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U.S. and Them: Hubs, Spokes, & Integration with Reference to Transboundary Environment and Resource Issues

By
Ian L.G. Wadley*

I. PREFACE

Transboundary environment and natural resource problems call for transboundary solutions. This article examines one possible means of arriving at transboundary environment and resource cooperation: the establishment by the United States of diplomatic “regional environmental hubs” in key locations around the world. The article follows the emergence of this idea and its implementation, examining the congruence between the regional environmental hub program and the wider foreign policy goals of the administration of President George W. Bush,¹ including the dominant foreign policy themes of integration and security. The regional environmental hub program is demonstrated to be fully congruent with the U.S. project of global integration and to permit great latitude to the U.S. State Department in pursuing a wide range of political, economic, and security goals.

Through a review of the theory, practice, and policy effects of the U.S. regional environmental hub program, this article provides support for three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Regional groups are well adapted to address transboundary environment and resource problems, and the U.S. regional environmental hub program provides an effective mechanism for this cooperation.

Hypothesis 2: The coordination of a regional diplomatic hub-and-spokes network is generally more favorable to U.S. interests than is participation in omnilateral, multilateral, or bilateral arrangements.

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1. January 20, 2001, through January 2003, hereinafter denoted “the Bush administration.” The Bush administration’s foreign policy arguably experienced a significant change of emphasis following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the present inquiry therefore places primary emphasis upon the foreign policy of the U.S. after September 11, 2001.

Hypothesis 3: The Bush administration may use the regional environmental hub program as a vehicle to integrate other states into a comprehensive regional hub-and-spokes diplomatic network, centered on the United States. The regional hub program serves the dominant U.S. foreign policy projects of integration and security.²

In testing these hypotheses, the article relies upon factual material drawn from contemporary newspaper articles, scholarly comment, published speeches, and private interviews and correspondence with retired and serving U.S. State Department officers.³ Part II of the article establishes the theoretical basis for examination of these hypotheses, drawing upon network theory and the variety of disciplines contributing to the study of international law, negotiation, and international affairs. This Part also considers the logic of regionalism alongside the concept of inclusive multilateralism or “omnilateralism.” Part III describes the roots and evolution of the regional hub program, with reference to the experience of State Department officers and to the characteristics of three regional environmental hubs: Ankara, Turkey; Tashkent, Uzbekistan; and Bangkok, Thailand.

Part IV provides a discussion of the practical effect of the regional environmental hub program, identifying the confluence of hub activities with the U.S. project of global foreign policy integration and with the U.S. National Security Strategy.⁴ Parts V and VI look to the future, drawing several conclusions regarding the potential impact of the Bush administration’s project of global integration upon existing international treaties, institutions, and arrangements.

II. IN THEORY

In focusing upon the State Department’s regional environmental hub program, this article draws upon various schools of thought, each contributing to the meaning of the key terminology used in the analysis. The concepts of networks, hubs, spokes, transboundary environmental problems, and regions are fundamental to this discussion, yet the meanings of these concepts are not necessarily self-evident. In order to base this discussion of regional environmental hubs upon a solid foundation, the following sections consider the utility of these

2. The exploration of this hypothesis should by no means reflect negatively upon the motives of State Department officers working on transboundary environmental problems at the Bureau of Oceans and International Economic and Scientific Affairs. This article seeks to distinguish the motives of those persons from the ultimate uses to which the regional hub program may be put, and the extrinsic strategic objectives with which the program may be burdened in the U.S. pursuit of global integration and domestic security.

3. The author is indebted to those serving and retired State Department employees who offered their generous help in the research for this article. It should be noted that these people agreed to discuss background material only and did so on the basis that they would not receive personal acknowledgment for their kind assistance. While the author is grateful for the information supplied in correspondence and interviews with numerous people from the State Department, the analyses, inferences, and errors contained in this article remain solely those of the author.

4. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (2002), at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html> (last visited Mar. 3, 2003).

concepts in describing U.S. relations with the wider world, focusing first on the concept of networks, then on the nature of regions, and finally integrating these concepts in a discussion of the dynamics of regional influence.

A. Network Theory & Concepts

Fields as diverse as ecology, computer science, engineering, epidemiology, and sociology have recognized the descriptive and interpretive power of the “network” concept through its application to interrelated and interdependent variables, which have led to the development of “systems theory” in numerous disciplines.⁵ Systems theory has enabled the analysis of multiple interactions within network structures of influence, communication, and dependence, and has been applied to many types of systems, including ecological food webs,⁶ macro power grid networks,⁷ transport and communication engineering,⁸ Internet server systems,⁹ and multiparty mediation or negotiation efforts.¹⁰

The significance of the network concept lies in its ability to encapsulate and describe the multiple alliances, connections, constraints and controls existing between numerous parties. In principle, it is possible to use network theory to predict the influence upon an entire network of changes in one interconnection within the network. Recent models of ecological food webs, for example, have sought to describe the influence on the entire system of individual changes in predation, enabling prediction of the likelihood of system collapse contingent upon the extinction of certain species.¹¹ These models have also enabled researchers to begin describing the characteristics of durable networks, which are able to withstand disruption because of the existence of numerous linkages between multiple network levels and are also characterized by the absence of critical “high-load” links that may become vulnerable to pressure or sabotage from within or without the network.¹²

Similarly, theoretical approaches to negotiation and mediation have advanced theories of analysis and prediction based upon simple network configurations. These theoretical models have enabled the forecasting of changes in negotiation behavior contingent upon the actions of other parties to the negotia-

5. See, e.g., Michael J. Lovaglia et al., *Negotiated Exchanges in Social Networks*, 74:1 Soc. FORCES 123 (1995); R. Milo et al., *Network Motifs: Simple Building Blocks of Complex Networks*, 298 Sci. 824 (2002); R. Bruce Money, *International Multilateral Negotiations and Social Networks*, 29:4 J. INT'L BUS. STUD. 695 (1998).

6. See, e.g., Jennifer A. Dunne, Richard J. Williams & Neo D. Martinez, *Food-web Structure and Network Theory: The Role of Connectance and Size*, 99 PROC. NAT'L ACADEMY SCI. 12917 (2002).

7. See, e.g., Alireza Khotanzad, Reza Afkhami Rohani & Tsun Liang Lu, *ANNSTLF—A Neural-network-based Electric Load Forecasting System*, 8 IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON NEURAL NETWORKS 835 (1997).

8. See, e.g., Michael G.H. Bell, *A Game Theory Approach to Measuring the Performance Reliability of Transport Networks*, 34B TRANSPORT RES. 533 (2000).

9. See, e.g., Milo et al., *supra* note 5.

10. See, e.g., Money, *supra* note 5.

11. See, e.g., Dunne et al., *supra* note 6.

12. *Id.*

tion¹³ and have begun to integrate the insights of social network theory into the complexities of international multilateral negotiations.¹⁴ For example, models based in game theory enable the formation of negotiation strategies taking into account the preferences and possible coalitions of other parties.¹⁵ When a mediator or broker is involved in the attempted resolution of a multiparty dispute, he or she functions as a central exchange for the various communications of the parties and frequently as a moderator or filter for certain types of communication that may jeopardize the likelihood of an acceptable outcome. In this respect, the mediator may be described as a central hub within a negotiation network, around which all the parties to the dispute are oriented, each with its own individual networks of influence and coercion.

These theoretical and applied network understandings are of direct relevance to the present inquiry. If network models are capable of describing and illuminating complex systems of interdependence, influence, vulnerability, and control, then the network is an ideal metaphor for analysis of international relations.¹⁶ The present inquiry into multilateralism under the Bush administration may benefit from the insights offered by network theory. In particular, the State Department's use of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy to address environmental problems presents an especially interesting type of network system, characterized by one dominant network hub—the United States—with a dozen spokes radiating out to regional hubs, which in turn connect to surrounding states and organizations within their regions.

This hub-and-spokes network provides an effective system of international influence for the U.S. government, enabling pressure to be applied to regional groupings to resolve pressing international environmental problems. But the regional hub-and-spokes model has numerous benefits for the United States going far beyond regional environmental concerns. The regional hub-and-spokes approach has the potential to dramatically reinforce and expand U.S. political influence.

The recognition of the political power to be gained from the effective management of political networks traces its heritage to nineteenth-century German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. In 1877, Bismarck theorized that Germany's best hope for retaining dominance in Europe lay in the establishment of a hub-and-spokes system of European power—with each of the European spoke na-

13. David A. Lax & James K. Sebenius, *The Power of Alternatives or the Limits to Negotiation*, in *NEGOTIATION THEORY AND PRACTICE* 97, 99 (J. William Breslin & Jeffrey Z. Rubin eds., 1991); see also Wilfred Siebe, *Game Theory*, in *INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION* 180 (Victor A. Kremenyuk ed., 1991).

14. See the extensive review of relevant literature contained in Money, *supra* note 5, at 695.

15. See, e.g., Moshe Hirsch, *Game Theory, International Law, and Future Environmental Cooperation in the Middle East*, 27 *DENVER J. INT'L L. & POL'Y* 75 (1998); Robert J. Schmidt, Jr., *International Negotiations Paralyzed by Domestic Politics: Two-Level Game Theory and the Problem of the Pacific Salmon Commission*, 26 *ENVTL. L.* 95 (1996).

16. For a discussion of international relations as a system of interdependent units connected through a multichannel, multidimensional structure, see LAURI KARVONEN & BENGT SUNDELIUS, *INTERNATIONALIZATION AND FOREIGN POLICY MANAGEMENT* (1998).

tions reliant in some critical fashion upon Germany at the hub.¹⁷ This framework of reliance was intended to keep individual European states from forming counterbalancing coalitions against Germany and the preponderance of German power. While Bismarck's approach was not a successful strategy in the long term, modern hub-and-spokes models of diplomacy owe their origins to his experimentation.

*B. The Logic of Regionalism Applied to Transboundary
Environmental Problems*

Transboundary environment problems may include issues relating to the conservation, extraction, exploitation, apportionment, and transport of natural resources, and the effect of these various activities upon regional ecological systems. These kinds of problems may in turn lead to the emergence of an international environmental dispute, which Cesare Romano has defined as "[a] conflict of views or of interests between two or more states, taking the form of specific opposing claims and relating to an anthropogenic alteration of an ecosystem, having a detrimental effect on human society and leading to environmental scarcity of natural resources."¹⁸

Environmental disputes may in turn develop into armed conflict as states compete for control of scarce resources. A full discussion of environmental security analyses is beyond the scope of this paper and has been examined in great detail elsewhere.¹⁹ Likewise, the judicial and arbitral mechanisms for the resolution of transboundary environment or natural resource disputes have been dealt with in other works.²⁰ Instead, this discussion focuses upon the merits of the regional response outlined in the State Department's regional environmental hub program and upon the general utility of a regional approach to transboundary environment and resource problems.

Numerous studies have identified the benefits of addressing transboundary environmental issues on a regional basis, rather than attempting to apply one global macro-paradigm to a wide variety of regional conditions.²¹ A regional response may also avoid the disadvantages inherent in a strictly national re-

17. See Lothar Gall, *2 Bismarck the White Revolutionary, 1871-1898*, at 51, 52, 58 (1986), citing Bismarck's *Kissingen Diktat* of June 15, 1877.

18. Cesare P.R. Romano, *The Peaceful Settlement of International Environmental Disputes* 29 (2000).

19. See Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, *On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict*, 19:1 *INT'L SECURITY* 5 (1991); see also, e.g., *Environmental Conflict* (Paul F. Diehl & Nils P. Gleditsch eds., 2001).

20. See, e.g., Permanent Court of Arbitration Optional Rules for Arbitration of Disputes Relating to Natural Resources and/or the Environment, 40 *I.L.M.* 202 (2002); Francis N. Botchway, *The International Adjudicatory Process and Trans-boundary Resource Disputes*, *Australian INT'L L.J.* 143 (2001).

21. See, e.g., John Vogler, *The Global Commons: Environmental and Technological Governance* (2000); *International Boundaries and Environmental Security: Frameworks for Regional Cooperation* (Gerald Blake et al. eds., 1997) [hereinafter *International Boundaries and Environmental Security*] (discussing various regional and transboundary environmental issues, including maritime boundaries, borderland regions, and international river basins, with reference to specific cases including the Mekong River and the Caspian and Baltic seas).

sponse to transboundary environment and natural resource challenges, which may create a fragmented and possibly inconsistent collection of micro-approaches.²² Any attempt to address a regional environmental problem properly must take place on the regional scale, in an integrated fashion. Neighboring states must cooperate in order to resolve transboundary environment problems. Regional groups are therefore well adapted to tackle transboundary environment and resource problems. However, two fundamental questions remain: How are these regions to be conceptualized, and by whom?

This question is pertinent simply because regions, as seen from a foreign policy point of view, are not self-evident and do not exist in and of themselves. Rather, “regions” are the subject of social construction:

Although often described in geographical terms, regions are political creations and not fixed by geography. Even regions that seem most natural and inalterable are products of political construction and subject to reconstruction attempts. . . . [R]egions are social and cognitive constructs that can strike actors as more or less plausible.²³

Similarly, sociologists have observed that “a border . . . is not a geographic fact that has sociological consequences, but a sociological fact that takes geographic form.”²⁴ Borders establish not only the boundaries of states, but of regions as well, even if a region’s borders are more porous or flexible than a state’s. Regional groupings result from negotiation among states and nonstate actors, and the existence and nature of these regions are neither self-evident nor primordial. Regions are conceptualized and established by states or nonstate actors seeking to accomplish certain ends.

This point may be aptly illustrated with reference to the emergence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the consequent recognition of a region referred to as the North Atlantic.²⁵ This remarkable regional grouping succeeds in combining the United States with Western Europe and forms security alliances across the frozen Arctic and the Atlantic Ocean in doing so. Similarly, the formation of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) regional grouping brings together a disparate collection of states extending over almost half of the earth’s surface, and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional group combines a diverse *mélange* of states with an astonishing heterogeneity in cultural, economic, political, and physical landscapes.

Given that regions are constructed, purposive, and not self-evident, one must understand the motive inherent in their construction if one is to properly analyze their instrumental role and influence. The establishment of regional environmental hubs by the world’s dominant power therefore calls for close scrutiny and provokes the question “Why?” The following section will therefore

22. See J.N. Rosenau, *Global Environmental Governance*, in *INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES* 19, 55 (Mats Rolén, Helen Sjöberg & Uno Svedin eds., 1997).

23. Christopher Hemmer & Peter J. Katzenstein, *Why Is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism*, 56:3 *INT’L ORG.* 575, 578 (2002).

24. See, e.g., *id.* at 587 (citing Jessica Gienow-Hecht, *Shame on U.S.? Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War—A Critical Review*, 24:3 *DIPLOMATIC HIST.* 465, 488 (2000)).

25. See *id.* at 588-91.

examine the question of U.S. motivation in the establishment of this network and consider why the United States might prefer regionalism to multilateralism or even unilateralism.

C. *From Omnilateralism to Unilateralism, Via Regionalism*

Large multilateral negotiations provide an effective leveling mechanism against the negotiating advantage of powerful states. These global multilateral settings, and the agreements and treaties they produce, may perhaps be better described as “universal,” or “omnilateral,” given that they solicit the participation of *all* states rather than simply *many* states.²⁶ The presence and participation of all states, and perhaps many nonstate actors, contributes a level of complexity that is not easily controlled, even by a unilaterally powerful actor.

For example, these multilateral or omnilateral settings, and the negotiation of the agreements with which they are concerned, provide numerous opportunities for coalitions around peripheral or extrinsic issues, formed in order to provide negotiating advantage for coalition leaders. Disinterested parties may be linked to disparate conglomerates of opposition or support constructed by those seeking to counterbalance the negotiating advantage of large states. Cross-linked issues may then eclipse the focus of the forum, and the complex actions of multiple parties may effectively limit the power of a few large states to attain their desired outcomes. These multi-party contexts may serve to protect liberal political ideals, empower smaller states, and restrict the influence of even the most powerful. A large multilateral or omnilateral forum provides a context in which even a hegemonic state may find effective and spontaneous coalitions of opposition.²⁷ The natural consequence is that a hegemonic state will seek smaller contexts in which to carry out its negotiations—on the bilateral or regional scale.²⁸

The United States certainly fits the description of a hegemonic state, more so than any other power in modern history. Commentators have described U.S. economic, military, and ideological power as creating a structure of global unipolarity, with world affairs clearly dominated by U.S. goals.²⁹ This concentration of power coincides with political leadership in the United States that pays little respect to the liberal ideals and institutions forged through two world wars and that readily follows the realist pursuit of unilateral power.³⁰ Efforts by the remnant advocates of liberal multilateralism within the Bush administration col-

26. For example, the U.N. Charter (1945) and the Geneva Conventions (1949) with their Additional Protocols (1977) constitute international agreements and institutional frameworks that are perhaps best described as omnilateral in character, given that these instruments seek *universal* participation and adherence.

27. On the structure and dynamics of international negotiations, see JOHN G. MERRILLS, *INTERNATIONAL DISPUTE SETTLEMENT* (3d ed. 1998).

28. Concerning the characteristics of regional conflict negotiations, see I.W. Zartman, *Regional Conflict Resolution*, in *INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION* 302 (Jeffrey Z. Rubin ed., 1991).

29. See, e.g., Stephen G. Brooks & William C. Wohlforth, *American Primacy in Perspective*, *FOREIGN AFF.*, July-Aug. 2002, at 20, 21.

30. See Michael Hirsh, *Bush and the World*, *FOREIGN AFF.*, Sept.-Oct. 2002, at 18, 21-23; G. John Ikenberry, *America's Imperial Ambition*, *FOREIGN AFF.*, Sept.-Oct. 2002, at 44.

lide head-on with the strong realist and conservative camps, causing a paralysis of liberal foreign policy.³¹ The diminishing respect paid by the United States to the rules and norms of international law, and the emergence of new “doctrines” such as the recent “pre-emptive strike” concept, combined with the overwhelming military and economic dominance of the United States, provide the pillars on which the so-called “imperial ambition” of the United States rests.³²

The significant discretion enjoyed by the United States in the exercise of its power yields great benefits for the world’s modern hegemon. Rather than divesting itself of this discretionary power, the United States will tolerate large multilateral or omnilateral institutions and structures only if they support its “global agenda.”³³ At the undoubted apex of modern global power, the United States has little interest in maintaining large multilateral institutions and structures that conflict with this agenda or serve to diminish its influence.

Instead, a hegemonic state such as the United States will tend to favor bilateral deals as a way of fully harnessing its negotiating advantage. This is the clear direction of current U.S. policies.³⁴ State Department officers interviewed agree that the official U.S. tendency is always to look toward bilateral contacts, particularly in the case of sensitive international issues.³⁵ This diplomatic strategy enables the United States to maintain good state-to-state relationships while also preserving its power advantage in numerous bilateral negotiations.

However, a purely bilateral approach to international relations has a number of disadvantages for the United States. First, an attempt by the United States to conduct its affairs on a strictly bilateral basis may be regarded as betrayal by the remainder of the international community. As has been seen in the negotiations for the International Criminal Court³⁶ and in U.S. reticent recourse to the Security Council regarding military action against Iraq,³⁷ indications of a U.S. retreat from omnilateral or large multilateral agreements and institutions have been met with strong criticism and pressure abroad.

A second disadvantage of bilateralism lies in the fact that some international issues require a multilateral approach by their very nature. Transboundary environment and natural resource problems are one example. Also in this category are global responses to terrorism and international crime, international trade relations, and international cooperation on military, scientific, humanitarian, and financial affairs.

In pursuit of these projects, the United States must seek a forum for collective negotiation and agreement that does not restrict its negotiation power. The

31. Hirsh, *supra* note 30, at 22, 23.

32. Ikenberry, *supra* note 30, pincite?.

33. Michael J. Green, *The United States and East Asia in the Unipolar Era*, 24:4 J. SECURITY STUD. 21, 37 (2001).

34. According to State Department sources; see also STEVE WEBER, MULTILATERALISM IN NATO: SHAPING THE POSTWAR BALANCE OF POWER, 1945-1961, 5-9 (1991).

35. Private communication with author; see also *supra* note 3.

36. See Jean Galbraith, *Aggressive Unilateralism: The U.S. Approach to the ICC*, 21 BERKELEY J. INT’L L. ____ (2003).

37. See Allison Ehlert, *Iraq: At the Apex of Evil*, 21 BERKELEY J. INT’L L. ____ (2003).

forum must be well adapted to transboundary issues and capable of addressing challenges and risks that may be exacerbated or initiated by diffuse and amorphous networks of hostile individuals, nonstate actors, and sponsoring states. The answer may be found in the establishment of regional systems of hub-and-spokes diplomacy.

Given the relevance of network theory to complex systems of interdependence and influence, and the purposive nature of the regional approach to foreign policy questions, the Bush administration's use of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy becomes particularly salient. Not only is the application of network theory a useful descriptive and predictive tool for an observer, but the discerning use of network theory may also enable a powerful actor within a complex system to exert effective influence and perhaps control over other actors within the system. In the case of regional environmental problems, the use by the United States of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy may prompt groups of states to cooperate on transboundary resource and environment problems that otherwise might fall between the gaps of national boundaries and national interest. These same networks may also serve much wider U.S. objectives, explicitly or implicitly, and facilitate a U.S.-led transition from multilateralism to unilateralism, via regionalism. The emergence of the hub-and-spokes model within the State Department is therefore of significant moment.

III.

IN PRACTICE

A. *The Roots of the Regional Environmental Hub Program Pre-2001*

Neither the concept of regional diplomacy, nor its application to transboundary environmental issues is new. Many regional initiatives address transboundary natural resource and environmental issues.³⁸ However, the idea of one supremely powerful state establishing a global diplomatic structure of regional environmental hubs is both novel and important.

The roots for this idea may be identified in the state of flux created by the end of the Cold War. Richard Haass, now the Director of Policy Planning for the State Department under President George W. Bush, wrote in 1990 that post-Cold War international conflict would be best addressed through U.S. use of a regional approach, allowing conflicts to be forestalled until a "more ambitious diplomacy might succeed."³⁹ This statement foreshadows Haass's subsequent promotion under the Bush administration of an ambitious diplomatic project of "global integration," in which regional alliances play a key role. This theme of "integration" is therefore central to understanding the regional environmental

38. See, e.g., MOSTAFA K. TOLBA & IWONA RUMMEL-BULSKA, GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY: NEGOTIATING ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS FOR THE WORLD, 1973-1992, 35-54 (1998) (reviewing the development of regional environmental regimes for regional seas and shared freshwater resources between 1973 and 1992); Stefan Riesenfeld, *Pacific Ocean Resources: The New Regionalism and the Global System*, 16 *ECOLOGY L.Q.* 355 (1989).

39. RICHARD N. HAASS, *CONFLICTS UNENDING: THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONAL DISPUTES* 4 (1990).

hub program and is examined in greater detail below.⁴⁰ For the moment, it is instructive to note that the roots of the integration project, and indeed the regional environmental hub program, may be traced back to Haass's regional diplomatic focus in the early 1990s. Haass was not alone in the promotion of regional diplomacy. Current Secretary of State Colin Powell also foresaw in 1993 the increasing use of regional approaches to the resolution of international disputes.⁴¹ James Baker, writing in 1991, likened U.S. diplomatic and military relations in East Asia to a wagon wheel with the United States at the center, radiating spokes bilaterally to nations in the region.⁴² This analogy presaged the development of a U.S.-led hub-and-spokes diplomatic architecture.

The prospect of eco-diplomacy and the inclusion of environmental issues within the U.S. security agenda may be traced back to the works of Thomas Homer-Dixon in 1991 and Robert Paarlberg in 1992.⁴³ Meanwhile, within the State Department, the groundwork for the regional hub approach to transboundary environmental issues was laid following the collapse of the Soviet Union, as the United States searched for suitable responses to the environmental problems of the newly independent Baltic States. The State Department reacted to this need by creating a regional environment position in the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen, a development that may now be regarded as the precursor to the regional environmental officer's position.⁴⁴ The possibility of a wider regional diplomatic approach was strengthened in 1993 with the Secretary of State's appointment of Tim Wirth to the newly created post of Undersecretary for Global Affairs. Then Secretary of State Warren Christopher described this new position as uniting responsibility for wide-ranging issues such as human rights, democratization, the environment, refugees, narcotics, and terrorism.⁴⁵ Appointing an Undersecretary for Global Affairs represented a significant shift of the State Department's approach to transboundary issues and began the process of change that allowed the emergence of the regional environmental hub approach three years later in 1996.

The public genesis of the regional hub approach to environment and resource problems was marked by a pivotal speech delivered by Christopher at Stanford University on April 9, 1996. In his address, Christopher outlined for the first time his vision of U.S. environmental diplomacy, describing "a new definition of national security and a worldwide shift in the objectives of U.S.

40. See Part IV, at page 122.

41. Colin L. Powell, *From Globalism to Regionalism: Keynote Address*, in *FROM GLOBALISM TO REGIONALISM: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON U.S. FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICIES* 3-16 (Patrick M. Cronin ed., 1993).

42. James A. Baker III, *America in Asia: Emerging Architecture for a Pacific Community*, *FOREIGN AFF.*, Nov-Dec. 1991, at 4.

43. Homer-Dixon, *supra* note 19; Robert L. Paarlberg, *Ecodiplomacy: U.S. Environmental Policy Goes Abroad*, in *EAGLE IN A NEW WORLD: AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA* 207-31 (Kenneth A. Oye, Robert J. Lieber & Donald Rothchild eds., 1992).

44. According to State Department sources; see also *supra* note 3.

45. *Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1994, Part 3: Department of State*, 103d Cong. 1 (1993) (testimony of Warren Christopher, Secretary of State).

diplomacy,” setting transboundary environmental issues as a top priority for foreign policy.⁴⁶ State Department bureaus and embassies had been required to submit their proposals for placing environmental protection at the top of the diplomatic agenda before March 15, 1996, and State Department policy planning staff had developed the concept of a regional environmental approach in preparation for Christopher’s address.⁴⁷

In his Stanford speech, Christopher announced the establishment of “regional environmental hubs” in major U.S. embassies around the world to “press natural resource issues and sustainable development” and to “meet the challenge of making global environmental issues a vital part of our foreign policy.”⁴⁸ Christopher presented good stewardship of the global environment not simply as an end in itself, but as a means to pursue wider U.S. aims: “Addressing natural resource issues is frequently critical to achieving political and economic stability and to pursuing our strategic goals around the world.”⁴⁹ A U.S. government official at the time provided an example of Christopher’s approach, stating that “[t]he Chinese are terrified of environmental degradation. . . . This is a way to engage with them constructively.”⁵⁰

This new development in the launching of regional environmental hubs was reflected in other regional approaches to U.S. foreign policy problems. For example, on September 26, 1996, the U.S. House of Representatives approved Concurrent Resolution 189, which offered bipartisan support for U.S. involvement in a number of South Pacific regional groupings, including the South Pacific Regional Environment Program, the South Pacific Forum, and the South Pacific Commission.⁵¹ This move was prompted in part by the success of the Japanese in cultivating strong ties with the small Pacific Island states, links that allowed Japan to form an effective coalition in support of its continuing whaling practices.⁵² The political motivation of Congress was articulated well by Benjamin A. Gilman, then Chairman of the House International Relations Committee:

In the post colonial era, regional cooperation has become one of the key elements in the development of the South Pacific. . . . [T]he impact on regional stability is critical. . . . Nations in the South Pacific share our values and a commitment to the democratic process. . . . Their support has been important to the U.S. in the U.N. and other international fora. . . . In the post Cold War era we need to ensure that we remain engaged in this key strategic region on the doorstep of Asia.⁵³

46. Thomas W. Lippmann, *Christopher Puts Environment High on Diplomatic Agenda; Abuse of Natural Resources Imperils U.S. Interests, Secretary of State Says*, WASH. POST, Apr. 15, 1996, at A10.

47. *Id.*; according to State Department sources; see also *supra* note 3.

48. Martin Walker, *Environment: Diplomat with a Cause*, THE GUARDIAN (LONDON), May 1, 1996, at Society 4.

49. *Id.*

50. *Id.*

51. H.R. Con. Res. 189, 104th Cong. (1996).

52. According to information obtained from State Department sources; see also *supra* note 3.

53. *Consideration of Miscellaneous Bills and Resolutions: Markup Before the House Comm. on International Relations of H.R. Con. Res. 132, H.R. Con. Res. 145, H.R. Con. Res. 189, H.R. Res. 515, H.R. Con. Res. 212, H.R. Con. Res. 51, and H.R. 4036*, 104th Cong. 42 (1996) (statement of Benjamin A. Gilman, Chairman of the House International Relations Committee).

During her term as Secretary of State under President Clinton, Madeleine Albright continued Warren Christopher's initiative to tackle transboundary environment problems on a regional scale. In April 1997, she followed Christopher's example by placing global environmental problems within the "mainstream of American foreign policy."⁵⁴ Albright recognized the U.S. obligation to take action against soluble environmental problems. She also acknowledged the strategic value of the environment and natural resource issues for the United States, stating that "environmental problems are often at the heart of the political and economic challenges we face around the world."⁵⁵ In plain terms, Albright was advocating that U.S. environmental action could be regarded as justified on its own terms or equally justified as a vehicle for attaining other political, military, and economic U.S. foreign policy objectives.⁵⁶

The mechanism for much of this diplomatic environmental activity was the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), originally created by Congress in October, 1973 to promote the protection of the world's environment.⁵⁷ In keeping with the environmental priorities established by Secretaries of State Christopher and Albright, the OES established six regional environmental hubs in 1997, followed shortly thereafter by six more. However, the primary "environmental" role assigned to these hubs is intermingled with extrinsic U.S. foreign policy and security goals, some of which have the potential to eclipse the original purpose of the regional environmental hub program. This combination and juxtaposition of roles and priorities is explored below.

B. *The Regional Environmental Hub Program Post-2001*

The State Department's twelve regional environmental hubs are based in U.S. embassies in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Amman, Jordan; Ankara, Turkey; Bangkok, Thailand; Brasilia, Brazil; Budapest, Hungary; Copenhagen, Denmark; Gaborone, Botswana; Kathmandu, Nepal; San Jose, Costa Rica; and Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Each hub lies within a region that faces significant transboundary environment or natural resource management problems.

According to the State Department, the establishment of these regional hubs, each staffed by a State Department "regional environmental officer,"⁵⁸ is well adapted to promote the resolution of transboundary environmental problems:

54. U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY: THE ENVIRONMENT AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY (1997) available at <http://www.state.gov/www/global/oes/earth.html> (last visited Mar. 7, 2003) [hereinafter ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY].

55. *Id.* This view is increasingly supported by scholars. See, e.g., THOMAS F. HOMER-DIXON, ENVIRONMENT, SCARCITY, AND VIOLENCE (1999).

56. 28 U.S.C. § 2655a (1990); see also ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY, *supra* note 54.

57. ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY, *supra* note 54.

58. For an overview of the functions of this position, see Charles O. Cecil, *On Being a "Hubster,"* STATE MAG. 17-19 (Oct. 2002).

The Hubs are predicated on the idea that transboundary environmental problems can best be addressed through regional cooperation. The regional environmental officer's role will complement the traditional bilateral Environment Science and Technology officers stationed in embassies around the world. Rather than dealing with a single country on environmental issues, regional environmental officers will look at transboundary issues from a region-wide perspective. Hub officers will engage with several countries of the region on a particular issue, with the aim of promoting regional environmental cooperation, sharing of environmental data, and adoption of environmentally sound policies that will benefit all countries in the region.⁵⁹

A cursory review of the roles of each regional hub reveals that key regional environment and resource problems often intersect with other strategic issues in the spheres of trade, security and political influence. As the State Department acknowledges, "Bringing nations together in a region to work on a common environmental problem—a common threat—can advance U.S. interests in ways that go far beyond the scope of the environmental issue itself."⁶⁰ It may be credibly asserted that the regional environmental hubs are located with reference to extrinsic U.S. foreign policy priorities and to the potential benefits that might accrue to the United States as a result of closer engagement in the region.⁶¹ A consideration of each of these regional environmental hubs provides some indication of the broader U.S. interests that may be served through their establishment and of the scope of the hubs' work with respect to environment and natural resources challenges. It appears that for a number of these environmental hubs, the challenge of addressing environmental degradation may have become secondary to the wider goal of expanding U.S. regional influence.

For example, it may be suggested that the South Asian regional environmental hub in Kathmandu, Nepal, now exists primarily to promote U.S.-sponsored political stability among the regional states of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.⁶² Many of these states are now recognized as presenting serious security problems for the United States and have the potential to add to the unwanted global burden of large-scale refugee movements and expensive humanitarian relief efforts. The importance of these factors is reflected in the official State Department website for the regional hub in Kathmandu:

Central to U.S. policy in South Asia is the objective of improving political stability by engaging and enhancing dialogue with and between the countries of the region. Toward this end, the South Asia Regional Environment Office (REO) in

59. Official OES website, at <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/c1871.htm> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003) [hereinafter Official OES website].

60. *Id.*

61. According to information obtained from State Department sources; see also *supra* note 3.

62. American Embassy, Kathmandu: Regional Environmental Hub, at <http://www.south-asia.com/USA> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003). The Kathmandu regional hub website does not mention China in this set of regional players, despite Nepal's strategic position between India and China, which is well acknowledged by the CIA. See <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/np.html#Issues> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003).

Kathmandu identifies opportunities to promote regional environmental cooperation. . . . Regional stability and confidence building are key goals.⁶³

Like other regional environmental hub offices, the U.S. hub in Kathmandu is well located with respect to other regional coordination networks. Kathmandu houses the secretariat of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), an economic development organization in which Nepal has played an active and formative role.⁶⁴ Similarly, the U.S. regional environmental hub in Copenhagen, Denmark, lies at the centre of the Northern European Initiative (NEI), a key regional network dealing with matters of strategic importance such as democratization, security, and trade relations,⁶⁵ while the hub office at Addis Ababa allows the U.S. government access to the regional Nile Basin Initiative, a network involving the interests of fourteen surrounding states.⁶⁶

Other regional hub locations present significant advantages for the U.S. objective stemming of international crime and terrorism. The U.S. embassies in Budapest, Gaborone, and Bangkok, for instance, also house International Law Enforcement Academies, through which the United States provides capacity-building assistance to local law enforcement authorities.⁶⁷ In many cases, the work of the regional hub officers crosses into many diverse and strategically important fields, united—sometimes tenuously—through the central motif of “environment.” For example, the regional hub in Budapest is responsible for “[t]ransboundary water management in [the] Carpathian, Danube and Sava basins, environmental crime, science cooperation, and the environmental component of Balkan reconstruction.”⁶⁸

A cursory review of the twelve regional environmental hubs reveals the following themes: hubs are frequently located in areas of strategic security importance to the United States; hub officers have widely drawn job descriptions that allow a broad scope of problems to be addressed within the compass of “environment and natural resources”; environmental hubs are often operating alongside other U.S. regional hub efforts in the dimensions of trade and security; and, in general, the environmental hubs serve wider purposes than their “envi-

63. American Embassy, Kathmandu: Regional Environmental Hub, at <http://www.south-asia.com/USA> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003).

64. See NAROTTAM GAAN, ENVIRONMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY: THE CASE OF SOUTH ASIA (2000) (confirming the importance of environmental issues for security in South Asia, with a review of states in the region and particular issues). Gaan refers to a study by SAARC confirming that regional action is necessary to address environmental problems, including recommendations for technical cooperation, regional disaster response mechanisms, and coordinated forest and watershed management, *inter alia*. *Id.* at 230, 231 (quoting SOUTH ASIAN ASS'N FOR REG'L COOPERATION, REGIONAL STUDY ON THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NATIONAL DISASTERS AND THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT 205-12 (1992)); See also the State Department's online Background Note on Nepal, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5283.htm> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003).

65. See Christopher S. Browning, *A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Regional Cooperation: The United States and the Northern European Initiative*, 8:4 EUR. SECURITY 84 (Winter 2001).

66. See the official website for the Regional Environmental Office for East Africa in Addis Ababa, at <http://usembassy.state.gov/ethiopia/wwwwhenvh.html> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003), and the official website for the Nile Basin Initiative, at <http://www.nilebasin.org/> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003).

67. See Official OES website, *supra* note 58.

68. *Id.*

ronmental” title suggests. The scope of work of regional hubs in Ankara, Tashkent, and Bangkok embody many of these themes; thus, each is considered in further detail below.

1. Ankara

The regional environmental hub in Ankara, first established in October 2000, was created to ensure regional cooperation on environmental problems. This regional hub nevertheless, or perhaps inevitably, includes a number of key U.S. strategic interests in its portfolio.

The official U.S. Embassy website for the Ankara regional hub office mentions its responsibilities as including: “Black and Caspian Sea: management of shared water resources and pipeline-related environmental issues.”⁶⁹ States falling within the Ankara hub’s sphere of influence include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine,⁷⁰ which together comprise a neighborhood of evident geopolitical strategic importance. The Caspian Basin is regarded as housing the world’s second or third largest reserves of petroleum and massive supplies of natural gas, making it second in potential only to the Middle East, in the opinion of some.⁷¹ In order to exploit these reserves and bring them safely to market, multinational energy corporations have commenced huge infrastructure projects in cooperation with local governments, constructing oil and gas pipelines from the Caspian oil fields to transport hubs in surrounding states, two of which are located on the Black Sea in Georgia and Russia.⁷² One ambitious plan foresees the establishment of a pipeline from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean, passing through Turkey.⁷³

The State Department website alludes obliquely to these strategic and commercial considerations in its description of issues addressed by the regional hub in Ankara, which include “environmental issues relating to the Black Sea, transboundary water issues in the Caucasus countries, and environmental aspects of regional oil and gas pipelines.”⁷⁴ The scope of work of the Ankara regional environmental hub is clearly open-ended: the official website states that Ankara “also follows other transboundary and global environmental issues in the region as well,” without specifying what those issues might be.⁷⁵ This open-ended job description is intended to grant the Ankara hub sufficient flexibility in defining its own response to regional environmental problems such as the over-fishing of

69. See Homepage for the U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey, at <http://www.usemb-ankara.org.tr/environment/reo.htm> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003) [hereinafter Homepage for the U.S. Embassy, Ankara].

70. *Id.*

71. See MICHAEL T. KLARE, *RESOURCE WARS: THE NEW LANDSCAPE OF GLOBAL CONFLICT* 81 (2001); Daniel Yergin & Thane Gustafson, *Evolution of an Oil Rush*, N.Y. TIMES, Aug. 6, 1997, at A19.

72. KLARE, *supra* note 71, at 82.

73. See Gawdat Bahgat, *Pipeline Diplomacy: The Geopolitics of the Caspian Sea Region*, 3 INT’L STUD. PERSP. 310 (2002).

74. See Homepage for the U.S. Embassy, Ankara, *supra* note 69.

75. *Id.*

sturgeon, and the risk of catastrophic oil spills.⁷⁶ However, the generality of the description may also allow the Bush administration to use the Ankara hub for other, non-environmental, ends.

Indeed, a cynical reader may readily conclude that the Bush administration's activities in Central and West Asia are oriented more around strategic economic and military interests than around the principled and visionary concern for environmental problems that underpins the State Department's formulation of the regional hub program. This cynical imputation of imperial ambition is likely to become more prevalent as the world grows more skeptical of the motives of the Bush administration, based upon the administration's own stated priorities. For example, in President Bush's National Security Strategy, issued in September 2002, allusions to strategic environmental interests in the Caspian region were abandoned in favor of blunt realism: "We will strengthen our own energy security and the shared prosperity of the global economy by working with our allies, trading partners, and energy producers to expand the sources and types of global energy supplied, especially in the Western Hemisphere, Africa, Central Asia, and the Caspian region."⁷⁷

There is little doubt that security and economic interests now play a large part in the U.S. interest in transboundary environment and natural resource issues in the Caucasus region. Some commentators have even described the U.S. involvement in the region as a "return to old-fashioned . . . empire-building," seeking to obtain "profits, . . . power and ide[ological domination]" in the region.⁷⁸ One observer has noted broad consensus among the petroleum companies concerning the potential for U.S. profits:

Just about every prominent U.S. oil company has a Caspian undertaking. . . . Western oil companies have made commitments to invest \$28 billion in Azerbaijan alone. . . . The Caspian may not be another Persian Gulf, as some optimists suggest, but there is no question that it contains huge quantities of oil and gas. Kazakhstan alone has proven oil reserves of 22 billion barrels, on the order of a Norway, Libya, or Nigeria, and it might have as much as 100 billion, putting it in a league with Iran and Kuwait.⁷⁹

In recognition of the strategic importance of the vast natural resources within the Caucasus and Central Asia, the U.S. government has recently established another regional environmental hub on the other side of the Caspian basin, with similarly strategic responsibilities. The new regional hub in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, is therefore relieving the Ankara hub of responsibility for promoting U.S. influence in central Asia.

76. According to State Department sources. See *supra* note 3.

77. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY, *supra* note 4, at 19-20. Note the relevance of these comments to the U.S. regional environmental hub in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. See also *How U.S. Will Lead "Freedom's Triumph,"* FIN. TIMES (LONDON), Sept. 21, 2002, at 8.

78. Paul Starobin, *The New Great Game*, 31 NAT'L J. 666-68 (1999).

79. *Id.* at 668.

2. *Tashkent*

Tashkent's regional environmental hub shares many of the characteristics of its counterpart in Ankara. In 1997, the OES defined the initial scope of work for the Uzbekistan regional environmental hub simply as "cooperation on water-related problems in the Aral Sea Basin."⁸⁰ Under the Bush administration, the hub gained a wider job description, taking up responsibility for "[r]egional management of shared water resources, especially in the Aral Sea Basin, and promotion of regional cooperation on environmental security and sustainable development."⁸¹ The reference to "environmental security" is of particular interest, given the military-strategic significance of Uzbekistan within the central Asian region, where the U.S. government has recently been promoting its "Partners for Peace" program.⁸² Not only does Uzbekistan possess, in the view of the U.S., "the largest and most competent military forces in the Central Asian region," but the U.S. government has also recently recognized its strategic significance to the "war on terror."⁸³ This recognition has led to a flurry of activity from the Bush administration, including a meeting between President Bush and Uzbek President Islam Karimov in March 2002.⁸⁴ The State Department explicitly links these increased diplomatic contacts with the security threat that materialized on September 11, 2001, and implicitly nominates Uzbekistan as a vehicle for exerting U.S. influence in the central Asian region:

High-level visits have increased since September 11, 2001, including that of the U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, and numerous congressional delegations. The U.S. believes that its own interests will best be served by the development of an independent, stable, prosperous, and democratic Central Asia. As the most populous country in Central Asia and the geographic and strategic centre of Central Asia, Uzbekistan plays a pivotal role in the region.⁸⁵

U.S. economic interests also have much to gain from engagement with Uzbekistan, which is currently the world's seventh largest producer of gold and holds the world's fourth largest reserves of this precious metal, according to the State Department.⁸⁶ In addition, the prospect of energy exports from Uzbekistan holds strategic importance for the United States, as does the prospect of access to other natural resources and cooperation over major infrastructure projects:

Uzbekistan has an abundance of natural gas, used both for domestic consumption and export; oil almost sufficient for domestic needs; and Uzbekistan has significant reserves of copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, and uranium. . . . The United States . . . values Uzbekistan as a stable, moderate force in a turbulent region; a market for U.S. exports; a producer of important resources—gold, uranium, natural gas;

80. ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY, *supra* note 54.

81. Official OES website, *supra* note 59.

82. See the State Department's online Background Note: Uzbekistan, at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2924.htm> (last visited Feb. 27, 2003).

83. *Id.*

84. *Id.*

85. *Id.*

86. *Id.*

and a regional hub for pipelines, transportation, communications, and other infrastructure in which U.S. firms seek a leading role.⁸⁷

In considering the role of the regional environmental hub in Tashkent, one must bear in mind these fundamental security and economic themes, which permeate the Bush administration's foreign policy toward Uzbekistan and its region. In this context, the positioning of the regional environmental hub in Tashkent assumes a special significance, oriented principally around the influence that the United States is able to gain within the regional network through its relationship with Uzbekistan. The State Department has emphasized this aspect of its relationship with Uzbekistan in the following official statement:

The U.S. has consulted closely with Uzbekistan on regional security problems, and Uzbekistan has been a close ally of the United States at the United Nations. Uzbekistan has been a strong partner of the United States on foreign policy and security issues. . . . Uzbekistan views its American ties as balancing regional influences, helping Uzbekistan assert its own regional role, and encouraging foreign investment. Uzbekistan is an ardent supporter of U.S. military actions in Afghanistan and of the war against terror overall.⁸⁸

3. Bangkok

The general tendencies observed in the Ankara and Tashkent regional environmental hubs may also be identified in the hub located in Bangkok, Thailand. In Bangkok, as in Budapest and Gaborone, the U.S. Embassy houses an International Law Enforcement Academy and a regional Trade and Development Agency office alongside the regional environmental hub.⁸⁹ Bangkok, it seems, represents an ideal hub for a multifaceted U.S. regional network in Southeast Asia.⁹⁰ In addition to the important regional efforts undertaken by the United States on the environment and security fronts in Bangkok, President Bush announced in December 2001 his administration's intention to open a regional Trade and Development Agency (TDA) office in Bangkok, in a joint statement with Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra:

To deepen U.S. ties to both the public and private sectors in Thailand, and in recognition of Bangkok's significance as a regional hub, President Bush announced that the U.S. Trade and Development Agency . . . will open a regional office in Thailand in January 2002. This office will work to support the development and financing of priority infrastructure projects in Thailand and throughout the region.⁹¹

87. *Id.* (emphasis added).

88. *Id.*

89. See Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Thailand (Dec. 14, 2001), PUB. PAPERS (Dec. 17, 2001) [hereinafter Joint Statement]; Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, U.S.-Thai Relations After September 11, 2001, Speech to the Asia Foundation in Bangkok (Mar. 3, 2002), at <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2002/8806.htm> (last visited Mar. 7, 2003).

90. See, e.g., Carl Grundy-Warr & Amanda Rajah, *Security, Resources, and People in a Borderlands Environment: Myanmar-Thailand*, in INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY, *supra* note 21, at 149-220.

91. Joint Statement, *supra* note 89.

The manner in which these two themes of trade and environment are enmeshed calls into question whether in fact U.S. trade interests in the region are driving the agenda of the regional environmental hub. The two governments confirmed that environmental protection would remain a priority in Thailand, and in order to make this commitment concrete, the United States agreed to cancel an outstanding concession-related debt in return for the Thai government's commitment to fund domestic forest conservation activities.⁹² In addition, both governments agreed to initiate an ongoing dialogue on a range of other matters, fusing trade and environment concerns within the activities of the TDA.⁹³ The net effect of this development is the cross-linking of trade and environmental issues by the United States and perhaps the subsuming of the regional environmental hub within trade concerns:

To further enhance cooperative efforts on the environment, the two leaders agreed that the United States and Thailand would co-host, and the Trade and Development Agency . . . would fund, a conference to promote better water management policies, reduce water pollution, and increase water supply in Thailand and throughout the region. TDA looks forward to working with the Thai Government to fund additional environmentally-sound projects in Thailand.⁹⁴

It is particularly interesting that the U.S. foreign policy regarding environmental problems in Southeast Asia revolves around the establishment of a regional network of cooperation linked with trade and law-enforcement issues. According to one expert in East Asian political economy, it is precisely this kind of interlinked network that has in the past contributed to the emergence of successful business and political structures in this region.⁹⁵ The Bush administration's endorsement of Bangkok as a regional hub thus extends well beyond environmental questions narrowly construed. Regional hub diplomacy can be turned toward many different needs, and the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok illustrates this point well.

4. *The Regional Hub Program—Experience*

In 2002, the U.S. State Department conducted a comprehensive review of the regional environmental hub program, including interviews with officers from each of the hubs and collective discussion of the merits and challenges inherent in the regional hub approach.⁹⁶ Although the resulting report is not available to the public, a number of retired and serving State Department officers were willing to contribute their observations to the present study.⁹⁷ These sources cited several instances in which regional environmental hub programs were able to harness synergies between the environmental and political issues in a particular

92. *Id.*

93. *Id.*

94. *Id.*

95. See Dajin Peng, *Invisible Linkages: A Regional Perspective of East Asian Political Economy* 46 INT'L STUD. Q. 423 (2002).

96. For a brief overview of this study, see Cecil, *supra* note 58.

97. See *supra* note 3.

area, and by this means contribute to the peaceful resolution of disputes and the effective management of transboundary environmental problems.

One such example dates from the genesis of the regional environmental hub program in 1996. Eileen Claussen, then the Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, appointed five Department of State officers with responsibility for "regional policy initiatives." The regional policy initiative group then briefed State Department negotiators participating in the "Friends" process of the peace negotiations between Peru and Ecuador. While considering the many facets of this long-running border dispute, State Department officers identified a zone of rich biodiversity in the contested border area, which had been documented by the environmental advocacy group Conservation International.⁹⁸

Working from this information, State Department officers presented a settlement proposal to the chief U.S. negotiator which set out ten reasons why the establishment of a conservation "peace park" in the contested area on the Peru-Ecuador border held merit for both the resolution of the conflict and the attainment of important environmental goals. This "peace park" concept finally offered a framework around which the two states were able to resolve their critical and potentially destabilizing border dispute.⁹⁹ This mutually beneficial and consensual outcome is concrete evidence of the utility of regional environmental diplomacy.

Other similar efforts to link security and environment include U.S. support for the strengthening of the Mekong River Commission, which has the capacity to avert potentially volatile regional conflicts in the future.¹⁰⁰ The regional environmental hub in Bangkok has a key role to play in advancing this U.S. diplomatic objective by encouraging regional cooperation on the environmental aspects of the Commission's task.

The experience of State Department officers within the regional environmental hub program also confirms the merit of the regional hub approach in situations where environmental development and restoration projects promoted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are blocked by local or regional political obstacles.¹⁰¹ Where the project corresponds with a U.S. foreign policy priority, the regional environmental hub officers are able to draw upon the persuasive political weight of the State Department and to use their direct channels of communication to local government officials, employing means which may not be so readily accessible to staff from agencies such as USAID.

98. CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL, *THE CORDILLERA DEL CÓNDO R REGION OF ECUADOR AND PERU: A BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT, RAPID ASSESSMENT PROGRAM WORKING PAPER NO. 7* (1997), at http://www.biodiversityscience.org/xp/CABS/publications/cabs_publ_research/rap_bulletins/terrestrial_rap_bulletins/tertrapbulletins.xml (last visited Mar. 7, 2003).

99. According to State Department sources; see also *supra* note 3.

100. According to State Department sources. See also Abigail Makim, *Resources for Security and Stability? The Politics of Regional Cooperation on the Mekong, 1957-2001*, 11 *J. ENV'T & DEV.* 5 (2002).

101. According to State Department sources; see also *supra* note 3.

According to State Department sources, regional hub officers are aware that their role goes well beyond traditional environmental concerns and actually revolves around issues of sustainable development, capacity building, environmental health, science, education, security, and democracy building. For example, environmental issues have been used as a vehicle to foster the emergence of effective citizens' groups in Mexico, furthering the U.S. objective of democracy building in Mexico.¹⁰² The State Department's OES Bureau is also encouraging the emergence of better dialogue between government officials, non-government organizations, and civil society in China, through its support for an American Bar Association project on the enforcement of Chinese environmental law.¹⁰³ Likewise, U.S. regional hub activities in Ankara attempt to encourage participation by all regional stakeholders in contentious issues and to therefore strengthen the role played by civic society in the region. This objective could potentially be accomplished through U.S. mediation, whereas similar efforts convened by Turkey or other regional states might be met with suspicion. Similarly, efforts toward regional environmental security in Tashkent require the incumbent regional hub officer to work closely with U.S. military authorities.¹⁰⁴

This brief review suggests that the State Department's initiative in establishing regional environmental hubs across the globe holds significant potential in addressing transboundary environmental and natural resource issues in an integrated and creative fashion. Juxtaposed against this potential is the danger of "mission creep," to borrow from military jargon. If the regional environmental hubs are also charged with responsibility for integrating issues of law enforcement, trade relations, security, and diplomatic harmonization into an environmental framework, then the original purpose of the regional environmental hub program may be subsumed within these pressing foreign policy objectives. Similarly, if the regional environmental hubs are seen to operate as the point of the spear in a U.S. project of global integration, there is a substantial risk that mistrust of the United States and consequent resistance to the State Department's initiatives will ensure the failure of the program's environmental goals. The potential for this risk to materialize may be seen in the practical effect of the regional environmental hub program and the extent to which it may already be encumbered by extraneous foreign policy projects.

IV. IN EFFECT

A. The Regional Hub Program, Integration, and Security

Having traced the development of the State Department's regional environmental hubs, and having identified some of the emerging trends in the implementation of the concept, this inquiry now turns to consider the wider foreign policy environment in which regional hubs are situated, and how this might

102. *Id.*

103. *Id.*

104. *Id.*

affect the manner in which these regional initiatives function. Two main themes are readily apparent in the public statements of senior U.S. administration officials after September 11, 2001: the nascent doctrine of U.S.-sponsored international “integration,” and the subjection of U.S. foreign policy to security concerns. These themes are considered in turn below.

1. A Foreign Policy of “Integration” Post-September 11, 2001

The attacks of September 11, 2001, were sufficiently catalytic and definitive for U.S. foreign policy that Secretary of State Colin Powell coined a new phrase to describe a new period of global history ushered in by these attacks: the “post-post-Cold War world.”¹⁰⁵ Indeed, it would be difficult to overstate the impact of the events of September 11 upon the U.S. worldview. The Bush administration’s foreign policy rhetoric moved from terms such as “disengagement” and “withdrawal” to the dominant themes of the current administration’s foreign policy: “integration” and “security.”

Integration is a particularly interesting lens through which to view the regional environmental hub program. The State Department’s Director of Policy Planning, Richard N. Haass, has expounded this central theme on numerous occasions, even describing it as a source of strategic clarity and an emergent doctrine in a speech to the American Foreign Policy Association.¹⁰⁶ “Integration,” therefore, is the definitive keyword for the State Department’s attitude to the outside world post September 11. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, to “integrate” is to “put or bring together (parts or elements) so as to form one whole; to combine into a whole.” The historical uses noted by the dictionary’s etymologists illuminate the imperial connotations of the word, citing an 1861 work by John Sheppard, *THE FALL OF ROME AND THE RISE OF THE NEW NATIONALITIES*: ““This immense variety of “peoples, nations and languages” which Rome had integrated into a coherent whole.””¹⁰⁷

The State Department has not shied away from the imperial motif implicit within its use of the word “integration.” In fact, this shade of meaning appears to be exactly what the present U.S. administration has in mind in its use of the word. Richard Haass has explicitly adopted Sheppard’s historical meaning of “integration” when using the word to denote the amalgamation of “other countries and organizations into arrangements that will sustain a world consistent with U.S. interests and values.”¹⁰⁸ The parallel with the rule of the Roman Empire recalled by Sheppard in 1861 is remarkable. According to Haass, inte-

105. Ambassador Richard N. Haass, *From Reluctant to Resolute: American Foreign Policy after September 11*, Remarks to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (June 26, 2002), at <http://www.state.gov/s/p/rem/11445.htm> (last visited Mar. 3, 2003).

106. See Ambassador Richard N. Haass, *Defining U.S. Foreign Policy in a Post-Post-Cold War World*, The 2002 Arthur Ross Lecture, Remarks to Foreign Policy Association (Apr. 22, 2002), at <http://www.state.gov/s/p/rem/9632.htm> (last visited Mar. 3, 2003); William Safire, *The Inside Skinny*, N.Y. TIMES, Apr. 25, 2002, at A31.

107. 7 OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY 1065 (2d ed. 1989) (quoting John G. Sheppard, *THE FALL OF ROME AND THE RISE OF THE NEW NATIONALITIES* (1861)).

108. See Haass, *supra* note 105.

gration would enable the United States and the world to move from a “balance of power” scenario to a metaphorical “pooling of power.”¹⁰⁹

If the appropriate geopolitical analogy is now a pooling of power, one must presumably ask to whom the pool will belong once it is full, and who will be permitted to swim in it. Haass elaborated further on the end beneficiary of such an amalgamation of power in his remarks to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations on June 26, 2002. Haass foresees an era in which states and nonstate actors will conduct their affairs in full accord with U.S. interests and values, and in which the United States is no longer obliged to protect these values with overwhelming military force:

The best way to describe our approach in this new, cooperative environment is as a process of integration, in which the United States seeks to include other countries, organizations, and peoples in arrangements that will sustain a world consistent with the interests and values we share with our partners. . . . In sum, integration is about creating the very consensus, institutions, and capabilities that have the potential of one day leading to a world that relies less on sheriffs—or even does without them.¹¹⁰

At the same time, Haass has noted the imperative duty of the United States to “integrate Russia, China, India, the Arab world, African countries and others,”¹¹¹ apparently indicating that integration is something that the United States will “do” to other countries, alliances of states, and even continents. The process of world integration, it seems, is not by invitation but by injunction.

As the Bush administration’s most senior figure in foreign policy planning, Haass must be regarded as speaking for the U.S. government in making these comments. In case there was any doubt as to integration’s credentials as a nascent doctrine, Haass made the matter clear when addressing the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations: “Integration reflects not merely a hope for the future, but the emerging reality of the Bush administration’s foreign policy.”¹¹² Elsewhere, Haass has elaborated on his understanding of the emergent doctrine of integration:

Integration . . . is an inclusive approach to international relations that involves creating ties between and among countries at all levels, from individuals to institutions to governments to multinational organizations. These ties link integrated countries in arrangements that help create and sustain a world consistent with the interests and values we share with our partners—such as rule of law, open trade, the peaceful settlement of conflicts—and in which these values and their benefits are enjoyed as widely as possible.¹¹³

Haass’s comments, despite their reassuring references to the rule of law, democracy, freedom, and peace, raise many questions. Among the most pressing are the following: Into what manner of system are countries to be integrated

109. *Id.* See also Safire, *supra* note 106.

110. Haass, *supra* note 105.

111. Safire, *supra* note 106.

112. Haass, *supra* note 105.

113. Ambassador Richard N. Haass, U.S.-Russian Relations in the Post-Post-Cold War World, Remarks to RAND Business Leaders Forum (June 1, 2002), at <http://www.state.gov/s/p/rem/10643.htm> (last visited Mar. 3, 2003).

by the United States? What is the nature of the “arrangements” by which integrated countries are to be “tied”? To whom and by whom are they tied? What role is left for the prevailing multilateral, bilateral, and universal “arrangements” and “ties” that now exist in the form of customary international law, treaties, international institutions, and international courts and tribunals? Should they be regarded as out of date or redundant in this envisaged new global framework? And if they are still central to the new world order envisaged by the United States, why are they not mentioned?

This last question is pertinent to Haass’s comments to the Foreign Policy Association in New York on April 22, 2002, in which he did not mention the crucial role of international law in the international system, nor the United Nations, except to note the world organization as a potential recipient of U.S.-sponsored adaptation through this process of integration. It seems that even the U.N. is to be “integrated” by the U.S., along with APEC, OAS, and NATO, among “numerous” other organizations:

In the 21st century, the principal aim of American foreign policy is to integrate other countries and organizations into arrangements that will sustain a world consistent with U.S. interests and values, and thereby promote peace, prosperity, and justice as widely as possible. . . . We are doing this by persuading more and more governments and, at a deeper level, people to sign on to certain key ideas as to how the world should operate for our mutual benefit. Integration is about bringing nations together and then building frameworks of cooperation and, where feasible, institutions that reinforce and sustain them even more. . . . Integration applies to institutions as well as relationships. We are helping adapt institutions inherited from the past century to cope with the challenges of this one, challenges ranging from international terrorism to the spread of infectious disease. We are doing this not just in NATO, but in the Organization of American states, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the United Nations, and numerous other organizations. We are creating an architecture for this new era that will sustain the cooperative pursuit of shared global interests even when disagreements over more limited or local issues intrude—as they inevitably will.¹¹⁴

The Bush administration’s policy, or nascent doctrine, of integration therefore provides the background for a broader consideration of U.S.-sponsored regional cooperation and illuminates our discussion of the regional hub approach to environment and resource problems. It seems evident from the foregoing that any State Department policy on regional environmental cooperation must be subsumed under the broader project of integration. Put differently, the State Department would produce an irreconcilable inconsistency if it allowed U.S.-sponsored regional cooperation to detract from the overarching integration project. The regional hubs program must therefore be demonstrated to be congruent with the integration doctrine or be discarded.

2. *Congruency Between “Integration” and Hubs*

To what extent is the regional hub approach to transboundary environment and resource problems congruent with the nascent U.S. doctrine of integration?

114. See Haass, *supra* note 106.

The beguiling answer must be: It depends. If regional cooperation on trans-boundary issues serves to strengthen local alliances while excluding U.S. interests, the objective of the primary integration strategy will have been defeated. If, on the other hand, the U.S. government is able to position itself strategically within these regional cooperative structures and to retain influence within the regional network, then the regional hub may serve effectively as the node connecting a smaller local network with the United States's global integrated network and influence.

The picture here is of a vast global network with the United States at the center, radiating spokes not only to individual states and organizations, but also to regional hubs surrounded by their own networks of spokes and nodes. If the policy of integration is to be upheld, the United States must be as close to the center of each regional network as is possible or hold a significant degree of influence within each local network. Recalcitrant or hostile networks will be integrated and reformed by the United States, or isolated, sanctioned, and perhaps attacked. This scenario may sound fanciful, but it is grounded in fact.

To begin with, it is evident that the United States perceives itself to have vital interests in many far-flung regions and to be connected in significant ways to the fate of these regions. In the current administration's view, it is appropriate to regard the United States as a hub around which world politics and events take place: Condoleezza Rice, National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush, suggests that the United States should be regarded as "a hub around which the President can coalesce others to get things done."¹¹⁵

Many authors have recognized the global preeminence of the United States in today's geopolitical framework, as discussed above in Part II.C.¹¹⁶ Josef Joffe agrees that the United States is the paramount power in the international arena, setting out "America's global primacy in terms of both structure and process."¹¹⁷ He credits the U.S. with the status of "No. 1 in the world" before going on to say: "[T]he United States is the foremost impresario of the world's major politico-strategic relationships. . . . The proper metaphor is that of 'hubs and spokes,' with America as the hub and players 2, 3, 4, 5 and so on representing the spokes."¹¹⁸

When discussing hub-and-spokes diplomacy, the comparisons of the present-day United States with Germany under Bismarck are inevitable and perhaps illuminating. It is possible that the effective use of the regional environmental hub program might enable the United States to overcome the chief challenge faced by Bismarck in maintaining a regional hub-and-spokes network: the resentment of the "networked" states and their ability to counterbalance the dominant power at the hub of the network. According to some commentators, the

115. David E. Sanger, *The World; Another Bush's "Vision Thing,"* N.Y. TIMES, Jan. 20, 2002, § 4 at 1.

116. See, e.g., Brooks & Wohlforth, *supra* note 29; Hirsh, *supra* note 30; Ikenberry, *supra* note 30.

117. Josef Joffe, *Hubs, Spokes, and Public Goods*, NAT'L INT., Fall 2002, at 18.

118. *Id.*

Bush administration has the opportunity to create a hub-and-spokes network far more durable than Bismarck's:

The United States can do better than [Bismarck] . . . if its grand strategy amounts to more than just playing one "spoke" off against the other. The aim should be not only to prevent, but to pre-empt, hostile coalitions by undercutting the reasons for their formation. The point is to make other powers *willing* participants in the American system.¹¹⁹

The key here is to entrench the interests of networked states in the continuation of the network structure. It is possible that the regional environmental hub program may therefore be particularly helpful to the United States in sustaining the project of integration by providing a benevolent and neutral basis for the regional networks from which the surrounding states derive benefit and upon which they may come to rely. It should not be quickly inferred that the regional environmental hub program was deliberately established with this primary aim in mind. However, it must also be acknowledged that the regional hub structure presents an ideal mechanism for accomplishing this aim, and the regional environment program may provide the point of the spear in the implementation of the overarching foreign policy theme of integration.

These regional networks of environmental cooperation, once established around U.S. sponsorship, may then be turned toward any problem confronting U.S. interests. One issue in particular is of pressing importance to the United States since September 11: security. In fact, this issue has assumed such a dominant place in the U.S. foreign policy discourse that one must consider whether all other foreign policy themes—including that of environmental responsibility and even the project of integration—now lie subsumed within this primary aim.

3. *Subjection of U.S. Foreign Policy to Security Concerns*

As noted above, "security" has emerged as a dominant motif following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Terrorism and al-Qaeda provided a suitable enemy against which to replicate the bipolar confrontation of the Cold War. The existence of such an enemy in terrorism and al-Qaeda arguably placed the Bush administration's security advisors in a privileged position with respect to their State Department colleagues in the formation of foreign policy. In the view of some commentators, the National Security Strategy released on September 20, 2002, was a significant turning point in the management of U.S. foreign affairs, returning U.S. foreign policy to the domain of military and security strategists.¹²⁰ One commentator concluded that U.S.-centered security considerations lie at the center of the new approach to foreign policy and to its future use: "[T]he core of the new doctrine is military. Its premise is that the U.S. is, and will stay, by far the strongest military power and that this military supremacy will shift other countries from competition to co-operation with it."¹²¹

119. *Id.* at 19.

120. Editorial, *Use and Abuse of U.S. Power*, *FIN. TIMES (LONDON)*, Sept. 21, 2002, at 10.

121. *Id.*

The effect of the attacks on September 11 was therefore to recast the U.S. foreign policy debate primarily in terms of pressing security concerns. As Lionel Barber notes, "The war on terrorism has become the central organizing principle in U.S. foreign policy."¹²² In this climate, other foreign policy issues become of relevance primarily because they may be seen as part of the great drive for America to better protect itself against the outside world. In a situation of grave threats and uncertain defenses, the United States has begun to regard international cooperation and diplomacy primarily as a way to engage and placate a potentially hostile world:

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon . . . forced Americans to see clearly that foreign policy still matters, and that our oceans and our ICBMs [intercontinental ballistic missiles] alone do not make us safe. They brought home the stark reality that if we do not engage with the world, the world will engage with us, and in ways we may not like.¹²³

According to Haass, the strengthening of international cooperation is no longer an end in itself, nor is it proposed as a critical element in global efforts to avoid the "scourge of war," as the U.N. Charter preamble frames it.¹²⁴ Instead, the "cultivation of international solidarity" has become "one of the major weapons in our foreign policy arsenal," to be used against the enemies of the United States.¹²⁵ This solidarity is to be sought and maintained with other states on "every given issue of foreign policy," thus creating a uniform, predictable and comprehensive approach to foreign policy throughout the world, consistent with U.S. interests.¹²⁶ This grand goal will be achieved through the global architecture provided by the U.S. network of integration.¹²⁷

Integration of foreign states into the United States approach to international issues is therefore to be absolute, and its driving purpose is not to guarantee a world respecting the rule of law and principles of human dignity. Rather, the primary goal of the integration project springs from the need of the United States for security. Establishment of a countervailing network to protect the United States against a hostile and hidden network of enemies is the "first and fundamental commitment of the Federal Government."¹²⁸

This is the "new rationale for engagement" spoken of by Haass,¹²⁹ in which international engagement is properly viewed as unilateral U.S. supervision, backed up by the use or threat of force. The metaphor of a global sheriff has not been disdained by the architects of U.S. foreign policy: "To be successful over the long haul, we need to evolve into a *resolute* sheriff—confident, clear-eyed, and strong enough for sustained international engagement."¹³⁰

122. Lionel Barber, *Not Against You but Not Always With You*, FIN. TIMES (LONDON), Sept. 3, 2002, at Special Series 6.

123. Haass, *supra* note 106.

124. U.N.CHARTER pmbl.

125. Haass, *supra* note 106.

126. *Id.*

127. *Id.*

128. George W. Bush, *Introduction*, in NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY, *supra* note 3, at iv-vi.

129. Haass, *supra* note 105.

130. *Id.*

In light of these observations, the State Department's regional environmental hub program and the broader integration project should therefore be understood as clearly subsumed within the drive to secure America against its military foes, at least for the foreseeable future. In pursuing this aim, the Bush administration is no longer content to relinquish or share power, or to facilitate a global balancing of power in favor of peace and stability. According to Haass, the "balance of power" approach to foreign policy leads only to war: "The 20th century was defined by balance of power politics. When it broke down, it gave us two world wars. When it held, it gave us a Cold War. In both cases, defense, not development, had first call on our blood and treasure."¹³¹

4. *Congruence Between U.S. Security Agenda and Hubs*

There is arguably little need to go into great detail regarding the congruence between the regional environmental hub program and the U.S. concern with security issues. The regional environmental hub program presents advantages to the U.S. government on two main fronts, each discussed briefly in this section.

First, the regional environmental hub program may allow the United States to control the emergence of conflicts related to scarce natural resources—the "resource wars" described by Homer-Dixon and others.¹³² The regional hubs are strategically located in order to address these conflicts as they arise.¹³³

Second, the regional environmental hub program may provide a political structure through which the U.S. government can achieve its security goals in numerous strategic regions around the globe. Regional security issues may be effectively addressed by a hegemonic United States if regional multilateral fora are directed toward finite and limited objectives under U.S. leadership, and if the bilateral links between the United States and its key regional partners remain strong.¹³⁴ This preference for small-scale regional multilateralism, combined with U.S. participation in regional security arrangements, would allow the United States to shape the regional agendas—something that it could not do in broader multilateral fora without provoking a backlash.¹³⁵

In brief, the structures of the regional environmental hub program and the widely applicable concept of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy serve the interests of the Bush administration's project of integration. In turn, the goals of the

131. Haass, *supra* note 113.

132. See INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY, *supra* note 14; HOMER-DIXON, *supra* note 55; Daniel Buckels & G. Rusnak, *Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management*, in CULTIVATING PEACE: CONFLICT AND COLLABORATION IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT 1 (Daniel Buckels ed., 1999); Homer-Dixon, *supra* note 19.

133. See, e.g., GAAN, *supra* note 64, at 230, 231 (confirming the importance of environmental issues for security in South Asia, with a review of states in the region and particular issues).

134. See Galia Press-Barnathan, *The Lure of Regional Security Arrangements: The United States and Regional Security Cooperation in Asia and Europe*, 10:2 SECURITY STUD. 49, 54 (2000-01); Alice M. Rivlin, David C. Jones & Edward C. Meyer, *Beyond Alliances: Global Security Through Focused Partnerships*, in FACING THE FUTURE: AMERICAN STRATEGY IN THE 1990s 289 (1991).

135. Green, *supra* note 33, at 36.

integration project are subsumed within the United States's immediate concern to secure its safety and economic prosperity. It may therefore confidently be asserted that the regional environmental hub program will operate congruently with the Bush administration's security agenda.

Once the U.S. perception of imminent threat has passed, the State Department's hope is evidently that the project of integration will enable the United States to move from its primary concern with security to the pursuits of global architecture and entrepreneurship, to "seize the opportunities of the new century."¹³⁶ If the United States can establish a secure setting for the project of integration, the opportunities will indeed be golden. Using its regional influence to advantage in both bilateral and multilateral relationships, the United States will realize trade, security, and political goals with far less uncertainty. A new century in which the United States is at the center of a global network of power seems to offer potential gains unrivaled in history.

B. The Effect of Regional Hub Networks Upon Pre-Existing Arrangements

As this brief review of the practice of the regional environmental hub program reveals, the Bush administration's project of global integration is well served by the establishment of this kind of regional hub-and-spokes structure. One of the direct consequences of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy is to allow the hub state to project its influence beyond the borders of its territory through the legitimate mechanism of a regional body. Depending on the relative power and weight of each member state, the regional group may function as a consultative and democratic institution or may become simply an instrument for influence and political expansion by the powerful hub. Regional groupings of states may therefore allow powerful states such as the United States great scope for the exercise of regional influence through an acceptable and noncoercive forum.

In the current climate of U.S. political, economic, and military dominance, the establishment of regional hub-and-spokes networks by the United States, exemplified by the regional environmental hub program, will have undoubted consequences for existing multilateral and bilateral arrangements.¹³⁷ According to senior policy spokespersons, the United States now regards existing multilateral and regional structures as suitable targets for the reform and "retooling" brought about by the grand integration project.¹³⁸ There appears to be no limit to the scale of integration envisaged, and no barriers exist in the Bush administration's vision of the new global architecture:

Integration applies to institutions as well as relationships, and we are helping adapt institutions inherited from the past century to cope with the challenges of this one. In Europe, NATO and the European Union are increasing their capabili-

136. Haass, *supra* note 105.

137. For an overview of existing multilateral environmental treaties, negotiations, and dispute settlement clauses, see PAMELA S. CHASEK, *EARTH NEGOTIATIONS: ANALYZING THIRTY YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY* (2001); ROMANO, *supra* note 17, at 35-129.

138. Haass, *supra* note 105.

ties and extending membership to more of Europe's emerging democracies. In NATO, for example, the recent Rome Summit inaugurated the NATO-Russia Council, and [the 2002] Prague Summit . . . extend[ed] invitations to new members from Central and Eastern Europe. We and our partners are also retooling such organizations as the Organization of American states and the ASEAN Regional Forum to create an architecture for this new era that will sustain the cooperative pursuit of shared global interests.¹³⁹

The term "retooling," used above with express reference to the OAS and the ASEAN Regional Forum, connotes the replacement of components in an assembly line or production process, to enable the machinery to produce goods with different characteristics, or perhaps to manufacture a completely different item (as in the case of civilian factories converted to military use during wartime, which may be an apt illustration). The noteworthy element in this process is that the structural changes being implemented in these existing international structures are to be carried out by the United States and its partners for the pursuit of shared global interests. There is apparently no need for the United States to consult with those states that are unwilling to align themselves as partners of the United States, or for consultation with the wider community of states participating in the relevant multilateral structures. The picture is of a closed "partnership" structure that excludes all competitors and is capable of privately determining the agenda and then carrying it out.

Multilateral regional organizations such as NATO, the EU, the OAS, and the ASEAN Regional Forum have been specifically mentioned by Richard Haass as candidates for U.S.-sponsored reform,¹⁴⁰ confirming that the implementation of the Bush administration's project of integration, with its regional hub-and-spokes networks, is intended to have a dramatic impact on existing multilateral structures. U.S. panelists in a 2001 Japanese symposium entitled "Reinventing the U.S.-Japan Alliance for the 21st Century"¹⁴¹ made clear that the ASEAN Regional Forum is currently too diverse and inclusive to allow the United States effective influence and control in the region:

Interviewer: The United States seems to feel the need for multinational cooperation after the terrorist attacks and China is displaying a cooperative attitude from a pragmatic viewpoint. This is a good opportunity to create a framework for international dialogue that is entirely missing in East Asia. Is it possible to take advantage of this opportunity and create a framework for regional stability, where there are still issues remaining from the Cold War such as the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan?

Berger:¹⁴² The kind of alliance system in East Asia is a "hub and spokes" relationship. In any given bilateral relationship, the United States of course tends to

139. *Id.*

140. *Id.*

141. Sponsored by the ASAHI SHIMBUN newspaper's Asia Network's East Asian Security and Regional Cooperation Research Team, together with the U.S.-Japan Group on U.S.-Japan Relations and Regional Governance. *The Japan-U.S. Alliance and Security in East Asia: Building a Framework for Cooperation*, ASAHI SHIMBUN, Dec. 16, 2001, available in English at http://www.asahi.com/english/asianet/hatsu/eng_hatsu020211b.html (last visited Mar. 7, 2003).

142. *Id.* The report provides no identification of "Berger," although it may be presumed from the context that this refers to Samuel R. Berger, former National Security Advisor to U.S. President Clinton.

be the dominant partner. We are quite comfortable with this hub and spokes, but on the part of a weaker partner, it means it could be pushed into policies and areas in which it is not comfortable, that it will be dragged into a conflict that may not be in its major interest. So we need some type of multilateral framework. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is obviously already one established framework, but the problem of ARF is that it is too broad and includes everyone, so it cannot act on controversial issues. We will need some other multilateral frameworks.¹⁴³

The scale of resources presently allocated to the regional environmental hub program by the State Department do not put the hub program in a position to supplant or reform a multilateral regional body such as the ASEAN Regional Forum. However, we have seen that the regional environmental hub program may form one small part of the overall U.S. project of integration. Therefore, the incremental changes brought about by the regional environmental hub program may be reasonably regarded as part of the process of institutional reform or replacement to which the Bush administration is committed.

Evidently, this approach to existing multilateral arrangements will also cause changes in existing bilateral agreements between the United States and other sovereign states. It might even be suggested that a principal aim of U.S. implementation of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy is the exertion of regional influence through the use of strategic partner states functioning as proxies. The U.S. relationship with Thailand, for instance, has the potential to yield great benefit for the dominant partner, allowing the projection of American ideological, economic, and military influence into the region, as evidenced by a joint statement issued by President Bush and his Thai counterpart, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, in December 2001:

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra . . . reaffirmed the strength and vitality of the alliance between the United States and Thailand, celebrating a mature partnership that spans many fields of endeavor, based on a shared commitment to democracy, open markets with free and fair trade, human rights, and ethnic and religious tolerance. Noting U.S.-Thai cooperation in conflicts from World War II to the war on terrorism, the President and the Prime Minister expressed the conviction that the alliance has been a pillar of stability in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.¹⁴⁴

V. IN THE FUTURE

A series of significant challenges confront the State Department's regional hub program, along with undoubted opportunities that remain to be fully realized. The major challenge for the regional hub program and the Bush administration's project of integration lies in determining how to prevent or dissuade other states from attempting to counterbalance the United States hegemonic power. If the Bush administration positions the United States as a unilateral super-state, exempting itself from the restrictions it places upon other states, those nations will be reticent to contribute to arrangements from which the

143. *Id.*

144. Joint Statement, *supra* note 89.

United States benefits, including the regional environmental hub program. As foreign policy commentators have noted, the United States needs not only the dominance of raw military and economic power, but more importantly the “soft power” of persuasion and influence¹⁴⁵ and effective networks of compliant or cooperative states surrounding it.¹⁴⁶

The success of U.S. primacy will depend not just on our military or economic might but also on the soft power of our culture and values and on policies that make others feel they have been consulted and their interests have been taken into account. Talk about empire may dazzle us and mislead us into thinking we can go it alone.¹⁴⁷

If the Bush administration is not at least able to create the impression of listening to other states, or if it becomes apparent that the United States does not consider international institutions, treaties, and alliances as existing for the mutual benefit of equal sovereign states, then there is a significant risk that the idyllic myth of U.S. leadership toward worldwide democracy, freedom, and justice will become tarnished. If this occurs, the persuasive power of U.S. ideology and diplomacy may be completely lost.¹⁴⁸ Faced with the stark reality of raw U.S. military and economic power, the former partners and allies would undoubtedly find means to counterbalance or undermine unilateral hegemony of the United States.

In recognition of this fact, the Bush administration has begun to emphasize its commitment to mutually beneficial engagement and cooperation with its partners. However, the question remains: Upon whose terms? The United States treads a fine line between world leadership by consensus or by coercion. The Bush administration’s policy planning unit is acutely aware of this tension, as demonstrated by the following comments from Richard Haass, seeking to portray the United States as a resourceful, forceful, and independent global sheriff, distinguished by good listening skills—at least for the right partners. Every child raised with American cowboys on the television and in public life knows the value of a good partner, because even the strongest sheriff needs a little help sometimes, as Haass acknowledges:

I recently returned from a trip to Europe, where I met with senior British, French, Spanish, and EU officials, and gave a speech on U.S.-European relations. What I heard everywhere—London, Paris, Madrid—was concern that while the United States may consult with allies, we do not take differing views seriously. I heard real fears that the United States is looking only for supporters, not allies. This would be a self-defeating approach to our foreign policy interests. For, we do not have a monopoly of wisdom. Or of power. It is also at odds with President Bush’s foreign policy. The United States is a forceful leader, but we also listen to our allies and partners and, when it makes sense, we compromise. . . .The bottom

145. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Lessons in Imperialism*, *FIN. TIMES* (June 17, 2002); see also Brooks & Wohlforth, *supra* note 29, at 32.

146. JOSEPH S. NYE, JR., *THE PARADOX OF AMERICAN POWER: WHY THE WORLD’S ONLY SUPERPOWER CAN’T GO IT ALONE* (2002).

147. Nye, *supra* note 145.

148. See Tony Judt, *Its Own Worst Enemy*, *N.Y. REV. OF BOOKS*, Aug. 15, 2002, at 12 (review of Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *THE PARADOX OF AMERICAN POWER: WHY THE WORLD’S ONLY SUPERPOWER CAN’T GO IT ALONE* (2002)).

line is that there is almost nothing we can do alone that we can't do better with partners. And the resourceful sheriff knows it.¹⁴⁹

If the Bush administration manages to strike this balance, it has the prospect of creating durable global networks of cooperation from which to address its security, trade, and foreign policy objectives. As noted above, this kind of constructive multilateral engagement remains an essential foreign policy approach if the United States is to prosper and profit from the processes of globalization.¹⁵⁰

The regional environmental hub program could become an important part of such an approach. In order to extend the program's influence further, a regional environmental hub will soon be added in Fiji in the South Pacific,¹⁵¹ and possibilities arguably exist for new hubs in North Africa, the Persian Gulf, Central Asia and Southeast Asia.

The regional hub program has great potential to continue its contribution toward resolving regional conflict, environmental and otherwise, through the effective use of environmental problems as a medium. In addition, the structure initiated by the regional hub program may be used by the United States to expand its influence in areas of global concern such as public health, trade relations, and regional law enforcement and security issues.

VI.

IN CONCLUSION

Having addressed the theory, practice, and effect of the regional environmental hub program, the foregoing discussion calls for a reconsideration of the three initial hypotheses advanced regarding the regional environmental hub program:

Hypothesis 1: Regional groups are well adapted to tackle regional environmental and resource problems. Any attempt to address a regional environmental problem must take place on the regional scale. Cooperation among neighboring states is necessary in order for transboundary environment problems to be effectively resolved, and the regional environmental hub program provides an effective mechanism for this cooperation.

Hypothesis 2: The United States gains from regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy post-2001. The U.S. government obtains significant political influence and power from a U.S.-led system of regional hubs, be they environmental or otherwise. The coordination of a network of regional diplomatic hub-and-spokes systems is generally more favorable to U.S. interests than participation in open omnilateral, multilateral, or bilateral arrangements.

Hypothesis 3: The Bush administration may use the regional environmental hub program as a vehicle to integrate states into a regional hub-and-spokes diplomatic network. The strategic positioning of many of the regional environmen-

149. Haass, *supra* note 105.

150. Shepard Forman, Princeton Lyman & Stewart Patrick, *THE UNITED STATES IN A GLOBAL AGE: THE CASE FOR MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENT* 28-29 (May 2002).

151. According to State Department sources. *See also supra* note 3.

tal hubs enables the U.S. government to influence the regional coordination of critical democratization, security and trade concerns, while maintaining a benevolent "pro-environment" image. The establishment of U.S.-sponsored regional environmental networks enables the United States to position itself at the center of regional diplomatic relations and to implement its foreign policy strategy of integration.

It appears from this brief overview of the regional hub program that the first hypothesis may in fact be well grounded. The use of regional networks may indeed prove to be an effective way of addressing transboundary environment and natural resource problems. It is certainly clear that a regional approach to these problems is far better adapted to the finding of regional solutions than is the traditional bilateral approach. Efforts to increase transboundary cooperation on environmental and natural resource problems are to be welcomed, provided their positive impact is not outweighed by negative side effects.

The second hypothesis, concerning the wider use of regional hub-and-spokes diplomacy by the United States, also appears to be well supported. As the nation best equipped to exert global influence, accompanied by unique military power projection capabilities, the United States must search for mechanisms for the exercise of this power. A global hub-and-spokes system of diplomacy appears to offer the United States a useful complement to its bilateral relations and to reduce the risks associated with U.S. involvement in omnilateral and large multilateral structures. Once successfully established, a regional system of hub-and-spokes diplomacy will provide unrivaled opportunities for increased profits, power, and defensive protection.

The third hypothesis remains more difficult to test. Determining whether the regional environmental hub program functions as a deliberate vehicle for the wider project of global integration calls for further research and would require access to confidential U.S. government documents. Likewise, whether the Bush administration's project of integration will feature a regional hub-and-spokes structure alongside traditional bilateral relations or among a diversity of other structures remains to be seen.

Nevertheless, the third hypothesis is certainly not unreasonable and is supported by a number of key facts considered in this brief inquiry. That the U.S. regional environmental hub program may in fact function as an outpost for the Bush administration's wider project of integration is not an unreasonable assertion. Even if this purpose was not envisaged by the architects of the regional environmental hub program, it is now credible to assert that the hubs may function as the "point of the spear" in the Bush administration's project of global integration, through the establishment of a system of regional hub-and-spokes networks.

The facts, rhetoric, and reality of U.S. foreign policy under the Bush administration therefore support the three hypotheses considered. What remains to be seen is whether the Bush administration will itself recognize the merit of the multilateral and omnilateral international arrangements forged through centuries of history and two world wars or whether it will endanger this valuable heritage

through the unilateral pursuit of imperial ambition. Both the role and the fate of the grand U.S. project of integration and the emerging regional environmental hub program rest upon this pivotal choice. The Bush administration's integration project will only succeed if it is seen to respect the rules and norms of international law and to abide by the Westphalian paradigm of state sovereignty. The substantial merit of the regional environmental hub program will only be realized if the U.S. government chooses the path of genuine multilateral engagement and demonstrates the same visionary leadership upon which the existing international order is founded.