Political Geography

Third Edition

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Geopolitics
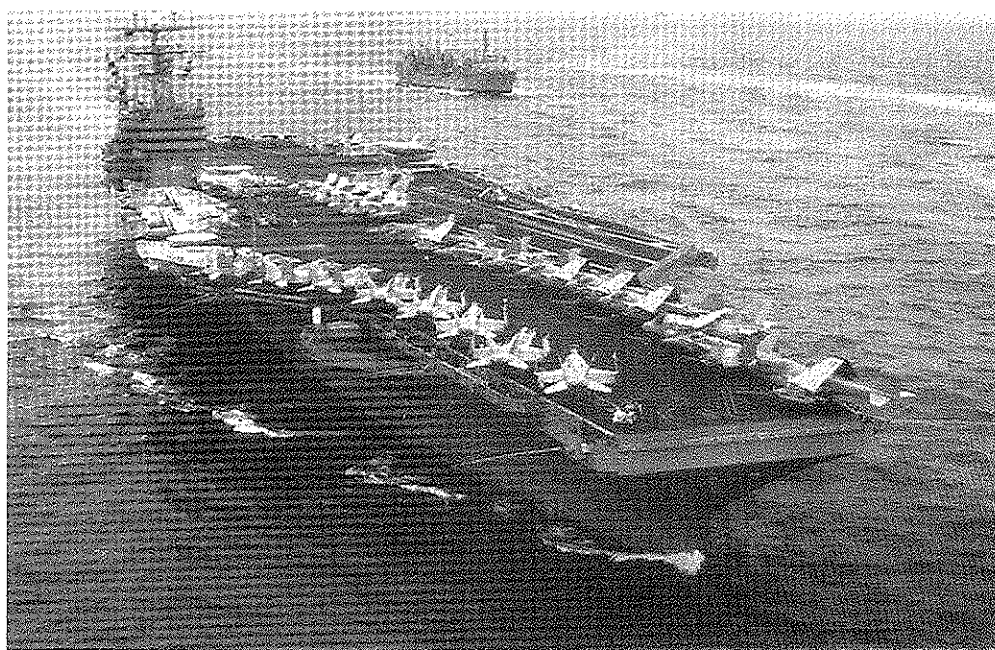
Carrier task force, controlling sea lanes and projecting power.

20

Power Analysis

Most of the problems of indigenous peoples and of imperialism, discussed in the last four chapters, were generated by policies of governments influenced in part by geopolitical notions. Imperialism, and even geostrategic concepts, as we have seen, have not been limited to large, rich, and powerful countries. Now we examine these concepts in greater detail, beginning with the popular, but little understood, notion of "power."

Three generations of political geographers, political scientists, military intelligence specialists, foreign ministry officials, and others have devoted countless hours and immeasurable energy to the definition, quantification, and analysis of the "power" of many, if not all, States of the world. Not only has it been a popular exercise, even for graduate students, but it has been accepted as a required one in the field of political geography. Indeed, some definitions of "State" even include "power" as one of the requirements. It is still undoubtedly essential for military and civilian leaders of a State to have a reasonably accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of potential enemies and allies, but the ability to conduct a power analysis or power inventory is increasingly difficult. So many things have changed since World War II, and the pace of change is accelerating so rapidly, that we find it difficult to keep up with the currently significant elements of power in the first place and then to quantify them, assign them realistic values, apply them to individual countries, and rank the countries.

Power has been defined as "the factors that enable one actor to manipulate another actor's behavior against its preferences."* This may involve influencing a State, a nation, or some other group to act in a certain way or perhaps to refrain from action. The latter aspect brings to mind the ancient Chinese proverb that *to take no action **is** an action.* That proverb, of course, can work two ways. On the one hand, a powerful State may cause a neighbor to abstain from action to avoid an unwelcome response. But powerful States may refrain from using their power on occasion for a variety of reasons.

It is quite obvious to anyone who reads even a hometown newspaper that there were two superpowers in the world until the end of the Cold War, with the United States significantly more powerful than the Soviet Union. Below them were perhaps six or eight countries that could bring some measure of power to bear outside their own immediate regions on a sustained basis. Below this group lay the remaining 180 or so countries whose ranking could vary widely depending on the variables selected for analysis and the geographical scale of possible action. No computer program could possibly produce a ranking acceptable to the majority of observers as both accurate and useful. Even if it were possible to do so, the

* Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf. *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, 7th ed. New York: Worth Publishers, 1999, p. 27.

ranking would quickly go out of date and have to be recalculated. Furthermore, the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks remind us that there are non-State actors on the world stage that must also be considered in our analysis of power.

For these reasons our discussion of the topic is confined to a survey of the various indicators that should be included in any power inventory and to some comments on the difficulty of analyzing them in any meaningful way.* The following topics are by no means exhaustive; they are suggestive only. The organization of the factors is partly arbitrary, and they are not necessarily listed in order of importance. Finally, we must stress that many factors overlap and most are interrelated, if not interdependent.

Territory

We have already discussed the importance of size and shape of a State and concluded that there is no ideal size or shape. Nevertheless, in measuring the power of an individual State, these factors can be very significant. All other things being equal, reasonably large size affords space for maneuver, defense in depth, variety of resources, and other advantages. In terms of territorial morphology, a compact State will have a smaller ratio of perimeter to area, making internal communications and external defense easier than in elongated, fragmented, or prorupt States. But a compact shape can leave valuable resources nearby but still outside a State's boundaries, and a large territory may pose administrative difficulties and expose the State to attack from several directions.

"Strategic" or "favorable" location is often cited as an asset to a State, and is sometimes cited by determinists as explaining a particular country's success. We discuss this in more detail later in these chapters on geopolitics, but for now we can point out that since technology, economies, politics,

* Readers who are interested in quantification of these indicators are referred to two basic tools: The UN *Statistical Yearbook* and the CIA *World Factbook.*

and strategies are constantly changing, so are the values of particular locations. It does make a difference to a State whether it has two seacoasts or one or none. Buffer States can benefit from the intermediary role in trade, transportation, and communications, but are also subject to buffeting from both sides. States located at the western edge of the Pacific Ocean, the eastern edge, or the middle clearly derive both advantages and handicaps from these locations. Who ever heard of Diego Garcia 40 years ago? Wasn't Korea "The Hermit Kingdom" in the nineteenth century? Wasn't Valparaíso (Fig. 20-1) a major port with a strategic location before the Panama Canal was opened? When the Suez Canal was closed from 1967 to 1974, eastern and southern Africa assumed a new importance. Who now knows or appreciates the past importance of Gallipoli, Château Thierry, Kasserine Pass, Tarawa, Pork Chop Hill, or the A Shau Valley—battlefields where thousands died during the twentieth century because of their "strategic importance." Who can predict which country will occupy a "strategic position" tomorrow?

Natural Resources

The **natural resources** of a State are also considered valuable and quantifiable, so they tend to rank high in everyone's power inventory. But what is a "natural resource"? It can be defined as a naturally occurring substance for which people have a need or use. Those needs, however, change with time. Fifty years ago, titanium was used primarily as an ingredient in some paints; today mine waste piles are being scoured for this metal, which is essential for the skins of high-performance supersonic aircraft. Wars were fought over natural nitrates only a century ago, yet few people today even know what they are. Natural resources include soils, water, forests, metallic and nonmetallic minerals and many other elements of the physical environment that are difficult to evaluate. Where in the State's territory are the resources located—on its periphery near a hostile border, deep in the inaccessible

Figure 20-1: "Strategic position of the ports of Northern Chile." This map appears in the Foreword to the report *Antofagasta and the North of Chile, Bridge of Exit and Entry of the Central West South American Hinterland, in the Sphere of Action of the G.E.I.C.O.S.* (interregional Business Group of the South American Central West, a private organization of Chilean, Argentine, Paraguayan, and Bolivian businesspeople trying to develop a new transit corridor through Antofagasta). It is an example of both the kind of boosterism and propaganda maps discussed in Chapter 3, and the folly of assigning "strategic" value to any particular place without very sound reasons.

interior, in the frigid and empty northland? Are they renewable or nonrenewable? Which resources are currently being utilized, which are known but inaccessible, which suspected but not proven, which too costly to process? What about resources that are needed but totally absent in the national territory? Can they be obtained from friends? At what cost? Even in times of stress? How do we factor in the roles of substitutes, synthetics, conservation, reuse? How do we evaluate resources in a country that squanders them on cosmetics and pet food while another uses them for tools and weapons?

Population

In any power analysis it is quite reasonable to assume that a country with a large population has a distinct advantage over a country with a small population—all other things being equal. But the fact that all other things are not equal makes it difficult to evaluate population as a power factor. Although sheer numbers are important to some extent in every country, their importance may be enhanced or diminished by such factors as their distribution over the national territory and demographic trends. Qualitative factors may be even more important than quantitative ones. The age/sex ratio, for example, affects the pool of potential military personnel and the proportions of producers and consumers in the society. Immigration and emigration, education levels, health factors, the distribution of wealth, and degree of poverty—all must be considered and evaluated.

Cultural and "racial" homogeneity or heterogeneity may produce centripetal or centrifugal forces that strengthen or weaken a society depending on the peoples involved, their attitudes toward one another, the role

of government in fostering integration or segregation, and whether the various groups complement or compete with one another. Social organization can be very important, including such things as the degree of socioeconomic stratification and social mobility in the society, the land tenure systems and distribution of good agricultural land, and the status and role of elites (Fig. 20-2). Religious and cultural values are intangibles that can bear heavily on a State's ability to mobilize its strength to pursue some policy. The mobilization might be ideologically motivated: patriotism, communism, democracy, or some other cause might be considered worth working or dying for—or might not.

Government

The political system of a country invariably figures in its power, but invariably it is also difficult to quantify. Does the government effectively control the whole country; is the *ecumene* coextensive with the national territory? Is the government popular, likely to be supported and rallied around in times of stress? Or is there widespread opposition either to the government in power or to the whole political system? Are the officials trained and experienced, efficient and honest, or is the government weakened by corruption, nepotism, bloated payrolls, and inefficiency?* Is the government capable of providing wise, effective, and inspiring leadership?

Economy

It is self-evident that wealth in our world is a form of power or can be translated readily into power, so wealthy countries, like populous countries or those richly endowed by nature, have an automatic advantage over those less fortunate. But wealth, even material wealth, consists of more than just

* For annual rankings of the world's States based on corruption, see Transparency International at http://www.transparency.org.
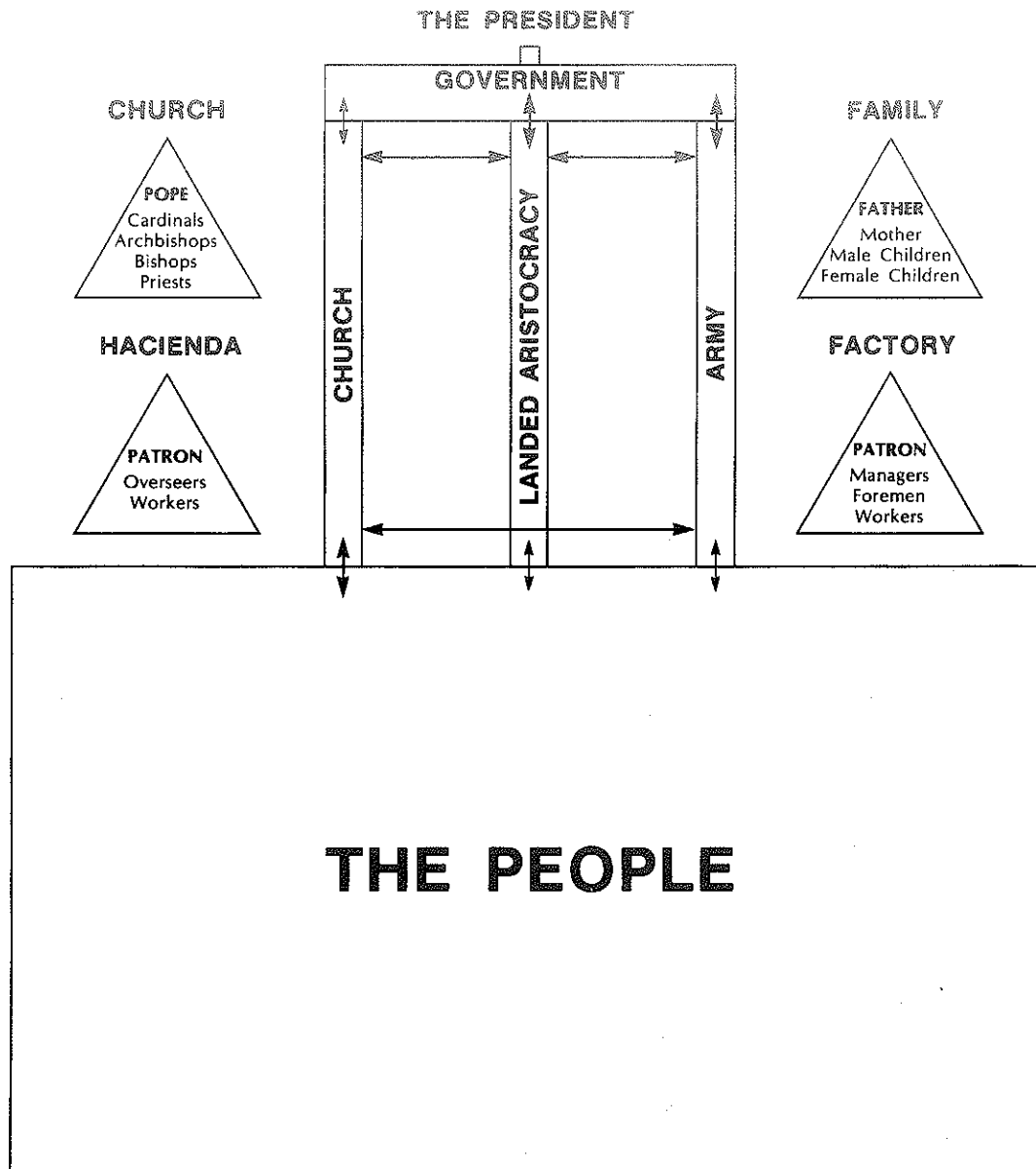
natural resources or even gross national product (GNP). If a State is to be powerful, it must have productive capacity, not only to meet its needs, but also to supply surpluses to sell abroad in peacetime and to meet expanded needs in wartime. Science and technology must be well developed, and research must receive adequate investment and other support. Industry must have adequate supplies of efficient, skilled, and dedicated managers and workers. Capital must move readily from where it is to where it is needed, and agriculture must get a fair share. Most societies rest on an agricultural base (no matter how marginal), and in times of stress a country may be cut off from agricultural imports completely. Foreign trade is both a strength and a weakness, and many countries have adopted autarkic policies in order to capitalize on its strength and avoid its weakness. **Autarky,** which refers to national policies of economic self-sufficiency and a nonreliance on imports or foreign aid, has no place in the twenty-first century. All countries are and must be interdependent if they are to prosper in an increasingly globalized world.

Banking and insurance systems are vital in any modern economy, yet they are seldom included in power inventories. How can we measure their quality or value in a power system? The question of quality runs through any useful economic analysis, for the quality of goods produced and services performed may be more important than the quantity.

Circulation

Transportation and communications—the movement of goods, people, and ideas—are fundamental to any modern society and to any modern State. Without a good circulation system to tie together all sections of the country, all elements of the population, all units of government, all sectors of the economy, and all of them with one another, a State would simply disintegrate. It would project not power but weakness. It must have not only an adequate physical infrastructure, but also efficient management and

THE PRESIDENT

GOVERNMENT

CHURCH

POPE
Cardinals
Archbishops
Bishops
Priests

HACIENDA

PATRON
Overseers
Workers

FAMILY

FATHER
Mother
Male Children
Female Children

FACTORY

PATRON
Managers
Foremen
Workers

CHURCH   LANDED ARISTOCRACY   ARMY

THE PEOPLE

Figure 20-2: Schematic representation of the traditional organization of society in Latin America. In some countries of the region it still exists in very much this form; in others it has disappeared entirely; in most it exists but is much modified. The Church, the landed aristocracy, and the army form an interlocking triumvirate controlling the entire structure. They exploit and repress the masses of the people while supporting and providing leadership for the government. At the apex of this pyramidal structure is the president (or a junta), a symbol of authority whether exercising real power or not. The size of the arrows represents the relative strength of the reciprocal links among the various sectors of society. The relatively rigid pyramidal structure is the product of similar structures in all other important aspects of life, symbolized by the triangles in the upper corners. Even the major pre-Columbian civilizations of the region, of which many of the people are heirs, were hierarchical. Such a structure is inherently conservative, resistant to change. It has hindered economic, social, and political progress in the region, and where it has not been displaced or greatly modified, it must be considered a negative factor in any power analysis.

workers, adequate capitalization, and proper maintenance.

Circulation systems also include, besides all forms of transportation, the various types of telecommunications such as radio, telephone, television, and the Internet; postal systems; a free and vigorous press; and other means of communication. These can be misused, of course, to persuade as well as inform, for mind control as well as mind enrichment. People must be wary of this, especially in times of stress, when they tend to relax their defenses against internal threats in order to concentrate on external ones.

Military Strength

All these factors are elements of, or can be translated into, military strength. Every conventional power inventory counts every piece of military hardware and every person in military uniform it can identify in a State and assigns values to the totals. But is this enough? Can we say that a country with a big, well-equipped army is more powerful than one with a small, poorly equipped one? Of course not. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of a military force, we must reckon with many intangibles. These would include the education and skill of the troops; the quality of their leadership; the effectiveness of its intelligence services, its ability to mobilize reserves, the ratio of "teeth-to-tail" (combat vs. support personnel); their motivation, morale, loyalty; their combat experience; the logistical system; and whether they are up-to-date in military doctrine, strategy, and tactics.* Times change, moreover, and victory in one war does not assure subsequent victories, especially if strategy, tactics, and military technology have substantially changed.

* These points are illustrated by a classic anecdote reported by U.S. Army Colonel Harry G. Summers: "When the Nixon Administration took over in 1969 all the data on North Vietnam and the United States was fed into a Pentagon computer—population, gross national product, manufacturing capability, number of tanks, ships and aircraft, size of the armed forces, and the like. The computer was then asked, 'When will we win?' It took only a moment to give the answer: 'You won in 1964.'"

A country's military strength can be enhanced by having distant bases in strategic places—unless the cost of supplying and protecting them nullifies their value. Its strength can also be enhanced through collective security, having allies pledged to aid one another ("all for one and one for all"), if they all have something tangible to contribute and will remain steadfast in the face of adversity or temptation. How can we measure the potential reliability of an ally under a variety of real or hypothetical circumstances?

Foreign Relations

Today no State can remain isolated and be either strong or prosperous. States that have chosen the route of virtual isolation, such as Albania, Myanmar, and North Korea most recently, must rely on their own human and natural resources. This may be good for the soul, but not for the mind or the belly. Today all States and all peoples are somehow dependent on the rest of the world. Even those that have chosen not to join military alliances must still be involved with others. Broadly speaking, it seems that those countries that participate most actively in world affairs—political, economic, and cultural—have the best opportunities to maximize their assets and overcome their handicaps and thus increase their national "power." International trade, cultural links (even with the former "mother country"), participation in transfers of development funds, participation in the work of the United Nations and other world and regional organizations all elevate a country, make it a more valued member of the international community, and perhaps render it less likely to be attacked

Analysis

What conclusion can we draw? Certainly that "power" is exceedingly difficult to define and to measure (Fig. 20-3). After considering the United States, the world's sole remaining

POWER FACTORS AND COMPONENT FORCES
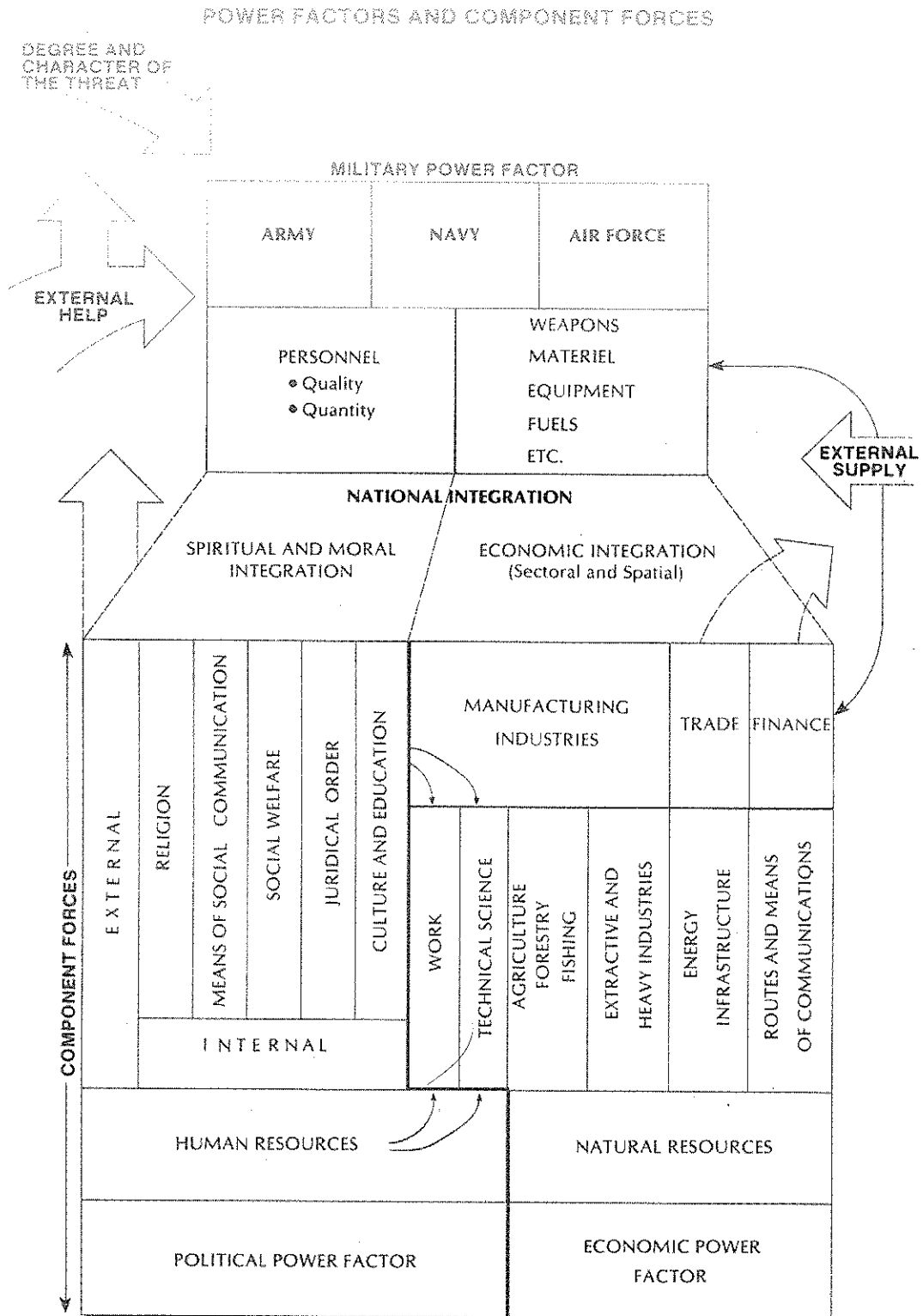
Figure 20-3. *A Latin American conception of national power analysis*. This diagram, by the retired Argentine general Juan E. Guglialmelli, represents one way of organizing one's thinking about national power. Note that these factors are not weighted in any way. (Translated by Martin Glassner)
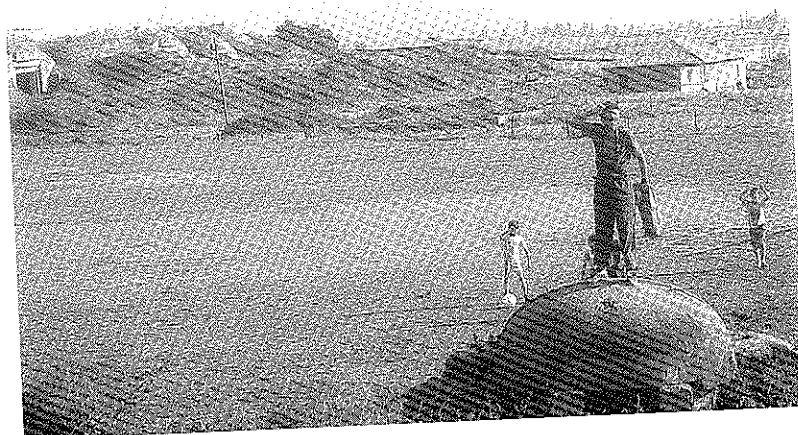
Bunkers in Albania. In the heart of The Balkans (the original shatterbelt, discussed in Chapter 21), Albania has traditionally been an unstable land. But during most of the 40-year rule (1944–1985) of the Communist dictator Enver Hoxha, the country was isolated from and fearful of the outside world. Hoxha built an estimated 600,000 of these concrete bunkers along all the important roads and railroads in the country and along all of its borders, as well as near airports, seaports, factories and other sensitive sites. Now mostly abandoned, they are not only eyesores but also impediments to agriculture and other land uses, though some of the larger ones now house poor rural families. In this photograph, taken southeast of Shkodër, the man standing on the bunker indicates its size, there are more such bunkers built into the hillside to the left next to the children in the center playing soccer. Could defensive structures such as these really have been of any value to the poorest country in Europe or might the money spent on them have been spent more constructively? (Martin Glassner)

superpower, and perhaps five or six other countries, it quickly becomes almost impossible to evaluate power. Some recent examples may illustrate the point. How do we rank Israel, for example? A country of only six million people in a land the size of Vermont with few natural resources, it nevertheless has made significant contributions to the world in science, agriculture, technology, medicine, scholarship, music, and other fields that would be impressive in a country many times its size. Its air and shipping lines, banks, development aid programs, educational and cultural exchanges, and importers and exporters operate around the world. Although its Arab neighbors possess supposedly overwhelming strength, it won five wars in less than 30 years and is purported to have a substantial nuclear arsenal

as a backup. Israel has even been able to project its military power as far away as Uganda, Iraq, and Tunisia. And yet, *Hezballah* forces compelled Israel to withdraw its military forces from southern Lebanon while Palestinian terrorist attacks continue to show that power does not guarantee security.

And how do we rank Cuba, still poor but with a sizable army, elements of which conducted successful military operations in Angola and Ethiopia? Or Viet Nam, poorer still but strong enough to fight the United States to a stalemate, conquer Cambodia, and humiliate China? Or India which, though still poor, has exploded a nuclear device and has kept its army very busy indeed since 1947? Before the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq was considered by some experts to have the world's

fourth largest army, equipped with modern and even advanced weaponry, well trained and highly motivated. Yet it was forced to withdraw from Kuwait and shattered after a short air campaign and an even shorter ground invasion by an expeditionary force consisting of only fractions of the military forces of its coalition adversaries.

Pakistan was perhaps weakened by its civil war and the breakaway of East Bengal in 1971 to become the new State of Bangladesh, but by how much? Are Pakistan and Bangladesh together equal to the Pakistan of 1970? Was Nigeria weakened or strengthened by the unsuccessful secession effort of Biafra? Iran under the Shah spent billions of dollars on the most modern conventional weapons available, perhaps in an attempt to recreate the empire of Darius, but none of that helped him retain power; indeed, it may have cost him his throne, and his successors, using much of that weaponry, were unable to defeat neighboring Iraq.

Then there are the States with negligible military power but considerable economic power. Japan, of course, is the prime example of an economic superpower. But it has serious weaknesses in its social and industrial structures and is utterly dependent on the importation of commodities and the export of manufactured goods for its economic health—and perhaps its survival. Is Japan a giant with feet of clay? Even Switzerland is something of an economic power, especially if we factor in its banking system. Is the united Germany of today more or less powerful than the former East and West Germany together? And is Germany more or less powerful—now, or potentially—as a result of its participation in the European Union and other supranational organizations than it would be standing alone? The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries has proven the efficacy of concerted action by States that individually have little power. In 1973 to 1974, this cartel, including such countries as Gabon, Ecuador, and the United Arab Emirates, was able to shake the economies and threaten the safety of the United States and Western Europe by withholding exports of oil for a time and quadrupling its price when exports resumed. How then do we measure the "power" of Gabon, Ecuador, and the United Arab Emirates?

Finally, who in 1980 or even 1988 predicted the sudden, rapid, and total disintegration of the Soviet Union, at the time the second most powerful country in the world by any reckoning? Where is all that power now? Where would Russia now rank in a power inventory? And are the former Soviet satellites in Eastern and Central Europe more or less powerful—individually or collectively—now than they were in the heyday of COMECON and the Warsaw Pact?

Perhaps, instead of attempting to measure power, we should attempt to measure influence, the ability of a State to influence the behavior of other States. This might be less precise and less geographic, but it would be more rewarding. Nevertheless, the exercise would still have to be repeated periodically to take into account new and altered circumstances. Influence, like power, is constantly changing and quite unpredictable.

Ozymandias

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Key Terms and Concepts:

Autarky
Natural Resources
Power

21

Historical Concepts in Geopolitics

In Part One we discussed the nature of political geography and some of its aspects. Unfortunately, many people, including some geographers, confuse political geography with geopolitics. **Geopolitics**, however, is only one of the subjects studied by political geographers. It is concerned basically with the study of States in the context of global spatial phenomena, in an attempt to understand both the bases of State power and the nature of States' interactions with one another. Before World War II generally and in some countries since then, geopolitics was considered to be the application of geographic information and geographic perspectives to the development of a State's foreign policies. It was called, with some justification, "applied political geography." This concept, however, was distorted during the interwar period by German geographers who twisted some of the basic ideas of geopolitics into the pseudoscience of *Geopolitik*, the chauvinist, aggressive, and antidemocratic version of geopolitics that led to so much physical and intellectual destruction before and during World War II.

Geopolitics evolved toward the end of the nineteenth century as new developments in science and technology led people to take a broader view of the world than they had previously. The consolidation of the modern State system with the unification of Germany and Italy, the apogee of European imperialist expansion, the appearance of Japan and the United States as new imperialist powers

on the fringes of Europe's sphere of interest, rapid population growth and pressures on resources, and differential development all took place in this period and contributed to the new perspectives of scholars and policymakers. Out of this ferment of new thinking (at least new in modern times) came two streams of thought that were geopolitical in nature. One of them emerged from the Social Darwinism fashionable in the period; this was the **Organic State Theory**. The other was based more on geographic facts and the policies that should be influenced by them; this is often called **geostrategy**. Neither term is entirely satisfactory, as we shall see, but they can help us separate in our minds two very different sets of ideas that were developing simultaneously.

Organic State Theory

Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) was a distinguished and prolific scholar, a geographer trained originally in biology, chemistry, and other sciences. He was greatly influenced both by Darwin's discoveries and by Social Darwinism. In his writings, particularly his classic *Politische Geographie* (1896), he used similes and metaphors from biology in his analysis of political science and geography, comparing the State with an organism. We can summarize Ratzel's theory of an organic State in this manner:

The State is land, with man on the land, linked by the State idea and conforming to

natural laws, with development tied to the natural environment. Therefore, States, like plants and people, do not do well in desert or polar regions. States need food in the form of *Lebensraum* (living space) and resources, and they constantly compete for them. States, like organisms, must grow or die. They live through stages of youth, maturity, and old age, with possible rejuvenation. The vitality of a State can generally be gauged by its size at a given time. In 1896, Ratzel produced what he called the seven laws of State growth. They are as follows:

1. The space of States grows with the expansion of the population having the same culture.
2. Territorial growth follows other aspects of development.
3. A State grows by absorbing smaller units.
4. The frontier is the peripheral organ of the State that reflects the strength and growth of the State; hence, it is not permanent.
5. States in the course of their growth seek to absorb politically valuable territory.
6. The impetus for growth comes to a primitive State from a more highly developed civilization.
7. The trend toward territorial growth is contagious and increases in the process of transmission.

There is a great deal more to the theory, but even from this sample we can detect that Ratzel had a very deterministic view of the world. Nevertheless, he was a careful scientist, emphasized that his description was only based on an analogy to an organism, and did consider the interrelationships between people and their environment in both directions. He took the position of the detached observer, making no policy recommendations. His American disciple, Ellen Churchill Semple, wrote in the same spirit in her work. Not all of Ratzel's followers were so careful, however, and some ignored his cautions.

Like Ratzel, Rudolf Kjellén (1864–1922) was a university professor, Ratzel at Leipzig, Kjellén at Uppsala. Kjellén, however, was a political scientist and a member of the Swedish parliament. He was a Gemanophile,

impressed with the new work in natural science and especially imbued with Ratzel's work in political geography. Unlike Ratzel, however, Kjellén was not a careful scientist. Instead he took Ratzel's analogies literally and insisted flatly that the State *is* an organism. He even titled his most important book *Staten som Lifsform* (*The State as an Organism*, 1916). Here he presented his theory that the State was composed of five organs:

1. *Kratopolitik*—government structure
2. *Demopolitik*—population structure
3. *Sociopolitik*—social structure
4. *Oekopolitik*—economic structure
5. *Geopolitik*—physical structure

Kjellén introduced aspects of the quality of the population, the nation whose aggregate constitutes the body of the State. In addition to moral capacities, there is the will, the cumulative psychological force of the State. The great power of the State is a dynamic, psychological concept. Kjellén saw the State in a condition of constant competition with other States; larger ones would extend their power over smaller ones, and ultimately the world would have only a few very large and extremely powerful States. He envisioned in Europe a superstate controlled by Germany.

This book, in which Kjellén originated the terms *Geopolitik* and *Autarky*, was translated into German in 1917, when the war was already going badly for Germany. At the end of the war, it was seized upon by some German political scientists, geographers, and nationalists who used it to lend the authority of the new evolutionary natural science to the older German political philosophy. It became a tool for rebuilding Germany into a world power and was subsequently used in the same way by Italy and Japan.

Geostrategy

Meanwhile, other scholars were focusing not on the State but on the world and trying to find patterns in State development and behavior. They took a global view of geopolitical

affairs and actually recommended policies or strategies to be followed by their governments. The first was Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840–1914). Mahan was a naval historian who eventually reached the rank of admiral in the U.S. Navy. He was a prolific writer, producing some 20 books altogether, among them *The Life of Nelson* (1897). His most influential books, however, were *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783* (1890) and *The Influence of Sea Power upon History: The French Revolution and Empire, 1793–1812* (1892). In his books he argued that control of the sea lanes to protect commerce and wage economic warfare was very important to a State (Fig. 21-1). He therefore advocated a big navy. But there were six fundamental factors that affected the development and maintenance of sea power:

1. **Geographical position** (location). Whether a State possesses coasts on a sea or ocean (or perhaps more than one), whether these waters are interconnected; whether it also has vulnerable, exposed land boundaries; whether it

can maintain overseas strategic bases and command important trade routes.

2. **Physical "conformation" of the State** (the nature of its coasts). Whether the coastline of a State possesses natural harbors, estuaries, inlets, and outlets; an absence of harbors will prevent a people from having its own sea trade, shipping industry, or navy; the importance of navigable rivers to internal trade but their danger as avenues of penetration by enemies.

3. **Extent of territory** (length of the coastline). The ease with which a coast can be defended.

4. **Population numbers.** A State with a large population will be more capable of building and maintaining a merchant marine and navy than a State with a small population.

5. **National character.** Aptitude for commercial pursuits; sea power is "really based upon a peaceful and extensive commerce."

6. **Governmental character.** Whether government policy is taking advantage

Figure 21-1: The Bab al-Mandeb. One of the most strategic waterways in the world, this strait connects the Red Sea (and beyond it the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean) with the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. At the top of the photo (southeast of the strait) is the Horn of Africa; surrounding the strait are Aden and Djibouti, formerly major British and French naval bases, and Yemen and Eritrea. (Photo courtesy of NASA)

of the opportunities afforded by the environment and population to promote sea power.

Mahan, too, refers (in items 5 and 6) to the question of the national "will," in terms reminiscent of Kjellén's. Indeed, the later German geopoliticians sometimes wrote much as Mahan did. But Mahan was a military man and tended to think in military terms. Moreover, he was writing at the apex of European imperialism, at a time when his own country was beginning to emulate the European imperialists, and was also influenced by Social Darwinism. He generally took the view that a State could survive only by being fit, and defined fitness chiefly in terms of military strength. But this depended, in turn, on the people's moral and martial fiber.

Mahan was also a practical man. He made specific recommendations for U.S. foreign policy based on his study of history, his military experience, and his geostrategic concepts. He advocated that the United States occupy the Hawaiian Islands, take control of the Caribbean, and build a canal to link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. President Theodore Roosevelt's administration used several of Mahan's suggestions as the basis of its foreign policy. He was even more influential in Germany, Britain, and Japan.

Of greater interest to the political geographer are the glimpses of Mahan's world view from his later book, *The Problem of Asia* (1900). In this work Mahan recognizes a core area in Asia and Russia's domination of it; he anticipates a struggle between Russian land power and British sea power. Not surprisingly, he presumed that British sea power would be able to contain Russian expansionism. He also predicted that the containment of Russia and the control of China would become the joint concern of the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and Japan. (It is well to remember that he was writing *before* the turn of the twentieth century.) Thus he proposed that Russia be provided warm-water ports in China by guaranteeing it the use of those exits.

While Mahan emphasized sea power, Sir Halford John Mackinder (1861–1947), who was much younger than Mahan, felt that the great age of naval warfare was over; that changing technology, especially the railroad, had altered the relationship between sea power and land power. Still, his approach to global strategy was similar to that of Mahan, but with a different emphasis and different forecasts. As professor of geography at Oxford and director of the London School of Economics, Mackinder helped raise geography to a high level in England. He was also a member of parliament from 1910 to 1922 and chairman of the Imperial Shipping Committee from 1920 to 1945.

In 1904, Mackinder read a paper at the Royal Geographical Society in London entitled "The Geographical Pivot of History." This was a true milestone in the geopolitical debate of that period; in fact, the contents of that article (afterward published in the *Geographical Journal*) are still a subject of discussion and evaluation today, a century later.

It is easy to regard Mackinder's paper as sophisticated speculation and to suggest that it has little value as a contribution to political geography. But it is worth remembering the main elements of the world situation when he produced his remarkable piece. Russia was losing a disastrous war with Japan, Germany was still a youthful, organizing State. Yet Mackinder in 1904 expressed the view that there was a Eurasian core area that, protected by inaccessibility from naval power, could shelter a land power that might come to dominate the world from its continental fortress. This Eurasian core area Mackinder called the Pivot Area. Later, he broadened this strategic concept into that of the **Heartland**. The Heartland's rivers drain into the Arctic, distances to warm-water oceans are huge, and only the Baltic and Black Seas could form avenues for sea power penetration, but these are easily defended.

Mackinder reasoned that this Eurasian territory would become the source of a great power that would dominate the Far East, southern Asia, and Europe—most of what he called the "World-Island," which he conceptualized as consisting of Eurasia and Africa. He presumed that the area contained a substantial resource base capable of

sustaining a power of world significance. The key, he argued, lay in Eastern Europe, the "open door" to the pivotal Heartland. Thus he formulated his famous hypothesis:

> Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland
>
> Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island
>
> Who rules the World-Island commands the World*

In 1924, Mackinder propounded a little-known counterhypothesis: The potentialities of the Heartland could be balanced in the future by Western Europe and North America, which (as Mackinder read the lessons of World War I) "constitute for many purposes a single community of nations." He called the North Atlantic "the Midland Ocean," in the midst of the area from the Volga to the Rockies, which he called "the main geographical habitat of Western civilization."[†]

In 1943, in the midst of World War II, Mackinder blended all these ideas and modified them in an article titled "The Round World and the Winning of the Peace."[‡] He moved the Heartland east of the Yenesei River and renamed it Lenaland. It would oppose the Midland Basin (the North Atlantic and bordering lands separated by Central Europe and surrounded by deserts and the Arctic). He felt that the Heartland contained soils and minerals equal to those of North America, but that the two regions would combine against Germany.

Mackinder made a significant contribution to our perspectives of the world, and in a broad sense his assumptions about the Heartland were later substantiated. There were, however, three major weaknesses in his work. First, he did not give enough weight to the growing power of North America; second, he failed to explain the

Sir Halford J. Mackinder, 1861–1947. (Courtesy of Brian Blouet)

seeming contradiction between his thesis of the power of the possessor of the Heartland and the relative weakness of Russia/USSR until World War II; and third, he failed to take into account the growing and very obvious importance of air power and other technological developments. Like Mahan, he oversimplified history and leaned too far in the direction of determinism.

Mackinder had many critics. Prominent among them was Nicholas John Spykman (1893–1943). Born in Amsterdam, he studied at Berkeley, became a professor of international relations at Yale in 1920, and became a U.S. citizen in 1928. In his work he emphasized the power relations among States and the impact of geography on politics, but he rejected the German school of *Geopolitik*. In two books, *America's Strategy in World Politics* (1942) and *The Geography of the Peace* (1944), Spykman pointed out two of the basic weaknesses of Mackinder's theories. First, he felt Mackinder overemphasized the power potential of the Heartland; its importance was in fact reduced by the major problem of internal transportation and by access through the barriers that surrounded

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* Halford J. Mackinder. *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction.* London: Constable, 1919.
† Halford J. Mackinder. *The Nations of the Modern World,* Vol. 2. London: George Philip & Son, 1924, p. 251.
‡ Halford J. Mackinder. "The Round World and the Winning of the Peace." *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 21 (July 1943): 595–605.

it. Second, history involving the Heartland was never a matter of simple sea power–land power opposition. Instead, Spykman felt, the real power potential of Eurasia lay in what Mackinder had called the "Inner or Marginal Crescent," and what Spykman called the **Rimland**. This area is vulnerable to both land and sea power and hence must operate in both modes. Historically, alliances have always been made among Rimland powers or between Heartland and Rimland powers. Spykman, therefore, proposed his own dictum:

> Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia;
>
> Who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world.*

Spykman advocated that the Allies base their postwar policy on preventing any consolidation of the Rimland. Although there is no evidence that George Kennan (who proposed the "containment" policy of the Cold War era) ever read Spykman, this policy became fundamental in the anticommunist position of the Western powers because of the change in thinking represented by Spykman. Still, however, it was basically a nineteenth-century view of the world.

Geopolitik

While the two streams of thought in geopolitics were developing, a new school of geopoliticians was forming in Germany, chief of whom was Karl Haushofer (1869–1946). A career officer in the Bavarian army, Haushofer served in Japan (1908–1910) and rose to the rank of major general on the army general staff, serving throughout World War I. Before the war he took a Ph.D. in geography at the University of Munich. He was embittered by Germany's defeat in the war, blaming it in part on the incompetence of its generals, but also on a too-early start of the war and the lack of links between the State's leaders and the land. He was convinced that Germany

should have won the war and wanted somehow to avenge the defeat. He had been impressed by what he had seen of the power and expansionist ambitions of Japan, and also by the power of Britain. He therefore devoted himself to the study of geopolitics.

Haushofer began lecturing at the University of Munich in 1919 and became a professor of geopolitics after the Nazis came to power in 1933. He gathered around him a group of disciples, including journalists who helped spread his ideas. In 1924, he founded the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, a monthly journal in which he and his colleagues propagated their new "science," whose name he had drawn from Kjellén. They also produced a flood of books and other publications, including maps, which they used as a major weapon (Fig. 21-2). They remained active throughout World War II, working to justify Germany's drive for conquest by "science." There was, in truth, little that was scientific in *Geopolitik*.

Haushofer and his group blended the Organic State Theory of Ratzel, its refinements and elaborations by Kjellén, and the geostrategic principles of Mahan and Mackinder, added a heavy dose of German chauvinism, willful ambiguity, and mysticism, and created a case for a German policy of expansionism. They used not only maps but also slogans and pictographs to influence people. The notion of *Lebensraum* was drawn from Ratzel but was distorted to justify as "natural" Germany's growth at the expense of its weaker neighbors, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Kjellén's advocacy of autarky was revived and elaborated, with emphasis on the political character of the German quest for economic self-sufficiency, again at the expense of other countries in southeastern Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere. Economic policy was, in fact, used as a political weapon by Nazi Germany. Influenced by the Heartland concept, the German geopoliticians advocated an alliance with the Soviet Union and apparently were dismayed when Hitler invaded that vast country. Not only did they develop new versions of geostrategy, all for the benefit of Germany, but they also attempted to create geo-medicine, geo-psy-

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* Nicholas John Spykman. *The Geography of the Peace.* New York: Harcourt Brace, 1944, p. 43.

Figure 21-2: A German propaganda map in the Haushofer tradition. This map, by Friedrich Lange, appeared in *Volksdeutsche Kartenskizzen*, published in Berlin in 1936. "This drawing was done in anger," reads the caption, and goes on to denounce German students who only visit places in "the beleaguered East" rather than settling there "because struggle, real patriotic struggle of the people" is to be found there, "where to be called a German demands courage, has disadvantages, and requires pledging of one's whole personality, the risking of one's economic position, and even the sacrifice of personal freedom. This kind of struggle is going on today on a broad front behind the borders, where German men and women cling to the soil which is their fate in a spirit of steadfastness, spite, and family sense. It takes place all over the East, to the north and south of Czechoslovakia, which brags about being the Slavic fist in Middle Europe. But, to be sure, only he can keep a border who has the right border spirit and is willing to put himself along the border." Such maps helped prepare the way for the German *Drang nach Osten* (March to the East), which triggered World War II. (Map courtesy of E. J. Huddy, British Library)

chology, geo-economics, and geo-jurisprudence, not as true sciences or legitimate branches of geography, but as weapons for German conquest. There was much, much more, of course, but this sample gives something of the flavor of *Geopolitik*.

How influential was *Geopolitik*? There is still no consensus on this question, but the evidence seems to indicate that its influence was great in some areas, nil in others. Within Germany it pervaded the educational system during the Nazi period, and it helped condition the intelligentsia to a policy of aggression. Its emphasis on planning, especially with regard to natural resources, did influence in part the direction of Nazi expansion. Haushofer visited Hess who was in prison with Hitler after the failed 1923 *putsch* (government overthrow or *coup d'état*). Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* while in prison and "the use of geopolitical terminology suggests the influence of Haushofer's ideas—possibly via Hess—on the Führer's thinking."[*]

Outside Germany, *Geopolitik* found fertile ground only in Japan, a country with which Haushofer had special ties and about which he wrote six books. Elsewhere it was greeted with opposition or indifference. A few of its ideas have survived and have been widely adopted: the extensive use of maps to convey ideas, for example, and the need for governments to have a store of accurate and up-to-date information about the Earth; concepts of propaganda and psychological warfare, of total war, and of the importance of air power. But *Geopolitik* as such died with the collapse of Nazi Germany in 1945—and none need mourn its passing.

Resurgence of Geostrategy

Advocacy of air transport and air warfare is not new. It began with the Wright brothers and continued through Charles Lindbergh, Billy Mitchell, Glenn Curtis, Eddie Rickenbacker, and many others around the world. One strategist, however, was the first to forcefully advocate a geopolitical view of the world

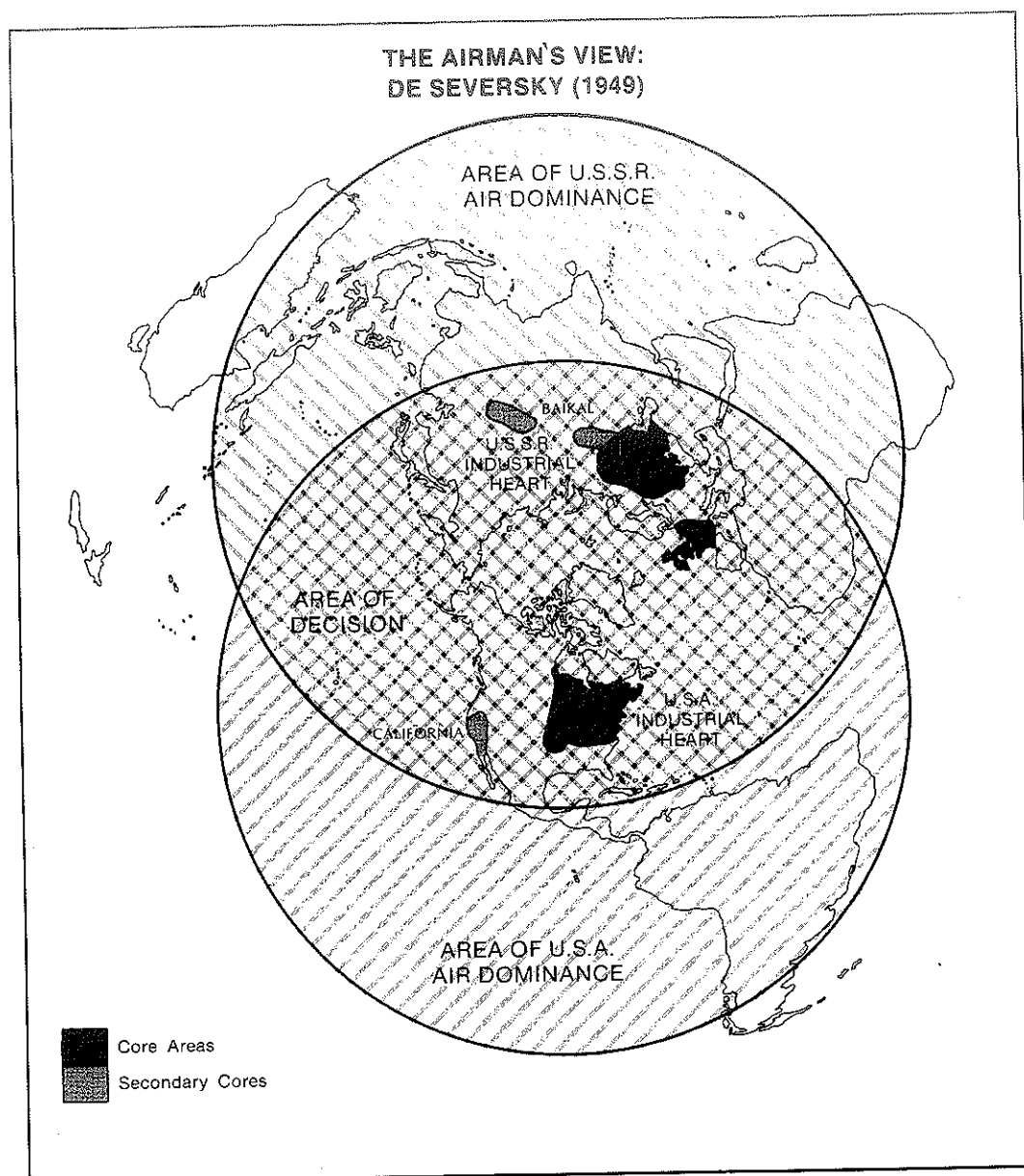[*] Geoffrey Parker. *Geopolitics: Past, Present and Future*. Washington, DC: Pinter, 1998: 34.

based on air power. He was Major Alexander P. de Seversky (1894–1974). Born in Russia, he served in the Russian navy during World War I and became a naval ace. In 1918, he was sent on a naval mission to the United States, to which he offered his services after Russia dropped out of the war. He served in various capacities, became an American citizen in 1927, invented the world's first fully automatic bombsight, founded an aircraft company that became Republic Aviation Corporation, and continued to advance aviation through his aircraft design, innovative combat strategy and tactics, speed records, production of aircraft, and work in civilian aviation. He was both a practical engineer and a businessman, as well as an imaginative thinker.

Among his many writings, two books had enormous influence on government officials as well as the general public. The first was *Victory Through Air Power* (1942). In it he reviewed the course of the war to that point, declared "the twilight of sea power," deplored the insufficient attention to air warfare being paid by the Allies (especially the United States), and advocated a totally new strategy and organization for victory through air power. The book reads well even today.

After World War II had ended and the Cold War had begun, de Seversky published another innovative book, *Air Power: Key to Survival* (1950). Here he restated even more forcefully his view that land and sea power had been subordinated to air power. He urged the development of massive air superiority for the United States. He advocated defense of the Western Hemisphere, avoidance of small wars as a useless sapping of American strength, and abandonment of overseas bases as costly luxuries. For the first time in such geopolitical writings he used a map drawn on an azimuthal equidistant projection centered on the North Pole to show clearly how close the United States and the Soviet Union really were. It also showed the vast areas of air dominance by both countries and how these areas overlapped over the North Polar region, in what he called the "Area of Decision" (Fig. 21-3).

As a result of this "new" view of the world, the United States and Canada erected, at great

THE AIRMAN'S VIEW:
DE SEVERSKY (1949)

AREA OF U.S.S.R.
AIR DOMINANCE

BAIKAL

U.S.S.R.
INDUSTRIAL
HEART

AREA OF
DECISION

CALIFORNIA

U.S.A.
INDUSTRIAL
HEART

AREA OF U.S.A.
AIR DOMINANCE

Core Areas
Secondary Cores

Figure 21-3: The airman's view: De Seversky (1949).

expense, three lines of radar stations and air bases stretching across Alaska and Canada. These were designed to provide a layered defense of North America in case of attack from the USSR by the shortest routes—over the North Pole. It is easy to criticize this view in an era of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and space travel, but at the time it performed a most useful function by tearing us away from our Mercator view of the world, by contributing to the development of an interim defense system, and by emphasizing defense instead of expansion as the prime goal of geostrategy. The "fortress America" concept was never accepted by policymakers, however, and the United States has become deeply involved in political affairs around the world.

Various geographers, particularly in the United States, have developed variations on the concepts represented by Mahan, Mackinder, Spykman, and de Seversky. One innovator is the American geographer Saul B. Cohen. In his *Geography and Politics in a World Divided* (1973), he considered the entire world as being divided into "geostrategic regions." Like de Seversky, he took into account the Americas as well as new technology, and formulated a theory aimed at global equilibrium. "The major premise of the work is that the dynamic balance that characterizes relations among States and larger regions is inherent in the ecology of the global political system. This world is organized politically in rational, not random fashion."* He rejected the notion, popular in the immediate postwar period, that spheres of influence are obsolete, even reprehensible. He insisted, in fact, that "spheres of influence are essential to the preservation of national and regional expression."† Nonetheless, his geostrategic regions at the time were essentially the spheres of influence of the United States, Maritime Europe, the Soviet Union, and China.

Subsequently, Cohen has refined his ideas, most recently to account for the great changes of the 1990s.‡ He preserves the concept of maritime and continental powers, but he expands it to include in the "Trade Dependent Maritime World" all of the Americas, Western Europe, Africa except for the northeastern corner, and offshore Asia and Oceania; and includes in the "Eurasian Continental Power" all of Russia, parts of Eastern Europe, and Eastern and Inner Asia.

He classifies South Asia as an Independent Area, and he identifies the Middle East and Southeast Asia as *shatter belts*. The term **shatter belt** or **shatter zone** was customarily applied to Central and Eastern Europe, a region of chronic instability in which States appear, disappear, and reappear with frequently changing names and boundaries. Cohen omitted reference to this original shatter belt, describing it instead as a transitional **gateway region** that serves as "a promising potential geopolitical mechanism for restoring the balance between the Continental and Maritime realm." He cautioned, however, against drawing too many of these countries into NATO which would be "a strategic blunder of enormous consequence."** Cohen has a great deal more to say, including recommendations for American policymakers, but a major thesis bears some special mention. He sees a paradigm shift in which the "geography of war" that dominated the Cold War yields to a "geography of accommodation."§

A very different view of the world was propounded by Lin Piao, late Defense Minister of China. In 1965, he offered a theory of world revolution that viewed the world as similar to a city and the surrounding countryside. The rich, industrialized, largely Western countries represent the city, and the poor, agricultural countries, largely colonies of the Western countries, represent the countryside. The poorer areas were gradually to be converted to communism. Later, using tactics similar to those described by Cohen but supplemented by guerrilla warfare, they would confront and eventually overwhelm the cities.

These are the tactics the Chinese Communists used so successfully against the Nationalists and the Japanese during the 1930s and 1940s, and are described by McColl in his studies of "insurgent states." It is also reflected in the later "core-periphery" concept and its variants discussed in this book. Applying them on a world scale, however, proved too difficult, due in part to the diversity within the developing world and the industrial world's great strength. Lin's basic thesis, however, survives as one version of the core-periphery theory discussed in Chapter 1.

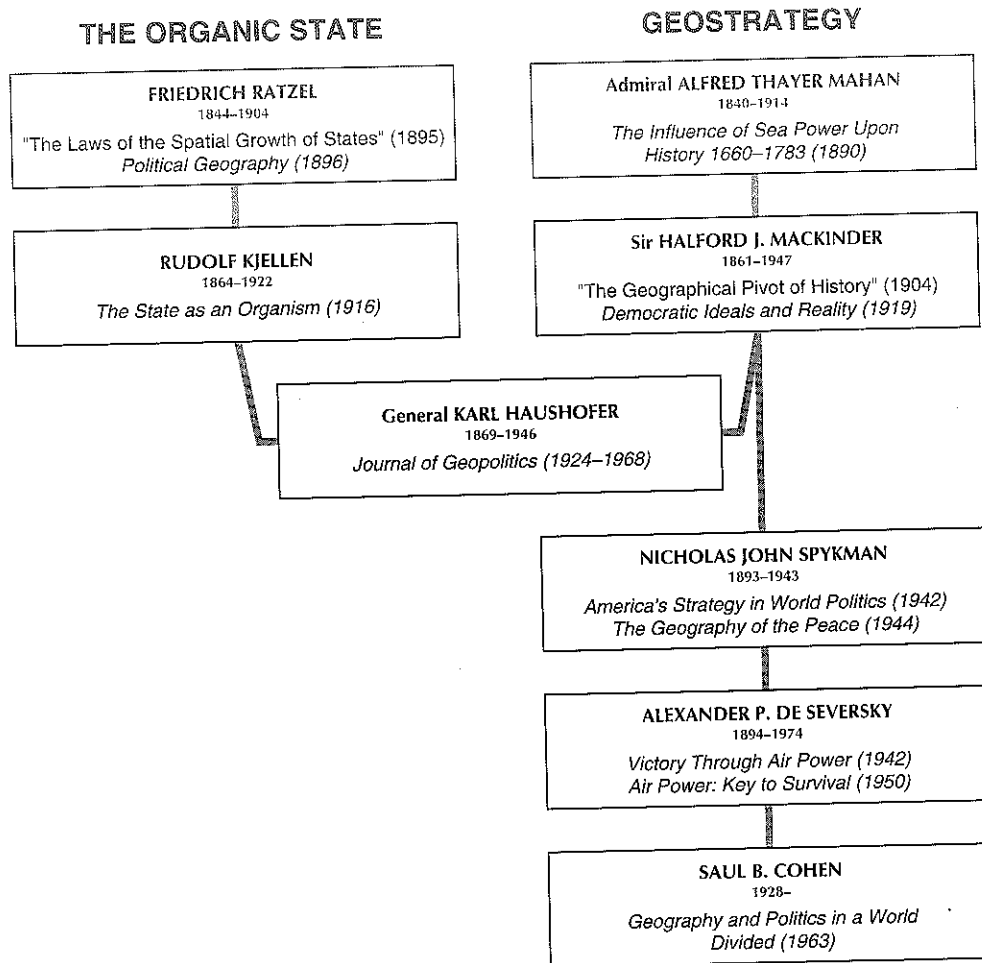* Preface to the second edition. New York: Oxford, 1973, p. vi.
† Ibid., p. viii.
‡ Saul B. Cohen. "Geopolitics in the New World Era: A New Perspective on an Old Discipline." In *Reordering the World: Geopolitical Perspectives on the 21st Century,* 2nd ed. George J. Demko and William B. Wood (eds). Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, pp. 40–68

** Ibid., p. 66.
§ Ibid., p. 67.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GEOPOLITICS

THE ORGANIC STATE

GEOSTRATEGY

FRIEDRICH RATZEL
1844–1904

"The Laws of the Spatial Growth of States" (1895)
Political Geography (1896)

Admiral ALFRED THAYER MAHAN
1840–1914

*The Influence of Sea Power Upon
History 1660–1783 (1890)*

RUDOLF KJELLEN
1864–1922

The State as an Organism (1916)

Sir HALFORD J. MACKINDER
1861–1947

"The Geographical Pivot of History" (1904)
Democratic Ideals and Reality (1919)

General KARL HAUSHOFER
1869–1946

Journal of Geopolitics (1924–1968)

NICHOLAS JOHN SPYKMAN
1893–1943

*America's Strategy in World Politics (1942)
The Geography of the Peace (1944)*

ALEXANDER P. DE SEVERSKY
1894–1974

*Victory Through Air Power (1942)
Air Power: Key to Survival (1950)*

SAUL B. COHEN
1928–

*Geography and Politics in a World
Divided (1963)*

The two streams of thought that constitute the theoretical foundations of geopolitics are symbolized in this diagram by the leading figures at each stage of development of the field. The Organic State Theory and geostrategy were blended by Haushofer, who added a heavy dose of German chauvinism and liberal portions of racism and militarism to create what he called *Geopolitik*. After the demise of the Third Reich in 1945, *Geopolitik* was no longer seriously advocated publicly. Although Haushofer's *Zeitschrift* resumed publication for several years after the war, it was quite different from the pre-1945 version. With *Geopolitik* died the Organic State Theory, but geostrategy survived and flourishes today.

Although all these geostrategic views have flaws, they do have the virtue of analyzing the world as a whole rather than as scores of discrete political units. In view of the increasing interdependence of the world, we need a good deal more of this holistic thinking, directed not toward formulation of strategies for confrontation, but toward strategies of cooperation; not a geostrategy of war, but a geostrategy of peace.

Key Terms and Concepts

Gateway Region
Geopolitics
Geopolitik
Geostrategy
Heartland
Lebensraum
Organic State Theory
Rimland
Shatter Belt
Shatter Zone

22

Contemporary Geopolitics

In retrospect, it appears that our devotion of two chapters to geopolitics in the third edition of *Systematic Political Geography (SPG III)*, written in 1979, may have presaged a revival of academic interest in the subject. It has again become acceptable—even respectable—to write on geopolitical theories without being branded a chauvinist or a warmonger. In the United States and Britain especially, geopolitics is again attracting attention and much creativity is being shown. Some of the credit must be given to Henry Kissinger, National Security Adviser and Secretary of State under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, as well as to Charles de Gaulle, Willy Brandt, and other pragmatic statesmen, but geopolitics was reviving independently in Italy, West Germany, and France at the same time. New texts specifically on geopolitics appeared in 1985 (G. Parker) and 1986 (O'Sullivan). The new academic work in geopolitics (as distinguished from the Kissinger-type governmental theses) is distinctly less bellicose and imperialistic than the older work was. We may be witnessing (and perhaps participating in) the development of what we urged in *SPG III* and have repeated since: a new kind of geopolitics, a geopolitics of peace. We examine this notion in the next chapter, but first we should point out that while

geopolitics was languishing in most of the world, it was flourishing in Latin America.

Latin American Geopolitics

All over Latin America, but especially in the *Cono Sur*, the Southern Cone of South America, geopolitics is not only a major professional field, but is of great popular interest as well. While in North America and Western Europe books on the subject were produced chiefly by military academies and organizations and geopolitical articles appeared almost exclusively in military journals, in Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Peru, and, to a lesser extent, Ecuador, there has been a steady and voluminous outpouring of writings on the subject by diplomats, professors, and government officials as well as by military personnel. Daily newspapers contain long, weighty geopolitical analyses; geopolitical books and journals are readily available at public libraries, newsstands, and bookstores. Radio and television programs carry geopolitical themes to people from all segments of society.

Most of the themes focus on South America and nearby areas, of course. Among the most prominent have been the South Atlantic as a zone of potential conflict between the United States and the (former) Soviet Union, Brazilian expansionism (real

and imagined), the strategic value of the straits at the southern tip of South America, the triangular relationships of Brazil–Peru–Chile or Brazil–Argentina–Chile or Peru–Chile–Argentina, the integration of the "American Antarctic" into South America, and the equivalence of sea and land in calculating national territory and power. The writings are often amply illustrated with maps and diagrams replete with triangles, arrows, arcs, stars, and other figures that illustrate areas of action, directions of movement, and relationships of all kinds.

It is difficult to say how much policy is influenced by this kind of geopolitical thinking, or whether, in fact, geopolitics is simply used to justify policy. In South America there is a constant rotation of people (almost entirely men) among academia, the military, the diplomatic service, and the government, and a great many people have served in all four sectors. Even after retirement some continue to write and to be read and quoted. And not all of them are parochial. Some write on geopolitics in other parts of the world, and the German geopoliticians of the Hitler era are still quoted approvingly. In Chapter 33 we discuss in more detail South American geostrategic views of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

There seems also to be a genesis of interest in academic geopolitics elsewhere in the developing world. In April 1990, for example, a week-long international seminar was held at Panjab University in Chandigarh, India, on Afro-Asian geopolitics. Many of the participants were European, but a significant number came from Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Basin. Even the papers presented by Europeans dealt with the geopolitics of the regions in question. Here at last is a healthy development: the spread of geopolitical studies into regions that were victims of early European geopolitics. Indications are that the trend is continuing and intensifying. Although substantial research continues to originate in Europe and North America, one need only study the names of scholars publishing articles in journals such as *Geopolitics* to realize that they span the world's culture realms.

Some Contemporary Geopolitical Approaches

In the next chapter we focus on what has emerged in the past decade as the dominant theme in the new geopolitics: the geography of peace and war. Here we examine briefly some contemporary geopolitical notions and in subsequent sections present some of our own.

Although retired from the University of Birmingham in England, Geoffrey Parker remains one of the foremost students of geopolitics today. In articles and books, he summarizes both its history and current developments. He points out that "the old geopolitics focused on one particular segment of territory, the state, and on the single-minded pursuit of ... its best interests even if these led ... to confrontation and war."[*] Since the mid-1970s, however, a more humanistic approach has emerged concurrent with both the demise of the colonial empires and the weakening of the power and influence of the two superpowers. Parker raises the difficult question of whether the new approaches are not basically reactions to changes in the world politicogeographical situation.

Peter Taylor, one of the world's leading contemporary political geographers, teaches at Loughborough University of Technology. In the second edition of his textbook he devotes a lengthy chapter to geopolitics.[†] Here he presents detailed discussions of the various theories of cycles in international politics that became popular in the 1980s. They include Modelski's long cycles of global politics, cycles of hegemony, an application of Kondratieff's economic cycle model to British and American roles in the world, and cycles and geopolitical world orders. He then uses the Cold War as a case study of a geopolitical world order, and goes on to raise questions about what will follow the Cold War. Finally, in a section on

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[*] Geoffrey Parker. *Geopolitics: Past, Present and Future.* London: Pinter, 1998, p. 55.

[†] *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality.* London: Longman, 1989, pp. 42–90.

"geopolitical codes," he uses as examples the U.S. policy of "containment" of the Soviet Union and the "nonalignment" policy of India and other countries.

More recently, **critical geopolitics** has come to the fore. According to Gearóid Ó Tuathail, critical geopolitics questions "the existing structures of power and knowledge" and "seek[s] to recover the complexities of global political life and expose the power relationships that characterize knowledge about geopolitics concealed by orthodox geopolitics."* In challenging conventional outlooks, critical geopolitics highlights the need to remind ourselves of one of geography's most basic characteristics: the holistic perspective. By considering the geographical factors related to a multitude of variables, critical geopolitics urges us to expand our horizons and examine issues from alternative viewpoints. Such an approach is in sharp contrast to the "us versus them" approach during the Cold War when geopolitics was viewed through the bipolar façade of East and West. The multipolarity and complexity of the post–Cold War era, however, makes this an opportune time for fresh approaches. As Geoffrey Parker points out, "critical geopolitics is also the recognition that while there are many meanings there is a common perspective."†

Regardless of the perspective, a significant problem for geopolitics is the difficulty in building a theoretical base. Some approaches tend to ignore reality, especially realities that do not fit the theories. Some approaches were rendered obsolete by the end of the Cold War, during which these theories were developed and tended to obscure many people's thinking. The dramatic change in the world political picture that took place during the brief period of 1989 to 1991 (and whose shock waves will reverberate around

the world for at least another generation) came as a stunning surprise to most people. Yet, in *SPG III* (written in 1979) we observed, "One is tempted to comment on the disintegration of the Soviet Empire by exfoliation, reaching into the Soviet Union itself, with revolts in the Ukraine and elsewhere" (p. 277). This observation was repeated in *SPG IV* (written in 1988), with the addition of "Lithuania, Armenia and elsewhere" (p. 238).

On the other hand, some attempt to bend current realities to validate their theories, no matter what grotesque contortions may be necessary to make the facts fit the theories. It is rather like Cinderella's stepsister trying to squeeze her large foot into the tiny glass slipper. Some approaches may seem quite novel, but may in fact be contemporary versions of established approaches. For example, the cycle concept, as we pointed out in Chapter 1, goes back at least to Ibn Khaldun in the fourteenth century.

It is basically for these reasons that Saul Cohen's approach, which builds a theory inductively from observed facts, may prove of greater value in understanding this complex and ever-changing world. We know that States rise and fall in power, however defined, and we have some idea of why. But we still cannot predict what will come next; which State, for example, will supplant the United States (perhaps in the first half of this century) as the dominant world power. It may not be a single country at all, but rather the States of the European Union acting in an increasingly collective fashion. If so, then it will herald the rise of supranational regions to replace the nation-state as the preeminent basis of power. Let us now consider some geopolitical ideas that have not yet attracted widespread interest or support.

Some Tentative Geopolitical Concepts

Geographic, political, and historical literature are replete with discussions of **buffer States** and **buffer zones**, areas of weakness that separate areas of strength, reducing the

* Gearóid Ó Tuathail. "Understanding Critical Geopolitics: Geopolitics and Risk Security." In *Geopolitics: Geography and Strategy.* Colin S. Gray and Geoffrey Sloan (eds.). Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999, pp. 107–124.

† G. Parker, 1998, p. 170.

chances of conflict between them. Classic buffer States include Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay, which almost completely separate Brazil from Chile and Argentina; Poland and (former) Czechoslovakia separating Germany and Russia/USSR; Afghanistan lying between Russia/USSR and British India; the Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan guarding the major mountain passes between China and India; Mongolia between Russia/USSR and China; and Laos and Thailand separating British and French colonial power in Asia. These and others have largely, if not completely, lost their buffer functions as a result of the end of colonialism, rising nationalism and the strengthening of the buffers themselves, changing technology, the role of ideologies other than nationalism, and the general tendency throughout the world to eliminate frontier areas in favor of clearly defined and delimited boundaries.

Even the kind of buffer zone that became prominent after World War II—the ideological buffer—has tended to disintegrate. On the grand scale, the new States that emerged from the dissolving empires combined with a number of older ones, including most of those listed as traditional buffers, to form a neutralist bloc, aligned with neither the Soviet nor the American bloc. This channeled some of the energies of the superpowers into attempts to win friends and influence in the neutralist countries, perhaps contributing to a reduction of tensions between them and avoidance of World War III. Another type of buffer zone developed across southern Africa as black Africans to the north attained independence between 1957 (Ghana) and 1963 (Kenya), while the white minority regimes in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa/South-West Africa retained tight control.

Both buffers have now disappeared. With the achievement of independence by Namibia (ex-South-West Africa) in 1990, largely through the efforts of the United Nations and Soviet-American cooperation, South Africa was forced to choose between withdrawing into the *laager* and accommodating the needs and aspirations of the great

majority of its citizens. Fortunately, it chose the latter course. The "nonaligned" bloc has also essentially disappeared. First, many of its members became aligned with one Cold War rival or the other (though rarely admitting it publicly); then new centers of capitalist wealth and power (Western Europe, Japan) developed; and finally the Soviet Union itself weakened and collapsed.

Recently, we have seen the classic type of buffer zone develop on a large scale and similarly wither and vanish. The Soviet Union set about during and after World War II to surround itself with concentric rings of defense against the kinds of invasion it had suffered so often in the past. The innermost ring consisted of territory actually annexed from other countries: Karelia, the Baltic States, eastern Poland, the Carpatho-Ukraine, Bessarabia, Tannu Tuva, southern Sakhalin, and the Kuril Islands. These acquisitions enabled the Soviet Union to regain most of the Tsarist Empire, take most of the bases Hitler had used for invasion of its territory, create defense in depth for vital and exposed Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), lengthen its coastline, attain common borders with Norway and Hungary, reach the Danube and obtain a seat on the Danube River Commission, and virtually enclose the Sea of Okhotsk, all most useful geopolitical objectives, the value of which it demonstrated repeatedly.

The second ring was composed of countries closely aligned with the USSR; some, in fact, were virtually colonies. These included most of the States of Central and Eastern Europe (including East Germany), China, Mongolia, and North Korea. Somewhat less reliable but still useful were States that were either neutral by treaty or neutralist by conviction (or necessity): Finland, Austria, Turkey, Afghanistan. The gaps in this ring were filled by Soviet troops in Iran, Xinjiang, and Manchuria.

Very soon though, beginning with the withdrawal (under UN pressure) of Soviet forces from northern Iran in 1947, this enormous and extensive buffer zone in the "Rimland" began to crumble, and the process is now complete. The Soviets early

on withdrew from Xinjiang and Manchuria, from Porkkala in Finland and Saseno in Albania, from Vienna and eastern Austria; they lost control of China, Yugoslavia, Albania, and North Korea; and Turkey joined NATO. More recently, they have had to relinquish control of all of Central and Eastern Europe, withdraw from Afghanistan, and dissolve COMECON and the Warsaw Pact. As with South Africa, this process of exfoliation has reached into the protected State itself, generating massive internal changes.

A fine exercise in the application of geopolitical theory would be the prediction of where the next buffer States or zones will develop, and something of their nature. Could they be Cohen's Gateway States and Regions? Or the traditional shatter belts?

Two other concepts, now at least temporarily discredited, derive from the Cold War. The dominant and guiding vision of American policymakers long after World War II was that of a **bipolar world**: the Soviet Union and its "satellites" versus the United States and its "friends and allies." There was, however, a recognition among more objective observers that not all countries in the world could in any manner be crammed into one or another of these neat categories of "bad guys" and "good guys." Indeed, the Non-Aligned Movement began as early as 1955, at the Bandung Conference, introduced in Chapter 19. Its leaders were Sukarno of Indonesia, Nehru of India, Tito of Yugoslavia, Nasser of Egypt, and (a little later) Nkrumah of Ghana. In recognition of its split from the Soviet Union, China was (after considerable debate) invited to attend. Their choice of neutralism in the Cold War marked the origin of the term "Third World," a term that later was given so many meanings that it became virtually meaningless.

The reaction of the United States to Bandung was epitomized by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who declared flatly, "Neutralism is immoral." With the modest exception of Yugoslavia, it was assumed that any country with a centrally planned economy was a Soviet satellite or, in another then-current phrase, a "captive nation." It

was many years before policymakers accepted the Sino-Soviet split as genuine, deep, and abiding and recognized China as a separate force in the world. Meanwhile, led by the Italian Communist Party leader, Palmiro Togliatti, what may have been a reasonably solid bloc of communist parties in and out of power in Europe began fragmenting.

We have now witnessed the conclusion of this process—the end of the Cold War. Yet the concept of nonalignment (or neutralism) may well be revived under new and currently unpredictable circumstances if again two powerful forces dominate at least a large proportion of the Earth's surface.

The second concept derives directly from the first; this is the **domino theory**. Like "containment," "massive retaliation," "the balance of terror," and other Cold War doctrines, this one assumed that the Soviets (and all communists and most socialists everywhere) were, and are, unqualifiedly evil, that they were bent on world domination, that they were fiendishly clever, and that any small victory by them would automatically lead to many more. The domino theory apparently originated with U.S. Admiral Arthur Radford, who in 1953 urged a carrier-based nuclear strike against the Viet Minh in Viet Nam to relieve their pressure on the French at Dien Bien Phu on the theory that a Viet Minh victory there would set off a chain reaction of countries going communist "like a row of falling dominoes." The theory came into prominence during the Viet Nam War in the 1960s. The argument went that the United States had to fight and win in Viet Nam, for if South Viet Nam "went communist," then automatically, like falling dominoes, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Burma, and perhaps India would as well. In the other direction, the Philippines, Taiwan, Hawaii, and even mainland United States were similarly threatened. Two decades later, President Ronald Reagan endorsed the theory, asserting that if his attempt to overthrow the government of Nicaragua was unsuccessful, the Sandinistas would soon overpower El Salvador, then Guatemala and México, and pose a mortal danger to Harlingen, Texas!

The domino theory guided much of American foreign policy for a generation, but it was based on a number of false assumptions. The Soviets certainly sought to spread communism throughout the world, but their plans were not based on simple contagious (proximity) diffusion as the domino theory suggests. Instead, Soviet leaders sought to exploit situations of opportunity (normally nationalist and/or revolutionary conflicts) wherever they might arise by offering substantial support to those groups willing to promote communism. This meant that there were often huge distances between the so-called dominoes, while many countries sharing borders with China and/or the USSR did not "fall" to communism. Furthermore, the theory did not account for the physical and cultural attributes that make each country unique. Although Cambodia, Laos, and South Viet Nam all fell to communist forces, those conflicts became intertwined over the years so that one victory became three. But in neighboring (and much larger) Thailand, the communists failed to make significant progress. They were similarly unsuccessful in Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The use of the word *theory* is clearly unjustified.

The domino theory is not necessarily dead, however. After all, did it not work in reverse as one country after another abandoned communism and socialism? More recently, the threat of radical Islamism has sparked talk of the domino theory in the Middle East. Interestingly, some Arab government officials have been among its strongest proponents, apparently believing that mentioning the domino theory in tandem with *Islamic fundamentalism* will produce a knee-jerk reaction on the part of the United States leading to increased foreign aid.

A third concept that needs geographic analysis has been almost entirely ignored in the geographical literature. This is the notion of *changing orientations.* Three examples of changing orientation illustrate the concept. First is the case of Zambia. Prior to independence, Zambia, as Northern Rhodesia,

was a member of the Central African Federation. It remained very much a central African country until after Southern Rhodesia declared its independence in November 1965, whereupon Zambia cut its ties to the south and began strengthening those to the north and east. Zambia thus became, at least temporarily, the southernmost country in East Africa.

A less dramatic but nonetheless important change in orientation has taken place in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Until World War II this region was oriented almost exclusively toward the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent to the rest of the Commonwealth and Western Europe. During the war these ties were severely frayed, and new links were developed with North America. By 1965, it could fairly be said that these new ties were far more important than the traditional ones. Since then there has been evidence of a second shift in orientation, gradual and still inchoate, but unmistakable: a turning away from North America toward Latin America.

A third example is that of Australia. Until World War II, Australia had the same orientations as the Commonwealth Caribbean: toward Britain first, and less importantly toward the rest of the Commonwealth. During the war and for about two decades thereafter, ties with Britain weakened, and Australia began looking northeastward, toward the United States, while still maintaining close relations with New Zealand (Fig. 22-1). More recently, although not abandoning any of these important relationships, Australia has become continually more closely tied to Japan while strengthening relations with nearby Pacific Ocean States.* After all, whereas to North Americans Indonesia may be the Far East, to Australians it is the Near North. And now, for the first time, Australia is looking at the Indian Ocean not as a vast void to be traversed en route to or from the British Isles but as an arena for Australian interest and activity.

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*In the United States, Spanish is the most common foreign language studied by high school and college students. In Australia, it is Japanese.
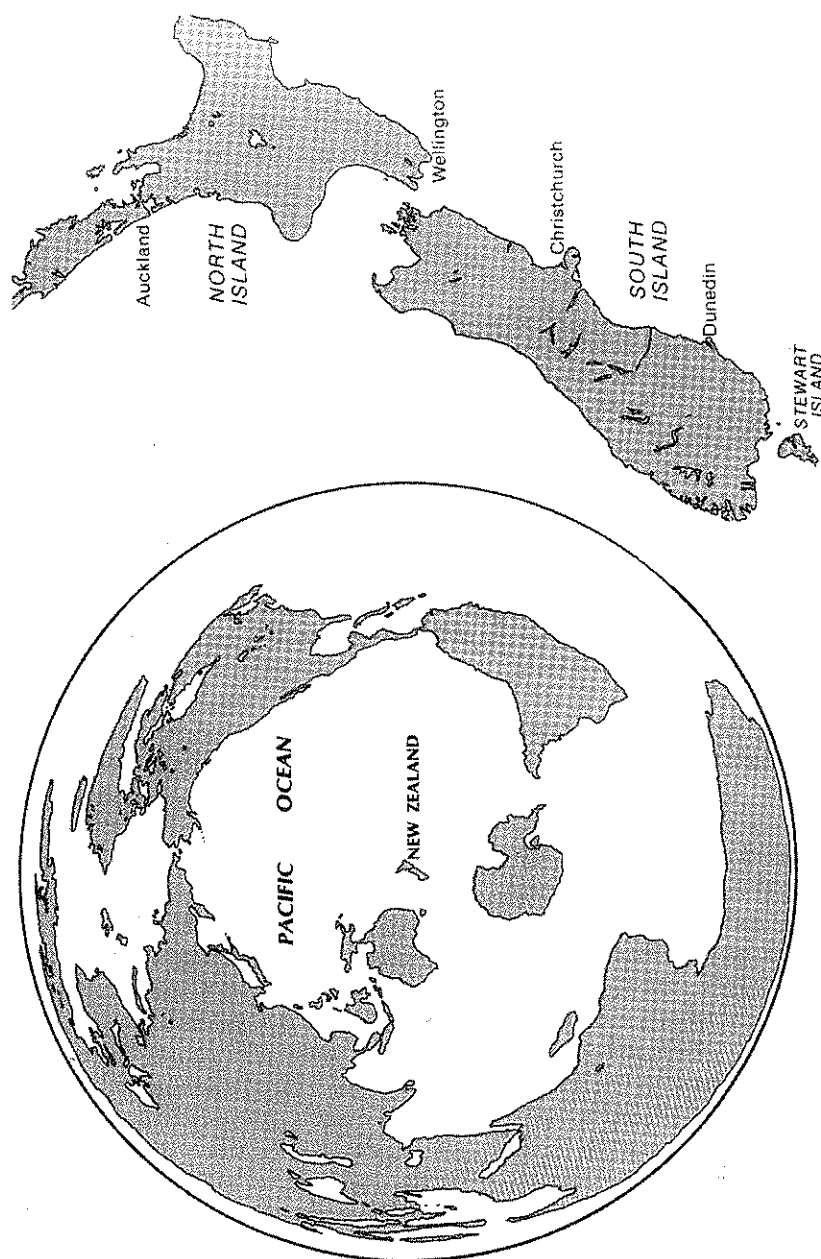
The World From New Zealand

Figure 22-1: The centrality of New Zealand. No longer on the outermost margin of the British Empire, New Zealand, like Australia, has changed its orientation since World War II and now takes a broader view of its place in the world, even developing an independent foreign policy. This new worldview is reflected in this official government map.

Labels on the maps: Auckland, NORTH ISLAND, Wellington, Christchurch, SOUTH ISLAND, Dunedin, STEWART ISLAND, PACIFIC OCEAN, NEW ZEALAND

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The end of the Cold War has opened up opportunities for a host of reorientations. Perhaps the most important and least publicized case already evident is that of the former predominantly Muslim republics of the USSR. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan were all, perforce, oriented toward the north and northwest, closely tied to the Soviet economy and polity, with only the weakest of links with neighboring States. Now, while retaining some ties with Moscow through the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), they are increasingly turning south and southwest. Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and even Israel are trying to woo them with blandishments of various kinds, and new trade, investment, transportation, cultural, and political relationships are being forged.*

* See Chapter 28 for some details of the Economic Cooperation Organization in Central and Southwest Asia.

In the post–Cold War era we must ask some important geopolitical questions about the orientations of States. Will formerly aligned or nonaligned countries gravitate toward China, Europe, Japan, or still newer power centers? Will territorial expansion be replaced by extraterrestrial expansion? What will be the effects on foreign policies of new technologies, new economic demands, new ideas? What groupings will survive or develop from the welter of regional and subregional groups we see today? Are the various cycle and world systems theories predicting any new orientations, or will they only be summoned to explain them after they have occurred?

Key Concepts and Terms

Bipolar World
Buffer State
Buffer Zone
Critical Geopolitics
Domino Theory

23

The Geography of War and Peace

In his classic work, *On War*, Karl von Clausewitz stated that "war is ... a continuation of political relations, a carrying out of the same by other means." His remark underscores the important relationship between political geography and *military geography*. Indeed, the factors that drive States and nations to warfare are often central themes for political geographers and include boundary disputes, ethnic and religious nationalism, imperialism, and environmental security, to name a few.

Like geopolitics, which suffered from the post–World War II stigma of *Geopolitik*, military geography languished in the aftermath of the Viet Nam War. We have already discussed the resurgence of geopolitics. Military geography has undergone a rebirth for similar reasons. Geographers have long contributed to the study of warfare itself, and there is substantial literature in the field. But the geographic study of the causes of war and the means to prevent or resolve them is relatively new. Just as contemporary geopolitics is increasingly aimed toward accommodation rather than confrontation, the new military geography is as much devoted to peacekeeping as to war fighting.

The Geography of Warfare

People have fought among themselves since antiquity. During the Cold War, some anthropologists promoted the idea that prehistoric peoples were relatively peaceful and that the rise of civilization was somehow to blame for conflicts. Such notions, however, are "incompatible with the most relevant ethnographic and archaeological evidence."[*] That evidence reveals a record of violent conflict spanning untold millennia of prehistoric time. What have changed, however, are the technology to wage war and the geographic scale on which conflicts are fought.

With the first Agricultural Revolution involving the domestication of plants and animals came the rise of urban centers and eventually empires. Rulers created standing armies to defend or expand their dominions. Geographical factors hampered, but by no means stopped, the process of imperialism. Despite primitive circulation systems, Greeks and Romans, Mongols and Muslims created vast empires spanning numerous regions of the world. As we mentioned in Chapter 5, the introduction of gunpowder during the late Middle Ages not only revolutionized warfare, but set the stage for the rise of European nation-states and their own subsequent imperial expansion. The resulting conflicts, both among Europeans and between Europeans and colonized peoples, led to ever greater

[*] Lawrence H. Keeley. *War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 170–171.

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developments in regard to warfare. During the twentieth century, the concept of *total war* emerged in which entire countries, particularly industrial regions, became potential targets for enemy attacks. Victory in one war may lead to disaster in a subsequent war. The French Army, for instance, fought well during World War I, but the subsequent complacency of French generals and their reliance on the Maginot Line proved disastrous when confronted with German *blitzkrieg* (lightning war) tactics during World War II.

Types of Warfare

Warfare can be divided into three basic types: conventional warfare, guerrilla warfare, and terrorism. World War II, which primarily pitted organized military units with standard weapons, equipment, and uniforms against one another in battle, is a classic example of **conventional warfare**. The strategy and tactics of conventional warfare have evolved through the millennia from the days of Egyptian chariots and the Greek phalanx to the feudal array; from the Napoleonic wars to

total wars. Throughout that evolution, however, certain characteristics remained the same, notably the ability to easily identify a military unit as such. But history holds countless examples of **asymmetrical conflict** in which one force's military power was vastly superior to that of its adversaries. Rather than risk defeat by engaging superior forces in open battle, weaker military forces have frequently chosen to employ **guerrilla warfare** in which relatively small, irregular units, often without uniforms, rely on surprise and mobility to compensate for limited personnel, weapons, and supplies. Such units might be composed of troops who farm by day and fight by night. Guerrilla warfare entered the military lexicon during Napoleon's Peninsula campaign in Spain. After the defeat of the Spanish Army, peasants began their own *guerrilla* (little war) campaign against Napoleon's forces. Their hit-and-run attacks, often directed at isolated units or supply trains, severely hampered Napoleon's ambitions to dominate Spain. Although the term is not yet two centuries old, the tactics are ancient. The Jewish revolt against the Roman

Conventional warfare. Tanks and armored fighting vehicles of the U.S. 24th Infantry Division advance east along the Baghdad-Basra highway during Operation Desert Storm in February 1991. Note the flat terrain of the Euphrates River valley. Political leaders make the decision to commit troops to combat. In regions with rugged terrain, governments are more likely to opt for air power and special operations rather than massive invasions. (Chuck Fahrer)

Empire that began in 66 C.E. was largely waged by Jewish guerrilla fighters who would have met defeat much sooner had they engaged Roman legionnaires in conventional warfare. Both conventional and guerrilla warfare, however, are primarily directed at military-oriented targets. In contrast, **terrorism** involves violence or the threat of violence directed against any members of society, including civilians, if such actions appear to advance the perpetrators' political objectives.
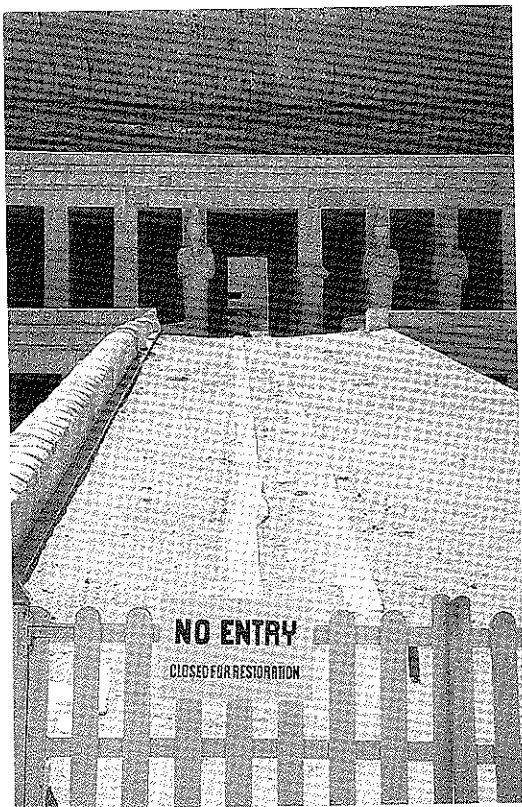
The Temple of Hatshepsut. On 17 November 1997, Egyptian terrorists killed dozens of foreign tourists and Egyptian security personnel at this temple. This photo was taken several months afterward. Tourist attacks were designed to drive foreigners away and undermine the Egyptian economy. It dealt a harsh blow to ordinary Egyptians who depend on tourism revenue and produced a backlash of anti-Islamist sentiment throughout the country. The savagery of the attack illustrates the tendency for insurgent groups to become increasingly violent in the face of looming defeat. (Chuck Fahrer)

Terrorism is also an ancient concept. The Chinese strategist Sun Tzu, who wrote *The Art of War* approximately 2,500 years ago, is credited with the maxim *kill one, frighten ten thousand.* Terrorist groups are usually the smallest of all, often numbering fewer than ten individuals, and are more likely to be urban-based. Terrorism is often described in terms of criminal behavior by the governments and other groups opposed to them, but its use in political struggles also makes it a separate category of warfare. Although there are conceptual reasons for considering terrorism as a form of warfare, such a classification does not justify the deliberate deaths and injuries inflicted. Rather than an either/or proposition, terrorism can be considered as both a way of war *and* a criminal activity.

The actions of conventional military units tasked with responding to guerrilla warfare are often designated as *counter-guerrilla operations*. A similar response to terrorism, however, is typically subdivided into two categories: *anti-terrorism* and *counter-terrorism*. Although the media frequently confuse the terms or use them interchangeably, there are distinct differences. Anti-terrorism is defensive in nature. This involves the establishment of **security landscapes** that are similar to cultural landscapes but are specifically designed to enhance the security of people and facilities. Anyone who has ever walked through a metal detector at an airport or other facility has passed through a classic fixture of security landscapes. Other examples include barrier devices around everything from buildings to countries, immigration controls at points of entry, surveillance systems, and a host of similar features. In contrast, counter-terrorism involves offensive operations directed against terrorists and their bases. These are often conducted by elite military or para-military units such as the United States' Delta Force and Seal Team 6, Britain's Special Air Service (SAS), Germany's *Grenzschutzgruppe 9* (GSG-9), and Russia's *Spetzialnoye Naznachenie* (Special Purpose) or *Spetznaz* troops.*

*Delta Force and Seal Team 6 are not the official names of these units, but they are commonly used in counter-terrorism literature.

Security landscapes. These large planter boxes outside the U.S. embassy in Cairo contain some rather small plants. They serve a valuable purpose, however. Each box contains hundreds of pounds of dirt and concrete, thus creating a barrier against attack by bomb-laden vehicles. (Chuck Fahrer)

Neither anti-terrorist nor counter-terrorist operations, however, are likely to achieve the primary goal of eliminating terrorism. To achieve that goal, one must study the situations that foster terrorism and work to eliminate them. This can involve working to improve human rights, reduce poverty, raise living standards, overcome economic disparities, and many similar actions aimed at providing hope and reducing despair. Ultimately, terrorists find an environment of despair most conducive to their recruitment efforts. Defeating terrorism will therefore require greater effort in identifying and correcting political, social, and economic injustices around the world.

Groups may employ conventional warfare, guerrilla warfare, or terrorism depending on their capabilities and doctrine. In general, weaker forces are normally unable to fight in a conventional fashion and are most likely to rely on the alternatives. But one must be cautious with labels. *Soldiers, guerrillas,* and *terrorists* are who they are based on how they fight and not their numbers or where they fight. There is also substantial overlap between the categories. For instance, the U.S. Army's Special Forces (SF) may be tasked to perform *direct action* missions such as raids and ambushes that are conventional, yet another classic SF mission is to train and lead foreign irregular forces in guerrilla warfare operations. And what of guerrilla fighters who ambush government patrols in the countryside, but also set off bombs in crowded urban markets? Combatants can and sometimes do qualify for more than one of the aforementioned labels.

Unfortunately, civilians have much more to fear from conventional and guerrilla warfare than from terrorism. While terrorists may kill civilians deliberately to terrorize a population, civilian casualties are normally higher as a result of unintentional "collateral damage," especially in conventional wars. For the survivors, there is little consolation in knowing that their loved ones' deaths were *accidental.*

The Arms Race

Throughout history, certain developments in military technology have vastly increased the lethality of weapons. Examples include metal blades and arrow points, gunpowder, rifled barrels, artillery, shrapnel, ironclad vessels, torpedoes, improved aiming devices, aerial bombing, and guided missiles. Simultaneously, advances in communications provided military commanders with the ability to rapidly engage opposing forces with these increasingly lethal weapons. Nothing, however, can match the lethality of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons, collectively known as **weapons of mass destruction** (WMD).

Biological and chemical warfare date to antiquity, but their lethality has increased

immeasurably in the past century. Biological warfare has been used the least, in part due to the fear that one's own soldiers may become victims. Modern chemical warfare began in World War I when German forces, attempting to break through French lines, attacked near Yprés in 1915 using chlorine gas. The Allies quickly condemned the attack, which violated the Hague Convention requirement to "abstain from the use of … [poison] gases." Meanwhile, British forces retaliated with a chemical attack of their own. Thus began the world's first major episode of chemical warfare. Since then, chemical weapons have been used only sporadically, by Italians in Ethiopia, Japanese in China, Egyptians in Yemen, Soviets in Afghanistan, and both sides in the Iran-Iraq War. Apart from Iran and Iraq, chemical weapons have not been used since World War I against anyone with the capability to retaliate with their own WMD.

The changing technology for warfare crossed a critical threshold in the closing days of World War II when American forces destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic bombs, thus ushering in the nuclear age. The detonation of just one thermonuclear weapon would represent an environmental disaster. A full-scale nuclear war would be catastrophic. It should be clear to everyone that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Nevertheless, the number of countries with nuclear weapons is steadily increasing. Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States have all had declared nuclear weapons programs for decades. Israel almost certainly belongs in this category as well, but prefers to neither confirm nor deny possession of such weapons. India and Pakistan joined the nuclear club in the 1990s. Other countries that may possess nuclear weapons or have the capacity to produce them include Iran, Japan, North Korea, South Africa, South Korea, and Taiwan.

During the Cold War, the major powers amassed huge stockpiles of nuclear weapons, with the United States and Soviet Union each producing enough weapons to destroy life on Earth several times.

Concurrently, delivery systems evolved from traditional bombers to intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). Installed aboard nuclear-powered submarines that could remain deployed and undetected for extended periods, the SLBMs provided the major powers with the capability to deliver massive retaliatory strikes even after devastating attacks on their homelands. This led to the concept of *mutually assured destruction* (MAD): No party could initiate nuclear war because they could not prevent a massive counterattack. The location of air bases, ICBM silos, and SLBM-equipped nuclear submarines created feelings of both security and apprehension for each side depending on perspective (Fig. 23-1).

In the post–Cold War era, however, the thinking is somewhat different. It is not necessarily the country with the greatest number of nuclear weapons that produces the most concern, but those with relatively few such weapons. Witness the cheering crowds first in India and later in Pakistan "celebrating" their countries' entry into the nuclear club. In 2003, the official rhetoric from North Korea was suggestive of a government with a proverbial chip on its shoulder, daring the world to try to do something about it. The danger is that such weapons are in the hands of governments that might actually use them.

Of course, it is not just governments (rogue or otherwise) that are the object of concern regarding nuclear weapons. There is a very real danger that terrorists might obtain a nuclear weapon. Even one "small" nuclear device detonated in a large city could dwarf the damage that occurred in New York City on 11 September 2001. Officials are also fearful of so-called dirty bombs that use conventional high explosives combined with radioactive wastes. Such a device would do no more initial damage than an ordinary bomb, but radiation poisoning and cancer could eventually magnify the casualty figures while the city, or substantial sections, might have to be abandoned. Ironically, the United States itself has used a sort of dirty weapon in the form of depleted uranium ammunition for 30-mm
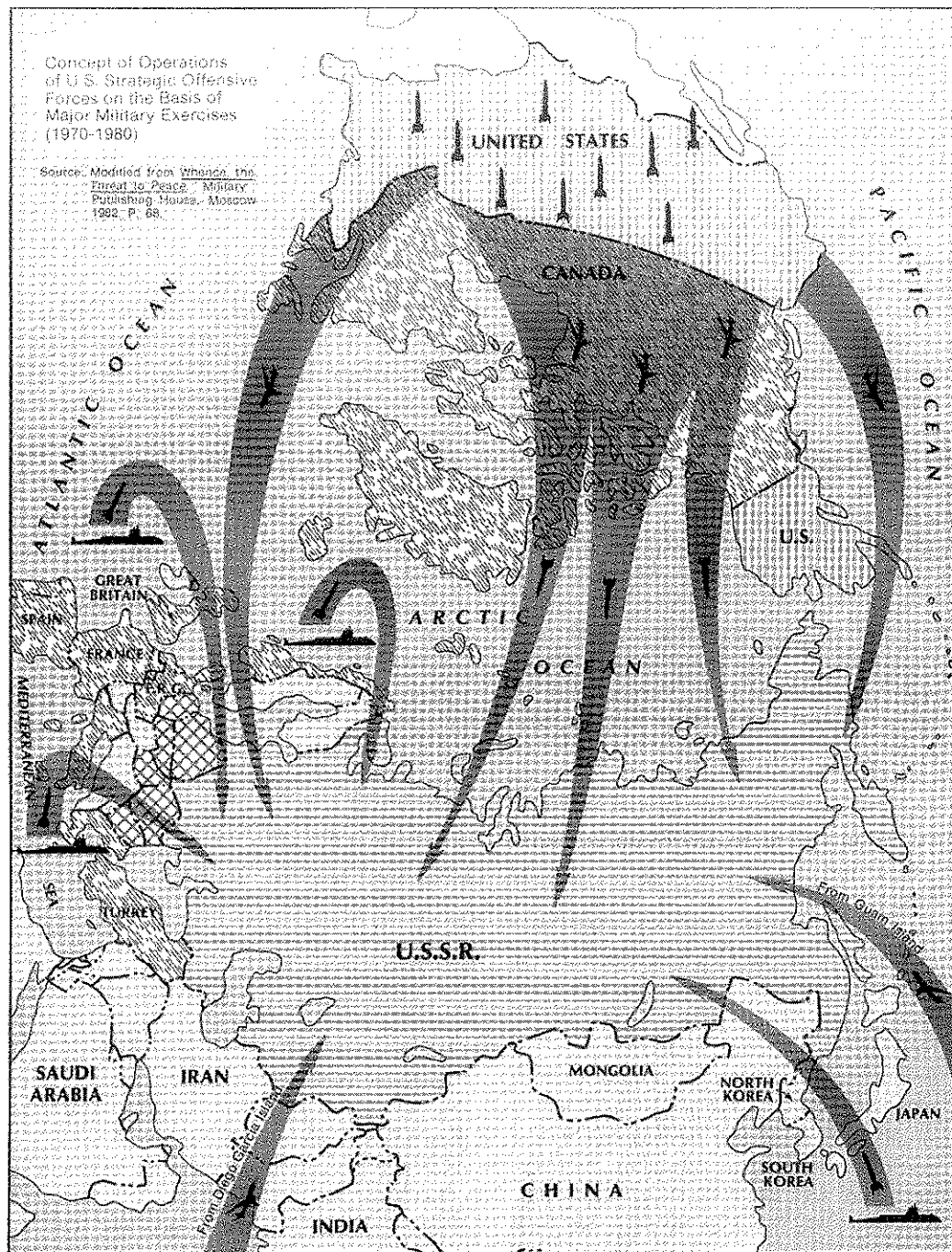
Figure 23-1: Who was surrounding whom? In Chapter 3 we pointed out that direction is essentially a matter of perception. We used as an example the perception of the American people that they were surrounded by a chain of their own military bases protecting them from attack by the Soviet Union. Here is a Soviet map showing some of those same bases, supplemented by nuclear-armed submarines, as seen from the Soviet Union. These very different perceptions of the same basic facts helped to create a climate that could have led to war. By presenting spatial facts objectively and analytically, political geographers can help to create a climate that will lead to enduring peace.

cannon shells fired by A-10 ground attack jets to destroy armored vehicles. To date, they have been used in Iraq, Kosovo, and Afghanistan despite evidence of increased cancer risks to civilians and ground forces of both sides.

The colossal expenditure of natural resources, productive capacity, time, talent, energy, and capital on preparation for nuclear war is almost unimaginable and—to a rational being—inexcusable. Yet it is only a part of the military expenditures made by countries large and small, rich and poor, old and new all over the world since World War II. One can only imagine how many wars might have been prevented had but a fraction of these resources been used for development rather than conflict.

A few statistics gathered from a variety of sources will help to illustrate the point.

1. During the period 1946–2002, the United States alone spent over *nineteen trillion dollars* ($19,384,200,000,000), in 2002 dollars, on military weapons, equipment, and personnel.
2. In 2001, all the countries of the world spent close to *a trillion dollars* ($839,000,000,000) for military purposes, and recent trends point to continued increases. The United States spent $343.2 billion, over six times that of Russia and over 23 times that spent collectively by the seven States considered 'rogues': Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria.
3. For the price of a single AH-64 Apache helicopter gunship, almost half a million small farmers in the developing world could obtain inexpensive pumps designed for small-plot irrigation that typically raise incomes by $100 per year (in regions where annual incomes are often less than $500).
4. In a single *hour*, the United States spends *twice* as much in military expenditures as it would cost *per year* to provide improved drugs for treating malaria throughout East Africa, thereby saving as many as 1.5 million African children per year from malaria-related deaths.

The big powers are not entirely to blame for these staggering expenditures, nor even the rich countries together. In terms of military expenditures as a percentage of GDP, some of the highest rates can be found in the Middle East and Africa, including Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Mozambique, Somalia, and Yemen.

Civil Wars and Insurgent States

The conflicts that generate increased military expenditures do not always cross State boundaries. Throughout history civil wars and other intra-State conflicts have accounted for a significant proportion of the world's conflicts. Because the combatants in such wars are often intermixed within the same territory, these conflicts are frequently of longer duration. For instance, the civil war in the Sudan between predominantly Arab Muslims in the north and mainly African Christians and animists in the south has continued in an on-again/off-again manner for over four decades. Consequently, political geographers must consider many terms such as rebellion, revolution, insurrection, insurgency, and secession. These terms are frequently used interchangeably, with each other and with those we have already discussed such as guerrilla warfare and terrorism, but there are actually significant differences among them.

A **rebellion** is an act of violence in which elements of society attempt to overthrow the incumbent leaders or force it to modify unpopular policies. In some cases, rebels may settle for a general rampage that vents their frustrations with the administration, but does not actually topple the government. In either case, the general objective is limited to changing leaders and/or policies. On the other hand, a **revolution** seeks to change the very system of government as well as existing leadership and policies. Just as hurricanes can spawn tornadoes, revolutions sometimes produce rebellions. In the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, for instance, several ethnic groups, notably the Kurds, rose in rebellion because they feared a net loss of power in post-revolutionary Iran.

Rebellions and revolutions may be viewed as both process and outcome. The process involves the campaign of violence employed to topple a government; the outcome refers to the changes made in the aftermath of a victory by rebels or revolutionaries. Insurrections and insurgencies, however, are simply processes by which discontented elements of society seek to employ the various forms of warfare in pursuit of change, regardless of whether such change involves rebellion, revolution, or some other objective. Although **insurrection** and **insurgency** are often used interchangeably, the two terms can be distinguished by the pace of change. Timothy Lomperis contrasted "the volcanic insurrection [versus] the more slow-burning insurgency," while further stipulating that "insurrections can just happen (and be taken advantage of by revolutionaries), but insurgencies have to be made."[*]

From the preceding discussion, we can note that one can be a guerrilla fighter *and* an insurgent *and* a revolutionary from the standpoint of methods, process, and objectives. The conceptual flaw in the popular expression that *one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter* is that terrorism is a method whereas freedom is an objective, so it is quite possible for one to be both a terrorist *and* a freedom fighter.

For political geographers, one of the most important factors to consider in any discussion of civil violence is whether success on the part of the challengers will result in boundary changes for the State. A successful revolution can lead to unprecedented changes without the slightest modification to the country's boundaries. In contrast, an insurgency can pursue an aim of greater *autonomy* or even outright *secession* such as Eritrea achieved in 1993 following its long struggle with Ethiopia. Here too, one must be careful with labels. A secessionist group that strives toward independence without any appreciable change in the form of government should not be considered revolutionary in character.

Political geographers are also interested in the root causes of such conflicts. Here, the research done by political scientists and political sociologists is relevant, particularly in regard to rebellion and revolution. Three overlapping theories can be considered: system disequilibrium, relative deprivation, and resource mobilization.

In the 1960s, some scholars proposed that severe shocks to social equilibrium may produce **system disequilibrium** sufficient to spark unrest. Examples include natural disasters, inter-State wars, epidemics, and rapid social changes such as those associated with decolonization. In his classic work, *Why Men Rebel*, Ted Robert Gurr suggested that **relative deprivation,** defined as "actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities," might explain civil war with the class conflicts of the Cold War and before as examples. In contrast, Charles Tilly and Theda Skocpol argued in favor of resource mobilization in which revolution is explained by structural mechanisms that allow for dissent to grow into an uprising. A democratic system typically offers outlets for protest, thus stealing the thunder of would-be revolutionaries. On the other hand, a totalitarian system such as that of North Korea tolerates no dissent. Protesters are jailed and organizers unlucky enough to be taken alive may be tortured for information. If one considers these contrasting systems as part of a spectrum of political systems, then uprisings are most likely to occur against authoritarian regimes that provide limited freedom.[†]

Of course, geography stresses interlinkages and Algeria offers an interesting case study. After achieving independence from France in 1962, the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) embarked on revolutionary

[*] Timothy J. Lomperis. *From People's War to People's Rule: Insurgency, Intervention, and the Lessons of Vietnam.* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996, p. 33.

[†] For an excellent article that synthesizes these concepts, see Jack A. Goldstone. "Demography, Domestic Conflict, and the International Order." In *International Order and the Future of Politics,* ed.T.V. Paul and John A. Hall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 352–372.

change, especially in regard to education, which was largely neglected by French colonial authorities. Within a few years, large numbers of graduates began to compete for relatively few jobs, thus promoting *system disequilibrium*. Government policies promoted capital-intensive industrial development, but failed to address rising population and educational levels. Obviously, individuals felt a sense of *relative deprivation* as their expectations collided with job market realities. Both promoted a growing sense of unrest among Algerians which, following the 1986 plunge in oil prices, erupted in 1988 when the government announced an austerity program. Many Algerians saw that **Islamism** (Islamic political activism) offered the only viable opposition because the government effectively silenced other groups. The Algerian government initially refrained from the ruthless tactics used in Syria and Iraq, but offered little more than pseudo-democracy compounded by corruption, thus making it vulnerable to Islamist opponents. So which of these concepts explains the problems in Algeria? The answer is all of the above and more.

In Chapter 4, we stipulated that three of the most important characteristics of a State are territory, population, and government. If an insurgent group successfully challenges an incumbent regime, it may begin to establish an **insurgent state** in which the insurgents control the territory and its resident population and even begin to take on government functions such as tax collection and provision of social services. (Insurgent states are also discussed in Chapter 11.) Insurgent groups may pursue a variety of objectives. They may be devolutionary in character such as Iranian Kurds and southern Sudanese who desire greater autonomy, or they might seek complete independence such as the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka. Some waged anti-colonial *wars of national liberation* such as Algeria's FLN. Other insurgent groups have revolutionary objectives. In his book *Insurgency & Terrorism*, Bard O'Neill identified four such categories: anarchist, egalitarian, traditionalist, and pluralist. Of those, egalitarian and traditionalist insurgencies are

the most common. Marxist insurgents such as the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) is an example of the former while Islamist groups such as Algeria's *Groupe Islamique Armé* (GIA) and Egypt's *al-Jama'a al-Islamiya* typify the latter.

Insurgencies can be divided into four basic categories: conspiratorial, protracted popular war, military-focus, and urban warfare. Egypt's 1952 Free Officers Revolt exemplifies the *conspiratorial* category, which is essentially a *coup d'état*. Although the rapid transfer of power that results from a successful *coup d'état* is suggestive of an insurrection, the careful planning that typically precedes it distinguishes it as an insurgency. In contrast, a *protracted popular war* may continue for years or even decades. This strategy was employed by Mao Zedong's communist forces in China. It placed great importance on support of the masses, especially the rural peasantry. Mao delineated three stages of insurgencies: strategic defensive, stalemate, and strategic offensive. The *military-focus* strategy differs from protracted popular war in that it calls for a rapid escalation of hostilities assuming that popular support will come later. Lastly, the *urban-warfare* strategy recognizes the impact of a rapidly urbanizing world. Operating in an urban environment typically necessitates the establishment of relatively small, independent insurgent cells to cope with the increased presence of government security forces in the cities and towns.

Robert McColl modified Mao's approach to produce the *Model of the Insurgent State*. He placed primary emphasis on the geographic perspectives and renamed the phases: contention, equilibrium, and counter-offensive. He further divided the contention phase into mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare stages. In the mobile warfare stage, insurgents have little more than safe houses and hiding places to use as headquarters while they organize their campaign. The transition to the guerrilla warfare stage comes when they establish their first secure base camps. A base camp, however, does not make an insurgent state. That only comes with the equilibrium phase. McColl's

model works well not only with Mao's protracted popular warfare, but with the military-focus strategy as well.[*]

Although insurgents frequently rely on guerrilla warfare and terrorism, this is normally a matter of necessity rather than choice. Insurgents cannot create armies out of thin air. Consequently, they will typically resort to guerrilla warfare and/or terrorism in the early phases when an asymmetrical relationship exists. Given time and resources, however, insurgent forces may shift to conventional warfare. Indeed, McColl's counteroffensive phase clearly raises that possibility.

Of all the countries in the world, Colombia offers one of the most complex examples of emerging insurgent states. The FARC, *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), and other insurgent groups control substantial portions of Colombian territory. Financed largely by the drug trade and kidnapping for ransom, the revolutionaries can purchase modern weapons to fend off government incursions, but are not equipped to make a transition to conventional warfare.

In Algeria and Egypt, Islamist insurgents failed to move beyond the contention phase in part because of physical geography. Colombia offers regions of rugged mountains and thick vegetation. In contrast, the rugged terrain of Egypt's Red Sea hills and Algeria's Atlas and Aurès Mountains cannot compensate for the arid and semi-arid conditions there. Consequently, Islamist insurgents could not establish secure base camps in those countries due to governments' ability to monitor and/or control the limited water sources. This was especially true for Egyptian Islamists operating in Upper Egypt during the 1990s. "Bracketed by inhospitable deserts, insurgents had little choice but to remain in the [Nile] valley" where Egyptian security forces made it "virtually impossible to establish any sort of safe haven."[†]

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[*] Robert McColl. "The Insurgent State: Territorial Bases of Revolution." *Annals, Association of American Geographers,* Vol. 59, No. 4 (December 1969): 613–631.
[†] Chuck Fahrer. "The Geography of Egypt's Islamist Insurgency." *The Arab World Geographer,* Vol. 4, No. 3 (2001): 182.

Resource Wars

Although irredentism remains an issue and future wars of independence are almost a certainty, possible resource wars also pose a threat. Nations, States, and empires have fought for millennia over control of territory, peoples, and resources. In Chapter 17, for example, we pointed out that the quest for assured supplies of commodities, especially of fuels and raw materials, was one of the impulses leading to European conquest and colonization of much of the Southern Hemisphere, while greed for precious metals was probably the most important motivation in the earlier Spanish conquest of most of Latin America. During the world wars of this century, petroleum and other minerals were prime targets of military campaigns and diplomatic intrigues. This was especially true during World War II when Nazi Germany and Japan both launched major campaigns to seize control of petroleum and other mineral resources.

After World War I, the U.S. War Department drew up a list of 28 materials, mostly minerals, that had presented supply problems during the war, and the concept of **strategic minerals** became important in the interwar period. Definitions of the term vary considerably and frequently change, but generally speaking, they include three factors:

1. The mineral is essential for defense.
2. Its supplies are found largely or entirely outside the country.
3. During wartime, strict conservation and control of it are necessary.

Our gargantuan consumption of minerals during and since World War II enhanced fears that some minerals would be depleted, and the chronic instability of the postwar world enhanced fears of interruption or interdiction of mineral supplies destined for the rich, industrialized countries. This remains particularly true of oil and natural gas. Ensuring access to these hydrocarbon resources has, for decades, served as a pillar of U.S. policy in the Middle East. The Arab-led embargo of petroleum shipments to the United States and the Netherlands and the

subsequent quadrupling of the prices of petroleum after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war underscored its importance and prompted Washington to work toward better relations with the Persian Gulf States.

Since World War II, there have been fewer inter-State conflicts for control of resources, but they have not disappeared entirely. The desire to control a larger percentage of Middle East oil, for instance, was one reason for the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. When a massive U.S.-led coalition liberated Kuwait, the retreating Iraqi Army responded with a "scorched earth" campaign to destroy Kuwait's oil wells. The United Nations has accused Uganda and Zimbabwe of using their deployment of troops to war-torn Congo-Kinshasa to facilitate extraction of minerals, diamonds, and timber. Liberia has sent troops into Sierra Leone less to restore stability than to acquire diamonds. Chinese support for the Sudanese civil war is largely based on the geopolitics of oil. China invaded the Paracel Islands (then controlled by South Viet Nam) in 1974, primarily due to oil reserves in the surrounding waters. Oil reserves also account for the allocational boundary dispute that resulted in conflict between Cameroon and Nigeria over the Bakassi Peninsula.

Even regions that are not directly involved in a war can feel the effects of warfare in neighboring countries. For instance, pipelines offer the best means of transporting oil from regions such as the Caspian Basin to markets in Europe or Asia. In the Caspian case, proposed pipeline routes involve traversing portions of Chechnya and Dagestan in southern Russia or passing through Azerbaijan and Armenia near the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. A southern route through Iran is opposed by the United States for political reasons. That leaves possible eastern and southeastern routes through Tajikistan and Afghanistan, neither of which is particularly stable at the moment. Consequently, it might be easier to extract the oil than to actually deliver it to market.

Competition for resources can also make for uneasy geopolitical alliances. Despite South Africa's reprehensible *apartheid*-era

sociopolitical system, its defiance of the United Nations and most of the world with regard to Namibia, and its vigorous efforts to "destabilize" its neighbors, South Africa claimed—and received—support from Western democracies throughout most of the Cold War due to three distinctly geopolitical factors:

1. It was both a bulwark against communism, which was gaining influence over much of the continent to the north, and a staunch ally against Soviet expansionism.
2. It was the guardian of the vital Cape Route, the route around the Cape of Good Hope followed by most supertankers carrying petroleum from the Persian Gulf to Western Europe, and by many other vessels as well.
3. It was the noncommunist world's major supplier of strategic minerals, producing in 1984, for example, 40 percent of its manganese, 47 percent of its chrome, and about 80 percent of its platinum-group metals.

At that time, it was very difficult for the West to abandon South Africa or insist that it abandon mineral-rich Namibia, regardless of *apartheid*, because of these factors, of which the last was by far the most important.

Does this mean that the need for minerals is the most important element in determining the foreign policies of industrialized countries? Or that they—or anyone else—will again go to war over minerals? It is becoming less likely. For one thing, there are now so many factors contributing to a breakdown in world order that minerals have simply declined in relative importance. So has the equation between mineral possession and military potential; a review of Chapter 20 on power analysis should make this clear. Third, while instability in the world has grown, so have the mechanisms for preventing and containing armed conflicts of all kinds. Since 1945, minerals have played an important role in some conflicts, but the world system has not disintegrated into another world war. Finally, the world is now so utterly interdependent, so laced together with interlinkages and countervailing forces

that there are few insoluble problems. This is not to say that countries will never again go to war in order to ensure supplies of minerals, only that many peaceful options are now available to countries facing resource shortages. If a country wants to go to war, minerals no longer serve as an excuse. Food or water perhaps, but not minerals.

Although resources may be less likely to contribute to inter-State wars, they remain a serious factor in many intra-State conflicts, especially now that the Cold War system of superpower patronage has disappeared. In Sierra Leone, rival militias struggle to maintain control of diamond fields that provide the resources to purchase arms and continue fighting. Diamonds also figure prominently in other regional conflicts such as Angola. Likewise, the copper-rich Shaba province is a focal point in the bloody civil war in Congo-Kinshasa. Previously known as Katanga, this region's mineral wealth funded the recruitment of European mercenaries during the equally bloody fighting in the Congo in the 1960s. Competition for diamonds, copper, coltan, manganese, gold, timber, and a host of other resources is increasingly sparking armed conflicts around the world.

Food and water may also threaten regional stability around the world. In Chapter 24 we discuss the potential for conflict between States over water. In 1988, then Egyptian Foreign Minister Boutros Boutros-Ghali remarked that "the next war in our region will be over the waters of the Nile, not politics." Although the 1991 Gulf War proved him wrong, the danger exists that the countries of the Nile River system might one day fight for water. Although they possess the strongest military forces along the Nile, the Egyptians are also last in line to receive water and might find it difficult to project power into the Nile's headwaters regions of Ethiopia and East Africa. We discuss the Nile River and other international rivers in Chapter 24.

In many parts of the world, unprecedented population growth increasingly taxes the abilities of States and peoples to secure an adequate share of the resources necessary for basic needs and development. In 1983, Richard Ullman raised the issue of **environ-mental security** as an emerging threat that transcended the spectrum of Cold War-related conflicts. Although States may be better equipped at the macro-scale to obtain strategic minerals, problems are arising at all scales in regard to satisfying basic survival needs for the various peoples of the world.[*]

In northern Uganda, for instance, drought and famine have forced many to forage far and wide for food sources. In many instances, people of various tribal groups have wandered into rival tribes' territories and been shot. Cattle herders in the region typically carry Kalashnikov assault rifles to ward off cattle rustlers. In some instances, military units have arrived to "reduce violence" by disarming the populace only to return later and steal the cattle themselves! Such violence occurs in many regions of the world, taxing the abilities of governments to control it, and raising the specter of more *failed States* in the future.

Case Studies

In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, there was some optimism that a new era of peace was about to unfold. Although some regions are experiencing greater stability, other regions remain subject to recurring violence. One thing is abundantly clear: conflicts have not disappeared with the end of the Cold War, but the Cold War façade that distorted our view of conflicts for nearly five decades has been stripped away. Once more, the local dynamics that cause conflicts are clearly visible. The following analyses offer a glimpse into the complex factors driving such conflicts. We begin with the war on terrorism that involves several regions, before turning to more regionally focused examples.

Afghanistan and the War on Terrorism

In the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City and

[*] Richard H. Ullman. "Redefining Security." *International Security*, Vol. 8 (Summer 1983): 129–153.

Washington. President Bush called for a war against terrorist groups in general and *al-Qaeda* (the Base) and their supporters in particular. Ironically, *al-Qaeda's* leader, Osama bin Laden, delivered his own declaration of war in a 1998 *fatwa* (religious ruling) calling on devout Muslims to wage war against the United States and Israel. At the time, it seemed inconceivable that a State, indeed a superpower, would find itself compelled to engage in warfare with a transnational insurgent group. But the changing nature of conflict in the twenty-first century makes such a situation all too possible.

A number of concepts discussed in this textbook help to provide a better understanding of the war on terrorism. Geopolitics and supranationalism play important roles as evidenced by U.S. efforts to build coalition support. Historically, the war on terrorism is directly related to the geopolitics of the Cold War **jihad** (holy struggle) waged by Afghan *mujahideen* against the Soviet Army. When Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan in 1979, in support of a new communist regime that they installed in a *coup d'état*, they assumed their stay would be brief and that they would restore stability throughout the country. They were wrong on both counts. Given Afghanistan's land-locked position and common border with the Soviet Union, the United States and its allies saw little opportunity to intervene directly. Nevertheless, substantial quantities of weapons and supplies were shipped to the *mujahideen* via Pakistan. Despite the presence of a variety of anti-communist factions, U.S. officials opted to funnel arms and supplies specifically to Afghan Islamists, hoping perhaps to spark a wider insurgency within the Soviets' own predominantly Muslim republics. Not only did the policy fail, it also compelled most would-be insurgents to accept radical Islamist leaders who served as conduits for military supplies. To make matters worse, Middle Eastern and NATO countries helped recruit Muslim volunteers from around the world to fight in Afghanistan. The arrival of these so-called Arab Afghans, or *Afghanis*,

did little to influence the outcome of the conflict.* But it provided a source of military training and, more important, combat experience to thousands of young Islamists (including Osama bin Laden) who were exposed to extremist Islamist doctrine.

Upon returning to their home countries, many of the *Afghanis* joined Islamist opposition groups. Radicalized by their experiences in Afghanistan, they had both the training and the resolve to challenge incumbent secular regimes throughout the Islamic world. Their campaigns, including protracted insurgencies in Algeria and Egypt, illustrate the conflict between secular States and religious nationalists who wish to install Islamic governments such as those in Iran and Sudan (Fig. 23-2). The vast majority of Islamists eschew violence and merely want their religion to play a broader role in government. Unfortunately, such moderate voices are seldom heard in the Western media whereas those preaching death and destruction need only set off another bomb to command world attention.

Radical Islamists who resort to armed struggle to pursue their goals can be classified as traditional revolutionary organizations.† Devolutionary pressure also plays a role in countries such as the Philippines and Thailand where some Islamist groups espouse secessionist goals. *Al-Qaeda* seeks to unite all such groups in an effort to foster a sense of religious nationalism. In that regard, their rallying cry directed at all Muslims suggests a degree of irredentism based on religious nationalism. Irredentism is also important in understanding Muslim perspectives regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That conflict, perhaps more than

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* *Afghani* is the Arabic word for Afghan. It is sometimes used to refer to all foreign "Afghans" who fought in Afghanistan, many of whom were not Arabs. It should not be confused with an *afghani*, Afghanistan's national currency.

† An excellent source for information on the development of modern revolutionary Islamism is R. Hrair Dekmejian. *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World*, 2d ed. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995.
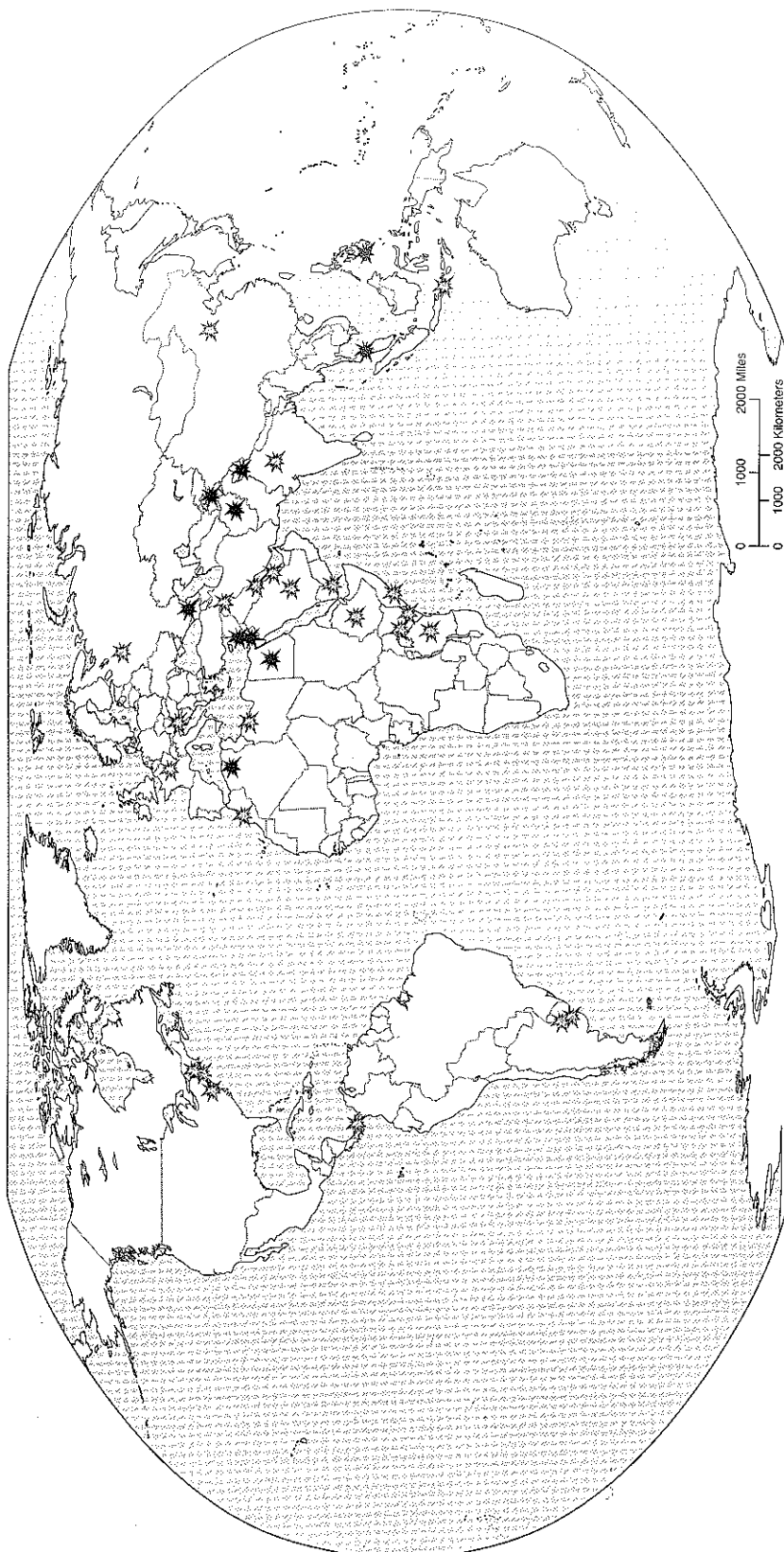
Figure 23-2: Islamist insurgencies and terrorism around the world. The activities of *al-Qaeda* and other loosely aligned radical Islamist groups have a worldwide impact. The flash symbols on this map depict a sample of the locations of recent or continuing Islamist insurgencies (black) as well as some of the sites of significant Islamist-inspired guerrilla and/or terrorist attacks (gray).

any other factor, helps *al-Qaeda* operatives attract new recruits willing to engage in armed struggle against those States viewed as enemies of Islam.

In 2001, conventional warfare appeared in an advanced form. The United States and other military forces attacked *al-Qaeda* and *Taliban* strongholds with precision-guided munitions, in some cases using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Such tactics, however, cannot replace troops on the ground. In that regard, thousands of coalition military personnel, including large numbers of Special Operations Forces (SOF), brought their skills to bear in the rugged terrain of the Hindu Kush.

Lacking the capability for conventional warfare, *al-Qaeda* relies instead on guerrilla warfare and terrorism. The physical geography of countries such as Egypt inhibited establishment of insurgent safe havens. Consequently, McColl's model can be viewed from a regional perspective whereby Afghanistan served as an insurgent state (until 2001) for Islamist extremists from around the world. The relatively successful campaign by American military personnel in Afghanistan forced *al-Qaeda* to return to the mobile war stage of the contention phase of McColl's model.

The war also raises controversial questions regarding guerrilla warfare versus terrorism. The 11 September 2001 attacks were undoubtedly terrorism. Even the attack on the Pentagon, a military target, was conducted with a jetliner carrying scores of innocent civilians. But how do we classify the October 2000 attack on the *U.S.S. Cole* in Yemen? The American sailors aboard the ship that day certainly did not perceive themselves as being at war. But the 1998 *fatwa* that *al-Qaeda* issued was, from their standpoint, a declaration of war and the *U.S.S. Cole* is a warship. While the question is certain to spark debate, one thing is clear. States cannot afford to dismiss a declaration of war regardless of whether the adversary is a State, a stateless nation, or another organization.

The war on terrorism can also be viewed from the perspective of core-periphery rela-tions. The Islamic world served as a light of civilization when Europe was in its Dark Ages. Since the Age of Exploration, however, the Islamic world has declined in power relative to the West. This process culminated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when European imperialism engulfed numerous Arab and/or Islamic countries. As we discussed in Chapter 19, neoimperialism continues to be an issue and the United States, as the world's sole superpower, has become the central target. Consequently, many Muslims see their realm relegated to the periphery and feel besieged by an onslaught of Western culture from the world's core regions. But many peoples, not only Muslims, desire modernization without Westernization. They therefore resent what they view as a Western-dominated global culture that threatens their own rich and unique cultures that have evolved over millennia. For a tiny minority, the anger is sufficient for them to engage in terrorism against those they view as enemies.

The Middle East

The Middle East and North Africa is, without a doubt, one of the most turbulent realms in the world. To understand it, we must begin with its location. It is the only tricontinental realm in the world, encompassing North Africa, Southwest Asia, and even a small part of southeastern Europe. At its heart lies the *Middle East* (or *Near East*), a term based on *relative direction* that was coined by Westerners, but is widely used by the region's inhabitants. Although its regional delimitation is inexact, most consider it to include Iraq, Jordan, and the Levant, and some would add Egypt and perhaps the Arabian Peninsula. The Levant, those countries facing the eastern Mediterranean coast (Syria, Lebanon, Israel and the Palestinian territories), is considered the heart of the heart, the great land bridge connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe. It includes much of the ancient Fertile Crescent and has served for millennia as a crossroads for armies, merchants, preachers, pilgrims, refugees, stu-

dents, scholars, and countless others. The Middle East gave rise to important culture hearths along the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates Rivers. Here settlers found a temperate climate, water, good soils, some good natural harbors, varied terrain with a fairly high proportion of level land, and eventually a little oil.

The Middle East has been the scene for countless wars and lesser conflicts, many of which continue to plague the region. The most prominent by far is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Like many conflicts, this one is territorial: two peoples competing for the same land. This land, whether one calls it Israel or Palestine, was the ancient homeland of Jews, the land given by God. But when Romans crushed the Jewish Revolt in the first century c.e., they punished the Jews by means of a **diaspora**, a forceful scattering of the majority of their people throughout the empire. Christians, however, were allowed to remain, and many of their descendants later converted to Islam following the seventh century Arab Conquest. For almost two millennia, Jews in the diaspora kept alive the dream of "next year in Jerusalem." During that time they suffered widespread persecution in Europe, although they fared better under Muslim rulers. They fought side-by-side and died side-by-side with Muslims defending Jerusalem from the Crusaders. And when the Spanish Inquisition demanded conversion to Roman Catholicism, death, or expulsion, many Jews found refuge in the Islamic world.

The current struggle originated with the rise of **Zionism**, the Jewish nationalist movement to create a State in Palestine, that began in the late nineteenth century. It gained momentum after World War I when the British controlled the Palestine Mandate and began to allow *Ashkenazim* (European Jews) to immigrate. The Ashkenazim soon came into conflict with Palestine's Arabic-speaking Muslims and Christians, particularly in regard to land issues. A 1947 UN partition plan (Fig. 18-2) was reluctantly accepted by the Jews, rejected by the Arabs, and redrawn by subsequent fighting. In 1948, the British withdrew, Israel pro-

claimed itself a State, five Arab armies invaded, and, when the dust settled, the Israelis had actually expanded their territory. The Israelis' success was due to desperate fighting on their part and the generally dismal performance of Arab forces, with the notable exception of Transjordan's tough Arab Legion.

Militarily, the Cold War never led to substantial confrontation between the East and West. Thus, the Arab-Israeli wars offer the best view of the evolution of warfare during the Cold War. The 1967, 1973, and 1982 wars are particularly revealing. In June 1967, the Israelis essentially won the Six-Day War on the first morning with a preemptive assault that destroyed the bulk of Arab combat aircraft, many of them on the ground. With total air superiority, Israeli ground forces overran the Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, West Bank (of the Jordan River), Golan Heights, and, most significantly, East Jerusalem. Their subsequent complacency nearly led to disaster in October 1973 when Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked. Initial Israeli counterattacking forces were stunned to find surface-to-air (SAM) missiles downing their planes and anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) knocking out their tanks. Israel showed that it had learned its lesson in 1982 against Syrian forces in Lebanon. First, high-speed anti-radiation missiles (HARM) eliminated Syrian ground control radar stations supporting SAM sites and combat aircraft. Next, Israeli pilots downed dozens of Syrian MIG fighters. With air superiority established, Israeli air and ground units destroyed hundreds of Syrian tanks with precision-guided munitions at which point the Syrians had had enough. This step-by-step approach reappeared in the 1991 and 2003 Gulf Wars as well as the war on terrorism and illustrates how even a small State can dominate its adversaries if it has substantial qualitative advantages.

The repeated failure of Arab armies to achieve their goals using conventional warfare underscored the asymmetrical relationship between Israel and its adversaries and prompted a shift to guerrilla warfare and terrorism. The most successful in this regard

was *Hizballah* (Party of God) that waged a protracted guerrilla war against the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon that eventually led to an Israeli withdrawal. Meanwhile, the Palestinian Islamist group HAMAS sabotaged the Israeli-Palestinian peace process by using terrorist attacks to provoke Israeli retaliation.

Terrorism is nothing new in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Jews and Arabs both used the tactics during the British Mandate period. The Jewish Stern Gang (one of the few self-described terrorist groups) and various Palestinian groups traded bomb attacks that typically targeted civilians. After Britain's departure, the Israeli Army had to use force against *renegade* elements such as the Irgun and Stern Gang. But terrorism remains a scourge in the region as evidenced by Palestinian suicide bombers who "fight" by killing women and children. Of course, Israel's inevitable retaliatory raids have killed significant numbers of civilians as well. Thus, the many Israelis and Palestinians who wish to live in peace find their hopes shattered by the continuing cycle of violence and counter-violence in a land that is remarkably compact.

Some conflicts are essentially "spin-offs" of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For instance, after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) increasingly tried to assert its autonomy within Jordan. Palestinian fighters brandished their weapons in public and openly ridiculed Jordanian soldiers who chafed under their orders to avoid incidents. In September 1970, Palestinian terrorists hijacked four airliners and flew three of them to Dawson Field, an abandoned air base in Jordan (the passengers were later rescued), whereupon King Hussein ordered the army to intervene. In short order, the Palestinian fighters received a brutal lesson in combat from the soldiers they had ridiculed.

In the aftermath of *Black September,* the PLO relocated most of its operations to Lebanon and resumed its attacks on Israel. Myriad Lebanese groups learned from the Palestinian example that it was relatively easy to buy weapons and form a militia. The Palestinian influx thereby served as a cata-

lyst to Lebanon's bloody civil war that began in the mid-1970s. PLO attacks on Israel eventually prompted Israel's 1982 invasion. Their efforts to control a "security zone" in southern Lebanon, however, sparked the conflict between *Hizballah* and Israel.

The region has also had more than its share of conflicts that have little to do with Israel. One of the most intractable is the dilemma of the Kurds, a stateless nation occupying portions of Armenia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey (Fig. 4.2). Although promised their own country after World War I, Turkish resurgence and British interest in the region's oil dashed their hopes. Since then, various Kurdish groups have engaged in periodic insurgencies against Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. During the Iran-Iraq War, each side used the Kurds as pawns in the conflict and the Iraqi regime even resorted to chemical warfare in its infamous *Anfal* campaign of the late 1980s. With U.S. encouragement, Iraqi Kurds as well as Shia Muslims staged an uprising during the 1991 Gulf War, but suffered horribly when American military support was not forthcoming. No one will ever know how many Kurds and Shia perished in the aftermath.

From 1980 to 1988, Iraq and Iran fought the region's bloodiest war in centuries, a frightful drain of lives and resources that neither party could afford. It began when Saddam Hussein violated the rule that one should "never attack a revolution."* What were the issues? Their mutual boundary on the Shatt al-Arab River, control of the head of the Persian Gulf, the Arab residents of western Iran, their respective struggles with Kurdish minorities, internal political power in each country, the Shia majority in Iraq ruled by Sunnis, rival revolutionary ideologies—all these and more.

Iraq also has long-standing claims to Kuwait, which it considers to be one of its provinces. When relations between the two countries deteriorated in 1990, Iraq invaded, prompting the massive international response

* William Quandt. *Middle East Uncertainties.* Keynote Address for the 49th Annual Conference of the Middle East Institute. Washington, DC (20 October 1995).

that eventually expelled Iraqi forces during the 1991 Gulf War. Besides representing a bid to gain a larger share of the region's oil reserves, Iraq also sought to lessen its nearly land-locked status by extending its border south to encompass Kuwait. An allocational boundary dispute (regarding the Rumeila oil fields) and Kuwaiti demands that Iraq repay loans made during the Iran-Iraq War added to the tension. The imposition of UN economic sanctions, establishment of northern and southern "no-fly" zones to protect Iraqi Kurds and Shia Muslims respectively, efforts to force Iraq to reveal and destroy WMD, and purported links to *al-Qaeda* kept tensions high and finally culminated in the 2003 Gulf War. By April 2003, the U.S.-led coalition had scored a decisive victory, but the rebuilding process had only just begun. That process will likely include efforts to create a federal or regional State such as we discussed in Chapter 10.

Other recent or continuing conflicts in this realm include the Algerian civil war with radical Islamists, Egypt's Islamist insurgency of the 1990s, Libyan aggression toward both Egypt and Chad, civil war in reunified Yemen, and Turkey's struggle with Kurdish insurgents. We could go on, but the point is clear: the Middle East is a complex and turbulent region interweaving ethnic diversity with ancient rivalries. Despite the best efforts of international negotiators, conflicts involving Israel/Palestine, Iraq, the Kurds, Islamists, and others seem to defy solution.

South Asia

South Asia is home to several conflicts in addition to connections with the conflict in Afghanistan. These include Kashmir, the Sikhs, Nagaland, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and others. The region's instability would be cause for concern in any regard, but it is especially troubling given the presence of nuclear weapons.

The most volatile conflict involves the region of Jammu and Kashmir (Fig. 27-2). The 1947 partition of British India aimed to divide the former colony into predominantly Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan. Despite the presence of a Muslim majority, the Hindu ruler of Jammu and Kashmir balked at becoming part of Pakistan. His attempt to maintain autonomy sparked a Muslim uprising that led to Pakistani intervention. This, in turn, prompted India to deploy troops, thus sparking the 1947 war between India and Pakistan. The conflict has never been resolved and the current "border" between the two States is the Pakistan-India Line of Control.

Thousands have died since the 1980s when Muslim Kashmiri separatists began an insurgency aimed at ending Indian rule. The conflict has assumed greater significance in recent years, as it became intertwined with the war on terrorism. Ironically, efforts by some Kashmiri families to keep their sons out of trouble contribute to the insurgency. Fearful of what could happen on the streets where Indian soldiers are constantly on patrol, many families encourage their sons to spend their free time at local mosques that Indian soldiers often avoid lest their entry spark more violence. But some mosques are controlled by Islamists who seek recruits from among the Kashmiri youth who visit. During the 1990s, many such recruits traveled to Afghanistan for military training before returning to Kashmir to fight.

When Muslims reached India in the tenth century, one group sought to synthesize Islam and Hinduism. Calling themselves *Sikhs,* they are concentrated in India's Punjab. Until recently, Sikh separatists waged a low-level insurgency in an attempt to establish an independent State of Khalistan. For now, the Indian Army appears to have quelled the worst of the violence. Although animosity remains among a population of nearly 20 million Sikhs, increasing employment opportunities among Sikh youths appears to be undermining the insurgency.

On the other side of India, Nagaland is the scene of what is perhaps India's longest insurgency. Located in the rugged Arakan Mountains along India's border with Myanmar (Burma), the Naga resemble the neighboring Burmese and Shan peoples. In addition to speaking their own Naga lan-

guage, they are predominantly Christian. Thus, a number of centrifugal forces are at work here. Three generations of Naga have fought the Indian government in hopes of achieving independence, an elusive dream that is unlikely to be realized. The Naga, however, have the highest birth rates in all of India and chances are that system disequilibrium may help to keep the insurgency alive. Tension with other ethnic groups also tests the fabric of Indian unity; however, the government has managed to maintain control.

To the north, the land-locked State of Nepal faces endemic economic problems and averages one new coalition government per year. Since 1995, the Maoist Nepal Communist Party (NCP) has challenged the constitutional monarchy in hopes of establishing a people's republic. The NCP launched widespread attacks in 2002 that brought the country to a standstill, but a shaky ceasefire has been in place since January 2003.

In Sri Lanka, Hindu Tamils who migrated from India to work on British plantations during the colonial period have long pressed for autonomy in the north and east. In 1983, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers) launched a separatist insurgency. A Tamil terrorist bombing campaign in the 1990s killed hundreds, including Sri Lanka's president in 1993. A permanent ceasefire was arranged in February 2002, however, and the LTTE has since dropped its demands for independence in favor of local autonomy in the north and east. Norwegian and German mediators played an invaluable role in bringing the two sides to peace talks in 2003. In April 2003, however, the Tamil Tigers withdrew from the negotiations casting a shadow over hopes that the conflict would soon be resolved.

East Asia

Often thought of for the Asian Tigers that have contributed to the region's economic growth over the past two decades, East Asia is still the scene of tensions involving North Korea and Taiwan. Like the Kashmir "border" in South Asia, the border between North Korea and South Korea is a ceasefire line,

although it is far and away the most *demarcated* border in the world. Approximately 1.7 million soldiers, including 37,000 Americans, face each other across the demilitarized zone (DMZ). Although communism is disappearing or moderating in other parts of the world, the Stalinist regime of the enigmatic Kim Jung-il remains frozen in time with no apparent intentions to change.

Environmental problems compounded by economic mismanagement led to severe food shortages in the 1990s. Some analysts believe that as many as two million North Koreans have starved to death (in a country of 21 million). Food and fuel aid from Western countries appeared to offer an avenue toward better relations; however, North Korea's admission of a clandestine nuclear weapons program in October 2002 caused relations to deteriorate rapidly. Fears of North Korea's potential development of ICBMs adds to the tension. Russia, China, and Japan, however, have a vested interest in the region's stability and may find a way to mediate the dispute. But nothing is certain in the former "Hermit Kingdom," and the situation will likely remain a major international issue for the foreseeable future.

Farther south, the dispute between China and Taiwan continues to threaten regional stability. For decades following their 1949 defeat, Nationalist Chinese forces that fled to Taiwan claimed to be the rightful government of China. Indeed, their official name is the Republic of China. More recently, the Taiwanese have expressed a desire to simply go their own way and become independent with no claim to the mainland. From China's perspective, this is far from a resolution. Taiwan is viewed as a renegade province and independence would be seen as a net loss for China and an international "loss of face" that China's leader cannot tolerate. So the issue continues to simmer with no immediate solution. In the past, the U.S. Navy has sent carrier task forces through the Taiwan Strait whenever China engaged in any saber-rattling. Given the heightened tensions between the United States and North Korea, it is possible that China will attempt to use its influence to lessen the chance of hostili-

ties. If so, they may demand a quid pro quo regarding Taiwan.

The Geography of Peace

While armed conflict continues, and will certainly continue for the foreseeable future, some regions of the world are making the transition to a geography of peace. It has been said that *democracies don't go to war*, and the spread of democracy provides avenues for peaceful resolution of disputes between States and engenders greater understanding between and among nations. Not only States, but intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and dedicated individuals are working tirelessly to prevent and/or resolve conflicts around the world.

Nuclear-Free Zones

WMD still pose an enormous threat to the security of all the world's peoples. The realization of this fact has led many States to propose that certain areas of Earth be declared off limits to nuclear weapons. The first such proposal in modern times came in 1957, when Adam Rapacki, Foreign Minister of Poland, proposed a zone in Central Europe, on both sides of the "Iron Curtain," that would be freed and kept free of all nuclear weapons as a contribution to the reduction of Cold War tensions and of the possibility of the outbreak of a hot war. The United States and its allies rejected the Rapacki Plan, and since then, with one exception, the United States has rejected every proposal for a nuclear-free zone in the inhabited world. Typically, these proposals include prohibition of the manufacture, testing, acquisition, storage, installation, or use of any nuclear weapon of any kind within the region and provide for on-site inspection and verification to ensure that the ban is strictly honored.

The first such nuclear-free zone was established in Latin America by the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco. It was not the product of abstract theorizing or a naive desire to change the world, but of a very strong and widespread perception of imminent danger of an introduction of nuclear weapons into the region by an outside power. When Algeria became independent in 1962, France was forced to remove its nuclear weapon-testing facilities from the Algerian Sahara. It then began building a new facility in French Guiana. France claimed it was to be only a scientific research base from which space vehicles would be launched, but the Latin Americans (and others) had reason to believe otherwise. After Latin America was declared a nuclear-free zone, with inspection and verification to be conducted by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Kourou station became a joint U.S.-France rocket research base and the French established their new nuclear weapon-testing facilities on Moruroa Atoll in French Polynesia.

Since then other nuclear-free zones have been proposed in various parts of the world: the Balkans, the Adriatic, and the Mediterranean; Northern Europe; the Middle East; and South Asia among others. None has actually been legally established by treaty, however, and it is known or presumed that nuclear weapons have been produced in, or introduced into, all these regions. Six areas have, however, been declared nuclear-free zones, to date: Antarctica (1959), outer space (1967), the seabed (1970), the South Pacific (1985–1986), Southeast Asia (1995), and Africa (1996). The first three are discussed in Part Seven.

Zones of Peace

Even more sweeping, and more idealistic, are the proposals that have been made over the years for **zones of peace.** The first of any consequence in modern times was the Declaration of South-East Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality adopted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in November 1971—in the midst of the Viet Nam War. It referred specifically to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, but aimed at "neutralization of South-East Asia." The UN General Assembly in November 1986 adopted the Declaration of a Zone of Peace

and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. It is much broader and more detailed than the ASEAN declaration, but nowhere mentions "neutralization" of the region. It is still unclear what significance either of these declarations will have.*

Meanwhile, the UN General Assembly adopted in December 1971 the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, and the late King Birendra of Nepal in February 1975 proposed that his country be singled out as a zone of peace. Both of these proposals have been pursued with varying degrees of vigor for three decades, yet neither has actually been implemented. The Nepal proposal is especially interesting since, unlike the "neutral" statuses of Finland, Austria, and Switzerland, it did not derive from wars with neighbors, and, unlike the "neutralist" status of the "non-aligned" countries, it had nothing to do with the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union—at least not directly. Instead, it concerned a country that had long been at peace with both of its neighbors and was not directly threatened by outside forces.

It is unclear what value all these proposals for, and declarations of, zones of peace and nuclear-free zones may have in the worldwide search for peace. Perhaps their greatest value lies in the deterrent effect they might have on extraregional powers that might be tempted to intervene in the regions and in the catalytic effect they might have on other countries and regions seeking some permanent relief from the chaos, misery, and bloodshed they have experienced since World War II.

The Post–Cold War Era

During the Cold War, superpower interest and/or involvement often fanned the

flames of conflicts. Although conflicts have not disappeared in the aftermath of the Cold War, there are encouraging signs. With the end of the Cold War, the major powers are far more likely to preach restraint. Furthermore, conflicts hamper economic integration, and States or nations with aggressive policies may find themselves diplomatically and economically isolated as punishment, as occurred in the case of the Serb-dominated government of the former Yugoslavia (now Serbia and Montenegro). Outside military interventions are more likely to feature some form of peace operations (discussed in Chapters 27 and 28). The international community generally fears the economic instability brought on by wars and is increasingly vocal in seeking peaceful resolution to all manner of conflicts.

So, while conflicts continue, the framework for conflict resolution is undergoing steady improvement and the international community is becoming increasingly involved in efforts to bring warring parties to the negotiating table. This trend, perhaps more than any other, bodes well for the future. With their spatial perspective and ability to present a holistic view, political geographers can and should take a more active role in the search for ways to prevent and/or resolve conflicts around the world.

Key Terms and Concepts

Asymmetric Conflict
Conventional Warfare
Guerrilla Warfare
Insurgency
Insurrection
Islamism
Jihad
Rebellion
Relative Deprivation
Resource Mobilization
Revolution
Secession
Strategic Minerals
System Disequilibrium
Terrorism
Weapons of Mass Destruction
Zone of Peace

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* The first meeting of States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic was held at Rio de Janeiro in July 1988. Among other things, the meeting "emphasized the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as an instrument regulating the uses of the oceans and their resources in a manner consistent with the interests of all nations."