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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

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National Intelligence Council

NIC #00854-88
22 February 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Oliver B. Revel
Executive Assistant Director - Investigations
Federal Bureau of Investigations

SUBJECT: Narcoterrorism

1. You will recall that last year your bureau, responding to tasking contained in the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, produced for Congress a study of "narcoterrorism." Your product, referred to informally as the "red book," resulted from a collaborative effort involving several agencies including CIA. You will further recall that the report contained the observation that three issues deserved follow-up attention and would get such through the joint efforts of the National Intelligence Officers for Counterterrorism and Narcotics. This memorandum reports on the actions taken pursuant to the above.

2. Issue: The problem of ambiguity in the use of the term "narcoterrorism."

The NIOs for Counterterrorism and Narcotics have held a series of meetings to address the problem of defining, with more precision, the term "narcoterrorism" in order to enhance communication and reporting on the matter. These meetings involved appropriate representatives of the Intelligence Community agencies as well as intelligence specialists from all the relevant law enforcement agencies. These meetings have resulted in a consensus that this definition be used in the future: Narcoterrorism is a generic term that refers to the nexus between terrorism/insurgency and drug trafficking. It encompasses: (1) drug trafficking by terrorist/insurgent groups for funding their activities; (2) violent acts by drug trafficking groups designed to influence national and/or international counternarcotics policy; and (3) other, perhaps temporary, linkages between terrorist/insurgent groups and drug-trafficking organizations.

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The undersigned NIOs believe that the above definition is sound and appropriate for general use in that it is broad enough to subsume the relevant phenomena and specific enough, in the three-point breakout, to facilitate differentiations when necessary.

3. Issue: The state, timeliness and general utility of the analytic products now available on the the subject of "narcoterrorism"

The NIOs reacted to this requirement by forming an interagency working group consisting of appropriate representatives of the Intelligence Community and the law enforcement agencies. The group held meetings to review the current "library" on the subject of "narcoterrorism" and to access its adequacy. This was accomplished with this result: it is the consensus of the NIO/Counterterrorism and NIO/Narcotics organizations that the current state of analytic product on the subject of "narcoterrorism" is adequate. The current intelligence and the research pieces on this subject are fulsome and the NIE 1/8-85, November 1985, "The International Narcotics Trade: Implications for US Security" is holding its usefulness and validity.

4. Issue: The state of intelligence collection against the target of "narcoterrorism."

It is apparent that intelligence on "narcoterrorism" will have a high priority in the years immediately ahead. Accordingly, a realistic and effective collection strategy against this target is vital. To get a comprehensive assessment on the current state of this collection endeavor and to acquire recommendations on how collection could be improved, the NIOs for Counterterrorism and Narcotics have formally petitioned the Intelligence Community Staff to undertake a study of this matter and report the findings by 1 May 1988.

5. It is hoped that these results are responsive to your needs. Please be in touch if further clarification is needed.



Charles E. Allen
National Intelligence Officer
for Counterterrorism



William R. Kotapish
National Intelligence Officer
for Narcotics

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SUBJECT: Narcoterrorism

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