

CHAPTER 1

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES: AN APPROACH AGAINST PROLIFERATION

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International peace and stability and other U.S. interests are potentially threatened by the proliferation of strategic weapons—both advanced conventional systems and weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons, and missile-delivery systems. Policymakers have been responding to this difficult and complex challenge with a broad range of initiatives aimed at curbing both the incentive to obtain these capabilities (i.e., the “demand side”) and the availability of enabling components and associated technology (i.e., the “supply side”).¹

Based on such matters as the experience gained in the Gulf War with Iraq, the related assumption that nonproliferation approaches may not succeed entirely, and the concern over limitations in U.S. force capabilities, the Department of Defense (DoD) has been pursuing counterproliferation, mainly by developing systems capabilities and exploring military response options as part of the Defense Counterproliferation Initiative (DCI).² A growing body of technical assessments, studies, and analyses indicates that implementing these measures will be operationally challenging, technically complex, costly, and—in some instances—not entirely feasible. Insights from war games are revealing here. For example, after nonmilitary actions fail to defuse a hypothetical but realistic crisis, experienced military planners and other participants typically see few to no good alternatives to high-risk military operations that offer the prospect of, at best, modest—and thus commonly politically unacceptable—chances of success. This has prompted

postgame comments such as, “Our political leaders must begin to act now so we never have to deal with this problem militarily.”

The authors of other chapters in this volume, as well as other commentators, have lamented the lack of adequate progress in dealing with the proliferation of strategic weapons through current nonproliferation and counterproliferation policies and programs.³ Although necessary and even useful in most cases—and acknowledging occasional, if grudging, progress—these initiatives collectively have proven insufficient in achieving meaningful results.⁴ They likely will not significantly impede, much less prevent, proliferation, and military counterforce response options undoubtedly will continue to require acceptance of often disconcerting levels of risk and uncertainty. Moreover, the problem augurs to worsen, if only because countries determined to acquire these capabilities have growing access to scientific, technological, and economic means to develop or simply buy them. We have won the (Cold) War yet are at risk of losing what might pass for peace in the new world (dis)order.

Perhaps it is time to try other approaches, not necessarily in lieu of but at least along with current pursuits:

- We could try to get ahead of the proliferation problem through more forward-looking, proactive strategic planning, instead of just reacting to it by (1) making heavy demands on the defense acquisition system (e.g., near-leakproof, active theater and strategic defenses against ballistic and cruise missiles); (2) relying on process- instead of results-oriented negotiations (e.g., the evolving nuclear deal between North Korea, the United States, South Korea, and Japan, and indefinite extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]); and (3) adopting individual initiatives piecemeal (e.g., item-level, technology-control measures).

- Instead of worrying about how to keep nonproliferation efforts from failing in the face of concerted exertions by proliferators determined to succeed and generally seeking to diagnose and ameliorate our assorted shortcomings here, we could develop strategies aimed at exploiting our strengths in leveraging proliferators' weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

- Instead of pursuing broadly formulated, even indeterminate, ends—which may amount to little more than just muddling through, buying time, and hoping for the best—we could seek to achieve more clearly defined and actionable goals.

- Instead of thinking and acting almost solely in relation to current actors and events in the context of the short- to (at best) medium-term future, we could adopt a longer-range view of the proliferation problem, including planning in relation to a set of not-implausible alternative futures a decade or more hence.

One candidate framework that meets these demanding criteria at least conceptually is “competitive strategies” (CS). These strategies call for thinking and acting strategically in a manner consistent with the view that the United States is engaged in a long-term competition with a broad assortment of proliferators—both acquiring parties and suppliers. Treating proliferation as a problem of long-term competition requiring a CS approach by the United States is not unlike what DoD did during the Cold War, *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union.⁵

By design, however, these past DoD efforts were largely military: military-operational, military-technical, and military-economic. Looking ahead, we see a major role for the military in deterring attacks against U.S. territory, military forces, and overseas interests, and in hedging against and otherwise planning to prosecute active operations against dangerous proliferation-related threats.⁶ But we need to conceptualize much broader, more multifaceted strategic approaches that will obviate—or at

least reduce—the need for direct military action or that will view the military as but one of a range of possible available tools of statecraft. Perhaps CS has something to offer here, as well.

Background to Competitive Strategies.

In his *Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1987*, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger announced, “I have decided to make competitive strategies a major theme of the Department of Defense during the remainder of this Administration.”⁷ Later that spring, he wrote, “Implementation of our overarching strategy of secure deterrence requires an array of strategies that capitalize on our advantages and exploit our adversaries’ weaknesses.”⁸ So it was that Competitive Strategies for the Long-Term Competition with the Soviet Union—more simply, DoD Competitive Strategies Initiative—first came to public attention in 1986. But it has much deeper roots.

At the broadest level of national policy, discussions of U.S. strategy for competing with the Soviet Union began in the late 1940s, when our relations with the Soviets began to change fundamentally for the worse and there was little or no prospect of a favorable turn of events in the foreseeable future. Studied interest in systematic planning for competing with the Soviets over the long term waned until 1968, when Andrew W. Marshall replaced James Schlesinger as director of strategic studies at RAND.⁹ Marshall’s quest for a framework for structuring and giving direction to RAND’s program of strategic studies led to his report, *Long Term Competition with the Soviets: A Framework for Strategic Analysis*, published in 1972.¹⁰ This document was a seminal contribution to U.S. strategic thinking in the post–World War II era. It reflects the strong influence of Marshall’s interest, beginning in the early 1960s, in the subject of organizational behavior and in the efforts at the Harvard Business School to develop the field of business policy and strategy.¹¹

Marshall concluded that what one saw immediately in thinking about U.S. relations with the Soviets was a continuing, essentially endless, military-economic-political competition. Consciously or not, we and the Soviets had implicit strategies for guiding our actions in this competition, within which each side tended to emphasize different things based on its respective appreciations of relative strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, this competition would proceed in the face of resource constraints on both sides. So our strategy for conducting the competition had to involve more than just trying to outspend the Soviets. We needed to be efficient in attaining our goals at less cost than the Soviets would incur in pursuing theirs. In addition, before deciding to acquire a particular weapon system in a given mission area, we had to raise a more important question: What is an appropriate and advantageous strategy overall, as well as for this particular area of the continuing competition? This inquiry led logically to a consideration of overarching, long-term U.S. interests and goals as to how the competition should evolve—its pace, scope, degree of stability, and ultimate outcome.

In context of the history of American strategic culture, this kind of thinking by Marshall and his colleagues raised a whole series of first-order questions that, although highly relevant, were seldom addressed by DoD and by the defense analytic community at large, which tended to emphasize relatively narrow, technical, systems-analysis kinds of studies. This, then, was the rich, pioneering intellectual tradition that Secretary Weinberger attempted to exploit, advance, and institutionalize when he launched DoD's Competitive Strategies Initiative in 1986.

Competitive Strategies: Concept and Methodology.

Worth considering in greater detail are the basic CS concept and the methodology devised to give it analytic utility.¹² As implemented in DoD, CS is both a process and a

product. As a process, it is a method of systematic strategic thinking that allows for developing and evaluating U.S. defense strategy in terms of a long-term competition. As a product, it is a plan of action (or a set of such plans) or simply a guide for helping the nation gain and maintain a long-term advantage in a particular competition.

The goal of CS was, through systematic, long-range, strategic-competition planning, to make the U.S. approach to the competition with the Soviets more efficient and effective to enhance deterrence and the security of the United States and its friends and allies. At bottom, DoD was seeking to contain the threat until, one hoped, things improved politically.

Methodologically, CS called for identifying and aligning enduring U.S. strengths against enduring Soviet weaknesses (the particulars here depended upon which part of the competition was of immediate interest and on the goals established for the competition). This necessitated employing a three-step, chess match-like methodology (three was considered the minimum) in a move/response/counter-response sequence in order to create a new or improved military capability in high-leverage areas, thereby gaining and maintaining the initiative, shaping the competition, and achieving particular competition goals. All of this was to be done in the context of a planning horizon that extended 15–20 or more years into the future. The notion of “enduring” strengths and weaknesses involved dealing with things that, by their very nature, were hard to change, at least in the near term to mid-term—thus the need to look out 15–20 years or more.

A “new or improved military capability” comprised one or more of the following:

- Policies and plans.
- Strategy (deterrent, force development, and/or force employment).
- Military doctrine, operational concepts, and tactics.

- Forces and organizational concepts.
- Training (individual-, unit-, and force-level).
- Hardware systems (platforms, munitions, and supporting systems).
 - Technology (improvements to existing systems and research and development [R&D] programs).

Given this robust list of options, including combinations, CS should not focus exclusively—or even mainly—on weapon systems or technologies. Indeed, a particular competitive strategy might not require any new resources to be effective in competing with the Soviets. It might only involve conceiving smarter ways of using capabilities and assets already in hand or programmed.

Developing “leverage” in the long-term competition involved finding ways to:

- encourage the Soviets to divert resources to less threatening forces or doctrine (e.g., defensive rather than offensive capabilities);
- get them to preserve forces we could defeat relatively easily (e.g., fixed-site air defenses);
- make existing Soviet capabilities obsolescent (i.e., impose costs; for example, by regularly modernizing our air forces);
- establish areas of enduring military competence (e.g., use our doctrine, operational concepts, technology, etc., to shape the competition);
- present unanticipated military capabilities with potentially significant impacts on the Soviets (i.e., take the initiative, shift the focus of the competition, and change the rules of the game);¹³ and,
- make the Soviets uncertain about the effectiveness of major components of their military capability (e.g., doctrine, plans, existing equipment, Research and Development

(R&D) programs, etc.) or otherwise undermine their confidence in the expected outcome of their plans and programs.

Whether with regard to the former Soviet Union or any other competitor, CS planning and analysis must accommodate several important conceptual guidelines.

CS assumes that, like it or not, the competition phenomenon is essentially omnipresent and, in virtually all cases that matter, is ongoing and likely will continue—perhaps indefinitely. The only question is whether to acknowledge that we are already involved in a competitive dynamic of actions and reactions with one or more competitors and seek to shape future behaviors, events, trends, and the overall state of competition consciously, rather than unconsciously.¹⁴ For example, even though the U.S. Army did not necessarily have CS-style Soviet reactions in mind when it adopted AirLand Battle doctrine and when it joined with the U.S. Air Force in the “Assault Breaker” program, the Soviets reacted nonetheless. They reacted, as well, to NATO’s follow-on forces attack (FOFA) concept and to various aspects of the U.S. Navy’s maritime strategy.

CS requires identifying a specific competitor or several competitors. In general, this was largely self-defining during the Cold War. However, right up to the time of the debunking of Soviet communism and the collapse of the empire it had dominated for much of the 20th century, Western experts were still debating whether the Soviet hierarchy was essentially monolithic or, as in pluralistic democracies, it comprised competing factions representing divergent points of view that our strategies could exploit.

The best competitor is reasonably predictable. For all of the dangers and other difficulties the Soviets presented as competitors, American policy elites widely believed and acted as though the Kremlin was largely inhabited by “rational actors” who would act responsibly

when it really mattered and in ways that the policy elites could anticipate. This notion was generally confirmed in the course of successfully defusing several major crises. Short of that, however, the history of Western intelligence and national security policy in the Cold War is replete with instances of the Soviets doing the unexpected—sometimes with major consequences.¹⁵

The most effective competitive strategy takes advantage of the competitor's enduring predispositions. This guideline requires understanding a competitor well enough to elicit a desired response that is also compatible with his basic values, interests, and objectives. To do otherwise is to work counter to human nature and thus to limit the predictability of the opponent's reaction. Insights into possible behavior of the Soviets were gleaned from their own extensive writings—including voluminous codifications of immutable "laws of war" and the like—as well as from the ever-expanding multidisciplinary corpus of knowledge and information generated by the massive Western intelligence effort over almost half a century. In addition, American strategists could always count on a seemingly congenital predisposition of the Soviets to paranoia and to a mutually reinforcing national inferiority complex when it came to their perceived need and ability to defend the homeland.¹⁶

Time is a critical factor that must be made a part of any competitive strategy. All advantages are transitory; their duration depends on the advantage sought and the opponent's willingness and ability to react. In addition, time is a matter of relative scale. Even as we seemingly were prepared to compete with the Soviets indefinitely, shorter time lines had to be carefully managed within the overall competition. The complex dynamics of the various subsidiary military-balance areas (e.g., artillery versus artillery, air versus air defense) testify to this practical reality.

U.S. policymakers could choose from among four broad alternatives in planning and managing the long-term military competition with the Soviet Union:

- The United States had the lead and needed to retain it (e.g., advanced technology in general; modern naval and air forces).

- At any given time, one side or the other enjoyed the lead, but the United States had to hold its own (e.g., tank technology; the overall armor/antiarmor balance).

- We had to cope with the Soviets' comparative advantage in a particular area by determining how to compete from a position of relative weakness (e.g., fighting outnumbered in the event of a war in Europe).

- Lastly, we could decide not to compete (e.g., large-scale Soviet investments in civil defense that we chose not to match). These basic but important ideas, as well as others that emerged as we gained experience, provided an essential basis in theory for understanding and conducting CS planning and analysis as it was formally undertaken by DoD in 1986.

Aside from the defining early contributions of Andrew Marshall and others to the theoretical and practical understanding of CS, these strategies were neither revolutionary (as some were suggesting) nor even new. Senior members of DoD and their closest advisors had pursued this kind of thinking over the years in several areas, even though at the time no one characterized it as CS. For example, Secretary Weinberger's Defense Guidance documents for 1981 and 1982—the first two years of the Reagan administration—made reference to “competing with the Soviet Union in peacetime.”¹⁷ They stressed the idea of imposing costs on the Soviets, along with other goals that were to be pursued through CS. In his annual reports to Congress for FY 1987 and FY 1988, the secretary cited several historical examples of what were judged successful CS. Both the ability of U.S. bombers to penetrate Soviet

airspace and U.S. antisubmarine warfare (ASW) programs figured prominently among the cases mentioned.¹⁸

As a basic concept in strategic planning, then, and as both Secretary Weinberger and Andrew Marshall always were quick to point out, CS itself was not new. What was new about CS as DoD began to practice it in 1986 was Secretary Weinberger's decision to formally institutionalize the process by involving people at many different levels and by attempting to develop and implement CS in a deliberate, systematic, and thus more effective way than hitherto had been the case. He hoped that such an approach might lead ultimately to a fundamental change for the better in how the department thought about and developed the military component of U.S. national security strategy, structured its research, development, and acquisition (RDA) programs, and, more generally, arrived at key decisions as part of DoD's Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS).

Adopting and Adapting Competitive Strategies to Current Needs.

What, if anything, might all of this theory and both formal and informal historical practice have to offer in contemplating the post-Cold War future? In particular, how much—if any—of the original CS concept and methodology is suitable for use in waging an effective fight against the proliferation of strategic weapons? At first glance, there appears to be some good news. But there is some potentially bad news as well—or at least a few things that merit a closer look and probably some hard work to rationalize in the current context.

Competitive Strategies Past and Future: Commonalities.

On the positive side of the ledger, policymakers, planners, and analysts do not need to begin with a blank slate. There are some important, immediately transferable,

or readily adaptable commonalities with past practice, such as:

- certain basic definitions and planning concepts, some already mentioned, and analysis tools and techniques;¹⁹
- the natural complementarity that exists between long-term competition planning and more traditional planning and management systems, such as—in the case of DoD—the PPBS and the Joint Staff's Joint Strategic Planning System (JSPS); and,
- the value of planning backward from not-implausible alternative futures that involve one or more proliferators fielding and even employing strategic capabilities against the United States or one of its allies or friends (of particular importance here for dealing with the proliferation of strategic weapons; this includes assessing the full range of military operational implications of such potential threats).

In seeking to draw on lessons from past practice, we must at the outset take good account of what may be implied by the conceptual guidelines introduced earlier.

CS assumes that, like it or not, the competition phenomenon is essentially omnipresent and, in virtually all cases that matter, is ongoing and likely will continue—perhaps indefinitely. As formerly, with respect to the Soviets, the question is whether we will acknowledge that we are already involved in a competitive dynamic of actions and reactions with various competitors—in this case proliferators—and seek to shape future behaviors, events, trends, and the overall state of the competition consciously, rather than unconsciously. The Israeli air strike against the Osirak reactor, the coalition's war against Iraq, and the U.S.-sponsored multilateral deal with North Korea involving its nuclear program are actions that we might reasonably expect to influence the future behavior of proliferators. The problem, to date, is that while some of our actions may be inducing competitor reactions that we might favor, all too often our approach to controlling

proliferation is inconsistent. For example, although the stated aims of current policies are generally supportive of our long-term security interests, in practice they often are subordinated to more short-term domestic and foreign political and economic goals whose pursuit works counter to the basic notion of competing consciously and effectively over the long term.

CS requires identifying a specific competitor or several competitors. Although we acknowledge the value of common policy guidelines, a one-size-fits-all strategy to counter proliferation would have to be so general as to be virtually useless in particular instances. Each case is unique—sometimes in nontrivial ways. Consider, for example, the fundamental differences in the challenges posed to U.S. interests and policy on proliferation by North Korea, Pakistan, Taiwan, France, Israel, and radical Islamic fundamentalism.

The best competitor is reasonably predictable. Given the broad range of national and elite psychologies represented by the full spectrum of current and potential future proliferators, this guideline appears to pose some real challenges. At the least, it would seem to suggest limiting expectations about what we can gain from subtleties in plans aimed at influencing the behavior of assorted “crazies” and others whose reactions may be hard to anticipate. We must remember, however, that Western policymakers only gradually came to believe that the Soviets were rational and, within limits, predictable. As Winston Churchill once said with characteristic insight and eloquence, Russian policy “is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” He then proffered what turned out to be akin to the Rosetta stone in deciphering the Soviets’ logic well enough to deal with them effectively during the Cold War: “But perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest.”²⁰ One suspects that this conclusion as well as all that derives from it retains its applicability—again, within limits—when dealing with proliferators.²¹ Very importantly, we need not assume

rationality on the part of a competitor. We need only be able to reasonably anticipate his reactions because he has displayed fairly consistent preferences for certain modes of action.²²

The most effective competitive strategy takes advantage of the competitor's enduring predispositions. This guideline argues for focusing on competitors about whom we already are reasonably knowledgeable, while gathering more intelligence and developing a better working understanding of the others. It also suggests exploiting opportunities where we now have leverage or can generate it quickly, such as those cases in which proliferators depend upon us for something that is important to them.

Time is a critical factor that must be made a part of any competitive strategy. Because competitors are unique, each may have a different perspective on the concept of time that we need to factor into our own strategic calculus. For example, the Soviets often were credited with taking the long view—seeing the “inevitable” victory of Marxism-Leninism as requiring perhaps decades or more to achieve. But what of those competitors whose operational time horizon includes the afterlife and glory achieved there through martyrdom in this life? Less teleologically—and to take competition goals as an example—in the short term it may be necessary as a practical matter to seek (with some urgency) to prevent certain dangerous proliferators from gaining access to nuclear weapons. Over the longer term, however, it may be sufficient just to contain them—as we did with the Soviet Union.

Competitive Strategies Past and Future: Dissimilarities.

On the other side of the ledger, some key differences exist between military CS against the former Soviet Union and a broadened formulation of competition planning involving assorted proliferators—differences that may

require major changes to past practice or entirely new perspectives and methods. These dissimilarities stem from the greatly increased uncertainty, complexity, and sensitivity that result from the following.

Expanding, perhaps substantially, the number of competitors. This includes both suppliers and recipients of strategic capabilities—both state and nonstate actors, starting now and extending into the future.

Increasing the number of instruments of policy at least theoretically available for prosecuting a competition. Even when it was largely confined to the military domain, CS planning and analysis proved quite challenging. Taking account of political, diplomatic, economic, psychological, and other factors, as well, portends to greatly increase the complexity of the task.

Competing in areas of interest for national security—not just with enemies but also with friends and perhaps even traditional formal military allies. It is a long way conceptually and analytically—as well as politically—from Iraq to, say, Taiwan and Germany.

Having to coordinate with a greater number of contributing and interested offices and agencies within the U.S. government and, as necessary, with selected non-U.S. players. Among other things, this calls for participatory arrangements that are inclusive and that facilitate close cooperation, coordination, and sharing of intelligence, yet allow for safeguarding sensitive national security information.

Having to choose from a much larger universe of possible competition goals, as well as having to manage the inevitable resulting increased frequency of inconsistencies and even conflicts among them. Developing and implementing effective strategies for fighting proliferation requires that everyone involved achieve a congruence of goals—seldom an easy task. For example, throughout the Cold War, there existed an

abiding, underlying—if seldom fully articulated—tension within the U.S. Government as to whether the overriding aim of policy should be to compete effectively with the Soviets or to seek stability in our relations with them.

Having to adapt and improve existing analysis tools and methods and create entirely new ones. Path-type, political-military simulation exercises and operational war games have proven helpful—within limits—in exploring alternative security environments for the future, including the possible nature of future war, and associated implications for policy. On the technical side, however, the suite of computer-based models that has evolved over the last several decades remains inadequate in helping military planners (as opposed to a few technical experts) understand the nature and implications of integrated (i.e., conventional and NBC) warfare.²³

In sum, if seeking to employ the CS approach in planning against the proliferation of strategic capabilities, one can build on some important continuities with past practice. But one must also take into account many important differences.

Planning Competition Strategies.

The object of strategy in general is to bring about some preferred end or state of being, including conditions that are most favorable to one's own side. But the crafting of strategy involves more art than science, so there is no generally accepted best way to do it.

Elements of Strategy.

At the same time, one can approach the task usefully by applying time-tested principles and techniques. For example, any true strategy—including a competitive strategy—involves the pursuit of particular ends (i.e., aims, goals, or objectives) in relation to one or more identified competitors, threats, or a more general set of strategic

conditions. This necessitates employing various means (e.g., instruments of policy, including associated human, materiel, and financial resources) through a time-phased plan of some kind that rationalizes and integrates these various strategic elements in the manner in which it answers the question “How?”

In other words, a competitive strategy—like any true strategy—should provide a realistic, actionable explanation of how, over a given period of time, a particular set of steps will accomplish clearly stated, measurable goals for a given competition.

Experience in DoD with planning for long-term military competition with the Soviet Union reveals that having to focus on goals and on the How? question—the essence of strategy—causes one to think differently. It also raises very different issues and questions than might otherwise be the case, particularly when one contemplates long-term competitive futures. Among other things, it encourages taking charge of the future. That is, it helps offset the tendency to focus almost solely on current problems by identifying opportunities, exploiting them from a position of established strength, moving in chosen directions, and proactively shaping the competitive environment.

Key Questions in Competition Planning.

People who participate in long-range strategic competition planning and analysis—whether with respect to competitors who are threats, friends, or allies—might profitably organize their thinking around certain key questions.²⁴

1. What is the abiding context of U.S. strategy that any current strategy must comport with, and what major assumptions underlie and thus condition our strategic thinking about the future?

2. What is the evolving nature of the global strategic environment? What alternative futures are possible over the next 15–20 years?

3. Which alternative futures do we prefer? Which do we wish to avoid?

4. Who are our current and likely future competitors? Who are the key third parties?

5. What are our competitors' and key third parties' goals and their strategies for achieving them?

6. What is the current state of the competition(s)? What future states are possible, and which do we prefer?

7. What major problems, enduring weaknesses, and other constraints face our competitor(s)? What are their strengths?

8. In any and all cases, what are our time-phased goals for the competition—both overall and supporting?

9. What are our areas of advantage or leverage, including our enduring strengths, relative to the particular challenge(s) the competition poses? What are our limitations or weaknesses?

10. What basic capacities or core competencies do we need to develop, sustain, adapt, protect, and plan to leverage?

11. What strategies can we employ that will permit us to influence—or even dominate—key competitions and future trends and events?

12. What is the likely range of competitor and third party countermoves? How might we respond?

13. What are the implications for resource allocation, including priorities, trade-offs, and divestment?

14. How can we best balance the costs, risks, and opportunities that accrue to various alternative security futures and competitive strategies?

The perspective afforded and the mental discipline imposed simply by asking such questions not only enrich the planning process but also enhance the chances of developing an effective strategy.

Where from Here?

All of the aforementioned history, theory, and assorted basics of strategy and strategic planning may be well and good, as far as it goes, if only by analogy. But how might we proceed from here?

For all of the potential dangers and uncertainties that lie ahead (and we must not underestimate them), the present situation offers an opportunity to make a real difference in how we fight against proliferation—both preventing or at least modulating it, as well as countering it. We still have time to do it right—or at least to greater practical long-term effect. But we need to get on with it—and in a serious way. Competitive strategies may have value to add here—not just militarily, as was the case in DoD during the Cold War, but more broadly. To determine with greater specificity what that value might be, we should do several things:

- Go back to the beginning and think through the issue of strategic weapons proliferation from first principles, including basic definitions (e.g., nonproliferation and counterproliferation).²⁵
- Ask what constitutes a strategic capability (including related technology), both now and as time unfolds—and why.
- Examine the existing body of literature on long-range strategic planning, including CS, and consider how the concepts, methods, and techniques discussed might have to be adapted to render them more relevant to the proliferation

issue. Be willing to conceive entirely new approaches as well.

- Build on existing trend analyses and threat assessments and add to the current catalog, looking at the near-term, mid-term, and long-term future.

- Select one or a few current and possible future proliferators (Iran and North Korea [or even a united Korea] might be good candidates), and begin to plan against them, employing the list of key questions provided earlier and adjusting the methodology as needed.

- Adopt the dynamic approach to planning. For example, give the proliferator credit for being at least as perceptive, resourceful, and adaptive as we are, and think in terms of action and reaction sequences—over the long term.

DoD experience in planning for long-term peacetime military competition with the former Soviet Union confirms that all of this is far easier said than done—much less done well. We must anticipate and plan for various forms of institutional resistance. Because we will find critical data lacking, we will need more and better intelligence. And we will require all manner of tough philosophical, technical, analytic, management, and policy judgments—including even the defining fundamentals (such as the basic assumptions and the specific competition goals to pursue).

Lack of an overarching strategic approach that is unambiguously goal oriented, forward looking, proactive, and anchored on a foundation of national strength makes the ongoing fight against the proliferation of strategic weapons more difficult than it otherwise might be. Viewing proliferation as a problem of long-term competition and adapting the traditional CS concept and methodology to strategic planning and analysis may offer a useful beginning in meeting this need. It is at least worth trying—and there is no time like the present.

CHAPTER 1 - ENDNOTES

1. For a summary of the proliferation issue, including current U.S. policy responses, see Robert G. Joseph, "WMD: A Proliferation Overview," in William H. Lewis and Stuart E. Johnson, eds., *Weapons of Mass Destruction: New Perspectives on Counterproliferation*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1995, pp. 3–15.

2. See Mitchel B. Wallerstein, "Concepts to Capabilities: The First Year of Counterproliferation," in Lewis and Johnson, eds., *Weapons of Mass Destruction: New Perspectives on Counterproliferation*, pp. 17–25. The current official definition of the term counterproliferation is limited to WMD.

3. See especially Chris Williams "DoD's Counterproliferation Initiative: A Critical Assessment," in Henry Sokolski, ed., *Fighting Proliferation: New Concerns for the 1990s* Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1996; and Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "Building a More Secure Asia through Missile Defense," *Backgrounders*, No. 138, Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, Asian Studies Center, October 24, 1995.

4. Problems with traditional approaches to nonproliferation and alternatives to them are examined by Lewis A. Dunn, "Proliferation Prevention: Beyond Traditionalism," in Lewis and Johnson, pp. 27–38.

5. A thoughtful treatment of the U.S.-Soviet military competition, including suggested means and methods for competing effectively, is presented in J. J. Martin, *et al.*, *The U.S.-Soviet Long-Term Military Competition*, Final Technical Report prepared for the Director, Defense Nuclear Agency, and Director, Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Vols. 1–3, San Diego, CA: Science Applications International Corporation, June 5, 1990. Volume 1, *Concepts*, describes the nature of the peacetime military competition, including concepts useful for understanding what was important in this competition and for developing strategies to compete effectively. Volume 2, *Planning and Analysis*, proposes a structured process for devising and implementing strategies for the long-term military competition, evaluates current analysis tools in terms of their adequacy to support competitive strategy development, and recommends improvements. Volume 3, *Appendices*, contains case studies and other background papers that supplement Volumes 1 and 2.

6. See, for example, Dunn, pp. 36–37.

7. Caspar W. Weinberger, *Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1987*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 5, 1986, p. 87.

8. Caspar W. Weinberger, "U.S. Defense Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1986, p. 694.

9. Since the mid-1970s, Marshall has been the first and only director of the Office of Net Assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

10. A. W. Marshall, *Long-Term Competition with the Soviets: A Framework for Strategic Analysis*(U), RAND Report R-862-PR, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, April 1972. (Confidential; subsequently reedited and declassified)

11. See, for example, the many works on business competitive strategies by Harvard's Michael E. Porter, including *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*, New York: Free Press, 1980; and *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, New York: Free Press, 1990.

12. The discussion in this section is adapted from David J. Andre, *New Competitive Strategies: Tools and Methodologies* Vol. 1, *Review of the Department of Defense Competitive Strategies Initiative, 1986–1990* Final Technical Report, McLean, VA: Science Applications International Corporation, November 30, 1990.

13. Whatever one may believe regarding the technical feasibility and the economic affordability of the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), announced in 1982, former Soviet officials have said in recent meetings with U.S. analysts that they viewed SDI as a compelling competitive strategy. They were at least as concerned, if not more so, with unknowable but—in their view—inevitable, pathbreaking technical spin-offs from the massive SDI research program as they were with the United States achieving its stated goals.

14. Even as Secretary Weinberger was attempting to institutionalize competition planning in DoD in the mid-1980s, some officials and staff members in other departments and agencies of the federal government questioned the basic wisdom of characterizing the Soviets as competitors, much less planning accordingly.

15. Examples include the Soviet decisions to multiple independently targeted reentry vehicle (MIRV) their strategic nuclear missiles, invade Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, remove the Berlin Wall, and dissolve the Soviet Union itself.

16. As *Pravda* often exhorted, "Defense of the Fatherland is the supreme law of life."

17. Department of Defense, *Defense Guidance, Fiscal Year 1981*(U); and *Defense Guidance, Fiscal Year 1982* (U). (Secret) Information extracted is unclassified.

18. Weinberger, *Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1987*, p. 86; *idem*, *Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1988* pp. 66–67. Refer also to Randall A. Greenwalt, David J. Andre, *et al.*, *Historical Examples of Competitive Strategies* Final Technical Report sponsored by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), and prepared for Director, Competitive Strategies Office, OSD, Denver, CO: Science Applications International Corporation, March 23, 1991.

19. Analysis tools to support competition planning, including an evaluation of current tools and techniques, are discussed in Martin, *et al.*, Vol. 2, *Planning and Analysis*. For an assessment of the application of particular tools in the DoD Competitive Strategies Initiative, see Andre, *New Competitive Strategies*

20. Radio broadcast of October 1, 1939.

21. Stephen Peter Rosen of Harvard University has argued persuasively in private conversation that we can better understand and deal with even “crazy” actors by broadening our knowledge of their actual strategic—including noncrisis—behavior. Even as regards “noncrazies,” Rosen notes that the rational-actor model is limited by our ability to understand how others “calculate”—when they calculate at all. (Anyone may occasionally act on impulse.) In any and all cases, however, in Rosen’s view the key question reduces to: What are a given actor’s interests, what does he want, and what is the associated cost-benefit or ends-means logic?

22. Stephen Rosen brought this insight to my attention.

23. Tools to support counterproliferation planning and analysis are discussed briefly in Wallerstein, p. 21.

24. Adapted from Martin, *et al.*

25. Limiting the official definition of counterproliferation to weapons of mass destruction ignores the reality that, even if the spread of WMD were somehow controlled, advanced conventional weapons—some with WMD-like effects—and supporting capabilities will continue to present an even more rapidly growing threat to U.S. interests and military forces worldwide. Moreover, many of the military capabilities whose development now falls under the Defense Counterproliferation Initiative both predate the DCI and were and remain fungible across a range of conventional and nonconventional—including WMD—threats.