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WEEKLY MEDIA REPORT

September 4, 2008

“Welcoming Committee” Anarchists Arrested in Pre-RNC Raids

At least five activists planning protests around the Republican National Convention (RNC) have been arrested and numerous others detained in raids on August 30 and 31, 2008. The “RNC Welcoming Committee,” a criminal enterprise made up of 35 anarchists, has been planning demonstrations for over a year at the convention. The Committee was intent on committing criminal acts before and during the RNC including blockading and disabling buses, breaching venue security, and injuring police officers. Those arrested have been charged with conspiracy to riot, conspiracy to commit civil disorder, and conspiracy to damage property.

Source: [San Francisco Chronicle](#)

Hizballah Finds Left-Leaning Allies Abroad

Hizballah has extended its international reach by establishing contacts with left-leaning, environmental and peace groups opposed to U.S.-led economic globalization. The Lebanese Shiite Muslim militant organization and political party, which is designated a terrorist group by the U.S., has participated through a front organization in dozens of gatherings where attendees criticized U.S. foreign policy and global financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Hizballah’s aim is to rally support for armed opposition to Israel among groups that regard the West’s policies as a threat to developing countries and to the environment. Hizballah has dramatically shifted its political rhetoric away from religious politics since the 2006 conflict with Israel and now often depicts itself as a universal movement fighting Israel domination.

Source: [LA Times](#)

Counterfeit Goods Seized in Newport News Operation

More than 20 retailers are facing felony charges after a large raid last week on outlets in Newport News’ Peddler’s Village. Police say more than half the stores in the center had been selling counterfeit goods. According to police authorities, these sales have been linked to terrorism. Investigators seized fake products totaling about \$2 million in merchandise including items branded Nike, Timberland, Rocawear and Ralph Lauren. Many of the fakes were clothes, but police also found designer jewelry, watches and sunglasses.

Source: [Daily Press](#)

OPEN SOURCE

No Template for Homegrown Terrorists

A leaked document on violent extremism from the British intelligence agency, MI5, provided official confirmation on the evolution of the terrorist threat that there is no “one size fits all” template that can be applied to the homegrown Islamist threat. The report highlights the degree to which extremist ideas have taken root among a constituency that can only be defined by the broadest of parameters. It is mostly men in their 20s and 30s, but women and those older and younger have also been involved. It is not even necessarily only born Muslims or non-white first or second generation immigrants who are involved. Converts and Caucasians appear regularly, though a running theme is their relative religious illiteracy. This suggests the extremist ideology has taken a much deeper hold in broader society and is able to feed off a pool of social disaffection that reaches far wider than previously thought. One interpretation of this “democratization” is extremism, in some quarters, has become the new counter-cultural and anti-establishment thing to do.

Source: [New Statesman](#)

Grant to Help Virginia Police Share Crime Data

Police in Augusta County, Staunton and Waynesboro will use a \$254,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to buy computer software to help them more quickly respond to acts of terrorism and better communicate between the three agencies. The money is part of \$23.4 million in Homeland Security grants to Virginia localities announced by Governor Kaine. The local grant is part of the law enforcement terrorism prevention program, which will allow for better computer communication between the three agencies in the event of a terrorist attack, natural disaster, or other catastrophe. The grant will allow the three agencies to have day-to-day access to one another’s records by computer. As part of the Governor’s announcement Tuesday, Homeland Security funds will also go to Virginia localities for equipment and vehicles to detect weapons of mass destruction, preparation of shelters for mass evacuation, citizen preparedness, and for the development of a smart card system for emergency responders to gain access to a disaster area.

Source: [News Virginian](#)

West Coast Gangs Make In Roads in National Capital Region

The Bloods and Crips, well-known gangs on the West Coast, are a growing concern for law enforcement in the National Capital Region. Gang members are suspected in several crimes from Prince William County, VA to Baltimore, MD. In Washington, DC’s Trinidad neighborhood, where police are battling an increase in violence this year, young people are wearing the Bloods’ colors and flashing their hand signs. Although police have noted an increase in both Crips and Bloods members, the Bloods seem to have a larger presence. In Montgomery County, MD, authorities have linked a shooting and three stabbings to a Bloods-Crips feud. In February, a federal grand jury in Baltimore indicted 28 members of a gang called the Tree Top Piru Bloods on charges including murder, robbery, drug trafficking, and witness intimidation. Additionally, some local gangs are adopting the names of well-known gangs in an effort to gain more credibility. Some may dismiss the smaller gangs as “wannabes”; however, these groups can potentially be more dangerous as they feel they have something to prove. The ranks of both the Crips and Bloods gangs are growing in part because men join the gangs for protection while in prison. Authorities said about 25% of 1,300 inmates in the

Prince George, MD jail are affiliated with gangs and that more than 60% of the gang members are Bloods. Virginia officials have identified about 2,000 Bloods and 700 Crips in state prisons.

Source: [Hometown Annapolis](#)