

Barend ter Haar
The Future of Biological Weapons
Praeger: New York, 1991
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The title of Barend ter Haar's book would lead one to believe it covers all aspects of the future of biological warfare. This work is, however, much more narrow than the title indicates. It does not deal with existing and future capabilities of nations to inflict mass casualties on the battlefield with biological weapons, nor does it delve deeply into the technology of biological warfare or the tactics and strategy of its use. The focus is on the diplomatic efforts to achieve biological weapons disarmament.

Having said this, the book is timely. The Review Conference on the Biological Weapons Convention met in September 1991 to deal with efforts to strengthen the Convention. *The Future of Biological Weapons* provides an excellent survey of the diplomatic history of biological weapons disarmament. Moreover, it provides valuable insight into the prospects of achieving meaningful disarmament.

Barend ter Haar, a Dutch diplomat with considerable experience in the diplomacy of biological weapons disarmament, devotes about half of the text to the examination of the history of biological arms control. He begins with the Geneva protocol of 1925, discusses the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972 in some detail, and reviews arms control efforts since implementation of the Convention. A second chapter looks at the current state of the Convention. The author reviews the threat, both from the viewpoint of war among nations and from the use of such weapons by terrorists. His conclusion is that, although some progress has been made, the major shortcoming of the convention is a

lack of verification. This, of course, will be a major topic for the Review Conference.

The author next looks at the Chemical Weapons Convention as a possible model for strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention. While noting that there are significant technological differences, he believes that work on chemical weapons disarmament provides useful insights. The final chapter then summarizes the author's ideas on how to proceed with disarmament and how to achieve a verification regime that will effectively police the Convention.

In addition to the very cogent narrative of disarmament efforts regarding biological weapons, backed by copious footnotes, the author also provides several appendices that will be of great use to anyone interested in this topic and in evaluating efforts to achieve disarmament. These include the Geneva Protocol of 1925, the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972, the Final Declarations of the two Review Conferences held on the Biological Weapons Convention, the Modalities for the Exchange of Information developed by a meeting of experts in 1987, and the text of a verification protocol.

The Future of Biological Weapons will be of primary interest to those concerned with biological warfare and the disarmament efforts surrounding that type of warfare. It will also be useful reading for those concerned with disarmament in general, particularly the verification aspects of disarmament. That, of course, includes most of us.

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Erratum

In our last issue, a line was inadvertently dropped from the article, "Lessons from the Gulf, NBC Warning and Reporting," by COL Raymond A. Barbeau and CPT Pratya Siriwat. Our apologies to the authors for this error.