



Terror Incorporated: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks

Loretta Napoleoni, Greg Palast (Foreword)

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In *Terror Incorporated*, Loretta Napoleoni maps out the arteries of an international economic system that feeds armed groups the world over. Chasing terror money, she takes the reader from CIA headquarters to the smuggling routes of the Far East, from the back rooms of Wall Street to hawala exchanges in the Middle East.

Napoleoni describes the "New Economy of Terror," "a fast-growing international economic system with a turnover of about \$1.5 trillion [that] is challenging Western hegemony." It is made up of illegal businesses such as arms and narcotics trading, and oil and diamond smuggling, as well as charitable donations and legal profits. Napoleoni reveals the interdependency between economies run by armed groups and western economies, and provides a pioneering examination of the system and methods by which international terrorism is financed.

Terror Incorporated: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks Details

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Sdrucciola says

L'obiettivo del terrorismo, qualsiasi terrorismo, è fare sentire insicuro e fragile il suo obiettivo. Come dimostrano i recenti avvenimenti, ci riesce benissimo.

Ma c'è qualcun'altro che lavora fervidamente per farci sentire sempre più spaventati: i governi che dicono di volerci proteggere.

Come opporsi a questo dilagare della paura che paralizza la ragione? Loretta Napoleoni (economista esperta di criminalità nota ai lettori di Internazionale) e Ronald J. Bee pensano che i numeri siano un ottimo modo per riuscirci.

Numeri, fatti e statistiche al posto di supposizioni, spauracchi e leggende. Per dimostrare che le nostre probabilità di cadere vittime di un attentato di matrice terroristica sono davvero minime. Se è il caso, anche facendoci sorridere delle nostre paure:

Con la sola eccezione dei dirottatori dell'11 settembre, il terrorismo islamico è caratterizzato da una grande mancanza di professionalità. [...] come la cellula marocchina al Qaeda che si è persa nella Medina di Rabat mentre andava a farsi esplodere davanti all'ambasciata statunitense; o i "baby terroristi", adolescenti musulmani delle Midlands britanniche, scappati di casa per diventare martiri, che ogni sera chiamavano le madri per rassicurarle sul loro stato di salute.

Napoleoni e Bee ci spiegano nel dettaglio che per fabbricare un ordigno nulceare occorrono conoscenze, materiali e risorse energetiche tali da rendere l'operazione impraticabile per un gruppo terroristico e decisamente poco conveniente per uno stato canaglia.

Se vogliamo spaventarci davvero, possiamo sempre osservare i dati sulla crescita della criminalità comune in Occidente nell'ultimo decennio e osservare il danno della strategia della paura dei nostri governi che hanno distolto più che ingenti risorse dalla lotta contro la criminalità per destinarle al terrorismo.

Ma lo hanno fatto per farci sentire più sicuri. Certo, con la crisi che alita sui nostri mutui e l'erosione della spesa pubblica, ci sentiamo molto più sicuri...

Ciò non toglie, come dimostrano i fatti, che il terrorismo internazionale, di qualsiasi matrice, continua a operare in vaste zone del mondo. Quello che spiegano i due autori è che se continuamo così, costruendo e ingigantendo il mito del nemico invece di affrontare le cause che lo sostengono, non faremo altro che alimentarlo. E allora sì, che avremo ottime ragioni per avere paura.

James Igoe says

I heard the author lecture at a bookstore in lower Manhattan, and although I initially hesitated buying her book - the beginning of her lecture began too "soft" - I later broached harder economic questions, which she deftly answered. Impressed, or at least positively engaged, I bought the book. I'm finding it well written and well researched, and I'm surprised that it weaves together much common, but fragmented, knowledge into a

cohesive review of terrorist financing, without the partiality common to politically/ideologically oriented analyses.

Sandesh says

Indeed a great book! I read it a few months ago as I found a copy in Delhi, CP. It was interesting to read such a well-researched book.

Caleb says

Napoleoni did an incredible job of establishing herself as an authority on the financing of terrorism and its integration with the global economy. The book is challenging to get through with limited interspersed narratives and stories surrounded by gluts of facts, figures, historical analyses, statistics, names, dates, etc. While I don't consider myself a novice in the world of financial crime, money laundering, and terror finance, this book really stretched me and showed me how much more I still have to learn on the global economy, markets, and the relationship between the white, black, and grey markets. My favorite aspect of the book is how it challenged my own presumptions regarding the concept of state sponsors of terror and giving me insight into how policy is formed in Washington and the repercussions that occur down the line.

Thomas Park says

Extremely well written and insightful book. One of the really interesting things I learnt from this was made right at the start - Napoleoni made the point that particularly prior to 9/11 terrorism was not understood of as an act of war, rather as a crime. After 911, Bush was important in developing this understanding. Really interesting to someone who has grown up and seen the effects of the 'war on terror' started by Bush and endorsed by Blair.

Although I already knew that states sponsored activities in other states during the Cold War in order to promote their ideology, before this book I had never fully appreciated that a lot of this lead to essentially state sponsored terrorism. Notably the US actions in Afghanistan and its support of the Mujehadin led to the rise of Osama Bin laden. It did this through fairly reprehensible means too - by levying a tax on opium, which led to an increase in production soon meaning that the area became biggest heroin producer in the world. US hid its involvement so well that even Osama Bin Laden did not know about it. On reflection, it is almost not surprising how much resentment has built up towards the west when this is considered.

The author makes a startling comparison of one of OBL's speeches with that of the Pope's back in the time of the Holy war and Christian crusades of a thousand years ago, for instance they both contain allusions to decaying economies. The theme of the book being the economics of terror networks, the author posits that OBL was a skilled businessman who ran a huge financial conglomerate.

The explanation of how state-shells become breeding grounds for terror activities is also fascinating. Money made by crime, smuggling, kidnapping, oil smuggling etc. When it is a state it is also very hard to intervene because can be construed as act of war. Author says that state sponsoring of Cold War no longer common, now instead there is asset transfer - for instance Iraq UN aid trucks subverted for military use.

Overall I would recommend this book only to academics or those with a serious interest - it is no light read!

Radiah says

A piece of solid work, Loretta Napoleoni has managed to shape our understanding of international terrorism, its birth and thriving nature through analysis of their funding activities. The title of the book is apt – she breaks down and analyzes the source of funding of many of the world's armed militias. Many groups are featured in the book – from the IRA, Basque groups, Islamist militants, African rebels, the FARC, and etc. What is fascinating is how the situation today was shown by Napoleoni to be caused by failed foreign policy outcomes from Western powers. Drawing parallels between the Crusades, and modern day terrorist activities – Napoleoni makes the argument that the motivations of the Crusades are inherently similar to modern terrorism - she manages to bring clarity to the motivations of today's terror groups. Through tracing their funding activities, she reveals how the force outwardly preaching stopping extremism and terrorism are at times the very propagators enabling them. The volume is a short, sharply worded book which turned out to be an eye-opening read bringing a robust understanding of the subject matter.

M says

My eyes are wide open. Napoleoni is telling how every single country in Europe,

Asia

South America is involved now in the business of terrorism. A trillion dollar business. She traced the dollars. She named what names she could.

Sometimes she tried to protect American Interests, but we got the idea.

This book puts a real time spin on conspiracy theorists. This is a conspiracy involving Afghanistan, Pakistan, in particular because of the Poppy which gets converted to heroin.

Wow. Am sad, awake and ready..ready to set goals- am outta here.

Amit Mishra says

Loretta is right in exposing that terrorism is the byproduct of politics around the world. However, she poses to be authority on this subject, which I find a little ambiguous! Rest all is fine with her works. I have read most of her works and Modern Jihad is even blunt than the others.

Sr?an Palomo Sánchez says

Una obra de referencia en el campo del terrorismo, con referencias sólidas y una argumentación agradable bajo un hilo conductor histórico. Este libro detalla la evolución del terrorismo desde las guerras por poderes, el patrocinio estatal hasta su privatización y establecimiento de estados embrión. Estos son los responsables de la Nueva Economía del Terror, un sistema económico que les garantiza independencia en relación con el sistema capitalista mundial.

John says

An excellent, reasonably objective look at the business of global terrorism. Leaving ideology aside, the book provides a cogent and thoughtful explanation of the links between enterprise (both legal and criminal) and the "new economy" of global terror.

Alok Mishra says

A short notice - I won't care if I don't exhibit myself as a politically correct person because politics around the world has given birth to terrorism! And, that must be exposed!

Loretta has rightly subtitled the book - tracing the dollars behind the terror networks. This is not a hidden story that terrorism has always been used as alibi - to hide economic, political and institutional failures in the past as well as for usurping the territories of others. We all know what happened in Russia and then in Iraq and now in Syria. Indians have been facing the curse of being neighbours of Pakistan. The question is whether terrorism is funded by mainstream institutions/establishments or not? And the answer has been presented by the author of this book very wonderfully!

I got this book last year and read it with great curiosity. I learned about some facts which will blow your mind; believe me! If you want to know the factory of modern jihad and the fuel that runs it, Loretta has the answers for you.

Zack says

Eye opening. I've read many books about terrorism and its modern roots. But this book should be required for just about everyone. ~230 pages of pure and shocking truth. Well-annotated so you can check her sources for yourself. I did on a few, and she is right on. This book is so troubling. Not much to say other than that, really.

Lidija says

Absolutely stunning book. Relevant to everyone who wants to understand the economics of terrorism and its deep roots in the post Soviet era vacuum. This is the second book I've read by Napoleoni, and I continue to be amazed by the level of research she undertakes. If you are curious, but don't have time to commit to the whole book, I recommend reading the chapter on terror jihad and the Islamic crusades (#8). Napoleoni reveals that what we are witnessing today with the surge of terrorism is really a historical deja-vu. Much like in the Christian Crusades of the Middle Ages, deft leaders use religion to mask political/economic motives, manipulate the disenfranchised and mobilize them for war.

A must read.

Justin Evans says

Solid stuff. At times Napoleoni's chapters get a touch of the fact explosions, but the general point is clear by the end. She lays out the historical development that led to contemporary terrorist movements (the funding of groups and client states by the cold war superpowers; their withdrawal and the consequent internationalization of terrorist and separatist movements and their economies; the ideal conditions for such groups being failing states, in which they can set up "shell-states," which fulfill many of the functions of an official state, e.g., taxation and public services).

My only complaint is that she tends sometimes toward conspiracy thinking about the west; or, on the other hand, comes close to suggesting that terrorist groups are motivated primarily by money. In both cases, she gives too much credit to the actors involved, I think. This is the ideal place to start if you want to learn about terrorist groups, either specific or in general.

Unwisely says

If you are thinking to yourself, I am insufficiently angry about the world, perhaps something could stoke the fire of my righteous anger? This might do it.

Despite being a pretty small, thin volume, this book covers a lot of ground - the Crusades, Iran-Contra, the evolution of self-funding. Groups from all over the world are discussed - narcoterrorists in Colombia, Islamic extremists, the IRA, Basque groups. My one minor complaint is that there's *so much* in here that it's a little hard to keep track of it all. (But there is a nice index of terror groups, so at least you don't have to get flagged for searching the names to remember which one was which.)

Depressing and incendiary, particularly the bits about the complicity of the American government and financial systems. Sigh. Worthwhile read though.
