
Book Reviews



By Mr. Reid Kirby

Chemical Demilitarization: Public Policy Aspects, Al Mauroni, Praeger Publishers, April 2003.

The U.S. Army has a long history in chemical demilitarization, dating back to the activities of the Chemical Warfare Service in World War I. Though the practices have changed over the decades, they were always in keeping with the practices of industry at the time.

Al Mauroni's discourse on chemical demilitarization is limited to the U.S. Army Chemical Corps's experience with incineration (from the 1970s to the present). His main focus is on how a straightforward endeavor ended up as a hotly debated \$24-billion, 25-year project and ultimately what lessons chemical soldiers may gain from this experience.

The book is replete with references to public laws and is one of the most detailed accounts of U.S. chemical-demilitarization activities. Mr. Mauroni sees the evolution of the demilitarization program as three distinct bands: Army-funded to destroy "leakers," Department of Defense (DOD)-funded to destroy obsolete chemical weapons to make room for binary weapons, and the current program to destroy all chemical weapons to meet U.S. disarmament treaty obligations.

His accounts are highly detailed and show a program embroiled with political conflicts. It is also a testament to the responsiveness of the U.S. Army to communities and groups. His analysis is critical of the political machinery at work on national projects and the inability of the Chemical Corps to affect public policy.

The book concludes that the policy lessons from the chemical demilitarization program are educational to other chemical- and biological-related issues (such as the anthrax vaccination program). A cultural change within the Army and greater teamwork within DOD is recommended.

Chemical Demilitarization is a valuable historical study and a must-read reference on the subject. It is also invaluable for understanding public-policy processes that affect the Chemical Corps.

Chemical and Biological Warfare: A Reference Handbook, Al Mauroni, ABC-CLIO, July 2003.

The *Contemporary World Issues* series of textbooks is intended for high school and college undergraduate studies. This particular title addresses the issues of chemical and biological warfare (CBW) in a format suitable as a special topic in a social studies or a political science course.

It is a balanced work that provides easy-to-read information on CBW policies through historical introspection. As a textbook designed specifically for supporting a teaching plan, the book sets the context through topical presentations of issues and controversies, leads into the chronology and basic background of CBW, and ends with case studies and resources to facilitate classroom discussion and student research. Educators will find this a highly usable book to support a semester study on CBW. The listed references serve as a guide to additional reading, and the list of organizations and Internet resources serve well for in-depth report writing.

The style of writing is clear, concise, and focused on high-level discussions without the distraction of technical details too common with many books addressing CBW. Rather, the book relies on references and resources for the student to learn the more in-depth technical aspects of CBW. The selection of topics is uniquely U.S. centric but also covers global issues. Though the chronology starts with some of the earliest history of CBW, much of the text relates to Cold War and present-day issues.

Chemical soldiers will value this book as a resource for communicating CBW-related issues. The annotated resources in the book represent material that all chemical soldiers should be familiar with, but they also serve as a self-study guide for public information on CBW (such as suggested reading).

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