

THE (AIR) POWER TO COERCE:
THE ROLE OF AIR POWER IN
21ST CENTURY COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

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THE (AIR) POWER TO COERCE: THE ROLE OF AIR POWER IN 21ST CENTURY COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

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2012 CHIEF OF AIR FORCE FELLOW

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DISCLAIMER

This thesis was submitted by Gretchen Fryar to the University of New South Wales in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy, which she undertook as the 2012 Chief of Air Force Fellow at the Air Power Development Centre, Canberra.

ABSTRACT

Coercive diplomacy as a strategy seeks to prevent crises from escalating into conflict, by using a combination of diplomatic measures and the threat, or if necessary the limited application, of force to change a belligerent's behaviour. This thesis examines the dynamics of coercive diplomacy and the role of air power as a key instrument of coercion.

The international response to the Libyan crisis in 2011 is a contemporary case where air power was employed following unsuccessful diplomatic efforts and non-military methods of coercion. In this instance, the United Nation's (UN) declared objective was for Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi to end the violence against Libyan civilians, re-affirming his responsibility to protect the population, and subsequently authorising UN member states to protect civilians under threat of attack. When the violence continued, the leaders of the major contributing countries also sought to coerce Colonel Gaddafi to relinquish power.

The strategy of coercive diplomacy was largely unsuccessful in the Libyan crisis primarily due to the disproportionate outcome sought—regime change. The combination of diplomacy, sanctions and military force did not result in Gaddafi changing his aggressive behaviour or capitulating, and the air campaign itself did not follow a 'textbook' case of coercive diplomacy, as force was applied at the high end of the coercive spectrum from the outset. Indeed, elements of the campaign comprised a limited war.

Air power, however, was instrumental in meeting the UN mandate by protecting Libyan civilians from their own government forces. Its application in Libya has reinforced that while military force is likely to remain the coercive option of 'last resort', air power has become an attractive option of choice where non-military methods have failed. Air power can be activated quickly, it removes the requirement for a sustained commitment of 'boots on the ground', and it can be employed in a precise and discriminate manner.

The conduct of the air campaign in Libya illustrated the importance of coalition operations and the risks of an over-reliance on the United States. Most significantly for Australia, it highlighted the challenges that might confront a small air force seeking to employ coercive air power in the future.

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Gretchen Fryar

2012

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAR	Air-to-Air Refuelling
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AU	African Union
AWAC	Airborne Warning and Control
CAF	Chief of Air Force
EU	European Union
EW	Electronic Warfare
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IADS	Integrated Air Defence System
ICC	International Criminal Court
INTERFET	International Force in East Timor
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
JSTARS	Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System
MAD	Mutually Assured Destruction
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEBA	National Effects Based Approach
NEO	National Evacuation Operations
NFZ	No-Fly Zone
NTC	National Transition Council (Libya)
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
PIIE	Peterson Institute for International Economics
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAF	Royal Air Force
ROE	Rules of Engagement
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute
SAM	Surface to Air Missile
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAV	Uninhabited Aerial Vehicle
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution

US	United States
USAF	United States Air Force
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



Regional Map: Libya and Surrounding Countries

(<http://www.yourchildlearns.com/online-atlas/africa/images/libya.gif>)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The threat of war has always been somewhere underneath international diplomacy.

Thomas Schelling¹

A Historical Perspective

History is replete with examples of one community using force to ensure the compliance of a less powerful society. For thousands of years, empires have risen and fallen. The methods employed by empires such as the Romans and Ottomans were consistent. Compliance was gained by defeating the adversary, usually through bloody wars, and occupying their lands. Military power equated to physical dominance and resulted in the submission of opponents and their culture.

In 1648 the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Dutch Republic. This diplomatic event heralded a new beginning, and a new hope for peace. With the concept of a nation-state with agreed discreet borders and ruled by a sovereign came the hope that bloody conflict could be rendered obsolete through the principle that national borders meant the non-interference of internal matters of the state. The Treaty of Westphalia introduced new rules and a sense of structure for the art of diplomacy, and although unsuccessful in bringing about an end to warfare, was a harbinger of subsequent initiatives designed to avoid war. The Concert of Europe, in existence from the end of the Napoleonic wars to the beginning of World War I, attempted to maintain the existing power arrangements between European states in an effort to avoid conflict between them, relying on the 'conventional wisdom and accumulated experience' of its member states rather than any systematically articulated strategy.² In addition, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, established in 1889, endeavoured to promote international diplomacy as an alternative

1 T. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1966, p. 33.

2 A. George and W. Simons, (ed.), *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd edn, Westview Press, Colorado, 1994, p. 2.

to war by serving as a focal point for worldwide parliamentary dialogue.³ The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 encouraged the settlement of international disputes by arbitration rather than war, and following each of the World Wars, concerted efforts were made to bring together states across the globe to engender a sense of a global community and shared commitment to peace. These took the form of the League of Nations in 1919, which later failed, and the United Nations (UN) in 1945, which has endured.

All of the philosophers, peace activists, institutions and good intentions nonetheless failed to create the utopia of a peaceful global society. International trade subsequently encouraged closer relationships between nations, but also served as a catalyst for heightened friction. Trade moved the concept of national borders from lines drawn on maps to national interests that extended well beyond agreed borders. When mixed with conflicting ideologies, and in many cases ancient animosities between nations, this meant that war remained an option for the resolution of disputes. In the 21st century, economic and political rivalries continue to dominate global affairs and states have shown that national security and territorial integrity remain at the apex of their concerns. Most critically, the mutual mistrust that states have of each other means that the prospect of warfare can never be entirely eliminated.

Coercive diplomacy is a strategy designed to address the dynamic tension between peace and war. United States (US) President Theodore Roosevelt perhaps best described the notion by advising that one should 'speak softly but carry a big stick'.⁴ The strategy of coercive diplomacy recognises that traditional diplomacy is the preferred option to resolve international disputes, but that recourse to more powerful options, such as economic sanctions or military force, may sometimes be required. The intention of coercive diplomacy is to prevent conflict, or if that is not possible, to use only limited force to demonstrate resolve, with the threat of more force to come should the adversary not capitulate. Critically, within the strategy of coercive diplomacy, when force is threatened or used in a limited fashion, it needs to be coordinated with diplomatic efforts to effectively communicate intentions and to enable negotiation, ideally preventing the crisis from escalating to full-scale war.

In the last century, the application of military force has been aided by the ability to project power from the third dimension, as a result of the invention of aircraft. Air power—defined as 'the ability to create or enable the creation of effects by or from

3 Inter-Parliamentary Union website, <http://www.ipu.org/english/whatipu.htm>, accessed 3 September 2012.

4 From the 'Theodore Roosevelt Association' website, <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/Quotes.htm>, accessed 5 September 2012.

platforms using the atmosphere for manoeuvre⁵—proved to have a great impact because it was not restricted by impassable terrain or oceans. Its speed of response, relative impermanence, escalatory potential (in order to increase or decrease the threat posed), and ability to strike with precision, amongst other advantages, has made air power a particularly attractive tool of coercive diplomacy.

Air power gives governments a range of options to exert influence on others. This can range from benign activities such as humanitarian operations to demonstrate capability and regional commitment, all the way through to strike operations that are intended to destroy. Between these two poles lie many other options, both kinetic and non-kinetic, in which air power can be used in a coercive fashion in an attempt to alter another's undesirable behaviour or to prevent further aggression.

It is important to note that military coercion is not exclusive to any of the three domains: land, sea or air. Furthermore, air power is not delivered solely by air forces. In Australia, air power is used by all three arms of the Australian Defence Force (ADF): the Army, Navy and Air Force. The navies of 10 nations now operate aircraft carriers from which air power can be projected via fixed-wing fighter aircraft.⁶ In addition, tomahawk cruise missiles can be launched by both naval surface ships and submarines – as they were in the early stages of the 2011 Libyan campaign. While not denying the critical roles that can be played by armies and navies, this thesis will deliberately focus on the role of air power as delivered by national air forces.

Literature Review

One of the earliest known military theorists Sun Tzu, writing centuries before the advent of air power, could reasonably be described as an advocate for coercive diplomacy in that he recognised the need for an alternative to immediate physical engagement. Sun Tzu cautioned that 'to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists of breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.'⁷ He recommended that the order of attack should be against the enemy's plans, followed by his alliances, and believed that enemy forces should only be targeted if these strategies

5 Royal Australian Air Force, Australian Air Publication 1000-D—*The Air Power Manual*, Fifth Edition, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, 2007, p. 3.

6 These nations are the US, UK, China, Italy, Brazil, France, India, Russia and Thailand. See *GlobalSecurity.org* website, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/carriers.htm>, accessed 23 November 2012.

7 Sun Tzu, 'The Art of War by Sun Tzu', L. Giles (trans. and commentary), El Paso Norte Press, Texas, 2005 (1910), p. 11.

were ineffective.⁸ This methodology closely mirrors the incremental approach of coercive diplomacy, namely to take steps to avoid a war before engaging in one.

Carl von Clausewitz, whose work was written in the early 1800s, is generally the most widely recognised Western military theorist, and is much quoted for his dictum that war is only a means to an end rather than an end in itself: 'The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.'⁹ Clausewitz recognised that war and politics by necessity are intimately intertwined, and that military actions may have immediate or indirect political implications.¹⁰ The frequently quoted Clausewitz phrase that 'war is the continuation of policy by other means', in fact excludes the critical text that follows. The full quote, as reproduced in James Graham's 1873 translation of *On War* is:

*War is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse, with a mixture of other means. We say, mixed with other means, in order thereby to maintain at the same time that this political intercourse does not cease by the war itself.*¹¹

Such a philosophy reinforces the idea that in order to achieve the desired objectives, political activities, such as ongoing diplomacy, must be conducted in synchrony with military endeavours.

While the practice of coercive diplomacy has been evident in one form or another throughout history, the term itself only emerged in the mid-1900s. The two prominent theoretical early works on the subject were those of Thomas Schelling in 1966, and Alexander George et al. in 1971¹², writing in the midst of the Cold War where the prevailing concern was the possession of nuclear weapons by the two great powers, and the danger of their use. It was in this period that the strategy of deterrence, based upon *Mutually Assured Destruction*, became prominent. Schelling viewed deterrence as a component of coercion, but George did not agree, believing that a distinction existed between preventing action as a passive strategy (deterrence), and the more active strategy of countering an adversary's own action (coercion). This thesis will discuss both deterrence and coercion as related but distinct strategies that may form part of a nation's security stance.

8 J. Cotton, 'Sun Zi: Diplomacy and War', in H. Smith (ed.), *The Strategists*, Australian Defence Studies Centre, UNSW, Canberra, 2001, pp. 15-26, p. 15.

9 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, M. Howard and P. Paret (eds, trans.), Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1976, p. 87.

10 P. Paret, 'Clausewitz', in P. Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1986, pp. 186-213, p. 207.

11 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, J. Graham (trans.), N. Trübner, London, 1873, Book VIII, chapter VI.

12 Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 1966; A. George et al, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1971.

Much of Schelling and George's foundational works are evident in the subsequent literature on coercive diplomacy of the late 20th century. Schelling's primary contribution was to propose the theory of *compellence*—a term that he described as 'inducing an enemy's withdrawal, or his acquiescence, or his collaboration by an action that threatens to hurt'.¹³ He emphasised the distinction between the use of brute force to 'take what you want' and limited force used for coercive purposes, based on the 'power to hurt'.¹⁴ Schelling however, was well aware of the difficulty in bridging the gulf between abstract theory and practical application. In 1964 he was asked by US President Johnson to design a coercive air campaign, based on the theory of compellence that could be used by the US against North Vietnam, but indicated that he was unable to do so.¹⁵ The *Rolling Thunder* strategy was subsequently designed by a close associate, based on Schelling's concepts, but failed to bring the Vietnam War to the decisive end that the government anticipated.¹⁶

George distanced himself from Schelling's use of the term *compellence*, as he considered coercive diplomacy to be based more on rational persuasion and accommodation than the exclusive use of threats.¹⁷ The use of positive incentives to make compliance more attractive to the target was an area of coercion to which he devoted considerable attention. Unlike Schelling, George recognised the need for a 'carrot and stick' approach against some adversaries. He believed that using this approach 'greatly enhances the flexibility and adaptability of the strategy and gives the negotiation and bargaining dimensions of coercive diplomacy even greater prominence'.¹⁸ This belief was supported by Art and Cronin's subsequent examination of 13 cases of US enacted coercive diplomacy.¹⁹ In this study, the authors determined that in the cases of 'success or borderline success, the United States appeared to have found the correct balance between threat and inducement. In the cases of failure, the United States offered little or no inducement to the target to comply'.²⁰ Other authors including Peter Jakobsen and Bruce Jentleson have

13 Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 79-80.

14 *ibid*, p. 3.

15 P. Jakobsen, 'Pushing the Limits of Military Coercion Theory', *International Studies Perspectives*, Issue 12, 2011, pp. 153-170, p. 156.

16 F. Kaplan, 'All pain, no gain. Nobel laureate Thomas Schelling's little known role in the Vietnam War', *Slate*, 11 October 2005, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/war_stories/2005/10/all_pain_no_gain.html, accessed 22 September 2012.

17 A. George, 'Coercive Diplomacy', in R. Art and K. Waltz (eds.), *The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, Plymouth, 2009, pp. 72-78, p. 73.

18 A. George, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War*, Washington, D.C, United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991, p. 10.

19 R. Art and P. Cronin, 'The U.S. and Coercive Diplomacy', in Art and Waltz (eds.), *The Use of Force*, pp. 272-293.

20 *ibid*, p. 287.

supported the use of positive incentives as a critical element of coercive diplomacy.²¹ As will be explored in the primary case study of this thesis, the absence of positive incentives also appears to have played a role in the unwillingness of Muammar Gaddafi²² to capitulate in Libya in 2011.

Peter Jakobsen, in his 1998 work *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy after the Cold War*, substantially built on the early conceptual framework of George, although he believed that George's work proposed too many variables, making the framework difficult to use.²³ Jakobsen proposed an *ideal policy*, comprised of four key components, one of which, in keeping with George's theories, is to offer the adversary 'carrots for compliance'. The aim of the *ideal policy* is to explain why coercive diplomacy succeeds or fails when it is employed against aggressors. Elements of Jakobsen's framework will be used later in this thesis to evaluate the results of the 2011 Libyan campaign.

It wasn't until the last decade of the 20th century that authors writing on coercive diplomacy began to focus on air power as an instrument of coercion, although air power had certainly been recognised both for its ability to punish and its psychological potential by theorists such as Giulio Douhet and Basil Liddell Hart. Two influential works on coercive air power were those of Robert Pape in 1996 and Byman, Waxman and Larson in 1999.²⁴

Schelling's distinction between brute force and coercion, although acknowledged by Pape, was not noticeable in Pape's retrospective analyses. In his work *Bombing to Win*, Pape analysed 33 strategic air offensives in the 20th century to assess the effectiveness of coercive air power.²⁵ His examples, however, incorporate a number of campaigns where air power was applied in an overwhelming fashion, and 'brute force' was used to bring about a military victory, including the final campaigns of World War II. From Pape's perspective, virtually any use of air power can be considered coercive as long as the adversary has the opportunity to surrender, but this does not embrace the true intention of coercive diplomacy: to induce an adversary to capitulate before the conflict degenerates into war and before they are defeated militarily.

21 P. Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy after the Cold War*, Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1998; B. Jentleson, 'Coercive Diplomacy: Scope and Limits in the Contemporary World', *The Stanley Foundation: Policy Analysis Brief*, December 2006.

22 I have deliberately chosen to spell the Libyan leader's surname *Gaddafi* throughout the text, as this is the version most commonly used in the references. Other forms including *Gadhafi*, *Qaddafi*, *Gadafi* and *Kadafi* may also appear within the references.

23 Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 22.

24 R. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1996; D. Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, Project Air Force, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica California, 1999.

25 Pape, *Bombing to Win*, pp. 332-358.

Furthermore, Pape's examples, by his own admission, deliberately exclude non-military variables, such as 'domestic political, organizational, and psychological factors'²⁶ in order to concentrate more fully on the military elements. This approach therefore disregards other crucial elements that may have contributed to the overall success or failure of coercive diplomacy, and thus oversimplifies possible causal effects. In essence, his examples focus on the coercive use of air power in isolation from the holistic strategy of coercive diplomacy.

Byman, Waxman and Larson's collaborative work on coercive air power is particularly valuable for its efforts to explore the notion of success, its recognition of the challenges of coercing non-state actors, its discussion of the constraints that apply to coercive air operations, and its recognition of the inevitability of coercive operations being conducted by coalitions rather than individual states.²⁷ Their suggestion in 1999 that the US would increasingly act as part of a multinational coalition, primarily for reasons of legitimacy, was borne out in the first decade of the 21st century, and illustrated most recently in Libya. The tendency to operate as a member of a coalition also has direct relevance for Australia, whose future involvement with coercive operations is more likely than not to be as a member of a coalition of nations.

Byman et al. also introduce the term 'escalation dominance', which they define as 'the ability to increase the costs while denying the adversary opportunity to neutralize those costs or counterescalate'.²⁸ The ability to provide escalatory options is one of the key advantages that air power can bring to the table of coercive diplomacy, and is considered by the authors to be 'the most common factor in successful coercive operations'.²⁹

In both their collaborative work with Larson, and throughout their other academic contributions, Byman and Waxman recognise the fact that air power is but one tool of coercive diplomacy, cautioning that air power should not be used as a tool in isolation, but recognised for the additive and synergistic contributions it can make to successful coercion.³⁰ This is a critical point that will be reinforced throughout this thesis.

A common conclusion that most theorists seem to agree on is that 'coercive diplomacy is hard to execute successfully'.³¹ Indeed a review of all the case studies presented by

26 *ibid*, p. 9.

27 A second significant work by two of these authors is D. Byman and M. Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might*, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

28 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 31.

29 *ibid*.

30 D. Byman and M. Waxman, 'Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate', *International Security*, Vol. 24, Issue 4, 2000, pp. 5-38, p. 9.

31 Art and Cronin, 'The U.S. and Coercive Diplomacy', p. 272.

the aforementioned authors demonstrates that coercive diplomacy is a strategy that has failed more often than it has succeeded. Actually categorising cases as success or failure is also contentious, with the same cases assessed as a clear success by some and a failure by others.³² A final complication comes with the inconsistency of agreement on whether cases can actually be labelled coercive diplomacy or not. This has been one of the contentious questions of the Libyan campaign: was it a case of coercive diplomacy or is it better defined as limited war? As this thesis will argue, it contained elements of both.

Noting the subjectiveness of such assessments, this thesis will test the international intervention in Libya in 2011 against two frameworks. Firstly, Jakobsen's 1998 *ideal policy*, and secondly the theories of Bruce Jentleson, as referenced in two key papers Jentleson authored and co-authored on the application of coercive diplomacy against Libya leading up to 2003.³³ Jentleson and Whytock describe that case as 'the strongest case of coercive diplomacy since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis'³⁴, and this assessment is shared by Art and Cronin who declare it 'an unequivocal success for coercive diplomacy'.³⁵ The intervention in Libya in 2011 did not achieve the same success however, and the differences between the cases of 2003 and 2011 will be examined to determine why Gaddafi was amenable to diplomatic coercion in 2003, but not eight years later. There were a number of reasons for this, but the most critical factor could be assessed as Gaddafi's desire for political survival. In 2003, he was guaranteed that regime change was not an objective of the coercing powers. In 2011, as will be highlighted in this thesis, ousting Gaddafi from power was the clear final intent of a number of international leaders, if not their original objective.

George lists one objective of coercive diplomacy as 'cessation in the opponent's hostile behavior through a demand for change in the composition of the adversary's government or in the nature of the regime'³⁶, whereas Jentleson describes regime change as a 'proportionality threshold' that is bound to result in failure.³⁷ Regime change is an objective no longer publicly accepted as legitimate by the majority of the international

32 In analyses of the NATO intervention in Kosovo for example, Art and Cronin claim that 'coercive diplomacy failed', 'The U.S. and Coercive Diplomacy', p. 277; while Byman and Waxman consider it a 'limited success', 'Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate', p. 17. The US Department of Defense was quick to proclaim it an 'overwhelming success', see Department of Defense, Joint Statement on the Kosovo After Action Review, Washington, 14 October 1999, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/kosovoaa/jointstmt.htm>, accessed 9 October 2012.

33 B. Jentleson and C. Whytock, 'Who "Won" Libya? The Force-Diplomacy Debate and Its Implications for Theory and Policy', *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 3, Winter 2005/06, pp. 47-86; Jentleson, 'Coercive Diplomacy: Scope and Limits in the Contemporary World'.

34 Jentleson and Whytock, 'Who "Won" Libya?' p. 49.

35 Art and Cronin, 'The U.S. and Coercive Diplomacy', p. 286.

36 George, 'Coercive Diplomacy', in George and Simons (ed.), *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, pp. 8-9.

37 Jentleson, 'Coercive Diplomacy', p. 3.

community, as was evidenced by the disquiet over the intervention in Iraq in 2003 and Libya in 2011. In the last decade, the principle of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P) has challenged the ability of the rulers of nations to act with impunity against the citizens of their own state, by legitimating coercive measures to be taken to counter crimes against humanity, genocide, ethnic cleansing and war crimes, but itself stops short of advocating regime change.³⁸

For the case study of Libya in 2011, information has been sourced primarily from newspaper reports, public statements, UN and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) documentation, and academic papers. An intention of this thesis is that it will add to the body of analytical research surrounding this particular event.

Thesis Outline

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the concept of coercive diplomacy and to determine whether air power has continuing utility as a tool of coercive diplomacy in the 21st century. The diplomatic initiatives and air campaign that took place in Libya in 2011 will be analysed as the most contemporary case of coercive diplomacy that used air power; thus adding to the existing literature on the topic, although it is acknowledged and will be shown that some phases of the operation went beyond coercion to limited war. The thesis will explore how the strategy was poorly coordinated in the early stages of international involvement, and why it was ultimately unsuccessful in causing Gaddafi to capitulate. Finally, the thesis will outline what lessons from the campaign are applicable to Australia as a nation that may be called upon to engage in coercive diplomacy in the Asia Pacific Region, or with allies elsewhere in the world, and what challenges the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) will face as the element of the ADF holding the primary responsibility for the delivery of air power.

Chapter Two questions whether the term coercive diplomacy is in fact an oxymoron. It goes on to examine the definitions of power in the modern lexicon—hard, soft, and more recently, smart power—and explains how coercive diplomacy is a strategy that relies upon many aspects of a state’s power. The fundamental requirements of a coercive strategy are then discussed: specifically how a coercer must be capable of carrying out the action that they have threatened, and how the threat must be both credible and well-communicated, ideally with the committed support of the domestic population of the coercing state. The case of the Cuban Missile Crisis is used to provide an historical example of successful coercive diplomacy, where force was threatened by both sides, but

38 G. Evans and M. Sahnoun, ‘The Responsibility to Protect’, *Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, December 2001.

ultimately not employed by either, and a war was averted. Chapter Two also highlights that coercive diplomacy is not a one-way interaction—that governments attempting to exercise the strategy must recognise that it is not only their intent, but how the message is received that is critical to success. Perception and misperception is an important and misunderstood facet of international relations.³⁹ The concept of ‘rationality’ and the notion that coercive diplomacy is essentially a strategy that relies on an assumption of rational behaviour in another⁴⁰ will also be considered, as will the challenge of inducing changes in the cognitive domain of the adversary.

Chapter Three examines the tools that may be used by a coercer to compel another to alter their behaviour. This will include tools of first political preference, such as economic sanctions, as well as military force, which is frequently the option of last resort. The chapter will introduce a spectrum of force, and highlight that as the level of force increases, the cordiality of diplomatic relations decreases accordingly, reaching a point where coercive diplomacy has failed, and states have resorted to the overwhelming use of force to achieve the desired end-state through a military victory.

Chapter Four examines the use of air power specifically and identifies the many advantages it offers to governments as a military instrument of coercion, including its responsiveness, impermanence and ability to provide proportionate amounts of force with discrimination and precision, minimising the risk of both civilian and coercer casualties. At the forefront of air power’s advantages are its ability to escalate both threats and consequences, and to have a psychological impact on an adversary without even applying force. The chapter also acknowledges the limitations of air power and some of the constraints placed upon its application.

The theoretical construct and abstracts presented in the first four chapters will lead into the case study of Libya in 2011; a series of international endeavours that transformed into a UN sanctioned, multi-national mission conducted against the government of Libya. A critical aspect of this thesis will be to question how the international intervention in Libya—the diplomatic initiatives, economic sanctions and the use of force (predominantly air power)—formed a strategy of coercive diplomacy. The concerns raised by a myriad of actors, not least permanent UN Security Council (UNSC) members Russia and China, that the intervention ultimately sought ‘regime change’ outside of the UN mandate, will be shown to be substantive. The fact that the objective went beyond the protection of civilians to regime change is significant in explaining why the strategy was unsuccessful in achieving the capitulation of Gaddafi.

39 See R. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1976, for a detailed study of this subject.

40 A. George, ‘Coercive Diplomacy’, in Art and Waltz (eds.), *The Use of Force*, p. 72.

Chapter Five lays the political setting for the international intervention, illustrating why Gaddafi had reached such a state of international and domestic isolation and unpopularity, and tracing the early diplomatic efforts carried out by a number of different states and organisations. Chapter Six discusses the US and NATO air campaigns, and the transformation of the objective to regime change, and Chapter Seven will analyse the objectives and effects of the campaign, testing it against Jakobsen and Jentleson's frameworks and theories. Ultimately, the example of Libya demonstrates not that coercive diplomacy is a non-viable option, but that an uncoordinated approach, or one that seeks disproportionate outcomes, is bound to fail.

Chapter Eight will draw out what lessons might be drawn from the air campaign in Libya for Australia as a maritime trading nation in the Asia-Pacific region, and for the RAAF specifically. The events in Libya took place far from Australian shores with no Australian contribution other than vocal diplomatic overtures by the Australian Foreign Minister and the ongoing commitment to provide continued financial aid to the Libyan people. Yet the international activities enacted by a coalition of nations with a joint purpose have wider implications, including highlighting the criticality of coalition operations and the dangers of relying exclusively on the US. Most importantly, the Libyan case has encouraged an assessment of Australia's own air force capabilities, identifying the challenges that are peculiar to a small air force intent on being able to respond to a range of contingencies, and recognising the obligations that come with alliances, as well as the benefits.

The conclusion will return to the key question of the thesis, to confirm whether, drawing on the information presented in the preceding chapters, air power has utility as a tool of coercive diplomacy in the 21st century. It is this author's contention not only that it does, but that while military force may remain the option of 'last resort', air power will continue to increase in predominance as the 'first choice' tool of military coercion. In the resolution of international conflict, however, air power must be acknowledged as a tool best used in a synergistic application with other mechanisms, rather than one employed in isolation, and recognised for what it can and can not achieve.

CHAPTER 2

THE THEORY OF COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

Coercive diplomacy is an attractive strategy insofar as it offers the possibility of achieving one's objective in a crisis economically, with little or no bloodshed, fewer political and psychological costs, and often with less risk of unwanted escalation than does traditional military strategy.

Alexander George⁴¹

Coercive Diplomacy—an Oxymoron?

At first glance, the expression *coercive diplomacy* appears to be a contradiction in terms. Diplomacy is traditionally considered a game of polite negotiation, replete with warm handshakes and proclamations of mutual satisfaction, whereas coercion conjures up visions of military strong-arm tactics against a weaker opponent. The term coercive diplomacy is increasingly used to describe a spectrum of initiatives that can embrace both military and non-military components, but with the common objective of inducing changes in an adversary's undesirable behaviour. While diplomatic engagement remains a critical and complementary component, the ability and willingness to threaten and use force to achieve the objective is the primary distinguishing factor between coercive and traditional diplomacy.

Alexander George is generally credited with being the father of the concept of coercive diplomacy, which he also refers to as 'forceful persuasion'.⁴² Other theorists have offered the terms 'strategic coercion', 'coercion' and 'compellence', as related concepts that frame the strategy.⁴³ The commonality comes with the fact that each mechanism strives to affect another entity's choices, through the threat or use of force. Only the term coercive diplomacy, however, properly embraces the dual nature of a strategy that seeks to affect

41 George, *Forceful Persuasion*, p. 6.

42 *ibid.*

43 The term 'strategic coercion' is attributed to: L. Freedman, *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1988; and, 'compellence' to Schelling, *Arms and Influence*. 'Coercion' is the term used by Byman et al. and Pape in their various works on the subject, which primarily focus on military force as an 'instrument' of coercion.

outcomes through the synergistic application of both ongoing diplomatic initiatives and more forceful measures.

National Power and its Application

To better comprehend how one state has the ability to coerce another state or non-state entity, it is necessary to understand the basis of a nation's power and how that power can be used to influence another. Within the context of international relations, two terms are commonly used: *soft* and *hard power*. According to Joseph Nye, soft power 'is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.'⁴⁴ Another theorist has described soft power as 'the capacity to persuade others to do what one wants.'⁴⁵ Soft power initiatives embrace not only high-level political interactions such as traditional diplomacy, but can also include exchange programs, developmental assistance, disaster relief and military-to-military contacts.⁴⁶ Hard power, on the other hand, is a measure of the relative strength of a nation that uses military and economic power 'to get others to change their position', either through inducements ('carrots') or threats ('sticks').⁴⁷ The two, however, do not necessarily operate in isolation from one another.

Soft power initiatives carry more weight when conducted by a state that has economic and military superiority over its opponents; a fact that the US has played to its advantage over the last 60 years. The benefit of economic and military advantage was recognised by Samuel Huntington, who declared that 'soft power is power only when it rests on a foundation of hard power',⁴⁸ and some two centuries earlier by Frederick the Great who quipped that 'diplomacy without arms is like music without instruments.'⁴⁹ State actors such as North Korea and Iran are not ignorant of this point and seek increased power, specifically the threat of a nuclear capability, for the psychological edge and bargaining advantage they perceive it will give them in international negotiations.

44 J. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York, Public Affairs, 2004, p. x.

45 E. Wilson, 'Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power', in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616, March 2008, p. 114.

46 J. Nye, 'The War on Soft Power', *Foreign Policy*, 12 April 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/12/the_war_on_soft_power, accessed 6 March 2012. In this respect, 'military to military contacts' relates to positive interaction rather than conflict.

47 J. Nye, *Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization*, Routledge, London, New York, 2004, pp. 5-8.

48 S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1996, p. 92.

49 As quoted in B. Slantchev, *Military Threats: The Costs of Coercion and the Price of Peace*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011, p. 65.

Throughout the course of history, soft power initiatives have played a precursory role. The reasons for this are economic—warfare is a debilitating expense for all concerned; humanitarian—the loss of life on both sides is an almost guaranteed element of armed conflict; and political—domestic populations are rarely enthusiastic about the prospect of their armed forces being used aggressively for anything other than the defence of the nation or their national interests. Most states give credence to the Westphalian system of respect for the sovereignty of nation-states, as outlined in the UN Charter.⁵⁰ The need for diplomatic engagement as a first response is articulated in the preamble to the UN Charter, which states that members of the UN shall ‘ensure...that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest’, and Article 2 of the Charter, which directs that ‘all members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means’.⁵¹

While few international players would disagree that soft power strategies are the desired first option in the resolution of disagreements, the road to conflict is littered with failed diplomatic initiatives. World War II was preceded by numerous treaties and negotiations that did little to prevent the outbreak of war. Perhaps the most glaring example was British Prime Minister Chamberlain returning to the UK with a signed treaty from Hitler while on the brink of war. Further examples were the negotiated arrangement between the Soviet Union and the US over the division of Korea after World War II, which eventually disintegrated into the Korean War, and the early diplomatic efforts of the US to resolve the 1999 Kosovo crisis, which failed to move President Slobodan Milosevic. Soft power has been shown to have clear limitations and will not work against all adversaries in every circumstance. This reality is recognised by all states that establish armed forces, including Australia, which specifies that ‘the main role of the ADF should continue to be an ability to engage in conventional combat against other armed forces’.⁵² Soft power does not negate the lack of trust that nations have for one another.

Soft power initiatives may fail for a number of reasons: when a state leader is irrational, delusional or simply impervious to any attempts at resolution, when the opponent is a non-state or quasi-state entity with whom negotiations are difficult, when the actors attempting diplomatic resolution lack power or credibility, or when the instigator of the undesired action perceives that the prospective gains are so high that they are worth the risk of international condemnation and possible retaliatory action. When traditional

50 Unless action is authorised under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which specifies that the Security Council can take action to ‘restore international peace and security’, Charter of the United Nations, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml>, accessed 22 April 2012.

51 *ibid.*

52 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, Commonwealth of Australia, p. 22.

diplomatic initiatives do not achieve the desired results, the use of hard power to coerce is often the next step.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, to *coerce* is to ‘persuade (an unwilling person) to do something by using force or threats.’⁵³ Coercive diplomacy, however, does not rely exclusively on the threat or use of military force. Non-military coercive mechanisms include the imposition and enforcement of economic sanctions, the freezing of financial assets, or travel bans on key members of a government. If such initiatives prove insufficient to motivate the desired behaviour change in the adversary, the use of military force can be threatened, or a limited amount of force applied discriminately. The point at which force used as part of a wider strategy of coercive diplomacy becomes force, as George describes it, used to ‘bludgeon [the enemy] into stopping’⁵⁴ is sometimes ill-defined. Destruction of the adversary’s military assets can be a necessary component of a coercive operation—to deny the enemy the ability to use such assets offensively—but in general, force intended to coerce is used discretely to indicate resolve and capability with the concurrent diplomatic efforts communicating the willingness to escalate if necessary. The intention of coercive diplomacy is never to annihilate an opponent with military might. Should it come to this, then the strategy has failed. Coercive diplomacy gives the adversary the choice between continuing with their current course of action and facing the prospect of increased application of force as punishment, or complying with the coercer’s demands, and having the threat of force removed. The critical element of a coercive strategy is that the opponent has a choice between compliance and resistance. Subsequent action on both sides is informed by the choice the adversary makes.

Like soft power, hard power also has limitations. One should not be misled into thinking that military power and economic might directly translate to clear-cut and decisive political outcomes. If any doubt existed about this point after the American experience in Vietnam, then the lesson has been reinforced by the murky post-conflict environments of the 21st century. The inability of the US, the world’s greatest economic and military power, to achieve decisive results in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan has been a source of frustration for both its military and political leaders. The absence of successful outcomes in these theatres can be partly attributed to unrealistic objectives, and a failure to recognise the limitations of hard power.

A third term now common in the lexicon of international relations is *smart power*, which refers to the combination of soft and hard power.⁵⁵ United States Secretary of State

53 J. Pearsall (ed.), *The New Oxford Dictionary of English*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1998, p. 355.

54 George, *Forceful Persuasion*, p. 5.

55 The term ‘smart power’ is also credited to Joseph Nye. See J. Nye, ‘Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2009, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65163/joseph-s-nye-jr/get-smart?page=show>, accessed 8 October 2012.

Hillary Clinton, in her Senate Confirmation Hearing in 2009, highlighted the US' need to use smart power: 'We must use what has been called smart power, the full range of tools at our disposal—diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal and cultural—picking the right tool or combination of tools for each situation.'⁵⁶ While states exercising pure coercion therefore may be using tools of hard power, those engaged in coercive diplomacy are more likely embracing the use of smart rather than exclusively hard power.

The notion of smart power is not explicitly referred to in Australian doctrine, but the intent is mirrored in (then) Prime Minister Rudd's 2008 National Security Statement, where he stated that:

*Australia's national security policy builds on a number of enduring capabilities. First, an activist diplomatic strategy that is aimed at keeping our region peaceful and prosperous. Second, making sure that we have an Australian Defence Force that is ready to respond when necessary, in a range of situations from combat operations to disaster relief. Third, building and maintaining national security agencies and capabilities that work effectively together.*⁵⁷

Both the US and Australian theoretical descriptions suggest the need to employ the most beneficial tools to secure peace, rather than being fixated on hard or soft power tools in exclusivity. Where this becomes challenging is to restrain proponents of each, who see the solution as entirely diplomatic or exclusively the realm of the military, and to ensure that the rhetorical language of smart power is matched by the practical application of the appropriate mechanisms.

The Four C's: Capability, Credibility, Communication and Commitment

Theorists often have difficulty agreeing if cases of averted or resolved crises can be attributed to successful coercive diplomacy. Where greater consensus can be found is in acknowledging fundamental requirements without which failure is likely. Four such conditions may be summarised as the four C's: capability, credibility, communication, and commitment. Firstly, the coercing state or coalition (referred to hereafter as 'the coercer'), must be capable of carrying out the threat. This means that it must have the economic and/or military power required to successfully undertake the threatened

56 H.R. Clinton, *Transcript Senate Confirmation Hearing*, 13 January 2009, <http://www.cfr.org/us-election-2008/transcript-hillary-clintons-confirmation-hearing/p18225>, accessed 4 March 2012.

57 K. Rudd, 'The First National Security Statement to the Australian Parliament', 4 December 2008, http://www.pm.gov.au/docs/20081204_national_security_statement.rtf, accessed 3 June 2012.

action should the adversary not heed the warnings. Secondly, the threat needs to be credible.

In addition to being physically able to carry out the threat, the adversary must believe that the coercer is likely to undertake the threatened action should they not comply—in many cases this will be assessed by reviewing the past behaviour of the coercer. Thirdly, the threat must be effectively communicated to ensure that the message sent by the coercer is that received by the target. The fourth element is less tangible. Ideally, the coercer will be in a stronger position if its domestic population supports the proposed action, enabling a strong commitment. This is especially important in a coalition of states where the fragility of one member can jeopardise the coordinated approach.

While the four requirements do not constitute an exhaustive list⁵⁸, they do provide an important foundation from which a promising strategy of coercive diplomacy can be developed. This is not to suggest that satisfaction of the four elements guarantees success—as Byman and Waxman declare, not only is a ‘rote formula for successful coercion...unattainable, but belief in its existence can spawn misguided policy’.⁵⁹ Similarly, Freedman cautions that there is ‘no mechanical formula that can ensure success, even though we might be able to identify conditions that make success more likely’.⁶⁰ Each of the four factors will be referred to in more detail throughout this thesis.

1960's Smart Power: The Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban Missile Crisis took place in October 1962, over 50 years ago, yet it still stands as the most impressive example of successful coercive diplomacy of modern times. It particularly highlights how skilful ongoing diplomacy coupled with credible threats can be used to de-escalate a crisis and ultimately avert a war. Each of the four factors referred to above—capability, credibility, communication and commitment—were exemplified in the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The early 1960s marked a period of heightened insecurity and tension between the world's two superpowers: the US and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In 1961, the construction of the Berlin Wall had placed a physical barrier between Soviet controlled East Berlin and Western controlled West Berlin, and highlighted the stark ideological differences between the USSR and Western countries. The poor relations

58 Jentleson and Whytock for instance suggests two sets of variables that may help determine the likelihood of success, one focusing on coercer state strategy and the other on the target state's domestic politics and economy. These variables will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven.

59 Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, p. 233.

60 Freedman, *Strategic Coercion*, p. 14.

were exacerbated by the US' deployment of intermediate range nuclear missiles in Great Britain, Italy and Turkey. The missiles in Turkey were seen as a particular threat to the USSR, as they could easily strike well into its territory. At the same time, the US was apprehensive about the regime in Cuba, led by Fidel Castro who had come to power by overthrowing the previous dictator, and who also had a close relationship with the Soviet leader, Krushchev. In concerted attempts to influence the political situation in Cuba, the US had imposed economic and political sanctions against the country and had covertly sanctioned the failed 'Bay of Pigs' invasion, where Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) trained Cuban exiles had unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow Castro. In response, the Soviets had secretly sent approximately 43 000 soldiers to Cuba, and commenced the delivery of nuclear missiles and warheads.⁶¹

The Soviet activity in Cuba was discovered by an American U-2 surveillance plane on 14 October 1962, and photographs of missile sites under construction were presented to US President John F. Kennedy, but not publicised. Kennedy's advisers gave him two options: air strikes against the sites followed by a land invasion, or a naval blockade to prevent the transfer of additional military equipment, to be accompanied by a threat of further military action. Kennedy chose not to take immediate action, but to take the time to weigh up his options and the consequences, and to consider possible diplomatic solutions. At the same time, US military forces were put on alert, including those in Turkey and Guantanamo Bay—a US naval base in an effective enclave at the Southern end of Cuba. Military units began to move to the south-east of the country, and naval units also began to prepare for a blockade.

Over the following week, the crisis was largely played out in private through an executive committee of the National Security Council, out of view of the public. On 22 October, Kennedy wrote to Krushchev with an appeal to a 'sane man', reinforcing that 'in this nuclear age...no country could win', and warning of 'catastrophic consequences to the whole world, including the aggressor.'⁶² He then publicly addressed the nation and announced that a naval blockade would be enforced. The blockade effectively prevented Cuba from importing additional military armaments.

Krushchev responded indignantly to Kennedy's 'intimidation' and promised that they 'had everything necessary' to protect their rights⁶³, but Soviet ships did halt in their

61 B. Coppieters et al, 'Last Resort', in B. Coppieters and N. Fotion (eds.), *Moral Constraints on War: Principles and Cases*, pp. 101-121, Lexington Books, Oxford, 2002, p. 108.

62 Letter from Kennedy to Krushchev, 22 October 1962, from JFK Library, <http://microsites.jfklibrary.org/cmc/oct22/>, accessed 18 July 2012.

63 Letter from Krushchev to Kennedy, 24 October 1962, from JFK Library, <http://microsites.jfklibrary.org/cmc/oct24/doc2.html>, accessed 18 July 2012.

progress towards Cuba. Letters continued to pass back and forth between the two leaders, as well as public statements, and Kennedy proclaimed that:

*It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.*⁶⁴

The USSR was left in no doubt about the willingness of the US to retaliate with force if attacked.

The crisis struck a critical point when an American U-2 pilot was shot down over Cuba by a Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) and killed, and further photographic evidence showed accelerated construction at the missile sites and unpacking of Soviet bombers from crates in Cuba. Fidel Castro attempted to intervene by urging Krushchev to initiate a first strike against the US, but was deliberately excluded from any negotiations.⁶⁵

Kennedy resisted pressure from his advisors to strike back against the SAMs, and continued his negotiations with Krushchev. Krushchev finally agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba in return for a lifting of the blockade and the guarantee that the US would not invade Cuba. This was the public deal that allowed both parties to save face. Privately, however, there were two other aspects to the arrangements. Firstly, Kennedy issued an ultimatum threatening to attack Cuba within 24 hours if the Soviets did not accept the public deal. Krushchev was also promised that the US would remove its Jupiter missiles from Turkey within six months.⁶⁶ These additional two factors were not made public for many years, but were critical in bringing about an end to the crisis.

The way in which the Cuban Missile Crisis was resolved highlights some critical aspects that indicate why it was so successful. One of these is the choice of participants. The central players deliberately excluded others, such as Castro, who had the potential to seriously damage the negotiations and cause unwanted escalation, but they did keep allies informed of their decisions. Kennedy called on the Organization of American States to support the US, and the UN to convene an emergency meeting of the Security Council to respond to the Soviet threat. Under the terms of the final agreement, the UN was also

64 J.F. Kennedy, *Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Build-up in Cuba*, The White House, 22 October 1962, from JFK Library, <http://microsites.jfklibrary.org/cmc/oct22/doc5.html>, accessed 18 July 2012.

65 G. Allison, 'The Cuban Missile Crisis at 50: Lessons for U.S. Foreign Policy Today', *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137679/graham-allison/the-cuban-missile-crisis-at-50>, accessed 18 July 2012.

66 *ibid.*

requested to provide observers to supervise the withdrawal of the nuclear weapons in Cuba. The involvement of these organisations gave the US actions added legitimacy.

In the first eight days of the crisis, Kennedy was able to keep the story from the press, but he deliberately kept the public informed after this time. This allowed him to take the time to undertake private negotiations without external domestic pressure, but then to keep the public on side by alerting them to the seriousness of the situation and the potential consequences. This ensured that his public support would be high.

While the crisis clearly brought the world to the brink of nuclear war, the two leaders continued to communicate with each other throughout the period. There was no second-guessing of thoughts or motivations, both leaders were very direct and used publicly forceful language to make it clear as to how the other's actions were being perceived in each country. The need for mutual compromise was appreciated by both parties and considerations beyond the national interest of both countries was evident.⁶⁷ While Kennedy had advisers pressing for military action, he was acutely aware of the need to avoid escalation on both sides. At the same time, his willingness to use military force was made clear by his enactment of the naval blockade and the preparation of the US military to conduct air strikes or invade if required. In short, the US actions demonstrated evidence of capability and credibility, and clearly communicated the US desire to resolve the crisis without force, but their willingness to use military force if necessary.

This crisis also fulfilled another of the key requirements for successful coercive diplomacy as first identified by Alexander George—the need to offer incentives as well as issue threats. In this case, the fact that the US was willing to cease the blockade and promise not to invade Cuba allowed Krushchev to claim the outcome as a success for the USSR, as well as it being seen as a victory for the US. The withdrawal of the missiles from Turkey went even further to demonstrate that this was not a 'winner takes all' result.

The resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis effectively illustrates how deft diplomacy, in combination with the threat of military force, can prevent war and result in a mutually satisfying outcome. While more recent analyses of the crisis have revealed just how close both countries came to war, and highlighted the extreme level of risk involved, the events of October 1962 proved coercive diplomacy to be a viable strategy for states to employ in the resolution of international disputes. The successful resolution was achieved not through physical force and the subjugation of an opponent, but through a change in his mindset, leading to a change in behaviour.

67 Coppieters, 'Last Resort', p. 112.

Effects in the Cognitive Domain

The undertaking of physical operations is merely the means to the end. The end is in the achievement of a significant shift within the mindset of the adversary decision-makers to the point where their will is broken.

Ben Bolland⁶⁸

As Bolland points out, coercive operations are ‘a cognitive process ... conducted at the strategic level.’⁶⁹ This means that any coercive approach must consider how it can most effectively influence the adversary’s intellectual reasoning in a way that leads to behaviour change. To be able to comprehend what will have the best prospect of compelling such change, an understanding of the adversary’s power base, values system, culture, political influences (both domestic and international), and motivation is required. The key vulnerability of an adversary may not be a single asset or series of assets, but less tangible elements such as the risk of financial ruin, reduction in domestic or international support or even the loss of personal prestige. For instance, the greatest vulnerability of an autocratic ruler may well be the fear of being deposed, thus a coercive strategy directed at that leader, but designed explicitly at regime change, is unlikely to be successful.⁷⁰

The Australian Air Power Manual describes cognitive influence as ‘creating effects and conditions that shape and influence an adversary’s belief system to align with one’s own aims and goals.’⁷¹ This is a noble aspiration, but an unrealistic one. To successfully coerce an adversary, it is necessary to understand as much as possible about what motivates them, but even if coercion succeeds in changing adversary behaviour, this does not necessarily mean that the underlying belief system has altered. An assumption that another’s beliefs can be easily aligned to one’s own is naïve at best, but at worst can lead to interventions with unachievable objectives—a potentially fatal undertaking for those forces involved.

The study of the creation of effects is not original. The ability to create effects has been considered throughout the history of warfare, and is currently articulated in the concept

68 B. Bolland, ‘Re-thinking Coercion’, *The RUSI Journal*, Vol. 151, Issue 4, 2006, pp. 42-46, p. 46. Bolland led and implemented a program within the British Defence Science and Technology Laboratory aimed at understanding the causal mechanisms of coercion, focusing on character profiling.

69 *ibid*, p. 42.

70 P. Jakobsen, ‘Pushing the Limits of Military Coercion Theory’, *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 12, 2011, pp. 153-170, p. 164; Jentleson and Whytock, ‘Who “Won” Libya?’ pp. 51-52.

71 AAP 1000-D—*The Air Power Manual*, p. 58.

of the Effects Based Approach to Operations in the US⁷² and the National Effects Based Approach (NEBA) adopted by the Australian government. The Australian NEBA seeks the synchronisation of all elements of national power: economic, military, diplomatic and informational in the achievement of the desired objective.⁷³

When discussing the effects of military actions specifically, the ADF uses the terminology *desired* or *undesired*, *direct* or *indirect* and *intended* or *unintended*.⁷⁴ Reference is also made to ‘first-order’ effects, which are the tangible physical results, and ‘second-order’ effects, which pertain to the psychological impact of the physical destruction. For instance, the killing of a high-level Al Qaeda operative in Afghanistan would be a first-order effect. The impact that his death has on the future operations of Al Qaeda would be a second-order effect. Within the realm of military coercion, a third effect, or ‘triple-order’ effect, should also be considered. Such triple-order effects are represented in Figure 1 (overpage).⁷⁵

Foreign governments or coalitions, when seeking behaviour change through coercion, must focus on their ability to influence the first- and second-order effects, and to realise their limitations with the third.

72 J. Hunerwadel, ‘The Effects Based Approach to Operations’, *Air and Space Power Journal*, Spring, 2006, <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj06/spr06/hunerwadel.html>, accessed 12 March 2012.

73 AAP 1000–D—*The Air Power Manual*, p. 56.

74 Australian Defence Doctrine Publication 3.14, *Targeting*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2009, Chapter 1, 1.17–1.21.

75 The concept of ‘triple-order effects’ was presented by Dr Sanu Kainikara, Air Power Trainers’ Course 1/12, Air Power Development Centre, 6–9 March 2012, and further elaborated in a discussion with the author.

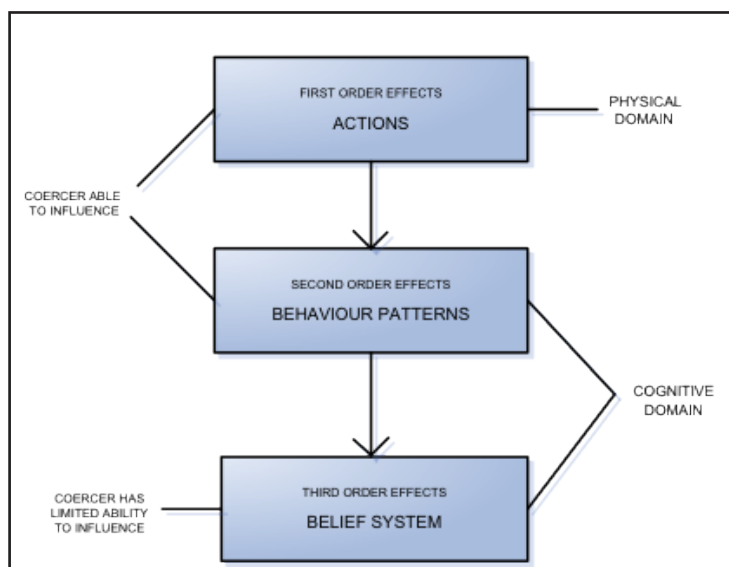


Figure One: Triple-Order Effects

The practical application of triple-order effects can be better understood by reviewing the US action against Colonel Gaddafi in Libya in 1986. For many years Gaddafi had been overtly sponsoring terrorist organisations across the world, including the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The support had its genesis in Gaddafi's own pro-Arab Islamic stance coupled with a strong anti-Western sentiment. Following a number of incidents in the late 1970s and 1980s, and a continuing acrimonious relationship between US President Reagan and Colonel Gaddafi, President Reagan decided to authorise the US Air Force (USAF) to conduct limited air strikes on the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. The action followed on from earlier coercive attempts involving political and economic sanctions, and was employed to deliver punishment for Gaddafi's sponsorship of terrorism. It was coercive in nature as it sought to demonstrate to Gaddafi the risk he would take by continuing to support terrorism, namely the prospect of further attacks on Libya.⁷⁶

The first- and second-order effects that could have been achieved by the action can be represented as follows:

Actions - Gaddafi stops providing funding and support to terrorist organisations; and,

⁷⁶ The source for this case is T. Zimmerman, 'The American Bombing of Libya: A Success for Coercive Diplomacy?' *Survival*, Vol. 29, May-June 1987, pp. 195-214.

Behaviour Pattern - Gaddafi decides that continued sponsorship is not worth the threat of escalation by the US.

The short-term effects of the strikes were that Gaddafi appeared to stop his sponsorship of terrorist organisations⁷⁷, thus the operation seemed to successfully change both Gaddafi's physical actions and his behaviour (bearing in mind that the strikes were conducted in conjunction with continued political and economic sanctions). The punishment inflicted, however, was never going to change Gaddafi's underlying beliefs about the primacy of Islam and the evils of the West. As history records, Gaddafi's sponsorship of terrorism did not cease at this point.

All strategists must recognise the limitations of external influence. Coercive diplomacy seeks to change the actions and behaviour of an adversary, but in the religious and ideological clashes that will most likely be encountered in the 21st century, each side must accept that they will be unable to change beliefs adopted through thousands of years of history. As Huntington notes, 'conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilizations has been going on for 1,300 years.'⁷⁸ Contemporary disagreements with their genesis in such division may be able to reach an accommodated settlement, but will never be resolved via a transformation of beliefs. The continued conflict between Palestinians and Israelis in Gaza and the West Bank attest to this point.

Accepting that long-standing cultural beliefs and values will be virtually impossible to change does not indicate that trying to understand an adversary is a wasted endeavour. Indeed an attempt to comprehend the adversary's motivations, desires and vulnerabilities lies at the very heart of coercion. One must be aware of what the adversary most values to be able to effectively target it, whether that is through psychological or physical methods, or soft and hard power. As David Petraeus, former director of the CIA and commanding general of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan advises: 'Knowledge of the cultural "terrain" can be as important as, and sometimes even more important than, knowledge of the geographic terrain.'⁷⁹ A failure to comprehend an adversary's belief system, from which their behaviour pattern emanates, is a certain recipe for coercive failure.

⁷⁷ *ibid*, p. 212.

⁷⁸ S. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, Summer, 1993, pp. 22-49, p. 27.

⁷⁹ D. Petraeus, 'Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq', *Military Review*, January-February, 2006, pp. 1-12, p. 8.

Perception and Misperception

The abstract theory of coercive diplomacy assumes pure rationality on the part of the opponent – an ability to receive all relevant information, evaluate it correctly, make proper judgements as to the credibility and potency of the threat, and see that it is in his interest to accede to the demand on him... [it] does not take into account the possibility of misperception and miscalculation.

Alexander George⁸⁰

Perception is ‘the organization, identification and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment.’⁸¹ All humans interpret actions and events within their own cognitive framework, which has been shaped by both genetics and personal experience.⁸² All of our calculations and decisions in life depend on how we interpret the information we receive. This is relevant in most aspects of everyday life, but becomes particularly important in international relations where the stakes are so high. In the psychological contest of coercive diplomacy, each move and counter-move depends on a subjective analysis of the opponent’s intentions and likely actions. When designing a strategy with the objective of compelling behaviour change in another, it is essential to appreciate that the way the threat is perceived is as important as the way it was intended.

In any international interaction, each side’s perception of the other plays a critical role in their decision calculus. Often both sides may make the incorrect assumption that the other perceives the world in the same way that they do. Robert Jervis, the predominant writer on this subject, also believes that ‘actors frequently assume that their intentions are clear to others’⁸³ and has put forward a hypothesis suggesting that ‘when I don’t try to conceal my intentions, I assume that you accurately perceive them.’⁸⁴

The dangers of this assumption were illustrated by the interaction between April Glaspie, the US Ambassador to Iraq, and Saddam Hussein prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991. According to one source, at a meeting on 25 July 1990, they ‘talked past each other’. When Saddam informed Glaspie that he intended to ‘resolve his differences with

⁸⁰ George, *Forceful Persuasion*, 1991, p. 4.

⁸¹ D. Schacter, et al, *Psychology*, 2nd edn. Worth Publishers, 2010.

⁸² This description of perception provided by Dr Carole Brown, PhD, in personal conversation with the author.

⁸³ Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, pp. 409-410.

⁸⁴ R. Jervis, ‘Hypotheses on Misperception’, *World Politics*, Vol. 20, Issue 3, 1968, pp. 465-490, p. 482.

Kuwait', Glaspie cautioned that the US would not 'excuse settlement of disputes by other than peaceful means', but also assured him that the US 'took no position on these Arab affairs'.⁸⁵ As a result of this meeting and Iraq's informal alliance with the US, established on the heels of the Iran/Iraq War, Saddam either suspected that the US condoned his intended action, or believed that they would not oppose it.⁸⁶ His misperception of American intentions cost him dearly.

The international and domestic media play a large role in framing perception amongst both sides in a conflict. In Kosovo, Serbian news outlets controlled by Milosevic showed pictures of the residents of Kosovo fleeing from the massacres being perpetrated by Serbian forces. The broadcast, however, reported that the Kosovars were running away from NATO bombs.⁸⁷ In Afghanistan, the Taliban used the al-Jazeera network to broadcast images of the destruction caused by bombing, and Libyan state media was quick to show footage of people it claimed were killed or wounded in NATO air strikes.⁸⁸ In a coercive campaign, the coercer needs to be acutely aware of both the domestic and international perception of their actions, recognising the critical impact that the media can have on public opinion.

The Notion of Rationality

In addition to cautioning against misperception and miscalculation, George warned of the danger of trying to apply a theoretical model to the real world, with an assumption of 'pure rationality' of the opponent. The rationality of another, in other words their ability to exercise 'reason, sound judgement or good sense'⁸⁹ is an entirely subjective process, which is dependent on a number of variables. The West's culture is quite distinct from that of Eastern or Arabic societies, and those societies' own values system will differ in turn from those of radical or extremist organisations. In the latter examples, for instance, martyrdom may be seen as a legitimate way to serve the cause, and held within high regard. By contrast, moderate societies generally value life above all other things,

85 A. Baram, 'Deterrence Lessons from Iraq: Rationality is Not the Only Key to Containment', *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137693/amatzia-baram/deterrence-lessons-from-iraq>, accessed 7 August 2012.

86 For a detailed study of US Foreign Policy towards Iraq in the 1980's, see B. Jentleson, *With Friends Like These: Reagan, Bush and Saddam 1982-1990*, W.W. Norton and Co, New York, 1994.

87 S. Driscoll, 'Who's in Control? Contemporary Audience – Media Relations and their Implications for Perception Management', *Journal of Information Warfare*, Vol. 1, Issue 3, p. 86.

88 S. Peterson, 'Despite Libyan claims, little evidence of civilian casualties', *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 March 2011, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2011/0324/Despite-Libyan-claims-little-evidence-of-civilian-casualties>, accessed 28 March 2012.

89 *The Macquarie Dictionary*, p. 1572.

and view martyrdom as an irrational philosophy. This distinction makes a Western approach to an extremist organisation, based on Western values, likely to be misdirected and ultimately unsuccessful. The dichotomy of the situation was recognised centuries ago by Lao Tzu, a philosopher in the sixth century BC and founder of China's ancient Daoism, who insightfully pointed out 'When people do not fear to die, what's the use of threatening them with death?'⁹⁰

In modern times Saddam Hussein also showed that he was aware of the differing values systems between nations, pointing out to the US ambassador that 'yours is a society which cannot accept 10,000 dead in one battle.'⁹¹ This belief directly influenced his decision to proceed with the invasion of Kuwait, as he considered that the US would be unlikely to authorise a ground campaign due to the potential casualty rate. Saddam was most likely correct in his assertion regarding the US' unwillingness to sustain mass casualties, but he misjudged the US' ability to minimise casualties in the campaign, and their commitment to his own defeat.

Ben Bolland, as a result of his experiments designed to understand the causal mechanisms of coercion, cautioned that

*Rationality (as we see it) is not assumed on the part of the adversary, neither is the adversary assumed to hold the same set of beliefs and values that we do. They instead operate from an entirely different set of beliefs and moral codes, which we would find hard to understand.*⁹²

What constitutes rational behaviour for each individual leader is hard to read, and often impossible to predict. As Bolland explains, theories of coercion that were developed in the Cold War, such as those of George and Schelling, 'were formed in a world where there was one dominant adversary.'⁹³ Tailoring strategies to work against a range of adversaries is significantly more difficult. Bashar al Assad of Syria is not Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei of Iran, nor is he Milosevic, Saddam or Gaddafi.

90 As quoted by Xu Weidi, 'Embracing the Moon in the Sky or Fishing the Moon in the Water?', *Air & Space Power Journal*, July-August 2012, pp. 4-23, p. 14.

91 Baram, 'Deterrence Lessons from Iraq'.

92 Bolland, 'Re-thinking Coercion', p. 45.

93 *ibid.*

Conclusion

This chapter has given only brief attention to a subject that is critical to the notion of coercive diplomacy and warrants a dissertation of its own. The inclusion of a discussion of the cognitive domain, despite being limited, is nonetheless essential to reinforce the point that physical effects, as potent as they are, are only enablers to the desired cognitive effect. The strategy of coercive diplomacy is absolutely dependent on the coercer's ability to affect the adversary's intellectual reasoning, as a means of changing behaviour.

Despite the impression that one may glean from the term itself, coercive diplomacy, rather than being regarded as an oxymoron is in fact a viable and intelligent strategy that can prevent disagreements between states escalating to war. The strategy addresses the reality that more desirable soft power initiatives, including traditional diplomacy, are often ineffective. When traditional diplomacy fails, and states or non-state actors continue to behave aggressively, raising the stakes to hurt a state economically or threaten to hurt them militarily provide the next legitimate escalatory options. Resorting to military force is often the last option. This does not, however, immediately imply strike operations or other aggressive actions. As exemplified by the Cuban Missile Crisis, the mere threat of military force is sometimes sufficient to produce the desired change in an adversary's behaviour.

CHAPTER 3

TOOLS OF HARD POWER: ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND MILITARY FORCE

Economic sanctions... have rarely in themselves been successful with respect to stopping or reversing armed aggression.

Peter Jakobsen⁹⁴

Introduction

As highlighted in the previous chapter, hard power does not encompass only military assets. International organisations such as the UN or European Union (EU), as well as individual states, will almost always try to use other methods to exert influence prior to resorting to the threat or use of military force. This chapter will explore in greater detail the use of economic sanctions, traditionally the first coercive option, before discussing the use of a state or coalition's combined military power.⁹⁵

Economic Sanctions

The term *economic sanctions* describes 'the deliberate, government-inspired withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal, of customary trade or financial relations'.⁹⁶ Sanctions are a key tool used where the intention is to compel behaviour change in the target through economic deprivation and hardship. Internationally they are considered a more

94 Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 27.

95 The assertion that economic sanctions constitute a form of coercive hard power is supported by many authors including Joseph Nye; E. Wilson 'Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power', p. 114; and C. Gray, 'Hard Power and Soft Power: The Utility of Military Force as an Instrument of Policy in the 21st Century', *Strategic Studies Institute Monograph*, April 2011, p. v.

96 *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Economics*, <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Sanctions.html>, accessed 10 April 2012.

politically palatable option than the use of military force, but their practical utility is much debated by analysts.⁹⁷

Generally, there are two types of sanctions: broad-based and targeted.⁹⁸ Broad-based sanctions, such as those applied against Cuba, Iraq and North Korea in the late twentieth century impose restrictions on any kind of trade with the country. Their application is, in effect, a political and economic isolation strategy. The generalised application, however, often has the unintended consequence of a disastrous humanitarian impact on the population, as citizens are prevented from being able to access basic necessities such as food and medicine. Autocratic rulers in such states tend to have their own means of supply and sufficient assets to ensure that the sanctions have little personal impact; often showing scant regard for the effects of the sanctions on the general population. Claims persist that responsibility for the deaths of 500 000 children in Iraq lay with sanctions imposed on that country in the 1990s⁹⁹, and both Cuban and North Korean citizens have reportedly experienced higher levels of public health problems following the imposition of multilateral sanctions against their countries.¹⁰⁰ Ironically, humanitarian suffering can have the unintended consequence of shoring-up support for a beleaguered leadership by attributing blame for the hardship to those that imposed the sanctions. Thus, instead of calls for the regime to change their behaviour, as intended by the coercer, the population can be encouraged to rally around the leader and unite against a perceived common enemy, resulting in support for a regime that may otherwise have been fighting for political survival.

Targeted sanctions are aimed specifically at those in positions of power, and attempt to directly impact the leadership and elite rather than the general population. The sanctions imposed against Libya by UN member states in February 2011 incorporated a travel ban on 16 key members of the regime, including Gaddafi family

97 For arguments for and against economic sanctions, see for example R. Pape, 'Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work', *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Autumn 1997, pp. 90-136; R. Pape 'Why Economic Sanctions Still Do Not Work', *International Security*, Vol. 23, Issue 1, Summer 1998, pp. 66-77; D. Baldwin, 'The Sanctions Debate and the Logic of Choice', *International Security*, Vol. 24, Issue 3, Winter 1999-2000, pp. 80-107; and, J. Nye, 'Syria Can Prove that Sanctions do Work', *Financial Times*, 9 June 2011.

98 *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Economics*, <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Sanctions.html>, accessed 10 April 2012.

99 M. Eriksson and F. Giumelli, 'Why the EU's Sanctions against Assad's Syria will Backfire', *Foreign Affairs*, 1 December 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136705/mikael-eriksson-and-francesco-giumelli/why-the-eus-sanctions-against-assads-syria-will-backfire>, accessed 27 February 2012.

100 A. Hartle, 'Discrimination' in Coppieters and Fotion (eds.), *Moral Constraints on War*, pp. 141-158, p. 155.

members, and an asset freeze on Colonel Gaddafi and five of his children.¹⁰¹ These sanctions were designed to compel Gaddafi to call ‘an immediate end to the violence and ... [take] steps to fulfil the legitimate demands of the population.’¹⁰² In this case, the sanctions did not have the desired effect, and Gaddafi’s continued actions prompted the UN to authorise the use of ‘all necessary measures’¹⁰³ to resolve the conflict, in effect approving the use of military force.

In an attempt to provide some theoretical rigour to the link between economic sanctions and political ‘success’, a comprehensive assessment was conducted by authors on behalf of the Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) in 2007.¹⁰⁴ The authors analysed all cases of applied or threatened sanctions between 1914 and 1990, and claimed a success rate of sanctions of approximately 34 per cent. The authors of the study concluded that ‘sanctions often do not succeed in changing the behaviour of foreign countries’¹⁰⁵, but that they were most likely to be successful when the ‘objective was modest and clear, the target was in a weakened position, economic links were significant, sanctions were heavy, and the duration was limited.’¹⁰⁶ The primary reason for failure was put down to a mismatch between the sanctions imposed and the outcome sought, highlighting that a disparity between appropriate means and desired ends is a major impediment to successful coercive diplomacy.

Sanctions have been employed for hundreds of years with varying degrees of success. Throughout the latter part of the 20th century, sanctions were used by the US in an effort to retard or prevent nuclear weapon development in a number of countries. In some cases, such as in Libya and South Korea, the target countries chose not to proceed with their nuclear ambitions but others, namely India and Pakistan did.¹⁰⁷ In these two cases, the increased prestige and power that could be gained by joining the nuclear club outweighed the pain caused by sanctions. The outcome in these cases illustrates the point that coercive diplomacy, to have any chance of success, must provide a threat of such significance that the original intended action is not considered worthwhile. An analysis of the effectiveness of sanctions however, must also recognise

101 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1970 (2011). A later UNSC resolution, U.N. Doc. S/RES/1973 (2011) expanded the list of targeted members and Libyan agencies.

102 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1970 (2011). The resolution also approved an arms embargo to prevent the transfer of weapons into Libya.

103 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1973 (2011).

104 G. Hufbauer et al, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*, 3rd edn., Peterson Institute for International Economics, Washington, 2007.

105 *ibid*, p. 7.

106 Observed by Nye, ‘Syria Can Prove that Sanctions do Work’.

107 Hufbauer et al, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*, pp. 12-13.

that sanctions are frequently employed in concert with other mechanisms, and to declare that they alone succeeded or failed is to ignore other contributory factors.

Sanctions are claimed to most likely work against a democratic ally, for reasons of economic inter-dependency¹⁰⁸, but paradoxically are less likely to be imposed on one. A notable case of successful sanctions against a traditional ally was the 1956 Suez crisis, where the US threat of economic sanctions against Britain and France proved a sufficient motivator to compel the withdrawal of the British and French occupying forces from Egypt.¹⁰⁹

One of the problems with using economic sanctions as a coercive tool is that while they may be more politically palatable, and more appealing to the international community than military action, they are not a panacea, and are likely to take a relatively longer period of time to show an effect. In the case of an effort to prevent or stop a humanitarian crisis, this may well be time that cannot be spared, particularly if genocidal activities are being perpetrated at a rate such as was experienced in Rwanda or at Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Political leaders may also be tempted to enact sanctions as proof that 'something' is being done, thus avoiding the unpopular decision to commit military force, but avoiding the question of whether sanctions are the most appropriate coercive tool to employ. As the PIIE study expressed 'Sanctions can provide a satisfying theatrical display yet avoid the high costs of war'.¹¹⁰ Michael Cohen, in an opinion piece in the *Washington Post* in 2012, made the following satirical observation regarding the ineffectiveness of economic sanctions imposed by the EU on Syria.

About a month ago the European Union, showing it will not be trifled with, barred Bashar al-Assad's wife, Asma, and other women in his immediate family from shopping for luxury goods in Europe. For some reason, going cold turkey on Dior, Armani and Prada failed to bring down the Assad regime or to end its vicious attacks on the civilian population. Now the Europeans, presumably with the staunch support of the Obama administration, have imposed an across-the-board ban on the sale of luxury goods to Syria — and yet, somehow, the killing continues.

The imposition of the luxury goods ban was cited in a New York Times editorial with all the solemnity usually reserved for naval blockades — as good an example of any of how we have gone to dreamland. In the dream, a vicious dictator, fighting for his own and his family's lives, will somehow come to the

108 K. Elliott, *Economic Sanctions as a Foreign Policy Tool*, 2006, power-point presentation available at: <http://www.piiie.com/publications/papers/elliott0406.pdf>, accessed 29 March 2012.

109 Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, p. 77.

110 Hufbauer et al, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*, p. 9.

*bargaining table because he is down to his last Montblanc pen. Of course, more practical measures and boycotts have also been adopted, but it is always good to remember that severe boycotts were imposed on Saddam Hussein's regime for about 12 years — and it still took an invasion to bring him down. There is a lesson here.*¹¹¹

Economic sanctions do have a place in international conflict resolution as a tool of coercive diplomacy, if used in appropriate circumstances for realistic goals. As with the use of military force, a match of methods to desired ends must be a fundamental consideration, along with a realistic assessment of the prospects of success. The effectiveness of economic sanctions is likely to be enhanced if they are used in concert with other mechanisms, such as increased political engagement to open up constructive dialogue, or the threat of more serious international action; that is, as an early element in a strategy of coercive diplomacy. Broad-based sanctions that will cripple an already suffering population, while leaving the leader immune, are unlikely to have the desired effect, and it is both more humane and more appropriate to target sanctions deliberately to strike at the heart of an errant regime. Economic sanctions in themselves are unlikely to provide the sole solution to every diplomatic quandary, but should be assessed for their utility as a prelude to, or in concert with, other coercive measures, including military force. As Jentleson cautions: 'the undifferentiated debate over whether sanctions do or do not work needs to be more focused on establishing the conditions under which they are most likely to be effective.'¹¹² The same is true of all tools of coercive diplomacy.

111 M. Cohen, 'The luxury we don't have in Syria', *Washington Post*, 24 April 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-luxury-we-dont-have-in-syria/2012/04/23/gIQApl4cT_story.html, accessed 26 April 2012.

112 Jentleson, 'Coercive Diplomacy: Scope and Limits in the Contemporary World', p. 8.

Options for Military Force

Military forces are not primarily instruments of communication to convey signals to an enemy; they are instead instruments of coercion to compel him to alter his behaviour.

S. Huntington¹¹³

Hard power applied through military force is usually the last option to be considered and endorsed by states or international bodies such as the UN, and is not readily sanctioned or easily enacted. The use of military force is never without contention, as the UNSC debates of the past six and a half decades attest, and as has been graphically illustrated by the emotive debates regarding the prospect of armed intervention in Libya in 2011, and Syria throughout 2011 and 2012.

Figure 2 illustrates a spectrum of military strategies, with the start and end points set as *no force* up to *overwhelming force*. Each of the strategies in the intersecting circles represents the possibilities of military force, starting from soft power options and increasing to the point where coercion has failed and overwhelming force is applied to ensure an adversary's defeat. At this point, the focus is on physically stopping an adversary so that they will be unable to continue the fight.

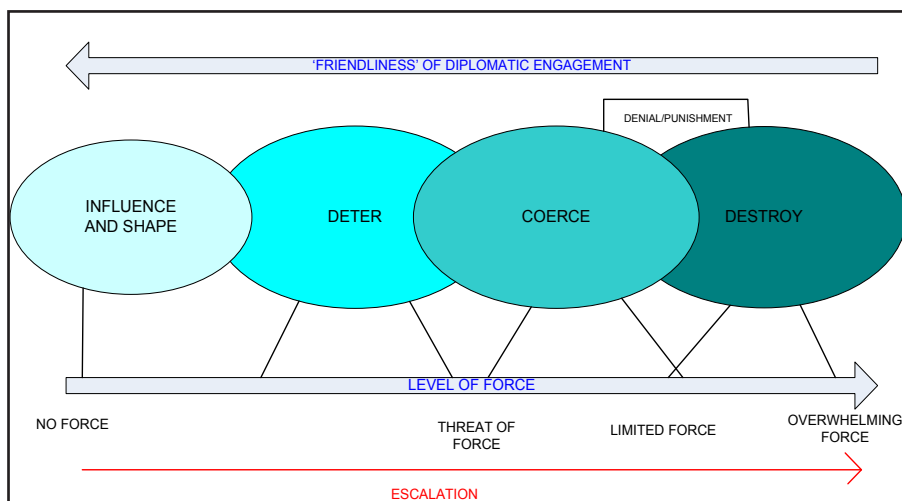


Figure Two: Coercive Diplomacy and the Use of Force

113 S. Huntington, *American Military Strategy*, Policy Paper 28, Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1986, p. 16.

The illustrated strategies form a continuum. The figure deliberately avoids delineating lines to highlight that it is impossible to mark a point at which one strategy stops and another starts. Each strategy is rarely conducted in isolation, or in accordance with an academic definition. Escalation along the spectrum is a constant possibility, and indeed this is the primary threat of coercive diplomacy; that a failure to comply with a coercer's demands risks more serious consequences. Figure 2 also illustrates how the use of force typically has an inverse relationship with the level of soft power engagement. At the beginning of the spectrum, soft power initiatives are dominant, but as the strategies increase their reliance on the threat and then use of force, the diplomatic engagement changes from soft to hard power initiatives. This is not to say that diplomatic endeavours cease. A feature of successful coercive diplomacy is that diplomatic engagement continues throughout a conflict, as exemplified by Kennedy and Krushchev's engagement throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis.

INFLUENCE AND SHAPE

In Figure 2, the first oval represents the need to positively impact the security environment. The ability to *influence and shape* is an ongoing governmental endeavour that is designed to minimise the need to threaten or use actual force, and represents the use of a state's soft power. Air capabilities can play a key role in this endeavour, particularly regionally—for instance through the delivery of humanitarian aid or emergency relief. Peaceful activities undertaken by air forces, such as training and joint exercises have the advantage of making adversaries aware of the potential air power capabilities possessed by the state, and contribute to its hard power credibility. In another context, pervasive Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities can provide information about the activities and intentions of others, while also demonstrating the state's own ability to secure its interests¹¹⁴; a requisite for the strategies further along the spectrum.

DETER

To *deter*, from the French term *deterreere* meaning 'to frighten from', is 'to discourage or restrain [one] from acting or proceeding, through fear or doubt'.¹¹⁵ Thus the adversary is both aware of, and sufficiently threatened by the opponent's capability, and their resolve to use that capability if necessary. Deterrence is a psychologically targeted concept, which is intended to cause a potential aggressor to realise that either: (a) all attempts to attack the nation are bound to fail due to the comparative weakness of the aggressor, or (b), that

114 S. Kainikara, *Essays on Air Power*, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, 2012, p. 4.

115 *Macquarie Essential Dictionary*, The Macquarie Library, 1999, p. 303.

any aggressive initiative will invoke massive retaliation.¹¹⁶ In either case, the clear message is that any attack would not result in a gain for the instigator, and would be more likely to leave them significantly worse off.

The prime example of successful deterrence during the 20th century is that of the period of 'Mutually Assured Destruction' (MAD) that prevailed during the Cold War. The MAD theory relied on the assumption that activation of the nuclear weapons of either the USSR or the US would result in immediate and massive retaliation from the other side, meaning that there would be no winners in a nuclear exchange, and both states would be destroyed.¹¹⁷ A deterrent strategy is only effective, however, if the opponent is aware of the capability, and if they believe that the other side would have the will to use it. As Meilinger points out, 'a deterrent threat that is not credible is not a deterrent; it is an invitation.'¹¹⁸

Deterrence can also be conducted by states without a nuclear capability. The small nation-state of Singapore employed a non-nuclear deterrent posture throughout the latter half of the 20th century. Recognising its vulnerability as a tiny state with no strategic depth and ideologically opposed neighbours, Singapore chose to develop an air force with an aggressive strike capability. The intent of such a posture was to send a powerful message to potential aggressors—if attacked, Singapore will retaliate with force.¹¹⁹

Deterrence, historically, is of use only against another state opponent. Irregular adversaries tend not to be intimidated by the threat of large scale force, as they know that the stronger power will find it difficult to identify and target the unconventional opponent's primary centre of gravity, or even their logistical or military capabilities.¹²⁰ The knowledge that the US had a nuclear capability, as well as powerful conventional capabilities, was an insufficient deterrent to prevent Al Qaeda's actions on 11 September 2001. Another challenge of deterrence against an extremist or terrorist organisation is

116 Pape, *Bombing to Win*, p. 7, and G. Snyder, *Deterrence by Punishment and Denial*, Research Monograph no.1, Princeton University, Center of International Studies, Princeton, 1959.

117 The 1964 Stanley Kubrick black comedy *Dr Strangelove* demonstrates a humorous but sobering example of how the MAD theory could ultimately play out. In this movie, the USSR has developed a 'Doomsday' machine, which will cause global destruction if activated, thus it is intended as a deterrent to any nuclear initiated action from the US. The irony though, is that the existence of the machine was not communicated to the US, thus it was worthless as a deterrent; *Dr Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, directed by S. Kubrick, motion picture, Columbia Pictures, 1964.

118 P. Meilinger, Hoyt S. Vandenberg: *The Life of a General*, Air Force History and Museums Program, 2000, p. 107.

119 A. Stephens, 'You'll Remember the Quality Long After You've Forgotten the Cost: Structuring Air Power for the Small Air Force', in R. Hallion (ed.), *Air Power Confronts an Unstable World*, Brassey's (UK) 1997, pp. 179-200, pp. 191-192.

120 For a comprehensive examination of deterring terrorist networks, see M. Kroenig, and B. Pavel, 'How to Deter Terrorism', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 5, Issue 2, Spring 2012, pp. 21-36.

that the opponent, whom one seeks to deter, cannot be judged as a rational unitary actor in the Western mould, who will react as expected to the threat of force. Stephen Metz notes:

Dedication to "the cause" and deliberate acceptance of danger cement terrorist and insurgent groups. This generates a tolerance for risk and passion for danger difficult for a potential deterrer to understand, much less manipulate. Put simply, the more an individual is prepared to lose everything including his life, the harder he is to deter.¹²¹

Thus strategies which focus on a 'rational actor' model of behaviour, as deterrence does, are susceptible to failure given differing interpretations of what constitutes reasonable conduct.

Israel operated for many years under a policy of deterrence, designed to ensure that its Arab adversaries were well aware of its capabilities and its resolve to use them. Israel's actions in the Six-Day war in 1967, where the Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi air forces were destroyed while still on the ground, demonstrated both the credibility and the capability of the Israeli Air Force. The belief that Israel had also acquired nuclear weapons shortly after the Six-Day War gave further credence to their policy of deterrence. The question of whether deterrence was a sufficient national strategy for Israel however, arose after less successful initiatives against Hezbollah, a quasi-state entity, in 2006.¹²² Against Hezbollah, more forceful strategies were required.

COERCE

Byman et al. define coercion as 'the use of threatened force, including the limited use of actual force to back up the threat, to induce an adversary to behave differently than it otherwise would'.¹²³ The actual use of force is initially discrete and increased incrementally, with the scalability and reversibility of the application of force being a critical component.¹²⁴ Military coercion has been used throughout history, and prominent 20th century examples include the US' unsuccessful *Rolling Thunder* campaign in Vietnam between 1965 and 1968, and NATO's more successful endeavours: *Deliberate Force* in Bosnia in 1995 and *Allied Force* in Kosovo in 1999.

121 S. Metz, 'Deterring Conflict Short of War' in *Strategic Review*, Vol. 22, No. 4, 1994, pp. 44-51, p. 46.

122 See S. Kainikara, *The Strategy of Deterrence and Air Power*, Working Paper 27, Air Power Development Centre, 2008, pp. 10-13, for a detailed discussion of Israel's deterrent strategy.

123 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 10.

124 Royal Australian Air Force, 'Air Power and Coercive Diplomacy', *Pathfinder*, Issue 177, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, May 2012.

According to Robert Pape:

*Both coercion and deterrence focus on influencing the adversary's calculus for decision making, but deterrence seeks to maintain the status quo by discouraging an opponent from changing its behaviour. By contrast, coercion seeks to force the opponent to alter its behaviour.*¹²⁵

Thus to deter is primarily to prevent behaviour, while the aim of coercion is to get the adversary to cease their current course of action. Another distinction between the two strategies is that deterrence is essentially not time-constrained, whereas coercive threats usually specify a time limit for compliance.¹²⁶ Critically, both strategies depend on the perception of the adversary, who in each case must believe both that the capability to use force exists and that the coercer/deterrer would be prepared to use it. If the opponent does not already believe both these factors, a display of limited force may well be the vehicle that alters their perception.

When the threat of force is insufficient to cause an adversary to desist from their aggressive behaviour, an escalation of the coercive strategy is required. To maintain the credibility of the coercive threat, the coercer must be prepared to escalate to the actual use of force, initially in a limited fashion, but with the prospect for further intensification communicated to the adversary. The two primary strategies of military coercion are known as *denial* and *punishment*.

In a coercive context, the strategy of *denial* focuses on attacking the enemy's military capability including their forces, interdicting military supplies and destroying arms, in an attempt to prevent the target from attaining its political objectives or territorial goals.¹²⁷ The enforcement of sanctions, arms embargoes, and no-fly zones also form elements of a denial strategy, as they degrade the adversary's ability to develop or use their warfighting assets. In addition, denial limits the ability of the adversary to escalate their own use of force, giving the coercer escalation dominance.

Pape claims that denial is the most effective of the coercive strategies¹²⁸ and Hinman concurs that denial is 'more compatible with the three specific attributes of conflict in the post Cold War era', which he defines as limited, non-protracted war, political restraint and the importance of a better state of peace.¹²⁹ Both of these authors, however, situate

125 Pape, *Bombing to Win*, p. 4.

126 Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, p. 72.

127 Pape, *Bombing to Win*, p. 330.

128 *ibid*, p. 13. Pape's work provides an analysis of the strategy of denial using air power in cases studies covering the period 1917-1991.

129 E. Hinman, *The Politics of Coercion: Toward a Theory of Coercive Airpower for Post-Cold War Conflict*, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 2001.

the use of the strategy in a state-on-state conflict. It is true that denial is most likely to be successful against a conventional state opponent armed with conventional military hardware and infrastructure, specifically targets that air power can strike; however, as with deterrence, it is a more difficult strategy to implement in an environment of irregular war where the targets are less discernible. The *Rolling Thunder* campaign in Vietnam suffered from the USAF's inability to target the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong supply lines in a hostile jungle environment. When the US campaign shifted to *Linebacker*, and the USAF was given permission to target key North Vietnamese infrastructure and facilities, it was significantly more successful.¹³⁰ The *Linebacker* campaign was aided appreciably by the fact that by the early 1970s, the North Vietnamese had shifted to a more conventional warfighting stance that was more vulnerable to the coercive efforts of the US.¹³¹

The theory of *punishment* is largely attributed to the Italian General and classical air power theorist Giulio Douhet¹³², although he foresaw punishment as a strategic method of widespread destruction that would induce the population to call for surrender, rather than a coercive tool with more limited aims. The theory of punishment primarily relates to attacks on a country's population, national infrastructure, economic wealth and war-making potential.¹³³ Punishment was the pre-eminent strategy during World War II, but is no longer legal or morally acceptable to the international community who are increasingly concerned with non-combatant casualties and indiscriminate destruction. The ability to employ coercive punishment assumes few domestic and international political constraints, and scant regard for international humanitarian law. The distinction between punishment in a coercive context and pure destruction lies in the level of force—limited rather than overwhelming—and the resultant desired effects. Critically, coercive punishment provides the target nation with the ability to choose to comply with the coercer's demands before they are totally militarily defeated and have lost any power for negotiation. Conversely, a pure military strategy does not provide the adversary with the same level of choice as 'it aims at achieving an objective no matter what the adversary does.'¹³⁴

130 M. Clodfelter, *The Limits of Airpower: The American Bombing of Vietnam*. New York: Free Press, 1989, p. 148. Note that there were many other factors that made *Linebacker* more of a success than *Rolling Thunder*. Primary among these were the highly restrictive Rules of Engagement and the degree of political control over military strategy exerted by President Johnson in the former campaign, as well as the fact that the agreement negotiated by President Nixon was more appealing to the North Vietnamese.

131 *ibid.*

132 G. Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, D. Ferrari (trans.), Office of the Air Force History, Washington D.C., 1983.

133 K. Mueller, *The Essence of Coercive Air Power: a primer for military strategists*, 2001, <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/cc/mueller.html>, accessed 08 February 2012.

134 Jakobsen, 'The Strategy of Coercive Diplomacy', p. 65.

It is important to note that the coercive strategies of denial and punishment are seldom used in isolation, and a hybrid effort that focuses on minimal use of force to achieve the desired effect is the most likely method of employment in contemporary operations.¹³⁵

In responding to coercive mechanisms, the adversary has the option of ceasing his own activities to prevent the coercer from escalating the use of force. Acquiescence with the coercer's demands will also result in the de-escalation of the coercive threat.

Byman et al. recognise the hazy delineation between coercion and destruction, stating that:

*A denial strategy at times blurs with 'brute force'; both usually seek to defeat an adversary's military, but 'denial' focuses on convincing an adversary that future benefits will not be gained through military means, whereas more conventional warfighting focuses on physically stopping an adversary regardless of whether its leadership believes it can fight on.*¹³⁶

Operation *Deliberate Force* in Bosnia in 1995 provides a good example of military force used coercively, rather than to bring about defeat. The US-led NATO forces conducted air strikes against Serbian targets in Bosnia-Herzegovina over a period of 11 days. The strikes were intended to coerce the Bosnian Serb forces into stopping their attacks against declared UN safe areas. The strikes, in coordination with some heavy artillery bombardment, were ultimately successful in bringing the Serbs to the point of negotiation.¹³⁷

Contrastingly, Operation *Desert Storm* in the 1991 Gulf War provides an example of military force used to defeat. Coercive diplomacy had initially been employed in an attempt to persuade Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. Saddam was given a deadline for withdrawal, and agreed to do so, but failed to take action in accordance with the timetable demanded, not least because of his unwillingness to leave his military equipment behind, as required by the coalition. As a consequence, the threatened air bombardment commenced and military force ultimately succeeded where coercive diplomacy had failed. Saddam Hussein only withdrew from Kuwait once he had been comprehensively defeated militarily, through a combination of a 40-day air campaign where the US destroyed 254 Iraqi aircraft on the ground, as well as 32 in the air¹³⁸, and a three-day ground invasion.

135 For instance, Hinman, *The Politics of Coercion*, pp. 28-40, proposes a three-phase hybrid approach to coercion.

136 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 37.

137 Coppieters, 'Last Resort', p. 115.

138 D. Haulman, *What Happened to the Iraqi Air Force?* Air Force Historical Research Agency, 5 November 2009, p. 4.

DESTROY

The concept of destruction comes into play at the end of the scale of coercive punishment, and essentially indicates that coercion has failed. Destruction ensures that the adversary's capability no longer exists. It is designed to punish the belligerent for their actions and to effectively teach them a 'lesson' that will ensure they cannot or will not repeat their actions. Much of the aerial bombardment of World War II was conducted for this effect, as was the attack on the line of Iraqi tanks and vehicles retreating from Kuwait along the so-called 'highway of death' in February 1991.¹³⁹

Overwhelming military force is most likely to be applied in a *total war*, where states are engaged in wars of national survival. In World War II, overwhelming force was applied to ensure the utmost destruction to the adversary, in an attempt to prevent them from being able to continue to fight. The incendiary bombing of Tokyo and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are prime examples of the overwhelming use of force.¹⁴⁰ Since the end of the Cold War, the hegemony of the US has reduced the likelihood of any entity embarking on the path of overwhelming use of force to achieve annihilation, either for lack of will or lack of capacity. For the last 70 years, war has generally been waged with limited force for limited purpose. Regrettably, as the 21st century examples of Iraq and Afghanistan illustrate, this has not translated to limited duration.

Conclusion

The intent of coercive diplomacy is to prevent a conflict from escalating into full-scale war, with both military and non-military options available to governments. Economic sanctions usually precede any decision to proceed with military options, but often take a long time to have an impact, have limited effectiveness, and unless targeted specifically at the elite, adversely impact the general population. Quite often they are an insufficient mechanism to achieve a major objective.

Military force is a less politically palatable option, but it can play a key role in influencing and shaping the security environment, deterring others from initiating aggressive actions, or if necessary, coercing an adversary who has initiated some undesirable action into ceasing or undoing their behaviour. Military coercion does not seek the ultimate goal of

139 A. Hartle, 'The Gulf War, 1990-1991', in Coppieters and Fotion (ed.), *Moral Constraints on War*, pp. 161-175, p. 173.

140 Note that some authors, such as Robert Pape and Thomas Schelling consider the atomic bombs over Japan a successful use of coercive air power. See Pape's *Bombing to Win*, pp. 87-136, and Schelling's *Arms and Influence*, pp. 17-18.

national surrender¹⁴¹, rather it is designed to apply limited force for distinct aims—often to preserve innocent life. Military force will continue to be seen by many internationally as the least desirable option, but it must be acknowledged as a viable option in the prevention and resolution of modern conflict.

141 Mueller, *The Essence of Coercive Air Power*.

CHAPTER 4

THE POTENTIAL OF AIR POWER

Air power is an unusually seductive form of military strength, in part because, like modern courtship, it appears to offer gratification without commitment.

Eliot Cohen¹⁴²

Introduction

Military force is generally the political option of last resort. Once its use has been authorised however, air power is frequently viewed by politicians and planners as the military instrument of first choice—as a low-risk, low-commitment measure.¹⁴³ Air power has a breadth of capabilities based on characteristics that make it particularly suitable for coercive operations; ideally to prevent conflict, or if necessary, to resolve it with the minimum use of force. Frequently air power is used to demonstrate resolve and capability, and to influence the political situation.

This chapter will outline the specific characteristics of air power that can best serve a strategy of coercive diplomacy and the roles it can play in gradual escalation, as well as acknowledging air power's limitations. Prior to this, however, the perspectives of two modern air power theorists will be briefly examined.

142 E. Cohen, 'The Mystique of U.S. Airpower', in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 1, Jan/Feb 1994, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/49442/eliot-a-cohen/the-mystique-of-us-air-power>, accessed 17 April 2012.

143 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 138.

The Modern Air Power Theorists

Colonel John Warden is generally credited with being one of the most influential air power strategists since World War II.¹⁴⁴ Warden 'set out to prove that airpower, precisely directed against centres of gravity, could coerce political concessions from an enemy'.¹⁴⁵ His metaphor of the human body as the enemy system and his design of the 'five rings' approach (Figure 3) was developed from the ideas of the US inter-war Air Corps Tactical School. In this representation, the central ring represented the enemy's leadership, and Warden's idea was that incapacitation of the leadership, or 'decapitation', would cause paralysis of decision-making and lead to the enemy's rapid capitulation. If it was not possible to target the leader, Warden advocated 'parallel war', a strategy that relied on the overwhelming and simultaneous use of force. This strategy largely formed the basis of *Instant Thunder*, the successful air campaign of the first Gulf War.¹⁴⁶

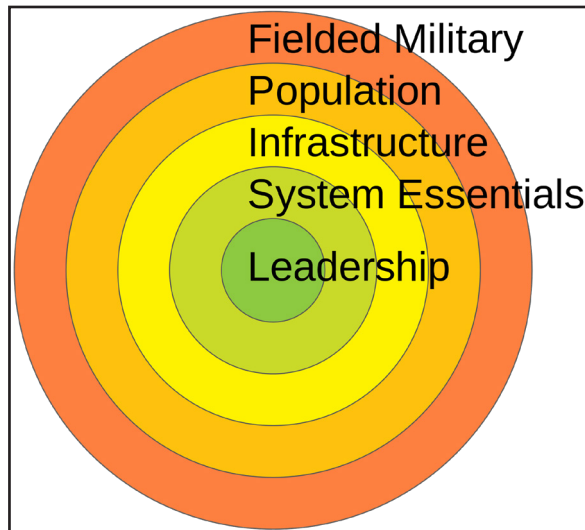


Figure Three: Warden's Five Rings Approach

144 J. Olsen, *John Warden and the Renaissance of American Air Power*, Potomac Books, Washington D.C., 2007, p. 328; D. Mets, *The Air Campaign: John Warden and the Classical Airpower Theorists*, Air University Press, Alabama, 1999.

145 H. Belote, 'Warden and the Air Corps Tactical School: What Goes Around Comes Around', *Airpower Journal*, Fall, 1999, <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj99/fal99/belote.html>, accessed 4 October 2012.

146 *ibid.*

Warden's primary objective was to secure enemy capitulation in minimal time through a winning air campaign. His approach is thus very difficult to categorise as purely coercive, as the transition to the use of overwhelming force is indistinct. Some authors have chosen to categorise decapitation as a distinct strategy of military coercion, along with denial and punishment¹⁴⁷, but as its application clearly goes beyond coercive to specific and deliberate targeting, it is perhaps more appropriately described as a targeting strategy that is designed to defeat, rather than coerce, particularly if directed against an autocratic leader. Nonetheless, Warden's contribution to the theory of coercive air power is significant.

In contrast to Warden, another contemporary air power theorist, Martin van Creveld, recently declared that the 'age of air power' is in a period of decline¹⁴⁸, an assessment made based on the long-term ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan where air power, after the initial campaign, has only played a contributory role. This assessment, however, has been shown to be inaccurate in the light of the subsequent air campaign in Libya, where coalition air operations played a dominant role. As the campaign in Libya demonstrated, for the foreseeable future, air power should continue to be seen as an effective and decisive military tool.

The Advantages of Air Power

Air forces can be switched from one objective to another. They are not committed to any one course of action as an army is, by its bulk, complexity, and relatively low mobility. While their action should be concentrated, it can be quickly concentrated afresh against other objectives, not only in a different place, but of a different kind.

B.H. Liddell Hart ¹⁴⁹

Air power has many attributes that result in it being considered the cleanest form of engagement in the military sense and thus the military tool of first choice. It is difficult to analyse these characteristics in isolation, as it is the sum of the related parts that result in the overall capability. Bearing this in mind, the following points illustrate some of the

147 See for example: Mueller, 'The Essence of Coercive Air Power'; Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*; and, Pape, *Bombing to Win*.

148 M. van Creveld, *The Age of Airpower*, Public Affairs, New York, 2011.

149 Accessed from *Quotations on airpower*, <http://www.afa.org/quotes/quotes.pdf>, accessed 2 October 2012.

key advantages that air power has over other military options. Cohen astutely points out that overall, it is the 'political seductiveness' of air power that holds the greatest appeal¹⁵⁰, specifically its ability to provide quick and decisive results without deploying ground forces, thus avoiding the prolonged and politically damaging engagements that governments most fear.

SPEED OF REACTION AND RESPONSIVENESS

While the use of non-military coercive tools such as economic sanctions may still be politically preferable, most non-military options take considerable time to be effective, and when there is a need to respond to an imminent or urgent threat such as genocide, the speed of reaction is critical. The ability to deploy air assets quickly gives any government immediate options in response to emerging global crises. In Libya in 2011, aircraft and personnel were immediately mobilised in response to UNSCR 1973 of 17 March authorising 'all necessary measures' to ensure the protection of civilians¹⁵¹, and the first air strikes on Libyan targets, conducted by the French Air Force, took place within 48 hours of the resolution. Air assets have the ability to respond far more quickly than ground or naval assets, and can swiftly demonstrate to the adversary not only the capability, but the firm resolve and intent of the coercer.

NO 'BOOTS ON THE GROUND'¹⁵²

States are becoming increasingly reluctant to engage in warfare that entails the deployment of ground forces, in light of both domestic and international concerns. When ground forces are deployed to an area of conflict, there are significant costs associated with both their deployment and maintenance, challenges in inserting and extracting personnel, and perhaps most critically, a far greater potential for high casualty rates, all of which can have adverse political consequences. Domestic populations are generally opposed to the deployment of their forces in conflicts which they do not see as directly relevant to their national interest. As the Australian Chief of Air Force (CAF), Air Marshal Geoff Brown, has recently observed: 'the spectre of incurring significant battlefield casualties in the prosecution of limited wars of limited consequence or strategic significance is a daunting possibility for any government.'¹⁵³ The use of air

150 Cohen, 'The Mystique of U.S. Airpower'.

151 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1973 (2011).

152 This term has been credited to various sources but is commonly used to signify the physical deployment of ground forces to an area of conflict.

153 G. Brown, AO, 'Chief of Air Force Address', *Air Power Conference*, 10 May, 2012. Available on podcast at <http://apdcpodcasts.blogspot.com.au>, accessed on 24 June 2013.

power in preference to land forces reduces the risk of coercer casualties; a risk further diminished when Uninhabited Aerial Vehicles (UAV) are employed.¹⁵⁴ The absence of troops on the ground also has the added advantage of mitigating against the possibility of the counter-coercive tactic of hostage-taking, as carried out by the Bosnian-Serb forces against UN forces in 1995.¹⁵⁵

The insertion of foreign troops against the wishes of a sovereign state is likely to be viewed as an illegitimate 'occupation' or 'invasion' by the host nation, and is unlikely to gain UN approval unless authorised on one of the four humanitarian grounds: ethnic cleansing, genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity.¹⁵⁶ Even then, many nations demonstrate an extreme reluctance to intervene in what they perceive to be another state's sovereign affairs. By the same token, it is naïve to assume that local populations are uniformly delighted with the prospect of foreign forces in their country. Evidence of the mixed reactions of civilians has been seen this decade in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

The use of air power clearly does not remove the 'intervention' component, nor enable the claims of illegitimate interference to be bypassed. Air power, however, has the ability to operate from bases remote from the conflict, thus obviating the need to occupy sovereign territory. The increasing global reach of air power has meant that in some circumstances, aircraft are able to operate from their home base if supported by Air-to-Air Refuelling (AAR) aircraft, also known as 'tankers'. The NATO coalition forces made extensive use of this capability in Libya, with US B-2 aircraft launching from, and returning directly to, their home base in the continental US, requiring four refuelings per bomber each way, but without needing recovery in another country en route¹⁵⁷, and other coalition aircraft were able to operate from European bases. The greater political acceptance of air power became evident in the Security Council debate over resolution 1973, where a number of states expressed their willingness to support a no-fly zone and arms embargo, and to approve 'all necessary measures' to protect civilians, but vehemently opposed the use of ground forces.¹⁵⁸

154 'Flight of the Drones – Why the future of air power belongs to unmanned systems', *The Economist*, 8 October 2011, <http://www.economist.com/node/21531433>, accessed 30 October 2011.

155 R. Smith, *The Utility of Force*, Penguin Books, London, 2005, pp. 351, 355-357.

156 G. Evans and M. Sahnoun, 'The Responsibility to Protect', *Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, December 2001.

157 J. Tirpak, 'Bombers Over Libya', *Air Force Magazine*, July 2011, pp. 36-39, p. 37.

158 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1973 (2011).

ABILITY TO DISCRIMINATE

Air power has traditionally been regarded as a major cause of ‘collateral damage’, (a term given to the unintended damage caused to infrastructure or the death of civilians), primarily because the damage caused by air power is highly visible and usually well-publicised.¹⁵⁹ While the damage to infrastructure causes some consternation, it is civilian casualties that justifiably receive the greatest attention. Statistically however, air power is not responsible for a great proportion of the civilian deaths in wartime. For instance, of the 40 million civilian deaths during World War II, less than five per cent were caused by air attack¹⁶⁰, yet it is still perceived as the predominantly guilty party. Air power has the ability to be highly discriminate. With the inherent ISR capabilities of many aircraft, the coordination of vital intelligence from other sources, communications enhanced through airborne platforms and the ability for strike aircraft to target dynamically rather than only at predesignated coordinates, the prospect of collateral damage and unintended consequences is now minimal. In addition, the technological improvements in aircraft and air-delivered munitions have enabled even greater discrimination.

PRECISION

With each successive air campaign, the improvements in precision weaponry become more evident. In the first Gulf War in 1991, only nine per cent of the munitions delivered by the US were precision-guided. By the time of Operation *Deliberate Force* in the Balkans in 1995, this had increased to 69 per cent of weapons deployed by the coalition¹⁶¹, and in Libya in 2011, all weapons deployed by all members of the coalition were precision weapons—ensuring that only the intended targets were struck. Precision air power has reduced the scale and likelihood of collateral damage. The risk of non-combatant casualties can never be entirely eliminated, for instance the right target can be struck at an inopportune time¹⁶², but precision weapons mitigate the risk as much as possible.

159 For each conflict in which air strikes have been used, the media eagerly reports civilian casualties.

Not all of these reports are independently verified, and some are subsequently discredited as deliberate strategies of mis-information. See for instance: Peterson, ‘Despite Libyan claims, little evidence of civilian casualties’.

160 Royal Australian Air Force, ‘Air Power and Collateral Damage: The Strategic Effect’, *Pathfinder*, Issue 126, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, 2010.

161 R. Hallion, *Precision guided munitions and the New Era of Warfare*, Paper 53, Air Power Studies Centre, Canberra, April 1997, pp. 11-14.

162 A prime example of this was when NATO deliberately attacked a railway bridge in Southern Serbia in April 1999. Tragically, a passenger train was approaching the bridge just as the missile struck it, resulting in 10 deaths and 16 wounded.

ABILITY TO APPLY PROPORTIONATE AMOUNTS OF FORCE

When tailoring a force response option within the context of coercion, the need to apply a proportionate response is critical. Too little force and the threat or action will lack credibility. Too much, and it risks being perceived as an overreaction causing excessive damage and masking a more serious intent. A disproportionate application of force is likely to generate significant objections from other states, and also runs the risk of alienating supportive local populations. In either case, the action risks failure. Air power has the ability to apply just enough force to illustrate capability and resolve, such as through precision strike against military targets, without causing unwarranted destruction.

TECHNOLOGICAL EDGE

Air forces are the most technologically focused of all military forces and use their technological edge as an asymmetrical advantage. One of the key asymmetries has been provided by the advent of stealth, defined as a ‘secret, clandestine or surreptitious procedure’.¹⁶³ When applied to aircraft, the result is a vehicle that is difficult to detect by sight, sound, or radar, thus providing a clear advantage over defending adversaries. Other technological advances that have improved air capabilities include the development of sophisticated intelligence capabilities; enhanced connectivity between platforms, command and control nodes, and ISR capabilities¹⁶⁴; the previously discussed improvements in precision weapons; advances in electronic warfare; and the longer range and increased payload of aircraft. All these capabilities are optimised to increase efficiency and ideally reduce the amount of force needed.

Unfortunately adversaries have learned to offset the technological advantages of air power by using their own asymmetric tactics. Less powerful opponents who find themselves in operations against state powers equipped with capable air forces now anticipate the use of air power and accordingly adapt tactics to neutralise such advantages.¹⁶⁵ These include things such as blending in with the civilian population or even using civilians as shields, or blurring the visual distinction between themselves and other forces on the ground by dressing in civilian clothes or using the same vehicles. Another tactic is to use residential locations as command and control centres, a practice which creates moral and ethical dilemmas for those responsible for targeting, and forms elements of a counter-coercive strategy.

¹⁶³ *The Macquarie Dictionary*, p. 1840.

¹⁶⁴ Kainikara, *Essays on Air Power*, p. 40.

¹⁶⁵ Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 131; Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might*, p. 2.

VERSATILITY

Many air assets have the ability to swiftly change from their original tasking, an essential requirement when the situation on the ground is dynamic and priorities are likely to change. Aircraft are also capable of being employed in multiple roles. Transport aircraft are used primarily to convey personnel and materiel, but some are also configured to serve as tankers to extend the range of combat aircraft. UAVs are able to act as vessels for the collection of information, or, if configured for such, as strike platforms. Conversely, fighter aircraft may be required to perform surveillance or reconnaissance roles at times in addition to their primary strike operations. The AP-3C, Australia's current maritime aircraft, has the ability to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface warfare.¹⁶⁶ The versatility of air power also provides force multiplication benefits. A single air platform has the ability to carry multiple weapons, increasing efficiency by enabling multiple targets to be prosecuted in a single mission.¹⁶⁷

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT

In the context of coercion, perhaps the greatest advantage that air power has over other forms of military power, second to its escalatory potential, is its ability to psychologically affect the adversary without even using force, or with only minimal force. Evidence of the psychological impact of air operations has been demonstrated in recent years in operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and most recently Yemen. UAVs play a significant role in psychological operations. In areas where they are employed, potential targets live with the fear that an armed UAV may be within striking distance at any time.¹⁶⁸ A report from July 2012 claimed that 'Al Qaeda hates the drones, they're absolutely terrified of the drones.'¹⁶⁹ While the actual kinetic effects of air operations have the greatest impact, even the threat of its employment has been seen to have adverse psychological effects on the adversary. In Gulf War I, the Coalition forces deliberately exploited this fear and dropped leaflets by air to warn Iraqis of imminent air attack. The knowledge that coalition air power would be brought to bear on them resulted in high levels of desertion. Lambert reports that 'the effect of the combined air and psyops campaign was catastrophic. For every Iraqi killed in the air and ground campaign, over 20 capitulated, most without

166 *Air Power Manual*, p. 88.

167 Kainikara, *Essays on Air Power*, p. 39.

168 STRATFOR, *Armed UAV operations 10 years on*, 12 January 2012, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/armed-uav-operations-10-years>, accessed 30 January 2012.

169 C. Swift, 'The Drone Blowback Fallacy', *Foreign Affairs*, 1 July 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137760/christopher-swift/the-drone-blowback-fallacy>, accessed 3 July 2012.

a fight.¹⁷⁰ A similarly compelling illustration of the psychological effect of air power was provided in a quote from a 1992 US Department of Defense study:

*An Iraqi officer told his interrogator that he had surrendered because of B-52 strikes. "But your position was never attacked by B-52s," his interrogator explained. "That is true," the Iraqi officer replied. "but I saw one that had been attacked".*¹⁷¹

The value of psychological effects in a coercive campaign cannot be over-stated. Air power has a powerful ability to cause adverse psychological effects, inducing changes in the cognitive domain of the adversary, which is a necessary precursor to behaviour change.

The Coercive Potential of Air Power: Gradual Escalation

The advantages outlined thus far all contribute to the key critical benefit of using air power as a tool of coercion: its scalability. Air power can deliver a measured response that can be withdrawn if the adversary chooses to modify their behaviour by complying with the coercer's demands, or increased to provide greater coercive leverage if required. At each point, prior to escalation, the adversary can choose to capitulate, bringing to an end the punishment being inflicted, ensuring that they will not encounter further forceful retribution. Mueller describes this as the 'surrender now or surrender later' choice, with the point being that early surrender should appear to the adversary to be 'a better deal'.¹⁷² Should the adversary choose not to surrender, they accept the risk that air power will be used on a larger scale, to the point of military defeat if necessary. In addition to scalability, a key feature of air power is the ability to restrict the adversary's own escalatory options¹⁷³, by denying them the use of their forces or disrupting their command and control capabilities, impacting the leaders' ability to communicate with their forces.

While the following stages illustrate how air power may be used in a gradual escalation of force, the continuum itself is not intended to present a step-by-step approach. Many of the roles listed overlap with each other, are reliant on one another, or are best

170 A. Lambert, 'Shattering Impact: The Psychology of Air Attack' in R. Hallion (ed.), *Airpower confronts an unstable world*, pp. 83-110, p. 92.

171 Department of Defense, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress*, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1992, p. 145; as quoted in S. Hosmer, *Psychological Effects of U.S. Air Operations in Four Wars 1941-1991: Lessons for U.S. Commanders*, RAND, Santa Monica, 1996, p. 164.

172 K. Mueller, 'The Essence of Coercive Air Power'.

173 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. xvi.

used in combination with other coercive mechanisms such as economic sanctions or increasing international diplomatic pressure.

DETERRENCE

In general, an air force's deterrent posture is formed by the combination of its assets and its reputation. Governments frequently find themselves under pressure to defend expensive air acquisitions; the current debate over the justification for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program is a case in point, but much of the true and unacknowledged worth of the asset lies in its role as a deterrent. If the aircraft is acknowledged as providing a superior capability, an adversary is unlikely to take it on and run the risk of a sound defeat. It is difficult to categorically prove the success of a deterrent, as an absence of attacks against a state can be attributed either to the would-be target's force capability, or merely indicate a lack of another's hostile intent. As a capability becomes more powerful, it also becomes more valuable as a deterrent, yet the likelihood that it will need to be used decreases. In this way, rather than just being a posture, deterrence can also be considered the outcome that results from a well-structured and potent military force.¹⁷⁴

Beyond deterrence, air forces may be called upon to perform more active roles to exert influence on an adversary. These subsequent activities commence at the low end of the spectrum of military coercion, and do not necessarily involve kinetic actions.

INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE AND RECONNAISSANCE

Air Force ISR is defined as 'an activity that synchronises and integrates the direction, collection, processing and dissemination of data as information and intelligence.'¹⁷⁵ In simpler terms, it is an activity that enables observation of the actions of others and interpretation of the information gained to use to advantage. ISR is both one of the primary roles and key enablers of a modern air force. Surveillance, 'the systematic observation of aerospace, surface or subsurface areas, places, persons or things' and reconnaissance, a more highly focused mission directed specifically at obtaining information 'about the activities and resources of an enemy or potential enemy'¹⁷⁶, can be either overt or covert, but in the former case, can be useful to remind an adversary that any preparatory or offensive actions are most likely being observed and recorded,

174 M. Evans, *Conventional Deterrence in the Australian Strategic Context*, Working paper 103, Land Warfare Studies Centre, Canberra, May, 1999, p. 31.

175 Royal Australian Air Force, Australian Air Publication 1001.3, *The Air Force Approach to ISR*, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, 2011, p. 1.2.

176 *ibid*, p. 2.3.

thus it will be difficult for them to hide their movements and aggressive intentions. Reconnaissance missions are often conducted prior to the approval of more forceful options, in particular when undesirable activities are suspected but not yet proven. In Libya in 2011, NATO Airborne Warning and Control (AWAC) assets were employed prior to the passage of the UNSC resolutions of February and March. The intention was both to obtain reliable information about the activities of the loyalist forces, and to increase the pressure on the Libyan government by demonstrating that their activities could not escape international attention.

The purpose of ISR is to provide information and decision superiority.¹⁷⁷ A force that has this, has the edge over an adversary, and will be better able to predict the adversary's future actions. In a coercive context, this means that the coercer can design a campaign that has an improved chance of influencing the adversary, or if force is to be used, can identify those targets whose destruction is likely to have the greatest effect on adversary decision-making.

FORCE PREPARATION AND MOBILISATION

The next overt sign of a coercer's intent is achieved by the visible preparation of their forces—one step short of actual operations. In the case of air power, this can be accomplished by the forward deploying of aircraft and personnel. The aircraft have not yet been utilised offensively, but their preparedness and location indicates an ability to do so. An example of such a deployment was that of No 3 and No 77 Squadrons deploying to Borneo from 1965-66 in reaction to the *Konfrontasi* between Malaysia and Indonesia.¹⁷⁸

PASSIVE MISSIONS

If the deployment of air power assets and personnel has thus far failed to result in the adversary's compliance, air assets may be utilised to perform passive missions such as show of force activities. These may take the form of non-kinetic actions, for instance air patrols, but when conducted by armed aircraft, contain the inherent threat of strike. It is also at this point that psychological or 'information' operations can be conducted through air. As discussed previously, the mere presence of an aircraft with a strike capability, inhabited or not, can achieve the desired objective. Other passive missions that can indicate intent include national evacuation operations (NEO), where civilians are deliberately extracted from an area prior to the area being targeted through offensive

¹⁷⁷ *ibid*, p. 2.12.

¹⁷⁸ P. Larard, "*Konfrontasi*" - *The Indonesian Confrontation. No.3 squadron in the regional hot-seat in the mid 1960s*, <http://www.3squadron.org.au/subpages/Confrontation.htm>, accessed 5 October 2012.

operations. NEOs give a strong indication to the target state that strike operations are imminent.

CONTROL OF THE AIR

Activities designed to achieve control of the air may be either passive or active, depending on the capabilities of the adversary. On occasion, the air forces of adversaries have been found to be lacking, such as in Iraq in 2003 where the coalition did not encounter any aerial opposition from Iraq whatsoever.¹⁷⁹ In addition, the state of an adversary's air defences has a significant impact on the level of operations undertaken. In most circumstances, however, to enforce a no-fly zone (NFZ) or to achieve control of the air in disputed territory, offensive or defensive counter air must be employed. These activities require the denial or destruction of the enemy's air capabilities¹⁸⁰, and suppression of their air defences either through electronic measures or strike operations.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NO-FLY ZONES

Once the use of military force has been authorised for an operation, a NFZ is frequently the first military sanction activated.¹⁸¹ NFZ are areas set up to deny the use of airspace, primarily to prevent the adversary from conducting offensive air operations, but also to deny them external support and to ensure that friendly air forces or approved humanitarian flights are uncontested. Alan Stephens has described the NFZ as 'perhaps the West's single most cost-effective military option'.¹⁸² Once a NFZ has been established, it can also incorporate 'no-drive zones', which can be enforced by air power and decrease an adversary's ability to conduct offensive ground operations or to build up forces.¹⁸³ The establishment of NFZs may or may not require strike operations in order to suppress enemy air defences; this will depend on the adversary's capabilities and intent.

To be credible and effective, an established NFZ must be patrolled by aircraft with offensive capabilities, and those enforcing the zone must have the political approval to carry out attack operations if required. As with many other aspects of coercive diplomacy, the effectiveness of the strategy is entirely undermined if those with the responsibility

179 Haulman, *What Happened to the Iraqi Air Force?*, p. 8.

180 AAP 1000-D—*The Air Power Manual*, pp. 141-2.

181 Another example of a 'military sanction' is a naval blockade, which is designed to prevent the transfer of arms, personnel or other supplies by sea.

182 A. Stephens, *The No-Fly Zone*, The Williams Foundation, 2011, www.williamsfoundation.org.au, accessed 04 July 2012.

183 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 135.

lack the will or ability to enforce it, as occurred in Bosnia in 1993-4.¹⁸⁴ The NFZs set up in Northern and Southern Iraq following the Gulf War were more successful in preventing Iraqi planes from attacking the Kurds and Shiites in the respective areas.¹⁸⁵ The successful establishment and enforcement of a NFZ creates control of the air, which then permits close attack, strike against key targets and information missions.¹⁸⁶

ELECTRONIC WARFARE

Military Electronic Warfare (EW) was first used in World War II with the electronic countermeasure of using chaff—metal foil dropped from aircraft—to confuse radar systems. The same principle is used today, but EW enabling technology continues to grow at an exponential rate. EW is used to control the electromagnetic spectrum by disrupting command and control capabilities, ‘jamming’ radar or communications transmissions, intercepting signals, and targeting the electronics of military assets. Successful EW can effectively create ‘a zone of complete silence that can be exploited to great advantage by an efficient military force.’¹⁸⁷ EW has been particularly effective in shutting down SAMs that would otherwise pose great risk to friendly aircraft, and disrupting enemy radar. During *Desert Storm* in 1991, the Iraqi KARI radar control systems were infected with a virus; planted and controlled by the Pentagon and activated as the first wave of bombers flew towards Baghdad, ‘momentarily blinding Saddam Hussein’s military.’¹⁸⁸ Twenty years later, the E/A-18G Growler, an aircraft with inherent airborne electronic attack capability, debuted in the Libyan campaign, and played a significant role in disabling the majority of the Libyan SAMs, enabling freedom of the air for friendly forces, and targeting the Libyan tanks’ electronics.¹⁸⁹ Following this positive introduction, the capability exhibited by the Growler is increasingly likely to be called upon as protective support for strike aircraft.¹⁹⁰

184 Despite there being 5300 recorded violations of the NFZ during Operation *Deny Flight*, only four aircraft were downed; all in a single episode. B. Lambeth, ‘The Transformation of American Air Power’, p. 180.

185 The NFZs in Iraq were challenged periodically, but in each case the US responded by attacking additional Iraqi military targets, such as air defence and radar installations. Haulman, *What Happened to the Iraqi Air Force?*, pp. 4-5.

186 A. Stephens, *The No-Fly Zone*.

187 Kainikara, *Essays on Air Power*, p. 51.

188 D. Bernard, ‘The coming cyberwar with Iran’, *Voice of America*, 20 March 12, <http://blogs.voanews.com/digital-frontiers/2012/03/20/the-coming-cyberwar-with-iran/>, accessed 08 July 2012.

189 G. Brown, ‘Chief of Air Force Address’.

190 In August 2012, Australia agreed to the conversion of 12 of its Super Hornet fighter aircraft into Growler aircraft, with operational capability expected to be reached by 2018.

One of the great advantages of EW is that it can have a considerable impact on a campaign, without a high risk of casualties.¹⁹¹ In a coercive sense, it can provide a weighty demonstration of the coercer's capability and intent, deny an adversary the use of their military assets or simply cause sufficient confusion to prevent them from coordinating action, making them realise that further action will be futile in the face of the opponent's superior capability. As a nonlethal weapon, EW is also a powerful political tool that may assuage concerns about the use of lethal force against another state.

STRIKE

At the extreme end of the spectrum of military coercion are strike operations, and it is through this activity that air power can generate the most devastating effects. As highlighted previously, there is a fine line between military force used to coerce and that used to destroy; in fact, once a punitive strike has been made against an adversary, continued military force would suggest that coercion has failed. For strike operations to be considered coercive, they must be limited in quantity and duration, and be discriminate and proportional. The targets should be carefully selected as those that will have the greatest ability to affect the adversary's will to continue, but without causing the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure or civilian casualties. To employ coercive air power in strike operations is to employ limited strikes for limited objectives, with the intention of allowing the coerced to capitulate. Capitulation should then result in the cessation of the air campaign, but with the threat of renewed action should the adversary initiate aggressive action once more. The air campaign in Libya, explored in detail in Chapter Six, made use of extensive air strikes, but as will be discussed, went well beyond the application of air power for purely coercive purposes.

POST-CONFLICT MONITORING

This final option in the spectrum of coercive air power is not always realised, but is an important aspect of operations. When the military campaign has concluded, and ideally, the political objective achieved, it is important to remember that air power may still be required to play a role—usually in a surveillance capacity—to help to ensure observance with stated agreements. While an adversary may have changed his behaviour, this does not necessarily mean that the beliefs that motivated the behaviour have changed, and compliance may need to be monitored to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated. Saddam Hussein's aggressive intent towards minorities in Iraq following the 1991 Gulf War is a case in point, and resulted in the continued enforcement of NFZs in both the

191 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. 133.

north and south. In addition to NFZs, post-conflict monitoring may be carried out through ISR. Where compliance is not maintained, the threat to escalate to air strikes remains an option.

The Limitations of Air Power

As outlined, air power has clear advantages over other forms of military power in many circumstances, but its limitations also must be recognised. Sometimes naval or land forces are better suited for the task at hand, and on many occasions, military force is not appropriate at all. This thesis deliberately focuses on the potential of air power as a tool of coercive diplomacy, but its limitations also need to be acknowledged, if only to recognise when its employment should not be the first option.

IMPERMANENCE

The impermanence of air assets is paradoxically both a strength and weakness. For the reasons highlighted previously, it is usually preferable not to have forces on the ground, but in some cases this may inhibit effectiveness. General Rupert Smith, who was the Commander of the UN forces in Bosnia in 1995, describes how the conditions on the ground made guns preferable to aircraft, as they could ‘apply fire just as accurately, could maintain the fire for longer and would not be weather dependent’.¹⁹² The case of Operation *Allied Force* also provides a potent illustration. The operation is generally considered a success for coercive air power as it resulted in the desired objective of bringing Milosevic to the negotiating table, and the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo. While the air campaign and concurrent diplomatic initiatives were taking effect though, Bosnian Serbs continued their ethnic cleansing of the enclave. From the air, NATO was unable to prevent the atrocities.

This paper has previously acknowledged the difficulties that air power faces targeting a dispersed enemy in an urban environment. In 1994, President Clinton defended the decision of the US not to engage air power in Rwanda with the observation: ‘Who was there to bomb?’¹⁹³ In this case, if land forces had been authorised to intervene, much of the slaughter could have been prevented. It must be said though, that precision targeting and the increased use of UAVs over the last decade has greatly improved air power’s ability to locate and destroy discrete targets, most recently Al Qaeda operatives in Yemen.

¹⁹² Smith, *The Utility of Force*, p. 355.

¹⁹³ As quoted in Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, p. 192.

RELIANCE ON ACCURATE INTELLIGENCE

All military campaigns are extremely reliant on good intelligence, but accurate and timely intelligence is absolutely critical for effective targeting in an air campaign. Faulty intelligence can lead to targeting errors and unintended collateral damage, which has the ability to undermine an air campaign, potentially leading to coalition fragmentation and international condemnation.¹⁹⁴ This may then result in a reduced commitment to the coercive campaign.

COST

The costs associated with sustaining a deployed force are lower for an air force located remotely from a conflict than an army on site, however it is important to acknowledge two other factors associated with cost. One is that air forces still need extensive support for basing, maintenance and logistics. The second is that the sheer expense of acquiring and operating air assets can make states reluctant to deploy them for fear of their loss in combat. In 2010, a report to the United States Senate Committee on Armed Services projected the overall unit cost of an F-35A JSF to be approximately US\$112 million.¹⁹⁵ With such a price tag, it is reasonable to question whether governments will be prepared to risk such precious assets in combat, particularly if the conflict is only a 'war of choice'.

POLITICAL CHALLENGES

With the improvements in the global reach of aircraft, particularly with AAR playing a significant role, aircraft do not always need to be deployed to the area of operations to conduct an air campaign. A government would be foolish to assume, however, that where proximity is required, that convenient local bases will always be available. NATO was fortunate that Italy was committed to the 2011 Libya campaign, and was willing and able to host international forces, but this will not always be the case. As a member of the 'coalition of the willing' in 2003, Australia was faced with this challenge and was required to engage in intense negotiations with another country to enable the basing of the

194 In May 1999, the reputation of an otherwise effective air campaign was damaged when the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade was struck by NATO missiles. The building was deliberately struck, but in the mistaken belief that it was actually a Yugoslav military facility. The incident created significant tensions in US/China diplomatic relations. See K. Cochrane, *Kosovo Targeting – A Bureaucratic and Legal Nightmare: The Implications for US/Australian Interoperability*, Aerospace Centre, Commonwealth of Australia, June 2001, p. 12.

195 'JSF faces US Senate grilling', *Australian Aviation*, 12 March 2010, <http://australianaviation.com.au/2010/03/jsf-faces-us-senate-grilling/>, accessed 12 July 2012.

RAAF's F-A 18 detachment closer to the area of operations.¹⁹⁶ In every instance, states will act first in their own national interest. If the positioning of foreign military assets will cause tensions with neighbours, access is unlikely to be approved.

The Effective and Appropriate use of Air Power

Air power on its own cannot bring about a political resolution. Even when it is the only military instrument being employed, public or private government-level interactions provide the essential communicatory and negotiating components within the overarching strategy of coercive diplomacy. The value of air power lies in its ability to create the conditions that make a satisfactory political outcome possible, such as denying a state the ability to use their military capability, or in demonstrating to an adversary that further aggressive action is futile. The objective is not to 'win the war' but to enable a positive strategic outcome, as occurred in Bosnia in 1995, Kosovo in 1999 and Libya in 2011.

To enable air power to be used effectively, politicians need to clearly understand what it is that air power can and cannot do. Air campaigns unfairly risk being labelled 'failures' if they do not result in the desired political objective, but 'failure' is generally more attributable to an unwillingness or inability at the political level to set and maintain achievable objectives. Equally important is that air power be used appropriately and not employed in an inappropriate circumstance that will ultimately damage its credibility, harming the potential for it to be used as a credible coercive threat the next time.¹⁹⁷ Operation *Rolling Thunder* in Vietnam is often cited as a case where air power was entirely ineffective, but as Lambeth asserts: 'air power can never be more effective than the strategy it is expected to serve'.¹⁹⁸ In the case of *Rolling Thunder*, the US political leaders were largely to blame for a half-hearted approach that applied air power in a hesitant manner, as well as assigning goals to it that made success unlikely.

It is rare that an air campaign is finished as quickly as promised by political leaders, and panic in the public and media is apparent when success does not come quickly enough.¹⁹⁹ The air campaigns of *Desert Storm*, *Deliberate Force* and *Allied Force* were all noted for their relatively short time frames: 40, 22 and 78 days respectively, and similar expectations were raised for the Libyan intervention. As Ramesh Thakur points out however, 'six

¹⁹⁶ Details of this interaction are classified.

¹⁹⁷ Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, pp. 138-139.

¹⁹⁸ B. Lambeth, 'The Use of Military Force in the Contemporary Military Environment', *RAAF Air Power Conference*, Canberra, 10 May 2012.

¹⁹⁹ A. Stephens, *Kosovo, or the Future of War*, Air Power Studies Centre, paper 77, August, 1999, p. 7.

months to overthrow an entrenched and determined dictator is not excessively long.’²⁰⁰ Despite the lengthy engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan this century, the general Western public still has an expectation of quick and decisive results, minimal casualties, and a successful outcome. This expectation means that continued public support for sustained operations is never guaranteed.

Conclusion

Politicians keen to avoid a prolonged and costly military engagement will be tempted by the prospect of ‘casualty free’ air power, but they must understand that for the threat to be credible, they must be willing to actually use it, have a believable capacity to escalate the level of force, and be able to sustain operations over a protracted period; otherwise the threat is an empty gesture that will hold no promise of consequences to an adversary who will feel confident enough to ignore it. Equally important is an appreciation of the limitations of air power, to ensure that it is indeed the most appropriate tool to be used in the specific circumstances. While air power is justifiably considered the instrument of first military choice in many situations, it should never be regarded as the only choice.

Air power provides a range of coercive options, both kinetic and non-kinetic. Despite the fact that military force of any kind is seen as anathema to many, coercive air power enables a far more reasonable and humane application of force compared to engaging in a prolonged ground offensive that is likely to result in higher casualties on both sides. Air power, if used appropriately, can bring about a quick and decisive end to a conflict, which can ultimately save lives.

In Libya in 2011, the saving of civilian lives was the explicit UN objective, and air power was the political and military instrument of choice used to realise the objective. Throughout the campaign, a number of the escalatory options detailed above were employed both to meet the UN objective and in an attempt to coerce Colonel Gaddafi. The next section of the thesis will examine the political climate of Libya over the four decades of Gaddafi’s rule, and assess the effectiveness of air power and other coercive instruments throughout the 2011 intervention.

200 R. Thakur, ‘Libya and the Responsibility to Protect’, *Security Challenges*, Kokoda Foundation, Vol. 7, No. 4, Summer 2011, pp. 13-25, p. 23.

CHAPTER 5

LIBYA 1969-2011: THE GADDAFI YEARS

Qadhafi deserves to be treated as a pariah in the world community.

Ronald Reagan, January 1986²⁰¹

History should show that if there was any mold, I have contributed toward its destruction. If there has been any shackle binding the Libyan people, I have participated in its demolition until the Libyan people have become free.

Mu'ammarr al Qaddafi, November 1987²⁰²

Introduction

Libya has been chosen as a case study for this thesis not because it provides a textbook case of coercive diplomacy (it does not), but because it is the most contemporary case of an international coalition employing air power, rather than land forces or extensive naval power, alongside other coercive and diplomatic measures. The next three chapters will explore the background to the political situation in Libya, the emergence of the 'Arab Spring', and the intervention that was the international response to the Libyan crisis. Finally, the intervention will be analysed against the theoretical frameworks of Jakobsen and Jentleson to determine to what extent the actions of the UN, NATO, and contributing countries, constituted a case of coercive diplomacy and to assess their effectiveness.

To better comprehend the events in Libya in 2011, it helps to have a rudimentary understanding of the prevailing political climate, in particular the 42-year period of Gaddafi's rule, leading up to the civil unrest. This chapter will provide a brief introduction to that period.

201 As quoted in R.B. St John, *Libya: From Colony to Independence*, Oneworld Publications, Oxford, 2008, p. 160.

202 *ibid*, p. 193.

The Political Landscape of Libya

In 1969, King Idris of Libya was overthrown by a group of junior Army officers in a bloodless coup—the ‘One September Revolution’. The coup was led by Captain Muammar Gaddafi, who immediately promoted himself to Colonel and established himself as head of the Revolutionary Command Council, taking control of both the executive and legislative arms of government. Gaddafi was not an unpopular figure in Libya during his first decade of rule. His initiatives to gain more favourable contracts with private oil companies, and subsequently to nationalise part of the oil industry generated substantial revenue for the country. Libyan citizens benefited from improved access to housing, health care and education, and the minimum wage for workers was raised and they were allowed to share in company profits.²⁰³ Throughout the 1970s, most Libyans experienced significant improvements in their quality of life as a result of the initiatives of their new leader.

However, Gaddafi’s motives were not entirely altruistic. They were also designed to cement his position as sole and unquestioned leader and to bring legitimacy to his rule. In 1977 he proclaimed himself only a symbolic figurehead with no power, the ‘Leader of the Revolution’,²⁰⁴ but in reality he kept a firm grip on control of the provincially divided country and retained the command of the military. Throughout his time in power, Gaddafi surrounded himself with only trusted fellow Army officers, family, and members of his tribe. He frequently made ministerial changes and kept his military leadership weak in an attempt to ensure that there would be no-one capable of mounting a successful coup against him.²⁰⁵ His opponents were denounced and persecuted, and in some cases, publicly executed. The people of Libya could continue to benefit from Gaddafi’s reforms, but only if they did not challenge his authority. In time, Gaddafi’s personal ambition and megalomania smothered his socio-economic initiatives.

The early Gaddafi years reflected his deep Islamist roots and a strong desire for Arab nationalism. Gaddafi was strongly anti-Western, and amongst his first actions as leader were the early closure of US and UK military bases in Libya, and the expulsion of Italian citizens.²⁰⁶ As the gulf between the Libya and the West deepened, Libya’s relationship with Russia improved, primarily as a result of the willingness of Russia to sell large quantities of military equipment to the North African nation.²⁰⁷ Gaddafi’s relationship

203 St John, *Libya*, pp. 148-150.

204 *ibid*, p. 169.

205 J. Oakes, *Libya: The History of Gaddafi’s Pariah State*, The History Press, Great Britain, 2011, p. 139.

206 Note however that many countries, in particular the US, chose to separate their commercial interests in Libya from their diplomatic relations. See St John *Libya*, p. 177.

207 St John, *Libya*, p. 144.

with the West was acrimonious throughout the late 20th century, particularly given his overt support and funding for disparate terrorist organisations across the world, including the PLO and the IRA. Relations plummeted in the 1980s following 1981 and 1986 military skirmishes between the US and Libya over territorial claims in the Gulf of Sirte²⁰⁸, the 1984 shooting of a British policewoman from inside the Libyan Embassy in London and the 1986 Berlin disco bombing, which killed two American marines and injured many others. The two incidents that resulted in the greatest loss of life and an intensification of the international opposition to Gaddafi were the 1988 bombing of US Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which resulted in the deaths of 270 people, and the mid-air explosion of French UTA Flight 772 over Niger in 1989, which killed 170 people.²⁰⁹

Gaddafi's clear support for terrorism did not result in any strong international military reprisal other than the 1986 US air strike codenamed Operation *El Dorado Canyon*. The primary retaliation took the form of ever-heavier sanctions imposed both by the UN and the US, a freeze on Libyan assets, and increased political isolation. Gaddafi also discovered that his radical actions were not endearing him to other Arab nations, with his efforts at establishing Arab unity frequently rebuffed. Arab antipathy towards him was further compounded after an unsuccessful attempt in 2003 to assassinate Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah.²¹⁰ In 2007 Gaddafi snubbed the Arab States, shunning an Arabic summit held in Saudi Arabia and explaining his boycott by proclaiming: 'Libya has turned its back on the Arabs ... Libya is an African nation. As for Arabs, may God keep them happy and far away.'²¹¹ This statement illustrated how far he had travelled from his failed attempts to unify Arab states behind Libya back in the early 1970s, and why he was unable to rely on them for support when the international community united against him in 2011.

The acrimonious relationship between Gaddafi and the West first changed in late 2003, when Gaddafi declared that he was giving up his Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) program, and agreed to allow international inspectors into Libya. He had also surrendered the two Libyan nationals suspected of orchestrating the Lockerbie bombing, settled the case financially, and offered financial compensation for the 1989 UTA bombing. In return, sanctions against the country were lifted by the US, who also

208 Oakes, *Gaddafi's Pariah State*, p. 145.

209 *ibid*, p. 158.

210 I. Warde, 'Gaddafi on political assassinations and the glory of suicide', *The Huffington Post*, 3 March 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ibrahim-warde/gaddafi-on-political-assassinations_b_834558.html, accessed 10 October 2012.

211 S. Sarrar, 'Gaddafi says only Islam a universal religion', *Reuters*, 30 March 2007, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/03/30/us-religion-gaddafi-idUSL3059334720070330>, accessed 21 May 2012.

subsequently resumed partial diplomatic relations in 2004 and full diplomatic relations in 2006.²¹² Commercial interactions also recommenced, with US and UK petroleum companies returning to Libya. This period of engagement between the West and Libya illustrated the positive outcome that could be achieved through coercive diplomacy.²¹³ Gaddafi was delighted with his return to the international fold, particularly for the attention and revived status it afforded him, but many remained cynical about both his own motivations and those of the West, and questioned the wisdom of reopening ties with the autocrat.²¹⁴

The 'Arab Spring'

Libya was not the only state in the region under autocratic rule in the latter half of the 20th century; in fact this was, and remains, the standard method of government in the majority of Arabic states. In early 2011, the populations of a number of Arabic nations began to rise up against their oppressive rulers. Labelled the 'Arab Spring', the uprisings began in Tunisia and quickly spread to Egypt. The events were 'carried in newspapers and magazines, on Twitter and Facebook, on the airwaves on al Jazeera and al Arabiyya.'²¹⁵ The relatively quick results in Tunisia and Egypt gave confidence to many within Libya to publicly oppose their own leader, with the trigger attributed to the arrest of government critics including the lawyer representing the families of some 1200 prisoners still unaccounted for from the 1996 Abu Salim prison massacre.²¹⁶ A small street protest in Benghazi on 15 February, similar to those that had taken place in Tunis and Cairo, was the first sign of public discontent.²¹⁷ Within a few days, the unrest had spread west from Benghazi to the cities of Misrata and the Libyan capital, Tripoli.

212 US Department of State, Office of the Historian, 'A Guide to the United States History of Recognition, Diplomatic and Consular Relations, by Country Since 1776: Libya', <http://history.state.gov/countries/libya>, accessed 10 October 2012.

213 Jentleson and Whytock, 'Who "Won" Libya?' pp. 47-86. The strategies employed by the West leading up to 2003 will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 8.

214 A controversial action at this time was British Prime Minister Tony Blair publicly embracing Gaddafi. See A. Chancellor, 'History should come down hard on Tony Blair for embracing Gaddafi', *The Guardian*, 25 February 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/25/tony-blair-colonel-gaddafi-alexander-chancellor>, accessed 1 June 2012.

215 F. Ajami, 'The Arab Spring at One: A Year of Living Dangerously', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2012, viewed 20 April 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137053/fouad-ajami/the-arab-spring-at-one>, accessed 1 June 2012.

216 Human Rights Watch, 'World Report 2012: Libya', <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-libya>, accessed 29 January 2012.

217 Oakes, *Gaddafi's Pariah State*, p. 160.

The critical difference between the uprising in Libya, and those in Tunisia and Egypt, was the government response. Despite some early violent clashes between protestors and government forces in the other two countries, both Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia, and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt capitulated or fled within two months. Gaddafi, however, remained defiant and ordered his military to retaliate against the protestors with lethal force. Unlike the officer corps in Tunisia and Egypt²¹⁸, the Libyan military, with their history of instinctive obedience and loyalty to Gaddafi, readily complied. When the tables turned and Gaddafi's forces fled towards Tripoli, pursued by the rebels, Gaddafi proclaimed that he would 'cleanse Libya house by house' to be rid of the anti-government protestors and civilians he described as 'rats and mercenaries.'²¹⁹

As with the other countries involved in the Arab Spring, the violent scenes were recorded by citizens with mobile phones and immediately relayed through social medial networks and news outlets to the rest of the world. The damning footage and media reports, in combination with Gaddafi's public vitriol, incited condemnation of the regime and generated calls for immediate international intervention.

International Intervention in Libya

International reaction was swift, but initially restricted to public statements and diplomatic initiatives. On 20 February 2011, the US condemned the Libyan government's use of lethal force against protesters, and suggested that a 'full range of options' was being considered²²⁰, although it did not specify what these might be. The UN appointed a Special Envoy to initiate contact with both the Libyan authorities and the opposition²²¹, and both the Arab League and African Union (AU) joined the chorus of condemnation, with the Arab League also suspending Libya from its membership. On 22 February the UNSC issued a press statement on Libya, calling for

218 D. Kirkpatrick, 'Top Tunisian general pledges support for revolution', *New York Times*, 24 January 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/25/world/africa/25tunis.html?_r=1, accessed 29 May 2012; and N. MacFarquhar, 'Egypt's military is seen as pivotal in next step', *New York Times*, 28 January 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/29/world/middleeast/29forces.html>, accessed 29 May 2012.

219 J. Hemming and D. Evans, 'Defiant Gaddafi vows to die as martyr, fight revolt', *Reuters*, 22 February 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/22/us-libya-protests-idUSTRE71G0A620110222>, accessed 29 May 2012.

220 E. Schmitt, 'U.S. "gravely concerned" over violence in Libya', *New York Times*, 20 February 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/21/world/middleeast/21diplomacy.html?_r=1, accessed 5 August 2012; and 'Libya protests: Obama condemns 'outrageous crackdown'', *BBC News*, 24 February 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12562574>, accessed 5 August 2012.

221 A. Williams, 'The United Nations in Libya', *United States Institute of Peace*, 21 April 2011, <http://www.usip.org/publications/the-united-nations-in-libya>, accessed 25 May 2012.

the Government of Libya 'to meet its responsibility to protect its population... [and for] the Libyan authorities to act with restraint, to respect human rights and international humanitarian law, and to allow immediate access for international human rights monitors and humanitarian agencies.'²²² In the following days, French President Sarkozy proposed that the EU adopt sanctions, and the US imposed unilateral sanctions, also closing its embassy in Tripoli on 25 February.²²³

The UN press statement was followed by UNSCR 1970 of 26 February 2011, which passed unanimously with no attempts by the permanent members of the Security Council to use their veto, and there were no abstentions from the vote. The resolution affirmed the Libyan authorities's 'responsibility to protect' its population, and also initiated more forceful actions, namely imposing an arms embargo, issuing a travel ban on the Gaddafi family and key members of the government, freezing Gaddafi family assets, and referring the Libyan crisis to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for investigation into crimes against humanity.²²⁴ Both the EU and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) also mirrored the language and actions of UNSCR 1970, suspending Libya from the Human Rights Council, calling for an immediate end to the violence and referring the situation in Libya to the ICC.

Declaring the appeals to be international interference, Gaddafi disregarded them. He refused to permit humanitarian aid convoys to enter besieged Libyan towns²²⁵, and his forces moved back towards the rebel-held city of Benghazi. Major human rights organisations, including the International Crisis Group and Human Rights Watch (HRW), demanded quick UN action to halt the impending violence. Between 2-12 March, the pressure on Gaddafi mounted. The ICC confirmed that it was investigating the Gaddafi regime for crimes against humanity, NATO deployed AWAC aircraft to provide 24-hour monitoring of movements in Libyan airspace, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and members of the Arab League called upon the UNSC to enforce a NFZ over Libya and to establish safe zones to protect the civilian population.²²⁶ Meanwhile, the Libyan military continued their air and artillery attacks on rebel forces.

222 SC/10180, *Security Council Press Statement on Libya*, 22 February 2011, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10180.doc.htm>, accessed 28 May 2012.

223 H. Cooper and M. Landler, 'U.S. imposes sanctions on Libya in wake of crackdown', *New York Times*, 26 February 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/26/world/middleeast/26diplomacy.html?pagewanted=2>, accessed 5 August 2012.

224 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1970 (2011).

225 A. Bellamy and P. Williams, 'The New Politics of Humanitarian Protection?' *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 4, 2011, pp. 845-870, p. 840.

226 E. O'Brien and A. Sinclair, *The Libyan War: A Diplomatic History February-August 2011*, New York University, Center on International Cooperation, New York, August 2011, pp. 9-14.

International initiatives to this point were coercive in the sense that they had been designed to compel Gaddafi to cease his attacks on rebel forces and civilians. Showing no progress, however, and with an increasingly volatile situation on the ground, the focus moved from appeals and non-military coercive efforts to an urgent need to prevent the imminent bloodshed. Gradually most governments and regional organisations realised that diplomatic efforts in isolation would be insufficient to protect the Libyan people who were in lethal danger.²²⁷ The disparate calls for action and the weeks of indecision about the most appropriate course of action to take finally changed to a more unified stance. In the absence of any compromise agreement, and with Gaddafi's forces showing no attempt to reverse their aggression or halt their advance towards opposition strongholds in the East, UNSCR 1973 of 17 March 2011 proposed the authorisation of military action. In addition to the measures enacted via UNSCR 1970, resolution 1973 mandated 'all necessary measures' to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas under attack or threat of attack in Libya.²²⁸ 'All necessary measures', however, specifically excluded a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory—an exclusion supported by the Libyan rebels. The UNSC also asked Arab States to cooperate in implementing the NFZ in order to give the resolution added legitimacy. Arab involvement in the decision-making was essential to rebut the anticipated claim of Western neo-colonialism.

The resolution was passed by a vote of 10 in favour to none against with five abstentions: Brazil, China, Germany, India and Russia. Political sensitivity about the proposed action was evident. The Chinese representative, despite being unenthusiastic about the prospect of intervention, stated that it did not block the action with a negative vote 'in consideration of the wishes of the Arab League and the African Union'.²²⁹ Many other states raised concerns about foreign occupation, with reinforcement that the resolution should not result in the occupation of 'even an inch' of Libyan territory by foreign forces²³⁰, and UNSC representatives stressed that the objective of international intervention was solely to protect civilians from further harm. Action was mandated under Chapter VII of the UN Charter²³¹, authorising international intervention in another state's sovereign affairs, with explicit reference to the principle of R2P.

227 V. Popovski, 'The Concepts of Responsibility to Protect and Protection of Civilians', *Kokoda Foundation Security Challenges*, Vol. 7, No. 4, Summer 2011, pp. 1-12, p. 8.

228 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1973 (2011).

229 *ibid.* Li Baodong, also the Security Council President, but speaking in his national capacity.

230 *ibid.* Lebanese representative to the UN, Nawaf Salem.

231 Chapter VII authorises the Security Council to 'determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression', and act to 'maintain or restore international peace and security'.

R2P is defined as ‘the collective international responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity’.²³² The UNGA had unanimously endorsed the principle of R2P in 2005—its purpose being to bridge the gap between ‘arrogant unilateral intervention’ and ‘institutionalised indifference’.²³³ It came about as a result of the perceived failure of the world to act to prevent atrocities in Rwanda, Somalia and the former Republic of Yugoslavia amongst others; critically to ensure that there was a way to protect citizens against violence perpetrated by their own governments who were attempting to use the sanctity of their borders as a shield against foreign intervention.

The doctrine is broken down into three pillars: the first placing the responsibility on the state to protect its own citizens, the second providing assistance to states where necessary in order to assist them to protect their citizens, and the third endorsing international action where states are unwilling to protect their citizens.²³⁴ With states’ natural desires to primarily act in their own interests, international consensus on the circumstances that justify intervention in the name of R2P is difficult to attain.²³⁵ The case of Libya in 2011 was the first occasion where the UNSC authorised the use of force in support of R2P without the express consent of the target state; a fact that gave many in the Security Council, particularly the ‘BRIC’ nations: Brazil, Russia, India and China, a sense of unease. The resolution did not explicitly refer to pillar three of R2P, choosing instead to frame it in pillar one terms²³⁶, but the intent of pillar three: ‘coercive international action with the final option being military intervention to protect at-risk populations from atrocity crimes’, was clearly evident.²³⁷ The UNSC was effectively endorsing military force as the option of last resort, recognising that other options such as economic sanctions, arms embargoes and asset freezes had already been attempted. In Libya, military force was indeed the last option. Coercive alternatives short of military force had been tried and had failed.

In anticipation of international perceptions, the US was initially reluctant to get involved in a military operation. Former US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated at a press conference on 1 March 2011: ‘All of the options beyond humanitarian assistance

232 United Nations, *2005 World Summit Outcome Fact Sheet*, http://www.un.org/summit2005/presskit/fact_sheet.pdf, accessed 01 June 2012.

233 R. Thakur, ‘Libya and the Responsibility to Protect’, p. 17.

234 *ibid*, p. 16.

235 M. Notaras and V. Popovski, ‘The Responsibility to Protect’, *United Nations University*, <http://unu.edu/articles/peace-security-human-rights/responsibility-to-protect-and-the-protection-of-civilians>, accessed 7 June 2012.

236 T. Dunne and J. Gifkins, ‘Libya and the State of Intervention’, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 5, 2011, pp. 515-529, p. 521.

237 R. Thakur, ‘Libya and the Responsibility to Protect’, p. 18.

and evacuations are complex ... We also have to think about, frankly, the use of the US military in another country in the Middle East.²³⁸ He recognised the likely unpopularity of another US-led military intervention in an Arab country and the sensitivity of the surrounding Arab states. The French and British, however, were adamant that immediate action needed to be taken, and that Europe should lead.²³⁹ The US finally agreed to back the operation on 15 March, just prior to the second Security Council resolution, but insisted that the operational leadership be transferred from the US to NATO as early as possible.²⁴⁰

With the passing of UNSCR 1973, the coercive threat against Gaddafi finally seemed to provoke a response. Within a day of the resolution, the Libyan government announced that it would halt its military operations, and the Libyan foreign minister declared a ceasefire.²⁴¹ This overture was treated with scepticism, however, with the international community not convinced that the call for a ceasefire was genuine, and concerned that it would not be honoured by the government forces. With the memory of the massacres in Rwanda and Srebrenica still in the minds of many, the potential risk of inaction was not a gamble they were prepared to take, and the continuing offensive on the ground gave them no reassurance that loyalist forces would halt their aggressive actions.

Government forces continued to march toward Benghazi and other Libyan cities continued to be attacked by artillery fire. Libya's action in claiming that it was taking one path, while pursuing its original intentions, hardened the resolve of the coalition. It also meant that future overtures from Gaddafi or his government would be treated with cynicism. The coalition was now determined to take advantage of the UNSC approval to use 'all necessary measures': the instrument of choice—air power.

238 CBS News, 'Libyan no-fly zone would require attack', 2 March 2011, http://www.cbsnews.com/2100-202_162-20038352.html, accessed 7 June 2012.

239 President Sarkozy and Prime Minister Cameron made this clear in statements to reporters and addresses to the European Union Emergency Summit on Libya and North Africa on 11 March 2011. See N. Watt, 'Nicolas Sarkozy calls for air strikes on Libya if Gaddafi attacks civilians', *The Guardian*, 11 March 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/11/nicolas-sarkozy-libya-air-strikes>, accessed 11 October 2012.

240 M.B. Sheridan, 'Clinton says US supports, but will not lead military intervention against Libya', in *The Washington Post*, 20 March 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/clinton-says-us-supports-but-will-not-lead-operation-against-libya/2011/03/19/AB9nkFw_story.html, accessed 28 February 2012.

241 'Libya declares ceasefire but fighting goes on', *Aljazeera*, 18 March 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/03/2011318124421218583.html>, accessed 28 February 2012.

CHAPTER 6

AIR POWER OVER LIBYA

The intervention should be reckoned as a case of airpower successfully achieving the strategic effect it was directed to pursue and, once again, defying traditional military expectations.

K. Mueller²⁴²

Introduction

In contrast to so many other cases of global inaction in the face of atrocities committed within a sovereign state's borders, the international response to the events in Libya was uncharacteristically swift. The international community had taken two years to intervene with air power in Bosnia, and a year in Kosovo. By contrast, consensus on Libya had taken only 31 days.²⁴³ Operation *Odyssey Dawn* began less than 48 hours after UNSCR 1973 was passed. It was led by the US, but with major contributions and independent initiatives from the UK and France in particular, and ran from 19 March 2011 until 31 March 2011, at which point NATO took over command of the coalition forces under Operation *Unified Protector*.

For both political and pragmatic reasons, air power was the military instrument of first choice in Libya. UNSCR 1973 explicitly forbade 'a foreign occupation force on any part of Libyan territory'²⁴⁴, thus the employment of international ground forces was not an option. However, even if their use had been sanctioned, air power was better suited to provide an immediate and discriminate response, and best able to create the urgently required effects on the ground. Air assets were activated immediately following the resolution, their global reach allowing deployment from bases in continental US or Europe, prior to the activation of more convenient bases in Italy. By using air assets rather than ground forces, the risk to coalition personnel was low, and the use of air-delivered

242 K. Mueller, 'Airpower; Two Centennial Appraisals', *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, Winter 2011, pp. 123-132, p. 130.

243 Report to US Congress on US Libyan Operations 15 June 2011, 'US Activities in Libya', p. 8, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/57966680/US-Activities-in-Libya-Report-to-US-Congress-on-US-Libyan-Operations-June-15-11>, accessed 14 March 2012.

244 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1973 (2011).

precision weaponry also bode well for keeping unintended casualties on the ground to a minimum; both critical factors in the legitimacy of the campaign. Utilising air power also enabled coalition countries who had trained together to integrate their operations in combined missions. A final advantage was the psychological impact of the early cruise missile and air strikes—a blow to the loyalist forces, but a welcome sign of international support to the protestors and rebels, who could finally see a decisive response to their pleas for help.

The Air Campaign – Operation *Odyssey Dawn*

Military operations in the first phase of *Odyssey Dawn* commenced with French Air Force Rafale and Mirage fighter-bombers targeting loyalist armoured vehicles, which were en route to Benghazi, in an application of *denial*; a strategy that focuses on attacking the enemy's military capability to prevent them from attaining their goal.²⁴⁵ The opening action by the French explicitly matched the primary declared objective of the UN resolution: to protect the citizens of Benghazi, with the additional effect that an unambiguous message of intent was delivered to Gaddafi and his forces.

The initial strikes against the tanks departed from the traditional air campaign priority, the destruction of air defence assets to ensure protection for subsequent aircraft²⁴⁶, but attacks against Libya's Integrated Air Defence System (IADS) and SAM systems around Tripoli and Benghazi began later that evening, with US warships and British submarines launching Tomahawk land-attack missiles. The cruise missile strikes were followed by US B-2 offensive counter air sorties against key Libyan airfields²⁴⁷, British air-launched cruise missiles, and US B-1B attacks against ammunition depots, combat aircraft, vehicle maintenance facilities, command and control buildings and additional Libyan air defence sites using satellite guided Joint Direct Attack Munitions.²⁴⁸

Libya's IADS was said to have been 'obliterated' within 72 hours²⁴⁹, thus within this time the coalition was able to establish air superiority and implement a NFZ over the northern half of the country. Once again, the key coalition strategy employed was that of denial.

245 The French EW capability of the Rafale aircraft reportedly provided excellent situational awareness, allowing them to avoid fixed SAM sites. Email communication between author and Australian Defence Attaché in Paris, Group Captain Mark Green, 20 September 2012.

246 C. Anrig, 'Allied Air Power over Libya', *Air and Space Power Journal*, Winter 2011, pp. 89-109, p. 89.

247 *ibid*, p. 91.

248 J. Tirpak, 'Bombers Over Libya', *Air Force Magazine*, July 2011, pp. 36-39, p. 37.

249 I. Daalder and J. Stavridis, 'NATO's Victory in Libya: The Right Way to Run an Intervention', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137073/ivo-h-daalder-and-james-g-stavridis/natos-victory-in-libya>, accessed 26 April 2012.

The NFZ prevented Gaddafi's air force from using Libyan airspace to launch attacks, as they had throughout late February and early March, and enabled friendly combat aircraft to engage their targets without the threat of enemy air defences. The Libyan air force learned a quick lesson about challenging the NFZ. An aircraft they launched on 24 March was immediately destroyed by the French Air Force after it landed.²⁵⁰ In another application of denial, NATO took control of the arms embargo, with ships and aircraft operating in the Central Mediterranean to prevent any arms or mercenary transfer to Libya by sea.

Over the remaining days of March, US, French and UK aircraft continued to lead the attacks against Gaddafi's command and control centres (attempting to inhibit his ability to communicate with his forces), his military infrastructure, and his forces on the ground. The strike operations, when combined with the actions of the rebel forces, enabled the defence of Benghazi and the protection of its citizens, thus meeting the primary objective of UNSCR 1973. The mission under *Odyssey Dawn* thus was clearly working in its objective to 'protect' at this point, but was not following the trajectory of a standard coercive campaign with incremental escalation of force; rather the force applied was at the high end of the coercive spectrum from the beginning.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the line between military coercion and destruction is not clearly delineated. In Libya in March 2011, the use of military force, delivered via air power, while short of overwhelming in its application and intent, left little room for flexibility and the ability to escalate the threat. One could debate whether the campaign at this stage was truly coercive in nature, or rather intended solely to prevent imminent offensive action. Gaddafi did have a choice, but it became increasingly clear that the choice on offer was not whether or not to call off his forces, it was between retaining and giving up power.²⁵¹

250 Anrig, 'Allied Air Power', p. 91.

251 This aspect will be explored in detail later in the chapter.

The Air Campaign – Operation *Unified Protector*

The air capabilities of contributing NATO members continued to be exhibited under Operation *Unified Protector* once the operation transitioned from US to NATO leadership on 31 March 2011. The campaign moved more slowly than *Odyssey Dawn* though, in part because of coalition air power's early success in destroying much of the fixed Libyan military command infrastructure²⁵², and because of many countries' dwindling supplies of precision-guided munitions.²⁵³

After a month of NATO-led operations, Gaddafi again declared his willingness to negotiate with NATO powers in order to end the air strikes. His offer was rejected by rebel leaders, who dismissed it as insincere²⁵⁴, and declared that they would only negotiate once Gaddafi and his sons stepped aside—a position untenable to Gaddafi. NATO leaders also rejected the offer saying that they needed to see 'actions, not words', and claimed that Gaddafi's calls for a ceasefire meant little while he 'continued attacking cities and civilians'.²⁵⁵

With the coalition's overwhelming air superiority providing an asymmetrical advantage for NATO and the rebels, Gaddafi's forces began to employ asymmetrical tactics of their own. This included wearing civilian clothes rather than uniform, using the same 'technical' vehicles as the rebel forces (pick-up trucks mounted with weapons), and even using civilians as shields for their advances in the knowledge that coalition forces would not target where there was a risk of civilian casualties.²⁵⁶ A high civilian casualty rate would have been completely unacceptable to the UN and to the international community, as well as calling into question the legitimacy of the campaign. As Air Commodore Edward Stringer, UK Air Component Commander of operations in Libya highlighted when outlining successful target statistics: 'We could have achieved similar results tactically and yet still failed strategically had we been routinely inflicting collateral damage.' He reiterated that by 'demonstrably doing everything possible to avoid civilian casualties, the coalition protected the legitimacy that was its bedrock'.²⁵⁷

252 E. Quintana, 'The War from the Air' in *Short War, Long Shadow*, RUSI Whitehall Report 1-12, 2012, pp. 31-37, p. 33.

253 *ibid*, p. 35.

254 X. Rice, 'Libyan rebel forces reject Muammar Gaddafi's ceasefire offer', *The Guardian*, 30 April 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/apr/30/libyan-rebels-reject-gaddafi-offer>, accessed 15 August 2012.

255 FOX News, 'NATO rejects Qaddafi's call for cease-fire', *Associated Press*, 30 April 2011, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2011/04/30/qaddafi-calls-negotiations-nato-airstrikes-hit-tripoli/>, accessed 15 August 2012.

256 Anrig, 'Allied Air Power', p. 97.

257 E. Stringer, 'Operation Ellamy', *RAAF Air Power Conference*, Canberra, 11 May, 2012.

For the sake of legitimacy, plus to reinforce their genuine desire to limit unintended damage, NATO public communications specified that: ‘Targeting is done with extreme care and precision, using the weapon with the smallest yield possible, to avoid harm to the Libyan people and their infrastructure.’²⁵⁸

Targeting was problematic for the coalition in many respects. Libya, for some years, had not been recognised by the US Intelligence Community as a potential adversary, therefore targeting information was out of date.²⁵⁹ The initial strike operations were conducted without US Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) or NATO AWACS intelligence²⁶⁰, and when the NATO AWACS did become available, they could not communicate directly with the Combined Air Operations Centre in Italy.²⁶¹ The absence of coalition ground troops with whom to liaise, most notably Joint Terminal Attack Controllers who normally laser-designate targets, also made target identification difficult. Thick cloud cover at times throughout the operation meant that only all-weather British Sentinel R1 and US JSTARS aircraft could operate sensors through the cloud²⁶², and these assets were not always available. Air platforms were required to be multi-role, with both tankers and strike aircraft also called upon to perform additional reconnaissance duties.²⁶³

One way to mitigate the absence of ground troops and to decrease the reliance on targeting information was to deploy attack helicopters. In early June 2011, the British launched Apaches, and the French deployed Tiger and Gazelle attack helicopters to strike Gaddafi’s forces in both Brega and Misrata. The use of the helicopters displayed a deliberate escalation of force, following stalemates in the East and frustration within the coalition about a lack of progress.²⁶⁴ According to Anrig, ‘these daring attacks undoubtedly and visibly demonstrated NATO’s resolve and thereby generated additional coercive leverage.’²⁶⁵ Using attack helicopters enabled closer combat without deploying ground forces, and was claimed to have the added benefit of a psychological impact on

258 NATO Fact Sheet, Operation Unified Protector: *Protection of Civilians and Civilian-Populated Areas and Enforcement of the No-Fly Zone*, October 2011, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_10/20111005_111005-factsheet_protection_civilians.pdf, accessed 15 June 2012.

259 M. Woodward, ‘Operation Odyssey Dawn: A US Perspective’, *RAAF Air Power Conference*, Canberra, 11 May 2012.

260 J. Tirpak, ‘Lessons from Libya’, *Air Force Magazine*, December 2011, pp. 2-6, p. 4.

261 Quintana, ‘The War from the Air’, p. 33.

262 *ibid*, p. 34.

263 E. Quintana, ‘The Air Operation’ in *Accidental Heroes: Britain, France and the Libya Operation*, RUSI Interim Libya Campaign Report, September 2011, pp. 5-7, p. 6

264 Anrig, ‘Allied Air Power’, p. 104.

265 *ibid*.

the loyalists.²⁶⁶ The coercive and psychological impact of the helicopters is difficult to prove, but it appears that at the most they had a tactical rather than strategic significance. Even after the attacks commenced, Gaddafi was publicly proclaiming that he would never surrender.

The coalition operated under strict Rules of Engagement (ROE) with respect to its targeting. Wherever possible, UAVs and other persistent ISR assets attempted to establish 'pattern of life'²⁶⁷ before strike operations were approved. Once approved, the target would continue to be monitored through cameras and sensors, and coalition forces would not engage a target unless there were 'eyes on the target'²⁶⁸, meaning that they were aware of what was happening at and around the target at the moment of impact. Strikes would still be called off if there was any chance of striking civilians or causing other unintended collateral damage.²⁶⁹ To this end, some 90 per cent of targeting in the Libyan campaign was dynamic rather than predesignated.²⁷⁰ Dynamic targeting had less reliance on an extensive ISR network,²⁷¹ and pre-existing intelligence assessments.

The RUSI Interim report on Libya, which was produced in September 2011, claimed that civilian deaths from air strikes in Libya were most likely between 50 and 100, compared to an estimated 400-500 in Kosovo²⁷², a campaign of approximately one-third the duration. The Libyan campaign also managed to avoid tragic errors like NATO's accidental strike on the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in 1999. Specific casualty figures are impossible to verify, but the strict ROE followed by the coalition forces were designed to minimise the loss of non-combatant life, and were largely successful in this aim.

Concurrent Diplomatic Efforts

Air power was not applied in isolation in Libya. While the coalition air and naval operations were taking place, concurrent diplomatic efforts continued, but in some cases, these were more about how to coordinate an international approach than direct attempts to communicate or negotiate with Gaddafi. On 29 March for instance, 10 days

266 Quintana, 'The Air Operation', p. 7.

267 Pattern of life indicates that you have a situational awareness of what is physically happening around the target, rather than relying on a static picture.

268 Quintana, 'The Air Operation', p. 5.

269 Tirpak, 'Lessons from Libya', p. 5.

270 Anrig, 'Allied Air Power', p. 99.

271 *ibid.*

272 Quintana, 'The Air Operation', p. 5. In addition, the *HRW World Report 2012 - Libya* suggests that 'the number of civilian deaths appeared far lower than that claimed by the Gaddafi government, but higher than acknowledged by NATO, p. 5.

into the US-led part of the operation, leaders from 35 governments and NGOs met in London as the 'Libyan Contact Group' in an attempt to coordinate political direction.²⁷³ Those initiatives that did engage Gaddafi or his government were largely unsuccessful. Delegates from the AU and Turkey, who were not taking part in NATO operations, attempted mediation with the Libyan government, the South African President Jacob Zuma, who was also president of the AU, met Gaddafi in May²⁷⁴, and the US sent a delegation to talk to Gaddafi's government in July. The most significant of these overtures was that of the AU's 'road map', which called for a negotiated end to the crisis, and which Libyan officials claimed to be ready to implement; but it was rejected by the rebels as it did not specify Gaddafi giving up power.²⁷⁵ With none of these initiatives having the desired effect, Libyan diplomats were expelled from embassies around the world and an increasing number of states and organisations formally recognised the National Transition Council (NTC) as the legitimate government of Libya; most significantly all members of the contact group on 15 July, the Arab League on 27 August, the UNGA on 16 September and the AU on 20 September.²⁷⁶

The End for Gaddafi

The battle between the Libyan forces and the rebels on the ground, with significant assistance from NATO air power, took seven months to reach its finale. The regime forces were largely blunted by May, and by the middle of August, Tripoli had been recaptured by the rebels. The final battleground was Gaddafi's home town of Sirte. On 20 October, coalition air power targeted the convoy in which Gaddafi was travelling as he fled from Sirte. Video footage showed that he was removed wounded from the vehicle, and met his death at the hands of rebels shortly thereafter. The convoy attack was the last strike mission of *Unified Protector*, with the NFZ and AWACS missions ceasing later that week. The operation was officially declared over on 31 October 2011.

Final statistics for the NATO operation were that over 260 air assets and 21 naval assets were employed; over 26 500 sorties flown, averaging 120 per day, (with over 9700 of

273 International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, 'The Crisis in Libya', <http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises/crisis-in-libya>, accessed 22 January, 2012.

274 J. Burns, 'NATO resumes airstrikes after Qaddafi vows to fight on', *New York Times*, 31 May 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/world/africa/01libya.html>, accessed 2 June 2011.

275 O'Brien, and Sinclair, *The Libyan War: A Diplomatic History February-August 2011*, p. 14.

276 International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect. 'The Crisis in Libya'.

these strike sorties); and over 5900 military targets struck.²⁷⁷ In spite of the overwhelming odds against him, the combined efforts of diplomatic and military coercion and the use of military force, Gaddafi had refused to relinquish power. The operation could justifiably be claimed a military success, but not a coercive one.

A Military Success

Despite the fact that Gaddafi did not capitulate, both the declared and undeclared objectives were met—civilians were protected, lives were saved and Gaddafi was forced from power. The air campaign itself was highly effective. It was enacted rapidly, NATO applied only limited force, kept civilian casualties to a minimum through its strict ROE and effective targeting, and no coalition forces were killed. While the decision to use force had been the end product of a highly unwieldy process, once authorised, operations proceeded relatively smoothly and were a significant improvement on NATO's previous air campaign in Kosovo in 1999.

The first phase of military operations in Libya bore a marked resemblance to the second phase of *Allied Force* in Kosovo, which was only undertaken after an inconclusive and cautious beginning 'hampered by poor co-ordination and a limited number of approved target sets'.²⁷⁸ The key lesson from Kosovo's air campaign was that timid early strikes were unlikely to coerce an autocrat for whom the stakes were so high, nor would they be sufficient to prevent the imminent slaughter of civilians—a humanitarian objective that had failed in Kosovo. In *Odyssey Dawn*, the political and military priority was to protect civilians first, by denying Gaddafi the use of his military capabilities. The operation demonstrated how air power was able to do this very effectively; by taking out the enemy air defences, establishing a NFZ to protect civilians and by destroying Gaddafi's military capabilities to prevent the assets from being used aggressively. Thus in Libya, the air campaign was both highly effective and ultimately successful.

277 NATO Fact Sheet, *Operation Unified Protector: Final Mission Stats*, 02 November 2011, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_11/20111108_111107-factsheet_up_factsfigures_en.pdf, accessed 15 June 2012.

278 J. Alexander, 'The End of Air Power History and the Last Airman? Air Power, Liberal Democracy and the British Way of War', *Air Power Review*, Vol. 14, No. 2, Summer 2011, <http://www.airpowerstudies.com/APR%20Vol%2014%2014%20No%202.pdf>, accessed 13 March 2012.

A Case of Mission Creep

The Libyan people's euphoria and NATO's relief over the successful military campaign is likely to temper criticisms of the manner in which NATO rode roughshod over UN authorization to protect citizens. For NATO had indeed intervened on behalf of one side in a civil war and pursued regime change.

Ramesh Thakur²⁷⁹

There is little doubt that foreign intervention in Libya in 2011 began using coercive diplomacy on an incremental scale. The international community employed a broad range of non-military measures from mid-February until mid-March as it endeavoured to convince Gaddafi that his actions were unacceptable, and to induce him to call off his forces. The measures included traditional diplomacy, pleas from various states, regional organisations and the UNGA, economic sanctions, a travel ban, asset freeze, and referral of the case to the ICC. It was only when these actions failed to persuade Gaddafi that 'all necessary measures', including the use of military force, were authorised by the UNSC. Military force was being utilised, in accordance with the principles of R2P, as the option of last resort.

The air campaign over Libya can justifiably be claimed as a success in terms of its achievement of the primary objective: the protection of civilians. Operation *Unified Protector* is, however, widely judged as a case where NATO went too far in contributing to 'regime change' when only tasked with a humanitarian mandate. The fact that Gaddafi was unseated through international assistance rather than solely the actions of the Libyan people was distasteful to many. As Gareth Evans, former Foreign Minister of Australia and one of the key architects of the R2P principle, stated in an article in late March 2011:

*Politically and militarily it [the intervention] has only one justification: protecting to the extent possible the country's people ... and when that job is done, the military's job will be done. Any regime change is for the Libyan people themselves to achieve.*²⁸⁰

Only a few months into the campaign, it became apparent that the Libyan NTC, already recognised as the legitimate government by many internationally, would not accept anything less than the removal of Gaddafi and his sons from power. The NTC were

279 Thakur, 'Libya and the Responsibility to Protect', p. 22.

280 G. Evans, 'When intervening in a conflict, stick to UN script', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 March 2011, <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/when-intervening-in-a-conflict-stick-to-un-script-20110323-1c6kz.html>, accessed 24 January 2012.

entirely unwilling to negotiate with Gaddafi and international leaders agreed that Gaddafi could not stay. Their statements were public and unequivocal. President Obama declared that: 'It is US policy that Gaddafi needs to go'; British Prime Minister Cameron: 'There is no decent future for Libya with Colonel Gaddafi remaining in power'; French President Sarkozy: 'France's position is clear, Mr Qaddafi must go'; and Italian Foreign Affairs Minister Frattini: 'We have reached, I believe, a point of no return'. Even the German Foreign Minister, despite the fact that Germany had abstained from the UNSCR 1973 vote, declared that: 'The dictator cannot stay.'²⁸¹ These pronouncements were all made in either February or March 2011. In April, Obama, Sarkozy and Cameron produced a jointly authored article that was published in five international newspapers, confirming their view that 'Qaddafi must go and go for good.'²⁸² It was clear that the removal of Gaddafi was being viewed as the final political objective, with the combined military and diplomatic operations directed beyond the coercive objective of behaviour or policy change, specifically Gaddafi calling off his forces, to his resignation, or if necessary, his removal.²⁸³ In actions that confirmed that at least some members of the coalition were taking sides in the conflict, France, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) decided to supply the anti-government rebels with weapons despite the arms embargo, and these nations plus Britain allowed Special Forces to operate on Libyan territory, in a clear contravention of the UNSC resolution.²⁸⁴

The goal of the political leaders to assist the rebels to drive Gaddafi from power, and the taking of sides in a civil war outraged those states that had maintained their strong opposition to foreign intervention in a sovereign state, but had allowed UNSCR 1973 to pass by abstaining rather than voting against it. The experience provided them with the

281 ABC News, 'Gaddafi must go: Obama', 22 March 2011, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-03-22/gaddafi-must-go-obama/2649682>, accessed 9 July 2012; also, J. Steers, 'Gaddafi must go: Western leaders condemn Libyan regime', *The Huffington Post*, 28 February 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/27/gaddafi-must-go-western-l_n_828873.html, accessed 9 July 2012.

282 The text of this article, 'Libya's Pathway to Peace' can be read in 'The White House Press Statement of 14 April 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/04/14/joint-op-ed-president-obama-prime-minister-cameron-and-president-sarkozy>, accessed 28 June 2013.

283 There was, however, a disconnect between the political leaders' statements and the declared intentions of NATO leaders. NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen claimed that NATO was doing 'nothing more, nothing less' than meeting its mandate under UNSCR, and Lieutenant-General Bouchard, the Canadian AF officer in charge of the air campaign claimed after the operation had concluded that 'we never once looked at targeting Gadhafi himself or regime change ... if in May or June the Gadhafi regime had opted to stop violence against civilians, this would have brought the mission to a stop' (as quoted by C. Chai, 'NATO commanders says NATO never targeted Gadhafi' *Postmedia News*, 23 October, 2011.)

284 M. Phillips, 'The Ground Offensive: The Role of Special Forces' in 'Accidental Heroes: Britain, France and the Libya Operation', *RUSI Interim Libya Campaign Report*, September 2011, pp. 8-9; and, D. Roberts, 'Behind Qatar's Intervention in Libya', *Foreign Affairs*, 28 September 2011, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68302/david-roberts/behind-qatars-intervention-in-libya>, accessed 7 June 2012.

moral justification to argue against future operations under the banner of R2P. Russia and China subsequently used their veto to prevent foreign intervention in Syria, a country also suffering from crimes of humanity perpetrated by its own government.²⁸⁵ The course of events in Libya has enabled the dissenting states to argue, with some validity, that the principle of R2P has the potential to be misused as a veil to mask undisclosed intentions in another state's sovereign affairs: principally allowing them to engage in regime change.

One could argue, however, that the Libyan case was not as simple as duplicitous and deliberate foreign intervention in another state's sovereign affairs. While clearly against the wishes of the government, the international action aligned with the wishes of the majority of the Libyan people against a government that had lost its legitimacy, and was not only failing to protect, but acting aggressively towards its own population. The Libyan citizens, as with other popular uprisings in the Arab Spring, were intent on seeing their leader deposed, and had requested international assistance.²⁸⁶ It is reasonable to claim, as Air Commodore Stringer has, that rather than being directly responsible for Gaddafi's downfall, 'the military line of operation in blunting Gaddafi's power and hold over his population; as well as fulfilling the initial humanitarian requirement, set the conditions for political success.'²⁸⁷ Reasonable, that is, as long as 'political success' in this case is truthfully acknowledged as regime rather than behaviour change.

As with all cases of international intervention, the case of Libya defies easy labelling or simplistic explanations of cause and effect. The final chapter in this case study will test the intervention against the frameworks of coercive diplomacy as described by Jakobsen and Jentleson, firstly to assess if the case can plausibly be categorised as coercive diplomacy, and secondly to further explore the notion of it as a success.

285 There are, in addition, many other reasons why the international community has been reluctant to act against Bashar al Assad in Syria. These included regional dynamics, his alliances with Iran and Russia, geographical constraints, the relative disorganisation of the opposition, the strength of the pro-government forces and the fact that the intervention would be likely to be far more difficult and prolonged, without necessarily resulting in a peaceful resolution.

286 See for example M. Abbas, 'Gaddafi strikes town, rebels call for foreign help, *Reuters*, 2 March 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/03/02/us-libya-protests-idUSTRE71G0A620110302>, accessed 22 October 2012.

287 E. Stringer, 'Operation Ellamy'.

CHAPTER 7

LIBYA 2011: MATCHING THEORY TO PRACTICE

I am a Bedouin warrior who brought glory to Libya and will die a martyr.

Muammar Gaddafi²⁸⁸

Some adversaries simply cannot concede.

M. Byman et al.²⁸⁹

Introduction

Did international action in Libya constitute a veritable case of coercive diplomacy? Analysts are divided on this question, and will most likely continue to be for years to come. One of the challenges in examining a contemporary conflict is that the publicly available information does not necessarily represent all the events of the time—for years the private arrangements between Kennedy and Krushchev that resulted in the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis were unknown. Undisclosed initiatives may have also taken place in Libya, and could subsequently prove assessments such as this one premature. What is known categorically at this point, however, is that the international community *did* engage Gaddafi throughout February and most of March 2011, prior to resorting to military force, in an attempt to compel him to stop his loyalist forces from attacking the rebels and Libyan citizens, and that the international efforts *did not* cause him to capitulate. Beyond this point, any attempt to neatly label the international intervention as a case of coercive diplomacy becomes more complicated. As Byman and Waxman caution in their comprehensive work on the subject: ‘coercion is often in the eye of the beholder.’²⁹⁰

Libya does not represent a straightforward case of the coercive actions of one state against another. Instead, a wide-ranging international coalition took action against an autocratic

288 Sourced from Brainy quote, <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/m/muammaral451919.html>, accessed 16 August 2012.

289 Byman et al, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, p. xv.

290 Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, p. 5.

government in the defence of the people of that country, while a transitional council was gradually recognised as the legitimate government of the country. Not all states agreed with the decision to intervene, and the period leading up to and following the Security Council resolutions was characterised by disunity and mixed messages. The US was 'the reluctant follower'²⁹¹ who ended up leading the initial military campaign *Odyssey Dawn*, then, as many described it, 'led from behind'²⁹², throughout *Unified Protector*. South Africa originally voted for UNSCR 1973 but changed its mind 24 hours later, and the AU, who had 'strongly condemn[ed] the indiscriminate and excessive use of force and lethal weapons'²⁹³ on the part of the Libyan government, voted against UNSCR 1973. As the campaign continued, the divergent stance of UN members and regional organisations became even more pronounced, with many objecting to the change from a purely humanitarian objective to one that clearly went beyond the Security Council mandate and incorporated regime change.

Jakobsen's Framework

Peter Jakobsen, in his 1998 theoretical examination of cases of coercive diplomacy, sets two criteria for determining whether a case can be considered as such:

1. The coercer must send a message to the aggressor(s) demanding that the use of force is stopped and/or its consequences undone.
2. A threat to punish non-compliance must accompany this demand.
This threat may or may not be accompanied by a carrot for compliance.²⁹⁴

By reference to these criteria, one can deduce that the international community was engaged in elements of a coercive diplomatic strategy up until 19 March 2011, when Operation *Odyssey Dawn* commenced. At that point, the focus turned to the use of military force for a clear objective—the protection of civilians, and shortly thereafter to regime change as the final, but unacknowledged, objective.

291 Thakur, 'Libya and the Responsibility to Protect', p. 19.

292 The expression 'leading from behind' was widely used by analysts and reporters to refer to the US contribution, and is attributed to 'one of President Obama's advisers'. See R. Lizza, 'The Consequentialist. How the Arab Spring remade Obama's foreign policy', *The New Yorker*, 2 May 2011, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/05/02/110502fa_fact_lizza?printable=true¤tPage=all?currentPage=all#ixzz1KXeJjYM2, accessed 22 November 2012.

293 *Communiqué of the 261st Meeting of the Peace and Security Council*, 23 February 2011, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201102240470.html>, accessed 10 August 2012.

294 Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 7.

The international action in Libya can be broken down into three phases:

Phase 1: 17 February-19 March 2011. Phase 1 employed multilateral initiatives including diplomacy and non-military coercive methods in an attempt to persuade Gaddafi to call off his forces.

Phase 2: 19 March-April 2011. Phase 2 incorporated a campaign of limited military force, primarily air power, to achieve the declared UN objective of the protection of civilians.

Phase 3: April-October 2011. Phase 3 was comprised of an extended air campaign that continued to protect civilians, but that also sought to shift the balance of power on the ground in favour of the rebels, and to oust Gaddafi from power—through surrender if possible, or via the collapse of the regime under the weight of military force.

The first phase accords with Jakobsen's two criteria. An examination of the diplomatic initiatives employed against the Libyan government in February highlights that many messages were delivered to Gaddafi calling him to desist from his aggressive actions against rebel forces and the Libyan population.²⁹⁵ These included a personal phone call from the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon²⁹⁶, public pleas from the EU, the Arab League, the OIC and the AU, and unilateral statements from the UK, US and France. In combination with the appeals were threats of punitive actions, including international sanctions and Gaddafi's referral to the ICC. The Arab League also took the step of expelling Libya from the organisation, and the US imposed unilateral sanctions. On 26 February the breadth of international opposition to the Libyan government was demonstrated via UNSCR 1970, which *demand*ed an immediate end to the violence, referred the situation in Libya to the ICC, imposed an arms embargo and travel ban, and froze the assets of Gaddafi and five family members.²⁹⁷

Despite the apparent unanimity behind the first UN resolution, one cannot blame Gaddafi for doubting whether the international community would be prepared to escalate to the actual use of force. At this point only non-military coercive mechanisms had been discussed and communicated to the Libyan government. Over the following two weeks, states and regional organisations demurred and prevaricated: first discussing the options for a NFZ then ruling it out, with many also publicly questioning the need for the use of military force. By the middle of March, however, public calls for action re-ignited, and the GCC called on the UN to 'take all necessary measures to protect civilians, including

295 See O'Brien, and Sinclair, *The Libyan War: A Diplomatic History February-August 2011* for a detailed breakdown of diplomatic initiatives over the period.

296 Bellamy and Williams, 'The New Politics of Humanitarian Protection?' p. 840.

297 U.N. Doc. S/RES/1970 (2011).

enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya²⁹⁸; a call supported by the OIC and subsequently echoed by the Arab League. At the same time, both President Obama and British Prime Minister Cameron publicly stated that Gaddafi should relinquish power, the US moved military assets closer to the Libyan coast, and French President Sarkozy divulged that his country was contemplating air strikes.²⁹⁹ Diplomatic initiatives also continued, with the AU establishing an ad-hoc High-Level committee to engage with all parties, and the UN Secretary General appointing a special envoy to Libya. Despite these efforts Gaddafi remained unconvinced or simply un-moved, and chose not to respond to the calls to stop the loyalist forces. His public proclamation on 17 March that he intended to 'cleanse' the city of Benghazi that day spurred the majority of UNSC members to vote to support UNSCR 1973.

While phase one undoubtedly contains elements of coercive diplomacy, it is apparent that the application of the strategy was untidy and the resolve inconsistent. The 'coercer' in this case was not a unitary actor clearly communicating threats with one voice, but many non-unified states and organisations sending conflicting messages. The situation was also complicated somewhat by the fact that non-military punitive measures in February and March were initiated in combination with the requests for withdrawal, rather than as a threat of the consequence of inaction. The threat of military force was not explicitly made to Gaddafi, but given his own public statements there is every reason to suppose that he was well aware of the public proclamations of other international leaders.

One aspect that makes it difficult to evaluate the 'success' of coercive diplomacy in Libya is Gaddafi's own responses. One detail noted in Chapter Six but rarely mentioned in public reports, is that on 19 March, immediately following resolution 1973, the Libyan government declared a ceasefire, an overture that was apparently not taken seriously by the UN. A second entreaty was Gaddafi's letter to President Obama in early April pleading for a halt to the air strikes,³⁰⁰ which was also rebuffed, and was shortly thereafter followed by Gaddafi's agreement to the conditions of the AU's proposed road map. Why were these offers so readily dismissed? In one respect Gaddafi's overtures could be interpreted as an indication that the threat and use of military force was actually proving to have a coercive impact, seemingly the only factor that compelled Gaddafi to seek

298 W. Keyrouz, 'Gulf states back Libya no-fly zone', AFP, 7 March 2011, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jRu1VXz2KQyUHoqOAAUYFhCgRCkg?docId=CNG.49104d077a72cbffeafe9d3689e92793.ba1>, accessed 15 August 2012.

299 S. Castle, 'European leaders don't rule out armed intervention in Libyan conflict', *The New York Times*, 11 March 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/12/world/europe/12diplomacy.html>, accessed 15 August 2012.

300 G. Lubin, 'Our Dear Son, Excellency, Baraka Hussein Abu Oumama', *Business Insider*, http://articles.businessinsider.com/2011-04-06/news/30031911_1_libyans-nato-intervention-terror, accessed 12 August 2012.

negotiations. Analysts have been sceptical though, one observing that any occasion when Gaddafi sought to negotiate or agree to plans always seemed to coincide with a 'reversal of fortune' for the government, hence could be viewed as an attempt to buy time or reverse the advantage, rather than a genuine desire to negotiate.³⁰¹ Others have argued that his 'empty rhetoric and gestures' were aimed at causing coalition fragmentation or 'tying NATO up in internal deliberations.'³⁰² In addition, Gaddafi seemed to regularly alternate his gestures with threats, such as his promise that Libyan fighters would descend on Europe like a 'swarm of locusts or bees'.³⁰³ The cynicism of the UN, the coalition and subsequently the NTC is understandable. Evidence would suggest that Gaddafi's entreaties and gestures were neither sincere nor credible. His history of cruelty, public rantings and proclamations of intent highlighted his increasing mental instability and made him both unpredictable and untrustworthy. By late March most of the international community was no longer prepared to engage with him. As one analyst described it, in Libya 'mediation was not a practical option.'³⁰⁴

In his 1998 book, Jakobsen proposes an *ideal policy*; the aim of which is to explain why coercive diplomacy succeeds or fails when it is employed against aggressors. The policy is comprised of four key components:

1. A threat of force to defeat the opponent or deny him his objectives quickly with little cost, backed by the necessary capability;
2. A deadline for compliance;
3. An assurance to the adversary against future demands; and
4. An offer of carrots for compliance.³⁰⁵

301 D. Morini, 'Did Diplomacy Succeed or Fail in Libya', *e-IR*, 12 April 2011, <http://www.e-ir.info/2011/04/12/did-diplomacy-succeed-or-fail-in-libya/>, accessed 26 July 2012.

302 D. Byman and M. Waxman, 'Libyan Limbo: Six reasons why it's been so tough to get Qaddafi to quit', *Foreign Policy*, 2 June 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/06/02/libyan_limbo?, accessed 30 June 2011.

303 'US slams Gaddafi's threat to attack Europe', *ABC News*, 3 July 2011, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/07/03/3259581.htm>, accessed 4 July 2012.

304 B. Jones, 'Libya and the Responsibilities of Power', *Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 3, June-July 2011, pp. 51-60, p. 58.

305 Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 30.

In looking at the operation in Libya through the lens of Jakobsen's ideal policy, the impending failure of the strategy is apparent.

1. The threat of force was implicit rather than explicit, although it is reasonable to suggest that Gaddafi should have better read the commitment of the major contributing powers—the US, France and the UK.
2. No deadline for compliance was given.
3. No assurance against future demands was made.
4. No 'carrots' for compliance were offered.

These points highlight why the coercive diplomacy strategy of the first phase was largely unsuccessful.

The second phase of the international intervention has been extensively covered in Chapter Six. Following the second UNSC resolution, NATO and its partners engaged in the limited use of military force, predominantly air power, in a campaign of denial that was designed to prevent Gaddafi's forces from carrying out their intended aggressive actions. This phase of the campaign bears more resemblance to force used to bring about defeat than to coerce, despite being limited rather than overwhelming. At the time of the UN resolution, the paramount consideration was the protection of civilians. The urgency of this objective had been reinforced by Gaddafi's public statement of intent, which was a credible threat given his record. Diplomatic initiatives were no longer an option to ensure the protection of civilians in Benghazi, and many within the UN had the desire not to be morally complicit in the imminent atrocity by failing to take action to prevent it.

The fact that the AU proposed a 'road map' illustrates that some diplomatic overtures were made while NATO was engaged in its military campaign. Turkey also proposed a three-fold strategy in April. These initiatives always reached a roadblock though, due to the entirely opposing positions of the NTC and Gaddafi's government. While the NATO/NTC/rebel alliance would not accept any resolution that enabled Gaddafi or his family members to retain power, Gaddafi and his government would not entertain a deal that required him to give up power. This meant that no diplomatic resolution, no matter how well intentioned, was going to be acceptable to both sides. In addition, the diplomatic initiatives were being conducted by parties who were not part of the military efforts, thus diplomacy was being conducted *alongside*, rather than *coordinated with* military action. The two mechanisms were not working cohesively, as they should in a true case of coercive diplomacy. Furthermore, by April, the leading members of the coalition had indicated that Gaddafi had to go—compromise was no longer on the table. The transition to the objective of regime change was reinforced by states as they gradually

accepted the NTC as the legitimate government of Libya. As this occurred, countries sought to engage with the NTC rather than with Gaddafi's regime.

The third phase, when the imminent humanitarian disaster had been averted, did once again retain some connection with the strategy of coercion. In this case though, the coercive effort was not designed to get Gaddafi to call off his forces: the intent was to compel him to give up all claims of leadership. However, as had been the case with other dictators of the 20th century, such as Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, Gaddafi was, at this point, simply not coercible. The coalition and the rebels, through the NTC, had made it apparent that the future for Libya held no place for Gaddafi. Consequently, Gaddafi, a megalomaniac who craved international fame and attention, and who had held power for 42 years, was not willing to agree to Libya being ruled by anyone other than himself or his sons. Some countries raised the possibility of Gaddafi being allowed to leave the country once he agreed to step down, but in practical terms this would have been complicated by the ICC indictment. In any case, this is an overture that Gaddafi rejected.³⁰⁶ The third phase ended with Gaddafi's capture and death at the hands of the rebel forces in October 2011.

Jentleson's Framework

In 2005 and 2006 Bruce Jentleson wrote extensively on the application of coercive diplomacy in Libya, focusing on the US and UK's relationship with Gaddafi leading up to Libya's 2003 declaration that it was disbanding its WMD program.³⁰⁷ Jentleson and Whytock describe that case as 'the strongest case of coercive diplomacy since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis'³⁰⁸, and it is useful to examine Jentleson's framework and some of the conditions of that case to explain why Gaddafi was amenable to diplomatic coercion in 2003, but not in 2011.

Jentleson's analytical framework does not set pre-conditions for classifying cases of coercive diplomacy, but he stresses two sets of variables that may help to determine the likelihood of success. These are:

1. The extent of 'balance' in the coercer state's strategy that combines 'carrots and sticks' consistent with three criteria—proportionality, reciprocity and coercive credibility; and

306 J. Burns, 'NATO resumes airstrikes after Qaddafi vows to fight on', *The New York Times*, 31 May 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/world/africa/01libya.html>, accessed 2 June 2011.

307 Jentleson, 'Coercive Diplomacy'; Jentleson and Whytock, 'Who "Won" Libya?'

308 Jentleson and Whytock, 'Who "Won" Libya?' p. 49.

2. The vulnerability of the target state as shaped by its domestic politics and economy.³⁰⁹

Examining the second set of variables first, it is apparent that in 2011, the domestic vulnerability of Libya was not the critical factor. In this case, international action was enacted *in support of* the citizens of the state, rather than *against* the state as a whole, and economic sanctions were targeted rather than broad-based. Gaddafi's popular support was low and his power base eroded with a number of high-profile defectors amongst the government and high ranking military officers. In 2003, his conscious decision to cooperate with the international community served his leadership and enabled him to stay in power. In 2011, Gaddafi staying in power was a fantasy at best. His brutal and repressive actions of the previous decades had finally caught up with him, and concessions to the coalition were not going to improve his domestic standing or increase his internal political support. Similarly, economic considerations were less relevant. In 2003, Gaddafi's decision to engage the international community had resulted in the lifting of economic sanctions, the resurgence of the local oil industry, and the resumption of diplomatic relations that enabled Gaddafi to represent himself as the champion of the Libyan people. Eight years later Gaddafi was seen as the direct cause of international condemnation and intervention. Gaddafi in 2003 had the ability to affect domestic and economic factors; by March 2011 his influence had all but dissolved.

Of greater analytical utility in this case is Jentleson's first consideration, the 'coercer state strategy', in this instance enacted by a coalition of states. By Jentleson's definition, *proportionality* refers to a matching of means to ends: understanding that the instruments used must be appropriate and sufficiently effective to achieve the outcome sought. A mismatch may occur on two fronts: firstly soft power initiatives that are insufficient to achieve state compliance where the gains to the state are high, such as territorial acquisition or access to valuable resources; or conversely, using a heavy handed approach to protest against a minor violation, such as air strikes in response to an apparently accidental incursion by non-armed aircraft into a NFZ. In both of these cases, the response is disproportionate to the objective.

In 2003, proportionality was in effect because the demands were for policy change—that Gaddafi renounce his WMD program—and not for regime change. Diplomatic efforts had been undertaken for many years leading up to 2003, with the Clinton administration and the British government conducting secret meetings with members of the Libyan government. Gaddafi was reassured through private negotiations that the US would not seek his removal. Indeed throughout the whole period of negotiations, Libya continued to seek reassurance that the goals of the West were tied only to policy rather than regime

309 *ibid*, p. 50.

change.³¹⁰ In addition, the relatively stable internal domestic environment meant that Gaddafi could comply with international demands and still save face with his people. Jentleson and Whytock claim that the ‘main source of disproportionality is an objective that goes beyond policy change to regime change.’³¹¹ In 2011, regime change was a clear objective, and the key reason why Gaddafi was not persuaded by the coercive efforts of the coalition throughout the campaign.

Reciprocity describes the relationship between incentives and concessions. The target state must feel that by giving something up, is it also gaining something. In other words, the outcome cannot be a total victory for one side and total defeat for the other—a coerced entity is highly unlikely to capitulate if there is no gain and only cost. This was borne out by the example of the final successful negotiations between NATO and Milosevic over Kosovo in 1999. In this case, Milosevic was able to ‘save face’ by accepting a deal which removed the requirement to hold a referendum in Kosovo, and allowed the retention of Yugoslavia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, thus allowing Milosevic to claim a victory of sorts.³¹² In 2003, positive incentives were offered to Gaddafi to balance the concessions made of renouncing terrorism and giving up the WMD program. These included the opening of diplomatic relations and the lifting of sanctions. In addition, on this occasion it was in Libya’s interests to comply on economic grounds. As well as the lifting of sanctions, the agreement allowed continued foreign investment in Libya, most notably in the oil industry.³¹³

In 2011 Libya, there was no incentive offered to Gaddafi in return for his agreement to NATO demands—at least no credible offer. As mentioned previously he was offered the chance to leave Libya with his family, but this offer was only made with the great concession that he would be giving up power, effectively acceding to regime change. Over a decade ago, Karl Mueller made the point that ‘conceding to the coercer’s demands will sometimes appear to represent a death sentence to enemy leaders, either figuratively or literally, which may be sufficient to make them resist no matter how costly and pointless doing so becomes.’³¹⁴ This was graphically represented in Libya in 2011. Gaddafi was in the midst of a civil war, and the Libyan people had turned upon him and rejected him as leader. Gaddafi had seen the fate that had befallen his contemporaries Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic and more recently Hosni Mubarak, and had most

310 Jentleson, ‘Coercive Diplomacy’, p. 5.

311 Jentleson and Whytock, ‘Who “Won” Libya?’ p. 51.

312 A. Hinen, ‘Kosovo: The Limits of Air Power II’, *Air and Space Power Journal; Chronicles Online Journal*, 16 May 2002, <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/cc/hinen.html>, accessed 23 August 2012.

313 Jentleson, ‘Coercive Diplomacy’, p. 6.

314 Mueller, ‘The Essence of Coercive Air Power’.

likely recognised that his was a similar destiny. After a reign of 42 years, conceding to NATO was not an attractive proposition. Gaddafi did have the choice of calling off his loyalist forces early in the engagement, and to do so really represented his only chance of survival as leader. Whether he would have been permitted by the Libyan population to remain as leader is another issue however; it is improbable that the rebel forces or the NTC would have viewed his retention as an acceptable outcome.

The third criterion, *coercive credibility* relates to the coercer's ability to convince the target of the serious consequences of non-compliance: that the threats of the coercer will be followed through. In 2003, coercive credibility was reinforced through the imposition of multilateral economic sanctions along with the implicit threat of military force. Critical to Gaddafi's perception at this time was his witness to the ongoing international actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, most notably the capture of Saddam Hussein, which occurred only five days prior to Gaddafi's declaration that he was disbanding Libya's WMD program. The degree of influence of this specific event is subject to debate, but it is reasonable to expect that it would have had at least some bearing on Gaddafi's calculations.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, the messages being sent to Gaddafi in early 2011 were mixed, thus Gaddafi did have some reason to doubt the coalition's credibility. By mid-March, the threat was credible, but critically, it was not perceived by Gaddafi as such. As Alexander George cautioned: 'it is the *target's* estimate of the credibility and potency of the threat that is critical.'³¹⁵ Gaddafi's failure to recognise that lead nations had both the capability, and critically the will to enable the intervention, may have been based on the fact that in some ways it was unprecedented. Never before had such a wide-ranging coalition, which also embraced Arab members, endorsed and proceeded with action against an Arab state. An additional factor, however, that should have caused Gaddafi to suspect that military action was likely was the widespread evacuation of nationals from Libya in the period leading up to the military offensive.³¹⁶ The extraction of nationals often acts as a warning that military strikes are imminent, and the US had conducted such an operation back in 1986 prior to their strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi. Gaddafi's unwillingness to recognise the determination and perseverance of the international community as well as the failure to observe historical lessons was a grave mistake.

Naturally the comparison between the events leading up to 2003 and those of 2011 is not as simplistic as presented, and it is important to recognise context. In 2003, time was on Gaddafi's side, as were the majority of the population, and the impetus for international action was not urgent. Diplomatic initiatives could take a slow course. By contrast, the

315 George, *Forceful Persuasion*, p. 140

316 'FACTBOX: Libya evacuations by country', *Reuters*, 27 February 2011, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/02/27/libya-protests-evacuation-idINLDE71N0WC20110227>, accessed 03 August 2012.

crisis in Libya in 2011 was characterised by Gaddafi's battle with his own people, and his threat to use increasing amounts of lethal force against them. This was the threat that inspired international action. In addition, despite travelling a rickety roller coaster of international engagement over the previous 40 years, by 2011, Gaddafi had almost no friends remaining internationally. The years of erratic behaviour had taken their toll on other states, and by March 2011, there appeared to be a determination to deal with him once and for all. Where the cases do have parallels is the fact that both were multilateral initiatives, each involving the UN. In 2003 this was by their imposition of economic sanctions; in 2011 through the Security Council resolutions that approved both the non-military coercive methods and finally the use of force.

Conclusion

The case of Libya in 2011 provides dual lessons – both for the conduct of air operations and the strategy of coercive diplomacy. While not a successful case of coercive diplomacy, insofar as Gaddafi neither took concrete action to call off his forces nor surrender his power, it does not disprove the potential effectiveness of the strategy, but reinforces the conditions under which such a strategy should be applied. Both Jakobsen and Jentleson's frameworks would have predicted that coercive diplomacy would not be effective against Gaddafi. One should stop short of labelling it a political failure, however, as in many respects, it succeeded in bringing about both the declared and undeclared desired outcomes—the protection of civilians in Benghazi and elsewhere in Libya, and ultimately regime change.

Despite not being a success story for the strategy of coercive diplomacy, Libya is still useful as a case study, as it demonstrated how air power could be employed by a wide-ranging coalition, against an adversary, in response to a state-generated humanitarian crisis. The operation can be justifiably claimed as a military success, illustrating the ability of air and naval assets to rapidly and decisively make an impact and affect the situation on the ground; the coalition working in concert with local troops, but without deploying international forces on Libyan territory.³¹⁷ Air power was appropriate for the primary task in Libya—the protection of civilians. Its failure to 'cause' the capitulation of Gaddafi is, in fact, not a failure of the coercive instrument, but the natural result of an unrealistic expectation: that Gaddafi could be compelled to step down from power. The events in Libya in 2011 are thus perhaps a better illustration of the *potential* of air power in response to cases of government-initiated violence than a template for 21st century coercive air operations.

317 With the exception of a limited number of Special Forces, inserted illegally.

Libya was a small and internationally isolated state with an unpopular leader, geography conducive to an air campaign, no real international allies and a relatively weak military. While the claims of the military success of the air campaign are warranted, it would be naïve to assume that the same strategy applied against a different state would result in the same outcome, or to suggest that events in Libya provide any kind of template for future action. Lest the claims of military success become inflated, Robert Farley provides a dose of pragmatism:

*The combined naval and air assets of the NATO alliance, in close coordination with an extensive rebel army, took six months to topple a weak, unpopular regime without a professional army.*³¹⁸

The conduct of this operation provided valuable lessons for the UN, NATO and European countries, in particular with respect to their heavy reliance on the assets of the US, forcing them to recognise that their own assets were insufficient for the exercise. Despite the fact that Australia was not directly involved in operations in Libya in 2011, lessons from Libya can also be applied to our own strategic circumstances.

318 R. Farley, 'Over the Horizon: Drawing the right lessons on airpower from Libya', *World Politics Review*, 26 October 2011, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/10458/over-the-horizon-drawing-the-right-lessons-on-airpower-from-libya>, accessed 22 March 2012.

CHAPTER 8

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR AUSTRALIA

If there is one attitude more dangerous than to assume that a future war will be just like the last one, it is to imagine that it will be so utterly different that we can afford to ignore all the lessons of the last one.

John C. Slessor³¹⁹

Introduction

Any military campaign is subject to considerable analysis regarding what went well, and what did not. A wise nation will learn from these lessons and incorporate them into doctrine and future planning, without falling into the dangerous trap of assuming that all future conflicts will follow the same pattern as the last. There are many lessons to be learned from the international intervention in Libya in 2011. While a significant number of these are operational, it is beyond the scope of this paper to address the operational component in great detail. The main thrust of this chapter will be to consider the strategic implications, and to determine what application the experience of the international coalition in Libya has to Australia, with respect to its possible involvement in future coercive operations.

The implications for Australia will be covered in three sections: coalition operations, Australia's relationship with the US, and the specific implications for the RAAF as the element of the ADF holding the primary responsibility for the delivery of air power. In particular, the final section will consider the challenges the RAAF will face if it is to have the capacity to provide the credible threat needed to support a strategy of coercive diplomacy.

319 J. Slessor, *Air Power and Armies*, Oxford University Press, London, 1936, p. x.

Coalition Operations

The reality of the contemporary global environment is that states, even powerful ones like the US, are more likely to embark on multilateral than unilateral operations, either in support of their national interests or in defence of human rights. In recent decades, almost all operations have involved coalitions, either those formally sanctioned by the UN, those creatively constructed without UN approval—generally referred to as ‘coalitions of the willing’—or informal ad hoc coalitions formed between intervening states and rebel forces on the ground, such as the Kosovo Liberation Army in Kosovo and the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. Australia is not immune from this trend, as has been evidenced by its leadership of the International Forces in East Timor (INTERFET) in 1999, and the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands in 2003, as well as its participation in military coalitions in Afghanistan and Iraq in the first decade of the 21st century. In the case of Iraq in 2003, Australia and the UK’s involvement was valued by the US as providing a degree of international legitimacy to a campaign that was not sanctioned by the UN, and that the US was reluctant to undertake unilaterally.

International legitimacy for operations is one of the most critical contemporary issues in coercive diplomacy, but it is only one of the benefits that coalition operations can bring. Participation in coalitions also enhances the potency and credibility of coercive threats by combining military and economic resources from various coalition members. As was the case in Libya, member countries that are geographically closer to the target state can allow other states’ forces to use their airfields for staging and their airspace to enable transit. Also, in some cases, geographically well-placed states can provide relevant intelligence, which includes an accurate picture of the conflict on the ground. Furthermore, states that have closer ties to the target state, through politics or ideology, are often in a better position to initiate diplomatic overtures than states whose presence in the region is a cause of resentment. In the case of Libya, besides contributing aircraft and crews, the presence of Jordan, Qatar, Sweden and the UAE not only added much needed legitimacy to another Western-led intervention in a Muslim state, but was said also to have added a valuable ‘cultural’ element to the operation.³²⁰

The integration of international air forces in Libya was effective largely because of their history of joint exercises and training. Small nations were partnered with larger ones with whom they had trained, such as Qatar with France, Jordan with the UK and the UAE with the US.³²¹ The success of the integrated efforts in Libya reinforces Australia’s own initiatives in this regard, and the need to continue to focus on training

320 Tirpak, ‘Lessons from Libya’, p. 5.

321 Quintana, ‘The War from the Air’, p. 32.

and interoperability with international forces. The relative ease with which Australia is able to coordinate operations with its largest ally the US is testament to the successful programs of training, personnel exchanges, intelligence sharing and the inter-operability of equipment that both countries have cultivated. Australia has also seen the value of cultural integration when working with its Pacific neighbours such as Fiji, Vanuatu and New Zealand in non-coercive humanitarian operations in the Solomon Islands and Bougainville. The integration of regional countries' activities sets a solid foundation for future coalition consensus, and may prove critical in the success of operations to come.

The air campaign in Libya demonstrated an unusual degree of international consensus, with a critical component being the unification of Arab and Western forces. However, it was not free from contention, with political difficulties emerging over joint objectives, ROE and command and control arrangements, and with some states, most notably France, initiating independent action. Some participants also chose to go outside the UN-endorsed mandate by deploying Special Forces to Libya and supplying weapons to the rebels, actions to which the other members of the coalition mostly turned a blind eye. Major General Margaret Woodward, US Commander under *Odyssey Dawn*, while acknowledging the benefit of shared assets, also described 'the integration of more and more participants' as 'an ongoing challenge', with each nation bringing 'idiosyncratic rules about what they would or would not do'.³²²

The benefits that come with coalition operations must be balanced against the complications that multi-country participation can provoke. Jakobsen recognised this dilemma, with one of the central questions of his study being whether the 'need for collective action hinder[s] or facilitate[s] effective crisis management and hence coercive diplomacy'.³²³ Increasing the number of states in a coalition increases the number of parties with distinct political agendas, with whom consensus is required before action can be undertaken. Byman and Waxman highlight that the inflexibility of coalition ROE makes it harder to deliver a credible threat to the adversary, and in particular, to enable an escalation of the coercive threat.³²⁴ If under the auspices of the UN, each change in the directed mandate in an operation will require Security Council endorsement, and continued escalation may not be supported by all states. This translates to indecision, time delays, and a reduction in credibility—all of which will be noted by the adversary and potentially read as a limited commitment. Furthermore, an increased number of participants leads to the possibility that conflicting messages are being communicated to the adversary by different members of the coalition.³²⁵

322 As quoted in Tirpak, 'Lessons from Libya', p. 5.

323 Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 2.

324 Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, p. 167.

325 *ibid*, p. 160.

A coalition of states has an inherent fragility that states operating unilaterally do not. This instability gives the adversary an opportunity to undertake counter-coercion and to undermine the united efforts of the coalition by exploiting its weakest point. For Western nations, a key vulnerability is often the intolerance of casualties, thus an adversary may choose to deliberately mount operations that will result in heavy loss of life, both civilian and military. The current operations in Afghanistan do not constitute a coercive campaign from the international forces' perspective, but a strategy of counter-coercion is evident where personnel wearing Afghan force uniforms have deliberately targeted international forces training them, resulting in the domestic populations of the contributing countries to call for an accelerated withdrawal of their troops from Afghanistan. This strategy has met with some success, with at least two countries indicating their plan to withdraw forces ahead of schedule.³²⁶

The withdrawal of coalition partners from an air operation has the potential to result in the removal of much needed facilities or resources, such as air bases or access to airspace, and also raises the possibility of a 'domino effect' from other members. Where the coalition appears to be fragmenting, the adversary may then choose to simply 'wait it out' until the coalition collapses. This was Milosevic's (unsuccessful) strategy in Kosovo in 1999³²⁷, and may also have factored into Gaddafi's deliberations in 2011.

Balancing conflicting priorities can also lead to coalition fragmentation. An adversary is likely to be aware of regional relationships and their vulnerability. Coalition members have ongoing relationships with other members of the coalition that hinge on trade, economic support and other foreign policy concerns where their actions and votes are often tempered by the potential consequences. Hence, preserving their national interests is paramount. Even the association between individual states and the adversary will be vastly different, with each state viewing the adversary's action through the prism of their own relationship. Considerations that can affect this include a reliance on the target state for a resource such as oil, or a strong economic or trade relationship.

For a coercive operation to succeed, coalition members must have aligned goals. They must also be cognisant of the adversary's possible interpretation of their decisions or inaction and the potential consequences. In turn, this raises a number of questions. Has the level of disagreement reduced the credibility of the coalition? Has the coalition unwittingly signalled its point of greatest weakness to the adversary? Has it signalled that

326 Both France and New Zealand have indicated that they will withdraw troops earlier than planned. See G. Bowley, 'Generals meet to study Afghan violence', *New York Times*, 20 August 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/21/world/asia/new-zealand-signals-an-early-withdrawal-from-afghanistan.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all, accessed 20 September 2012.

327 Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, p. 172.

the divisiveness of the coalition is more powerful than its cohesion? These are all factors that must be considered by members participating in a coercive coalition.³²⁸

The possibility of Australia becoming involved in multilateral operations in the future, such as that undertaken by the coalition of NATO and other nations in Libya in 2011, is high. In fact, it is far more likely that Australia will operate as a member of a coalition than in isolation. For this reason, it is important to focus both on Australia's relationship with its key strategic ally, the US, and its role amongst smaller nations in the region.

Australia's Relationship with the US

The European states learned two key lessons from the air campaign in Libya. Firstly, the extent of their reliance on the US, and secondly, that America will not always be prepared to be the lead nation in coalition operations. The reliance on the US manifested itself in the provision of critical enablers such as ISR and AAR assets, as well as through the re-supply of precision-guided munitions, which many nations reputedly ran out of only a few weeks into the campaign.³²⁹ Without the vital contribution of the US, the air campaign itself would have been seriously jeopardised, and would have been unlikely to be able to continue through to its denouement in October.

In his outgoing speech to NATO in June 2011, US Secretary of Defense Gates made it clear that the US would expect a higher level of commitment in the future from other states in matters of global security, not only in terms of financial commitment, but also by way of additional assets and personnel. He noted that some European nations were 'apparently willing and eager for American taxpayers to assume the growing security burden left by reductions in European defense budgets' and declared that 'nations must be responsible for their fair share of the common defense'.³³⁰

Other American leaders ensured that the message was delivered to Australia following the Australian government's announcement of cuts to the defence budget in mid-2012. US commander in the Pacific, Admiral Samuel Locklear, called for Australia to 'stick close to the "NATO standard" of spending about 2.5% of gross domestic product'³³¹, and

328 *ibid*, pp. 152-174.

329 A. Etzioni, 'The Lessons of Libya', *Military Review*, January-February, 2012, pp. 45-54, p. 53.

330 R. Gates, 'The Security and Defense Agenda (Future of NATO)', Speech given in Brussels, Belgium on 10 June 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1581>, accessed 25 September 2012.

331 B. Toohey, 'Less force, more trade', *Australian Financial Review*, 4-5 August, 2012, p. 54, <http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex>, accessed 23 September 2012. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute places Australia's defence spending in 2012 at 1.8%, compared to the US at 4.7%.

in even stronger language, Richard Armitage, a former deputy secretary of state, warned the Australian government not to 'misuse the US "pivot" to Asia as an excuse to take "a free ride" on US military efforts in the Asia Pacific'.³³²

The realities of Australia's geopolitical circumstances—a small population housed in a geographically large island nation in the Asia-Pacific region, with a heavy dependence on maritime trade and vulnerability through its northern approaches—has meant that it has been historically dependent on great power protection. This was provided first by the UK, then subsequently by the US. The ANZUS alliance was formalised in 1952, and as well as protection, has provided the benefits of shared intelligence, training, and access to research, development and technology.³³³ The relationship with the US is, and will remain, Australia's 'most important defence relationship'.³³⁴

As illustrated by the US declarations of 2012, however, the alliance was never intended to be a one-way relationship. In return for its protection, the US has expectations of its smaller but strategically important partner—expectations that have been honoured through Australia's participation alongside the US in wars in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. The 'war on terror', perhaps more than any other, has been as much about providing a return on the 'strategic insurance premium'³³⁵ as it has about Australia's personal commitment to the campaigns.

The maintenance of the relationship with the US means that any conflict involving the US could conceivably also involve Australia. As long as Australia continues to seek the protection of the US, it cannot assume that remote conflicts or crises hold no relevance. Australia was not asked nor expected to provide air power for the campaign against Libya, but should conflict emerge in the Asia-Pacific Region, the US would certainly expect Australia to play a leading role.

The Asia-Pacific is home to four of the world's major powers and five of the world's largest militaries—the US, Russia, China, India and North Korea.³³⁶ However, while only a small power in comparison to these states, Australia is nonetheless seen as the significant military power of the Pacific Region, and is hence looked to by smaller Pacific nations for protection, and for the leadership of regional coalitions if necessary. With its good relationships with others in the region, Australia is in a natural position to both take the

332 G. Sheridan, 'American's aghast at ally's deep defence cuts', *The Weekend Australian*, 21-22 July, 2012, p. 22.

333 Prime Minister Howard when on a visit to the US which coincided with the attack on the World Trade Centre invoked the Alliance for the first time by offering Australia's assistance.

334 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper 2009, Commonwealth of Australia, p. 93.

335 N. Hordern, 'US alliance key to defence posture', *Australian Financial Review*, 9 February 2012, p. 59.

336 'Force Posture Review Progress Report', *Australian Maritime Digest*, 1 March 2012, p. 1.

lead and obtain support from other states. Primary among the assets that Australia could offer to protect smaller allies, or to use as a coercive tool to stop the aggressive actions of others, is air power.

Challenges for the RAAF

The RAAF has used air power as a tool of coercive diplomacy on a number of occasions throughout its 90-year history. It was employed in this capacity twice during the Cold War, firstly when squadrons were deployed to the Malayan Emergency in the late 1950s, and secondly to the Indonesian *Konfrontasi* in the mid 1960s. On both of these occasions, the primary purpose of the deployment was to prevent ‘irregular’ conflicts from escalating into war³³⁷, although over time, the RAAF contribution itself escalated beyond coercion. The RAAF has also been used at various times throughout its history in ‘building and reinforcing partnerships, in reassuring allies, and in deterring aggression.’³³⁸ In 1999, following on from the East Timorese vote on self-determination, militias loyal to Indonesia turned against those East Timorese in favour of autonomy. Australia led a coalition of international forces to address the rapidly deteriorating situation. The RAAF employed aircraft in ‘information operations’, designed to demonstrate the resolve of INTERFET, and to play a role in coercing the militia into ceasing their aggression.³³⁹ The RAAF has thus already demonstrated its ability to be used across the spectrum of conflict—from operations designed to shape and influence the environment, to more coercive roles and finally strike operations.

The RAAF possesses a wide spectrum of capabilities that are able to be employed by the Australian government in a coercive capacity. Chapter Four explored the characteristics of air power that can best serve a strategy of coercion, and the force structure of the RAAF has been developed to ensure that it can continue to provide the government with a range of escalatory options. This includes ISR assets to survey potential areas of conflict and provide timely intelligence, and aircraft that can establish and control a NFZ. Most recently, the government announced that 12 of Australia’s Super Hornets will be upgraded to ‘Growlers’, which are able to be used in an electronic warfare role to paralyse

337 G. Gilbert, ‘Coercive Diplomacy: Forget the Gunboat, send a Squadron instead’, *WINGS*, Winter, 2012, pp. 12-13.

338 *ibid.*

339 Royal Australian Air Force, ‘The RAAF Experience of Information Operations’, *Pathfinder*, Issue 184, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, August 2012. Note that this show of force also incorporated the Army’s rotary wing assets.

an enemy's communications and missile systems, giving Australia a technological edge in this regard over others in the region.³⁴⁰

These capabilities, however, come at a high cost, and the capacity to provide the same level of options at a time of budget austerity is one of the greatest challenges facing not only the RAAF and wider ADF, but militaries across the world. The campaign in Libya was the first major military engagement initiated following the global financial crisis.³⁴¹ The need and ability of states to use their air power capabilities in response to unforeseen international events provided a timely lesson for many European states, including the UK, who had only just embarked on a program of reduced defence spending that was set to have serious flow-on effects for capability.³⁴²

The Arab Spring came as a shock. European states were not expecting to be asked to contribute to another military campaign, with many of them already heavily committed to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gaddafi's actions in Libya in early 2011, followed swiftly by the international calls for action and the UNSC resolutions, highlighted the need for air forces across the world to be prepared, flexible and adaptable, and to recognise that capacity—the ability to conduct simultaneous and sustained operations—was as important as capability.

PREPAREDNESS

Concentrating on only one event at a time, or planning only for a single contingency, is a luxury a military cannot afford. The rapid mobilisation of air assets in response to the crisis in Libya can be directly attributed to the high level of preparedness at which the forces were held, but it must also be partly ascribed to good fortune, in that the US had a number of air assets permanently stationed throughout Europe that could be called upon immediately for service in Libya. In addition, the fact that Libya was so close to continental Europe also enabled a relatively quick response time.

340 Royal Australian Air Force, 'The Importance of the Growler to Australia's National Security', *Pathfinder*, Issue 185, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, September 2012.

341 A. Rasmussen, 'NATO After Libya', *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67915/anders-fogh-rasmussen/nato-after-libya>, accessed 28 March 2012.

342 The UK Government's *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (SDSR) released in late 2010 announced significant budget cuts across the Ministry of Defence, including to RAF equipment and personnel. The RAF's leading role in Libya caused reconsideration of the planned action under the review, including the proposed axing of the *Sentinel R1* airborne battlefield and ground surveillance platform, which proved critical in operations in Libya. See *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, October 2010 and *Reprieve for axed Sentinel R1 spy plane*, British Forces News, 23 November 2011, <http://bfbs.com/news/worldwide/reprieve-axed-sentinel-r1-spy-plane-53697.html>, accessed 24 August 2012.

Australian military forces pride themselves on their preparedness, but the ability to respond ‘rapidly and efficiently to a short notice contingency’³⁴³ comes with risks and costs. Maintaining forces and assets on perpetual short-notice is a prohibitively expensive endeavour. For a country the size of Australia, with a shrinking Defence budget and a relatively small Defence Force, including an air force of approximately 14 500 full-time personnel³⁴⁴, it is a particular challenge. Placing forces on permanent standby is both unrealistic and unsustainable, thus the Australian government needs to recognise this fact and temper its expectations accordingly.

There is no panacea to this challenge, other than to continue the practice of ongoing training and exercises, so that events, when they happen, will not seem entirely unfamiliar and personnel can transition quickly and effectively into their required roles. In addition, the dissemination of timely and accurate intelligence permits forces to train and prepare as well as possible for the most likely events, rather than relying only on the experience of the most recent operation. It is worth reinforcing here that the intervention in Libya bore little resemblance to the experiences of Iraq and Afghanistan.

ADAPTABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY

In a coercive campaign, an air force needs to have the assets and the force structure to be both credible, as can be demonstrated through regular exercise programs, and capable, and to be able to provide the range of capabilities that are able to escalate and de-escalate as required. Due to its position in the region, and its inability to rely exclusively on the protection of the US, Australia’s air force cannot afford to be tailored exclusively to one type of conflict. However, a small air force with a comparatively small budget also faces serious challenges in being able to deliver air power in reaction to events across the full spectrum of conflict. Consequently, a balance in force structure needs to be made between the most likely type of conflict, and the one with potentially the most disastrous consequences. This is referred to by the Australian government as ‘strategic hedging’³⁴⁵, and what it amounts to is the need for the RAAF to be highly adaptable and flexible.

The adaptability and flexibility of forces hold the key to the best prospect of success in any type of military operation. These attributes were shown by the coalition air forces in Libya, with a shortfall in some areas, such as ISR, partially made up for by the multi-role capabilities of aircraft. The RAAF has also embraced the concept of multi-role aircraft, with its decision to purchase the JSF, and the multi-role tanker and transport aircraft

343 *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century*, 2009, p. 87.

344 Department of Defence, *Portfolio Budget Statements 2011-12*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2011, p. 39.

345 Defence White Paper 2009, pp. 28-29.

two such examples. This adaptability will go some way towards mitigating, but cannot remove the problems that confront a small air force in trying to cover all contingencies with dwindling resources.

CAPACITY AS WELL AS CAPABILITY

Throughout this thesis, reference has been made for the need for a coercer to possess both credibility and capability. The need for a state to have a certain military capability such as strike aircraft is often discussed, but ongoing campaigns in the 21st century demonstrate that a state's capacity—its ability to sustain operations—is equally important. The military campaign in Libya took over seven months to reach its finale. Commentators and the public alike were dismayed at the length of time it was taking to achieve a decisive outcome³⁴⁶, as there is still a widespread expectation that air power should resolve a crisis quickly.

One of the key features of coercive campaigns is their unpredictability. Coercion is a two-way engagement, and it is up to the adversary to decide whether or not to capitulate, and when they will do so. Consequently, the expectations of short air campaigns do not always come to fruition, and contributing nations must expect to have their resources in use for indeterminate periods. The states who contributed to the Libyan campaign faced challenges in a number of areas including their dwindling stocks of munitions, and the fatigue of personnel and platforms that were subject to extended use. In September, when the UN extended its mandate for another 90 days, many states were publicly questioning their ability to sustain operations for this period.³⁴⁷ The coalition in Libya was made up of 28 nations, who contributed varying levels of assets and personnel. The fact that there were so many nations, and that the US chose to stay engaged the entire period, ultimately enabled the campaign to be seen through until the end of October; however, no contributing nation, apart from the US, would have been able to conduct the campaign on its own.

A small air force such as the RAAF will always be constrained by its ability to sustain open-ended conflict, or to take part in more than one operation at a time. Commentators who decry expensive defence purchases often fail to grasp the point that capacity is a critical requirement. A single JSF, or indeed even a squadron of JSFs would not provide either a sufficient deterrent, or a credible threat to a potential aggressor who would be well aware that operations could not be sustained for very long. Similarly, the role of enablers cannot

346 See, for instance, S. Myers and J. Dempsey, 'NATO showing strain over approach to Libya', *International Herald Tribune*, 14 April 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/15/world/africa/15nato.html?ref=africa>, accessed 25 September 2012; and J. Burns, 'British leader rebuts commanders concerns about a long Libya campaign', *New York Times*, 21 June 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/22/world/africa/22libya.html?_r=0, accessed 25 September 2012.

347 E. Quintana, 'Defence Capability Programmes: Air', *RUSI Defence Systems*, Summer 2011, p. 53; Anrig, 'Allied Air Power Over Libya', p. 105.

be underestimated. Five squadrons of JSFs for instance, may well provide the capacity to sustain a prolonged campaign, but their ability to carry out their operations would most likely be constrained by the availability of tankers to refuel them en route to their targets. Without the capacity to conduct sustained operations, credibility is significantly reduced. In a coercive campaign, if the threat is not credible, it will simply be ignored.³⁴⁸

It is beyond the scope of this paper to proffer arguments for or against specific equipment purchases, but the example of the JSF is used deliberately to highlight that a specific capability, as potent as it may be, does not equate to an ability to conduct extensive operations. This is a fact that needs to be recognised and accepted if the government intends to present Australian air power as a viable tool of military coercion in the future.

POLITICAL DIMENSION

Both policy makers and military officers need to remember that military power is but one means of achieving a political objective. When offering up air power within a broader strategy of coercive diplomacy, it is vital that the government has realistic expectations. This entails both a frank acknowledgment of exactly what the expectations of military action are, and whether, if successful, they will assist with the final political objective. An air campaign in itself can be entirely successful in its own military objectives; for instance destroying key military installations, without necessarily realising the desired political objective, such as changing the behaviour of an autocratic leader. Before authorising military action therefore, a government must ask itself whether military means are the most effective way to achieve the desired political ends. It is here that professional mastery, defined in an air force context as ‘knowledge and understanding, coupled with experience and confidence, which empowers a person to realise the full potential of air power in operations’³⁴⁹ is critical. Decision-makers may well call on the RAAF to play the major role in attempting to coerce adversaries in the region, so air force leaders need to understand and be able to quickly articulate what the RAAF can and cannot offer.

348 As an example of the resources required to maintain an air campaign, during the second Gulf War, the overall Combat Air Patrol cover required to secure advancing coalition forces as they moved towards Baghdad in Iraq involved 155 fighter and 32 specialist support aircraft for every 24 hours of operations. G. Brown, *Air Power Conference*.

349 AAP 1000-D—*The Air Power Manual*, p. 13.

Conclusion

This chapter has deliberately focused on implications for military forces and the RAAF in particular; however, it is important not to dismiss the ongoing criticality of diplomatic overtures that should precede, then act, in concert with stronger coercive measures, if indeed more forceful action is required. Australia has proven itself to be an active participant in international diplomacy. Foreign Minister Rudd was credited internationally for his stance on Libya and his activism in calling for a NFZ, demonstrating 'the effective mobilization of soft power'.³⁵⁰ Early in the crisis, Australia also independently imposed sanctions on 22 members of the Libyan regime, and lobbied relevant regional bodies to promote a strong stance on Libya.³⁵¹ Throughout the conflict, Australia remained the third-largest aid donor to Libya.³⁵² A previous Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans was one of the key architects of the R2P principle, and Australia's continued interest in global issues has been demonstrated by the efforts to gain a temporary seat on the UNSC, the achievement of which will now generate even greater expectations of Australian participation in international affairs.

With its own budget constraints, Australia needs to ensure that its Defence dollars are invested wisely, by recognising the unpredictability of global events and the need to be prepared to respond to a range of crises. Inherent in this, however is the appreciation that there are limitations to what a small force can do, both in terms of its preparedness and its capacity. These problems cannot be entirely mitigated, but can be best addressed by having a force that is flexible and adaptable, and leaders who are frank about the force's limitations.

350 C. Stewart, 'EU credits Rudd for no-fly jolt', in *The Australian*, 26 March 2011, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/eu-credits-rudd-for-no-fly-jolt/story-fnS9niix-1226028350961>, accessed 27 February 2012; T. Dunne and J. Gifkins, 'Libya and the State of Intervention', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 5, 2011, pp. 515-529, p. 520.

351 Dunne and Gifkins, 'Libya and the State of Intervention', p. 520.

352 G. Sheridan, 'Vindication for the West's soft tactics', *The Australian*, 22 October 2011; Dunne and Gifkins, 'Libya and the State of Intervention', p. 520.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Air power plays a vital role in shaping the environment in terms of the battlegrounds that are not physical – virtual conflict environments – for diplomatic overtures, economic assertions or even social action to be successful. In the interdependent global security scenario the characteristics of air power that provide governments with rapid and effective response capabilities will be highly prized.

Sanu Kainikara³⁵³

This thesis began with an examination of the theoretical literature on coercive diplomacy. It is a subject that engenders as much disagreement as consensus, with dissent regarding both the classification of cases and the interpretation of their success. As instances throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries have demonstrated, the practical application of the theory of coercive diplomacy is not simple.

Difficulties in definition and application do not, however, mean that the strategy is not viable. Coercive diplomacy provides the best chance of changing an adversary's aggressive or undesirable behaviour by affecting their intellectual reasoning in a way that leads them to abandon their original intent. This can either be through making them realise that the objective sought is unattainable, or that the attempt will end up costing more than they can potentially gain. Ultimately, the aim of coercive diplomacy is to resolve crises before they escalate into war.

Coercive diplomacy is in essence a 'smart power' strategy, necessitating that the threat of economic deprivation or military force—making use of the hard power attributes of a state—be synchronised with the softer art of diplomacy, to effectively communicate a coercer's resolve to a potential adversary. At the low end of the coercive spectrum are economic disincentives such as the freezing of personal assets, or wider reaching economic sanctions that restrict trade to and from the country in an attempt to isolate it economically. The strategy of imposing economic sanctions can be seen today in the UN, EU and US' efforts to strangle the regime in Syria, and to retard the development of a nuclear capability in Iran. The effectiveness of the sanctions in these cases is yet to be proven, but herein lies one of the disadvantages of sanctions—they may take a long time to be effective.

353 S. Kainikara, *The Art of Air Power*, Air Power Development Centre, Canberra, 2009, p. 25.

Military force is seen as more decisive and able to bring about a quicker resolution, but potentially at a higher cost to both sides. States may also be reluctant to physically intervene in the sovereign affairs of another state, and are disinclined to become involved in a country that holds little relevance to their own national interests. For these reasons, the application of force against another state is politically undesirable, and is generally considered the option of last resort. In the second decade of the 21st century, diminished defence budgets across the globe and the financial and human costs of the extended conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have made states both cautious and weary of war.

The intent of coercive diplomacy, however, is to prevent war, or to resolve it with the minimal application of force. Military force is used primarily as a threat, although the willingness to follow through with the threat if required is critical. If a state possesses the requisite military hardware and the ability and will to deploy it if necessary, the threat of military force serves as a final warning to a potential adversary that further action on their part will be met with a forceful response. This gives the adversary the opportunity to capitulate before force has even been employed against them. If unsuccessful, a limited amount of force may then be applied in an attempt to prevent the adversary from using their own military assets, and to achieve escalation dominance. Successful coercion relies on the ability to increase and decrease the threat and application as required, and to prevent the adversary from doing so themselves. If the opponent chooses not to give in to the demands they then accept the risk of further action, and ultimately the application of punitive force. Once force is used to militarily defeat the opponent, its application can no longer be considered coercive.

Air power continues to display its utility as a valuable tool of coercive diplomacy, and both the threat of air power and its actual employment have proven decisive in engagements over the last three decades. Air power's ability to be deployed rapidly gives it credibility as a mechanism that can be activated quickly and achieve immediate effects. Politically its use is likely to gain international support ahead of other military means as it removes the need to deploy 'boots on the ground', thus the coercer is less likely to be viewed as an 'occupying' force. The use of air power, including the increasing employment of UAVs, also reduces the risk of casualties to the coercing force. In addition, the situational awareness that can be achieved from the air, and the ability to deploy precision weapons with discrimination means that civilian casualties can be more easily avoided. Air power provides governments with a range of options that are more politically appealing than the prospect of large-scale land deployments.

It took only 31 days for the international community to support the use of air and naval power against Colonel Gaddafi and his loyalist forces in Libya, (while ruling out the use of ground forces), and less than 48 hours for air assets to be deployed following the UNSC resolution. Air power was initially used to establish and enforce a NFZ, to suppress enemy air defences, and to deny Gaddafi the use of his military assets and his ability to communicate

with his forces. Even prior to the resolution, AWAC assets were surveying the air above Libya, recording loyalist forces' use of their own air assets. Critically, air power was employed in a successful attempt to immediately protect the citizens of Benghazi against whom Gaddafi had threatened imminent harm.

The case of Libya has been no easier to neatly categorise as coercive diplomacy, nor to label a clear success or failure, than have other engagements in the past. The international intervention was successful in achieving the declared UN objective of protecting civilians by denying government forces the ability to attack them, and the wider undeclared objective of ousting Gaddafi from power, but failed to compel Gaddafi to cease his attacks on civilians and rebel forces, or to voluntarily relinquish power. Thus it was ultimately unsuccessful in changing Gaddafi's actions or his behaviour: the intent of coercive diplomacy. As the study determined though, this was not a failure of air power, but the result of an unrealistic objective—that an autocrat who had led his country for 42 years could be compelled to change his behaviour at the whim of the international community, or coerced into acceding power.

Coercive diplomacy was not coordinated well in Libya in early 2011. Too many states attempted their own methods of resolution and negotiation, and as a result, conflicting messages were sent to Colonel Gaddafi. Complicating the matter significantly was the fact that many international leaders had decided that Gaddafi had to go, and made public proclamations to that effect. Their intent tilted the objective, despite UN and NATO statements to the contrary, from protecting civilians to removing Gaddafi from power. The objective thus transcended the 'proportionality threshold' of policy change to regime change; as Jentleson cautioned, a sure recipe for coercive failure.³⁵⁴

The case of Libya in 2011 reinforced the limitations of what a strategy of coercive diplomacy can ever hope to achieve. Potentially the international efforts could have changed Gaddafi's actions, and his pattern of behaviour, should he have felt that there was still something to gain and that he could retain power. Nothing, however, was going to change his fundamental belief that he had the right to act with impunity against Libyan citizens, and that he was the legitimate and sole ruler of Libya who could not be challenged or removed from power. The case of Libya also showed the futility of exercising coercive diplomacy against an apparently irrational opponent who most likely misjudged the extent of international opposition against him and the likelihood of multilateral military action, and who was ultimately prepared to die a martyr rather than capitulate.

US politicians were quick to endorse the operation in Libya as the way of the future. Vice-President Joe Biden claimed that 'NATO got it right ... this is more the prescription for

354 Jentleson, 'Coercive Diplomacy', p. 3.

how to deal with the world as we go forward.³⁵⁵ Certainly the campaign had borne traces of the 'seductiveness' of air power suggested by Eliot Cohen³⁵⁶, but sweeping statements like Biden's failed to recognise that the 'success' was directly linked to the unique circumstances of the event. The intervention in Libya has not provided a template for future intervention in Syria or indeed any other nation.

The temptation to proclaim that a military/political success translates to *the* way of the future, rather than *a* way to deal with a specific set of circumstances is an attraction that must be resisted to ensure that the appropriate lessons of the campaign are absorbed. The unique features and individual political considerations inherent in each case mean that there cannot possibly be a prescription for future action. All that may have been proved was that the action taken was ultimately successful in the circumstances. In saying this, however, one should also be prepared to assert that the particular instrument used (such as air power) was decisive in that case.

Air power is increasingly seen as the preferred military option by governments. There is a need for caution however, in the optimistic conceptualisation of a clear and causal connection between the use of air power and the response of the adversary. Even those operations that have been largely proclaimed as successes due to the actions of air power, such as Gulf War I, Kosovo and now Libya, did not achieve that victory by virtue of air power alone.³⁵⁷ In tempering their expectations, the public should be made aware that force has both capabilities and limitations, and that it cannot, on its own, achieve political ends such as establishing democracy in a country with pronounced sectarian divisions and no history of democratic government. Military force does, however, have utility for its specific purpose, and can act as an enabler to affect the situation on the ground, setting the conditions for political change. Whether or not the political objective is ultimately achievable is another question altogether.

The application of air power in Libya did not follow the traditional escalatory pattern of coercive diplomacy; it was applied at the high end of the coercive spectrum from the beginning. Elements of the campaign could more accurately be described as engagement in limited war, rather than the coercive use of air power. The campaign did demonstrate

355 M. Memoli, 'Kadafi death: Joe Biden says 'NATO got it right' in Libya', Los Angeles Times, 22 October 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/20/news/la-pn-santorum-kadafi-20111020>, accessed 29 October 2012.

356 Cohen, 'The Mystique of U.S. Airpower'.

357 See for example L. Willett, 'Don't Forget about the Ships', in A. Johnson, and S. Mueen (ed.), *Short War, Long Shadow. The Political and Military Legacies of the 2011 Libya Campaign*, Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall Report 1-12, 2012, pp. 41-51; and R. Funnell, 'Military History Overturned: Did air power win the war?' in A. Schnabel and R. Thakur (ed.), *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action and International Citizenship*, United Nations University Press, Tokyo, 2000, pp. 433-447.

however, how air power might effectively be employed in a number of different ways in a coercive campaign in the future, including by monitoring a potential adversary's activities through ISR, establishing a NFZ, using EW to disable SAMs and disrupt the adversary's communications, continuing the use of ISR to identify and track the adversary, and finally, if necessary, engaging in strike operations to destroy military assets. It showed how air power could be applied with precision against both deliberate and dynamic targets, while avoiding collateral damage and minimising the loss of innocent lives.

The seven month campaign in Libya reinforced that conflict is hardly ever resolved as quickly as expected, and that states must be prepared to support ongoing operations. This means that the capacity of a force—their ability to sustain operations—will become as important as the capability they possess through their assets. For air power to be used as an effective tool of coercive diplomacy it must provide a credible threat. A limited number of assets or a shortage of enablers such as AARs will result in an operation that cannot be sustained. This limitation will be recognised by a potential adversary, who will then have the option of simply waiting out for the coercer's withdrawal.

The manner in which foreign intervention in Libya was approved and the success of coalition air operations reinforced the importance of maintaining relationships with potential coalition partners, and the need for continued interoperability and training to ensure effectiveness in actual operations. The rapidity with which events unfolded across the Arab Spring also highlighted the need to be prepared, adaptable and flexible. Libya has served as a reminder that we cannot predict either the nature or location of future conflict.

On the political side, the Libyan campaign demonstrated that the US is no longer prepared to carry disproportionate weight in future international interventions, if indeed it chooses to become involved at all. This means that Australia will need to be prepared to take the lead in regional engagements, as occurred in 1999. The ANZUS alliance will remain an enduring feature of Australia's relationship with the US, and Australia can expect to serve with the US as part of wider coalitions in the future, but Libya served as a cautionary tale that exclusive reliance on what is still the world's only superpower at this point would be foolhardy.

This study set out to examine whether air power has utility as a tool of coercive diplomacy in the 21st century. It was not the intention of the thesis to suggest that air forces are superior to the other services, that they warrant exclusive attention or additional funding, or that air power can achieve results entirely independently; nor does it argue for the primacy of air power over land or sea power. What the thesis has done is to articulate the many advantages of air power that make it valuable as a tool of coercion, and more likely to be supported both domestically and internationally, in preference to large-scale deployments of ground forces. Air power that is truly intended to coerce rather than

defeat can be applied in a variety of ways, in a gradually escalating fashion. The number of options that it offers demonstrates its utility as an instrument of 21st century coercion. As observed throughout this thesis, however, air power forms only one part of a broader strategy of coercive diplomacy.

Many aspects of coercive diplomacy were not addressed in this thesis. These include the moral and ethical considerations around the use of force, particularly in cases of humanitarian intervention, the coercive potential of land or naval forces, and finally the question of how to measure success; each of which could constitute a dissertation in its own right. Another question not covered is whether a strategy of gradual escalation is actually the most appropriate use of air power. It is beyond the scope of this paper to argue for or against this position as an alternative to the rapid and overwhelming use of force. Opponents could easily argue both sides as the more ethical option and the one most likely to achieve a resolution with minimal loss of life; the former because only limited force is used, and the latter because it may avoid prolonged engagements. What is clear though, is that air power is the optimal tool to provide both options. The reality is that the method of employment is likely to be directed by government and constrained more by political and domestic factors than any other considerations. As John Correll cautions, gradual escalation may be the only option on offer.³⁵⁸

Following the events of Libya in 2011, NATO Secretary General Rasmussen recognised that 'Europe needs to build a strong continuum of hard and soft power so that it can respond to the full spectrum of crises and threats'.³⁵⁹ Australia must also appreciate that it does not have dominance in either hard or soft power capability; therefore it must be smart in how it uses both of these tools. Coercive diplomacy is a viable way to do this—to combine skilful diplomacy with a force structure that will prove a deterrent but is able to be used in a coercive capacity should the need arise. Air power will be integral in this endeavour and will continue to be a politically attractive choice for governments.

With the 20th century deemed the 'European Century' fading from view and the so-called 'Asian Century' coming into focus, tensions between countries will be inevitable. In the Great Power transitions of history, the rise of an emerging power has rarely occurred without some level of conflict. As a maritime trading nation reliant on the vital sea lanes to its north, Australia has a prime stake in ensuring that the region remains secure so that its trade and economic prosperity is not endangered. Coercive diplomacy, with a credible air force as the tool, will remain an important strategy in the management of relations in the region throughout the 21st century.

358 J. Correll, 'The Use of Force', *Air Force Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 12, December 1999, pp. 37-39, p. 39.

359 Rasmussen, 'NATO After Libya'.

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