When evaluating the ethics behind unmanned aerial vehicle use in warfare, one of the best ways to evaluate was Act Utilitarianism. Since Act Utilitarianism wants the greatest good for the greatest number of people, it seems to be the right method for evaluating how ethical a war machine is. When using Act Utilitarianism, it is helpful to create a stakeholder table to better understand how actions would affect each stakeholder. For this reason, we decided to create a stakeholder table so that we could look at the pros and cons of using unmanned vehicles in warfare.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Stakeholder | Weight | Net Utility | Reasoning |
| Drone engineers | 1 | -1 | The creators of the drones: could feel some remorse for what they have created |
| Possible victims of drone strike | 5 | -5 | Could be innocent civilian casualties |
| The public | 5 | 3 | Understand that drone strikes are sometimes necessary, however, they still have empathy for the civilian casualties |
| Targets | 3 | -5 | Would be targeted by the drone, likely death |
| Government | 2 | 4 | Using a safe technology that does not put their military personnel in harms way and takes out potential threat to the country |
| UAV pilot | 2 | -2 | They are doing what they are told, however, ~25% of all drone victims are civilians and not their target |

Utilitarian analysis: (1)(-1) +(5)(-5) + (5)(3) + (3)(-5) + (2)(4) + (2)(-2)

= -1 + (-25) +15 + (-15) + 8 + 0 = -22

After constructing the stakeholder table and analyzing the net utility and weight, we can conclude that unmanned drone usage in warfare is unethical when using Act Utilitarianism. While unmanned vehicle usage has positives, the negatives heavily outweigh them.

Another method to look at was Rule Utilitarianism. In this method, we want the greatest good for the greatest number of people, but it is also an ethical theory that is based on rules. When it comes to warfare, generally the fighting is between the military forces of both sides. It is because of this that the rule should be: Never kill civilians. The reason that we did not use “innocent civilians” is because people could have different ideas of what is innocent, and it is hard to tell who is innocent.

If this is the rule being used when analyzing if unmanned aerial vehicles should be used in warfare, then the answer would be no. Drones have proven to be safe and effective for the user because it does not put the user in danger and are good for getting their job done. The problem is that they have also shown to cause civilian casualties. If the rule is that we should never kill civilians, then unmanned aerial vehicle usage in warfare is unethical.

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/to-protect-against-weaponized-drones-we-must-understand-their-key-strengths>

<http://www.sirjournal.org/op-ed/2019/1/28/the-ethical-concerns-of-drone-and-automated-warfare>