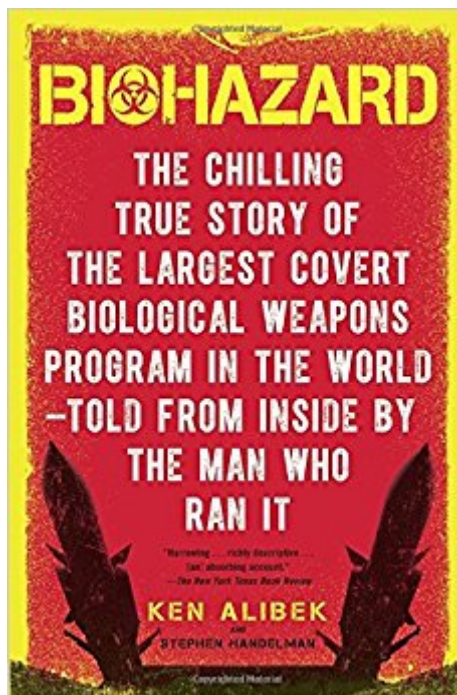


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Biohazard: The Chilling True Story Of The Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program In The World--Told From Inside By The Man Who Ran It



Synopsis

Anthrax. Smallpox. Incurable and horrifying Ebola-related fevers. For two decades, while a fearful world prepared for nuclear winter, an elite team of Russian bioweaponers began to till a new killing field: a bleak tract sown with powerful seeds of mass destruction—by doctors who had committed themselves to creating a biological Armageddon. Biohazard is the never-before-told story of Russia's darkest, deadliest, and most closely guarded Cold War secret. No one knows more about Russia's astounding experiments with biowarfare than Ken Alibek. Now the mastermind behind Russia's germ warfare effort reveals two decades of shocking breakthroughs . . . how Moscow's leading scientists actually reengineered hazardous microbes to make them even more virulent . . . the secrets behind the discovery of an invisible, untraceable new class of biological agents just right for use in political assassinations . . . the startling story behind Russia's attempt to turn a sample of the AIDS virus into the ultimate bioweapon. And in a chilling work of real-world intrigue, Biohazard offers us all a rare glimpse into a shadowy scientific underworld where doctors manufacture mass destruction, where witnesses to errors are silenced forever, and where ground zero is closer than we ever dared believe.

Praise for Biohazard

“Harrowing . . . richly descriptive . . . [an] absorbing account.”—The New York Times Book Review

“Remarkable . . . terrifying revelations . . . [Ken Alibek's] overall message is ignored at great national peril.”—Newsday

“Read and be amazed.”—An important and fascinating look into a terrifying world of which we were blissfully unaware.”—Robin Cook, author of Contagion

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Customer Reviews

In this fast-paced memoir, Ken Alibek combines cutting-edge science with the narrative techniques of a thriller to describe some of the most awful weapons imaginable. The result will remind readers of *The Hot Zone*, Richard Preston's smart bestseller about the Ebola virus. That book focuses on the dangers of a freak accident; *Biohazard* shows how disease can become a deliberate tool of war. Alibek, once a top scientist in the Soviet Union's biological weapons program, describes putting anthrax on a warhead and targeting a city on the other side of the world. "A hundred kilograms of anthrax spores would, in optimal atmospheric conditions, kill up to three million people in any of the densely populated metropolitan areas of the United States," he writes. "A single SS-18 [missile] could wipe out the population of a city as large as New York." Chilling passages like these, plus discussions of proliferation and terrorism, make *Biohazard* a harrowing book, but it also has a human side. Alibek, who defected to the United States, describes the routine danger of his work: "A bioweapons lab leaves its mark on a person forever." An unending stream of vaccinations has destroyed his sense of smell, afflicted him with allergies, made it impossible to eat certain kinds of food, and "weakened my resistance to disease and probably shortened my life." But it didn't take away his ability to tell an astonishing story. --John J. Miller --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Biological weapons in the former Soviet Union; where are they now? Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The book is very informative, and it is rather a source than an entertaining reading. I did not miss a line, because of my professional interest as a microbiologist and because I knew personally many of the listed in the book individuals. Perhaps, for an ordinary reader it is too many technical things. Unfortunately, there are no summary to be presented in a lay language. Also is missing and would be of interest for an ordinary reader a perspective of today on the possibility and danger of biological weapon, and not just from Russia, but rather from other countries where people were trained as a result of collaboration with Russians and beyond. I tried to address this issue in my recent book titled "Murder in the Lab". The book is neeses for those who are interested in the problem, and congratulations to the authors for this work. Leonid Heifets

A little dry, but hey, he's a Russian scientist, not a novelist. Autobiographical stuff to hold the story together, but not too much to detract from the subject. Scary! Marburg, Ebola, Anthrax, Bubonic Plague, Botulism, Smallpox, various other bacteria, viruses, genetically engineered to be resistant to treatment drugs, all weaponized in an aerosol form and tested as payloads on missiles (poor monkeys). Look at the current natural Ebola outbreak in Africa with several countries and hundreds of victims now involved. Imagine an attack on a city where thousands would be infected in the initial attack, then hundreds of thousands dead before containment. The USSR and later Russia had a serious production line going, not just experiments. And the U.S. "experts" keep saying that it was possible to achieve such a result. Maybe they just didn't want us to be afraid.

Well written and a good companion to "the Biology of Doom" which is a story of America's biowarfare efforts.

This story of the development of the Soviet Union's biological weapons program as written by a former high level official in the program is truly scary. I, for one, had no idea of the scope of the program, the huge amounts of bioweapons being produced and stored, the cold-hearted calculation of how to make them as thoroughly deadly as possible. This is a well-written chronological account that clearly explains the diseases they worked with and how they worked to develop from the original diseases even more deadly weapons and the means to deliver them. The scariest part is that, even if the stockpiles have been destroyed, this knowledge is still out there and being used today. I found this narrative compelling from beginning to end and strongly recommend it.

America Beware would be another subtitle for this book. While the rest of the world stopped their bioweapons programs, the USSR secretly developed bioweapons that could easily kill or eliminate an entire country's population. The downside is that it would eventually destroy Russia as well as the bioweapon make it back. This is an updated book of his earlier release of the book Biohazard. Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, stockpiles of smallpox, plague, Ebola and a few other highly infectious diseases are no longer tightly controlled or protected. The highly trained scientists also found out that they could earn an enormous salary if they went rogue going from 100 rubles per month to thousand of rubles per month. The former KGB and the Russian military still have secret bioweapon manufacturing sites in the new Russia. President Putin, a former KBG head, now leads the country. He undoubtedly still believes that the western nations need to be eliminated and placed

under Russian control. Remember, bioweapons are a "poor man's" nuclear weapon. Easy to disperse without anyone knowing about the release for several days or weeks. Just sit back and watch a population collapse without firing a single shot.

Well, this was certainly disturbing. Here, in the words of a man who was the head of a whole department dedicated to the weaponization of biological agents, is the rundown of just how far the old Russia got with such a program before the state itself imploded - and it was pretty darned far along. It seems incredible that scientists could be motivated to dedicate great effort towards developing diseases for which they themselves had no cure, to use as weapons. They even hybridized smallpox with equine encephalitis to make a new superbug. Thank God none of this ever ended up in actual use. An actual on-the-ground war with them in the 80s might well have quickly devolved into an international horror show.

I found this to be among the best written and informative books on this topic. There is an excellent discussion of how the Soviets (and now Russia?) have interwoven their military and production programs. Also discussed are the contributions the United States and other countries made to this program by supplying equipment and other material. This is a great book to develop an understanding of why we have so much more to fear from a rogue bioweapons attack than we do from being nuked. Where has all the material wound up? With Russia's current economic troubles, who has sold what where?

Colonel Kanatjan Alibekov - now Ken Alibek - ran the USSR's biological weapons program which produced weaponized strains of plague, dengue fever, smallpox and a host of other toxic terrors. This book unveils the cold war's worst aspects where both the USA and USSR violated Geneva Convention protocols in hopes of having an 'edge' on the other superpower. This book is remarkable in that it could be fascinating to both a Ph.D. level scientist or a student being introduced to the Cold War era. It contains some technical specifics but they are explained in a way that does not demand a knowledge of advanced chemistry in order to become absorbed in. One unexpected but highly educational aspect of this book is its expose of the Soviet bureaucracy. Few Westerners have any clue as to how following party doctrine and pleasing one's superiors were often the deciding issues as to if one's career advanced or if you would be exiled to Siberia. Definitely recommending reading.

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