



Clausewitz and America: Strategic Thought and Practice from Vietnam to Iraq (Strategy and History)

Stuart Kinross

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This book demonstrates how Clausewitzian thought influenced American strategic thinking between the Vietnam War and the current conflict in Iraq.

Carl von Clausewitz's thought played a part in the process of military reform and the transition in US policy that took place after the Vietnam War. By the time of the 1991 Gulf War, American policy makers demonstrated that they understood the Clausewitzian notion of utilizing military force to fulfil a clear political objective. The US armed forces bridged the operational and strategic levels during that conflict in accordance with Clausewitz's conviction that war plans should be tailored to fulfil a political objective. With the end of the Cold War, and an increasing predilection for technological solutions, American policy makers and the military moved away from Clausewitz. It was only the events of 11 September 2001 that reminded Americans of his intrinsic value. However, while many aspects of the 'War on Terror' and the conflict in Iraq can be accommodated within the Clausewitzian paradigm, the lack of a clear policy for countering insurgency in Iraq suggests that the US may have returned full circle to the flawed strategic approach evident in Vietnam.

Clausewitz and America will be of great interest to students of strategy, military history, international security and US politics.



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