

# Michigan Law Review

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Volume 47 | Issue 6

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1949

## Weigert, Stefansson and Harrison: NEW COMPASS OF THE WORLD

Michigan Law Review

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### Recommended Citation

Michigan Law Review, *Weigert, Stefansson and Harrison: NEW COMPASS OF THE WORLD*, 47 MICH. L. REV. 868 ().

Available at: <https://repository.law.umich.edu/mlr/vol47/iss6/31>

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NEW COMPASS OF THE WORLD. Edited by *Hans W. Weigert, Vilhjalmur Stefanson* and *Richard E. Harrison*. New York: Macmillan. 1949. Pp. xix, 375. \$5.50.

"We have still to learn the vital lesson that the strategy of the peace must be based on geography," say the editors of this symposium. Twenty-three essays "describe and interpret" the geography of areas which have been or are likely to become centers of conflict, with emphasis on thorough analysis of a few regions rather than sketchy treatment of many. An important section of the work is devoted to Russia:

her internal development—industry, transportation and population; her position as a naval power with expanding control in the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Seas; the establishment of defensive zones to protect her vulnerable western boundary; the intensive colonization and industrialization of arctic areas; her strategic location, inaccessible to sea power and commanding the land approaches to Europe, Africa, the Near East and the Far East. Complementary discussions deal with the strategic systems of Great Britain and the United States and with the exclusion of naval power from an increasing number of strategic areas by military and land-based air power. The final section of the book points up the industrial and demographic problems of key areas in Asia. Two disturbing threads run through the essays. One is the Malthusian dilemma confronting virtually every nation in East Asia: severe overpopulation causes chronic malnutrition which invites disastrous epidemics and famines. More adequate food supply and public health administration are essential to improve this situation; yet any increase in food supply or public health is immediately reflected in population increases (currently 15,000 persons daily in India, for example) which completely nullify any gains. The other is failure of the United States to recognize, as has her Soviet neighbor, that the pivotal area in world power systems is now the "Polar Mediterranean"—the area of contact between the continents of the northern hemisphere, that Pacific bases are no longer "blue chips of United States power" since they are useless in any struggle for control of arctic airways and since the decisive forces in Asia are being and must be generated along its inland frontiers, not super-imposed from the coasts. It is urged that the United States and Canada recognize the northward thrust of Russian strategy and fill the "power vacuum" of the North American arctic, and that we realize that national frontiers have become so extensive that a strong United Nations in the near future is an imperative for world peace.