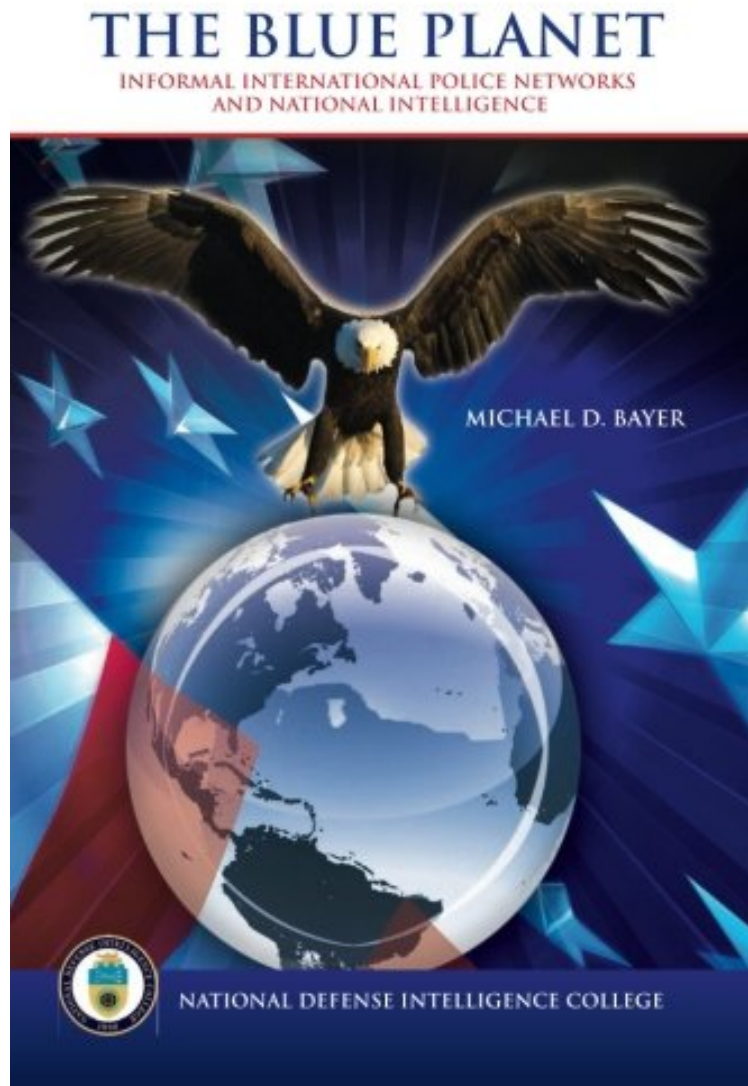


(Download pdf ebook) The Blue Planet: Informal International Police Networks and National Intelligence

The Blue Planet: Informal International Police Networks and National Intelligence

Michael D. Bayer

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Michael D. Bayer : The Blue Planet: Informal International Police Networks and National Intelligence before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Blue Planet: Informal International Police Networks and National Intelligence:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Blue PlanetBy Arete-ZoeThe Blue Planet: Informal international police networks and national intelligenceMichael D. BayerPublished by National Defense Intelligence

College Press in February 2010. *The Blue Planet* is a very interesting book which discusses a very hot topic of police-intelligence interface and the thin line between effective defense and abuse of power. Jacqueline Ross in her foreword stated that informal police networks were effectively used in fighting organized crime, but were so far underused in identifying terrorist threats and preventing attacks; and pointed out that U.S. intelligence agencies rely too much on secret sources of information compared to relatively freely shared information from law enforcement agencies. The author essentially explains that terror plots should be dealt with in a standard manner known from battling organized crime and transferred to the police instead of the military and intelligence agencies. The main argument is that information sharing between intelligence agencies even within the EU is considered a matter of national sovereignty, whilst sharing information between different branches of national police is not. The author himself values highly the U.S. system of checks and balances, and considers the current situation after 9/11 attacks off balance because of enhanced executive (presidential) authority due to the fact that the president is a Commander-in-Chief and the military is exceptionally susceptible to political designs of the president and his administration. In the first two chapters, the author explains the unique hybrid role of the FBI, and their ability to act as both intelligence and police structure; reviews main changes in legal background for functioning of different agencies, the shift from domestic to international activities, and militarization of overall national security policy. Information sharing among national intelligence agencies is severely restricted. Compared to this, the total numbers of the police worldwide are significantly higher, and due to the fact that they have direct contact with the communities, they can serve as important intelligence source and resource. The main point is that "it takes a network to fight networks". Most of "real" work is done informally rather than through formal investigation and proceedings. In chapter three, the author argues why and how institutional failures allowed 9/11 attacks to happen, and how the classification of intelligence procedures originating in early 1980's made the intelligence community more rigid and less able to respond to a different type of threat. Attention is also paid to over-classification of intelligence, vulnerability to leaks, and consequences of leaked information in relation to personal agendas and activities of traitors. The authors consider SBU (Sensitive But Unclassified) and LES (Law Enforcement Sensitive) categories much more convenient and safer, and argue that the Marshal's Witness Protection Program over 30 years of its existence did not lose a single witness, despite dealing with cases against highly dangerous criminal, human trafficking, and narcoterrorist gangs. In this section, the author also lists departments which send their agents to operate abroad. Chapter Apples, Oranges, and Lemons explains interface between the law enforcement and intelligence community, and military and intelligence when it comes to counterterrorist activities. There is another network with serious potential in tackling international organized crime, and that is American Society for Industrial Security, which cooperates closely with the FBI. The most important drawbacks in international policing in relation to organized crime and terrorism are legal processes and procedural constraints; because national police forces can be closely tied to political centers, corrupt, and/or incompetent. In next chapter, the author presents cases of cooperation with countries in which the USA has got little or no diplomatic ties, e.g. successful investigation and prosecution of child pornography cases originating from Cuba and China, or Operation Triple X in which wide criminal network from Indonesia connected to Jamaah-al Islamiya was uncovered. On a case of Czech organized crime network connected to Russian gangs, which involved visa fraud and trafficking of young women for peep shows in the USA, the author explains how vulnerable the system of issuing visa was, and how it could later be exploited by the terrorists for the 9/11 attacks. In short, this is an interesting point of view, and is well argued. The author does not seem to worry about abuse of power by the police, especially in places where the systems of checks and balances are less effective than in the USA; and where the division between intelligence and police is less strict or non-existent.

Under the shield of *The Blue Planet*, law enforcement professionals and academics will discover an intricate web of arguments and cases concerning the continuing need for informal international police networks. On the basis of his rich experience, Mike Bayer argues in an authoritative and persuasive manner that the control of transnational organised crime and terrorism can only be successful if informal information exchange is acknowledged as a necessary asset which can complement formal law enforcement bureaucracies. Notwithstanding current developments in the direction of intelligence-led policing, Mike Bayer observes persistent myopia when it concerns conceptions about the separation between information and intelligence. The latter field of activity is steadily being cultivated as typically belonging to the realm of intelligence agencies and secret services. Hence, intelligence is often labeled as classified and not capable of being disclosed.