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The text has been extended to include policy recommendations and some new references.

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# ***NARCOTERRORISM***

**Jonas Hartelius**

**Policy Paper 3/2008**



# FOREWORD

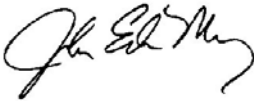
*By John Edwin Mroz and Peder Langenskiöld*

Narcoterrorism has become a major international problem in the last decades. It has wide impact on national security, public health and personal freedom.

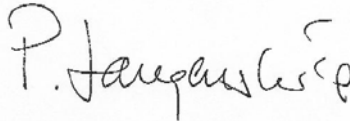
In this outline, originally published by the Swedish Carnegie Institute in a volume to commemorate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 23 February 2007, Mr. Jonas Hartelius describes the development and effects of narcoterrorism. He also points to factors to be considered when developing counterstrategies.

As part of a co-operative effort, the East-West Institute and the Swedish Carnegie Institute have decided to make this translation, done by Mr. Hartelius himself, available to an international audience. The publishers hope it will help focus professional and public attention on this serious contemporary problem.

New York and Stockholm, 1 February 2008



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The concept of “narcoterrorism” was introduced in 1983 by the Peruvian President Belaunde Terry to designate terrorist-like attacks against his country’s drug enforcement police. Drug criminals utilized methods from political assailants to influence the politics of the country by causing terror and obstructing justice. Later, ideology-driven terrorist organizations took up illegal drug trade as a source of income.

Over the years, several definitions of “narcoterrorism” have been introduced. The widest definition is given by the Oxford dictionary (1999): “Terrorism associated with the trade in illicit drugs”. It does not indicate whether ideological and political or, criminal and commercial motives are the main driving factors. The simplest way of describing narcoterrorism is, perhaps, as a part of an illegal complex of drugs, violence and power, where the illegal drug trade and the illegal exercise of power have become aggregated in such a way that they threaten democracy and the rule of law.

The manifestations of narcoterrorism are manifold and far reaching: increased drug production; wide spread abuse of drugs; serious drug-related crime; threats to the rule of law, public security, and public health; money laundering; infiltration of the legal economy; and financing of terrorism. It has been estimated that the FARC guerilla of Colombia has a net profit from drug-related crime (including the “taxation” and “protection” of the illegal cocaine trade) of at least 300 million USD every year. The annual total income from the drug trade for movements such as al-Qaeda has been estimated by the U.N. to be 2.4 billion USD. Twelve of the 28 organizations, which in October 2001 were listed as terrorist organizations by the U.S. State Department, were stated to be involved in the illegal drug trade, ranging from Sendero Luminoso of Peru to the “Tamil Tigers” of Sri Lanka.

Narcoterrorism represents another step in the development of organized drug crime in the postwar period. It surpasses the traditional drug syndicates and drug cartels in being much more autonomous and having paramilitary strength. Yet another step is represented by “narcostates”. A narcostate is a state (or region), where the operators of the drug trade through their economic, political and paramilitary strength influence the exercise of power by the central government. Current examples are Afghanistan and Colombia.

The debate on countermeasures against narcoterrorism is parallel to the debate on countermeasures against the global illegal drug trade. The

consumer countries, who are mainly industrial or post-industrial countries, locate the problem with the producer countries and their production and distribution of illegal drugs. They call for elimination of the problem “at source”, e.g. by crop replacement or by police and customs action against the illegal production and distribution of drugs. The producer countries, who mainly are developing countries, point to the demand in the consumer countries as the driving force for the illegal trade. They call for the consumer countries to reduce their demand in order to dry up the industry, e.g. by prevention, treatment and local drug enforcement.

Countermeasures against narcoterrorism may take many forms:

- *Administrative measures* in order to limit and control production and distribution of drugs. This is co-ordinated by the United Nations.
- *International drug enforcement* is coordinated through the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO, Interpol) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), but the operative measures are carried out by the member countries.
- *Counterterrorist measures* are directly aimed at breaking terrorist organizations.
- *Action against money laundering*, i.e. converting profits from crime to legal assets, is fought by tracking and freezing of payments, assets etc. This rests mainly with national financial oversight authorities.
- *Activities directed at domestic drug problems and domestic demand for drugs* cover everything from opinion moulding (e.g. on the theme that drug abuse is feeding terrorism), counseling and treatment for drug abusers and drug enforcement at the “street level” in order to stop the spread and maintenance of the demand for illegal drugs.

The following policy recommendations to counter narcoterrorism may broaden the perspective and the set of specific action.

## **Recommendations**

1. Public opinion moulding against non-medical use of drugs (controlled substances) should emphasize more strongly that such use is a funding channel for narcoterrorism and other forms of organized crime.



2. National drug prevention and intervention strategies should set a sharper focus on diminishing the demand for drugs among drug abusers.
3. Successful “model projects” in drug prevention, intervention, and treatment (e.g. by police or customs authorities, social services, and schools) should be recorded, evaluated and presented for adoption elsewhere.
4. Monitoring and coordination of measures and their effectiveness should become a more integrated part of the strategic intelligence service in the drug control and enforcement field.
5. Measures against money-laundering should be incorporated more actively in any investigation and prosecution of drug crimes and drug-related crimes.



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## NARCOTERRORISM AS CONCEPT AND REALITY

The concept of “narcoterrorism” was introduced in 1983 by the Peruvian President Belaunde Terry to designate terrorist-like attacks against his country’s drug enforcement police. Drug criminals utilized methods from political assailants to influence the politics of the country by causing terror and obstructing justice. In 1985, the phenomenon received much attention, when the Medellin cartel joined forces with the M-19 terrorist group and attacked the Supreme Court in Bogotá, Colombia, in order to prevent the extradition of several leading cocaine profiteers to the United States. Eleven high judges were killed.<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1980s, American government agencies started using the concept of “narcoterrorism”, in order to describe inter alia the involvement of the Soviet Union in the drug trade.<sup>2</sup> In the 1990s, it was applied in a number of circumstances, referring to various complexes of illegal trade in drugs, terrorist methods of violence, and ideological superstructures.

Over the course of time, the concept of narcoterrorism has acquired two main usages. One of them focuses on drug gangs using the methods of terrorists in order to protect their own drug operations, e.g. by murdering judges or journalists. The United States Department of Defense uses the definition “terrorism conducted to further the aims of drug traffickers”.<sup>3</sup>

Another determination focuses on narcoterrorism as the involvement by terrorist organizations in drug trafficking in order to finance their ideology-driven operations. Boyce (1987) gives the definition as, “the involvement of terrorist organizations and insurgent groups in the trafficking of narcotics”. Ehrenfeld’s definition is even wider: “the use of drug trafficking to advance the objectives of certain governments and terrorist organizations”. This definition also covers state-controlled trade in drugs outside of channels regulated by the United Nations. It also retrospectively covers the opium war (1839–1842), when Great Britain was the primary agent forcing China to open up its country to a free trade in opium, as well as the drug operations of the CIA in Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>4</sup>

In order to cover both aspects, Davids<sup>5</sup> has introduced a two-legged definition: “On the one hand [...] terrorism that aims to protect and support the activities of illegal drug traffickers; and on the other, terrorism by organizations that use the financial profits of narco trafficking to support their political, religious or other goals”.

The simplest and widest definition of narcoterrorism is given by the Oxford dictionary (1999): "Terrorism associated with the trade in illicit drugs". It does not indicate which factor is driving the other one. The Oxford definition will be used in this overview.

None of the definitions include psychochemical warfare against other countries, e.g. attempts to influence the resistance of a country by infiltrating it with drugs, which inter alia the Soviet Union was accused of doing against the United States. Outside the Oxford characterization are also local gangs of drug abusers and drug pushers, who for certain periods can terrorize their neighbourhoods.<sup>6</sup>

A borderline case is made up of the modern motorcycle gangs of the "outlaw" type. In the United States, some of them have been involved in the sale of controlled substances, especially methamphetamine. Their operations have been profitable, and their members have used violence in order to protect their drug trade. The gangs have established illegal spheres of power for themselves, threatening the state monopoly of violence by protection services, destruction constituting a public danger, deadly attacks on competing gangs and threats against witnesses. They are not covered by the definitions given by Boyce or Ehrenfeld, but they fall within the definition given by the United States Department of Defense.<sup>7</sup>

In practice, narcoterrorism becomes more of a politically-constructed concept than a strict legal or criminalistic definition. The concept is actually a persuasive definition, which fits into various conspiracy theories, as it brings forth a picture of dark forces united against one's own society. Characteristically, Douglass describes his book about the connection between drug smuggling and communism as "a case study of evil". The concept of narcoterrorism also fits into the American drug policy doctrine of a "war on drugs". There is something of a "Humpty Dumpty definition" to the concept, meaning that in the end it is the person who has the power over language who decides what anything is to mean and refer to. The Humpty Dumpty aspect becomes particularly obvious in American usage: narcoterrorism is carried out by others; what the United States did in South-East Asia in the 1960s and 1970s is not included.<sup>8</sup>

Narcoterrorism is, however, a conceptually manageable headline for studies of an aggregation of drug crime, use of violence, exercise of power and in some cases also ideology.<sup>9</sup>

The simplest way of describing narcoterrorism is, perhaps, as a part of an illegal complex of drugs, violence and power, where the illegal drug trade and the illegal exercise of power have become aggregated in such a way that they threaten democracy and the rule of law. The complex can, according to Makarenko, be described as a continuum, where one endpoint is occupied by specialized drug crimes with commercial motives and the other endpoint by specialized terrorist activities with ideological motives.<sup>10</sup>

The co-operation between drug traffickers and terrorist organizations or armed movements was originally not a foregone conclusion. There were many circumstances against it: basic differences in ideology, in ambitions of social status and in attitudes towards the structures of the state. A few years into the 1980s, murder, kidnapping and other crimes of violence occurred between drug dealers and terrorist organizations in South America. After a while, peace was reached and a kind of co-operation was developed. At the end of the 1980s, this co-operation had become such an important part of the game around drugs that American government authorities widely spoke about narcoterrorism as a driving force for both parties.<sup>11</sup>

## **THE ILLEGAL DRUG TRADE**

According to the United Nations International Drug Conventions (1961, 1971 and 1988), narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances may be used only for medical and scientific purposes.<sup>12</sup> The illegal trade in drugs has a commercial motive to produce and distribute drugs for purpose of abuse (non-medical use).

The global drug situation is summarized every year by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the annual *World Drug Report*.<sup>13</sup> In the 2006 issue it is noted that a total of 200 million people, or 5 per cent of the world population in the 15 – 64 year age group, are using illegal drugs.

The most widely spread type of drug abuse is that of cannabis, which involves 160 million people. Cannabis production was estimated at 40 000 metric tons in the year 2003. The most important supplier to the European hashish market is Morocco, which delivers 80 per cent of the supply. Amphetamine type drugs are being abused by 26 million people. The global production of amphetamine and methamphetamine is 300 metric tons. Opiate abusers number 16 million, and 10 million of them are abusing heroin. Production today occurs mainly in Afghanistan, where all 34 provinces are cultivating opium. The purity of heroin in Europe has increased, which indicates a rich supply. Southeast Asia has,

however, reduced its production by 78 per cent since 1996. The UNODC offers the carefully considered opinion that it is not unrealistic to believe that Southeast Asia may become virtually free of opium production in a few years. In 2004, world production of opium was 4 850 metric tons, which can produce up to 565 metric tons of heroin. Cocaine production is estimated at 900 metric tons. The abuse of cocaine involves 13 million people, with a concentration in North America and Western Europe.

The UNODC has developed a model of its own in order to make a more qualified estimate of the world trade in illegal drugs. This trade is estimated (in 2003) to have a value of:

- 13 billion USD at the producer level,
- 94 billion USD at the wholesale level, and
- 322 billion USD at the retail level.

This calculation shows that the major adding of value occurs close to the consumer-level.

The total turnover corresponds to the gross national product of Sweden (calendar year 2004: 2 545 billion SEK; exchange rate 1 USD = 8 SEK). The global trade in drugs has a larger economic volume than the economies of most countries. In comparison with data from the World Bank, drugs turn over more money than 163 of the 184 countries for which statistics is available.

The profit levels in the drug trade can be very high. People who avoid being intercepted by government authorities can make a profit of up to 20 000 percent on one kilogram of cocaine. The FARC guerrilla is estimated to tax the cocaine trade in Colombia by 100 – 500 USD per kilogram and to take in 300 million USD annually (corresponding to approximately 70 per cent of its total income) in taxes for the “protection” of plantations, laboratories etc.<sup>14</sup>

This environment of drugs, money, and corruption offers drug dealers and terrorists ample opportunities for profitable operations. Then, it is not remarkable that increasing lines of operators who are accustomed to acting *ultra vires* (outside the law) are drawn into the trade.



## LINES OF OPERATORS

In the post-war period, the organizational structure of the trans-border illegal drug trade has developed from single operators through gangs to syndicates and cartels. Narcoterrorism, through its systematic threats against the legitimate monopoly of violence, represents another stage of development.

In the arena of narcoterrorism, four types of operators are the main participants: criminal organizations of the mafia or syndicate types, armed movements, state governments, and “narcostates”.

*Criminal organizations of the mafia or syndicate type* have been active in this field throughout the entire post-war period. A classic example is the smuggling route *French Connection*, which in the 1950s and 1960s was the most important transport route for opiates to the United States. Alongside the traditional syndicates, in the last decades a more loosely knit type of organization has developed in the form of flexible networks (e.g. cartels), where the arrangements are constantly changing. The specialized drug organizations are important for the distribution of drugs to the end consumer.<sup>15</sup>

*Armed movements* consist of both religiously- and politically-motivated organizations (“rebels” or “terrorists”) and paramilitary groups. During the civil war in Tajikistan 1991–1997, warlords financed their forces by drug smuggling, primarily from Afghanistan. A number of Colombian paramilitary groups have been the focus of extradition requests to the United States, based on suspicion of drug crimes. Twelve of the 28 organizations, which in October 2001 were listed as terrorist organizations by the U.S. State Department, were stated to be involved in the illegal drug trade. The total income from the drug trade for movements of the al-Qaeda type has been estimated by the U.N. to be 2.4 billion USD (approx. 20 billion SEK).<sup>16</sup>

*State governments and their intelligence and security services* can be involved in the drug trade for both political and commercial reasons. In the post-war period, Communist regimes in Eastern Europe carried out government-sponsored narcoterrorism. The Bulgarian state trade bureau KINTEX was particularly involved in the transfer of large amounts of heroin to Europe, making good profits. In the period 1985–1995, the Castro regime in Cuba functioned as middlemen for drug transports from South and Central America to the United States. In Nicaragua, both the Sandinista regime and Contras were involved in the drug trade. General Manuel Noriega in Panama in the 1980s was one of the world’s leading “drug barons”. North Korea has for decades been involved in drug smuggling through diplomatic channels.<sup>17</sup>

Armed movements who are or have been involved in the drug trade:

- Aby Sayyaf (The Philippines): cultivation of cannabis
- Basque separatist movement ETA: trade
- Hezbollah: trade
- Islamic Movement in Uzbekistan (IMU): trade
- Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK): trade in heroin
- Tamil Liberation Front (LTTE– "The Tigers") in Sri Lanka: courier operations
- National Liberation Army (ELN) in Bolivia: all types of operations, except international distribution
- Palestinian Islamic Jihad: trade in hashish and heroin
- al-Qaeda: trade in opium and heroin
- Revolutionary Armed Forces in Colombia (FARC): trade, and taxation and protection of Colombian cocaine cartels
- Sendero Luminoso (Peru): protection of coca cultivation and laboratories
- United Self-Defence Forces in Colombia (AUC): all aspects of cocaine trade

Source: Lee (2004, pp. 296 f.)

*Narcostates* is a concept, which has been used by e.g. the Southeast Asia expert A. W. McCoy in order to describe countries (or regions), where the operators of the drug trade through their economic, political, and paramilitary strength influence the exercise of power by the central government. Rows of people who are involved in the illegal drug trade have moved into politics, e.g. in Colombia. They achieved great success with the revision of their country's constitution, which currently prohibits the extradition of citizens of the country to other countries. The illegal Pakistani heroin industry in 1998 had a turnover corresponding to half the country's legal economy. In Mexico, the cocaine cartels received 30 billion USD in income, which was four times the value of the country's oil exports. Other countries, which are described as narcostates are Afghanistan (which had a record harvest of opium in 2006 and currently

supplies some 80 per cent of the world's opium and heroin production), Burma and Colombia. When a society develops into a narcostate, actions against the illegal drug trade become more difficult or blocked, as the economic basis of society is dislodged and the political power is passed on to criminal operators. In a narcostate, drug enforcement does not function. The political risks can be tangible for the governments who intervene too heavy-handedly and disturb many people's income. Narcostates can be seen as an additional step in the development of international drug crime, as the operations are carried out in a more or less autonomous territory and in practice, invalidate international drug control.<sup>18</sup>

## **MANY SIMILARITIES AND SOME DIFFERENCES**

Running large-scale operations in the drug trade or ideologically-based operations of violence requires vast resources and good planning. Thus, both drug syndicates and terrorist organizations display several similarities in their structure and operations. In an overview, the former American federal drug enforcement officer G. D. Lee<sup>19</sup> has structured the most important similarities and some differences.

Both drug organizations and terrorist organizations participate in criminal activities over extended periods of time. They act in cells. As the cells do not have knowledge of each other, the risks are reduced that someone will disclose the whole organization in a deal as a crown witness or that other cells are disclosed through e.g. telephone tapping. The governing is top down. The organizations use advanced communications equipment to protect themselves against eavesdropping. They use money laundering in order to hide their income, avoid taxes and protect themselves against forfeiture.

Other common features are that both drug organizations and terrorist organizations are vulnerable to infiltration, i.e. that police and intelligence organizations send in people with false identities, who are ordered to manoeuvre themselves into the criminal operations with the purpose of securing evidence. The organizations commit crimes in order to achieve their goals. This is a feature of the definition of each type of organization, but the criminal activity is nevertheless a decisive part of their operations. The organizations often resort to violence. They form partnerships with each other, so that drug organizations make business with terrorist organizations and vice versa without being bothered by moral inhibitions. The commercial criminals make use of the knowledge of violence and politics possessed by the

ideological groups, and in return they offer money and competence in smuggling. Both use established methods from drug smuggling, but the content of the shipments may vary. The methods can be highly advanced, using reloading of cargo and re-registrations in several countries in order to hide their place of origin from sensitive areas. The groups often use forged identity papers, and they can even publish handbooks of their own for the education and training of their members.

Police, customs, and intelligence services can make use of the fact that both types of organizations can be profiled, which consists of inspecting external features (country of origin, travel routes, behaviour or similar features), making it more likely that a person or a vessel would be subjected to closer examination.

Taken together, these similarities make it easy for drug and terrorist organizations to co-operate, exchange intelligence and take up methods from each other. An idea-based motive for both of them is that they have a common enemy in the established order of society, which they attempt to destabilize in order to increase their profits or their influence.<sup>20</sup>

The most important difference is that the drug syndicates have commercial motives and that their people are seldom prepared to sacrifice their own lives for the cause, while the violent idea-based movements are driven by political or religious motives.

Drug criminals in the top leagues have such strong economic resources that they can acquire advanced communications equipment and build up a security protection of their own, in several cases matching those of the authorities who have been entrusted with the task of fighting them.

The Cali cartel, which in the mid-1990s ousted the Medellin cartel to become the largest cocaine distributor in South America (and the world) and periodically had 100 000 (!) employees in Colombia, developed an IT support system with the same level of sophistication as that of a multinational company. The system had information about everything ranging from shipping data on drug shipments to information about relatives who could be threatened or murdered in the case of "staff problems". The signals intelligence operations included illegal entry into the Cali city telephone network to tap the telephone traffic to the United States consulate in order to track people who were collaborating with the Americans. A central computer, which was found by the Colombian police, had a tailor-made software code for

tracking moles within their own ranks, e.g. by pointing to patterns in the telephone traffic. A dozen informants were unmasked and murdered. Every day, 1 000 messages were sent out without any of them being intercepted. A net-based “drug bazaar” maintained a site for buying and sales orders of drugs with an estimated annual turnover of 3 billion USD. The whole set-up was used to run a cocaine empire with a capacity to smuggle 10 – 15 metric tons of cocaine every month. A Colombian drug cartel in 2005 bought a Russian diesel-engine submarine with a cargo capacity of 10 metric tons to be used for cocaine export. The submarine was, however, detected by Colombian authorities before it had been commissioned. Airplanes and fast boats are seen almost as expendable items in large-scale drug running.<sup>21</sup>

## **THE INTERNATIONAL DEBATE ON THE FOCUS OF COUNTERMEASURES**

A large part of the operations against narcoterrorism is governed or co-ordinated by the United States. American analyses and intelligence reports serve as the basis for much of the knowledge formation and the media reporting in the area. The United States has a decisive influence over the labelling of organizations as being involved in narcoterrorism. An example is the UCK guerrilla in Kosovo (also called the KLA). Until about 1997, the United States regarded the UCK as a terrorist organization involved in heroin trading. When the political situation in the former Yugoslavia changed shortly afterwards, the UCK was struck from the list – it had become a liberation movement.<sup>22</sup>

The American federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) co-ordinates large operations, which may involve several countries. DEA is also “big brother” in almost all bilateral relationships and operations involving police authorities in other countries, through having more people, more equipment, and a tougher attitude.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout the entire post-war period, American academic and political debates about measures against drug crime have had a major influence on the drug debate in other countries with widespread drug abuse. This applies to topics as different as control or legalization (free sale) of cannabis (hashish and marijuana) or police procedures.

The United States has also been at the centre of the debate between producer and consumer countries. The exchange of views started in the 1970s, and it is to a large extent parallel to today’s debate about the focus of measures

against narcoterrorism. Both producer and consumer countries perceive the other side as being responsible for solving the problem. Viewed globally, the producer countries often belong to the “South” and the consumer countries to the “North” (at least in the cultural and economic sense).

The producer countries are usually developing countries. They have considerable problems with the economic, political, and social effects of illegal drug production, ranging from environmental pollution to corruption and violence. They assert that the consumer countries must stop or at least reduce their demand for drugs in order to make it possible to stop the influx of drug currency. They see market demand as the driving force. From the perspective of the producer countries, the emergence of narcoterrorism is just another domestic consequence of the problem, which is created by the ongoing demand.

The consumer countries, and particularly the United States, locate the problem with the producer countries. They try to attack the drug problem “at source” by which they mean the plantations and laboratories of the producer countries. The idea is to prevent the drugs from getting into the illegal market. In order to implement this strategy, they work with heavy operations, often military in nature. In spite of big tactical successes (DEA directors used to present figures on seizures and statements about “breakthroughs” in connection with international operations to American media every month), the strategic picture does not change. The DEA has attracted criticism from within their own ranks. The former DEA agent Michael Levine who, during a 25-year career as a drug enforcement officer on the street, arrested 3 000 suspects, who were sentenced to 30 000 years imprisonment, and seized more than one metric ton of drugs, wrote in his professional memoirs (1990) that the United States’ war on drugs was “the biggest, costliest, most dangerous failure of American policy since Vietnam”. He described how, in sensitive situations, foreign policy and security analyses led the U.S. federal government to avoid prosecutions at the end of police operations and how the CIA would sometimes assist drug distributors. In another book, *Fight Back!* (1991), Levine instead focused on drug abusers as the weakest link in the chain and showed how simple police operations against the drug abusers could quickly drive dealers out of an area, as there were no abusers left to buy their drugs.<sup>24</sup>

An explanation why the consumer countries, despite criticism and poor results fighting supply, nevertheless continue along the old lines is that they are simply following political and administrative tradition. According to Naim,<sup>25</sup> this reflects the fact that fighting the supply of illegal goods and services is an automatic reaction on the part of a government in order to protect its national

borders against intruders rather than a complicated attempt to induce their citizens to abstain from consuming the products or making use of the services. It is more gratifying to blame foreign criminals, whilst it can be political suicide to place the burden on one's own drug-consuming fellow countrymen. Demand reduction calls for complicated and often difficult changes in values, education, and other soft issues. Attacking the supply side is a way of relying upon trusted methods of statecraft, such as police operations. Operations with helicopters, gunboats and heavily armed agents are also more photogenic on television. The focus on the supply side draws a sharp line between the good people and the bad people, even if reality is much more ambiguous.

A similar analysis of the propensity to put the blame for one's own drug problems on other countries was made by [the Swedish drug expert] Nils Bejerot already in 1983:

"We cannot blame the behaviour [drug abuse] of our young people on the mountain Andeans in Colombia or on the farmers in the Golden Triangle. We must primarily put the blame on our own youngsters, which may be difficult and painful. Second, we must blame ourselves for having let us become duped to an inconsistent, permissive, excusing and ever forgiving attitude."<sup>26</sup>

From such a perspective, narcoterrorism becomes yet another addition to a grossly mismanaged drug control policy in the Western world. Bejerot, in a number of publications, stressed that the decisive element lay in fighting the illegal handling of drugs by the drug abusers in order to stop the great drug epidemics. The aim is to stop the spread of drug abuse to other people and to reduce the demand. Also, to stop the affected individual from developing drug dependence, diseases, criminality and social disabilities.<sup>27</sup>

Fighting the demand can be done here and now. It does not require any exotic police methods or extraordinary levels of authority, and it runs little risk of corruption. It needs no conspiracy theories to be legitimated. It involves thinking globally but acting locally and taking responsibility for maintaining the U.N. drug conventions in one's own neighborhoods. Finally, the strategy strangles the financing of narcoterrorism and other forms of drug-related activities endangering order in society, which find their nourishment in the demand of the drug market.

The serious problems caused by the illegal exercise of power and illegal currency flows as a result of the extensive illegal drug industry has, however, given new energy to the calls for legalization of drugs.<sup>28</sup> In this debate, there are also visions that a well-regulated and heavily taxed drug trade would

generate a considerable source of income in tax. The situation would then return to that in China around the turn of the century 1900, before the development of international drug control: a wide-spread abuse of drugs with big profits in the drug trade, a rapidly deteriorating public health, and a damaged public welfare system.<sup>29</sup>

## INTERVENTION IN MANY STEPS

The kaleidoscopic character of narcoterrorism requires a multi-faceted set of countermeasures in a society ruled by law. The broad repertoire of criminal modus operandi calls for a counterstrategy with at least the same richness in variation; this a fundamental theorem in systems theory which is commonly called the “law of requisite variation”.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, adherence to the rule of law sets narrow limits on what can be permitted in law enforcement. Tradition and lack of imagination also limit the perceptions of what could be done and what should be done. For example, in most countries drug treatment services have been based on voluntary admission, even though it is hardly possible to prove that voluntary treatment produces any better long-term results than no treatment at all. Much of the fight against narcoterrorism is ineffective due to poor coordination and deficient evaluation of measures.

In order to broaden the approach, Davids<sup>31</sup> has presented a “unified strategy” against narcoterrorism with four main features: *education and public opinion moulding* to increase the awareness of the threat from narcoterrorism and reduce the demand for drugs; *the extradition* of drug criminals for prosecution in other countries; setting up a military *special force* against drug syndicates and narcoterrorists in order to attack their command structure, stop smuggling etc.; and *civilian development programs* for inter alia South America with planting new crops, economic development of the countryside etc.

Several types of countermeasures are used in the fight (“war”) against narcoterrorism:

1. *Administrative measures* that limit and control the production and distribution of drugs are co-ordinated through the United Nations drug conventions and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Their work prevents the possibility of national legalization of drugs. For the adhering states (presently approx. 180), the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988) offers a foundation based on international law for co-operation in drug enforcement. The United Nations supports the growing of replacement crops,



e.g. coffee, in order to offer farmers sources of income other than growing drug plants. The U.N. also provides assistance in the form of equipment and education for police authorities in producer countries.<sup>32</sup>

2. *International drug enforcement* is co-ordinated through the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO, Interpol) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), but the operative measures are carried out by the authorities of the member countries. Much is achieved through bilateral co-operation, where the DEA is often given – or takes upon itself– a leading operative role.<sup>33</sup>

3. *Counterterrorist measures* are directly aimed at breaking terrorist organizations. In this context, it is mainly an American specialty. In recent years, the specific and expensive activities against terrorism have been given priority over the activities against drug crime.<sup>34</sup>

4. *Money laundering*, i.e. converting profits from crime into legal assets, is fought by tracking and freezing payments, assets etc. Here, the 1988 U.N. Convention Against Illicit Trafficking represents a breakthrough in international law. Several international conventions and co-operative bodies within the U.N. and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) provide legal authority and channels for exchange activities against money laundering.

5. *Activities directed at domestic drug problems and domestic demand for drugs* cover a series of activities of varying efficiency. This sector is seen as decisive, but analysis of the driving factors behind the development of drug problems is seldom carried out to completion. All countries provide some kind of “drug information”, but this information can in some instances (e.g. the Netherlands) function as neat consumer guidance. Opinion moulding against drugs has taken on new arguments after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 due to the fact that drug abuse is financing terrorism. Some projects have aimed to encourage people to stop their use of drugs as a personal sacrifice in the fight against terrorism. Treatment services are often emphasized as a way of reducing demand, even though treatment can never catch up with the spread of the drug habit by the drug abusers themselves. Obviously, something else is required to make demand reduction more efficient.<sup>35</sup>

The countries that have stopped or at least considerably reduced their drug abuse in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (People’s Republic of China in the early 1950s, Japan 1954 –1958, and Sweden through the police offensive 1969), have all consistently intervened against the illegal handling of drugs by the individual

drug abusers. There seems to be a threshold level of somewhere between 10 and 15 percent: when the intervention reaches a significant enough number of active drug abusers to have a general deterrent effect, leading to a decrease in the population of drug abusers at large. This experience has not received much attention in the international debate. Today, most countries lack a systematic approach to police intervention against the demand for drugs created by the drug abusers. There are, however, a number of mental obstacles to intervention that focuses on the handling of drugs by the drug abusers, e.g. that drug abusers are seen as passive victims and not as key players in the turnover and the expansion of the drug market. In almost all cases, drug abusers spread their drug habits (drug-taking behaviour) to novices by personal introduction, thus providing an automatic marketing tool. Drug testing on young people can have a considerable effect by stopping the recruitment of new drug abusers and stopping the progression into a career as a drug abuser. However, this approach is similarly rebutted as being an intrusion into a person's privacy and integrity. Bejerot summarized this attitude by stating that the individual drug abuser has become almost "protected" [as in the sense of a "protected species"] and inaccessible to intervention by the police or the social services. Therefore, the "war on drugs" continues as a kind of positional warfare, decade after decade, as the drug abusers continue to supply organizations involved in crime and terrorism with the three things necessary for waging war: "money, money and more money".<sup>36</sup>

Intervening against drug abusers in order to attack narcoterrorism (and international drug crime) can be seen as an "indirect strategy" of the kind described by the British military theorist Sir Basil H. Liddell Hart as the most effective type – not only in military contexts. It is a matter of refraining from frontal assaults against well-positioned and resourceful adversaries, who are able to easily regroup. Instead, a detour is taken in order to find a more vulnerable area where it is possible to make use of an advantage. In the fight against drug crime, the drug abusers/consumers constitute the crucial sector. This sector has been well-studied. The strategies exist. The turn of events within this sector will decide the future drug situation.<sup>37</sup>

Rachel Ehrenfeld has summarized the long-term necessity of eliminating the demand for drugs created by the drug abusers in order to stop narcoterrorism, stating that,

"One thing is certain: unless Americans curb their appetite for drugs, they will continue to provide the funds that the world's drug traffickers and their terrorist allies need to continue their war against the United States and the

West – and the price we finally pay will dwarf anything we are spending now.”<sup>38</sup>

The same thing can be said for all other Western countries.

Based on previous analyses of narcoterrorism, new paths for policy and countermeasures may have to be explored. The following policy recommendations may broaden the perspective and the set of effective action:

1. Public opinion moulding against non-medical use of drugs (controlled substances) should emphasize more strongly that the non-medical use drugs is a funding channel for narcoterrorism and other forms of organized crime.
2. National drug prevention and intervention strategies should set a clear focus on diminishing the demand for drugs among the drug abusers; this may call for a coordination of enforcement, treatment and counselling services.
3. Successful “model projects” in drug prevention, intervention, and treatment e.g. by police or customs authorities, social services, schools etc. should be recorded, evaluated and presented for adoption elsewhere.
4. Monitoring and coordination of measures and their effectiveness should become a more integrated part of the strategic intelligence service in the field of drug control and enforcement.
5. Measures against money-laundering should be incorporated more actively in any investigation and prosecution of drug crimes and drug-related crimes.

## NOTES

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcoterrorism> (accessed 6 December 2006); Tarazona-Sevillano (1990, p. 99).
2. Bagley (1997, p. 1).
3. Quoted in Davids (2002, p. 4).
4. Definitions: Boyce (1987); Ehrenfeld (1990, p. xiii); CIA: McCoy (2003, pp. 195 and 203). The purpose of the U.S. drug operations was to gain support from mountain tribes cultivating opium in the fight against the FNL (Viet Cong) guerrilla.
5. Davids (2002, pp. 4 f.).
6. Cf. Douglass (1990). Davids (2002, pp. 18 f.) describes how the Japanese during the invasion in China in the 1930s consciously used opium in order to break down Chinese society.
7. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hells\\_Angels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hells_Angels) (accessed 10 December 2006), [www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/states/newsrel/sanfran042106a.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/states/newsrel/sanfran042106a.html) (accessed 10 December 2006).
8. Douglass (1990, p. xxiii). Laquer (2003) has a special appendix (pp. 232 ff.) dealing with the problems associated with definitions of terrorism. He points to the fact that the definitions in media are often done as by Humpty Dumpty (in *Through the Looking-glass*; Carroll, 1872, ch. 6). There, Humpty Dumpty is discussing with the main character, Alice, about the meaning of words. "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less." In response to Alice's subsequent question if you really can make words mean so many different things, Humpty Dumpty says: "The question is which is to be master – that's all."
9. The area offers problems related to the criticism of sources, as a major part of the source material originates with security and intelligence services, which often have interests of their own in the area.
10. Makarenko (2004).
11. Several authors are, however, highly critical towards the statements of a co-operation between political movements and commercial drug traders. See e.g. Carpenter (2003, p. 48). Stepanova (2005, p. 302), too, means that the differences in origin and function preclude a complete "merging" between drug crime and armed movements.
12. See e.g. UNODC, [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org) (accessed 28 November 2006).
13. UNODC (2006); estimates of the illicit drug market: UNODC (2005).
14. Profit levels: Arnold (2005, p. 235); FARC fees: [http://www.rcmp.ca/crimint/narcoterror\\_e.htm](http://www.rcmp.ca/crimint/narcoterror_e.htm) (accessed 27 November 2006); FARC income: G. D. Lee (2004, pp. 298 f.).

15. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_Connection](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Connection) (accessed 6 December 2006); Naim (2005, p. 7).
16. Terrorist list: G. D. Lee (2004, pp. 296 f.); income: Björnehed (2004).
17. KINTEX: Ehrenfeld (1990, pp. 5 ff.); Cuba: Ehrenfeld (1990, pp. 38 ff.), Davids (2002, pp. 13 ff.), Napoleoni (2005, pp. 43 f.); Nicaragua: McCoy (2003, p. 489); Panama: McCoy (2003, p. 454); North Korea: Naim (2005, p. 278).
18. Narcostate: McCoy (2003, p. 23) giving as examples Mexico etc.; political risks: R.W. Lee (1989, p. 223); entry into politics: van Dongen (2005).
19. G. D. Lee (2004, p. 293).
20. Tarazone-Sevillana (1990, p. 100).
21. Cali, number of employees: Ramo (1996); IT support: Kaihla (2002); submarine: Shachar (2005). Addition (January 2008) for the English language edition: For an analysis of management thinking, see Kenney (2007). Nordstrom (2007) gives an empirically based overview of modus operandi etc. of the global smuggling industry.
22. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kosovo\\_Liberation\\_Army#\\_ref-2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kosovo_Liberation_Army#_ref-2) (accessed 27 November 2006).
23. For a rich description of American drug enforcement strategy as an international “model”, see G. D. Lee (2004).
24. Levine (1990, p. 13); Levine (1991). Other references about the double standards of the United States policy in drug enforcement are e.g. Brock (1989) and McCoy (2003).
25. Naim (2005, pp. 234 f.).
26. Bejerot & Hartelius (1984, p. 27).
27. See e.g. Bejerot (1988). Today, this “epidemic” spreading of behaviour through personal contacts has been adopted in marketing, see e.g. Lewis & Bridger (2000). Bejerot (in Bejerot & Hartelius, 1984, p. 61) warned that a badly managed drug control policy would lead to demands for legalization in order to protect the powers of government.
28. See e.g. Naim (2005, p. 251) regarding the legalization of cannabis (marijuana) and Arnold (2005, p. 237) regarding legalization in general.
29. For a discussion of the development in China, see e.g. La Motte (1920) and Lowinger (1976).
30. Ashby (1964, p. 206).
31. Davids (2002, pp. 55 ff.).
32. Home page: [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org) (accessed 25 October 2006).
33. Home pages: [www.interpol.int](http://www.interpol.int); [www.wcoomd.org](http://www.wcoomd.org), [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov) (accessed 25 October 2006).
34. See e.g. Björnehed (2002) and Makarenko (2002).
35. Public opinion moulding along the lines that drug abuse is feeding terrorists is an important part of the strategy by Davids (2002, see

- appendix, pp. 103 ff.). See e.g. Björnehed (2002, p. 316) as an example of a reference to treatment in order to reduce demand, although without any discussion of the importance of police action directed at the demand by drug abusers. See Bejerot in Bejerot & Hartelius (1984, pp. 28 ff.) for an analysis of the problem of solving the problem of drug abuse by “treatment”.
36. See e.g. Bejerot (1972, pp. 170 f.) about Sweden and Japan; Brill & Hirose (1969) about Japan; Lowinger (1976) about the People’s Republic of China. See also Burroughs (1959) for a discussion about the drug abuser as the irreplaceable factor in the “pyramid” of the drug trade. For other examples, see Levine (1991) and Dalrymple (2006). Dalrymple (2006, p. 38) notes that during the great anti-opium campaign (1951–1953) Mao Zedong “produced more cures than all the drug clinics in the world before or since, or indeed to come.” Bejerot on the drug abuser being “protected” [in the sense of a “protected species”], see Bejerot & Hartelius (1984, p. 26). “Money ...” answer by the Italian condottieri Trivulzio to the French king Louis XII around the year 1500 about what would be necessary in order to conquer the duchy of Milan. (Holm (1939, p. 192: vide “pengar”). [The original Italian quotation is “Danari, danari e poi danari”].]
37. Liddell Hart (1954, p. xii) about the influence of the indirect approach on military thinking. It may be noted that such an “indirect” strategy is used in Sweden against the sex trade, where the buying of sexual services was criminalized by the Law on prohibition of sexual services (1998:408) (the regulations are currently in the Swedish Penal Code, Ch. 6, Sect. 11). According to some observers the law has reduced the demand for sexual services.
38. Ehrenfeld (1990, pp. 182 f.).

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