

**Stanislav Matějka**

**M.A. Dissertation Evaluation**

**2014**

**Title of Dissertation: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in U.S. National Security Policy: New Face of War on Terror**

Stanislav (Stano) Matějka has selected the topic of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in U.S. national security policy as the topic of his Master's dissertation. I must say that it was a pleasure to supervise this work because Stano regularly consulted with me and he accepted my critical comments and made appropriate changes where necessary. The treatise is properly researched and all sources are correctly cited. The bibliography demonstrates that Stano consulted interesting printed and online sources. There are also some informative graphs and tables, which add to the quality of the work and aptly summarize certain concepts and figures. Stano has divided the dissertation into an Introduction, four main chapters, and a Conclusion. In the paragraphs that follow, I will comment on individual parts of the work.

The Introduction clearly spells out the aim of the paper, which is "to demonstrate that using UAVs has the potential to change the overall conduct of national security policies..." (p. 2) In addition, Stano clearly describes the content and argumentation of each main chapter. The overview of the literature is more than sufficient. I am quite satisfied with the Introduction.

In the first chapter, Stano defines UAVs and explains the history of their use and their suitability for conducting warfare in the present day. The main manufacturers of UAVs are described well. Most importantly, cost efficiency is

analyzed in detail. This chapter is of proper length and naturally inspires the reader to continue reading.

The second chapter deals with the limitations of the utilization of UAVs in the war on terror. After all, there are considerable legal issues that need to be explored and decided. The issue of targeted killing in particular of American citizens is thoroughly analyzed. Collateral damage is quite a serious matter because it occurs quite frequently and involves the killing of innocent bystanders. Then the overall principles of American foreign policy are challenged because the United States is, in effect, seeking to kill and actually killing people deemed to be a threat to United States national security and legal and ethical considerations have yet to catch up with the possibilities afforded by UAVs. Stano questions the accuracy and overall reliability of media coverage of UAV strikes as well. Public opinion (as represented in polls) shows that Americans tend to approve of the use of UAVs to kill foreign terrorists, but they don't like the idea of targeting American citizens. Also, the use of UAVs for domestic intelligence gathering is not as popular as using such technology abroad. Even some of the technical limitations are discussed and discussed well. This chapter is very good in my view.

The actual use of UAVs in the war on terror is discussed in the third chapter and Stano analyzes their use in individual countries. The countries focused upon by Stano are Somalia, Yemen, Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Tables summarize the number of strikes in each country (in some countries the use of UAVs has been going on longer than in others). Stano very precisely portrays the situation in each of the five countries and the advantages and

disadvantages of UAV use in each country. His ability to compare and contrast is truly admirable. I have no problem whatsoever with this chapter.

The fourth chapter represents an analysis of “the revolution in military affairs”. Theoretical concepts, definitions, and schools of thought are scrutinized. What Stano clearly demonstrates is that traditional concepts of just war and warrior ethos are challenged by UAV use. Profound moral, ethical, and legal issues are at stake and this is underscored by Stano’s reference to top scholars in the field. This chapter demonstrates that UAVs and their use are an issue that goes far beyond technical military and strategic considerations. The entire perception of war changes when lives of American military personnel are not in jeopardy. The existing international system is also called into question. This chapter places everything that Stano has discussed in perspective.

In the Conclusion, Stano recapitulates his main points and he argues that his hypothesis that the use of UAVs goes far beyond military affairs is confirmed. I am quite happy with Stano’s work.

My overall impression of Stano Matějka’s dissertation is that it is of excellent quality and it answers the questions posed. The English could be somewhat better (especially the use of definite and indefinite articles), but that is a quibble. I recommend that the work be defended and, if the defense is as good as the content, I recommend an **excellent** mark.

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