

1971

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### Recommended Citation

Rostow, Walt W. (1971) "Politico-Economic World Developments As They Affect NATO Nations in the 1970's," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 24 : No. 4 , Article 3.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol24/iss4/3>

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*Two underlying forces that are at work on the world scene are the diffusion of power away from Moscow and Washington and the decline of the aggressive revolutionary romantics. With an understanding of these forces the existing dangers that confront mankind must be probed seriously, with confidence and caution. The role of NATO and its member nations should be more internationalistic in both perspective and commitment to the building of a stable world order.*

## **POLITICO-ECONOMIC WORLD DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY AFFECT NATO NATIONS IN THE 1970'S**

An address delivered at the  
Allied Command Atlantic Naval Symposium  
at SACLANT Headquarters, Norfolk, Virginia

on 4 November 1970

by

**Dr. Walt W. Rostow**

It is, if I may say so, appropriate that you have assigned to me a global perspective in discussing NATO in the 1970's. In the narrow sense, NATO is a defensive alliance designed to deter hostile military action against the NATO members by the Soviet Union and the nations of the Warsaw Pact. But, from the beginning, the security of the NATO nations and the character of NATO as an organization have been profoundly affected by developments throughout the world.

NATO, as we know it—with SHAPE and a massive capacity in tactical nuclear weapons—is, after all, a product of the Korean war and its aftermath. NATO's southern flank, as we are reminded every day, is profoundly affected by events in the Middle East and

Africa. Turkey is a critically important member of NATO whose security runs with that of Iran and South Asia. Relations between the Soviet Union and mainland China are a part of NATO's equation, as is the fate of Southeast Asia.

I shall begin, therefore, by describing two potentially hopeful forces at work on the world scene rather than with the NATO area narrowly defined. I shall then consider certain dangers we all confront as citizens of the planet as well as members of NATO countries. And I shall finally pose the question of how NATO and its member countries, acting together, might tip the balance of forces at work in a hopeful direction and move the world in the direction of stable peace in the decade ahead.

The two underlying hopeful forces at work on the world scene I take to be:

- the diffusion of power away from Moscow and Washington; and

- the decline of the aggressive romantic revolutionaries.

*First, the diffusion of power away from Moscow and Washington.* This is no new phenomenon. It began, in a sense, for both capitals in 1948. For the United States it began as a matter of national policy. It began when the American Congress voted the funds for the Marshall plan and threw its weight behind the movement toward Western European unity. We set about reviving a region which we hoped to see emerge as a partner, not a satellite. In effect, we set about purposefully to reduce the power we could then exercise in a critical part of the world. As for Moscow, the diffusion of power began when Tito defied Stalin and proved that Yugoslavia could survive on that basis.

This diffusion has continued over the past generation, gathering momentum, in particular, after the Cuban missile crisis. For good or ill, that crisis persuaded men in many parts of the world that the Soviet Union was not as dangerous as it had been in the past; and, therefore, they could act with greater independence of Washington, as well as of Moscow. The missile crisis also brought Moscow's split with Peking into the open and intensified it.

So far as American policy is concerned, I believe we can take a certain pride in the fact that in the first postwar generation we threw our political influence, as well as our economic resources, behind the desire of nations to stand up straight and fashion their own destiny. And we have moved in recent years—notably under President Johnson's leadership—to the active support of regionalism in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, as well as continuing our support for regionalism in Western Europe. President Nixon is, evidently, acting in continuity with this policy

whose roots lie, as I say, as far back as 1948.

But what about Moscow?

In 1960, after the presidential election, I was sent to take part in a Pugwash conference in Moscow on arms control. I was asked to speak toward the end of the sessions. I described, as an economic historian, the spread of the industrial revolution after 1815 and, with it, the diffusion of power away from London in the century before the First World War. I then said:

Now the industrial revolution is taking hold in the areas which were skipped during the century after 1815—that is to say the industrial revolution is taking hold in China and Eastern Europe; and it is occurring—or it will soon occur—in the whole southern half of the globe.

The inevitable result is that industrial potential, military power, and influence on the world scene are being diffused and will continue to be diffused.

Faced with this fact, there are three choices open to the Soviet Union and the United States. We can stumble into a war and destroy a large part of what man has built on the face of the earth and a large part of the world's population. We can continue the cold war until the diffusion of power removes the capacity to decide from Moscow and Washington. Or, working constructively together, we can create the terms on which power will become diffused.

This is the limit of the historical powers of the Soviet Union and the United States. I would hope that we would choose the third path. This is the historical responsibility we owe to our peoples.

I believe that assessment was essentially correct in 1960; and it remains correct, although the continued relative concentration of nuclear capacity in the United States and the Soviet Union makes it necessary to define the diffusion of power with some subtlety.

I cannot say that the Soviet officials who heard me in 1960 immediately agreed to choose the third path; and, much as I should like to believe it, I do not think Soviet policy has yet firmly accepted this doctrine. But I do believe that there are more men in Moscow than there were 10 years ago who understand that the world emerging in the latter half of the 20th century is not going to be dominated by any single power or any single ideology and that their duty to their own peoples is to help organize the world peacefully rather than to try to control it directly from Moscow. That is what the Nonproliferation Treaty is about, the SALT talks, and the occasional Soviet efforts to join others in damping, rather than exacerbating, crises. What has happened in the Middle East since 1967 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 should remind us that this doctrine has not been accepted fully. But we are closer to it; and the forces making for the diffusion of power will certainly persist, not diminish.

Related to the diffusion of power is a second major force which could lead us in the direction of stable peace. That is *the decline of the aggressive revolutionary romantics*.

The politics of developing nations has been marked in the generation since 1945 by a group of autocratic or totalitarian leaders who have chosen to build their domestic politics on "anti-imperialism" and to channel a high proportion of the limited energies, talents, and resources available to them into external expansion: in Asia the roster includes Mao, Ho, Kim, and Sukarno; in the Middle East, Nasser and the other radical Arab leaders; in Africa,

Nkrumah and Ben Bella; in Latin America, Castro. In one way or another these men were deeply involved in the world's major crises since South Korea was invaded more than 20 years ago.

Some of these leaders are gone, and the fate of others—and their policies—is still to be determined. In general, however, they encountered three forces which have tended to frustrate them.

First, they encountered other people's nationalism. Their revolutionary doctrines had a certain resonance in other countries within their regions; but it is one thing to be a radical nationalist Arab, a believer in Black African unity and assertiveness, or to hold that the social ills of Latin America require radical solutions; it is a different matter to agree to take your orders from Cairo, Accra, or Havana.

Second, they have encountered the resistance of those who have not wished to see the regional balances of power upset. Although the United States has carried in our time the major burden of supporting those under pressure of regional aggression, the British and Australians stood with Malaysia; 15 nations with South Korea; six with South Vietnam; in 1958 Britain and the United States stood with Jordan and Lebanon; since 1967 the United States has helped keep the balance of regional forces from overwhelming Israel.

Third, the relative neglect of domestic welfare gradually reduced political support at home for policies of external grandeur which failed to yield decisive results. It is easy initially to excite the people with visions of quick redress for real or believed old grievances or humiliations; but, in time, the desire to eat better, to see the children grow up with better health and more education asserts itself.

It was in such settings of frustration and disabuse that Nkrumah, Ben Bella, and Sukarno gave way to successors more focused on tasks of welfare and growth; the great debate proceeds

between Mao and his opposition; and the North Vietnamese begin to surface their inner debate on the priority of victory in the south versus "building socialism" in North Vietnam.

It is no easy thing for a group of political leaders to abandon a vision to which their mature lives have been committed and which, up to a point, granted them success. Mao, evidently, has refused, and will probably refuse to the end, to acquiesce in the pragmatic bent of his "revisionist" opponents who would (in the phrase of one of Mao's opponents) encourage policies based on "objective economic laws" at home and external policies such that "the world can bask in the sunlight of peace" and "infants can slumber in the cradles, and mothers and wives may no longer live in nightmares." Kim's dream of ruling all of Korea from Pyongyang will die hard; although Kim has been brought up short by a simple, stabilizing and sobering fact: the rate of growth of South Korea is two or three times the rate of growth of North Korea. The dream of the men in Hanoi—that they alone are the proper successors to the French colonial empire in Asia—will also fade slowly and with great pain for men who have sacrificed almost a million human beings in its fruitless pursuit. Castro will never find in producing sugar a substitute for his vision of converting the Andes into the Sierra Maestra of South America. And Nasser, tragically, could not have held long to the idea that occasionally engaged him—that Cairo will only be great when Egypt, by its performance in economic and social development, helps lead the Middle East by example in overcoming its heritage of poverty and reconciling an intractable Arab culture with the exigencies of the modern world.

In the case of Hanoi, Pyongyang, Cairo, and Havana, the availability of large external resources permits postponement of the decision to shift from

expansion abroad to growth and welfare at home.

And before these dreams are abandoned, we may see final desperate acts to fulfill them. But, in the end—sooner or later—they will confront the destiny of the first great romantic revolutionary expansionist—Napoleon. And they—or their successors—will echo Napoleon's memorandum to his Finance Minister in December 1812, when he abandoned the continental system and the attempt to throttle Britain: "Undoubtedly it is necessary to harm our foes, but above all we must live."

I believe the forces at work yielding a diffusion of power and the decline of the romantic revolutionaries are real and strong, but I would not for a moment predict a sudden emergence of our world into the sunlight of stable peace, nor do I expect these two forces to work out smoothly and automatically to hand us peace on a platter. There are ample forces also at work which could yield disruption and chaos, and there are a number of specific dangers.

For example, the turn away from radical expansionism to a concentration of the tasks of growth and welfare for the people is not yet visible in the Middle East, although the popularity of the American peace initiative among the people of Jordan and Egypt suggests that the latent impulse might be there; and only recently I heard it reported that the new Egyptian Prime Minister said to his people that their most urgent task is in education, to modernize their society, and that the problem of Israel must be dealt with through diplomacy, but against a background of military strength. So far so good, but we will have to see.

For example, a frustration of growth in important parts of the developing world could induce a shift away from a pragmatic concentration on economic and social progress to more disruptive policies at home and abroad. Let me

pause and underline this point. I can think of no worse period for a decline in aid to the developing world than right now. President Kennedy suggested the 1960's might be called the Decade of Development. And that decade saw much more progress than is generally understood. In every region there are success stories which demonstrate that the job *can* be done: from South Korea and Thailand to Iran and Turkey; to Tunisia and the Ivory Coast; to Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela. But the job is *not* done. We have at least another decade of hard work before the nations containing the bulk of the population in the developing world will have moved into self-sustained growth. We all—that is, the nations of NATO plus Japan and Australia, Sweden, and Switzerland—have a major task ahead to make the second development decade a success.

Now, of course, increased external assistance to developing countries will not, alone, deal with all their problems; for example, the urgent need to bring down the birth rate in the Indian subcontinent, Java, and elsewhere. But increased external assistance is essential if we really wish to move the world in the direction of stable peace and to make the most of historical forces which trend in that direction.

There are still other dangers of disruption and conflict which could arise within the Communist world; for example, out of the Soviet fears of a nuclear China and Soviet fears of rising nationalism and liberalism in Eastern Europe.

One of the question marks is the United States. We Americans evidently face a number of searching problems at home. We have carried a high proportion of the burdens and responsibilities of the world community for a quarter century. There are those who believe this is enough and that we should now come home.

I do not doubt that in a world of diffusing power—where others wish to

take a larger part in shaping their own destiny—the relative role of the United States should and will decline with the passage of time. It has declined in Europe and Latin America, and it is declining in Asia. And the role and responsibilities of others should and will increase. That, after all, is the whole point of the Marshall plan and the similar policies the United States has followed in other parts of the world where we have sought not satellites, but partners, preferably working on a regional basis.

But still, if the United States pulls back too fast—in Europe or the Middle East, Latin America or Asia—we could move the world not toward stable peace, but toward chaos and enlarged areas of violence and international conflict. This is a responsibility we Americans bear and cannot escape.

But whether we Americans stay the course depends in part on the behavior of our allies. I do not believe the American people are truly isolationist in mood. They understand that the world is being drawn closer together every day—by missiles and satellite communications and jumbo jets. But they are a bit lonely in the responsibilities they have borne in the first postwar generation, and they look to Western Europe and Japan, in particular, to do more in the 1970's. The European members of NATO and Canada should understand, therefore, that the cast of American policy in the 1970's is partly in their hands.

This is roughly the balance of forces at work on the world scene as I see them. Now, what can NATO—and the Atlantic community in the larger sense—do to tip them in the right direction?

I suggest that the NATO agenda for the 1970's can be stated in terms of six major items.

*First, we must keep NATO strong.* NATO represents the first successful reconciliation of the diffusion of power, on the one hand, and the organization

of diffused power for the constructive common purposes, on the other. The whole history of war and peace in this century, and especially of movements toward peace since 1945, is that we have moved forward on the basis of Western strength, and we have moved backward when the West looked weak and divided and the men of ambition in Moscow were tempted to press against us. That proposition has, at this moment, a particular meaning. In the wake of the Cuban missile crisis, the Soviet Government, undoubtedly influenced by the Soviet military, decided that it would not again be in the position of undertaking exercises in the expansion of power without an adequate foundation of military hardware. We are now seeing in every part of the Soviet military structure the physical consequences of that decision not to be caught bluffing again. We can observe a rapid increase in Soviet strategic capabilities, in the pace of modernization of the Warsaw Pact ground forces and air forces, and a remarkable expansion in the Soviet Navy. I have no doubt that deep in Moscow is the hope of producing, somewhere, somehow, a reverse Cuban missile crisis; that is, a major confrontation from which the United States and the Western World would have to back down palpably. I do not believe that it is the only strand of thought and policy in Moscow. There are, for example, great anxieties about mainland China and about the stability of Eastern Europe. There are, as I suggested earlier, some who probably understand that the diffusion of power makes a Cuban missile crisis in reverse an anachronistic dream. There are undoubtedly many who know that even a massive increase in military hardware does not easily translate into usable military, diplomatic, or political force.

Nevertheless, I take the first duty of NATO to remain strong enough by a substantial margin so that a major mili-

tary adventure by the Soviet Union is ruled out in the 1970's.

*Second, it follows that the American forces in Europe should not be reduced significantly—except as part of a jointly negotiated mutual withdrawal of forces—and that the European members of NATO should enlarge rather than diminish their military contributions to the organization.*

As a busy teacher of history, I have not followed closely NATO affairs in recent months; but I have the impression that there are some who argue that the Western European nations should make some special contribution to assure the continued presence of U.S. forces in Europe. I am sure that the balance of payments burden of maintaining U.S. forces in Europe should, by one device or another, be fully offset. But I believe that what is required now is not some special budgetary contribution to the United States from Europe, but that the European members of NATO find the resources to modernize their own forces committed to NATO. The United States does, indeed, face certain severe economic and budgetary problems at the moment. But these we ought to solve ourselves. And, meanwhile, the other NATO members ought to increase their contributions to NATO rather than provide a temporary crutch to the United States.

*Third, from this basis of strength, assured by common action in loyalty to common NATO plans, we ought to probe seriously, with both confidence and caution, the possibility of détente to the East.* There are serious reasons why Moscow might wish to ameliorate at this time its relations with Western Europe and NATO. It is evidently anxious about mainland China and the Sino-Soviet border. It is evidently anxious about the inner stability of Eastern Europe where the forces of nationalism and liberalism are historically on the rise and the economic

example of the West (and Japan) has proved vastly more attractive than that of the Soviet Union. If the issues of tension in Central Europe can be eased and evenhanded arms control measures negotiated between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, that is all to the good. But we will discourage—not encourage—such achievements if we are weak, if we are overanxious, or if we seem ready to accept such amelioration at the cost of weakening our position on Berlin, diminishing the cohesion of NATO, or going slack in our defense budgets. We have had a quarter of a century's experience negotiating with Moscow. We ought to know, by now, that solid agreements can only be reached under circumstances where Moscow concludes that Western strength offers no realistic alternative.

*Fourth, NATO obviously faces special new challenges in the Mediterranean, and great attention will have to be given to NATO's strength and cohesion in that area. It is not at all clear what Moscow intends to do or, indeed, can do with its enlarged naval activities in the Mediterranean; but it is important that Moscow be clear that NATO is united and determined in maintaining its vital interests on the critical southern flank.*

*Fifth, the ultimate meaning of Soviet activism in the Mediterranean may depend on political and economic policy in Africa and the Middle East, at least as much as on the balance of naval and other forces that can be brought to bear in the Mediterranean itself. We all know that Moscow has interests not only in the Middle East, but in the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean area. We all know that Moscow has exhibited an interest in the western as well as in the eastern Mediterranean. The policies followed by the NATO countries—and especially their political and economic policies toward the nations of Africa, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and South Asia—may be decisive in deter-*

mining the outcome of this new phase of Soviet experiment with the doctrines of Admiral Mahan. If the nations of these regions decide that their primary mission is to maintain their independence and to concentrate their energies on economic and social development, the outcome of this phase of Soviet naval policy may be relatively harmless. If Moscow can draw and hold certain critical areas into dependence on—or even alliance with—the Soviet Union, we may face difficult times. In my judgment, if we play our cards with wisdom, the odds are with us and not the Soviet Union; but, as always in history, the odds do not work with you unless you work with them.

As a former public servant, I know how difficult it has been to get the NATO countries to concert their political and economic policies outside the narrow NATO area. It has never, in my view, been more important that we learn to do so than in the 1970's.

*Sixth and finally, I believe the 1970's is the decade when Europe ought to resume an active interest in Asia and Latin America as well as expand its constructive role in Africa and the Middle East. This is the decade when the European perspective ought to become, again, a global perspective.*

Both Latin America and Asia are going through difficult passages in different ways. Latin America is wrestling with certain deep and slow-yielding problems of economic growth on the one hand, and political stability, on the other. On the economic side it needs help not only from the United States, but also from Western Europe.

Latin America is also gradually coming of age. It has been a virtue of American policy since, let us say, the Punta del Este meeting of the Presidents in 1967 that Washington has actively encouraged the movement toward Latin American economic integration.

As in the case of American support for European integration, Washington



has supported this trend for political as well as economic reasons. We believe economic integration is essential if Latin America is to solve certain of its critical economic problems, but we also believe that economic integration would help give Latin America the strength to deal with the Colossus of the North in an environment of confidence and dignity. In the generation ahead Latin America ought to move in this direction, and, as it does so, it ought to come into the Atlantic community as a partner not merely of the United States, but also of Europe.

By the year 2000 Latin America will contain a population of about 600 million. Its GNP per capita at that time should be in the range of \$650-\$1,100. It will have absorbed virtually all of the modern technology and be enjoying the ambiguous blessings of what I have called the stage of high mass consumption, to which Western Europe and Japan have taken with such exuberance in the past 20 years.

Europe ought to be moving now to help bring Latin America along so that it gradually emerges as a partner of the North Atlantic community as a whole.

With respect to Asia, I would simply say, without arguing the case, that I expect a stable settlement to emerge in Southeast Asia in the months and years ahead. We all have an enormous stake in seeing an Asia emerge after that settlement in which cohesion is gradually built up in the vital arc from Seoul and Tokyo to Karachi and Teheran—a cohesion aimed not against China, but one which would offer China a chance to come out into Asia and the world without the temptation that weakness and disunity would offer. Europe, as well as Japan, could play an enormous constructive part in bringing about this salutary balance in the part of the world where 60 percent of humanity lives and will continue to live. For surely life in the Atlantic is going to be increasingly affected by events in Asia.

In holding up this vision of the NATO agenda for the 1970's, I am conscious of the radical change it demands of Europe and in the European outlook on the world.

In concluding, I wish to talk about this change with the freedom I now enjoy as an individual and historian rather than as a public servant—and also, if I may say so, as one who has had the privilege, over 35 years, of sharing something of the life of Europe: as a prewar student; 3 years in Europe at war and 2 in reconstruction; as a teacher in post-war Europe, and as an often itinerant public servant, including my job as a founding member of NATO's group of policy planners.

As a historian I have no difficulty understanding why Western Europe has, in effect, pulled back from the world scene in the first postwar generation:

- Europe began exhausted by war and understandably anxious to concentrate on its own recovery and growth;

- It fell into reliance on U.S. military strength and especially American nuclear strength;

- It faced the painful withdrawal from colonialism which, by and large, was conducted with considerable statesmanship and grace but left, also, some harsh memories and a desire to stay home;

- There was the exceedingly painful episode of Suez which left scars;

- Like the United States, some of the nations of Western Europe face domestic problems that go with what I have called the search for quality—the stage beyond the automobile age: those domestic problems may not be as acute as those in the United States but they are, nevertheless, real enough to narrow horizons and deter impulses to assume enlarged responsibility on the world scene;

- Finally, there has been the problem of Britain's relation to Europe which has complicated the already difficult task of formulating common

European policies toward the world outside NATO.

All this is understandable, but it has thrown an unnatural burden on the United States. I remember well, for example, how it was impossible to generate from Europe two or three C-130's to help Mobutu airlift his best unit across the Congo so that a massacre of some 10,000 Europeans could be avoided. President Johnson, with an ample agenda of trouble, had to do this at considerable political cost in the Senate.

I remember, during the hot-line exchanges of the Middle East war of June 1967, the total lack of coherent policy in Europe toward an area of truly vital interest—a lack which left the handling of the crisis almost wholly up to the United States.

I would hope that in the 1970's the leaders and citizens of Western Europe could free their minds from the simple image of a now dominant United States committed to look after the world's problems out of its own natural hegemony. I would hope they would free their minds, also, from the trauma of the Second World War, from the painful liquidation of colonialism, Suez, and all that. I would hope that Western Europe would come wholeheartedly and in unity to join in the greatest piece of unfinished business we all confront; namely, the building of stable world order.

Angus Maude, in his book *The Common Problem*, stated well the process that has to take place in the collective mind of Europe. He writes:

People will only do great things if they see the possibility of great things to do. Once they see the possibility of creative action—their own action—they may regain the confidence that has begun to desert them. When they have regained their own self-confidence, they will recover a confidence in

their country. When they have rediscovered a role for themselves in their country, they will rediscover a role for their country in the world.

The fact is that a great role now awaits Europe in a job too big for the United States—or any other single nation—to handle on its own. The job is to move the world from where it is to a stable peace not known since 1914: by steady and concerted action to tip the forces making for order, reconciliation, and progress against those making for disruption, fragmentation, and danger in a fragile nuclear world.

In helping tip that balance in a hopeful direction, Western Europe could find, I believe, a stable role in the

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#### BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Professor Walt W. Rostow is a recognized international authority on economics and economic history and has written many prominent books and articles in the field. Graduating from Yale in 1936, he attended Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar and completed his Ph.D. degree at Yale in 1940. He also holds M.A. degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge.

After serving in the Office of Strategic Studies during World War II, Professor Rostow taught American history at both Oxford and Cambridge prior to returning to the United States. In 1950 he joined the faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as Professor of Economics and senior staff member of the Center for International Studies, where he remained for 10 years. In January of 1961 he was appointed as Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. In November of that year he was designated Chairman of the Policy Planning Council of the State Department. Selected as Special Assistant to President Johnson in 1966, Dr. Rostow left Washington in 1969 to become Professor of Economics and History at the University of Texas.

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1970's and beyond. And Britain's entrance into an enlarged Europe could make that role easier to accept and more effective in action.

We do not know whether the job can be done, even if we all work at it in full Atlantic partnership. What can be said,

on the basis of a quarter-century's effort against considerable odds, is that the task of moving in the next generation toward stable peace does not appear impossible; and those are about as good odds as man is ever granted in great enterprises.



One truth must rule all we think and all we do. No people can live to itself alone. The unity of all who dwell in freedom is their only sure defense.

*Dwight D. Eisenhower, Second Inaugural Address,  
21 January 1957*

**Cover: Wright-Molyneux map of the world circa 1600. A first state of a map by the eminent English globe maker Emery Molyneux done on the new Wright modification of Gerardus Mercator's projection. Edward Wright was the first to demonstrate the true principles upon which maps were to be laid down by means of the tables of meridional parts. This map represents his first attempt. It accompanied Richard Hakluyt's second edition of *Principall Navigations* (1598-1600). The map is also known as Shakespeare's "New Map," being referred to by the playwright in *Twelfth Night* (iii, 2), which was produced for the first time in 1601-1802. Reproduced with the kind permission of the Hakluyt Society, c/o British Museum, London, from the Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society, Ser. 1, No. 59 (in separate cover).**