

GLOBAL POWER-PATTERN THEORIES

13 March 1957

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## GLOBAL POWER-PATTERN THEORIES

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DR. CLEM: General Calhoun, Admiral Deutermann, Ladies, and Gentlemen: Among professional educators, there is a school of thought which has labeled the lecture as "the last vestige of educational barbarism." While my immediate circumstances scarcely permit me to comment freely on this observation at this time, I can assure you that there is another school of thought which is equally intent on extolling the lecture's virtues.

Not long ago I found this rather provocative statement in a book on educational method. I quote:

"When it is desired that factual material shall slip without friction into the thought stream of the student, no method is as economical, both of time and money, as is the lecture."

I find that phrase "slip without friction" very descriptive, because I can recall lectures from my student days in which the element of friction was apparently so infinitesimal that their content slipped by, never to be recalled.

Needless to say, I'll try to exemplify the virtues of the lecture this morning.

I suppose that all of us here were conditioned, at least in our earlier student days, to look forward to the day when a great international organization, representative of the world's peoples, could effectively guarantee peace in the world--a "parliament of man" that could assure the observance of a code of morality in a society of nations, similar to those principles and rules which now relate to individual and local morality. But, when we are forced, as we are here, to face the stark realities of the present, we see a political world still falling far short of our dreams--still characterized largely by the multistate system--a world divided into "sovereign" political communities--each sending ambassadors to a United Nations, to be sure, but each still inclined to insist on being the ultimate judge of what constitutes its "vital interests," and of what action will properly safeguard those interests. And so it is with national power that we are concerned here, and the relative power positions of nation-states in the world.

There are those students of international affairs who have sought to discover, in this confusion of "sovereign" state politics, some distinct and fixed global pattern of power--some clearly cut design--in which the power relationships of nations have been operating, and to which nations are unconsciously conforming. And through an intensive study of geography, of history, and of man's intellectual and scientific progress, these students have evolved certain theories as to the course which international politics may take in the future--as to what the ultimate outcome of the struggle between nations may be, should that struggle be permitted to go on unbridled.

So I propose this morning to examine a few of these theories--more specifically those of Mahan, Mackinder, and Nicholas Spykman--since these in particular have enjoyed wide interest and appeal over the past 50 or 60 years. But, in undertaking to review these particular theories, I am mindful, of course, that it is customary today to regard them largely as "dated," and now a part of history. Yet, I submit that it is still a worthwhile exercise in itself to speculate on the degree of validity which they may still possess in the light of contemporary world conditions. But, for the more immediate purposes of our course here in Unit VIII, I think the value of the work of these men lies not so much in the ultimate conclusions which they may have reached, but rather in the fact that each undertook a composite, all-embracing approach to the assessment of the power positions of nations in his day--a multifactor approach, if you will, similar to that which we visualize as being employed in this course.

Now, in my selection and treatment of the particular theories named it may appear to some of you that it is my avowed purpose to defame or belittle air power. But far from it! In fact, if you will take a fresh look at the college directory appearing at the ICAF entrance to the ramp leading over to this room, you will note inscribed thereon the name "Clem, H. J., Dr.," followed with the bold letters, "USAF"--an obvious mistake, of course. So, if there should be any question in your mind, you can attribute these feeble efforts of mine to a desire to recover some small vestige of what I liked to think was a reputation for academic objectivity.

And so, first, to Alfred Thayer Mahan.

I can remember when I first heard that name "Mahan" mentioned with sea power. Must be British, I thought--until one day, as an undergraduate, I found his Influence of Seapower on my required reading list in a course in Nineteenth Century English History. And reading, I found

to my astonishment, of course, that he was an American naval officer. But why an American glorifying British seapower? Unpatriotic, thought I. Well, that took a little more reading, until it was gradually revealed to me that this man, Mahan, thought that we didn't have a Navy, and that this work of his was really a deliberate propaganda campaign to arouse interest in building a United States Navy.

For the average American, mention of the name "Mahan" is likely to conjure up images of long gray lines of battleships surging forth on a sea of blue, bent on performing some complicated and mysterious naval maneuver. But an examination of his works--his writings--will reveal that, while naval tactics and operations receive detailed treatment therein, Mahan was equally concerned with exploring the broad role of maritime power in world affairs. In fact, "maritime power," rather than "sea-power," would have been a happier term for him to have employed, as he later admitted, since much of his work deals with the broad relationships of the sea to national power as a whole.

Mahan's thesis is often represented as being set forth in its entirety in his book, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783--a book published in 1890. Well, you can find the core of it there, pretty well; but, actually, his overall thesis must be pieced together from fragments found in numerous books and articles representing more than two decades of voluminous writing.

Mahan interpreted world politics basically as a continuing struggle for control of the seas. The nation which controls the pathways of sea-borne commerce possesses the key to world power! And when Mahan looked on a map of the world, (Chart 1, page 4), it was not the land masses thereon which held his attention, but rather the water area which surrounds the land--as he put it--a vast plain, unbroken by obstacles, crossed and crisscrossed by unmarked, but heavily traveled highways--affording man a transportation system which overland transportation could never equal, either commercially or strategically.

From earliest times to his own day, Mahan held, these water areas had served as the great medium which brought nations and civilizations into contact with each other, culturally, economically, and politically. Did not history reveal that early civilization expanded and flourished along the seashores of the world? The Mediterranean Sea was the true power center of the ancient world, and control of that sea was the key to power. Was it not Greek maritime power which triumphed over the Persian horde at Salamis? And was not the fate of Carthage sealed when she lost control

CHART 1



of the sea to Rome in the First Punic War? And, in more modern times, didn't British control of the seas doom Napoleon's Continental System to failure, and contrive his ultimate downfall? In brief, said Mahan, history reveals that the important political and military decisions go to the nation possessing control of the sea, because it offers a system of communication and mobility far superior to that on land. Because of the sea, the maritime power has access to a greater portion of the world's resources. Because of the sea, it can concentrate superior political and economic influence, as well as military force, at points where needed--and it can do this more easily and more economically than can any land power.

But the core of Mahan's thesis was his theory of "insular dominance," developed largely from his study of the evolution of British maritime power from the 16th century to his own day. From this study he concluded that "insularity" is a priceless asset in the struggle to control the seas. No state with insecure land frontiers can hope to compete successfully for maritime supremacy with a relatively strong state that is insular, because the state with land frontiers must divert too great a portion of its resources to defend those frontiers. Therefore, no Eurasian power could challenge the position of England--or that of the United States, which he regarded as occupying a position of continental insularity here in North America.

Now, it is generally conceded that Mahan had a profound impact on the events of his day. For England he provided the philosophical foundation for a power which England had exercised on the seas for centuries--and so strengthened her determination to remain dominant on the seas. Further, he gave impetus to Germany's interest in the sea in the days of William II, the Flottenverein, and Admiral von Tirpitz. Again, his picture of national power as something derived from a combination of colonies, overseas trade, and naval power encouraged that late 19th century revival of imperialism and colonialism which we have known. And, of course, by direct influence, and through the political power of his friends, Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr., Mahan played a leading role in persuading the United States to pursue a larger destiny in the world in the opening years of the 20th century.

But in the first decade of that same century, an Englishman, of all people, arose to challenge this concept of the supremacy of seapower. This was the pioneer Scottish geographer, Sir Halford Mackinder. His views are to be found in two notable treatises--one, his paper entitled "The Geographical Pivot of History," read to the Royal Geographical

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Society in 1904--the other, his book, entitled Democratic Ideals and Reality, published on the eve of the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, and representing an expansion of his ideas contained in that earlier paper.

Mackinder believed that the opening of the 20th century marked the end of a great historic epoch. The period of geographical exploration, inaugurated by Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama, had come to a close, with the remotest portions of the world explored and politically appropriated. From henceforth, Mackinder believed, we should have to deal with a closed political system, albeit of worldwide scope. Every explosion of social forces occurring in this world, instead of being dissipated in the surrounding circuit of unknown space and barbaric chaos, would henceforth be sharply reechoed from the far side of the globe, and weak elements in the political and economic organism of the world would be shattered in consequence. (And, gentlemen, not until 40 years later were the people of the United States beginning to discern the real implications in that observation.)

Further, in this closed political system, Mackinder saw no such thing as equality of opportunity for nations. Rather, he perceived an uneven distribution of fertility in this world--an uneven distribution of strategical opportunity on the face of the globe; and this had been, and would continue to be, at the root of struggle between nations. And in these struggles there was no assurance that the predominance of maritime power over continental land power, which prevailed in his day, was any more than just a passing phase in the eternal struggle between the two. Maritime power, he contended, was dependent, in the last analysis, on the possession of "secure and productive bases" on land, and mobility on land he conceived as rapidly approaching mobility on the sea. He held, further, that the grouping of lands and seas, and of fertility and natural pathways, on this globe is such as to lend itself to the growth of empires and, in the end, of a single empire. This empire would combine power on sea and power on land under one rule, and ultimately would extend its sway over all the lands and seas of the globe--unless men recognized these geographical realities and took steps to counter them.

(May I say that Arnold Toynbee arrives at a similar conclusion through another avenue of approach--a study of history.)

Chart 2, page 7.--In essence, Mackinder saw the ultimate pivot area of world politics as that region stretching from the Volga River eastward to the Lena River basin, and from Tibet northward to the

CHART 2



Arctic Ocean. To Mackinder, this region, inaccessible to seapower, and possessing vast resources and size, represented, (in his words), "the greatest natural fortress on earth;" and, if ever a single power were able to control this land mass effectively, it would be in a position to dominate the world. It was this region which Mackinder ultimately named the "Heartland" of the world.

The rimland region surrounding this heartland, Mackinder called the "Inner or Marginal Crescent," consisting of Western and Central Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and China--all those continental states of Eurasia which have direct access to the sea, and which could, therefore, exercise power both on sea and on land.

Finally, an "Outer Crescent" consisted of all the outlying continents--or "islands," (according to Mackinder's concept)--in which category were placed North and South America, and Australia.

For years it was Mackinder's fear that some East European nation, such as Germany, with access to the sea, might get control of this heartland fortress, and thereby pose a threat to England and all nations of Europe. This is the origin of his oft-quoted warning to the Versailles peacemakers in 1919:

Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland  
Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island  
Who rules the World Island commands the World. "

Why did Mackinder attribute so much importance to this portion of the old Russian Empire of his day? He reasoned that the spaces within that area were so vast, and "their potentialities in population, wheat, cotton, fuel, and metals were so great," that it was "inevitable" that a vast economic world would develop there, inaccessible to ships.

In fact, he saw Russia occupying the central strategical position in the world at large. She could strike on all sides, and be struck from all sides, save the North. And Mackinder, looking at Russia there in 1904, believed that the full development of Russia's modern railway mobility was merely a matter of time. Nor was it likely that any possible social revolution would alter her essential relations to the great geographical limits of her existence.

True, Mackinder recognized that, in the circumstances of the balance of power prevailing in his day, this pivot state, Russia, was not yet

equivalent to the peripheral states; but an oversetting of the balance of power in favor of the pivot state, resulting in its expansion over these marginal lands of Eurasia, would permit it the use of vast resources for fleet building--and the empire of the world would then be in sight. This, Mackinder believed, might happen if Germany were to ally herself with Russia. Or, were the Chinese to overthrow the Russian Empire and conquer its territory, they might constitute the yellow peril to the world's freedom, because thereby they would add an oceanic frontage to the resources of that great continent.

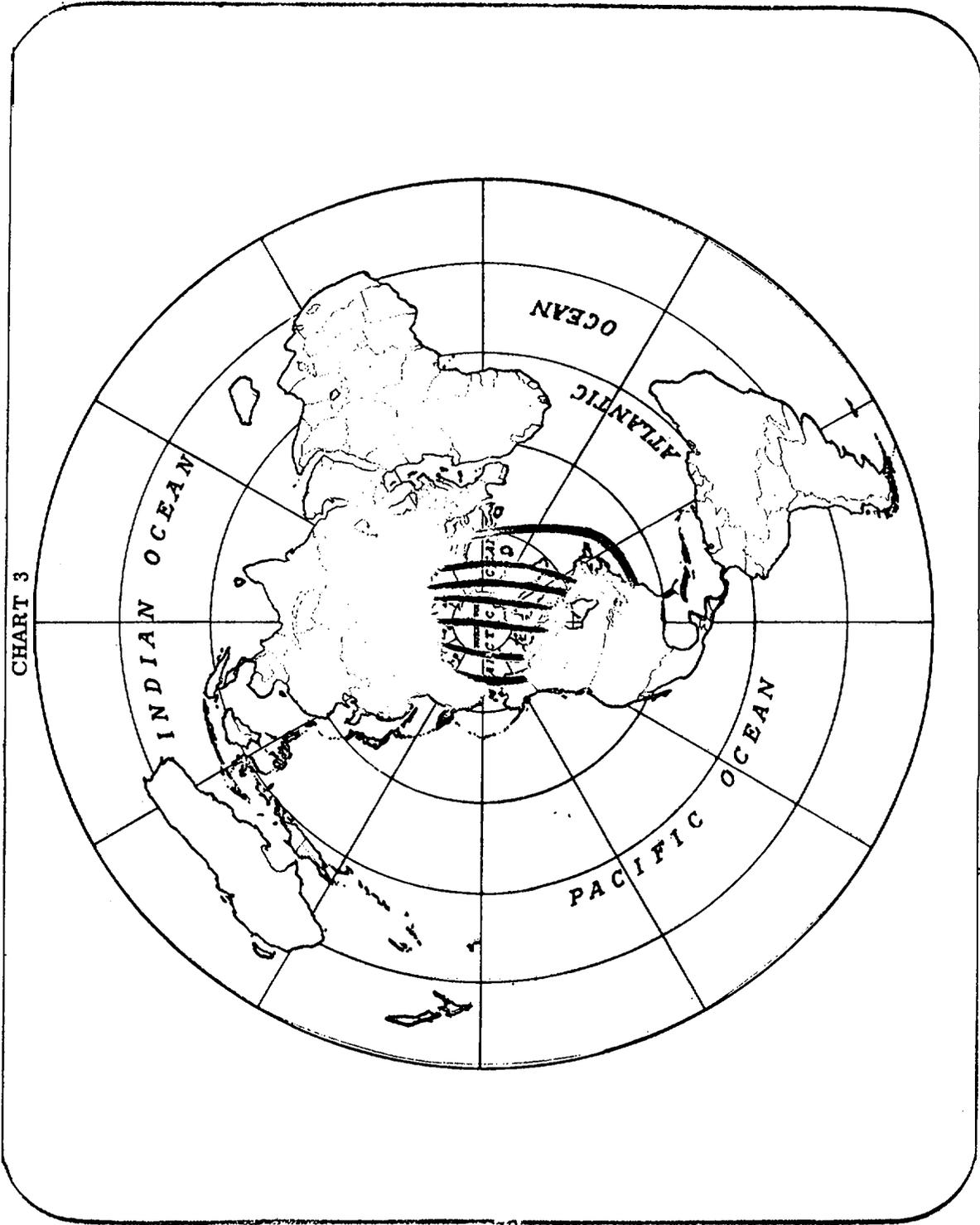
Gentlemen, we must remember that these observations were made 53 years ago.

Mackinder lived long enough to see his fundamental thesis incorporated into the system of Geopolitik of the German, Karl Haushofer. He lived to see Germany, under Hitler, make a supreme effort to conquer this heartland--and fail. But he also witnessed the rise of Russia, under Soviet rule, to the position of a world power.

And, adding a final postscript to his thesis in 1943, Mackinder believed he saw his heartland garrisoned for the first time in history by a government and state strong enough in military, economic, and political power to exploit its geographic position to the fullest.

Now, there are those in this audience who will be quick to observe that it was a Mercator world map which served to support so well the logic of the heartland thesis; but that mobility by air now demands that we exchange Mercator for a Polar Projection, (Chart 3, page 10), in which the skyways of the Arctic give validity to a new way of regarding the geographical relationship of North America and this "heartland." The heartland's conventional defenses against sea and land attack are now of little avail against attack delivered by air, and its vast resources and industry now stand exposed to the long-range air power of North America--and then suddenly we stop, realizing that such mobility provides a two-way street in the present context of things, and North America also is vulnerable.

On that evening in London, back in 1904, when Mackinder concluded his lecture on the "Geographical Pivot of History" before the members of the Royal Geographical Society, the meeting, according to the usual practice, was thrown open for discussion and comment by the audience. In the record of these proceedings (which has been preserved) it is to be noted that one Mr. L. S. Amery, later to become First Lord of the



Admiralty and Secretary of State for India, arose and called attention to the fact, that, while currently it might be valid to base a power-pattern thesis on the relative merits of mobility on land as against mobility on sea, might it not be anticipated that these two mobilities would be supplemented eventually by the air as a means of locomotion; and, in that event, would not a great deal of geographical distribution lose its importance, and the successful powers be those that have the greatest industrial basis? And Amery concluded by asserting, "It will not matter whether they are in the centre of a continent or on an island; those people who have the industrial power and the power of invention and of science will be able to defeat all others." (I think, gentlemen, that this observation is all the more remarkable in that it was made only a few weeks after the Wright brothers had made their first flight.)

I can find no record of Mackinder's reply to Amery at that time, nor does he furnish a reply in his later book, published in 1919. In fact, not until 1943, just four years before his death, and after having had some opportunity to observe airpower in action in World War II, did Mackinder give his answer. It is contained in an article entitled "The Round World and the Winning of the Peace," appearing in the July 1943 issue of Foreign Affairs. Here we find that he has greeted the airplane as the ally of land mobility and landpower in this heartland. May I quote:

"I have no hesitation in saying that my concept of the Heartland is more valid and useful today than it was either twenty or forty years ago... It is true that the Arctic shore is no longer inaccessible in the absolute sense that held until a few years ago, but a hostile invasion across the vast area of circumpolar ice and over the tundra and Targa forests of Northern Siberia seems almost impossible in the face of Soviet land-based air defense.

"Some persons today seem to dream of a global airpower which will liquidate fleets and armies. I am impressed, however, by the broad implications of the fact that airpower depends absolutely on the efficiency of its ground organization... /and/ it can only be said that no adequate proof has yet been presented that air fighting will not follow the long history of all kinds of warfare, by presenting alternations of offensive and defensive tactical superiority, meanwhile effecting few permanent changes in strategical conditions."

Others who have questioned the validity of Mackinder's "Heartland" thesis have stressed the pivotal importance of the densely

populated regions of the "rimland" or the coastal areas. And here I'd like to return to Mahan for a moment.

Today, certain serious students of Mahan, viewing his thesis within the context of the current East-West struggle, see him as the advocate of a global strategy based on "rimland" or "peripheral" control of Russia. And in Mahan's works can be found direct support for this interpretation. In the year 1900 he published a book entitled The Problem of Asia, in which he recognized Russia as possibly presenting a problem to the world in the future. He described Russia in terms similar to those employed by Mackinder later--"a vast, uninterrupted mass whose center cannot be broken." And Mahan emphasized Russia's landlocked position and its dominance there in Central Asia. He predicted that Britain, Germany, Japan, and the United States would some day find a common interest in containing Russia, and in controlling China. And he estimated that Russian expansion could be opposed successfully by sea-transported power.

So the latter-day disciples of Mahan hold that, when one looks at the globe today, one still sees the vast water areas surrounding the land masses, stabbing deep into every continent. They point out that the major centers of civilization are still concentrated in areas easily accessible from the sea. One is not to be unduly impressed by the size of this Asiatic hinterland. More impressive is the vast area and power potential of the other five-sixths of the globe. Compared to the power potential of the maritime world, that of this Asiatic heartland is still outclassed by a large margin. In fact, does it deserve the name "heartland?" Certainly, until land transportation in this Eurasian land mass becomes a network such as that here in the United States, that area just remains an island--an island that can be contained, squeezed, and exhausted--provided enough patience is exercised, and provided the water around and the air above the periphery are controlled. True, (these men say), today the airplane has increased the vulnerability of sea transportation as well as of land transportation. But land transportation systems are vulnerable to a greater degree than ships, which travel over readymade highway systems, requiring no bridges, no tunnels, no maintenance, no repairs. Rather, the advent of the airplane has enhanced the power of the sea, permitting it to extend its dominating influence over land areas previously denied to it, and to strike at great distances inland from the coast. And finally, if a nation gives serious thought to the potentialities in submarine mobility, it will find no essential difference between the effectiveness of operating in the air or under the water.

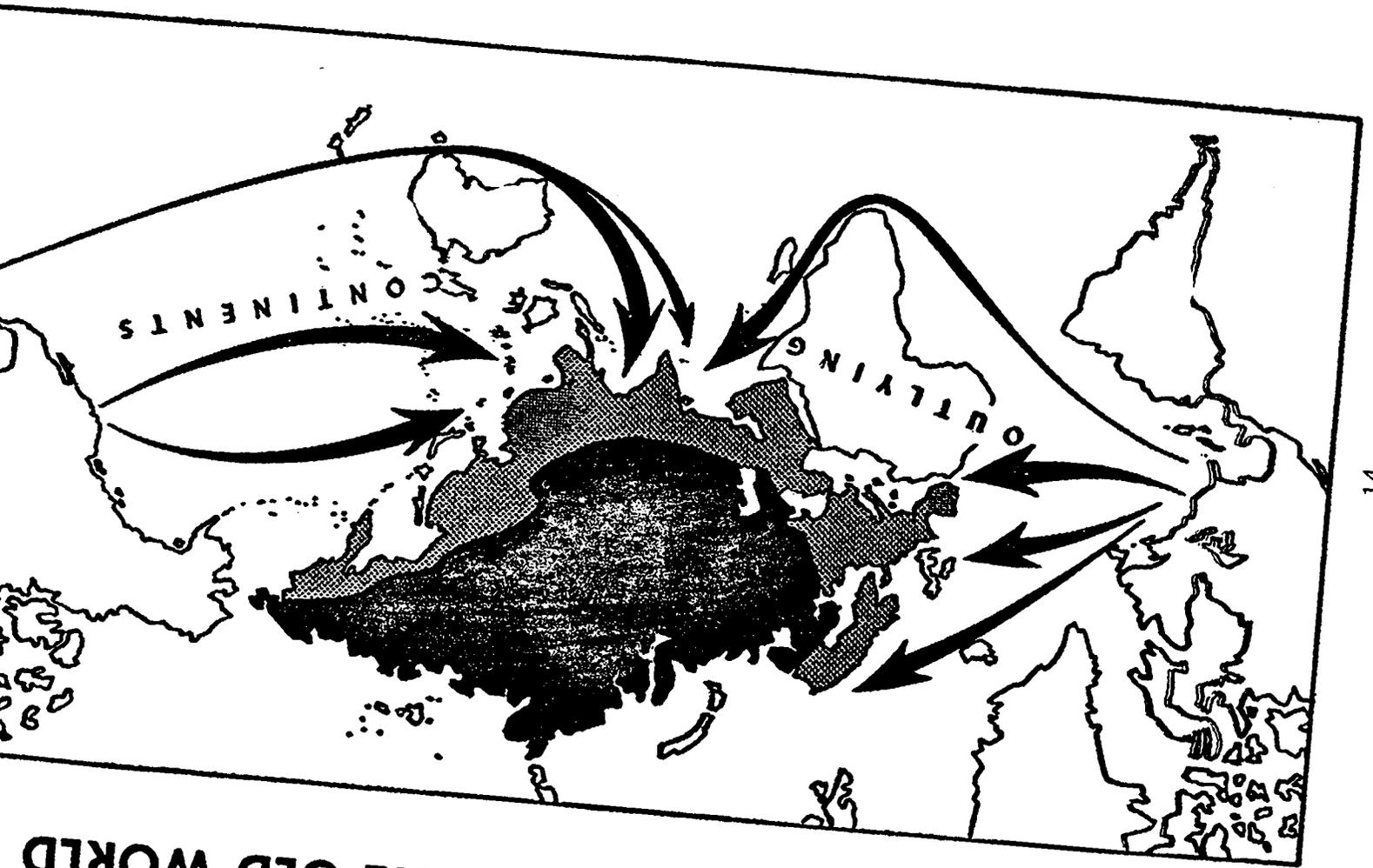
Gentlemen, that is Mahan today.

The most effective proponent of the "rimland" thesis was Dr. Nicholas J. Spykman, late Sterling Professor of International Relations at Yale University. In his book, The Geography of the Peace, published in the closing year of World War II, Spykman deals with the "heartland" and "rimland" concepts especially in the light of the advent of air mobility. First, he takes to task those who propose that the advent of air power has so completely changed the relationship between the great states, and their exercise of power, that no map other than a North Polar Projection can adequately portray the world of today. He concedes the military importance of the Arctic north, but he reminds his readers that it is well to assess its importance in terms of the geography which conditions all exercise of power. And here he believes that the significant fact about the position of North America in the world today is not that the icy wastes of northern Canada and Russian Siberia are the shores of a Mediterranean Sea of the North, but rather that our continent lies between the European and Asiatic power centers of the Old World, and is separated from them by vast oceanic distances. It is more important to remember, he believes, that the centers of power and communication are still in the middle latitudes of the Atlantic and Pacific areas--that it is no accident that the great masses of the world's population are still concentrated in these lower latitudes, instead of the inhospitable North. Thus, it will be the skyways and the seaways of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans that will most effectively carry our overall influence into the Old World. And so, any analysis of the power relationships of the nations of the world today is still more adequately presented in the style of Mercator.

It was from this point of view that Spykman evolved his basic thesis--his thesis being that Mackinder's rimland of Eurasia is more important than his heartland. Chart 4, page 14--the rimland, which is that section there in gray, includes all of Continental Europe (except European Russia), Asia Minor, Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, Southeastern Asia, China, Korea, and Eastern Siberia. All this area Spykman regarded as a buffer zone between maritime power and continental land power, and so he modified Mackinder's little jingle, thus:

"Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia;  
Who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the World."

And it was Spykman's belief that, if a major maritime power, such as the United States, could unite the rimland and control the marginal seas around this heartland, then this heartland power could be confined to its inland fortress. England and Japan he saw rather as centers of power outside, and off the shores, of this rimland; and Africa and Australia



**THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF THE OLD WORLD**

CHART 4

he saw as offshore continents whose positions would probably be determined largely by the nation which controlled the seas.

Then Spykman concluded with a warning to the United States. Charts 5 and 6, page 16--he visualized the New World as being surrounded by, and as surrounding, the land masses of Eurasia, Africa, and Australia. It must always be the objective of the United States, he held, both in peace and war, to prevent a unification of the Old World centers of power. For, if this should happen, the Western Hemisphere center of power could be confronted by a combined Eurasian power potential possessing two and one-half times the area and ten times the population of the Americas. Even though the industrial productivity of the New World would almost balance that of the Old World, the United States would still find herself irresistibly encircled by a superior force.

Looked at broadly, the Mahan, the Mackinder, and the Spykman theories have much in common. And their similarities to what we call "containment" are obvious. Especially does Spykman's view that the pivotal area can be bottled up by a strong "rimland" crescent come close to our original concept of "containment."

Now this map here, (Chart 7, page 17), is a partial representation of the Western containment ring thrown around the Communist bloc. It doesn't correspond exactly with the "rimland," since parts of the rimland of Mackinder and Spykman have already slipped into the heartland orbit--North Korea, part of Indo-China, China itself; and in Central and Eastern Europe, the captured states there.

Containment means, first of all, the prevention of the extension of Soviet control into the rimland--a policy which was inaugurated officially back in 1947 with President Truman's plea for American aid to Greece and Turkey. But the philosophical basis for the pursuit of such a policy has often been cited as set forth in an article entitled, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," appearing in the July 1947 issue of Foreign Affairs, -- with the author identified only as "X," but soon revealed to have been George F. Kennan, career foreign service officer. Actually, in order to grasp the full import of Mr. Kennan's reasoning, it is necessary to examine, along with this article which I have mentioned, a rather lengthy report dispatched by him to our Government in February 1946, in his capacity then as American Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow. And since I am convinced that Kennan's views have had no small impact on our official concept of the pattern of power in the world today, I'd like to take just a few minutes to examine them briefly.

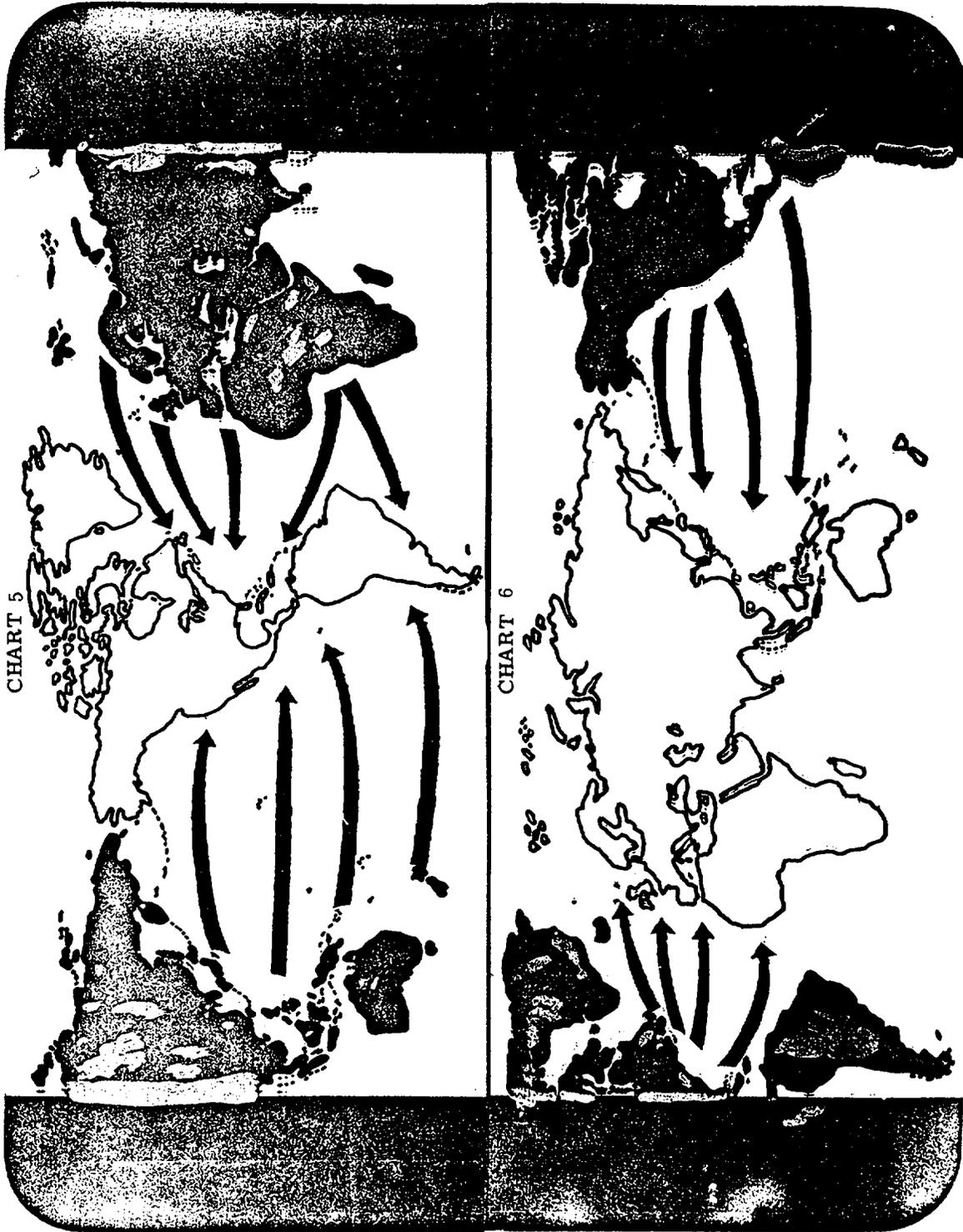
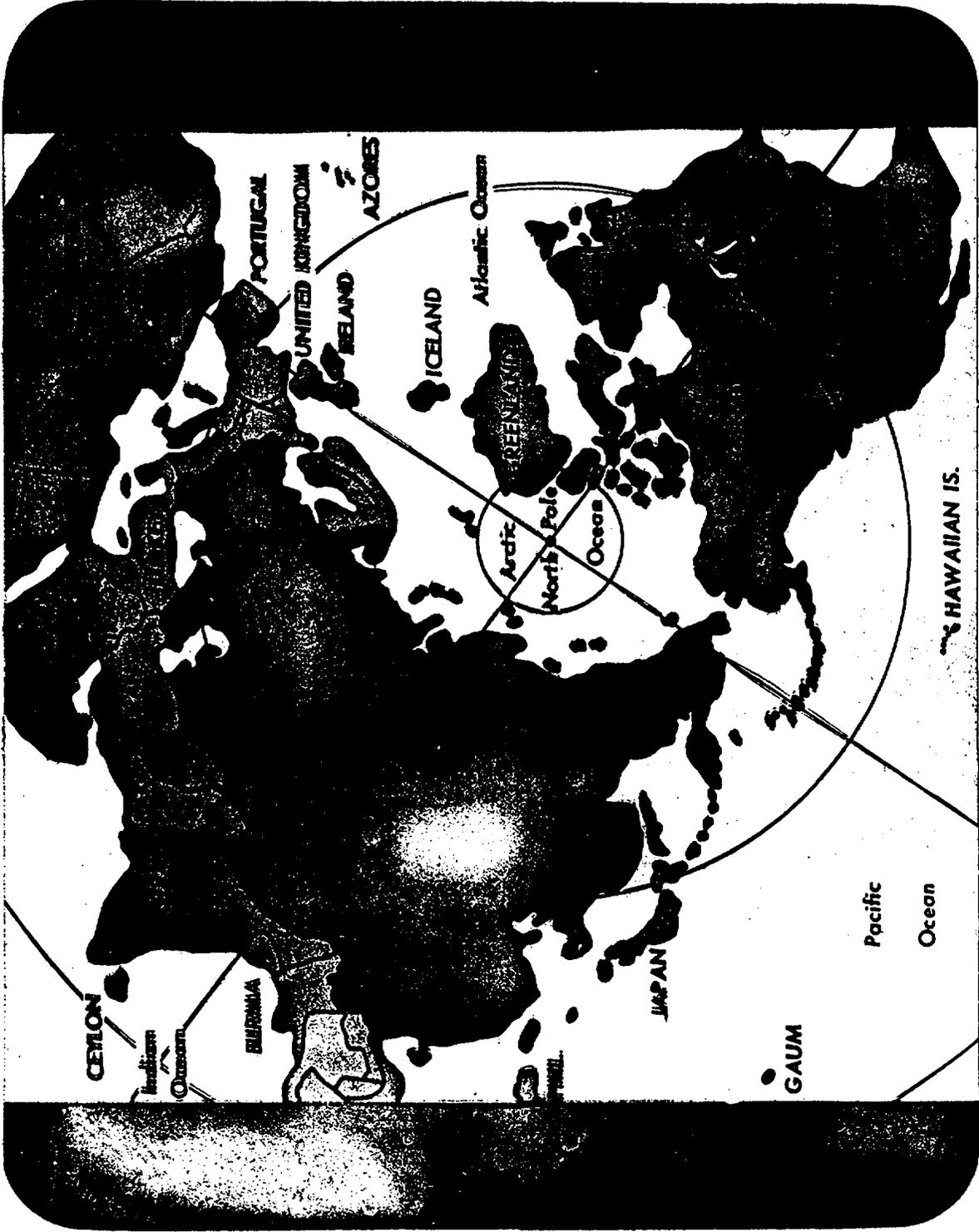


CHART 7



Kennan's thesis rests on the premise that there are two basic facts of geography and history which have determined the nature of Russian national character and governmental institutions throughout modern history, irrespective of the ideology which has prevailed there at any given time. The first fact is that the Russians live in a vast, defenseless plain, where they have always been surrounded by hostile forces. The second is that their society and culture have ever been weak, disorganized, and primitive according to western standards. As a result, Kennan contends, the Russians have traditionally suffered from a sense of insecurity, and their rulers have suffered from an inferiority complex. They have always been consumed by fear--fear of foreign penetration; fear of what would happen if the Russian people learned the truth about the world outside, or if foreigners learned the awful truth about the world inside; fear of direct contact between the Western World and their own. Thus, Russia's rulers have learned to seek security only in waging a patient but deadly struggle for the total destruction of rival power--never in compacts and compromises with it.

The advent of Marxism in Russia, Kennan holds, and its doctrine of the irrepressible conflict between Marxism and capitalism, is just a convenient vehicle, serving only to enhance still further the concept of Old Mother Russia encircled on all sides by hostile forces. It has served merely to provide Russia's rulers with a more plausible apology and justification for the exercise of autocratic power, and with a more intense faith in the ultimate triumph of Russia's cause, without the urgency of adhering to any fixed timetable to insure ultimate success.

And so Russia's political behavior under Soviet rulers, as under the Czars, is a matter of persistently and patiently applying pressure on the outside world. Its main concern is to fill every nook and cranny available to it in the basin of world power. But Russian rulers have always been very realistic in evaluating the odds against them. If they find a dangerous or unassailable barrier in their path, they accept it and accommodate themselves to it, and patiently await the opportunity to advance at a later date. But their main concern is that there be increasing, constant pressure toward the desired goal--and this need not be reached at any given time.

This, in essence, is Kennan's approach to the problem faced by the United States and all the free world today. But what is his solution? What can be done in the face of such persistence? Well, Kennan contends that verbal arguments will be of no avail. Russian pressure cannot be charmed or talked out of existence. Russian rulers see the world as they want to

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see it; and the vast fund of objective fact about human society is drawn on only when it serves to bolster an outlook already preconceived. Further, the Soviet ability to lay out and follow consistently a long-range plan, retreating when necessary but advancing at the first sign of weakness in the enemy lines, makes short and sporadic acts on our part futile. No, to Kennan the most effective policy for the West is a long-range containment effort, pursued as steadily, patiently, and resourcefully as the policy pursued by the Russians. This involves the diligent application of Western power at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy. The West must confront the Russians with unalterable counterforce at every such point. And, while Kennan does not spell out or elaborate on the various kinds of force which might be applied--that is, economic, political, psychological, and military--he does suggest that force be accompanied by the pursuit of a modest program of informational activity. More important (and this is a fact which I am afraid is often overlooked), Kennan believed that the United States must demonstrate to the world that it is capable of dealing successfully with its own internal problems, that it is a country which knows what it wants, and that it possesses a spiritual vitality capable of holding its own among the major ideological currents of the time.

In sum, Kennan believed that such a program of continuous pressure applied from the outside, if vigorously pursued for a period of 10 to 15 years, would so frustrate and disillusion Russia's leaders as to result in either a genuine mellowing of Soviet power or in its complete breakup. For, as Kennan put it, no mystical, Messianic movement can face frustration indefinitely without eventually adjusting itself in one way or another to the logic of that state of affairs.

And, needless to say, Mr. Kennan has found considerable encouragement in the trend of events in Eastern Europe in recent months.

Within this scheme of things seems to fit the main thesis of Sir John Slessor's book, Strategy for the West, in which one will find a liberal quoting of Kennan. Slessor's thesis, in essence, is that the West must be willing and prepared to meet, swiftly and boldly, the limited military aggressions of the Soviet Union, and on a localized basis, with Omaha, or the Strategic Air Command, standing overall as the Great Monitor--the Great Deterrent to the outbreak of global nuclear air war--which Slessor believes is not likely to occur, except by some accident.

And Slessor leaves us with this admonition, which I regard as an appropriate note on which to conclude my remarks here:

"Don't waste all of your time and resources in preparing to fight the wrong war. You are in the real one now."

CAPTAIN OWEN: Dr. Clem is ready for your questions.

DR. CLEM: Don't forget that you want to get out of here.

QUESTION: Doctor, is there any evidence of this concept having received very wide reception, not alone in the United States Government, but also throughout the free world governments?

DR. CLEM: That isn't clear at all. I don't know what reception it gets in our own Government. The question is often speculated upon as to what kind of a reception it gets with the Soviets; that is, how much credence they put in the Mackinder thesis. There it is not clear, either. Dr. J. B. Cressy, a geographer at Syracuse University, claims that the Soviets regard this as just Nazi geopolitik--the Haushofer thing--that it is something that one is not to pay any attention to.

On the other hand, the Reverend Edmund Walsh, who for years was the director of the Georgetown Foreign Service School, and who has given talks on this--he is now dead--was sure that the Russians placed great credence in this Mackinder theory, particularly. But he never went on to elaborate. And I don't know what his sources of information were, to tell you the truth.

QUESTION: I notice, sir, that you leave out the theory of the economic "have" and "have-not," as propounded by Brookings. Would you care to comment on your views on that theory?

DR. CLEM: I know nothing about it.

QUESTION: Dr. Clem, you spent a lot of time preoccupied with the idea of what kind of power, be it sea power, land power, or air power. We are trying to develop missiles up here. Would you let me have your comments on the amount of power being an influencing factor? Actually the amount of power is the only measure of the economic capability of the United States. In other words, wouldn't it be feasible to have an air power of sufficient magnitude to beat down any land and sea power; and conversely, a sea power of sufficient magnitude to overwhelm this heart-land by a siege process--getting out of the type of power and getting more into the idea of the amount of power?

DR. CLEM: I am not sure that I can comment on that. You mentioned the missile--and I am thinking now in terms of the intercontinental ballistic missile. To me, the intercontinental ballistic missile fits into the context of the Great Deterrent only. I mean by that, that the intercontinental missile to me will represent merely an interchange of weapons within the context of the Great Deterrent--the intercontinental missile perhaps eventually taking the place, shall we say, of the manned long-range bomber--or perhaps merely supplementing it? But I can't imagine the intercontinental missile, or the Strategic Air Command as a whole, being employed to snuff out these small wars or small aggressions--"brush fires" as we sometimes call them--such as Korea.

I don't know whether I am helping you or not. I have a fixed view in my own mind about the employment of power and how it divides up--that is, the power you employ in the all-out total war against a potential enemy, and that which we use to snuff out these smaller, creeping aggressions.

So I have a hard time catching on to your idea.

STUDENT: Maybe I'll come down some time and we'll have a three-hour chat.

QUESTION: You mentioned Kennan's writings here. Wasn't Bohlen also the author of those? As I remember it, they worked hand in glove in the State Department, back in that period, in 1945. That was Charles E. Bohlen.

DR. CLEM: That could very easily have been, Captain. The two things which I read were the article which appeared in Foreign Affairs in July 1947 on "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," and then this long dispatch which Kennan sent from Moscow to our Government about February 1946. This dispatch, by the way, you can find printed pretty much in its entirety in the Forrestal Diaries. Those are the two things I used. This dispatch, in fact, gives you more of Kennan's basic thinking. To what extent Ambassador Bohlen helped to conceive this idea I am not sure. It could have happened that the two worked hand in glove.

QUESTION: I have wondered for years why the geographers continued to orbit around Russia, or the heartland. Always they ignore the Western Hemisphere, especially South America. It seems to me that the combined potential of North and South America is such that we could control all the

rest of the world very easily if we wanted to bring that into control and use it. It is possible for us to intertwine the facilities and economies of the two countries and rule the world. Why is that ignored?

DR. CLEM: I assume that you are talking about the concept of Western Hemispheric defense. Right?

STUDENT: Yes, sir.

DR. CLEM: Seversky, in his Air Power: Key to Survival--the book which he wrote in 1950--also takes that same point of view. This is the concept that he has set forth. In the context of things today--and this again is a personal opinion--it would seem to me that Western Hemispheric defense would be impractical for us. I have read Seversky's line of thought on this. In essence, he seems to ignore completely Russia's intercontinental air capability. He believes that it is left for us only to build up such an intercontinental air capability, and we would then have the world at our feet. We can then just confine ourselves right here to the Western Hemisphere--North and South America--South America with its allegedly vast resources down there to keep feeding into our productive machine. But doesn't this ignore the fact that by confining ourselves to the West, we would be setting up a more compact target for our potential enemy? In other words, you are concentrating your resources narrowly, thereby pinpointing them too much for your enemy, it seems to me. I, for my part, would prefer to keep them dispersed. I think especially of our air bases scattered around the world, and so on. We are dispersing our capabilities. This makes a more difficult target for our enemy. He has then to disperse his effort when he goes to attack.

Does this help answer your question?

STUDENT: All these theories have not been for today; they have been for generations to come. You mentioned that Mahan is beginning to come to the fore. Speaking of generations to come, a lot of this potential is used up in other places in the world, where there are such terrific populations. We have something new over here that has not been tapped at all. What can be brought out on this?

DR. CLEM: I don't know. I couldn't answer that, now. I have not given this enough thought, and it would take me too long to think it over here and give you an immediate answer.

QUESTION: Doctor you said something about Kennan seeing evidence of pressure being brought against Eastern Europe and other places. Could you be more specific? What evidence?

DR. CLEM: It was indicated in the newspaper press, back about late November or early December, that Kennan was greatly encouraged by what he saw taking place in Poland and Hungary in recent months. He was quoted as saying that he thought he saw the beginning of the break-up of the Soviet orbit.

STUDENT: These are not pressures by us. These are pressures within those countries.

DR. CLEM: That would require further analysis. I am not sure. But Kennan seemed to infer that this was resulting largely from pressures on our part.

STUDENT: I don't see any evidence of pressure by us. That's the thing I am thinking about.

DR. CLEM: I think we have applied pressure in a good many places. As I said, we started back with Greece and Turkey in 1947. We did let China slip into the Soviet orbit. We let part of Indo-China slip into it. We stopped them in Korea--and I think that was something, to stop them there. If you noticed on that "containment" map, though, we've still got some holes around there. There's India. Now we are trying to bolster things in that perimeter in the Middle East, with the new Middle East doctrine there. I'll put it this way: We don't know how far the Russians might have advanced by now, had we not put those obstacles around there.

That's all I can say in answer to your question at this time.

QUESTION: Doctor, this question of containment must presuppose a commonness of purpose in the geographic units surrounding the heartland, as it were. It seems to me that our greatest problem is to weld this into a chain that has strength, rather than having a chink here and a chink there, and a gap here and a gap there. Particularly in Southeast Asia, where the political sophistication is so limited, it seems to me that it is a terrific problem; because this must be a mutual thing, in which the United States perhaps takes the leadership. But it must be by mutual consent, so that we can apply this force and pressure from without. Will you comment on that?

DR. CLEM: In other words, it seems to be only a halfhearted attempt on our part to draw this chain around Russia--to draw the other countries into this chain. Is that the idea you have?

STUDENT: No, it is a question of the problem of welding this into a chain, rather than have separate and perhaps diverse interests. Some countries seem to feel that they are being made the cat's-paw of the United States in this containment policy.

DR. CLEM: My only comment on that would be that it is probably well that you do not make it, or try to make it, too uniform a chain or draw them all into one big ring. Perhaps it is best, due to differences in the economies and in the cultures, to keep the links in the chain somewhat diverse. Perhaps breaking this chain up into different lengths serves to give it a little more flexibility. If, for instance, aggression were to occur in the Southeast Asian region down there, would it not be better, from our standpoint, that that group of countries down there in Southeast Asia itself move as a group, rather than trying to move this whole containment ring into the region? Would it not perhaps be better to move the group or "link" more immediately affected, with perhaps United States or British backing, into it, rather than attempt to pull this whole ring in at one time? This might result at the outset in a bigger war than you would want to have on your hands, otherwise.

Am I getting into the essence of your question?

STUDENT: I think so.

QUESTION: Without being disrespectful to these great minds of the past, don't you think they would turn over in their graves if they could have seen Mr. Powell's curve a few weeks ago? How can we place any credence on what their powerful minds devised 50 years ago?

DR. CLEM: I didn't see Mr. Powell's curve. I was doing my own thinking at that time.

STUDENT: I mean, do you still stick to your lecture? I realize you put a lot of work on it. But shouldn't we look a little bit at the Russian philosophy? They are obviously ignoring it. With the increase in technology, how can we place reliance on the thoughts of these men who lived and died several generations ago?

DR. CLEM: Largely, this morning, I have regarded myself more as the presenter of the ideas of other people. I said earlier that it is usual

to regard these theories as dated and a part of history. But I still think it's a good exercise to go back and judge for one's self the degree of validity they might still possess today. It was merely a little exercise, shall we say, in global thinking.

I can say this: Today there are scholars, geographers, who feel that Mackinder has given one of the best expositions of all time of the geographical relationships in this world. They find it hard, in fact, to tear themselves away from it. It's the same in the case of Mahan. Perhaps the Navy still has some trouble tearing away from Mahan, and there may be good reasons.

I still find some validity in those things. A study of these theories "lubricates" my thinking a little further, shall we say? Although I will not accept them in toto.

Do I make myself understood now as to what I was getting at this morning in treating this subject?

STUDENT: Yes, sir.

DR. CLEM: This was an exercise, as I say.

QUESTION: Dr. Clem, you pointed out that the Russian philosophy or ideology is that they are going to expand by all means that they can, and where they are stopped they will stop; if they have to retreat, they will. Now, you also mentioned that it is our idea that we are going to try to contain these people, and that we will build up alliances, or whatever you want to call them, with nations around the perimeter, and try to suppress any advances that they might make. I wonder what would happen if we should get away from the defensive and try to apply some offensive pressure at certain points. I wonder if you will touch on that.

DR. CLEM: Back about 1952, by chance a presidential election year, there was a good deal of talk that this containment policy was too negative, and that we ought to have a more positive policy--that we ought to get in there and liberate some of these East European countries. Mr. Kennan pointed out at that time--he must have made himself heard somehow--that this might get us into a major war. It is a regrettable fact, but one which we must face, that even good foreign service officers may find themselves expendable, shall we say, when their advice becomes politically embarrassing. Mr. Kennan was relieved. In fact, he was permitted to go into private life. He has been teaching, doing research and writing since.

There has been much talk of liberation, but it would seem to me that we have gone just back the other way. It is still containment. But even there it is somewhat halfhearted. I look at what happened in Eastern Europe. I look at our reaction to what happened in Eastern Europe here the last couple of months. Weren't we somewhat frightened? We thought that if we interfered it might bring on that which we didn't want to see--a big war. We didn't want to be disturbed. In fact, we almost apologized to the Russians for what was happening there in Eastern Europe, particularly in Hungary, by asserting, "Oh, Radio Free Europe and the Voice of America didn't encourage these people to revolt at all. We didn't ask them to do this thing at all." Didn't we do that? I think we did. We were afraid to move. Don't ask me what we should have done. I am not sure yet.

This is what we might have done in the old days. We've got forces in Europe, and so have some other countries. We might have hooked up the artillery and rolled out the cannon, and all of that, and held big maneuvers just across the border there from Austria or from Czechoslovakia, and raced up and down the border as though we were preparing to go in there, and help the Hungarians. That used to work in the old days--just the threat. But, far from giving them any threat, we rather apologized, I'm afraid. Maybe I'm putting it a little strongly.

STUDENT: I don't think you are.

DR. CLEM: Fear? The Russians are not the only ones who are afraid perhaps.

QUESTION: These theories of Mahan and so forth seem to work toward the happenstance of geography and the type of power to be applied. I wonder if some of these people ever put out, or anyone else, any philosophies about the comparison of power and intellectual superiority and energy and leadership, for instance. It appears to me that the Romans had power because they were advanced intellectually and had leadership. It was the same with England for years. And today I think perhaps we can consider America that way.

DR. CLEM: I don't know about that. I couldn't cite anyone right now who has set forth such a thesis as that. In fact, some people might dispute your thesis as to the extent to which Roman power was built on intellectualism--or that of any other power, as far as that's concerned. I have never thought this one through, either. Nor do I recall anyone that I could cite on this particular point, at this time.

QUESTION: Dr. Clem, I have become somewhat unpopular in my car pool for arguing that there is reason for considerable hope in the possibility that the United States might become a dominant moral and spiritual power. Have you any ideas as to present trends in this direction?

DR. CLEM: A dominant moral and spiritual power? I would put the United States ahead on that score, but I am not able to put it ahead as far as I would like to, I think. We still have a good deal of spiritual vitality. I think religion plays a big role in this. I have a very strong conviction in this regard. I like to think that there is currently a religious revival taking shape in this country, because I think that that will serve to strengthen our moral fiber even more--and ultimately contribute to a strengthening of our real basic belief in democratic ideals.

I am not sure whether we now possess enough spiritual vitality to counter effectively this Communist ideology, or whether we will have it. I am not sure. (You are making me say some awful things here, because I am trying to think as we go along.) I would like to see us have more of this kind of vitality.

Toynbee, in his Study of History (I never have had a chance to read it all, because my wife makes me quit. It's about ten volumes, and she says it interferes with the normal functioning of married life. And I'm not bragging, by the way. She means that it interferes with my cleaning and my cooking. But once in a while I sneak a page or so.) The thing that makes me think is Toynbee's views on the characteristics of a declining civilization. He has looked back over about 23 civilizations, which he claims is really not a sufficient number from which to draw pure and firm inferences. He says that it seems that civilizations in the past show these as the symptoms of decline: (So we are all gathered around today, examining ourselves to see whether or not we have symptoms of the "bubonic plague.") Toynbee cites as the first symptom, a fall in the material standard of living. I don't know whether we have that here. We have a wonderful automobile economy here. Maybe it is falling in some countries. He cites, secondly, a fall in intellectual cultivation--a return to ignorance, as he calls it. Sometimes we think we see that occurring today. Thirdly, there is a setback in social manners and customs. Well, when I drive down here in the morning along Maine Avenue, I can suspect some awful things of this civilization, as a result of the kind of traffic and driver-manners which I encounter on the street. But, Toynbee says, most important as a symptom of a declining civilization is a great deterioration in law and order--and he means not only within a country, but between nations. There is war, constant war, between nations, and war between classes.

And I must say that I gather that Gibbon, of Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire fame, is Toynbee's great mentor, because many of these things which he suggests as evidence of decline are the very things which Gibbon expressed as the evidence of decline and fall in the Roman Empire--the great Greco-Roman civilization as a whole, extending from 500 B. C. to 500 A. D.

But Toynbee says that, while our civilization may have the earmarks of decline, he is definitely not a determinist. He will not agree with those who hold that a civilization has a life span of only 1,000 to 1,200 years. Actually, he says, we have the cases of only 25 civilizations in the last 6,000 years to go on--and any good statistician will tell you that you will not be able to draw firm inferences from such a few cases. No, he thinks that our civilization is not necessarily doomed to go the way of all others. But he believes that the world is headed toward a universal state and a universal church.

It is the universal state that I have always been particularly interested in, and Toynbee says that here the only question is as to how it is going to evolve. Is it going to come about by force, that is, by the traditional method of a knockout blow, leaving one great power to impose its will on all the others of the world--a Pax Americana, or a Pax Russicana, if you please? Or will it come about by the formulation of a cooperative union of nations, achieved through voluntary consent?

That's the problem which Toynbee poses. Let me say that Slessor again sees hope here. He believes that the advent of nuclear air power may actually be a godsend to the world, since it is possible that its very threat of massive destruction has outlawed the big war for all time, thereby giving nations a further opportunity to work toward the achievement of a universal state and a universal peace, based on consent.

But Slessor says that, meanwhile, we've got to keep ourselves in a state of preparedness. We may have to live in this period of armed uncertainty for a long time. Nor does he accept the old thesis that just because nations possess the means for war, that necessarily they are going to use them--as we used to be taught in the nineteen twenties and thirties as having been one of the underlying causes of the First World War. Slessor insists that we must remain armed and ready.

CAPTAIN OWEN: Thank you, Harold.

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