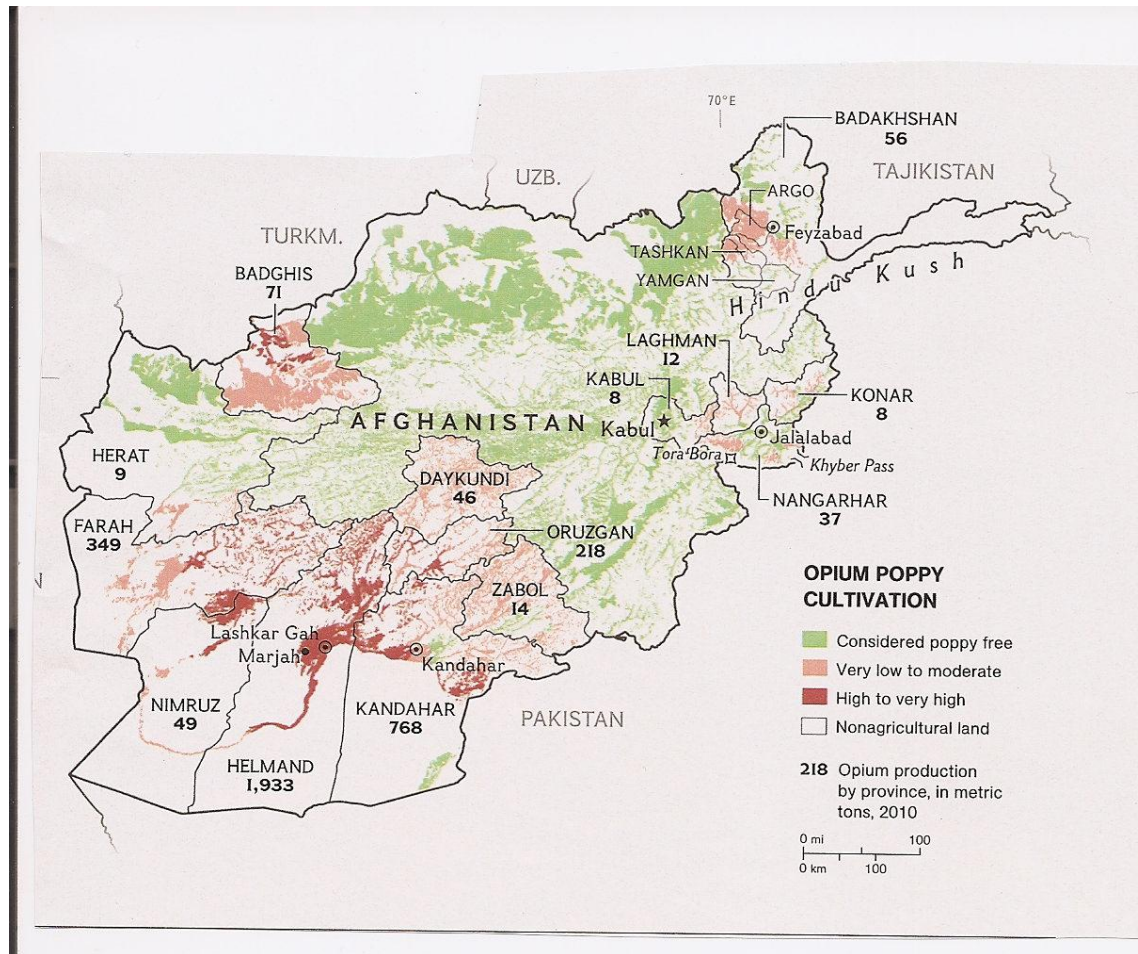


In Afghanistan, those regions cultivating poppy are also those to present the most concentrated challenges to state building and to efforts of both military and civilian outsiders to establish security



Drug cultivation established a parallel economic and political system, that rivals official ones; and undermines them with ill effects on both the internal security of such countries; as well as on global security

The New York Times

Published: December 11, 2010

WASHINGTON — When Hajji Juma Khan was arrested and transported to New York to face charges under a new American narcotics law in 2008, federal prosecutors described him as perhaps the biggest and most dangerous drug lord in Afghanistan, a shadowy figure who had helped keep the Taliban in business with a steady stream of money and weapons.

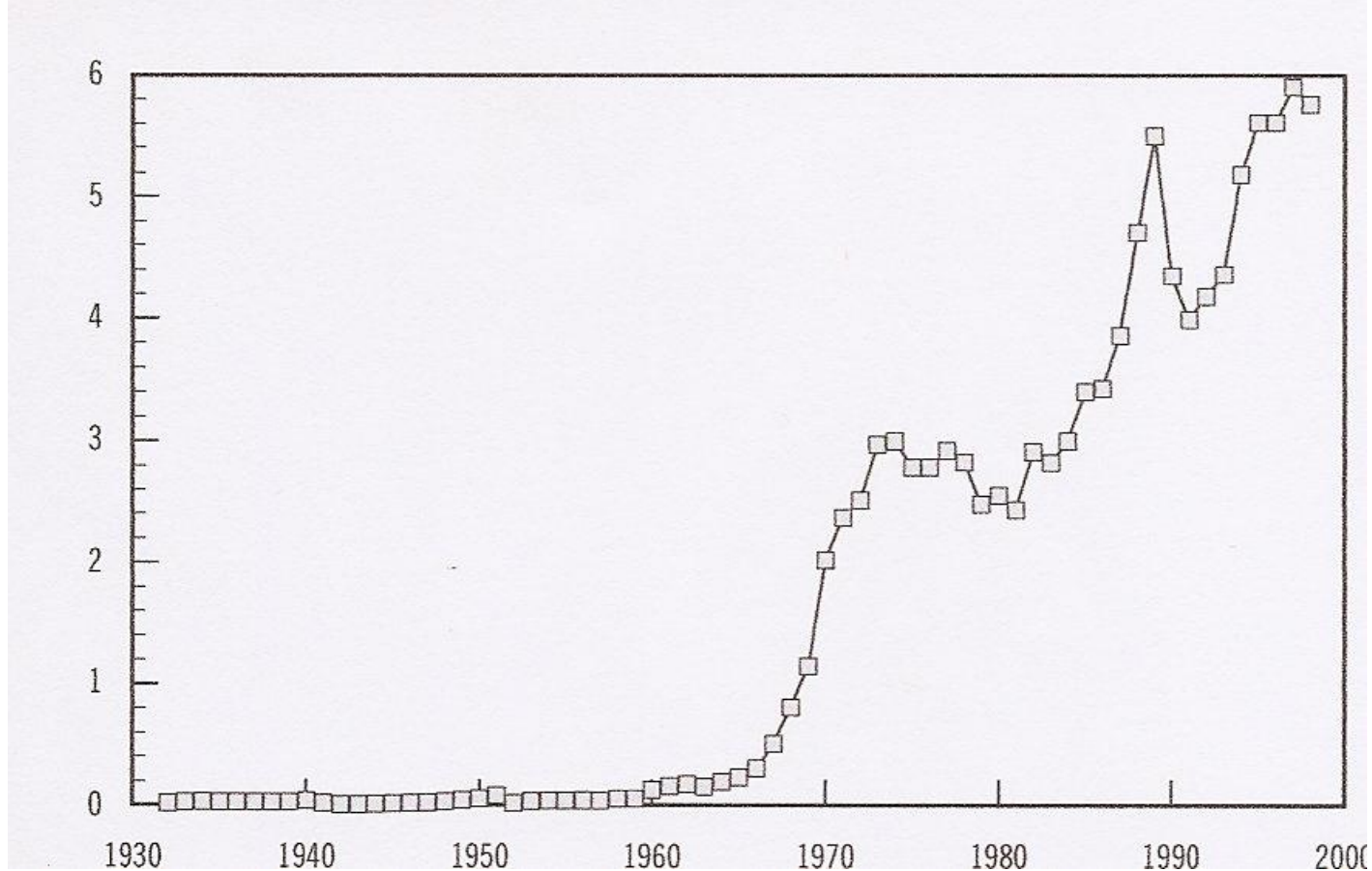
But what the government did not say was that Mr. Juma Khan was also a longtime American informer, who provided information about the Taliban, Afghan corruption and other drug traffickers. Central Intelligence Agency officers and Drug Enforcement Administration agents relied on him as a valued source for years, even as he was building one of Afghanistan's biggest drug operations

The high volume of illegal drug production and of drug trafficking also impacts negatively on efforts to stabilize the global monetary and financial system

- *“The IMF estimated global money laundering to be*
- *between 590 billion and 1.5 trillion dollars a year,*
- *representing 2-5 percent of global GDP. (Asian Banker, 15 August 2003).*
- *A large share of global money laundering as estimated*
- *by the IMF is linked to the trade in narcotics”*

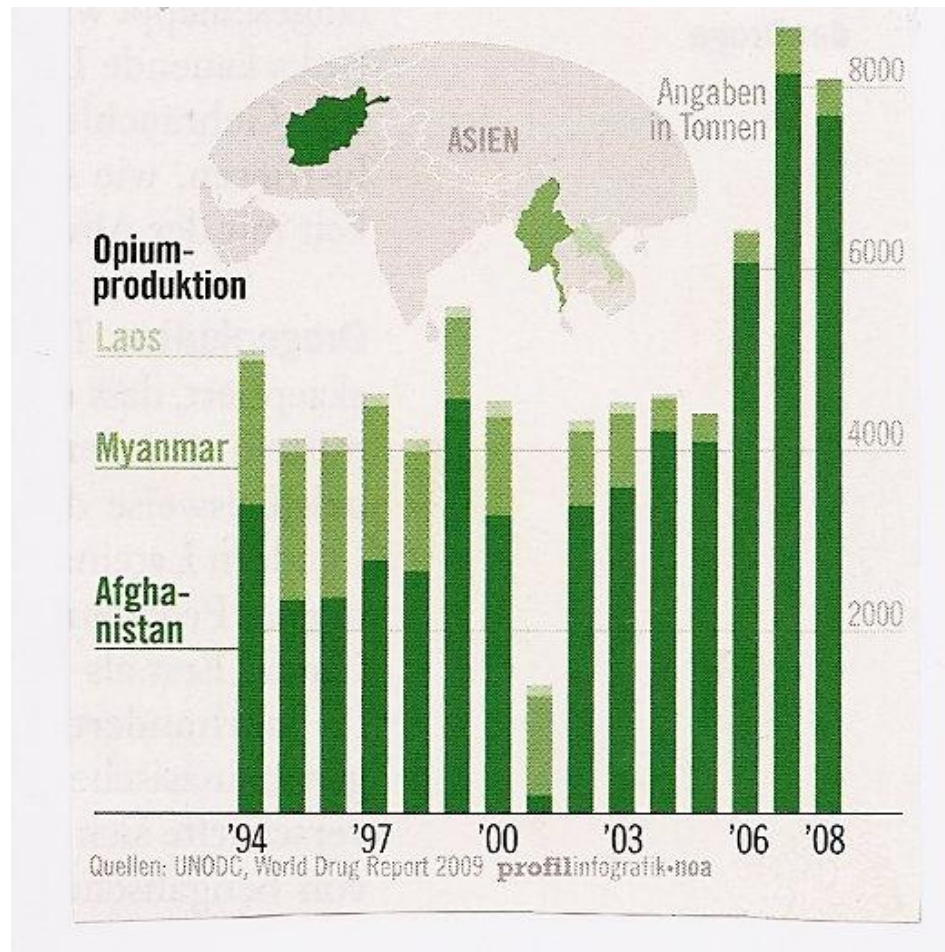
It also affects negatively the internal security of “Consuming Countries” through increase in drug related crime; and through incarceration (which breeds further crime due to the high rate of recidivism); example: the US

Figure 2: Total drug arrests per 1000: 1932–1998

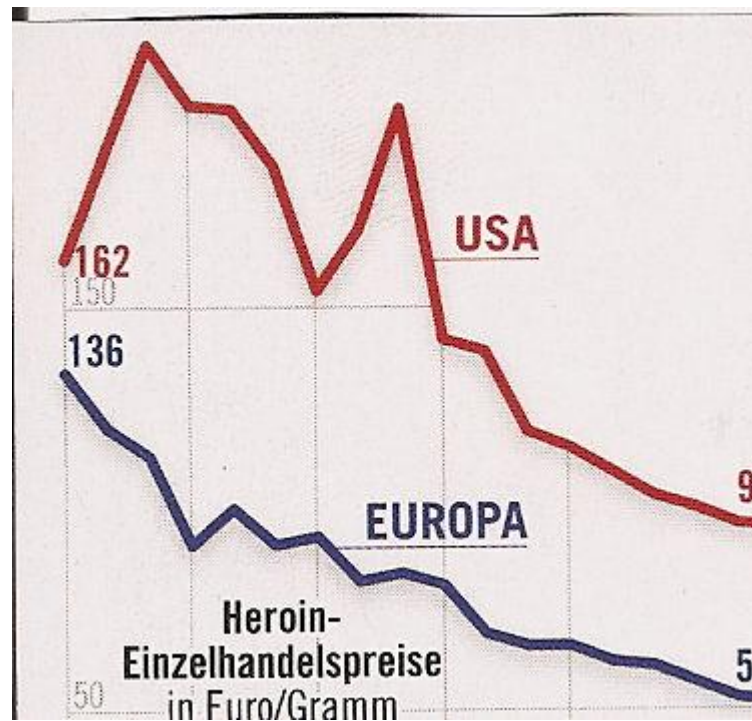


Changing global drug policy: a choice between bad and worse

Current policies have failed to reduce supply



They have also failed to curb access to drugs: they have become cheaper



Conclusion

All regions of the world had their specific drugs. The problem is that by now all existing drugs become available in all regions of the world.

Drug trafficking and drug use creates not just social problems but serious challenges to internal and external security (see example: Mexico)

Simply letting go and leaving everything to the market is no solution, especially in view of the highly addictive nature of many of these drugs

But present policies of trying to limit supply and of criminalizing consumption have not only failed; they had mostly negative consequences

In my view, emphasis should be on curtailing demand – see the example of tobacco, which also is an addictive substance (granted: with other consequences)