The Importance Of US Security Agencies Fighting Against Organized Crimes

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Abstract

The evolution of the human race over the years has led to a new state of defiance and has urged the rejuvenation of security protocols to ensure that any and every type of lawlessness is dealt with. Terrorism has shaken the world. Almost every progressing country has faced the brunt of terrorism. These hideous acts have not only hindered the progression of the targeted countries but have caused significant loss of precious human lives. The US has been a superpower for many years due to its achievements in the fields of advancement and technology and has been regarded as a source of support for other nations in need. State-level crimes were targeting innocent Americans and damaging the state's assets. Law enforcement agencies had always taken control of the situation and were able to pin down the criminals before further damage occurred.

The attack of 9/11 completely shifted the paradigm for evaluating the severity of a terrorist attack. US law enforcement agencies and the public were never ready for anything on this massive scale. The US Airways radar system was considered the safest and most reliable one, through which no element could cross without identification and without alerting the radar that illegal activity was about to be executed. However, the terrorists were capable of generating new methods of entering US soil and targeting the most valuable assets to prove that even the superpower on which the world relies for its safety is not safe from terrorism. Thus, this began a new era of experiencing and expecting terrorist attacks, and law enforcement agencies needed to plan counter-terrorism strategies (Albanese, 2016). However, after the incident of 9/11, US law enforcement agencies were prepared to handle foreign insurgency.

As technology improves the means of communication, the planning of terrorist activities has also evolved. Thus, the increasing strength of terrorist elements in equipment and means of spreading terror at unanticipated levels urges government security agencies to spend more time developing counter-terrorism activities that may cater to every possible scenario and present the best solution. Thus, with improved security and preparedness, external attacks could be prevented through intelligence sources. However, ongoing internal crimes, which could be stated under the umbrella of organized crime, could bring down the progress of the country. The increase in organized crime shows that there is lawlessness within the country that is capable of posing a threat to the safety and security of people.

Thus, organized crime and criminal units within the country, if not stopped or eliminated, may facilitate external terrorist elements operating on US soil. Thus, the elimination of established and growing crimes should currently be a focus of US law enforcement agencies (Cowan, 2015). To fight terrorism, US agencies have the support of NATO; however, dealing with internal issues and regulating the law within the country rely on effective strategies planned and implemented by US security agencies.

Thus, this paper focuses on highlighting the importance of US security agencies fighting against organized crime. If miscreants and criminal activities are prevented by adopting the latest technology, there is a chance that it may help the agencies control a larger area within a shorter time and lead criminals either to give up their harmful activities or to be caught by state departments.

Thus, for dealing with internationalized crime and suspected criminals, a vast range of useful intelligence assets and equipment for monitoring every corner is required. Whenever a suspicious act is identified, it should immediately be reported, and sufficient human resources should be available and trained to deal with the miscreants. When US law enforcement agencies are able to establish their position against these miscreants and organized crimes within their jurisdiction, there are strong chances that international terrorist attacks will be restricted or even prevented from happening (Coyne & Bell, 2011).

Introduction

The prominent feature of the US legal system that makes it unique yet powerful is its discrete implementation of law enforcement. Police activities and criminal justice, with some overlap in competencies, are provided by numerous government agencies registered with the government for the protection of US soil. The agencies can be further divided into local, state, and federal levels. The US code for handling the safety of the country is clear; there is no single policy that is responsible for the security of state assets, but many agencies are working openly or undercover following the US code of the State Department. The internal environment is the first priority of state agencies. If it is in a stable state, this sends a clear message to the outside world that US soil is not an easy target.

Combating Organized Crime

Organized crime was not a term registered with law enforcement agencies until the 1900s. However, in the Prohibition era, criminology research first presented the view that if this upcoming issue was not handled with a strict response in time, there was a chance that the state might face lawlessness and civil war. During Prohibition, the state was formulating new laws, while Chinese, Japanese, Russian, and Italian Mafia groups were growing and gaining strength on US soil. However, since 1960, these crimes have been addressed on a legal basis. Thus, organized crime became a focus of the state, which sought to eliminate it to ensure a drug- and corruption-free environment (Davis, 2012).

The prominent laws approved during these times were the 1970 Organized Crime Control Act, 1968 Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, Witness Security Program, and RICO Act. However, the September 11, 2001 attacks changed the structure for controlling crime. Thus, law enforcement agencies began planning counter-terrorist activities, and the entire focus shifted from organized crime to counter-terrorist activities.

Thus, this change in focus was taken as an opportunity by organized crime units and was considered detrimental to the efforts made over the years. However, in recent years, the focus has again shifted to organized crime because the US does not know on what grounds international terror attacks could be countered. Policymakers realized that it was high time that organized crime was focused on again. In the beginning, organized crime groups had hierarchical structures, and it was easy to identify the head of the unit. Targeting the hierarchy would lead to each piece in the cartel. However, with time, the working style of these cartels has improved, and instead of working within a rigid regime, they prefer working independently. Thus, more groups with a refined working style, which is difficult to detect, have come into play over the years (Garoupa, 2015).

Law enforcement agencies focus on four priority areas for combating organized crime, through which, I believe, the US safety policy may help improve homeland security against organized crime. The priority areas are listed below:

Intelligence and Marshal Information

The collection of authenticated information, synthesis of relevant data from it, and dissemination of it as soon as possible ensure that the information is received by the required authorities and processed in a timely manner for useful results. Thus, cooperation is expected among the intelligence community, law enforcement, private sector, and foreign partners to identify potential threats and develop an immediate counterattack.

Prioritize and Target the Most Significant Internal Threats

The appropriate law enforcement plan has to be drawn up according to the targeted crime and the organizations that could be the biggest threats to the safety of US soil. Thus, it is to be ensured that prosecutions and investigations involving the targets are fair and on point.

Countering from All Angles

Every available law enforcement and non-law-enforcement tool should work together, employing their expertise so that crime can be analyzed from every angle and perspective. It becomes easier to judge

the source of the offense and formulate policies on how the particular crime could be handled in the future (Giuliani, 2014).

Enterprise Theory

Law enforcement agencies should adopt aggressive strategies for dealing with cartels and especially their leadership. Detailed and thorough investigations leading to prosecution should result in longer sentences to ensure that offenders are set as examples. The prosecutions should be multi-layered so that all their crimes come under one section, and the punishment is decided accordingly.

International Organized Crime

Terrorist groups participating in criminal activities on different grounds are categorized as international organized crime. As stated earlier, prominent terrorist groups emerging from Italy, Russia, and China were causing significant damage to the peace and prosperity of the US nation. Drug abuse and corruption were at their peak when these groups came from other lands in search of power and commercial and monetary gains. These groups usually protect their illegal activities through corruption and by threatening people (Lombardo, 2013).

Thus, international organized criminal units collaborating with locally organized crime groups can pose new threats to the safety of society. Coming from other lands, they do not develop a hierarchy. Rather, they work as networks, units, and cells. When one of the links is identified, that link is destroyed before any law enforcement agency reaches it. Thus, it is now important for law enforcement agencies to develop laws accordingly so that they can deal with local and international organized crime units on the same scale.

Thus, the pattern identified through research on the previous workings of criminal units provides information about their future work structure. Although no definite plan can be determined, the possible recognizable characteristics are as follows:

- Their major activities involve acts or signs of violence, or if they are not committing violence, they pose a threat to people’s lives.
- Ideological differences are exploited for their purposes, and they may avoid being highlighted among other clans so that they do not come into the limelight.
- These groups influence government, commerce, and political departments through corruption and bribery, and if not, then they may use any means to threaten them to achieve their aims.
- The primary purpose of such a group is to gain economic benefit. These units do invest in legitimate businesses so that their money trail cannot be traced through a simpler procedure.

The organizational structure is deep, and they ensure that their hierarchical structure and data are concealed under false facts so that they remain undetectable in any prosecution.

Thus, organized crime units exhibiting such activities could be searched for further clues. It is important to know who is funding them. There is a chance that locally organized crime units may be supported by external crime groups (Ott, 2010).

Strategies Addressing Organized Crime

The strategic threats posed by these groups are identified and prosecuted under the 2008 Law Enforcement Strategy to Combat International Organized Crime. Thus, the pinhole for infiltrating the system is the economic plateau. Cyberspace is used for targeting US infrastructure and is considered a threat to the US and international financial system. The breakthrough for these international crime units is to use the power of monetary benefits and bribe anyone, considering the importance of the designation, to get the work done. So, law enforcement agencies are not only focusing on criminals involved in street fights but also on dangerous ones, as they are difficult to identify but are spreading their wings within the system.

The National Security Strategy law was passed in 2010, considering organized crime units to be a more significant threat to national security than counter-terrorism. Thus, it was emphasized while passing this law that transnational crime had grown over the years in scope, size, and operational scale.

Thus, the use of criminal networks by terrorists to obtain logistical facilitation demands that multidimensional and upgraded strategies be used for fighting organized crime within the US. Due to this, a new law, Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime, was passed in 2011. The motto of this law was that American power had to be organized on one scale to maintain the balance of power within the state and ensure that sole power lies with the state to fight organized or transnational crime. These crimes will be considered a threat to national security, and allies will be found to cooperate in combating them on local and international grounds for the elimination of organized crime.

Thus, the ultimate proposed policy is to handle the situation appropriately and ensure that organized crime units, whether they are operating on local grounds or infiltrating from international fields, are identified and repulsed through aggressive action. For this purpose, the number of security departments should be increased to keep an eye on incoming threats, and a proper plan should be devised so that criminals are prosecuted and sentenced. Breaking the chain of command in organized crime and understanding the network will help the Homeland Security Department keep an eye on the situation.

It is identified through the research that there is no centralized unit for dealing with organized crime. Even the 2011 law, “Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime,” didn’t define any centralized unit for dealing with organized crime. Many agencies have been working on their own to deal with the situation, but the influence of cartels through bribery and corruption has lowered the

performance and determination of the law enforcement workforce. However, people who facilitate organized crime units will be dealt with under strict laws, and they may have to face a life sentence for committing a wrongful deed. The departments involved in dealing with organized crime and their responsibilities are stated below (Paakkonen, 2015):

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice is headed by the Attorney General. Leadership of the Department of Justice is assigned to the Federal Government's chief law enforcement officer. Thus, the Attorney General is responsible for the implementation of anti-drug laws and federal criminal law enforcement activities. Thus, tackling organized crime and structuring prosecutions come under this appointment.

The Attorney General has had the Organized Crime Council since 1970. The primary focus of this department is to formulate policies and combat organized crime. For the first time in 2008, the Organized Crime Council was asked to look into organized crime and offer suggestions to the National Security Council. Thus, this collaboration was finalized to establish inter-agency intelligence sharing to ensure that authenticated and relevant information is passed to the designated departments.

Organized Crime and Gang Section

The Organized Crime Council is further subdivided into a subsection, "Organized Crime and Gang Section." This department focuses on the crime unit of the Organized Crime Council, implements RICO prosecutions against organized crime, and brings offenders to justice. All proposed federal prosecutions are carefully observed by the Organized Crime Council, and it can offer recommendations and suggestions to investigators or the board for better investigation of the issue and identification of all relevant crimes. If the prosecution and investigation hit the right target, there is a chance that the entire network could be exposed (Schouten & Brennan, 2016).

Federal Bureau of Investigation

The FBI is the biggest and most important department of the administration of justice and the Federal Government. Though the FBI has 60 international offices with a workforce of 36,000 people, a huge responsibility falls on the department because dealing with local organized crime and international threats to state security falls under the duty of the FBI. Thus, this department was primarily strengthened after the attack of 9/11. The increase in the budget by $8.12 billion in 2012, then to $3.81 billion in 2001, and the growth in the workforce have increased the operational capacity of this department. Every crime could possibly be investigated by the FBI. The department has an extensive network and may have more authenticated information regarding organized crime units operating on US soil.

The Transnational Criminal Enterprise unit of the FBI is divided into three sub-departments according to their mission focus. The information generated by these departments should be reported back to the FBI and then further to the Department of Justice so that the entire series of events and information is recorded through first-hand investigation and there is no probability of any discrepancy (Skoblikov, 2015).

- Italian organized crime is handled through 'Cosa Nostra.' All information regarding the operational capacity of ongoing criminal activities executed by the Italian gang section is reported by this unit.
- Middle Eastern or Eurasian crime is handled by a separate unit.
- Asian and African criminal activities are further assessed, evaluated, and identified by a separate unit.

The information gathered by these three groups is reported back to the FBI, which further plans the action to be executed for taking out the entire criminal racket.

Drug Enforcement Administration

The US federal government has been facing drug abuse for a long time, and the intensity has grown to the point that the government has had to approve new laws stating that no teenagers under the age of 18 years will be able to consume or obtain any drugs. This law was passed in the 1970s, and a department called "The Drug Enforcement Administration" was established to monitor the efficient execution of the law. For a few years, the law that no teenager under the age of 18 years would be able to have any access to drugs was implemented; however, the involvement of drug cartels started providing drugs through other means, which were more harmful to the youth. Thus, the law was canceled, and it was considered a better approach that drugs be offered through legitimate sources, but other measures, like driving on highways and the involvement of an addicted person, be restricted. Thus, the security department ensures that no illegal drugs are supplied to people from unregistered sources and that individuals who are taking drugs are registered with the healthcare department so that their health can be monitored (Small & Taylor, 2006).

Thus, controlled substances and the availability of drugs on the streets come under the Drug Enforcement Administration. The information gathered should be shared immediately if any foreign element is observed selling drugs through sources other than the registered ones. The primary focus of this department is to share all available intelligence regarding drugs with authorized agencies. The DEA is permitted to maintain a strict check on any foreign involvement in narcotics brought into the US. If any lead is identified, this department, without any influence, shares the details with the designated authorities. Even the use of drugs like 'Cannabis' is restricted by local and state agencies.

Department of Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security was brought into operation after the incident of 9/11. The primary focus of this department is to prevent attacks like September 11 and any other similar attacks. Also, Homeland Security is called upon to handle any man-made disasters. The core mission statements of this department are:

- Securing and managing US borders
- Enhancing security and preventing terrorism
- Upgrading the security of cyberspace
- Enforcement of immigration laws
- In case of disaster, the first respondents shall be Homeland Security

Department of State

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs has made a significant contribution to enforcement functions and intelligence departments. Money laundering and other financial crimes that may lead to involvement in other crimes like drug and human trafficking are monitored so that any excess amount of unauthorized funds identified is immediately reported to a higher authority, preventing criminals from prospering within US jurisdiction. The Financial Action Task Force helps the Department of Justice provide proof of the operations of these international cartels, and it could provide substantial evidence for prosecution and jail time (Veklenko & Neshataev, 2017).

Fundamental Understanding and Response to International Organized Crime

Thus, the importance of the departments and the need to centralize them under one Department of Justice show that processing and sharing intelligence in one unit may help avoid loopholes when bringing organized crime groups to justice. Thus, the government should focus more on dealing with organized crime groups after considering the following probable threats to US solidarity and progress:

1. It is not necessary for international organized crime units to operate directly on US soil. The advancement of technology and new fields has made it much easier to operate offshore. The miscreants may find a way to generate contacts with organized units operating on US soil, and sharing ideological differences with the government may convince them to work toward the motive of the international crime organization. There are some countries in which citizens may not be accessed for any prosecutions. Thus, the contact between organized crime units within and outside US jurisdiction may be harmful to the safety of the state.
2. International organized crime can target corrupt officials, businessmen, and leaders of other

organized crime groups to work in their favor. Thus, it is concerning that if these three elements develop an alliance, there is a chance that they may develop a systematic link to avoid coming to the attention of the law (Vigna, 2015).

3. However, the efforts of the departments proposed to work under the Department of Justice have eliminated or reduced organized crime occurring on the streets. However, international crime units have many funds available at their disposal, and they have the power to make their money appear legitimate and legal. Thus, if the money is proven to be clean, it can be invested in the system, which will then run through every channel and help organized crime units access the internal investment system of the US. It is alarming because it will assist them in bribing or corrupting the entire system.
4. Organized units have evolved over the years. They are not even working in a hierarchical structure or the form of a network. Every time, they operate in a different manner, for which the security departments should upgrade their security levels and strategies.
5. There are identified gaps in the system due to corrupt officials. An account should be maintained for every individual participating in this cause. It may also help in keeping up with the pace of fighting against organized crime units.

The threats stated above should help draw the federal government's attention to the severity of the growth of international organized crime within US jurisdiction.

Strategic Goals

The departments focusing on fighting organized crime units should have the strategic goals stated below:

Target International Organized Crime Figures and Organizations

For actually operating against organized crime, it is important that all relevant information is gathered about international organized crime figures and that their possible connections with any organized group operating in the US are evaluated. There have been significant achievements in drug trafficking incidents, and networks connecting elements working locally with the support of international funding have been caught. Further sharing of relevant intelligence will help to find other organized crimes, too.

For this purpose, a new committee or team should be developed so that it can invest all its efforts in identifying targeted international organized crime units. These teams should have the authority to operate internationally as well so that the entire network can be eliminated from the root level.

Domestic Law Enforcement Operations against International Organized Crime Targets

International organized units operating from general grounds or locally have been a major threat to U.S. law enforcement. Thus, US law enforcement departments should work on cases from different angles and in collaboration, sharing all required intelligence, which may lead to the actual corrupt chain. When agencies are working together and sharing information, the efforts generated will be more concrete and to the point. Thus, the allocation of resources for specified targets may help the teams hit the target. In response to their efforts, law enforcement teams should be recognized or given tangible rewards so that they continue to work toward their aims efficiently in the future.

Pursue Domestic, Foreign, and Joint Law Enforcement Team-Up with Foreign Counterparts to Operate against International Organized Crime Threats

Due to ongoing globalization, US law enforcement authorities and other security departments from around the world are fighting against crime on a wider scale to eliminate it from the face of the earth. Thus, the collaboration of law enforcement agencies from other countries has led to the development of a team that has the authority and aims to fight crime internationally. United States law enforcement departments should share information with other internationally operating offices so that jurisdictions do not limit the operational capacity of law enforcement agencies and organized crime units have no place to hide, whether on US soil or in other countries. The development of the task force in collaboration with foreign counterparts is a major success in breaking the circle and attacking criminal units from all angles. Thus, this will not only improve the countering of these criminals but will help in identifying any individuals with base instincts before they can gain competence (Wolak, 2015).

Recommendations

The incident of 9/11 has depleted domestic terror among US nationals. The developed counter-insurgency was required to ensure US security. Since that incident, 39 attacks have failed, either due to inadequate preparation or the higher intelligence of security departments. The lesson learned from fighting organized crime has identified the phenomenon that a plan or negative thought of any foreign element can only be successful if local networks help these international organized units operate on US land.

For this purpose, local and state departments should collaborate to share information regarding locally organized crime units, whether or not they are receiving funding from any international organization or operating alone. Thus, the operational culture and strategies of law enforcement

should be changed and upgraded. Local and state law enforcement agencies, with their foreign counterparts, should share information regarding the operations of these cartels, and this may help reduce infiltration into the US and other countries. The adoption of the following measures will help the US government focus better on the internal security of the United States and build a better place for people to live:

- Collaborations should be generated from the top level. For example, the President of the US should personally contact the leaders of other countries to develop foreign counterpart teams. Also, the authority to operate with the consent of the government should be ensured for future progress in fighting organized crime.
- The Department of Homeland Security should develop uniform laws for training security departments in fighting organized crime. New officers should be given motivation and direction along with appropriate training before being launched into the field.
- The Department of Justice should be the center for all security agencies to report their findings and operational statistics so that the information is processed under one roof and directions are given to ensure the proficiency and success of the operation. Centralizing the entire process will reduce loopholes within the system, and no officers will be bribed by organized crime units.

Conclusion

US law enforcement has experienced a complete paradigm shift as offenses have evolved. Organized crime groups have improved their working capacity, and as foreign terrorists are unable to commit attacks like 9/11, they may engage organized units within the US. Through this, they may infiltrate the legal and economic system. It will be damaging to US progress because once the people and the state are not at peace, the overall growth of the country will be hindered.

To deal with the situation better, the decentralized work of the departments should be centralized, and all agencies should work under one centralized unit, the Department of Justice. Thus, if terrorism is to be fought with the help of local and state departments on common grounds, then officers should share information with each other and take responsibility for their actions. The leadership should take appropriate measures for fighting crime and should motivate the judiciary to take necessary steps to make the United States a better place to live.

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