

PREFACE

The chapters of this volume of *Homeland Security* provide insights and recommendations about the protection of public spaces and social institutions. While these are sometimes referred to as “soft targets,” the reality is that virtually all potential terrorist targets—except, perhaps, military bases and a relatively small handful of buildings with fortified security barriers and armed personnel—could also be included under the same category. Thus, we have limited the discussions in this volume to issues which would be most salient to communities, large and small, throughout the United States. After all, it is in our local communities where homeland security matters the most to the average American citizen.

Each author was asked to simplify as much as possible the complexities of policy and practice, while highlighting both pre- and post-9/11 security challenges. After a brief introductory chapter, the volume is organized into three sections. In the first section, chapters explore the threat to our communities, addressing the question of why terrorists would seek to target a group of innocent bystanders in a shopping mall, school, café, or sports arena. The second section examines the threat to specific social institutions and what is being done to mitigate this threat, and the third section offers a set of thoughtful essays on strategies for improving homeland security, and the perception of security, in all our communities. As a collection, the chapters advance our understanding of key national security challenges, as well as raise important questions and issues for further research.

PART I: ASSESSING THE THREAT

This section of the volume begins with a chapter by National Defense University professor James Robbins, who defines soft targets as locations that are either difficult to defend, or usually undefended. “They are typically nongovernment sites and, more often than not, places where people congregate in large numbers. Ideally, from the terrorist’s point of view, the target also has some other value, such as the possibility of secondary effects beyond those caused by the attack itself.” From this initial

description, his chapter then explores the historical threat to soft targets, noting that these have accounted for about two-thirds of terrorist attacks around the world, and describes the rationale terrorists use to justify such attacks. After examining the challenges to protecting America's public spaces and social institutions, Robbins concludes that the United States will never be in a position to be able to secure every potential target in the country. Thus, the soft target challenge will always be with us.

The next chapter of this section, by Peter Spagnolo (a counterterrorism instructor at the Government Training Institute in Boise, Idaho) expands this discussion of soft targets to include whole communities and municipalities—particularly those with less than 50,000 people which, he reminds us, are where two-thirds of all Americans live. Since the most famous terrorist attacks to occur in the United States have all involved large metropolitan areas, he notes, many Americans feel a sense of security because they live in smaller communities which appear to present little interest to terrorists as possible future targets. In some cases, a mentality of complacency has even found its way up to the leadership of the law enforcement agencies of midsize communities. However, he argues, terrorism can be seen as a form of communication meant to send a message and create victims well beyond those actually involved in the attack. Thus, a strike where one is least expected—where there is often a limited ability to detect an attack before it takes place, to counter it as it's happening, or recover in the aftermath—would clearly send a far more powerful message to more Americans than individual attacks on each of the nine largest U.S. cities. Thus, the threat to America's small and midsized cities must not be underestimated.

PART II: PROTECTING SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The second section of the volume explores the challenges of protecting America's social institutions, focusing on specific examples of national monuments and icons, elementary and high schools, colleges and universities, and sports arenas. In the first of these, Philip Brennan—a terrorism researcher currently working for the U.S. government—examines the terrorist threat to national monuments and icons. In the United States, these sites cover a range of physical descriptions, from the sprawling park of Mt. Rushmore to the Statue of Liberty's island preserve, each of which have challenging security vulnerabilities. Further, protecting these types of sites involves maintaining a balance between access and security. Brennan explores three specific dimensions of this important balance: risk assessment, landscape design and technical security, and administrative issues. He then provides a case study—the creation of the Ring of Steel in London's downtown City district in response to IRA attacks in the 1990s—and concludes that despite the enormous potential costs involved,

protecting our national monuments and icons must be part of a long-range planning process, rather than a series of short-term fixes.

In the next chapter, Lauren Bean (of the Hunt Alternatives Fund) and Dr. Richard Friedman (of the National Strategy Forum) address the challenges of school safety in the post-9/11 security environment. Their chapter is based on a national conference, sponsored in October 2003 by the Sloan Foundation, at which parent groups, school administrators, teachers, and school security experts met with federal public health officials and representatives of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and U.S. Department of Education (DOE), among others, to discuss school emergency preparedness. This chapter addresses a range of subjects including threats, infrastructure, resource needs, and the emergency preparedness process and provides a summary of the conclusions that emerged from the conference discussion sessions.

Next, Dr. Laura Finley—a professor at Florida Atlantic University and former high school teacher—examines the relationship between high schools and homeland security. After briefly outlining the current state of school safety, the chapter provides a summary of the most prominent terrorism-related safety threats in schools. These include direct attacks, attacks via transportation services, and assaults through the school food supply. The second part of her chapter outlines homeland security efforts being made in schools, sponsored by governmental and private agencies, including service-learning projects and changes in the traditional curriculum. She concludes that as schools consider the physical safety of their campuses, they must involve students, staff, and the community in developing a plan to prevent, prepare, respond, and recover from terrorist attacks.

Continuing with the theme of educational institutions, Samuel Brenner, a doctoral candidate at Brown University, provides a discussion on protecting America's colleges and universities from the threat of terrorism. He argues that representatives from colleges and universities need to work together with representatives from the local, state, and federal governments to discuss, quantify, and minimize the risks presented to institutions of higher education by terrorism. Some collaboration has been taking place at many institutions since the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon, but because of the careful balance these institutions need to maintain between fostering open societies and clamping down on people, facilities, and resources, and because college and university campuses contain unusual and even unique potential targets, it seems likely that such collaboration will remain part of a critical and ongoing battle.

And finally, the section concludes with a chapter on security at sports stadiums and events by Matt Wahlert (Miami University, Ohio) and Shane

Tomashot (Kettering Fairmont High School). The United States boasts over 400 arenas that accommodate at least 30,000 spectators. After describing the general attractiveness of these venues to terrorists, Wahlert and Tomashot explore both pre- and post-9/11 security measures, drawing on examples and lessons learned from the Salt Lake City Olympics, various Super Bowl events, and the Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, among others. They conclude that, while many efforts have been made to secure sports venues, much remains to be done. Protecting these facilities requires an active partnership between security professionals, teams, facilities managers, and patrons. In the case of the latter, they note, fans who attend sporting events should expect to feel protected and safe, but they should also expect to assume some responsibilities for contributing to the overall security of the venue. Clearly, as illustrated in many of the chapters throughout this publication, securing our public gathering spaces is a challenge to which we all must contribute.

PART III: PUBLIC SECURITY STRATEGIES AND PERCEPTIONS

The third section of the volume provides a diverse collection of essays on security and perception at national and community levels. In the first chapter, Chief Deputy Jose M. Docobo of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office (Tampa, Florida) identifies a need to develop specific local law enforcement operations and strategies that refine and strengthen the role of community policing in America's war on terrorism. Traditionally, he notes, local law enforcement has concerned itself primarily with preventing and solving crimes such as burglary, theft, and robbery—crimes that have an immediate and visible impact on the local community and affect citizen quality of life. In the face of unknown future terrorist threats, however, local law enforcement organizations will have to adapt existing policing strategies to fulfill the requirement of homeland security. He proposes the development of "homeland policing," a new model of policing in which established community policing practices and strategies are expanded to support the larger national domestic security objective. The partnerships formed in support of community policing provide a ready framework across the country for engaging citizens in helping police identify domestic security-related threats and to implement preparedness plans. Citizen awareness campaigns can inform citizens about what police and the government are doing to prepare for and prevent a future attack. Overall, working in close partnership, communities and their law enforcement professionals can greatly enhance our nation's homeland security.

The next chapter, by Ohio State University professor Jeffrey Lewis, explores the role of technology in protecting America's communities and public spaces. His discussion is organized into three sections, beginning

with an overview of the factors that make public gathering sites uniquely challenging to defend. The second section analyzes the relationship between terrorist groups and technology, particularly the ways that technology can empower individuals and small groups. Finally, the third section examines a number of practical ways in which we can put technology to use to provide a higher level of security in public gathering sites. Lewis' overall conclusion is that both the technologies of destruction and protection—which seem so effective in the abstract—are in practice much more difficult to implement. Any strategy that is designed to protect America's gathering places must recognize this fact and integrate technology with people in a robust, layered system. Such a system will emphasize the detection and prevention of attacks but must also recognize the impossibility of perfect security and therefore incorporate measures for mitigation and recovery as well.

The next chapter explores a specific type of potentially destructive technology: the threat of bioterrorism to America's communities. Authors Brian Hanley (an expert on modern biological weapons scenarios) and Dr. Birthe Borup (a research scientist at Codexis, Inc., a biotechnology company) note that the effects of disease can be highly destructive for societies in various ways and that methods and techniques for biological warfare have become readily available, well-understood, and inexpensive worldwide. Thus, communities must be prepared to grapple with the threat of bioterrorism. After describing seven fundamental principles of biological warfare, the authors examine what types of groups or individuals might attempt to use these deadly weapons against America's communities, and they offer some recommendations for countering this threat, emphasizing the importance of monitoring basic public health issues.

Bioterrorism is also the subject of the following chapter, in which Dr. Patrick Stewart, Dr. Will McLean, and Lucas Duffner (all of the Department of Political Science at Arkansas State University) explore the fears held by many Americans about the threat of a terrorist attack on our nation's food supply. They argue that if an attack on the food supply system were to be carried out by terrorists, it would likely not be as immediately politically advantageous as traditional terrorist attacks. Traditional terrorist attacks obtain attention through a sudden strike followed by a period of calm during which time public fear becomes attenuated as anxious citizens await another attack. In contrast, a biological attack on the food supply would likely exhibit a pattern in which, if the poisoned food reaches the public, there would be a time lapse between the effect of such food poisoning and government and public awareness of such an attack. Further, such an attack would lack fearsome images like those seen with September 11; instead it would provide a series of public interest stories. However, an agricultural bioterrorism attack would likely lead to

decreased trust in food processing and governmental institutions unless it was dealt with quickly and with public risk perceptions in mind. Working to maintain public trust underscores the need to understand what drives risk perceptions. If individuals perceive they have control over a risk, they are likely to be less concerned about it, just as individuals tend to be less concerned about natural occurrences, as compared to man-made events. Drawing on a survey of residents in five states, which revealed a high level of concern about the likelihood of an attack on the U.S. food supply, the authors conclude that the federal government should do more to educate the public about the threat to agriculture and what individuals can do to help mitigate this threat.

Issues of public perception and homeland security are also addressed in the next four chapters of this section, beginning with a discussion by Lydia Khalil (a former staff member of the White House Office of Homeland Security). She argues that public perception, more than critical infrastructure, airports, or national historical sites, is *the* real target of terrorist attacks. Manipulating public perception and exaggerating their capability to do harm are terrorists' primary weapons. In order to be effective, terrorists need to arouse fear of their organizations and leaders. They generate that fear by attacking the public's confidence in the national leadership's ability to protect its citizens from the unpredictable and indiscriminate nature of their attacks. Therefore, it is critical that homeland security officials understand what informs the public's perception of their own security in relation to terrorism. Khalil explores the various factors that influence public perception—in particular, threat perception—and then describes how these factors affect the public's behavior and the success of homeland security policies. Finally, her analysis identifies the appropriate government role in addressing perception and offers recommendations for how homeland security agencies can be more responsive to the public's perception of threat, enhance levels of confidence, and improve their policies accordingly.

Next, Dr. Gideon Mailer, a faculty member at St. John's College, Cambridge University, brings an international perspective to the issue of perceptions and reactions to the terrorist threat faced by America's communities. Drawing lessons from the experiences of counterterrorists in Australia, France, Israel, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom, the United States can learn a great deal about managing fear and maintaining a sense of normality while facing the threat of terrorism. The best course of action for federal agencies, he argues, would be to harness an innate rationalism in the American people when it comes to their everyday movements in these public areas. His chapter synthesizes existing scholarship that relates to fear and individual rational/irrational behavior in the public environment and relates it specifically to the practical, technological, and emotional means by which individual Americans can

maintain “vigilance,” while at the same time maintain as much normality as possible in a public gathering space. Mailer then focuses on shopping malls as an example of key, prominent public spaces where risk education and new technology can help to improve our perceptions of homeland security and concludes that the federal government can do more to empower individual Americans to play a more direct role in protecting our communities from terrorism.

However, as professor Eric Miller of Kent State University argues in the next chapter, recent governmental failures have weakened public confidence in the federal government and its leaders. After the government’s lackluster response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, he notes, a national survey by *CNN* revealed that only about one in five Americans felt a “great deal” of confidence in the government’s ability to deal with future natural or terrorist-created disasters. In essence, the first real test of the new Department of Homeland Security revealed that significant work remains in order to secure the American homeland and help it recover quickly when disasters strike. Of course, in a country as geographically vast as the United States, Americans need to appreciate that—regardless of what politicians may promise—every square inch of this country cannot be guarded or protected at all times. Thus, we must make every effort to promote resilience in all of our communities. Through public education initiatives and greater involvement in the policy making process, the American government can empower its citizens to exert a greater level of confidence in their own and their respective communities’ ability to anticipate and respond to security threats. Ultimately, in doing so, one of the most potent weapons that terrorists possess—fear—may be quashed.

Finally, the volume concludes with a brief analysis of the current Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). Here, Dr. Patrick Stewart, Dr. Will McLean, and Matthew Huckaby (Arkansas State University) argue that events of the past decade in American history make it clear that all citizens are potential terrorist targets whether they reside in large urban population centers or more rural areas of the nation. With the general public’s concern about the terrorist threats facing the United States remaining relatively constant and high since the mid-1980s, researchers are concerned with the extent to which the American public is aware of the current threat of terrorism and its subsequent knowledge of the newly developed Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). This final chapter explores the issue of perception in the heartland of the United States, where terrorist attacks have been less frequent and have caused less physical destruction. Initial findings from a recent case study regarding knowledge of terrorist threats and the HSAS reveal a general lack of knowledge and concern about the system, which in turn impacts the public perception of threats to the homeland. In essence, the authors conclude, it appears that the potential for large-scale death and destruction from acts of terrorism

xviii Preface

has not spurred the rural public to obtain knowledge of the warning system put in place to protect communities.

CONCLUSION

Together, these chapters inform our understanding of the challenges of securing public spaces and social institutions in communities throughout America. However, there are obviously other avenues to explore beyond what is covered in this volume. Thus, this collection will hopefully also stimulate readers to pursue further research on their own, in order to expand our collective understanding of homeland security at the national and local levels. In a country as vast as the United States, the challenges of homeland security require a broad, collaborative effort between government agencies at all levels, private corporations, community groups, and the general public.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not purport to reflect the position of the United States Military Academy, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.