The Potential of Crime to Undermine Australia’s National Security

Peter Grabosky and John McFarlane

National security entails more than a country’s ability to withstand military invasion. A wider conception of national security includes the burdens on the state that are imposed as a result of crime. Domestic criminality can weaken a society and its economy, with obvious implications for national security. Even crime that occurs on the other side of the world, whether it entails major financial crime or the cultivation of opium, can have domestic ramifications. So too can crime that occurs in neighbouring nations, whose own security problems may have unfortunate spillover effects. This article explores crime and its impact on Australia’s national security. It observes that a degree of convergence in Australian policing and security institutions has become apparent, and is likely to continue.

Introduction: A Wider Conception of National Security

At first blush, aside from the traditional offences of treason and sedition, crime and national security would appear to be different fields of inquiry. However, the concept of national security has expanded significantly in recent years, and the term now means many things to many people. Today, national security entails more than merely the capacity to defend one’s territorial borders against the invading armed forces of rival nation states. Even to the defence establishment, strategic threats today are very different today from those of 1939. With the end of the Cold War and the actual or impending collapse of a number of states around the world, Australia’s strategic environment has changed dramatically. Today, two of the most significant (if not the most significant) threats to Australia are posed by a loose coalition of non-state actors, and by a strain of influenza.

The end of the Cold War has seen an increase in the prevalence of state failure. State failure can result from, and in turn, facilitate, various kinds of criminal activity. The term “asymmetric warfare” embraces a good deal of...
activity that is punishable under conventional criminal law. And the nature of
crime itself has changed significantly in recent years. The rapid mobility of
people, ideas, finance, commodities, and viruses (both the microbial variety
and those that infect one’s hard drive), driven in large part by the revolution
in information technology and telecommunications, has been accompanied
by criminal opportunities that were unimaginable not long ago. The
successful exploitation of these opportunities can weaken a state. So the
relationship between crime and national security may be closer than
apparent at first glance.7

While a wider conception of national security may be novel in living memory,
it is by no means new to the 21st century. Consider the following thoughts,
more than 2000 years old:

Plans and projects for harming the enemy are not confined to any one
method. Sometimes entice his wise and virtuous men away so that he has
no counsellors. Or send treacherous people to his country to wreck his
administration. Sometimes use cunning deceptions to alienate his ministers
from the sovereign. Or send skilled craftsmen to encourage his people to
exhaust their wealth. Or present him with licentious musicians and dancers
to change his customs. Or give him beautiful women to bewilder him.8

As Sun Tzu perceived so long ago, there are many ways to harm a country
short of a military invasion. Sun Tzu may still have had eventual military
attack in the back of his mind, but was looking at the multidimensional
strength of a nation as the basis of security. A state is not necessarily
conquered by force of military dominance, but may also collapse for want of
popular support. The demise of the Soviet Union is illustrative.9 Today,
national security may be conceptualized to include not only defence of one’s
territory, but also the ability of governments to provide basic services to their
citizens, or at the very least, a stable platform for the functioning of free
markets.10 Whether one subscribes to this minimalist conceptualization or

U.S. weaknesses, using methods that differ significantly from the U.S.’ expected method of
operations. … [Asymmetric approaches] generally seek a major psychological impact, such as
shock or confusion, that affects an opponent’s initiative, freedom of action, or will. Asymmetric
methods require an appreciation of an opponent’s vulnerabilities. Asymmetric methods often
employ initiative, non-traditional tactics, weapons and technology, and can be applied at all
levels of political warfare – strategic, operational and tactical – and across the spectrum of

R. Pattugalan (eds.), Transnational Crime and Regional Security in the Asia Pacific, Manila,
Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific/Institute for Strategic and Development
113-114.
10 A. Dupont, East Asia Imperilled: Transnational Challenges to Security, Cambridge,
rather to the multidimensional foundations of a strong state, powerful and autonomous, consider the following as components of national security:

- Economy
- Political legitimacy
- Health
- Education
- Social welfare
- Social cohesion
- Interpersonal trust
- Environmental quality

All of these impact upon a nation’s ability to defend itself territorially. A serious deficit in any of these areas can weaken a country significantly. It is not accidental that the economy heads this list, and dominates the policy agendas of many nations. The famous observation “It’s the economy, stupid”, made during the 1992 US presidential election, applied well beyond American politics. A wealthy country can afford not only guns and butter, but also schools, hospitals, clean water, and honest public servants. To the extent that the wealthy country is ethnically or religiously diverse, there will be enough of “the pie” to go around, and diverse elements will have less cause to fight each other for a share.

Ours is a complex world, and it is popular nowadays to remark that everything is related to everything else. While this may be a slight

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11 The World Bank considers many of these issues in terms of “governance” which it defines as “a set of traditions and institutions by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; formulate and implement sound policies; demonstrate respect of citizens and the state for institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.” The World Bank has also established six “governance indicators” to measure the effectiveness and stability of political systems, including their vulnerability to crime. The six indicators are:
1. Voice and Accountability – i.e. the political process, freedom of the press, human rights, etc.;
2. Political Stability and the Absence of Violence – i.e. the physical strength or vulnerability of the state;
3. Governance Effectiveness – including the independence of the bureaucracy;
4. Regulatory Quality – i.e. policies on contracts, prices, banks, trade, etc.;
5. Rule of Law – i.e. the incidence of crime, the quality of the criminal justice system, etc.;
6. Control of Corruption – defined as “the exercise of public power for private gain.”


12 Attributed to Democratic Party strategist, James Carville.
exaggeration, crime can adversely impact on each of the above factors, which bear upon the strength of the state and on the ability of the state to defend itself and to provide for its citizens. The following pages will explore these relationships in greater detail, and their relevance to Australia’s national security.

Local and Global Manifestations of Crime

Street Crime

Crime is a mansion with many rooms. Some is entirely local. The term “street crime” has been coined to refer to conventional crime in public places. Of course, a great deal of crime is committed in private between acquaintances and intimates. Homicide, assault, rape, robbery, burglary are all classic street crimes.  

White Collar Crime

The term “white collar crime” was coined nearly seventy years ago to refer to crimes committed by persons of relatively high social status in the course of their occupation. The term is now used more often to refer to the offence rather than to the offender, and embraces a range of criminal activities of a financial nature, including embezzlement, fraud, insider trading, tax evasion and corruption. 

Transnational Crime

Some crimes are transnational. The criminal act itself may involve the crossing of national frontiers, as in smuggling, illegal immigration, or the unauthorized incursion of fishers into one’s territorial waters. Alternatively, the advent of digital technology may enable a crime to be committed in one
country against a target in another.\textsuperscript{18} For example, when an extortionist in Country A threatens to shut down the information system of a bank in Country B unless an electronic funds transfer payment is made, or when a hacker in Country A gains unauthorized access to the servers of a defence installation in Country B, it is information in digital form, rather than human actors or physical matter, which crosses boundaries.

\textbf{Degrees of State Involvement in Crime}

Not all crime is exclusively the work of private individuals. State involvement in crime, and in the effects of such crime on the security of other states, can vary.\textsuperscript{19}

At one extreme, the state is a criminal actor. The criminal activity in question is state sponsored. The most obvious example is state-sponsored terrorism.\textsuperscript{20} When agents of the Libyan Government blow up a commercial airliner over Lockerbie, or where agents of the French Government sink the Rainbow Warrior, this is explicit state action. States may also be directly involved in the commission of other types of transnational crime, as when crew of a North Korean ship, the Pong Su, attempted to deliver drugs to Australia.\textsuperscript{21}

Just short of explicit state action is state complicity in private criminal activity. Here, the state will encourage proxies to engage in criminal acts. The Iran-Contra scandal arose from arrangements to place the executive branch of the US Government at arm’s length from criminal activity. The emergence of the private military industry may create further risks of the state’s complicity in crime.\textsuperscript{22}

Next, there are circumstances where the state may be aware of criminal activity, but will turn a blind eye.\textsuperscript{23} Most criminal justice systems have more

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business than they can handle. Each country sets its own priorities, which may not be entirely consistent with those of other countries. Poor countries for example, may have other things to worry about than the fact that their ports are used for the transshipment of contraband.

One step beyond this is where the state is aware of criminal activity but lacks the capacity to do anything about it. The poorest countries may simply be unable to interdict the activities of powerful criminal organizations. Where corruption is endemic, or where norms of reciprocity are deeply engrained in local culture, the state may be powerless to respond. Circumstances in the Solomon Islands prior to the RAMSI intervention reflected this degree of governmental impotence.24

Crime in a Shrinking World

Some crimes are local, both in motive and in deed, but may have cross-border ramifications. One may look to events of a decade ago in Albania to see an example of the trans-national impact of domestic criminality. A massive fraud resulted in a significant number of Albanians losing their life savings. This in turn precipitated the collapse of the government, and a substantial exodus of Albanians seeking refuge in neighbouring Italy, with consequent strains on Italian law enforcement, emergency services, and immigration resources.25

Even if Australians are not directly involved as victims or offenders elsewhere in the world, overseas crime can have significant implications for Australian interests. There are crimes that, although they occur abroad, reverberate strongly in Australia. To the extent that illegal trafficking in firearms overseas contributes to conflict and instability in our region, Australia’s national security is at risk.26 Of no less significance is the potential for corruption to facilitate some forms of the transnational criminal activity noted above.27 The weakening of law enforcement or regulatory

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capabilities in one of Australia’s near neighbours can greatly enhance the
capacity of criminals to use that jurisdiction as a “safe haven”, a staging area
for a variety of criminal or terrorist activities, or as a trans-shipment point for
contraband. What appears at first glance to be an internal matter in a
nearby nation may ultimately impact on the streets of Sydney or Melbourne.
This alone is justification for the creation of Australian Federal Police (AFP)-
funded Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation in Semarang,
Indonesia, and the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre in Fiji,
and Transnational Crime Units in several other locations in the Asia-
Pacific.28

In general, Australia’s economic and strategic interests are best served by
world economic growth and political stability. To the extent that an overseas
nation’s economy is crippled by crime and corruption, it is a less attractive
market for Australian exports. Abroad and at home, crime—and
corruption—is bad for business.

More generally, large scale financial crimes such as those which lead to the
collapse of major financial institutions can shake the confidence of global
markets. In recent years, the demise of Barings Bank29 and the Sumitomo30
copper scandal have had significant reverberations for Australian institutions.
The Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s, arising in no small part from
criminal fraud, extortion, bribery and corruption in a number of nations that
are major purchasers of Australia’s exports, had a noticeable (if temporary)
impact on Australia’s domestic economy.31 By contrast, the massive size of
the US economy enabled it to withstand the Savings and Loans and Enron
scandals.32

Sungsidh Piriyarangs and Nualnoi Treerat, Guns, Girls, Gambling, Ganja: Thailand’s Illegal
28 John McFarlane, ‘Regional and International Cooperation in Tackling Transnational Crime,
301-309.
29 The Barings Bank, a venerable British institution which had helped finance the Napoleonic
Wars, collapsed in February 1995 after one of its traders lost US$1.3 billion in disastrous trading in
derivatives contracts. In the immediate aftermath of the collapse, Japan’s Nikkei 225 index fell 3.8%,
and the British pound plunged to a record low against the Deutsche Mark. Michael
Lim Choo San, and Nicky Tan Ng Kuang, Barings Futures (Singapore) Pte Ltd: Investigation
pursuant to section 231 of the Companies Act (Chapter 50): the report of the Inspectors
30 An employee of the Sumitomo Corporation was blamed for single-handedly losing $1.8 billion
trading copper. Following the announcement, world copper prices fell to their lowest point in
over two years. See J. Kharouf, ‘The Copper Trader Who Fell from Grace,’ Futures Magazine,
31 John McFarlane, ‘Corruption and the Financial Sector: The Strategic Impact,’ Journal of
Financial Crime, vol. 9, no.1 (September 2001), pp. 8-21
32 K. Calavita, H. Pontell, R. Tillman, Big Money Crime: Fraud and Politics in the Savings and
Loan Crisis, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997; R. Tillman and M. Indergaard, Pump
and Dump: The Rancid Rules of the New Economy, New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University
CRIMES COMMITTED BY AUSTRALIANS ABROAD

Australians travelling abroad do not always conduct themselves with perfect decorum. Hundreds of Australians are arrested overseas each year, and between 150 and 200 are held in foreign prisons at any given time. Perhaps the most common cases from an Australian perspective involve persons unwise enough to be found trafficking or in possession of drugs in those nations where such activity is met with very severe punishment. The most recent misfortunes of Schapelle Corby and the so-called “Bali Nine” are but two examples. Certain other forms of conduct on the part of Australians overseas, may, for a variety of reasons, escape the full force of law in the host country, but are nevertheless regarded as seriously repugnant. Most prominent among these in recent years has been child sex tourism.

Crime by Australian expats may be regarded as unseemly (or worse) by citizens or authorities in host countries, but it has not triggered the moral outrage that (for example) crimes by US military personnel in Japan have generated. Tensions have arisen, however, from Australian reactions to perceived inappropriate treatment of fellow citizens in the arms of foreign legal systems, which in turn may be perceived as patronizing or arrogant by citizens or officials of the host state. The resulting strain on diplomatic relations can be significant. The Corby and Bali Nine cases are illustrative, and particularly significant given the importance of cooperation between police services of Australia and Indonesia in the light of regional terrorist activity.

Australian companies doing business in conflict-ridden countries also run the risk of becoming implicated in illegal activities. By lending financial or material support to a party (be it government or opposition) that is corrupt, criminal or otherwise violates human rights, a company can create bad will that can stain Australia’s international reputation.


33 Schapelle Corby was convicted of attempting to import cannabis into Indonesia and sentenced to twenty years prison in 2005. Nine Australians were arrested in Indonesia in April 2005 and charged with possessing heroin. At the end of 2007, nine were still imprisoned and six were facing the death penalty.


35 The execution of a Filipina expatriate in Singapore severely strained diplomatic relations between the two countries. Dupont, East Asia Imperilled: Transnational Challenges to Security, note 7, p. 164. Similarly, when the Melbourne resident, Van Tuong Nguyen, was hanged in Singapore on 2 December 2005 for possession of 396.2 mg of heroin, for a short while there were serious tensions in the bilateral relationship with Singapore.

CRIME AGAINST AUSTRALIANS ABROAD

Of the hundreds of thousands of law abiding Australians who are overseas at any given time, most manage to stay out of harm’s way. But a few do not, and fall victim to offences from purse snatching to homicide. While certainly unfortunate, such incidents do not effect Australia’s national security. But crimes against Australian business interests may be a different matter. The globalization of commerce means that more Australian businesses are active overseas than ever before. The intensely competitive nature of world commerce is such that Australian companies face a significant risk of becoming victims of a variety of offences. One potential threat is that of industrial espionage. Competitors, and at times, foreign governments, seek to acquire strategic economic intelligence, trade secrets, or intellectual property by illegal means. Indeed, for many nations, corporate intelligence collection may be more important than defence intelligence collection.

Another risk, less related to global competitiveness than to political and social factors, is that of extortion. In some locations around the world where public security is a major problem, expatriate executives and staff are targeted for ransom kidnapping. In the case of minor offences, a tourist or businessperson might be able to shrug off the experience as just an unfortunate aspect of overseas travel. But depending on the gravity of the incident, there may be a call on Australian consular services for emergency assistance. In the case of crimes against businesses, security measures will increase the cost of doing business, and may detract from the profitability of an investment. An important consideration here from a national security standpoint can be the extent to which a state is seen as giving in to blackmail.


39 C. Beer, ‘Judicial Performance and the Rule of Law in the Mexican States’, Latin American Politics & Society, vol. 48, no. 3 (Fall 2006), pp. 33-61. In August 2007, a South Australian sheep farmer, Des Gregor, traveled to Mali to meet a Liberian refugee who he met over the Internet and proposed to marry. When he arrived in Mali, he was kidnapped by men claiming to be the woman’s relatives, physically threatened and held for a US$86,000 ransom. Gregor’s relatives in Australia raised the alarm when they started to get emails asking for money, and alerted the AFP. After 12 days in captivity, the AFP managed to persuade Gregor’s kidnappers to send him to the Canadian Embassy to pick up the ransom money, where Gregor was recovered. This operation involved cooperation between the AFP Senior Liaison Officer in Pretoria, the Mali National Police, the South African Police and the Canadian Embassy in Bamako (Mali). Nick Bryant, ‘Australian taken hostage in Mali’, BBC News, 13 August 2007, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/asia-pacific/6943616.stm> [Accessed 11 November 2007]; and AFP briefing, 25 October 2007.
The Impact of Crime on National Security

National security is not an either/or phenomenon. The security of a given state at a given time can be located on a continuum between impregnability on the one hand, and collapse on the other. Various factors, of which crime is but one, will determine a state’s location on that continuum and its movement in one direction or another.

The nexus between crime and national security began to attract wider attention with the end of the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Empire presented criminal opportunities of considerable magnitude. The ascendancy of Russian organized crime had ramifications well beyond its borders, and the availability of fissionable material diverted from Soviet arsenals represented a threat worldwide.

But Australian criminologists have been mindful for at least three decades of the nexus between crime and national security. The June 1975 issue of *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* contains no less than three articles of relevance. In one, the inaugural Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) noted the rise of transnational crime. He commented on

> the great gaps in international legal practice which loom more like canyons and caverns than the proverbial loopholes in our system or (sic) world security and cooperation.\(^{41}\)

In another, a lecturer at the University of Melbourne addressed the issue of terrorism and international order. He noted that

> we have in this country powerful minority groups which reflect all the bitterness found in those areas of the world where terrorist operations are active and most violent.\(^{42}\)

In a third, a lecturer at the University of Sydney who currently sits as a District Court Judge in New South Wales warned against the possible criminal use of atomic or biochemical materials. He said that “As even the most casual observer of the terrorist scene will be aware, the spirit of kamikaze is still alive all over the world.”\(^{43}\)

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\(^{43}\)G. Woods, ‘The Possible Criminal use of Atomic or Biochemical Materials’, *The Australian*
States vary in robustness. They differ widely in their ability to withstand adverse circumstances, whether natural disasters, economic adversity, or criminal insults. The impact of crime on national security is largely indirect, and cumulative, except in states where crime is endemic.

From this vantage point, one can begin more clearly to see the relationship between crime and national security. National security can be jeopardized by domestic criminal threats as well as by transnational forces. Rampant crime and violence on Australian soil will discourage tourism. Rampant fraud and corruption will discourage investment. Rampant drug use and environmental pollution can damage public health and detract from the productivity of one’s workforce. In today’s increasingly competitive global economy, that threatens national security. Fortunately, Australia’s robustness makes it well situated to withstand the criminal insults that are home grown.

When transnational influences are added to the equation, the relationship become even more stark, especially in poorer countries. The use of bribery in international business can be corrosive. When bribery and corruption detract from the public’s trust in their leaders and in national institutions, that is harmful to national security. No nation today, rich or poor, can boast of a role model of integrity such as Nelson Mandela. But the strength of a state is generally dependent upon its legitimacy. The legitimacy of a state, the willingness of the public to accept the validity of the regime, will contribute to national security.

When illegal international traffic in guns, drugs, people and other contraband place greater burdens on law enforcement and other public services, that threatens national security. When the inflow of “dirty” money to a small nation’s economy impacts on exchange rates and reduces the competitiveness of traditional exports, that threatens national security. When extremist movements deal in contraband in order to finance terrorist operations, that threatens national security.

The day is fast approaching when it will be possible to say “when China sneezes, the world will catch cold.” We have begun to appreciate the extent to which economic well-being in Australia depends on the health of the Chinese economy, much as it has depended on the US economy since the end of WWII. Authorities in China are acutely sensitive to the existence of centrifugal forces and place a great deal of importance on social stability. A strong Chinese state is more likely to deliver prosperity to its people than a set of separate political entities. We might suggest that any criminal activity within China that weakens the state, or the economy of that country, is

*and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, vol. 8, no. 2 (1975), p. 117.

potentially harmful to Australia’s national security. Let us return to our dimensions of national security and explore how they may be adversely impacted by crime.

**ECONOMY**

Street crime can discourage economic activity at a micro-level. It can make the difference between profit and loss for a small business. It can contribute to the death of neighbourhoods. At the extreme, it can chill economic activity across an entire city or country. One need only look to Port Moresby for an example.45 White collar crime may be no less harmful. Markets that are seen to be rigged will not attract investors. Small investors may shy away from the stock market because they see it as the playground of insider traders; others may be deterred by their perception of corporate high flyers as looters of shareholders’ money. To the extent that a major institution of the economy is seen as tainted, the economy will suffer. Some years ago, the government of Albania fell after a significant proportion of the citizenry fell victim to a Ponzi scheme46 and as a result lost their life savings. More generally, endemic tax evasion may make it more difficult for the government to afford both guns and butter. So too when a corrupt head of state and other members of a corrupt national elite divert hundreds of millions of dollars to personal bank accounts offshore.47

Australia incurs opportunity costs as a result of crime. While not all of these represent dead-weight loss (those of us who are paid to study crime do not regard ourselves as economic burdens), a great deal of Australia’s wealth could be more productively spent on enhancing Australia’s national interest and infrastructure.

The most rigorous analysis of the cost of crime in Australia has been prepared by the AIC. A report released in 2003 found that crime costs Australia $19 billion while the costs in dealing with crime cost close to another $13 billion. This is nearly $1,600 per person in Australia and 5 per cent of GDP. It is also twice the nation’s annual defence budget.48

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46 Charles Ponzi was a North American swindler of the 1920s who promised investors spectacular and rapid returns. His basic strategy was a pyramid scheme wherein the funds of more recent investors were used to repay earlier investors. Such a scheme was inherently unsustainable, with later stage investors usually losing their investment. The name Ponzi is used today as a generic term for this type of fraud.

47 The recovery of moneys diverted by corrupt elites is one of the key objectives of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, 2003.

Table 1: Total Costs of Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs in dealing with crime</th>
<th>$ million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal justice system</td>
<td>6,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private security industry</td>
<td>3,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household precautions</td>
<td>1,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for victims</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance administrative costs</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,750</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Crime costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$ million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Property loss</td>
<td>4,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical costs</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost output</td>
<td>2,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intangible losses</td>
<td>3,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>1,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs (not elsewhere included)</td>
<td>1,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>5,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,030</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31,780</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**HEALTH**

Crime is hazardous to one’s health. The health effects (and economic costs) of legal drugs are bad enough. Illicit drugs pose great risk to the mental health of users. In addition they pose the risk of infectious disease. It goes without saying that an unhealthy society, all else equal, is less able to defend itself. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in many developing nations has had a devastating impact socially and economically. The costs of treating HIV/AIDS can exhaust a poor nation’s health budget. To the extent that a significant proportion of persons of military age are infected, this too can detract from military preparedness. An assessment in 1999 found that 50% of South African soldiers between 23 and 29 years were HIV positive.49

Australia’s major health burdens arise from abuse of tobacco and alcohol, and to a lesser extent, from the abuse of illicit drugs. These costs are significant; money spent on repairing damage arising from unfortunate lifestyle choices could otherwise be available for more productive national investments.

EDUCATION
When young people conclude that they can earn a better living through crime than through a legitimate vocation, they may be less inclined to finish their education. Poor educational performance is itself a risk factor for crime. Schools can play an important role, not only in improving cognitive skills in children at risk, but also in fostering social control and social competency. Schools can also help to mitigate the social and economic disadvantage that contribute to delinquency.50 Today’s weapons systems are of such complexity that they require educated people to operate them. Education is also essential to economic productivity.

SOCIAL WELFARE
The effects of crime may be regrettably redistributive. Crime tends to bear most harshly on those least able to pay. Homeless people, for example, are disproportionately at risk of victimization from street crime.51 The ability of governments to provide a basic safety net for all becomes more difficult through crime. The days when hordes of unemployed could be conscripted and sent off to fight foreign wars are gone. Poverty impedes productivity, and contributes to social dislocation. Deprived minorities may see no alternative to crime as a strategy for survival.

SOCIAL COHESION
A divided society is a vulnerable society. Australia’s cosmopolitan, multicultural society is at risk of division and conflict. Such division can arise from a variety of stresses, of which crime is certainly one. While most crime tends to occur between people of common background, those crimes that occur across racial or ethnic lines pose particular risks of deepening social divisions. For expressive as well as instrumental reasons, Australia has enacted legislation criminalizing incitement to racial hatred, and racially motivated violence.52

In Australia’s multicultural society, a degree of inter-ethnic crime is inevitable. But xenophobic crime is neither systematic nor widespread. Sexual assaults committed by males of Middle Eastern background against victims of European ancestry have not gone unnoticed, but have not threatened the social fabric.53 Imprisoned Australians from minority racial or

52 Racial Hatred Act 1995 (Cth); Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) s 20C(2); Wrongs Act 1936 (SA) s 37(1); Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT) s 66(2); Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) s 124A(2); Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) s 11; Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas) s 55.
ethnic groups may also be vulnerable to radicalization whilst in prison. The possibilities of prisons serving as a school for terrorists require that considerable care be taken in the management of correctional facilities.

INTERPERSONAL TRUST

Trust is not only the foundation of commerce, but it is the cement of a civilized society. Almost by definition, crime involves a violation of trust. A society whose citizens are always looking over their shoulders at one another may be less likely to join together in the common defence AND citizens who defraud their government can weaken the capacity of their country to defend itself.

The essence of fraud, in any of its manifestations, is the betrayal of trust. An economy where violations of trust are common will be a weaker economy, because mistrust per se may have a chilling effect on commerce; people will forego risky transactions. The future of electronic commerce, and the economy on which it is based, depends significantly on interpersonal trust. Various means of safeguard and verification will themselves entail expense, which will add to the cost of a transaction.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

While environmental quality was subordinate to economic development in the century following the industrial revolution, the importance of environmental protection is receiving increasing attention today. Activities that are harmful to the environment are becoming criminalized, and as environmental damage intensifies, environmental crime may be expected to receive increasing attention. Meanwhile, the impact of environmental damage on national security is becoming more apparent. Drought-affected nations of sub-Saharan Africa are unable to sustain their populations. Fisheries around the world have been depleted as a result of overfishing. Australia’s chronic shortage of water and soil degradation have had an adverse impact on the economy, but not to the extent that national security is in jeopardy. The long term effects of climate change are, however, another matter.

PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY

Bribery and corruption invite imitation. Ultimately what is at state is the legitimacy of government itself. Kleptocracy is an unsustainable form of government. Endemic corruption has often preceded the collapse of governments, indeed even states. At the very least, individuals are less likely to go the extra mile in the defence of their country when they perceive its leadership to be corrupt. Fortunately, Australian elected officials and public servants are relatively honest by world standards.58

Crime and Terrorism

To many commentators, today’s most explicit threat to Australia’s national security is terrorism. While there are those who see terrorism and crime as distinct and unrelated, the connections are undeniable.59

For example, most if not all behaviour defined as terrorism will constitute some breach of criminal law. In addition, criminal activity may be a predicate to terrorism. Terrorists may obtain false identification obtain explosives or other destructive substantives, or may engage in criminal activity to fund terrorist operations. In Peru the Sendero Luminoso enaged in “protection” of the drug trade to support their operations.60 The Nicaraguan Contras generated revenue from drug trafficking.61 In 2005, IRA elements were involved in a significant bank robbery in Northern Ireland.62 Tamara Makarenko speaks of a “crime-terror continuum” in which the two forms of activity have begun to share common organizational features, and to learn from each other.63

Terrorists may also engage the services of organized criminal for particular ends, such as the acquisition of high technology tracking equipment. The use of defence forces to respond to certain forms of criminal activity is not without precedent. For centuries, naval forces have sought to combat maritime piracy. In the United States beginning in the Reagan administration, naval and air forces became actively involved in tracking and interdicting drug traffic on the high seas.64 Australian maritime constabulary

58 Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index, 2006 <http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2006> [Accessed 2 March 2007]. However, the recent revelations, such as the Australian Wheat Board scandal, cast doubt on whether Australia will retain its high ranking in the TI Corruption Perceptions Index
63 Makarenko, op. cit.
64 P. Andreas and E. Nadelmann, Policing the Globe: Criminalization and Crime Control in
operations are sufficiently common that some strategists have expressed concern that they detract from the capacity for war fighting.65

The relationship between terrorism and organized crime was noted most recently in the Wheeler Review of Australian Airport Security.66 The Review suggested that criminals may assist in the provision of weapons, identity documents, or places of refuge for terrorists.67 It also suggested that criminal activity in and around airports can be helpful in identifying security weaknesses that might be exploitable by terrorists.

Conclusions

The world is becoming an increasingly interdependent place. Those societies who ignore this do so at their peril. By contrast, those who recognize this and plan for and adapt to a smaller world are likely to benefit most and suffer least.

Crime is undeniably linked to Australian national security, and the potential for crime to undermine Australia’s national security is certainly real. But because of its healthy economy, cohesive society and stable political system, contemporary Australia is sufficiently robust to withstand an extensive array of criminal insults, whether home grown, transnational, or offshore. By contrast, states like Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Colombia are demonstrably insecure, in no small part because of crime. And their security problems have become our security problems. Institutions traditionally concerned only with crime, and those focused only on security not only have a lot to learn from each other, but they will from now on find themselves working together.

The global criminal environment is complex and fluid, with transnational crime groups active at local, national and international levels. This requires innovative and adaptable measures to address the criminal challenges present in diverse geographical regions. For this reason, the AFP has a range of international networks in place with other agencies, as well as AFP International Liaison Officers located strategically around the world. There are currently 87 officers at 33 posts in 27 countries. This represents one of

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the largest international police liaison networks and is one of the largest Australian Government agency networks overseas. 68

In February 2004, the AFP International Deployment Group (IDG) was established “to manage the deployment of Australian police overseas” undertaking capacity building or peace operations. 69 On 25 August 2006, the government authorised the increase of IDG staffing levels to 1,200 personnel, over a period of five years. Included in that number will be a 200-strong Operational Response Group (ORG) that is ready to respond at short notice to emerging international law and order issues and stabilisation operations. It will contribute to regional stability and security on behalf of the Government of Australia by:

- Contributing to offshore law enforcement initiatives;
- Participating in capacity development programs within the Law and Justice Sector. 70

This will provide a Formed Police Unit 71 capacity to the IDG not dissimilar to that of the Italian Carabinieri, the French CRS [Republican Security Companies] and the Portuguese GNR [Portuguese National Guard], although each of these organisations are paramilitary rather than conventional police. 72

In its contribution to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into Australia’s Involvement in Peacekeeping Operations, the AFP stated:

Partner relationships in law enforcement capacity building will increase and demand greater coordination with AusAID. The secondment of AFP officers to AusAID’s Fragile States Unit and the Office of Development Effectiveness builds on the cooperative efforts both organisations enjoy.

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69 In March 2007, the IDG had some 350 officers serving overseas in Cyprus, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Timor Leste, Nauru, Tonga, Vanuatu, Cambodia and Afghanistan. Of this number, about 100 members have been seconded from Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia Police, and from thirteen Pacific Island Nations.
71 Formed Police Units are a new innovation in United Nations police peace operations. They specialise in dealing with civil disturbances and are normally the only armed UNPOL units. Each unit numbers between 100 to 150 officers drawn from individual contributing countries. AFP Briefing, 25 October 2007
72 A detachment of the Portuguese GNR is currently deployed in Timor Leste as part of the United Nations Civilian Police (UNPOL) Formed Police Unit. There are also 50 AFP officers attached to UNPOL, and an additional ten involved with a bilateral capacity development project known as the Timor Leste Police Development Program (TLPDP).
Joint operations with the Australian Defence Force as part of national offshore crisis response will become more frequent and increased interoperability will be necessary. Progression toward this objective will partly be achieved this year with the embedding of AFP officers in Joint Operations Command and the Australian Defence Force Warfare Centre, and the meeting of mutually agreed milestones as expressed in the interoperability joint Terms of Reference signed in November 2006.  

The IDG is at the leading edge of police preparation, planning and operational capacity. It will continue to engage regional and global partners to share experience and development of approaches to police capacity building, interagency coordination and deployment.

In recent years, the AFP has become an indispensable player in the Australian Government’s “whole of government” approach to foreign relations, overseas aid, border security, counter-terrorism policy and law enforcement initiatives. It has also been a trend setter in relation to police peace operations overseas, as envisaged in Recommendation 10 (Civilian Police Personnel) of the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi Report), of 21 August 2000. However, this also means that the IDG has become an instrument of Government policy, rather than a conventional element of the AFP, which is accountable to the courts, under the law.

At the same time, the role of Australian Defence Forces is also becoming more diverse. Over the past century we have seen disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping replace trench warfare as core defence business. Further evolution in the nature of both police and defence institutions may be expected in the years ahead.

Peter Grabosky is a Professor in The Regulatory Institutions Network, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University. peter.grabosky@anu.edu.au.

John McFarlane is a Visiting Fellow in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy. He lectures on transnational crime, intelligence and security issues, corruption, police peace operations, and related topics at ADFA, the ANU, Macquarie University, Victoria University of Wellington and

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73 The AFP and Australian Defence Force are increasingly working together in peace operations in the region. In the Solomon Islands, the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) is a regional police-led operation with military support. In Timor Leste, due to the current political situation, the military have primacy, with UNPOL in support.


several Defence establishments. He is a former Director of Intelligence in the Australian Federal Police. j.mcfarlane@adfa.edu.au.