

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE EMERGING THREAT OF ILLICIT DRUG FUNDING OF  
TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

by

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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## ABSTRACT

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The art of warfare to the terrorist is a sacrosanct event, waged with incontrovertible conviction and viewed as a mere extension of an ill-defined front on an endless field of battle. It is with this concept in mind that I approach the writing of my SRP, in hopes of showing the strategic impact of illicit drug manufacture and distribution on (1) financial sustainment of the terrorist organization, (2) its (illicit drugs) viability as a weapon of mass destruction, and (3) potential to impair the readiness of U.S. Armed Forces. I will seek to convey through historical overview and current events the symbiotic relationship that exists between illicit drugs and terrorism, to include the funneling of illicit drug profits to sustain known terrorist organizations, the trading of illicit drugs to obtain military weaponry, and upsurge of illicit drug use by U.S. military personnel. Additionally, I will discuss certain aspects of on going U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Colombia, showing a corollary increase of opium and coca production/distribution from those regions.



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I also offer my appreciation to the DEA Special Agents of the DOC Section, for sharing their institutional knowledge, strategic insights, and enthusiasm throughout the course of my Fellowship. The dedication shown by DEA Special Agents nationally and internationally in waging this Nation's War on Drugs is truly inspirational.

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## **THE EMERGING THREAT OF ILLICIT DRUG FUNDING OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS**

### **ILLICIT DRUGS AND TERRORISM**

On September 11, 2001, the United States of America fell victim to an unprecedented series of terrorist attacks ostensibly aimed at damaging the functionality of this Nation's political, military, and financial institutions. In as much as these horrific events spurred a re-kindling of national pride, resolve, and resiliency, it also brought into sharp focus this Nation's vulnerabilities and served to question our conventional wisdom regarding "legitimate" threats to this country. Even more unsettling to public safety officials, military strategists, and the general populace, were the seemingly unorthodox and pragmatic methods utilized by the terrorists to carry out their acts of death and destruction and the alliances and funding models utilized to make it all come to fruition.

" In response to the incidents of September 11, 2001, the international community is expanding their efforts to control and extinguish financing that supports terrorism. On September 28, 2001, the United Nation's Security Council unanimously adopted an anti-terrorism resolution that called for the suppression of terrorist group financing and improved international cooperation against terrorists. The resolution, identified as Resolution 1373 (2001), requires all states to prevent and abolish the financing of terrorism, and to criminalize the willful collection and distribution of funds for such acts. Furthermore, the resolution created a committee to monitor the implementation of the guidelines set forth in the resolution. The Security Council noted, "the close connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, money laundering, illegal arms-trafficking, and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological, and other potentially deadly materials, emphasizes the need to enhance coordination of efforts on national, sub-regional, regional and international levels to strengthen a global response to this serious challenge and threat to international security."<sup>1</sup>

As this Nation's intelligence and law enforcement community more clearly defines and assesses the terrorist threat going forward, it becomes painfully evident that tragic events such as those witnessed on September 11<sup>th</sup> will in all probability be reenacted with equal fervor and hatred, with the intent being to weaken our economy and demoralize the American public. These planned outcomes by our adversaries will not however evolve into reality any time soon.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINMENT OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

“Up until the 11<sup>th</sup>, terrorism was something we saw on CNN, and we thought was 12 time zones away. The 11<sup>th</sup> has brought it home, and I would argue it’s been here all along.”

Steven Casteel, Assistant Administrator for Intelligence, DEA<sup>2</sup>

“Throughout history, various aspects of the criminal world have been linked together, such as drug traffickers with connections to illegal gambling, prostitution, and arms dealing. Perhaps the most recognizable illustration of this linkage is the expansion of the Italian mafia in the U.S. during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The links between the various aspects of the criminal world are evident because those who use illicit activities to further or fund their life style, cause, or well being often interact with others involved in various illicit activities. For example, organizations that launder money for drug traffickers also launder money for arms traffickers, terrorist, etc. The link between drugs and terrorism is not a new phenomenon. Globalization has made the world a smaller place, changing the face of both legitimate and illegitimate enterprise. Criminals, by exploiting advances in technology, finance, communications, and transportation in pursuit of the legal endeavors, have become criminal entrepreneurs. Perhaps the most alarming aspect of the “entrepreneurial” style of crime is the intricate manner in which drugs and terrorism may be intermingled. Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, the public’s image of terrorism is magnified. Not only is the proliferation of illegal drugs perceived as a danger, but also the proceeds from drugs are among the sources for funding for other criminal activities, including terrorism.”<sup>3</sup>

“According to the U.S. Department of State, between 1996 and 2000, over 600 terrorist incidents occurred against the United States of America. Starting in October 1997 and continuing every two years thereafter, the U.S. Department of State designated approximately two dozen foreign terrorist organizations, or FTO’s. As a result of the most recent round of designations, there are 28 FTO’s. The DEA has identified several of these terrorist groups that are associated with or directly engaged in drug trafficking. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> graphically illustrate the need to starve the infrastructure of every global terrorist organization and deprive them of the drug proceeds that might otherwise be used to fund acts of terror.”<sup>4</sup>

“The relationship between terrorist-insurgent groups and narco-trafficking is commonly referred to as “narco-terrorism.” But are these fair labels? Ronald Reagan stated that “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter.” Is a terrorist really just another form of freedom fighter, and is terrorism just another

form of warfare for the powerless? Are acts of violence by insurgent forces against innocent people acts of terrorism or merely war crimes, and what is the difference."<sup>5</sup>

The following definitions of terrorism are but a few of many that currently exist within institutional lexicons. The Department of Defense (DoD) defines terrorism as "the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to instill fear, intended to coerce or try to intimidate governments or societies in pursuit of goals that are political, religious, or ideological."<sup>6</sup>

Christopher Blakesly, Professor of International Law at Louisiana State University, has defined terrorism as "...the application of terror-violence against innocent individuals for the purpose of obtaining thereby some military, political, or philosophical end from a third party government or group. The third party government or group may be another government, one's own government, one's own people, or another people, which the perpetrators are attempting to intimidate, influence, overthrow, or oppress. According to Blakesly, terrorism consists of five elements:"<sup>7</sup>

- The perpetration of violence by whatever means;
- The targeting of innocents;
- The intent to cause violence with wanton disregard for its consequences;
- The purpose of coercing or intimidating an enemy or otherwise obtain some political, military, or religious benefit;
- and conducting the above acts without justification or excuse.

Essentially, Blakesly implies that "terrorism is violence aimed at innocents (non-combatants) to gain an edge over, or to coerce a third party. As such it differs from justifiable and legal revolutionary violence, which seeks liberation from oppression or restriction on one's own sovereignty (assuming such acts of revolutionary violence fall within the law of war)."<sup>8</sup>

The final definition of terrorism describes it as an act to "induce a state of fear in the victim which is ruthless and does not conform to humanitarian norm, and that uses publicity as an essential factor in terrorist strategy."<sup>9</sup>

Regardless of the varied and in-depth definitions accorded the term terrorism, my favorite continues to be "...I can't really define it but I'll know it when I see it."<sup>10</sup>

## SUSTAINING TERRORISM THROUGH ILLICIT DRUGS

" One of the more significant developments since the end of the Cold War has been the growing involvement of insurgent, para-military, and extremists groups – whose crimes are primarily against the state – in criminal activities more associated with traditional organized crime groups and drug-trafficking syndicates. Although various insurgent and extremist groups had been involved in traditional criminal

activities before, particularly the drug trade, their role typically was more a subsidiary one of extorting or offering protection to drug trafficking and crime groups operating in areas they controlled. Partnerships that some of these insurgent or extremist groups had were often fleeting, but sometimes longer-standing symbiotic arrangements based on coincidence of interests. In either case, the relationship was often strained and marked by mutual suspicion and wariness."<sup>11</sup>

Some examples of the aforementioned would include:

The Peruvian Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) insurgents who, in the late 1980's until the early 1990's, profited from protecting coca fields and extorting drug traffickers operating in the Andean region they controlled.

"In Western Europe, members of the terrorist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey have engaged in drug trafficking and other crimes to help finance local operations."<sup>12</sup>

The recently discovered linkage via U.S. intelligence networks showing the Iranian backed terrorist organization Hezbollah receiving financial support through illicit drug sales in the United States.

" Among the changes brought by the end of the Cold War however, was the loss of Soviet, Cuban, and other communist benefactors for many regional insurgencies and extremists groups. Unable to rely on aid from state sponsors, many insurgent and extremist groups were forced to remain militarily relevant, and involvement in drug trafficking and other criminal activity became a priority as an independent source of revenue."<sup>13</sup>

#### COMMONALITIES IN DELIVERY AND CONTROL

"Despite their differences, terrorism and illicit drug activity have several commonalities in their delivery and control, making a compelling case for exploring further to decipher any shared lesson. For example, drugs and terrorism involve covert illegal activities that call for sophisticated undercover enforcement operations. Both terrorism and drug activity do have a domestic component, but the threat from the organized and international component of these activities is far more devastating. In addition there is evidence to suggest that terrorist cells and networks have structures similar to those of drug cartels."<sup>14</sup>

"Drug smugglers and street drug dealers alter their strategies based on the enforcement efforts and pressures, making adaptive counterdrug strategies indispensable. In the case of terrorism, the sporadic nature of the attacks makes it even easier for terrorists to study and adapt to exploit the weaknesses of counter-terrorism strategies."<sup>15</sup>

"This strategy is as old as warfare itself. Sun Tzu, the ancient military strategist and general, wrote in his famous book, *The Art of War*: "Should [the enemy] strengthen his left, he will weaken his right; should he

strengthen his right, he will weaken his left. If he sends reinforcements everywhere, he will be everywhere weak." In other words, one knows where the enemy is weak if he knows where the enemy is strong. Therefore exploit the enemy's weakness."<sup>16</sup>

Given the timelessness of those writings one is struck by its accuracy and current applicability. Not only is America's unyielding penchant for illicit drugs weakening this Nation's youth, it yields an even greater measure of success to our adversaries in advancing economic, social, and medical instabilities. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Americans alone spend an estimated \$64B on illegal drugs annually.

The following excerpt of a speech by Mr. Raphael Perl, Senior Policy Analyst with the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, to a national symposium on Narco-terrorism, clearly denotes the transparencies of the drug trade and terrorism. "If we look back in time a decade or two, we see that links between drug trafficking and terrorist groups were recognized, but they were often treated as two distinct and separate phenomena. After all, the terrorists sought political power and the drug traffickers sought profit. Today however, the law enforcement, the intelligence, and the national security analysts, while recognizing the difference, sees a lot more in common here. An analyst studying both drug trafficking and terrorism might well note that both terrorism and drug trafficking are classic examples of interdisciplinary issues. They cut across traditional federal agency jurisdictions and bureaucratic turf. Both operate globally and transnationally and benefit from trends associated with globalization and an open deregulated environment.

Increasingly, we live in a multi-ethnic, globally interconnected, seamless world. In this world, both terrorist and drug traffickers try to merge into unsuspecting local ethnic communities to provide cover for their illicit activities. Both terrorist and drug traffickers operate from base countries or regions not under strong government control. They seek weak states in which to develop and implement operations. Both exploit porous U.S. borders and seek loopholes in immigration controls.

Generally, they seek to take advantage of our trusting and open society. Both rely heavily on technology to network and avoid detection. Both types of organizations rely on the services of the underworld community. For both, violence is an instrument to an end. They both seek to undermine our rule of law. Both seek to create a climate of intimidation and fear in our society. Both terrorists and drug traffickers target youth, especially as a source of recruitment to their ranks. Terrorist organizations seek to exploit and subordinate the individual to their rule and their ideology. Drug trafficking organizations seek to exploit and enslave the individual with their drug."<sup>17</sup>

## IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL-RELIGIOUS JUSTIFICATION OR FANATICISM

“Terrorism is often warfare for the weak. That is persecuted people attempting to gain freedom may have little choice but to use violence and intimidation to achieve their goals, and they may use narco-trafficking to support such warfare. Some people may see acts of terrorism as desperate measures to support personal freedom. They might even have a population's support to conduct such acts. However, one cannot legally, or morally, justify the death of an innocent bystander or otherwise uninvolved person for any cause.”<sup>18</sup>

“The difference between narco-terrorism and narco-insurgency is that narco-terrorists use terrorism (as defined above) as a tactic or method of operating, whether they are drug traffickers or insurgents. On the other hand, narco-insurgents are those who use financial profits of narco-trafficking to support their goals of subversion, but do not use terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goals.”<sup>19</sup>

“Ironically, some insurgent organizations initially frowned upon drug trafficking for any purposes. The religious views of Afghanistan's Taliban, for instance certainly should not have allowed their use of the heroin trade to finance their war. Comparatively, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), also initially frowned upon narco-trafficking, and opposed drug use. Originally the FARC's goals were ideological and they began working with the narco-traffickers solely to fund their socialist cause. However, the younger generation of FARC insurgents seems to have lower ideological standards and is more interested in personal gain by any means – including drug trafficking and terrorism.”<sup>20</sup>

“Any region, in which illegal drugs are cultivated, transported, distributed, or consumed, is susceptible to narco-terrorism. Throughout the world, insurgent groups, revolutionary groups, and ideological or spiritual groups, who use violence to promote their political mission may use drug proceeds to fund acts of terror in the furtherance of their ideology. Internal divisions and splinter groups may result, each seeking to pursue their goals via different avenues, be they legitimate political activity, perpetuation of violence, or criminal activity such as drug trafficking.”<sup>21</sup>

“History has shown that narco-terrorist organizations fall into different categories. One category includes politically motivated groups that use drug proceeds to support their terrorist activities; activities that will confer legitimacy upon them within the state. These groups usually call for a cease-fire with the government or take measures to establish a legal political party whereby their political goals are realized through non-violent, legal means. Groups that fall into this category are generally viewed with skepticism by the state. An example of one such group is the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), whose linkages to illicit drug trafficking are well documented by the government of Turkey.”<sup>22</sup>

“Another category consists of groups that continually pursue their ideological goals while participating in aspects of the drug trade. The FARC is indicative of such a group, grounded in pro-communist ideology bent

on replacing the current Colombian government with a leftist, anti – U.S. regime. Seen as an economically self-sufficient organization, the FARC supports the furtherance of its mission through kidnapping, extortion, bank robberies, and the drug trade.”<sup>23</sup>

“There are notable and emerging examples of narco-terrorist groups in almost every corner of the world. Many insurgent and extremist groups are suspected of drug trafficking involvement, such as Hezbollah and the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) in the tri-border region of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil; Sendero Luminoso (The Shining Path) in Peru; and the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) in Spain. The level of involvement in drug trafficking by actual narco-terrorist groups and the evolution of the groups and their purposes are often very different.”<sup>24</sup>

## ECONOMIC NECESSITY

In assessing the various causal factors leading to connectivity of illicit drugs and terrorist organizations, one must view the comprehensive mosaic in terms of baseline ingredients. Governmental corruption, economically tiered societies, abject poverty, and ignorance by a large segment of the populace as well as a thirst for power by a self appointed view, are all leading contributors. However, even more fundamental factors come into play, which include ethnic hatred, and religious ideology, which in and of them selves can comprise the building blocks of narco-terrorism.

In viewing Colombia as a case in point economists there recognize the wide-ranging discrepancies associated with the study of drug exports and its specific weight in the Gross National Product (GNP). “Some consider that Colombia is not a “narco-economy” and that the disappearance of the illicit drug business would not have major effects on the national economy. They feel that the impact of the business is more negative than positive because this type of income stimulates smuggling and the flight of capital, is concentrated in fewer hands, contaminates exports, and distorts the relative prices of the goods desired by traffickers as well as the assignation of resources in the global economy.”<sup>25</sup>

“Others affirm that the “narco-economy” has been fundamental for the support of the national economy by having a somewhat stabilizing effect on the Nation’s financial institutions and currency. As such it (illicit drug exports) are seen as being inextricably linked to the country’s economy and is, therefore, almost impossible to eliminate.”<sup>26</sup>

“Regardless of the real dimension of the macro-economy associated with narco-trafficking, its regional and sectoral incidence should not be overlooked. The example of the agrarian issue illustrates this situation: While there is general consensus that agricultural and ranching economy has responded to variables of macroeconomic order, it is no less certain that the investments of the narco-traffickers have played a counter



reformist role. Apparently, narco-traffickers control close to 4.3 percent of agricultural land in the country (3 percent of Colombia's total rural area). By using heavy capital investment and the organization of armed groups they have eliminated the possibility that their land could ever be expropriated through agrarian reform. It is presumed that many land owners have sold their land when faced with the impossibility of competing with narco-traffickers in investments that include the increased use of modern technology and methods, the monopoly of technicians from the surrounding area's, and wage-raising to increase their domination. Other landowners managed to keep pace and to make their land less expropriatable, while increasing their level of income. Furthermore, as a consequence of "cleansing" actions, there has been a reduction on demands for the land, and peasants who have survived migrated to more populated areas.<sup>27</sup>

" In terms of the building industry, 10 –20 percent of the value of construction in Colombia corresponds to the business of narco-trafficking, equating to (between 1979-1988) approximately \$5.4 B dollars."<sup>28</sup>

"Narco-traffickers have been socially accepted or rejected because they represent the values, aspirations, hates, fears and envies of large segments of the population. To stop being poor in one coup de grace or with one audacious move, to parade with current or former beauty queens, to be able to hand out favors to members of the intelligentsia, the church, the worlds of politics, show business, and finance; all these actions contrast with arrogance, arbitrariness, and the efficiency in ordering assassinations and terrorist acts. Narco-traffickers seem to move in a modern society and contribute toward its development, but at the same time, they maintain a predilection for traditional values such as a desire to possess land and the admiration of horses and other symbols of land gentry. At the same time their methods of business and competition and their survival as entrepreneurs are characterized fundamentally by the violence and savagery in the means they choose to solve their conflicts and overcome the obstacles that confront them."<sup>29</sup>

## TRADE – BARTER – OR SELL IT

It is estimated that the annual proceeds realized from worldwide illicit drug distribution exceeds \$500B, with said amount being virtually 100 percent profit.

" As James Mills wrote in 1986, drug trafficking has become an "underground empire" with a powerful, multi-national political base, comprised of:

1. Innumerable actors organized into private and public networks or systems;
2. A rather well defined division of labor on a multi-national basis;
3. A complex set of attitudes, values, and behavioral norms;
4. Production and distribution systems that are both domestic and multi-national;
5. Avenues for "laundering" the flow of large cash profits;

6. Often a high level of violence;
7. A complex set of relationships with governments of various nations that, in one way or another, find themselves related to and sometimes profiting from, the traffic in drugs.

However, in considering such an empire, it may be in error to perceive it as under the control of an elite that rules from a central position of power. Rather, the empire may consist at any one time of a variety of groups, large or small, long – lasting or of short duration, to which individuals contribute their services and from which they gain their rewards. Further, it may be that those individuals holding superior positions in the various groups that constitute the illicit drug industry, or empire, are those who have the most control over three assets:

- a. The ability to make “connections,” that is, the ability to get things done, especially in a world of crooks with no police or courts to enforce contracts;
- b. The control of swift and massive violence, and especially the reputation for controlling such violence without having to actually use it; and
- c. The control over the corruption of law enforcement and various other officials.”<sup>30</sup>

Seemingly, the operative word heard repeatedly within the realm of narco-terrorism is control, which, more often than not equates to armament and protectionism. “The following three cases graphically illustrate and validate the U.S. Justice Department assertion that drug profits are helping to finance global terrorism.

1. Two Pakistani nationals and a naturalized U.S. citizen were indicted on 30 Oct for allegedly offering to trade 5 metric tons of hashish and 600 kilograms of heroin with undercover FBI agents for four Stinger missiles. According to the indictment, the men told the agents they intended to sell the ‘Stinger’ anti-aircraft missiles . . . To members of the Taliban, an organization which the defendants indicated was the same as Al Qaeda.
2. The Colombia case, called “Operation White Terror,” began 13 months ago and resulted in video and audio tapes of meetings with undercover FBI and DEA agents in London, Panama City, and the Virgin Islands, where 4 suspects allegedly discussed exchanging drugs for weapons. U.S. authorities said the four suspects believed they were going to trade \$25M in cash and cocaine for weapons, including shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles; 9000 assault rifles; grenade launchers and nearly 300K grenades, 300 pistols, and about 53M rounds of ammunition.
3. In the largest recent case, dubbed ‘Operation Mountain Express,’ participants in a massive meth-amphetamine ring allegedly sent millions of dollars to the Hezbollah terror organization. About 100 people were arrested in 10 cities in January as a result of the probe, which also found evidence of close ties between Mexican drug-trafficking organizations and Arab American organized crime groups in New York, Michigan, and Canada.”<sup>31</sup>

"The aforementioned cases illustrate the increasingly aggressive efforts by U.S. authorities to stanch the flow of drug money and other funds that terrorists use to buy weapons and finance their activities. From Islamic militants to Colombian paramilitaries, Attorney General John D. Ashcroft said, "there is a deadly nexus between terrorism and drug trafficking that poses a serious threat to American security."<sup>32</sup>

"We have learned, and we have demonstrated, that drug traffickers and terrorists work out of the same jungle; they plan in the same cave and they train in the same desert," Asa Hutchinson, DEA Administrator, said at a Washington News Conference."<sup>33</sup>

#### POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS/REPERCUSSIONS

" Today in many of the third world source and transit countries that provide opium, heroin, and cocaine for western industrialized consumer nations, the illegal drug industry is a most important source of foreign currency. The industry means jobs and investment capital in countries otherwise characterized by much poverty and unemployment. In effect, the drug economy, although it has its disadvantages to be sure, appears to bring a measure of political stability to third world nations where ever-present rebel factions are waiting to exploit any weakness.

There seems to be a remarkable similarity between the conditions that prevail today and the importance of drugs in the economics of source and transit countries in earlier decades. Then as well as now, drugs declared illegal and banned on the initiatives of the west appear, upon closer scrutiny, contributors to the structural stability of source and transit nations."<sup>34</sup>

As was previously discussed, the full "cause and effect" of U.S. intervention within Afghanistan and Colombia has yet to be fully realized. Given the fact that certain elements of our involvement can be accurately projected and itemized, to include budget, manpower, and logistical needs, other variables such as politics, corruption, and ethnicity, are less well defined and calculable. "Over the past 15 years, many U.S. allies have undertaken costly drug-war campaigns under threat of U.S. sanctions, and all have acknowledged that the drug trade has exacted a price in violence, instability, and environmental destruction in their countries. Yet the fact remains that U.S allies simply have not assumed the cause of the U.S. drug war as their own."<sup>35</sup>

" One reason these would-be allies do not share U.S. interests in fighting the drug war is that their other national priorities are simply overwhelming. For Andean leaders, for example, cocaine plays a role in economic and political survival. Struggling to comply with strict austerity budgets and international debt payment schedules, Andean countries are hesitant to adopt economically risky drug policies. The jobs and revenues generated by the cocaine trade help maintain the Bolivian and Peruvian economies."<sup>36</sup>

" In Peru, the coca industry provides hundreds of thousands of jobs and is one of the country's largest sources of foreign exchange revenues. The drug economy in Bolivia employed roughly 500,000 people in the early 1990's,

about 20 percent of the work force. Additionally, over half of Bolivia's imports were financed by coca/cocaine traffic, and 70 percent of its real GNP was cocaine related. According to Flavio Machicado, Bolivia's former Finance Minister, "If narcotics were to disappear overnight, we would have rampant unemployment. There would be open protest and violence."<sup>37</sup>

" Like Andean government officials, the Latin security forces charged with carrying out the U.S. Drug Strategy on the ground have little real interest in joining the anti-drug campaign. They may want U.S. equipment and aid, but if they have any real military concern, it is battling leftist insurgencies, not drugs. This reluctance to make the drug war a national priority is compounded by the systematic corruption engendered by the market character of the drug-war enemy."<sup>38</sup>

" As in the Andean region, the various provinces within Afghanistan are replete with examples of illicit drug (opium) cultivation/trafficking, as being crucial to the economic solvency of the country. According to the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, opium production this year has been estimated at about 3400 tons – the highest in the world. Interior Minister Taj Mohammad Wardak called eradication of drugs a key element in the war on terror, but said the fact the cash-strapped government could not provide farmers with alternative livelihoods hindered the goal."<sup>39</sup>

"The Drug Enforcement Administration has undertaken an urgent new initiative to confront the exploding Afghan heroin trade, which officials fear will generate millions of dollars for Al-Qaeda linked groups. Code named Operation Containment, is a response to recent intelligence reports that the spring of 2003 will yield a poppy harvest that may rival the record 3656-metric ton harvest of 2000. During that year Afghan growers, backed by the Taliban cornered as much as 80 percent of the world heroin market. Afghan warlords are once again the dominant players in the world market, and some, U.S. officials say, are closely allied with Jihadist fanatics determined to undermine the weak Kabul government and mount new attacks on the U.S., Israel and the west."<sup>40</sup>

## SUBSIDIZING OR TOTAL ERADICATION

" The Andean region drug market logic is not complicated. The equivalent of major corporations in an oligopolistic market, the cartels shape market structure and behavior through control over barriers to entry (such as economies of scale and marketing channels). Busting up the cartels, like trust busting breaks the oligopoly – and creates a freer market in drugs. But dispersing these centers of gravity does not significantly reduce supply."<sup>41</sup>

" As such, efforts to reduce supply by going after peasant growers – eradicating their crops, using the stick of sanctions or even the carrot of subsidies for crop substitution, may be somewhat flawed from the market logic standpoint. From an Andean peasant's perspective, coca brings many times the price of competing crops. A coca farmer in the Bolivian Chapare region could net up to \$2600.00 per hectare annually from coca production in the late

1980's, more than four times what he could earn from cultivating the two most profitable legal crops traditionally grown in the region, oranges and avocados. What is more, coca is easy to grow on poor soil and inexpensive to process. The market is virtually assured: traffickers fly into remote areas and pay peasants up front.<sup>42</sup>

" In this context, U.S. efforts to give peasants economic incentives to switch to other crops are undermined by the high profits of drug production. Bolivian coca growers, for example, knowing that legal crops could not compete, sometimes accepted the \$2000.00 per hectare offered for voluntarily eradicating their coca crops, but then destroyed only part of their crop or planted coca on new sites. Forceful efforts to eradicate crops have succeeded in removing acreage from production, but not in significantly reducing overall production levels. Crop eradication has simply led peasants to replant elsewhere. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has estimated that there are 2.5M square miles in South America alone that are suitable for coca production; coca is currently cultivated on less than one percent of suitable land in Peru and Bolivia."<sup>43</sup>

Unlike the small advisory role of specialized U.S. military members in Colombia, our military presence in Afghanistan is approaching 8000 troops committed to conducting a "hands on" approach in dislodging of Al-Qaeda remnants, rebuilding infrastructure, and nurturing governmental legitimacy. In spite of this overt, sometimes covert, omni-presence of U.S. Forces, Afghanistan's new government lacks the manpower to stop farmers from planting the raw material for opium. Enforcement efforts to ban poppy growing by the newly elected Afghan President Hamid Karzai have had some success: about one-quarter of the poppies have been eradicated, but total elimination of the crops have largely failed.<sup>44</sup>

Drug Enforcement Administrator Asa Hutchinson stated that cultivation of opium-producing poppy plants in Afghanistan has surged and that proceeds are being used to finance terrorism. Mr. Hutchinson went on to state that poppy production is flourishing largely because of weak law enforcement under Afghanistan's year old government. "It's back up to the level it was pre-Taliban," Hutchinson advised. "We hope to be more successful this year reducing the crop."

"Mr. Hutchinson and President Karzai are apparently at odds regarding possible solutions to Afghanistan's burgeoning poppy production, with Karzai favoring alternative livelihoods for farmers, and Hutchinson seeking enhanced training for police to eradicate poppies."<sup>45</sup>

## **Viability of Illicit Drugs as a WMD**

### NARCO-TERRORISM'S INFRASTRUCTURE AND FUNDAMENTALS

" Drug trafficking has always been a profitable means for criminal organizations to further or fund their activities. The complicity of terrorist groups in drug trafficking varies from group to group and region to region. In the broadest

sense, some terrorist groups may be involved in all aspects of the drug trade, from cultivation, production, transportation, and wholesale distribution to money laundering. These groups may also provide security for drug traffickers transporting their product through territory controlled by the terrorist organization of their supporters. Finally, in some cases, terrorist groups or their supporters may require a "tax" to be paid on illicit products, or passage through controlled territory. No matter which form it takes or the level of involvement in drug trafficking, many terrorist groups are using drug money to fund their activities and perpetuate violence against governments and people around the world.<sup>46</sup>

" The integration of narcotics trafficking and terrorism since the mid 1970's or early 1980's has strengthened the hand of both the terrorist and the narcotics traffickers. This union provides terrorists with an ample supply of money, guns, and explosives; it provides the narcotic traffickers with security, sanctuary, and protection. The marriage of terrorism and narcotics is only natural: Both are unprincipled and lawless; they are complementary rather than competitive; both are in large measure the product of communist strategic intelligence operations; and as such they have a common objective – to bring down the established order.<sup>47</sup>

" When asked about the use of an island he owns in the Bahamas for refueling planes carrying cocaine to the United States, Carlos Lehder Rivas, one of the larger Colombian drug exporters stated: "The question today no longer is whether there is drug dealing or not, whether this produces a bonanza or not, or who profits from the bonanza. The bonanza is a revolutionary means of struggle against imperialism and against the monarchial oligarchy . . . Cocaine is the Latin American Atom Bomb."

#### ILLICIT DRUGS AS A WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD)

Drugs...are merely another form of terrorism, another weapon in the Fourth World War. The drug trade may indeed be more disruptive, more pernicious in the long run, to the survival of our western society than any terrorist activities. While terrorists may maim or kill hundreds in a single incident, drugs penetrate the inner soul of millions, make each individual another person, deprived of his or her faculties, the very ability to function.

Count De Marenches  
Former Director – French Intel Service

"The most serious chemical warfare actually directed at the U.S and Europe today is the deliberate marketing of drugs and narcotics intended to demoralize U.S. military forces and disrupt the social fabric of the United States. Early in the 1960's public concern began to rise over the problem of illegal drugs and

narcotics in the United States. Unfortunately, it is only recently that there has been some realization in the west that this drug plague is not an accident, or simply the product of a variety of domestic social ills. Rather, it is in significant measure the consequences of a number of contributing factors, not the least of which is the direct role played by Nation's such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Bulgaria, East Germany, and Hungary. There is also a direct connection between the western drug problem and communist sponsored terrorism and revolutionary warfare.<sup>48</sup>

"Congressional hearings have convincingly verified that the organizations behind the flow of narcotics into the U.S. are not the mafia or organized crime or the many unprincipled individuals from all walks of life. Drug and narcotic trafficking is chiefly an operation run by governments hostile to the U.S. and by various terrorist and revolutionary war forces. The drug and narcotic trafficking, amply serious in its own regard is made doubly so by virtue of its marriage to international terrorism. These two despicable activities have merged since the mid 1970's, with the terrorist providing protection to the traffickers and the traffickers financing terrorist activities. The merger of the two has become so completed in all regions of the globe that the two groups are becoming indistinguishable."<sup>49</sup>

#### IS IT PART OF OUR ADVERSARIES ARSENAL?

Recent geo-political events have given rise to monumental changes to world order and prioritization of global issues. Events such as the breakup of the former Soviet Union and assured admittance of seven of its satellite countries into NATO; normalization of political ties with Vietnam, and inclusion of China into the World Trade Organization (WTO), give credence to the continual evolution of world order. Extraordinary diplomatic successes, critical to meaningful dialogue and necessitated in large measure by economic globalization, assured mutual destruction of known super powers, and hemispheric turf grabbing, portends a rapidly changing landscape of global inter-dependence. With the advent of the aforementioned events also came the unlocking of state secrets, which by their very nature were never destined for public scrutiny or review. "Some of these atrocities are discussed at length by Dr. Joseph Douglas, author of the book Red Cocaine. In it he describes in detail the efforts of China, the former Soviet Union, and its surrogates, to use drugs over many decades as a weapon designed to damage and weaken – if not destroy – the stability of Free World countries. The top target is and always has been, of course, the United States."<sup>50</sup>

"In 1928, Mao Tse-Tung, the Chinese Communist leader, instructed one of his trusted subordinates to begin cultivating opium on a grand scale. Mao had two objectives: Obtaining exchange for needed supplies and "drugging the white region," where "white was an ideological, not racist, term that Mao used to refer to his non-communist opposition. Mao's strategy was simple; use drugs to soften a target area. Then, after a

captured region was secured, outlaw the use of all narcotics and impose strict controls to ensure that the poppies remained exclusively an instrument of the state for use against its enemies. Mao defined the process as “chemical warfare by indigenous means.”<sup>51</sup>

“ Professor J.H. Turnbull, head of the Department of Applied Chemistry at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, United Kingdom, prepared a succinct summary of the Chinese narcotics trafficking strategy. Their trafficking he wrote, was “directed broadly at the major industrial sectors of the Free World.” He (Turnbull) went on to state that production and distribution of drugs was “a valuable source of national income, and a powerful weapon of subversion.” Turnbull went on to describe the three basic aims of the Chinese subversive activities employing drugs: To finance subversive activities abroad, to corrupt and weaken the populace of the free world; and to destroy the morale of U.S. servicemen fighting in Southeast Asia.”<sup>52</sup>

As was remarked to by Harry Anslinger, former U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics, “the covert dissemination of opium narcotics, in particular the addictive drug heroin, for commercial and subversive purpose represents one of the gravest threats to the Armed Services and societies of the free world. The subversive operation must be recognized as a peculiar form of clandestine chemical warfare, in which the victim voluntarily exposes himself to chemical attack.”<sup>53</sup>

“ While the distinction of initiating large-scale political war with drugs goes to the Chinese, it is the Soviets who have made the trafficking the effective political warfare and intelligence weapon it has become, and who accomplished this without almost any recognition in the west of their involvement. Invaluable information gained from General Major Sejna, a high level Soviet defector, regarding Soviet narcotic warfare, is as much compelling as it is frightening. The Soviet concept of using drugs and narcotics trafficking as a strategic operation, Sejna explains, emerged during the Korean War. During the war, the Chinese and North Koreans used drugs against U.S military forces to undermine the effectiveness of both officers and enlisted men and to raise revenues in the process.”<sup>54</sup>

“ News of the physically debilitating effect of the drugs captured the imagination of Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev. Drug and narcotics trafficking, he reasoned, should be viewed as a strategic operation that would directly weaken the enemy, rather than merely as a financial or intelligence tool. Accordingly, he ordered a joint military – civilian, Soviet – Czechoslovak study to examine the total effects of drugs and narcotics trafficking on western society; this included its effects on labor productivity, education, the military, and its use in support of Soviet bloc intelligence operations. The narcotics potential was examined in the context of a long – range strategic operation. Even the effects of drugs over several generations were analyzed by scientists from the Academy of Sciences.”<sup>55</sup>



## MILITARY DOCTRINE ON ITS USAGE

According to one military planner familiar with the terrorist threat, "Bugs and Drugs are the wave of the future."<sup>56</sup>

"The Communist trafficking operation began shortly after WWII, when China and North Korea started smuggling heroin into Japan as a weapon directed against the Japanese and U.S. military forces. During the Korean War, China and North Korea supplied high quality, low – cost heroin for use by U.S. troops. The narcotics were marketed in the immediate vicinity of U.S. military bases throughout the Peninsula."<sup>57</sup>

Soviet interest in the emerging utility of drugs being utilized as a troop debilitator were also ongoing with secret experimentation being a central aspect.

## THE U.S. MILITARY CAMPAIGN IN AFGHANISTAN AND COLOMBIA

President Bush captivated the American public's zeal for swift and robust retribution for the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, when he coined the phrase "axis of evil" and readily defined its components as being Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. While none would dispute the fact that the aforementioned nations pose a valid, albeit, non-near term threat to this Nation, it remains to be seen how long the American public's passion for reprisal can be sustained for adversaries that have yet to show overt aggression to the U.S. Conversely, the countries of Afghanistan and Colombia have had, and will continue to have an immediate impact on the infrastructure of not only the U.S., but the world community at large. This impact, while seeking not to sound too apocalyptic, poses an even greater destructive power than any conventional or non-conventional munitions possessed by our adversaries. The destructive power inherent within illicit drugs in many ways can be seen as a by product or ancillary advantage for transnational actors or rogue states. Its (illicit drugs) primary purpose, as discussed earlier, is to help advance ideological, political, and religious beliefs, by insuring viability through limitless monetary infusion and bartering power.

The ousting of the repressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan by U.S. and coalition forces and the re-directing of Congressionally dedicated counterdrug monies from counterdrug operations to para-military operations in Colombia, is indicative of warfighting within an "orthodox" military paradigm. What is however indisputable and remains constant is the fact that going forward, illicit drug manufacture, distribution, and usage, will unequivocally blur the accepted manner of waging war, with the unaccepted manner of funding it. A cursory backdrop to the Afghanistan mission reveals the following:

" Before the U.S. – led war against the Taliban, Afghanistan was a major source for cultivation, processing and trafficking of heroin, and accounted for more than 70 percent of the world's supply of illicit opium in 1999. Morphine base and heroin produced in Afghanistan were trafficked worldwide and narcotics were the largest source of income

in Afghanistan as a result of the decimation of the country's economic infrastructure. The ousted Taliban militia controlled the opium trade, which realized in excess of \$40M annually, with some of the cash going to terrorists, to include Osama Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda terrorist network.

The Taliban taxed opium harvest, heroin production and drug shipments to help finance purchase of arms and war materials, pay for terrorist training, and support extremists in neighboring countries. In January 2002, the Afghan Interim Authority (AIA) announced a ban on poppy cultivation and began an eradication program that targeted about a quarter of the 2002 spring poppy crop. It should be noted that federal law enforcement authorities expect the 2002 opium production in Afghanistan to be about 3700 tons, compared with the 185 tons in 2000.<sup>58</sup>

#### IMPACT ON REGIONAL OPIUM AND COCA CULTIVATION

"The Bush administration plans to ask Congress for \$573M in Colombian military aid and social investment during the 2003 budget year. Only Israel and Egypt receive more aid from the United States, and the increase would equal the amount of military and anti-narcotics aid the U.S. sends to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Until now, the infusion of \$1.8B in anti-narcotics aid has done little to reduce the flow of drugs from Colombia, the world's number one cocaine supplier."<sup>59</sup>

"Seemingly, with the pronounced emphasis of coca eradication U.S. anti-drug officials are faced with the dilemma of increased opium production, a fact that U.S. lawmakers correlate to the recent upsurge in heroin availability in the United States. "Plain and simple, the heroin that is flooding the United States and is killing our citizens comes from Colombia," said Rep. Bob Barr, R-GA. "It is a weapon of mass destruction and we must help the Colombian government eradicate it, before it gets to the United States."<sup>60</sup>

A top State Department anti-drug official, Paul E. Simons, told lawmakers that the United States is fighting opium as well as coca in Colombia. Simons said opium spraying was hindered last year by lack of spray planes and pilots, interruptions in the flow of money, and bad weather. With coca eradication requiring fewer resources than opium eradication, it was a higher priority. Colombia accounts for most of the world's cocaine, but only a tiny fraction of its heroin, with almost all of it sold in the United States. Echoing Rep. Simon's remarks, Rep. Dan Burton, Chairman of the Government Reform Committee, said, "that the government is focusing on eradicating coca, at the expense of opium. The result has been an increase in Colombian heroin availability in the U.S., an increase in hospital admissions for overdoses, and an increase in overdose deaths in nearly every big city and small town east of the Mississippi."<sup>61</sup>

"Colombia's new president, Alvaro Uribe, has blazed through his 100 days with a host of aggressive initiatives, ranging from new taxes and security measures to secret talks with outlaw paramilitary groups. Declaring a state of emergency, he granted the army exceptional powers for sweeps in several regions and ordered an offensive that

took back a rebel-held district outside the city of Medellin. He also launched the most aggressive aerial spraying campaign against coca cultivation in the country's history, destroying more acreage in a couple of months than his predecessor managed in the previous year. Secret talks with the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) have yielded a unilateral cease-fire that will at least temporarily halt operations by some 11,000 right-wing paramilitary forces."<sup>62</sup>

The ousting of Afghanistan's repressive Taliban regime and posting of a new government headed by President Hamid Karzai, has been heralded by world leaders as a necessary means to inhibit human suffering and nurture the tenets of democracy. "Additionally however, one of the few things that won international praise for Afghanistan's fundamentalist former rulers, the Taliban, was their crackdown on the growing of opium poppies. As a result, cultivation fell dramatically in 2001, and Afghanistan temporarily lost its traditional place as the world's main supplier of the raw material for heroin. But after the American-led toppling of the Taliban regime in the wake of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, Afghan farmers rushed to replant the lucrative crop."<sup>63</sup>

"According to the official U.S. Government estimates for 2001, Afghanistan produced an estimated 74 metric tons of opium from 1685 hectares of land under opium poppy cultivation. This is a significant decrease from the 3656 metric tons of opium produced from 64,510 hectares of land under opium poppy cultivation in 2000. Opium prices in Afghanistan currently range from nine to eleven times higher than in 2000 (Feb 2000: \$30-43/kilogram, Mar 2002: \$333/kilogram). Cultivation and production estimates for the spring of 2002 conservatively suggest Afghanistan returning as one of the largest opium producers in the world."<sup>64</sup>

"Taking a proactive stance, President Karzai in January 2002, renewed the Taliban's ban on poppy cultivation and drug production, which had originally been instituted to raise prices by preventing a glut on the opium market, and called upon the international community to support his efforts. In spite of these renewed prohibitions and associated threat of arrest of violators, all indications suggest that the April – May 2002 opium-harvesting cycle saw a dramatic upsurge in product yield, rivaling the 3600 metric tons realized in calendar year 2000."<sup>65</sup>

#### IS THE U.S. VIEWED AS AN ACCESSORY?

"I am absolutely convinced that we have. . . .had various branches of our government – CIA, etc. – who have operated, who have worked with drug traffickers for various geopolitical reasons, etc. That is absolutely intolerable."

Sen. Alphonse D' Amato, R-NY

It has been suggested that the United States can be viewed as culpable in helping sustain the ever-burgeoning illicit drug market through its insatiable demand. This, coupled with the unintended spin off effect of U.S. military

interventions in source country conflicts, can be seen as contributory pre-cursor events that help facilitate this immense problem. "Successful trafficking organizations require more than organizational skill, financial sophistication, and ruthlessness. Above all, they need political or police protection. The route to market domination lies in corrupting political leaders and serving ambitious law enforcement authorities by trading information on competitors for protection from arrest. The same rule holds true for successful international drug syndicates. On that level, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has offered unmatched opportunities for protection.

In 1970, a correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor reported, "Clearly the CIA is cognizant of, if not party to, the extensive movement of opium out of Laos." A California Congressman even charged that "clandestine yet official operations of the U.S. Government could be aiding and abetting heroin traffic here at home."<sup>66</sup>

" However, notwithstanding the results of an internal and secretly initiated Inspector General report that cleared the agency of having "sanctioned or supported" drug trafficking as a matter of policy – concerns were expressed. Specifically troublesome was the fact that the CIA did not interfere with the "Tribals" who raised opium lest they refuse to "cooperate." Under the CIA'S umbrella of protectionism, nurtured informants who were known traffickers were virtually immune to arrest by other drug law enforcement agencies."<sup>67</sup>

Currently, U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan continue to focus on the pursuit and elimination of Islamic terrorism. Of equal importance and yet understated are the efforts of U.S. civil-military affairs teams that are focused on a sustained program of economic reconstruction of this war torn region. Regardless however of the best laid plans being advanced to bring economic stability and security to Afghanistan, severe challenges persist in the form of warlord factionalism and cultural fundamentalism, that could ultimately thwart those efforts. The mantra of U.S. military intervention within the region has afforded the Afghan's populace a measure of freedom and civil liberty never envisioned under the repressive Taliban regime. The "piggy back" effect of those newly acquired freedoms and human rights however is opportunism and exploitation in the form of reviving the long tradition of opium cultivation and trafficking. It is safe to assume that cultural norms imbedded within the Afghan people will not appreciably be altered by our lifting the yoke of fundamentalist oppression. As such, U.S. military operations within the region must remain as vigilant and responsive to the presence of drug trafficking warlords as they are to Al-Qaeda terrorist cells. The American military can ill-afford to keep a blind eye to the events unfolding within their midst regarding illicit drug production and distribution.

Just as our presence in Afghanistan can be viewed as a double-edged sword, so to is our role within the ongoing Colombian conflict. Destined initially to combat illicit coca and opium cultivation and augment the governmental campaign against hostile rebel factions, the Bush administration now views the Colombian conflict as part of the broader, worldwide war on terrorism.

" With this re-labeling of a four-decade-old civil war, Congressional permission was granted to use hundreds of millions of dollars of anti-drug aid directly against anti-military guerrilla's and other paramilitary forces, and not just the

drug crops and labs they protect and profit from.<sup>68</sup> The re-directing of dedicated counterdrug funding bodes the question however; will this help or hurt the fundamental tenets of Plan Colombia of cutting coca production in half by 2005? The training of two Colombian Army brigades by U.S. Special Forces, ostensibly utilizing counterdrug dollars, is “focused toward providing security for a pipeline that carries oil for L.A. – based Occidental Petroleum, across northern Colombia to a seaside oil depot.”<sup>69</sup>

Additionally, the State Department budget for international anti-drug efforts has been reduced by 45 percent from its 2001 level, coupled by the Pentagon’s refashioning of counterdrug activities into the service of the anti-terrorism war. Seemingly, the undiluted war against drug cultivation and trafficking in Colombia is being portrayed as the lesser of two evils.

## **The Potential of Illicit Drugs to Impair the Readiness of U.S. Armed Forces**

### LESSONS LEARNED IN VIETNAM

“ Both China and the Soviet Union competed for the drug business of U.S. servicemen during the Vietnam War. The Chinese side of the trafficking was an extension of what they had learned in the early 1950’s, not only in the Korean War, but in the French Indo-China War as well. During the Indo-China War, which culminated with the defeat of the French in Dien Bien Phu, the Chinese worked with the Vietnamese Communists to promote drug use by the French soldiers. The tactic was even more successful in Indo-China than it had been in Korea. In January 1954, French Lt. General Cogny explained to an American Army operations officer, Molloy Vaughn, that drugs from China were having a serious effect on the morale of French combat units and that the growing use of drugs among the French soldiers was also eroding support for the war back in France. One of the chief distribution centers was the Chinese gambling city of Cholon, a suburb of Saigon, where the troops went for rest and relaxation. Prostitutes there were especially effective in pushing drugs on the French servicemen.”<sup>70</sup>

“ In 1957, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party decided to expand their narcotics operation as part of the “Great Leap Forward” campaign to enhance their own economy and undermine the morale of the French Troops. The decision was made to expand opium farms by 100% and, similarly, to double research and production activities. In addition to economic objectives, there was another motivation of particular importance from a U.S. perspective: preparation for the growing U.S. military presence in Vietnam. As explained by Chou En-Lai in 1958 during a pep talk he delivered at a meeting in Wuhan to discuss increasing opium production: “The center has decided to promote poppy cultivation on a large scale. . . Every one of you must awake to the fact that the war in Vietnam is likely to escalate and U.S. imperialism

has determined to fight against our revolutionary camp by increasing its military force in Vietnam. . . From the revolutionary point of view, the poppy is a great force to assist the course of our revolution and should be used; from the class point of view, the poppy can also become a powerful weapon to win the proletarian revolution. . . By exporting large quantities of morphine and heroin, we are able to weaken the U.S. combat force and defeat it without even fighting at all. . .”<sup>71</sup>

“ The reports of Chou’s remarks at the 1959 meeting are remarkably consistent with reports on his discussions with President Gamal Abdel-Nasser during a visit to Egypt seven years later, in 1965. At a banquet given in his honor, Chou is reported to have said: “We think that U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War provides a good chance for us to fight against U.S. imperialism. Thus, the more troops it sends to Vietnam, the more satisfied we are. . .

At present U.S. servicemen are experimenting with opium eating and we are helping them in this respect. We have already grown the best quality of opium for them. . . We will use opium to shatter the morale of the U.S. troops in Vietnam and the effects on the United States will indeed be beyond prediction.”<sup>72</sup>

“In spite of the Chinese being first to seize upon the potential for the use of drugs in Vietnam, the Soviets were not far behind. Intelligence networks between Czechoslovak and the North Vietnamese resulted in mutual agreements that oversaw increased production of narcotics and drugs in North Vietnam, and the trafficking of same via the Viet Cong and Thailand to U.S. forces throughout Southeast Asia. In 1965, the Soviets expanded their Vietnam narcotics trafficking operations to ensure that drugs were available in nearby locations where U.S. servicemen and officers would visit during vacations and R&R. Destinations such as Japan and Australia were widely seen as excellent venues and targets of opportunity.

Of utmost importance to the Soviet’s employment of drug weapons was to re-affirm its principal purpose as being to promote drug usage, not make money. The Soviet Defense Council stressed that the primary targets within the U.S. military in Vietnam were command staff officers, communications personnel, intelligence analysts and intelligence officers. Senior Soviet military leaders, such as General Yepishev, head of the Main Political Administration, stressed that “if the U.S. military will take the drugs, give them the drugs free. The money was far less important than influencing the military with drugs.” By 1967, narcotics had become a serious problem among the U.S. military in Vietnam. One Soviet KGB intelligence study reported that 90% of U.S. servicemen were using some sort of form of drug, most commonly marijuana.

In spite of vehement U.S. military denial concerning the extent of the drug problem in Vietnam, 1970 witnessed a meteoric upsurge of drug use by U.S. military members that would defy containment. What happened in 1970 to bring the drug problem out of the closet came immediately following the “secret” bombing of Viet Cong sanctuaries in Cambodia in April – May 1970. In June 1970, almost pure heroin

suddenly appeared for sale at below wholesale prices (\$1.00 - \$2.00 vials), outside the gates of every U.S. installation in Southwest Asia.

As described by General Lewis Walt: "The only explanation that makes sense is that the epidemic was political rather than economic in inspiration – That whoever was behind the epidemic wanted to hook as many GI's as possible, as fast as possible, and as hard as possible."<sup>73</sup>

"The result was a mammoth rise in U.S. military drug abuse. While previously there had been two deaths per month due to a drug overdose, suddenly the statistic rose to sixty per month. In 1970 – 1971, the U.S. Air Force lost more people to drugs than to combat. The impact on morale, readiness, and support for the war at home was devastating. But notwithstanding the over whelming evidence on the role of China, The White House, issued instructions in 1972 to U.S. Government officials telling them that the rumors about Chinese drug trafficking were without substance and should be disregarded."<sup>74</sup>

#### INCREASED DRUG USE AMONGST U.S. MILITARY MEMBERS

" Stereotypes of psychoactive substance use in the military service abound, and they extend back through the centuries. Rations of rum were deemed essential for soldiers' morale in the American Revolutionary Army, and the picture of the hard drinking U.S. serviceman has persisted at least until very recently. Similarly, GI's in WWI and WWII were issued cigarettes with their rations and were routinely pictured smoking cigarettes. The use of illicit drugs among military personnel in Vietnam was widespread and widely publicized.

In recent years however, a dramatically different picture has emerged concerning drug use in the U.S. Armed Forces; a policy of "zero tolerance" with respect to illicit drug use is firmly in place, and new policies promoting healthy lifestyles have focused attention on reducing tobacco use and alcohol abuse. Because military service involves a high level of commitment to, and involvement in an institution that strictly organizes many aspects of an individuals lifestyle, these new policies might reasonably be expected to have important impacts on the behaviors of military personnel."<sup>75</sup>

" Alcohol, illicit drugs, and cigarettes may be used as a means of coping with and reducing stress, although research shows that the nature of this relationship is more complex than once thought. Clearly, many military personnel experience high levels of stress associated with the physical or mental challenges of their jobs, demands placed on them because of a shortage of other personnel, exposure to trauma associated with combat, or conflicts between military and family responsibilities. In addition, military women may experience stress associated with being a woman in a predominantly male environment or because of sexual harassment they may encounter. Military personnel are also likely to experience the same stressors

as other people outside the military, including the press of family and work responsibilities and uncertainties introduced by changing economic conditions.”<sup>76</sup>

“Exposure to traumatic stressors has been strongly implicated in the elevated rates of substance abuse and dependence among veterans, and substance abuse has been found to be highly comorbid with post-traumatic stress disorder.”<sup>77</sup>

“ In spite of the proactive stance taken by the DoD to combat illicit drug use by its military members, an increase is beginning to emerge after 20 years of decline. Positive drug tests in the military have risen 29 percent since 1999, and about 17,000 people have been discharged for illicit drug use during that time. Military officials say alcohol use is partly to blame, as well as easy access to drugs and the stress following September 11<sup>th</sup>. Despite the increase, military officials say drug use rates are lower than they were 10 years ago. Less than 2 percent of military personnel tested for drug use have positive results, while an estimated 16 percent of civilians, ages 18 to 25, use illicit drugs monthly.”<sup>78</sup>

#### AMPHETAMINE USE TO ENHANCE U.S. WARFIGHTING CAPABILITIES

“ As combat systems become more and more sophisticated and reliable, the major limiting factor for operational dominance in a conflict is the warfighter.”

2001 Report by DARPA

“ Amphetamine use is emerging as a new trend that foresees “performance enhancements” designed to produce “iron bodied and iron willed personnel, “ as outlined in one document of the U.S. Special Operations Command. Indeed, the ability to keep fighting for days at a time without periods of rest, to perform in ways that may seem almost super human, is seen by military officials as the key to success in future conflicts. The capability to resist the mental and psychological effects of sleep deprivation will fundamentally change current military concepts of “operational tempo and contemporary orders of battle for the military services,” states a document from the Pentagon Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA). In short, the capability to operate effectively, without sleep, is no less than a 21<sup>st</sup> century revolution in military affairs that results in operational dominance across the whole range of potential U.S. military employments. What’s called for, according to DARPA, is a “radical approach” to achieve “continuous assisted performance” for up to seven days.”<sup>79</sup> “The “Better Warrior through chemistry” construct, as coined by Rear Admiral Stephen Baker, current member of the Center for Defense Information, is being looked at very closely and aggressively researched.”<sup>80</sup>



" Having in mind the aforementioned overview regarding DoD's proactive posture in preventing illicit drug use by U.S. military members, it may be startling to realize that amphetamine administration, within given parameters and environments, is not only condoned but encouraged by military physicians and strategists."<sup>81</sup>

" In a memo outlining technology objectives, the U.S. Special Operations Command notes that the special-forces "operator" of the future can expect to rely on "ergogenic substances" (such as drugs used by some athletes), to manage environmental and mentally induced stress and to enhance the strength and aerobic endurance of the operator. Although the Air Force Surgeon General's Office recently acknowledged that "prescribed drugs are sometimes made available to counter the effects of fatigue," it is not publicly known how widespread the practice is or whether special-operations forces on the ground in Afghanistan are taking such drugs. Recently, concerns have been raised about aggression and violence among soldiers returning from Afghanistan. In three of four cases in which men killed their wives, the accused husbands were in special-forces units based at Ft. Bragg, NC. "This sort of hyper-aggressive behavior is just what one would associate with excessive use of such drugs or withdrawal from using them," says John Pike, a defense expert with Global Security.Org in Alexandria, VA."<sup>82</sup>

As eluded to earlier, the military aviation side of the house is also provided the opportunity to enhance their war fighting stamina by amphetamine use. Currently, it is not readily known how pervasive and to what extent "speed use" is employed in each of the service aviation specialties. What is known is that the U.S. Air Force refers to "dextroamphetamine," commercially sold as Dexedrine, as a "fatigue management tool," with pilots commonly referring to them as "go pills."

" B-1 pilots like Col. Robert Gass take the pills to help stay alert on long missions. "During mission planning, we plan when we are going to take these pills, and its based on what we're doing at that time," Gass said. "When we are really just cruising at a high altitude, and the demands on our attention and aviation skills are lowest, we plan not to take it. We plan to take it just before those cockpit demands rise. So I took this about 30 minutes before the refueling operations." The result he said was a "short term boost and heightened state of alertness."<sup>83</sup>

" Military doctors may recommend Dexedrine of flights that are 10 hours long or more, that are flown at night or that have time changes. The Wing Commander approves the pills and Air Combat Command is notified. The pills are prescribed per mission with a normal dose consisting of 10 milligrams. Before they get a prescription for the pills, pilots are given a dosage as a test and evaluated. Only fighter and bomber pilots can take the pills."<sup>84</sup>

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration lists Dexedrine as a "schedule 2" drug, putting it under the highest level of control for a legitimate pharmaceutical. Other schedule 2 drugs include morphine and methadone.<sup>85</sup>

## THE WAR ON DRUGS IN AMERICA

Illegal drugs impose a staggering cost of more than \$100B every year, principally from lost productivity. Yet this dollar figure does not capture the human tragedy of drug use – lost lives, educational and job opportunities unmet, families torn apart, health care costs, school drop out rates, and more. Drug use harms people of every economic class.

President George W. Bush

" With each passing year, some would suggest that mounting evidence exists showing America losing the War on Drugs. Eighty-six years after Congress passed the 1914 Harrison Act that criminalized drugs, America's consumption thrives. According to recent surveys and news reports, illegal drugs are cheaper, purer, and more available than ever before, and the results are devastating."<sup>86</sup>

" Some researchers see intoxicant use (and abuse) as a way for humans to adapt to especially harsh circumstances. Since misery will never be completely eradicated, some people will continue to use drugs, regardless of their legal status. Sociologist Elliot Currie, notes that drug use and addiction can be responses to hopeless conditions. Those who have no hope do not seem to be intimidated by the prospect of punishment, even long-term incarceration."<sup>87</sup>

" Since at least the middle of the Reagan administration, the United States has had a "war on drugs." The official objective of this war has been the creation of a "drug-free" America. It seems like a real war, with televised reports of heavily armed police attacking the drug trade throughout the United States and the armed forces engaged in counterdrug missions both at home and abroad. To understand the "war of drugs," it is important to remember the definition of war. Carl von Clausewitz, the 19<sup>th</sup> century military theoretician, defines war as "an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will." When seen in this light, it becomes apparent that America's "war on drugs" is not really fought against drugs. Drugs after all, are inanimate objects and cannot be compelled to do anything. The "war" is actually fought against the people who traffic in and consume drugs."<sup>88</sup>

" According to DoD analysis, a successful interdiction of U.S. borders against drug traffic would require 96 infantry battalions; 53 helicopter companies; 210 patrol ships, and 110 surveillance aircraft (House of Representatives, 1987: 339). This is a greater number of maneuver units and support equipment than are currently deployed by U.S. forces

in North America. Given all of this, why doesn't the United States government deploy the 96 infantry battalions, etc., that a victory in the "war on drugs" would require. Such a deployment has never been seriously proposed by leaders of either political party. Most debates revolve around increasing the number of troops and law enforcement personnel on the border by a few thousand, a force that obviously is totally inadequate. Let us briefly consider what would be required to fight a true "war on drugs." Such National Strategy would mean something like the following:

- Mobilization and expansion of armed forces and retraining toward police-oriented missions.
- Increased DoD expenditures.
- Deployment of combat troops for combat against drug-producing nations.
- Engagement of drug traffickers through massive intelligence efforts and their destruction through full military power.
- Permanent occupation of all drug-producing regions and permanent sealing of U.S. borders to prevent resurgence of drug production and importation.<sup>89</sup>

"Deployment of U.S. troops in protracted combat missions might receive much initial support, but in the long run would prove to be politically disastrous. Unlike the 1990 through 1991 Persian Gulf War, there would be no quick victory in a real "war on drugs." The U.S. would not be attacking a conventionally armed enemy force conveniently concentrated in a relatively confined desert region where it could be targeted by superior American technology and firepower. Instead, the U.S. would be fighting over vast under developed regions against infrastructures encompassing the various drug cartels, as well as their terrorist and guerrilla allies."<sup>90</sup> Conversely, many pundits of the war on drugs subscribe to the philosophy that legalization would in large measure, curtail the illicit drug problem. Citing seemingly all too logical examples of the positive effects of illicit drug legalization, to include:

- Resulting decrease in drug prices
- Government regulated/induced low drug prices, equating to less crime to support the habit.
- Drug production, distribution, and sale being removed from the criminal arena.
- Reduction in government corruption and intimidation by traffickers, as well as drug based foreign policies.
- Terrorist organizations with a nexus to drug trafficking could also feel the impact of legalization and governmental oversight, primarily through decreased profit margins and loss of leverage in sustaining an unquenchable demand.

Consequently, believers of this ideology feel emboldened to be ever more vociferous in professing its merits.<sup>91</sup>

"In the long and the short, the argument for legalization seems to boil down to the basic belief that U.S. prohibitions against marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and other drugs impose far too great a cost in terms of tax dollars, crime, and infringements on civil liberties. Although the overall argument may be well intended and seem quite plausible, it is

highly questionable in its historical, socio-cultural, and empirical underpinnings, and demonstrably naïve in its understanding of the negative consequences of a legalized drug market.”<sup>92</sup>

#### THE BALANCE BETWEEN DEMAND AND SUPPLY

“ At the end of the day, there can be only one clear priority and that is focus on youth, drug prevention and education. We’ve got to tell our children, the parents, the school teachers, the coaches, that it’s wrong.”

GEN. Barry McCaffrey<sup>93</sup>

To say that the drug war is “supply-side” economics at its zenith would be an understatement. “Current U.S. counter-narcotics strategy assumes that America’s drug problems can best be ameliorated by drastically restricting the supply through prohibiting the sale of drugs. The strategy of targeting the drug supply is designed to make drugs less available and drive up prices – and thus discourage abuse and addiction. The war on supply has been the major focus of the strategy since the early 1980’s, absorbing about 70 percent of the drug-war budget. The war on supply is being fought on three fronts: (1) In the drug producing “source countries,” U.S. military forces and anti-drug agencies pressure foreign governments to eliminate coca, opium poppy, and marijuana production (with eradication or crop substitution programs), and to attack the refining facilities where crops are converted into heroin and cocaine; (2) where U.S. Forces also work with foreign allies to target drugs at or enroute to U.S. borders, using planes, boats, border patrols, and customs officers to interdict drug shipments; and (3) where drug enforcement agents and local police go after drugs here at home, by trying to locate, arrest, and prosecute drug dealers and seize drug supplies. At all three stages, the mission and strategy seem clear: use force and coercion to make it more dangerous and more costly for growers, refiners, smugglers, and dealers to produce, transport, and sell drugs – Thus driving down production and availability, driving up prices, and discouraging consumers from buying and using drugs.”<sup>94</sup>

It is supplemented by efforts to reduce use through treatment and prevention – so called demand-side policies – which have never played more than a minor role in the drug war. “Demand reduction, as its very designation suggests, includes policies and programs designed to reduce the demand for drugs. The logic behind demand reduction is essentially the same as the basic premise of zero tolerance – if there are no drug users, there will be no drug problem. However, approaches to demand reduction versus zero tolerance are dramatically different. Rather than attempting to legislate drug use out of existence through mandatory sentences, asset forfeiture, and drug-testing policies, demand reduction focuses on two specific areas – substance abuse prevention and substance abuse treatment. The history of drug education and prevention reflects a collection of highly problematic approaches. For

the better part of the twentieth century, programs attempted to scare people away from using illegal drugs. But the tactic did not work. The problem was simple – the propaganda was a series of untruths, and most of those in the target audiences knew it. The 1960's witnessed the advent of ideology that grounded itself in the belief that the more information young people had about drugs and their effects, the more negative their attitudes would become, with the accompanying lower-usage rate of illegal drugs being the end state. This illusion was shattered in the 1970's, however, when studies demonstrated that students who know the most about drugs had the most positive attitudes toward their use.<sup>95</sup>

Since the 1980's, a cavalcade of drug abuse prevention programs have been instituted, to include; "Just Say No," "DARE," and numerous well-funded media campaigns. "At the core of these youth targeted messages are concepts that most teens do not use drugs or approve of drug use, that using specific drugs has many negative consequences, that remaining drug-free has many benefits, that young people can learn skills to enable them to stay drug-free, and that young people can use their time in positive ways after school and on weekends. With all this effort, however, do media campaigns work? To date, there is no clear evidence that they do."<sup>96</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The symbiotic relationship that exists between illicit drug traffickers and terrorist organizations is incontrovertible and ever expanding. Historical alliances, cultural norms, greed, and opportunism will continue to be enablers that condone and facilitate the destructive power of illicit drug infusion waged against this Nation. The National Strategy for Homeland Security is succinct in its pronouncement of reducing America's vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks through governmental and private sector partnering, with the overarching intent being to protect critical infrastructure and key assets, detect terrorist threats, and augment our defenses.<sup>97</sup>

In as much as this strategic vision seeks to embolden and revitalize our National will to combat terrorism on a grand scale, it does little to provide meaningful detail on the operational "tenets" of combating narco-terrorism.

This monograph seeks to portray a mosaic of causal factors that have contributed and will continue to contribute to the illicit drug dilemma challenging the Nation. It is noteworthy to recognize that as of late, media attention has again vaulted the link between illicit drugs and terrorism to the forefront, while graphically illustrating the functionality of this insidious method of mass destruction. The illicit drug problem plaguing the United States was officially recognized as a National Security Threat well over a decade ago. Since that initial period, thousands of hospital emergency room mentions dealing with drug overdoses and a surging rate of youth drug addiction poignantly illustrate to a protracted battle campaign of epic proportions.

If decisive victory is to be attained in waging this battle illicit drugs and narco-terrorism must be accorded "stand alone " prominence for funding and given equal footing for military war fighting priority. Systematically de-

emphasizing the dangers posed by illicit drugs or re-directing vital funding to combat its cultivation and distribution, can ultimately be a precursor to strategic failure, with unimaginable repercussions going forward.

WORD COUNT=12,769



## ENDNOTES

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