Book Review

The Global Underworld: Transnational Crime and the United States

Donald R. Liddick Jr

Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers, 2004, 159 pp., \$35

ISBN: 027598074X

Security Journal (2007) 20, 140–141. doi:10.1057/palgrave.sj.8350028

Donald Liddick's recent book entitled *The Global Underworld: Transnational Crime and the United States* explores the ramifications of transnational crime. Transnational criminal activities are increasingly affecting domestic prosperity and the world's economy. Additionally, numerous governments, industrial organizations, and individuals have fallen victim to the activities of the transnational criminal underworld.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 2001, the US understands the vulnerability of a nation to organized criminal groups. According to Liddick, 'the perpetration of crime across national boundaries may involve the actions of individuals and the coordinated ventures of loose networks of people, it is also true that there are identifiable criminal entities in the US that are best characterized as transnational organized crime groups.' Transnational organized crime groups operate from inside and outside of American borders, illustrating the magnitude and potential of these criminal groups.

Liddick divides the book into the national and international dimensions of transnational organized crime. Chapters 1–4, describe specific authorities and criminal activities of transnational crime groups affecting the US. Specific attention is paid to Cosa Nostra, Russian 'Mafiya', Sicilian La Cosa Nostra, Chinese Triads, and Outlaw Motorcycle gangs. Liddick's focus on criminal activities linked to specific transnational crime groups include a discussion of drug, organ, human, and weapons trafficking; money laundering; prostitution; identity theft; and environmental crime.

Chapter 5 explores terrorism as a transnational criminal activity. This chapter is particularly worth noting because of its focus on the evolution of terrorism and common methods used to finance terrorist activities. In this chapter, Liddick also examines the potential use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist groups. Readers are walked through terrorist scenarios involving the use of biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear weapons. Each scenario offers a detailed description of the event and activities surrounding the terrorist attack.

Lastly, chapter 6 describes efforts by the US government to combat transnational crime. These efforts include activities on the law enforcement, judicial, administrative, and legislative fronts. Specific law enforcement and administrative efforts addressed by Liddick include the establishment of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and the Financial Action Task Force. Recent legislative efforts to deal with transnational criminal groups include the enactment of the USA. Patriot Act and the Homeland Security Act.

Overall, this book offers significant insight into the world of transnational crime. Each chapter of the book illustrates solid explanations and examples of organized transnational crime groups and related criminal activities. *The Global Underworld* should be a fulfilling read for individuals interested in the ramifications of transnational crime and recent practices to combat this type of criminal activity.

Jamie Kistner
Department of Culture and Communication, Drexel
University, Philadelphia, PA, USA