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THE GROWING GAP BETWEEN FORCE AND POWER

EGEBERG Halvor S, KJØLBERG Anders

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Ragnvald H Solstrand
Director of Research

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FORSVARETS FORSKNINGSINSTITUTT
Norwegian Defence Research Establishment
P O Box 25, NO-2027 Kjeller, Norway

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THESAURUS REFERENCE: 8) ABSTRACT The use military force in order to influence other actors has always been both costly and controversial. The main argument in the report is that the use of military force is less cost-efficient than before, in spite of the obviously greater military efficiency of modern weapons. This situation is caused both by the lower acceptability in the Western world to solve conflicts by military means, but also by the fact that military means seem to have a lower utility rate than before, which first of all is caused by the changing character of modern war, but also by the broader spectrum of political actors that military force is supposed to influence. The result is a growing reluctance to use military force in international politics, and hence, a growing gap between force and power. This could of course be regarded as a positive development, leading hypothetically towards a more peaceful international society, but also as a problematic development because many international actors, not only in the non-western world, still see the use of military force as a legitimate tool to influence other actors. The result might be a declining Western (i.e. EU-NATO) potential to handle conflicts in International Relations.				
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THE GROWING GAP BETWEEN FORCE AND POWER

1 INTRODUCTION

The use of military *force* to influence other states as well as non-state actors, has traditionally been seen as the core of security politics. The use of force is expected to yield *power* in relation to these actors, but the link between force and power is not straightforward. Since the use of force is controversial and therefore restricted by norms, it is bound to involve *costs*, and the degree to which force can be converted into power is dependent on how efficient force is as a means to influence other actors. These two factors produce a *gap* between force and power and the magnitude and relevance of this gap is dependent on the context in which force is used. This context has changed dramatically over the last decade.

Military force was a central aspect of Cold War politics, but because of the link between the use of force and the dangers of nuclear warfare, the actual applicability of military forces was severely restrained because of relations between the great powers. In the relations between those powers, military force was regarded as a threat in a crisis situation but not as a means of physically forcing the other side. In this context military *potential* seemed more relevant than military engagement. Military means however, were used against third countries and they were used in conflicts between smaller states, mostly outside Europe. The end of the Cold War has cut off the main link between the use of military force and the danger of nuclear warfare and thereby unchained military force as a tool that could be used to a more general extent in international politics.

As a result, military force has regained its significance as an essential tool in international politics. Throughout history, military might has been the symbol of a state's position in the international hierarchy while the use of force has served as an essential means to influence a state's surroundings. The potentially devastating consequences of armed conflict will probably help preserve the military's unique standing in any sovereign state's security considerations. However essential, the use of force is controversial due to the international norms and the political reactions it is subject to. In some parts of the world military means are no longer deemed acceptable in handling disputes between the states. These states can be said to constitute a *security community*, and the North Atlantic area in particular is characterised by such peaceful interstate relations. In this area the use of force is considered inappropriate and it is therefore imperative for a state to be able to *legitimise* the use of force. An apparent lack of legitimacy may incur considerable political costs to the initiator of an armed conflict. In a sense, the end of the Cold War has unchained military force but it is not accepted as an integral part of the means constituting foreign policy. A threshold is crossed if military force is put into use. In the contemporary world where "peacemaking" by military means has been firmly established in our post-cold war vocabulary, the issue of legitimacy is very important.

The threshold is however, crossed when it comes to handling disputes within and between states that do not belong to the above security community. Since the end of the Cold War military force has primarily been used against local aggressors or to reinstate order in areas that are tormented by political anarchy. Military threats against the territorial integrity of the Western countries are no longer deemed likely to appear, and therefore the focus seems to shift towards the use of military force in crisis management. Such military missions are nevertheless subject to close political scrutiny.

Even if the *possibility* of employing military means in areas outside a security community is much greater today than it was during the Cold War, the *acceptability* (Hoffman 1973) of using military means is steadily diminishing in many parts of the world. This is particularly true in Western societies. In other parts of the world, however, both the *possibility* and the *acceptability* are high. War and the use of military power in order to achieve political ends are in these areas still seen as legitimate, and the political costs stemming from the use of military force are therefore low. The very same areas are at the same time seen as possible arenas for future Western military intervention. Western forces, restricted by other norms and values than their opponents, are likely to experience conflicts that are asymmetric (Foghelin 1999) in various ways.

The use of military means however, is not only restricted by the acceptability of its use but also by its *utility* (Martin 1973). In order to be used, military means have to be seen as more efficient than other means in achieving specific goals. In determining the efficiency of different means the array of costs have to be considered.

Power in general, and military power in particular can be seen as the ability to influence other actors in the international system. At the one extreme, this means destroying the opponent's ability and will to resist one's wishes through the use of sheer force. A less dramatic approach involves the attempt to alter an actor's cost-benefit calculations by emphasising the potential of one's military might. The aim is to make the options considered unfavourable to us, seem unduly costly to the actor we are trying to influence. In the end power is the ability to influence the decisions made by other actors. What we are interested in here is the relationship between military means and the effective fulfilment of political ends. In short, how military capabilities can be directed effectively towards influencing decision-makers. An actor is very rarely influenced directly by our actions. More commonly, the actor is influenced indirectly by threats posed against the assets we believe are vital to him. Possible targets may be symbolic or physical in nature; the point is that the actor places great value in sustaining these assets. Evidently it is crucial to identify the *centres of gravity* of an opponent in order to influence upon his behaviour.

Western military forces are to a growing extent being deployed against states or in states that are characterised by low levels of formal organisational structure and poor infrastructure. The forces also have to deal with either different categories of political groups, or states in a state of anarchy. In such situations centres of gravity are hard to define and equally hard to act against. The aim of the outside military involvement could be to create stability of some sort, but creating stability is a difficult task involving several societal and political forces. Military force will have to be complemented by other means in order to reach such an end.

In sum this could imply that the utility of military forces in the kind of operations they are increasingly likely to take part in, may turn out to be much lower than in classical operations of warfare.

Our hypothesis in this report is that the costs of using military means as a way of influencing other actors in the international system have grown considerably since the end of the Cold War. The use of military force to foster political ends may therefore have to become more selective than it has been until now. This development is caused mainly by four factors:

- a) The cost of military resources in itself has increased. This fact will not be discussed in this report since it is outside the scope of our research.
- b) The nature of war has changed.
- c) The growing restrictions on the use of force owing to the development of international norms and political expediency.
- d) The weakening of the link between military targets that can be hit and the political will of the actors we want to influence.

2 THE RISING COSTS OF MILITARY RESOURCES

The economic costs of maintaining and developing military capabilities whether it is personnel or equipment, have increased steadily since the end of the Second World War. In comparison to other sectors of society, the cost of military equipment is rising at a rate of 2-5% more each year (Forsvarsstudien 2000). This is due to the fact that military technology has reached a relatively high level of complexity from which any advances through research and development demand considerable capital investments. In addition, the markets for military equipment are narrow, and real competition between producers is limited. Military personnel have become more costly due to a considerable increase in salaries and social benefits appropriate in the modern state. Increasing costs within the military sector would appear less dramatic if the effectiveness of the improved military capabilities could demonstrate a similar development.

The promised “Revolution in military affairs”, RMA, is supposed to enhance the effectiveness of military capabilities through improved firepower, precision and range (Freedman 1998-99). According to the initial reports on the damages caused by Allied weapons in the wars in the Gulf and in the former Yugoslavia, the new weapons seemed very effective. Later reports however, cast serious doubts on these initial figures, and therefore on the military effectiveness of the weapons. In addition the effectiveness of military means can not be measured solely by the ability of different weapon-systems to eliminate its target. In accordance with the concept of power, the crucial question is whether the use of military capabilities has the desired impact on the respective actor. Military action will always be part of a political setting, and is effective only to the extent that it helps bring the essential political goals. From a political point of view the most splendid show of superior force can be useless, or even devastating to the stated political ends. In a political context the military means constitute an important part of an actor’s capabilities, but exerting power involves more than firepower, precision and range.

3 THE CHANGING NATURE OF WAR

Effective use of military means requires a rational actor who conducts war in accordance with stated military ends. A situation where the military is allowed to use its forces only according to a military logic is however more ideal than real. There is a gap between the traditional reliance on military rationality in times of armed conflict and a recent trend towards subjecting the use of military force to close and continuous political control/scrutiny. The gap even seems to be growing. It is our assertion that the context in which military capabilities can be applied to a conflict has been radically changed since the end of the Cold War. In this new context, the effectiveness of military means as a way of exerting power has been reduced. This is true despite the technological advances and the resulting rise in effectiveness of military equipment and personnel *per se*.

The reason for this apparent paradoxical situation stems from two connected, but different criterias for success. One is the ability of a weapon system to neutralise or destroy military targets. Another criterion for success has a broader scope and rests on the ability of military means to influence the political target i.e. to make the opponent susceptible to our will. In order to comprehend contemporary security dilemmas, it is essential to underline the relationship between use of force against military targets and a desired political outcome. An understanding of this relationship involves analysing the factors that limit the effectiveness of force in fulfilling political goals.

Conflicts vary when it comes to content and scope, and the restrictions posed on the use of force vary accordingly. The Cold War had some extraordinary characteristics. An eventual military conflict between the two superpowers or their two alliances would have had such disastrous consequences that both sides deemed the actual encounter as meaningless and collectively irrational. The military planning in this period concentrated on existential war where both parties were expected to mobilise their total resources. Under such circumstances it is likely to expect war to be run according to military criteria. The main problem was to avoid war, but as soon as combat is initiated military rationality dominates the field. Whether an actual major war would have evolved according to the above assertions is fortunately something history can not teach us. Nevertheless the presumed characteristics of a Cold War conflict are relevant to the subject of this report, because this was the kind of war we planned for.

Tjøstheim (1998) considers the Cold War to be a part, as well as the end, of the *Napoleonic paradigm*. Clausewitz set the theoretical underpinnings of this concept. Experiencing the rise of Napoleon and his armies, Clausewitz realised that military thought was about to go through a major transition. Eighteenth century warfare had been largely an art of manoeuvre initiated by sovereigns and fought by highly trained professionals. The great revolutionary army with its patriotic conscripts signalled that traditional concepts of warfare were about to change.

War was about to become a rational instrument of national policy (Rapoport 1968: 14). In order to illuminate the central aspects of this paradigm Tjøstheim (1998) lists some of its

essential preconditions. Whenever one or more of these preconditions do not seem to fit the reality of warfare, the paradigm is challenged; it may even be rendered irrelevant.

- **Total war:** The *nation-state* as the dominant actor on the international stage. A clear distinction between wartime and peacetime, where all the resources of the state were mobilised at the threat of war. At the outbreak of war all able persons were drafted and industrial production was directed towards military needs in form of weapons and ammunition. As with Clausewitz: “Moderation in war is an absurdity”.
- **War or peace:** The distinction between war and peace was made necessary by the enormous resources that had to be generated in order to conduct a war. Both the conscription system and the defence laws rested upon such a distinction. The nation-state was not geared to a half hearted war effort.
- **Symmetric war:** The European continent was the principal *theatre of war* and conflict often involved neighbouring states in hold of a similar culture, a relatively equal technological standard and a common conceptual understanding of warfare based on the works of Jomini and Clausewitz.
- **War conducted on military terms:** In the nineteenth century war was established as an independent “science” or “art”, and the officers obtained an uncontested position when it came to conducting war. As a modern day technocrat the officer was believed to possess a unique understanding of the principles of warfare. To a large extent this was reflected in the actual abdication of politicians at the outbreak of war leaving the officers a free hand in times of crisis. Loss of political control often resulted in an escalation and continuation of war according to *the logic of war*
- **Willingness to risk lives:** Demographic conditions of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century were tormented by early deaths. Hunger, diseases and epidemics contributed to the high death tolls. Losing one or two sons in combat or in an epidemic, even though tragic to the families, did not have the traumatic emotional effects on family and society as it would have had today (Luttwak 1994).

The much feared and anticipated full-scale conflict between the cold war adversaries can be said to fit the above description of the *Napoleonic paradigm*. Trust in military rationality, strategies and planning could have brought apocalyptic results from the moment when deterrence failed. The conflicts that actually occurred during the Cold War period however, showed little or no resemblance to the expected horrors of the full-scale nuclear war. Some military encounters adhered to the traditional preconditions stated above, while others seemed to follow a new and unorthodox military logic. It would not be controversial to state that the Cold War represented an exceptional period of military thought; a period with an unparalleled focus on enhancing military effectiveness; but this also helped undermine the very effectiveness/usefulness of military means. It makes sense to refer to the Cold War as the *Indian Summer* of the *Napoleonic paradigm*, and in this perspective the far-reaching repercussions of the 1989 events marked the end of this paradigm’s relevance (Tjøstheim 1998: 80). The move out of Cold War tensions has even led to the thesis that major war has become obsolete (Mandelbaum 1998-99).

It is true however, that the perceived military threats to the dominant players in international politics have undergone some changes. The attention given to asymmetric warfare and the above-mentioned revolution in military affairs point towards a shift in military thought. Although major war between the great powers seems less likely as of today, numerous military conflicts of varying scope and intensity have replaced the relatively stable and predictable

attributes of the Cold War period. Civil wars and insurgencies taking place in the “*chaotic*” parts of the world, involving fragile and/or rogue regimes, have become the most frequent threats to peace (King 1997). This is by no means a new phenomenon, as the Cold War period experienced several conflicts of this kind. What is new is the focus directed towards this kind of conflict by the international community. In the post Cold War security environment, the possible regional tensions that can be ignited by apparently minor conflicts, are seen as a threat to any major power that cherish an ordered and globalised world. Belligerents in such intrastate conflicts can be expected to speculate in the possibility of foreign intervention and the major powers best be prepared to face the challenges of conducting military operations in an unorthodox environment (Freedman 1998-99). Because the great powers have limited interests in these areas after the Cold War, the unstable stability of the Cold War period has been replaced by a stable instability.

In some parts of the world, anarchy and war have become endemic and can no longer be seen as a transitory phenomenon. This situation causes important changes in the power structure of societies because civilian law and order is likely to break down. Force, not law is regulating the behaviour of people and as a result force tends to rule society. “Warlordism” (Rich 1999) and massive criminality are the ultimate results of such a development. Situations like these pose challenges to the outer world, primarily to neighbouring countries, but also to the international society as such. Enduring war in anarchical states could therefore be the cause of outside intervention.

We have seen such developments in parts of Africa, and although to a lesser degree, in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Tajikistan and Afghanistan). Because of the importance of force in such societies power structures are deemed to change, placing individuals or groups possessing raw force on the top, making it possible to reap benefits previously unavailable to them. For these people and their dependants, war and anarchy become a goal in itself; peace and order become the main threat. Not only will they lose their position of power if order is restored; they will also risk severe punishment. They therefore have every incentive to fuel conflict and disorder and they are likely to oppose any effort to restore peace and order. An outside military intervention moreover, will be regarded as a threat to their position of power and opposition will be strong.

Such intrastate wars are certainly different from traditional interstate warfare; still they lack a central characteristic of civil war. Civil wars are usually fought to obtain specific goals, but in the kind of “Warlordism” we have commented on above, war seems to be an end in itself. War is fought without regard to international rules and norms, without fronts, bases and formal headquarters, and often with mere children as soldiers. This kind of war is sometimes labelled “War of the third kind” (Holsti 1996). It goes without saying that outside intervention in such wars is very difficult.

“War of the third kind”, aggressive rogue states and prolonged civil wars constitute the primary challenges to regional stability (Duus 2000). These are the kinds of conflict that may become subject to international interventions in the future. An awareness of the different characteristics of conflict is important to successful handling of such challenges by the

international community. We will return to these challenges later in the paper when we discuss the utility of force in relation to the different kinds of conflict.

Bellamy (1996) claims that the contemporary security challenges resemble the ones the colonial powers faced at the beginning of this century when insurgency opposing colonial rule was widespread. According to Tjøstheim (1998) the preconditions of the Napoleonic paradigm have been, and will continue to be challenged by pragmatic military thinking and by a shift in actual warfare:

- From total war to several kinds of limited war.
- From symmetrical war to several kinds of asymmetric war.
- From war *or* peace to war *and* peace simultaneously.
- From war conducted on military terms to war conducted under continuous political control (a precondition for wars to be limited).
- From a willingness to risk lives to an aversion to human casualties.

It is our assertion that the context in which military means can be applied has changed since the end of the Cold War. As a consequence, the effectiveness of military capabilities as a means of exerting power has been reduced. In the following we will pursue the task of mapping factors which can explain why the gap between military capabilities and power is widening.

4 THE ACCEPTABILITY OF FORCE

During the Cold War most states perceived the main threat to be an attack directed against own or alliance territory. This threat had existential dimensions and in accordance with the Napoleonic paradigm the states prepared for a total war. An eventual attack was to be met with a massive mobilisation of national resources. Military forces in the shape of mass armies were to be deployed more or less directly against the aggressor in order to deter his military or political ambitions. The soldiers were expected to risk their lives for the defence of their homeland.

In a situation where the territorial threat no longer seems to be pressing and the main thrust of attention is towards international operations in distant areas, the traditional military planning is forced to adapt as well. Force projection is an essential concept when it comes to international operations. Only small parts of the state's armed forces are likely to be involved in international interventions off domestic territory, but the need for support- and transport-capacity is all the more important. This implies that the costs per effective unit in such operations are much higher than when forces are stationed in the homeland.

Therefore one can expect costs per unit to rise when forces to a larger extent are deployed in distant territories. In addition, restrictions placed on the use of these military forces can be expected to increase as well.

An aversion to human casualties present in most developed countries, helps to restrict the use of military force. Especially military engagements in conflicts that do not seem to touch upon vital interests or that seem geographically peripheral to the domestic public, are faced with a strong public sentiment against any actions that may cause casualties. What causes this growing opposition is an issue subject to debate. Compared to the attitudes present at the eve of the First World War there is not much doubt that sentiments have changed. Luttwak (1994) has presented the hypothesis of “mammaism”, linking the reduced number of children per family to the resistance towards sending them to war. This argument is appealing, but fundamental societal developments as well as the absence of death in modern society should also be part of a comprehensive explanation. History can provide several examples supporting the claim that it is the rise of “civilisation” itself that has undermined the willingness to go to war (Meyer 1995). A fundamental but may be unrealistic belief in mankind gradually learning its lessons and becoming more liberal, more democratic and more peaceful underlies such an explanation. Regardless of how one conceives the emerging aversion to casualties, restrictions obviously exist on the kind of forces a state can employ and on how these forces can be employed. The principle of proportionality, essential to traditional military strategy, is seriously impeded when avoiding human casualties becomes the dominating criterion for military action. By turning time into a variable it is reasonable to argue that risking lives today may prevent higher casualties in the future. If however, a military operation is judged solely in terms of the loss of blood it generates here and now, the strategic impact of the operation in relation to its stated aims is easily blurred. Tucker (1998: 74) reflects tellingly on the very essence of the matter:

“The result of these attitudes can be seen in the remark of a *Washington Post* reporter several months ago. He wrote, “In purely military terms, the Bosnia operation has been a huge success, with scarcely any casualties to NATO troops.” For some, military success has come to mean no casualties. But if military success means no casualties, then military success will be very rare because military operations without casualties are very rare. If military success is rare, then our defeat in the future seems almost certain.”

The threshold is therefore becoming high for the use of ground forces. Conflicts of high intensity which do not appear to involve vital national interests, are not very likely to result in an international intervention through the use of ground forces. At the early stages of an evolving conflict the chance of human casualties would be low, and if international ground forces were used in a pre-emptive manner it would therefore be more acceptable to the public opinion. Moreover, conflict management is often easier to perform at the early stages of conflict. Despite the advantages to early engagement, public support of international operations normally presupposes a certain level of media coverage of the conflict and coverage will increase along with intensity and drama. It is a paradox that by the time the international community is ready to act, the use of force may be the only possible solution. To risk-averse politicians international operations are preferably of short duration, they involve marginal civil destruction and they involve minimal human casualties. Tucker (1998), however, believes that the public’s fear of casualties is highly overrated. As long as the justification of an operation is reasonable the (American) public is willing to sacrifice lives. A government is therefore forced to legitimise an operation to the domestic public in order to hope for a sustained public support. There is of course a close relationship between purpose and will. Still, in a modern society, “deaths in combat” continues to be an abnormality.

Air force is consequently a compelling alternative to ground forces to the modern-day thin-skinned politician. International operations increasingly make use of this military capability to exert pressure. This is particularly true when it comes to the US. Two factors can help explain why the Americans are especially prone to the use of air power. First, the Americans are *politically visible* to a higher degree than other nationalities. Irrespective of nationality, ground forces constitute a more visible use of force than air power. Going in on the ground reflects determination and a physical challenge/presence that can not be matched by any other use of military force. The particular attention given to American soldiers stems from the dominant role of the US since the end of the Cold War. Outside the Western world the US is often regarded as the foremost representative and defender of Western civilisation. Immediately after the Operation Allied Force in Kosovo, critics feared that the intervention represented a start to an era of unilateral actions by the US around the globe (Pharo 2000). For all we know this prediction may turn out to be correct, but criticism of the world leader is bound to arise regardless of how the US performs. The point here is that political visibility makes American troops particularly vulnerable on the ground. In addition the troops are very much visible to an American public with a low inclination to accept losses. As a result the American ground forces represent a *centre of gravity* that easily attracts hostile attacks aimed at altering US policy. Second, the Americans are eager to use their air forces simply because they are in possession of the most advanced air force in the world. Other states friends and foes alike, can not compete either in quantity or quality. Even when it comes to allied operations there are only a few states that have sufficient air capabilities to operate alongside the Americans.

The reliance on air capabilities in international operations is mainly the result of a widespread aversion to casualties. The same aversion also forces the bombers to fly at a high altitude in order to avoid air defence. Sentiments in the public are therefore not only inhibiting the use of ground forces but are simultaneously influencing how the air capabilities are being used. High altitude bombing serves the purpose of avoiding casualties but in addition two disadvantages are produced by this kind of warfare.

First, the ability of high precision bombs to hit their military targets accurately is reduced when delivered from high altitudes. A reduced accuracy is limiting the effectiveness of air power in this kind of operations. Straining the effectiveness further is the growing ability and the recent trend for rogue states and other potential adversaries, to “dig in” (Rogers 1998). The superiority of Western high precision bombing was clearly demonstrated during the Gulf war and in order to protect against possible future attacks, national command centres and WMD facilities have been built under ground. As a result, the adversary is less vulnerable and he will be able to continue his resistance for a longer period of time. According to Rogers (1998), an arms race between the diggers and the bombers has developed. In order to retain their superiority in high precision bombing, Western countries are trying to increase the capability to destroy hardened structures. Meanwhile states such as Libya, Syria and North Korea are taking the lead in the defence against Western air power. Still, the ability to hit military targets accurately is reduced regardless of whether the targets are on or under the ground, as long as the bombs are delivered from high altitudes.

Second, a reduced accuracy implies that the chance of inflicting collateral damages outside target-areas will increase. Public opinion in Western countries is very sensitive to civilian casualties. CNN-broadcasts showing civilian casualties caused by Western forces are likely to produce opposition against the entire operation. These sentiments are readily exploited by the state that is suffering from the international intervention. Outdistanced in weapon technology, militarily weak states will make the most out of this *centre of gravity*. Most commentators regard information technology a crucial advantage to the West, but the graphic footage now transmitted around the world is also an important asset to the enemy. In the *public relations battle* the West is vulnerable to dramatic footage on the CNN and the enemy is given the weapons to fight this battle by the West's reliance on high altitude bombing. In fear of causing civilian casualties, the West may even refrain from attacking some military targets despite their strategic importance.

High altitude bombing does not only produce the disadvantages mentioned above. Reliance on air power alone creates strategic problems irrespective of altitude. The discussion concerning whether air power is sufficient to win a war has been revitalised after *Operation Allied Force*. We will not elaborate on this discussion, but rather underline one essential drawback of ruling out the use of ground troops. The use of massive air strikes certainly has demoralising effects on the targeted society in general and on the military forces in particular. The challenge is to convert this demoralisation into surrender. Targeting the opponent's military forces from the air will result in both a physical destruction of military equipment and personnel and a psychological subversion of the will to fight. War is about destroying will as well as capabilities. By not being present on the ground one is inhibited from exploiting eventual local demoralisation among enemy troops. The majority of enemy troops in the Gulf war surrendered; they were not killed or wounded. But the Iraqi soldiers were not able to surrender until allied ground-troops made their appearance. By relying solely on air strikes it is not possible to take advantage of an eventual demoralisation simply because a soldier can not surrender to an airplane (Eide 2000). The decision to surrender is under these circumstances often left to the political leaders situated far away from the battlefield. Sea combat represents an intermediate case since it always is the commander of the vessel who has the opportunity to surrender to a hostile vessel, not the individual crewmember. Traditional sea combat is however unlikely to be of much relevance to future international interventions in the "chaotic" parts of the world.

The reduced effectiveness of the use of military force in the modern day international operation is in many respects tied to public opinion in the West. Public opinion constitutes a major centre of gravity vulnerable to hostile manipulation. This is a result of what one may call the perils of progress. In a context where international interventions are legitimised with references to democratic and civilised ideals, most people expect an intervention to be equally humane and clean. Opponents like Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic have demonstrated how to take advantage of this by using human shields to protect facilities essential to them. The recent *Operation Allied Force* developed into a war of attrition where NATO attempted to attack airports, electricity plants and bridges in order to paralyse the Yugoslav society. Yugoslav authorities did not hesitate to expose to the world public the collateral damage that followed. In addition to the civilian casualties being unpopular to the public, there existed legal opposition to the strategy as well. UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights, Mary Robinson questioned the legality of such a strategy with reference to the laws of war (Roberts 1998). Taking on the role as representatives for the civilised world fighting “barbarians”, is effective when it comes to giving legitimacy to an operation. At the same time it places heavy restrictions on the use of force. ” Tyrants, madmen and power hungry dictators around the world are rediscovering an old truth: that the progress of civilisation can be evils best ally” (Meyer 1995). These actors do not recognise the same obligations to the laws of war, as do the Western countries.

As mentioned above the notion of *just war* is gaining ground and the need to legitimise the use of force, as being *just* has therefore grown stronger. The effectiveness of military force is challenged by this notion. It is expected that there is a certain correspondence between the means employed and the ends one wishes to fulfil (Børresen 1998). This implies that the use of force should be adjusted to the point where it matches the political ends of the engagement. Adherence to this restriction impedes the effectiveness of military force. The most effective use of force is often to overwhelm the opponent at the initial stages of a conflict in the intent of shocking him from attempting resistance. If the show of force is sufficiently impressing it might not even be necessary to use force. The contemporary need for war to appear *just* can therefore be a hindrance to the optimal use of force.

The military task forces sent to handle a conflict situation will be subject to a set of rules stemming from the mandate and the Rules of engagement (ROE). A mandate is supposed to outline the purpose of the operation and it should establish guidelines as to how the force should act in order to fulfil the ends of the operation. The authority that lays down the mandate is in most cases the same authority that argues the legitimacy of the operation and that makes the final decision of implementing the military mission. The mandate is a political undertaking and its content will be marked by the need to reach a consensus. Multinational authorities are inherently dependent on consensus among its members. In most cases these characteristics of a mandate will result in heavy restrictions on the use of force and the result will be a reduction in military effectiveness. The restrictions can be expected to become more strict the more political controversy the operation provokes. Disagreement between states that are part of the very coalition expected to execute the mission can also have effects on the military effectiveness. If controversy arises for instance over which bases the military forces can operate from, the costs of the operation may rise. The greater the differences within an alliance on what constitute the essential threats, the greater the chances of limiting the effectiveness of the military engagement.

The Rules of engagement are supposed to give transparent directions for the military forces involved, as to when the use of force is legitimate and how force is to be used if the legitimate situations arise. A typical problem the ROE would have to clarify is whether the military forces are allowed to open fire only in direct response to hostile fire, i.e. only in self-defence. An extension of this problem is what one could refer to as the concept of anticipated self-defence, and the ROE would have to confirm if the use of force is legitimate when thought to prevent anticipated hostilities. In comparison to a mandate the ROE deal with issues of a more tactical nature, consequently it is the responsibility of the military to lay down the ROE. In reality however, the military often act in consultation with national political authorities while working out the ROE. As a result, there will normally be a consistency between the mandate’s

overarching guidelines and the tactical directions for the use of military force. The restrictions on the use of force indicated by the ROE have shown a tendency to differ from country to country. Traditionally the US has had a less restrictive policy in this area than the European countries. Regardless of national differences in the tendency to allow the use of force, the type of conflict will help determine the content of the ROE. The total war of the Napoleonic paradigm would produce a set of ROE quite different from the ones likely in a contemporary conflict of a more limited scope. The kind of conflicts most likely to become the subject of future multinational peacekeeping or peacemaking operations can be expected to have ROE that place heavy restrictions on the use of force. Considering therefore, the development in ROE brings us yet another sign of the diminishing role of military force.

5 THE UTILITY OF FORCE

The principal objective when using military force is to exert influence upon the actions of other actors. The aim may be to influence an actor's pattern of behaviour that is deemed unfavourable to us. But the use of force may just as well be aimed at sustaining an actor's actions and through this avoiding potentially undesirable behaviour. Influence is exerted either by the actual use of force or by the threat to use force. Effective use of force should target the opponent's ability or will to carry out the relevant actions and as such tilt his cost-benefit considerations towards the favoured outcome to the attacker.

We have already discussed how the use of military force is restricted by the existence of international and national norms. These norms which have gained in strength and relevance since the end of the Cold War, do not only put restrictions on *when* to use force but also on *how* force is to be used. In sum one could claim that the *acceptability* of the use of force has decreased. Moreover, we have discussed the changing nature of war in relation to the changes in the characteristics of conflict. The question is to what extent military force can be used effectively in a changed political and military environment. It is important to discuss the *utility* of force apart from its acceptability (Martin 1973).

Effective use of force is dependent upon a clear identification of targets. An overreaching political end, although important is only the starting point. In order to exert influence upon an actor one has to detect the links between his vital assets and his way of thought. The assets he himself considers essential would at the same time constitute his *centres of gravity*. If military force is to have an effect there has to be a link between the assets one has the potential to target and the cost-benefit considerations of the actor. Moreover, it is essential to understand the relative importance of the different links. Generally speaking military force is effective only to the extent one is able to conceptualise the opponents' centres of gravity. Improved weapon technology stemming from the RMA seems more or less irrelevant when it comes to dealing with these kinds of conceptual problems. The greatest problem is not so often to destroy a target, rather to know what target to destroy. Enhanced quality of information and improved weapon accuracy is important, but it can never replace human ingenuity (Sullivan 1998).

The actors one may wish to influence are by no means uniform. For the object of clarity they can be separated into three groups:

- Leaders of organised states.
- Substate actors with limited political aims (parties to civil war, liberation- or guerrilla-armies).
- Substate actors with non-political aims (criminal organisations or warlords).

In addition one may want to target lower-level leaders in the conflict with the intention of indirectly influencing higher levels of authority. As mentioned above, relying solely on air power makes it difficult to assert this kind of influence.

5.1 The use of force against organized states

A state is responsible for supplying the basic needs of its population. Certain institutions have been established in order to meet the demands of the people and in addition they serve as means to organise the population to such a degree that the political goals of its leaders can be fulfilled. A state does also have a political leadership designated to arrive at authoritative decisions and it is responsible for executing these decisions. To insure that authoritative decisions can be carried out, the state has a national defence to preserve its sovereignty as well as institutions to maintain internal stability.

In principle all the essential institutions in a state can be targeted by military means, but as we have already discussed there exists limitations of a normative character, which make it harder than before to select targets based solely on military rationality. Acceptability of the use of force has decreased. In theory, it is easy to believe that modern society characterised by an integrated complexity should be very vulnerable to military attack. The technological developments as well as the move towards an information-society point in this direction. In practise however, states have reached different levels of complexity and in the cases of Iraq and Serbia one experienced the difficulty of targeting the societies in a way which could produce a decisive outcome. The aim was to target the two countries' ability to make war, still their ability to endure under superior military might proved durable. In both cases the degrading of the two countries' military capabilities also ran parallel to a degrading of the legitimacy of the allied military operations. Public opposition in the coalition officially responsible for the outside intervention, caused the weakened legitimacy and as such reduced the effectiveness of the military intervention.

The purpose of targeting and destroying another actor's infrastructure and military capability is to alter his expectations about the outcome of the military encounter. Superior military might and the resulting damages to territory and military force can be expected to accelerate his inclination to surrender. If however, the same actor has the impression that the military aggression towards him will become restrained by weakening legitimacy and a faltering willpower, he is likely to continue the resistance. The actor's expectation about the outcome will be influenced by a belief that time is working for him; it is only a matter of perseverance. Whether this belief is realistic or not, it will nevertheless give the actor hope; hope that the opponent's "will" is about to falter. The "collective psyche and will of the people" as a comparative advantage may be expected to counter the military superiority of the opponent (Dunlap 1998). In such a situation the effectiveness of military force will be impaired.

This being the case, *uncertainty* about the final outcome makes the actor less susceptible to the military means used against him. In spite of massive military superiority the actor has detected a lack of *credibility* in the opponent. Hope that a faltering willpower is about to evolve is enough to rule out surrender and therefore prolong the conflict. In some cases however, it may be desirable to deliberately create uncertainty in the actor we wish to assert influence over. This is particularly true when it comes to the kind of means that will be used in the conflict. The greater the uncertainty in this area, the harder it is for the opponent to calculate and plan for countermeasures; i.e. work out a coherent strategy. If for some reason political considerations inhibit the use of certain kinds of force, and especially if this is made public, the opponent will have one less problem to worry about. A potential diversity of future threats will be narrowed down and it will be easier to work out a strategy when uncertainty is reduced. Military capabilities that are ruled out will lose the utility that stems from their mere existence. The statement made at an early point by NATO on not using ground forces in the Kosovo-conflict, serves as an example on how to reduce the uncertainty for the opponent and consequently reduce the utility of military force as an influential tool.

Another, yet parallel reason for targeting a society's infrastructure is to inflict a sense of loss, suffering and demoralisation on the population. The primary aim is not to weaken the physical military ability to make war but rather to weaken the population's will to support a continuation of conflict. This approach is thought to alter the relationship between the political leadership and its subjects. In part this approach rests upon a belief that the political leadership will change its policy of aggression because of the suffering it brings to the population. Alternatively the population itself will force the leadership to change its policy and if this fails the government can even risk to be overthrown. This perceived link between the government and the governed is not necessarily present in a state. Both the top-down and the bottom-up explanations behind a change of policy rest on certain preconditions that may not apply to the respective state. For the top-down perspective to be relevant the leadership must show a certain degree of empathy to the suffering inflicted on the population, regardless of whether the suffering is caused by economic or military warfare. If this is not the case, the strategy of targeting the population's stamina will not only be flawed but also ethically questionable since innocent civilians are deemed to suffer for no apparent strategic reason.

The critique levelled against NATO's war of attrition in Serbia referred to above, circled around this very issue (Roberts 1999). What we have learned from the several conflicts in which military and economic means have been used, is that their effectiveness often is limited by an opposing political leadership that does not give priority to the welfare of its population. This is particularly true if the prospect of staying in power or the prospect of fulfilling vital political goals is likely to be challenged by an eventual attentiveness to public distress. Moreover, military force is to a growing extent being used by the international community against states that do not possess a system of government emphasising legitimacy and political expediency. Consequently military force will to a growing extent be used against political leaders that do not place great value on the well being of their population. The fact that not all states share a Western set of values when it comes to legitimate statesmanship is undermining the effectiveness of military force. Making the population suffer and hoping for a top-down effect in a society with no preconditions for such an alteration of policy, could be a futile strategy, reducing the utility of military means.

From the bottom-up perspective the strategy of inflicting suffering to the population could be equally futile. This perspective presupposes a strong and determined initiative by the population itself to put pressure on its political leaders. When we consider this precondition to be less relevant than before it is mainly for two reasons. One, populist political leaders are becoming more frequent in many parts of the world. Populist leaders manifest themselves as representatives for the common people and the people as a whole. Their legitimacy stems from the claim to represent everyone and everything vital to the nation. Outside interventions could therefore strengthen more likely than weaken this kind of leaders. Foreign threats will help underline the ties between the population and its leader, and he will make every effort to present himself as the firm and sole defender of national sovereignty. An opposition will be stigmatised as co-operating with the enemy. Second, the *media* is often controlled and therefore actively used by the political leaders. A powerful tool as it is, the media will contribute to a demonisation of the enemy as well as its supporters (read domestic opposition). Improved information technology implies that more people than ever have access to information through the media. The globalisation of information can be said to weaken a state's control over domestic opinion, but this argument presupposes that information technology is widespread and available to large portions of the population. This is not the case outside the highly industrialised parts of the world. The kind of states we are referring to as populist have not experienced such a degree of technological progress but the improvements in information technology the state may have seen, are likely to be controlled by state authorities. A state-controlled media at least in times of crisis, is therefore a more powerful tool than before and is likely to reduce the effectiveness of outside intervention. The combination of populist leaders and state-controlled media is often the rule in states likely to be subject to international intervention, and this is a powerful combination when it comes to easing pressure on the political leaders. Military means intended to spur a bottom-up effect are likely to have a diminishing utility.

In conclusion, military force used against other states is less effective today than in it was before simply because the targets for its use have changed. The kind of political leaders military force is likely to be used against in the years ahead are different from the leaders traditional military strategy planned to fight. The strategy of weakening the population's will does in fact have a certain degree of naivety to it, particularly so when national and international norms put restrictions on how military force can be used. Political leaders attentive to public hardship and an opposition able to challenge the political leaders are two essential and connected features of a modern democracy. Democratic states however, are not very likely to become subject to international interventions in the future. A democratic state is more likely to be part of an international intervention than one of its targets.

5.2 The use of force against sub-state actors

To a growing extent military operations are not directed against the political leaders of a state, but sub-state actors. It would be an oversimplification to treat the variety of sub-state actors as one homogenous group. They differ in composition, strategy and goals. In this report we make a distinction between the actors who have and the actors who do not have political aims tied to their struggle. A military intervention targeting political sub-state actors is likely to be

triggered by their use of force, regarded inappropriate and illegitimate by the international community. Terrorism, ethnic cleansing or genocide is examples of acts that fall into this category. A more general cause of international intervention is if a sub-state actor by his actions has destabilised and helped create unacceptable conditions within a state, particularly so if the instability is likely to affect neighbouring countries. There is however, often a close relationship between a general destabilisation and the specific acts of violence.

The sub-state actor is distinguished from the state as an actor in many ways. The differences are substantially important to be aware of when considering the use of military force against such an actor:

1. A sub-state actor is often not closely linked to a specific society and he does not bear responsibilities towards this society to the same extent, as does the state.
2. A sub-state actor's cost-benefit analysis is in most cases very different from a regular state leader's analysis.

Evidently, a sub-state actor will not have the same kind of infrastructure for an outside intervention to target as the one most states possess. The mentioned lack of responsibility towards a society may actually differ in degree between different groups depending on the strength of their territorial affiliation. In most cases the sub-state actor will have to his disposal a system of bases and a political network that are important to his war-effort. Even though both of these structures constitute potential targets for military attack, they are not of the same vital importance to a sub-state actor as they are to a state. Moreover these structures are far more difficult to localise and destroy than the more visible and traditional infrastructure possessed by the state. In fact, an insurgent group would not be able to survive if it did not have an organisational structure characterised by a certain degree of invisibility and mobility. This is particularly true when it comes to minor groups that primarily conduct acts of terrorism.

5.2.1 Political sub-state actors

The political sub-state actor would typically be a liberation movement or some other group, which through illegitimate means attempts to overthrow the existing political regime or undermine the traditional political order. In both cases there are reasons to believe that only parts of the population the group claims or wishes to represent are actually supporting its cause. Large portions of society will probably be negative or remain indifferent to the activity of the insurgents. Although military conflict may drive people towards indifference, it may just as well produce a polarised society where people are forced to choose side. Military intervention by outside forces is likely to produce this kind of polarisation. The intervening party may hope for widespread support in the local population but in reality it should be content if the locals remain passive to the military conflict. Since the population's resistance against outside forces would have been a vital strategic advantage to the insurgency groups, passivity would imply a major loss of potential capability. During the Vietnam War this kind of problems were essential.

A foreign military force is for these reasons likely to run into problems when it comes to targeting the sub-state opponent's organisation and ability to make war, and it will be equally

hard to limit the opponent's local support by carrying out military operations against the local population. The latter approach is likely to be counterproductive as well as ethically questionable.

Any attempt to influence and alter the cost-benefit calculations of the leader of a sub-state political movement is bound to be difficult. His calculations will be harder to affect than the calculations that are made by the political leader of a regular state. The main reason for this can be found in comparing the two counterparts' room for political manoeuvre. A sub-state leader will perceive his room for political manoeuvre to be very narrow. His entire *raison d'être* is embedded in the fight which he leads. He owes his position and status to the war-effort, to call off the fighting would not only represent a setback in the struggle but would be perceived as a total failure. The political costs from ending the fight would appear very great to him. Moreover, most of his bridges are likely to be burnt as a result of his subversive actions. The alternative to continued fighting could turn out to be imprisonment, death or a life in exile. All of these alternatives can be said to involve insurmountable personal costs. The leader has placed all his bets on succeeding or on continuing the fight; to him there are no alternatives.

This is not to say that the leadership of the state facing subversive sub-state actors has a wide room for manoeuvre. Sustaining the state's territorial integrity is under most circumstances considered by the regime a primary national interest. This is true despite some recent exceptions as with the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. The political costs involved in conceding territory and independence to a secessionist movement may therefore be very high. The political costs of conceding may be perceived as even higher if the aim of the sub-state actor is to overthrow the regime itself. To the political leadership of a state such a demand is likely to appear irreconcilable and the leadership finds itself in much the same situation as the insurgent leader. Concessions would imply considerable personal costs and there appears to be no alternative to prolonged fighting.

In this kind of situation compromises are hard to find since the narrow rooms for manoeuvres strain both kind of actors. Sovereignty and territory is simply something one has or something one does not have. A change of regime does also have the same kind of duality to it due to the wide array of power structures likely to be incorporated in a regime. Either the totality of power structures has to be altered or the regime can not be regarded as overthrown. Autonomy, limited political concessions and liberalisation are often better solutions on paper than they are in the real world since these kinds of compromises often come across as vague and short-sighted. Such a compromise is vulnerable to future hostilities. According to King (1997: 25) negotiated settlements have been relatively rare in intra-state conflicts, and "...when the belligerents have been able to sign a peace accord, with or without the assistance of outside mediators, negotiations have historically produced more unstable settlements than those resulting from the outright victory of one side.» At the same time many of the so-called negotiated settlements is the result of an actual victory by one of the sides. The settlement is supposed to make defeat more acceptable and thereby widen the room for manoeuvre for the party that is forced to face the losses. Until defeat is an inescapable fact there does not seem to be an alternative to continued fighting.

Considering the above discussion of cost-benefit calculations made by political sub-state actors and their counterparts, it is hard to see how the use of military force is likely to help produce a settlement short of total victory for one of the parties. Since we have seen an increase in this type of secessionist conflicts in recent years, and since the international community has shown a greater interest in settling this kind of conflict by military force, the effectiveness of military force when it comes to producing politically acceptable settlements has been reduced.

5.2.2 Non-political sub-state actors

In territories where the central authority and legitimacy of the state is weak or where it has literally broken down, other actors will attempt to fill the void, establish positions of power and attempt to use these positions for what they are worth. The aspirations of such actors may be of a political character and a breakdown in central authority would be an opportunity for them to press ahead with their demands. The Habsburg monarchy in 1918 and the Soviet Union in 1991 serve as illustrative examples. Alternatively the actors may lack either formal or real political aspirations and their main objective may be pure economic profit. These actors will be referred to as non-political sub-state actor in this report. Local bases of power based on organised crime and blackmailing of the local population will often be established when profits, not politics is involved. In the inter-war period this kind of sub-state phenomenon came to be labelled “war-lordism” (Rich 1999), and today the same phenomenon is starting to spread in parts of the world where state authority is too weak to counter such a development. Central Africa, Lebanon, Caucasus, the Balkans, but also parts of South America are experiencing the spread of “war-lordism”. In the latter case there are examples of former revolutionary movements that have developed into criminal movements due to their handling of the drug traffic. We see this most clearly in the case of Columbia.

To these kind of non-political sub-state actors, anarchy serves as the vital precondition for survival and therefore it becomes pressing to preserve such a state of affairs. The state itself and the eventual outside powers that may attempt to reinstate central authority constitute the main threats to their economic position of power. In many cases the state alone is unable to restore “law and order” on its territory and it is left with no alternative but to call upon external actors for help. Outside intervention may alternatively take place because neither the state nor the sub-state actors manage or wish to satisfy the basic needs of the population, i.e. a humanitarian intervention. An outside intervention may also be legitimate to the world community if the anarchical conditions in the respective country have far-reaching consequences for the neighbouring countries in form of drug trafficking, organised crime and waves of refugees. Regardless of the reasons for intervention the purpose is still the same: to seek to create the necessary security and stability for the state to be able to reassert itself. Whenever an international intervention has stated such an objective one falls into the paradoxical situation where the territorial sovereignty of a state is defended by a breach to the very principle of territorial sovereignty (Semb 2000). In practice the strategy of such an intervention would be to disarm the sub-state actor. But sub-state actors, political or not, are likely to resist any effort to be disarmed due to the traditional security dilemma which applies to internal conflicts as well as inter-state conflicts. The hostilities resulting from prolonged warfare do not vanish the day the belligerents lay down their weapons. Intra-state warfare is likely to produce relatively strong hostilities since intra-state wars have a history of being

especially violent and the viciousness with which they are prosecuted tend to be particularly high (King 1997). The opponents are in need of a credible neutral third part to guarantee the personal security of all the inhabitants of the state. An international force that has previously targeted the sub-state actor is not likely to have credibility among supporters of the sub-state actor in the aftermath of conflict. As mentioned above, outside military operations may not be a very effective tool when it comes to halting the actual fighting between parties in intra-state wars, mainly because of the invisibility of organisation and the narrow rooms for manoeuvre. When it comes to the reconstruction of good faith and co-operation between the parties, military force must be supplemented by other means (Hansen 1998).

In dealing with a non-political sub-state actor an international military intervention will run into very similar problems, as was the case with the political sub-state actor. It will be hard to affect his cost-benefit calculations for essentially the same reasons we mentioned above. Conceivably however, it may be even more difficult to alter a non-political actor's calculations. This can be explained by the existential importance the actor is likely to place on preserving the state of anarchy. In addition to the bridges that are burnt as a result of his actions, the material well being of leaders and dependants relies directly on the anarchical situation. The room for manoeuvre may appear even narrower to an actor when material degradation can be added to the judicial prosecution likely to take place if the state manages to reinstate order and security on its territory.

For the object of clarity we have made a distinction between sub-state actors with and without political goals. This is of course a crude categorisation. Within the non-political category there are actors with different ties to the society in which they operate and to the population from which they profit. Take for instance the traditional clan-leader that in practice is dependent upon a certain degree of anarchy in the state for him to be able to assert influence over his territory. His position is partly political although his authority stems from the dissolution of central authority. Such leaders tend to have close ties to the local population even though the relationship may take on different forms. The ties between leaders and population may be organised as patron-client relationships or the clan-leaders may have a traditional charismatic authority over their subjects. Nevertheless, there often exist close ties to the population, and the leaders are dependent on the continued support of this population in order to remain powerful. Somalia and Lebanon can serve as examples for how clans assert influence over parts of the population. For an eventual intervening force the ties between the leaders and their subjects constitute possible targets for attack. This bring us back to the discussion on the strategy of inflicting suffering on the population in order to affect its leaders, the bottom-up or the top-down strategy. In addition to the flaws in this strategy stated above, the strength in the particular relationship stemming from the traditional legitimacy of the clan leaders makes this strategy seem even more futile.

On the other hand there are leaders within the non-political category, which owe their position of power to the superiority in arms or to the control of organised crime. In these cases the ties are not so tight between leaders and the population in the area, at least their authority rests more on intimidation than on legitimacy. Still, the locals often depend on the same kind of revenues as do the leaders and therefore incentives are weak when it comes to turning against them. Even though the population may oppose the authority of the leaders it would meet the

same fate as them materially, if central authority were to be reinstated in the state. This is for instance the case for the poor Indians in Columbia. The alternative for the local population could be to tie themselves to a competing sub-state actor, but this would not be preferable to an eventual intervening force which would aim at destroying the basis for criminal activity in general, not necessarily one particular sub-state actor. Correspondingly it is the fighting itself an intervening force often would want to stop in a civil war, not one of the political sub-state actors in particular (King 1997). Traditional military strategy is consequently challenged by the recent shift towards intra-state conflict. The enemy is no longer an easily recognisable actor but rather a complex activity, deemed undesirable by the international community.

Despite the difficulty of creating two mutually exclusive categories in which to place different sub-state actors, it does however bring some clarity to the intermediate status of cases such as the clan-leadership. The non-political sub-state actors in general however, are hard to influence by the use of outside military force. This because there are limited opportunities to influence the leaders indirectly through the population and because their room for manoeuvre is narrow. Military means therefore, has to be combined with several other means when the aim is to create a stable situation of law and order in a state previously plagued by anarchy. Military force may however, serve as an important support to the other means employed, since there will be a need to counter any attempts at undermining the efforts made the international community. From this point of view a credible latent military force may be more useful than the actual use of force in such an unorthodox strategic environment. Credibility however, is hard to establish if the utility of force is known to be low.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Military power has taken on a new role in the post-Cold War era. While this statement seems uncontroversial, the real challenge lies in the attempt to describe *how*, and *to what extent* the role has changed. During the Cold War the actual use of military force was heavily restricted due to the fear of escalation into superpower conflict and thereby the possibility of nuclear war. Today, the Cold War is history, and military force is not restricted by the looming possibility of an all-out nuclear war. Military force however, has so far not been applied between the Great Powers in the post-Cold War era, but mostly in order to cope with conflicts and disorder in the so-called periphery or “chaotic” parts of the world.

Although the use of military force in a sense has been *unchained*, the actual use of military force is becoming more and more controversial. This is especially true when it comes to Western societies, but other parts of the world are experiencing a similar development as well. The sacrifice of human lives for political ends often seems to be in conflict with the humanitarian values most of these countries adhere to. If humanitarian values were equally predominant in all countries around the world this would not be regarded as a problem; far from it. Internationally however, the same humanitarian and democratic norms which secure westerners against the use of force domestically, are presented as legitimate reasons for the West to intervene militarily. Force is often used by the West against non-western countries that adhere to a different set of values, and as such the norm of non-interference is undermined on a

humanitarian basis. The Western world is to a growing extent seen as a peaceful and orderly centre surrounded by a disorderly periphery still dominated by conflicts and poverty. This dichotomy is gradually becoming the main dividing line in the world today, taking the place of the former division between East and West.

Use of military force is controversial in aspects apart from the strictly ethical ones. The various costs of using military force are high. At the same time the effects can be questioned if we consider the low degree of *acceptability* for the use of force and the reduced *utility* in using it. The cost-benefit equation for actors using force can therefore be seen as becoming steadily less favourable.

The cost of weapon systems is rising. For some important weapon platforms costs are doubling at least every ten years. This development could be thwarted by an improved weapon-performance and many weapons have in fact increased their firepower, precision and range. The problem is however, that several relevant aspects of acceptability and utility restrict the impact these improved weapons could have had on the actual targets; the actual targets being the political leaders and decision-makers of the opposing entity.

In order to grasp how improved weapons can become less effective, attention should be given to the changing nature of war. War and other forms of military conflicts are to a lesser degree fought to defend own territory. Military force is to a growing degree being used to restore stability or to halt aggression in far away places. In addition war is not so often fought between states as it is fought between states and non-state actors. Moreover the new kinds of war tend to be conducted more according to a political than to military rationale. As seen in Kosovo, political considerations tended to dominate every stage of the conflict, and military force was primarily used in accordance with political, not military logic.

The diminishing acceptability of military force has important implications for how the whole range of military means can be employed. Even though the most obvious restrictions are placed on the actual conduct of war; a weakened acceptability will affect the effectiveness of the mere military *threat* as well. Earlier military planning focused on existential wars fought with all available forces and in such a context the willingness to sacrifice lives was hardly ever questioned. Contemporary military planning is more and more characterised by the attention given to force projection, and situations where only a very small part of a state's military force is likely to be mobilised for war. These facts alone do heighten the real costs per military unit considerably, but in addition the use of these forces is subject to severe political restrictions.

There is a high threshold against sending *ground forces* into possible combat situations unless vital interests are at stake. Air forces will often stand out as the preferable "risk-free" and effective alternative. There are of course limits to what air force by itself can accomplish and especially so when restrictions are placed on its use. The destructive potential of air power is considerable, but precision is lost when pilots are forced to fly at high altitude in order to reduce the risks. This fear of risking the lives of pilots could in turn endanger civilian lives on the ground, because precious will be less. Collateral damage is in turn likely to cause political problems at home. A critical public opinion at home will therefore in practise restrict the actual choice of military targets. These factors taken together lead to a situation where the impact of

using military force is growing less. Military capability is neither permitted, nor able to, perform at its full potential as long as the *acceptability* of its use is low.

The *utility* of military has always been, and still is, restricted. Recent changes in the nature of war have increased these restrictions further. The *link* between the targets we want to strike and the actors we want to influence seems to be much weaker than before. This is mainly because the relevant actors tend to have different characteristics than target actors had before, and we are less sure about how to influence them. Sub-state actors are to a growing extent becoming possible targets for the use of military force, but these actors are hard to influence because they often lack clearly defined *centres of gravity*. Our inability to act against such actor's centres of gravity and the corresponding visibility of our own centres of gravity, being our own society and public opinion, may lead to an epistemological asymmetry of greater importance than the technological asymmetry often stressed in public debate. The problem of knowing and understanding is even more pressing when the "enemy" turns out, not to be an defined actor, but anarchy and chaos itself. In this case there are no actual actors to target.

In the situations where a state is the target for military operations, it complicates the task if the political leaders of such states seldom are not receptive to suffering inflicted on the population, and this is all too often the case. Such lack of empathy may pose ethical problems to the attacking party because innocent people are the victims in and a conflict were attacks are seemingly futile. In addition the media in the respective country is often state-controlled, and this will be fully exploited in the process of securing public support at home while attempting to weaken the collective will of the intervening country/alliance. The limitations on the use of military force caused by diminishing acceptability and utility are also likely to foster prolonged resistance, because the uncertainties in a targeted state's strategic calculations are likely to be reduced, still more lowering the effectiveness of the military force.

Changing military challenges combined with, and related to, the reduced acceptability and utility of the use of military force do have one essential overarching implication. Military force is not as effective as before as a means to fulfil political goals. Due to the several factors discussed in this report, military force appears to be a costly instrument to use. The costs even seem to be growing. This leads us to the assertion that the gap between force and power is growing.

The result could be a growing frustration among politicians who previously were intrigued by the prospects of a "New World Order" and an "Aggressive Multilateralism". After the end of the Cold War, military means finally seemed to become *unchained* from the threat of nuclear war. Now there is a tendency for military means to become *chained* by the limitations imposed by societal norms and public opinion after a short intermezzo in the '90s. To a large extent however, this development depends on whether the war over Kosovo will be regarded as a failure or a success. Public opinion tends to be very unstable and could be manipulated, as we have seen time and again before.

On the one hand this development away from the use of force can be said to be utterly positive; international relations are moving in a civilised direction. On the other hand however, the development may be problematic. This is because because a high threshold against the use

of force in countries that are regarded as stabilizers may lead to increased instability if other actors, that are limited by such norms, believe they have little to fear from being aggressive. If one perceives of the Western world as an international stabiliser, a growing Western reluctance towards using military force could therefore lead to a rising propensity to use military force in other regions of the world. Paradoxically enough, the decreasing acceptability and utility of military force in the West may result in an actual increase in the utility of military means for some non-Western actors. The West, being the main power-centre in the world and also the main provider of international stability, can not disregard its responsibilities without having to face the consequences. To some commentators however, these consequences do not have to be problematic to the West. According to Tucker (1998) the implications of anarchical conditions in the periphery have been largely overstated.

Nevertheless, instability in the non-Western world is likely to persist and at least some of the resulting conflicts are likely to touch upon vital interests for the West. Since the use of military force seems to be politically very problematic; what should be the remedy?

Preventive action is the most efficient solution. The difficulties involved in using resources to handle situations that are not seen as posing an immediate threat to Western interests are considerable. Still, this objection should not impede the effort as long as we know that an eventual military intervention by the West at a later stage will be equally difficult and much more costly to conduct. If one accepts the precondition that the West will have an interest in halting hostilities in its periphery in the future, there are good reasons to focus on preventive tasks. It goes without saying that this approach will turn out to be much cheaper. Too many times the world has seen conflicts developing and escalating without making serious attempts to solve them. The result has been war and human suffering. This may be the most important lesson learned from the wars in the former Yugoslavia; wars that were foreseen years ahead.

Regardless of political costs, military force will continue to be an essential part of international politics. Without military capabilities we would not possess a real barrier against disruptive forces that in the last resort could undermine our civilisation. To defend "civilisation", one have to act "barbarian", that is a lesson learned by many civilisations before ours, and may be we have to learn it too .

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