

ment series, and decided to send a questionnaire to the members of the Association for an expression of their opinion on these matters.

The sub-committee on political education has divided its work into two parts: (1) the promotion of the teaching of political science in elementary and high schools, and (2) the organization of a number of regional conferences each year on governmental topics, composed of fifteen to twenty politicians, officials, interested laymen, and political scientists, the aim being to foster close personal contact between prominent political scientists on the one hand and the officials and politicians on the other—groups that nowadays not uncommonly regard one another with distrust.

After hearing these reports, the Committee on Policy adopted the following budget:

Sub-committee on Research	\$ 3,500
Sub-committee on Personnel	1,775
Sub-committee on Publication	750
Sub-committee on Political Education	5,500
General Chairman (office and travel)	1,500
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Total	\$13,025

The balance of the grant from the Carnegie Corporation is left unappropriated to cover emergencies and such further meetings of the general committee as may be necessary. Very little more time and money will be devoted to such meetings; there will probably not be more than one during the remainder of the year, perhaps in connection with the summer meeting of the Council. The sub-committees, however, are all vigorously at work. The Committee will welcome suggestions from any member of the Association as to methods and as to subjects to be dealt with.

University of Michigan.

THOMAS H. REED, *Chairman.*

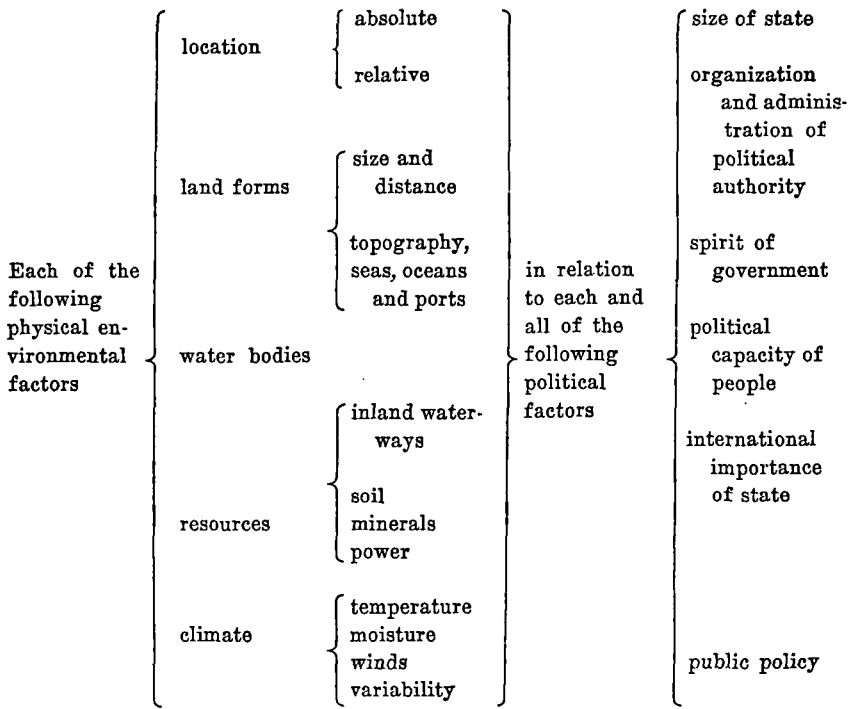
Political Geography as a Political Science Field. "Physical environment never compels man to do anything; the compulsion lies in his own nature. But the environment does say that some courses of conduct are permissible and others impossible."¹ Do these words of Dr. Ellsworth Huntington apply to the political scientist's special preserve? Some geographers have thought so. They have written books designed to disclose relationships between physical environment and politics.² Geography departments occasionally offer university courses

¹ E. Huntington, *The Human Habitat* (New York, 1927), p. vi.

² Cf. I. Bowman, *The New World* (4th ed., Yonkers, 1928); E. Huntington and

called "political geography."³ Political scientists, on the contrary, seem to have paid less attention to the geographical implications of their subject. Upon repeated occasions, the writer has elicited reactions of astonishment and scepticism from friends and colleagues in response to the suggestion that regional geography is the "bed rock" upon which political science is founded. For this reason, he welcomed the opportunity to organize a course on "political geography" in the political science department at Stanford University during the year 1929-30. This note is inspired by the thought that the scope and initial results of this experiment may interest political science teachers and students elsewhere.

The following schematic diagram suggests the types of questions raised and discussed in connection with each political area studied :



S. W. Cushing, *Principles of Human Geography* (2nd ed., New York, 1922), Chaps. XXI-XXII. Many others might be cited.

³ Such courses are advertised by the geography departments of the University of Chicago, the University of Nebraska, and the University of Washington. Further search might reveal others.

The size of a state and the nature of its boundaries often exhibit relationships to geographic facts. It is obvious that its island seat limits the size of the United Kingdom, or that the Pyrenees mountains form a "natural" boundary between France and Spain. Other correlations of this character may be more obscure. The political importance of such factors appears frequently, as, for instance, in the Italian insistence upon certain frontiers in the Alps, or the French desire to extend territorial sovereignty to the Rhine.

The articulation of physical environment with the organization and administration of political authority upon a national or an international scale is a matter of fundamental concern to the student of politics. Distance and area may impose real limitations upon the efficiency of civil administration. Tendencies toward federal centralization in the United States, the regionalist movement in France, and plans for devolution in Great Britain undoubtedly have geographical connotations as yet largely unexplored. Regional planning, whether on a municipal or on a grander scale, must inevitably take account of the physical advantages and limitations of the area under consideration.⁴ Political sectionalism and sudden shifts in partisan allegiance may likewise depend upon climatic or other physical factors to an extent as yet insufficiently recognized.⁵

Most illusive is the matter of the "spirit of government." Latin American peoples have failed to work political institutions patterned more or less closely after the North American model with anything like the results attained in this country. New Zealanders and Australians have developed traditions regarding the scope of governmental operations quite foreign to Anglo-Saxon notions elsewhere. In the United States, there exist deep-seated beliefs regarding the principle of democratic government, personal liberty, governmental interference with business, and many other matters. It is well to inquire to what extent typical American stereotypes may have been conditioned by an abundance of cheap land, great natural wealth, a variable and stimulating climate, and a location generally suited to industry and commerce; and to ask similar questions regarding the prevailing spirit of the governments of other lands.

⁴ Cf. B. Mackaye, *The New Exploration* (New York, 1928).

⁵ Cf. J. D. Barnhart, "Rainfall and the Populist Party in Nebraska," *Amer. Polit. Sci. Rev.*, XIX, pp. 527-540 (1925); and E. Krehbiel, "Geographic Influences in British Elections," *Geog. Rev.*, II, pp. 419-432 (1916).

It is in the realm of public policy, however, that geographic inquiry may contribute most to the science of politics. Thorough and accurate knowledge of the physical environment of a country, together with information concerning economic and social adjustments thereto and the technological possibilities of improving such adjustments, will enable the student of public policy to make predictions regarding the results to be expected from any line of governmental policy adopted or under consideration. Mention need be made of only a few such subjects of inquiry, e.g., the five-year plan in Russia, the land policy of Mexico, the Canadian system of federal subsidies, the Italian insistence upon naval parity with the French, the development of democratic, constitutional government in Central America. The list might be extended indefinitely. In fact, geographical knowledge is a *sine qua non* for the political scientist who seeks to comprehend the foreign or domestic policies of any state.

The foregoing suggests only a few of the immensely important and intriguing questions considered in the Stanford political geography course. Happily, the initial success was sufficient to justify continuance. During 1930-31, the course has been greatly expanded and offered to a large class of undergraduate and graduate students. An advanced course on the Pacific basin was advertised for the spring quarter; and already a number of graduate students have made arrangements to include political geography in their list of major fields.

It is the writer's belief that political geography should become an established political science field, and that it should be taught in political science, and not in geography departments, by men broadly prepared in geography and economics, as well as in traditional political science. The possibilities of developing this field, and the training of persons competent to direct such studies, might well enlist the interest of scholars devoted to the advancement of political science—in particular, those who have curricular responsibilities in our colleges and universities.

HAROLD H. SPROUT.

Stanford University.