

Post-Soviet Organized Crime: A New Form of Authoritarianism

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The collapse of the socialist system in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has been hailed as the end of authoritarianism. With the demise of Communism, analysts concluded that citizens could no longer be denied access to information, restricted in their mobility, or compelled to obey by a powerful central state.

The pronouncements on the end of authoritarianism may have been premature. With the declining importance of the nation-state at the end of the twentieth century, the state is no longer the pre-eminent determinant of international politics or individual lives. But diminishing state sovereignty does not necessarily mean the disappearance of authoritarianism¹.

Post-Soviet organized crime represents a new form of non-state based authoritarianism. Citizens still live in fear but are now intimidated by non-state actors in the form of organized crime groups. The coercive apparatus of the state (the KGB and MVD) has been privatized to organized crime. Unlike Soviet authoritarianism which was focused on citizens within its borders or sphere of influence, the international reach of post-Soviet organized crime groups causes them to intimidate individuals and the media outside the confines of the Newly Independent States.

One Russian who served as a witness in an American legal proceeding concerning an alleged Russian organized crime figure commented:

In Russia today, it is the same terror system of the old days, just with different people ... My grandfather was a general who was discredited and killed by Stalin in 1937, so I know. Now it's not the communists, it's the mafia, But everyone in Russia is extremely afraid of them, and they have all the power. They don't even have to say they will kill you. You just know it.²

Traditional authoritarianism was based on the state's ability to force compliance, intimidate its citizenry and limit free elections and expression. Under communism, citizens were also limited in their economic and labor rights. The traditional authoritarian state, limited by national boundaries, could only fully control its citizens within the nation-state or the empire.

The organs of state control functioned within the country; rarely could or would the state reach outside its borders to control or punish its members who sought autonomy from the authoritarian state. While KGB operatives worked overseas in emigre communities and Trotsky was killed in Mexico, the force of Soviet repression was confined primarily within its borders.

Traditional Soviet authoritarianism was state-based and differs in many respects from the new authoritarianism of post-Soviet organized crime. But both traditional and non-state based authoritarianism affect all aspects of society including economic relations, political structures, legal institutions, citizen-state relations and human rights. The non-state authoritarianism has evolved from the old existing structures contributing to its current form. (See Table 1).

Traditional authoritarianism is based on total state control. The authoritarianism of organized crime represents abnegation of the state's obligations to its citizenry and reflects its inability to protect them from threats against their life, livelihood, or economic security. Organized crime is such a threat because the government is weak and simultaneously compromised by the corrupting influence of crime groups. Government structures fail to protect their citizens because they are collusive and complicit in the organized crime activity.

The authoritarianism of post-Soviet organized crime manifests itself in the following ways:

1. Domination of economy and ruling structures
2. Intimidation of citizenry
3. Privatization of state coercion
4. Intimidation of the press and journalists domestically and internationally
5. Privatization of state resources to organized crime
6. Subversion of emergent civil society

The New Authoritarianism

The Ruling Structures

Traditional theories of authoritarianism were based on the concept of the nation-state or the empire. Centralized governmental control was exercised by a monarchy, a military government or a communist system. Often there was a hegemonic political party or a dictator ruling the state. The Soviet period was characterized by both the personal dictatorship of Stalin and the

TABLE 1

SOVIET AUTHORITARIANISM VS. AUTHORITARIANISM OF
POST-SOVIET ORGANIZED CRIME

	Soviet Authoritarianism	Authoritarianism of Post-Soviet Organized Crime
Ruling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Based on concept of Soviet state 2. Centralized governmental control through communist system 3. Controlled elections 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not state based: predicated on demise of nation state or complicit with compromised governmental 2. Decline of centralized control; replacement by regional leaders beholden to or complicit with organized crime 3. Infiltration of organized crime into state structures undermines democracy and results in impotent state. Presidential, executive and legislative branches unable and unwilling to protect citizens' interests.
State Relation to its Citizens	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subordination of citizens' interests to the state and Communist Party 2. Compulsion of the citizen by state legal system 3. Citizens often mobilized for state's objectives 4. State limited civil society and denied human rights 5. State provided public services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corruption of state institutions undermines integrity of government 2. Abnegation of state's obligations to its citizens 3. State cannot protect its citizens or residents from global reach of organized crime groups 4. Subversion of emergent civil society

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Ideological control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control by Soviet state over film, art, mass media and scholarship through Glavlit (censorship authority) and criminal law 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intimidation of journalists, domestically and internationally 2. Acquisition of mass media to circumscribe news coverage 3. Lawsuits against foreign media who seek to disclose organized crime activity 4. Intimidation of scholars
Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under communist system, state ownership or control of economy 2. State domination of labor force or labor unions 3. Disorganized areas not immune from organized crime 4. Use of economic levers to control other states 5. Strategic economic alliances with other authoritarian states 6. Government guarantees business transactions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organized crime groups control large sectors of economy at home base; invest transnationally 2. Create new monopolies 3. Exploit privatization process of state economies to gain control of key industries 4. Intimidation of labor force and cooptation of labor unions 5. Strategic alliances with crime groups for economic objectives 6. Organized crime guarantees business transactions in absence of state protections

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Legal System	1. Legal system serves interests of state or controlling Party elite rather than welfare of citizenry	1. Weakened state legal system serves interests of organized crime rather than state or citizens
	2. State maintains monopoly on forces of coercion and deployment of violence	2. Privatization of forces of state coercion to organized crime.
	3. Absence of independent judiciary and executions	3. Corruption by organized crime undermines law enforcement, judiciary in successor states and in foreign countries.
	4. Extensive reliance on penal institutions and executions	4. State penal institutions are rendered ineffective because of domination by organized crime groups
	5. State-sponsored violence remains unpunished	5. Violence perpetrated by organized crime remains unprosecuted and unpunished by the state 6. Exploitation of weaknesses in legal structure. 7. Intimidation now central feature of contract enforcement

subsequent dominance of the powerful Communist Party under different Party Secretaries. In the USSR there were no free elections and elections were controlled by the Communist Party to ensure desired results.

The USSR epitomized the modern authoritarian state, mobilizing its population and using its highly developed control apparatus to ensure compliance from the citizenry.³ The military, law enforcement, the judiciary and the penal system were important in guaranteeing compliance with state objectives.⁴ The Soviet state collapsed in 1991 because it was no longer able to maintain centralized control over its empire. The failure of Soviet power does not mean the end of authoritarianism. Authoritarianism can exist without the state, an idea recognized by enlightenment thinkers.

While their analysis was based on man in a primitive state, their conclusions also apply to the contemporary period beyond the nation-state.

With the breakdown of state institutions, citizens do not enjoy legal protection for their life or their property.

Organized crime groups arise to provide the protection that the state cannot provide as was the case of Sicily in the nineteenth century.⁵ But in the successor states of the USSR, the collapse of existing state institutions has transferred individuals from the state to the private control apparatus. While previous analysts have focused on primitive societies which gave rise to some organized crime groups,⁶ in the USSR collapsing state structures contributed to the growth of organized crime.

The new authoritarianism of post-Soviet organized crime is a distinct phenomenon blending the privatized elements of the state control apparatus with existing organized crime groups. It replaces the state at the same time that it is collusive with the decaying state institutions.

Infiltration of Government

Transnational organized crime is able to assert control at all governmental levels by infiltrating governmental structures. This undermines existing democracy and results in an impotent state. Once this infiltration has occurred, presidential, executive and legislative branches of government are unable or unwilling to protect citizens' interests.

The impact of organized crime on the development of the state is particularly pernicious in the successor countries of the former Soviet Union that are presently in fundamental transition. Organized crime, by undermining the electoral process, is shaping the development of the future legal system and the norms which will govern daily life and the operation of the economy. The penetration of organized crime into the state exists from the municipal up to the federal level as organized crime groups have financed the election of candidates and members of the newly elected Russian parliament as well as those of other CIS states.⁷ Candidates, once elected, acquire parliamentary immunity.

The criminalized banking sector has financed different political campaigns as an insurance against post-election clean-up of the banking sector by the president or the parliament. Their presence within legitimate state institutions undermines political stability because their goals are to further the crime group's interest (illicit profits), not the interests of the populace at large.

In the Soviet successor states, corrupt officials and organized crime groups have ample opportunities to infiltrate and exploit the weaknesses of state structures. These compromised states cannot combat organized crime nor can they protect citizens from its power. Citizens who have resided in traditional authoritarian states still live in fear. But now the source of their

fear is different. It stems not from the state but from organized crime groups which have managed to privatize or coopt the coercive capacity of the state.

The State's Relation to Its Citizens

Under the authoritarianism of the Soviet Union, citizen interests were subordinated to the state and its ruling elite. Citizens were compelled by a legal system that did not uphold the rule of law but was a primary form of intimidation for the citizenry. Citizens were mobilized, particularly in the Stalin period, often through governmental propaganda.

Civil society was eliminated by state control of religious bodies and the prohibition of any independent clubs, sports activities or charities. The absence of any legitimate independent economic activity denied citizens the financial resources to initiate or run any activities. In this way the state prevented individual initiative.

State paternalism existed as the government provided for social and individual welfare, denying a role to civil society that might challenge its hegemonic control. Human rights were routinely denied because citizens did not have labor rights, mobility, access to a free media or the right to individual expression.

The Soviet system has collapsed. Both the coercive and the social welfare mechanisms of the state have deteriorated along with the central state. Instead, they have been supplanted by the force and highly limited protection of post-Soviet organized crime.

Democracy Undermined by Transnational Organized Crime

The global reach of transnational post-Soviet organized crime groups is especially pernicious because it denies residents of even democratic countries the protection they expect from the state. With the ability to travel internationally, many former citizens of the USSR have emigrated. Others travel or work overseas, often in Western Europe, Israel and the United States. Even when they obtain the legitimate right to residence and work in their new country, they often cannot escape the intimidation of the long arm of organized crime.

Post-Soviet organized crime groups intimidate Russian athletes and businessmen in Europe, Canada and the United States. Individuals abroad who fail to make their pay-offs have been killed by hit men specially sent from Russia to execute their crimes. Prostitutes in Western Europe are compelled to stay in prostitution because enforcers from the former Soviet Union threaten them and their families.

Legitimate businessmen who emigrated from the USSR in the 1970s and 1980s to Germany and the United States are now being extorted by

organized crime groups; law enforcers are often unable to protect these businessmen from the intimidation. These emigrants from an authoritarian state are still living in fear because the democracy in which they live is unable to protect them.

Civil Society

Organized crime thrives in an environment in which there is limited civil society. As Robert Putnam has pointed out in his recent book *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Southern Italy lacked the civil society that had developed over centuries in Northern Italy.⁹ Consequently, Southern Italy provided fertile ground for the development of organized crime.

A traditional authoritarian state like the Soviet Union, as previously discussed, limited civil society because such a society could undermine state control. Likewise the organized crime groups which have assumed much of the state's authority view civil society as a threat to their existence. Organized crime groups, therefore, undermine and coopt civil society.

Civil society has seemingly flourished since the collapse of the USSR. Yet recent research reveals that Russians believe that civil society is dominated by organized crime. Their assessment of this phenomenon is not misplaced. Many criminalized companies which, having illegally privatized state resources, now support sports teams and other performance groups as a way of currying favor. Heads of crime groups have sponsored sports clubs. The significant role that the criminalized banking sector has assumed in the development of 'civil society' has prevented the emergence of truly autonomous groups.¹⁰ Many charity funds have been used to launder money. The recent indictment in New York of individuals who embezzled from the Chernobyl victims' fund raises serious questions about the propriety of the management of this Russian charity.¹¹

There are no self-sustaining anti-mafia groups of any importance in the former USSR even though citizens recognize the pervasiveness of organized crime as one of the most serious problems facing their society. Citizens working against organized crime have had to curtail their activities following threats. Others have lacked the financial resources to support such activities. Potential activists are deterred by the risk with little prospect of success. They sense their impotence in a society where crime groups and clans dominate the economy and the political structure.

Citizens who confront organized crime groups still live in fear. Hit men are used to silence those who threaten the monopolies of organized crime or challenge their dominance in the banking sector or disclose their activities in the mass media. Law enforcement is incapable of protecting citizens or

even legal personnel who stand up to organized crime.

Ideological Control

The Soviet state maintained strict ideological controls.¹² This resulted in central state control over film, art, mass media, and scholarship. The legal system and the state bureaucracy were used to maintain this control. Censorship boards controlled expression and errant writers and scholars were prosecuted or even eliminated by the Stalinist legal system.¹³

Post-Soviet organized crime groups also achieve ideological control. Like the authoritarian state, they seek to suppress all challenges to their economic and political power. Disclosure of organized crime activity is an essential first step to combatting the phenomenon.¹⁴ Suppression of information about their activities is of paramount importance to leading crime groups.

Suppression of Information

In Russia, organized crime groups seeking to shape the future development of their economy acquire newspapers and television stations to restrict citizen access to objective economic coverage. Russian journalists and regional newspapers which attempt to confront organized crime are subjected to the strong arm techniques of organized crime. Journalists are resisting the purchase of newspapers by the criminalized banking sector because it is subverting newspaper coverage. Nevertheless, newspapers and magazines unable to stay viable without injections of cash are often selling out to banks. This is particularly affecting financial and banking reporting on television and in print.¹⁵

The significant financial resources of Russian organized crime are limiting press freedoms abroad by using intimidating law suits to stifle revelations in European and American newspapers. The *Wall Street Journal* was willing to assume the legal costs that followed the publication of an article revealing the significant role of former KGB personnel in a Russian bank. The suit against the *Journal* was dropped by the Russian side after it had spent millions of dollars in legal fees. Several western newspapers have failed to publish articles that disclose the activities of Russian organized crime groups because they fear the costly suits that will follow.¹⁶

Intimidation of scholars of organized crime is rare but not unknown. Olga Kristanovskaya, a Russian researcher received threats after publishing her sociological research on the criminalized banking sector.¹⁷ The journal, *Sociological Research*, subsequently was forced to issue a disclaimer.

The Economy

In the USSR, the state had control over the entire economy creating a state

monopoly of trade and production. A compliant labor force was assured through cooption, domination or control of labor unions.¹⁸ Strategic economic alliances were made with other authoritarian states through such trade organizations as COMECON.

Despite state control and domination of the economy, a shadow economy existed on a mass scale in the USSR. This economy prevailed in consumer areas not in strategic military areas or the corporate sector of paramount interest to the state. Therefore, even in an authoritarian state, disorganized areas of the economy were not immune from an organized or parallel economy.¹⁹ These shadow economies often laid the seeds for the future development of organized crime activity after the collapse of the Soviet state.

The Soviet court system, although denying individual liberties, upheld the financial interests of the state. Under the communist system, in the absence of private property, the role of government in the protection of transactions was less important than in a capitalist system with competing business interests.²⁰ Nonetheless, the state-controlled court and arbitration system ensured predictability and stability.

In the post-Soviet states there is no effective legal framework to protect the property rights of the new owners or to guarantee the security of businesses. Trade and business relations continue among entrepreneurs in the successor states. But with the breakdown of the USSR, there are no functioning legal mechanisms to ensure the repayment of debts or the resolution of financial conflicts between businessmen in Russia and Ukraine or Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

In the absence of courts with effective enforcement mechanisms, organized crime, as in Sicily in the past century, becomes the protector of private property and the guarantor of contracts.²¹ Businessmen in the successor states hire enforcers from organized crime to settle their disputes within their countries and across the NIS. The intimidation once associated solely with Soviet criminal justice is now a central feature of the contract enforcement of the growing civil sector.

Organized Crime and Control of Markets

Contemporary global markets prevent the extent of control that states once enjoyed over their national economies. Yet organized crime groups attempt to replicate the controls of an authoritarian state. Within the former USSR, organized crime groups are replicating the monopolistic controls over the economy that existed in the Soviet period. Organized crime groups are monopolizing many sectors of the economy including consumer goods, construction and much of banking. They are consolidating their wealth

through privatizing the huge resources of the state to themselves and their associates. Organized crime groups, according to investigations of the MVD, now control 40,000 businesses representing a significant share of existing capital.

Investment: National and International

Transnational crime groups have acquired billions of dollars in the last few decades. Highly speculative estimates of the extent of the illicit global economy range up to 1 trillion dollars. Soviet organized crime figures have entered into this global illegal economy since the collapse of the former USSR. Russian governmental authorities estimate that at least \$50 billion has been exported from Russia and a significant share of this money is illicit.

With this newly acquired and highly unregulated wealth, crime groups have been able to acquire key sectors of their national economy. In Colombia, organized crime groups have acquired significant urban real estate and large ranch areas.²² In Italy, crime groups own significant real estate holdings, resorts and increasingly have purchased large sectors of burgeoning light industry.²³ In Russia, possibly the most extreme case, organized crime groups have acquired or dominate a very significant share of the total economy including the banking sector, joint ventures and the highly lucrative export sector of natural resources.²⁴

With such significant assets at home, mature transnational organized crime groups diversify their portfolios investing very significantly overseas.⁵ While this same investment approach is pursued by legitimate multi-national corporations,²⁶ transnational organized crime groups do not necessarily globalize their portfolios because they are shrewd investors. In the Soviet successor states, the export of capital and the purchase of real estate and businesses abroad reflects the insecurity of domestic financial institutions and of private property.²⁷ Not surprisingly criminal groups are already noticeable players in lucrative real estate markets in the South of France, Cyprus, Israel and England.

Intimidation of Businessmen and the Labor Force

Private property, according to John Locke, is to be the citizens' bastion against state authoritarianism. But in the Soviet successor states, organized crime and the financial oligarchy have already acquired property on such a mass scale that citizens do not possess the property they need to be autonomous actors.

With organized crime's acquisition of businesses, citizens of the former Soviet Union have moved from one kind of control to another. The labor

force once controlled by the state or state-dominated trade unions is instead subject to the intimidation of organized crime which now operates as a major employer. Individuals cannot initiate businesses because organized crime intimidates all its potential competitors.

Exploitation of Privatization

State ownership or domination of the Soviet economy has been exchanged for control of the economy by organized crime groups which have a monopoly on existing capital. The much heralded process of privatization of state resources in many successor states is proving a growth industry for organized crime groups. These groups presently have the large capital resources necessary to acquire significant shares of the denationalized economy. Because transnational crime groups thrive in transitional or weakened states, the Soviet successor states have no effective safeguards against the criminalization of the privatization process. Furthermore, organized crime control of, and collusion with, legislators prevents the institutionalization of effective safeguards.

Citizens of the former Soviet states have acquired almost no resources from privatization. Instead, almost all property has been transferred to organized crime groups, former members of the Communist Party elite and corrupt members of the law enforcement and security apparatus. These groups now have the financial resources to execute their illicit activities both domestically and internationally.²⁸

Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances are being formed by post-Soviet organized crime groups with many groups abroad. This is not the *pax mafiosa* enunciated by Claire Sterling but it expands the reach and capabilities of post-Soviet organized crime.²⁹ The cooperation among the organized crime groups from different regions of the former Soviet Union with foreign crime groups enhances drug trafficking capacities, permits the smuggling of nuclear materials, and the trafficking in human beings. Geographic proximity explains the ties among Asian organized crime groups and criminals in the Soviet Far East.³⁰ All of these crimes reduce individual civil liberties and increase the authoritarian threat of organized crime.

The alliances are not explained solely by proximity because African crime groups have links with groups in Russia and Ukraine and Colombian groups have worked with their counterparts in these countries as well.³¹ In these cases the criminals are exploiting the weaknesses of the international legal system which permit them to forge alliances unimpeded by the laws or enforcers of their respective societies.

The Legal System

Authoritarian societies depend on their legal systems and their institutions of social control for the maintenance of their power. In the USSR, the state did not respect the rule of law. Instead, the legal system served state interests and the controlling Party elite. Citizen needs and interests were subordinated to those of the Communist Party and the Soviet state.

The state maintained the monopoly on the forces of coercion. There was no room for private police or security until the end of the Soviet period. The state relied on violence as an instrument of control. Random and calculated violence ensured a submissive population, particularly after the mass killings and the imprisonments of the Soviet period. Arrests in the middle of the night characterized nearly three decades of the Soviet period. These state-sponsored acts of violence remain unpunished because there is no accountability of the law enforcers to legal norms.

The independence of the judiciary, a key enlightenment idea, did not exist because the interests of the state were paramount. Legal institutions were highly repressive with reliance on severe and lengthy punishments. Executions were frequently used against both common and political offenders.

Weakened State Institutions

With the collapse of the USSR, existing state institutions were weakened and subject to manipulation by individual interests. Organized crime through bribes and coercion corrupted the already weakened legal institutions. In many of the former socialist countries low-paid police are bribed by or collusive in organized crime activity.³² Strategic bribes to judicial personnel preclude effective action against organized crime personnel.

The successor states with limited traditions of the rule of law have legal institutions highly susceptible to infiltration by organized crime. They are unable to protect the interests of their citizens in this transitional period.

Privatization of Law Enforcement

Privatization of law enforcement in the socialist context has not meant the same as in western countries. Rather than representing a new form of policing, privatization merely continued the worst of Soviet policing practices while freeing private police forces from legislative and institutional controls.³³ The approximately 800,000 individuals working in security bodies comprised of former law enforcement, security and military personnel do not just protect businesses but intimidate honest citizens and

business competitors. Many of them exist just as fronts to collect protection money from businessmen. They institutionalize organized crime violence. The significant role of organized crime in private policing is not confined to the former USSR; Poland and to a lesser degree other Eastern European countries face the same problem. With this massive presence, organized crime becomes a pervasive threat that touches the many aspects of daily life.

International Reach

The threat of post-Soviet organized crime groups is not just domestic. With their global reach, transnational crime groups also undermine the administration of justice in foreign countries. Law enforcers in different European countries have been bribed by crime groups from Eastern Europe and the successor states to ignore alien smuggling, drug trafficking or prostitution rings. The failure to enforce money laundering legislation by compromised regulators is particularly pernicious to the regulation of international financial markets.³⁴

The international mobility of the members of post-Soviet organized crime and their access to huge sums of money impedes apprehension and punishment. Criminals exploit the inconsistencies in the international legal system by wiring money through many countries, thereby impeding investigations of their financial activities. They avoid capture by travelling to countries that do not have extradition treaties with the country in which their crime was committed.³⁵

Penal Institutions Rendered Ineffective

Even when the courts in the Soviet successor states manage to convict and incarcerate members of their organized crime groups, their efforts often prove ineffective because the resources of the criminals permit them to bribe even top correctional officials. In Russia, transnational crime groups operate unimpeded from penal institutions even recruiting new members for their operations.³⁶ Detention facilities are presently so horrible that organized crime members threatened with an investigation will pay huge sums to avoid confinement. Therefore, even the most coercive actions of the government cannot protect citizens from the threat of organized crime.

Unpunished Violence

Legal institutions permit the most serious of organized crime offenders to perpetuate their activity with impunity. Perhaps the most visible sign of state impotence is that the violence perpetrated by organized crime remains unprosecuted and unpunished by the state. Almost none of the hundreds of contract killings perpetrated by organized crime groups throughout Russia

have been solved.³⁷ The same problem exists in many of the Soviet successor states. Furthermore, contract killings by Russian crime groups in the United States and Western Europe often remain unsolved.³⁸

Conclusion

Post-Soviet organized crime represents a new form of authoritarianism. While Soviet authoritarianism was based on a strong and highly coercive centralized state, the authoritarianism of organized crime groups is based on the weak and collusive governments of the successor states. By penetrating and influencing the already weak government structures, organized crime groups are undermining the states' responsibilities to their citizens.

The authoritarian threat posed by post-Soviet organized crime is not presently as dangerous as that of traditional authoritarian states. Citizens of the Soviet successor states cannot be sealed within the closed borders of a traditional authoritarian state like the Soviet Union nor subject to its comprehensive controls. But the increasing wealth and power of post-Soviet organized crime groups have the potential seriously to impede the transition to democracy.

Citizens cannot enjoy their new freedom because the collapse of the social safety net and of economic institutions has left many citizens in a weaker position than previously. The state can still exercise coercion, albeit less than before, but citizens also face the threat of organized crime. The collusion of corrupt state institutions with crime groups makes many individuals vulnerable to intimidation.

Individuals who live in fear of organized crime may welcome authoritarian controls and the enhancement of state power in the name of fighting organized crime. Therefore, organized crime represents a double threat. Post-Soviet organized crime groups intimidate individuals, promote violence, corrupt governmental structures, limit free markets, circumscribe expression and undermine the rule of law. At the same time, the comprehensive measures needed to combat the phenomenon may lead to a serious reduction in civil liberties.

The weak and collusive governments of most of the Soviet successor states are unable and/or unwilling to address the post-Soviet organized crime problem. The coordinated international effort needed to combat post-Soviet organized crime does not presently exist. In its absence, this crime may grow nearly unimpeded in the coming decades. The present passivity against the growing power and entrenchment of post-Soviet organized crime may usher in a new form of authoritarianism with very severe long-term consequences for the citizens of the Former Soviet Union – and indeed for the rest of the world.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of state sovereignty see, for example, Michael P. Fowler and Julie M. Bunc, *Law, Power and the Sovereign State* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1995), Raymond Vernon, *Sovereignty at Bay: The Multinational Spread of US Enterprises* (New York: Basic Books, 1971).
2. Pamela Constable, 'From Russia with Chutzpah,' *Washington Post*, 18 Aug. 1996, p.F4.
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4. Hannah Arendt, *Totalitarianism* (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace, 1976), Adam Podgorecki and Vittorio Oligati (eds.), *Totalitarianism and Post-Totalitarian Law* (Aldershot, UK: Dartmouth, 1996).
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7. 'Duma Adopts Anticorruption Bills,' *FBIS Daily Report*, 16 May 1994, p.32; A. Uglov, 'Prestupnost' i vlast', *Argumenty i Fakty*, No.27 (July 1994), pp.1–2.
8. Interviews with American law enforcement and BKA (German National Police) in Weisbaden, Germany, Aug. 1993.
9. Robert Putnam, Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993).
10. Igor Baranovsky, 'To Jail in America from Russia—With Love,' *Moscow News*, No. 26, 25 June 1993, p.13; Paul Khlebnikov, Joe Stalin's Heirs, *Forbes*, 27 Sept. 1993, p.131.
11. The indictment was issued in March of 1996.
12. According to Juan Linz, ideological control differentiates totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, see Juan Linz, 'Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes,' in F. Greenstein and N. Polsby Reading (eds.), *Handbook of Political Science* (Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1975), Vol.3, *Macropolitical Theory*, pp.175–412.
13. See various contributors in Carl J. Friedrich, *Totalitarianism* (New York: Universal Library, 1964).
14. Interview with Jonathan Winer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US Department of State on 1 Dec. 1995.
15. Elizabeth Tucker, 'The Russian Media's Time of Troubles,' *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol.4, No.3 (Summer 1996), pp.443–460.
16. Author interview with Michael Waller who wrote the article for the *Wall Street Journal European edition* and was subsequently a party to this legal suit, March 1996, Washington, DC.
17. 'Mafia's Growing Power Detailed by Sociologist,' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XLVII, No.38, Oct. 18, 1995, pp.1–3.
18. Leonard Bertram Shapiro and Joseph Godson (eds.), *The Soviet Worker: From Lenin to Andropov* 2nd ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984).
19. See for example Maria Los, *Communist Ideology, Law and Crime: A Comparative View of the USSR and Poland* (London: Macmillan, 1988); K.M. Simis, *USSR: The Corrupt Society* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).
20. For a discussion of the importance of the legal system in guaranteeing transactions see Gambetta. In the absence of these guarantees, organized crime can flourish.
21. Gambetta, pp.251–256.
22. Francisco E. Thoui, *Political Economy and Illegal Drugs in Colombia* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995).
23. 'Mafia Money Laundering Practices Explained, Italian Federation of Public Enterprises' reprinted in *Trends in Organized Crime* Vol.1, No.4 (Summer 1996), pp.96–102.
24. Timur Sinuraja, 'Internationalization of Organized Economic Crime: The Russian Federation Case,' *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, Vol.3, No.4 (1995), pp.34–53.
25. Thoui; Ernesto U. Savona (ed.) *Mafia Issues Analyses and Proposals for Combatting the Mafia Today* (Milan: International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme [ISPAC], 1993).

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27. Sinuraja.
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29. Claire Sterling, *Thieves' World: The Threat of the New Global Network of Organized Crime* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).
30. A.G. Korchagin, V.A. Nomokonov and V.I. Shul'ga, op.cit., pp.68-95; Observatoire Géopolitique des drogues, *Géopolitiques des drogues 1995* (Paris, 1995), pp.59-60; conference on organized crime in Irkutsk sponsored by the organized crime study center of the law faculty of Irkutsk State University, 30 May 1996.
31. Observatoire Géopolitique des drogues, *Géopolitiques des drogues 1995*.
32. Louise I. Shelley, *Policing Soviet Society: The Evolution of State Control* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.173-176.
33. The head of the Russian State Duma Committee on Security, Viktor Iliukhin, estimates that there are now approximately 800,000 individuals working in private security forces many of them controlled by organized crime. July 1994 interview with Viktor Iliukhin, Moscow.
34. Margaret E. Beare, 'Money Laundering: A Preferred Law Enforcement Target for the 1990s,' in Jay Albanese (ed.), *Contemporary Issues in Organized Crime* (Monsey: New York Criminal Justice Press, 1995).
35. The present federal indictment of a lawyer for Colombian drug traffickers suggests that he was hired by the Cali cartel because he had written the extradition legislation with Colombia while a high level US Justice Department official. See Meredith K. Wadman, 'Cocaine and Abbell,' *Washington City Paper*, 3 Nov. 1995, pp.17-32..
36. V.I. Seliverstov, 'Nekotorye voprosy preduprezhdeniia organizovannoi prestupnoi deiatel'nosti v mestakh lisheniia svobody,' *Aktual'nye problemy teorii i praktiki borby s organizovannoi prestupnost'iu v Rossii* (Moscow: Institute MVD Russia), pp.41-46.
37. For a discussion of recent conference sponsored by the Ministry of Interior on contract killings see 'MVD nazyvaet avtorov zakaznykh ubiistv', *Interfaks-AIF*, 3-9 June 1996, pp.1, 29.
38. For a full discussion of the transnational crime activities of post-Soviet organized crime see George J. Weise, Commissioner, US Customs Service, Statement before Committee on Governmental Affairs, Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Hearings on Russian Organized Crime in the United States, 15 May 1996.