

IP658: TERRORISM INVOLVING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
Theory, Threat, and Policy
Spring 2005

Wednesdays, 2 pm – 4 pm, Morse B208

Overview

This course will provide students with an understanding of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Students will review the technical aspects of WMD, examine the history of WMD terrorism, discuss and explore the current debate on the likelihood of WMD terrorism, and assess policy tools available to address the threat of WMD terrorism. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to view the threat of WMD terrorism in the context of the threat of terrorism more broadly, and also be able to place the 9-11 attacks and subsequent anthrax letters in context.

Instructor and Office Hours

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Expectations and Requirements

This course's success depends on active participation by all students, including completion of ALL the readings prior to class time. Most readings are available online. It is vital to complete the readings for this class.

- **One discussion assignment** will count 10 percent of the grade. **Starting on February 9**, students will be required to give one 15-minute presentation discussing one of the topics listed for one week of the course, or a topic chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. The presentation should display thorough knowledge of the assigned readings and other material related to the topic. PowerPoint slides, multimedia, or other presentation aids are allowed but not required. Students should contact the instructor to sign up for a date and topic for their presentation.
- **One debate** will count for 20 percent of the grade. Students will be required to participate in a debate on one of the Resolutions listed under the early sessions of the seminar (or a different resolution germane to the topic chosen by mutual agreement and approved by the instructor). Format for the debates will be as follows:
 - 10-minute opening affirmative presentation (supporting the resolution)
 - 10-minute opening negative presentation (against the resolution)
 - 5-minute rebuttals by each side
 - 10 minutes of questions from other students (moderated by the instructor)
 - 5-minute summations by each side

PowerPoint slides, multimedia, or other presentation aids are **not allowed**. Students should contact the instructor to sign up for a debate.

- **One op-ed** will count for 10 percent of the grade. Op-eds must follow the New York Times guidelines for editorials (target length 650 words; 600 to 700 words will be acceptable for the course). Topics must be submitted for approval by the instructor by **16 February**. The final version of the op-ed will be due by 8:00 a.m. on **March 9**.
- **Abstract for long paper and presentation of research design** will count for 10 percent of the grade. Abstracts should be 100 words in length and are due for approval at the beginning of class on **March 23**. Students are encouraged in the strongest possible terms to meet with the instructor to discuss the research design before submitting the abstract.
- Students will be required to give a 5-minute presentation explaining the research design and take questions from the seminar on **April 27 or May 6**. Students should contact the instructor to sign up for research design presentations. **One long paper** will count for 50 percent of the grade. This paper will be at least 12 but no more than 18 double-spaced pages (Times New Roman 12-point font with one-inch margins), including endnotes. The final version of your paper will be due by **4:00 p.m. on May 11**.

Required Texts

- Nadine Gurr and Benjamin Cole, *The New Face of Terrorism, Threats From Weapons of Mass Destruction*, I.B. Tauris, 2002 edition - hereafter referred to as Gurr and Cole. (N.B.: This text is available from the publisher through the Palgrave Macmillan web site, www.palgrave-usa.com.)
- Jonathan Tucker, ed., *Toxic Terror, Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons*, MIT Press, 2000 - hereafter referred to as Tucker

Recommended (or frequently used) Texts:

- Walter Reich, *Origins of Terrorism*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998 - hereafter referred to as Reich
- Alex P. Schmid, *Political Terrorism*, Transaction Publications, 2005 – hereafter referred to as Schmid

Course Schedule

26 January 2005: Introduction 1: What are WMD?

(required for those unfamiliar with the technical aspects of WMD)

- Office of Technology Assessment, “Technologies Underlying Weapons of Mass Destruction,” 1993, pp. 15-70. [<http://www.wws.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/byteserv.prl/~ota/disk1/1993/9344/934404.PDF>]
- Office of Technology Assessment, “Technologies Underlying Weapons of Mass Destruction,” 1993, pp. 71-117. [<http://www.wws.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/byteserv.prl/~ota/disk1/1993/9344/934405.PDF>]
- Office of Technology Assessment, “Technical Aspects of Nuclear Proliferation,” 1993, pp.119-171. [<http://www.wws.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/byteserv.prl/~ota/disk1/1993/9344/934406.PDF>]

2 February 2005: Introduction 2: What is Terrorism?

- Schmid, pp. 1-39, 61-135 (required if you haven't already taken IPS' “International Terrorism” course)

Lecture by Jeffrey Bale

9 February 2005: Trends in WMD Terrorism

- Gurr and Cole, pp. 1-40.
- Tucker, pp. 1-14.
- Gary Ackerman, “Misperceptions Surrounding WMD Terrorism”, to be handed out in class.
- 2002 WMD Terrorism Chronology: Incidents Involving Sub-National Actors and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, or Nuclear Materials, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, August 2003. [<http://cns.miiis.edu/pubs/reports/pdfs/cbrn2k2.pdf>]
- Ron Purver, “Understanding Past Non-Use of CBW,” in *Terrorism with Chemical and Biological Weapons: Calibrating Risks and Responses*, CBACI, 1997, pp. 65-73, to be handed out in class.

Discussion questions:

- 1) What recent trends in terrorism make CBRN use by terrorists more likely?
- 2) Is the threat of WMD terrorism growing faster than the fear of WMD attack, or vice-versa?

Debate resolution: **One person's “terrorist” is another's “freedom fighter.”**

16 February 2005 Motivations: Terrorist Behavior and the Appeal of WMD

****TOPICS APPROVED FOR OP-EDS****

- Gurr and Cole, pp. 80-125.
- Martha Crenshaw, “The Logic of Terrorism,” in Reich, pp. 7-24.
- Tucker, pp. 271-290
- Albert Bandura, “Mechanisms of Moral Detachment,” in Reich, pp. 161-191.

- Brian Jenkins, "Understanding the Link between Motives and Methods," in *Terrorism with Chemical and Biological Weapons: Calibrating Risks and Responses*, CBACI, 1997, pp. 43-51.

Discussion questions:

- 1) What are the advantages and disadvantages of CBRN weapons for terrorist use?
- 2) How are motivations for mass casualty attacks similar to motivations for using CBRN, and how are they different?

Debate resolution: **Charismatic leadership greatly increases the probability that a terrorist group will make mass casualty attacks.**

23 February 2005: Motivations (cont.) and Capabilities

- Gurr and Cole, pp. 126-194 (Motivations, cont.)
- Gurr and Cole, pp. 42-79 (Capabilities)
- Richard A. Falkenrath, Robert D. Newman and Bradley A Thayer, *America's Achilles' Heel: Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Terrorism and Covert Attack*, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs 1998, pp. 97-166.
- Karl Lowe, "Analyzing Technical Constraints on Bio-Terrorism: Are They Still Important?" in *Terrorism with Chemical and Biological Weapons: Calibrating Risks and Responses*, CBACI, 1997, pp. 53-64.

Discussion questions:

- 1) What types of WMD are terrorists most likely to acquire and use?
- 2) How is the acquisition of CBRN weapons by state sponsors of terrorism likely to affect the capability of their terrorist clients to use CBRN?

Debate resolution: **Researchers in the biological sciences should adhere to a Code of Conduct to reduce the likelihood that their work will be utilized by terrorists.**

2 March 2005: Case Studies – Nationalist/Separatist and Left-Wing Groups

- Tucker, ch. 2, 3, 6, 7
- Gary Ackerman and Laura Snyder, "Would They If They Could?" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (May/June 2002). [<http://www.thebulletin.org/issues/2002/mj02/mj02ackerman.html>]
- Daniel S. Gressang, IV. "Audience and Message: Assessing Terrorist WMD Potential" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13:3 (Autumn 2001).
- Arpad Palfy, "Weapons System Selection and Mass-Casualty Outcomes." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15:2 (Summer 2003).
- Gurr and Cole, pp.195-211.
- *Monterey WMD Terrorism Database*, Case Numbers: 200; 1259, to be handed out in class

Discussion questions:

- 1) What similarities and what differences stand out among terrorist groups that have attempted to acquire and/or use CBRN?
- 2) What motivations, capabilities, and inhibitions could affect the use of CBRN by environmental extremists?

9 March 2005: Case Studies – Right-Wing Groups

****OP-EDS DUE****

- Paul de Armond, "Right-Wing Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Motives, Strategies, and Movements," in *Hype or Reality: The "New Terrorism" and Mass Casualty Attacks*, edited by Brad Roberts, Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, 2000, pp. 49-68.
- Tucker, ch. 9, 10, 13.

Discussion questions:

- 1) In which known cases have group dynamics and other organizational factors promoted attempts to use CBRN? In which cases have these factors worked to discourage or prevent CBRN use?
- 2) What motivations, capabilities, and inhibitions have affected the use of CBRN by right-wing extremists?

Debate resolution: **The provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act should be made permanent.**

16 March 2005

SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS

23 March 2005: Case Studies – Cult Groups and “Loners”

****ABSTRACTS FOR LONG PAPER DUE ****

- Tucker, ch. 4, 5, 8, 12
- *Chronology of Aum Shinrikyo's CBW Activities*, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, March 2001. [http://cns.mii.edu/pubs/reports/aum_chrn.htm]
- Amy Smithson, *Ataxia: The Chemical and Biological Terrorism Threat and the US Response*, 2000, Chapter 3. [<http://www.stimson.org/cbw/pdf/atxchapter3.pdf>]
- *Monterey WMD Terrorism Database*, Case Numbers: 958; 190; 237, to be handed out in class

Discussion questions:

- 1) How serious is the threat of CBRN use by lone actors?
- 2) What organizational and psychological factors have contributed to the use of WMD by religious cults?

Debate resolution: **The anthrax attacks of 2001 were perpetrated by a lone actor.**

30 March 2005: Al-Qa`ida and Other Islamist Groups

Lecture by Jeffrey Bale

- article on al-Qa`ida and WMD, to be mailed to course conference
- article on al-Qa`ida and WMD, with accompanying chart [<http://cns.mii.edu/pubs/other/alqwmd.htm>]
- David C. Rapoport, “Sacred terror: A contemporary example from Islam,” in Reich, pp.103-130
- Martin Kramer, “The moral logic of Hizballah,” in Reich, pp. 131-160
- Tucker, ch. 11, 14.

6 April 2005: Likelihood of WMD Terrorism

- Ehud Sprinzak, “The Great Superterrorism Scare,” *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1998), pp.110-124. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/issue_SeptOct_2001/sprinzaksuperterrorism.html]
- Ehud Sprinzak, “Revisiting the Superterrorism Debate,” *Foreign Policy* (September 2001). [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/issue_SeptOct_2001/sprinzakrevisiting.html]
- Brad Roberts, “Has the Taboo Been Broken?” in *Terrorism with Chemical and Biological Weapons: Calibrating Risks and Responses*, CBACI, 1997, pp. 121-140
- David Rapoport, “Terrorism and Weapons of the Apocalypse,” *National Security Studies Quarterly* 5:3 (Summer 1999), pp. 49-67.
- Bruce Hoffman, “The Debate over Future Terrorist Use of Chemical, Biological, Nuclear and Radiological Weapons,” in *Hype or Reality: The “New Terrorism” and Mass Casualty Attacks*, CBACI, 2000.

Discussion questions:

- 1) How comprehensive and how effective are current efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring CBRN capabilities?
- 2) How does the threat of WMD terrorism compare to the threat of terrorism using conventional means?

Debate resolution: **The international community is not doing enough to prevent nuclear terrorism.**

13 April 2005: Terrorist Attack and Response Scenarios (simulation)

Readings TBA

20 April 2005 Responding to WMD Terrorism

- Jonathan Tucker, “Improving Infectious Disease Surveillance to Combat Bioterrorism and Natural Emerging Infections,” Testimony to the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related

Agencies of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, 3 October 2001.
[<http://cns.miis.edu/research/cbw/testtuck.htm>]

- Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction, *Fifth and Final Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, 15 December 2001. [<http://www.rand.org/nsrd/terrpanel/terror3-screen.pdf>] Read the Executive Summary.
- Amy Smithson, *Ataxia: The Chemical and Biological Terrorism Threat and the US Response*, 2000, Executive Summary. [<http://www.stimson.org/cbw/pdf/ataxiaexecsum.pdf>]
- Stephen E. Flynn, Project Director, "America – Still Unprepared, Still in Danger: Report of an Independent Task Force, *Council of Foreign Relations* 2002, pp. 1-32
- Paul M. Maniscalco and James P. Denney, "Public Safety Agencies: Trying to Define Readiness while Surviving the Rhetoric," in *Hype or Reality: The "New Terrorism" and Mass Casualty Attacks*, edited by Brad Roberts, Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, 2000, pp. 253-262

Discussion questions:

- 1) What aspects of consequence management for CBRN incidents should get highest priority?
- 2) What can be done to prevent or manage the psychological consequences of WMD attack?

Debate resolution: **Planning for response to terrorist attacks should give high-probability, low-consequence incidents priority over low-probability, high-consequence scenarios.**

27 April 2005: Antiterrorism and Counterterrorism

- Gurr and Cole, pp. 212-246
- Ian Lesser, "Countering the New Terrorism: Implications for Strategy," in *Countering the New Terrorism*, RAND, 1999, pp. 85-144.
- Bruce Hoffman, "Terrorism and Counterterrorism After September 11," *U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda* 6:3 (November 2001). [<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/1101/ijpe/pj63hoffman.htm>]
- United Nations Treaty Collection, Conventions on Terrorism, website to be skimmed [<http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism.asp>].

Discussion questions:

- 1) What should be done to improve coordination of antiterrorist activities by U.S. federal agencies?
- 2) What can be done to improve international cooperation against terrorism?

Research design presentations

6 May 2005: What does the future hold?

- Peter D. Zimmerman with Cheryl Loeb, "Dirty Bombs: The Threat Revisited," *Defense Horizons* 38 (January 2004).
- Gurr and Cole, pp. 247-263

Discussion questions:

- 1) How will globalization affect motivations for mass casualty terrorism?
- 2) How are future technical developments likely to affect terrorist capabilities for using CBRN?

Research design presentations

11 May 2005:

****LONG PAPERS DUE at 4:00 PM****

(no seminar meeting)