

NARCOTICS & TERRORISM

LINKS BETWEEN DRUG
TRAFFICKING AND VIOLENCE
ARE PLENTIFUL AND INTRICATE



THINKSTOCK

By Dr. Christopher C. Harmon

The Taliban is making some \$100 million a year from drugs in Afghanistan while waging a war against the Afghans and their coalition partners. Afghanistan provides a new case in an old pattern: Insurgency and terrorism often go together with drug production and trafficking.

This nexus is not new but has been common in certain conflict zones. Also, the linkage is not universal: Many terrorists neither use nor deal in drugs. Some are quite puritanical; others have very different vices. This should be kept in mind because once a month, it seems, a commentator declares that the nexus between crime and terrorism is “growing” or “strengthening.” Most offer no evidence of growth or even attempt an argument about growth. Perhaps the problem is not new, but new to them.

What is demonstrable is that the nexus is real, and really important. These two phenomena — drugs and terrorism — have been responsible for wrecking certain societies and the emotional and physical laceration of many others. Peru’s drug-fueled insurgency of the 1980s cost that country 30,000 dead and perhaps \$25 billion in damage. In Turkey, in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the combination of drugs, smuggled weapons and terrorist groups of right and left caused regimes to fall — not just totter, but fall. The military twice staged coups d’état, although each time the military established order and backed out, returning political authority to civilian hands.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

At Turkey’s Ankara University in April 1984, academics and security experts addressed a conference on “International Terrorism and the Drug Connection.” A transcript of the proceedings was released with a colorful cover showing a bloody red liquid emitting from an icy gray handgun. The gun barrel was a hypodermic tube with a protruding needle. It was a catchy and garish way to connect the two phenomena of drugs and terror. But the academics’ papers made apparent some important developments: In 1984, there were international connections between terrorist groups and their sponsors. The connections included exchanging trading expertise, selling guns and dealing in drugs in some cases. What most concerned Turks on the panels was the evidence of drug dealing by Armenians and the prospective links of this to terrorism by Armenian organizations — a few witnesses mentioned the Justice

Commandos, and many focused on ASALA, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia.

This conference in Ankara coincided with other indicators of a terrorism-drugs nexus, such as research and reporting by Rand Corporation’s Paul Henze, Turkish journalist Ugur Mumcu, Nathan Adams and others. Some described the narcotics business as a calculated part of the “strategy of tension” employed by certain state sponsors of terrorism against NATO states, especially Turkey. But of course, moneymaking was also a prime motive. In the early 1980s, evidence was building that the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or the FARC, was involved in narcotrafficking. And Italian arrests in 1984 yielded heroin and more than 30 Tamils, many part of a Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or LTTE, network selling drugs worldwide. Swiss authorities began talking of “The Tamil Connection” to heroin trafficking, and a Canadian think tank began tracking this relationship between drug runners and international terrorists out of Sri Lanka.

TERRORISTS’ ROLES IN NARCOTICS

Consider the roles, actual and potential, in the nexus between terrorists and narcotics.

Growing: This is unusual, but some terrorists may grow illicit crops.

“Taxation” of growers: This is commonplace for drugs that are cultivated rather than manufactured. It brings insurgents and terrorist’s much money.

Organization of growers, as in union making: This has been done by the Sendero Luminoso, or Shining Path, group in Peru. Such methods underscore the control that insurgent “shadow governments” may have over a region’s farmers. Thus, the activity is political as well as financial.

Refinement of cocaine or heroin: There is evidence against the Taliban, and perhaps the FARC and Hezbollah, for refining product from base.

Trafficking: Here the evidence is clear; some terrorist groups have used their underground networks to move narcotics, which is lucrative. Examples include the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK, and the Tamil Tigers.

Taxing the traffickers: This is common and the basis for FARC power over Colombians. This has been a staple of Sendero Luminoso’s control over certain

Peruvian traffickers — as when the known price for letting a small plane full of coca powder or paste fly away was 3,000 to 10,000 British pounds (\$4,600 to \$15,500).

Certain states — sovereign political entities with serious duties and membership in international organizations, but also liaisons to terrorist groups — have sometimes aided narcotrafficking by those terrorists. In such arrangements, the normal congruence of wielding power and protecting stability is in part set aside, and a capital (a government) deals directly with revolutionary terrorists financing political subversion elsewhere. On occasion, deal-making ensures that the transnational terrorists only attack elsewhere — which helps the patron state assure its own security. These narcotics linkages have been, in some cases, important to terrorists' success and profiteering. The state gains by a powerful infusion of hard currency.

The Bulgarian communist government had several roles in helping certain narco-mafia figures and terrorists. Damascus, Syria, and its state architecture facilitated and benefited from narcotrafficking in Lebanon, parts of which it occupied for a quarter century; this may be less true now given Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. Cuba's work with the Colombian terrorist group M-19 began in 1979 and continued for a number of years with that and other sub-state actors, garnering the Castro regime as much as \$200 million a year for a time, according to British journalist James Adams in 1986. And there is a massive evidence of illegal North Korean behavior. Pyongyang today manufactures and markets methamphetamines through a state agency called Bureau 39, which has offices near the party headquarters in the North Korean capital.

All four of these states — communist Bulgaria, Syria, Cuba, North Korea — also have been on the list of terrorism sponsors maintained by the United States, and with good reason. The authority with which states may protect trafficking, and the agencies of state that may facilitate it — diplomatic pouches, protections against search or seizure for official travelers, legitimate documents of transit, embassy storerooms — are of immense advantage in the black business of drug dealing. For a state to support such trade is akin to that state's support for foreign terrorism. It is a high-risk strategy, but one with many potential payoffs.

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Considering levels of terrorist engagement in this illicit business, one might perceive four categories, beginning with no clear evidence of operational linkages up to a level where drugs are the main source benefiting the sub-state actor.

Level One: no convincing connection

Omitting the odd report, or occasional and minor purchase or sale, one may argue that there is no serious organizational connection to the drug business for many named terrorist groups. The newest research on the life of the Baader-Meinhof Gang, or Red Army Faction, makes it evident that members used drugs at times, especially hashish. But the organization made its money

in other ways, such as bank robberies. It did not traffic. It was the same in Greece with its 17 November terrorist organization, which carried on for three decades, mainly in Athens. U.S. white power organizations also normally lack connection to drug profits — a characteristic only underscored by the fascination some white supremacists have shown in the killing power of ricin and chemical weapons. The Order and Aryan Nations was prosecuted for many kinds of crimes but not drug dealing.

Level Two: one of many sources

Drugs have been one of multiple money sources for terrorist groups of modern times. The LTTE trafficked during its 35-year lifespan. The group developed worldwide networks for logistics and was intimately connected within the global Tamil diaspora. LTTE even managed a shipping business. Its logistics genius, known as KP for Kumaran Pathmanathan, was finally caught in Malaysia in 2009, months after most other Tiger leaders were killed or captured within Sri Lanka by an effective armed forces offensive. Among the many charges he is likely to face now are those of worldwide smuggling.

Elements of the Palestine Liberation Organization, or PLO, have trafficked, buying weapons with money they made selling drugs and, on occasion, swapping the drugs for guns directly. When Yasser Arafat died in 2004, he and his organization were very wealthy. Arafat's life was a testament to his skills at managing the influx of foreign money. The PLO had many sources, especially private donations and government gifts. Its company, SAMED, proved the utility of legitimate business: It made candy, furniture and many other things. But the same company, with its regional reach, agents and vessels, could move drugs, and some experts report that it did. PLO members did deal at times in hashish, opium, heroin and even cocaine. The evidence includes arrests by British and Australian authorities in 1984 and 1985 for hashish trafficking on a large scale.

The list of organizations enjoying narco profits as one of many funding sources is broad and includes ASALA; Hezbollah; Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, or ETA; the Ulster Freedom Fighters; some Irish "republicans"; Abu Sayyaf; and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, or IMU. Aum Shinrikyo is not included; studies of this Japanese political cult responsible for the Tokyo sarin attacks indicate manufacture of a range of drugs, but these were for internal use, not commercial sale.

Level Three: a main source

The narcotics business has been a steady and major source of funding for many violent political groups in contemporary times. In the early 1970s there were the German anarchists of Michael "Bommi" Baumann's band who chose the name "Rambling Hashish Rebels." Their slogans included "If you put down the needle, replace it with a gun in your hand." Wielding club, bomb, gun and needle, they supported themselves by selling drugs. But such clowns fade quickly in politics, and they cannot run a careful underground. Their effect was

negligible compared with the terrorist impact of the Red Army Faction. Larger and more serious groups that organized and systematized narcotics dealing to pay operating expenses have included Colombia's M-19 and National Liberation Army, or ELN, PKK, Sendero Luminoso and, according to Interpol, the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Level Four: the main source

The al-Qaida allies that staged the Casablanca attack of 2003 and the 2004 Madrid train bombings were funded by drugs, especially hashish out of Morocco. The Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group and others arranging devastation in Madrid made hundreds of thousands of euros in the hashish trade. Incredibly, when the cells' possessions were accessed after the attack, they were found to contain no less than 1.3 million euros' worth of drugs.

At least three much larger groups have flourished directly via the drug business: the Taliban, the FARC, and the United Self-Defense Forces, or AUC, which are militias reacting to the FARC. The two Colombian organizations are remarkable mirrors of each other in this commercial respect. Both begin with high political aspirations — the FARC to revolutionize society on Fidel Castro's model and the AUC militias to preserve their country from the Castroites. The FARC has flourished for four and a half decades now, and its main money source is cocaine. As long ago as 1986, a devastating indictment of this business was laid out in print by Adams, the British journalist. Twenty years later, Jane's intelligence consortium published research finding the FARC's income from drugs alone to be as much as \$600 million annually — a stupefying figure. Even the more common lower estimates are still stupefying.

Enter AUC. Founded by Carlos Castaño about 1997, it protected peasants and townspeople against the abuses of the leftist guerrillas. But for financing, AUC fell into trading locally produced drugs. Castaño is now presumed dead, but his published autobiography admits that 70 percent of the AUC's income was from drugs. The irony is immense: A self-defense militia that begins in opposition to the FARC and ELN and their drug-fueled terrorism ended up in narco-trafficking and terrorism. Soon the U.S. Department of State issued a formal condemnation of the AUC militias.

There is no "level five." That is, there is no known terrorist group that derives all of its funding from the business of drugs.

The FARC may make hundreds of millions each year, especially in cocaine, but it also makes much money by extortion of cattle ranchers and mines, bribes paid by oil pipeline companies for their security, highway robbery and kidnapping. The Kosovo Liberation Army is derided for its trafficking, but one new book examining these regional insurgents-turned-state-army claims to document broad and successful efforts at honest fundraising among donors and diaspora members in the United States, Canada and Switzerland. Terrorist groups always have more than one source of income.

COMMUNIST BULGARIA AND ITS SUB-STATE PARTNERS

Circa 1981, Bulgaria's roles in the nexus of drug crime and violent sub-state actors included facilitating the smuggling of narcotics, especially from the Middle East into Western Europe and, to a lesser degree, making narcotics for illicit

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A young Palestinian refugee carrying an AK-47 participates in a December 2008 ceremony at the Shatila refugee camp outside of Beirut to mark the 44th anniversary of the Fatah party's declaration of armed resistance. The Palestinian Liberation Organization, allied with Fatah, has been accused of exchanging illicit drugs for weapons.

Pakistani customs officials in Karachi display confiscated bags of hashish packed in coffee bags in April 2010. Officials seized a shipping container holding 3,740 kilograms of hashish, one of the illegal drugs that finance terrorism.



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sales to the West. It also facilitated other forms of contraband — including weapons, electronics and cigarettes — usually shipped from Europe into the Middle East. On the terrorism side of the ledger, Bulgaria ran a campaign with Syria to destabilize Turkey and ruin it with political violence and narcotics because Turkey was not merely a neighbor of Bulgaria but its rival and NATO enemy. Finally, the country hosted and, as necessary, moved key personnel in the international terrorist network — usually persons of the extreme left, but on occasion of the right — anything to advance the anarchy in a neighboring state.

A generation ago, documents smuggled into Greece from Bulgaria by a defector pointed to a decision made in Moscow, and another made in Sofia, to facilitate the narcotics business by creating the import-export firm Kintex. Bulgaria's Council of Ministers created this entity by decrees of 1966 and 1967. Its bureaucratic home was in the Foreign Trade Ministry, and State Security helped staff the enterprise. Key to this commerce was the trucking firm TIR, which freely moved goods, including contraband such as weapons and narcotics, across international borders in sealed cargo spaces rarely subject to inspection. About 25,000 trucks owned by TIR crossed Bulgarian and Yugoslav borders every year. Bulgaria's government-owned Balkan Airlines was also useful for moving personnel and illicit goods. A bold new book that explores archival research by two Bulgarians says that much of the contraband landed at Sofia airport — before being dispersed outward by many different means, including sea routes via Varna and Burgas, Bulgaria.

Although the controlling officials of Kintex were Bulgarians, they worked with smugglers who were usually not Bulgarians. These foreigners sheltered in spots such as Hotel Vitosha in Sofia. They were allowed to move about freely, conduct business without papers or with false ones, come and go among the West, East and Middle East as they pleased. They made great amounts of money, and by two

accounts, the take by Bulgaria was 10 percent.

An insider described how authorities “smoothed the way” for illegal materials reaching Turkey. “You had to have a place to store your goods near Turkey before smuggling them into the country, and Bulgaria provided the ideal location. The Bulgarians helped us in return for 10 percent of the cargo's value in hard currency. It was worth it because they not only provided storage facilities but many services, even sending gunboats to escort our ships out of Bulgarian waters and rescue vessels to bring them back if they ran into rough weather.”

The drugs that this network of state and sub-state agents were moving included Middle Eastern hashish and marijuana. There is limited evidence that morphine base was made in Bulgaria from imported opium; that Kintex moved heroin and helped make it for sale in Europe; and that some customers of Kintex used heroin as currency to pay for contraband. The terrorist movements this network helped and armed were frequently Turkish — Turks on the left and right. The damage was such that by 1980, a Turk somewhere in the republic was dying from political violence more than once every hour — 28 a day. Other Kintex beneficiaries included PLO elements and Armenians who were killing frequently in Europe and the United States.

All this came under Western scrutiny after a mysterious Turk, Mehmet Ali Agca, under handlers from Bulgaria, appeared in St. Peter's Square in Rome on May 13, 1981. Pope John Paul II, perhaps the greatest living threat to the Soviet bloc, was making a scheduled public appearance. Agca shot him repeatedly. After capture, he admitted Bulgarian Embassy links; in his pocket were some of the embassy phone numbers. One of the handlers was photographed near the pope in the square that day.

Italian authorities did not doubt the source of their grief. In 1981, Rome expelled 26 foreign nationals, including Bulgarians, all linked to terrorism in Italy. The next year, 100 more people were arrested during a northern Italian



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Two militants from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or the FARC, guard a pass near Florencia in Colombia's south Cauqueta province in March 2010. The FARC helps finance its insurgency with proceeds from the production and sale of cocaine.

investigation into Bulgarian arms and drugs smuggling. In 1984, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, or DEA, declared: "In virtually every report available to DEA since 1970 containing information on trafficking in and through Bulgaria, the state trading organization Kintex is mentioned as a facilitator of transactions. In turn, sources consistently state that top-ranking members of the Bulgarian intelligence service and/or former heads of Bulgarian ministries comprise the directorate of Kintex."

THE SHINING PATH

Sendero Luminoso is a revolutionary Maoist organization that disdains all state connections while aspiring to become a state. It was founded in Peru after 1970 by Abimael Guzman, an admirer of China's "Gang of Four" authorities. Sendero began with political work and organization, very quietly, for a decade. In 1980, Sendero's emergence into overt violence coincided with the movement of its first militants into the Upper Huallaga Valley, already a coca-growing region.

Coca culture was a part of Peruvian life. The revolutionaries were seeking the money in it, and they made great sums, as did others enjoying the export boom. By the estimate of two experts, Tom Marks and David Scott Palmer, Shining Path's income totaled \$10 million a year in the late 1980s. British authority Simon Strong pegged its take at more than twice that, only for drugs.

By degrees, in different times and places, the Sendero rebels played varied roles in the narcotics trade. A few initial militants were growers, which would have been unimaginable without their totalitarian organization's clearance. Sendero guerrillas also protected growers, at least in some times and places. In a third role, ideological militants "taxed" growers. Sendero militants were often union organizers; they organized small growers and got them collectivized as bargainers, able to demand higher leaf prices from traffickers who bought this agricultural product. In a few places, the revolutionaries controlled land on which there were

refining laboratories. They had a major role in taxing the traffickers, the "black businessmen" linked to the outside, consumers in the United States, Europe and elsewhere. This happened on the ground, and it happened systematically at covert airstrips where pilots landed to fly the leaf or paste away — usually to Colombia — for processing. Finally, Sendero murdered many government employees — and harassed others — charged with coca eradication or with creative economic aid projects that would improve peasants' lives, such as the Upper Huallaga Area Development Project. Ruthless attacks nearly caused its collapse in the late 1980s. Sendero personnel have no role as drug users. They speak out against consumption and have no demonstrable problem in their rank and file with consumption of drugs. This is all about business, with the users living outside Peru.

Sendero is today a shadow of its old self, but the coca-guerrilla link still exists. Thirteen Peruvian troops died in two grenade and dynamite attacks by Sendero guerrillas in April 2009 in Ayacucho province, and their presence there is tied to the local drugs trade. There was a major arrest of a Sendero principal in August 2009 — some news accounts tie him to the coca trade.

The growing of coca plants by peasants has survived many government efforts: manpower-intensive eradication, gas-powered cutting tools, herbicides and U.S.-aided crop-substitution programs. Coca also survived one of the more effective anti-insurgent tools: peasant militias. *Rondas*, or self-defense militias, traditional in the Peruvian outback, formed in many additional places during the late 1980s and early 1990s, sometimes with government leadership but often without. Militias were a smart way to oppose communist insurgents: They marshaled the energies and drew upon the self-interests of farmers and other local residents — defense is chosen instead of imposed by the central government. But as militias formed and succeeded against Sendero, some took financing from the coca trade. As in Colombia with AUC, a fine counter-revolutionary concept was abused.

HEZBOLLAH

Hezbollah began in Lebanon in 1982 as a movement of “the dispossessed” but became wealthy and powerful. Hezbollah calls itself “The Party of God,” but not all that its members do is pious. Their organization, involved in the drug business, makes a third case study of distinctive character — a religious movement with real political power at sub-state and state levels. The group arose in territory with a reputation for narcotics cultivation and export. The Bekaa Valley’s marijuana and hashish were prized exports. And then opium growing came to Bekaa, just about the time Hezbollah began. Most Lebanese armed groups, including Hezbollah and Syrian troops there in occupation after 1975, furthered, protected and profited from trade in hashish, opium and opium’s derivative heroin. Some in the country were also refining opium raised in Asia, or coca imported from Latin America, so there were many laboratories, not merely growing fields, in Lebanon. Heroin is, of course, less bulky and more valuable by far than poppy or any other plant.

Today Hezbollah may manufacture — as well as help export — drugs, some created in labs, some grown in Lebanon’s fields. A criminal case in Israel shows Hezbollah members offering money, hashish and heroin to buy classified information from Israeli Arabs — one of many examples of sub-state actors using drugs for barter.

Americans might be surprised to learn that the DEA has reported pseudoephedrine smuggling (in a domestic case) linked to Hezbollah and Hamas. That chemical is an ingredient in “speed” — methamphetamine — a plague in some American Midwestern states. Several DEA and FBI investigations have led to the Middle East and to Hezbollah and Hamas bank accounts. “A significant portion” of the sales helps Middle East terrorism, according to past DEA chief Asa Hutchinson.

Hezbollah was found, in one case, to deal in stolen American autos. Another drama starring the group featured almost \$8 million in cigarettes, transferred within the U.S. to take advantage of differences in state sales taxes. Hezbollah’s curious profile in the Western Hemisphere grew in 2008 with a New York federal court indictment of an international arms dealer. Based in Honduras, this man offered Hezbollah weapons hidden in Mexico to the Colombian FARC — one of the world’s best-known narco-trafficking groups. On offer were plastic explosives, surface-to-air missiles, rocket-propelled grenades and military rifles stolen from Iraq. Payment was to be in cocaine powder — nearly a ton of it. The conspiracy was interrupted. But the U.S. v. Jamal Yousef case shows that international terrorists, not just local drug traffickers, are active in Mexico. Nor may one forget this federal case’s indicators of direct links between Hezbollah and the FARC.

The year 2008 saw a separate conspiracy involving several dozen arrests, drug trafficking and money laundering. The ring had connections to both Lebanese Hezbollah and the FARC. Clearly, ideology and culture do

not bar partnerships in the drugs-for-guns trade. There is at least one previous such case with Hezbollah, noted in 2005 U.S. congressional testimony.

Drawing attention to Latin America are Lebanese Shia who settled there during and after the Lebanese civil wars. Some are now on Margarita Island, Venezuela, now known for smuggling and narcotics deals as well as political activism for Hezbollah. Matthew Levitt, an analyst with a long background in specialized government work and the think tank world, has been tracking the emerging terrorist connections to this coastal zone. He reports finding political propaganda, smuggling, “dirty” travel agencies, one link to a Hezbollah money-raising cell in North Carolina, and a Venezuelan diplomat with former postings in Damascus and Beirut who counsels Hezbollah activists on raising money in Latin America. Collaboration between Latin America and the Levant moves not only money but

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Colombian police display some of the 757 sticks of dynamite confiscated in late 2009 from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. Cocaine is a major source of financing for the insurgents.

also trainees for courses in Iran — Hezbollah's primary sponsor and a state that just happens to be making major and successful incursions into Latin America.

Other Lebanese Shia settled into the now infamous Tri-Border area, an archetypal “gray area,” or ungoverned zone. This region — where Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina touch — has for 15 years been a favored destination of journalists and others studying gray and black markets, including drug trafficking. Bombings of Jewish and Israeli targets in Argentina in 1992 and 1994 spurred these inquiries, which discovered links to Hezbollah and its patron, Iran, and yielded criminal indictments of some Iranian officials.

Estimates of any underground group's take in narcotics and illicit business are difficult. A controversial criminologist, Rachel Ehrenfeld, estimates that Hezbollah drug trading generates tens of millions of dollars in profits each year. Levitt believes some \$10 million is raised each year in the Tri-Border area alone by Hezbollah, for all types of dealings, drugs and other commodities. One can at least be sure that, after gifts from Iran, smuggling is the second source of income for Hezbollah. The growing literature on terrorist financing makes it apparent that this smuggling includes masses of drugs and brings The Party of God into regular contact with international criminal organizations.

SEVEN LESSONS

The case studies of Bulgaria, Sendero terrorists in Peru and Hezbollah's global diaspora — when combined with analysis of Colombian armed groups, the Taliban in Afghanistan and much other evidence — tend toward seven general conclusions:

- Narcoterrorism — and that precise name for the problem emerged in the mid-1980s — is a global problem. Absent evidence, one should not repeat the common assertion that it is a “growing” problem. Nor should one conclude too quickly that narcotrafficking groups “are no longer political” because of deep involvement in such crime. It is common for sub-state political entities also to be deeply engaged in crime. Setting aside those two unproven generalizations, what is clear? It is clear that the drug business is very significant for many of today's terrorist groups and that narcoterrorism is a serious transnational problem.
- Terror groups rarely protect their “political purity,” and organized crime groups may be eager for partners. Despite the immense differences these two sides have, including politics, they come together at points: living in the underground; relying upon similar criminal behaviors; hiring or recruiting skilled white-collar experts in accounting and law; requiring good international connections; and mastering access to money. Sometimes they share reasons for attacking the extant government.
- The fact that a group deals in drugs is no predictor

of its role in that business. The more one looks at three decades of evidence, the more variety one notices in the roles such groups had or play now.

- Because drugs are valuable, and some are highly portable, drugs can be currency, not only a commodity. Trafficker Jamal Yousef — the alleged Hezbollah member in the 2009 indictment — expected a mass of cocaine powder in exchange for weapons. Bulgaria's Kintex occasionally did such deals. Salvadoran guerrillas training in Cuba sometimes paid their fare with drugs produced in Latin America. In at least one case, the Basque ETA contracted with the Genovese clan of the Italian Camorra mafia to pay with drugs for missile launchers and ammunition.
- No terrorist group has only one source of funding. They tend to favor diversity in money sources, perhaps as it offers independence from donors. The PLO used to get handsome checks from Soviet bloc countries, but it had just as many noncommunist donors and much real business on the side. Only one small part was dealing drugs from Lebanon. Today, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group and Hezbollah each take millions in currency from Tehran annually, but they are also in the drug trade. This is one of many reasons it is unlikely states can “strangle” a terrorist organization by attacking the drugs nexus.
- A large number of violent political movements have dealt in drugs, at least sometimes. Nearly half of the better-known transnational groups have links to the business. For example, thousands of average Americans favoring certain political ideals of the Irish Republican Army Provos are unaware that the organization has, from time to time, been in the drug trade. This is credibly reported — although the Provos' more usual sources are gaming tables, social clubs, diaspora donations, extortion, robbery and fraud.
- States — not only anti-state terrorists — may deal in drugs. Their large and elaborate networks, offices, resources and international connections make them potent players in such markets. Older communist states such as Cuba, Nicaragua and Bulgaria previously engaged in such trade. Syria has been in the business. North Korea is a leader in this narrow dimension of the black commercial world; innumerable diplomats, businessmen and state assets have been seized in trafficking scandals. Japan and Russia, especially, have seen their citizens targeted in this kind of moneymaking effort by Pyongyang. And we note a coincidence between lists of state sponsors of terrorism and states known to facilitate, or engage for profit in, narcotics trafficking. □

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