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BOOK REVIEW

Biological Warfare and Security

MARGARET S. MARANGIONE

Patrick F. Walsh: *Intelligence, Biosecurity, and Bioterrorism*
Palgrave, Macmillan Publishers, New York, 2018, 300 p., \$40.00.

In an intelligence world where cybersecurity and artificial intelligence seem to vie for immediate attention, the recent measles outbreak in the United States and the targeting of Ebola Healthcare facilities in the Congo makes *Intelligence, Biosecurity, and Bioterrorism* by Patrick F. Walsh a necessary read for intelligence professionals, intelligence studies majors, and policy makers. Walsh's book supports the warning in the *Global Trends Report*, produced by the National Intelligence Council, that

forecasts the prediction that a “sinister shift could be the wider access to lethal and disruptive technologies such as bioterror weapons and cyber instruments, which could offer a means for individuals and small groups to inflict large-scale violence and disruption.”¹ Walsh lays out early in chapter two that the major biosecurity threats to intelligence communities are stolen biological agents, insider threats, biological agents that can become weaponized, genetic identity threat, and lack of security and oversight, all

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of which can cause widespread panic and terror. Walsh's book provides a specific focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the Five Eye's intelligence communities (Australia, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and New Zealand) and their capacities in assessing, managing, analyzing, and securing these emerging biothreats.

Walsh's objectives are multifaceted. First is to provide an overview of the contemporary biosecurity and bioterrorism environment. Second, he evaluates the role of intelligence from a tactical, operational, and strategic perspective. Third, he explores the effectiveness of the intelligence process for decision makers while providing an understanding of the audience in how a robust intelligence framework can help in the management of biothreats. One of the many successes of this book is its organization around these themes. This organization results in extreme readability and also makes this text an excellent reference tool because of the subheadings, summaries, conclusions, recommendations, and notes the author utilizes for all of the chapters. For example, chapter two, "The Biosecurity Threat Environment," is divided into the challenges of defining the biosecurity threat environment before providing an overview of historical evidence of twentieth- and twenty-first-century biothreat cases. The chapter provides background and context on emerging threats and risks before chapters three, four, and five explore the role in managing these threats. Importantly, this chapter also lays the foundation for the difficulty of

managing the multiple threat scenarios as well as the number of players involved with assessing and monitoring these threats. Reminiscent of pre-11 September 2001 (9/11) intelligence organization, the author points out that these players, to include first responders; hospitals; doctor's offices; research institutions; and various government, state, and local agencies, are siloed from each other. In addition to the author's thorough analysis and summaries, each chapter has clarifying endnotes as well as six pages of bibliographic references and citations.

In the following chapters, the author discusses how the numerous government agencies involved with the collection and assessment of biothreats, to include those most knowledgeable in the scientific community and private sector, make the scope of the evaluation and selection of data challenging to coordinate. Additionally, many policy makers see biothreats and security as relatively low probability despite a bio-attack being high impact. This may be the most eye-opening information of this book, which underscores every chapter and Walsh's objectives. Walsh states in chapter three, "... intelligence communities do have a role in making sure that biosecurity and bioterrorism issues do not fall completely off the [decision and policy makers'] radar."² Lack of attention to biosecurity and bioterror issues by policy makers and lack of awareness by the intelligence community to biothreat scenarios does not make the damage and terror any less. It only took two planes to change the world.

Along with collection and coordination challenges, as well as buy-in, intelligence analysts need more knowledge about what collection sources and field experts are available in the specialized field of biosecurity and bioterrorism. This can be demonstrated by the number of groups and individuals that make up the larger picture of biothreats. From physicians' offices and hospitals, first responders and law enforcement to signals intelligence, human intelligence, geospatial intelligence, and the scientific community that would have specialized knowledge, all would have information that would be critical for analysis, improvement, and coordination. The author notes that "just like other technologically enabled threats such as cyber, no amount of increased investment in analytical capability can produce analysts that will be able to anticipate all possible trajectories of such a complex evolving threat environment as biotechnology."³

In chapter five the author argues that there will be a challenge in making analysts "fit for purpose" to work on complex emerging biothreats and risks, which also requires agencies and communities where analysts work to "function more effectively."⁴ A reader could draw the conclusion that just like the larger Intelligence Community (IC) got overhauled post-9/11, the author's underlying theme is there needs to be a paradigm shift in how the IC assesses and manages biothreats before a nonstate actor, country against U.S. policies, a criminal agent, or unbalanced person starts a zombie apocalypse. For

example, North Korea has more than thirteen biological weapons, including anthrax, the plague, and smallpox. Former senator Joe Lieberman, who worked on a congressional report on preparedness for biological attacks, stated, "At some point, we will likely be attacked with a biological weapon, and will certainly be subjected to deadly naturally occurring infectious diseases and accidental exposures, for which our response will likely be insufficient."⁵

One of the many strengths of the book is that Walsh does not shy away from drawing unpleasant conclusions. Additionally, Walsh's narrative comes across as balanced, fair, and his claims are supported by academic research and evidence. He has an objective approach, makes well thought out recommendations, and points out challenges and shortfalls in the biosecurity community. He also clearly states where he was unable to obtain the necessary information or where additional research and analysis is needed.

The only challenge is the book's broad field of view, although it does provide an excellent overview for an introduction to the world of bioterrorism and security. The "Five Eyes Approach" is also interesting, as it is not often that there is an examination of Australia or New Zealand's IC. Also, the author points out the limitations of his book in terms of his interview cohort as well as purposefully excluding military intelligence and the role they play in this area. Interestingly, the author provides his critical analysis of his book in the conclusion by analyzing

his claims and relating them to chapter content. Walsh does a clear job of showing the gaps in knowledge and difficulty of ascertaining and making intelligence predictions in the bioterrorism field.

Strangely, the book's audience may be targeted for intelligence analysts, but that the author states he "does not assume [his audience] has any prior knowledge of intelligence or biosecurity." Ideally, this book would be an excellent summary for readers wanting to get an overview of the critical issues, and it would be an excellent textbook for course work in this field. For a generalist in the IC, it may provide new information. Even so, the author writes from what he knows.

Walsh has been an intelligence analyst and is an Associate Professor in Intelligence and Security Studies at Charles Stuart University Australia. His previous book, *Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis*, tracks post 9/11 developments in national security and policing and their relevance to new

emerging areas of intelligence practice, such as corrections, biosecurity, private industry, and regulatory environments.⁶

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