

## Summaries

*Justitiële verkenningen* (Judicial explorations) is published eight times a year by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Boom Juridische uitgevers. Each issue focuses on a central theme related to judicial policy. The section Summaries contains abstracts of the internationally most relevant articles of each issue. The central theme of this issue (nr. 3, 2009) is *Politics and organized crime*.

### **A dangerous triangular relationship? Failed states, organized crime and transnational terrorism**

*T.E. Aalberts*

In recent years it has become popular in political discourse and academic literature to talk about the blurring boundaries between transnational terrorism and organized crime. In addition, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 have instigated a debate on the link between transnational terrorism and state failure. This article scrutinizes this so-called 'black hole' thesis and its relationship to the crime-terror nexus by addressing the political significance of such conceptual blurring within an international context that is increasingly characterized by uncertainty and uncontrollable risks.

### **The political-criminal nexus in Italy: 150 years of relationships between mafia and politics**

*L. Paoli*

This article analyzes the so-called political-criminal nexus in Italy, that is, the relationships of exchange and collusion between politicians and civil servants, on the one hand, and members of organised crime – and specifically Southern Italian mafia – groups on the other. Its main thesis is that the political-criminal nexus in Italy finds nowadays no parallel in any other Western, developed nation, with the possible exception of Japan. The extraordinary intensity of Italy's political-criminal nexus is related to the specificity of Italy's organised crime. This is discussed in the first section of the article. The following ones briefly sketch the evolution of the political-criminal nexus since Italy's Unification in 1861 and then focus on the last thirty years. The recognition of the recent

law enforcement successes is complemented by a discussion of the factors that favour the perpetuation of mafia organisations and the political-criminal nexus in the future.

### **Lombroso's views on the Italian mafia**

*C.J.C.F. Fijnaut*

The writings of Cesare Lombroso reflect to a high degree the crime problems being discussed in his time. This is certainly true for the phenomenon of the Italian mafia. Inspired by others writers, press reports and his own observations he came to the conclusion that criminal associations belonging to the Sicilian mafia and the 'Ndrangheta, in particular consisted of professional criminals and were quite often headed by an intelligent born criminal. In a quite detailed manner he described the ways in which these organizations were structured and the initiation rites that were applied to youngsters who wanted to join them. Lombroso made no secret of the political role the mafia groupings played in Italy, but he warned at the same time that one should take into account that these groupings also disguised themselves as political organizations in order to cover up their true nature: nothing else than criminal organisations. This warning gives room for the idea that – like in the United States – the Italian mafia could also take root in other European countries than Italy itself and not only use them as places to hide from the Italian police and judicial authorities or as market places to trade in illegal goods and services.

### **André Cools and Agusta; a Belgian affair**

*M. Cools*

This article describes the relation between the murder on the Walloon social-democratic politician André Cools on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1991 at Liege and the corruption case Agusta – dealing with the purchase of army helicopters – in order to reflect on typical Belgian criminological issues in this political organized crime topic. The murder committed by Tunisian hit-men was ordered through the influence of the personal cabinet of Van der Biest, a former minister. During the murder investigation a link with the Agusta corruption case was discovered and would tear down several ministers as well as the former NATO Secretary-General Willy Claes. Due to the existence of especially journalistic sources and a lack of scientific criminological material, the conclusions of this article are strictly

personal. The murder and the corruption prove the fact that political organized crime was a reality in Belgium. This case can stand as a scholarly example in the study of political organized crime in Belgium.

### **Crime and politics in Russia**

*D. Siegel*

Traditionally there was a lot of admiration in Russia for the social bandits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Later, under the Soviets, other brave political bandits, better known as revolutionaries, were praised. In addition, there were *vory v zakone* and the prisoners of Gulag. In this article the link between politics and crime in the Soviet and post-Soviet Russia is analyzed. In order to understand the emergence of old and new criminals it is necessary to follow the historical development of this interrelationship.

### **Organized crime, corruption and politics in Bulgaria**

*P. Gounev and T. Bezlov*

This paper focuses on how organized crime in Bulgaria uses political corruption to achieve its goals. It focuses, though, on one specific type of criminal structures, the ones controlled by former security officers. More specifically it analyzes the criminal careers of two well known Bulgarian crime figures and former security officers. The way they use the instrument of corruption changes through the years when they evolve from relatively unimportant racketeers into powerful local oligarchs.

### **Criminalizing consequences of international economic sanctions**

*P. Andreas*

The upsurge in the use of economic sanctions in the post-Cold War era has prompted much scholarly and policy debate over their effectiveness and humanitarian consequences. Remarkably little attention, however, has been devoted to their criminalizing consequences and legacy for the post-sanctions period. In this article, the author develops an analytical framework identifying and categorizing the potential criminalizing effects of sanctions across place (within and around the targeted country) and time (during and after the sanctions period). This framework is applied and evaluated through an in-depth examination of the case of

Yugoslavia. For comparative leverage and to assess the applicability of the argument beyond the Yugoslavia case, the analysis is briefly extended to Croatia. The article suggests that sanctions can unintentionally contribute to the criminalization of the state, economy, and civil society of both the targeted country and its immediate neighbors, fostering a symbiosis between political leaders, organized crime, and transnational smuggling networks. This symbiosis, in turn, can persist beyond the lifting of sanctions, contributing to corruption and crime and undermining the rule of law.