

**TERRORISM: THE MEDIA AND THE LAW.** Edited by Abraham H. Miller, Dobbs Ferry, NY: Transnational Publishers, 1982. ISBN 0-941320-04-9. xi + 221 pp. \$25.

Reviewed by William H. Reid, MD, MPH

In the past several years there have been a number of national and international conferences on the topic of reactions of the media to terrorism and terrorists. The contents of *Terrorism: The Media and the Law* cover many of the topics of greatest interest, although the number of chapters (eight) is small. The chapters, often arising from presentations at a 1979 DePaul University (Chicago) conference, are written by a variety of acknowledged professionals in academic, legal, law enforcement, and publishing fields.

In his Foreword, the editor notes that terrorism always has been a mixture of propaganda and theatre. In the four major sections of the book, authors weigh the obvious (and some not so obvious) conflicts among the rights of the media, the public's "right to know," protection of society, submitting to the publicity demands of terrorists, philosophy of censorship, and of course whether media activity matters very much one way or the other anyway. The sections are brief: "The Nature of the Problem," "The Law Enforcement Perspective," "A View From the Fourth Estate," and "Recommendations for Covering Terrorism." Many differences between, for example, law enforcement personnel and journalists, in interpretation of particular events are brought out. On the other hand, one is struck by the similarity of concerns voiced among the diverse group of writers.

In addition to an extensive bibliography, two appendices are of considerable interest. The first contains five documents related to voluntary reporting standards of television and print media. The second describes "A Summary of National Surveys and Investigations" by a 1977-79 project on media coverage of terrorism.

This is an easily readable, thoughtful collection of papers that not only stimulates thought but also provides documents and bibliography with which the reader can pursue his or her interests in the topic. Its many good points far outweigh the expected differences in style and quality among the chapters. □