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Employing Aerial Coercion to Combat Terrorism: Recommendations for the Theater CINC

by

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Abstract

EMPLOYING AERIAL COERCION TO COMBAT TERRORISM: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE THEATER CINC

As military engagements edge farther away from large conventional force-on-force conflicts and into military operations other than war, the diplomatic and military 'tool of choice' has become the coercive use of air power. Air power can be a powerful weapon for the Theater Commander-in-Chief (CINC) to employ in combating terrorism, however, the CINC must be able to determine when aerial coercion is applicable, and under what conditions it will be effective. Aerial coercion has been employed, with varying degrees of success, against state-sponsored terrorists in Lebanon (1983) and Libya (1986), and against the non-state terrorist network Al Qaeda (in 1998 and again in 2001).

The selective application of air power, specifically, the employment of high technology weapons against select targets that directly effect a terrorist's will to continue his course of action, can overcome both self-imposed operational constraints and enemy strategies to defeat coercion. In addition, the Theater CINC can implement several measures to significantly enhance the coercive effects of air power in the fight against state-sponsored and non-state terrorism. These include the political and military will to finish the mission, a strategic plan, implementation in conjunction with diplomatic, economic and information initiatives, and employment in conjunction with ground forces.

Introduction

As military engagements edge farther away from large conventional force-on-force conflicts and into military operations other than war, the diplomatic and military 'tool of choice' has become the coercive use of air power. Coercive efforts involve "persuading an opponent to stop an ongoing action or to start a new course of action by changing its calculations of costs and benefits."[1] When air power is employed, it becomes aerial coercion and is defined as the selective application of air power intended to change a course of action or influence behavior. Attempts by belligerents to coerce one another into accepting a change in the status quo are visible across the spectrum of military operations - from conventional war at the high end to military operations other than war (MOOTW) at the low end.

At the high end of the conflict spectrum, where military forces are engaged in large-scale combat operations, the coercive use of air power has been employed at varying levels of intensity and with varying degrees of success – Linebacker II in Vietnam and Instant Thunder in Iraq are two recent examples. At the extreme low end of the spectrum of conflict, where military forces are normally not involved in combat activity, the goal of most operations is to promote peace and support U.S. civil authorities. Except for limited utility in support of counterdrug operations, the coercive use of air power in this environment is generally not applicable. In the middle of the conflict spectrum, where combat and non-combat operations overlap, military action is primarily focused on deterring war and resolving conflict. Representative examples include combating terrorism, enforcement of sanctions, enforcing exclusion zones, nation assistance programs, peace enforcement

[1] Robert Pape, Bombing to Win, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996): 12.

operations, strikes and raids.[2] It is in this portion of the spectrum that aerial coercion will most likely be employed.

Historically, the Department of Defense (DOD) has acted in a supporting role to other federal agencies in the fight against terrorism. The Department of State functions as the lead agency responsible for responding to terrorist acts that occur outside of the United States, the Department of Justice for acts within the United States, and the Department of Transportation for acts aboard aircraft within United States' jurisdiction.[3] Of late, the DOD has assumed an increased role in dealing with terrorism and has arguably moved from the supporting to the supported agency. Within the Defense Department, where counter-terrorism had primarily been a special operations mission, a subtle shift in responsibility has also occurred. Air power is not only being employed more frequently to achieve various foreign policy and military objectives, but air power is also being employed more frequently as a coercive element in the fight against terrorism.

This paper examines aerial coercion and its applicability to and effectiveness against both state-sponsored terrorism and non-state terrorism.[4] While air power can be a powerful weapon for the Theater Commander-in-Chief (CINC) to employ in combating terrorism, it is not decisive in and of itself. In order to be successful, the Theater CINC must be able to determine when aerial coercion is applicable and under what conditions it will be effective. The selective application of air power, specifically the employment of high technology weapons against select targets that directly affect a terrorist's will to continue his course of

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[2] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, Joint Pub 3-07, (Washington, DC: 16 June 1995): I-2.
[3] Ibid., III-3.
[4] While there are instances where aerial coercion may also be applicable against domestic terrorism, they will not be addressed in this paper.

action, can overcome both self-imposed operational constraints and enemy strategies to defeat coercion. When employed in conjunction with other measures, to include the use (threatened or actual) of ground troops and diplomatic, economic, or information initiatives, aerial coercion can successfully change a terrorist's course of action and influence their behavior.

Constraints

War fighting at the operational (as well as strategic and tactical) level is guided by a set of 'principles of war' described as the "bedrock of U.S. military doctrine."[5] This set of universally accepted principles, however, primarily applies to conventional conflicts. Planning and operations for military operations other than war are guided by a separate set of principles. Contained in this distinct set are the principles of objective, unity of effort, and security that are derived from the former list, and the principles of restraint, legitimacy and perseverance that are MOOTW unique.[6] Restraint is the need to apply appropriate military capability prudently. Key to this principle is the concept of proportionality, which states that force expended must be proportional to the objective sought. Both restraint and proportionality are crucial in the fight against terrorism. If force is not used judiciously, it will damage "the legitimacy of the organization that uses it, while possibly enhancing the legitimacy of the opposing party."[7]

As the United States operates with multi-national or coalition forces on a more frequent basis, the legitimacy of the operation, based upon "the perception by a specific

[5] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0, (Washington, DC: 10 September 2001): A-1. These principles include: objective, offensive, mass, economy of force, maneuver, unity of command, security, surprise and simplicity.
[6] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, II-1.

audience of the legality, morality, or rightness of a set of actions," will be paramount to sustaining the effort.[8] Terrorism is a contentious issue within the international community, and is made even more so because it is ill defined under the United Nations Charter. Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the Charter states, "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations."[9] The exception to that rule, other than when authorized by the Security Council, is self-defense. Article 51 states that nothing "shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs."[10] The phrase 'if an armed attack occurs' puts the commander in a legal gray area when contemplating anticipatory self-defense versus self-defense after the fact. Harold Robertson points out the "unreality" of forcing one side to "absorb the first blow", "especially in this age of missiles and weapons of mass destruction [and precision guided weapons], where the first strike may be fatal."[11] If military action in the fight against terrorism is conducted under the auspices of anticipatory or pre-emptive self-defense, the legitimacy of the operation may be challenged by coalition partners and within the international community.

The final MOOTW unique principle, perseverance, underscores the importance of preparing for the measured and protracted application of military capability in support of strategic aims.[12] Perseverance, when applied to coercive efforts, is absolutely paramount to credibility. Coercion, as Robert Pape suggests, is intended to force an opponent to "choose

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[7] Ibid., II-4.
[8] Ibid., II-5.
[9] United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations – 26 June 1945. (Reprinted from AFP 110-20, 27 July 1981): 5-3.
[10] Ibid., 5-8.
[11] Horace B. Robertson, Jr. "Contemporary International Law: Relevant to Today's World?" Naval War College Review, Summer 1992: 101.

between making concessions or suffering the consequences of continuing its present course of action."[13] If a lack of protracted action (either stated or implied) causes a terrorist to perceive there to be no credible threat, then there is no incentive for him to make any concession. Nowhere is this entire concept more important than in the fight against terrorism - especially involving non-state actors - where the causes are difficult to discern, the perpetrators are hard to target, and the outcomes are rarely decisive.

The objective of the fight against terrorism is to force the belligerent, either those committing or sponsoring the acts, to alter their behavior. This is accomplished when force, or the threat of its use, is used to influence a deteriorating or potentially hostile situation, deter an adversary's action, or compel compliance. If air power delivers the 'force,' then it becomes aerial coercion. The degree to which a coercive effort is successful can be evaluated, in part, by examining the extent to which the principles of restraint, legitimacy and perseverance were leveraged as means to reach the desired objective.

Aerial Coercion and State-Sponsored Terrorism

State-sponsored terrorism is an operational dichotomy. On one hand, "the potential of terrorist groups to inflict damage against a state is increased by the support, active or passive, given to such groups by other states."[14] On the other, it also increases the options available to those against which the terrorism was targeted. Under the 1949 Geneva Convention on the Law of Armed Conflict, state-sponsored terrorists are considered illegal combatants. As such, less stringent restrictions and legal obligations are placed on the

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[12] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, II-4.
[13] Pape, 12.
[14] Henry W. Prunkin, Jr. and Philip B. Mohr, "Military Deterrence of International Terrorism: An Evaluation of Operation El Dorado Canyon," Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, Vol. 20, 1997: 268.

Theater CINC that, in turn, results in increased response options. Above all else, it provides the operational commander with a tangible target (a state) toward which a response can be directed. Studies have shown, however, that while often dependent on the type of government in power, "institutions [states] have difficulty accepting coerced change to actions they have put in motion."[15] Despite this reality, aerial coercion has been employed against state-sponsored terrorists on numerous occasions to deter further attacks and to compel them to act within international norms.

The 1983 air strikes by the United States against terrorist targets in the Bekaa Valley (see Appendix A) and the 1986 strikes by the United States against Libya (see Appendix B) are two examples wherein aerial coercion was employed against state-sponsored terrorists. In both cases the United States demonstrated a great deal of restraint, some intentional and some unintentional. In the case of the Bekaa Valley strike, inadequate planning was largely responsible for the inconsequential nature of the targets selected. Insufficient training and poor execution were responsible for the limited number of targets hit. Operational failures aside, restraint in this case was not compatible with the overall strategic goal of the coercive effort. The results of the strike were not proportional to the damage caused by the terrorist attacks, nor were they against targets that would have had any meaningful effect on the terrorists. In the raid against Libya, although very few targets were struck, their destruction had a profound effect on the coercive effort. The vast majority of the targets hit in the attack were selected with the specific aim of reducing Libya's ability to support terrorist activities. The "personalization" of one target, however, significantly affected Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's "will to continue the policy [of supporting terrorism] unabated."[16]

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[15] Maj. Scott Walker, "A Unified Theory of Coercive Airpower," Airpower Journal (Summer 1997): 71.
[16] David R Klubes, Conventional Strategic Bombing and Compellence, (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1999), 313.

The effect the strike on Lebanon had on the legitimacy of the effort against terrorism was the exact opposite of that desired by the United States. The strike was viewed as an act of reprisal that, although technically a legal act in response to a prior illegal act, has a lower moral standing in the international community than self-defense.[17] Rather than enhance the morality of the fight against terrorism, the strike on Lebanon elevated the status and legitimacy of the terrorists. The raid against Libya was also viewed by some in the international community as an act of reprisal, despite claims by the United States that it was an act of pre-emptive self-defense. As discussed, the concept of self-defense is universally accepted within the international community. The idea of *anticipatory* or *pre-emptive* self-defense is not universally accepted however, and the legitimacy of actions conducted under those auspices has been called into question. Nevertheless, the application of air power in an attempt to coerce Libya to end its support of terrorism was widely viewed as legitimate.

For a coercive effort to ultimately be successful it must be viewed as credible. The Theater CINC must, in both actuality and appearance, be prepared for the measured and protracted application of resources. Against Lebanon, there was no perseverance in the coercive effort against the terrorists. The United States withdrew militarily from Lebanon, there were no additional measures implemented against the terrorists or their sponsors, and the Lebanese sponsored terrorist group Hizballah remains one of the most active and dangerous in the world. Although direct military operations against Libya ceased after Operation El Dorado Canyon, other flexible deterrent operations continued. The international community joined the United States in applying long-term political and economic sanctions that, combined with the persistent threat of further military intervention,

[17] Richard B. Lillich, "Forcible Self-help Under International Law," Reprinted from U.S. Naval War College International Law Studies, Vol. 62, (Volume II of Readings) Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1980: 131.

"succeeded in achieving the United States' political objectives."[18] The credibility absent from the effort against Lebanon was evident in coercive effort against Libya. The measured and protracted initiatives implemented to deter Libya's continued support of terrorism ultimately compelled Libya to comply with international norms.

Aerial Coercion and Non-State Terrorism

Whereas state-sponsored terrorists provide the theater CINC a tangible foe, non-state terrorists are much more elusive. Because they operate across borders, with or without the benign acquiescence of the host country, non-state terrorists are difficult to target militarily. While states are frequently difficult to coerce due to bureaucratic inertia and national pride, individuals can be even more challenging to coerce because they are often committed to their current course of action no matter what the cost. These two factors make the use of air power as the primary coercive agent against non-state actors extremely complicated. The United States has on occasion, however, turned to aerial coercion in an attempt to deter the actions of non-state terrorists.

In 1998 the United States launched cruise missile strikes against terrorist targets in Afghanistan and Sudan (see Appendix C). Both the proportionality of the cruise missile strikes in relation to their targets and the overall application of military power were questioned. The goal of the strikes was to coerce Usama bin Laden to cease terrorist operations, however, the targets selected did not achieve that aim. Evidence showed the targets were selected in large part due to political expediency. For example, the El Shifa chemical plant, explained a White House official, "could be struck with little risk of civilian

[18] Klubes, 313 and Prunckun and Mohr, 277.

casualties."[19] In 2001, the United States again employed air power against Usama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network in Afghanistan (see Appendix D). The United States, while employing significant air power against the Al Qaeda organization, has thus far limited its actions to purely military targets. The introduction of ground troops to find, fix and identify targets has greatly increased the effectiveness of the air strikes and significantly minimized collateral damage. The low amount of collateral damage has consequently aided in sustaining the legitimacy of the operation.

The legitimacy of the 1998 cruise missile strikes was questioned both internationally and domestically. It also highlighted a problem that exists when attempting to confront non-state terrorists. Unilateral action may be required if terrorists are operating out of (but not necessarily sponsored by) countries that are not party to a coalition, or in situations where neither 'friendly' basing nor over-flight rights for military forces are available. The violation of another country's sovereignty to achieve military and political objectives in the fight against non-state actors may be a necessity. The legitimacy of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan has been largely unquestioned thus far. The horrific nature of the terrorist attack that precipitated the response notwithstanding, almost universal international support has solidified the moral justification of the operation.

Similar to state-sponsored terrorism, if any attempt to coerce non-state terrorists is to be successful, or even credible, it must be sustained. This sentiment was echoed by in a 1998 article on the self-imposed limits of air power where Stephen Aubin stated, "[e]ven in the case of the strikes against terrorist targets in Afghanistan and Sudan, the success of the cruise missiles (and this form of air power) ultimately depends on whether the war against world

[19] Whitelaw, Kevin and Warren Strobel. "It was a direct hit, but was it the right target?" U.S. News & World Report, Vol. 127, no. 7 (Aug 16-23, 1999): 27.

terrorism will be sustained by the Clinton administration."[20] After the strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan, the United States made no further attempt (other than hollow rhetoric) to persevere in its coercive effort against Usama bin Laden who, undeterred, continued sponsoring terrorist attacks against the Untied States. Forced to confront to same terrorist problem, the current Bush administration and the Department of Defense have repeatedly stated that Enduring Freedom operations in Afghanistan are only the beginning of a long international campaign to end world terrorism. To date, the United States has shown requisite perseverance in eradicating the terrorist threat operating from within Afghanistan. The question remains, however, as to whether this operation will be credible enough to convince the remainder of the Al Qaeda network operating in other parts world to end their campaign of terror. If not, the United States must have the political and military will to continue the effort and finish the mission.

Enemy Options to Defeat Coercion

Coercion is a dynamic process. As such, terrorists will attempt to counter each move made by the United States with strategies designed to take advantage of perceived weaknesses. Coalition fracturing is an obvious strategy. Although the United States reserves the right to act unilaterally when national interests are at stake, it prefers to strengthen the legitimacy of its actions by operating within a coalition. With few exceptions, "all [United States] coercive military operations since the end of the Cold War have been prosecuted under the auspices of the UN or NATO, or of ad hoc collections of allies or partners."[21] Each

[20] Stephen Aubin, "The Self-imposed Limits of Air Power," Strategic Review, 1998: 50.
[21] Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, "Defeating US Coercion," Survival, Vol. 41, no. 2, (Summer 1999): 108.

coalition member brings its' own set of interests. Terrorist states and organizations will try to leverage those interests in an attempt to split the coalition. State-sponsored terrorists may attempt to target specific states within the coalition, while non-state sponsored groups, like Al Qaeda, have unabashedly attempted to link their operations to a larger 'cause.' In an attempt to maintain coalition unity, restrictions are placed on the type and amount of force employed, which ultimately "reward the adversary's coalition-splitting efforts and further encourage such ploys."[22]

Another potential method of countering coercion is a casualty generating strategy. A common perception within the international community is that the United States is not willing to engage in a situation that could result in a large number of military casualties. In confirmation of those perceptions, a RAND study concluded that, in limited war situations, "the public tends to be unwilling to tolerate anything more than minimal costs."[23] Democratic states tend to be especially sensitive to casualties, so much so that "even newly democratic Russia feared raising its (friendly) casualty count too high in its war in Chechnya."[24] Capitalizing on this apparent casualty aversion, terrorists, both state and non-state sponsored, have struck military assets of the United States in the past with relative impunity. The 1983 bombing of the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, which killed 241 and wounded 100, resulted in the 'decision' to move U.S. forces offshore.[25] If terrorists can raise the level of 'pain' above what political and military leaders are willing to accept, especially

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[22] Byman and Waxman, 114.
[23] Maj. Charles K. Hyde, USAF, "Casualty Aversion Implications for Policy Makers and Senior Military Officers," Aerospace Power Journal (Summer 2000): 19.
[24] Michael Horowitz and Dan Reiter, "When Does Aerial Bombing Work? Quantitative Empirical Tests, 1917-1999," Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 45, no. 2, (April 2001): 150.
[25] Byman and Waxman, 115.

in operations considered peripheral to national interests, then the terrorists have effectively rendered impotent any attempt at coercion.

The civilian suffering-based strategy is perhaps the most effective counter to coercive pressure from the United States. Once a coercive effort is undertaken, terrorists attempt to portray themselves as the victim. Those that cannot compete with the United States militarily highlight the loss of civilian life and collateral damage in hope of preventing further strikes and curtailing the coercive pressure completely. Sudan, a country virtually inaccessible to international media, invited television crews to view the damage to the pharmaceutical facility in Khartoum in the wake of the 1998 cruise missile strikes.[26] The instant access of television, the so-called 'Cable News Network (CNN) effect,' has greatly aided efforts to sway international and domestic opinion towards those being 'victimized.' Due to an over-arching desire to uphold humanitarian norms, "[e]ven when domestic and international support for further U.S. coercive strikes does not erode, the United States imposes a range of restrictions on its activities, thus limiting the coercive pressure it can bring to bear."[27]

Restraints

For aerial coercion to be an effective strategy in combating terrorism, the Theater CINC must have the political and operational will to overcome traditionally self-imposed restraints. Those restraints include the strategic and political preference for coalition operations, intolerance for U.S. casualties, aversion to enemy civilian suffering, sole reliance

[26] Ibid., 112.
[27] Ibid., 113.

on high technology weapons, and an excessive commitment to international norms.[28] Of those, the first three are easily exploited by terrorist organizations and can lead directly to the counter-strategies previously discussed. The last two restraints arbitrarily limit the type and amount of military force the Theater CINC can employ in a coercive effort.

The United States has the most advanced military and equipment in the world. Its reliance on high technology weapons has, paradoxically, rendered it doctrinally and operationally at odds with the concept of perseverance. Colonel John A. Warden argues that "air power permits the *virtual* occupation of enemy territory by aircraft without requiring a potentially entangling and costly ground occupation."[29](emphasis added) This is not the same as an *actual* occupation. By removing the ground option, the United States has undermined its own credibility by declaring that it is not willing to assume the risks or incur the costs associated with that particular course of action. Operationally, the problem is similar. Aerial coercion employs precision weapons which; "by concentrating force to hit what they aim at (which may or may not be what they should aim at) achieve the desired effects with fewer engagements than non-precision weapons."[30] While extremely effective, this is often construed as an attempt to 'win wars on the cheap.'

Continued distortion by the United States of international norms also poses a problem for the operational commander attempting to coerce terrorists with the use of air power. In Afghanistan, the fear of criticism about civilian casualties not only "influenced wartime decisions," but also "increased the likelihood of Al Qaeda chieftains escaping because of its

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[28] Ibid., 108.
[29] Maj. Marc K. Dippold, USAF, "Air Occupation: Asking the Right Questions," Air Power Journal, Winter 1997: 69.
[30] Col. Richard Szafranski, USAF, "Twelve Principles Emerging From Ten Propositions," Air Power Journal, Spring 1996: 78.

pervasive influence on U.S. strategy."[31] The United States continually places self-imposed restraints on the type and amount of force that can be employed in military operations in an attempt to maintain legitimacy within the international community. While this loosely corresponds to the principle of restraint, which states military capabilities should be applied appropriately and prudently, it is not completely compatible with the concept of coercion. For aerial coercion, or any manner of coercion, to be successful it must be perceived as credible. If the United States is not willing to increase the initial levels of pressure it applies to an adversary, then any attempt at coercion will not be viewed as credible. At that point "adversaries [terrorists] can capitalize on such constraints and win a coercive contest despite being militarily, politically, and economically inferior."[32]

Conclusions

Aerial coercion is extremely difficult to implement successfully. Success in coercion "can be attained only if the coercer is fully prepared to impose its demands by force and usually only after fighting a long way toward a military decision."[33] Properly applied, air power can not only negate enemy strategies to defeat coercion, but can overcome several self-imposed constraints as well. Because it has the most advanced military equipment in the world, the use of air power within a coalition often means the United States will provide the vast majority of the military forces. High technology weapons, in combination with its power projection capability, enable the United States - while *technically* a member of a coalition - to *effectively* operate unilaterally.

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[31] William M. Arkin, "Fear of Civilian Deaths May Have Undermined Effort," Los Angeles Times, 16 January 2002, sec. 1, p. 1.
[32] Byman and Waxman, 107.
[33] Pape, 316.

Air power also makes it extremely difficult to execute an effective casualty generating counter-strategy. Against low-technology adversaries, air power's inherent standoff range, especially when combined with precision-guided weapons, make it relatively invulnerable. The increased use of cruise missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles for reconnaissance and combat will make it exponentially difficult for adversaries to inflict casualties on U.S. military forces. Precision-guided weapons also negate civilian suffering-based counter-strategies. While not perfect, precision-guided weapons not only limit collateral damage, but "bolster coercive strategies…by enabling the coercer to turn punishment on and off at will, as well as modulate it into fine increments."[34] Consequently, this also resolves the self-imposed constraint of conforming to international norms for, "in comparison with the devastating impact on civilians of coercive mechanisms such as sanctions, modern air warfare stands out as an increasingly efficient, effective, and humane tool of foreign policy."[35]

Aerial coercion can be effective in combating both state-sponsored and non-state terrorism. For state-sponsored terrorism, the "hostile act of another state provides the target state with a visible putative foe."[36] This not only increases the military and diplomatic options by which the Theater CINC can respond, but it increases the legitimacy of the operation. Legally, international norms concerning operations against hostile states are clearly defined. While restraint may become less of a concern against states that prove initially unsusceptible to coercion, perseverance is essential to success. The Theater CINC

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[34] Pape, 320.
[35] Phillip Meilinger, "A Matter of Precision," Foreign Policy, no. 123 (Mar/Apr 2001): 78. Meilinger cites a 1993 study by the Harvard Center for Population on the sanctions imposed by the Organization of American States (in 1991) and the United Nations (in 1993) that not only failed to persuade coup leaders to surrender power but also caused considerable civilian deaths. Upwards of 1,000 children a month were killed compared to a handful of deaths, civilian and military, resulting from the United States' armed intervention.
[36] Prunckun and Mohr, 268.

must be prepared and able, both politically and operationally, for a measured and sustained effort.

Despite increased difficulty, non-state actors can also be coerced through air power. The legal and political difficulties in dealing with non-state actors, however, will inevitably harm the legitimacy of any operation the Theater CINC implements. Because operations are likely to violate another country's sovereignty, restraint may also become a more significant issue. No attempt at coercion will be successful if the effort is not perceived as credible, thus perseverance will again be of paramount importance – especially against individuals or groups who are committed to their cause no matter what the cost.

Recommendations

A relatively new entry into the lexicon of military jargon, aerial coercion has quickly become the military and diplomatic tool of choice for the United States. As such, the Theater CINC must be prepared to implement that course of action - even in conditions where the probability of success is less than favorable. In the fight against state-sponsored and non-state terrorism, the Theater CINC can implement several measures to significantly enhance the coercive effects of air power:

1) Have the political and military will to finish mission. For coercion (of any type) to be successful, it must carry a credible threat of 'pain' beyond the benefits which an adversary may anticipate through resistance. Within parameters set by civilian superiors, this may involve ignoring international and domestic pressure, violating established 'norms,' and acting unilaterally to accomplish the mission.

2) Have a strategic plan. The most important aspect of the strategic plan is 'effective targeting.' Targets cannot be hit simply because they are targets. In a coercive effort, select targets will be struck in an attempt to change or deter an adversary's behavior. Consequently, each target chosen must have a direct effect on the terrorist's will to continue his course of action.

3) Implement in conjunction with diplomatic, economic and information initiatives. Some flexible deterrent options may have limited applicability dependent upon the situation; however, coercive efforts against both state-sponsored and non-state terrorists must be a coordinated, protracted operation employing all means available. The Theater CINC should coordinate and integrate coercive efforts with initiatives from other United States and international agencies.

4) Employ in conjunction with ground forces. Ground forces are required to accurately find, fix, and identify targets. Against state-sponsored terrorists they can be surrogate or multinational forces, while against non-state terrorists U.S. ground or Special Forces can be employed. Additionally, ground forces should be on stand-by for employment if aerial coercion is unsuccessful and - as important - to further signal United States' resolve at finishing the operation.

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APPENDIX A

One of the earliest examples of the use of air power to coerce state-sponsored terrorism is the December 1983 retaliatory strike against terrorists in Lebanon. In the wake of the 1982 Lebanon War, U.S. Marines were deployed to Lebanon for peacekeeping duties. The United States, under the Reagan administration, attempted to protect the pro-American government of President Amin Gemayel.[1] The increased military presence, coupled with its overt backing of Israel, generated a great deal of regional animosity towards the United States. Hizballah, a Syrian backed Shiite extremist group, became "the main perpetrator of the anti-U.S. terrorist assaults" that culminated in the 1983 terrorist bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut.[2] Although more American lives were lost than in any previous terrorist attack, the bombing led to no direct response from the United States.

Shortly after, while flying a reconnaissance mission to "monitor terrorist-training activities in the Shouf Mountains, " a U.S. F-14 was engaged by a terrorist-fired SA-7 missile.[3] In direct response to the missile attack, which resulted in no casualties or damage to the aircraft, President Reagan ordered a retaliatory strike. Twenty-eight A-6's and A-7's were launched from the aircraft carriers USS *Independence* and USS *John F. Kennedy* at terrorist targets in the Bekaa Valley. In an attempt to launch a quick response, the mission was executed by aircraft of which none had "the proper munitions load and with no aircrews properly briefed," and was "marked by no surprise, no deception, and no use of countermeasures."[4] While several targets of little consequence were struck, the United States lost two aircraft and had one airman captured.

The legitimacy and credibility of the operation came under fire for several reasons. Far short of coercing the state-sponsored terrorists to cease their activities, the strike increased the legitimacy of the group and their actions. Hussein Musawi claimed responsibility for the Marine barracks bombing and, after the retaliatory strikes in the Bekaa Valley, was elevated to the status of "mastermind terrorist."[5] The Syrians held the captured airman for over a month as the centerpiece of their successful propaganda campaign. In the Middle East, the bombing was viewed as "indiscriminate" and "it created new recruits for the movement."[6]

There was no follow-on military operation undertaken, nor was one planned, and the United States ultimately withdrew militarily from Lebanon.[7] Politically, the situation reinforced the growing belief that "terrorism had to be viewed as a 'war'" and led to National Security Directive 138, which "officially established the principle for the use of military force against terrorists."[8] The difficulty in targeting even state-sponsored terrorist groups, however, became evident. Despite the fact that Hizballah receives support from several states, and thus should be easier to target with coercive pressure, there are in fact no clear targets to retaliate against. While Hizballah maintains several terrorist training camps and

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[1] Robert Pape, Bombing to Win, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996): 96-97.
[2] Jeffery D. Simon, The Terrorist Trap: America's Experience With Terrorism (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994): 175.
[3] Pape, 97.
[4] Ibid.
[5] James M. Wall, "Chasing Terrorists," The Christian Century, Vol. 115, no. 24, (Sept 9-16, 1998): 812.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Simon, 177.
[8] Ibid., 178-9.

other facilities in Lebanon, "the physical effect of such a strike might be to bounce rubble that the Israelis had already created several times over" and thereby producing limited coercive pressure.[9] Although the Lebanese Hizballah "has not hit U.S. interests directly in the last few years," they have killed more U.S. citizens than any other terrorist organization besides Al Qaeda, and are still "active, robust and dangerous."[10]

[9] Paul R. Pillar, Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2001): 105.
[10] Ibid., 134.

APPENDIX B

The United States, prior to 1986, accused Libya of providing bases and training for terrorist attacks occurring around the world. These included direct roles in, or in support of: the 1972 Olympic Games massacre; the 1973 attack on the Saudi embassy in Khartoum; the 1973 Rome airport massacre; the 1976 Air France hijacking to Entebbe, Uganda; the 1981 assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat; numerous other assassination attempts on world leaders (to include President Reagan); and several other bombings.[1] In the spring of 1986, terrorist attacks that increasingly targeted the United States culminated in the bombing of a West German nightclub that killed three people (including two U.S. servicemen), and wounded 261 (of which 79 were American). In possession of direct evidence that Libya was behind the attacks, the United States launched what President Reagan termed was an act "of pre-emptive self-defense to protect Americans from further terrorists attacks."[2]

The United States exercised a great deal of restraint in conducting the operation. A single bomb would have probably been viewed as an illegal act of reprisal by the international community, and would have had little impact on attempts to coerce Libya to change their policy vis-à-vis supporting terrorism. Despite all the military might of the United States, only 33 strike aircraft (18 F-111's and 15 A-6's) were sent against the five Libyan targets that were selected. The targets selected were all clearly related to terrorist activities. An airport and military barracks were hit in Benghazi, and in Tripoli the international airport, a terrorist training complex and a military barracks were hit.[3] Azizyah, the military barracks in Tripoli, was also a primary terrorist command and control center and doubled as Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's principle residence.[4] Targets selected were ones planners felt would not only "send a message," but would "do visible and felt harm" to the Qadhafi regime in Libya.[5]

International reaction to the operation was mixed. While a resolution within the United Nations General Assembly condemned the strike (albeit with a high abstention rate), a similar resolution within the Security Council was vetoed.[6] There was no widespread anti-American outcry within the Arab community, and even normally vocal Soviet criticism was somewhat muted. While future strikes were considered a "possibility," there was no coherent plan for an "extended or continuous [military] campaign."[7] The international community, however, was finally galvanized by the strike and joined the United States in implementing diplomatic and economic sanctions on Libya. The United Nations' sanctions, "particularly the prohibition on the sale of oil equipment and technology and a ban on financial transfers," undermined Libya's "ability to extract and export its main source of revenue."[8]

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[1] Maj. Gregory L. Trebon, USAF, "Libyan State Sponsored Terrorism – What did Operation El Dorado Canyon Accomplish?" (Air Command and Staff College Research Report no.88-2600, Maxwell, AL: 1988), 7-9.
[2] David R Klubes, Conventional Strategic Bombing and Compellence, (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1999), 311.
[3] Trebon, 23-4.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Benjamin Lambeth, The Transformation of American Air Power, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 100.
[6] Klubes, 343.
[7] Ibid., 312.
[8] Ray Takeyh, "The Rogue Who Came In From the Cold," Foreign Affairs, Vol.80, no.3 (May/June 2001): 64.

The coercive effort has been called a success for several reasons. First, studies indicate "the immediate targets of the raid, namely, those terrorists groups supposed to be sponsored by Libya, were substantially less active in the twenty and a half months after the raid than they were before."[9] In addition, "the frequency of terrorist attacks against U.S. targets – after an initial flurry of apparently retaliatory activity – fell away after the raid, compared to pre-raid levels."[10] This resolve, when combined with sustained diplomatic and economic initiatives, resulted in realization of U.S. strategic aims as "Qadhafi has recently severed his links to his terrorist clients and abandoned terrorism as an instrument of policy."[11]

[9] Henry W. Prunkin, Jr. and Philip B. Mohr. "Military Deterrence of International Terrorism: An Evaluation of Operation El Dorado Canyon." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, Vol. 20, 1997: 276.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Takeyh, 69.

APPENDIX C

In August of 1998, terrorist bombs destroyed the United States Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. U.S. intelligence agencies discovered the bombings were directed by Usama bin Laden, a wealthy Saudi Arabian who had been striped of his citizenship and banished from his native country years earlier. Intelligence also discovered that not only were more terrorist attacks planned by bin Laden, but they would occur "perhaps within days."[1] In response, thirteen days after the embassy bombing, the United States launched Operation Infinite Reach.

Over 70 Tomahawk cruise missiles were launched from U.S. Navy ships operating in the Red Sea and Arabian Sea at targets in Afghanistan and Sudan that had been linked to Usama bin Laden. The vast majority of the cruise missiles were targeted at suspected terrorist-training camps located south of Kabul in Afghanistan. Over seventy-five million dollars in high technology weapons was expended on several unfortified buildings in the Afghan desert.[2] The remaining six cruise missiles destroyed a suspected chemical weapons plant in Khartoum, Sudan. Despite CIA allegations that soil samples from the El Shifa plant in Khartoum contained the chemical Empta, which is used to make VX nerve gas, no actual proof that chemical weapons were manufactured there was ever uncovered.[3]

The legitimacy of the strikes has been questioned in several ways. The U.S. government argued the strikes were legal because they were carried out in self-defense. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter states that nothing "shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs."[4] That 'inherent right', however, does not currently cover anticipatory or pre-emptive self-defense. Additionally, the cruise missiles targeting Afghanistan had to fly through Pakistani airspace in order to reach their targets. Despite breaching Pakistani sovereignty, and in direct violation of international law, Secretary of Defense William Cohen said, "The United States did not warn Pakistan of the missile flights."[5] Lastly, the strikes occurred three days after President Clinton "admitted in a televised address that he misled the public about his relationship with Monica Lewenski."[6] This admission prompted widespread accusations that the strikes were an attempt to divert attention from the President's domestic problems.

There was no further military action, or any plans for it, after the initial cruise missile strikes. In an attempt to impose some economic hardship on the terrorists, President Clinton signed an executive order "designed to curb bin Laden's financial dealings."[7] The symbolic gesture had little effect as bin Laden, a man of great personal wealth, had most of his money "hidden in sympathetic banks and businesses."[8] Despite Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's comment that, "our memory is long, our reach is far," no additional active or

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[1] Richard J. Newman, "America Fights Back," U.S. News & World Report, Vol. 125, no. 8, (Aug 31, 1998): 38.
[2] James M. Wall, "Chasing Terrorists," The Christian Century, Vol. 115, no. 24, (Sept 9-16, 1998): 812.
[3] Kevin Whitelaw and Warren Strobel, "It was a direct hit, but was it the right target?" U.S. News & World Report, Vol. 127, no. 7, (Aug 16-23, 1999): 27.
[4] United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations – 26 June 1945. (Reprinted from AFP 110-20, 27 July 1981): 5-8.
[5] "Terrorist State," The Progressive, Vol. 62, no. 10 (Oct 1998): 8.
[6] Paul R. Pillar, Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2001): 107.
[7] Wall, 811.
[8] Ibid.

persistent measures were undertaken against bin Laden and his organization at that time.[9] The 1998 cruise missile strikes failed to coerce Usama bin Laden to alter his behavior and end his campaign of terrorism. This failure, exacerbated by the decided lack of perseverance in the United States' effort at combating terrorism, contributed to further - and increasingly horrific - terrorist attacks on U.S. interests.

[9] "Terrorist State," 9.

APPENDIX D

Although trained by the CIA in Afghanistan's war with the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabian dissident Usama bin Laden became increasingly vocal and active against the United States, its actions and its policies. The perceived desecration of his homeland by 500,000 American troops in the 1991 Gulf War enraged bin Laden and turned him against his former sponsor.[1] Usama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network assert that "Muslim rulers have become subservient to the West," and because peaceful means of change will not work, "Islamists must resort to armed struggle."[2] They were behind several terrorist attacks on the United States to include the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City, the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania (see Appendix C), and the 2000 attack on the USS *Cole* in Yemen. Bin Laden's reign of terror culminated on September 11, 2001 when his operatives hijacked four U.S. civilian airliners. One airliner crashed into the Pentagon killing several hundred, and two airliners crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapsing the buildings and killing thousands.[3] In response, the United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom of which the objectives are the "destruction of terrorist training camps, the capture of Al Qaeda leaders, and the cessation of terrorist activities in Afghanistan."[4]

The United States commenced air operations on 7 October with strikes against military targets by aircraft and cruise missiles. By November, the number of aircraft involved in the operation had surpassed five hundred, including assets from Britain, Canada, Australia, and France. In a marked difference from past attempts at aerial coercion, ground troops played a significant role. The United States not only utilized a proxy ground force (Afghan Northern Alliance opposition forces), but also introduced Special Forces ground units. The Special Forces have proven instrumental in operating as a liaison with the opposition ground forces and working directly with the air assets to find, fix and identify targets. On 19 November, U.S. Special Forces directed air strikes for over eight hours against Al Qaeda and Taliban troops, killing over one thousand in what has been labeled as "the decisive battle" of the effort.[5]

Because of the scope of the operation, however, the argument can be made that the effort has shifted from one of coercion to one of war fighting. In his seminal work, *Arms and Influence*, Thomas Schelling postulated "[c]oercion requires that the enemy make a conscious decision to quit, prior to complete military defeat, while he still has an option to continue military resistance."[6] For Operation Enduring Freedom there are really two efforts, one short term and one long term. The immediate war fighting effort is against both a state that is harboring and sponsoring terrorism, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and a non-

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[1] James M. Wall, "Chasing Terrorists," The Christian Century, Vol. 115, no. 24, (Sept 9-16, 1998): 811.
[2] Ahmed Hashim, "The Strategy of Usama bin Laden and Al Qaeda," (Unpublished Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 2001): 1.
[3] The fourth airliner crashed in the Pennsylvania countryside killing all aboard. It is believed to have been forced down by passengers who had been alerted to the destruction caused by the three other hijacked airliners.
[4] "Operation Enduring Freedom." Global Security.org. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/enduring-freedom-ops.htm/ >[7 Jan 2002].
[5] Karl Vick, "Rout in Desert Marked Turning Point of War," Washington Post, 31 December 2001, Sec. A. p.1.
[6] Thomas Schelling, Arms and Influence, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966): 15.

state terrorist network (also the focus of the long term effort). Coercive efforts against the state were unsuccessful, thus the level of military involvement.

The operation, while suffering the usual detractors, has experienced widespread international support. Because it is currently unclear what rights and protections are afforded non-state actors (terrorists) under international law, a controversy over the status and treatment of captured Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters has threatened that support. A contemporary trend in international law holds that under certain circumstances individuals may "be 'subjects' of international law; that is, they may have rights (and obligations) flowing directly from international law."[7] Until this legal ambiguity is resolved, the United States will continue to hold its prisoners under the status of detainee, not prisoner of war (POW). Overseas, this has generated an "initial wave of protest" that could "split the U.S. and its staunchest European allies."[8]

The will of the United States to continue the effort was signaled mid-January by the decision to send approximately 650 U.S. soldiers to the Philippines to "assist Philippine troops in their fight against Muslim guerrillas linked to Usama bin Laden."[9] Whether the immediate outcome of the operations in Afghanistan, combined with the demonstrated will of the United States to persevere in the fight against terrorism, ultimately causes the non-state terrorists to change their behavior is currently unclear.

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[7] Horace B. Robertson, Jr., "Contemporary International Law: Relevant to Today's World?" Naval War College Review, Summer 1992: 95.

[8] Chip Cummins and Laurie Cohen, "Legal Limbo of U.S. Afghan-War Prisoners Touches Off a Storm of Criticism Overseas," Wall Street Journal, 22 January 2002, p. 2.

[9] Steve Vogel, "Special Forces Sent to Philippines Fight," Washington Post, 16 January 2002, p. 1.

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As military engagements edge farther away from large conventional force-on-force conflicts and into military operations other than war, the diplomatic and military 'tool of choice' has become the coercive use of air power. Air power can be a powerful weapon for the Theater Commander-in-Chief (CINC) to employ in combating terrorism, however, the CINC must be able to determine when aerial coercion is applicable, and under what conditions it will be effective. Aerial coercion has been employed, with varying degrees of success, against state-sponsored terrorists in Lebanon (1983) and Libya (1986), and against the non-state terrorist network Al Qaeda (in 1998 and again in 2001).

The selective application of air power, specifically, the employment of high technology weapons against select targets that directly effect a terrorist's will to continue his course of action, can overcome both self-imposed operational constraints and enemy strategies to defeat coercion. In addition, the Theater CINC can implement several measures to significantly enhance the coercive effects of air power in the fight against state-sponsored and non-state terrorism. These include the political and military will to finish the mission, a strategic plan, implementation in conjunction with diplomatic, economic and information initiatives, and employment in conjunction with ground forces.

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