

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**CENTER OF GRAVITY DETERMINATION  
AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WAR  
AGAINST RADICAL ISLAMIC TERRORISM**

by

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Keppler  
United States Army

Professor Douglas Campbell  
Project Advisor

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CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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## ABSTRACT

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This paper examines Carl Von Clausewitz's center of gravity concept and applies it to the war against radical Islamic terrorism. It describes the confusion associated with the concept, compares the current doctrinal definition of center of gravity with Clausewitz's likely intent, and describes the concept's contemporary importance and applicability. It describes the nature of the threat to U.S. national interests posed by radical Islamic terrorists, identifies the enemy and friendly centers of gravity in a U.S.-led war against terrorism, and highlights some broad short and long term implications of these centers of gravity for U.S. strategy. This paper starts by looking at the war against terrorism in the abstract before addressing the status of and implications for stated U.S. policies. It provides a broad framework within which a more detailed study of relevant ends, ways, and means can occur.



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## CENTER OF GRAVITY DETERMINATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WAR AGAINST RADICAL ISLAMIC TERRORISM

In 1996, Osama Bin Laden formally declared a holy war on the United States<sup>1</sup>. Despite an earlier terrorist attack against New York City's World Trade Center in 1993 and subsequent actions such as the attack against American forces billeted at Khobar Towers in 1996, the attacks against U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and the bombing of the U.S.S. *Cole* in 2000, most Americans did not internalize the threat. The attacks of September 11, 2001 awakened America to the seriousness of Bin Laden's war declarations and the intensity of the hatred and evil the U.S. must confront. America reacted with remarkable rage, speed and power striking selected terrorist networks, infrastructures, and adversarial regimes abroad and shoring up defenses at home with massive government and private sector security initiatives.

While there have been many successes in the "War on Terror" (WOT), the war in Iraq to remove the Hussein regime, preempt any collusion between Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs and terrorist networks, and plant the seeds of democracy in the Middle East<sup>2</sup> has, exasperated by media filters, resulted in sharp divisions in international and domestic opinion. Debates about the war in Iraq and the larger WOT were central to the 2004 U.S. Presidential election. President Bush won a second term; however, continued bickering regarding the costs and timetable associated with the war in Iraq, the Patriot Act, and the road ahead raise questions about bi-partisan cohesion in the WOT and the sustainability of American will to remain proactively engaged in the Middle East and make sacrifices for homeland security beyond 2008.

Some have questioned whether the WOT and the current campaign in Iraq is a quagmire analogous to Vietnam. While there are more dissimilarities than similarities between the war in Iraq and the war in Vietnam<sup>3</sup>, we learned some lessons from the Vietnam experience that are applicable to today's debate about the road ahead and our ability to synchronize ends, ways, and means. During the period of reflection<sup>4</sup> following Vietnam, doctrine writers and military analysts rediscovered operational design concepts in the works of Carl von Clausewitz and other great military theorists. In *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, Colonel Harry Summers argued that America failed to achieve its political objectives in Vietnam because the enemy applied Clausewitz's "center of gravity" (CoG) concept better than the U.S.<sup>5</sup> Since that time, CoG has been part of the contemporary strategy lexicon and has been a key, though controversial, facet of military campaign plan design - - the conceptual linkage of ends, ways,

and means.<sup>6</sup> *How does Clausewitz's CoG theory apply to the U.S. - led war against radical Islamic terrorism and what are the broad short and long term implications for U.S. strategy?*

This paper examines Carl Von Clausewitz's CoG concept and applies it to the war against radical Islamic terrorism. It briefly describes the confusion associated with the concept, compares the current doctrinal definition of CoG with Clausewitz's likely intent, and describes the concept's contemporary importance and applicability. It describes the nature of the threat to U.S. national interests posed by radical Islamic terrorists, identifies the enemy and friendly CoGs in a U.S. - led WOT, and highlights some broad short and long term implications of these CoGs for U.S. strategy.

This paper makes the argument that Clausewitz's CoG theory, while not a panacea, is still important today. Its application to the U.S. – led war against radical Islamic terrorism suggests a protracted campaign that will be a true test of America's greatness reminiscent in many respects to the test America passed in defeating the Soviet Communist threat during the Cold War. This paper concludes that the U.S. needs to do a better job educating Americans as to the interests, timetable, and cost and risks involved; needs to achieve a much more effective use of all elements of national power to reduce the levels of hatred, ignorance, and tolerance for anti-U.S. terrorism in the Muslim world; and needs to achieve sufficient bipartisan consensus prior to 2008 to sustain the fight in this test of wills.

This paper starts by looking at the WOT in the abstract before addressing the status of and implications for stated U.S. policies. It provides a broad framework within which a more detailed study of ends, ways, and means that are relevant to defeating enemy CoGs and protecting friendly CoGs in the war on radical Islamic terror can occur.

## **CENTER OF GRAVITY THEORY**

The CoG concept is a difficult and contentious topic. It is not a panacea but it is extremely important. Professor Douglas B. Campbell, Director of the U.S. Army War College's Center for Strategic Leadership, notes, "The design and conduct of campaigns and major operations begins with determining the center of gravity."<sup>7</sup> Properly and consistently applied, the concept can help inform a rational decision with regard to committing elements of national power. It also helps focus war efforts and campaigns and helps ensure that strategic, operational, and tactical objectives are logically linked.<sup>8</sup>

### **CENTER OF GRAVITY: WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT DIFFICULT?**

The concept of "center of gravity" (CoG) is about identifying and focusing to defeat the enemy's "hub of all power and movement, on which everything (in the war) depends"<sup>9</sup> while

protecting one's own most irreplaceable source(s) of relevant power. Military doctrine writers and commentators almost invariably seem to agree that CoG determination is important; however, there is often a lack of agreement on what it means or how it applies to warfare. As U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel John Saxman, a graduate of the School for Advanced Military Studies quipped in 1992, six years after the Army re-introduced the term, CoG has generally meant "something to everyone but not the same thing to anyone."<sup>10</sup> *Why?*

CoG is difficult for many due to the complexity of the unfinished book that introduced the term; the different service interpretations in contemporary literature; the tendency in joint doctrine and related discussions to focus primarily at the operational level and on the military element of power; the challenging nature of the contemporary operational environment; and the lack of an agreed upon methodology for CoG determination and application.<sup>11</sup>

### ***On War*: Source of Understanding/Source of Confusion**

The didactic style of his day, the challenge of fully describing the nature of war, and the fact that Clausewitz was unable to finish his epic work and achieve the level of clarity he desired, make *On War* a challenging read. The unfinished *On War* often confuses its readers regarding CoG because the author used the term interchangeably with another term, because the ideas in Book Six and Book Eight are not cleanly integrated, and because many questions are not explicitly answered.

The term "center of gravity" is controversial in and of itself; some argue whether it is even an accurate translation of the idea Clausewitz was trying to articulate. The English translation "center of gravity" comes from Clausewitz's use of the German words "*Centra gravitates*" and "*schwerpunkt*". In his draft of Book Six, Clausewitz used the terms interchangeably when describing the same concept. Peter Paret and Michael Howard, editors of the most widely used translation of *On War*, translated both as "center of gravity"<sup>12</sup> when in fact there were two terms used in the original. Literally, *schwer* means heavy and *der punkt* means point or spot.<sup>13</sup> Taking that definition literally connoted to many a physics analogy - - one that is difficult to apply in the contemporary operational environment and one that grossly oversimplifies the idea that Clausewitz was trying to convey.

Many students of CoG are led astray by attempting to apply the physics analogy described above and the operational logic in Book Six of *On War* without regard to the more strategic context of Book Eight. Many military planners are inclined to like Book Six because discussions of CoG in that book focus on an enemy's military versus other, less tangible elements of power. In Book Six, Clausewitz describes the CoG as being found "where the mass

is concentrated most densely” in a theater of operations.<sup>14</sup> But to stop there and conclude that the CoG is always some aspect of the military and that hitting the “heavy spot” will lead to victory ignores much of what Clausewitz had to say about CoG and about war. While acknowledging that the “defeat and destruction of [the enemy] fighting force remains the best way to begin, and in every case will be a very significant feature of the campaign,”<sup>15</sup> Clausewitz later argued that defeat of an enemy in war can mean different things - - that a CoG can extend beyond just the military element of power. One such quote, from Chapter Four of Book Eight, states:

In countries subject to domestic strife, the center of gravity is generally the capital. In small countries that rely on larger ones, it is usually the army of their protector. Among alliances, it lies in the community of interest, and in popular uprisings it is the personalities of the leader and public opinion. It is against these that our energies should be directed.<sup>16</sup>

At the end of Book Six, Clausewitz cautions the reader that his discussion of the CoG concept is not yet complete and that he “will describe how this idea of a center of gravity in the enemy’s forces operates throughout the plan of war” later in Book Eight.<sup>17</sup> He wrote, “That is where the matter properly belongs; we have merely drawn on it here (in Book Six) in order not to leave a gap in the present argument.”<sup>18</sup> In a note by Clausewitz regarding his plans for revising *On War*, he called Book Six “only a sketch” and said he hoped to clear his mind when writing Book Eight and revise Books Two through Seven accordingly.<sup>19</sup> Clearly Clausewitz did not intend for readers to rely exclusively on Book Six when trying to understand CoG - - yet many do because the examples of CoG in that book are easier for the military to attack. More likely, Clausewitz intended that the operational application described in Book Six be nested with the strategic application described in Book Eight (although his untimely death makes that implicit rather than explicit.) In Book One, the only portion of *On War* completed to his satisfaction<sup>20</sup>, Clausewitz describes the “paradoxical trinity” stemming from the people, the Army and its commander, and the government. He states that a theory must “maintain a balance between these three tendencies, like an object suspended between three magnets.”<sup>21</sup> The question of whether CoG applies to one leg of this trinity, the whole, or both is clear to some (I think Clausewitz intended it apply to both) – but not to others thus leading to difficulty applying it in a consistent and consensual manner. While Clausewitz’s *On War* is clearly the primary source for learning about CoG, the complexity of what is written in the unfinished book<sup>22</sup> - - and the many questions that are not explicitly answered in it - - have also made it a source of difficulty.<sup>23</sup>

### **Service and Military Ethnocentrism and Other Sources of Confusion**

The fact that Clausewitz died before he could fully clarify the concept he obviously considered important is not the only reason CoG is difficult. One of the main sources of difficulty has been service and military ethnocentrism. This has led to a myriad of interpretations in contemporary literature and a tendency in joint doctrine and related discussions to focus primarily at the operational level and on the military element of power. Initially, each service tended to mold CoG theory to suit its own organizational essence. For example, the Air Force used the term CoG to describe strategic bombing target sets.<sup>24</sup> For a long time, Marine doctrine, which has long focused on exploiting enemy vulnerabilities, insisted that the CoG was a “critical vulnerability”<sup>25</sup> rather than the source of all power and strength. The Army viewed CoG as the source of power and strength and advocated attacking it via (predominantly land-based) decisive points.<sup>26</sup> But the Navy advocated reaching centers of gravity via weaknesses and vulnerabilities, centering its discussions on (surprise) sea lines of communications.<sup>27</sup> The services have come a long way towards jointness and common understanding in the past decade but the initially divergent interpretations of the term and the resulting myriad of contradictory examples of CoGs remain a source of difficulty. It is difficult to undo the many misinterpretations that were spawned by service ethnocentrism and or parochialism. Several retired general officers who “learned” CoG during this era continue to pollute the dialogue by misusing the term during television commentary.<sup>28</sup>

While joint doctrine has done much to break down service stovepipes and achieve common language and understanding, today’s joint doctrine exhibits a military ethnocentrism that, given today’s interagency environment, is analogous to last decade’s service ethnocentrism. While the discussions on CoG have improved in Joint Publication 5-00.1, *Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning* by helping better explain the linkages between CoG and other friendly and enemy characteristics<sup>29</sup>, the capstone definition of CoG has taken a step backwards. Joint Pub 1-0 originally described the CoG as “*That* characteristic, capability, or locality from which a military force, *nation, or alliance* derives its freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight”<sup>30</sup> indicating a clear understanding that the concept applied beyond just the military element of power. The current capstone definition in Joint Pub 1-02 now defines it more narrowly as “*Those* characteristics, capabilities, or sources of power from which a *military force* derives its freedom of action, physical strength, and will to fight.”<sup>31</sup> The earlier definition is more in line with Clausewitz’s original intent. The current definition’s exclusive focus on the

military element of power ignores much of what Clausewitz had to say about CoG and about war. It is a useful definition for an operational CoG but does not get at the concept of the strategic (or, as some authors like to call it, *moral*<sup>22</sup>) CoG. It causes confusion because it leads students to the erroneous conclusion that by attacking and defeating a military force's source of power, we will achieve our political aims. This is as absurd as an individual service claiming it can achieve theater level military aims without help from the other services. To achieve political aims, we must impose our will on the enemy's *strategic* CoG while protecting our own - - something that typically requires all elements of power. Imposing our will on the operational CoG with primarily military force is important but does not, in and of itself, lead to the collapse of the enemy strategic CoG or the attainment of political aims.

Another source of difficulty in CoG determination and application is that the operational environment today is more complex than when the term was introduced in the 1800s. On War includes examples that emphasize war between nation states. Today's environment features a myriad of non-nation state actors, operations other than war, and asymmetric threats. While many still find the CoG concept useful in such an environment, others have great difficulty taking Clausewitz's discussion and examples from their 19<sup>th</sup> century context and applying them to today's less tangible threats.

Another major source of difficulty is that there is no agreed upon methodology for CoG determination and application. While work done with experts at the U.S. Army War College produced a methodology that has proved useful in guiding students to consider relevant aspects of the theater and strategic environments and applying a litmus test to CoG candidates<sup>33</sup>, no such methodology has been accepted for incorporation into joint doctrine. Despite the popular physics analogy, CoG determination and application is as much (or more) art as science; therefore it is doubtful that doctrine will (or should) go to great lengths to tell one precisely *how* to use the concept. Perhaps more than any other reason, CoG is difficult because war itself is difficult and CoG determination necessarily involves an understanding of the essence of warfare in the context of an increasingly complex strategic environment.

### **Strategic and Operational Centers of Gravity**

Clausewitz argued that in war, it is a wasteful exertion to use military force or other elements of national power in ways that do not contribute to imposing your will on the enemy's CoG and/or sustaining your own source of power and strength.<sup>34</sup> This author contends that the CoG concept applies at strategic and operational levels - - to both the military leg of the Clausewitzian trinity and the trinity as a whole. The strategic CoG is the root source of power

and strength relevant to pursuing war aims. In a nation state, it is found at the strategic national level. A litmus test for an enemy strategic CoG candidate is whether imposing our will on it will create the deteriorating effect that prevents our foe from achieving his aims and allows the achievement of our own in a sufficiently decisive way.<sup>35</sup> In wars between two nation states, the strategic (national) CoG is often some aspect of the source of government - - the will of the people in a democracy or the ruler/his inner circle in a more autocratic regime.<sup>36</sup> In wars involving multiple nations, the strategic CoG is often some aspect of the existing or potential coalition. The operational (theater) CoG is often the most critical aspect of the enemy's fielded forces.<sup>37</sup> It is heavily dependent on theater objectives. A litmus test for an enemy operational CoG candidate is whether imposing our will on it will lead to accomplishment of our military aims and denial of the enemy's military aims.

The degree to which one must directly attack these CoGs is determined in large part by the strategic objectives. OPERATION DESERT STORM offers a contemporary case study. In OPERATION DESERT STORM, the enemy strategic CoG was Saddam Hussein and the inner circle of the Ba'ath party (those who would continue to pursue Hussein's strategic agenda if he were captured or killed.) The enemy operational CoG was the Republican Guard. These two sources of strength, at national and theater level respectively, were most relevant to attainment of Iraqi aims and the potential denial of U.S. objectives. America had to deal with these CoGs and did so to the degree necessary to achieve stated political objectives. America effectively cut off Saddam and his immediate circle from the international community and from his fielded forces. The U.S. then crushed the fielded forces, with emphasis on the Republican Guard, in Kuwait while attacking strategic targets and WMD-related facilities. The United States took active measures to sustain friendly CoGs - - the will of the American people and our coalition and the quantity and quality of the land-air team. Had American political goals included regime change or the complete destruction of Iraqi forces as opposed to focusing on the liberation of Kuwait, the coalition would have required greater efforts and more decisive actions against the identified CoGs in order to achieve the desired end state.

When applied to a war or intervention involving non- state actors, the enemy strategic CoG can often be viewed as the fundamental source of the problem or situation that is leading us to consider military intervention.<sup>38</sup> A question to ask when screening identified friendly strategic CoG candidates is: what national or international source of strength must we have, protect, and sustain at all costs in order to continue on and achieve our strategic aims? A question to ask when screening friendly operational CoG candidates is: what aspect of our forces must we have at all costs in order to continue on/achieve our military objectives enroute

(or in parallel to) imposing our will on the strategic CoG? The basics of CoG application are summarized in Figure 1 below.<sup>39</sup>

## Applying the CoG Concept

- Consider relevant aspects of the strategic and theater environments
- Identify and test logical *strategic* CoG candidates
- Consider the degree to which the strategic CoG must be neutralized or destroyed in order to achieve political aims
- Consider adequate, feasible, and acceptable approaches
- Identify and test logical *operational* CoG candidates relevant to the selected COA
- Consider relevant decisive points, critical capabilities, critical requirements, and critical vulnerabilities
- Evaluate things that might cause the Operational CoG to shift or change
- Assess friendly strategic and operational CoGs
- Use CoG selections to help provide input to political decision to use/not use force and to focus war efforts and campaign plans

FIGURE 1

### DYNAMIC LINKAGES BETWEEN CENTERS OF GRAVITY AND RELATIVE INTERESTS, OBJECTIVES, TIMETABLES, AND COST/RISK TOLERANCE

There are dynamic linkages between CoGs, relative interests, objectives, timetables, and cost/risk tolerance. Asymmetries in this calculus are typically major factors when a militarily superior power is defeated by smaller foes. Napoleon's ill-fated invasion of Russia and the American experience in Somalia offer examples, in conventional warfare and in military operations other than war respectively, where smaller foes defeated stronger powers due to such asymmetries. On the other hand, the stronger power is more likely to triumph when interests are as high or higher than the enemy's and when there is a commensurate willingness to endure the costs, risks, and timetable associated with imposing one's will on the enemy CoG to the degree necessary to attain objectives.

In the summer of 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia for peripheral interests. Napoleon thought he could defeat the Russians in a short period of time; his enormous Army entered Russia clad only in summer uniforms.<sup>40</sup> His invasion put the Russians in a survival interest situation; the Russians were willing to fight indefinitely to protect the "Rodina" (Motherland). Space and time enabled the Russian Army to elude Napoleon's operational CoG, his Army, and

ultimately enabled the Russian strategic CoG, Russian nationalism, to triumph over the French strategic CoG, the will of the emperor. Cold, hungry, and defeated, Napoleon's force crossed back into Poland a tiny fraction<sup>41</sup> of the huge Army that entered Russia.

In Somalia, American will, fueled by only peripheral national interests, was pitted against the chaos caused by independent clan power. Initially U.S. objectives were commensurate with interests. America would fight the chaos by providing the security and infrastructure needed to feed the people for a year and break the cycle of hunger. There was no illusion that we would attempt to permanently defeat the chaos and accept the timetable, costs and risks associated with building a functioning government in a tribal land. After UNISOM II, U.S. goals became more ambitious than our interests warranted. By consciously or unconsciously choosing a strategic option that forced clan leaders into a fight for survival, the United States created a dangerously asymmetric situation. A key U.S. vulnerability, aversion to casualties, provided an indirect means of attacking our strategic CoG. With no survival or vital interests at stake, we could not protect and sustain popular and political support. Meanwhile, Mohamed Farah Aideed's desire for independent power could be sustained indefinitely because he was motivated by survival interests.<sup>42</sup>

#### **THE LEVEL AND INTENSITY OF INTERESTS INVOLVED IN THE WOT**

The United States' grand strategy necessarily considers the full range of opportunities to promote our interests, values, and purpose as well as means to prevent, deter, or defeat near and long term threats to them. Terrorism is one of these threats and the strategy to defeat radical Islamic terrorism should be subordinate to the larger American strategic calculus.<sup>43</sup> America reacted in justifiable rage to the barbaric attacks on "9-11". As the U.S. continues to unleash its power in full view of the international media and a wary world, the American people need to remain convinced - - or be re-convinced - - that the level of effort required and the costs, risks, and timelines associated with waging a war against terror are truly warranted by the intensity of the interests involved.

The Preamble of the U.S. Constitution eloquently defines the fundamental purposes of the United States - - "to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."<sup>44</sup> In NSC-68, a report to the National Security Council examining what U.S. strategy should be in light of the Soviet threat and the world the U.S. faced in 1950, the authors reflected on these purposes and argued that three American truths arise from them: the determination to maintain individual freedom; the determination to create

conditions under which our free and democratic system can prosper; and the determination to fight as necessary to defend our way of life.<sup>45</sup> Historically, American interests have included four enduring themes: 1) defense of the United States and its constitutional system; 2) enhancement of the nation's economic well-being and promotion of U.S. products abroad; 3) – creation of a favorable world order; and 4) promotion abroad of U.S. democratic values and the free market system.<sup>46</sup> The American commitment to the purpose described in the Constitution, the resulting truths regarding American determination described in *NSC-68*, and U.S. enduring national interests remain strong today but are clearly under attack.

Radical Islamic fundamentalists, bound together by a common hatred of the United States and Israel and a common desire to repress any expansion of freedom and western influence in the Arab world<sup>47</sup>, have taken violence and terrorism to new extremes. Terrorism directly impacts enduring U.S. interests. Radical Islam and terrorist attacks - - at home and abroad - - can have devastating effects on U.S. economic interests. The economic loss just to New York City was over 105 Billion dollars just in the first *month* following the 9-11 attacks.<sup>48</sup> 146,100 jobs were lost in New York as a result of the 9-11 suicide-murders.<sup>49</sup> The airline and tourism industries are still recovering from the attacks that occurred over three years ago as well as the rise in oil prices caused by the ensuing conflict. It is difficult to calculate the total direct and indirect costs of 9-11 or the potential economic impacts of similar attacks in the future. The spread of terrorism also clearly undermines world order in a way that the drafters of the United Nations Charter could not have envisioned.<sup>50</sup> Islamic extremists are dedicated to fracturing western alliances and coalitions and undermining governments that support them. Radical Islam directly challenges America's most cherished values , denying basic rights of individual freedom to which Americans believe every human being is entitled and using terrorism as a means of repressing those who advocate greater freedom in the Middle East and around the world. The threat of terrorism at home undermines "domestic tranquility", the "general welfare", and the ability to live, free from fear, with our Constitution and values intact. Over 20 percent of Americans knew someone hurt or killed in the attacks on 9-11 and witnessed the barbarity of the attacks in media coverage. Humans were seen leaping out of flaming skyscrapers. Rescue workers and cleanup crews found almost 20,000 body parts. <sup>51</sup> The psychosocial cost of the attack was considerable. In New York City alone over 422,000 people suffered post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>52</sup>

The degrees to which America's purpose, values, and enduring interests can be impacted through terrorism are exponentially heightened by the prospects for terrorists to use weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Terrorists have shown that there are few, if any, limits to the violence

they will use against American interests. The classical deterrence theory of the Cold War that worked very well with WMD-equipped adversaries who are rational nation states is unlikely to be successful against an amorphous collection of irrational non - state actors.<sup>53</sup> Policy makers should assume that if Al Qaeda and associated radical Islamic terrorist groups acquire WMD, they will attempt to use them against the west.<sup>54</sup> In his 1998 Fatwa, Osama Bin Laden called acquisition of WMD a "religious duty".<sup>55</sup> The survival of life in America as we know it is directly threatened by the nexus of radical Islamic terrorism and WMD. Accordingly, the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* states that "the threat of terrorists acquiring and using WMD is a clear and present danger"<sup>56</sup> and that "we will never forget what we are fighting for - - our fundamental democratic values and way of life."<sup>57</sup> The key phrase, "we will never forget," is not a self-fulfilling prophesy. America and Americans are busy and, absent the provocation of a new attack on the Homeland, could very well "forget" the interests involved in the WOT absent a concerted effort to keep our collective head in the game.<sup>58</sup> 2008 will be a critical point in determining if the U.S. can sustain the required effort. If America fails to set - - and then meet - - expectations in Iraq or fail to communicate the cost/benefit equation in the broader WOT, the required long term non-partisan effort is likely to evaporate.

Meanwhile, the intensity of interests for radical Islamic terrorist groups is also extremely high. In the minds of their leaders, they are fighting for their fundamental, *undemocratic* values and way of life - - the elimination of American and western influence and a return to the (imagined conditions of)<sup>59</sup> the "pious caliphate" and a Muslim state guided by Sharia law.<sup>60</sup> Many moderate Muslims do not aspire to this way of life yet tolerate extremists due to a combination of hate, fear, and ignorance, or a belief that the terrorists struggle against America is legitimate from a perspective of "physical and cultural self-defense."<sup>61</sup> The growth of freedom in the Middle East could yield more alternatives; less hate, fear, and ignorance; less alienation, and greater distance between moderate Muslims and extremists.

#### **CENTER OF GRAVITY IN THE WOT**

In the WOT there are many important sources of strength for the enemy. Terrorist leaders, groups, sanctuaries, communications, training camps, sources of finance, and weapons are all critical to their success and must be dealt with in U.S. strategy.<sup>62</sup> But none of these meets the litmus test of a strategic CoG. Individual leaders - - even Osama bin Laden - - are important and the U.S. should make every effort to capture or kill them. But there are many others who are able and willing to replace them; their capture or death will not, in and of itself, end the terrorist threat to U.S. interests. Killing terrorists is essential but new terrorists are

recruited and trained to help replace those U.S. and coalition partners kill. Denying sanctuaries is essential but terrorists are adept at finding new ones. Communications must be attacked and disrupted; however, terrorists enjoy redundant means and can execute effects-based operations with minimal communications. Training camps can be reconstituted and their destruction, while helpful, does not eliminate the threat posed by terrorists who are already trained. Terrorists have many sources of funding. While America and her coalition partners must attempt to minimize the resources available to terrorists and their collaborators, it is difficult to completely cut off their sources and terrorists can achieve disproportional effects with relatively little investment.

To find the strategic CoG in the WOT, one must find the ultimate source of power and strength that, if neutralized, would prevent the enemy from achieving his aims and enable attainment of our own - - in the long run. One must find the root source of the problem. The ultimate source of power and strength promoting terrorism/tolerance of terrorism is the intense hatred, fear, and distrust of the United States and western influence in the Middle East. This fuels radical Islamic fundamentalists and “their ideology of divinely mandated violent struggle,”<sup>63</sup> attracts active mutual support between Islamic fundamentalists and other anti-American elements, and triggers passive support from moderate Muslims. Until that flame of passion is reduced to a more modest intensity level, radical Islamic fundamentalists will continue to be tolerated and will continue to be able to recruit and employ terrorists against U.S. interests and threaten America’s way of life. Islam, and exhortations for “jihad” and the physical and cultural self-defense of Islam are misused to incite and perpetuate hatred and justify terrorism. Enemy information operations and their ability to manipulate Muslim and international perceptions is one of the associated “critical capabilities”<sup>64</sup> America must defeat. The operational CoG for the enemy is that aspect or aspects of their power that could most undermine accomplishment of U.S. aims and ensure attainment of their own. The real or potential ability to acquire WMD, along with the ability to orchestrate large-scale attacks, are logical candidates for the operational CoG in the WOT

The friendly strategic CoG in this war is the ability to sustain the will of Americans to fight a proactive war against terrorists. While it is a global war requiring an international coalition, American leadership is the critical ingredient to leading that war and American will is the ultimate source of strength that can fuel sustained U.S. leadership. The friendly operational CoG is more difficult. HUMINT and offensive anti-terrorism forces are the most indispensable military enablers to our joint, interagency, and multi-national efforts to defeat the enemy operational CoG abroad, in conjunction with law enforcement and other efforts at home.

Focused and synchronized diplomatic, informational, and economic action are indispensable to the larger efforts to ultimately isolate and impose our will on the strategic CoG in the larger WOT. Of all of these non-military sources of strength, the informational and economic elements of power are most essential to both sustaining our strategic CoG and defeating the enemy's in the WOT.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. STRATEGY**

### **MACRO ENDS, WAYS, AND MEANS RELEVANT TO WOT CENTERS OF GRAVITY**

The near term objective in the war should be to defeat any large-scale terrorist attacks or WMD use against the homeland and to set the conditions for sustained non-partisan support of the long term campaign. The long term objective in the WOT should be to isolate and delegitimize radical Islamic terrorists both in the international community and in an increasingly moderate Arab world in order to ensure an end state where America and our friends - - including emerging democracies in the Middle East - - can live freely without the persistent fear of terrorism. Ways to achieve the military ends can generally be reduced to offensive, preventative, defensive (or some combination thereof) directed against terrorist groups, nation-states and other actors that support them (or some combination thereof). Ways to achieve the strategic ends include actions to isolate radical Islamic terrorists from more moderate Muslims and soft power options to increase the degree of moderation and pluralism in the Muslim world. Globalization has past the point where western influence can be completely removed from the Middle East; disengagement is not a viable option.<sup>65</sup> All elements of national power must be intelligently leveraged to sustain American CoGs and impose U.S. will on the enemy to the degree necessary to attain our near and long term objectives.

While aggressive measures are needed to reduce vulnerabilities, a purely defensive approach to terrorism is not suitable, feasible, or acceptable. America's free and open society offers so many potential targets that defending them all would be a costly, reactive exercise in futility.<sup>66</sup> Americans need to understand that, at least for the foreseeable future, the enemy will attempt attacks using a myriad of tactics and while the U.S. will defeat most of them, America cannot and will not be able to stop all of them.<sup>67</sup> Winning the war requires an offensive and defensive combination that puts emphasis on "being a shooter rather than a target" - - against both terrorists and any state or non-state actor that supports them. The U.S. must make it strongly undesirable to be a radical Islamic terrorist, to harbor them, provide funding to them, or even tolerate them. While America cannot reduce enemy attacks to zero, the U.S. must do whatever is necessary to prevent large-scale attacks and the use of WMD. Strategically, we

must proactively intervene with societal conditions that teach 300 million Arabs, and each succeeding generation, that America, Israel, and western ideas are the source of their woes and to tolerate suicide-murder and lies in the name of a great religion.<sup>68</sup> This will take a long time and Americans need to be educated regarding the stakes involved and the time and patience required to change perceptions in the Middle East and broader Muslim world. This task is a global war and requires global means. The United States must not only ensure commitment of resources commensurate with the enormity of the task but must enlist the aid of partners and regional institutions worldwide.

#### STATED U.S. POLICY

While a full discussion of stated U.S. policy and positive and negative aspects of the WOT to date is well beyond the scope of this paper, President Bush's concept -- the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* -- is quite consistent with the theoretical discussion of ends, ways, and means above. He articulates a "4D strategy" -- *Defeat* terrorist organizations of global reach; *Deny* sponsorship, support and sanctuary; *Diminish* the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit; and proactively *Defend* the United States, our citizens, and our interests<sup>69</sup>. Although the term CoG is not explicitly used, the strategic and operational centers of gravity posited in the preceding theoretical discussion are addressed by the "4D" strategy. He emphasizes preventing the nexus of WMD and terrorism and winning the war of ideas to delegitimize terrorism.<sup>70</sup> He describes an end state where "the United States and its friends and allies will secure a world in which our children can live free from fear and where the threat of terrorist attacks does not define our daily lives."<sup>71</sup> The "old adage that the best defense is a good offense"<sup>72</sup> and the explicit goal of denying sponsorship to terrorism<sup>73</sup> show the administration has selected an overarching "way" that is a combination of offense and defense, against both terrorists and sponsors. It acknowledges the need for both hard power and soft power and the need for international cooperation. The *Combating Terrorism* strategy accurately cautions "because we are a free, open, and democratic society, we are and will remain, vulnerable to the dangers of terrorism"<sup>74</sup> and that "the United States will confront the threat of terrorism for the foreseeable future."<sup>75</sup> The *National Strategy for Homeland Security*<sup>76</sup> complements the *Combating Terrorism* strategy.<sup>77</sup>

The challenge is that not many Americans read national strategy documents. Clear language in speeches regarding the protracted nature of the WOT get drowned out and forgotten in generally myopic "news" sound bites about the car bombing du jour. Similarly, America's intentions and actions abroad are not neutrally represented in the international media

or in Middle East schools, mosques, and cafes. Much remains to be done for both the domestic and international public's perceptions of U.S. intentions and actions to be favorably aligned with reality.

#### REFLECTIONS ON A PREVIOUS PROTRACTED CHALLENGE TO OUR WAY OF LIFE

The complexities, costs and risks, and timelines associated with defeating the enemy strategic and operational CoGs, coupled with the challenges of sustaining U.S. CoGs, are sobering. Some lack confidence that the war against radical Islamic terror is winnable. Terrorism has been around for a long time. Anti-American terrorists are passionately committed to their cause. It is tough to imagine that they will not always be a force to be reckoned with. But this is not the first great, sustained test of American resolve. Before concluding with some short and long term imperatives for the tough road ahead in the WOT, perhaps Americans can find some encouragement by reflecting on the U.S.-led victory in the War against Communism, the Cold War.

In 1950, *NSC-68*, a report to the National Security Council, famously detailed the nature of the physical and ideological battle between freedom loving people and Soviet Communism. *NSC-68* stated that "the gravest threat to the security of the United States within the foreseeable future stems from the hostile designs and formidable power of the USSR, and from the nature of the Soviet system."<sup>78</sup> *NSC-68* laid out a program to wrest the initiative from the Soviet Union and frustrate their designs for world domination. The final paragraph<sup>79</sup> of *NSC-68* is worth viewing in its entirety as it is strikingly applicable today:

The whole success of the proposed program hangs ultimately on recognition by this Government, the American people, and all free peoples, that the cold war (substitute *war against radical Islamic terror* here) is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake. Essential prerequisites to success are consultations with Congressional leaders designed to make the program the object of non-partisan legislative support, and a presentation to the public of a full explanation of the facts and implications of the present international situation. The prosecution of the program will require of us all the ingenuity, sacrifice, and unity demanded by the vital importance of the issue and the tenacity to persevere until our national objectives have been attained.<sup>80</sup>

There are many differences between the WOT and the War against Communism. But like terrorism, Communism had been around a long time and its disciples became increasingly passionate in their cause over time. Like the WOT, "there were those who did not think it (the war against Communism) was worth fighting"<sup>81</sup> and those who questioned its costs. Like the WOT, WMD raised the stakes of the war of ideas in the Cold War.

The first practical experiments in Communism date back to the sociopolitical upheavals of the Reformation. The origins of modern Communism trace back to the aftermath of the French revolution. In the 1800s, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel emphasized the need for conflict to achieve qualitative change and Karl Marx emphasized the need to consciously take part in the historical transformation of government.<sup>82</sup>

The Communist party in Russia was formally established in 1925 after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917.<sup>83</sup> Differences between East and West were noticed but tolerated due to isolationist tendencies in the inter-war period, lack of any perceived threat, and the necessity for cooperation in the war against Nazi Germany. During a conversation at the Yalta Conference, when Churchill revealed that he might lose his position in the upcoming election, Stalin replied (with conviction) that “one party is much better.”<sup>84</sup> After achieving the great victory together in World War II, these ideological differences and increasingly aggressive Russian behavior led to increased tensions between east and west. Stalin’s 1946 speech on the incompatibility of communist and capitalist systems, George Kennan’s “long telegram”, and Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech increased the level of rhetoric.<sup>85</sup>

In 1947, George C. Marshall introduced the “Marshall Plan,” a massive investment in post-war Germany to avert economic, political, and social collapse in Europe, stabilize the international economy, and to help halt a feared Communist advance into Western Europe. Some called it “a plan to fight Communism with dollars”<sup>86</sup> as well as rebuild war-torn Europe. Many in Congress objected to the program’s costs, necessitating an intensive selling campaign on Capital Hill.<sup>87</sup> Discussions on the Marshall Plan further brought to light the competing aims of American capitalism and Soviet Communism. The Czech delegate to the Marshall Plan negotiations recalled Stalin stating, “The aim of Soviet policy is to get the Americans out of Europe and Asia.”<sup>88</sup> During that same period, President Harry S. Truman observed, “The whole world should adopt the American system.”<sup>89</sup> The Soviet Union backed out of the Marshall Plan negotiations. With the August 1949 detonation of a Russian atomic bomb, the stakes in the war of ideas grew leading to *NSC-68*. Following the blueprint of *NSC-68*, the Cold War was fought, using all elements of power, on a world-wide basis. The intensity of the Cold War remained high for the next four decades until glasnost and perestroika in 1986, the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, and the dissolution of the Communist party in Russia in November 1991.<sup>90</sup>

At the time of *NSC-68*, few could have predicted that Soviet Communism would be so completely defeated and discredited. Even in 1980, when 250,000 demonstrators protested American Pershing II missiles in Europe, many questioned the costs, risks, and prospects for even a fraction of the success achieved. In 1847, Mark Engels boasted that Communism was

“a specter haunting Europe”<sup>91</sup> and for much of the twentieth century, the shadow of the Warsaw Pact armies and missiles indeed haunted the entire world. But as historian Alex Callinicos observed, “By the 1990s, no serious capitalist would discern even a spectral threat to the established social order from Communism.”<sup>92</sup> He concluded:

The horrors perpetuated in the East in the name of socialism had been capitalized on by a powerful and sophisticated pro-capitalist propaganda, which successfully used them to discredit every form of Marxist politics. The surviving group of revolutionary Marxists had been reduced to squabbling sects, without mass influence or political impact in any country whatever.<sup>93</sup>

The seemingly invincible foe - - and its ideology - - were defeated by successive generations who believed in freedom and democracy, internalized the threat posed by Soviet Communism, and were willing to sustain proactive efforts against it.<sup>94</sup>

#### SHORT AND LONG TERM IMPERATIVES

In war, there are dynamic linkages between CoGs and relative objectives, interests, timetables, and cost/risk tolerance. The challenging CoGs identified for the WOT, symmetrically high interests, and ambitious but diametrically opposed objectives suggest that America is in for a tough, sustained fight analogous in many respects to the half century fight against Communism. The invasion of Iraq contributed to success against the operational CoG by eliminating Sadaam Hussein as a threat and eliminating any actual or potential nexus between Iraqi WMD programs and terrorism - - one battle in a larger war. But the aftermath of the invasion exacted a toll from the U.S. strategic CoG. Predictably, it is also, in the near term, making the enemy strategic CoG stronger. The President believes that inserting democracies in the heart of the Arab world will ultimately spread freedom and help extinguish the flames of hatred, ignorance, and extremism that fuel terrorism in the region.<sup>95</sup> But the very thought of this idea is unacceptable to Islamic extremists and they will fight long and hard to abort emerging democracies in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in the Arab world.

Potential asymmetries in timetables and cost/risk tolerance are a key concern. There are key points in time, such as the 2008 Presidential election, that impact America’s ability to sustain non-partisan acceptance of this long term effort. In the short term, these need to be factored into military and interagency planning as the U.S. continues the push towards democracy in Iraq and prosecutes the larger WOT. It is essential that U.S. leaders set and achieve realistic but tangible objectives in Iraq prior to both the 2006 Congressional elections and the 2007 Presidential campaigning. America must see evidence of tangible benefits and

decreasing cost and casualties or the achievements and sacrifices to date may be for naught. This involves both actions and the perception of actions; information operations is critical. Failure to sustain the effort in Iraq and reinforce the gains made in Afghanistan<sup>96</sup> until completion would irreversibly harm prospects for success in the region and in the larger war of ideas.

In the long term, the Army, Joint, and interagency team need to focus on protecting and sustaining our CoGs while defeating the enemy CoGs. Operationally, we must sustain sufficient HUMINT and offensive anti-terrorism forces and prevent adversaries from acquiring the ability to employ WMD or orchestrate large scale terrorist attacks against the homeland. Strategically, the U.S. needs to do a better job educating Americans as to the interests, timetable, and cost and risks involved and needs to achieve a much more effective use of all elements of national power to isolate extremists from moderate Muslims and reduce the levels of hatred, ignorance, and tolerance for anti-U.S. terrorism in the Islamic world.

## **CONCLUSION**

Clausewitz's CoG theory, while not a panacea, is still important today. Its application to the U.S. – led war against radical Islamic terrorism suggests a protracted campaign that will be a true test of America's greatness reminiscent in many respects to the test the U.S. passed in defeating the Soviet Communist threat during the Cold War. The U.S. needs to achieve sufficient bipartisan consensus prior to 2008 to sustain the fight in this test of wills. Preventing the juncture of WMD and radical Islamic terrorists and eliminating their ability to plan and orchestrate large scale attacks will take a proactive use of all elements of power and will require great cooperation in an international community that has not fully internalized the need for a policy of preemption. The U.S. must do a better job educating Americans as to the interests, timetable, and cost and risks involved and must achieve a much more effective use of all elements of national power to reduce the levels of hatred, ignorance, and tolerance for anti - U.S. terrorism in the Muslim world.

WORD COUNT= 7,995

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> James Lehrer, "Bin Laden's FATWA," *Online News Hour*, August 1996 [journal on-line]; available from <[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1996.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html)>; Internet; accessed October 2004.

<sup>2</sup> There were eight specific goals for coalition forces subordinate to the general goals of defending the American people, eliminating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and liberating the Iraqi people. See Department of Defense Press Briefing Excerpt "Goals and Objectives of War" available from <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2003/t03212003\\_t0321sd1.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2003/t03212003_t0321sd1.html)>; Internet.

<sup>3</sup> See especially pages 12-14 Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr, "Iraq and Vietnam: Déjà vu All Over Again?," July 2004; available from <<http://www.csbaonline.org/4publications/Archive/B.20040702.IraqViet/B.20040702.IraqViet.pdf>>; Internet; accessed October 2004.

<sup>4</sup> History is replete with examples of tactical level military units performing superbly yet failing to achieve the desired operational and strategic objectives. The first three years of World War 1 on the Western Front provide a compelling example. Similarly, history is filled with examples where militarily superior powers were defeated by weaker foes. Napoleon's ill-fated invasion of Russia provides one such example. The American experience in Vietnam yielded both of these frustrations and caused the U.S military to do much soul-searching. Military professionals and scholars sought to understand what went wrong - - and how America could avoid similar results in future conflicts. Many concluded that one missing element in the Vietnam War, and in many of history's other failed military exertions, was operational art - - the linkage of tactical combat success to strategic success in order to ensure attainment of strategic objectives.

<sup>5</sup> Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1984), 177-185.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning*. JCS Joint Pub 5-00.1 (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 2004), viii.

<sup>7</sup> Phillip Kevin Giles and Thomas P. Galvin, *Center of Gravity: Determination, Analysis, and Application* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Center for Strategic Leadership, 1996), iii.

<sup>8</sup> Timothy J. Keppler, *The Center of Gravity Concept: A Knowledge Engineering Approach To Improved Understanding and Application* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1995), 85.

<sup>9</sup> Clausewitz, Carl Von. *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984, 595-596; quoted in U.S. Army War College Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations, *Campaign Planning Primer AY 05*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations, 14.

<sup>10</sup> John B. Saxman, "The Concept of Center of Gravity: Does It Have Utility in Joint Doctrine and Campaign Planning?," Monograph, School for Advanced Military Studies, Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1992), 4.

<sup>11</sup> The ideas in this paragraph and in the following two more detailed sections on "sources of confusion" are also found in an unpublished paper I wrote for Course four of the U.S. Army War College on the assigned topic of why the CoG concept is difficult. I used my SRP research when writing this unpublished paper in January 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Knud Bartels, "The Center of Gravity," in *An Anthology of Doctrinal Papers* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, U.S. Army War College, 1994), 13-14.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Clausewitz, 486.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 596.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 486.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> See Patrick M. Strain, *The Tactical Center of Gravity: Fact or Fallacy?* Monograph, School for Advanced Military Studies, (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1992), 11. Also see Clausewitz, 69-71 for notes regarding his plans for revising *On War*.

<sup>20</sup> Clausewitz, 70. He states: "The first chapter of Book One alone I regard as finished. It will at least serve the whole by indicating the directions I meant to follow everywhere."

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 89.

<sup>22</sup> On page 70, in Clausewitz's notes for *On War*, the author predicted confusion in these words: "If an early death should terminate my work, what I have written so far would. . . being liable to endless misinterpretation it would be the target of much half-baked criticism, for in matters of this kind everyone feels he is justified in writing and publishing the first thing that comes into his head when he picks up a pen. . .if critics would go to the trouble of thinking about the subject for years on end and testing each conclusion against the actual history of war, as I have done, they would undoubtedly be more careful of what they said.

<sup>23</sup> The author conducted earlier research on Clausewitz's intent with regards to CoG for Chapter Two of *The Center of Gravity Concept: A Knowledge Engineering Approach to Improved Understanding*. Some portions of this section paraphrase this earlier work. In the earlier work, I also document a number of questions that Clausewitz did not explicitly answer that are now points of divergence in the ongoing debate on what Clausewitz really meant.

<sup>24</sup> Air Force planners identified twelve strategic target sets as “centers” of gravity during the air operation for DESERT STORM (Saxman, 29). Clausewitz said that “The first principle is that the ultimate substance of enemy strength must be traced back to the fewest possible sources, and ideally to one alone.” (Clausewitz, 617) It is unlikely Clausewitz intended the CoG concept to be analogous to a long list of bombing targets.

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Marine Corps, *Warfighting*, Field Manual FMFM1, (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Marine Corps, 1989), 85.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Operations*, Army Field Manual 100-5, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986, 6-2.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Navy, *Naval Warfare*, Naval Doctrine Publication 1, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 35-36.

<sup>28</sup> Tomlin, Harry A., “The Center of Gravity Through Reverse Engineering,” *Readings Volume I: Implementing National Military Strategy*. Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, Department of Military Strategy, Plans, and Operations 2004, 4-19.

<sup>29</sup> Joint Pub 5-00.1 incorporates some of the ideas found in Dr. Joe Strange, *Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities: Building on the Clausewitzian Foundation So That We Can All Speak the Same Language*. Quantico, VA, Marine Corps War College, 1996. Strange coined new terms “critical capabilities” and “critical requirements” in addition to the previously used Marine Corps non-doctrinal term “critical vulnerabilities” to describe aspects of an enemy system that were not CoGs but are relevant to attacking/protecting enemy/friendly CoGs.

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces*, JCS Joint Pub 1-0 (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1991), 65.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, JCS Joint Pub 1-02 (Washington DC: 12 April 2001 as amended through 9 June 2004), 80.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph L. Strange and Richard Iron, “Center of Gravity: What Clausewitz Really Meant,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* 35,25.

<sup>33</sup> See Keppler, *The Center of Gravity Concept: A Knowledge Engineering Approach to Improved Understanding and Application*. Ft. Leavenworth, KS, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1995 for documentation of the 1993-1994 War College Center for Strategic Leadership effort the author helped lead in an effort to capture the heuristics used by selected experts when applying the CoG concept. This effort led to the establishment of the elective course *Case Studies in Center of Gravity Determination* in 1994 - - a course still being taught today at the U.S. Army War College. Also see Giles and Galvin whose 1996 pamphlet and CoG methodology poster were based on this earlier research and documentation.

<sup>34</sup> Clausewitz, 596-597.

<sup>35</sup> William Mendel and Lamar Tooke, “Operational Logic: Selecting the Center of Gravity,” *Military Review* 73, no. 6 (June 1993): 3-11.

<sup>36</sup> Keppler, 62-65.

<sup>37</sup> Clausewitz, 485-486.

<sup>38</sup> Keppler, 58.

<sup>39</sup> See Keppler. These are the top level steps in a more complex methodology for determining, testing, and applying the CoG concept.

<sup>40</sup> Historywiz, "Napoleon's Invasion of Russia," available from <<http://www.historywiz.com/russiainvasion.htm>>; Internet; accessed January 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Depending on the sources consulted, estimates of survivors vary between 5,000 and 40,000 - - less than 10% of the 400,000 (200,000 of the 600,000 man Army were kept along the Russian border) that attacked inside Russia.

<sup>42</sup> Keppler, 6-7.

<sup>43</sup> Dr. Boone Bartholomees underscored the idea that strategy should not be driven solely by the threat of the day in a 2004 War College lecture on the merits and shortfalls of NSC 68.

<sup>44</sup> "The Constitution of the United States: Preamble," available from <<http://www.usconstitution.net/const.txt>>; Internet; accessed September 2004.

<sup>45</sup> The Executive Secretary, "NSC-68: A Report to the National Security Council." *Naval War College Review*, 27, No 6 (May-Jun 1975) in U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy, *Readings Volume II: War, National Security Policy, and Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy 2004), 452.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 99. Note some of these themes have been present since our Country was founded while some were added over time. The 4<sup>th</sup> "enduring theme" - promotion abroad of U.S. democratic values and the free market system, was added after World War II. In the 1800s, expansion of the continental U.S. was a major goal.

<sup>47</sup> Lehrer, 14.

<sup>48</sup> "9/11 by the Numbers," available from <<http://www.newyorkmetro.com/news/articles/wtc/1year/numbers.htm>>; Internet; accessed October 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Anthony Clark Arend, "International Law and the Preemptive Use of Military Force" in U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy, *Readings Volume II: War, National Security Policy, and Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy 2004), 137.

<sup>51</sup> "9-11 by the Numbers," 3.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Doron Almog, "Cumulative Deterrence and the War on Terrorism," *Parameters* 34 (Winter 2004-2005): 5.

<sup>54</sup> It is also very likely radical Islamic terrorists and/or nation state sponsors will try to blackmail our allies, putting the U.S. in a situation where if America goes on the offensive, they will attack our allies and the population of our allies will then blame the tragedy on U.S. policy rather than the terrorists.

<sup>55</sup> George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington, DC : The White House, February 2003), 10.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>58</sup> See Philip Seib, "The News Media and the Clash of Civilizations," *Parameters* 34 No. 4 (Winter 2004-2005): 83-84 where he describes the declining media coverage in Afghanistan over time. In November 2001, Afghanistan received 306 minutes of coverage. This dropped to 28 minutes by February, 2002; 11 minutes by January 2003, and one minute by March 2003. This lack of an attention span in the media can impact a more general myopia that undermines prospects for sustained focus on the region and the underlying causes of terrorism.

<sup>59</sup> This distinction "imagined" conditions versus actual conditions of life in 7<sup>th</sup> century Saudi Arabia was found in Alan Richards, *Socio-Economic Roots of Radicalism? Towards Explaining the Appeal of Islamic Radicals*. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute (July 2003); 5.

<sup>60</sup> James S. Robbins, "Bin Laden's War" in *Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, ed. Russell D. Howard and Reid Sawyer (Guilford, CT: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2003) 355.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid

<sup>62</sup> See Dr. Joe Strange, *Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities: Building on the Clausewitzian Foundation So That We Can All Speak the Same Language*. Quantico, VA, Marine Corps War College, 1996 for a description of the terms "critical capabilities", "critical requirements," and "critical vulnerabilities." These and more established doctrinal terms such as "decisive point" all describe important aspects of the strategic and operational environments that are not CoGs but are important and may be relevant to CoGs. See James Reilly, *A Strategic Center of Gravity Analysis On The Global War on Terrorism*, Strategy Research Project, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2002) to see one Marine Corps officer's attempt to apply Strange's construct to the WOT.

<sup>63</sup> The words "divinely mandated" and "violent struggle" were found in Dr. Bruce Hoffman, "The Modern Terrorist Mindset: Tactics, Targets, and Technologies" *Columbian International Affairs Online* (Oct 1997) in James Reilly, *A Strategic Center of Gravity Analysis On The Global War on Terrorism*, Strategy Research Project, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2002): 30.

<sup>64</sup> See Strange, 3. Dr. Strange defines Critical Capabilities as "Primary abilities which merits a CoG to be identified as such in the context of a given scenario, situation or mission."

<sup>65</sup> Bush, 30.

<sup>66</sup> While this reflects my own opinion, much of the public discourse in the presidential elections discussed the pros and cons of preemption versus a purely defensive approach. The election, in some respects, was a referendum on a policy of fighting terrorist threats and WMD overseas versus on our Homeland.

<sup>67</sup> While some, for domestic political purposes, will no doubt blame an attack on the reigning administration's policy and suggest a reversal of proactive U.S. anti-terrorist efforts, it is likely that the aggregate effect of such an attack will be to re-invigorate American resolve. Historically, attacks against America have unified Americans against the attacker. Another attack on the U.S. Homeland would likely strengthen the U.S. strategic CoG and mobilize the *Nation* to be at war (as is necessary) versus primarily the military element of power.

<sup>68</sup> Harari, Haim, Speech "A View from the Eye of the Storm." April 2004; available from <[http://www.worldthreats.com/middle\\_east/Haim%20Harari.htm](http://www.worldthreats.com/middle_east/Haim%20Harari.htm)>; Internet; accessed November 2004.

<sup>69</sup> Bush, 11-12.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 9-10;23;29.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid,18.

<sup>74</sup> Bush, 25.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>76</sup> George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, (Washington, DC : The White House, July 2002), 7.

<sup>77</sup> The author incorporated relevant Strategy Research Project research into an unpublished paper for a U.S. Army War College writing assignment. The sections on interests; ends, ways, and means; and U.S. policy are evolved from similar text by the author in the earlier unpublished paper.

<sup>78</sup> The Executive Secretary, "NSC-68: A Report to the National Security Council." *Naval War College Review*, 27, No 6 (May-Jun 1975) in U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy, *Readings Volume II: War, National Security Policy, and Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy 2004), 452.

<sup>79</sup> This is the final paragraph in "NSC 68: A Report to the National Security Council" prior to the recommendation that the President approve the findings of the report.

<sup>80</sup> The Executive Secretary, "NSC-68: A Report to the National Security Council." *Naval War College Review*, 27, No 6 (May-Jun 1975) in U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy, *Readings Volume II: War, National Security Policy, and Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy 2004), 496.

<sup>81</sup> Joseph Smith and Simon Davis, *Historical Dictionary of the Cold War*. (Latham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2000), vii.

<sup>82</sup> Alex Callinicos and Shane Mage, "Communism," *Collier's Encyclopedia*, (New York: Collier's, 1995), 85-88.

<sup>83</sup> Thomas Parrish. *The Cold War Encyclopedia*. (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), 71.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Smith, vii.

<sup>86</sup> Parrish, xiii-xvi.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Smith, 38.

<sup>91</sup> Callinicos, 96

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> This section on the parallels between the war against Communism and the WOT was inspired by discussions with Professor Doug Campbell, who recommended expanding this idea in the text.

<sup>95</sup> Bush, 24.

<sup>96</sup> See especially Dr. Larry Goodson. "Afghanistan's Long Road to Reconstruction." *Journal of Democracy*. 14, no.1 (2003): 82-99.



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