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Book Review

Book Review – Terror for Profit: A New Paradigm for Understanding Terrorism and Organized Crime

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Book: Martin J. Gallagher, *Terror for Profit: A New Paradigm for Understanding Terrorism and Organized Crime* (Boulder: KeyPoint Press, 2024). ISBN: 979-8-9909158-6-2 (hardcover); 979-8-9909158-0-0 (e-book)

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Terror for Profit by Martin J Gallagher, a scholar and law enforcement practitioner, is an enriching new addition to terrorism and crime literature. The book makes an important argument, namely that we are no longer in the religious wave of Rapoport's four waves of terrorism. Instead, we are in a new wave that is profit-motivated "identity terrorism" (p. 221). The definition of profit is not limited to economic terms. It defines personal gain of varying nature. For example, said concept does not merely include criminal profit seekers but can also describe individuals, who may have mental health issues, who seek to enhance their own reputation, which in their terms, is a form of profit. This view is in line with how police investigators think about what motivates actors to commit crimes. Sometimes, the motivation for a lone wolf terrorist is in the reputation enhancement and the notoriety they seek, not in mere economic gain. Gallagher argues the urgency to move beyond our post 9/11 fixation that religion primarily motivates terrorism in this "wave," to better understand the current wave of lone wolf terrorism through the lens of individual profit, whether that be monetary profit or reputation enhancement. Gallagher challenges us to take a micro level view of terrorism at the individual level (p. 11).

Structure of the Book

The book is comprised of an introduction and conclusion, and Gallagher organizes it in five parts across fourteen chapters. Part one "An Oceanography for Terrorism" contains chapters one through three; Part Two "Tsunami" contains chapters four through six; Part Three "High Tide" contains chapters seven through nine; part four "Stagnation" contains chapters ten and eleven; Part five "Tidal Harmonics" contains chapters twelve and thirteen. The structure builds upon early definitions of terrorism terms and theories to scaffold its argument.

Situating the Argument in the Literature

Gallagher situates his work within the academic literature via Rapoport's four waves of terrorism and this seminal work. "Rapoport classifies terrorist waves starting in the 1880s with an anarchist wave, followed by an anti-colonial wave in the 1920s, a new left wave in the 1960s, and finally a religious wave that is believed to persist today" (p. 2).

He concurs with Rapoport's warning that terrorism is dynamic and ever changing, and that this new era of identity terrorism will be "all-embracing" (p. 225-226). Gallagher also situates his work within the academic literature using Tamara Makarenko's crime-terror nexus. He uses examples such as former IRA terrorist who are primarily profit motivated in the organized crime sense but continue to commit acts of political terrorism for the legitimacy it entails (p. 221).

In chapter six, Gallagher proceeds to extensively review literature regarding lone wolf terrorism and mental health issues. He points to literature which finds that a significant number of lone wolf terrorists, estimated to be up to 30%, suffer from mental health issues. He further points to research that shows how oftentimes, individuals with mental health conditions combine ideologies with their personal frustrations. This is a useful contribution as it gets at something which bedevils the study of terrorism and in particular lone wolf terrorism. Namely, society and authorities write off individuals as mentally ill, when they are part of the broader social context (p. 80). This conclusion is consistent with Kathleen Belew's research in her Harvard University Press book, *Bring the War Home*, which analyzes white supremacy as a form of terrorism that utilizes lone wolf tactics as part of broader social milieu. He also finds much in common with lone wolf actors of today and the first wave of Rapoport's framework for terrorism: the anarchist wave. He points to ISIS members motivated by an ethnonationalist struggler rather than religious fervor. Indeed, they can be summed up with the word "caliphate" which means state (Pp. 101-103). Based on his own 2014 interviews with law enforcement, Gallagher suggests that reputation is often more important than cash for these actors, including organized criminal actors, thus proving the new wave of

"identity" terrorism (p. 160). In the same interviews, Gallagher also points to criminal codes and conventions as limiting cooperation with terrorists (p. 162).

In chapter thirteen, Gallagher argues that five factors culminate in his conception of profit. He usefully elucidates these factors in Figure 5.4 which include: cooperation, the individual, financial, distance, and reputation (p.192). In his conclusion, Gallagher does not exclude a potential resurgence in left wave terrorism due to the conflict in Gaza which stemmed from the October 7, 2023, attacks on Israel (p. 231).

Utility of the Work

This book would be an excellent addition for anyone in law enforcement, including policymakers, practitioners and any scholars in numerous other academic disciplines including political scientists, sociologists, criminologists, and security studies specialists. This book is particularly useful as Gallagher writes as a practitioner with more than 30 years of law enforcement experience in Scotland. Its use of myriad real-world examples from a global perspective, including: the Wagner mercenary group, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) in Colombia, various Irish Republican Army (IRA) criminal splinter groups, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Hezbollah, Hamas, and its discussion of lone wolf terrorist renders it particularly valuable and a source for empirically understanding the phenomenon. Its most important contribution is to expand our horizons of what constitutes and motivations for terrorism and helps us to remember micro explanations and design counterterrorism strategies around them.

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None.

Disclosures

None.

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