

## POLICE ACTION AGAINST THE THREAT OF SPECIAL WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

John W. Ellis, *Police Analysis and Planning for Chemical, Biological and Radiological Attacks: Prevention, Defense and Response* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1999).

For decades the defense against weapons of mass destruction (WMD) was almost exclusive responsibility of military organizations, and in some cases - paramilitary civil protection agencies. With the end of the Cold War, however, we witnessed rapid increase in the involvement of law enforcement organizations to counter two interrelated concerns - WMD proliferation and rising terrorist threat.

Drawing on his experience both in the military and in the police, John Ellis presents a comprehensive treatment of *police* operations against chemical, biological and radiological threats. In separate chapters he describes these special WMD, presents framework for assessment of terrorist use, assessment of vulnerabilities to such attacks, and outlines preventive, defensive and response actions.

The book is rich of historical examples of dealing with chemical, biological and radiological effects, whether they have resulted from military use, industrial accidents or terrorist attacks. The author further provides detailed account of the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

John Ellis favors integrated police prevention, defense and response to special WMD. Often referring to a companion book,<sup>1</sup> he extends the vision for integration to cover potential use of *conventional* weapons of mass destruction. But although he describes functions and capabilities of other US governmental organizations in regard to these threats, he does not volunteer with proposals for joint governmental response to terrorist threats.

Instead, using the language of an experienced practitioner, in every particular case Ellis punctually describes kill zones, survival zones, barriers, parameters, etc., assuming one or only a few points of attacks or release points. Unfortunately, this approach is of little help when terrorists use different attack pattern, such as in the post-September 11th anthrax attacks in the continental United States.

The author carefully examines the legal aspects of the issue, starting from UN Charter, declarations and resolutions, and discussing specifics of state legislation when needed. Thus, the comprehensive treatment of legal, organizational, operational and technical issues makes the book a useful reference for the law enforcement practitioner. Further, it may be a useful entry level reading for IT specialist who intent to work on technology development projects in this particular area of security.

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- <sup>1</sup> John W. Ellis, *Police Analysis and Planning for Vehicular Bombings: Prevention, Defense and Response* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1999).