

## German Geopolitics Revived

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## GERMAN GEOPOLITICS REVIVED

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### I

TEN YEARS ago, the word "geopolitics" was familiar to a broad public. Numerous monographs and popular articles on the subject appeared in this country<sup>1</sup> and abroad. It was widely known that geopolitics signified a novel science — or pseudoscience — which served as a blueprint for and a "scientific" justification of German aggression.

After the collapse of Nazi Germany, the term geopolitics all but disappeared from public discussion. The conclusion might have been drawn that geopolitics was so inextricably tied to the Third Reich that, with the downfall of the régime, it also became extinct.

However, beginning in 1950, geopolitical titles appeared again, and in 1951 the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, the mouthpiece of the prewar geopolitical school, was revived.<sup>2</sup> This reappearance is not without significance for an assessment of the current political and intellectual climate of Germany. For the first time in the postwar period, a leading political magazine of the Nazi era is being published again. Although the *Zeitschrift* professes to aim at scholarly objectivity, it contains numerous instances of the old geopolitical thought and jargon.

In the following pages an attempt will be made to describe the characteristics of the new *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, to show some differences between prewar and present geopolitics, and to examine the revived geopolitical literature as an influence on current political thinking and as a possible clue to future German intentions.

Before we start our examination of current geopolitics, it may be useful to give a brief survey of prewar *Geopolitik*. German geo-

<sup>1</sup>Such well-known American authors as Derwent Whittlesey, Nicholas J. Spykman, Hans Weigert, Andrew Gyorgy, Robert Strauss-Hupé, Andreas Dorpalen, and others have dealt with geopolitics.

<sup>2</sup>K. H. Pfeffer, professor at the University of Hamburg, became the new editor, and Kurt Vowinckel of Heidelberg, former publisher of the *Zeitschrift* and one-time president of the (Nazi) Association of German Publishers, served as the new publisher. In July, 1953, the *Zeitschrift* was taken over by the publishing firm of C. D. Leske at Darmstadt.

politics grew up in the atmosphere of disillusionment that followed Germany's defeat in World War I. In 1917, the vision of a German-dominated *Mittel-Europa*, with tentacles of control reaching from Dunkirk to Riga and from Hamburg to Baghdad, had seemed close to realization. But, two years later, the imperial dream was replaced by the stark reality of a drastically reduced national area, cut in two by the Polish Corridor, and suffering from overpopulation.

It is hardly surprising that, in the post-Versailles climate of bewildered bitterness, questions arose as to the reasons for this precipitate decline. Many answers were given, but few proved as plausible and convincing to patriotic Germans as those which explained the plight of Germany in a blend of geographical and political terms. *Geopolitik*, the name of the new science which gained currency at that time, explained how defeat became unavoidable when Germany strayed from clearly defined geopolitical precepts. At the same time, the new science held out hope that, through intensive study and deeper insights, victory might yet be snatched from defeat.

Karl Haushofer (1869-1946), a retired major general and professor of history, was the leader of the German geopoliticians who formed the "Munich school" of political geography. In 1919, when he was appointed to the chair of geography and military history at the University of Munich, he gained a platform from which he could spread his ideas throughout the country. The rare event of a former general's lecturing on political and military geography gave his courses a tremendous attraction for a restive generation of students. Early in 1924 he widened his audience by launching the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, a monthly dedicated to the study of geopolitical questions.

An elaborate doctrine was created, which mixed scientific facts with mysticism and emotionalism. In the geopolitical literature, constant stress was laid on the dynamic character of the science, the element of conflict was ever-present, and history was seen as an unending fight among states for political and spatial survival. Geostrategy emerged as the central theme. Terms like "outflanking," "encirclement," and "breaking through the center" became standard vocabulary used even in discussing matters which bore no direct relation to tactical military operations. The concept of total war was clearly perceived, and the study of its various aspects was pro-

moted under the headings of such subsidiary sciences as geopsychology, geomedicine, geotechnics, and geojurisprudence.

For almost twenty years people became fanatical over the sacred words *Lebensraum* and *Autarkie*; their imagination was fired by the vision of a virile continental power bloc headed by Germany; and their hatred of the Versailles system was fanned by the geopolitical harping on "bleeding" frontiers. It is obvious that the Nazi régime could not fail to recognize the usefulness of *Geopolitik* for its own purposes. Nazi ideas of territorial expansion and of international politics were essentially similar to geopolitical concepts. Nevertheless, there was a latent and sometimes unconcealed tension between the Munich school and the Nazi rulers. Geopolitics represented a pre-Nazi stratum of German right-wing romantic thought, which the Nazis took over and combined with ideas of their own. The geopoliticians resented Nazi adulteration of their doctrine, and the Nazis were annoyed by the incomplete subservience of the Munich school. On several occasions, however, notably the signing of the Russo-German Pact in 1939 and the conclusion of the Triple Axis Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan in 1940, Haushofer and his followers enthusiastically endorsed Nazi politics.

For a brief period, Haushofer's ambition to become the people's guide to an understanding of the laws of geopolitics and the preceptor of German statesmen was fulfilled. The zenith of his career was reached in the years prior to the outbreak of World War II. But it was followed by precipitate decline. The course of the war shattered his dream of a dominant Germany. Nazi suspicion fell on him, and in 1944 he was sent to the Dachau concentration camp. In the same year, his *Zeitschrift* disappeared in the turbulence of war. When the Nuremberg Court in 1946 interrogated him to determine whether or not he should be classified as a war criminal, his health broke down and, a few months later, he committed suicide.

## II

The revival of the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, which indicates a continued belief in the validity of geopolitical insights, should not come as a great surprise. After all, it must not be forgotten that, at one time, *Geopolitik* had filled the imagination not only of fanatic Nazi functionaries but also of many serious students who had searched for a guiding principle in the confusion of the world's

political affairs. Furthermore, geopolitical thought had reached and influenced broad sectors of the German population. It is likely that some basic concepts have been retained in the minds so affected. But the most important reason for assuming that the old *Geopolitik* is not altogether dead lies in the fact that the basic German problems, on which the Munich school once focused its attention, namely, narrowness of living space, overpopulation, and untenable frontiers, are still extant and even more pronounced than ever. For these reasons, it may be useful to review briefly some of the main tenets of geopolitical doctrine and to examine the extent to which they survive in the current literature.

The central position in the geopolitical creed was held by the concept of space, which was not only a physical-geographical term but a vision and a program. Particularly in the version of *Lebensraum*, it acquired a life-and-death urgency and a strong emotional appeal. According to geopolitical space theory, the state is an organism, endowed with both life and will, and must expand or pay the penalty of decay and disintegration. The youthful, strong, and dynamic nations are always pitted against the aged, weak, and static (or stagnant) nations.

In contrast to such pre-war pronouncements, the revived geopolitical literature no longer mentions the old thesis of dynamic versus static powers, perhaps because it is difficult to apply it to the changed world scene. On the contrary, the right of small states to independent existence is defended for moral and cultural reasons, and by the same token imperialistic tendencies of the large states are deprecated. Nevertheless, it is recognized that the trend of the times toward larger political and economic units may progressively encroach on small-power self-determination.

Closely related to the doctrine of space was the geopolitical theory of population pressure. In Haushofer's opinion, a growing population not only needed expansion in space but was justified in acquiring it through means of aggression. Peaceful solutions to the problem of overpopulation, such as the export of goods and emigration, were regarded as unsatisfactory.

As is to be expected, the new geopolitical literature devotes considerable attention to population problems. After all, population density in the Federal Republic stands at 496 persons per square mile, as compared to 370 in pre-war Germany. For obvious reasons,

however, the old thesis that population pressure justifies territorial expansion is not advocated at the moment.

Another important tenet of geopolitical doctrine dealt with the problem of frontiers. To regard a frontier as a mere line was thought a meaningless abstraction. The frontier was thought of as a living thing, the "peripheric skin" of the body politic, a breathing part of the state organism. In geopolitical parlance, frontiers "exuded," "attracted," and "devoured"; they were "apathetical" or "stimulated." Haushofer declared that only declining states sought stable borders, and only decadent ones protected them with fortifications. Young and strong nations expended their energies upon the construction of roads. In the sight of the geopoliticians, the Maginot Line was a symbol of France's national exhaustion. It needs no great perspicacity to see how this frontier concept lent itself to expansionist and revisionist tendencies. In post-Versailles Germany, it was often used as a scientific cloak for demands for border revisions.

No parallel to this frontier dynamism has been found in the current geopolitical literature. Still, it can be assumed that the former geopolitical rejection of rivers as natural frontiers has supporters today, in view of the fact that the most resented border of contemporary Germany is the Oder-Neisse frontier. Undoubtedly, the explosive potential of this boundary is greater even than was that of Germany's Versailles frontiers, which Hitler exploited with such effect. It seems likely that in the long run no German government will be able to ignore this particular frontier problem, and in the future it may become a factor of growing importance in international politics.

This brief comparison of geopolitical doctrine as presented in the pre-war and in the present literature shows a rather striking difference. Whereas formerly the reader was fed with elaborate theories about the rôle of space, the effects of population pressure, and the nature of frontiers, such topics are now absent or, at least, played down. This difference may be a deliberate editorial policy on the part of *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, the chief mouthpiece of current geopolitics. When the *Zeitschrift* reappeared in 1951, the editor obviously felt compelled to eradicate as far as possible the unsavory reputation of its forerunner and namesake. He tried to achieve this aim by setting high standards of objectivity and truthfulness, by using material which stressed democratic and humanitarian values,

and by nearly eliminating geopolitical doctrine. The intent undoubtedly was to establish a journal of strictly scientific standing.

A scrutiny of its pages, however, gives the impression that the *Zeitschrift* falls short of this aim. Even though doctrinal pronouncements of the prewar brand are conspicuous by their absence, the continuance of traditional geopolitical thinking is unmistakable. It becomes particularly obvious in the views and characterizations of individual nations which the *Zeitschrift* presents. These views are of considerable interest as illustrations of what some Germans think about the rôle played by other powers on the world-political scene; they also shed light on German thought about Germany's international status. Even more important, some of these assessments of other nations may some day have a bearing on the course of German foreign policy, provided they gain acceptance by the broad public or by influential political leaders. For these reasons, some detail on German views of a few selected countries, as printed in the pages of the prewar and the current *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, may be of interest. France, Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union have been chosen for this purpose.

To the pre-war geopoliticians, France was the chief obstacle to the creation of a German-led continental Europe. A "profiteer" from World War I, she was seen as clinging tenaciously to the remainders of her former power. As one of the possessor nations, she resisted the dynamism of the "have-not" nations. In spite of her frequently effective obstruction of German aims, she was regarded as a decadent and stagnating nation, which sought shelter behind the Maginot Line and the League of Nations.

The assessment of France has not turned more positive in the current *Zeitschrift*. True, several articles advocate a genuine reconciliation between France and Germany with the ultimate aim of establishing a Franco-German Union.<sup>3</sup> But the reason advanced for recommending this union is not that mutual respect and attraction are demanding closer ties, but rather that the threat of a common enemy makes the pooling of their resources imperative. According to other statements, the new power center of Europe must not be sought in Franco-German union but in the restoration of a powerful Reich. Other opinions refer to France as "a former great

<sup>3</sup>*Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (January, 1951), pp. 44-56, and (August, 1951), pp. 471-481.

power," a nation characterized by "fatigue" and "sterility," "ridden with problems and so unstable that she may infect other Western nations with her lack of courage."<sup>4</sup>

Great Britain was never treated so lightly and disdainfully as was France. Nevertheless, Britain, too, was considered a decadent nation which had lost her "flair for rule." Often a note of admiration, or perhaps envy, for the greatness of the British past could be discerned, but her decay was held inevitable.

Despite Britain's victorious rôle in World War II, the current assessment of Great Britain and her empire shows little change. British sea power is still described as "declining." The days when Britain could keep the balance of power in Europe, either in "splendid isolation" or as leader of a coalition against a continental hegemony, are declared to be gone forever.<sup>5</sup> With regard to her empire, Britain is seen not only as having lost former positions of strength but as having become a liability for all Western policy, particularly in the Orient. On the whole, the postwar *Zeitschrift* devotes much less space to the problems of Britain and the Empire than did Haushofer's journal.

Before the war, the *Zeitschrift* treated the United States with the caution and respect due one of the "giant" powers of the world, but she ranked behind the British Empire. With America's entry into the war, the *Zeitschrift's* spotlight shifted from Britain to the United States. America was seen as the new leader of "world imperialism" and treated with alternating venom and respect; the venom was directed at American "greediness" and "cultural barbarism;" the respect was reserved for America's giant space and her enormous economic capabilities.

The new *Zeitschrift* is consistently critical of America. Only one friendly remark has been found — an approval of the United States' refusal to exchange North Korean and Chinese prisoners-of-war unwilling to return home.<sup>6</sup> Otherwise, the assessment of the United States dwells largely on negative aspects. The American governmental system is subjected to criticism for its "cumbrousness, slowness, and lack of clearly defined responsibilities."<sup>7</sup> The Constitution and its function in contemporary American civilization is likened

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, January, 1954, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, January, 1953, pp. 8 ff.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, April, 1953, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, May, 1953, p. 270.



to an ox-drawn wagon on a super-highway. In an article on American cities, the United States is characterized as a country "lacking in tradition and exposed, in equal measure, to the dangerous mass psychoses of arrogance and fear."<sup>8</sup> American foreign policy is described as "haphazard" and "anemic." It is alleged, furthermore, that American policy, contrary to protestations, is based chiefly on selfish motives. Thus, the American "Point Four" policy of aid to underdeveloped areas is described as an attempt to secure the lion's share of investments for American capitalists at the expense of their European competitors.<sup>9</sup> These are, of course, examples of negative statements only. In fairness to the *Zeitschrift*, it must be added that it also contains articles which report on various aspects of American political life with objectivity.

The Soviet Union, in the image of the early geopoliticians, was an imperialistic, colonial power, eager to play a significant rôle in world politics in its desire to bring about world revolution. Its final goal was held to be a union of all nations in a federated Soviet Socialist Republic on a Communist pattern. Communist belief was thought to be a religion demanding absolute obedience and complete self-sacrifice in the service of the idea. During the Weimar Republic, an almost exuberant warmth of feeling for the Soviet Union was occasionally expressed. The geopolitician Erich Obst, for instance, made the following statement in 1925. "No nation is closer to Russia than Germany; only Germany can understand the Russian soul; Germany and Russia have been friends for centuries; their economic structures are complementary: they must hang together."<sup>10</sup> During the pre-war years of the Hitler régime, also, the Munich school favored Russo-German rapprochement and co-operation. Russia was seen as a potential ally in Germany's life-and-death struggle with the possessor nations. Only the mighty Soviet Union was regarded as being in a position to give her the necessary geographic depth of impregnable hinterland with the concomitant of strategic security. A possible pooling of Russian and German strength was proclaimed as assuring the "liberation" not only of Eurasia but of the entire Western Pacific region from "hateful Anglo-American hegemony."

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, May, 1953, p. 274.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, September, 1952, p. 567.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted by Hans W. Weigert in *Generals and Geographers: The Twilight of Geopolitics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), p. 183.

The new *Zeitschrift* evidently continues to consider the Soviet Union as a power to which the closest attention must be paid. It draws an impressive picture of Soviet accomplishments in industrial development and stresses the fact that Russia's economic growth has not been achieved at the price of neglecting armaments. New mammoth armament plants are mentioned, in which special attention is devoted to the production of A-bombs and the H-bomb.<sup>11</sup> The military position of the Soviet Union in relation to the Western powers is considered vastly improved, not only as the result of Russia's catching up with American production of atomic weapons, but also on account of epoch-making changes in her transportation system. In the political field, Russia is seen as displaying unequalled astuteness in exploiting the recurring crises of Western governments and in having at her command a vast system of agencies doing her bidding in foreign countries.

Again, as in the case of France, Great Britain, and the United States, it appears that the present geopolitical assessment does not radically differ from that of prewar times. However, there is one basic difference in the case of Russia: whereas the Munich school favored a Russo-German combination directed against the West, today's geopoliticians do not seem to find any fascination in this idea. Nor is there, on the other hand, any enthusiasm for a "crusade" against the Soviet Union under American leadership. But German defense interests, as viewed by the current *Zeitschrift*, are clearly identified with the West. Nowhere is there any contemplation of an alternative, such as aggression started by any power other than the Soviet Union, or of Germany as part of a continental bloc warding off an attack from the sea powers. The present orientation of German geopolitics is distinctly West-centered, in spite of many harsh words of criticism uttered against the West. Anti-Westernism, it appears, serves as an emotional outlet but does not carry over into practical political and strategic thought.

### III

An investigation of the current *Zeitschrift* would not be complete without at least a brief glance at its contributors. From January, 1951, to October, 1953, a total of 559 contributions to the *Zeitschrift* were made by 273 different contributors. The authors of 109 could

<sup>11</sup>*Zeitschrift* (March, 1953), p. 132.

not be identified, and 13 contributions were anonymous. The identifiable contributions can be broken down as follows:

	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTORS
Former military personnel.....	25	19
Former government officials.....	23	13
Present government officials or holders of public office.....	15	8
Academic personnel.....	132	72
Journalists and writers.....	89	46
Commerce and industry.....	20	14
Miscellaneous professions.....	32	26
Non-Germans.....	101	75
	—	—
		273
Unidentifiable.....	109	—
Anonymous.....	13	—
	—	—
Total.....	559	273

The former military group, though not large in numbers, is represented by well-known names, among them Generals Guderian, Ramcke, Rohden, and Heygendorf, Rear Admiral Engel, Colonel Rudel, and Colonel Silgailis (the former Chief-of-Staff of the Latvian SS-Legion). The views of this group are tinged with disapproval of Western policies. Guderian, in a pamphlet called "So geht es nicht," published in 1951 as *Beiheft* (Annex) #1 to the *Zeitschrift*, suggested a program for Germany's defense based on a national army to safeguard German independence. The pamphlet is interspersed with attacks on the "disingenuousness" of United States policy.

Among former government officials we find the names of Werner-Otto v. Hentig, career diplomat and lecturer during the Hitler era, and minister to Indonesia; Rudolf Nadolny, pre-Hitler diplomat and advocate of a rapprochement between the governments of the East and West German states; Herman Rauschnig, one-time president of the Senate of Danzig, and author of controversial books,<sup>12</sup> who advocates a revision of present Western-oriented German policy; and, finally, Karl Epting, director of the German Institute in Paris from 1940-1945. In general, except for Epting, former gov-

<sup>12</sup>E.g., *The Revolution of Nihilism* (New York: Alliance Book Corporation, 1939); *Hitler Speaks* (London: T. Butterworth, Ltd., 1939); and *Ist Friede noch moeglich?* (Heidelberg: K. Vowinckel, 1953).

ernment officials write objectively and without display of personal bias or resentment.

Present government officials and holders of public office include Franz Blücher, vice-chancellor of the Bonn Republic; Ferdinand Friedensburg, one-time mayor of Berlin and delegate to the *Bundestag*; and Gustav Harmssen, a Bremen Senator. Each of these men writes on subjects of political interest, but with no visible relation to geopolitics. Obviously, the wish to display prominent names was the foremost motive in soliciting these contributions. There is no indication that present government officials, either as authors or as readers, are concerned with geopolitics.

Academic personnel supply the largest number of contributions, although they do not constitute the most numerous group of contributors. Most of the academic writers are university professors at Hamburg, Göttingen, and Munich; others are connected with scientific institutes. No concentration in definite localities, comparable to the former geopolitical centers in Munich and Heidelberg, is noticeable at present.

Unlike the professors who wrote for the old *Zeitschrift*, the new academic group avoids geopolitical themes. Most of their articles are concerned with *Auslandswissen* (foreign areas studies). Contemporary issues prevail in their discussions, but they are frequently interspersed with historical observations. The academic group, on the whole, is composed of sound scholars, who are experts in their fields, and who are apparently unwilling to risk their reputation in the support of ambiguous or ill-founded theories. They constitute the one group of contributors which enables the *Zeitschrift* to lay claim to the status of a serious and scholarly periodical.

In comparison with the academic group, the journalists and writers present a more diversified picture. Some of their contributions represent reliable, objective reporting; others amount to tendentious editorializing; and some show a reversion to the prewar geopolitical jargon.

In the industrial and commercial group, we find a member of the *Erdöl-Informationsdienst* (Petroleum Information Service), the public relations director of the Esso Oil Company, two experts on civil aviation, one representative each of the rubber and margarine industries, the manager of a Ruhr coal mine, the head of the Federal Information Office for Foreign Trade at Teheran (in charge of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan), and an industrialist connected with the

large leather goods manufacturing firm "Goldpfeil" at Offenbach, whose owner, Heinrich Krumm, was a West German delegate at the Moscow Economic Conference in April, 1952.

It can surprise no one to learn that the *Zeitschrift* has established close contacts with members of the export business, since its editor and numerous contributors live in Hamburg, Germany's largest port. Collaboration between the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* and foreign trade interests continues a pre-war tradition, when periodicals like *Die Tat* (Action)<sup>13</sup> and Haushofer's journal formulated policies of economic expansion which the exporters translated into practice.

Of the twenty-six contributors listed in the "miscellaneous" group, eight have organizational connections. Some of these organizations are concerned with the grievances of ethnic Germans in border districts; others represent German interests abroad or promote certain political schemes. The *Mittleuropäische Reichsunion* (Central European Reich Federation), for instance, proposes the creation of a Greater German Reich covering the combined territories of pre-1918 Germany and the Hapsburg Monarchy. What most of these organizations have in common is their refusal to accept certain *de facto* frontiers, their proclivity to keep past grievances alive, and their support of revisionist policies. It is perhaps not without significance that the *Zeitschrift* gives ample space to these malcontent groups.

The largest single group of contributors are the seventy-five non-German authors. The size of this group, undoubtedly, attests to the endeavor to make the *Zeitschrift* a journal of international scope with points of contact throughout the world. Some of the contributions were probably solicited for the prestige or public interest associated with the authors' names. Among these are Ralph Bunche, Owen Lattimore, O. K. Armstrong (representative from Missouri), A. L. Geyer (High Commissioner of the Union of South Africa in London), Hans Oprecht (*Nationalrat* and president of the Swiss Social Democrat Party), and Achmed Sukarno (President of the Indonesian Republic). Articles by these men are, of course, not geopolitical; they might have appeared in any political science publication in any country.

<sup>13</sup>The former editor of *Die Tat*, Hans Zehrer, is now editor-in-chief of the influential Hamburg newspaper *Die Welt*.

Another group of non-German authors is distinguished by scholarly soundness and objectivity. Among these we find Harold Hinton of Georgetown University, and several Swedish and English university professors.

A political overtone is noticeable in an interview with the former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, now exiled in Cairo.<sup>14</sup> The interview in itself is innocuous enough, but the choice of the Grand Mufti, once known as one of the staunchest friends of the Nazis in the Near East, as spokesman for the Arab world cannot be called fortunate.

Stronger reminiscences of the past become visible in contributions from Argentina. It seems that the gospel of the Munich school, which is rather thoroughly discredited in Germany itself, is still flourishing on the South American continent.

Sympathetic feelings for the vanished Third Reich and its rulers are also displayed in a contribution from South Africa.<sup>15</sup>

It can hardly be considered entirely accidental that such extreme views are repeatedly stated by non-German authors. There are two possible explanations. One would indicate a remarkable naiveté, if not blindness, on the part of the editor who, by accepting this type of contribution, unintentionally allows the *Zeitschrift* to become a mouthpiece of the unreconstructed geopolitical thinking and the pro-Nazi sentiment which still exist in various corners of the world. The other explanation would be that the journal prefers to have certain extreme views stated by non-German rather than German authors, a policy which may be calculated to protect it from the stigma of narrow nationalism or neo-Nazism.

Finally, the list of current contributors contains the names of eleven pre-war contributors,<sup>16</sup> some of them one-time officials of the Nazi party and members of Haushofer's inner circle. However,

<sup>14</sup>*Zeitschrift* (December, 1951), p. 761.

<sup>15</sup>Review of a pamphlet by Johan Schoeman, entitled *Göring's Last Letter: Field-Marshal Hermann Göring Speaks from His Grave to His Accuser, Prosecutor, Judge and Hangman—Winston Churchill—and to the World-Christian Conscience*, *Zeitschrift* (June, 1952), pp. 371 ff.

<sup>16</sup>Klaus Mehnert, editor of *Osteuropa* and *Christ und Welt*; Wolf Schenke, editor of *Korrespondenz-Realpolitik*, a newsletter published in Hamburg; Peter Heinz Seraphim, lecturer on East European economics at the University of Munich; Otto Maull, professor of geography at the University of Munich; Carl Schmitt, one-time Nazi authority on international law and author of a "decisionist" philosophy of government; Hermann Rauschning; Kurt Vowinkel; Gustav Fochler-Hauke, professor of geography in Argentina; Carl Schmidt; Heinz Kloss; and Rupert v. Schumacher.

no traces of the old trends or jargon have been detected in their present writings.

#### IV

The revival of German geopolitical literature reveals not only the persistence — although with some modifications — of traditional geopolitical thinking. Recent geopolitical literature also serves as a vehicle for the spreading of certain views which have gained currency on the German political scene. They can be briefly summarized as follows:

Germany's present political position between East and West is recognized as fraught with danger, but it is not viewed as altogether negative. The *Zeitschrift* notes, for instance, with a certain satisfaction that victorious nations always take over not only the assets but also the liabilities of defeated nations. Thus, in the post-war situation, the Allies had to assume Germany's military defense, and the vanquished nation was relieved of this particular burden. The division of Germany, weakening though it is, is also regarded as having its compensating aspects. For, whatever the outcome of the present world struggle, "at least half of Germany will be on the winning side." In a similar vein, the *Zeitschrift* cautions its readers that the cold war has by no means been decided yet and that it would be wise for Germany "to seek her friends in all camps."<sup>17</sup>

A great deal of space is devoted to an evaluation of the chief protagonists of the two camps, the Soviet Union and the United States. The treatment accorded these two nations is strikingly different. In general, the Soviets seem to command the journal's respect; their system may be disliked and their intentions may be feared, but the expectation, though nowhere explicitly stated, that the future belongs to Russia pervades its pages. Above all, the revitalizing of German trade with the Eastern bloc is eagerly advocated. Present United States trading policy, characterized by the embargo against the Eastern bloc, is seen as leading Europe to economic disaster. Germany is, therefore, advised to rid herself of "excessive loyalty toward the Americans" and to redirect a sizable portion of her foreign trade to the East.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup>August, 1952, p. 452.

<sup>18</sup>*Zeitschrift* (May, 1953), pp. 261-266.

As has been pointed out before, the United States, in contradistinction, is treated with criticism and even sarcasm. She is often blamed for the uneasy state of the world today and referred to as "the lesser evil." Much is made of the "shortsightedness" of United States foreign policy, which, by destroying German and Japanese military power, has torn down the chief bulwarks against Russian expansion.

However, such criticism of the United States must not be taken as an indication that the geopoliticians advocate a German alignment with the East in preference to a Western alliance. Though emotionally anti-Western, in terms of *Realpolitik* they see, at the moment, no alternative to linking Germany closely to the West.

A different view, however, is taken of the long-range development. Without a doubt, the new school of geopolitics favors a strong and independent Germany, unattached to either side, but part of a power bloc which would keep outside the conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States. The magazine frequently expresses the belief that this aim can be achieved if Germany avoids taking sides either ideologically or materially, and if she develops her economic resources and strengthens her ties with nations that are equally interested in a "third force." It is clearly recognized that Germany, even if reunited, would never be strong enough to maintain herself alone between East and West. Therefore, a genuine federation of Europe, not just a loose coalition of states, should be created, for which Germany would serve as rallying point and in which she could once more assume her "stabilizing function." This federation should, of course, have its own strong and independent army, a true European Army, "unadulterated by association with the Atlantic Pact."

A strong Europe of this type is declared to be the vital factor that is missing in the present power constellation. Its very existence would be a powerful deterrent to war. For, as an article in the *Zeitschrift*<sup>19</sup> asserts, the European bloc would never start a war of its own, but would turn against that side which threatened the peace. If, for instance, the Kremlin had no intention of breaking the peace but was menaced by an aggressive America, it could count on the benevolent attitude of a strong Europe.

Eventually, it is hoped, this third power would grow so strong

<sup>19</sup>January, 1952, pp. 1-9.



as to become the decisive factor in world politics. But before this can be accomplished, Germany must be restored to the position of a great power. This restoration is regarded as the indispensable precondition of an effective "Third Force." As one geopolitical author puts it: "As soon as Germany is so strong that Europe *alongside it* [italics mine] accounts for something, then Europe can assume the function of a buffer between the world giants, but no sooner."<sup>20</sup>

The concept of an "equidistant" third force, powerful enough to prevent another war and able to apply this power in the rôle of umpire, has obviously taken root in the minds of numerous geopoliticians, both inside and outside Germany. Of course, the *Zeitschrift* is aware that the time for German leadership of the European bloc has not yet arrived. For the time being, a hard-headed appraisal of political and strategic-geographical realities seems to dictate continued co-operation with the Americans and integration of Germany with the Western group, for only such a policy will serve the realization of German ambitions. At a later stage, when Europe is once more a high-power area under German leadership, the situation will be different; then Germany can either choose her partners freely or play off one of the world powers against the other. Viewed from this angle, the "Third Force" concept of the geopoliticians differs from that of the pacifist, welfare-oriented neutralists. While both are apt to create difficulties for the West, those created by the geopoliticians may be worse than those created by the neutralists. Unfortunately, however, the West may have to depend on the former group.

In conclusion, it can be said that current German geopolitics, as presented chiefly by the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, cannot be regarded as a symptom of resurgent Nazism, nor is it the proponent of an intellectual revolt against Germany's pro-Western orientation. The number of unreconstructed contributions in the pages of the journal is exceeded by that of well-considered, objective articles in the field of political geography. Nor does the new *Zeitschrift* have, at present, the dynamic leadership, the popular support, and the favor of the government in power, which its predecessor enjoyed. But the tendencies mentioned above place the *Zeitschrift* and the new geopolitical school at the extreme right of the German political spectrum. Although not neo-Nazi, the *Zeitschrift* may be considered an

<sup>20</sup>*Zeitschrift* (May, 1953), p. 288.

attempt to turn the pro-Western orientation of the Bonn Republic to the advantage of right-wing army and industrial circles in Germany.

It is, of course, difficult to assess the weight and significance of the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* among current German publications. Assuming that the weight of a periodical can be judged by the size of its circulation, by the frequent appearance of élite contributors, by citations from its pages, and by references to it in other publications, the *Zeitschrift* (which has an approximate circulation of 3,000) would not rate very high. However, the possibility should not be ruled out that the political concept which the new geopolitical school propagates may some day attain the force of doctrine or inspire a popular movement. In that case, the *Zeitschrift* could conceivably become a leading political organ.