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ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORISM. REASONS, MANIFESTATIONS, COUNTERACTIONS

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Without doubt globalization is impacting on just about every aspect of life in the modern world. One may argue about the positive and negative issues involved in the process but what cannot be overlooked is that it is creating new opportunities to expand criminal activity, particularly in the form of organized crime and terrorism. As such, this phenomenon needs to be carefully studied both for purposes of cognition and the development of effective countermeasures. Quite apart from its economic advantages, the expansion of multinational bodies such as the European Union combined with increasing freedom to move capital, goods, services and people across national boundaries unhindered, has opened up new areas for organized crime, challenging existing penal laws and creating a situation where they require to be constantly adjusted and improved. Insofar as this relates to Poland specifically, one has to remember that since its integration into the European Union, Poland has not only been required to adapt its law to that of the EU but also to secure EU borders. Moreover, organized crime in Poland is a recent phenomenon - one which did not exist prior to the collapse of communism. Another major challenge and one that is much more visible than organized crime, is the growing threat of terrorism and on a scale previously unimaginable (e.g. 9/11 which led to the “War on terror”). The East/West conflict is almost certainly a consequence of continuing economic, social and political globalization that is seen by some in eastern countries (countries negatively affected by changes) as a threat that can only be countered using terrorist means.

The book “Organized Crime and Terrorism – Reasons, Manifestations, Countermeasures” is the latest publication from the Faculty of Criminology and Criminal Policy at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. As the title suggests the book focuses on the problem of organized crime and terrorism and its cognition by penal and criminal law science. The study, edited by prof. Wiesław Pływaczewski, LL.D. of the University of Warmia and Mazury, contains a series of

articles produced by participants of the Scientific Forum “Podlasie – Warmia and Mazury, a cooperation by different academic centres in north eastern Poland. The output of the second forum meeting held in May 2010, dedicated to the problems associated with organized crime and to the different aspects of terrorism, was the main source and inspiration for the book.

The study contains a synthetic database of articles presented in three thematic parts. Part I, entitled “Organized Crime – Domestic and International Perspective”, contains articles by researchers from the University of Bialystok, the University of Thessaloniki, and the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. The prospect of being able to address issues globally as well as domestically provided an opportunity to broaden discussion to encompass crime on both Polish and foreign territory. Part II, Phenomenon of Terrorism, Diagnosis of Phenomenon and Possible Countermeasures”, is mainly devoted to the prevention of terrorism in specific countries using different solutions drawn from e.g. Swiss law and Roman law. Part III, “Countering Other Pathological Phenomena”, comprises a collection of papers addressing various other contemporary issues in the field of criminality that were also discussed at the second forum meeting.

The “Second Scientific Forum of Podlasie, Warmia and Mazury”, enabled a summation of opinion from research scholars of academic centres located in Poland and abroad to be presented and discussed. It provided an opportunity to take a fresh and in depth look at the problems associated with organized crime and terrorism, as always, with a view to furthering research and development on issues of criminological and criminal law interest. In this particular instance it also widened understanding of the problem in its many diverse forms, extending beyond the standpoint of domestic affect, to Europe and other regions of the world. In addition to characterizing the nature of organized crime and terrorism the publication also characterizes ways to counter the phenomenon.

The most extensive chapter of the book, Chapter 1, summarizes studies on the various aspects of organized crime as it effects both Poland and the world as a whole. The first article, “Threats to the Security of Poland’s Borders in the Context of Organized Crime”, evaluates the threat posed to Polish borders by criminal organizations and assesses whether current legal instruments and provisions of law provide adequate protection. “Selected Aspects of Organized Crime in Contemporary Greece”, characterizes the main types of organized crime prevalent in Greece, profiles Greek penal law and presents a study of how (and if) it can be adjusted to curtail such activities. “Combating Organized Poaching in Africa: Activities of the Kenyan Wildlife Service”, addresses the issue of effective forms of combating illegal hunting. The article, “Role of Women in the Criminal World of the Mafia”, presents the reader with some interesting findings on social and cultural

determinants seen in the behavior of “mafia women” from around the world. The next article, “Legal Instruments Intended for the Fight Against Organized Crime in the Opinion of Public Prosecutors”, presents the results of a survey conducted by the authors’. The forfeiture role in preventing organized crime is discussed by Justyna Karazniewicz. The paper on “Stadium Crime” deals with the problem of football hooliganism which (due to recent conflict between football fans and the government) is still echoing in the Polish media and which, with Euro 2012 on its way, is of ever significant importance. The final essay in the chapter, “Illegal Trade in Waste – Domestic and International Determinants of this Phenomenon”, focuses on the socio-economic factors underlying the illegal trade in waste and stresses the need to raise ecological awareness in society along with the need to create international regulations for dealing with the problem.

Chapter II, characterizes the nature of terrorism, its diagnosis and possible means of prevention from a variety of perspectives. The introductory article captures perfectly the truth about Islamic terrorism as it is today. The chapter goes on to address the concept of terrorism in the context of Polish and Italian legal systems and illustrates the face of the phenomena against a background of Roman law. Among the circle of international studies contained in this chapter, one can find methods of preventing and combating terrorism in Swiss legislation, as well as discussion on issues such as the suppression of terrorist financing and the general characteristics of terrorism and its relationship to organized crime.

Prima facie Chapter III may appear to depart from the subject matter suggested by the title of the book. However, such is the nature of the Forum that a wide range of material was gathered on other topics that, either directly or indirectly, can be related to the subjects of organized crime and terrorism, and which could be compiled under a common heading. Consequently, this chapter presents other pathological phenomena and their eradication. It includes noteworthy studies on unfair conviction in North America, the issue of adopting the private security industry as an element of public security, the fight against corruption from the perspective of the CBA, and the principles of humanitarianism. The closing article is devoted to the development of social reaction to counterfeiting money.

The aim of this publication was to bring together the achievements of many scientists in the field of criminal law and criminology and to combine this with the works of those authors from other branches of law who participated in the study. This diversity provided a view of organized crime and terrorism from an entirely different perspective and provided an opportunity to select topics that would be of most interest to the reader. Naturally, the extent of problems which exist cannot be covered by a single study and what has been included in the book is confined to those issues raised during the Scientific Forum. However, seed has been sown for

future publications as the phenomenon of organized crime and the phenomenon of terrorism provide rich fields for further research.

The book “Organized Crime and Terrorism. Reasons, Manifestations, Countermeasures” will appeal to a wide audience not just to a narrow group of penal law theoreticians and practitioners. The subjects addressed are rich in variety, interesting, and readily understandable. Worth particular mention is the fact that whilst the issues covered come from all over the world, the conclusions drawn from each article have a wide application and are not limited to the specific geographical territory in which the study took place. This makes the book a must-have for all who are interested in cognition of the modern aspects of organized crime and terrorism.

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