FOREWORD

The Milbank Memorial Fund is an endowed operating foundation that works to improve health by helping decision makers in the public and private sectors acquire and use the best available evidence to inform policy for health care and population health. The Fund has engaged in non-partisan analysis and research on and communication about significant issues in health policy since its inception in 1905.

Are We Ready? Public Health since 9/11 is the fifteenth of the California/Milbank Books on Health and the Public. The publishing partnership between the Fund and the University of California Press seeks to encourage the synthesis and communication of findings from research that could contribute to more effective health policy.

David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz provide a history of governmental response to the effects on health of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent anthrax cases. Their book is based on interviews with officials in New York City, many states, and the federal government and on written sources.

The authors document the dedication and insight of many senior officials of the legislative and executive branches of government. In the years since 9/11, these leaders have prepared for future disasters as tax revenues declined and the costs of health care and defense increased. As a result, the hurricanes of 2005 revealed both strengths and weaknesses of preparedness. Rosner and Markowitz address the response to the hurricanes in the preface, which was written while their book was in press.

The Fund published most of chapters 1 and 2 of this book as Milbank Reports in 2003 and 2004. The reports in this series result from the Fund's work with decision makers. The Fund invites decision makers who are interviewed for or quoted in a Milbank Report to review it in draft. Other decision makers and, as appropriate, researchers review each report for clarity and relevance. The Fund permits the authors of Milbank Reports to disagree with, but never to ignore, comments by reviewers. Because of the generally enthusiastic response of public officials to the first two reports and the draft of what would have been a third, the Fund and the Press invited Rosner and Markowitz to recast the reports and the manuscript as a book.

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