Non-lethal Weapons

Non-lethal Weapons and the Future of War

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Non-lethal Weapons: Impact and Utility Concerns for Operational Commanders in Future Conflicts. Kyle Garland 1998 The role of today’s military in future conflict is far from certain. Rapid changes and instability in the world’s political arena may thrust our military into a wide spectrum of conflicts as a matter of necessity. In order to meet these ever-changing challenges, the United States military must constantly be prepared for any crisis. From peace operations to war, the U.S. armed forces represent the instrument of power that must never lose. The coalition military success in the Gulf War set the standard for future conflicts. The need for a high-tech military capable of decisively defeating an agile opponent in record time with few casualties. Unfortunately, the next conflict may not be so accommodating and the magnitude of our casualties again return to American public interest. One avenue to avoid this, to attempt victory without fighting, is nonlethal weapons. The role of nonlethal weapons in future conflict is likely to increase as a continuous line. Political and military benefits, hindered destruction, and the American public desire to avoid war casualties, will force increased development and deployment of weapons that avoid killing. These weapons will offer the operational commander a choice. Additional flexibility, thereby enhancing military effectiveness, in both war and operation other than war. Additionally, nonlethal weapons will offer political commanders a choice in determining their use. Current laws and treaties, possible negative impact on operational effectiveness, and ethical issues prohibit the employment of many non-lethal weapons. Additionally, some so-called non-lethal weapons may still result in death or permanent disability to their victims if used indiscriminately or incorrectly.

Non-lethal Weaponry: A Framework for Future Integration 1998 Consideration of non-lethal and non-lethal weapons by the Department of Defense as an expression of military power is a relatively new yet growing phenomenon. This report explores four issues germane to non-lethal weaponry to the Department of Defense: (1) the need of military organizations to integrate technologies intended to minimize enemy civilian casualties, (2) the potential for non-lethal weapons to enhance the U.S. military’s ability to exercise control, (3) the need to employ non-lethal weapons in response to the challenges of a new international arena, and (4) the U.S. military’s ability to integrate non-lethal weaponry into various phases of military operations. The report concludes that the research report is a valuable contribution to the understanding of non-lethal weapon capabilities and potential. The report suggests that the military should continue to develop non-lethal weapon technologies and to explore ways to integrate these technologies into military operations. The report also highlights the potential for non-lethal weapons to enhance the U.S. military’s ability to exercise control and to respond to the challenges of a new international arena.

Non-lethal Weapons and Conventional War: Facing the Commander’s Issues and Dilemmas 1998 Although the usefulness of non-lethal weapons during Military Operations Other Than War and in reducing lethal weapons’ use is widely recognized, future political and public expectations may change current policies regarding the use of non-lethal force. This paper explores the potential issues and dilemmas that future commanders who possess a substantial non-lethal capability may face during conventional war.

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Non-lethal Weapons: Applications to AC-130 Gunships. Brian Rappert 2004-11-23 As mankind finds ever more impious ways to kill and maim, some look to non-lethal weapons as a fix. Brian Rappert discusses the technologies involved and the ethics of, for example, blinding someone with a laser, leaving them blind forever, versus killing them outright.

An Analysis of the Strategic Application of Non-lethal Weapons to Provide Force Protection. Charles R. Rice 2001 The working principles of the U.S. National Security Strategy are to shape the international environment, to respond to threats, and to prepare for an uncertain future. The U.S. continues to respond to a variety of contingencies by using its military capability across the spectrum, including peace operations and humanitarian assistance. U.S. forces are manned, trained, equipped to deter and, if necessary, to fight and win conflicts where this nation’s vital interests are threatened. The application of lethal force is the ultimate option for the military element of power. However, new situations current options short of lethal force. This study analyzes various options available option: the application of non-lethal force to provide force protection. It will describe strategic, operational, and tactical applications of non-lethal weapons during past conflict, and then propose non-lethal capabilities for the future, including challenges to their use. It concludes with recommendations for the use of non-lethal weapons in selected U.S. military operations.

Non-lethal Weapons and Capabilities. Ordan T. Allen 2004 By providing an intermediate option between “don’t shoot” and “shoot,” the Task Force observes, nonlethal weapons (NLW) have enormous potential in the new military role of modern combat. Wider integration of existing types of NLW into the U.S. Army and Marine Corps could help to reduce the damage done by widespread looting and sabotage after the creation of major conflict in Iraq. The Independent Task Force report on Nonlethal Weapons and Capabilities finds that incorporating these and additional forms of nonlethal capabilities into the equipment, training, and doctrine of the armed services could substantially improve U.S. military effectiveness.
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