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Drones: Military Use and Effects

Throughout human history, militaries have always been striving to develop more powerful weapons to help destroy their enemies. From swords, to guns, to tanks, and even all the way to the atomic bomb, humans have been on a neverending quest to have a "bigger stick" than their enemies to protect their countries. In recent years, we have seen the rise of a particular technology that has the potential to be one of the most lethal and dangerous we have ever seen: drones. Military drone use needs to be closely monitored by the government due to the difficulty to spot them, their ability to conduct a military operation anywhere in the world without a pilot, and their potential for mass production due to their low production cost.

One thing that makes drones so dangerous to the public is how difficult they are to spot with the naked eye. Due to the fact that drones are unmanned vehicles, they do not require a cockpit, so they can be much smaller in size than other aircraft. As a result, drones can be much faster and more elusive, making them very difficult to see once they get close. This means that, unless they are detected on a radar, which isn't guaranteed to detect them (again due to their size), they could perform a whole military operation, and the enemy wouldn't even know that they were there until it was too late. While this gives America great potential in performing swift strikes against an enemy in a timely manner, it also gives the enemy significant potential in performing strikes against America. If drones are here to stay, then we need to develop better radar technology to make sure that we are prepared to take what we're giving.

In addition to being hard to detect, drones have a much larger range of potential operations that they can conduct. Without a human pilot, you do not have the same risk of

casualties if the drone is destroyed. So a drone can be sent to a much riskier mission that has a lower potential rate of success, because, if worst comes to worst and the drone is destroyed, they haven't lost a soldier. They've only lost their drone. While this is a good thing for the military because they aren't putting their soldiers at risk, it is also a potentially dangerous situation on the receiving end, because we may see militaries become much more aggressive towards their targets due to the much reduced risks from the operation. They don't have to be as conservative as they once were in order to protect their soldiers, because the drone can be piloted remotely from the safety of their military base.

The biggest game changer that drones bring to the table however, is the fact that their production cost is significantly lower than that of a traditional military aircraft. According to one report, "one Predator [drone] costs between $3 million to $4 million compared to the around $160 million for one F-35A [fighter jet]." This means that the military could produce the same size fleet of drones as before while saving a large amount of money that can be put to better use. While that may seem like a significant thing, it also means that other countries that may not have as much economic firepower as the US could still produce an effective force to be used against us.

As long as there are humans, there will be conflict, and as long as there is conflict, there will be people trying to design the deadliest weapons possible to help their country stay safe. Drones are a very powerful technology, and they have the ability to revolutionize the way that wars are fought forever. However, we must be careful, because while they are powerful, that also makes them dangerous. We need to pay close attention to how drones are used in the coming years, or they may become too powerful for us to stop.