

# Book Reviews

## New generation of anti-terrorists

by William M. Kelly

***Beyond the Iran-Contra Crisis: The shape of US Anti-Terrorism Policy in the Post-Reagan Era* edited by Neil C. Livingston & Terrell E. Arnold. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company (original publisher Lexington Books of Lexington, Mass.), 1988, 340 pages, US\$16.95.**

Since much of the terrorist focus worldwide is on the US, particularly on its citizens, personnel and installations abroad, the US will continue to be something of a fulcrum around which other countries' anti-terrorism efforts revolve. The sale of weapons to Iran and the clandestine transfer of funds to the Nicaraguan Contras have called into question the true depth of the US commitment to international cooperation and the US fidelity to clear, long-term and effective anti-terrorism policies and strategies, especially when they conflict with short-term domestic political exigencies. The thirteen essays in this book examine the impact of Iran-Contra on US counter-terrorism, now and for the future, and the lessons that were — or should have been — learned. The book concludes that Iran-Contra, in retrospect, was but a blip on the US counter-terrorism front and has not seriously undermined or changed the essential policies and strategies.

Much progress has been made in the last two or three years in the worldwide fight against terrorism. The US administration would have us believe that this is due largely to the US's evident willingness to resort to military force (be it against Libya or via the presence of warships in the Gulf of Sidra). The successes are probably more due to enhanced resolve by the allies to prosecute and jail terrorists and to enhanced international cooperation (particularly intelligence gathering and sharing). According to Parker Borg in the first essay, the universality of terrorism and the need for bilateral and multilateral cooperation — as opposed to unilateral US action — is belatedly being recognized by US policy-makers. Given the importance of intelligence sharing, Canadians should be more

mindful of the effectiveness and credibility of our own intelligence capability, particularly CSIS, lest we be left on the sidelines as a bit player to be consulted or involved only at others' convenience.

Because terrorism as it impacts on the US is quantitatively and qualitatively different from the Canadian brand of terrorism, there is much in this book that, although interesting, has little direct application to Canada. It is unrealistic, for example, for Canadians to spend much time worrying about a special operations capability to rescue hostages worldwide, or to consider the pros and cons of preemptive or retaliatory military strikes on terrorist sanctuaries. What the reader will find intriguing — and what the Canadian Senate Committee found dismaying in the Canadian context — is the tangle of bureaucratic organizations involved in US counter-terrorism. Notwithstanding how well it appears to be coordinated on paper, one legitimately wonders how effective the structure is in practice, particularly during a crisis.

The role of the media is examined in an essay by W.D. Livingstone. This was an area our Senate Committee examined in some detail and concluded that the media needed to engage in some serious introspection on how it handled coverage of terrorist threats and incidents. The essay — while being very critical of the media and its handling by government — raises the old bugbear of media forbearance: if the media refuse to cover a terrorist incident, terrorists will simply ratchet up the level of violence until they force media attention. The Senate Committee disputed this logic. Terrorists have to walk a fine line between enough violence to communicate terror and attract media attention on one hand and, on the other, too much violence that risks alienating supporters and legitimizing massive retaliation by government.

When faced with the constitutional "freedom of the press," the practical power of the media and the political and practical difficulties in trying to curtail or influence its coverage of terrorism, Livingstone turns (as did the Canadian Senate Committee) to "Voluntary guidelines" worked out by the press, perhaps in consultation with law enforcement and government officials. One wonders how long it will take the media to

come to grips with the extent to which it is used by terrorists; and come to grips with the wider "public" responsibility it has in covering terrorism.

P.J. Brown and T.E. Arnold review counter-terrorism as enterprise: the huge industry growing up in the private sector around "risk analysis," physical security, terrorist profiling and so on. I had hoped to read more about the other side of the coin, "terrorism as enterprise." The days when most of the sophisticated terrorist groups were motivated only by ideology or some cause are gone (if they ever existed). Leadership of the large groups is now motivated at least as much by power, money and prestige as by altruism. Even if their causes are resolved, these groups will not likely disband. Instead, to maintain their status they will make themselves available to other causes and grievances. That is why trying to get at and resolve the root causes of terrorism is often a fruitless exercise. My experience in the Middle East taught me how quickly the techniques and strategies of terrorism spread and I am convinced that it is not solely through imitation. "Terrorists for hire" and "terrorism as an industry" already exist and will constitute an increasing threat for the future, as the tactics of terrorism supersede the causes.

*Senator W.M. Kelly chaired the Senate Special Committee on Terrorism and Public Safety (November 1986-July 1987).*

## Canadian post-revisionism?

by David Farr

***Diplomacy of Fear: Canada and the Cold War, 1941-1948* by Denis Smith. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, 289 pages, \$15.95 paper, \$35.00 cloth.**

This is a well-written account of the attitudes of Canada's foreign policy makers towards the Soviet Union and the drift into hostility between East and West in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. As the book's title suggests, the author believes that Canada's policy towards the USSR during these years was based to a