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NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE

JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL



**PIVOT TO THE HOMELAND – AN ESCALATED MARITIME
INTERDICTIONS APPROACH TOWARDS COMBATING TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIMINAL NETWORKS IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE**

by

David W. Ramassini

Captain, United States Coast Guard

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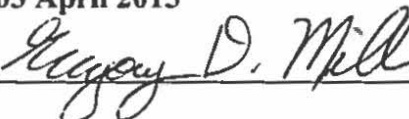
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This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.

Signature: 

03 April 2015

**Thesis Adviser:
Name**


Signature: 

**Dr. Gregory Miller
Associate Professor
Joint Advanced Warfighting School
Thesis Advisor**

Approved by:

Signature: 

**Mr. Mike Bennett
Special Operations Chair
Joint Forces Staff College
Committee Member**

Signature: 

**Dr. Robert Antis
Acting Director
Joint Advanced Warfighting School**

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ABSTRACT

The brutal violence and terrorism nexus of Transnational Organized Criminal (TOC) Networks, specifically Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs), decreases stability throughout the Americas and poses a present and growing danger to U.S. national security. Advances in submersible smuggling technology coupled with the proliferation of safe havens within the Americas are a direct threat to the homeland. As the world's premier maritime power, the U.S. must strengthen resolve and investment to counter narco-terrorist networks where most vulnerable—in the maritime. This thesis argues the need for an escalated maritime interdictions approach against DTOs in the Western Hemisphere examining the limited success over the past four decades, current monetary and social costs to the U.S., and outlines the potential benefits of an increased maritime interdictions approach. This thesis asserts that U.S. National Fleet resources could be better leveraged to increase apprehensions of narco-terrorists at sea.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the countless defense and security professionals who work 24x7x365 to guard our nation's approaches protecting our homeland, preserving our values, and upholding our way of life against all enemies foreign and domestic.

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I am grateful to the United States Coast Guard for affording me this year to attend the Joint Advanced Warfighting School at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, VA. Special thanks to my seminar mates from the British and U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Defense Intelligence Agency, and State Department. Finally, thanks to my family for their love, perseverance, and support during this endeavor, as well as for their sacrifice in my preceding four consecutive years afloat.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

“In 2013, Joint Interagency Task Force South was unable to take action on 74% of actionable illicit trafficking events due to lack of assets.”

**-General John F. Kelly, Commander U.S. Southern Command
Testimony before the 113th Congress Senate Armed Service
Committee on 13 March 2014**

As globalization continues to interconnect world economies, transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) continue to expand their reach through global networks which exploit fledgling nation-states and the largely ungoverned maritime commons in order to traffic lucrative payloads of illicit drugs, weapons, and persons worldwide. Since President Nixon declared drug abuse as public enemy number one over four decades ago, the United States has attempted to disrupt Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO) with limited degrees of success. The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), under President Obama, has a national interdiction goal of 40 percent of the documented flow of cocaine destined for the United States by FY2015.¹ The stark reality is that far less is being disrupted and this ONDCP goal will not be achieved given current efforts and approaches.

The brutal violence and terrorism nexus of Transnational Organized Criminal (TOC) Networks, specifically DTOs, upends stability throughout the Americas and poses a present and growing danger to U.S. national security. Advances in long range TOC submersible smuggling technology, coupled with the proximate safe havens within the

¹ U.S. President, *National Drug Control Strategy 2014*. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 50.

Americas where well-connected transnational criminal organizations, gangs, and terrorist networks flourish are cause for alarm. As the world's premier maritime power, the U.S. must strengthen resolve and investment to counter these narco-terrorist networks where they are most vulnerable—in the maritime.

This thesis examines the limited counter narcotics supply disruption and apprehension successes over the past four decades arguing for an escalated maritime interdictions approach against DTOs in the Western Hemisphere. As U.S. forces return from overseas after a decade of preempting terrorism following the horrific attacks of September 11th that claimed 2,977 victims, DTOs have killed tens of thousands of Americans annually through illicit drugs and the associated drug trafficking violence. An escalated maritime interdictions approach enables U.S. targeting of these DTO networks closer to the source with minimal violence, increases U.S. credibility and leadership in the Western Hemisphere through active presence, and provides the highest return on investment in the quantity of narcotics seized and the quality of intelligence gained. As important, this approach respects the sovereignty of partner nations in accordance with international law. This thesis also offers alternatives to increase at sea interdictions and apprehensions within the Western Hemisphere by more fully leveraging existing U.S. National Fleet resources and infrastructure.

Joint Doctrine defines 'Interdiction' as, "In support of law enforcement, activities conducted to divert, disrupt, delay, intercept, board, detain, or destroy, under lawful authority, vessels, vehicles, aircraft, people, cargo, and money."² As all cocaine transported to the United States emanates from the Andean Region with the large

² U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs November 8, 2010), 127.

majority exploiting the largely ungoverned maritime domain in bulk form, it is logical that a large majority of U.S. investment be devoted to this region to enable at sea interdiction to provide best return on investment. Bulk cocaine is transported in a wide variety of conveyances ranging from small unlit pangas and go-fasts that run under cover of darkness to fishing, sailing, and commercial vessels that blend with legitimate traffic and trade. While these traditional methods of maritime smuggling remain the mainstay, the emergence of low to no-profile conveyances is additional cause for alarm. The evolution of self-propelled semi-submersibles' (SPSS) and fully submersible vessels' (FSVs) offer TOCs improved range, stealth, and payload capacity. The swift development of SPSS and FSV technology is indicative of a well-funded adversary whose latest technological advances should create a great sense of urgency within the U.S. Government (USG). However, the development and investment of a more robust approach to counter this direct threat to the homeland stagnates despite narco-terrorists' advances. Current semi-submersible and submersible technology provides TOCs the tools to smuggle significant amounts of drugs, weapons, and persons into the United States with a high probability of success.

Countering TOC Networks in the Western Hemisphere requires a 'Pivot to the Homeland' to increase National Fleet presence within drug threat vectors to escalate interdictions and apprehensions at sea. Potential threats by narco-terrorist networks, coupled with revolutionary conveyances that expand TOC's global reach and size of payloads are cause for great concern not only due to their direct threat to the homeland, but also for their potential to connect the Western Hemisphere with the failed and failing nation-states in sub-Saharan Africa, known safe havens for terrorists.

This thesis is limited in scope focusing primarily on the supply reduction of cocaine trafficking in the maritime transit zone. It does not focus on other illicit drugs such as heroin, methamphetamines, synthetics, or marijuana that are primarily trafficked across the U.S./Mexico border. The ill effects within the Western Hemisphere that result from the trafficking of the most lucrative drug, cocaine, are representative of the larger destabilizing effects of all the other illicit drugs. With an estimated \$84 billion in annual global sales,³ cocaine trafficking remains the most profitable activity for narco-terrorist networks operating in the region. Bulk shipments of cocaine destined for the U.S. that are not interdicted at sea move largely uncontested through Central America and Mexico. Mexican cartels then smuggle smaller loads across the southwest border and onto the street corners of America, placing a significant strain on domestic law enforcement, health care, and criminal justice systems - costing American taxpayers an estimated \$193 billion annually.⁴

Additionally, with respect to the U.S. maritime approaches, cocaine trafficking sufficiently addresses the vulnerabilities to the homeland, highlighting the multitude of illicit pathways and conveyances utilized by TOCs in the Western Hemisphere to smuggle drugs, weapons, money and persons into and out of the U.S. Ultimately, terrorist organizations could exploit these pathways causing grave harm to U.S. citizens, economy, and the American psyche. In a worst case scenario, terrorists with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) could be smuggled into the homeland.

³ United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Estimating illicit financial flows resulting from drug trafficking and other transnational organized crime*, New York, NY: United Nations Publication, October 2011.

⁴ U.S. Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center, *The Economic Impact of Illicit Drug Use on American Society*, Johnstown, PA: National Drug Intelligence Center Publication, April 2011.

CHAPTER 2

Current Strategy, Policy, and Regional Partnerships

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare...”¹

-Preamble to the U.S. Constitution

The preamble of the U.S. Constitution lays out the founding beliefs and values of the United States and its citizens. These founding principles and U.S. society are under constant attack by TOCs who erode the rule of law, disrupt the peace, corrupt political and security establishments, and bully populations through violence and threats with the goal of creating safe havens from which to operate. The increase and proliferation of disordering violence within the Western Hemisphere is cause for great concern as the potency and transnational nature of these TOC networks continues to be emboldened and directly challenge the rule of law of neighboring countries and the United States.

U.S. Core Interests, Objectives, and Funding Mechanisms

There are numerous strategy documents, agreements and initiatives, beyond the U.S. Constitution, that guide USG engagement efforts within the Western Hemisphere with the overarching aim of protecting the homeland, increasing stability in the region, and promoting the rule of law. First and foremost, the U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) identifies enduring national security goals to advance national interests and shape international order to enhance the security of the United States.¹ The National Military Strategy (NMS) provides the ways and means to advance the national interests outlined

¹ U.S. President, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), 1.

in the NSS, emphasizing the need to build regional security cooperation and coordinate efforts in South America, Central America and the Caribbean to enhance stability and disrupt illicit trafficking in the Western Hemisphere. The NMS also aims to counter violent extremism; deter and defeat aggression; strengthen international and regional security; and shape the future force.²

Additionally, the National Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC) describes TOC as a national security threat and specifically identifies the Western Hemisphere as a regional priority. It targets regional threats in Central America to protect Americans and partners from TOC networks; strengthen partner nation governance and break the corruptive power of TOC networks; break the economic power of TOC networks; defeat TOC networks that pose the greatest threat to national security; and build international consensus, cooperation, and partnerships to defeat TOC.³ The CTOC Strategy specifically states, “We must attack these organizations as close to the source as we can by forward deploying our law enforcement and intelligence assets.”⁴

Likewise, the National Counterterrorism (CT) Strategy outlays the overarching steps to achieve the President’s goals of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al-Qaida (AQ) and its affiliates. It aims to protect American people and interests; prevent the use and trafficking of WMD; build CT partnerships; degrade links to AQ; and deprive terrorists the enabling means. The CT Strategy also names the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) as a significant threat to U.S. strategic interests and a

² U.S. Department of Defense, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America: Redefining America’s Global Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, February 2011), 1.

³ U.S. President, *Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime – Addressing Converging Threats to National Security* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, July 2011), 1.

⁴ U.S. President, *Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime – Addressing Converging Threats to National Security* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 2015), ii.

regional de-stabilizer against whose operations the U.S. must work with partner nations to disrupt.⁵

These strategies are enabled through various funding mechanisms. For instance, the Economy Act requires that other government agencies (OGAs) reimburse the DoD for services or support provided. Reimbursement for Military Support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies (MSCLEA) is not required when the support is in the normal course of military training and operations, results in benefit to the DoD that is substantially equivalent to that which would otherwise be obtained from military operations or training, or is provided under the authority of the current National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).⁶ The Fiscal Year 1989 NDAA designated the DoD to be the single lead federal agency for detection and monitoring (D&M) of illegal aerial and maritime drug shipments into the United States. Section 1004 of the 1991 NDAA authorized DoD support for CD purposes in addition to that authorized by Title 10, USC, Sections 124, 372, and 374 to include activities such as: the transport of US and foreign personnel and supplies; establishment and operation of bases of operation and training; training of foreign law enforcement personnel; linguistic and intelligence services; and aerial and ground reconnaissance.

Most recently, Public Law 113-291, also known as the Carl Levin and Howard P. Buck McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015, amended Section 1022 further expanding authorities of DoD Joint Task Forces to provide support

⁵ U.S. President, *The National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, June 2011), 1.

⁶ U.S. Code, Title 31, Section 1535, *Money and Finance: Agency Agreements* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 2010.)

to Law Enforcement Agencies. Specifically outlining “a joint task force of the DoD that provides support to law enforcement agencies conducting counter-drug activities may also provide, subject to all applicable laws and regulations, support to law enforcement agencies conducting counter-terrorism activities or counter-transnational organized crime activities through 2020.”⁷ The expansion of authorities to account for TOC atop existing CT and CD authorities enables a better whole-of-government approach to more fully go after the illicit networks that support transnational crime, terror, and narcotics.

DoD capacities remain critical to enabling this effort and are further validated by the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) which outlines the following priorities: protect the homeland; build security globally; and project power and win decisively.⁸ Furthermore, the Chairman of the Joint Staff highlights the need to rethink how the Joint Force is developed and reconsider how to fight together stating, “Fundamental to Joint Force 2020 is interoperability. Our capabilities, tactics, techniques, procedures, and terminology must be able to translate across the services, the interagency, and with our partner nations...to operate across the Joint Interagency Intergovernmental and Multinational environment.” The maritime operating environment of the Western Hemisphere offers an optimal proving ground to test the envisaged agile and adaptive Joint Force 2020 against the growing narco-terrorist CTOC enterprise.

Key Partnerships and Initiatives

Regional partnerships remain instrumental to increasing U.S. national security. While not exhaustive, it is important to outline a few key partnerships to understand the

⁷ U.S. President. *The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 19, 2014).

⁸ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 2010), 2.

positive effects in the multinational environment. The Organization of American States (OAS) Charter, of which the U.S. is a member, establishes security related objectives including: strengthen the peace and security of the continent; promote and consolidate representative democracy, with due respect for the principle of non-intervention; and provide for common action in the event of aggression. This charter is instrumental to preserving democratic rule of law in the hemisphere against state and non-state actors.

The Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), a Department of State led initiative, serves as the National Policy Framework for organizing all U.S. government (USG) efforts in support of Central America citizen security efforts. Within Central America, the deteriorating security situation threatens citizen safety. Narcotics traffickers continue to establish trafficking routes to and through Central America. The continued expansion of national and transnational gangs creates communities of fear where gangs are effectively in control. Organized crime—from extortion to corrupt acts by government officials—robs citizens of confidence in their ability to earn a livelihood, provide for their families, and trust public officials for solutions. The CARSI objective is to produce a safer, more secure region where criminal organizations do not threaten national and regional security.⁹

The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), another Department of State led initiative, enhances capabilities and joint collaboration on regional security among all members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Similar to CARSI, CBSI serves as a framework for organizing USG security efforts around reducing illicit trafficking; advancing public safety and security; and promoting social justice. The U.S. commitment

⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI): A Shared Partnership,” <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/carsi/> (accessed December, 11 2014).

to the CBSI cooperative dialogue process bolsters Maritime and Aerial Security Cooperation, Law Enforcement Capacity Building, and Border/Port Security and Firearms Interdiction.¹⁰ U.S. membership and active participation in these organizations and initiatives demonstrates resolve to partners in the region combating illicit drug transshipments' violence, corruption, and instability.

Recent Maritime Operations and Campaigns

Operation Martillo is a U.S., European, and Western Hemisphere effort targeting illicit trafficking routes in coastal waters along the Central American isthmus. U.S. military participation is led by Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S), a component of U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). Operation MARTILLO built increased trust and cooperation in 2013 amongst the 14-nations that combined to deny use of Central America as a trafficking corridor, resulting in the disruption of the trafficking of more than 132 metric tons of cocaine valued at over \$2.6 billion, seizure of over 32,000 pounds of marijuana, \$3.5 million in bulk cash, 315 arrests, and the seizure of 107 vessels, vehicles, and aircraft. The pressures put upon trafficking organizations resulted in a 38 percent decrease in illicit air trafficking activity and decreases of 29 percent and 57 percent of the illicit maritime activities in the Western Caribbean and Eastern Pacific littoral routes, respectively.¹¹ However, the focused interdictions in one area caused consequences in other areas of the Caribbean, including the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, which saw an uptick in drugs and associated violence.

¹⁰ Department of State, "Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI): A Shared Regional Security Partnership," <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/cbsi/>, (accessed December 11, 2014).

¹¹ U.S. Southern Command, "Operation Martillo Overview," <http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/Operation-Martillo.aspx>, (accessed January 5, 2015).

Record Removal Rates

Landmark efforts from 2004-2008 achieved significant interdiction successes within the transit zone. During this timeframe, while working with interagency and international partners, on average the Coast Guard removed 149 metric tons of cocaine from the transit zone annually, the five highest removal years on record. These record removal rates can be attributed to three primary factors. The first is actionable tactical intelligence. Through interagency cooperation, the Coast Guard benefits from the joint Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and Department of Justice (DoJ) investigative task force known as Panama Express (PANEX), which provides real-time, actionable, tactical drug-related intelligence to Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) in Key West, FL. Second are the Coast Guard's advances in technology utilizing armed helicopters and faster over-the-horizon cutter small boats. Through employment of Airborne Use of Force (AUOF) by the Coast Guard's Helicopter Tactical Interdiction Squadron (HITRON), coupled with U.S. Navy, Dutch and British Royal Navies with Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) embarked, the Coast Guard is able to stop go-fasts carrying multi-ton loads of cocaine. Third is the negotiation of international agreements with partner nations eliminating safe havens for smugglers who attempt to exploit territorial seas.

Since 1981, the Coast Guard, in cooperation with the Departments of Justice and State, negotiated over 41 bilateral agreements with drug interdiction partner nations in and around the transit zone providing ship riding, overflight, and ship boarding agreements along with the right to patrol and pursue drug smuggling suspects within partner nation's territorial seas. These bilateral counterdrug agreements deny DTOs the

safe havens sought in evading law enforcement assets. These agreements improve the USG's ability to gain jurisdiction over interdicted smugglers and facilitate international cooperation in counterdrug efforts. On a larger scale, the U.S. Coast Guard's drug interdiction strategy centers on reducing the supply of drugs to the U.S. by denying drug traffickers access to maritime routes across the six million square mile transit zone.

The combination of intelligence, interdiction assets, and territorial access nets more prosecutions. Successful prosecutions provide investigators the ability to acquire actionable intelligence about drug movements and the illegal drug trade. Cueing, Detection and Monitoring (D&M), and Disruption and Apprehension (D&A) remain core components of the National Drug Control Strategy.¹² This interdiction cycle is more commonly known in law enforcement circles as “Find-Fix-Finish-Exploit” (Appendix A, Figure 1). Cued intelligence assists fixed wing air assets in initially *finding* targets of interest; air asset coordination with surface and rotary wing assets enables the *fixing* of the target's position, course, and speed enabling an intercept where targets are *finished* through warning shots, then disabling fire to facilitate law enforcement (LE) boarding. Over the gunwale intelligence gained by LE from receipts in pocket trash to coordinates in GPS provides critical and actionable intelligence. When there are insufficient surface LE assets, the *finish* and *exploit* part of the interdiction cycle does not occur. Sans surface assets, the best case scenario is the overt presence of fixed wing assets leads to a jettison of contraband and a disruption. However, savvy smugglers are often aware of the limited LE presence in the largely ungoverned maritime commons and are able to continue their voyage uncontested after waiting out fixed wing assets on station time.

¹² National Drug Control Strategy 2014, 57.

CHAPTER 3

The Costs to American Society and Western Hemisphere Stability

“The spread of criminal networks is having a corrosive effect on the integrity of democratic institutions and the stability of several of our partner nations. Transnational criminal organizations threaten citizen security, undermine basic human rights, cripple rule of law through corruption, erode good governance, and hinder economic development.”

**-James R. Clapper
Director of National Intelligence**

Gang-related drug distribution and trafficking poses a serious threat to public safety and stability in most major cities and in many mid-size cities because such distribution activities are routinely associated with lethal violence. Illicit drugs remain a serious threat to the health, safety, security, and financial well-being of Americans, fueling the power, impunity, and violence of TOC.

The Costs to American Society

The costs to U.S. society in lost productivity and health care are substantial; the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) estimates the societal costs of illicit drugs exceed \$193 billion annually with someone in the U.S being sent to treatment every four minutes.² The National Highway Traffic Administration (NHTSA) reports that one out of every eight Americans driving on a weekend night tests positive for an illicit drug.³ Ten percent of eighth graders reported using an illicit drug within the past

¹ James Clapper, *Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community Statement for the Record*, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (March 12, 2013) <http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/130312/clapper.pdf> (accessed December 7, 2014)

² Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Report on Cocaine Smuggling in 2010*. http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/international-partnerships-content/20_january_cocaine_smuggling_in_2010_for_posting_on_ondcp_webpage_2.pdf (accessed September 5, 2014).

³ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), *Impaired Driving*. <http://www.nhtsa.gov/-Impaired> (accessed September 3, 2014).

month⁴ and 60 percent of the American population lives in a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)⁵ where well organized gangs poison the streets with drugs, violence, and all manner of crime. Mexican DTOs (MDTOs) escalation of violence to consolidate Western Hemisphere market share, protect operations in Mexico, and expand reach into the United States brings increased cross-border violence and lethality.

DTO Distribution, Street Gangs, and Violence

Drug trafficking is accompanied by dramatic increases in local corruption and crime, as noted by the United Nations in West Africa and Central America.⁶ Mexican traffickers wrestled control of the most valuable portions of the trafficking chain from the Colombians becoming by far the most important conduit for cocaine entering the United States. The UNODC estimates that over 200 metric tons of cocaine transits Central America and Mexico annually, netting \$6 billion for regional cartels. As a result, DTOs command manpower and weaponry sufficient to challenge the state when threatened, including access to military arms and explosives.⁷ The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Bank have identified drug trafficking by illicit networks as the primary driving factor of violent crime.⁸

National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) reporting indicates that Hispanic and African American street gangs are expanding their influence over drug distribution in rural and suburban areas of the U.S and acquire drugs directly from Mexican DTOs

⁴ Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth; University of Michigan, 2013.

⁵ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *ONDCP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program* <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/high-intensity-drug-trafficking-areas-program> (accessed September 10, 2014).

⁶ Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime, 9.

⁷ UNODC, *World Drug Report 2010*, New York, NY: United Nations Publication (2010), 237.

⁸ UNODC & The World Bank. *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean*. Report No. 37820 (2007). <http://web.worldbank.org/wbsite/-external/-countries/lacext.html> (accessed 20 September, 2014).

(MDTOs). Forty-five percent of law enforcement agencies in the Southwestern United States report that gangs in their jurisdiction are moderately to highly involved in drug activity, while 30 percent indicate that street gang involvement in drug activity increased within the past year.⁹ Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs) engage in routine and systematic exploitation and infiltration of law enforcement and government infrastructures to protect and perpetrate criminal activities. OMGs regularly solicit information of intelligence value from government or law enforcement employees. MDTOs are among the most prominent DTOs largely because of their control over the production of most drugs consumed in the United States. Many gangs are sophisticated criminal networks with members who are violent, distribute wholesale quantities of drugs, and develop and maintain close working relationships with members and associates of transnational criminal/drug trafficking/violent extremist organizations.¹⁰ It is important to recognize the influence of DTOs not only over partner nations, but also within USG ranks. The pervasive abilities of these DTOs to acquire and rapidly disseminate information across international borders puts limited maritime law enforcement resources at distinct disadvantage, often allowing DTOs to circumvent force laydowns. Increasing operational security (OPSEC) and maintaining a superior information advantage remains integral to interdiction success.

The Costs to U.S. Partners in the Western Hemisphere

While the ill-effects surrounding illicit drug trafficking in the U.S. remain costly,

⁹ U.S. Department of Justice, *National Drug Threat Assessment 2010*, National Drug Intelligence Center, February 2010, 4.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Justice, *2011 National Gang Threat Assessment*, U. S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, http://www.fbi.gov/-about-us/investigate/vc_majorthfts/gangs (accessed December 13, 2014), 33.

they pale in comparison to the tragic effects within the Americas and Caribbean. In particular, the homicide rate for male victims aged 15-29 in South and Central America is over four times the global average rate for that age group. More than 1 in 7 of all homicide victims globally is a young male aged 15-29 in the Americas. The homicide rates in the Americas overtook Africa as the geographic region with the highest rates of murders in 2012 (Appendix A, Figure 2).

The UNODC lists the top ten countries with highest murder rates, of which, seven are in the Western Hemisphere, from highest to lowest: Honduras (90.4 per 100,000), Venezuela (53.7 per 100,000), Belize (44.7 per 100,000), El Salvador (41.2 per 100,000), Guatemala (39.9 murders per 100,000), Jamaica (39.3 murders per 100,000), and Colombia (30.8 per 100,000). The U.S. territory of Puerto Rico ranked 14th in homicides (27 per 100,000) peaking in 2012. This surge in murder rates in Puerto Rico correlates to the rerouting of drug flow to the Eastern Caribbean as a result of Operation Martillo.

The USG reversed this trend with increased federal and territory enforcement efforts within and around Puerto Rico, which cut the number of homicides by half. From September 2012 to August 2013, the Coast Guard seized over 20,000 kilograms of cocaine and 8,500 pounds of marijuana during 22 law enforcement interdictions as part of Operation Unified Resolve, in partnership with regional law enforcement authorities in the Caribbean seizing more than \$690 million in contraband.¹¹

The 2013 UN Global Study on Homicide sheds light on the worst of crimes - the "unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person."¹² In 2012,

¹¹ U.S. Coast Guard, *Office of Law Enforcement Drug Interdiction Statistics*, http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/-cg531/drug_interdiction.asp (accessed December 8, 2014)

¹² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Global Study on Homicide 2013*, <https://www.unodc.org/gsh/en/index.html> (accessed December 10, 2014).

intentional homicide took the lives of almost half a million people worldwide with over 157,000 in the Americas; relevant as lethal violence creates a climate of fear and uncertainty allowing TOCs to thrive. These destabilizing effects are attributed to the unprecedented expansion of criminal networks and violent gangs impacting citizen security and stability in the Central American region. Skyrocketing criminal violence exacerbates weak governance; as a UN report recently noted, despite improvements, Latin America remains the most unequal and insecure region in the world.¹³ Driven by economic pressures and rising criminal violence, the number of Hondurans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans attempting to cross the U.S. Southwest border increased 60 percent in 2013.¹⁴ “The spread of TOC is having a corrosive effect on the stability of Central America ... threaten citizen security, undermine basic human rights, cripple rule of law through corruption, erode good governance, and hinder economic development.”¹⁵

Drug Related Gang Violence in the U.S.

Violent disputes over control of drug territory and enforcement of drug debts frequently occur among gangs in both urban and suburban areas, as gangs expand their control of drug distribution, according to National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) and National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC) reporting. In 2010, law enforcement agencies in 51 major U.S. cities reported moderate to significant levels of gang-related drug activity (Appendix A, Figure 3). NDIC survey data indicates that 69 percent of U.S. law

¹³ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report for Latin America 2013-2014*. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/human-development-report-for-latin-america-2013-2014.html> (accessed December 24, 2014).

¹⁴ Posture Statement of General John F. Kelly, Commander, U.S. Southern Command before the 113th Congress Senate Armed Services Committee 13 March 2014, http://www.armedservices.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Kelly_03-13-14.pdf (accessed November, 25 2014).

¹⁵ Clapper, 3.

enforcement agencies report gang involvement in drug distribution. Understanding the domestic pathways and distribution networks of these syndicates is critical to combating transnational threats into the U.S. The connections that link individuals are the paths by which criminals and terrorists move material and ideas. These are the foundations for illicit transactions.¹⁶

The FBI reports that over 33,000 violent street, motorcycle, and prison gangs with about 1.4 million members are criminally active in the U.S. today.¹⁷ All use violence to control neighborhoods and boost their illegal money-making activities, which include robbery, drug and gun trafficking. According to the 2011 National Gang Threat Assessment, gangs are responsible for nearly half of violent crime in most jurisdictions, and up to 90 percent in others. Gangs pose an increasing threat to U.S. communities serving as an arm for DTOs to operate within the United States.

While the militarization of police forces received national media attention in 2014, one of the catalysts of this militarization, violent threats posed by gangs, received far less. Violent and well-armed gangs are transnational and affiliated with a wide range of nefarious criminal and terrorist organizations (Appendix A, Figure 4). Sixty percent of the TOC affiliation resides in the Western Hemisphere.¹⁸ At sea interdictions enable Federal law enforcement to further penetrate these networks by incentivizing those apprehended against the larger network with reduced sentences in return for information.

¹⁶ Scott Helfstein, "Risky Business: The Global Threat Network and the Politics of Contraband," *The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, (May 16, 2014): 53, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/RiskyBusiness_final.pdf (accessed February 14, 2015).

¹⁷ National Gang Threat Assessment, 20.

¹⁸ Ibid, 21-22.

CHAPTER 4

The War on Drugs: Politics and Funding – Nixon to Obama

“Detecting and countering the production and trafficking of illegal drugs is a high-priority national security mission...”

**-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney
September 1989**

¹

From the outset of the war on drugs, national investment has waxed and waned between supply and demand side reduction. This funding fluxuation generates starts and stops domestically and internationally, increasing uncertainty and impacting efficacy.

The Nixon, Ford, and Carter Administrations

In 1971, President Nixon initiated the war on drugs when he declared, “America’s public enemy number one in the United States is drug abuse. In order to fight and defeat this enemy, it is necessary to wage a new, all-out offensive.”² This offensive focused both on the supply and demand reductions from the outset, however, the center of gravity of his strategy initially favored demand-reduction as evidenced by the drug program budget, which increased from \$81.3 million in FY 1969 to \$783.6 million in FY 1973, with two-thirds of the new resources allocated to treatment and one-third to law enforcement.³ Nixon recognized that supply reduction of drugs was subordinate to demand reduction when he addressed Congress in June 1971 and declared, “as long as

¹ Bruce M. Bagley, *Myths of Militarization: The Role of the Military in the War on Drugs in the Americas* (Miami: University of Miami North-South Center, 1991), 14.

² Kenneth Sharpe, Eva Bertram, Morris Blachman, and Peter Andreas. *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 1.

³ Richard Nixon: “Statement on Establishing the Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement,” January 28, 1972, *The American Presidency Project*, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3552 (accessed on January 2, 2015.)

there is a demand, there will be those willing to take the risks of meeting the demand.”⁴ This is what has been referred to as the “iron law of drug economics” – if the insatiable demand for drugs exists it will result in the rerouting of the international drug trade over land, sea, and air routes into the U.S.⁵ Such was the case with Operation Martillo and Puerto Rico which illustrated this ‘iron law’ firsthand. Hard realities surrounding the drug trade led Nixon to create the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) in 1973.

In the 1970s, President Ford’s policy focused on incarceration for offenders, instituting mandatory sentences for sale of hard drugs and encouraging Congress to enact mandatory fixed sentences for persons convicted of Federal crimes involving the sale of hard drugs. The meteoric rise of drug user prosecution and incarceration budgets initially stem from the Ford Administration approach. Today, there are an estimated 50,000 federal prisoners and 400,000 state prisoners (approximately 25 percent of all state prisoners) serving time for drug convictions.⁶

In 1977, President Carter’s anti-drug policies focused more on the supply side, spending an average of \$437 million annually on interdiction and eradication programs and \$386 million annually on education, prevention, and rehabilitation.⁷ While somewhat balanced, the approach proved insufficient given the cocaine market boom with U.S. demand for cocaine increasing from 25 tons to an estimated 137 tons between 1978 and 1984.⁸ In 1979, an estimated 14.1 percent of Americans over the age of twelve

⁴ Sharpe, 27.

⁵Leif R. Rosenberger, *America’s Drug War Debacle*, (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1996), 22.

⁶ Carnevale Associates, “*Policy Brief: The Continued Standstill in Reducing Illicit Drug Use*,” (Gaithersburg, MD: September 2009), http://www.carnevaleassociates.com/drug_policy_budget_mismatch-2009.pdf (accessed December 29, 2014).

⁷ Rosenberger, 25.

⁸ Merril Collett, *The Cocaine Connection: Drug Trafficking, and Inter-American Relations* (New York, NY: Foreign Policy Association, 1989), 35.

reported illicit drug usage within the previous month.⁹ Today, an estimated 20 million Americans age 12 and older have used illicit drugs within the previous month equating to about 6 percent of the population.¹⁰ Although demand has more than halved, the reach of DTOs and confluence with transnational criminal networks remains far reaching.

The Reagan and Bush Administrations

In 1981, President Reagan tripled the annual amount of funding for supply side interdiction and eradication programs to \$1.4 billion while cutting education, prevention, and treatment slightly to \$362 million.¹¹ Congress also passed changes to the Posse Comitatus Act in 1981 authorizing an escalation of counterdrug MSCLEA. This new law allowed the reluctant military to lend equipment to law enforcement agencies and to operate that equipment, and to share pertinent intelligence with law enforcement agents.¹² This reluctance within DoD continues today despite national strategies that warn of the confluent dangers of terrorism and transnational crime on the homeland.

The Reagan Administration also increased anti-drug rhetoric to deglamorize drug use with the “Just Say No” campaign, while emphasizing a “Zero Tolerance” policy signing the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act further stiffening possession penalties. Despite these steps, political pressure continued to mount for the use of the military due to the perceived failure of law enforcement efforts to curb a national drug epidemic.¹³ The U.S. officially labeled DTOs as a transnational threat to national security for the first time

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Preliminary Results*, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies (1996) <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nhsda/PE1996/artab011.htm#E8E19> (accessed 14 November 2014).

¹⁰ Claire Suddath, “Brief History: The War on Drugs,” *Time.com*, March 25, 2009 <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1887488,00.html> (accessed January 2, 2015).

¹¹ Rosenberger, 26.

¹² *Ibid.*, 30.

¹³ Bagley, 14-15.

when Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive-221 (NSDD-221) in April 1986. This directive expanded the role of U.S. military forces stating, “drug trafficking threatens the national security of the United States.”¹⁴ This directive also charged Vice President George H.W. Bush, with promoting support for the war on drugs internationally by raising this in high level discussions amongst U.S. Allies.¹⁵

Lastly, the Reagan Administration created the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), elevating it to a cabinet-level office within the executive office of the president.¹⁶ Despite staunch resistance from DoD and military senior leadership, Congress passed the 1989 NDAA directing a dramatic increase in military support to drug interdiction.¹⁷ This act designated DOD as the lead federal agency for air and maritime surveillance of illicit drugs and was the origin for the DoD’s modern day D&M mission (Figure 1). As well, the NDAA allows updates to MSCLEA beyond counterdrug (CD), which enables expanded CT and CTOC efforts today.

President George H. W. Bush succeeded Reagan in January 1989 well entrenched given his previous international role. Bush assured the nation of his continuing commitment to the war on drugs by speaking on illicit drug use in his inaugural address, passionately stating, “Take my word for it - this scourge will stop!”¹⁸ U.S. CD policies changed little with Bush largely staying the course set by Reagan. In December 1989, President Bush ordered the invasion of Panama to carry out Operation Just Cause

¹⁴ Ronald Reagan, *National Security Decision Directive Number 221*, (Washington, DC, April 1986), <http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-221.htm> (accessed 22 October 2014).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3-4

¹⁶ David Teasley, Congressional Research Service Report 98-149, *Drug Control: Reauthorization of the Office of National Drug Control Policy* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 26 August 1998), 1.

¹⁷ Sharpe, 114-115.

¹⁸ George H.W. Bush, *Inaugural Address* (January, 20 1989), http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/-research/public_papers.php?id=1&year=1989&month=01 (accessed 12 November 2014).

removing Manuel Noriega from power – partially justifying the act due to Noriega's involvement in drug trafficking.¹⁹ This controversial action continues to effect trust of U.S. military operating within the Western Hemisphere, as many countries viewed the act as a violation of sovereignty. An escalated maritime interdictions approach recognizes these existing tensions and maintains respect for partner nations' national sovereignty as a core tenet.

The Clinton and Bush Administrations

President Clinton continued to bolster federal government drug policy by signing Executive Order 12880 in November 1993, identifying drugs as a national security threat.²⁰ Although Clinton doubled spending on rehabilitation and prevention programs, he devoted an even more substantial increase to the supply side, focusing on eradication and law enforcement. The 1995 budget included \$13.2 billion for drug policy with \$7.8 billion for supply reduction (interdiction, international, and domestic law enforcement) and \$5.4 billion for demand reduction (education, prevention, and rehabilitation).²¹ Despite increases in supply reduction spending, the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) arguably shifted drug flows towards the U.S. via Mexico as enforcement along the Southwest border lagged the dramatic increase in trade – enabling TOCs to directly exploit the licit trade crossing U.S. borders.

In response to the domestic terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, President George W. Bush created U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) with the primary

¹⁹ New York Times, "A Transcript of President Bush's Address on the Decision to Use Force," 21 December 1989. <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/12/21/world/fighting-panama-president-transcript-bush-s-address-decision-use-force-panama.html> (accessed 14 December 2014).

²⁰ The White House, *Executive Order 12880, National Drug Control Program, 16 November 1993*, <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/pdf/12880.pdf> (accessed 14 November 2014).

²¹ Rosenberger, 51.

responsibility to secure the U.S. homeland from transnational threats.²² The Homeland Security Act of 2002 also created DHS with the mission to prevent terrorist acts within the U.S., reduce the vulnerability of the U.S. to terrorism, and minimize the damage and assist in the recovery from terrorist attacks that do occur within the United States. The act also charged the Secretary of Homeland Security to appoint a senior official to oversee national drug interdiction and to serve as the United States Interdiction Coordinator – a position held by the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard since inception as the head of the Lead Federal Agency for maritime interdictions.²³ The Bush Administration maintained its commitment to fight the war on drugs during the post-9/11 period with allocations to interdiction steadily growing over the period – the same period that saw record success in at-sea interdictions previously discussed (Figure 5). Bush recognized the relationship between drugs and terrorism early on when he remarked, “If you quit drugs, you join the fight against terrorism.”²⁴

The Obama Administration

President Obama’s National Drug Control Budgets for FY13/14/15 more than doubled prevention and treatment funding from 2009 levels to \$9.2B/\$10.1B/\$10.9B, respectively (Figure 6). Meanwhile, supply reduction budgets for interdictions stagnated at \$3.9B/\$4.0B/\$3.9B while international funding declined to 1.8B/\$1.8B/\$1.4B.²⁵ This shift towards a demand reduction at the expense of international and interdiction funding

²² U.S. Northern Command, *Mission Statement*, <http://www.northcom.mil/About/index.html> (accessed September 11, 2014).

²³ Homeland Security Act of 2002, HR 5005, *Library of Congress*, <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:h.r.5005.enr> (accessed 25 September 2014).

²⁴ George W. Bush, *Statement upon Signing the Drug-Free Communities Act*, December 14, 2001. <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/bush-war-on-drugs-aids-war-on-terror/> (accessed January 11, 2015).

²⁵ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *National Drug Control Budget Fy2015 Funding Highlights*, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/aboutcontent/fy_2015_budget_highlights_-_final.pdf (accessed December 12, 2014).

caused great concern within the U.S. military senior ranks with respect to the Western Hemisphere. Interdiction funding, now only 15% of the total drug control budget, coupled with a simultaneous rebalancing to the Pacific, and sequestration continues to deplete naval interdiction assets and apprehensions.²⁶

U.S. Navy Frigates Decommissioning and an Aging Coast Guard Fleet

One of the immediate effects of sequestration is the U.S. Navy's acceleration of Perry Class Frigates (FFG) decommissioning by FY2015,²⁷ the traditional D&M assets utilized by JIATF-S in the SOUTHCOM AOR. Just as important, the FFGs also carried Coast Guard LEDETs which enable end-game D&A (Figure 1). Their loss further degrades the actionable intelligence cycle and prosecutions. To quantify this, USS Ingraham (FFG-61) disrupted or intercepted 11,937 kilograms of cocaine valued at more than \$560 million as part of Operation Martillo while assigned to U.S. 4th Fleet.²⁸ Ingraham was commissioned in 1989 and is being decommissioned and scrapped five years earlier than planned due to budget cuts.²⁹

Meanwhile, Coast Guard High Endurance Cutters (WHECs) built in the 1960s continue to carry out drug interdiction duties battling not only smugglers, but also lower availability and reliability rates as they operate well beyond intended service life. In fact, 34 high and medium-endurance cutters, and 37 large patrol boats, were unable to get

²⁶ William Kyle, "The US Navy and the Pivot: Less Means Less" *The Diplomat*. March 31, 2014. <http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/the-us-navy-and-the-pivot-less-means-less/>

²⁷ Sam LaGrone, "Youngest U.S. Frigate Decommissioned, Remainder Will Leave Fleet in 2015," *The Navy Times*, November 14, 2014, <http://news.usni.org/2014/11/14/youngest-u-s-frigate-decommissioned-remainder-will-leave-fleet-2015> (accessed January 4, 2015).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Associated Press, "Former SecDef Gates laments USS Ingraham decommissioning," *The Navy Times*, November 13, 2014, <http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/pentagon/2014/11/13/former-defense-secretary-gates-laments-frigates-oliver-hazard-perry-class-frigates-uss-ingraham-decommissioning/18973529/> (accessed December 11, 2014).

underway for an accumulated 1,654 days in 2013 — the equivalent of four and a half years of lost patrol time. New Jersey Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-2nd Dist.), a member of the House Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee and its former chairman, said a key reason why drug interdiction rates by the Coast Guard have fallen to historic lows was because its boats are no longer able to do the job.³⁰ The recapitalization of the Coast Guard fleet is underway funded at approximately \$1 billion annually. However, with the majority of Legacy Fleet beyond or approaching service life estimates (Figure 7),³¹ the pace of recapitalization will leave an additional vulnerability for DTOs to exploit over the next two decades.

Despite NDAA expansion of spending authorities for DoD across CD, CT, and CTOC domains, the capital investments needed in the maritime domain lags. The Coast Guard relies on authorities, capabilities, capacity, and partnerships to conduct statutory missions including the CD mission; however the capacity and associated capabilities gaps continue to plague the service. The former U.S. Coast Guard Commandant estimated, “To fully recapitalize the Coast Guard’s ships, aircraft and shore facilities would require a budget of \$2.5 billion per year in acquisition funding.”³²

U.S. SOUTHCOM Commander Testimony

The SOUTHCOM AOR is the distribution hub for drug trafficking destined for the United States.³³ In testimony before Congress, General John F. Kelly, Commander,

³⁰ Ted Sherman, “Dead in the water? U.S. Coast Guard deals with aging fleet and mounting budget woes,” *NJ Advance Media*, September 28, 2014. <http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2014/09/dead-in-the-water-us-coast-guard-deals-with-aging-fleet-and-mounting-budget-woes.html> (accessed March 14, 2015).

³¹ Government Accountability Office, *Coast Guard Legacy Vessels’ Declining Conditions Reinforce Need for More Realistic Operational Targets*, GAO Report 12-741, 6. <http://www.gao.gov/assets/600/-593163.pdf> (accessed February 1, 2015).

³² Ibid.

³³ U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration. *2013 National Drug Threat Assessment*.

SOUTHCOM said he would be able to interdict more drugs if he had 16 ships that could be used as the base for helicopters. Currently, there are, on average, one U.S. Navy ship and two Coast Guard cutters in the 6 million square mile maritime transit zone being utilized for drug interdiction.³⁴

To better understand the sizable challenge, the U.S. is approximately 3.8 million square miles. Kelly stated, “Because of asset shortfalls, we’re unable to get after 74 percent of suspected maritime drug trafficking. I simply sit and watch it go by ... because of service cuts, I don’t expect to get any immediate relief, in terms of assets.” Kelly also expressed concern over waning U.S. influence, leadership, and relationships in the Western Hemisphere³⁵ countries within the SOUTHCOM AOR negatively influenced by the flow of cocaine to satisfy U.S. demand are illustrated in Figure 8. Investment in counterdrug relationships remains instrumental in stopping the flow of cocaine along the multitude of vectors within the SOUTHCOM AOR.

U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Testimony

Admiral Robert Papp testified to the importance of the JIATF-S role in the seizure of the majority of cocaine bound for the U.S, noting it receives only 1.5 percent of the total counter narcotics budget: “Over the last five years, Coast Guard ships and LEDETs operating in the offshore regions have removed more than a million pounds of cocaine with a wholesale value of \$17 billion ... more than two times the amount of cocaine seized by all other U.S. federal, state, and local LE agencies combined.”³⁶

³⁴U.S. Senate Armed Service Committee, Marine General John F. Kelly, Commander, U.S. Southern Command, Testimony (March 13, 2014) <http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/More-Ships-Equal-More-Drugs-Seized,-SOUTHCOM-Commander-Says.aspx> (accessed September 28, 2014).

³⁵ Ibid. pg 6.

³⁶ U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee Hearing on Transportation and Infrastructure, Coast Guard and Marine Transportation, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere. *Testimony of Admiral Robert J. Papp, Coast Guard Commandant*. (April 30, 2014)

Admiral Papp and General Kelly's testimonies speak directly to the returns on investments and partnerships within the Western Hemisphere. Given waning interdiction and international drug budgets, the 'Pivot to the Pacific' in response to the rise of China, and the extreme and immediate effects of sequestration, TOC influence is poised for a dramatic rise in the Western Hemisphere as tens of billions of dollars of cocaine continue to flow toward U.S. shores (Figure 8). If bulk shipments are not interdicted before making landfall, cocaine moves through Central America and Mexico with less than 2% interdicted post-landfall, leaving lethal violence in its path (Figure 9). Safe havens within Central America and Mexico enable narco-terrorists to evade detection by breaking down the bulk shipments into smaller loads leaving domestic law enforcement and border agents to chase dust in the wind as it is trafficked across the border to the various crime syndicates on street corners across America.

These concerns deepen as the President's FY 2015 budget request for interdiction efforts totals approximately \$3.9 billion, a decrease of \$184.8 million (-4.6%) from the FY 2014 level with even deeper cuts impacting international relationships.³⁷ In September 2014, Admiral Paul Zukunft released the U.S. Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy narrowing the service's focus to at sea apprehensions within the hemisphere in an effort to focus scarce resources on disrupting TOC networks.³⁸

<http://coastguard-.DoDlive.mil/2014/04/adm-papp-testifies-on-drug-interdiction-efforts/#sthash.gsY4LZAw.dpuf> (accessed November 26, 2014).

³⁷ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *National Drug Control Budget FY2015 Funding Highlights* (March 2014)

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/aboutcontent/fy_2015_budget_-highlights_-_final.pdf (accessed December 12, 2014).

³⁸ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *United States Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy*, Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, September 2014, 1.

CHAPTER 5

A Revolution in Transnational Criminal Affairs - Submersibles

"If drug smugglers can pack tons of illegal drugs into these stealthy vessels, it's pretty clear that terrorists could carry weapons of mass destruction or other threats into our country this way."

**-Senator Joseph Biden
July 2008**

Self-Propelled Semi-Submersibles

In 2006, the U.S. Coast Guard seized the first Self-Propelled Semi-Submersible (SPSS) interdicted by U.S. forces, approximately 100 nautical miles southwest of Costa Rica. The interdiction in international waters netted the seizure of three metric tons of cocaine.² By 2008, proliferation of the SPSS was evident with an average of ten per month being sighted by maritime patrol aircraft, but only 10 percent of those being interdicted by surface forces.³ However, the few SPSSs that were interdicted were rarely seized due to scuttling valves that enabled SPSS' crews to sink them rapidly upon being intercepted, to destroy all evidence of smuggling, including the vessel and contraband.⁴ A lack of evidence meant no prosecutions, leaving law enforcement to rescue the mariners treating them as search and rescue survivors. To address this legal loophole, Congress enacted the U.S. Drug Trafficking Vessel Interdiction Act in September 2008,

¹ GlobalSecurity.org, "Self-Propelled Semi-Submersible (SPSS) watercraft," *GlobalSecurity.org* <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/spss.htm> (accessed December 31, 2014).

² Associated Press, "Submarine with cocaine seized off Costa Rica," *MSNBC News*, November 20, 2006 http://www.nbcnews.com/id/15811689/ns/world_news-americas/t/submarine-cocaine-seized-costa-rica/#.VO0eoD8cSM8 (accessed December 31, 2014).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Acosta, Luis Jaime; Hugh Bronstein, "Another cocaine-laden submarine sinks off Colombia," *Reuters*, January 3, 2008). <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/01/04/us-colombia-drugs-idUSN0325244420080104> (accessed December 17, 2014).

making it a "felony for those who knowingly or intentionally operate or embark in a self-propelled semi-submersible that is without nationality and that is or has navigated in international waters, with the intent to evade detection."⁵ In 2008, DHS estimated that submersibles accounted for one-third of all maritime cocaine flow between South America and the United States.⁶

In July 2008, the Mexican Navy intercepted a 10 meter long narco-submarine traveling about 200 km southwest of Oaxaca. Mexican Navy Special Forces rappelled from a helicopter on to its deck and arrested four smugglers before they could scuttle their vessel. The vessel was loaded with 5.3 tons of cocaine and was towed to Huatulco, Oaxaca by a Mexican Navy patrol boat.⁷ In September 2008, the U.S. Coast Guard captured a semi-submersible about 350 miles west of Guatemala that carried seven tons of cocaine.⁸ A U.S. Navy aircraft detected the 18 meter long steel and fiberglass craft as part of Operation Panama Express and it was intercepted by a Coast Guard LEDET deployed on an FFG. Five days later, a CG WHEC seized an 18 meter semi-submersible about 200 miles south of Guatemala.⁹ These apprehensions illustrate the increasing range and payload capacities of SPSSs, as well as the utility of the interdiction assets previously discussed.

⁵ GlobalSecurity.org. "Self-Propelled Semi-Submersible (SPSS) watercraft," *GlobalSecurity.org* <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/spss.htm> (accessed December 31, 2014)..htm

⁶ Kevin G. Hall, "At \$2 million each, subs become the drug transport of choice," *McClatchy Newspapers DC*, July 18, 2008, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2008/07/18/44739/at-2-million-each-subs-become.html> (accessed December 19, 2014)

⁷ BBC News, "Mexican navy seizes cocaine sub," *BBC News*, July 18, 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7515056.stm> (accessed December 28, 2014).

⁸ Elaine Silvestrini, "Drug-Toting Semi-Sub Nabbed In Tampa-Based Probe," *The Tampa Tribune*, September 13, 2008. (accessed December 15, 2014).

⁹ Jeanne Meserve, "Cocaine smugglers turn to submarines, feds say," *CNN News*, September 19, 2008, <http://www.cnn.com/2008/CRIME/09/19/drug.subs/index.html> (accessed December 18, 2014).

By 2009, there were over 60 SPSS related events reported with projections that this conveyance transported over 330 metric tons of cocaine annually.¹⁰ With production costs for an SPSS estimated at less than \$2 million, and construction taking just months to a year under jungle cover, the SPSS offered significant return on investment for the TOC DTOs given its ability to transport \$100-\$400 million in cocaine (up to 12 tons) in a single voyage.¹¹ SPSSs were originally believed to be single voyage, disposable vessels, however recent SPSS seizures reveal indicators that the vessels are being used for multiple trips as zinc anodes are now being affixed to the hulls providing cathodic protection against corrosion on metal exposed to seawater.¹² There were 30 SPSSs intercepted in the Caribbean between 2006 and April 2012.¹³

Fully Submersible Vessels

As early as 2000, Colombian cartels have invested in Fully Submersible Vessel production. The discovery by Colombian authorities of a double-hulled steel submarine, under construction in a warehouse outside Bogota confirmed the DTOs invested heavily in submarine technology. The submarine seized would have been capable of traveling over 2,300 miles, diving to 300 feet, and carrying a significant payload of over 100 tons.¹⁴

¹⁰ U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security House Committee on Homeland Security, *Written Statement of Rear Admiral Charles Michel, Director Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S)*, June 19, 2012, <http://www.justf.org/files/primarydocs/Testimony-Michel.pdf> (accessed December 19, 2014).

¹¹ Michael S. Schmidt, Thom Shanker, "Smugglers Go Under the Sea to Move Drugs". *The New York Times*, September 10, 2012, A1. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/10/world/americas/drug-smugglers-pose-underwater-challenge-in-caribbean.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed December 20, 2014).

¹² *Inside Cocaine Submarines*, USA: National Geographic Channel, 2009.

¹³ Charles Parkinson, "Ecuador Discovers Drug Submarine Near Colombia Border," *Insight Crime*, October 22, 2013. <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/ecuador-discovers-drug-submarine-near-border-with-colombia> (accessed December 17, 2014).

¹⁴ BBC News, "Drug submarine found in Colombia," *BBC News*, September 7, 2000, www.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/915059.stm (accessed December 4, 2014).

In July 2010, Ecuadorian authorities seized a fully functional submarine in the jungle, approximately five miles south of Colombia in Esmeraldas, Ecuador.¹⁵ This diesel electric submarine had a fiberglass and Kevlar hull and was almost 100 feet long with a periscope and air conditioning. The vessel had a ten ton cargo capacity, accommodations for up to six people, an ability to dive over 60 feet, and the capability for extended underwater operations with a range enabling non-stop travel from Colombia to California.¹⁶ Ownership of this FSV remained unclear although the drug trade in the vicinity of Esmeraldas was traditionally dominated by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and organized crime group the Rastrojos. However, the emergence of rival Colombian group the Urabeños who also use submersibles, along with Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel increasing presence in the country, left law enforcement uncertain as to whose vessel was seized.¹⁷

In February 2011, the Colombian navy seized a similar submarine in the jungle in southwest Colombia, less than 200 miles from Esmeraldas. It was capable of diving 30 feet, carrying four people and eight tons of cargo.¹⁸ In September 2011, after receiving a tip from an informant, Colombian police seized a well-equipped 40 foot FARC submarine with a payload capacity of four tons and advanced technology, in a jungle area in western Choco province. This FSV contained a GPS navigation system, satellite telephone, radar, external video cameras, gyroscope, generator diesel engine, air

¹⁵ Bajak, Frank. "Ecuadoreans, DEA seize drug-smuggling submarine." *Associated Press*. July 4, 2010. (accessed December 4, 2014).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ BBC News, "Sophisticated drug submarine seized in Colombia," *BBC News*, February 14, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12461089> (accessed December 15, 2014).

conditioning, and ten emergency oxygen tanks.¹⁹ This seizure came on the heels of a FARC SPSS capable of carrying ten tons being seized one day prior by Colombian authorities in the same vicinity.²⁰ The majority of the above seizures resulted from interdictions' intelligence – a tremendous example of the fruit the Interdiction Continuum (Figure 1) can bear in preempting maiden voyages by disrupting networks and leveraging international partnerships.

Submersibles in Europe and the West African Threat Vector

The highly lucrative European market for cocaine gives DTOs over twice the incentive as the American market based on price of cocaine. In 2006, a 10 meter long submarine was found abandoned on the northern coast of Spain, where the authorities suspect the crew unloaded a cargo of cocaine before fleeing.²¹ In March 2006, the Calabrian mafia ordered a shipment of nine tons of cocaine (retail value of \$870 million) to be transported by FSV from Colombia to Italy, but the vessel was discovered by the Colombian police while it was still under construction.²²

While terrorist groups are not the primary actors involved, there is compelling evidence they are financed in part by drug proceeds. Al Qaeda in the Land of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and affiliated groups profited from taxing the transit of illegal drugs. Below is just one example of the connections between terrorist organizations and the drug trade in West Africa: In March 2013, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

¹⁹ BBC News, "Colombians seize \$2M FARC drug submarine," *BBC News*, September 26, 2011, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-15069370> (accessed December 14, 2014).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ BBC News, "Spanish police find 'drugs' sub," *BBC News*, August 14, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4792075.stm> (accessed December 23, 2014).

²² Nick Pisa, "Drug cops foil mafia plot to smuggle \$870m of cocaine by submarine," *Drug News Vault*, March 30, 2006, <http://drugnewsvault.blogspot.com/2006/03/drug-cops-foil-mafiasubterfuge.html> (accessed December 17, 2014).

arrested two Colombians in Algeria – including an alleged member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) – along with three individuals affiliated with AQIM, on charges that the Colombians were delivering cocaine in exchange for cash and arms that were acquired in Libya following the fall of Muammar Gaddafi.²³ This Libya-FARC nexus is even more troubling given estimates of 17,000 unaccounted for man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) in a post Gadhafi Libya, as well as the recent rise of the Islamic State in this region.²⁴

Narco-Terrorism Convergence

David Brown, a scholar at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, asserts that “criminal enterprises are evolving into new hybrid organizations that blur the traditional distinctions between organized crime and terrorism.”²⁵ He illustrated this point by looking at the three main terrorist groups with links to the drug trade in West Africa: the FARC, AQIM, and Hezbollah.

First, in December 2009, three West African Al Qaeda associates were arrested on drug and terrorism charges in Ghana and extradited to the U.S. The individuals agreed to transport cocaine through West and North Africa with the intent to support Al Qaeda, AQIM and the FARC -- all three defendants pled guilty.²⁶ Second, in 2010, Mauritanian authorities reported that members of AQIM provided security for a convoy of cocaine

²³ James Bargent, “Arrests Point to FARC Ties to Al Qaeda in North Africa,” *Insight Crime*, April 8, 2013. <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/arrests-point-to-farc-ties-to-al-qaeda-in-north-africa> (accessed December 21, 2014).

²⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *UN Report of the Assessment Mission on the Impact of the Libyan Crisis on the Sahel Region*. 18 January 2012, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/West_Africa-_TOCTA_2013_EN.pdf (accessed January 11, 2015).

²⁵ David Brown, *The Challenge of Drug Trafficking to Democratic Governance and Human Security in West Africa*, pg. 20.

²⁶ Testimony of Thomas Harrigan, Deputy Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, before the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, May 16, 2012.

and marijuana.²⁷ Even experts more skeptical of direct AQIM involvement concede that the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, an AQIM splinter group, is linked to hashish and cocaine trafficking in Niger and Mali.²⁸ Third, in 2011, Ayman Joumaa, a Lebanese drug kingpin linked to Hezbollah, was indicted in U.S. federal court for coordinating the sale of cocaine to Los Zetas, a prominent Mexican drug trafficking organization that controls the eastern seaboard of Mexico, by using West Africa to launder huge amounts of drug money, likely up to \$200 million a month.²⁹

The presence of cocaine in West Africa (Figure 10) is analogous to its presence throughout Central America; both serve as transshipment points to Europe and the U.S., respectively. It is important to highlight the existence of these illicit pathways between West Africa and the Americas as they serve as ready avenues for narco-terrorism networks to threaten the Western Hemisphere across an arc of instability and violence as highlighted previously (Figure 2). The blurring of the lines between organized crime and terrorist organizations is even more alarming given the recent emergence of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) training camps in Libya.³⁰ The convergence of terrorism and DTO networks (ISIS, AQIM, FARC, Hezbollah, MDTOs) and proliferation of unaccounted for weapons (i.e. Libyan MANPADS) are a recipe for disaster given the illicit pathways and stealth conveyances that now exist.

²⁷ Ibid, pg. 51.

²⁸ Wolfram Lacher, *Challenging the Myth of the Drug-Terror Nexus in the Sahel, West Africa Commission on Drugs Paper*, July 17, 2013, <http://www.slide-share.net/Rob-SentseBc/challenging-the-myth-of-the-drug-terror-nexus-in-the-sahel-2013> (accessed January 17, 2015).

²⁹ United States Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia, "U.S. Charges Alleged Lebanese Drug Kingpin with Laundering Drug Proceeds for Mexican and Colombian Drug Cartels," December 13, 2011. <http://www.justice.gov/usao/vae/news/2011/12/20111213> (accessed January 19, 2015).

³⁰ Jared Malsin, "ISIS-linked Camps in Libya Fan Concerns About Growing Militant Threat," December 5, 2014, <http://time.com/3621015/isis-in-libya/#3621015/isis-in-libya/> (accessed December, 14 2014).

CHAPTER 6

Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusions

"Criminal networks are not only expanding their operations, but they are also diversifying their activities, resulting in a convergence of transnational threats that has evolved to become more complex, volatile, and destabilizing ... to the detriment of the United States."

**- President Barack Obama
July 19, 2011**

Summary

The brutal violence of Transnational Organized Criminal (TOC) Networks and nexus to terrorism decreases stability throughout the Americas and poses an exponentially growing danger to U.S. national security and interests, costing tens of thousands of lives and hundreds of billions of dollars annually. Advances in submersible smuggling technology coupled with the convergence of transnational criminals, gangs, and terrorist networks from West Africa to the Americas creates an arc of instability and violence that leads directly to America's doorstep via the maritime domain. As the world's premier maritime power, the U.S. must project power at sea to combat these threats where most vulnerable.

Given the limited narcotics supply disruption and apprehension success over the past four decades and current enforcement efforts falling well short of ONDCP goals, re-evaluating investment and strategy in the maritime arena is a prudent course of action. At current investment levels, maritime interdictions net over two times the value of all other

¹Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime: Letter from the President retrieved from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/nsc/transnational-crime/letter> on 01 Jan 15

domestic law enforcement efforts combined, in terms of quantities seized, at a fraction of the cost. More importantly, maritime interdictions minimize violence and collateral damage, increase U.S. credibility in the Western Hemisphere, and provide the highest return on investment, in quality of actionable intelligence gained, while respecting the sovereignty of nations.

TOCs are in the business of making money – the more money made, the more sophisticated, brutal, and influential these networks become. The most common examples of TOCs found in the Western Hemisphere traffic illegal drugs, weapons, and humans with definitive ties to terrorism. Transnational crime remains a highly lucrative illicit business that continues to grow with recent academic analysis estimating the value of the global black market at nearly two trillion dollars.²

FSVs are prime examples of the revolutionary depths to which TOCs will go to increase their overall span of control and return on investment. The transnational nature of DTOs continues to expand along with the capabilities of FSVs over the past two decades. This expansion makes transatlantic ventures to West Africa a reality bringing with it an associated wave of instability and violence. The FSV serves as a valuable trafficking conveyance that will likely be utilized by DTOs to the fullest extent possible to generate revenue, secure profits, and increase payload security. As U.S. sophistication and international influence to limit money laundering and freeze bank accounts grows, TOC DTOs' desire to unplug from governed systems will continue to increase. The FSV provides these networks the stealth conveyance to unplug and transfer large quantities of

² Havocscope Global Black Market Information, The World Black Market 2014, <http://www.havocscope.com/market-value/> (accessed December 5, 2014).

cash or cash equivalents (diamonds, weapons, persons, etc) along all legs of narcotics ventures – maximizing the total value of each voyage.

Given recent history and modus operandi, TOCs and terrorist networks will continue to interact when it is mutually beneficial to do so. In a recent government study, criminals and terrorists are shown to be largely subsumed with 98 percent operating in a single network within the illicit marketplace as a self-organizing complex system built through social connections from the bottom up.³ These relationships of convenience, coupled with existing maritime pathways into the homeland, require increased attention.

Recommendations

The USG should seek to maximize returns on investment through a commitment to an escalated maritime interdictions strategy. With U.S. forces returning from overseas after a decade of fighting a global war on terror, and recent amendments to the NDAA enabling CD monies to be utilized for CT and CTOC, it is an opportune time to orient to the homeland and bring additional capabilities to bear against TOCs. The SOUTHCOM Commander testified that 16 flight deck equipped ships are necessary to take the offensive. Combating TOCs will require proactive engagement with domestic and international partners to identify, target, and defeat the threat. Improving the integration and synchronization of intelligence and operations is crucial for success, as is maintaining an effective offshore presence to find, fix, finish, and exploit TOC targets. While enhanced intelligence and continued international partnerships is central, putting steel on maritime targets and boots over the gunwale is critical to penetrating and dismantling TOC networks. The following offers avenues for putting the requisite hulls

³ Helfstein, 6.

proximate to threat vectors within the SOUTHCOM AOR, as well as additional steps that could be taken to further maximize theater resources to expand current efforts.

1. Leverage National Fleet Resources:

- a. U.S. Navy and Coast Guard refresher training should be conducted in the relatively benign SOUTHCOM AOR. Staging this training out of GTMO and San Diego puts critical D&M assets where they are needed rather than off the coast of Virginia, Florida, Hawaii, and Washington state. With over 300 hulls in inventory (assuming half our homeland based) and approximately seven weeks of underway training for Navy hulls annually, there exists 1,050 weeks of D&M potential that is not being tapped - equating to a 20 ship presence in the SOUTHCOM AOR and U.S. southern approaches.
- b. Expand CG LEDET and AUOF programs to accommodate the surge of U.S. Navy and Marine Corps ships. Pairing CG authorities and specialized capabilities on U.S. Navy and Marine Corps platforms personifies the Chairman's Joint Force 2020 vision of an agile and adaptable force.
- c. U.S. Navy submarines must be employed in SOUTHCOM's AOR to counter the FSV threat. Submarines' ability to track FSVs covertly provide tremendous intelligence on delivery routes while surface forces are vectored in to intercept and apprehend. Additionally, targeting FSVs could deter DTOs from continuing the ongoing revolution in transnational criminal affairs while hardening existing pathways towards the U.S.

2. Increase OPSEC:

- a. Fully utilize GTMO infrastructure for ships and detainees. Major ships and cutters in the Caribbean should provision in GTMO rather than in foreign ports of call. In addition to bringing port call costs down, it also increase OPSEC and force protection by avoiding foreign port calls. As alleged terrorists are cleared out of GTMO's detention facility, there exists an opportunity to leverage existing infrastructure for temporary detention of TOCs. In short, ships provision in GTMO and then move in a circular pattern around the Caribbean starting in GTMO and steaming easterly south of Hispaniola to Puerto Rico to the Guajira Peninsula then towards the Honduran Rise returning to GTMO (or counterclockwise). These pattern enables seizures and detainees to be brought to one central location in the Caribbean and maximize efficiency with wide area coverage.
- b. Commit to placing Oilers (replenishment ships) in the Eastern Pacific and Caribbean. Refueling at sea is a capability that enables U.S. and coalition ships to remain on patrol in threat vectors and out of sight of land. With speed of information greater than the speed of ship hulls; avoiding counter-detection increases OPSEC and overall mission effectiveness.
- c. Leverage U.S. airbases and tanker capabilities to provide quality and timely overflight in the SOUTHCOM Theater. Flight restrictions and prolonged closures at foreign airports in Central and South America are extremely limiting and compromise OPSEC as TOCs monitor takeoffs and landings. As the majority of apprehensions stem from Maritime Patrol

Aircraft (MPA) detection, increased aerial coverage remains a key enabler to interdiction and apprehension success.

- d. Increase need to know restrictions on CD force laydown and intelligence products. Currently this information is accessible by too many throughout the USG who do not have a need to know. Tightening the span of control on this data through password protection or other control measures would limit compromise by OMGs, DTOs, and TOCs, and increase OPSEC.

3. Recapitalize the Fleet:

- a. Accelerate Coast Guard Fleet recapitalization of National Security and Offshore Patrol Cutters to \$2.5 billion annually to offset FFG losses.

Explore leveraging the Military Sealift Command's Joint High Speed Vessel Fleet with LEDET and AUOF assets embarked to provide coverage in the interim.
- b. Study the utility of DoD funded Coast Guard Fast Response Cutter Fleet program to assist partner nations in patrolling their littorals to maximize bilateral ship rider agreements. These platforms are small enough (154 ft) to be hosted by partner nations to further expand international cooperation and efficacy. This concept could be duplicated across Geographic Combatant Commands to enhance rule of law in the littorals and push threats away from shore into international waters thereby increasing TOC vulnerability to law enforcement.
- c. Improve interoperability with partner nations. Providing specialized capabilities like Fast Response Cutters, LEDETs and AUOF, coupled with

intelligence sharing creates win-win situations through cooperative interdictions and apprehensions.

Conclusion

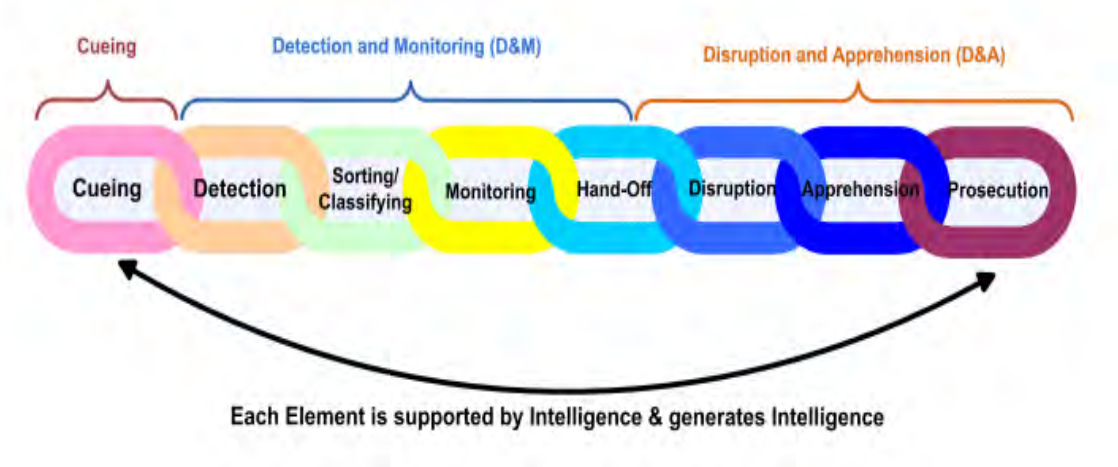
Advancements in technology and communications equipment allow TOC networks to expand their illicit enterprises with increased mobility and anonymity. TOC networks have now evolved to form a "crime-terror-insurgency nexus," with illicit activities in the maritime that span drug trafficking, terrorism, human smuggling, trafficking in persons and weapons, piracy, environmental crime (including illegal fishery exploitation), intellectual property theft, and cyber-crime.⁴ Criminals' interest in terrorist activity goes beyond profit, since criminals also desire a sanctuary or the political space from which to operate with less pressure from the government or from law enforcement agencies.⁵ An escalated maritime interdictions approach surges much needed governance to the largely ungoverned maritime domain and disrupts transnational networks who move in and through Central American and other sanctuaries largely unchallenged. Increased maritime presence is a worthy investment that also hardens the southern approaches to the homeland against growing existential threats, displays U.S. leadership in the Western Hemisphere in line with national strategies, and puts TOC networks on the defensive. In the end, the best defense against TOC networks is a layered, networked, and most importantly, present offense.

⁴ United States Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy, 32.

⁵ Patrick Radden Keefe, "The Geography of Badness: Mapping the Hubs of the Illicit Global Economy," in *Convergence*, eds. Michael Miklaucic and Jacqueline Brewer (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2013), available at www.ndufoundation.org/file/pdfest/Convergence.-pdf (accessed February 3, 2015).

APPENDIX A - FIGURES

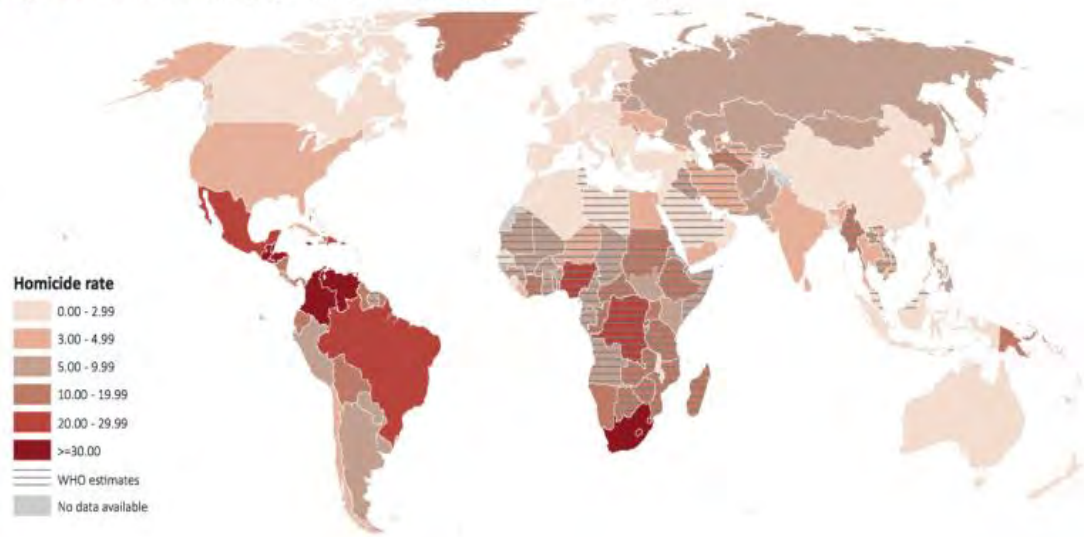
Figure 1. The Interdiction Continuum



1

Figure 2. UNODC Homicide Rates for 2012

Map 1.1: Homicide rates, by country or territory (2012 or latest year)



2

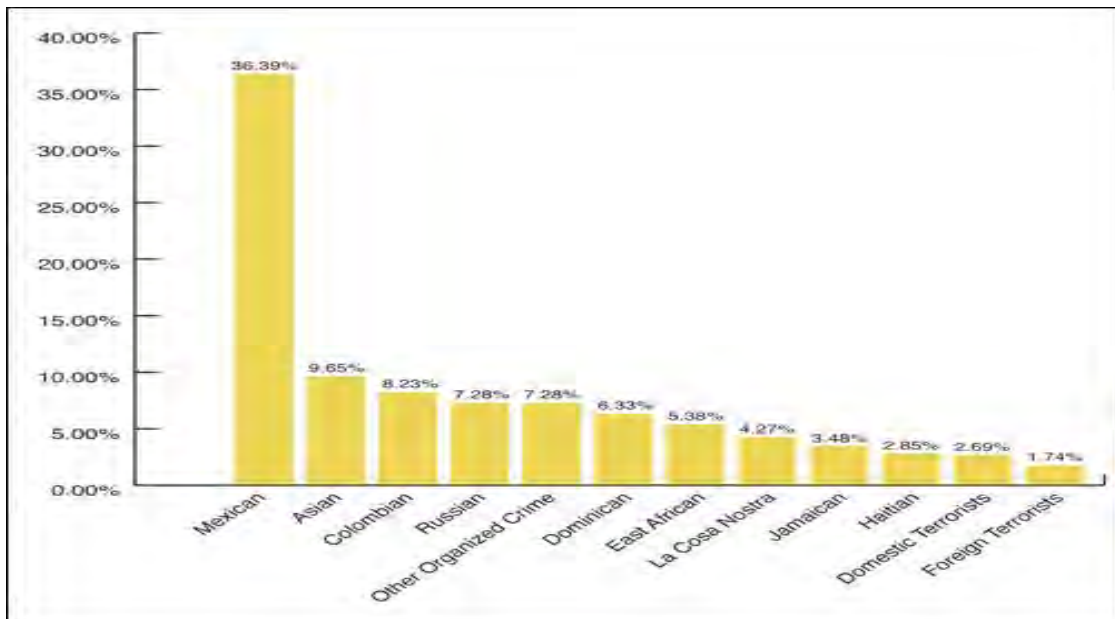
¹ National Drug Control Strategy 2014, 50. Printing Office, 2014.

² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Global Study on Homicide 2013*. <https://www.unodc.org/gsh/en/index.html> (accessed December 10, 2014).

Figure 3. Major U.S. Cities Reporting Gang Related Drug Activity



Figure 4. U.S. Gang Associations with Foreign Criminal Organizations



³ U.S. Department of Justice. *2011 National Gang Threat Assessment*, U. S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, http://www.fbi.gov/-about-us/investigate/vc_majorthreats/gangs (accessed December 13, 2014).

⁴ Ibid.

Figure 5. Bush Administration Federal Drug Control Spending

Bush Administration Record on Federal Drug Control Spending, by Function FY 2002-FY 2005 (Budget Authority in Millions)⁵				
	<u>FY 2002</u>	<u>FY 2003</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>
Treatment (w/Research)	\$2,784.6	\$2,876.0	\$3,028.3	\$3,053.0
Percent	26.2%	25.9%	25.5%	24.1%
Prevention (w/Research)	\$1,996.4	\$1,936.5	\$1,955.9	\$1,952.1
Percent	18.8%	17.5%	16.5%	15.4%
Domestic Law Enforcement	\$2,867.2	\$3,018.3	\$3,189.8	\$3,317.9
Percent	26.9%	27.2%	26.9%	26.2%
Interdiction	\$1,913.7	\$2,147.5	\$2,534.1	\$2,927.9
Percent	18.0%	19.4%	21.4%	23.2%
International	\$1,084.5	\$1,105.1	\$1,159.3	\$1,393.3
Percent	10.2%	10.0%	9.8%	11.0%
Total	\$10,646.4	\$11,083.4	\$11,867.4	\$12,644.2





Figure 6. Obama Administration Federal Drug Control Spending

Obama Administration Record on Federal Drug Control Spending, by Function FY 2006-FY 2009 (Budget Authority in Millions)⁶				
	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>
Treatment (w/Research)	\$2,941.9	\$3,060.9	\$3,226.0	\$3,402.8
Percent	22.6%	22.1%	23.6%	24.1%
Prevention (w/Research)	\$1,862.6	\$1,841.8	\$1,756.8	\$1,507.1
Percent	14.3%	13.3%	12.9%	10.7%
Domestic Law Enforcement	\$3,474.7	\$3,748.8	\$3,800.3	\$3,763.3
Percent	26.7%	27.1%	27.8%	26.7%
Interdiction	\$3,285.6	\$3,175.9	\$3,214.2	\$3,830.9
Percent	25.3%	22.9%	23.5%	27.1%
International	\$1,434.5	\$2,016.6	\$1,666.3	\$1,609.8
Percent	11.0%	14.6%	12.2%	11.4%
Total	\$12,999.3	\$13,844.0	\$13,663.6	\$14,113.9

⁵ John Carnevale, FY02-09 Budget Emphasizes Least Effective Ingredients of Drug Policy, <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/fy02-09-budget-emphasizes-least-effective-ingredients-of-drug-policy-57040872.html> (accessed October 29, 2014).

⁶ Ibid.

Figure 7. Information on the Coast Guard's Legacy Vessels

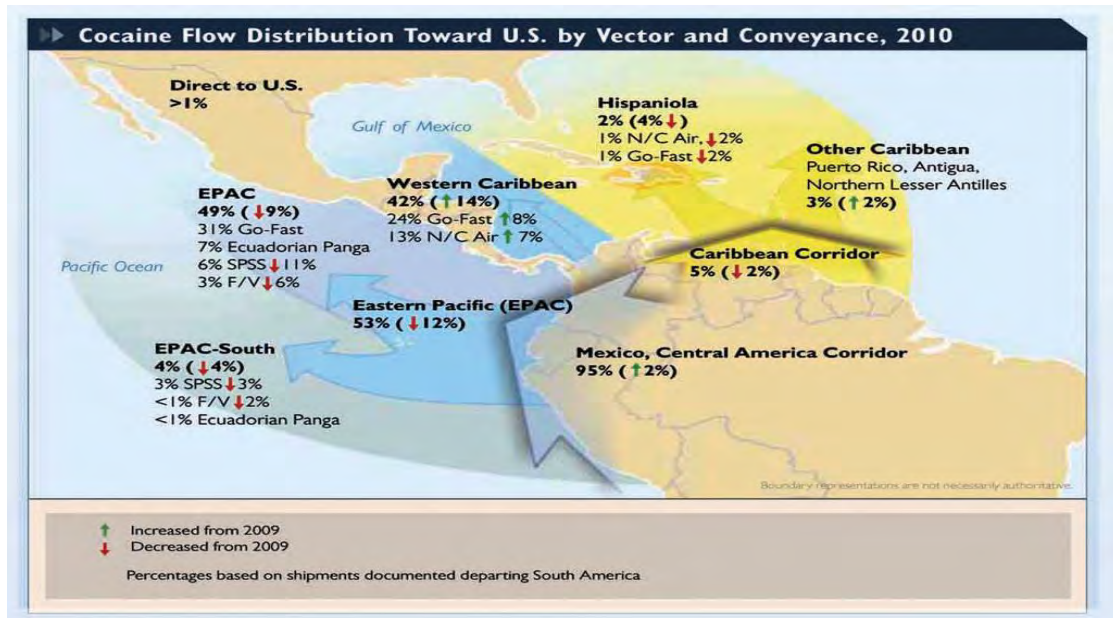
378-foot high endurance cutter (HEC)		
	Quantity of vessels	9 ^a
	Estimated service life	40 years
	Average age	42.8 years
	Crew	166
	Maximum speed	29 knots
	Cruising range	14,000 nautical miles ^b
	Helicopter operations	Yes
270-foot medium endurance cutter (MEC)		
	Quantity of vessels	13
	Estimated service life	30 years ^c
	Average age	25 years
	Crew	100
	Maximum speed	19.5 knots
	Cruising range	9,900 nautical miles
	Helicopter operations	Yes
210-foot medium endurance cutter (MEC)		
	Quantity of vessels	14
	Estimated service life	47 years
	Average age	45.3 years
	Crew	76
	Maximum speed	18 knots
	Cruising range	6,100 nautical miles
	Helicopter operations	Yes
110-foot patrol boat (PB)		
	Quantity of vessels	41 ^d
	Estimated service life	20 years
	Average age	23.1 years
	Crew	16
	Maximum speed	28 knots
	Cruising range	1,900 nautical miles
	Helicopter operations	No

Source: GAO analysis of Coast Guard information. Photographs courtesy of the US Coast Guard.

7

⁷ Government Accountability Office, *Coast Guard Legacy Vessels' Declining Conditions Reinforce Need for More Realistic Operational Targets*, GAO Report 12-741, 6, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/600/-593163.pdf> on 01Feb15 (accessed February 1, 2015).

Figure 8. Cocaine Flow toward U.S by Vector and Conveyance 2010



8

Figure 9. Cocaine Flow & Associated Deaths in CENTAM and Mexico

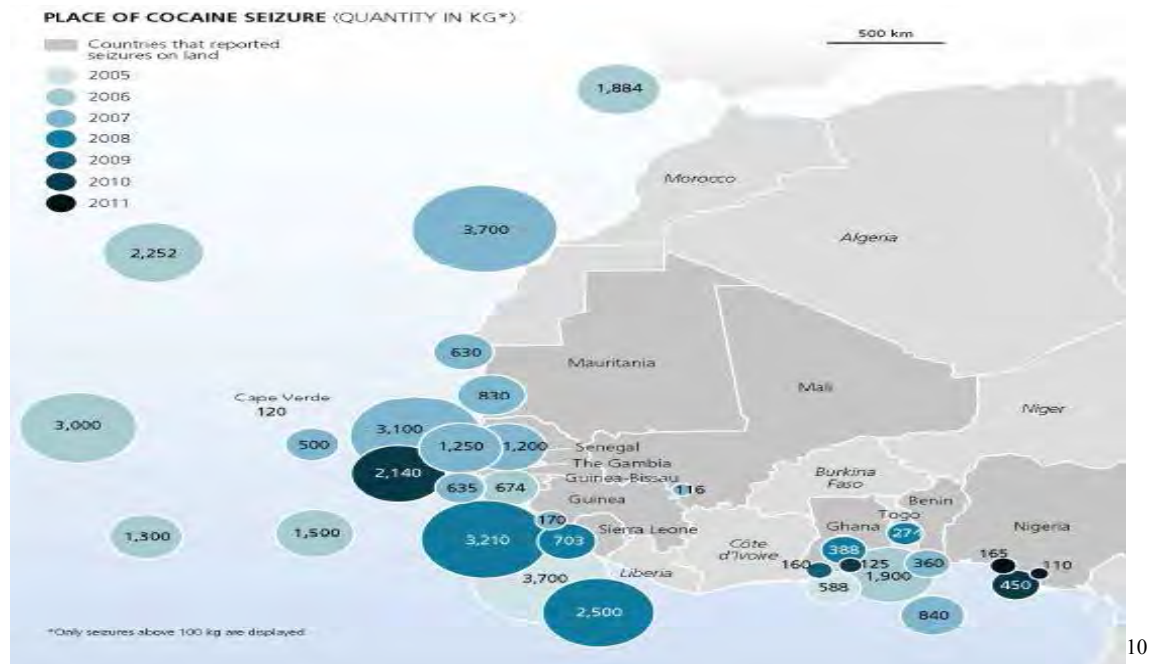


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⁸ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Report on Cocaine Smuggling in 2010*, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/international-partnershipscontent/20_january_cocaine_smuggling_in_2010_for_posting_on_ondcp_webpage_2.pdf (accessed September 5, 2014).

⁹ U.S. Open Borders, 'Operation Hammer', a multinational effort against drug trafficking, February 8, 2012, <http://usopenborders.com/2012/02/operation-hammer-a-multinational-effort-against-drug-trafficking/> (accessed December 10, 2014).

Figure 10. Cocaine Seizures in West Africa 2005-2011



¹⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *UNODC Map of Major Cocaine Seizures in West Africa from 2005-2011*, http://www.unodc.org/documents/toc/Reports/TOCTA_WestAfrica/West_Africa-_TOC_COCAINE.pdf (accessed January 18, 2015).

APPENDIX B – ACRONYMS

AOR	Area of Responsibility
APS	Africa Partnership Station
AQIM	Al Qaeda in the Land of the Islamic Maghreb
AUOF	Airborne Use of Force
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARSI	Central America Regional Security Initiative
CBSI	Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
CG	Coast Guard
CT	Counterterrorism
CTOC	National Strategy to Combat Transnational Crime
D&A	Disruption and Apprehension
D&M	Detection and Monitoring
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DTO	Drug Trafficking Organization
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FFG	Oliver Hazard Perry Class Frigates
FSV	Fully Submersible Vessel
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GTMO	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
HIDTA	High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
HITRON	Helicopter Tactical Interdiction Squadron
LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
LEDET	Law Enforcement Detachment
JAWS	Joint Advanced Warfighting School
JIATF-S	Joint Interagency Task Force South
JFSC	Joint Forces Staff College
MANPADS	Man-Portable Air Defense Systems

MDTO	Mexican Drug Trafficking Organization
MPA	Maritime Patrol Aircraft
MSCLEA	Military Support for Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies
NAFTA	North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NDIC	National Drug Intelligence Center
NDU	National Defense University
NGIC	National Gang Intelligence Center
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Administration
NORTHCOM	Northern Command
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
OAS	Organization of American States
OGA	Other Government Agency
OMG	Outlaw Motorcycle Gang
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy
PD	Presidential Directive
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
SOUTHCOM	Southern Command
SPSS	Self-Propelled Semi-Submersible
TCO	Transnational Criminal Organization
TOC	Transnational Organized Crime
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USG	United States Government
WHEC	Coast Guard High Endurance Cutter
WHEM	Western Hemisphere
WMEC	Coast Guard Medium Endurance Cutter

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VITA

Captain David W. Ramassini has served in multiple sea-going and staff assignments in over 23 years of service in the United States Coast Guard. He has commanded four Coast Guard cutters, serving over twelve years at sea with the majority dedicated to counterdrug and alien migration interdiction operations throughout the Caribbean and the eastern Pacific. An Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran, Captain Ramassini earned his Bachelor's Degree from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 1992 and his Master's Degree from the United States Naval War College in 2005. He has served on the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, and is currently attending the National Defense University Joint Forces Staff College Joint Advanced Warfighting School.

