PREFACE

Terrorists seek to maximize economic, political, and psychological disruption through their actions. To capture media attention for their cause, terrorists often engage in one-upmanship, acting in a more horrific and spectacular manner than has been previously seen, from the Olympic Village attack in Munich in 1972, to the airliner crashes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001. The use of biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons has been contemplated by many terrorists, and even carried out with some success on occasion, but the medical community justifiably fears that we are likely to see more calamitous use of such agents for terrorist means in the future.

Terrorist events in the fall of 2001—the attacks upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, followed by dissemination of anthrax through the US mail-painfully emphasized the need for physicians to be able to diagnose and manage individuals suffering injuries as a result of exposures to biological, chemical, and nuclear, as well as explosives. *Physician's Guide to Terrorist Attack* is intended to prepare physicians and other health care workers to respond knowledgeably and confidently to a terrorist event. Whether you are a first responder working with emergency personnel amid the chaos of a disaster scene or at a hospital receiving mass casualties, a provider in the community responding to an anxious patient fearful of exposure to a biological agent, or a primary care provider or mental health specialist helping patients and their family members to cope with the psychological aftermath, this book will provide the information you need, in an easy-to-follow, clinically relevant, case-based format.

Dr. Smoak, a veteran of the US Embassy bombing in Nairobi, Kenya, reviews lessons learned from previous events with regard to the initial response. Dr. Geiling, who was chief of medical services at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, details the impact that a terrorist event is likely to have on the medical system, providing valuable guidance on what to expect and how to prepare for a future event. Drs. Yeskey and Morse of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outline the approach that a community provider should take, from the initial suspicion of a terrorist event, to the involvement of public health authorities.

Dr. Murray reviews the historical use of biological, chemical, and nuclear agents, from ancient times through the present, putting into perspective recent concerns, and providing an introduction to the ensuing chapters, which provide an agent-by-agent review for the clinician. A number of the world's leading infectious diseases experts on potential biological agents focus on the key aspects of diagnosis and therapy for the 13 most feared bacteria, viruses, and toxins. A comparable field of experts then reviews the diagnostic and therapeutic approach to various chemical agents. Many of the authors have been involved in various aspects of evaluation and management of biological and chemical threats, in homeland defense efforts to combat terrorism, and in a variety of educational endeavors to help fellow clinicians prepare to diagnose and treat victims promptly should an event come to pass.

The subsequent three chapters provide critically important information as well. A chapter on blast injuries, written by leading authorities on this subject, is significant because conventional explosives are still far more likely to be used by terrorists than

anything else. A chapter on nuclear and radiological weapons, written by experts at the Armed Forces Radiobiologic Research Institute, covers the gamut from a "dirty bomb" to the use of a high-powered nuclear device. Last but not least, members of the Department of Psychiatry at Uniformed Services University, internationally recognized for their disaster response experience, review the immediate and late psychological effects of terrorist events. This is particularly salient, since no matter how severe and numerous the physical casualties, it is safe to assume that they will be exceeded by those suffering from psychological traumatization.

Although it would be nice to think that physicians need not know the information that is covered here, the reality is that it is critically important for physicians to prepare themselves by acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to cope effectively with a major terrorist event now, rather than learning through painful experience.

Michael J. Roy, *MD, MPH, FACP*

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