

# Modern irregular war and European security

by Roberto A. Marcacci

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The object of this lecture is to characterize the possible threats to the internal security of Europe, to briefly analyze the new potential for violence that has built up in the former East bloc and in the Balkans, and to show what means can be used to achieve economic as well as military goals, even on the part of "friendly" nations. That this can also happen with the assistance of organized crime and terrorist organizations, is thoroughly conceivable. The boundaries between terrorism, organized crime, and obvious power politics promoted from government offices have become fluid in the last 10 years. In this regard, I would like to distinguish two forms of threat. The first is war on the economic level and the second is war by means of terrorism, commonly designated as *modern irregular war*. In this lecture, I will principally treat the second. . . .

Apart from the revival of nationalism, especially in the East and in the Balkans, various forms of threat in Europe can be distinguished. These are, on the one hand, the military threat from outsiders, the threat from organized crime, and the threat through terrorism operating internationally. Let us now consider these three forms more closely.

## The military threat

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact as one of the consequences of the glasnost era has lessened the military threat. In addition there is the fact that a military confrontation with conventional means of war in Europe would, first, take too long and, second, could not be carried out without great losses for the aggressor himself. In the present moment and conditional on the civil wars in the Balkans and in the former East bloc, a direct military threat is thus, in the opinion of the author, to be classified as small. This situation, however, could quickly change if the European Community or the United Nations should make a decision for a military intervention in former Yugoslavia. The resulting conflict can,

depending on its duration, develop into a serious threat for all of Europe. The technical considerations of such a scenario, however, I would like to leave, at least in this lecture, to experienced strategists, and turn to the danger that arises from organized crime.

## Organized crime

As a result of the immense economic and political power that organized crime has created for itself since the Second World War, the threat that will appear in a Europe with open borders currently difficult to estimate. The influence of organized crime is particularly apparent in the East bloc, where it has started up in various economic areas and is there engaged in political agitation as well as money laundering and trafficking in human beings and drugs. These intrigues are supported by former members of state security organizations and secret services. The former Soviet criminal organization *Organizatsia*, which in the 1970s and 1980s was especially active in the United States, illustrates this in an impressive way. Organized crime in the West is also being served by experts from the KGB, in the areas, among others, of bugging technology and counter-surveillance. Correspondingly, it should also be stated that western organized crime is strongly active in the countries of the former Soviet Union, and is operating, among other things, successful money laundering there by means of investments in legal businesses.

The special danger of organized crime is its presence in higher levels of security organizations and of politics. For some time, corruption has no longer been an "affair" of the southern states of Europe. It has unfortunately also become a component of central European states, meaning especially the Federal Republic [of Germany] and Switzerland as well as Austria. Through the involvement of these components in some places with, among other things, governmental secret services (in the area of weapons trafficking), organized crime has become a state within a state, and has also further developed this position. It does not hesitate to use outright violence against functionaries of the state. This is impressively documented by the murder of judges and prosecuting attorneys in Italy (for example, [Giovanni] Falcone and [Paolo] Borsellino).

Through the structure of organized crime and its politics of violence and the employment of the means of modern irregular war (guerrilla war methods in the murder of Falcone and Borsellino in Sicily), the various branches of organized crime and its structure could become interesting in connection with the enforcement of power interests of states, and this by means of the murder of economic functionaries and those with social and political responsibilities, and also through the methods of modern irregular war that, with terrorism, are among the most likely methods that can also be employed among states for the assertion of interests.

## Terrorism

By terrorism, we understand the pursuit of political goals through the perpetration and disposition of acts of violence in order to undermine the subjective feeling of security of those directly or indirectly affected and of the public. According to the form of terror, these attempts at intimidation and extortion can be directed against functionaries in politics or the economy, but also against the population itself. The use of terror groups for the enforcement of political goals has already become "habit" in the Arab countries. This is shown particularly by the various kidnappings of American and European citizens in Lebanon. Although here terrorist organizations take responsibility, the negotiations were carried out with Iran, Iraq, Syria, and even Libya, which have always helped such organizations push through their demands. Whether it is a matter of political support against Israel or of economic interests always depends on the individual situation.

But we must also slowly reconcile ourselves to the idea that possibly "friendly nations" or their intelligence services can also make use of these means, especially if it is a matter of asserting their power interests. The knowledge that a direct military conflict, seen from a free market point of view, can occur only with considerable losses, could thus allow the deployment of methods of irregular war to become thoroughly plausible. Seen from this point of view, we must speak in the definition of terrorism not only of a

*left- or right-oriented* but also of a *governmentally directed terrorism*. A form of terrorism, particularly based on the logistical possibilities of a state (misuse of diplomatic privileges, use of governmental training infrastructure, etc.), is very dangerous. Combatting such a form of irregular war realistically is possible only through direct action (political, military, or economic) against the government concerned. This would be very difficult, especially with the states of the Balkans, of the former East bloc, and also of the Near East. The same is true of measures against a friendly nation.

The three previously named forms of threat are only a small part of the possible threats. . . . The goal of this lecture, however, was to call attention to the problems, and to find a new basis for discussion concerning the threat from organized crime and terrorism and their definition. The borders between governmental and criminal terrorism as well as organized crime have become fluid. In the future, we can no longer absolutely deny the thesis of specialists and strategists on operations staffs against terrorism and organized crime, that these criminal forms are supported for the assertion of government interests (thus irregular war operations) and not by radical groups. That means that combatting these criminal forms must take place also on the diplomatic and political level through economic or military pressure, a task that, in the interest of European security, is unavoidable.

## Experts focus on western role in terrorist threat

The *EIR* seminar on "European Security in the 1990s," held in Oppenheim, Germany on Aug. 6, was the second in a series dealing with questions of security and terrorism. The purpose of the series was to bring security experts from various European countries to examine the security threats to Europe posed not only by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, but, more importantly, the implications for European security of the so-called Webster Doctrine and the Thornburgh Doctrine. CIA head William Webster officially signaled a policy reorientation which committed U.S. intelligence, military, and law enforcement resources to target nations that were once considered American "allies" during the Cold War but are now considered economic "threats." Former Attorney General Richard Thornburgh advanced the doctrine, approved by the U.S. Supreme Court, that the United States could violate national sovereignty by such measures as kidnaping foreign nationals living abroad, in

pursuit of U.S. "law enforcement."

The question of terrorism and its control and deployment by intelligence services of both the East and the West was closely examined. For many years *EIR* has documented such control to an all too skeptical public, but the revelations in Germany on how the German terror group the Red Army Faction was supported and trained by the Communist East German intelligence service, exposed to the general public the lie that terrorism was a sociological phenomenon. The assassinations of leading European political and economic leaders over the past three years were clearly not in the interests of former communist countries of the East, and pointed clearly to a western link that is becoming more and more apparent to the general public.

An important example was the assassination of Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen, who, as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's leading economic adviser, was planning a major economic initiative for the former East bloc. These seminars, whose participants included experts formerly in the secret services of several western European countries, discussed the implications of the "western" link in these terrorist operations.