



Future War: Non-Lethal Weapons in Modern Warfare

By John B. Alexander

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The nature of warfare has changed! Like it or not, terrorism has established a firm foothold worldwide. Economics and environmental issues are inextricably entwined on a global basis and tied directly to national regional security. Although traditional threats remain, new, shadowy, and mercurial adversaries are emerging, and identifying and locating them is difficult. Future War, based on the hard-learned lessons of Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia, Panama, and many other trouble spots, provides part of the solution.

Non-lethal weapons are a pragmatic application of force, not a peace movement. Ranging from old rubber bullets and tear gas to exotic advanced systems that can paralyze a country, they are essential for the preservation of peace and stability. Future War explains exactly how non-lethal electromagnetic and pulsed-power weapons, the laser and tazer, chemical systems, computer viruses, ultrasound and infrasound, and even biological entities will be used to stop enemies. These are the weapons of the future.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Non-lethal weapons" may sound like an oxymoron, or something found only on *Alice in Wonderland* battlefields. In reality, however, they are important security tools for armies and law enforcement officials (think tasers and tear gas). Author John Alexander describes all the justifications for non-lethal weapons: they come in handy during peacekeeping operations, help combat terrorism, and head off revenge before it is sought. ("They thank you when they wake up and they're not dead," a Las Vegas cop tells Alexander.) The most fascinating parts of *Future War*, however, are the descriptions of cutting-edge weapons. The sticky foam gun, for example, immobilizes targets by spraying a powerful gluelike adhesive on them. Acoustic blasters issuing low-intensity pulses can cause "perceptual disorientation" among troops. One antivehicle technology called the Silver Shroud "is a ballistically deployed polymer film that literally wraps up a targeted vehicle." A set of accompanying photographs--illustrations are one of *Future War's* attractions--shows a car becoming enveloped in a sheet of aluminum foil. Perhaps the most bizarre non-lethal weapon in this fascinating book involves scattering pheromones (a chemical substance that evokes sexual responses in members of the same species) on an area to make it uninhabitable. Writes Alexander, "Imagine trying to sleep or work in an area that is attracting every ant, cockroach, or spider from miles around." No thanks: better to lose a battle than fight that kind of enemy. And that's exactly the point. --*John J. Miller*

From Publishers Weekly

In a thoughtful examination of the future of military doctrine, Alexander takes a hard look at what options might be available to the American military in a world in which the rules of warfare have changed. Non-lethal weapons, he argues, will become more important for both political and practical reasons. Americans have grown increasingly aware of and sensitive to all casualties on any side in even the most just wars. At the same time, the armed forces increasingly are expected to play a constabulary rather than a military role (as in Bosnia and Haiti). Alexander, a retired U.S. Army colonel who was involved in research on non-lethal weapons at Los Alamos National Laboratory, discusses the use of non-lethal weapons in a series of well-developed near-future operational scenarios in which conventional weapons would be counterproductive. One is a peace support operation. Another involves technological sanctions against a rogue state aimed at disabling its communications systems. A third projects the paralysis, by non-lethal means, of the military capacities of a hostile government. The fourth postulates hostage situations resolved by non-lethal alternatives. Alexander covers technologies ranging from low-kinetic weapons to chemical options, acoustic systems and "conventional" electronic warfare. Such weapons, Alexander demonstrates, are not necessarily humane. They inflict pain; they may permanently disable; they can severely disrupt entire societies. Their sole merit is that they are not designed to kill. Alexander's case for non-lethal weapons may be disputed, but it shouldn't be dismissed.

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From Library Journal

Alexander, U.S. Army col. (ret.) and scientist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, offers the first text dealing with the emerging art and science of nonlethal weaponry, including electromagnetic (lasers), chemical (tear gas), physically restraining, informational, and biological systems. Alexander creates fictional scenarios involving terrorist, military, and hostage situations and postulates how nonlethal weapons could be used to resolve them. Various appendixes list different types of weapons and currently funded military programs. Recommended for public libraries, not because of any special merit. Much of the information on this topic is classified, and descriptions in the text are short and simplistic. But because Alexander is one of

the acknowledged specialists in this field, and this is the first book on the topic written for lay readers. ARichard S. Nowicki, Emerson Vocational H.S., Buffalo, NY
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