



America's Achilles' Heel: Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Terrorism and Covert Attack (BCSIA Studies in International Security)

By Richard A Falkenrath, Robert D Newman, Bradley A Thayer

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Nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons delivered covertly by terrorists or hostile governments pose a significant and growing threat to the United States and other countries. Although the threat of NBC attack is widely recognized as a central national security issue, most analysts have assumed that the primary danger is military use by states in war, with traditional military means of delivery. The threat of covert attack has been imprudently neglected.

Covert attack is hard to deter or prevent, and NBC weapons suitable for covert attack are available to a growing range of states and groups hostile to the United States. At the same time, constraints on their use appear to be eroding. This volume analyzes the nature and limits of the covert NBC threat and proposes a measured set of policy responses, focused on improving intelligence and consequence-management capabilities to reduce U.S. vulnerability.

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Editorial Review

Review

An excellent and timely study that neither exaggerates nor underestimates the prospect of terrorist use of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. The authors' assessment of the threat is the most thorough, careful, and objective analysis available. If policymakers want to anticipate and prepare sensibly for a danger that becomes more real and present by the day, they should consult this book's recommendations.

(Martha Crenshaw, Professor of Government, Wesleyan University)

I know of no more incisive, detailed assessment of the growing threat of mass destruction terrorism than *America's Achilles' Heel*. This outstanding book is essential reading for anyone with a serious interest in American national security.

(U.S. Senator Richard Lugar)

About the Author

Richard A. Falkenrath is Assistant Professor of Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. He served as Executive Director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (BCSIA) and, before that, as a Research Fellow. He is the author and co-author of *Shaping Europe's Military Order* (1995), *Avoiding Nuclear Anarchy* (1996), *America's Achilles' Heel: Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Terrorism and Covert Attack* (1998), and numerous journal articles and chapters of edited volumes.

Bradley A. Thayer is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

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