

# Means, Will and War

Col Dave Lewis, USAF (Ret)

Political Science Department, Texas Tech University

If you want to overcome your enemy you must match your effort against his power of resistance, which can be expressed as the product of two inseparable factors, viz. *the total means at his disposal* and the *strength of his will*. – *On War* (Clausewitz)

- A natural focus on material (means)
- Moral elements “... cannot be classified or counted. They have to be seen or felt.”
- “...the part and the whole must always be thought of together.”
- “Military activity is never directed against material force alone ...”

# The 200 Year Waiver

- “No theorist, and no commander, should bother himself with psychological and philosophical sophistries.”
- Sorry, Carl. It’s time.

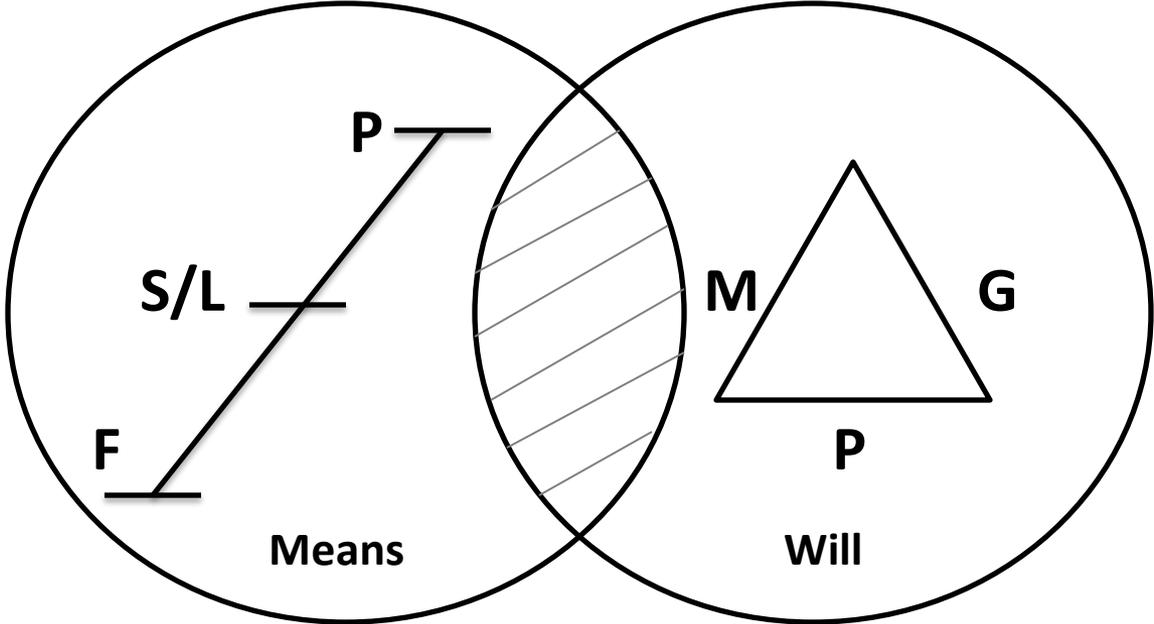
# **DEFINITIONS**

# Total Means

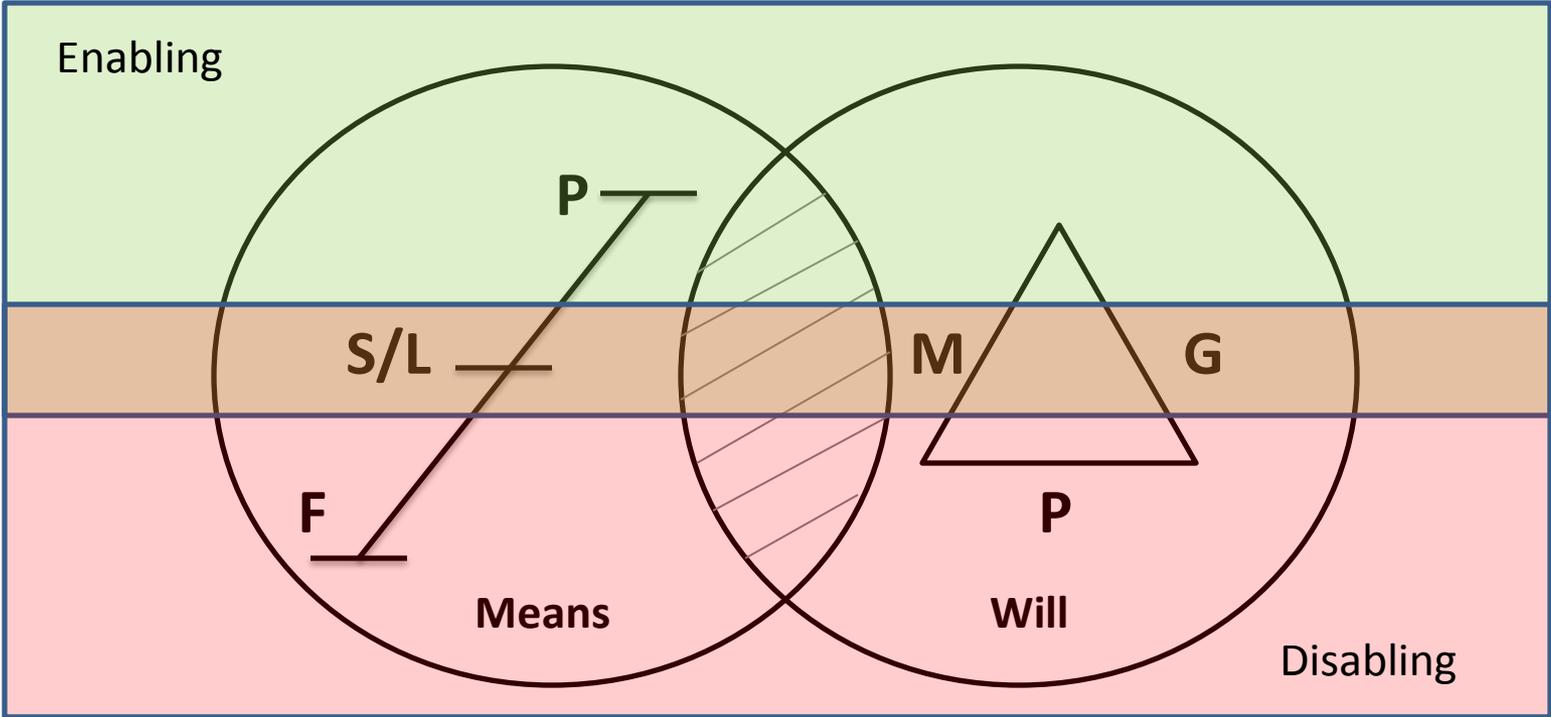
- Fielded Means – immediately available to a commander
- Supply/Logistical Means – exist, but are not immediately available
- Potential Means – can be manufactured or procured from an external source

# Will

- Borrowed from Clausewitz
  - Will of the people
  - Will of the military
  - Will of the government



- Enabling factors – operations applied to reduce one’s own “fog and friction”
- Disabling factors – operations applied to increase the enemy’s “fog and friction”



- Large “M” wars (interstate)  $M \times W$   
 $M_1 \times W_1 = M_2 \times W_2$
- Small “m” wars  $m \times W$
- All conflict is Large “W” (initially)

Diplomatic, legal, informational, military and economic elements of national power can be used to affect means and will

# Reducing means

In addition to military power, means can be reduced by economic and diplomatic elements of national power

# Influencing Will

- All elements of national power can be brought to bear
- Reducing will to wage war
- Hearts and minds (small m wars)
- Will can be bolstered as will as reduced

# Some unanticipated will effects

- Inverse effect
- Boomerang effect
- Victory disease

# Additional thoughts

- Strategies of the weak (small m)
- Instant means
- Mao's m to M
- Terrorism as a counter "W" strategy
- Classifying wars
  - Fear, honor, interests?
- Regime types

# Complex interactions

- Understanding the nature of the war
- Means/will interactions
- Sustaining your own will
- Wars morph
- Political victory cannot rely exclusively on attacking means (re: Harry Summers)

# Finally

- Strategy must consider will
- Ends/Ways/Means (and .... Will)
- Excessive or abundant means can mask poor strategy
- Large N analysis?