans residing and building homes in Guinea Bissau, indicating that the cartels intend to use that state as a base of activities for some time to come. The use of Guinea Bissau's islands and her capital to transit cocaine into Europe has increased the drug cartel's profits and strength to operate in other global markets. Increasingly, Guinea Bissau and other West African locales are being used to also transit heroine from Afghanistan to the United States. The ability to operate in a fairly safe and free environment also serves to increase the availability of drugs and their price in the U.S. and Europe, creating more addicts in each market. Michael Braun, former head of Special Operations for the DEA, noted in a 2009 talk at the Woodrow Wilson Institute that terrorist organizations and drug trafficking cartels are operating in the same space within West African locales. Such sharing of space and mutual illicit goals can easily lead to cooperation and hybridization of transnational illicit organizations.⁸

How this affects the United States

The use of Guinea Bissau's islands and its capital by drug cartels strengthens drug cartels operating within the United States and facilitates the movement of heroine into the American market. Additionally, the risk remains of cooperation between the organized crime elements and other transnational security threats such as terrorist organizations as well as organizations trafficking in goods, such as weapons, and/or people.

Responses to the Problem

The responses to these problems have mainly come from international actors, including the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), and the United States. The UN, in cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), sent a peace-building commission in 2008.⁹ The EU launched a program with Guinea Bissau to reform its security sector,¹⁰ which was of major importance in Guinea Bissau considering the widespread corruption within the military and the political leverage that the military exerts in Guinea Bissau. The mission ended in 2010 and as of yet it remains unknown whether the EU efforts have been sufficient to end the drug cartel's influence on Guinea Bissau's military. Similarly, the EU has worked to aid the growth of Guinea Bissau's police force, another necessary action considering that Guinea Bissau operated one prison in the early 2000's and many police officers lacked weapons. In addition, both the EU and the U.S. have increased maritime patrols of the waters in and around Guinea Bissau in an effort to stem the flows of drugs to and from the region. The number of interdicted drug

⁸ 2009 talk at the Woodrow Center titled: "Global Drug Trafficking: Africa's Expanding Role." Event summary available at: http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1417&categoryid=09B6BF65-65BF-E7DC-40F567F157F96E15&fuseaction=topics.events_item_topics&event_id=533255.

⁹ Dabo, Alberto. "UN, EU Help Create Guinea-Bissau anti-drugs unit." *Reuters*, June 19, 2008. Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL19312440>.

¹⁰ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1413&lang=en>.

shipments from West Africa has fallen since the height of 2007, but, as always with this type of statistical information, it is unclear whether this is due to a weakening of the cartels in the area or whether the cartels have simply learned how to avoid interdiction in the region. While it is too early to decisively state whether parts of Guinea Bissau and other regions of West Africa will continue to be dominated by transnational illicit organizations and remain a security threat to the region and the world, it is clear that their location combined with political and economic vulnerabilities makes them highly attractive to transnational organized criminal operations. For that reason, West African states should be monitored and assisted by the United States and European Union, since it is in their strategic security interest to make that part of the world unattractive to illicit non-state actors.

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The Wa State, Burma

By Kathryn Theobald and Hui Hui Ooi

Introduction

Burma has one of the most oppressive military juntas in the world (despite the recent 2010 elections of questionable legitimacy). However, within the borders of this closed-rank regime exists a semi-autonomous entity known as the Wa State. The Wa State is run by the United Wa State Army (UWSA), and since negotiation of the cease-fire agreement in 1989, the UWSA and the Burmese junta have co-existed relatively peacefully. The Wa State has remained untouched by Burmese or outside forces, so it is effectively operating as a sovereign semi-state within a state.

The Wa State (also known as the “Wa Special Region 2”) is located in the eastern region of the Shan State bordering the Yunnan Province of China. The unofficial capital of the Wa State is Pang Shang which is located directly across the Chinese border. The UWSA is a military organization composed of 20,000 soldiers that are well equipped and operate as an unofficial power managing the regional Wa State government. The UWSA is also one of the biggest drug cartels in the country, which is led by Wei Xuegang, the chief financial holder.

The Wa State is encompassed within the so-called Golden Triangle,¹ which spans sections of four countries (Burma, Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand) and is one of the most extensive opium producing and trafficking areas in the world. Burma is the world's second-largest producer of

¹ Lintner, Bertil. “The Golden Triangle Opium Trade: An Overview.” March 2000. Published online at: http://www.asiapacificms.com/papers/pdf/gt_opium_trade.pdf (accessed March 22, 2011).

illicit opium, amounting to 5% of the world's total production.² In Burma, most of the opium cultivation and trafficking takes place under the authority of the UWSA; Shan state is responsible for 94% of Burma's poppy farming.³ For all these reasons, the U.S. State Department once dubbed the UWSA as the world's "most heavily armed narco-traffickers."⁴

Fertile Conditions

Burma has been assessed as the third most corrupt country in the world.⁵ In Burma, corruption is a part of most daily activities throughout the government, the military, and businesses. In order for the UWSA to continue their stronghold in the Wa State, it is believed that local Burmese military officials collect high taxes from the traffickers as well as fees for protection and transportation assistance. The Burmese military junta has no economic motivation to oppose the rule of the UWSA or halt narcotics trafficking so long as they are able to tap into the wealth created by the illegal drug trade. Therefore, illicit activity will flourish in Burma and the Wa State so long as the two ruling powers maintain a symbiotic relationship.

On the other hand, without the economic stability that the illegal drug trade provides, the Wa State region would have no means of supporting itself. In the past, the Wa people have tried other self-sustaining agricultural endeavors (e.g. planting and harvesting rice) but their failures have proven that the only feasible use of the land is for the growing of opium poppies.

During the UWSA's longstanding reign over the Wa State, the organization has been able to dominate local residents because of their violent treatment of non-compliers. As a result, the local people who are not part of the UWSA either submit and become workers in the growing and manufacturing of opium, or they move away from the area. Thus, the majority of the people residing in the Wa State either work as opium cultivators or drug traffickers for the UWSA.

Challenges to State Security

In the past, the UWSA has not posed a direct threat to Burma's military junta. However, tensions have escalated since the most recent Burmese elections in 2010. The UWSA rejected the Burmese junta's Border Guard Force (BGF) plan, since they suspected that move by the regime to be aimed at increasing its troop strength in the northern Shan state.⁶ At the same time, the junta has called on groups like the UWSA to transform themselves into BGFs and place themselves under the Burmese military command. These recent actions threatened the UWSA's

² United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2009. "World Drug Report 2009." Published online at: http://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/WDR_2009/WDR2009_eng_web.pdf (accessed March 22, 2011).

³ Central Intelligence Agency, 2011. "The World Factbook: Burma." Published online at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bm.html> (accessed March 22, 2011).

⁴ Andrew Marshall and Anthony Davis. "Soldiers of Fortune." December 16, 2002. Published online at: <http://www.time.com/time/asia/covers/1101021216/story.html> (accessed March 22, 2011).

⁵ Transparency International, 2009. "Corruption Perceptions Index 2009." Published online at: http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/cpi_2009_table (accessed March 22, 2011).

⁶ Sai Zom Hseng, "Cease-fire Groups Wary as Burmese Army Buildup Continues." March 2, 2011. Published online at: http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=20862 (accessed March 23, 2011).

autonomy and have increased their wariness towards the military junta. The UWSA leader, Bao Youxiang, pledged to protect its people and properties within Wa State, which resulted in the Burmese army being placed on standby since the worsening of the relationship.⁷

Insecurity Flows

Illegal narcotics trafficking is the greatest insecurity flow in and out of the Wa State. Through profits of the drug trade, UWSA has successfully built a formidable para-state within Burma, equipped with the largest and best armed fighting force in Myanmar, next to the government's army. The UWSA has capitalized on the drug trade and reinvested the earnings into building facilities and developing technologies to manufacture other drugs such as methamphetamines. Additionally, the UWSA has used the money it makes from the drug trade to take part in weapons trafficking. Drug syndicates operating in Wa State and other areas produce heroin and methamphetamine that is trafficked overland and via the Mekong River, primarily through China, Thailand, India, Laos, and, to a lesser extent, Bangladesh, and within Burma. Drug traffickers are increasingly using maritime routes from ports in southern Burma to reach trans-shipment points and markets in southern Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.⁸

The illegal drug trade in the Wa State and Pang Shang have also led to money laundering. Wei Xuegang, the financial controller of the UWSA, is one of the biggest drug trafficking kingpins and is wanted for narcotics trafficking in the United States. He established a financial group called Hong Pang Group, which owns an extensive business network in Burma and overseas that builds and operates hotels, casinos, and restaurants.⁹ The financial network of Wei Xuegang shows he has ties to individuals and businesses in Burma, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, and Hong Kong.¹⁰ The U.S. has information that two Burmese banks – Myanmar Mayflower Bank and Asia Wealth Bank – are controlled by and used to facilitate money laundering for the United Wa State Army.¹¹ The U.S. Department of Treasury also claims that the UWSA's Chairman Bao's brother-in-law owns Yangon Airways, one of the country's two main domestic airlines.¹²

⁷ Wai Moe. "Wa Leader Vows to Fight On." March 22, 2011. Published online at: http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=20985 (accessed March 24, 2011).

⁸ United States Department of State: Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report: Volume I Drug and Chemical Control." March 2010. Published online at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/137411.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2011), page 173.

⁹ Tom Norling. "Haven or Hell." July 11, 2008. Published online at: http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=13275&page=4 (accessed March 24, 2011).

¹⁰ United States Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control. "Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act: Wei Hsueh Kang Financial Network." November 2005. Published online at: http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Terrorism-Proliferation-Narcotics/Documents/wei_chart_1105.pdf

¹¹ United States Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control. "Wei Hsueh Kang United Wa State Army Financial Network." November, 2008. Published online at: http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Terrorism-Proliferation-Narcotics/Documents/wa_chart_11292008.pdf (accessed March 24, 2011).

¹² United States Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control. "Wei Hsueh Kang United Wa State Army Financial Network."

National and International Responses

International organizations, like the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), have continuously tried to decrease the extensive opium production and narcotics trafficking in the Wa State. Since 1998, the UNODC has maintained a presence in the Wa State and facilitated programs organized by other UN agencies and development organizations to reduce opium production. The UNODC introduced programs like crop substitution and rural development in order to divert people's incomes away from growing opium.

Drug-monitoring agencies say it is undeniable that Burmese opium production has dropped significantly in recent years. The U.N.'s estimate for last year's harvest was 748 tons, which is down from more than 900 in 2009. Despite these promising figures, one UN report says that even if opium harvest has decreased, opium will remain "the economic backbone of the villagers" in the Wa State so long as new economic ventures in the area benefit only UWSA leaders and Chinese investors.¹³

What does it mean for the United States?

The United States has always had an interest in monitoring drug trafficking in Burma because it is part of the infamous Golden Triangle. For instance, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, through the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon, shares drug-related intelligence with the government of Burma and conducts joint drug-enforcement investigations with Burmese counter-narcotics authorities.¹⁴ In September 2009, the U.S. government identified Burma as having failed demonstrably to meet its international counter-narcotics obligations—one of only three countries in the world that failed to meet this standard.¹⁵ Furthermore, the U.S. has issued arrest warrants for many UWSA members. Wei Xuegang is wanted by the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and the United States is offering a two million dollar reward for his capture.¹⁶ The U.S. Treasury of Foreign Assets Control labeled Wei Xuegang as part of financial network of foreign narcotics trafficking in 2008.¹⁷ In addition, U.S. authorities are believed to have unsealed indictments against another dozen or so drug lords, who are operating under the UWSA umbrella.¹⁸

The U.S. government is also increasingly concerned about the relationship between Burma and North Korea and the potential of cooperation in the development of nuclear weapons. There are

¹³ Marshall and Davis, 2002.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of State. "Southeast Asia: International Narcotics Control Strategy Report." March 2008. Published online at: <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2008/vol1/html/100780.htm> (accessed April 23, 2011).

¹⁵ United States Department of State: Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report: Volume I Drug and Chemical Control." Page 169.

¹⁶ Moe, Wai. "Wa Army to Celebrate 20th Anniversary." April 8, 2009. Published online at: http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=15456&page=2 (accessed March 24, 2011).

¹⁷ United States Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control. "Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act." February 23, 2011. Published online at: <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/drugs.pdf> (accessed March 25, 2011).

¹⁸ Lintner, Bertil. "UN Fiddles while Myanmar Burns." October 23, 2007. Published online at: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/IJ23Ae01.html (accessed March 25, 2011).

suspicions within the U.S. intelligence community that some military departments of the Burmese and North Korean militaries are in regular interaction. This relationship raises concerns not only in the United States, but also for neighboring countries of the Asia Pacific region. The U.S. Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs recently stated: “One of our goals over the course of this period of strategic review has been discussions with Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and China. There is a greater desire on the part of these regional partners for the United States to have a direct dialogue with Burma about aspects of their relationship with North Korea that we’re seeking to gain greater clarity into.”¹⁹

Conclusion

Without a doubt, Burma and the Wa State are among the main participants of the global drug trade problem. Moreover, other forms of trafficking organizations (e.g., specializing in weapons, humans, human organs, etc.) take advantage of the availability and convenience of established drug trafficking infrastructures. In fact, it is not uncommon for trafficking operations to include multiple illegal commodities being trafficked simultaneously. With Burma's drug trade reach to the outside world and its implied potential to move any assets and people from one place to another through illicit trafficking routes, Burma's potential connection with North Korea's nuclear weapons program should certainly raise serious red flags in the U.S. intelligence and defense communities. It is therefore critical for the United States to continue close monitoring of the Wa State and the UWSA's operations.

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¹⁹ United States Department of State. “U.S. Policy Toward Burma: Special Briefing by Kurt M. Campbell Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs.” September 28, 2009. Published online at <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2009/09/129698.htm> (accessed March 25, 2011).

“The Most Dangerous Place on Earth”* **Case Study of the FATA Area, Pakistan**

By Umar Riaz

Introduction

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan are considered one of the main sources of insecurity in the region as well as internationally and conveniently conceived as “stateless” or “ungoverned.”¹ The fact that this area actually possesses robust alternate social and economic structures in a ‘militarized society’ is not addressed by scholars and policy makers. It is of course the poorest and least developed part of Pakistan with a literacy rate of only 17% (3% among women), with per capita income of approximately \$250, and about 66% of households below poverty line.² There have been varying estimates about FATA’s rapidly growing population, which range from 3.5 million (1998 census) to 7 million according to various experts. However, the notable feature is the ethnic homogeneity of the population, whose great majority belongs to different tribes³ of 40 million Pashtuns scattered on both sides of the border.⁴ Total territory encompasses just over 27,000 square kilometers (almost 11,000 square miles) and it is divided administratively into seven agencies and six frontier regions⁵ governed through an informal system of “collective responsibility.”⁶ The “usual” state institutions and processes of taxation, law enforcement, courts, and administration are not present there⁷ and all judicial, administrative, and development functions are supervised by a “French prefect” type of office, known as “political agents.”

* President Barack Obama’s speech on March 27, 2009. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/akbar-ahmed/with-obama-at-the-worlds_b_180371.html.

¹ Chalk, Peter. “The Pakistani-Afghan Border Region.” Found in Rabasa et al ed. *Ungoverned Territories: Understanding and Reducing Terrorism Risks*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007. See also: Rohan Gunaratna and Anders Nielson. “Al Qaeda in Tribal Areas of Pakistan and Beyond.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 31: 7, 2008. Pages 775-80.

² “World Development Indicators Database.” World Bank: July 1, 2009.

³ *NWFP Handbook: A Guide to People and the Province*. Eds. Nick Dowling and Amy Frumin Arlington. VA: IDS 2009. The booming population is despite the presence of highest Infant and Maternal mortality.

⁴ Hussain, Zahid. *Scorpion Tail : The Relentless Rise of Islamic Militants in Pakistan and how it threatens America*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 2010. Page 10. The international border called as ‘Durand Line’ besides being porous and impossible to Police, has been a source of contention between Pakistan and Afghanistan due to different interpretations of agreement between British and Afghanistan in 1893.

⁵ Seven agencies are North Waziristan, South Waziristan, Kurram, Orakzai, Khyber, Bajuar, and Mohamnd. All except Orakzai share border with Afghanistan. Frontier Regions are small portions of districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, DI Khan, Tank, and Lakki Marwat of KPK Province.

⁶ Abbas, Hassan. “Militancy in Pakistan’s Borderlands.” *The Century Foundation*. The collective punishment system is also a crime under the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

⁷ Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Article 246.

Fertile Conditions: “The Most Dangerous Place”

Pashtuns, the natives of tribal areas, though tribal and parochial as a group, have proved agile and entrepreneurial in keeping all political and economic activities outside state control. The physically inhospitable environment ensures higher level of ‘invisibility’ for terrorists, especially the foreign *jihadis*, who blend into the local population, making detection substantially more difficult. A vibrant and effective black market economy exists in the FATA owing to tax evasion and illicit smuggling facilitated by the Afghan Transit Trade (ATT) agreement.⁸ The World Bank has estimated the overall value of this “stealth” economy to be over \$30 billion a year, which is one of the highest in the world and which successfully insulates local livelihoods from outside pressures.⁹

The regional *hawala* system that handles on average \$4.6 billion in foreign remittances is at the heart of this informal economy which has been found to be robust and defying inflationary pressures and adverse exchange rates.¹⁰ Illicit narcotics are another lucrative source of income in the tribal areas and, according to casual estimates, as much as a quarter of the drugs produced in Afghanistan pass through the border areas.¹¹ The FATA region is historically abundant in arms and ammunition, but in the last two decades illegal and highly sophisticated weaponry has arguably tilted the balance in favor of the local non-state actors against the Pakistani state.

The political economy of this Black Spot is further fueled by the presence of a reasonable road network, telecommunication facilities, and financial institutions in the area.¹² The tribal areas largely lack the formal education system, but they do have a sizable presence of mostly foreign-funded Madrasas that, according to some estimates, cater to around 33% of school-aged children¹³ and provide a steady supply of volunteers to the insurgent groups (related to the Taliban and, potentially, Al Qaeda) that are active in the area.

Slipping Outside of the State’s Control

There is a consensus among scholars as well as practitioners that following the insurgency and terrorism of the last decade the erstwhile governance system has totally collapsed, leaving the areas at the disposal of mullahs (prayer leaders) that turned into warlords,¹⁴ as well as local and

⁸ Rashid, 2000. Pp 189-194. He also estimates that each year thousands of stolen cars end up in FATA.

⁹ Behar, Richard. “Kidnapped Nation.” *Fortune*, Vol. 145, No. 9, April 2002. See also: Ahmed, Mansoor. “Regulations to curb smuggling, under invoicing a must.” *Nation* (Pakistan), July 13, 2004.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Chalk, 2007. Page 56. Also there is evidence that Islamist groups are benefiting from this trade. See also Rotella, S. “Jihad’s unlikely alliance.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 2004. Scarborough in a *Washington Times* article also notes that Bin Laden is reaped as much as \$24 million a year from one heroin network in Knadhar.

¹² Ibid, page 63.

¹³ Andrabi Tahir et al. “Religious School Enrollment in Pakistan.” Washington, DC; *The World Bank Policy Research Paper*, No 3521, March 2005.

¹⁴ Johnson, Thomas H. and M. Chris Mason. “No Sign until the Burst of fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Frontier.” *International Security*, 2008, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 41-77. See also: *International Crisis Group*, Report No. 164, notes that several hundred *Maliks* or elders were assassinated and rest have been forced to change their loyalties.

foreign militants. During the 1980s, around 35,000 Muslim radicals passed through the FATA area to wage *jihād* against the “Russian infidels.”¹⁵ The war left behind experienced fighters, training camps, substantial amounts of military equipment, transnational networks of organizational relationships, and—above all—self-confidence and a belief in the possibility of a victory over a superpower.¹⁶

Several thousand of these so-called “Arab Afghans” established their bases in the provinces of Kunar, Nuristan, and Kandahar, all of them bordering Pakistan,¹⁷ and spilled over to the FATA after the Operations Enduring Freedom and Anaconda launched by NATO forces in 2001-2002.¹⁸ The so-called “Pakistani Taliban” (TTP) was established on December 14, 2007, by 40 militant commanders leading approximately 40 thousand fighters.¹⁹ Subsequently, these Taliban militias emerged also in North Waziristan, Kurram, Orakzai, Mohmand, and Bajaur Agencies of the FATA.²⁰

State and International Responses to the Insecurity Challenges

Pakistan and its international partners have faltered in most of the available options to counter crime-terror nexus (i.e. targeted strikes, military offensive, border control, law enforcement, negotiations, and public diplomacy). Pakistani government has, however, shown willingness and ability to use military force to extend control over the region,²¹ but after struggling to hold the areas had to enter into agreements with the militants on their terms.²² The state’s resort to military force, economic blockades, and appeasement has been found to be helping the terrorists’ cause and has only fueled the militancy in the area.²³

The United States and her allies have also continued with the “hard intervention” type of response in hunt for Al Qaeda members through Predator and Reaper drone strikes that have

¹⁵ Rashid, Ahmed. *Taliban*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000. Page 130.

¹⁶ Huntington, Samuel P. *Clash of Civilizations Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

¹⁷ Rashid, 2000. Page 132.

¹⁸ Chalk, 2007; page 54. Ahmed Rashid (2000) puts the number of Pakistani fighters around 80000, who trained and fought with Afghan Taliban since 1994 and according to Zahid Hussain, the number of militants in the FATA region is between 10000 to 15000. *The News* (Pakistan) reported the number of foreign fighters in FATA around 8000 quoting the Interior Minister Reman Malik.

¹⁹ Hussain, 2010; page 135. Also, *International Crisis Group*, Report No. 178 (2009). Khalid Kheshgi, in *Daily Times* (Pakistan) July 31, 2009, estimates that Taliban ranks receive salary of PKR 15000 PM far more than the government.

²⁰ Gul, Imtiaz. *The Al-Qaeda Connection*. Penguin: London, 2009. This gives a detailed profile of different groups.

²¹ Gul, 2009; pp 263-273. Law enforcement and writ of the State has always been weak and various agencies like irregular *Khasadars*, Frontier Constabulary (FC) and Frontier Corps (FC) had officers drawn from outside but the force consisted of local tribes with the objective of keeping the tribes engaged

²² Hussain, 2010; p 71. Agreements included *Shakai* and *Sararogha* in South Waziristan on April 24, 2004 and February 7, 2005 respectively and *Miramshah* agreement in North Waziristan on September 5, 2006.

²³ “Pakistan Countering Militancy in FATA.” *International Crisis Group*, Report No. 178, October 21, 2009. Around one-third of FATA’s population has been displaced by conflict. Government of Pakistan also puts the cost of conflict at around \$ 2 billion in damages to livelihood and infrastructure.

resulted in the killing of many high value targets,²⁴ but at the cost of substantial collateral damage. Many experts are questioning the efficacy of drone strikes and there is now increasingly a shared belief that the “political costs” of these attacks exceed the tactical gains.²⁵ Political and legal reforms within the FATA area are considered inevitable, but there is difference of opinions regarding the nature and extent of those reforms.²⁶ As a part of the “soft intervention” type of response, the United States in 2001 also committed \$750 million for development projects within the FATA over a five-year period, in addition to proposing the so-called Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZ).²⁷

Most of the operational and tactical achievements have been compromised and thwarted as a result of repeated disregard for the dynamics and fertile conditions that make the FATA area a Black Spot and a source of insecurity. The matter has not been helped by the lack of political will and a lagging counter-insurgency capacity of Pakistan to bring the FATA region under control through increased state presence.

Insecurity Threat to the Outside World

The tribal areas form the crux of residual Al Qaeda network, which is dispersed but able to communicate with regional affiliates around the world.²⁸ Besides Al Qaeda and Pakistani Taliban (TTP), there has been visible presence of a number of other actors in the FATA.²⁹ The TTP also became a formidable threat even after the killing of its founding commander, Baitullah Mehsud, in a U.S. drone strike on August 9, 2009. He was succeeded by the more ferocious Hakimullah Mehsud, who took responsibility for suicide attacks on the CIA Forward Operating Base (FOB) Chapman in the Khost Province of Afghanistan. As a result of that attack, 7 officers were killed, while Hakimullah Mehsud was also responsible for scores of strikes inside of Pakistan, which led to the deaths of hundreds of security personnel. The failed Times Square bomber, Faisal Shahzad, was also motivated by Hakimullah in his attempt to avenge the killing of Beitullah Mehsud, a reportedly similar motive to that of the Afghan-born Najibullah Zazi who pled guilty of charges of planting a bomb in the New York City subway system.³⁰ Terrorist attempts and attacks in Britain and other parts of Europe, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf have

²⁴ Hussian, 2010; pp. 80, 147. Amongst the senior Al-Qaeda operatives killed in drone strikes the most important was the international operations chief Abu hamza al-rabia in 2005 and al-Libbi in 2008.

²⁵ Kilcullen, David. “CIA’s silent war in Pakistan.” *Times*: June 1, 2009.

²⁶ Johns and Mason (2008) favor strengthening the tribal structure as opposed to majority of pro ‘development’ advocates. Marten et al, on the other hand, propose complete integration into mainstream

²⁷ Eckert, Paul. “ US Senate approves bill to triple aid to Pakistan.” *Reuters*: June 24, 2009. Most of the aid is got ‘livelihood development programs’ to prevent the Youth’s reversion to terrorists, other initiative of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZ) are yet to take shape.

²⁸ Risen, James, and David Hode. “Mountains and Border foil quest for Bin Laden.” *New York Times*, December 13, 2004. Gunaratna and Nielson (2008) note the presence of al-Zawahiri in Bajaur Agency and the training infrastructure in North Waziristan, pp. 781-788.

²⁹ Gunaratna and Nielson (2008) identify presence of Afghan Taliban, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan(IMU) led by now dead (Aug 2009) Tahir Yalshadov, Libyan and Moroccan Islamic Fighters Group(LIFG), and Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement(ETIM) consisting of Chechens and Uighurs.

³⁰ Ibid: pages 8, 193.

also been traced to the networks operating in the FATA region.³¹

Conflicts in the FATA and in Afghanistan have always complemented each other with formidable presence of and support for Afghan Taliban in the area.³² In the longer term, the area certainly has the potential of becoming an increasing source of instability not only for Pakistan, but also for the entire region and even globally.

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Why the Frankfurt Terrorist Shooting is Taking Our Eye Off the Ball in Albania

By Matt Kavgian and Amela Kraja

On March 2, 2011, a young man stormed aboard an American military transfer bus parked outside a Frankfurt International airport terminal and opened fire, reportedly shouting "Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar, Jihad, Jihad!"¹ Two airmen were killed and two others wounded before ever reaching their destination on the Afghan battlefields. The gunman, 21 year-old Arid Uka, a Kosovar Albanian Muslim now residing legally in Germany, claims to have been self-radicalized in recent months in reaction to his anger over American military actions in Afghanistan. Naturally, this tragic incident has set off a flurry of commentary in the press and among security professionals about Islamic radicalization within Kosovo and Albania, most pointedly in Arid Uka's hometown of Mitrovica. Murmurings about uprooting what must surely be a 'hotbed of terrorists and radical elements' amongst its population have begun to surface.²

While not being dismissive of Wahhabi Islamic terrorist elements that have operated in and around the region, and their potential for generating harm, we offer a different assessment of the greater threat posed by Uka's hometown of Kosovska Mitrovica and its environs. It is not an increase in terrorist activity that is likely to threaten the interests of the United States and her

³¹ Gunaratna and Neilson (2008), p 789. Crevice operation by the British Security Service is one example. "British Terror Trail traces a path to militant Islam." *New York Times*, November 25, 2006.

³² General Pervez Musharraf. *In the Line of Fire*. NY; Simon and Schuster, 2006; page 220. See also: Hussain 2010, page 95. See also: Bergen, Peter. "The long hunt for Osama." *The Atlantic*, October 2004. The network is led and facilitated by the Soviet war veteran Jalal-u-Din Haqqani who allegedly helped Bin Laden escape the Tora Bora in 2001 and through his son Sirajudin is responsible for Taliban resurgence in Afghanistan.

¹ Schwartz, Stephen. "Kosovar Albanian in Frankfurt Terror Attack." *The Weekly Standard Blog*, March 3, 2011.

² Ibid, 2011.

allies so much as the threat posed by the truly staggering level of transnational organized crime (TOC) that is based in Mitrovica.

Events such as the Frankfurt shooting, though sickening and senseless, do tend to take analysts' and security professionals' eyes off the ball. The result can be lending undue attention to a lesser threat presence (a lone-wolf radical) at the expense of a greater, though less visible, one. We contend that criminality at the scope and scale seen in the Mitrovica region is more destabilizing than terrorism at this point in time and thus deserves the lion's share of the attention.

Mitrovica: Microcosm of Balkan “Bads”

The common problems that plague the town in relation to these illegal activities are in effect representative of the common “bads” and problems in Kosovo, and the Balkan region as a whole. Mitrovica is well known amongst regional analysts and heavily documented in the media going back to the end of the Balkan conflicts in 1999. The city is generally considered the last major holdout of division and conflict in Kosovo, primarily due to its large Serb population, and still maintains a United Nations Mission in Kosovo peacekeeping presence (UNMIK).³

Mitrovica's unemployment levels, affecting nearly 70% of the population, only begin to illustrate the room that exists for narcotics and other goods to be traded and flow through the area illegally. In the most northern parts of the city, nearly 100% of the population is without work. These figures represent even higher levels than the unemployment for Kosovo as a whole, which remains around 40-44%. Kosovo is considered to be one of the most economically depressed areas in Europe.⁴ “According to the United Nations Security Resolution 1244 (UNSCR 1244), there is no “legal economy” in Kosovo right now except insofar as it functions under the only internationally legal entity in Kosovo: UNMIK.”⁵ Thus, for many, turning to illegal or black market trade is seen as a necessity for survival. These effects take hold of the entire Balkan region as narcotics and other illegal goods are transported through the southern leg of the “Balkan Route,” originating in Afghanistan, then flowing through Pakistan or Iran, into Turkey, Bulgaria, Macedonia, then into Kosovo or Albania, and finally into Italy and the heart of Europe.⁶

Illegal narcotics remains the largest flow of criminal activity to be found in Mitrovica and the region, with heroin being the main traded drug. The city, as well as the majority of Kosovo, is effectively controlled by the Albanian mafia who is said to control close to 40%-75% of the European market for heroin and control production and transportation of the drug moving through the region at all times. The heroin trade is estimated at \$7 billion annually.⁷ For the

³ <http://www.unmikonline.org/> (accessed April 1, 2011)

⁴ “Bridging Kosovo's Mitrovica Divide.” Report for the *International Crisis Group*, September 13, 2005.

⁵ Gallucci, Jerry. “Kosovo: Beware ‘Wolves’ Baying at the Moon.” <http://outsidewalls.blogspot.com/2011/01/kosovo-beware-wolves-baying-at-moon.html>.

⁶ “UNODC—Crime and its impact on the Balkans and Effected Countries.” http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Balkan_study.pdf.

⁷ “UNODC: Kosovo Albanian Drug-Trafficking Acquired Alarming Proportions.” March 27, 2008. <http://www.kosovocompromise.com/cms/item/latestnews/en.html?view=story&id=743§ionId=1>.

majority of unemployed workers still distraught by the lack of economic and social opportunities after the wars of the 1990s, such opportunities for profit seem like feasible and very tempting options where there are few others present.

The Greater Threat: Transnational Organized Crime

Mitrovica's key problems stem from TOC groups and the flow of narcotics through the region. In addition to narcotics, the Albanian mafia has a firm hold on the region's black market trade in alcohol, cigarettes, gas and petrol, weapons, and consumer goods—automobiles being a particular favorite of many crime lords.⁸ Adding to the nightmare of Mitrovica are mafia activities in human trafficking and organ harvesting, with children being the most common victims.⁹

TOC operations in Mitrovica have managed to circumvent the age-old ethnic violence prevalent in the region by developing criminal alliances with their otherwise contentious neighbors. It is ironic that TOC organizations have been able to foster “productive” relationships between ethnic Serbs and Albanians, inter-ethnic relations in which even the savviest of international diplomats have failed. Affirming this is the recent statement of former UNMIK Representative in Mitrovica, Jerry Gallucci: “Interestingly, the one area in which Serbs and Albanians have always been able to cooperate fully is organized crime.”¹⁰ Regional cooperation between crime groups has allowed them to learn valuable lessons they are now using to forge alliances on a global level. The Kosovar-Albanian mafia has now established international connections with every known narco-cartel in Europe, the Middle East, Far East, and Central America, feeding all the corridors that lead to the heart of the United States.¹¹

Mitrovica remains the hub of regional and international criminal cooperation, as it sits on the porous border of Kosovo and Serbia. The lack of adequate border patrol has been noted as a key element to allow drugs, arms, and other contraband to flow through the region.¹² Enabling this flow of illicit goods is an endemic culture of corruption at the government level, ranging from local levels to Kosovo's now former Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, considered by many to be the head of the Albanian mafia, arrested in November 2010.¹³ This type of wide-spread corruption threatens to allow for the gray economy to continue undermining the stabilization the region so desperately needs.

⁸ Marty, Dick. “Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo.” A report to the Council of Europe Committee on Legal and Affairs and Human Rights, December 12, 2010. (<http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/APFeaturesManager/defaultArtSiteView.asp?ID=964>)

⁹ Gec, Jovana. “Prosecutor Investigating Reports of Trafficking Organs of Missing Kosovo Serbs.” *Associated Press*, March 21, 2008.

¹⁰ Gallucci, Jerry. “Kosovo: A Final Solution?” <http://outsidewalls.blogspot.com/2009/08/kosovo-final-solution.html>.

¹¹ “UNODC: Kosovo Albanian Drug-Trafficking Acquired Alarming Proportions.” March 27, 2008. <http://www.kosovocompromise.com/cms/item/latestnews/en.html?view=story&if=743§ionId=1>.

¹² Khakee & Florquin. “Kosovo's Mafia: Assassinations and intimidation.” *Global Post*, March 27, 2011.

¹³ McAllester, Matt. “Kosovo's Mafia: Assassinations and intimidation.” *Global Post*, March 27, 2011

Impact on the United States

The gray economy intertwined with corruption and insecure borders makes Mitrovica representative of the problems produced by the region as a whole. By allowing TOC operations to go on unaddressed, it undermines the development of fragile states, the stability of which is in the United States' best interest.

However, the United States needs to re-conceive its notion of what constitutes true stability. American resources have been drawn into regional affairs on multiple occasions, which have been costly, bloody, and largely ineffectual. Certainly, some security related victories have been achieved, but they are largely symbolic in nature (i.e., arrests of a few war criminals). But these symbolic victories come at the expense of stemming the tide of more fundamental issues in the region, such as the entrenchment of TOC organizations and corrupt governance. A recent three-month investigation by *GlobalPost* has found that “concerns about criminality among Kosovo’s ruling political class went largely ignored by the United States, NATO and the United Nations over the past 11 years—and in some cases U.S. and UN officials thwarted criminal investigations into former senior KLA figures.”¹⁴

Allowing TOC groups and corrupt authorities to further drag places like Mitrovica into the criminal and corruptive abyss poses an ongoing threat to American interests. The Balkan region is simply too important to be ceded to the control of thugs and criminals.

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The Case of Scampia and Secondigliano, Italy

By Egon Donnarumma

Known as the “anti-state” or simply the “system,” the “Camorra” dominates the city of Naples, Italy. The Neapolitan equivalent of Sicily’s Mafia operates a multibillion dollar a year enterprise ranging from international smuggling to street level crime to providing material support to

¹⁴ Ibid, 2011.

terrorists. The epicenter of the system is the neighborhoods of Scampia and Secondigliano, called the Red Zone due to the amount of power that Camorra exerts over the area.¹

Fertile Conditions

The Camorra came on the international stage in the early 1990s. The Sicilian Mafia had traditionally been the most powerful of the organized crime groups in Italy, but following the assassination of two prominent anti-mafia judges, Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, in 1992, it faced an unprecedented level of crackdowns by law enforcement.² This created the opportunity for the Camorra to fill the void for international drug trafficking, and subsequently the bulk of drug trafficking shifted from Sicily to Naples.³

The conditions in Naples itself, particularly Scampia and Secondigliano, have allowed the Camorra to continue to operate on the international level. Following the earthquake of 1980, thousands migrated to the public housing complexes known as the Vele di Scampia (Sails of Scampia). This influx exacerbated already existing problems of poverty, drugs, and street crime, in which an estimated 60,000 residents were now living in the complexes seriously lacking public services, not even a single police station initially.⁴ The lack of commercial development coupled with extremely high unemployment made this a perfect area for criminal enterprise. A deep suspicion of outsiders, including police, along with the brute force the Camorra was able to exert over the population provided security for the “camorristi” to conduct criminal activity openly throughout the housing complexes.⁵ Of the almost twenty million tons of cargo the Port of Naples handles each year,⁶ an estimated 60% evades customs checks altogether.⁷ This means that the Port of Naples has become the gateway to Europe for international smuggling.

Insecurity Flows

The combination of these conditions has given rise to a wide breadth of criminal enterprises. The sale of fake designer clothes from Chinese manufacturers is a rapidly growing industry for Camorra, reaching France, Britain, Germany, and the United States. Of the 50,000 shipments of contraband that pass through the Port of Naples each year, 99% of them are believed to be coming from China.⁸ It has been suggested that the trade may become more profitable than drug trafficking.⁹

¹ “Gangs, guns and bins.” *Sunday Telegraph*, June 15, 2008.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ <http://faculty.ed.umuc.edu/~jmatthew/naples/vele.htm>.

⁵ “Gangs, guns and bins.” *Sunday Telegraph*, June 15, 2008.

⁶ http://www.worldportsource.com/ports/ITA_Port_of_Napoli_1073.php.

⁷ “The Chinese Godfathers: Gangs fill void as mafia goes to jail.” *The Daily Record*, June 30, 2010.

⁸ “In Naples, Sopranos’ scarier cousin.” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 11, 2007.

⁹ “Italy’s Mafia thrives in global financial meltdown.” *Associated Press*, April 25, 2009.

Some observers claim no drugs enter the European market without first passing through Secondigliano.¹⁰ Drug trafficking as well as street dealing, both handled by the single organization, is a U.S. \$20 billion a year industry. A trafficking ring exposed in September 2010 shows a network spanning from Naples to Nigeria, Tanzania, Brazil, China, and Turkey. This network employed couriers as mules to smuggle cocaine, heroin, and marijuana into Italy.¹¹ Cocaine generally enters Naples from Colombia and Venezuela via Nigeria. Likewise, heroin from Afghanistan passes through Nigeria to Naples.¹² Another route originates in Turkey and enters Italy from ports in Albania and Kosovo.¹³ Once they pass through the port and enter the safe havens of Secondigliano and Scampia, those drugs that are not put straight onto the streets are moved throughout Italy as a whole or into northern Europe, specifically France through at least one known drug route called the Apennine Range.¹⁴

The drug trade is financed in part by cash, but also with weapons. Most were smuggled into Italy from the former Yugoslavia and other Warsaw Pact countries especially in the early 1990s. During the civil war in Algeria, the Islamist terrorist organization, Armed Groups, linked with Camorra to use drug smuggling routes in reverse to ship weapons from Slovakia through Naples to Algeria.¹⁵ During the conflict, “investigators seized at least a ton of high explosives, 613,000 rounds of ammunition and 175 missiles, artillery pieces or other bits of ‘long-range military weapons.’”¹⁶ According to the then Italian Defense Minister Salvo Ando, even sophisticated weapons such as the American-made Stinger anti-aircraft missile “are quite easily found on the market,” and Mafia bosses “will certainly have no difficulty obtaining them.”¹⁷

The most troubling result is the emerging relationship between Camorra and terrorist groups that exchange drugs for both weapons and assistance entering Europe. In February 2003, 28 Pakistani terrorists were arrested in a Camorra safe house in downtown Naples.¹⁸ “800 grams of explosives, detonators, fuses, detailed maps of Naples, 100 mobile phones and documents on falsifying passports” were seized.¹⁹ It is alleged that Camorra not only provided the terrorists with a safe house, but may also have procured the explosives they had planned to use.²⁰ The suspected target was Sir Michael Boyce, Britain's Defense Chief of Staff, who was scheduled to visit Naples the month after the arrests.²¹ In October 2010 a French-Algerian man was arrested

¹⁰ Ed Vulliamy. "Observer Review." *The Observer*, October 5, 2008.

¹¹ "Drug Trafficking Gang Busted." *ANSA*, September 9, 2009.

¹² "Italy: Nigerian 'ex-slaves' help bust drug trafficking ring." *Adnkronos International*, Rome, September 7, 2010.

¹³ "Heroin from Albania and Kosovo Seized in Italian Drugs Bust." *ANSA*, October 3, 1999.

¹⁴ "Nigeria; Popular Drug Lord, Iyiola Arrested in Italy." *Africa News*, August 23, 2008.

¹⁵ "France warns Europe on terror; Arms traffic tied to many nations." *Washington Times*, February 7, 1995.

¹⁶ "Mafia's power, riches grow through weapons trade; E. Europe giving mob missiles, uranium, more." *Dallas Morning Star*, November 1, 1993.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ "Italy charges 28 Pakistanis with global terrorism." *Irish Times*, February 1, 2004.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ "Italy: Police seek more evidence at Naples home of arrested Pakistanis." *La Stampa*, February 3, 2003.

in Naples with a bomb-making kit under a French arrest warrant in connection with two raids of suspected Islamist militants in France.²²

Challenges to State Security

The Camorra directly challenges state authority through violence and corruption. At the street level, illicit sale of cigarettes and other goods is tolerated by authorities under an “air of casual illegality.”²³ With little in the way of commercial infrastructure and social services, it functions as the only viable economic organization in these neighborhoods.²⁴ It also serves as a welfare agency, in essence, by providing care for families of any member who ends up in prison.²⁵ This tightens its grasp on the neighborhoods by making the population dependent on its services, which pushes out state services, thus further integrating Camorra into society. Following the global economic crisis, organized crime in Italy is one of the few businesses with liquidity and is lending lots of money (although with extremely high interest rate) to businesses.²⁶

National and International Responses

Camorra’s activities have experienced pushback from the Italian government. Military responses have been provoked on more than one occasion. In 2008 a crisis developed in the city following the buildup of trash on the streets largely blamed on Camorra interests in the illegal waste disposal business filling up garbage dumps.²⁷ Soldiers were sent in to restore calm and start moving the trash. Later that same year, street violence induced a military response of 500 elite paratroopers to provide security in the surrounding towns of Naples.²⁸ Unfortunately, Camorra and its stronghold in Scampia and Secondigliano receive little attention outside of Italy with the exception of the 2008 release of the film *Gomorra*.

Impact on the United States

The biggest threat to the United States stemming from this part of the world over the long term is the increased probability of a catastrophic terrorist attack. If left unobstructed, terrorist groups can continue to use Naples as a point to safely enter Europe, which may eventually result in a major terrorist attack. The U.S. should focus on enhanced cooperation with the EU to increase interdiction efforts in the Mediterranean to cut down on smuggling (in this area it may be facilitated by the fact that U.S. Navy has a base just outside of Naples). A partnership of Italian

²²<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/terrorism-security/2010/1005/France-arrests-12-as-concerns-grow-about-homegrown-terrorism>.

²³ "Southern Discomfort; Corruption, Joblessness Plague Lower Italy’s Economy." *Washington Post*, August 20, 1995.

²⁴ "Gang warfare, Camorra style." *Toronto Star*, February 20, 2005.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/02/28/AR2009022801972.html>.

²⁷ "World: Street battles rage in Naples over rubbish: Berlusconi's hardline decision to open new dumps for piles of rotting garbage sparks angry protests." *The Observer*, May 25, 2008.

²⁸ "500 paratroops fail to bring peace to mafia stronghold." *Daily Telegraph*, October 9, 2008.

and American intelligence operations to track terrorist activity in Naples would also be in both countries' interest.

The last point of concern would be for American businesses. The implications of facing organized crime elements must be considered when deciding to locate in Naples or interact with Naples based industry. While this does not apply to every industry, those involved with shipping and especially waste disposal should be aware of the likelihood of crossing paths with elements of the Camorra and consider the possible consequences.

Realistically, the criminal elements of the Camorra are so embedded in society that they are unlikely to go away anytime soon. Thus, it may be advisable to focus both efforts and resources on anti-terrorism to address what is perceived to be the most imminent of the security threats.

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Akwasasne: A Complex Challenge to U.S. Northern Border Security

By Bree Spencer

Fertile Conditions

St. Regis Mohawk Reservation (U.S.) and Akwasasne Indian Reservation (Canada), known simply as Akwasasne, is a Native American reservation that straddles 12 miles of the United States–Canadian Border in northern New York State.¹ The geographic, jurisdictional, environmental, and social dynamics of the Akwasasne region create a perfect environment for smuggling. Smuggling represents a challenge to United States security that has not been mitigated by governmental attempts to stem the flow of illicit goods across the porous Akwasasne border.

The jurisdictional quagmire on the reservation has confounded government attempts to secure the region. Akwasasne spills into the municipalities of New York State, the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and the federal jurisdictions of both Canada and the United States. The St. Lawrence River bisects Akwasasne, cutting a forty-nine acre swath of water and islands through the reservation.² The river is narrow and freezes over in the winter ensuring that smugglers can move with ease year round, using speed boats in the warmer seasons and snow mobiles in the winter.

¹ Marsden, William. "Mohawks, Gangs and Tobacco." *The Montreal Gazette*, April 28, 2009. Available at: <http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/Mohawks+gangs+tobacco/1437136/story.html>

² Fennel, Tom, and Phillips Andrew. "Human Smugglers." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 1999. Available at: <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/PrinterFriendly.cfm?Params=M1ARTM0012044>

In addition to the geographical opportunity that Akwesasne provides to smugglers, the economically depressed nature of the reservation and the cultural marginalization of the Mohawk people contribute to the vulnerability of the region. Organized crime groups take advantage of the lack of opportunity, hiring members of the community to turn a quick profit by assuming the risk of transporting illicit items through the reservation.

Challenges to State Authority & Regional Exportation of Insecurity

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) reports that organized crime groups from both the United States and Canada utilize Akwesasne as a transit spot for smuggled goods and people.³ Smugglers—frequently members of the Akwesasne community hired by organized crime groups—ferry drugs, people, and occasionally weapons through the reservation between the U.S. and Canada.⁴ The commodities most frequently trafficked into the United States through the reservation are hydroponic marijuana,⁵ ecstasy,⁶ and oxycodone.⁷ It was estimated in 2009 that there was as much as thirteen metric tons of marijuana smuggled weekly into the U.S. through Akwesasne.⁸ In 2010 the National Drug Control Strategy noted that traffickers are smuggling “multi-thousand quantities” of ecstasy tablets through Akwesasne into the United States.⁹ Cocaine and Heroin seizures have also been on the rise in recent years.¹⁰ Human trafficking on Akwesasne territory is less common than drug smuggling but it does occur, as seen in the 1998 bust of a large trafficking ring that brought Chinese and Malaysian immigrants into the U.S.¹¹ In

³ Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2007. *Canada United States Integrated Border Enforcement Teams Threat Assessment*. Available at: <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ibet-eipf/reports-rapports/threat-menace-ass-eva-eng.htm#tphp>

⁴ “New York/New Jersey Drug Market Analysis.” The United States Department of Justice, 2009. Available at: <http://www.justice.gov/ndic/pubs32/32784/32784p.pdf>

⁵ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, 2009. *Statement for the Record – Oversight Hearing to Examine Drug Smuggling and Gang Activity in Indian Country*. Available at: http://www.justice.gov/dea/speeches/hearing_indian_country.pdf

⁶ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, 2009. *Statement for the Record – Oversight Hearing to Examine Drug Smuggling and Gang Activity in Indian Country*. Available at: http://www.justice.gov/dea/speeches/hearing_indian_country.pdf

⁷ McKenzie-Mulvey, Erin. “Effort to Combat Oxycodone Abuse Leads to Federal Indictment and Arrests,” U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, 2010. Available at: <http://www.justice.gov/dea/pubs/states/newsrel/2010/nyc111210a.html>

⁸ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, 2009. *Statement for the Record – Oversight Hearing to Examine Drug Smuggling and Gang Activity in Indian Country*. Available at: http://www.justice.gov/dea/speeches/hearing_indian_country.pdf

⁹ Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2010. *National Drug Control Strategy*. Available at: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/ndcs10/ndcs2010.pdf>

¹⁰ U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer, 2010. *Schumer, Gillibrand and Owens Urge DHS Secretary to Address Northern Border Narcotics Trafficking at Upcoming Summit with Canadian Public Safety Minister*. Available at: http://schumer.senate.gov/new_website/record.cfm?id=325860

¹¹ MacCharles, Tonda. “Huge Smuggling Ring Not Unique.” *The Toronto Star*, December 12, 1998.

2009 an illegal Polish immigrant living in the U.S. was arrested for ferrying three illegal aliens from Akwesasne into New York State.¹²

The goods most commonly trafficked north through Akwesasne are cigarettes, which are in demand due to the high taxes on tobacco leveraged by the Canadian government.¹³ Smuggled cigarettes are sold tax free, resulting in substantial savings for the consumer. Cigarettes are manufactured in illegal factories on the reservation and shipped north to Canada in huge quantities.¹⁴ In 2008 the RCMP estimated that 90% of smuggled cigarettes in Canada came from Akwesasne, resulting in a loss of tax revenue of up to \$2 billion dollars per year.¹⁵ As with other regions of the U.S. border that experience high trafficking rates, there have been reports of weapons¹⁶ and money being confiscated at the border as crime groups try to smuggle goods and cash back into Canada after making a profit in the U.S.¹⁷

Within the reservation there is cultural conflict among Mohawk residents regarding the criminal activity of smuggling. The development of groups like Akwesasne Eagle Watch, a grassroots movement of concerned citizens organizing to eradicate the presence of drugs in the community, exemplifies this conflict. The constant presence of drugs and traffickers on the reservation puts Akwesasne residents at increased risk of violence and corruption.¹⁸ In Akwesasne it is easy to see the tangible benefits of working as a smuggler since drug dealers and traffickers flash their profits around the reservation in the form of nice cars or unusually large homes.¹⁹

Cultural challenges that threaten collaborative efforts between Akwesasne and the relevant governments go beyond the traditional discontent felt by Native American tribes due to a history of forced attendance at Native American boarding schools and tumultuous treaty governance. Akwesasne has dealt with major environmental repercussions resulting from large industrial factories, particularly General Motors and Alcoa, using toxic materials near reservation land.²⁰ Toxins have seeped into the soil, the ground water and the three major waterways near the reservation, making the fish and wildlife inedible. The site of the former General Motors plant

¹² Department of Justice, 2010. *Press Release – U.S. Attorney Richard S. Hartunian, Northern District of New York*. Available at: <http://www.justice.gov/usao/nyn/news/1103-2157-2009522560.pdf>

¹³ Public Safety Canada, 2007. *2006-2007 Formative Evaluation of the Akwesasne Partnership Initiative for the Period of January 2002 to December 2005*. Available at: <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/abt/dpr/eval/api-apca-eng.aspx>

¹⁴ “Akwesasne Cigarette Plant Legalizes Operations.” *CBC News*, April 14, 2010. Available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2010/04/14/akwesasne-cigarette-tarbell.html>

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Marsden, William. “Mohawks, Gangs and Tobacco,” *The Montreal Gazette*, April 28, 2009. Available at: <http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/Mohawks+gangs+tobacco/1437136/story.html>

¹⁷ The United States Department of Justice, 2010. *National Drug Threat Analysis*. Available at: <http://www.justice.gov/ndic/pubs38/38661/38661p.pdf>

¹⁸ Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2010. *National Drug Control Strategy*. Available at: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/ndcs10/ndcs2010.pdf>

¹⁹ O’Brien, John. “Feds: Pots Smugglers on Border Territory Sold More than \$700 Million,” *The Post Standard*, 2009. Available at: http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2009/05/feds_pot_smugglers_on_border_t.html

²⁰ Johnson, Tim. “Border Indian Reservations Sources of Drug Smuggling,” *Seattle Times*, 2010. Available at: http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2012209920_rezdrugs27.html?syndication=rss

has been designated as an EPA superfund site.²¹ The pollution has left a tangible mark on the Mohawk tribe destroying the traditional and economic trade system which was centered on hunting and fishing in the region.²²

National and International Responses

The United States government response to the problem of smuggling in Akwesasne has been varied. The new state-of-the-art border protection governmental complex built just outside of the reservation in 2009 exemplifies U.S. interest in reinforcing security around the reservation.²³ Perhaps the most controversial investment in U.S. security at Akwesasne is the utilization of Predator drones, flown out of the nearby Fort Drum, to monitor the area.²⁴ The Department of Justice (DOJ) provides grants to native communities, including the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, to support tribal law enforcement efforts and youth community programs.²⁵ The DOJ also provides financial training programs for grantees.²⁶ The U.S. Department of Commerce gave the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe a federal broadband stimulus grant to build computer centers, increase access to the internet, and train reservation residents with the hope of providing greater career and education opportunities in the region.²⁷ According to the New York State Office for Technology, "...the Tribe administers more than 180 state and federal-funded programs that provide essential programs and services to the Akwesasne community."²⁸ In addition to providing funds to the tribe, the U.S. Treasury department has sought to mitigate the flow of illegal cigarettes into Canada by granting legal status to two cigarette factories that are located on the U.S. side of the Akwesasne reservation.²⁹

Akwesasne has also drawn political attention in the U.S. in recent years. A piece of legislation called the "Cross Border Reservation Drug Trafficking Sentencing Enhancement Act of 2009" has been proposed by Charles Schumer, a Democratic senator from New York. If passed into

²¹ Environmental Protection Agency, 2011. *Superfund Sites – General Motors (Central Foundry Division)*. Available at: <http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/0201644c.pdf>

²² "Akwesasne Task force on the Environment." *Environmental Impacts*. Available at: <http://www.northnet.org/atfe/envt.htm>

²³ Ouroussoff, Nicolai. "At a Border Crossing, Security Trumps Openness," *The New York Times*, July 26, 2009. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/27/arts/design/27border.html>

²⁴ "U.S. Launches Another Drone Plane to Patrol Canadian Border." *CBC News*, June 22, 2009. Available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2009/06/22/drone-great-lakes022.html>

²⁵ U.S. Department of Justice, 2010. *Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation – Fiscal Year 2011 Competitive Grant Application*. Available at: <http://www.tribaljusticeandsafety.gov/ctas11/fy2011ctas.pdf>

²⁶ U.S. Department of Justice, 2010. *Regional Financial Management Training Seminar for Tribal Communities*. Available at: <http://www.tribaljusticeandsafety.gov/docs/rfmts-03102011.pdf>

²⁷ New York State Office for Technology, 2010. *Federal Stimulus Funds Awarded to St. Regis Mohawk Tribe for Broadband Development*. Available at: <http://readme.readmedia.com/Federal-Stimulus-Funds-Awarded-to-St-Regis-Mohawk-Tribe-for-Broadband-Development/1733151>

²⁸ New York State Office for Technology, 2010. *Federal Stimulus Funds Awarded to St. Regis Mohawk Tribe for Broadband Development*. Available at: <http://readme.readmedia.com/Federal-Stimulus-Funds-Awarded-to-St-Regis-Mohawk-Tribe-for-Broadband-Development/1733151>

²⁹ "Akwesasne Cigarette Plant Legalizes Operations." *CBC News*, April 14, 2010. Available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2010/04/14/akwesasne-cigarette-tarbell.html>

law, the Act would add ten years to the sentence of any cross-border drug traffickers that utilize Native American land. This proposal is meant to discourage traffickers from taking advantage of Indian reservations which have suffered due to the presence of drugs and crime in their communities.³⁰

Government response to the issue of smuggling is not limited to the United States. The Canadian Government works with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne—the governing body for the Canadian side of the reservation—particularly by supporting law enforcement efforts in the region. The year 2002 marked the beginning of the Akwesasne Partnership Initiative (API), which was a funded federal program aimed at increasing the effectiveness of RCMP, Akwesasne Mohawk Police (AMP) and cross-border collaboration.³¹ The API also funded the creation of the Joint Investigative Team, a special unit of the AMP which focuses on organized crime. In addition to the API and similar programs, the Canadian government provides grants with varied social aims to the Akwesasne community. One such grant is provided by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation which awarded subsidy money to build four new housing units at Akwesasne. The intention of the grant is to improve housing infrastructure and provide job opportunities on the reservation.³²

Impact on the United States

The threat that the Akwesasne border region presents to the United States is real and complex. In addition to goods traditionally smuggled across the border, there is potential for people with aims of a more destructive nature to capitalize on the weakness of this particular region, utilizing the area to transport weapons, terrorists, or other forms of insecurity into the United States. While both the U.S. and Canadian governments are funding programs and supporting security in and around Akwesasne, there is still a lack of opportunity that haunts reservation residents. The challenges associated with the geographic, environmental, and jurisdictional complexity of the reservation have been compounded by the historical and social turmoil of the Akwesasne Mohawks, a mixture of challenges that resulted in a region vulnerable to smugglers and resistant to government intervention.

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³⁰ Senator Charles E. Schumer, United States Senator for New York, 2009. *Following the Discovery of the Largest Marijuana Ring in Upstate NY: Schumer Unveils Legislation to Increase Penalties on People who Smuggle Drugs through Indian Reservations*. Available at: http://schumer.senate.gov/new_website/record.cfm?id=320789

³¹ Public Safety Canada, 2007. *2006-2007 Formative Evaluation of the Akwesasne Partnership Initiative for the Period of January 2002 to December 2005*. Available at: <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/abt/dpr/eval/api-apca-eng.aspx>

³² Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2010. *Canada's Economic Action Plan Creates Jobs and Improves Housing On-Reserve in Ontario*. Available at: <http://www.schl.ca/en/corp/nero/nere/2010/2010-06-29-1500.cfm>

Book Review:

Why Leaders Lie—The Truth About Lying in International Politics

Reviewed by Arthur I. Cyr

Why Leaders Lie—The Truth About Lying in International Politics

John J. Mearsheimer

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John J. Mearsheimer, the R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, is one of the most prominent, productive, and imaginative scholars in the realist school of international relations. In this brief, highly instructive volume he discusses how and why leaders have used deception, dissembling, and outright lying in pursuit of foreign policy goals. He differentiates lying from two other kinds of deception, concealment and ‘spinning,’ or putting facts in the most favorable light possible.

A committed realist, he states clearly that lying, “widely viewed as reprehensible behavior in ordinary life,” nonetheless is acceptable in international politics when “good strategic reasons” so dictate. Reasons of state may persuade a leader to lie to other leaders, and even to the population at large. Interestingly, he argues that there is not much lying between states and leaders are “much more likely to lie to their own people” regarding matters of foreign policy.

Advocates of the realist perspective are usually described as emphasizing power in relations between nation states, sometimes to the exclusion of other important considerations, but that is misleading. Professor Hans J. Morgenthau, who remains the seminal figure of this school of thought and analysis, explicitly among scholars and implicitly among the wider interested public, was committed to the importance of ethics and the rule of law. Power might be unavoidable in international relations, but policies regarding use of force must be guided by a range of considerations, including morality.

Perhaps the more fundamental defining quality of the realist school is emphasis on understanding history as context, both limiting but also facilitating policy effectiveness. A great irony of American foreign policy since the Second World War is that leaders who have seen themselves as especially tough-minded and hard-nosed, willing unflinchingly to use force for purposes of state, have also overlooked history in their self-defined policy pressure cookers of decisions and crisis management.

The Vietnam War experience is today a principal exhibit for the prosecution regarding fatal dangers for foreign policy when realism is removed from historical context. The American invasion and occupation of Iraq may prove to be another, and provides the principal focus of this book.

Mearsheimer argues that top officials of the administration of President George W. Bush told “four major lies” in the prelude to the Iraq invasion. First, they lied in stating “that they knew with complete certainty” that Iraq dictator Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. Second, they stated that Saddam “was closely allied” with Osama bin Laden. Third, a variety of statements from senior officials indicated Iraq had some involvement in the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11. Fourth, President Bush and others indicated that peaceful resolution of the dispute with Iraq was possible, when the decision had already been made to go to war.

On the last point, Richard Haass, at the time head of the policy planning staff in the State Department, and currently President of the Council on Foreign Relations, is quoted regarding a conversation in July 2002 with Condoleezza Rice, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. He questioned the wisdom of making Iraq the highest military priority, given the wider war against international terrorist groups. She replied in effect that this decision had already been made, and so “don’t waste your breath.”

Mearsheimer also absolves Saddam Hussein of lying about possessing weapons of mass destruction before the Iraq War, and discusses this topic in some detail. This is true based on examination of explicit statements from that leader and others in his regime. However, Saddam Hussein’s on-again, off-again course of action regarding admission of internationally authorized weapons inspectors provides implicit evidence that he was seeking to hide such a program. Ironically, apparent concealment of nonexistent weapons contributed to his downfall.

The author’s other examples of lying by national leaders include President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s description of an armed exchange between the USS *Greer*, a destroyer, and a German submarine in the late summer of 1941, several months before the attack on Pearl Harbor. FDR implied the attack was unprovoked, though the American vessel had been cooperating with a British anti-submarine effort. He also cites President Lyndon B. Johnson’s use in 1964 of an apparent attack by North Vietnamese patrol boats on another destroyer, the USS *Maddox*, to secure passage by Congress of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution authorizing expanded military efforts in Vietnam. In each case, a warship was employed in provocative fashion but leaders stated otherwise.

Mearsheimer views simplistic emotional appeals to force or “fearmongering” as a special danger facing democracies, and accuses Bush administration leaders of employing such tactics to generate public support for the Iraq invasion. He criticizes neoconservatives such as Irving Kristol who believe much of the public is too unsophisticated to be told detailed truths in dispassionate fashion.

He goes on to link the great journalist philosopher Walter Lippmann with Kristol and company in disparaging public sophistication, but that is unfair. Lippmann personified commitment to serious public education, and saw himself as an informative intermediary between leaders and the wider public. Perhaps the only news columnist of that earlier era with even more public influence was First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt; readers knew she was always completely honest.

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