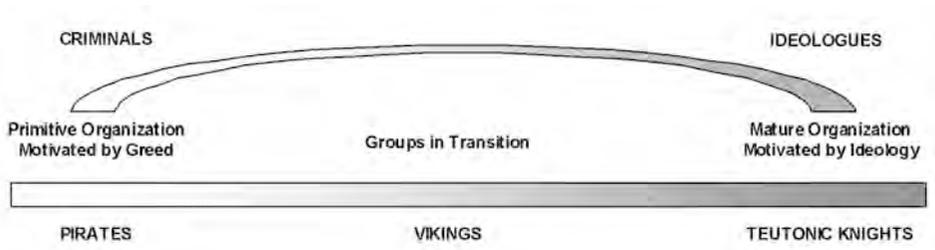


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# 1 Pirates, Vikings, and Teutonic Knights

Peter T. Underwood

Armed groups not directly springing from governmental authority, such as military and police forces, fall into three basic categories along a spectrum, ranging from poorly organized, disjointed, and motivated by greed, to highly organized, coordinated, and motivated by ideology. Recognizing where any particular group falls on this spectrum can help explain how and why the group behaves as it does. This in turn will aid in determining how to effectively deal with these groups.



At one end of the spectrum are criminals, motivated by the simple prospect of plunder. At the other end are ideologues, driven by strong motives and seeking to change political and social conditions. Occupying the middle ground are groups in transition. Still motivated by greed, at some point they “mature” and want a bigger stake in the political, social, and economic order. The group seeks the trappings of authority more closely associated with traditional political power.

Identifying where a particular group is on the spectrum is important in determining how we deal with it. While these categories often overlap in their purposes and motivations, a common thread is their inevitable connection to an established political power. Whether from a modern nation-state, feudal kingdom, or colonial empire, some form of

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support from an existing government, tacit or overt, is present if any of these groups moves beyond the stage of routine criminal annoyance or fanatical fringe element.

## THE PIRATES

The first group on the spectrum has a long history. Its members are organized criminals. Pirates are a classic example. Their goal is money. They don't want to change society or overthrow existing governments even though their actions may ultimately contribute to both. They simply want to prey on society and steal from others. In fact, their livelihood depends on the prosperity of the societies on which they prey. Since arguably their plunder comes from the wealth generated by productive societies, it is in their interest not to disrupt those societies to the point of decline or collapse. Pirates simply want to "skim the cream from the top."

As criminals driven by profit, pirates are usually found taking the path of least resistance. From the ancient world to today, the lucrative, easily taken merchant vessel is their target. They rarely challenge an authoritative presence in any region. They desire to exploit the trade routes, not control them.<sup>1</sup>

The struggle to control maritime trade is as old as seafaring itself. Yet the line between piracy and state-sponsored war was never clear in the ancient world until governments developed sufficient strength to actually police the seas. Until that point, piracy was not viewed as an illegal action but simply another form of armed conflict. Once governments developed sufficient power to build navies, or at least issue letters of marque, piracy could be, and was, declared an illegal activity. Pirates became lawbreakers, pure and simple.<sup>2</sup>

Piracy follows well-defined cycles. Initially small groups attack weak merchants. As small groups gain wealth and grow in size and power, they absorb or drive off other, smaller groups, a pattern readily recognizable in other organized criminal groups. When sufficient power is gained and pirates become a genuine threat to a state's stability, the sovereign will make a concerted effort to crush that threat. If the offensive is successful, piracy will return to a low level of annoyance. If not, pirates begin to be more than just criminal gangs.<sup>3</sup>

In the modern world, the percentage of trade affected by piracy is insignificant when compared to the total volume and the associated profits of worldwide shipping interests.<sup>4</sup> Most acts of piracy, if reported at all, suggest no pattern or logic other than random acts aimed at targets of opportunity. They are simply a criminal annoyance. However, in some regions, particularly Latin America, Africa, and Asia, there are signs of increased involvement by organized crime.<sup>5</sup> There is evidence of the systematic targeting and seizure of whole vessels and their cargoes, followed by quick, efficient disposal. This implies a level of sophistication beyond the capability of small-scale criminal activity driven by mere opportunity and convenience.<sup>6</sup> This pattern fits neatly with the previously identified cycle of piracy: small groups being absorbed by larger, more organized groups. Could such groups become regional threats?

In the past, pirate organizations have sometimes grown to such a scale that they in fact earned the privileges of governments, able to form alliances and treat with other governments. This process was invariably enabled by the support of existing political

entities. In the ancient world, during periods of war and turmoil between existing states, opportunities for piracy grew as the warring factions turned a blind eye or even openly supported the predatory actions of pirates directed against their opponents. Starting a practice that endures today, city-states, kingdoms, and empires of the Mediterranean routinely supported piracy for their own political ends.<sup>7</sup>

The wars between Rome and Carthage, followed by nearly a century of Roman civil war, saw piracy on the greatest scale in all antiquity.<sup>8</sup> With no power able to adequately patrol the Mediterranean, pirates developed powerful strongholds. When King Mithradates of Pontus allied himself with pirates, acting as their protector and providing them with safe haven from the Romans, they became capable of advancing beyond random attacks against merchants and developed into naval organizations capable of coordinated action. They became so powerful that they threatened Rome, even raiding up the Tiber. In response, Rome undertook a campaign in 67 BCE, under Pompey the Great, to directly attack the pirate strongholds of Asia Minor. In addition to destroying the pirate lairs and absorbing Mithradates' kingdom into the empire, Pompey swept the pirate fleets from the sea, making commerce safe for centuries to come.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, Rome's power weakened eventually. With Rome gone, piracy once again emerged.<sup>10</sup>

The chaos of the Middle Ages proved profitable for pirates. By the thirteenth century, the cycle began to repeat itself. North Sea pirate bands grew so powerful that they decisively influenced events in the region for 200 years. The pirate Eustace the Monk, a mercenary willing to sell his services to the highest bidder, controlled a fleet so strong that it dominated the English Channel. From 1205–12, he sold his services to King John of England, plundering and raiding up the Seine. For this, the English monarch gave him letters of protection and royal gifts. With the king's blessing, Eustace even built a palatial residence in London. King John gave this largesse despite the fact that he simultaneously outlawed Eustace, who was plundering English vessels as well as French. When the time and price proved right, Eustace switched his services to the French king Philip and began massing a fleet large enough to invade England.<sup>11</sup>

Eustace and his pirate band suddenly became more than criminals. They were genuine threats to the safety and security of the existing order. The king and the merchants of the English Cinque Ports pooled their resources and crushed Eustace in 1217 once they realized that they could lose everything, and not just a percentage of their profits.<sup>12</sup>

The pirate threat was far from eliminated. Pirates continued to be powerful actors in the region, consistently with the support of existing states. From the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, the Hanseatic League, an association of merchant cities, was formed largely to protect their trade from pirates. Yet, in a fashion similar to the sparring French and English monarchs, the league encouraged pirates to prey on rivals and allied itself with pirates when warring with the Danish king.<sup>13</sup>

The European powers continued to foster piracy well into the early modern era. Muslim pirates, the Moors or Barbary pirates, became so powerful that in 1534, under the leadership of Khayr ad-Din Barbarossa, they seized Tunis and openly challenged Charles V. Though defeated by the Italian admiral Andrea Doria, Barbarossa's skills as a pirate remained useful to the regional powers. Appointed by the Ottoman sultan as

governor of North Africa, he commanded the sultan's fleet sent to support Francis I, king of France. In support of Valois and Ottoman ambitions, Barbarossa plundered the Italian possessions of the Hapsburgs.<sup>14</sup> Ultimately, these pirates accrued such power and status within the Ottoman Empire that they became the relatively independent Barbary States, political entities that would continue as significant regional powers well into the eighteenth century.

These examples have a connecting thread. All three illustrate that when tolerated by existing governments and given tacit support, criminal activity, in this case piracy, can grow to the point that it becomes a genuine threat to regional stability. However, when not tolerated, such activity has difficulty in rising above the level of criminal annoyance. These examples also illustrate the gradual movement from poorly organized criminal activities motivated by the prospect of plunder to highly organized entities that gradually become regional power brokers or, as in the case of the Barbary pirates, regional powers with governmental authority.

## THE VIKINGS

This evolution beyond the desire for mere plunder is also illustrated by the second group, the Vikings, who occupy the midrange on the scale, somewhere between simple criminals and their opposites, religious zealots. Usually characterized as fierce pirates focused on rapine and plunder, the Vikings were always more than that. With their own unique culture, sense of government, and commerce bolstered by a need to colonize, the Vikings were never representatives of society's criminal element nor were they religious proselytizers seeking to change the cultures they invaded. They eventually merged with the societies they were looting, became a part of them, adopted their religion, and accepted their customs while, at the same time, spreading their own unique traits and trademarks.<sup>15</sup>

While they were frequently bought off with tribute, when forcefully challenged, as they were in England by Alfred the Great, they continued to engage in piracy but were prevented from gaining sufficient power to displace or supplant the reigning government.<sup>16</sup> As their raids became annual events, they began marrying the locals and remaining behind. Forming their own communities, they eventually became parts of the local cultures, leaving their own mark to be sure, but absorbing religious, artistic, and administrative influences from their former victims.<sup>17</sup> Their incursions into the Frankish empire of Charlemagne would follow a different course when by 919 they acquiesced to the authority of the Frankish throne.<sup>18</sup>

In their role as marauding pirates, the Vikings were thoroughly professional. As with all pirates, they sought easy victims. The military power forged by the Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne, and bequeathed to his heirs, was formidable. The French coast proved a far more difficult military problem than had the English. The Vikings looked elsewhere for plunder. But the death of Charlemagne's son Louis brought an internal struggle for power that resulted in the empire's division by the Treaty of Verdun in 843. This internal struggle for power saw the coastal defenses of the newly divided and weakened kingdom ignored and fatally weakened. As a result, the Vikings returned.<sup>19</sup>

In 860 the Vikings began to systematically advance up the Seine valley during their annual campaigns. Similar to their practice in England, many of the Viking bands

wintered over in France rather than return home at the end of the campaigning season. One such group, led by Weland, was particularly large and powerful. The increasingly hard-pressed French king, Charles the Bald, procured his services as a mercenary.<sup>20</sup> In return for payments from Charles, Weland began to eject other Viking bands and protect the region from all interlopers. In short order, Charles's payments took the form of danegeld, mandatory "protection" money. The Vikings were in France to stay.<sup>21</sup> Over the next 50 years, the thirst for land replaced the thirst for gold. The Viking camps became larger, more numerous, and more permanent. With the grudging acquiescence of the French kings, northern France became, in effect, an independent Viking colony.<sup>22</sup>

In the first decade of the tenth century, the Viking chieftain Rollo achieved such power in the Seine valley that the French king, Charles the Simple, could not challenge him as he looked covetously toward the Île de France. Recognizing the reality that the balance of power had irrevocably shifted, Charles the Simple simply gave Normandy to Rollo. At Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in 911, Rollo became the first duke of Normandy. The agreement gave Rollo the land he wanted in exchange for his allegiance to Charles. Charles got a buffer against further depredations as well as a vassal, subject to his will, at least in theory.<sup>23</sup>

Following the division of Charlemagne's empire, the French kings never had the power to completely repulse the Vikings. But once they began to use them to achieve their own political objectives, it only became a matter of time before the Vikings evolved from seasonal raiders to a military and political force that had to be recognized and treated as a legitimate power. Once again, the tolerance of an existing government, however grudgingly given, proved a key element in the Normans' rise to power. What had been a wide-ranging group of pirate raiders achieved political legitimacy and became a regional power influencing events for decades.

## **THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS**

Occupying the opposite end of the scale from ordinary criminal gangs are organizations that are motivated by ideology, are armed with significant military capability, and possess organizational infrastructures capable of implementing their ideological visions. Such armed groups are formidable. While the modern world seems to have no shortage of ideological zealots, even a cursory look at the past shows we have never suffered from such a shortage. One such group, bent on religious conversion through colonization and conquest, was the Teutonic Knights.

The Teutonic Knights of Saint Mary's Hospital of Jerusalem were crusaders. A military order founded in the Holy Land in 1198, they represented the religious spirit of their times.<sup>24</sup> Hardly limited to the Holy Land, the proselytizing zeal of crusaders propelled their banners throughout the Christian world from Spain to Russia. Nor were their efforts confined to Muslims. Pagans, heretics of every ilk, and, not surprisingly, Christians that were political opponents: all saw the shadow of the Knights' flags and felt the steel of their swords. Born of and nurtured by religious fervor, the Teutonic Knights made their greatest imprint in the Baltic.<sup>25</sup>

The crusading tradition ran deep in northern Europe as Christians expanded into heathen lands. As early as 1147, Saint Bernard proposed an expedition across the Elbe.<sup>26</sup>

The goal was colonization. This had great appeal to the Teutons' thirst for land. But professional priests always led the Baltic Crusades. Equally important as new land was the goal of gaining new converts for the church. This imparted a righteousness to their ventures. By converting new souls to their version of the "true religion," they justified their acts as acceptable to God. But their ventures also implied colonization. It thus had great appeal to the Teutons' thirst for land.<sup>27</sup> In this particular period of history, the expansion of Christian faith was often hard to separate from the increase in trade and economic power, which was in turn furthered by military power resulting in political power.

In practice, proselytizing monks brought merchants with them. Whether drawn by the word of God or superior trade goods, conversions seemed more plentiful when trading outposts grew and prospered. As always, wealthy merchants required protection from native chiefs whose power they threatened. Fortifications and the soldiers to man them grew in size and number to protect both the growing wealth and the growing number of converts. But castles cost money, and soldiers, no matter how religiously motivated, required pay. This hastened the need to rapidly spread the faith and convert more heathens, for, ironically, only Christians could be taxed.<sup>28</sup> Whether the monks gained more converts through the pulpit or by the sword can be disputed. But, in the end, bishops and archbishops controlled ever-larger territories in an expansion led by the Teutonic Knights that did not end until the Russians finally stopped them on the frozen waters of the river Neva in 1240.<sup>29</sup>

From the outset, the efforts of the Teutonic Knights were shaped by a complex political environment. In a familiar pattern, the authority of the governing bishops required military strength and administrative skill. Providing both, the Teutonic Knights clashed with their spiritual masters for temporal power.<sup>30</sup> Seen as useful agents by the Pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the German princes, the Knights held an enviable position. In 1229, the emperor bestowed the Knights with full sovereignty of the Baltic lands. The Pope, in turn, confirmed this sovereignty.<sup>31</sup>

The star of the Teutonic Knights seemed to wax full. Still, though increasingly powerful, they never achieved a truly independent status. Being useful to so many, they diffused their power, sending it in many directions. Pope, Holy Roman Emperor, French and English monarchs, and the endless number of German princes were all engaged in a constant series of power struggles, wars, and civil wars. Ultimately, the Teutonic Knights were but pawns in this larger struggle for power.<sup>32</sup>

The Knights' religious zeal, organizational abilities, and military skill were, in the end, tools employed by their more powerful patrons to serve their own ends. When their patrons' power declined or the Knights simply no longer provided useful leverage in the game of power politics, they simply faded and were absorbed by more skillful players. Whether their hunger for wealth and political power diffused their religious zeal, or religious zeal prevented them from consolidating their position in the practical world of politics, is difficult to say. In the end, it seems what made the Knights a powerful force was not their combination of ideological zeal and organization and military might but simply the support of numerous patrons, who, unfortunately, were at odds with each other. Once again, we see evidence that armed groups, irrespective of underlying aspirations, were often used as pawns by established powers. When the group serves some

political, economic, or military purpose for an existing power, patrons turn a blind eye or provide support.

## THE PAST AS PROLOGUE

Ultimately, the three groups examined here all came to desire and possess the economic, military, and political power needed to be treated as near-sovereign entities. While their original motivations differed, eventually each group gained sufficient power that it had to be dealt with as more than a criminal annoyance or transient threat.

While pirates and criminal groups will never go away, they are generally not an existential threat to the life of a state or society. They can be dealt with as criminals. However, if their power is allowed to grow unabated, at some point they will no longer be just criminals. New ways of dealing with them must be developed. Some will likely be distasteful, such as recognizing some degree of sovereignty, should they become powerful enough. If they gain enough power, as did the Barbary pirates and the Normans, governments will have to treat with them, as did the kings of France. The good news is that as they assume the trappings of states, they can be dealt with as states, which brings with it the potential for diplomatic action.

The last group, represented by the Teutonic Knights, is the most dangerous and difficult to deal with. Ideologically motivated, organized, and armed with the support of existing powers, these organizations pose immediate and genuine threats to society and existing states. While they are perhaps the most dependent on patrons, they are also the most difficult to destroy. They simply won't go away until the societies and states that succor them withdraw support.

While some may think it unlikely for criminal organizations to become statelike, with growing regional chaos, ungoverned territory, and budgetary pressures on the military and naval capabilities of established states, the cycle described is still plausible. If not challenged, at some point, such groups can begin to gain enough power to evolve into more than just criminal groups. Modern examples are narco-terrorists and drug cartels. This evolution readily conforms to the patterns already described, such as existing powers turning a blind eye, showing tolerance, and giving support, however tacitly, when it suits their needs.

Narco-terrorism is a problem that encompasses issues beyond simple criminal activity. In their quests for wealth, drug syndicates often use terrorist methods to confront a state's law enforcement agencies. But these same syndicates may in turn be "taxed" by politically motivated guerrillas, or the guerrillas may traffic in drugs themselves to finance their political agendas. States will also directly or indirectly sponsor drug crimes when it suits their needs.<sup>33</sup> Drugs can fuel many motives.

Just as weak governments in the Mediterranean and Europe gave openings for Vikings and Moors, unstable governments in Latin America provide opportunities for the drug trade to grow and prosper. Fueled by huge profits, drug syndicates, guerrilla insurgents, and paramilitary organizations wax as the indigenous governments wane.<sup>34</sup>

Emerging from the illegal-drug industry, narco-insurgent-paramilitary groups become increasingly organized and capable of exerting political influence that undermines the integrity and sovereignty of existing states. With their own executive-level

leadership, systems of councils and courts, managers for local projects, and public affairs apparatuses, all fully funded and capable of using the most modern technology, these organizations are capable of exerting powerful political voices. Even though the source of their power can be tied to the trafficking of illegal drugs, they cannot be dismissed as simple law enforcement problems.<sup>35</sup>

The inability of indigenous governments to counter threats from armed groups furthers their growth. Whether insurgency or drug cartel, the vacuum left by weak government promotes the merger of these groups into ever-more-powerful paramilitary organizations that increasingly fill the political void. An excellent example is the Colombian paramilitary organization *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC). Profiting from the drug trade, this organization systematically expanded control of local governments in rural areas, even forming regional alliances. Though itself a narco-insurgency-paramilitary organization, as it consolidated its power, AUC began to drive out competing insurgents providing fundamental justice and security in the areas it controlled.<sup>36</sup> In September of 2001, the AUC announced the formation of the National Democratic Movement, a political organization to give it a legitimate political voice.<sup>37</sup>

Another Colombian example is the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC). The FARC is a significant narco-terror organization. Having connections with criminal organizations throughout the world, ranging from Mexico to Russia, it is a major actor on the international terror scene. Still, by 1999, its strength and influence had grown to the point where the Colombian government ceded to it 16,000 square miles of territory and opened a peace dialogue.<sup>38</sup> Similar scenarios unfolded in Peru and Mexico as insurgents, funded by criminal activity, gained control of territory and assumed the trappings of government, if only on the local level.<sup>39</sup>

While clearly criminal in many respects, these armed groups have also accepted some level of responsibility for the societies in which they exist. Whether provided by Viking Normans, or Colombian paramilitary drug traffickers, security and stable administration are basic functions of government. When effective, stable government and a secure environment have a strong appeal to society, and the organizations that provide it cannot long be ignored.

Similar to the cases of the Vikings and Mediterranean pirates, while modern criminal groups owe their success to weak indigenous governments, success is also dependent on the support or at least the tolerance of governments that see them as useful pawns in some larger geopolitical game. Narco-terrorism is often tolerated for political and economic reasons. For example, cultivation of drug-producing crops may be a significant source of income for rural farmers, making the government reluctant to anger growers and risk losing political support. In Bolivia, President Evo Morales's rise to power began with his leadership of the coca growers union and his high-profile opposition to the U.S.-funded eradication of the coca crop. He helped to lead street demonstrations by Indian and union groups that toppled the country's last two presidents and elected him, in 2005, the country's first-ever indigenous president.<sup>40</sup> Even the United States turns a blind eye when it suited its higher geopolitical purposes.

The cold war and the struggle against communism often made unusual alliances. Beginning in the 1940s, the United States saw the need to tolerate corrupt forces linked to

drug trafficking, provided they were anti-communists. This allowed the drug trade to prosper.<sup>41</sup> The political leverage gained by ignoring drug traffickers was deemed acceptable, provided the revenues benefited “allies.” U.S. covert operations often formed “gray alliances” with organizations ranging from the Sicilian Mafia, French Corsican underworld, crime gangs of Southeast Asia’s Golden Triangle, and Cuban exiles to Afghan opium smugglers. Yet these “alliances” greatly facilitated the flow of drugs to the world’s markets.<sup>42</sup> This proved especially true when the Soviets established their own connections, particularly with their Cuban and Nicaraguan allies. Narco-terrorism became an increasingly useful weapon in the struggle between East and West.<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps it is no small coincidence that the U.S. invasion of Panama to depose its former ally turned drug suspect Manuel Noriega coincided so closely with the fall of the Berlin wall and the demise of communism. The game changed. Once-useful allies quickly became criminals, their activities were no longer tolerated, and their strongholds no longer protected. Methods and activities once surreptitiously deemed acceptable were suddenly publicly decried. No doubt Manuel Noriega, Eustace the Monk, and Khayr ad-Din Barbarossa could all compassionately empathize with each other.

We have seen examples of weak governments providing opportunities for armed groups originating from a desire for profit. Now we return to the example of strong governments providing opportunity for ideologically motivated zealots. The example of the Teutonic Knights, religiously motivated and bent on colonizing and proselytizing, has many similarities with modern armed groups, none more so than Hezbollah.

The Teutonic Knights were motivated by a complex mix of religious, economic, social, and political conditions. They grew in power as these conditions were exploited by a series of patrons seeking their own objectives. So too has Hezbollah.

Growing from a small politically motivated group with no distinct organization, Hezbollah has become a major actor in Lebanese politics. Created in 1982 as a break-away faction of the Islamic Amal Party, its roots are found in Iran’s Shia religious academies and in its historical ties with Iran. While Islam does not recognize the Western concept of nationality, the cultural and religious links between Hezbollah and Iran stretch back to the days of the Persian Empire.<sup>44</sup> When the Iranian Revolution incited Islamic activism, Shia fundamentalism, and the creation of militant groups, Hezbollah emerged as a perfect pawn in the larger game being planned in Iran.<sup>45</sup> Its religious zeal is manipulated for purposes far beyond gaining converts.

Just as Palestine and the Baltic provided an outlet for the religious fervor of Christian crusaders a thousand years before, the unique conditions of Lebanon provide fertile ground for the “fire-brand clerics” providing the central foundation for Hezbollah.<sup>46</sup> Both Iran and Syria provide military training, administrative support, and funding to Hezbollah, rapidly transforming the organization into a military and political force in Lebanon.<sup>47</sup>

In a pattern not dissimilar to that of the Teutonic Knights, Hezbollah’s success is derived from a complex set of conditions beyond simple military strength. Building on existing Shia organizations and religious institutions, Hezbollah increasingly brought administrative order as well as religious fervor, which, in combination, brought political power.<sup>48</sup>

Ideological indoctrination, sweetened with tangible material benefits, is a powerful force, particularly when the controlling administrative apparatus is culturally acceptable. With Iranian and Syrian funding, Hezbollah established schools, housing, hospitals, and social welfare facilities, all independent from the Lebanese government. Its return on investment has been duly elected membership in the Lebanese parliament and positions in the cabinet.<sup>49</sup>

How far the power of Hezbollah will grow remains to be seen. No doubt it will continue to receive Syrian and Iranian funding as long as it serves the purposes of those governments. The fact that it supports the concept of an integrated Islamic state over an independent Lebanon and rejects the renunciation of violence against both internal and external enemies makes it an ideal pawn in the hands of its more powerful Iranian and Syrian backers.<sup>50</sup>

Until Hezbollah no longer serves the ulterior motives of these states and the radical Islamist movement, or until the people of the region finally reject the use of violence as the primary means to solve their problems, Hezbollah will likely continue to grow in power. If Hezbollah, already a recognized part of the Lebanese political structure, continues to augment its position, it will increasingly become a force that has to be dealt with by established states.

Whether a pirate kingdom, religious order, or narco-terrorist cartel, and whether motivated by a desire for wealth, a desire for land, a desire for political power, a desire for converts, or a combination of all of these, armed groups as illustrated here share a common link. They only grow beyond the level of criminal annoyance when they remain unchallenged and have the support of existing governments.

The governments that tolerate the existence of these groups invariably do so not because they approve of them but because they find them useful for furthering their own ends. Even when they do approve of the basic motivations of the group in question, such as the religious motives of the Teutonic Knights, when it ceases to serve the goals of existing states, they will withdraw their support and, at worst, will actively attack, and destroy the group.

The dangerous exception is when an armed group, through the support of a patron government, is able to consolidate its power to the extent that it has the strength to openly challenge both its patron and other existing governments. Once this threshold is crossed, it can no longer be treated as a criminal annoyance. It must be dealt with as a co-equal entity. It can be eliminated through traditional methods of power politics as were the Teutonic Knights, openly attacked and destroyed as were the pirate kingdoms, or, as with the Norman Vikings, accepted as a coequal and integrated into the political order.

The last option is not particularly desirable. But then neither are the first two, which invariably prove costly in terms of blood, treasure, and political capital. At some point the piper must be paid. The question is when he will be paid, and what currency will be used.

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45. Simon Haddad, “The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon’s Hezbollah,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29 (2006): 24.
46. Ranstorp, *Hiżb’Allah in Lebanon*, 38–39.
47. *Ibid.*, 33–35.
48. *Ibid.*, 36–37.
49. Haddad, “The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon’s Hezbollah,” 23–24.
50. *Ibid.*, 24–32.