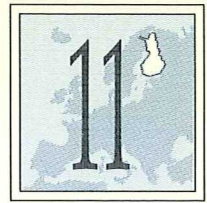


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THE NEW GEOPOLITICS

The World System and Northern
Europe seen from a Modern
Geopolitical Perspective

Osmo Tuomi

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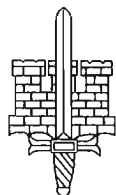
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FINLAND

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Osmo Tuomi



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1 INTRODUCTION

Although the word *geopolitics* was anathema after the Second World War because of its connection with National Socialism and German expansion policy, geopolitical considerations and geopolitical behaviour were apparent in almost all countries. The whole policy of containment adopted towards the Soviet Union was nothing more than a clear geopolitical construct, and the Soviet Union had developed its own mirror image of this setting. Slowly the expression became employable once again, but now in the more restricted sense of the competition between the two superpowers. The U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, defined geopolitics in the late 1970's as an approach that pays attention to the need for a balance of power (between the superpowers).¹

Territorial control was once an essential part of geopolitics, but now global economic forces, international organizations and the vast networks of interaction between individuals and groups are becoming increasingly independent of the boundaries between states. Does this mean that geopolitics belongs to history, or can we still perceive evidence of its existence? If we can, how does it affect foreign policy in our corner of the world? What actually is geopolitics, how it was practised in the past and what will be its characteristic features in the future?

Dr. Osmo Tuomi is a former naval officer (Captain), whose last appointment was Chief of Operations at Naval Headquarters. He has studied military sciences in the Swedish War College and political sciences at the Helsinki University. At present he works in business life and is an independent researcher.

The present paper aims to provide answers to questions of this kind. Its first aim is to analyse the old theoretical and methodological tenets of the discipline and regularities in the development of geopolitical behaviour. Secondly, it arrives at a new definition of both theoretical and practical geopolitics by analysing the features of the old geopolitics that are still relevant and the most important changes that have taken place in the forces influencing the relations between societies and space. The third part describes the influence of the "new geopolitics" at both the global and the regional level in the context of different scenarios of the world system, with the emphasis on Europe, and especially on the security policy consequences for Northern Europe. This is done against the background of recent political and economic trends in the main regions of the world, with the purpose of showing that any major geopolitical world order will be reflected in the position of the northern subregion of Europe.

After the break-up of the bipolar world system, political theories have been in a state of uncertainty. There is no single theory capable of explaining and predicting changes in world politics or the political behaviour of societies, and consequently the world can be observed through several alternative perspectives and decisions are often made under the influence of contradictory motives. This study provides the observer with a geopolitical perspective on processes currently taking place in the world system. It does not deny the merits of other viewpoints, which are usually based on integration theories and stress common interests and global interdependence, but its thesis is that geopolitical considerations still have an impact of their own.

Much of the theoretical material in this publication is dealt with more thoroughly in the author's doctoral thesis (in Finnish): *New Geopolitics: The Feasibility of the Geopolitical Perspective for the Study of International Politics in a Changing World* (1996).

2 THEORIES IN THE PAST

2.1 *Old understandings of geopolitics*

Geopolitics has had many features in common with political realism. Both of these approaches to international relations have assumed that the main actors on the global scene are states, and that the economic, military and other capacities of these states are crucial in determining whose goals will be realized. But whilst realism regarded power as a means as well as an end, the old geopolitics stressed the influence of objective geography on the spatial division of the world in that it could be assumed to constrain and directing the activities of states. In the most extreme of the old theories almost all occurrences in international politics were seen as derived from geography, and the critical parameters and concepts included those of location (*Lage*), *space* (*Raum*), *territorial control*, *power projection*, *sphere of influence*, *sphere of interest*, *accessibility* and *buffer zone*. Even today geopolitics is commonly understood as a discipline which deals with the influence of geographical space on the politics of a state.²

Geopolitics is not far removed from political geography, and the terms are sometimes used as synonyms. But there is a difference, as there also is between geopolitics and geostrategy. The French "Fondation pour les Études de Défense National" (FEDN) tries to clarify these three concepts in the following way. *Political geography* describes the rise and actions of political forces in a spacial context, *geopolitics* presents the spatial situation in the form of texts, articles and governing principles, and implicitly or explicitly signals the direction which policy should take, and *geostrategy* is the military and political strategy or course of action adopted to achieve the geopolitical ends.³

It is characteristic of geopolitical images that there is assumed to be at least latent competition between the states and regions of the world. The hypothesis put forward here is that such competition will continue to prevail in the future, for reasons to be explained later, but that the causes of the existence of competing regions and their distribution cannot be derived from geography alone. Instead, one has to consider all the

national, international, regional and local forces that are acting to mould the political landscape and the geographically bounded decisions of states and other territorial societies and unions.

2.2 *The birth of global geopolitics*

Geopolitics and geopolitical behaviour in a modern sense developed amongst the Great Powers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and most especially in Germany, the United States and Russia, all of which were experiencing a period of rapid growth. In Germany, an idealistically based national unity was being propounded as a means of attaining prosperity and greater influence in Europe, while in the United States and Russia geopolitical considerations constituted justifications and goals for their period of expansion. These considerations were developed in the course of the nineteenth century into doctrines of internal growth and the extension of influence beyond the country's own national borders, and finally into global geopolitical theories. It should be noted that geopolitical thinking grew up in a period characterized by great changes in power relations, and especially in those countries that were actively engaged in improving their status.

In Germany the phase of unification and growth was preceded by the work of several influential writers and philosophers. David von Bülow predicted in 1799 that there would be a trend in Europe towards a few large, strong states, while the small ones were doomed to disappear. A strong nation such as the Germans had to control a unified area surrounded by natural borders (Naturgrenzen) which were easy to defend. The German nation should take control of the whole Danube area, for instance, and thus isolate Russia and Turkey from each other. A balance of this kind would favour lasting peace in Europe.⁴ Johan Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) recommended a unified Germany under the leadership of Prussia, and this Germany should protect itself from commercial competition, which was the reason for inequality and war. He combined Machiavellian realism with national idealism, which also included a concept of individual liberty and social equality. His writings, especially the book "*Der Geschlossene Handelsstaat*", provided inspiration for the National Socialism of the present century.

Friedrich List (1789-1846) maintained that a sea power such as England would profit from a liberal trade policy. The only way to compete against it was to create a vast, strong, industrialized Germany under a protectionist system. The first step would be a German customs union and later a coalition of the continental states. List predicted that the United States would later be the dominant sea power, and that the world would be divided into a Pan-America and a Pan-Europe, the latter led by Germany. England would finally be forced to co-operate with Europe, and Germany and England together would rule even the Asian and Pacific areas. The development of railways was an essential condition for continental unification and expansion.⁵

Geopolitics in Russia and America was based on theoretical considerations to a lesser degree than that in Germany, for the arguments and concepts were developed while the expansion was already in progress. The extension of Russia's boundaries was carried out by military force and coercion. There were different opinions regarding the main geographical direction, but a common feature was perhaps a tendency towards coastal areas. Several influential writers recommended that Russia's centre of gravity should be moved eastwards. Railways should be built in order to be able to exploit the Pacific coast and to compete with western countries on the Chinese market. They would also serve as means to control the vast area and to Russify its most important regions.⁶

Justification for the expansion was sought in geographical facts. It was natural for the whole Eurasian plain to be under one command, and Russian settlers were needed to spread civilization among the barbaric peoples of Asia. The possession by Russia of its own religion, the idea of the "difference" between Russia and the western nations and the Slavophile concept tended to provide an ideological background whenever the borders of Russia were drawn. Feodor Dostoyevski was highly influential in emphasizing the uniqueness and mission of Holy Russia. Russia is not part of Europe as many people in the west think, it simply has a European appearance.⁷

In the United States, economic growth and the increase in the European population created an atmosphere which was favourable for notions of an American empire. President Thomas Jefferson in particular spoke up in favour of an Empire, separate

from Europe, that would represent liberty, welfare and a difference relative to other countries. The vast continent and its hidden resources should be taken in into use, exploration was favoured, and the Pacific coast was seen as the natural boarder of the country in the west.⁸ The geopolitical concept of the *Western Hemisphere* was created in connection with the *Monroe doctrine* in 1822, when the president declared, that all European attempts to extend their political systems to the new continent were to be considered a threat to the United States. A period of vigorous, bellicose expansion in the middle of the century gained its ideological justification from the idea of a *Manifest Destiny*, in which the white Americans were destined to spread democracy and human rights across the whole continent.

Economic growth was founded on mercantilism and protectionism, and the country was bound together with a railway network. The United States was considered to represent values and qualities that would attract neighbouring islands and continental areas.⁹ Since the 1860's the USA has emphasized its exceptionally peaceful brand of imperialism and the attractiveness of its own virtues.

2.3 *Anglo American theories and their influence*

A global maritime doctrine was first put forward by Alfred T. Mahan, whose work "The Influence of Sea Power upon History" (1890) was greatly appreciated among the political and military elites in both the United States and England. He perceived the key to global leadership in control over the lines of communication at sea and over world trade. A favourable geographical location with good harbours was a necessary condition.¹⁰ He combined the idea of commercial expansion with the necessity to reinforce the naval power of the United States, and regarded the area from China to the Mediterranean, the *Middle Strip*, as commercially important. He strongly recommended the construction of the Panama Canal and the acquisition of various Pacific islands situated on the route from the USA to China and Southeast Asia. There is clear evidence that Mahan's ideas influenced the American policy of expansion, and special attention has been drawn to their influence on the

thinking of Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Even the Senate debated over Mahan's ideas.¹¹

The most famous geopolitical writer of all was Sir Halford Mackinder, who published the central idea of his theory in a discourse and an article "The Geographical Pivot of History" in 1904. This theory views world history as a continuous struggle between land power and sea power, between the horsemen of the steppes and the seafaring people of the surrounding insular world. The land power is situated in the fulcrum of the Eurasian continent, the pivot of history. The pivot region could become a major sea power if Germany were to ally herself with Russia. He advocated that the maritime powers, including France, should join forces and lead Germany to adopt a continental course, and away from the temptation to turn eastwards.¹²

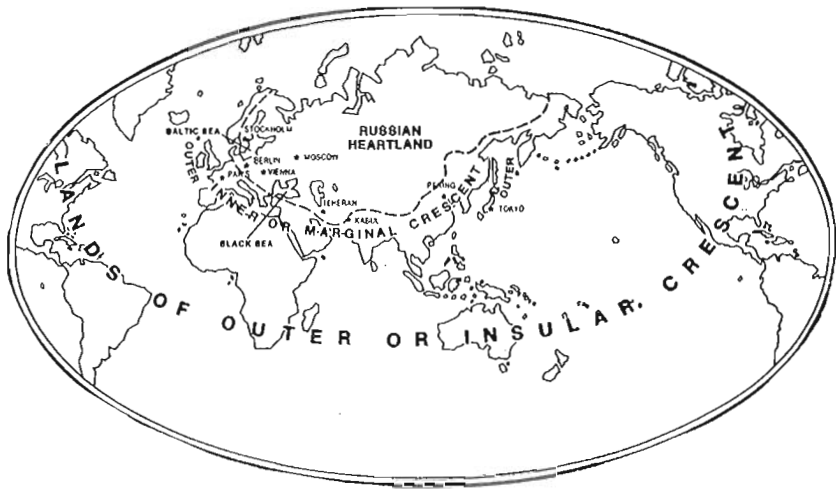


Fig. 1. Mackinder's world in 1919

Mackinder later gave his Pivot of History the title Heartland. After the First World War he included Eastern Europe, the Baltic

Sea area and the Black Sea in the Heartland, and suggested that a strong continental power could use these seas to develop a capacity fit to challenge the sea power globally. Command of Eastern Europe was a key factor for dominance of the Heartland. Russia had been the central power there up to that time, but Mackinder saw a real danger in form of an eventual alliance between Russia and Germany.¹³

Consequently, Mackinder advised the peace negotiators at Versailles to separate Germany and the Soviet Union with a buffer zone of independent states to prevent the rise of a powerful Heartland. Poland should have a guaranteed access to the Baltic Sea, because the buffer must be complete. A number of politicians shared Mackinder's opinion, and a buffer zone was created. The British prime minister, Lord Curzon, considered such a zone necessary to separate the maritime British world from the continental areas dominated by Russia.¹⁴

During the Second World War there was an "unholy alliance" between the maritime powers and the Soviet Union. Old geopolitical arguments were still used to motivate the people. In the United States it was important to convince the nation that the Western Hemisphere extended to Western Europe, and Mackinder then described the North Atlantic area as the "Midland Ocean", which in time became a geographical framework for the "Atlantic Alliance".¹⁵ Mackinder's influence continued after the war. Opinion has it that either Mackinder's ideas were totally outdated but his notion of "Heartland" was exploited to serve other political goals, or else that Mackinder did not create the Cold War strategy but that this state of affairs in any case brought certain of his theses to the fore.¹⁶ The Department of State Bulletin in 1964 nevertheless recognized that whatever the case might have been, the whole containment policy of the United States was inseparably tied up with Mackinder's thesis as presented at the Royal Geographical Society 60 years earlier.¹⁷

The pictures espoused by the national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, in 1986 are very similar to that of Mackinder in 1919, leading President Ronald Reagan to put matters in the following way: "The first historical dimension of our strategy is relatively simple, clear cut and immensely sensible. It is the conviction that the United States' most basic

national security interests would be endangered if a hostile state or group of states were to dominate the Eurasian land mass, the area of the globe often referred as the world's heartland..."

Another famous geopolitical writer during the Second World War, Nicholas Spykman, developed upon the ideas of Mackinder. In his opinion the key to world dominance lay in the rich rim of the Eurasian continent that acted as a buffer between the Heartland and the maritime powers. It was in the American national interest to prevent the unification of this rim under one command. He saw that the Japanese and German spheres of influence had to be eliminated, but these countries should not be destroyed entirely, as they were needed to resist the predicted expansion of the Soviet Union after the War.¹⁸ Balanced power relations should be created between the European countries, and Germany, which would still have the greatest power resources should be counterbalanced with France and Eastern Europe.¹⁹ Plans were conceived at the end of the war to make Germany a scattered farming federation (the Morgenthau Plan), but geopolitical considerations revived in the spirit of Spykman turned opinion towards restrengthening the country.

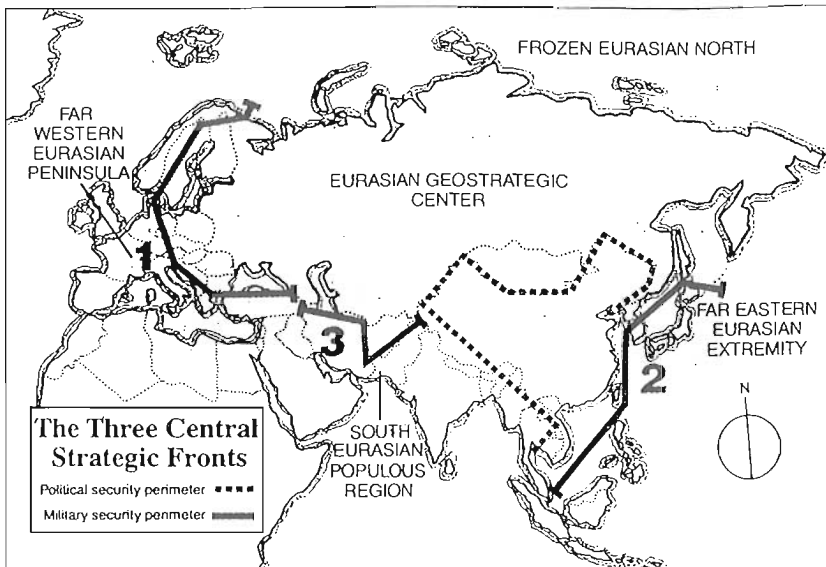


Fig. 2 Geopolitics of the Cold War by Zbigniew Brzezinski: Game Plan 1986

2.4 Theories and practice in Germany

German geopolitical thinking since the end of the nineteenth century has been nurtured by fear of a closed location and a preoccupation with the sufficiency of the nation's living space. Two schools, *Weltpolitik* and *Lebensraum*, came into existence. The adherents of the former recommended colonialism, world trade and a strong navy, while the latter called for a strong position in Europe and saw the natural direction for expansion to be in the east. The *Lebensraum* school proved the stronger, although both had some influence in practice.

It was a political geographer, Friedrich Ratzel, who created the concepts used later in geopolitical theories. He wrote about the *organic nature of states*, by which he meant that growth and movement were natural phenomena. All human societies struggle with the outside world to ensure an independent life for themselves. Small societies are obliged to join together into larger units, and a global movement is in operation which is transforming the whole world into one huge economic organism. The whole energy and tenacity of a nation is needed to preserve its cultural and political independence in the face of this movement towards concentration.²⁰

The best known representative of German geopolitics between the world wars was the General and Professor Karl Haushofer. He maintained that states were engaged in a competition for *Lebensraum*, and that growth depended on possessing the capacity to absorb one's smaller neighbours. Natural borders had to be favoured in each phase of the expansion. The great aim of geopolitics was a reasonable division of the *Lebensraum* of the whole world. Geopolitics should provide a basis for the exercise of political skill.²¹

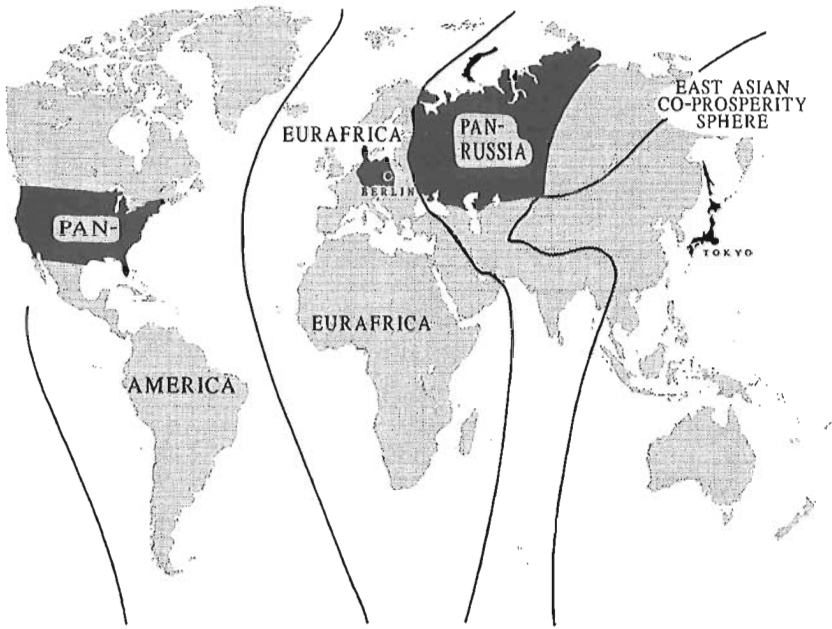


Fig. 3. Pan areas, according to Haushofer (Strategic Atlas, Penguin Books 1985).

Haushofer was influenced by Mackinder. A state that could dominate Europe should be capable of extending from the Rhine to the Urals, and accordingly Haushofer saw the Slavic nations as potential allies. Since self-sufficiency was important, Haushofer predicted that the world would develop towards three *pan-areas*, Pan-America, Pan-Eurafrica and Pan-Asia, the self-sufficiency of which would be guaranteed by their size and the fact that they extended to all climatological zones.²²

The relation between geopolitical theories and the conduct of the foreign policy of the Third Reich was a dual one, in which some theoretical considerations were accepted and others disregarded. The German leadership adopted the following ideas from the theoreticians:²³

- Germany's security should be based on a strong Central Europe. The threats posed by France and the Soviet Union should be eliminated and the whole German speaking population should be united.

- The border of Germany in the west should be moved westwards to "Naturgrenzen", and it should also correspond to geopolitical facts.
- In the east, Germany should dominate and reorganize Eastern Europe.

The geopoliticians had an impact on policy up to the beginning of 1939. They published an influential magazine, "Zeitschrift für Geopolitik", and Karl Haushofer was a personal friend of Rudolf Hess. Public opinion was influenced by maps, writings, radio programmes and press comments originating from the geopoliticians,²⁴ and Hitler's "Mein Kampf" made use of a number of half digested ideas and concepts taken from the geopoliticians, e.g. that of *Lebensraum*.²⁵ But in 1939 the party began to implement its own policy, and finally Karl Haushofer was arrested several times and the Zeitschrift was suppressed. Haushofer had recommended an alliance with the countries of Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, whereas Hitler had planned an alliance with Britain against Russia. The "Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement" on spheres of interest, signed on 22.8.1939, and the neutrality agreement with Japan and the Soviet Union of 13.4.1941 seemed to be following the "geopolitical path". But only two months after the latter agreement Germany launched its attack eastwards. Arguments that sounded geopolitical were used to justify the engagement on two fronts, but in this, as in many other cases, Hitler's ideological illusions surpassed the theoretical results.

2.5 The geopolitical character of Russia and the Soviet Union

During the Soviet regime ideology denied the influence of geography on societies. Geopolitics was defined as a tool of imperialism, and use of the word "Eurasia" was banned in political and historical connections. A short exception to this rule was the Eurasian movement led by Pyotr N. Savitsky in the 1920's, which stressed the uniqueness of Eurasia and the importance of creating a continental economic area of this kind that was almost independent of trade in the maritime world. Some exchange was still thought advantageous, however, and therefore a harbour was needed on the Persian Gulf, for

instance.²⁶ The ideas of self sufficiency and the need for harbours lived on even after the fall of the movement.

After the Revolution communism became a formal legitimization of the old geopolitical behaviour. The empire strove for internal growth and strengthening of its power by centralized rule, until the focus of politics turned outwards. The construction of railways continued, mainly according to plans dating from the previous century. The coastal areas were bound together by a canal system that first connected the Baltic Sea with the White Sea and the Caspian Sea and was finally completed in 1952 with the Volga-Don canal that gave access to the Sea of Azov. The access to the oceans was considered important in order to enhance the economy, stimulate scientific research and facilitate connections with friendly countries.²⁷ Geopolitical behaviour was militarily inclined. After the Second World War a sphere of influence was created in Central Europe to serve Russian economic and military interests. This zone provided for both forward defence and the concentration of invasion troops.

As a whole the history of Russia and the Soviet Union is considered to furnish empirical evidence of "realistic" geopolitics in which power, distance and expansion are connected. Whenever the country has been strong, it has pushed its borders and spheres of influence outwards, while in periods of weakness it has retreated from its more remote areas.²⁸

3 GEOPOLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

3.1 *Phases of geopolitical conduct*

In the light of historical evidence it is possible to construct a model to demonstrate how geopolitical thinking and behaviour develop. As a starting point it can be assumed that there exists a certain geopolitical world order, but that power relations begin to change due to uneven economic growth, technical breakthroughs, political upheaval or the break-up of an empire. The situation becomes unstable and the system starts to change. In the first phase all the countries affected by the change have to redefine their positions to match the new situation or new expectations, in other words they have to determine their new place relative to other countries. The geographical dimension of this sense of position is often called a *geopolitical code*, which means a subjective comprehension of one's location (quarter, region, reference group) and direction of interests, goals, possibilities and threats. In Germany the code was a leading position in Central and East Europe and the right to "Lebensraum", while in the USA it was this country's "mission and destiny" on the American Continent. Geopolitical behaviour has often been based more on the ideological component of the geopolitical code than on economic or strategic realities.

In the second phase, countries improving their positions have normally promoted internal growth in order to strengthen their economic and other capabilities. This means such things as industrialization programmes, exploitation of the resources of the whole country, communication networks from the perspective of the centre and protection of one's own economy. The goal is to become competitive, or stronger than one's competitors.

The third step is to unify the country culturally, or at least create a community spirit. This is a prerequisite for success in the face of economic, political or military competition. Any increase in influence always needs a cause that the majority of the people can accept. In the examples described earlier, the cause was nationalism (Germany), the orthodox-slavonic "differences" (Russia) or liberty and democracy (USA). Among other

ideologies that expanding states have deliberately used are Islam (the Ottoman Empire), catholicism (Spain), the Habsburgian heritage (Austria) and the enlightenment (France).²⁹ Symbols of the ideology are created: great temples or dominant official buildings, flags and other emblems. The different cultures within the regime are fused or assimilated to the dominating one, and internal borders are dissolved and outer ones strengthened. An atmosphere of "different from and better than the Others" has to be created. The great powers in particular want to appear as defenders of a good cause and to believe that they are promoting a better and safer world.³⁰

If resources allow, the fourth phase is geographical expansion or enlargement of the country's spheres of influence and interest. This can be accomplished with the aid of economic benefits and sanctions (attraction), political and ideological propaganda (Anschluss) or political and military power (coercion). A common feature has been a striving towards natural borders and lines of marine communication.³¹

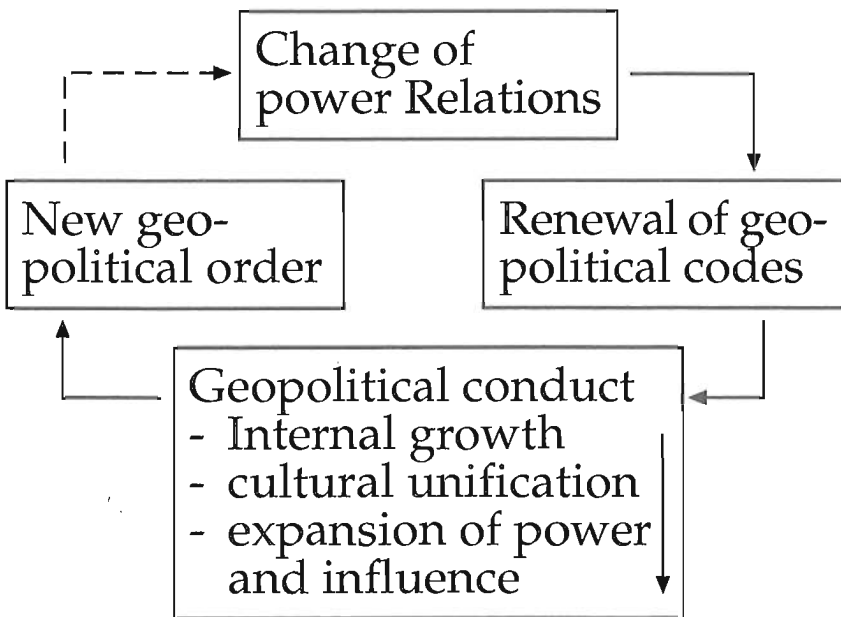


Fig. 4. Phases of geopolitical behaviour

The goal of the extension, either access and exploitation or power and influence, often determines the means adopted. France had the latter in mind when expanding and acquiring colonies, and consequently subjugated the new areas directly under its own administration and promoted the French language and culture. Britain, on the other hand, was mostly aiming at trade and economic benefits, and therefore often contented itself to cooperation with local governments or rulers.³²

3.2 Motives and arguments for the mastering of space

The manifestations mastery over living space are political authority, economic dominance and military control. All these form part of geopolitics, given that there is a geographically defined target. The goals for mastery are either preservation of one's own regime or expansion of dominance and influence, and the reason behind it is a feeling that mastery and control are linked to prosperity and influence. Consequently such thoughts seldom exist without there being heavy pressure for a state to surrender part of its territory. Rudolf Kjellén, one of the fathers of geopolitics, wrote that its easier for a state to give up human lives than possessions.³³

Is expansion a "natural" part of a state's behaviour? At least the tendency appears in various guises. In many regions there is a pure, realistic tendency to grow at one's neighbour's expense. On the other hand, democratic, industrialized countries often use political and economic means to secure their interests. If there is expansion, it becomes apparent in increased political influence, economic dependence or control over social values. Generally speaking a propensity for growth – in numbers, value, area, quality – is well rooted in all human societies. Companies want to become bigger, to capture a larger share of the market or to branch out into new markets.

There are theories that try to explain this desire with regard to the state: (1) Marxist theories that link imperialism with capitalism, implying that the state is furthering the interests of the owners of capital by securing trade and investments in foreign markets, (2) theories grounded in about nationalism, which consider that the vital energy of the nation state almost

automatically turns towards expansionism, and (3) theories that set out from persistent features of human nature.³⁴

It has been said that power in politics is the equivalent of money in the economy. One can extend this comparison in the following way. The maximizing of profits and market shares is a common goal in economics, but it is an ambition that is often attenuated because of a lack of resources, fear of counteractions or restrictions and regulations imposed by society. In the same manner a political society may suppress its expansive tendencies because of limited resources, a fear of reactions from other societies, international agreements or common interests.

What, then, are the justifications offered for territorial control? Peter Slowe lists five sources of political power behind such control: might, right, nationhood and ethnicity, legality and hegemonic legitimacy.³⁵ We add a sixth reason to this list, one which is by no means new but is especially applicable to modern trade blocs: economic necessity.

Might means the direct, unconcealed pursuit of power and a leading local, regional or global position. Lying behind it there may still be the image of an organicist nation state, with the assumption that it is natural for a successful state to grow and achieve dominance. The most desirable areas are those with natural resources or good communications. The personal ambitions of a state's leaders can also propel it towards dominance by might. Positions of this kind exist nowadays chiefly in the Third World.

Right means the mobilization of people who believe that their society is entitled to a certain territory and status. The feeling of justification can be very persistent, as in Northern Ireland or the Middle East. Both England and Argentina still consider that they have a right over the Falkland Islands / Islas Malvinas, and there are numerous comparable cases all over the world, e.g. around China.

The power vested in nationhood and ethnicity has been very influential. A nation state is a strong human society which can effectively mobilize its resources, whilst a state as such is no more than a legal entity. A nation state can under certain circumstances demand expansion on the pretext of national unity.

The legality aspect focuses on the borders between legal units. The signatories to treaties often have different opinions

about the legality, relevance and mutual significance of these documents. The United Nations has been trying in recent times to solve the claims over sea areas and the sea bed according to legal principles, but with only partial success, and there are many legal disputes still running, a good example of which is the ownership of the islands and waters in the South China Sea.

Hegemonic legitimacy refers to the acceptance of power differences as a fact which gives special rights to powerful states. In Finland, President Paasikivi spoke at length in the 1940's and 1950's about the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union. Hegemony would not be possible without tacit acceptance of this legitimacy. The United States has actively adopted the role of a world power with special duties and rights to maintain order, and most other states acknowledge this.

Economic necessity has accounted for geopolitical expansion even in the past. Mahan recommended expansion one hundred years ago on the grounds of the growth in production in the United States.³⁶ Nowadays there is a general opinion that national economies are too small for global competition. It is only within large common markets that it is possible to sustain welfare and successful competition. Similarly it is said that the control of economic forces is possible only within a wide area that also has a political dimension. At the same time, general security would be enhanced by creating a common foreign and security policy and a common defence.

3.3 Relation between theories and practice

A dual relation exists between theoretical models and reality. One question is how well a theory describes the real world, and the critics of geopolitics have concentrated on this aspect, especially on the coarse simplification of the real world that this entails. This question will be dealt with in the next chapter. The other question is how the theories influence political decisions, examples of which were presented in Chapter 2. These examples mainly described circumstances in which a theoretician had direct contacts with the political elite or commanded vast support through his writings, but there are also cases where an influential politician himself has created geopolitical images and expressions. Such figures have included President Theodore

Roosevelt, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the national-security advisors Zbigniew Brzezinski and Anthony Lake. In Chile, President Augusto Pinochet had been Professor of Geopolitics at the War Academy and had himself published a book entitled "Geopolítica" (1974). It is often difficult to establish a direct liaison between theory and practice, but the existence of a geopolitical world of ideas, as a result of impacts from many sources, is still evident. A state and its leadership normally embrace a geopolitical code or a geographical framework in which they address matters of foreign policy.³⁷ Those responsible for major decisions have a subjective picture of the world in mind, a *mental map*,³⁸ and this does not only concern the leadership, as national discussion of foreign policy is limited in general by a socially accepted hegemonic geopolitical view which is influenced and maintained by the media, e.g. by popular publications like the Readers Digest.³⁹ Theories can have an important indirect influence on this process.

A third kind of relation between theory and practise is the use of geopolitical or semigeopolitical expressions and arguments for propaganda purposes, to conceal the real objects or to make acts of policy acceptable. Germany before and during the Second World War is a good example of this, but certainly not the only one.

3.4 Criticism of the old geopolitics and changes in world politics

Geopolitical theories were already subjected to much criticism in the period between the two world wars, on the grounds that they attributed the most important activities of states solely to certain fixed geographical conditions and that they compared states with living organisms, employing biological and physical phrases such as 'heart', 'nerves' and 'power lines' (Kraftlinien).⁴⁰ This whole concept was later described as useless, as meaning either everything or nothing in terms of world politics.

Several books and articles have been published in recent years that can be grouped together under the heading of "critical geopolitics", the findings of which must be taken into account when analysing geopolitics as a science. All in all, this criticism focuses mainly on the way in which the complexity of the world

was reduced to a simple bipolar picture, with no input of genuine geographical information. "Exhortations about heartland substituted for real human geography, in its messy complexity. The result, most spectacularly in the case of the United States, was a foreign policy driven by simplistic visions of containment and domino reasoning rather than a comprehensive grasp of the complexity of regions and places".⁴¹

Other reviewers note that geopolitical descriptions are always selective and differ from the facts. Geography is not used objectively, apart from ideology and politics, but becomes part of the power discussion. Some scholars would like to abandon the whole idea that the influence of geography in politics could be assessed objectively, and have suggested that geopolitics should be defined in terms of discursive analyses of how the situation is maintained and legitimized by the rhetoric and policy of a few core powers.⁴²

The relevance of geopolitics has become even more questionable since the recent changes in world politics and economics. First of all, the ideological, political and military confrontation between East and West has ended as such, making the respective geopolitical models irrelevant. But this does not mean that other kinds of area-bound descriptions of the world system are useless. One geopolitical world order has always been followed by another. The big question of today is in that of how the military alliances, economic blocs and political communities will take shape and where they should extend.

John Lewis Gaddis makes sense when writing about American policy, in that he maintains that in order to recognize American interests in the present world, the first thing one needs is a geopolitical map.⁴³ Henry Kissinger points out that the geopolitical containment doctrine was clear and understandable, but now, when "enlargement of democracy" has been presented as an alternative to containment, it remains unclear what this means in practice. "Whom does it imply we should support? With what means? Over what period and at what risk?"⁴⁴

The second major difference relative to the situation in the past has been the gradual development of relations between the western industrialized nations. The probability of an all-out war between the Western European countries, for example, within a predictable period of time is commonly estimated to be close to

zero. There are several explanations for the futility of any such war. One is supranationalism and a feeling of community between people living in different welfare states, i.e. the people simply could not be motivated to make war on each other, and another argument is that the costs of any conquest would vastly exceed the gains to be made from it. The benefits of an imaginary expansion are already available now, or can be achieved by other means.⁴⁵ These arguments must be taken into consideration when defining the geopolitics of today, but they still do not remove the element of competition pursued by other means, nor are they valid for other parts of the world.

The third profound development in the world system concerns the nature of economics, in two senses. One is the internationalization of economics, the fact that states have more or less lost control over economic forces now that the obstacles to trade and the movement of capital have been lifted. As geopolitics has been concerned with the state, it is widely believed that one of the main reasons for geopolitical behaviour has disappeared as well. This view is actually part of the "pluralistic paradigm", which denies the dominant influence of the state in other respects, too. This challenge to geopolitics will be discussed later.

The second economic aspect stresses the significance of technology and education rather than spatially bound material resources. This "new growth theory" maintains that the increase in labour and capital explains only a small part of economic growth, and that the main contributory factors are technical progress and human capital. Ideas and innovations cross borders and knowhow moves rapidly between growth centres. The possession of a large territory would thus not be a very tempting goal for a state. Japan and Germany are often mentioned as examples of countries with a small area coupled with high capacity and substantial influence.

The notion of the diminishing importance of size is true, but only to a certain extent, possession can be replaced with assured access. Both of the above mentioned countries had a great interest in financing the Gulf War. Improvements in technology are mainly aimed at material production, and material growth is still dependent on access to natural resources and locations. The availability of raw materials, energy, labour, transport and

marketing areas are all unevenly distributed, in in this sense geography still matters. The “rims” of the continents are commonly the most prosperous areas in the world and within individual countries, and non-material growth parameters are also concentrated in these areas, together with high quality production. Some of these growth centres straddle national boundaries. This provides a hint that competition, and along with it new patterns of geopolitics, may be partly taking shape between areas other than states.

4 THE CONTENT OF THE NEW GEOPOLITICS

4.1 *Definition*

It is essential that a new species of geopolitical thinking should take note of the valuable insights provided by the critics. The old theoretical views of an eternal confrontation between Sea Power and Land Power are no longer defensible, for there are several other possible scenarios for future competition between geographical areas. The fact that such competition is inescapable will be demonstrated later.

The notion of an overwhelming impact of geography on politics must be rejected, and account must be taken of all the main forces that influence the formation of spatially bounded political units and their mutual relations. Geography exerts mainly an indirect influence on this. One theory maintains that physical geography largely determines economic geography, which in turn regulates social geography, which in turn influences politics.⁴⁶ The parameters on which geography influences economics are distances, lines of communication, accessibility, transport costs, subjective ideas on the ease of intercourse between given places and the aggregation of economic activities,⁴⁷ and these same parameters also have a direct impact on politics when they are evaluated for the purposes of economic and military planning.

Secondly, the argumentation behind the recent changes indicates that the old geopolitical approach must be renewed in many other ways, too. First of all, we must remember that societies that are smaller or larger than nation states, may also act geopolitically in the future. Transnational or multinational societies developed by economic and political integration may commit their participants to mutual cooperation, interdependence and solidarity, thereby reducing their internal tensions. But when such integration aims at increasing their influence and strengthening their competitiveness relative to other comparable entities, geopolitical behaviour can be

expected, the perceptibility of which depends of the harshness of the competition. One prerequisite for a geopolitics of this kind is that the political dimension of the entity should be "large enough". Another change, the diminishing role of power politics and the use of military force between western democracies, must similarly be taken into account, as must the increasing importance of trade policy and other economic considerations. In other parts of the world, however, straightforward power still matters, and the struggle for physical, areal control is continuing.

It has been correctly pointed out that geopolitical images are subjective, so that each of the states or other actors will behave in accordance with its own perceptions. In spite of this, theoretical geopolitical research striving at objective results can be useful. Therefore suggestions that geopolitics can be defined only in terms of discussion are unacceptable. Instead, we have to distinguish theoretical geopolitics, studying both measurable and estimated parameters for boundaries between geopolitical units, from practical behaviour, which is based on the individual picture of the world embraced by each political actor.

With these aspects in mind, geopolitics can be defined in a new way to corresponding to the conditions of the contemporary world.

Theoretical geopolitics studies the relation between physical space and international politics, develops models for the spatial division of the world into cooperating and competing parts for historical, economic and political reasons, and analyses how the participants interpret the political, economic and military consequences of this division.

Geopolitical behaviour in the real world can be defined in the following way:

The geopolitics of a state or other territorially defined society means its pursuit of geographically dimensioned aims that are connected with its economic and political position, security and culture.

To make it shorter,

Theoretical geopolitics is the study of spatial political division, its causes and effects. Practical geopolitics refers to the interpretation of the world's division into competing political and economic entities and to the advancement of space related objects.

The actors are states, smaller societies and larger unions with "enough" of a political nature, and a set of forces are recognized that mould the geopolitical world system in addition to the

indirect influence of physical geography, the most important of these being political, economic and cultural forces.

4.2 *Political forces*

One major question is whether foreign policy and national interests still matter, or are we moving towards a pluralistic world which is no longer directed by the power of states but by complex social movements. It has been aptly pointed out that there are threats that cannot be resolved with force but need cooperation instead. But the pluralistic view goes further than that. It describes the world as a network of actors which are interdependent on each other, so that the state is only one among the multitude of such actors. It is also claimed that their economic interdependence is so great that an independent economic policy is not possible, or that national economies will soon cease to exist.⁴⁸ The opposite view is that there is no real challenge to the present world system based on nation states, nor any indication of what could succeed this system.⁴⁹

If a pluralistic state of affairs were to prevail, there would not be much space for geopolitics either. The supporters of this argument believe that free trade has removed all endeavours towards supremacy. This argument has been raised in various forms at least since Norman Angeli published his work "The Great Illusion" in 1911, but it fails to recognize that neo liberalism and the ideology of market access economics are based on control over territories and interactional flows. World trade has in fact to be steered in order to create and sustain a well operating network and common rules, and so far this has not been successful without territorial control, while conversely the tendency towards territorialism is often a result of economic competition, development having led to a situation in which sustaining of the network has taken up a disproportionately large share of the total effort.⁵⁰ Nation states and the forms of international regulation created and sustained by them still have a fundamental role in governing the economy.⁵¹

Neo liberalism claims that the markets reward the most efficient and punish the slothful, but in reality the end result is a coercive hierarchy of "greater" and "lesser" states and regions.⁵² The differences in income level between the rich and the poor in

terms of both individuals and places continue to widen on a global basis. Spatially organized political control is therefore necessary to give security for individual people and to protect empowering communities. It is not appropriate to leave these tasks to market forces, and ideas of a global society are as utopistic as ever. Where the necessary authority should be housed, is a matter currently under discussion, but it can be said in any case that all the time the nation state or some other kind of political entity is the institution which gives physical and other security in an unsafe world, and the institution with which people can identify themselves, political forces and the political goals of territorial societies will continue to exist.

A related question concerns the usefulness of military force in a world which has a multitude of mutual connections. The use of violence is truly outdated concept in relations between the western countries, which form a "security community" of their own, but it would be a common mistake to conclude that a high percentage of foreign trade or foreign investment within the BNP leads as such to peaceful relations.⁵³ The real reason is the similarity in the values upheld by these countries and their democratic regimes.⁵⁴ In other connections, however, the use of military force by the western democracies is still highly probable. These countries have important global interests, mainly economic ones, which they will be prepared to defend with force if needed. The real reasons for the intervention by the western world in the Gulf War were the maintaining of world trade and the assuring of a flow of oil. At the regional and subregional levels the use of force may even be easier after the retreat of the two superpowers than it was before. A strong global hegemony or a global contest has often emerged in conjunction with a lack of regional supremacy. Now, after the collapse of the bipolar world, a contest for regional domination is arising, e.g. in East and South Asia, and an arms race is going on there. There are now 100 times more weapons in Africa than there were forty years ago.⁵⁵

Which of these views, the political state centred one or the pluralistic one, predominates in the real world? Increased interdependence and the establishment of democratic regimes are factors which have softened the geopolitical behaviour of the highly industrialised countries in their mutual relations, but the opposite trend is often evident in many parts of the world. The

reason for the first of these trends does not lie naturally or automatically in the globalization of economies and the increase in trade, but in conscious political decisions to remove the obstacles to cooperation. Hence a reversal would also be possible. At a time of negative growth, and if basic national interests were endangered, these countries could be tempted to give precedence to their own interests, which in turn would make their geopolitical behaviour more visible. Serious internal disturbances and a retreat from the democratic ideal could also effect a change in this respect.

It is evident that competition between states is partly being replaced by competition between economic blocs, which could potentially develop into political blocs. Whether these blocs could, now or in the future, be treated as geopolitical entities is a matter that will be considered later. Borders are still important, as seen from the fact that the drawing of these in the "right" places has been the main problem in the area of the former Yugoslavia. Likewise, political dissension between Japan and Russia over the Kuril Islands is seen as a serious obstacle to cooperation.

National or alliance-centred political territorial goals are still visible even in Europe, where the extension of NATO and the EU on the one hand and the status of Russia and the existence of its sphere of interest on the other are key questions. The moves to enlarge NATO and the EU are aimed at expanding the zone of established democracy in Europe, but at the same time they are a matter of prestige and power. The element of competition for influence in the expansion of NATO and the EU's endeavour for greater political and economic weight are clearly discernible. The geopolitical features of Russian thinking are commonly recognized, but western aspirations are often viewed solely as unambitious steps towards promoting security.

4.3 Economic forces

The global economic order can be looked at from two perspectives. It can be perceived either as an independent network without any notable political control, or as an interaction between national economies. The first view is connected with the neo-liberalist ideology and the latter with protectionism and neo-

mercantilism.⁵⁶ The difficulty lies in the fact that current political leaders mostly espouse the former view but have to take more or less overt measures in accordance with the latter in order to provide security for their citizens. The Nobel prize winners in economics in 1993 and 1966, respectively, Douglas North and James Mirrlees, were concerned about the problem of how to achieve effective markets and at the same time attenuate the drawbacks of the modern economy. The belief that the markets are always right or that everything will be arranged provided the state does not interfere is nonsense in their opinion, but there are also lot of unnecessary regulation. An ideal mixture still does not exist anywhere.

The question of free trade or protectionism is crucial to the art of geopolitical behaviour and the degree to which it is practised. Nations have resorted to protectionism in the course of history when consolidating their power, but as their capacity to compete has grown, they have changed their stance in favour of free trade, which has resulted in softer geopolitical behaviour, with power, coercion and possession giving way to influence, attraction and access.

The United States created the present free trade regime in order to keep the western countries united against the Soviet Union. It was not an economic question in the first place but a political one.⁵⁷ The system still prevails, and is controlled by a hegemonic structure consisting of the United States and other states, institutions and organizations that advocate a similar policy.⁵⁸ Now the global economy is altering power relations and giving rise to new kinds of territorial societies and spatial settings. States, economic blocks and regions compete to offer high-level training and education, low wages and social benefits, low taxation, good infrastructure, large internal markets, good access to external markets etc. The present economic conditions, mixed with political aspirations, tend to favour continent-sized economic blocs that are able to sustain competition among their industries. It should be remembered, however, that this trend is the outcome of innumerable individual profit calculations that do not take much account of social or environmental costs or of real transport costs, while the communications infrastructure is mainly provided by the taxpayers. Since there exists no optimum size for a production site, company or market, the result depends

on the bounds within which the calculations are performed and which costs are included.

The benefits of the free trade system are currently under discussion. Organizations like the OECD or WTO and the western governments are commonly of the opinion that the resulting growth more than compensates for the drawbacks of free trade, and that some people and some regions should make sacrifices in order to guarantee a better future. People themselves are less mobile than money, goods and ideas, however, and the majority of the world's population are unable to move about in response to temporary changes in the economy. Thus an OECD publication warns that one should not underestimate the possibility that governments may be forced to give up the economic and social benefits of interdependence and to adopt protectionism or an isolation policy.⁵⁹

The reasons for the eventual change in attitudes cannot be discussed in detail here, but its sources could include regional inequalities in development, instability caused by movements of capital, collapse of the financing system based on expectations, imbalances in trade or a rise in international crime. The U.S. Vice-President Al Gore stated at a GATT meeting in 1994 that the whole trading system will be bound to collapse if it is impossible to get people all over the world to support it.

The competition between states and economic blocs would obviously become more open if protectionism were to prevail, for the only option for a society under such circumstances would be to develop its own economic capacities under the protection of its internal markets. If the consistent features of geopolitical behaviour described earlier were to be repeated, this would mean efforts towards cultural unification, territorial extension or the expansion of spheres of influence in order to provide each economy with the largest possible base. In the light of changes in attitudes and the development of information channels, control over territories outside one's own borders would be based not on military might but mainly on economic means. Large economic blocks would secure their vital interests with military power, however, even outside their own borders, as has already been seen, and if the blocks were unable to cope with their uneven internal spatial development, they would break up into smaller units.

4.4 Culture

It would be a serious mistake to consider that the future spatial division of the world will be a result of political aspirations and global economic forces alone. Culture is and will be one of the autonomous fields of international politics and also an arena of competition. The ability of a culture to create favourable rules and institutions for international relations is an important source of power,⁶⁰ and global interdependence and the emphasis on culture or ethnicity stand in an inverse ratio one to another. The internationalization and movements of people, information, goods and services often creates a reaction in the form of a tendency towards cultural autonomy.⁶¹

The highest level of cultural identity is the civilization, of which 7 or 8 major examples can be distinguished in the world. Some researchers, such as Samuel Huntington, consider civilizations and cultural differences to be the most important factors in the shaping of future geopolitical divisions. World history is more a history of civilizations than of states, and the main source of conflicts in the future will not be economics or political ideology but culture.⁶² In this last respect Huntington is drawing conclusions for which there is no clear evidence. A clash of civilizations is not inevitable, but culture is one of the main instigators of different geographically distributed societies and can be invoked to mobilize people behind political objects.

According to Johan Galtung, the coherent technique of writing, oriental religions and stress on collectivism are such significant cultural features in East and South-East Asia that they may lead to the establishment of the most populous coalition in the world. Galtung sees cultural differences as especially persistent in Europe, where they still assiduously follows the borders that took shape in the 11th century between Catholicism and Orthodoxy and between Christianity and Mohammedanism. The fronts in the Cold War were situated in the wrong place from a cultural point of view, forcing Poland and Hungary into the camp of the Orthodox world, which is why the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact began in these countries.⁶³ The language barrier, a new "Iron Curtain" between east and west in Europe, is now stronger than it has ever been since the Second World War. For example, 90% of all translations from foreign languages into Finnish are made

from English, Swedish, German or French originals, and only 1% from Russian ones. This has effects on the world of ideas in all fields of life.⁶⁴ The differences between Northern and Southern Europe have led to suggestions of a Northern Block of EU members, and it was earlier customary in the Nordic countries to point out the differences between their values and those of other European countries.

Culture is related to the economic system. Asian ways of trading are quite different from those in Europe, Japanese regulatory structures being imitated to a large extent in the other Asian countries. The relations between government, company, family and individual are based on Confucian and other oriental codes of ethics,⁶⁵ whereas the whole of western capitalism grew up in protestant soil. Thus even the adaptability of Russia to a western economy is a dubious matter. There is a strong Russian opinion that it is absurd and socially dangerous to borrow an economic model that does not fit the cultural, mental and moral values of the people.⁶⁶

Culture and politics are as likewise interrelated. Being aware of the great effect of culture, politicians use it to promote their goals. It is true, as has been pointed out, that a cultural identity is a created image, but there is an interface with reality, the images are not remote from the real world. Geopolitically, culture has been used to extend a nation's sphere of influence, using a kindred minority in a neighbouring country as a good excuse to apply pressure. Culture can also be an obstacle to political aspirations. Minority cultures in specific regions of one country can interfere with unity and often restrain the full exploitation of resources. The means of achieving uniformity have varied from brute force to gentle assimilation, internal immigration and the construction of communication systems from the perspective of the centre are frequently used methods. The same targets, uniformity and effective use of resources to achieve competitiveness, are also part of the modern economic system. It is just that slightly different slogans, such as free movement of labour, a multicultural society and flexibility, are used.

A common ideology and a coherent culture are important for every society, and they would be important even for the European Union. There are many answers to the question of what is really European culture. The Hudson Institute has concluded

that the type of social policy accepted in Western Europe may be the only common feature differentiating its way of life from the American way. Another opinion is that there is a European cultural identity that consists of a partially shared historical heritage and experience in the widest possible sense, but that it does not serve as a blueprint for the EU.⁶⁷ The differences between the nations currently make the union difficult to govern and are a hindrance to the free movement of labour. From the economic point of view this is a disadvantage relative to the United States, which can deal better with the detrimental consequences of uneven regional growth. Since the EU members differ a great deal in their political cultures, and will do so even more after the next enlargement, it is hard to imagine how they could ever attain coherence.⁶⁸ It is no wonder, therefore, that EU tries to promote "European" values and European culture rather than "western" culture. Culture was and still is a crucial factor for the consolidation of political power and influence.

5 THE PRESENT WORLD SYSTEM AND THE CHARACTER OF THE NEXT CHANGE

5.1 *A hegemonic world*

The present situation can best be described as a “world of one superpower”, although there are other features present as well and the hegemony is by no means absolute. The competition between the land power and the sea power described by Mackinder and Spykman has at least temporarily been resolved in favour of the sea power, that is to say the United States and its allies. The position of the United States is based on its political and economic power, which according to the old geopolitical thinking is the result of a favourable maritime location.

The U.S. Secretary of Defence stated in his annual report for 1994 that the United States is the ruling force in the world, with the strongest defence, the largest economy and a dynamic, multi-ethnic society. American leadership is looked for and respected in all parts of the world.⁶⁹ An essential part of this world picture is that other nations acknowledge the leading position of the United States, its interests in the world and its decisive role in NATO, which is incontestably the most significant military alliance. American troops in Europe will be kept at a level of 100 000 men for the present, and the United States is also committed to maintaining have an equal force in the Far East. This leading position accords well with the American culture and ideology. Americanism has from its birth been a transnational movement, and the founding fathers already believed that it was America’s destiny to spread a liberty that derives its origins from democracy. Associated with this belief was the myth of equal possibilities for everyone and a quasi-religious feeling that riches and power were given for use in a certain mission.⁷⁰

Under the principles set out above, it is the leading power that has the greatest vested interest in protecting the free trade regime. This model leads us to the conclusion that the United States is working for global free trade by means of its structural

power, but that it is also ready to use economic and military resources together with its allies to achieve its goals. The ruling coalition secures its economic interests, especially in important market areas, nodes of the communications network and areas rich in oil and raw materials.

On the global level, the geopolitical behaviour implied in the One Superpower model follows the "soft" lines of the new geopolitics. The world system is relatively coherent, but power is unevenly distributed. The significance of different parts of the world is dependent on their value for the functioning of the global system. There is only moderate economic competition between the pan-areas, and there are no territorial disputes between them. The liberal paradigm is predominant, leading to a high level of interdependence and to a subordination of historical and cultural features to economic interests. On the regional and subregional levels free trade is altering the power relations and creating competition, which outside the democratic, industrialized nations assumes the form of the "old" nationalist geopolitics with aspirations of dominance, expansion and the formation of spheres of interest.

This geopolitical world order will remain dominant, however, only so long as the United States has superior resources and is willing to maintain the system and honour its own commitments abroad. There is no permanent stability in the world. The relative power of the United States has decreased, and scenarios differing from the One Superpower model have been seriously considered. There are opinions that the declining share of the USA in the world economy was already initiated in the 1970s, when the gold standard was abolished, economies were weakened by the oil crises and the Vietnam War came to an end. The collapse of the Soviet Union also meant that countries such as Germany and Japan lost some of their motive for integrating their policies with those of the United States.

At the same time it must be noted that the political will within the United States to interfere in matters abroad has diminished and its military organization is being reduced in size. The U.S. troops were still virtually at their Cold War strength during the Gulf War, but the country is now committed to designating an ever increasing proportion of its forces in the future to controlling regional crises. This will render the decision-

making process more difficult and reduce the country's readiness to intervene in non-vital areas. The reduction in the numbers of bases and depots will further detract from the U.S. forces' ability to react in a crisis. Even though they may remain the most effective forces in the world, their relative weight will diminish when China, India, Iran, the ASEAN countries and even Japan upgrade their defences.

Future changes in power relations can also be expected to reduce the structural hegemony of the United States. Germany, Japan and possibly some other countries will acquire more influence in the United Nations, and U.S. participation in regional organizations and in the upper structures of world trade will contract.⁷¹ In the light of these assertion it is justifiable to explore alternatives to the One Superpower world.

5.2 The next geopolitical change

A central question from a geopolitical point of view is whether the present trend towards freedom of trade and other liberties will continue or whether protectionism and the tightening of competition between pan areas, regions or states will take over. If the free trade regime prevails for some time, there may then be a period of transition to another kind of hegemony.

Hegemony does not necessary mean the supremacy of one single nation, in fact for most of our history it has been difficult to point out any clear dominance. But the system is unlikely to be an anarchic one; more probably hegemony will be vested in the operations of international organizations. J. Agnew and S. Corbridge describe this as a "cultural complex of practices and representations associated with a particular geopolitical order without the requirement of a dominant territorial agent". In their usage, "(geopolitical) order refers to the routinized rules, institutions, activities and strategies through which the international political economy operates in different historical periods".⁷² The rules express the nature of the geopolitical order, and they are always politically accepted through agreements or similar behaviour on the part of the leading powers. It is these rules that determine the importance and status of countries, territories and regions.

In fact there are already signs of a geopolitical order emerging of the kind described above. A very influential forum for the major industrialized powers is the G7 group, the decisions of which affect the whole global economy. This group, which has sometimes been placed on the level of a Holy Alliance, was initially founded only on purely economic considerations, but at the United States' initiative it has come to deal more and more with political and geopolitical matters. But this group is not based internally on mutual equality, as three great powers, the United States, Japan and Germany form a triumvirate, so that the United States will almost without exception consult in advance with the other two before taking any important decision. In view of the endeavours of the United States to share the burden of governing the world system, and of the aspirations of some other countries to gain more influence, the new hegemony could be a concensus between certain leading powers ruling through the medium of international organizations.

There is a real possibility, however, that the system could not be controlled for very long by this kind of international organization, and that some other form of geopolitical order would manifest itself. Possible scenarios will be discussed later, but all of them have the common feature that they entail some degree of disorder, the possible reasons for which were mentioned earlier. In a nutshell, the present growth ideology may not go on solving local and global problems for ever and providing security for citizens. It must be remembered that hegemonies have always been deposed sooner or later. There will then be two main alternatives, global steering of the world towards a sustainable system connected with universal solidarity, or implacable competition. The former is desired and the latter feared by scholars such as Georg Henrik von Wright, who perceives that we are slowly moving towards increasing disorder.⁷³

John Lewis Gaddis considers that the competition between democracy and totalitarianism will be replaced by a clash between forces representing integration and fragmentation.⁷⁴ Robert Gilpin predicts that economic nationalism, splitting world trade and giving rise to sectorial protectionism will probably replace the present capitalistic world order maintained by one hegemonic power.⁷⁵ But there are even more pessimistic

scenarios, such as Robert Kaplan's "global anarchy".⁷⁶ In any case, the official developmental optimism must not be allowed to hinder the study of other possible outcomes. One has to remember that people who believe in social evolution and rational progress blamed Oswald Spengler for his pessimistic views before the First World War.

Changes in geopolitical order have been linked with major economic and cultural upheavals, and all these phenomena have been seen as cyclic in nature, as foreseen by Arnold Toynbee, the most famous advocate of the notion of cultural cycles. The Russian Nikolai Kondratieff presented evidence for cycles in economies as early as 1922, including the theory that the length of one cycle in the industrialized countries, consisting of a growth period and a recession, is about 50 years. Later research has lent a certain credibility to this hypothesis.⁷⁷ Peter Taylor tried to ascertain the link between the Kondratieff cycles and the phase of hegemony, which in turn is connected with the geopolitical world order,⁷⁸ and proposed that the duration of one hegemony spans two geopolitical world orders. The periods of hegemony follow the Kondratieff cycles in the sense that the rise and fall of a hegemony corresponds to the time period occupied by two successive Kondratieff waves. Thus a hegemony lasts for roughly 100 years if the duration of one world order is about 50 years.

This hypothesis of Taylor's is presented here in the form of a simplified table.

Kondratieff cycle	Phase of hegemony	Geopolitical order
1. Growth period	Rise	Successor system of the previous hegemony
1. Recession	Victory	
2. Growth period	Maturity	New stabilized world order
2. Recession	Decline	

Fig 5. Relation between economic cycles and geopolitical world orders

Taylor proposes that there have been two geopolitical world orders during the 20th century, the system that succeeded the British Empire and the Cold War system, both with short preceding transition periods. Both of these belong to the hegemonic era of the United States. It was during the first that

the might of the United States was built up, and it was at the end of this period that that country surpassed its competitors, while during the second order the hegemony reached its maturity, until the supremacy began to diminish and potential competitors came into sight. If this scheme is valid, we are at present living in a transition period leading to a new hegemony and a new world order. It would also mean the beginning of a new Kondratieff cycle, actually the fifth in the history of the industrial era according to Taylor's calendar. This would also mean that at least some powers must be experiencing an economic upswing or will shortly do so.

5.3 *Theoretical new world orders*

No single scenario can be pointed out as the clear outcome of the present situation, but it should be remembered that towards the end of the Second World War there were several alternatives for the new geopolitical world order depending on the mutual importance assigned to economic, political and ideological aspects. Taylor lists the orders that were under serious consideration as the following:⁷⁹

- 1) One peaceful world led by a large coalition.
- 2) Three separate pan areas led by Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union.
- 3) The anti imperialistic front consisting of the United States and the Soviet Union to balance the British Empire.
- 4) An anti hegemony front consisting of Britain and the Soviet Union to resist the economic dominance of the United States.
- 5) A united front of the United States and Britain against the communist world.

When considering these alternatives, one has to remember that Britain was one of the victors in the war and the break up of its empire could not be foreseen, any more than could the collapse of the democracies of Eastern Europe.

Today there are likewise several foreseeable outcomes. According to the theory of Samuel Huntington, the geopolitical regions will coincide with the areas of the main cultures, namely

the Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin-American and eventually African civilizations. Conflicts will be initiated in the future when a nation is hampered by finding its in the "wrong" reference group, and culture will replace ideology as the cause of such conflicts.

Johan Galtung outlined following alternatives as early as 1979:⁸⁰

- 1) Competition between ten major powers
- 2) Three pan areas
- 3) Dichotomy between North and South.

The driving forces in Galtung's scenarios were both cultural and economic. Immanuel Wallerstein thinks that the United States could ally itself with China and Japan, thus leaving only one alternative for Europe, to build a new "Greater Europe" coalition together with Eastern Europe, North-Africa, the Middle East and even India.⁸¹

Robert Taylor identifies four possible geopolitical world order models for the future:

- 1) Concensus between the power centres of the world. There would be competition between them, but the system would be regulated by the U.N. Security Council and the G7 group. In other words this alternative would be a state of structural hegemony.
- 2) Several autarchic pan-areas;
- 3) Two competing coalitions separated by the Atlantic Ocean, one block being the "New Great Europe", i.e. Western Europe together with Russia, the Middle East and Africa, and the other America with the Pacific Rim;
- 4) A new northern "Heartland" and the encircling islamic world.

Taylor himself seems to consider the third possibility, a new bipolar world, the most likely outcome, and this scenario is consistent with the scheme of Wallerstein. The scenario could be described as the mighty sea power forcing the continental powers into unification, and not vice versa, as in the old geopolitical theories. There are also suggestions, especially in Britain, that Western Europe and North America should form an economic co-operation area to balance the rising power of Asia. This project clearly resembles traditional geopolitical theories. Even closer to Mackinder is Saul Cohen, who thinks that the contrast between

the maritime and continental *realms* still forms the upper structure of the modern geopolitical system, with politically fragmented and unstable *shatterbelts* lying between these realms. The competition between maritime powers belongs to the second level of the system. In this context the continental realm consists of Russia and China with their neighbours.⁸²

A study on Finland and Possible Worlds, published in Finland in 1995,⁸³ deals with different scenarios for the world and Finland's place within it. The resulting five alternatives are included to greater or lesser extents in the suggestions outlined above. The first is consistent with the consensus of three power centres, the United States, the European Union and Japan, co operating and competing with each other. The second is characterized by uneven development and social and political upheavals caused by transnational economic forces. The role of the United States would be accentuated in this case. The third alternative follows the civilization idea of Huntington and the fourth scenario is a break-up of the present system leading to global disorder. The last scenario is an "old fashioned" state of competition for power and influence between five major powers, the United States, the European Union, Japan, China and Russia.

All the alternative world pictures presented above are inherently geopolitical and refer to the reasons for spatial arrangements and competition between geographically defined political entities. The cause of the differences between individual researchers and scenarios lies in the uncertainty as to which forces that are the most influential ones in the formation of alliances and hegemonies. Some stress politics or economics and others cultural differences or geographical proximity.

In summary, the above scenarios can be compressed into three main alternatives:

- 1) Division of the world into three pan-areas, the degree of competition between which would vary according to the economic paradigm that is accepted.
- 2) Division into two parts, one more maritime and one more continental. Two alternative dividing lines exist here, either through the Atlantic Ocean or through the Pacific Ocean.
- 3) Break-up of the present world system into several competing parts and a return to the "old" geopolitics,

in which possessions and spheres of influence are important.

The borders between the regions in these scenarios would not necessarily follow the present borderlines between states. The system could be mixed with an impact from states, civilizations and economic areas led by specific growth centres. The dichotomy between North and South cannot be compared with these three categories, because it is not based on competition between societies with equally matched capacities. It is more a part of the description of the contemporary structural hegemonic system and the disparity existing within it.

6 TRENDS IN CERTAIN VITAL REGIONS

6.1 *Qualities of a global power*

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the extent to which certain states and alliances could fulfil the qualifications for a global power within the next two or three decades. Irrespective of the degree of relation between consensus and competition, the highest level in the world system will be occupied by states and coalitions with world-wide influence. Before examining actual trends in certain important parts of the world, it is useful to discuss the qualities required of a modern power with a global voice.

A global role needs both the will and the ability to mobilize resources for world-wide purposes. John Agnew proposes that the necessary qualifications are economic and military power on the one hand and will and vision on the other.⁸⁴ The military dimension of this power has diminished for the present, to be partly replaced by economic might. There are even opinions that the link between economic and military capacity that was the key to dominance was broken at the end of the Cold War. If this were true, it would also increase the difficulty of predicting which will be the future great powers.⁸⁵ In fact this argument only partly holds true. If there is will to maintain great power status even during critical times and economic sanctions do not have the desired effect, a certain military capacity must be available.

A maritime position is still favourable, because it allows global accessibility. World trade and the whole market economy are almost totally dependent on marine lines of communication. The volume of seaborne freight exceeds that of airborne freight by a factor of more than 200, and a ton of airfreight takes an average of 47 times more energy to transport than a ton of sea cargo.⁸⁶ Modelski and Thompson present extensive statistical analyses to prove that all previous world powers during the last 500 years have been maritime nations. It seems that the United States at present rules the oceans with its naval forces, and could if necessary determine the pattern of world trade and dictate

which goods will be transported to where and under which conditions.⁸⁷ Marine lines of communications are also needed for large military operations abroad. During the Gulf War roughly 90% of the allied forces' material was transported to the area by sea.

But a potential world power must have a comparable degree of capacity in the following traditional categories: economics, political cohesion, population, world-wide military capacity, nuclear weapons, a physical base and an advanced level of technology and training. The military qualifications are the following:

- forces with state of the art armaments
- a world-wide surveillance and command network. The surveillance system must include a satellite system.
- naval capacity to protect the marine lines of communication and to project force over all the continents. Aircraft carriers and a blue water navy with tenders and bases would be needed.
- nuclear weapons as deterrents. It is estimated that this would mean some 10-20 nuclear-powered submarines with ballistic missiles and the same number of attack submarines to protect them.⁸⁸

6.2 *The United States*

The United States is and will be a global power. Its gross national product is by far the highest in the world, and it occupies a leading position in many fields of science and technology. It has a great potential for adjustment to new products and production methods, and its military capacity is superior to all other defence forces. It has a flexible arsenal of nuclear deterrents and is capable of providing its "conventional" forces with modern equipment of a kind that no other nation cannot afford. At present only the United States fulfils the criteria for a global power.

There is another side to the picture of the United States, however. According to OECD statistics its share of global industrial production was about 40% in the 1950s but is only 20% nowadays, in the mid-1990s. The real increase in GNP has declined over the decades and there are enormous internal problems, including dilapidated infrastructure and unevenly

distributed poverty. The average per capita incomes began to diverge regionally in the 1980s, and the principal feature of American income patterns since 1974 has not been growth but redistribution from poor and middle-class households to richer ones. "A resurgence of protectionism and growing hostility to liberal internationalism in the regions most affected by job loss and economic decline is one not surprising result".⁸⁹

Three explanations have been advanced for this development. The first, the overcommitment argument, maintains that the United States has excessive world-wide military and humanitarian obligations. In response to this opinion the military budget has been cut and the military presence abroad reduced since 1992. The second explanation is that capital has not accumulated sufficiently and that the federal deficit has grown because of excessive spending on infrastructure, education and social benefits. This is not a very good argument, however, because of all the major industrial countries, only Japan consumed a smaller proportion in public services. The third explanation is that American industry has been successful chiefly on account of productive investments abroad. From a geopolitical point of view one has to ask whether the U.S. government can use this industry to support its foreign policy. It is difficult to give a proper answer, but there is a closer linkage between industry and administration than in many other countries, and US firms gain very real benefits from remaining American. "For example, that the Dollar remains the medium of international trade, that regulatory and standard-setting bodies are world leaders and work closely with US industry, that the US courts are major means of defence of commercial and property rights throughout the world, that the Federal Government is a massive subsidizer of R & D and also a strong protector of the interests of US firms abroad."⁹⁰ As the leading nation, the United States can take measures such as trade embargoes and prohibit the export of strategic goods more easily than others.

Various measures have been taken to counteract the relative decline, and many politicians and economists in the 1990s have demanded a strategic trade policy that includes industrial policy and foreign investment. Their slogan has been "fair trade instead of free trade". In order to revitalize the economy, the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) was founded in 1992, partly

as an answer to the integration processes in Europe and Asia. The results of these measures are disputed, but economic growth during the last few years has in fact been faster than in Europe and the deficit is declining.

Another fact influencing the position adopted by the United States is the shift in its interests towards East and South-East Asia. This means a return to the geopolitical ideas put forward by Mahan in the 1890s and Spyckman in the 1940s. This new interest resulted in an agreement on Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 1994.

As a result of all these divergent interests and ideas there are three main schools of American geopolitical thinking at present. The right wing Republicans advocate an isolationist policy, claiming that it would be possible to solve the country's own problems by cutting down the flow of money abroad. It is also said that as the physical security of the United States itself is no longer directly threatened, it would be possible to return to the old doctrines of "Hemisphere Defence" and isolation. The second school supports internationalism in the sense of global U.S. economic, military, humanitarian and peace-keeping interests, so that the country must continue to act as a global superpower, and the third, moderate view is a compromise that acknowledges interests abroad, but regards it as possible to reduce the American presence. The Clinton administration has defined important regions where the United States should maintain its position as the leading partner in security matters, namely Europe, South and Central America, East Asia, the Middle East and South-East Asia.⁹¹ Despite its Asian Pacific interests, the United States stresses that it has been and always will be a European power. The arguments for this are the existence of deep historical and political philosophical ties and the European origins of American culture.⁹²

6.3 *Russia*

Geographically, Russia is once again almost isolated from the western industrialised world. According to the logic of phases in geopolitical behaviour, as described in Chapter 3, Russia finds itself in a situation where it has to define its new role in the world,

a new geopolitical code. Part of this code should be an ideology that is acceptable to a vast majority of the people. In fact, President Yeltsin has recently publicly pleaded for ideas on a new Russian identity. Without this the central government would lose its already shaky control over the country and the independence of the different regions would increase. In fact some observers already see signs of a break-up. Moscow has *de facto* lost control in large parts of the Central Caucasus, and similar developments can be perceived elsewhere. When Russian laws are often not put into effect, the regions and autonomous republics try to rule themselves. Separatism is very obvious in the Far East, where Japanese influence is present, and Chita and Buryatia are looking for cooperation with China and Mongolia.⁹³ Even St. Petersburg is in many respects quite independent of Moscow. The role of provincial governors will be strengthened once they are elected by the people.

As in the United States, there are three principal geopolitical orientations to be followed; to turn to the west, to the east, or inwards, which would not be a new situation for Russia. What is the probable outcome? As in the American case, all the possibilities are real and not just imaginary. Andrei Zagorski refers to the three main possibilities as "Atlantism, Uralianism and Neo-Anti-Imperialism".⁹⁴

Atlantism means integration and cooperation with the western economic and political sphere. This trend of opinion can be compared with the aims of the Zapadniks in the mid-19th century. A hopeful development from the point of view of the western democracies is the progress made in this integration and acceptance of western values. "Elections conducted according to international norms in 1995-96 indicate that democracy is beginning to establish itself".⁹⁵ The present leadership is working in this direction, albeit halfheartedly, and Russia has taken many practical steps towards membership of international organizations and other forms of cooperation with the rest of Europe.

The Uralian (or Eurasian) persuasion has its roots in the Slavophile and Dostoyevskian notion that Russia has a geopolitical "mission" to mediate between Europe and Asia. Russia has a culture of its own, consisting of its Slavonic heritage and Orthodox religion, and it should not even try to be a part of

the West but develop from its own starting-points. This means rejection of the western Eurocentric image of history, and with it western concepts of liberal democracy, justice, parliamentarianism and individual human rights. The supporters of this doctrine claim that integration with western economies will not work in Russia, and that it would be absurd and dangerous to borrow an economic model that is inconsistent with the nation's cultural, intellectual and moral values.⁹⁶ The discussion concerning Russian identity has served to revive the Eurasian movement of the 1920s,⁹⁷ a trend which has gained expression in efforts to consolidate cohesion between the CIS states under Russian leadership.

The third position, neo-anti-imperialism, has much of the old geopolitical thinking imbedded in it. It admits that there now exists only one superpower in the world. Peaceful stability has disappeared and the consequences can be seen in turbulence and separatism. The balance should be restored, but Russia alone is too weak for this. An alliance with China would create an Eurasian geopolitical force that could counterbalance the United States. In practice, Russia has taken measures to create good relations with China and India. Russia and China have enhanced their cooperation in many fields and are speaking of a strategic alliance and a multipolar world, in a spirit of resistance to western dominance.⁹⁸ India and China are the most important customers for the Russian defence industry, and the three countries are also engaged in other forms of cooperation in military technology.

A reborn panslavism or neoslavonism, as supported by Alexander Solschenitzy, for example, could be used to support both of the last two geopolitical directions. It would aim at unification of former slavonic Soviet republics and emphasize difference relative to the west, as does the Eurasian school of thought. Only the liberation of forces that originate from its centuries-old spiritual, religious and social traditions can preserve Russia from a total collapse. The idea of a balance of power is imbedded in this philosophy, as it is in neo-anti-imperialism. Neoslavonism stresses only Slavic origins, and apart from Kazakhstan, it does not acknowledge the Mohammedan nations as part of the Russian Empire, nor does it contemplate any close alliance with China.

A survey of the distribution of support for these orientations within the Russian political, economic and military elites shows that one third would be ready to support an Atlantic orientation and one third an anti-imperialistic policy, but that if the Uralian option were to be selected, three out of four would opt for it. This means, of course, that some people could support more than one option, and that a clear majority could accept an independent policy as the best compromise.⁹⁹

Seen from the perspective of common geopolitical behaviour in the past, Russia is going through a phase in which it has to consolidate its power and develop its resources. Earlier in this phase, when competitive power was weak, states are apt to concentrate on internal growth and protectionism, and events would appear to point in this direction in the present case of Russia. It all depends, however, on how favourable the terms of cooperation offered by the western countries and their companies prove to be, which will in turn depend on how badly Russia's potential resources are needed in world-wide economic competition. Foreign aid, which is tied to geopolitical considerations, will not have any decisive influence. In fact the Ukraine has received more American aid in 1997 than Russia.¹⁰⁰

6.4 Asia

Two opposite trends are to be perceived in Asia: increasing economic cooperation on the one hand and growing political competition and a military build-up on the other. Despite its present economic difficulties, Japan is still by far the strongest economic force in Asia, and has now passed through its most protectionist phase, which helped it to consolidate its power. Its balance of trade has shown a surplus for four decades, and a great proportion of this surplus has been with the United States, Europe and the other countries of Asia. Investments in Europe and America have declined in recent years and the proportion of investments in Asia has grown. Foreign investment in Japan has been only 10-15% of Japanese investments abroad, which has led to a one-sided influence. Japanese companies hold tight control over their subsidiaries abroad, and the strategically most important components and products are produced at home.¹⁰¹ The integration of corporate Japan has helped create a true "co

prosperity sphere" in Asia. "Washington must now address the economic threat, if indeed there is one, as a pan-Asian, not Japanese, problem".¹⁰² Japan has been the world's largest aid donor, and much of its overseas development assistance has taken the form of loans. "Japan directs much of its money to Asia so as to carve out a sphere of influence".¹⁰³ Thus its Overseas Economic Co operation Fund had 78% of its loans outstanding in Asia at the end of 1994, the biggest recipients being Indonesia, China, the Philippines, India and Thailand.

Japanese capital has been an important factor in the development of the South-East Asian countries in particular, through an association (ASEAN) founded as early as 1967. Japan has shown increasing economic and political interest in South-East Asia and Indochina during the last few years,¹⁰⁴ and the ASEAN countries have now decided to implement an Asian Free Trade Area (AFTA) as from 2008. Following the entry of Vietnam in 1995, ASEAN has 425 million inhabitants, and more members are expected within some years.¹⁰⁵

China is going through a period of rapid economic growth, the average annual figure having been 9% over the period 1978-1994. The biggest investors have been Chinese living in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States. China is connected to the international business community through an ethnic Chinese network of businessmen, who are particularly active in South-East Asia. The investments have mainly been used in export industries. The Japanese share in these investments is growing in branches aimed at Chinese markets. The optimistic view is that by allowing China to join the WTO, for example, without insisting on adherence to its principles, the country could slowly be converted into a "normal" member of the trading community. But China is behaving like all the other great powers before it, developing sufficient economic potential first in order to become a global actor. It is in China's interest to prolong its current policies, as long-term expansion of its industrial base necessitates the use of protectionist measures.¹⁰⁶

The industrialized countries are in turn investing in China and helping it in its development aspirations in the hope of future returns from its huge potential market. All of this has resulted in a U.S. trade deficit with China which amounted to 34 billion USD in 1995. This situation cannot be tolerated for long, but most of

the America's business community still favours deeper engagement of China in the international community, believing that China is a good place to make money.¹⁰⁷ The situation resembles that prevailing one hundred years ago, when the attraction of Chinese markets resulted in fierce competition between Japan, Russia, England, Germany and the United States.

There are predictions that China will be a political, military and economic superpower somewhere round the year 2020 and will overtake the United States as the world's largest economy. These predictions probably overestimate China's development. One has to remember that the country's GNP is only 15% of that of Japan,¹⁰⁸ and that Taiwan imports more from the United States than the rest of China put together. In any case, a high pace of growth that is based on future expectations normally slows down when a certain level has been achieved. If previous historical experience is anything to go by, the Chinese growth rate is too high to be sustained.¹⁰⁹ Economically, China is dependent on foreign technology, capital and export markets, and its behaviour is attenuated by the fact that provocative policies could suspend participation of the advanced industrial countries in its economy and risk ending its economic success story.¹¹⁰ China also has enormous problems ahead. It possesses 22% of the world's population but only 7% of its arable land. Farmland is being swallowed up by cities and roads, to the extent that almost 1% of is being lost each year.¹¹¹ At the same time its regions are developing in an utterly uneven manner. The central government has lost some of its authority, it lacks financial resources and the rule of law is defective. Internal migration is assuming enormous proportions, so that a total of over 400 million people are likely to be affected, and unemployment could rise to over 280 million.¹¹²

India has also gained in importance as a target for investment since it adopted more liberal policies. India's political system makes the country a more predictable partner than China, but the United Nations Population Fund points out that the country's rapidly growing population will almost reach that of China by the year 2025, 1400 million vs. 1500 million.

In summary, there are two economic trends affecting Asia at present, globalization and regionalization, both of which are vulnerable to disturbances, the former more so than the latter. Culture favours regional cooperation, and the Japanese structure

of business regulation is spreading to other Asian countries. Cultural exchanges and the studying of other Asian languages are becoming more and more popular.

On the political and military front the situation is one of regional and subregional competition for leadership. Japan and China are suspicious about each others' aims, and the Japan Defence Agency has for the first time indicated that it regards China as one of the potential regional threats to Japan.¹¹³ The countries have territorial disputes over the Senkaku, or Diaoju Islands. Thus Japan is discussing economic cooperation with the regions of China rather than with the central government. China's army is the world's largest, and it is modernizing its armaments, mainly with Russian material, but Japan can spend more money on more modern equipment. Japan's defence zone has now been extended to 1000 nautical miles, and if the Americans were to reduce their forces in the area any further, Japan might be forced to increase its defence area and reinforce its self-defence forces to counterbalance China and secure its marine lines of communication in South East Asia.¹¹⁴

The ASEAN countries are spending much more on defence than earlier, and regional disputes are continuing with China over the Paracel and Spratly Islands and over gas and oil resources. The southern coast plays a central role in China's development programs, and according to some statements the South China Sea and Spratly Island will be the key to coming challenges in the next century. The area features prominently in China's national geopolitical code, and regardless of political orientation, the leaders and people of China alike consider that the other states in the region have taken advantage of China's internal conflicts and occupied islands and claimed sea areas that belong to her.¹¹⁵

In South Asia there is a power struggle taking place between China, India and Pakistan, accompanied by a number of territorial disputes. All three countries probably possess nuclear weapons, and each of them has developed missiles which could carry nuclear warheads. China even has several intercontinental ballistic missiles. CIA has issued a warning that the India Pakistan border is the most probable site for a future nuclear war. The cold war in South Asia is fuelled by a recent history of fierce conventional battles.¹¹⁶ India's military capacity is growing

rapidly, and it is suspected that the country has ambitions to exercise influence over an area extending "from Aden to Singapore".¹¹⁷

China is still some decades away from becoming a major global power. Its only assets at present are its population and its rapid economic growth on the strength of foreign money, and the same can be said of India. Japan is an economic giant, growing in political self esteem and influence, but its military capability is modest. Even if Japan were to decide to acquire a global military capability, the accomplishment of this would take a further fifteen to twenty years.¹¹⁸

6.5 *Western Europe*

Geopolitically the most important features in this area will be the coherence and geographical extent of the European Union and its relations with the outer world, especially Russia and the United States. The central question regarding coherence is whether the union will be developed into a federation and a great power with a geopolitical code of its own surpassing those of the member states. Officially this is denied on the grounds of the independence and cultural diversity of the member states, but seen against the background of history, there are signs that point towards the patterns of geopolitical behaviour adopted by all previous great powers, and towards a similar approach to gradual unification to that prevailing between the German states in the 19th century.

The Union's aim is definitely to increase the competitiveness of its industry within a single European market, which in fact means a system with many protectionist and mercantilist features. Competitiveness is considered especially important in strategic fields such as aviation and defence. "Cooperation in defence purchases, with the aim of making the defence industries of NATO's European member states more competitive, is being developed within the WEU".¹¹⁹ The ongoing consolidation of the defence industry throughout Europe is a matter of critical urgency in order to be able to face increasing competition from the American industry. Likewise, self-sufficiency in many civilian fields such as forestry is considered to be of importance. EU's

internal unity is being enhanced through an active campaign launched by the EU Commission for a European (= West European) identity. Common cultural features are being stressed and differences between the nations are being softened by active measures such as the increasing of movement across the internal borders. Common symbols are being created, and the forthcoming common currency will be needed more to consolidate unity and make separation more difficult than for economic reasons. Communications networks are being planned, and their construction is supported financially from the centre. The steps seem to be leading from a customs union in the direction of a federation, but it is not clear whether the development will halt at some level in between.

A bent for geographical accretion has been one of the main characteristics of geopolitical entities. In this respect the EU is behaving geopolitically, for its visions include a future Greater Europe. It is envisaged that the enlargement will take place by pulling in adjacent countries, which was the typical way of thinking in the USA in the period of its most rapid expansion. The European Union is not credible as a great power at present, as it still lacks political cohesion, but there are strong forces and organizational dynamics that are pushing it towards a common foreign and security policy. It is eager to be present in negotiations and settlements that well could be taken care of by the United Nations or the OSCE alone. On the other hand, some member states harbour strong opinions against a federalist future.

There have traditionally been two trends in security policy in Western Europe: Atlantic and pan-European. Official statements try to achieve a balance between these two views, and the West European Union (WEU) is described as "the European pillar of NATO". NATO has decided to develop *Combined Joint Task Forces* that could operate under either NATO or WEU, and the organizations responsible for European and American troops are to be "separable but not separate".¹²⁰ NATO standards and the use of existing command systems and other infrastructure offer in effect the only sensible grounds for defence in Western Europe, as an independent WEU would mean unnecessary and expensive duplication of systems. All activities within the NATO area could already be handled by European troops alone, but

there have been plans to develop Europe's own satellite surveillance system, and a Union-level deterrent force consisting of the nuclear armament of France and England has been discussed. Behind these aspirations for "independence" lie mainly questions of prestige and geopolitical considerations.

A separate Western European defence would make sense in the following cases:

- if the United States were to withdraw from Europe,
- if the area of operations were stretched to places where the United States was not willing to participate, e.g. Eastern Europe or North Africa,
- if the European countries did not want to be involved in conflicts involving Turkey,
- if the European Union wanted to achieve global great power status, and/or
- if NATO really was transformed from a defence alliance into a continental peace-keeping organization, and Europe still needed a defence alliance.

The European Union could in principle create the capacity for a global geopolitical role. It already has enough economic capacity and human resources; its total number of uniformed soldiers exceeds that of the United States. On the other hand, the following would still be needed: the political will, command and military satellite systems of its own, an adequate naval force to make the projection of power possible in all parts of the world, and a "sufficient" nuclear deterrent.

If the decision were to be made to create this capacity, it would take approximately ten years to achieve it.

A further question concerns the expansion and "final" geographical limits of the European Union. Like all previous great powers, it wants to be as large and powerful as possible in the light of the benefits, costs and competition. The history of the idea of European unity provides us with hints as to which countries could be expected to be members and which would most likely be left out. Almost all such plans made during the past 700 years have excluded Russia and Turkey. It has always been the opinion that the basis of unification must be a similarity in values and appreciations that are grounded in religion. The concrete goals have been inner peace, welfare and defence against external threats. Turkey has been excluded because it

represents a difference in religion and mentality. Iver Neuman and Jennifer Welsh conclude that the whole idea of Europe has been defined with help of "the Other", in terms what Europe is not. "The Other" has played a decisive role in the formation of European identity, and the ruling "Other" in history has been Turkey and the Ottoman Empire.¹²¹ The same basic ideas form an obstacle to acceptance of the present Turkish application for EU membership.

In the Russian case, too, the old arguments still stand. Russia was excluded from the historical plans because of differences in culture, ethnic incoherence, economic problems and above all its size, which means that it does not fit in with European dimensions. Like Turkey, Russia has often posed a threat to Western Europe. It may be that the European Community could never have been formed without the threat from the Soviet Union. As the German Minister of Defence, Volker R  he, put it: "The enormous potential and geostrategic location of Russia exceed the European dimensions to an explosive extent. They exclude membership of EU and our alliances..."¹²²

Culture seems likely to be the most influential aspect in determining where the "final" borders of the European Union will be drawn, even if economic indices and political aspects such as peace and democracy are used as formal criteria for membership. Culture directs the decisions of politicians, and even influences economic connections and political systems. Economic needs could be satisfied by a customs union, e.g. with Turkey, or by other forms of economic cooperation, as in the case of Russia. But alongside culture there are also direct geopolitical goals, e.g. the German desire not to be situated on the eastern border of the Union, an idea which is in itself concrete evidence that borders still matter.

Whatever the economic criteria, if the Union has to expand, the most coherent result could be created by limiting membership to countries where attitudes and traditions are based on western religion, i.e. the Baltic States, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia. The Germans traditionally include the two last-mentioned states within Central Europe for cultural and geographical reasons,¹²³ a fact whose significance became obvious during the process of achieving recognition for Slovenia, which was initiated by Germany alone.

The coherence even of a union of this kind would be exposed to external economic challenges and inner dissensions. The order of precedence of Atlantic and European orientations in Britain is different from that in France, Britain, Germany and the Nordic Countries support an Atlantic Free Trade Area, whilst France and the other Mediterranean countries are against it. Impressions of the external threat and other security aspects are totally different in the Mediterranean area from what they are near the Russian border. There are cultural differences between the Protestant north and the Catholic south that can be discerned in business styles, political systems, the upbringing of children and every aspect of social life. Thus all the main factors, political, economic and cultural, that normally influence geopolitical settings speak for a certain division into North and South within the European Union, and possibly other divisions as well. The prominence of this fact depends on how strong the external challenges to the Union as a whole are by comparison with the centrifugal forces. The future of the Union and the geopolitical status of Northern Europe will thus be determined by the nature and structure of the forthcoming world geopolitical system.

7 NORTHERN EUROPE: PAST AND PRESENT

7.1 *The geopolitical situation in the past*

There have been two geopolitical stress factors in Northern Europe in the course of history: regional competition for supremacy, and disagreement between the local ruling power and external maritime powers over the status of the area. The latter tension emerged during the periods of Dutch and British dominance in internal European matters, but developed later to form a part of the global Heartland-Rimland-Midland Ocean problem. Traditionally, the ruling regional power, the Hanseatic League, Denmark, Sweden, Germany or the Soviet Union, has tried to restrict the use of the area and access by outsiders, to make the Baltic Sea a *Mare clausum*, while the main maritime power has opposed this by claiming for it the status of a *Mare liberum*.

In the 18th century Sweden lost its position in favour of Russia, and Poland forfeited its access to the sea and was divided. Poland's ally, the ancient great power Lithuania, was annexed to Russia, and Prussia took over the role of Poland as a major Baltic nation. Since then the characteristic feature in Northern Europe has been a power struggle between Russia and Germany. The emerging global geopolitical system can be traced back to the 18th century, when England intervened in the Baltic situation in 1719-1720, during the Great Northern War, balancing the situation and preventing Russia from making the Baltic into a Russian inland sea.¹²⁴

Denmark, as a neutral buffer state between the maritime and continental powers, had to go to war against Britain at the beginning of the 19th century and against Prussia in the 1860s. Thus Sweden, Denmark and Norway formed an inner circle of three small countries surrounded in turn by an outer circle of three great powers. Kjellén explained in 1915 that Sweden had two possibilities, either neutrality based on a strong defence, or alliance with Germany to resist Russian expansion.¹²⁵

Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania became independent after the First World War and aimed at neutrality. Both Germany and the Soviet Union were then reduced to a state of weakness. Britain dominated the Baltic Sea and secured the independence of the Baltic States by sending a naval force to the area. The buffer zone across Europe recommended by Mackinder was created, including the Danzig corridor, and under the dominance of this geopolitical image the Nordic and Baltic countries had no other options in practice than to strive for neutrality, together or separately. The zone functioned well until Germany became the major threat to the western countries instead of Russia. The Soviet Union, Britain and France began in spring 1939 to negotiate over how to contain Germany, and the Soviet Union claimed the right to initiate defensive actions in the buffer zone extending from Finland to Rumania against a direct or indirect attack, even without the consent of the countries in question. The western powers tried to limit the Soviet claims, especially where Finland was concerned, but Russia insisted on including Finland in the same group as the Baltic States. In August 1939 the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact finally negated the whole idea of a buffer zone.

The geopolitical picture after the Second World War, as presented by Brzezinski (Fig. 2), included the former buffer zone extending into the Heartland. The Baltic States, Poland, East Germany and the main part of the Baltic Sea belonged to the Heartland and the Soviet defence zone. Norway and Denmark abandoned their neutrality, after the failure of negotiations for a Scandinavian defence alliance and were accepted into NATO. Sweden was situated on the border in the prevailing geopolitical scheme and managed to keep its non-alliance policy, even if inclined towards the west. Finland was considered to be a rand state of the Soviet Union and to be likely to be occupied in the initial phase of an eventual war,¹²⁶ even though the government of the United States directed its export policy towards maintaining and, if possible, increasing Finland's independence and democratic social order.¹²⁷ In these circumstances Finland had no option but to try to preserve its neutrality as far as possible, even though President Paasikivi admitted that the Soviet Union had "legitimate interests" on its north western border.

Denmark and Norway were given an important role in the

western policy of containment, as bases for air force and naval units. As Mackinder had foreseen, the Soviet Union aspired to a global role comparable to that of the United States, by enhancing its maritime resources, including its navy, fisheries, merchant navy and shipbuilding capacity, and the Baltic Sea area played an essential part in this policy. When submarine-launched ballistic missiles became an irreplaceable part of the nuclear deterrent force, the Kola Peninsula became a base and fortress of global importance.

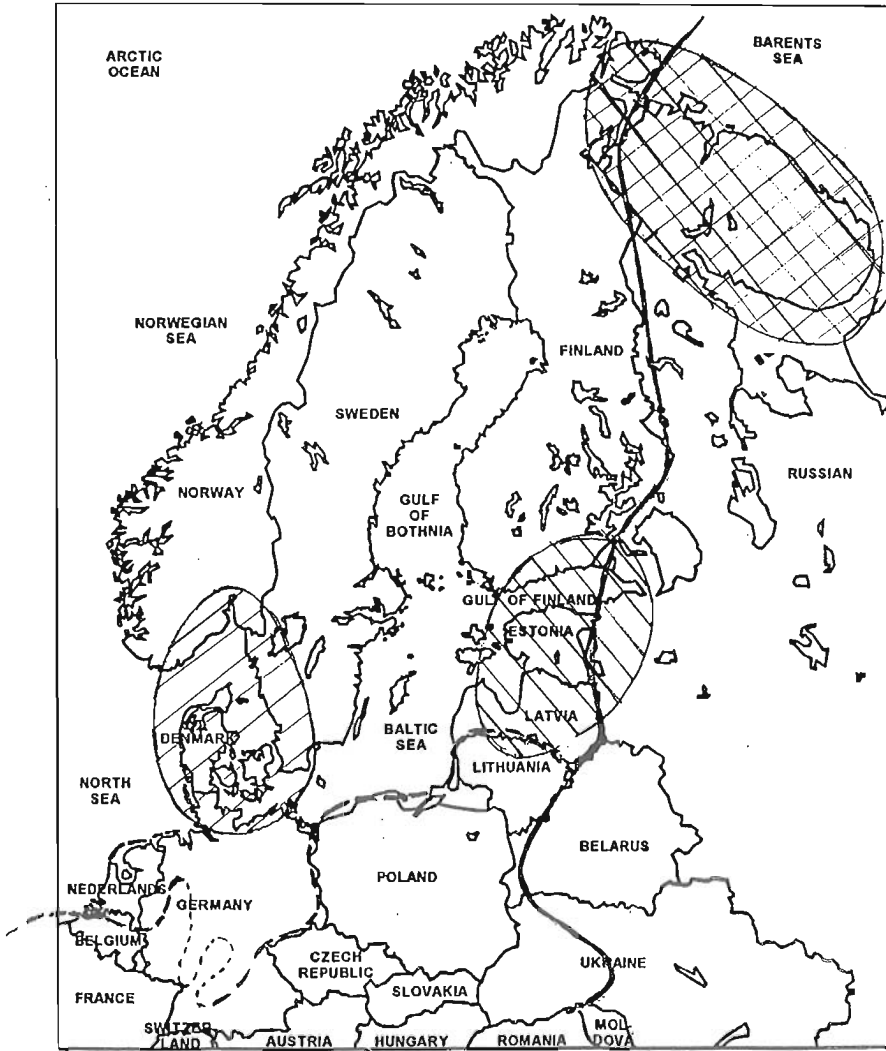
The geopolitical approach serves well for describing and explaining the political situation in Northern Europe up to the time of the collapse of the Soviet empire. The Anglo-Saxon sea power - heartland image can be invoked, and the history of Northern Europe can be interpreted as a result of an attempt by the maritime power to prevent a competing power from arising on the continent of Europe (18th and 19th centuries) or in Eurasia (19th century). Whether the theories describe the real situation or whether they merely caused a form of behaviour which led to the observed consequences is another thing. Most probably the truth is a mixture of both aspects. In any case, geopolitical expansion and dominance of the "old type" can be observed alongside highly homogenized geopolitical codes.


7.2 The present hegemony and Northern Europe


The geopolitical "one superpower" image leads to an interpretation in which Western Europe is an essential part of a global economic system created and led by the United States. But the European subcontinent is not economically and politically united, and Russia is only weakly integrated into the system. There exist remnants of the old bipolar geopolitical world, especially in the north, and there is still a border between east and west running through Europe, only it is no longer an ideological border but a cultural, economic and political one, and it is not an iron curtain preventing all unofficial connections.

There is a grey zone between Russia and the European Union (or NATO), the status of which is partly an open question. This is not merely a question of political prestige but of a shift in the strategic centre of gravity in the Baltic region the Baltic Approaches to Baltic Sea proper and the Gulf of Finland. Instead

of control and defence of the Straits of Denmark, the military problem is now Russia's surveillance and defence area. Although the means used at present are "soft", the question is fundamentally a geopolitical one: how far the respective spheres of interest will extend. From the western point of view it may not be a question of spreading influence and dominance in the old sense, but more one of exercising some pull on adjacent countries which are afraid of the potential costs of exclusion. In spite of this, however, there is a political will to extend the western type of political and economic system eastwards in the name of democracy and stability. Even in earlier times, especially in the case of the United States, geopolitical expansion had been motivated by the attractions of a better system and the spread of democracy. Somewhere the "final" borders would be reached in any case. As argued earlier, the EU and NATO of the future might well finally extend to the old cultural border.



Strategic center of gravity  before 1990

 mid 1990's



Line between  western religion and eastern orthodoxy
 catholicism and protestantism

Fig. 6. The geopolitical picture of Northern Europe

From the Russian point of view accretion on one side means curtailment on the other. Russia wants to be regarded as an influential power and to keep up its global nuclear force. It is more than 30 times larger in area than the largest Western European country, France, and the U.S. Defence Department counts it by virtue of its size, geostrategic significance and military power as pre-eminent among the states that arose out of the communist tyranny.¹²⁸ The former "liberal" Russian foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, declared that Russia had a right even to military intervention in all the countries having Russian minorities in order to protect them.

With the radical change in the balance of power, the former rand states and ex-Soviet republics have been trying to create a new geopolitical code for themselves. Austria, Sweden and Finland became EU members in 1995, but the question of NATO membership is still under debate. Finland has officially stated that the geopolitical change enabled the country to make its own choice, which was to join the West, a clear geopolitical decision, and President Ahtisaari has claimed that EU membership strengthens Finland's security. Most of the other nations located between the EU and Russia are striving hard to rid themselves of their grey, or buffer zone status, for fear that agreements will be concluded over their heads.

NATO was created in 1949 to resist Soviet expansion and to ensure an American presence and American interests in Europe by displacing the Western European Union, established one year earlier. Of the European countries, it was the United Kingdom, that began secret negotiations with the United States and Canada to these ends in 1948. In the one superpower world, NATO stands out as the dominant security system in Europe. Its continued existence was under serious discussion after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but it has now modified its mission and taken on tasks of a new kind, partly through the United Nations. As a regional military alliance, however, it will have clear borders, wherever they may lie, and the threat is assumed to come from the outside, apart from perhaps some minor internal rebellions against democracy. There will be two categories of border in Europe, one protected by NATO and the other not, the latter being the only ones that some countries are concerned about.¹²⁹ Now NATO has announced plans to expand eastwards, into the

present grey zone. The first new members will be Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, which are also strong candidates for the EU. This plan would bring NATO to the border of the Ukraine, but still leave the Baltic States outside. The German desire to relinquish its borderland position would be fulfilled, while the Ukraine would then be a buffer country. In fact the term neutrality is being mentioned increasingly often in the Ukraine at the present time.

As a reaction to this, Russia is trying to strengthen its influence in the CIS countries, to the extent that Byelarus is already more or less a Russian satellite. Western optimism that the Yeltsin administration will continue to rule and that it can be persuaded to accept all future NATO plans, lies on insecure grounds. Russia is trying to exclude the former Soviet republics from any NATO enlargement, and the Communist Party has declared that the harbours in the Baltic States should be owned jointly with Russia.¹³⁰ This is understandable in view of the fact that Russia has lost the majority of its harbour capacity in Europe. The Baltic harbours are more important for Russia's foreign trade than are on the Pacific coast, in the Far East or on the Black Sea. More than 50 Mio tonnes of Russian transito goods were transported via the Baltic States in 1995, while the volumes handled by Finnish ports or those of the St. Petersburg area were each roughly one tenth of this.¹³¹

A mutual understanding between NATO and Russia about which countries could join NATO would in fact resemble a division of Europe into spheres of influence. The Partnership for Peace concept aims to soften this effect and to bring NATO together with all the countries concerned in a structure that would engage in joint military planning. It is doubtful whether this concept can wipe away the geopolitical realities. As Henry Kissinger puts it, "operationally, the Partnership for Peace implies an arrangement aimed at China and Japan or an empty shell". A military alliance always exists against some potential military threat, through deterrence or direct action. The area of responsibility of AFNORTHWEST when it comes to naval operations in Northern Europe was extended early in the 1990s to cover the whole Baltic Sea, including the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia, although operations must be coordinated with BALTAP, which is in turn subordinated to AFCENT, in

which German influence is prominent. Since such an organization is not needed to perform sea rescue or other humanitarian operations in Northern Europe, NATO is implicitly attempting to avert the consequences of an eventual upheaval in Russia or prevent Russian aspirations towards its old positions in the Baltic States, for instance.

The new command structure planned for NATO will consist of two Strategic Commands, SC Atlantic and SC Europe,¹³² and differing security interests in Europe will be taken into account by dividing Europe into two main areas of responsibility along a line that roughly follows the cultural division between north and south. This means that SC Europe will be divided into two Regional Commands, of which the northern one will be situated in Holland. The new organization would mean the disappearance of AFNORTHWEST and provide more space and flexibility for subregional arrangements.

As NATO and Russia are now separated in Central Europe, the relative weight on the flanks has increased, and there has been no decrease in troops near the Finnish border so far. Russian strategic nuclear weapons are concentrated in submarines based in the Kola area, and as a consequence of the START agreement 55% of all Russian nuclear warheads will be in submarines by the year 2002. The Kola Peninsula will continue to be a base for a considerable body of troops in the future. The only direct border that NATO and EU have with Russia is in the north, and the Gulf of Finland still leads directly to the heart of Russia. NATO has increased its activities in the Baltic Sea during the last three years, and Russia is more determined than in the early 1990's to maintain its access to the sea and keep up its bases in the Kaliningrad area.

The situation resembles that of the period after the First World War: Russia is weak and Germany has increased its power but is still being cautious, while an external maritime power with its allies dominates the security situation. A common "European house" with no sharp borders is still just a wish and not a fact. The policies and possibilities of the European Union are still guided and limited by old geopolitical features such as the American influence, the existence of NATO and the Russian self-image of great power with a global nuclear force. The simplified picture painted by the old geopolitical theories of a bipolar world

brought about by physical geography cannot explain the whole situation, however, as the general atmosphere and the behaviour of the countries involved have changed. On the other hand, we are still far away from the "critical geopolitics" in which geography has no objective influence, and from the geopolitical order of structural hegemony based on economics alone as proposed by Agnew and Corbridge.

All the main factors promoting a geopolitical grouping, political, economic and cultural, are clearly visible in Northern Europe, thus giving an insight into the positions taken up by the different countries, and the situation is quite different from that in the Southern Europe on all geopolitical criteria. This fact should not only influence the NATO command structure, but also mean that control over the situation should be in the interest of all the countries in the Baltic area. One of the main concerns is the current grey zone status of the Baltic States. The extension of NATO cannot solve the overall security problem as long as Russia resists, and if Russia were a full member, then there would be no subregional defence task left for NATO in the Baltic area. These circumstances have led to discussions and proposals regarding about mutual Nordic political and military cooperation and even joint actions with the Baltic States. An idea of a military alliance or common security zone for the Nordic and Baltic countries has been denounced, but cooperation could be enhanced in many military fields. Some measures are already being taken to coordinate frontier guard action in the Baltic area, and regional cooperation and political discussions between the countries concerned are certainly a useful means of softening the dichotomy in Northern Europe.

8 NORTHERN EUROPE IN SOME POTENTIAL SCENARIOS

8.1 Competition between three economic blocs

There are three geographical concentrations between which world trade and investments mainly move: Western Europe, North America and Japan with South-East Asia. These areas belong to the core of the world system by numerous criteria.¹³³ The motivation cited for regional economic cooperation and a free trade area has in each case – EU, NAFTA, ASEAN – been competition with other areas. The idea is the same as that of Haushofer: self sufficiency. “The (trade-) blocks are big enough markets themselves to stand against global pressure on specific policy issues if they so choose”.¹³⁴ The most probable outcome of the present situation is therefore that the future geopolitical world system will be characterized by competition between these pan-areas. The issues over which this competition takes place may be leadership, investments, raw materials, energy, market areas, patents etc.

The “official” interpretation of the situation within GATT and its successor WTO has been that the formation of a number of free trade areas does not create obstacles to trade in general; on the contrary the world trade should benefit from organizations like EU and NAFTA. Many research institutes and experts on economics have nevertheless drawn the logical conclusion that regional alliances are incompatible with multilateral politics. Almost all the principal branches of industry, e.g. electronics and communications, aviation etc., are preparing themselves for intensified competition between geographical areas.

This cannot happen without political consequences. The formation of economic and political unions will lead towards increasing polarization and could mean the end of the whole present trading system.¹³⁵ Open competition between the blocs would break up the present security structures and increase the role of political and military forces once again. In such a case,

developments in the three areas would probably follow the old patterns of geopolitical behaviour as described in Chapter 3, that is to say from internal unification and growth to the enlargement of spheres of influence as far as resources allow. Each bloc would develop an identity of its own by emphasizing the common history, culture and interests of its members. Each of them would also adopt its own concepts of the world system and have its own geographical mental maps. One part of this identity would concern security policy.

The option of the United States would be to expand NAFTA to include the whole of the American continent. This would fit well with the old American ideology, and the old notion of "Western Hemisphere" would still work as an effective geopolitical image. In fact a Western Hemisphere Economic Free Trade Area has already been proposed by President Clinton, and negotiations will be initiated in 1997. Only the growth of South-American ambitions could place limits on the scheme, as the MERCOSUR organization uniting Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay has plans to develop into an independent South American Free Trade area, SAFTA. Despite protectionist blocs, NAFTA could still present itself as a defender of political and economic freedoms. Defence of the freedom of the seas and the definition of areas of vital interest would be as important as ever.

The available alternative for Japan would be to intensify its economic, political and even military cooperation with the South-East Asian countries and to arrange collaborative relations with China, Korea and eventually also India. Some support already exists in the countries of this region for the proposed East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC) as an alternative for APEC. If the United States were to withdraw its forces from the area, Japan would be compelled to secure traffic through the world's most important sea route, in South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca.

For the European Union, internal strength would become an highly prized target, and the organization would work more intensively for a federalist union than in times of relatively limited concurrence. A more centralized organization would give less freedom for regional arrangements than the present system. The natural direction for enlargement of the European Union would be Central and Eastern Europe. The acquisition of an additional population of 100 million would provide more

resources for competing against America or the Far East. The cultural border in Europe, which in fact goes through the Ukraine, would most probably limit formal extension, but in a world of harsh competition the EU would have no other alternative than to try to form some kind of alliance with the Orthodox-Slavonic world in which Russia would build its own semi-isolated empire.

The prevailing competitive situation and the predicted new borders have already led to the decision by the EU to initiate free trade negotiations with Russia and the Ukraine. Other possible directions for extending the EU sphere of influence are North Africa and the Middle East. The extension of free trade arrangements to the whole Mediterranean area is in fact included in the long-term scenarios of the EU. This "Pan-Europe" area would then have one billion inhabitants, a noteworthy figure even by Asian standards. There are Spanish and French cultural influences in the North Africa that could be appealed to the purposes of enlargement, and as the more western-oriented Arabs like to point out, their ancestors moved to their present locations from Europe.

The spheres of interest of the three blocs would intersect in the Middle East and South Asia. The oil resources of the Gulf area, which constitute 60% of the known resources in the world at present, would be important for all of them. Europe would have an advantage geographically, and stability in the Middle East is indeed mentioned as one of the most important goals in U.S. strategy. In addition to Japan, there are now other countries in East Asia, including China, that are becoming increasingly dependent on imported oil.¹³⁶

The raw materials and huge market areas available in India are of interest to Europe, which is the most important trading partner for India at present among the three blocs. The EU is already present in the Indian Ocean, as France has been able to retain its possessions there, and the Law of the Sea Conference in 1982 resulted in a French economic zone of 2.8 million sq. km. France has a permanent army and navy in the area, and can react if necessary by sending aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines.¹³⁷

India's significance for Japanese trade is growing, and it has also been suggested that India should intensify its ties with Japan

and the ASEAN countries to balance its western connections. The route through the Strait of Malacca continues across the Indian Ocean, so that India and Japan have a common strategic interest in securing this line of communication. The United States, on the other hand, has striven to extend its military connections with India because it is foreseen that that country might have a strategic role to play in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf. Even Russia is still offering India cooperation in the armaments industry and is an important supplier of weapons.

The distribution of power in this scenario is more even than in the one superpower world. The presence of geopolitics is more obvious, economic concurrence harder and the control of space and extent of influence more important. Ties between North America and Europe would weaken, and NATO could develop from a military alliance into a peace-keeping organization under the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Western European Union would become an EU organization, separate from NATO, and the EU would strive for global political, military and economic influence. This would mean in turn that the tasks of the strengthened WEU would also become global ones.

Without American protection, the EU would be compelled to cooperate even more closely with Russia than at present, for political and security reasons as well. Russia does not have such severe reservations about the enlargement of the European Union as it does about the extension of NATO, and the outcome, a united Western Europe collaborating with Russia, would in fact be consistent with the old pan-area theories. If this approach were to succeed, the danger of a confrontation in Northern Europe would diminish and the EU could concentrate on securing its interests elsewhere in the world. One precondition for a peaceful, cooperative approach is that the Russian economy should manifestly benefit from the situation. Such a cooperative arrangement could be attractive to Russia from the security point of view, too, as a peaceful western border would release resources for the southern and eastern front, where pressure is being experienced.

There is a danger in this scenario, however. Without an American presence, Russia could try to benefit from the situation politically, and its aspirations could conflict with those of the EU

when it, too, is trying to increase its influence. The demands made on the Baltic States could be stepped up under the pretext of supporting the Russian minorities, and the Kaliningrad area could be used to exert political pressure on its neighbours, Lithuania and Poland, which might by then be actual or potential EU members. Also, the mere idea of Europe as a domain of the European Union could lead to actions beyond the present EU borders that are in conflict with Russian interests. This would also concern the Baltic Sea if it were treated as the Union's own inland sea. In a tripolar world Sweden and Finland would find it difficult to stay outside the Union's common defence system and Norway would be forced to choose whether to belong to the "Western Hemisphere" or to "Europe".

The NATO organizations in Northern Europe would be replaced with some kind of regional organization of the WEU, in which Germany would have the largest share and Sweden and Finland would be included. The strength of WEU forces needed in Northern Europe would depend on relations with Russia and on the status of the three Baltic States, which in this scenario could be membership of the EU and WEU. Economic cooperation could create a favourable security policy atmosphere, but the situation could equally well be more unpredictable and more exposed to political changes in Russia than in the NATO era. The focal points of the EU defence and the areas most exposed to danger would be the northern and eastern parts of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic approaches would not have the same value and meaning from a European point of view as for the United States and the present NATO, and even the Kola submarine bases would not prove a very relevant problem for the EU.

8.2 *Other scenarios*

One of the scenarios presented earlier was the division of the world into two competing blocs. The trend towards APEC could finally lead the world into a situation where the North Atlantic is no longer a uniting "Midland Ocean" but a dividing space between two huge coalitions: Europe with its allies and the American-Asian coalition. Even if it is not a question of a zero sum game, Europe would be left out of APEC internal cooperation, which would involve the fastest growing economies

in the world. Russia's interests in Europe and Asia would be so diversified that the country could try to balance between the two blocks or might even dissolve into two or more parts. The competitive situation would be much harder for the European Union than in the previous case, especially in the Middle East, in the face of the resources of the APEC coalition.

Extension of the EU's sphere of influence eastwards and southwards would be even more important than in a world of three blocs, and the focal point of EU security policy would be located in the southern and eastern parts of the Mediterranean area. The situation in Northern Europe is difficult to predict, but in an atmosphere of cooperation with Russia, common interests could make the region quite peaceful and security problems could be less noticeable than in the previous scenarios. The EU would work hard to include Russia, or at least its western parts, in its economic and political cooperation in order to secure access to its natural resources. If this were successful, then the regional organization of the WEU in Northern Europe could be relatively loose and the Baltic Sea could mainly be used as a training area for the WEU forces. In these circumstances the countries of Northern Europe might also be compelled to participate in operations on the southern front of the EU or even elsewhere in the world. The present tendency, to be more prepared for operations outside the borders of one's own country, would be strengthened further. The planning principle adopted by the German navy, "Flotte 2005", is that its new vessels must be able to operate in crises all over the present NATO area of operations, and this capacity would make naval operations possible even outside this area.¹³⁸ The same principle could be extended to other Northern European countries as well, or else Germany could divert the main part of its forces southwards, leaving the Baltic Sea area to the smaller countries.

Even so, an arrangement that breaks the old ties across the Atlantic is not very likely to come true. In relations between Western Europe and North America the tendency towards economic competition is counteracted by old cultural and political ties, and a system in which the United States was engaged in fierce competition with Europe in the economic arena but cooperating with it in the field of security policy within the NATO organization could not last very long. Samuel Huntington

argues in his new book that because of their shared values, such as individual liberty, America and Europe should bind themselves more closely to each other and stop jabbering about things like the "Pacific Century". Henry Kissinger writes that "It is among the established democracies that we should reinforce the values and institutions we treasure. The Western Hemisphere Economic Free Trade Area.... and its ultimate merging into an Atlantic Free Trade Area are crucial steps towards realizing these goals".¹³⁹ Another reason for rejecting the APEC alternative is that there would be enormous difficulties in combining the interests of the United States and China. China practices highly protectionist policies and has territorial claims outstanding with almost all of its neighbours, apart from which its defence forces are the largest in the world.

These facts lend credibility to the other bipolar alternative, continuation and strengthening of the Euro-Atlantic alliance. The present trend towards the extension of NATO in Europe also speaks for a strengthening of ties between Europe and America. The world's main line of division would then pass through the Eurasian continent, either between China and Russia or somewhere in the middle of the Asian Russia. India would probably be part of the western world. The Islamic countries might well form a separate group outside the major alliances and could take advantage of the situation by inclining towards the side that offers the more benefits in each particular case. In the extreme bipolar case suggested by Huntington, it would be the Christian West against the rest of the world.

Within a large Atlantic alliance with Russia associated and the rival being located in the Far East, the problems experienced by Western Europe would not be as great as if APEC were fully implemented and Europe were left out. Consequently there would be less pressure for internal unification within the European Union and more space and need for subregional organizations than in the present situation even, because a vast alliance would be too diversified to be centrally governed. Britain together with some other countries could turn more towards America, Southern Europe to the Mediterranean area and Germany eastwards. In Northern Europe this might mean the emergence of an economic and political "New Hanseatic League". NATO could still exist, but its outlines in the Baltic Sea

area would be softened. A common organization with Russia would still not be very plausible, but a local and formally accepted Nordic military cooperation between Finland, Sweden, Denmark and maybe some other countries could be beneficial to stability. The United States and the European Union could agree upon a totally new kind of NATO, the tasks of which would mainly be situated outside the present area of operations. The demand for the small Northern European countries to participate in military operations in remote areas would not be as great as without U.S. participation.

The third principal course of development would be a return to great power policies. If the detrimental effects of free trade were to prove unbearable for large parts of the population, the big investors were to miscalculate, the spread of crime and terrorism were to become uncontrollable or the rising power of China were to fail to adapt to the western system, then the liberal regime might be abandoned. This would lead to the resurrection of borders, protectionism and long-term mercantilistic policy in most countries. Large nations would once again have much more say in international relations than small ones. Great powers would compete with each other openly, or else they would find more or less lasting ways of achieving a new consensus. In both cases some features of the old geopolitics would return, such as clearly defined spheres of interest.

This scenario is also consistent with the forecast by China's leadership that an era of economic competition will commence once the need of U.S. protection has diminished. The future world powers in the Chinese view will be the United States, Russia, China, Germany and Japan.¹⁴⁰ In order to prevent domination, China is supporting independence of the EU to from the United States and an active role for Germany in Europe. China's position could be improved by a strategic alliance with Russia. In order to oppose Japanese or American supremacy, China wished to involve Russia in Asian-Pacific cooperation.¹⁴¹ There are thus already some new signs of old-fashioned power play and balance of power thinking.

Theoretically, there could be other reasons for the resurgence of competition between states. If the free trade regime really did lead to the abandonment of nearly all restrictions between the large free trade areas, the regional free trade organizations and

agreements would become obsolete. Then the nearest political community available to protect the citizen would be the state, or some other subregional economic-political entity. An additional course for the return to national policies would be the observation that huge pan-areas are simply too large to govern. The reason for the successive retreats of Russia in the past is said to have been "overextension", and that for the present decline in the American presence all over the world "overcommitment". Governing a large empire is difficult in other respects, too. The "common interest" of a union can easily suppress the equally valuable "private interests" of individual nations or subregions. The larger the entity, the greater the issues that can be written off as "individual" and neglected. The common interest is mostly determined by the total economic growth to be expected, and local costs or other effects and interests are usually assigned a secondary role. As an example, the internal market philosophy of the EU and the removal of barriers to trade tend to override other social aspects.

In the scenario of great power competition the state would also play a substantial role in the field of security policy. Overall responsibility for global and regional security would lie with international organizations such as the United Nations and the OSCE, which are not discriminatory. The success of regional cooperation in Northern Europe would depend heavily on the Russian decision as which of the three possible directions it would turn in. It is quite possible that the global competition between the great powers could strengthen its aspirations to restore its old empire, perhaps securing the Asian front by means of an alliance with China. For Northern Europe this would in principle signify a return to the times of the old geopolitics, with two local great powers, Russia and Germany, and a maritime one, the United States, dominating the picture.

9 CONCLUSIONS

It seems to be a common belief in the western democracies that the increasing interdependence between nations and the functions of the global economic forces will bring progress, spread welfare, demolish borders and remove the causes of conflicts. Liberalization of the movements of capital and elimination of the obstacles to trade are seen to be the means for achieving these goals. These actions are often seen as evoked by natural laws which cannot be resisted.

This ideology that neglects political, ideological and cultural differences, or even aspires to annihilate them, is not an adequate guiding principle for governments which have to combat the negative aspects of free trade, above all the uneven and divergent patterns of geographical and social development. Citizens must be protected from internal and external threats by the states or other political organizations that hold responsibility within clearly defined borders. A universal society with equal rights and possibilities for everyone seems to be as utopistic an idea as ever, and market forces cannot be interested in bringing this about. In a harsh economic climate, spatially divided societies compete with each other in many ways, e.g. by offering more favourable terms for investors. The basis of geopolitical thinking, promotion of one's own interests within defined geographical boundaries, has not vanished. Competition between areas cannot be avoided.

The patterns of development of geopolitical thinking and behaviour in all earlier great powers and empires have shown astonishing similarity, and there are reasons, grounded in present trends observable in some regions of the world, to believe that basically the same model will continue, even if the practical measures may be of a less perceptible kind. The arguments and motives expressed for deliberate internal unification or geographical expansion differ from case to case, but the direction of movement is the same. It has to be remembered, too, that the organizers of states in the past seldom had motives other than positive ones, like peace, prosperity, democracy and so on. In this respect the present justifications put forward for NATO and EU expansion sound very familiar. Behind peace and the securing of democratic development, genuine as they may be as aims, there

are always aspirations of improved competitiveness, access and influence. The International Institute for Strategic Studies maintains in its Strategic Survey 1996-1997 that western governments avoid interfering in mere humanitarian matters abroad; it is political and economic prospects that matter.

The need for areal control and the protection of citizens from against external and internal menaces has been recognized in practice, and by way of a compromise a second belief is arisen, that the nation state is too small a unit to achieve competitiveness. On the other hand, the idea of large unions and pan-areas was not strange for the old geopolitical theoreticians either. It is just that the present trend is towards economic pan-areas of continental proportions. This still leaves the question unanswered of where the political responsibility for providing protection lies, at the union level or at that of its subunits, and from whom should the economic resources be collected and how should they be divided between very large areas. The concentration of production has to be counteracted by extensive subventions, which were seen as means of achieving competitiveness in the first place. There is no optimum or eternal size for a political community, and therefore one valid approach is to study different theoretical possibilities for a new world geopolitical system. Until now the state has been the exclusive geopolitical unit, but in the future there may also be smaller or larger entities. The more power is concentrated in the community, the more geopolitical character it is bound to take on.

The most important new aspects in the world system are the passing of the former bipolar world, the slowly developing feeling of community between people in the democratic industrialized countries and the liberation of economic forces. These changes call for a new understanding of geopolitics and how it gains expression nowadays. It is important to reject ideas of the automatic, organistic growth of states and the determining influence of physical geography. Politics, economics and culture are the most important immediate forces that direct the shape of the geopolitical world order, while geography has an indirect impact through history, economic conditions and military considerations. Which of the forces is most influential, depends on the level of the system and the specific regional circumstances.

It is difficult to point to any one prevailing, largely accepted geopolitical theory, but every country has a more or less agreed geopolitical code or mental map as one of the tools of a policy that helps to determine its basic interests in the external world. With the world system in a transition phase, these codes and the associated self-images are still taking shape in many societies. In Russia, for example, neither the country's concrete geographical orientation nor its commonly accepted identity lie on very solid ground. In the United States there is a serious discussion going on about isolation, Asian-Pacific interests and old ties within the Atlantic Alliance. Paradoxically, if all the planned and sketched large free trade areas in the world were implemented, the United States would be the only power to participate in all of them. Logically, the present U.S. hegemony would only be enhanced by such a development. Consequently no definite future world system or corresponding geopolitical position for Northern Europe can be predicted with any certainty. As in earlier transit phases, several serious alternatives exist for the future system, and a faith in only one course would strike the analyst as being unfounded.

The present situation in Northern Europe is influenced by the remnants of the bipolar world and the existing overall world system of a single hegemony. This affects the discussion over the extension of NATO as a military alliance providing protection to countries that feel themselves threatened by Russia. Russia in turn wants to secure its influence over the neighbouring countries, and opposes any alliance founded against it that could expand eastwards. Geopolitically, the extension of NATO is in fact an action intended to prevent eventual Russian expansion, should that country one day rise from its present state of weakness, and an attempt to consolidate the western world.

The situation would change if the world system were to develop towards fierce competition between economic blocs, with a growing political content. Just now economic forces on the global level seem to be the most influential ones, pushing the world towards three competing pan-areas. In each bloc the most influential branches of industry are preparing themselves for an intensification of competition against the corresponding industries in the other blocs. This tends to strengthen the political will to consolidate one's own resources by the same kind of

methods that were used in empires of the old type. In this scenario the need for the United Nations and the OSCE and their significance might increase anew, and NATO would disappear or become little more than a peace-keeping organization. This in turn would intensify plans to organize the defence of the European Union within the WEU. The only real option for the Nordic Countries would then be full membership of this alliance, although a subregional organization would be beneficial for the purposes of stability. There could be pressure from the EU against the Nordic Countries taking part in operations outside Europe to defend the interests of the Union.

Two other possible alternatives based on competition between pan-areas were also presented above, distinguished from each others mainly according to the point of the compass favoured by the United States. An inconsistent situation would be produced if the United States were to become engaged in a tight form of Asian-Pacific economic cooperation and at the same time consider its most important political and military partners to lie in Europe. In the extreme case it could find itself securing the border of NATO between China and Russia and at the same time promoting the economic interests of the APEC in the face of a European coalition on the other side of the same border. A more stable system would be created if the political, cultural and economic forces were to act in the same direction, that is to say, if the United States and Western Europe were united both within NATO and within a transatlantic free trade area. This latter view would give more space for subregional security arrangements.

The last scenario presented here, a return to great power policies and competition between the states would come about if the present free trade regime were to fail to cope with its inherent sources of instability, or if a rising power could not adhere to the rules of others. This would return Northern Europe to the geopolitical model of the past, in which two local powers and a maritime one balance each other out and aim to extend their spheres of interest.

Different geopolitical world orders demand their own approaches to Nordic security policy, but the degree of global competition and the prevailing general atmosphere also influence the situation. It should be noted that by comparison with the past the means of achieving geopolitical goals have often

become "softer". If the present liberal free trade ideology gives way to a more protectionist one, however, geopolitical behaviour will revert earlier, more striking patterns. Cooperation in the Baltic region can in any case help to moderate the negative influences exerted on security by global economic and other forces, and this cooperation should also be formalized in the field of security policy.

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