

PERSPECTIVAS

A Collection of Current Research and Analysis from the William J. Perry Center

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By Wendell C. Wallace

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Abstract

Circumstantial evidence suggests that organized crime has witnessed a global explosion. Despite this disconcerting sign, investment in academic research on the impact of organized crime on societies in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) remains limited. As a result, this study was conducted to assess the impact of organized crime on SIDS in the Caribbean. The study utilized archival research, secondary data and self-administered questionnaires to forty (40) top level security and defense professionals in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago to better understand the impact of organized crime on societies in the region. The results indicate that there are negative social, political, communal, economic and governance and governability impacts on Caribbean societies as a result of organized crime.

Keywords: Organized crime; impact; societies; Small Island Developing States; Caribbean

Introduction

For many Caribbean countries, their existence is characterized by commonalities as well as diversity. Some common characteristics include history, language, geographical location, colonial domination and eventual discard, while diverse aspects include population size, developmental level and economic activity. In spite of their diversity, a major commonality of life in the Caribbean is the increase in organized crime which is greatly facilitated by the international drug trade (see Figueira, 2004). This increase in organized crime via international drug trafficking is largely due to the perception that the Caribbean is an appealing geographical ground for organized criminality to flourish. And, in fact a strong case can be made that this is true as the Caribbean lies at the middle of the supplier's market to the south and the consumer's demand to the north. Other factors that make the region receptive to organized crime include porous borders and social issues

such as poverty, unemployment, low educational achievement, weak governance, political populism and corruption.

It has been repeatedly argued that we live in precarious times due to the proliferation of real life events such as terrorism, war and organized crime and that these real life events merit further elaboration from researchers. However, this author articulates that one such event that merits careful consideration at this time is organized crime and its impact on societies in the Caribbean. This is premised on Gomez-Hecht's (2012) thesis that organized crime has negative impacts which range from social, economic and security to governance and governability. With reference to the Caribbean, it is argued that there now seems to be a pervasive and perhaps passive acceptance of organized crime by certain sectors of society, albeit, a small minority. Harriott (2011, 6) corroborates this claim as he points out that "organized crime in Jamaica is now more active, powerful and entrenched and perhaps more well tolerated by the people and some of their political representatives than ever before."

Many individuals may be tempted to ask, why focus on the impacts of organized crime and not on the root cause? The answer to this question is three-fold and frighteningly simple. First, there is much well conducted data driven research on the root cause of organized crime in the Caribbean (Townsend 2009; United Nations Human Development (UNDP) Report, 2012). Second, there is a constantly shifting, if not ever widening, nature and scope of organized criminal organizations in the Caribbean (as well as transnationally) which seem to be influencing and affecting government's decision making process (see United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2009). Third, there is now a perception that organized crime is infiltrating Caribbean governments with increasing rapidity, regularity and impunity. Therefore, to understand more completely the complex impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies, it is imperative that cross-regional studies on the phenomenon are undertaken. Instructively, the Christopher 'Dudus' Coke saga in Jamaica in 2010 as well as the now incarcerated Allan Sanford and his past political influence in Antigua and Barbuda are humiliating reminders of the possible impact of organized crime on Caribbean societies.

In light of the aforementioned, the issue of the impact of organized crime is especially salient in light of anecdotal evidence as well as recent data driven reports which suggest that it is a concern facing contemporary Caribbean societies. With this in mind, this researcher posits that organized crime must be confronted headfirst as a malaise like approach will allow it to flourish in an unfettered manner to which no quantum of historical amnesia will allow future Caribbean generations to forget. In short, Caribbean legislators cannot allow organized crime to become so ingrained into the moral, political and social fabric of Caribbean societies that it is accepted as a norm in the socio-political landscape of the region. This socio-criminological research draws on the work of Buscaglia (2008), Gomez-Hecht (2012) and Arias (2013) and focuses solely on the impact of organized crime on Caribbean societies. The research seeks to challenge the conventional academic and policy wisdom on organized crime as well as previous findings on the impact of organized crime by seeking out additional, newer and/or developing impacts.

Background

Richter-White (2003), Burgoyne (2012) and Nurgaliyev et al. (2014) all point out that organized crime is hardly a new phenomenon as it has been in existence for a long time and that no country is completely safe as it reaches transcend borders. As is the case with other regions, organized crime in the Caribbean is not a recent phenomenon as it has had a long-standing history which can potentially be traced back to organized piracy in the region in the 17th century. In spite of this, there remains a startling paucity of literature on the subject. In its contemporary form, organized crime began flourishing in the Caribbean in the 1970s and 1980s as international drug cartels increasingly began using the region as a trans-shipment point for illicit drugs and a host of other criminal activities. At the twilight of the 20th century; however, the nexus between organized crime and threats to democratic governance system, national security, politics, the Judiciary, the economy and other facets of Caribbean life was tenuous and based on speculation, with little support from empirical data. However, at the onset of the 21st century there appeared a proliferation of organized crime groups operating in almost every Caribbean country and this rendered the previous position on organized crime in

the Caribbean irrelevant. Increasingly, this irrelevance is now based on a plethora of new evidence establishing the presence of organized crime groups in the Caribbean.

Interestingly, organized crime is not an aspatial activity Hall (2010) and thrives in all countries without exception, even in the hard authoritarian (totalitarian) regimes (Nurgaliyev et al., 2014). With this in mind, organized crime groups and their illicit activities can be found in almost every Caribbean island. Further, their activities are not limited to conventional crimes but include newer organized criminal activities such as cyber-crime, intellectual property theft, money laundering, vehicle theft, extortion, oil bunkering and arms and human trafficking (see Bryan, 2000).

Reporting on the presence and impact of organized crime, Kavanagh (2013, 8) points out that in Guyana and Jamaica, organized crime is prevalent and has important impacts on governance” while Lashin (2005, 1) contends that “..... Caribbean associates attribute their increase in crime to gang and organized crime related incidents, especially those involving drug trafficking and sales.” In fact, Jamaica stands out in the global organized crime perception index where high scores are observed (Van Dijk, 2007). Evidence that organized crime groups and organized crime are present in the Caribbean comes from Dr. Peter Phillips, former Minister of National Security in Jamaica, who in addressing a Pan Caribbean function on organized crime in the Caribbean, stated “organized criminal activities ha[ve] reached unacceptable levels with gangs linked to the illegal drug trade now venturing into other criminal activities” (Green 2004, para 8, cited in Lashin, 2005, 3). Interestingly, Holder and Walcott (2014) argue that a daunting issue recently taking precedence is the increase incidences of organized crime within the Caribbean Basin.

Other researchers have also weighed in on the presence of organized crime groups in the Caribbean. Such is the case of Ramoutar who wrote in the Trinidad Guardian that “Trinidad and Tobago is not exempted from the cross currents of transnational organized crime (TOC) as it has not only gained a foothold in this country, but has penetrated all sectors of the society” (Ramoutar, 2012 as cited in Wallace, 2015, 2). Williams and Seepersad (2015, 95-117) also point out

that “.....organized crime has become a major concern for authorities in many Caribbean nations, including Trinidad and Tobago.” In a similar vein, Bobea (2010, 162) submits that “The Caribbean has progressively become a center of organized crime.” Bobea (2013) also submits that organized crime has become embedded in some Caribbean societies to the point of becoming a parallel power, with interests that overlap with politicians, bureaucrats, and law enforcement officials.

The presence of organized crime in the Caribbean is also evinced by media headlines on organized crime in the Caribbean which include, but is not limited to ‘Canned Cocaine - \$.6b in drugs hidden in Trinidad juices tins busted in Virginia (January 17, 2014)’, ‘Guyanese fugitive from US law being sought in Trinidad (February, 2012)’ and ‘the Dudus Connection - things are starting to unravel in Jamaica, as the drug money link between dons and politicians starts to get the media attention it deserves (May, 2010)’. The mediatized headlines outlined above may be representative of only a small percentage of the many alarming reports on organized crime in individual Caribbean countries; however, the headlines are symptomatic of occurrences in the wider Caribbean. Importantly, the concerns expressed by Bobea (2010), Ramoutar (2012) and Williams and Seepersad (2015) reflects the dangers posed by organized crime to Caribbean societies.

Rationale for the study

The rationale for the pursuit of this study is as follows:

1. To focus on criminal event/criminal activities (organized crime in the Caribbean) and not on the offenders, in light of pioneering work by Ronald Clarke and Marcus Felson who have contributed to “.....shifting the focus of some criminologists from a preoccupation with offenders to a detailed analysis of criminal events and criminal activities” (Kleemans et al., 2012, 87).
2. To create a body of knowledge on the impact of organized crime in the Caribbean as the UNDP (2012) posits a debilitating lack of research in the area. For instance, research has been long been conducted on the impact of organized crime on North American, European, American and African communities (Hofmann, 2009; Finklea, 2010; Kavanagh, 2013;

Nurgaliyev et al., 2014; Nwebo and Ubah, 2015); however, such research is generally lacking in the Caribbean. Unfortunately, even when such research is conducted, the Caribbean is usually lumped together with Latin American countries (see Bagley, 2004; Goehsing, 2006; Durán Martínez, 2007; Hofmann, 2009; Solís and Aravena, 2009; Arias, 2010, 2013; UNODC, 2012). Further, it argued that data are sparse; for most [Caribbean] nations, we must rely on learning about the consequences of organized crime through anecdotal evidence (UNDP, 2012) and that most of what is known comes from the two largest Caribbean nations: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (see UNDP 2012).

3. To create a body of literature solely on the impact of organized crime in the Caribbean. There has been some recent research on the existence of organized crime in the Caribbean (Harriott, 2008; UNDP, 2012; Anderson and Bourne, 2013; Arias, 2013); however, those studies were focused on the root cause of organized crime (as well as its significance, challenges posed to good governance, policing, national security and the ways it has shaped security policies) and not solely on the impacts.

The issues outlines at 1-3 above, reflects a critical gap in the literature which affects the knowledge base on the impact of organized crime on Caribbean societies. Indeed, these warranted the need to stimulate analytical and data driven discussions on the impact of organized criminality for Caribbean peoples. Additionally, while the impact of organized crime is not easily measured, the literature suggests that the impact of organized crime is potentially significant especially considering the homogenous nature of most Caribbean countries. This homogeneity is largely due to their small and comparatively weak national budgets, poverty, porous borders, weak governance capacities and inadequate national security infrastructures.

Despite the limitedness of research and literature on the impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies, available international literature cogitates that its impacts can be far reaching and deleterious (see Buscaglia, 2008; Gomez-Hecht, 2012; Arias, 2013; Kavanagh, 2013). Therefore, the author's desire was to ensure that the impacts of organized crime are made more visible to Caribbean community and their legislators. This is predicated on the notion that if the impacts

of organized criminality are made highly visible through empirical research, then Caribbean-wide governments may be more amenable to act in a proactive manner on the issue. Ultimately, this approach may render obsolete the previous laissez faire attitudes in dealing with organized crime. Within this narrow context, this study explores the interplay of organized crime and its impact on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by way of an analysis of views expressed by security and defense personnel in five SIDS in the Caribbean. Instructively, this paper provides the first scholarly account exclusively dedicated to the analysis of the impact of organized crime on Caribbean societies.

Methodology

This research utilized archival research as well as primary and secondary data to assess the impact of organized crime on Caribbean societies. Survey questionnaires were distributed to forty (40) front-line security and defense personnel in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. This included senior police officers, security professionals, lawyers, senior lecturers in criminology and criminal justice, senior public servants with responsibility for security and defense and military and other law enforcement personnel. Data were gathered from these personnel with intimate knowledge of the operation of organized crime groups in the region. Much care was taken to explain to the respondents that impact refers to the “consequences of an action that affects people’s lives in areas that matter to them” (European Science Foundation, 2012, 5) and encompasses changes to the economy, politics, social structures, public policy and the quality and way of life. It was also explained to the respondents that the impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies refers to the impacts emanating from the actions of locally organized crime groups that consisted of primarily local residents which were generally involved in criminal activities within their jurisdictions.

The respondents for this study were chosen using purposive sampling. This method of sampling is considered as the most important kind of non-probability sampling to identify the primary participants (Welman and Kruger, 1999). The sample was selected based on the researcher’s judgement and the purpose of the

research (Greig and Taylor, 1999) by actively seeking individuals who have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched (Kruger 1988). Based on the nature of this heuristic study, those respondents are the primary unit of analysis (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000). Due to the sensitive nature of the study, the comparatively small size of the Caribbean and the limitedness in terms of the number of persons in the Caribbean with the designation ‘security and defense professionals’, much care is taken in this paper to keep the respondents anonymous.

The data for this paper were generated through use of a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of a two section, six page instrument containing 36 items. The survey instrument had a mixture of closed and open ended questions. The questions were designed to measure core issues surrounding organized crime and its impacts in the Caribbean. Section one was the demographic section which collected data on the age, gender, location, employment status and length of time employed in the security and defense industry. Section two gathered data on the respondent’s knowledge of the presence, operation and impact of organized crime groups in the region. The respondents represented a variety of demographics (countries, positions, educational levels, years on job etc.) and this is highlighted at table 1.

Due to the sensitive nature of the study, ethical clearance was provided prior to the conduct of the study, informed consent was sought and received from the respondents and anonymity and confidentiality guaranteed to them. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was piloted in Trinidad and Tobago to a group of security and defense personnel and minor adjustments made to correct ambiguities. The questionnaire took between 15-20 minutes to complete. The data were screened for inconsistencies and then analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS); however, keeping in mind the nature of the study and the prospective audience, the data are presented using simple percentages to foster greater readership by the non-academic audience.

Organized crime

Globally, the term ‘organized crime’ has been loosely and generically used to describe the criminal activities of organized criminal groups consisting of three or more persons who commit serious crimes over a period of time for profit (Gastrow, 2001). However, the term ‘organized crime’ faces a definitional conundrum (Richter-White, 2003) as the nature of organized crime tend to differ from country to country, thus facilitating “a spectrum of organized crime” (Dietzler, 2013, 330). In part, this is because, unlike in the case of rape or robbery or other types of offences, organized crime is a conceptual rather than a legal category (Sacco, 2002). In fact, it is submitted that ‘organized crime’ is a contested concept (Levi, 2002; Albanese, 2005; Hornsby, and Hobbs, 2007), while Hauck and Peterke (2010, 408) argue that “Organized crime is a very pithy term.” Indeed, there is a great amount of fuzziness in identifying and defining the parameters of organized crime as members of organized crime groups are sometimes involved in legal activities which serve as possible alibis for their illicit activities. However, it is important to operationalize organized crime as “the first requirement of measuring organized crime in an international context is agreement on its definition” (see Von Lampe, 2004 as cited in Van Dijk, 2007, 40). Further, a clear definition of organized crime is important for both legal and policy purposes (Finklea, 2010).

Interestingly, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime does not define ‘organized crime’, but at Article 2 defines what is an ‘Organized criminal group’ and criminalize participation in such groups. However, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) (2010) defines organized crime as the activities emanating from any group having some manner of a formalized structure and whose primary objective is to obtain money through illegal activities. In the following discussion, organized crime is operationalized using the definition provided by Flores and González (2009, 21), to wit, “a social network made up of individuals that commit illicit activities during a prolonged period of time with the goal of obtaining the biggest economic benefit possible.” In the context of this paper, the following is a non-exhaustive list of organized criminal activities: drug and human trafficking, illicit trade in counterfeit goods

and illegal commodities, arms trafficking, prostitution, illegal trade in wildlife, money laundering, identity theft, internet fraud, piracy, corruption, forgery, oil bunkering, extortion and kidnapping and racketeering. In light of the wide range of acts which are considered as organized criminal activities as well as the lexicographical quagmire surrounding the definition of the term (Hagan, 2006), the author's decision was to focus on 'organized crime' writ-large, rather than a specific organized criminal activity.

The research context

In simplest terms the Caribbean is the archipelago that links North and South America. The Caribbean straddles important air and sea routes linking East and West, North and South hemispheres and has been described in security terms as the porous third border of the USA. The Caribbean refers to thirteen (13) countries which are part of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the countries used as proxies for the study (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago) are all part of the Caribbean Community. All of the Caribbean islands have overlapping maritime zones and the threats of organized crime are common to all island states. Therefore, as the countries under inquiry in this study are similar in many respects, it is expected that the vulnerabilities of organized crime and its impacts should generally be homogeneous.

Literature review

Starting possibly in the 1950s, organized crime has attracted global attention, mainly due to its transnational nature. For the Caribbean, organized crime has resulted in a heightened sense of security and societal awareness due to its negative impacts as well as 'the globalizing nature of violence' as described by Appadurai (2006). As it relates to the impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies, it is argued that there are numerous negative impacts (Sung 2004; Duran Martínez, 2007; Buscaglia, 2008; Gomez-Hecht, 2012; Kavanagh, 2013). Sung (2004) illustrates this argument by highlighting that organized crime groups facilitate the entry of illicit drugs into urban and rural areas and raise the level of violence in

those communities by corrupting the moral values of public officials by the use of graft, extortion, intimidation and murder to maintain their operations. Particular researchers also cogitate that organized crime groups and their illicit activities may mock democracy, erode the state's capacity to govern effectively, erode the Rule of Law, hinder the social structures and compromise public safety (Sung, 2004; Aravena, 2009). In the words of Duran Martínez (2007) the prevalence of organized crime threatens territorial sovereignty, weakens institutions, damages the maintenance of public values through law, and discredits states before the international community.

According to the UNODC (2012) organized crime serves to undermine development by driving away business as both foreign and domestic investors see crime as a sign of social instability, and crime increases the cost of doing business. Organized crime therefore has the potential to hinder development and governance in the Caribbean by eroding social and human capital and degrading the quality of life as well as forcing skilled workers to leave the region (UNODC, 2012; Aravena, 2009). Further, organized crime syndicates influence decision making particularly in urban areas and at national levels (UNESCAP, 2009). Aravena (2009, 7) reporting on organized crime asserts that this [organized crime] challenges the "rule of law," negatively impacts the economy and security, and it also disturbs the political systems and democratic institutions." In fact, recent research by Fukuyama (2011) points out that organized crime threatens the state and its basic institutions and a failure to deal effectively with these problems has the propensity to undermine the legitimacy of democracy.

Existing research has documented that the activities of organized crime groups also facilitates the underground economy inclusive of prostitution and human trafficking which sows the seeds of misery. Further, where elected governments are unable to provide basic functions such as education, security, governance or guarantee citizens' rights and security, organised crime groups may seek to fill that void and perform those functions (Gomez-Hecht, 2012; Bergeron, 2013). This is evident in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago where there is clear evidence of organized crime groups sharing public space of governance and crime control with public authorities (see Arias, 2010; Bobea, 2013). Commenting on Jamaica, Arias

(2010) contends that in Jamaica organized crime groups, drug dealers and vigilante groups regularly act as clientelist interlocutors in poor neighbourhoods and share the space of governance with public authorities.

The extant literature on organized crime also submits that there is a relationship between organized crime and negative impacts on democratic governance (Durán Martínez, 2007; Hofmann, 2009). For Caribbean people, this is evinced by the images of violence which erupted in the West Kingston, Jamaican community of Tivoli Gardens in 2010 over the search, arrest and eventual extradition to the USA of Jamaican organized crime boss Christopher Michael Coke aka ‘Dudus’ as well as the damage to property and the loss of more than seventy-five (75) lives. The diplomatic concatenation between the USA and then Jamaican Prime Minister, Bruce Golding (Leader of the Jamaica Labour Party) over the slow pace of extradition proceedings against ‘Dudus’ was played out in the international media and allegedly led to Golding’s resignation from the Jamaica Labour Party in 2011. Similarly, the UNDP (2012) points out that organized crime contributes significantly to the levels of criminal violence and other forms of crime and undermines the rule of law through the corruption of the judicial process. Continuing, the report submits that drug production and trafficking in Jamaica are both enabled and accompanied by organized crime. In like fashion, but to a lesser extent, officials of the Royal Barbados Police Force report that organized crime has been linked to drug-trafficking and fighting over turf.

The UNDP (2012) submits that organized criminal networks in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and Jamaica are increasingly becoming involved in human trafficking. For example, investigative work in Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados recently discovered that the majority of prostitutes in the country were immigrant women forced into the sex trade. The investigation determined that organized crime groups corruptly obtained the cooperation of immigration officers and senior officials, who were frequently bribed to allow the women into the country (UNDP, 2012). Continuing, the report also points out that in Trinidad and Tobago, organized crime groups commit high-level fraud through the Unemployment Relief Programme (URP) which is designed to provide short-term employment to the jobless. Contracts for these URP projects are sometimes corruptly obtained

and managed by organized crime groups who fraudulently magnify the number of persons required to complete particular jobs. It was also intimated by the UNDP (2012) that the proceeds from the URP projects are utilized to facilitate further organized criminal activities. This nexus between corruption and organized crime has been corroborated by Hagan (2006, 129) who points out that “Corruption has long been considered one of the defining characteristics of organised crime.”

From the perspective of economics, the International Narcotics Control Board (2002) as cited in Mekinc et al. (2013, 220-221) submits that “organized crime directs money away from sound investments towards low quality one, which in the end generate relatively little future-oriented economic activity.” The International Narcotics Control Board (2002) also points out that organized crime encourages financial investment in non-productive sectors. With this in mind, organized crime groups and their members tend to invest proceeds from their illegal activities in real estate, bars, restaurants, prostitution, cars and transport companies (Unger, 2007). Though not released in an official capacity, it was indicated (verbally) by several regional police officers that this is a preferred method of cleaning dirty money (money laundering) by local organized crime groups and their minions.

Findings

Nurgaliyev et al. (2014) point out that organized crime groups are sources of strategic threats and challenges related not only to police and that there is a wide range of possible impacts emanating from acts of organized crime. It is no secret that organized crime has negative impacts. For example, Kavanagh (2013) points out that if left unchecked, organized crime, even at a small scale, can produce long-term negative impacts, particularly in development settings where institutions remain weak and democratic processes are still consolidating. Continuing, Kavanagh (2013) submits that over time, it can slowly erode the capacity and will of a state to respond to the needs of citizens. It generally accepted that organized crime has negative impacts and that governments should endeavour to ameliorate somewhat its most damaging effects (Gill 2006, 281–282). It is against the background of the postulations by Gill (2006), Kavanagh (2013) and Nurgaliyev et al. (2014) that the findings of this study should be viewed.

Respondent's demographics

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents

Country	Number of respondents	Level of education	Approximate number of years on the job
Antigua and Barbuda	3 (one individual employed in Barbados)	Secondary School, Undergraduate, Postgraduate	20.5 years
Barbados	4	Undergraduate, Postgraduate	21.6 years
Jamaica	9 (two individuals employed in Trinidad and Tobago)	Undergraduate, Postgraduate	25 years
St. Lucia	6 (two individuals employed in Trinidad and Tobago)	Secondary School, Undergraduate, Postgraduate	22 years
Trinidad and Tobago	18	Secondary School, Undergraduate, Postgraduate	30 years

Source: Fieldwork (2014).

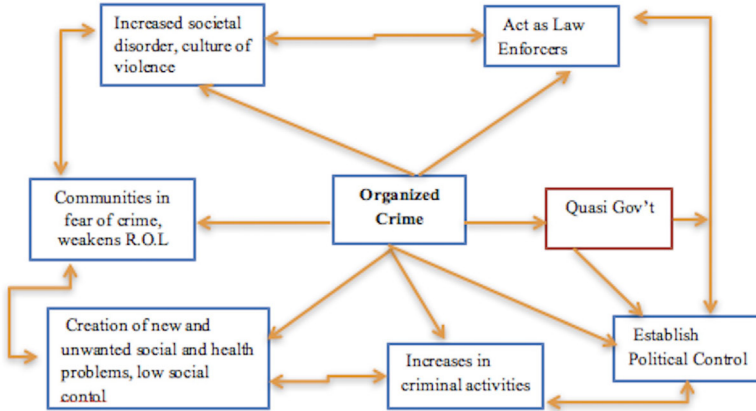
The offices held by the respondents included senior police officers (Assistant Superintendent, Senior Superintendent, Deputy Commissioner of Police), Retired Coast Guard officer (Commissioned), Senior Crime Analysts, Army personnel (Major, Colonel), Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Senior Government official (National Security), Private Security Consultant, Attorney-at-Law and Senior Military officer (Retired) (see Table 1).

Eighteen of the respondents were nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, nine were citizens of Jamaica, six were citizens of St. Lucia, three were from Antigua and Barbuda and four of the respondents were Barbadian nationals (see table 1). In terms of academic qualifications, approximately ninety per cent of the respondents were educated up to the undergraduate and postgraduate level. Their experience, as indicated by the approximate number of years on the job, ranged from 20.5 years in Antigua and Barbuda to 30 years in Trinidad and Tobago.

Social Impact

A view expressed by the respondents, which was a common thread throughout the dataset was that organized crime tends to increase societal disorder and create new and unwanted social and health problems. It was also posited that fear of organized crime groups may leave communities in constant fear, may cause wanton increases in criminal activities in communities as well as stigmatize certain locales. The respondents also proffered the view that organized crime contributes to the culture of violence in the Caribbean and weakens the Rule of Law in the region. This position is consistent with the views of international literature such as the UNDP (2012). Eighty per cent (80%) of the respondents noted that there were negative social impacts such as low social control, increased fear of crime, the legitimizing of crime and deviance, the inability of state guaranteed security and growth in the stature of organized crime groups as law enforcers within local communities. This particular finding (law enforcers within local communities) echoes the view of Bobeia (2013) who points out that in Jamaica, for example, organized criminals groups (posses and yardies) have become part of the political system and assist the government to establish political control in garrisoned areas. As it relates to the social impact of organized crime on Caribbean societies, one respondent opined, *“I have witnessed the impact of organized crime in at least three Caribbean countries (Barbados, Jamaica and St. Lucia) as I have worked in those countries for extended periods. OC is really a scourge for young men and women as they [young men and women] have become materialistic, do not wish to earn an honest living and end up a drug mules, gun runners, drug addicts (pipers) and prostitutes and if they are lucky, dead before thirty”* (senior military security and defense professional with approximately 18 years’ experience - Respondent #28). The views expressed by the study’s respondents on the social impact of organized crime have found support in the international literature from Duran Martínez (2007), Buscaglia (2008) and Gomez-Hecht (2012) who all submit that there are deleterious social impacts which flow from organized crime.

Figure 1 - Social Impacts of Organized Crime in the Caribbean



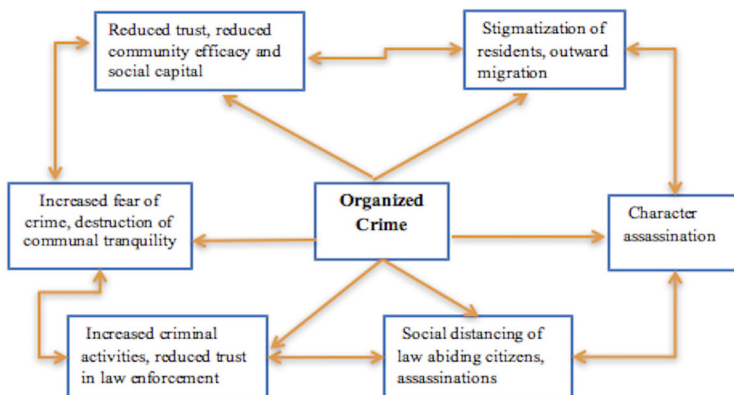
Source: Fieldwork (2014).

Communal Impact

Ninety per cent (90%) of the respondents submitted that organized crime tends to reduce trust between community residents, reduces community efficacy and social capital and also negatively affects the relationship between the police and community residents. The respondents also submitted that increased criminal activities within some communities is as a direct result of organized crime and that it may lead to the negative stigmatization of all persons residing in those communities. Organized crime was also seen as having other implications for communities such as the destruction of communal tranquility (75%), fear of crime (80%), anxiety, silence, loss of the ability to move freely within communities (66%), distrust of neighbours and security forces, outward migration from stigmatized communities (81%) and the encouragement of residents to become involved in illicit criminal activities (77%). The respondents (77%) also indicated that increase in poverty and crime is another negative of organized crime on Caribbean societies and this echoes previous findings by Goede (2013). Another important finding was that the respondents regarded organized crime groups and their activities as a pervasive issue. The respondents also attributed the increase in violence in the region to the presence and activities of these groups. Instructively, research by Lashin (2005) and Holder and Walcott (2014) proffer similar findings.

With regards to the impacts of organized crime for Caribbean societies one respondent placed the phenomenon into context by stating *“The magnitude of organized crime for communities in the Caribbean is multi-layered with the destruction of human capital due to drug addiction and violence at the base”* (retired Naval professional with approximately 30 years’ experience in law enforcement - Respondent #7). The study findings also submitted that organized crime creates avenues for violence of all descriptions and lead to barbarian exactions and regressions, corrupt politicians, infiltrate state institutions, weaken law enforcement apparatus and mock the Rule of Law. Approximately 87% of the respondents intimated that organized crime in the Caribbean has negative impacts and outcomes for law abiding citizens. These (impacts and outcomes) were identified as murder/attempt murder of individuals and/or family members, character assassination and social distancing of these individuals by members of organized crime groups. Several respondents highlighted the death by poisoning of morally forthright Jamaican police officer, Senior Superintendent Dayton Henry in 2012 as well as Trinidad and Tobago’s Senior Counsel Dana Seetahal’s assassination in 2014 as evidence of the dangers which some law abiding citizens face for non-collusion with organized criminal elements in the region. Generally, the data which emanated from this aspect of the study were supported by previous research by Griffith (2004), Aravena (2009), Gomez-Hecht (2012) and the UNODC (2012).

Figure 2 – Communal Impact of Organized Crime in the Caribbean

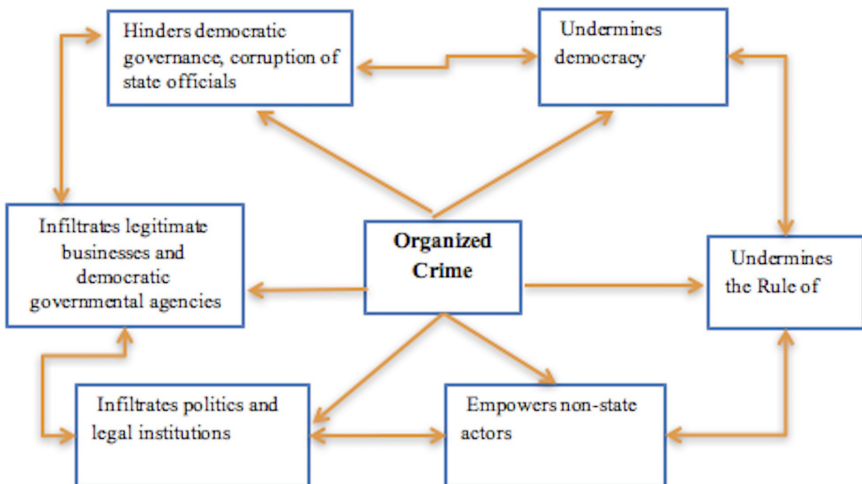


Source: Fieldwork (2014).

Impact on Governance and Governability

With reference to governance, ninety-five per cent (95%) of the respondents proffered the view that organized crime hinders democratic governance in the Caribbean and undermines democracy due to threats to the state by organized crime groups as they seek to assert themselves as major actors within the state. This position has the support of both Aravena (2009) and UNODC (2013). The findings are also supported by Kavanagh (2013, 4) who pontificates “organized crime has a significantly detrimental impact on governance in many developing countries” and from Van Dijk (2007, 55) who points out that “the most important negative effect of organized crime, offsetting all possible benefits, is its pernicious impact on governance.” Seventy per cent (70%) of the respondents indicated that organized crime groups and their operatives have infiltrated legitimate businesses, politics, democratic governmental agencies and other legal institutions in the island. This finding is significant as those actions may serve to empower those who operate outside the law (see UNODC, 2013). The results emanating from this aspect of the research (impact of organized crime on governance and governability) are consistent with the findings of Durán Martínez (2007), Hofmann (2009) and Gomez-Hecht (2012).

Figure 3 – Impact of Organized Crime on governance and governability in the Caribbean

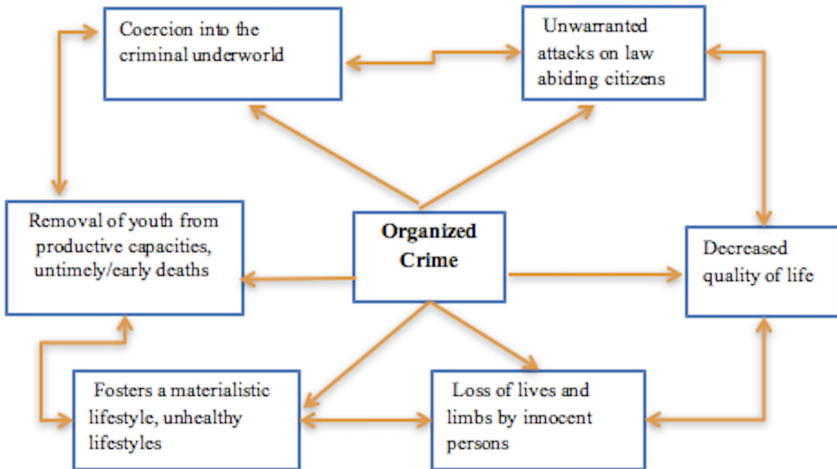


Source: Fieldwork (2014).

Individual Impact

Sixty per cent (60%) of the respondents felt that innocent individuals have become targets of organized criminal groups due to familial relations. Another view was that organized crime may foster a materialistic lifestyle among those not involved in criminality as they view criminals committing crimes with impunity or perceived assistance from the state. Several of the respondents postulated that organized crime may cause the quality of life to be decreased in the Caribbean, may cause the loss of innocent limbs and lives and may cause young persons to be taken out of productive sections of society and coerced into the criminal underworld. In other words, at least sixty per cent (60%) of the respondents felt that the quality of life in the Caribbean was negatively impacted by the presence and activities of organized crime groups in the region.

Figure 4 – Impact of Organized Crime on Individuals in the Caribbean



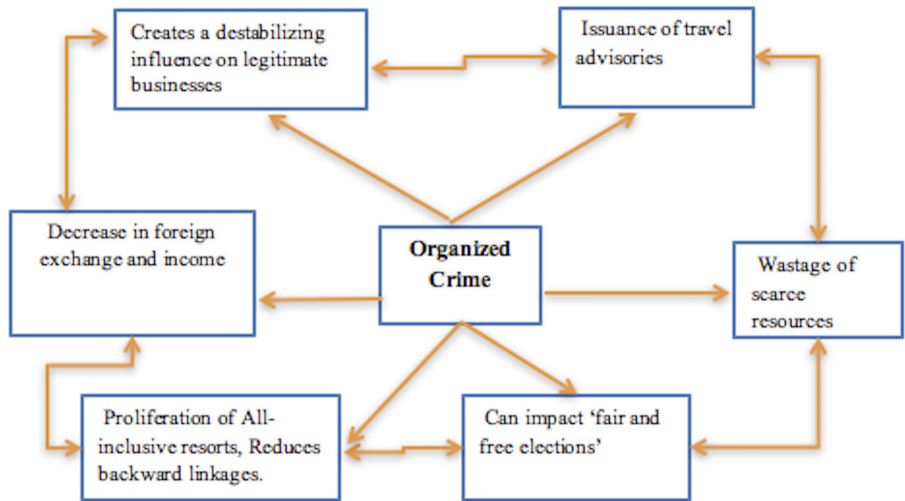
Source: Fieldwork (2014).

Economic Impact

With respect to the economic position of the Caribbean, the respondents submitted that organized crime has negative impacts on legitimate businesses by creating a destabilizing influence. It was posited that this destabilizing influence can serve to increase the vulnerability of fragile economies of small island states in the

Caribbean. Further, it was indicated that major industries, especially tourism, will face negative impacts from organized crime as increasing rates of crime may cause international governments to issue travel advisories to their residents against travelling to the Caribbean. The respondents (77%) submitted that this may cause a decrease in foreign exchange and income as the Caribbean region is largely dependent on tourism for its livelihood. Another impact of organized crime for Caribbean societies from an economic standpoint was that organized crime has the potential to cause wastage of scarce resources in addressing security issues to the detriment of other critical social needs as well as on education. It was also noted that organized crime tends to hinder the economic development of nation states and this position has found support from (Aravena 2009: 7). Eighty-three per cent (83%) of the respondents also submitted that organized crime groups might have a direct impact on ‘fair and free elections’ as democratically constituted elections can be bought through graft and corruption by organized crime groups (see also UNODC 2013). The economic impacts of organized crime on Caribbean residents as espoused by the participants of the study are described above and draws upon the work of Gomez-Hecht (2012). Indeed, there are clear similarities between the findings of the study as shown at figure 3 and those of Gomez-Hecht (2012).

Figure 5 – The Economic Impact of Organized Crime in the Caribbean



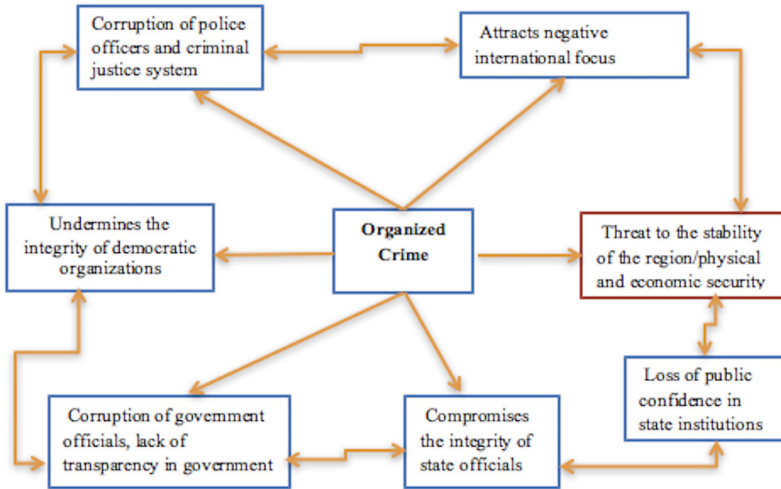
Source: Fieldwork (2014).

Political Impact

Regarding the political impacts of organized crime on individuals in the Caribbean diaspora, the majority of the respondents (83%) reported that organized crime has far reaching negative impacts for the political landscape of the Caribbean as it relates to corruption. The respondents noted that the major impacts of corruption on the political landscape in the Caribbean included the corruption of government officials, police officers and other persons within the criminal justice system. This position has found support from (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, n.d.; Sung, 2004; UNODC, 2013) as well as from Fletcher and Herrmann (2012) who cogitate that there is a strong link between organized crime and public officials in the areas of border control, law enforcement, government and the judiciary. In this context, the impact of organized crime is deleterious as it compromises the integrity of state officials and leaves them powerless to act.

Organized crime was viewed by sixty-four per cent (64%) of the respondents as having the potential to undermine the integrity of democratic organizations and political institutions within the Caribbean via corruption of public officials. This position by the respondents is consistent with the findings of Buscaglia and Van Dijk (2003) as cited in Fletcher and Herrmann (2012, 164) who point out that “organized crime and corruption reinforce each other.” The respondents also proffered the view that organized criminality also serves to attract negative international focus from legitimate and illegitimate persons/governments in the developed world as well as attract international sanctions. Organized crime was also viewed by the majority of respondents as a major threat to the stability of the region and to the physical and economic security of its citizens. This position has found support from Sung (2004). Other impacts included the increased cost of security as a result of organized criminality; the loss of public confidence in state institutions, infiltration of organized crime group members into legitimate state institutions and the loss of or lack of transparency in government actions. The impact of organized criminal activities on Caribbean societies in a political context is depicted at figure five and mirrors the work of Gomez-Hecht (2012).

Figure 6 – The Political Impact of Organized Crime in the Caribbean



Source: Fieldwork (2014).

Other Key Findings

Sixty-four per cent (64%) of the respondents believed that there is a relationship between organized crime and corruption in the countries under review. The respondents pointed to the awards of government contracts to community leaders (gang leaders) in Trinidad and Tobago and dons (gang leaders) in Jamaica as evidence of corrupt collusion between organized crime groups and state officials. In Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and St. Lucia, corrupt practices between state officials (including the Judiciary and Customs) and organized crime groups were highlighted as lenient sentences or dismissal of criminal offences, protection by police and Customs officers and turning a blind eye to certain illegal immigrants at the behest of these non-state actors (organized crime groups). This organized crime/corruption nexus is corroborated by the International Narcotics Control Board (2011, 3) which posits “... *the most successful criminal organizations are usually those that are able to make use of corruption (supported by violence and systematic intimidation) to weaken official controls and law enforcement..... In some instances, criminal organizations also manage to buy the protection of public officials so that they can undermine the activities of competing criminal organization.*” Interestingly, 36% of the respondents did not see such a link between organized crime and corruption; however, no reasons were advanced

for that position. The author of this paper speculates that this position might be attributed to the possible endemic nature of corruption whereby certain acts are trivialized and viewed as a way of life.

Mekinc et al. (2013) point out that organized crime and corruption have a direct impact on the sustainable development of tourist destinations. For many Caribbean countries, the tourism industry is important for their economic survival and the presence of organized crime groups can have negative impacts on the tourism industry. Globally, for example, rising violence, fueled by organized crime, has led to a construction boom of “all-inclusive” hotels which aim primarily to provide a full-service holiday experience, but also to reassure tourists that they will be safe. However, it is widely accepted that “all-inclusive” hotels do not foster important backward linkages to the rest of the local economy as tourists are encouraged to enjoy their vacation at “All-inclusive” tourist resorts without leaving the compound, thereby reducing the overall economic benefit of tourism. Indeed, the recent proliferation of all-inclusive resorts in Jamaica and St. Lucia is evidence one negative impact of organized crime on Caribbean communities.

Apart from the tourism industry which stands to suffer from the scourge of organized crime, legitimate businesses may also suffer negative impacts due to elaborate taxing (extortion) schemes operated by these organized crime groups. In fact, for each country under review, the respondents noted that extortion had forced several small to medium size businesses to cease their operations. In a general sense, the impacts of organized crime for Caribbean societies were described by the respondents as ranging from individual, political, social and individual to communal, economic and governance and governability. Eighty-five per cent (85%) of the respondents were aware of organized criminal activities in their jurisdiction, ninety per cent (90%) were aware of organized crime in other Caribbean countries and ninety-five per cent (95%) agreed that there were negative impacts associated with organized crime for the region. Collectively, the respondents opined that the five organized criminal activities which constituted the most deleterious impacts for Caribbean communities in order of seriousness of impacts were drug trafficking, illegal firearm and ammunition trade, human trafficking, state facilitated corruption and embezzlement/money laundering. Another notable finding which

emanated from the study but which was not elaborated upon by the respondents was that organized crime groups were involved in money laundering (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago) and embezzlement of state funds (Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago).

Concluding Thoughts on the Findings

For some societies in the Caribbean, organized crime has come to permeate the moral fabric of the structures and institutions which are essential for the continuation of structured societies and may even facilitate irreversible damage to those structures and institutions by which modern societies are defined. Unfortunately, for law-abiding Caribbean residents, organized crime groups in the region are openly able to use their illicitly gained profits from criminal activities for re-investments into the legal economy with impunity (for example, Christopher ‘Dudus’ Coke and Allan Stanford). The respondents indicated that organized crime in the Caribbean has manifested itself in various forms such as corruption of state officials, political patronage, political populism, money laundering, embezzlement of state funds, social malaise and drug related health problems (see supporting works of Arias, 2010; Ramoutar, 2012; Goede, 2013; Williams and Seepersad, 2015). The long term negative connotations of organized crime include serious societal damage due to the corruption of political figures and members of the Judiciary (which facilitates public mistrust), weakening of the economy due to tax evasion scams, the facilitation of the underground economy, weakening of the Rule of Law and the creation of failed or failing states. It is this author’s submission that there must be a shared responsibility in confronting the multi-faceted problem of organized crime in the Caribbean as the study results indicate that the impacts are commonly shared throughout the region.

Words of Caution

The results of this study should be accepted with some caution. This caution emanates from the inherent bias of personnel who are employed in the security and defence fields. It is well known that professionals who work in the security and defense fields tend to exaggerate security threats. Indeed, as the forty (40)

respondents in this study were all frontline security and defense personnel, there existed the possibility of bias, exaggeration and conflation. In spite of this possibility, it must also be made clear that the individual respondents were all professionals with relevant and experiential knowledge and this should serve to counter balance the aforementioned possibility. Further, their possible exaggerations are backed by crime rates, empirical research and organized crime infiltration of the state made public (Ramoutar, 2012; Bobea 2013; Williams and Seepersad, 2015; Wallace, 2015).

The small sample size of the current study (n=40) also has the potential to limit the reliability and generalizability of the data collection as well as the ability to generalize the findings of the study to the entire Caribbean. However, similar to Heal's (2015) work with male Jamaican men involved in the UK drug trade which utilized a small sample of 'hard to reach' drug functionaries, (n=8) and which focused on the quality of respondents and not the quantity, this study utilized a similar *rationale*. Additionally, based on the exploratory nature of the study and the fact that key security and defense personnel are limited in numbers in the Caribbean, the sample size may appear small; however, this was a purposeful restriction.

Despite the limitations of the study, this research is quite valuable as it offers an important contribution to the field by assessing and highlighting the negative impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies. The study and its findings are also important as the survey produced data that can be useful in constructing a cross-Caribbean picture on the impact of organized crime for the region. The study's findings are also comparatively consistent with the extant literature in the international arena on the issue and sends a signal to regional legislators that organized crime cannot be dealt with using a malaise like approach. Finally, the study appears to be the first of its kind to measure the impact of organized crime in the Caribbean and the findings echoes Gomez-Hecht's (2012) hypothesis that there are widespread negative impacts of organized crime.

Implications for Policy

In light of the negative impacts of organized crime which were previously discussed, there are implications for policy makers in the Caribbean. One such implication involves the Judiciary. For example, effective judicial measures against organized crime must be introduced and implemented and where already implemented – strengthened (see Buscaglia, 2008) so that when apprehended and charged by law enforcement personnel, members of organized crime groups are appropriately sanctioned by the Judiciary (without fear for their safety). The author of the current paper submits that there must also be an attack against high level public sector corruption linked to organized crime and this has found support in the international arena from Buscaglia (2008). Another important implication is that the political executive in the region must seek to sever the relationship between the state and organized crime wherever it exist and so seek to eviscerate organized crime groups in the region. In light of the statement by Respondent #28 that youth are often targeted as well as greatly impacted by organized crime, Caribbean governments must seek also to prevent the recruitment of youth by organized crime groups. This can be achieved by the identification of geographic areas which are most affected and provide youth in these communities with long term protection via state sanctioned employment opportunities. This position is consistent with the view of Vergara (2012).

Another implication for policy makers involves addressing high crime, high unemployment, and high poverty associated with youth in the region. This position finds support from Buscaglia (2008) who argues for the operational presence of government and/or non-governmental preventive programs (funded by the private sector and/or governments and/or international organizations) addressing technical assistance to the private sector, educational opportunities, job training programs and/or rehabilitation (health and/or behavioral) of youth linked to organized crime in high-risk areas (with high crime, high unemployment, and high poverty). Generally speaking, there are implications for policy makers in the Caribbean emanating from this study which acknowledges the need for governmental responses to organized crime in the region. However, it is submitted by the author of this paper that these

responses should neither be reactive nor kneejerk as “premature and inappropriate kneejerk policy responses can significantly worsen the situation and even reinforce organized crime” (Kavanagh, 2013, 7).

Conclusion

Many individuals in the Caribbean reminisce about a return to the halcyon days when organized crime was practically non-existent. That fantasy is not the special province of persons in any particular Caribbean island, but of almost all individuals in the Caribbean. However, such a transcendental return by regional societies is almost impossible and those individuals must now adjust to the changing nature of organized crime as a failure to adapt is likely to result in additional negative outcomes. Overall, the impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies constitutes a grave form of collective victimization” (see Cohen, 2000 as cited in Van Dijk, 2007) and should be given more attention. This is premised on the conventional wisdom that the impacts of organized crime on Caribbean societies are too consequentially grave to stand idly by and do nothing. Indeed, there is no room for institutional inertia on behalf of the present status quo, otherwise that status quo may quickly disappear and be replaced by that of organized crime as part of the socio-politico landscape of the Caribbean. It is therefore imperative that these impacts are made highly visible so that their insidiousness can be placed into the context of a future Caribbean region. In lieu of this, a future generation of Caribbean leaders may have to piece together the remnants of the once glorious Caribbean if organized crime is allowed to continue in an unfettered manner.

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