

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**LINES ON A MAP:
REGIONAL ORIENTATIONS AND
UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY COOPERATION**

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this paper is to examine one narrowly-focused aspect of United States government interagency cooperation. Many of the departments, agencies and bureaus that contribute to our national security divide the globe into regions so that they can better manage their activities around the world. As two prime examples, the Department of State has six regions, each assigned to an Assistant Secretary of State, while the Defense Department has five, each under the responsibility of a regional Combatant Commander. It seems obvious that the way each department or agency organizes its global affairs impacts not only how it sees the world and applies programs and policies thereto, but also that these divergent regional orientations impact the interactions of the organizations with one other. The paper's thesis is that aligning the regional orientations of our departments, agencies and bureaus—beginning with the National Security Council staff, State and Defense Departments—would provide a cross-agency synergy that could dramatically outweigh the costs associated with denying each the parochial ability to draw its own lines and boundaries on the map.

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PREFACE

I have benefited greatly over the past seven years from a couple of jobs that placed me within or near the United States interagency community. During the second Clinton Administration, I was a direct, if minor, player in the interagency process while serving as executive officer to the Deputy Special Representative of the President for Global Humanitarian Demining. My bosses, Major Generals Skip Garrett and Jack von Kaenel, and their State Department counterparts, Ambassadors Karl Inderfurth and Jim Steinberg, ran this new, small bureau with minimal direction from the Secretaries of State and Defense, much less the President (in spite of the lofty titles). Our offices were in the State Department building, ensuring my broad exposure to that department's unique culture and talented professionals. Additionally, our office worked routinely with members of the National Security Council staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Central Intelligence Agency, Energy Department, and U.S. Agency for International Development (now part of State), as well as Congressmen and their staffers, a host of non- and quasi-governmental organizations, public media, and Fortune 500 firms. We were members of Interagency Working Groups (IWGs) and suffered our fair share of the plodding dysfunctionality that characterizes many interagency endeavors. The State Department regional map covered walls throughout the building. I studied it frequently, but at that point my motivation was nothing more than intellectual curiosity.

Three years later, I joined the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) staff in Tampa, Florida, as the Engineer Operations Chief under CENTCOM Engineer Colonel Mike Morrow. As a new member of the staff, I truly studied the Defense Department's Unified Command Plan map for the first time. I was instantly struck by the differences between it and State's map. Over the next two years, I observed with professional curiosity as my J5 brethren across the hall interacted with the Joint Staff and, far less frequently, interagency counterparts. I often wondered at the ebb and flow of the infamous State-Defense schism, and began wondering how much of it emanated from different maps driving divergent organizational structures. That was the intellectual seed which germinated this research project and proposal for change.

I owe profound thanks to friends, mentors and educators too numerous to name for their (sometimes unwitting) assistance on this project. Beyond the leaders already named, chief among them are: State Department colleagues Stacy Davis and Jim Lawrence for teaching me how to "think State"; CENTCOM battle buddy Andrew Goetz for repeatedly dragging me out of the tactical weeds; Colonel Harry Tomlin of the Army War College for his insightful criticisms of early drafts; Ginny Shope and the other Army War College research librarians for frequent assistance with sources; and my parents, John and Margaret Pulliam, for their lifelong support of the career of this soldier. Most especially, thanks to my twin daughters, Katie and Alex, for bearing with frequent "not right now, sweetie" responses, and my editor-in-chief, proofreader, partner, true love, and bride of seventeen years, Jacqueline Langlois Pulliam.

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LINES ON A MAP: REGIONAL ORIENTATIONS AND UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

How do you win the peace? Since the United States-led Coalition's overwhelming triumph in the decisive combat operations phase of the 2003 war against Iraq, the Coalition has been engaged in the monumental chore of securing victory in that country. Defeating a stubborn insurgency and establishing a secure environment remain key military tasks, but equally challenging civil requirements have emerged: reestablishing governance, restoring the infrastructure of society, improving Iraq's financial and economic well-being, and so on. These are tasks best led by agencies other than the military, organizations with expertise in diverse fields: foreign ministries, treasury and commerce departments, law enforcement and justice bureaus, education and health agencies. Moreover, because the security, governance, societal and economic needs are so closely intertwined, one cannot tackle the issues each in its own lane. There must be close collaboration among the agencies involved. When the United States Government has the lead, as it does in Iraq, this becomes an interagency challenge.

The thesis of this paper is built upon a straightforward logic chain: that the United States Government's interagency structures and processes are critical to our success in complex national security challenges (such as Iraq); that those processes and structures must therefore be as effective as we can make them; that they are not as effective today as they can and should be; and finally—distinguishing this study from many others—that a relatively simple yet powerful way of improving our interagency competency would be to more closely align the overseas regional orientations of our federal departments, agencies and bureaus.

MAKING THE CASE FOR CHANGE

It is beyond the scope of this paper to reargue the front end of that logic chain. Some of these elements seem common sense (interagency coordination is important, and should be as effective as possible), while others have already been skillfully argued in other places. In the latter category, the case that the United States interagency process can be—and frequently is—so dysfunctional that it hinders, or even prevents, the accomplishment of U.S. strategic and national objectives has already been made, repeatedly, by sources from all corners of the United States Government, academia, and the media.¹ The fact is that our experience over the past two years in Iraq is simply the open window that allowed light to flood in and expose the problem widely.

Nor is it the purpose of the author to propose an exhaustive menu of wide-sweeping proposals to completely revamp, or even reinvent, the U.S. interagency process and structure.

Again, such proposals already exist.² Rather, the intent here is to introduce and explore the merits of one narrowly-focused change in the way that the interagency is structured and operates, a change that has the potential to yield benefits far out of proportion to its scope.

Interagency shortfalls may very well interfere with the resolution of all complex issues that face our government, but this paper will not attempt to address domestic policy areas. It is when the lack of interagency cooperation involves matters of national security that the risk to our country is at its greatest. Thus, the interagency process most deserves scrutiny where it engages in national security policy formulation and execution.

While it would be useful to apply this study across all departments, agencies and other organizations that contribute to the U.S. national security policymaking process, such breadth would require a book rather than a research paper. Instead, we focus on the five members of the interagency community with membership or advisory positions in the National Security Council: the National Security Council staff, the Departments of State, Defense, and Treasury, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Given their critically important roles in the Global War on Terrorism, we also look at the Department of Homeland Security and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Several of these seven departments, agencies and bureaus divide the globe into regions so they can better manage their activities around the world. It is obvious that the way each agency organizes its global affairs not only impacts how it sees the world and applies programs and policies, but also affects how it interacts with the other agencies. The thesis of this paper is that an alignment of the regional orientations of these offices would provide an interagency synergy that might dramatically outweigh the cost each pays in giving up the autonomy to draw its own lines on the map.

DRAWING FREEHAND

As implied in the introduction, there is no single answer to the question, “How does the United States Government view the world today?” Rather, there are several, one for each department or agency involved in international affairs. That is not really surprising, given the varying roles of the organizations and their cultures. It may surprise the reader, though, to learn that no two departments or agencies agree even on something so basic as a regional framework for the globe. One might suppose that most would simply borrow the State Department’s regional structure—State is, after all, the United States Government’s lead for international affairs—but none do. Each draws its own lines on the map and regionalizes the

world in its own way, making interagency collaboration a game akin to matching up patchwork quilts.

The staff of the National Security Council (NSC), under the leadership of the National Security Advisor, has the vitally important role within the interagency process of coordinating the activities of the various federal departments and agencies in pursuit of national security. How the NSC staff views the globe has an obvious impact on the interagency process, so it is important to understand that staff's organization.

While it is impossible from the NSC's organization chart (figure 1) to discern a country-by-country layout of the NSC staff's global perspective,³ some elements are immediately obvious. For instance, the NSC's world is divided into seven regions. The western hemisphere (the Americas) is distinct and discernable, as is Africa—though one or more countries of Africa, particularly those in the Maghreb, may in fact fall under the responsibility of the Near East and South Asian bureau. The Eurasian land mass is the biggest challenge to decipher. One may assume that the European Affairs bureau

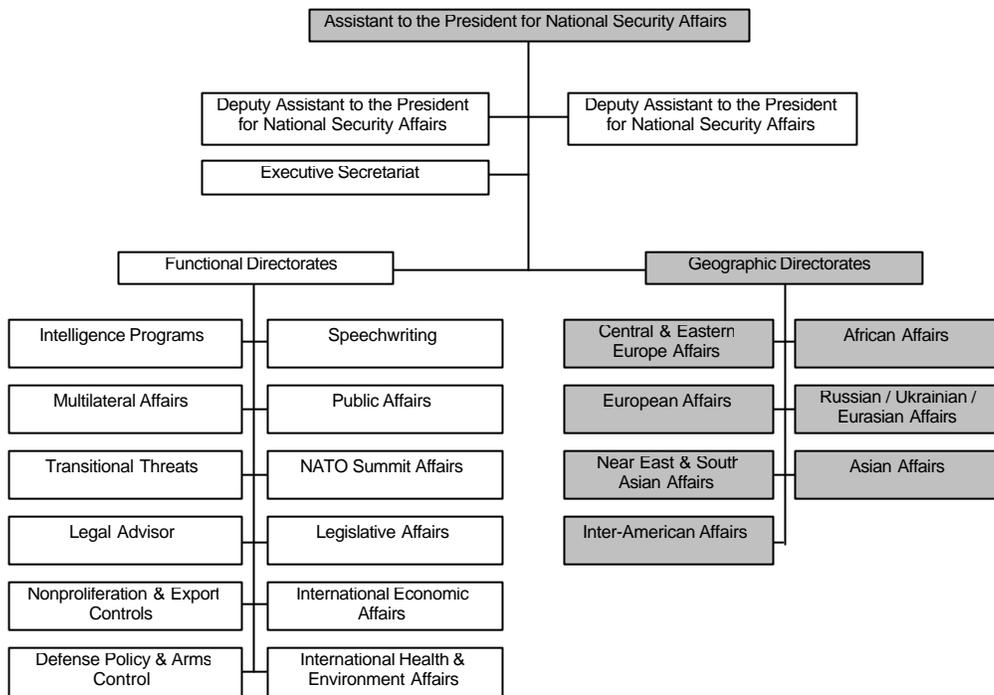


FIGURE 1: NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STAFF ORGANIZATION DIAGRAM, WITH GEOGRAPHIC DIRECTORATES HIGHLIGHTED⁴

would more accurately be described as West European, given that Central and Eastern Europe is a separate office. The boundaries between the Asia, Near East/South Asia, and Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia bureaus are undefined, as is the line of demarcation between Central/East Europe and Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia. Nevertheless, one gains a rough understanding from this chart of how the NSC staff views the world.

The State Department has a significantly different global view. State divides the world into six regions (figure 2), each under the responsibility of an Assistant Secretary of State: Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, the Near East, South Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. The first and most obvious difference between NSC and State is that the latter has one fewer region (six vice seven), but the variations are more profound than simply numbers. Two regions, Africa and the Americas, appear

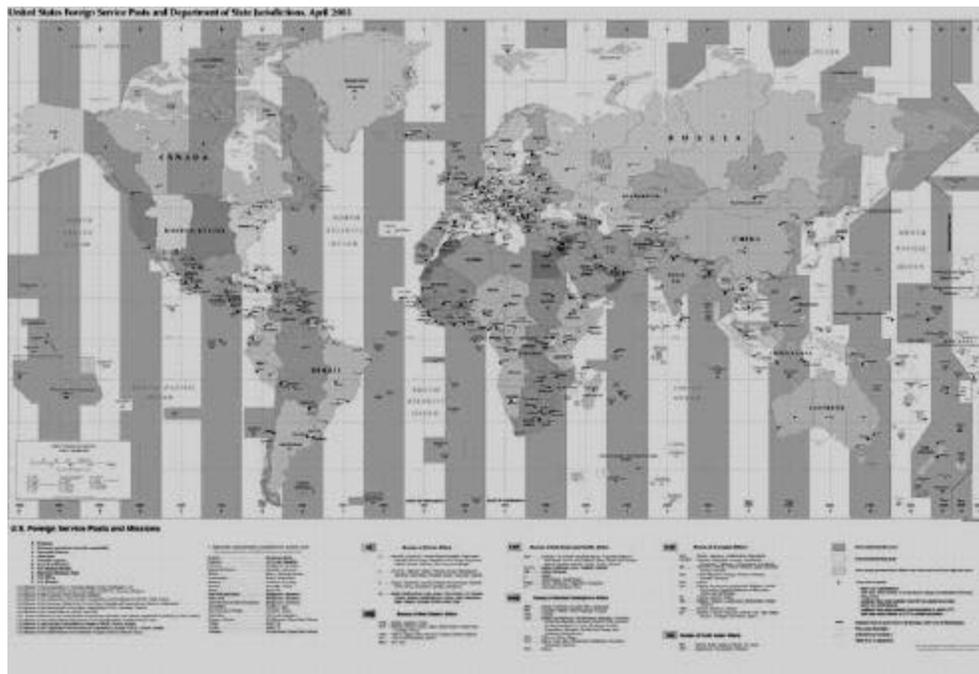


FIGURE 2: UNITED STATES FOREIGN SERVICE POSTS AND DEPARTMENT OF STATE JURISDICTIONS, APRIL 2003⁵

at first blush to match. NSC's Asia and State's East Asia may correspond fairly well. There the coherence—or apparent coherence—ends. State separates the Near East from South Asia, while the NSC combines the two. Meanwhile, State unites Europe and Northern Asia, from

Portugal to the farthest corner of Russia; the NSC staff divides this area into three regions (West Europe, Central/East Europe, and Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia).

The Department of Defense organizes its globe in yet another way. It divides the world into five regions, or Areas of Responsibility (AORs), each under a geographic Combatant Commander (figure 3). Those regions include Northern Command (NORTHCOM), shorthand for the United States, Canada and Mexico; Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), the remainder of the Americas and Caribbean; European



FIGURE 3: THE WORLD WITH COMMANDERS' AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY, FROM DEFENSE DEPARTMENT UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN ⁶

Command (EUCOM), which idiomatically includes Israel and most of Africa; Central Command (CENTCOM), which translates as the Middle East, part of South Asia, and the northeastern corner of Africa (Horn of Africa); and Pacific Command (PACOM), which encompasses the western rim of the Pacific and part of South Asia.

The Department of the Treasury has a clear role in national security, especially countering transnational terrorist organizations by attacking their sources of financing. Treasury has no regional structure within the bureau of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Terrorism and Violent Crime, the office most directly engaged in the Global War on Terrorism. However, there is a regional structure in the office of the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs: two regional bureaus, one for Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and the other covering Eurasia and Latin America (figure 4). While Treasury does not extensively regionalize the world in the way that the NSC, State or Defense do, its regional structure is still worthy of closer comparison to those of its interagency partners.

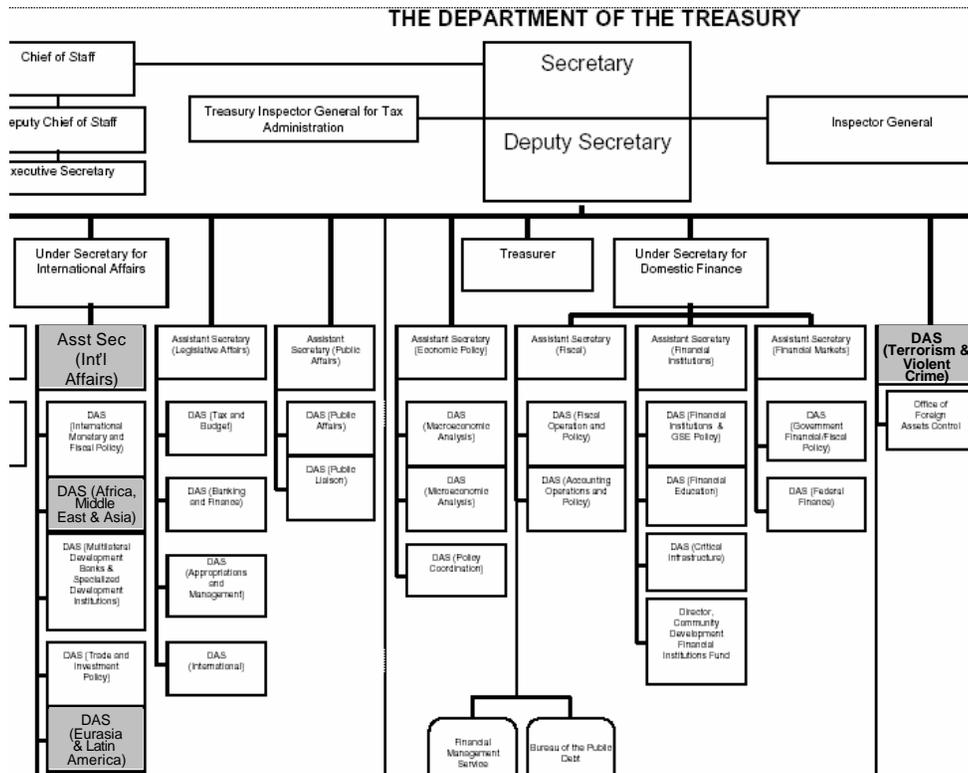


FIGURE 4: ORGANIZATION DIAGRAM OF THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT, WITH REGIONAL OFFICES HIGHLIGHTED ⁷

The CIA is regionally organized in yet another way. The Operations Directorate appears from the agency's organizational chart (figure 5) to contain regional divisions, though the available documentation provides no further detail on this covert bureau's structure. The regional sub-organization within the Intelligence Directorate is, however, available as shown on

the wiring diagram. This directorate has separate offices devoted to the analysis of intelligence concerning three broad regions: Asia, the Pacific and Latin America; the Near East, South Asia and Africa; and Russia combined with Europe.

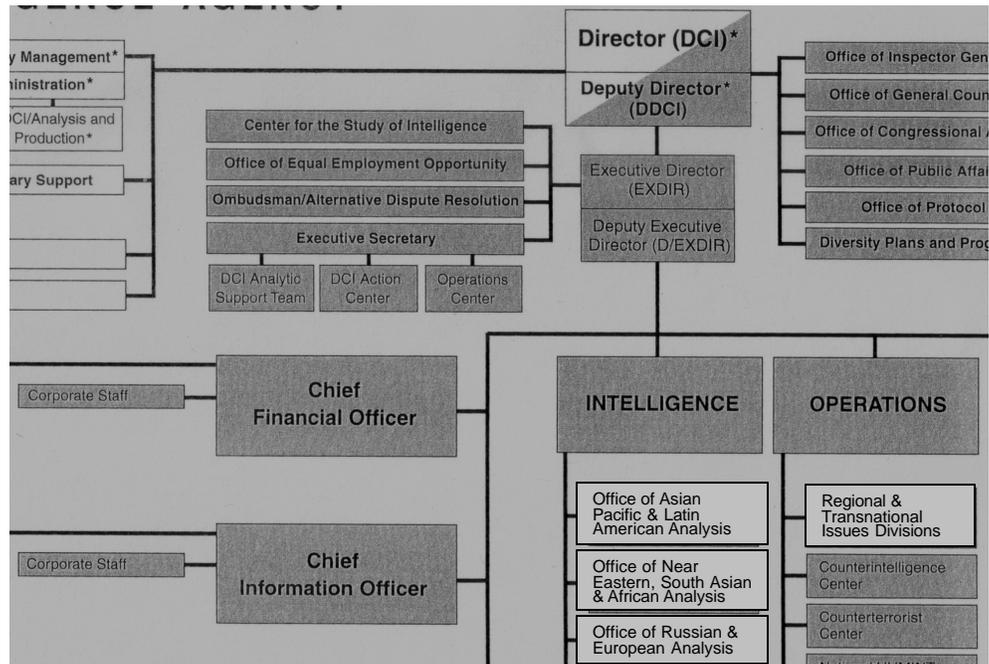


FIGURE 5: DETAIL OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY ORGANIZATION DIAGRAM, WITH HIGHLIGHTS ADDED⁸

The Department of Homeland Security, with its focus on the internal defense of the United States, has no regional framework for the world beyond our borders. Such structure simply is not needed by the department.⁹ Nor has an overseas regional structure been required in the past by the FBI. This need may be emerging with the Bureau's increased role in international security matters, particularly as they pertain to trans-national terrorism, but thus far the organization's Counter-Terrorism Division has only two regional cells: a Middle East Unit, and a Global (read, the rest of the world outside the U.S.) Unit.¹⁰ For the purposes of this study, that is not significantly different from having no regional structure at all. The Bureau does have some forty-five Legal Attaches (LEGATS) assigned around the globe, but these attaches do not ascribe to a strict regional structure.¹¹

In summary, five of the seven agencies with the most significant roles in national security affairs have regional structures for dealing with the world. Each has its own way of looking at the globe as summarized in the following chart (figure 6). Notably, the cross-agency mapping of this diagram is only very roughly approximate, as a host of

NSC (7 Regions)	State (6)	Defense (5)	Treasury (2)	CIA (3)
Inter-America	Western Hemisphere	SOUTHCOM (Latin America)	Eurasia & Latin America	Asia-Pacific & Latin America
		NORTHCOM (Mexico & Canada)		
Europe (Western)	Europe & Eurasia	EUCOM (Europe, Eurasia & Africa(-))	Africa, Middle East & Asia	Russia & Europe
Central/Eastern Europe				
Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia				
Africa	Africa	CENTCOM (South Asia, Middle East & Horn of Africa)	Africa, Middle East & Asia	Near East, South Asia & Africa
Near East & South Asia	Near East			
	South Asia			
Asia	East Asia & Pacific	PACOM (East Asia & Pacific)	Africa, Middle East & Asia	Asia-Pacific & Latin America

FIGURE 6: COMPARISON OF DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS' REGIONAL STRUCTURES

country-by-country differences exist along the regional borders. In other words, the reality of the comparison is even more confusing and intertwined than is displayed here.

One tentative conclusion can be drawn from study of this chart: it appears that Treasury and the CIA are in fact mirroring, to some degree, the organization of State Department. They have simplified and merged State's six regions into two (Treasury) or three (CIA), perhaps to reduce bureaucratic overhead and personnel requirements, but the mapping seems clean. Thus the true challenge of interagency regional cooperation exists among the top three players in national security affairs: NSC, State and Defense. Accordingly, the remainder of this study will focus on these three organizations.

HERE THERE BE DRAGONS

Why the cacophony? How did our government grow into this state of worldview inconsonance, particularly among three key agencies that must work so closely together? The answer derives from the variance in cultures, functions, autonomy, resourcing levels, and responsibilities among the organizations. Let us begin by trying to understand why each of the three drew lines on the map as it did.

The National Security Council's structure, including its regional bureau framework, changes at the whim of each administration. Lacking a definitive response from the current NSC staff for today's layout, one can only state with any assurance that the structure reflects the intellectual orientation of the Advisor to the President for National Security Affairs, who heads the NSC staff, and what he or she is comfortable using as bureaucratic scaffolding based on the world situation at the time he or she takes office. In short, the NSC staff's regional divisions are personality driven, much more so than either of the two departmental members of our triumvirate.

State Department's regional framework is also open to change, but the driving factors and conditions are often different, and the process—once initiated—somewhat more formal. A senior permanent staffer within the department described State's approach to reorienting its map in this way: "There is no automaticity [set frequency or trigger] to our reviews. There is precedent [from past changes], there is a process [of staffing, review and approval], but there is no automaticity."¹²

This staff officer and a colleague gave three anecdotal examples. During the 1988-1992 administration of President Bush the elder, an influential congressman decided that State Department should have an independent bureau of South Asian Affairs. Prior to this, South Asia was joined with the Middle East in a bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. The congressman was able to use his influence to force the change upon the department from outside. In 2000, the Department internally initiated a review to decide whether the Central/South Asian "Stans" (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, etc.), formerly joined with Russia politically as well as on State's map, should remain with the European and Eurasian bureau (EUR) or be shifted to the Near East; after review, they remain in EUR. Finally, in 2002, the department decided for a combination of internal administrative (staffing, efficiency, etc.) and geopolitical reasons to shift responsibility for Canada from the European bureau to the Western Hemisphere. Each of these changes was initiated in a different way, but all were studied, staffed and decided in a similar manner.

Importantly, as both interviewed State Department officials noted, most decisions to reorient the State map involve both internal (administrative/management) and external (geopolitical, societal) considerations.¹³ "These changes are driven by a combination of policy and administrative rationales. There is a diplomatic aspect involved as well—when Canada heard that it was being shifted to Western Hemisphere, it was not happy."¹⁴

The regional orientation of the Department of Defense is roughly as flexible as that of State, but seems less driven by administrative/management considerations. At the same time,

the Defense review process is far more formalized than State's. It is set by the Unified Command Plan (UCP).¹⁵ The UCP is amended frequently (twenty times since 1946, thrice in the past three years), sometimes in major ways—such as the creation of a new Combatant Command. Most often, though, the changes are relatively minor: shifting a particular set of missions from one geographic Combatant Commander to another, or responsibility for a single country between commands. Unfortunately, this constant tinkering makes it nearly impossible to establish a holistic explanation for why Defense currently organizes the globe as it does. What can be discerned is that the Joint Staff continually reviews the UCP for changes that will make the Defense Department's operations overseas more effective or efficient: "The geographic boundaries are set in a way that makes sense to us for political, military, cultural sorts of reasons."¹⁶

In fact, these three key members of the interagency community have one important similarity in their approaches: each adjusts its regional framework to best fit its roles and missions in pursuit of national security. The problem is that each does so unilaterally, without obvious regard for or coordination with its interagency fellows. This leads to curiosities and concerns when the frameworks are compared. Let us look at three potentially explosive sets of examples: the first, a line of countries stretching Iraq-Iran-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India; next Israel-Palestine; and finally, Japan-South Korea-North Korea-China.

The potential national security fault lines among the first string of countries are obvious. Iraq and Iran (Mesopotamia and Persia) have fought on and off for millennia. Similarly, Iran and Afghanistan have a long and complex history, as do Afghanistan and what is now the state of Pakistan. Finally, Pakistan and India have a shared past as one colony under Great Britain, followed by religious schism, separation, independence, and a great deal of animosity today. If there were ever a short string of nations that could challenge any attempt to regionalize the world cleanly, this is it. The National Security Council staff places responsibility for national security policy pertaining to all five of these nations under one person, the Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs. State Department divides the responsibilities among two Assistant Secretaries: one for the Near East and the other for South Asia. The State Department structural border runs between Iran and Afghanistan. The Department of Defense has its own structural boundary in this string, between Pakistan and India: all the nations west of that line fall into CENTCOM's AOR, while India is inside the PACOM AOR.

Consequently, the NSC Director hoping for coherent, cohesive policies from his or her State and Defense counterparts across this string of countries is going to find instead two Assistant Secretaries (and their staffs) who may or may not coordinate as frequently or well as

one might hope, and two Combatant Commanders (and staffs) with the same intra-departmental challenges. Not only that, but the potential fault lines within one are different from those within the other. Knowing how strongly personalities play a role—and how strong the personalities can be—at the senior executive level, one might commiserate with the frustrations of an NSC Near East & South Asian Affairs Director.

But who has it right? It is easy to understand the NSC's stance in this case, bringing all these nations together. Given the need to regionalize at all (for management and programmatic purposes), one can also understand State Department's fault line between Iran and Afghanistan—it is probably the least contentious of the four international borders of this string. Finally, if one takes an educated guess at the Joint Staff's reasoning, one can also understand the Defense Department's dividing line running between Pakistan and India: the Combatant Commanders of CENTCOM and PACOM can, thanks to this boundary, work with their Pakistani and Indian military counterparts while disavowing responsibility for the United States' policies with respect to the other (the 'not my job' disclaimer). Taken together, though, these varying seams in responsibilities play havoc with the U.S. interagency community's ability to operate cohesively.

The second example, Israel-Palestine, seems much simpler on the face of it. There is, of course, no state of Palestine (precisely the problem, some would shout). Since Jordan hosts the largest population of Palestinian refugees outside of Israel's borders, and—not coincidentally—plays a leading role representing Palestinian interests in international fora, we will amend this string to Israel-Jordan. Again, the NSC staff is unified: the Director for the Near East and South Asia has full responsibility. In this instance, State is also unified, with the Assistant Secretary for the Near East. Defense is not, however. Jordan is in the CENTCOM AOR, while Israel is on the EUCOM map.

Though the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff might not publicly admit it, it is probable that the same thought process supposed above for India-Pakistan fits here. The CENTCOM Commander can interact with his Arab and Islamic counterparts free of any responsibility for the United States' policies regarding Israel and the Palestinian problem.¹⁷ This makes the CENTCOM Commander more effective as a military leader and coalition builder, but can play havoc with interagency attempts to coordinate and rationalize cross-departmental programs and policies.

Contrast the interagency challenges of the first two examples with the final string: Japan-South Korea-North Korea-China. Again the historic links and potential animosities are obvious. In this string, however, there is interagency unity across the board. All four nations are within

the portfolio of the NSC Director for Asian Affairs, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, and the Defense Department's PACOM Commander. Interagency cooperation and coherence in this example is bound to be much higher than in either of the previous examples, as the three agencies' staffs have unity of effort and unfettered ability to coordinate between themselves without the additional burden of intra-departmental coordination across seams.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

As may have become obvious in the previous section, the complications of interagency coordination multiply as seams are introduced within departments. All other factors being equal, an Assistant Secretary of State who has perhaps two NSC Directors and three geographic Combatant Commanders to coordinate with will be less effective *at the interagency level* than his or her peer who is perfectly mapped to a single NSC Director and only one Combatant Commander. The same is true of each geographic Combatant Commander and NSC Director: simplicity leads to effectiveness, while complexity engenders incoherence and friction. Further, these challenges of working together at the executive level are replicated countless times within those key leaders' staffs, as military action officers, foreign service officers and NSC desk officers engage one another. And this massively complex interweaving of inter-relationships must be reestablished from scratch every three to four years, as key leaders and staff officers constantly rotate.¹⁸ How much simpler and more effective the interagency process could be if these schisms were eliminated. But what are the direct and indirect costs associated with such a change, and do the benefits outweigh those costs? The answer is yes, but first let us consider the costs.

One clear cost, already mentioned, is that the departments would no longer have the freedom to draw lines on their own maps to best fit their parochial duties. If the Defense Department were to adapt to the State Department regional structure, for instance, the CENTCOM Commander would no longer be able to divorce himself from responsibility for U.S. policies toward Israel when interacting with his or her regional military counterparts. Though it is well beyond the scope of this paper to outline all the potential costs to each department and agency of unifying an interagency regional structure—and it is important to note that the costs could only be determined after a framework is decided upon—one must acknowledge that such costs exist.

Another, more literal, cost is the reorganization required of all (or all but one) of the departments once a framework is set. Staff have to be reassigned, hired and fired; offices must

be established or torn down; whole organizations have to be created or disbanded. This can be very expensive,¹⁹ but not prohibitively so. It certainly should not be considered a valid reason for blocking improved interagency cooperation.

A second- or third-order cost to any reorganization would be the creation of a new set of government-wide seams. As every baseball player or military leader knows, any time a line is drawn on the ground and responsibility divvied out for the terrain on either side of it, a seam has been created where coordination and coherence is bound to be weaker than inside either of the adjacent zones. It is human nature to let the other person worry about his or her side of the line. Unfortunately, what happens on the line itself—or very near it—becomes a bit of a blind spot to both players/leaders, unless they go out of their way to integrate their efforts with their neighbors.

To some extent, though it is undoubtedly rarely a conscious effort, the fact that many State Department seams fall well inside a single Defense Department region (and vice versa) allows the departments to back-stop one another. As a hypothetical example, even if neither the Assistant Secretaries of State for Europe nor Africa are closely watching an issue on the seam between their regions, the chances are good that the EUCOM Combatant Commander has been closely watching the issue on that seam (which is, after all, squarely in the middle of his or her AOR). The EUCOM Commander can thus alert his State Department counterparts to issues that have national security implications, preventing them from being blind along their seam. This fictitious example is an over-simplification of reality, but there is undoubtedly some cross-governmental benefit to the patchwork nature of our current regional orientations.

None of these costs, even taken together, appear to outweigh the prodigious and obvious benefits to be gained by rationalizing our regional frameworks across the interagency community. Imagine a United States Government in which the departments see the world the same way. Near East for one means the same as Near East for all. Each Assistant Secretary of State works routinely—and regularly—with a single geographic Combatant Commander, and with a single NSC staff Director. Below their leaders, the staff officers of these various elements of our government departments and agencies can afford to meet together, share views, problems and solutions, form interagency working committees, get to know each other well, even potentially form a team of teams. Key leaders and staff officers can, in this new interagency structure, afford the costs (time and money) associated with truly getting to know their interagency counterparts, and are as a result much better empowered to exchange ideas and concerns. The potential benefits are enormous.

Pushing the envelope a bit further, a Regional Director within the NSC could even function as a mini-NSC, a Regional Security Council of sorts. Planning for peaceful theater security cooperation as well as war could be integrated, with regular coordination meetings and plans reviews that would be truly interagency at the working level. Returning to the real-world example that introduced this study, planning for interagency post-conflict stability and nation-building operations in Iraq would likely have been dramatically more effective if the CENTCOM, State Near East, and NSC Near East/South Asia staffs were regular collaborators during the planning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2002.

This idea may seem threatening to an Under Secretary of State, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, or even Secretary of Defense, because it would empower subordinate leaders to truly go interagency—often a closely guarded prerogative of those at the very pinnacle of our government. And yet this concept could be seen as a fairly natural evolution once all the departments and agencies involved in national security matters are sharing one world view. More importantly, this evolution could bring immeasurable relief to the interagency traffic jam so commonly reported and bemoaned in recent decades. It is the right idea, and is worth the associated costs.

SHARING ONE MAP: A MODEST PROPOSAL

This study would be incomplete without some recommended solution, or way ahead, though it would be premature to introduce a full-blown map complete with new lines drawn upon it. Before any interagency regional structure can be decided upon, the key agencies involved must be brought together to argue their cases for the grouping, or separation, of specific countries with and from each other. The department-by-department costs associated with each pairing or separation must be weighed against a similar department-by-department measure of the benefits to be gained. The fact is that one can draw a single line connecting all 190-odd countries on the globe and link them each to the other as important neighbors; regionalization involves difficult and nuanced decisions of relative merit. This can not be done by each agency in isolation, unless one is happy with the interagency situation as it currently exists.

The proposal of this paper is much more modest, and yet more enduring. It begins with a presidential decision (codified through a National Security Policy Directive or similar document) that directs the key departments and agencies to empower representatives to make decisions on behalf of their departments, then—under NSC staff lead—sequestering those representatives to iron out a regional framework that all will live by. It includes presidential or congressional introduction of a bill (an executive order is not enduring enough) that makes it a

requirement of United States law that all agencies of the government with national security responsibilities adhere to the regional framework so decided, and that the same process be used from time to time to adjust the regional structure in light of world events. In short, the recommendation is for a UCP-like process for creation and maintenance of an interagency regional world framework that is embedded in U.S. code.

The basic concept is not truly novel. In *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols* (BG-N),²⁰ Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) principle author Clark Murdock proposes a region-defining world map “that [is] common to all U.S. government agencies.”²¹ The BG-N study, however, mentions the interagency-wide map only as a point of introduction for a far-ranging restructuring of the interagency community, including such significant changes as creating two additional geographic Combatant Commands. The simpler recommendations of this paper can provide many of the benefits of BG-N’s vastly more ambitious project at significantly lower cost. Further, this paper leaves it to the interagency players themselves to collectively redefine the map, as well as how and whether their departments and agencies should restructure after the lines are redrawn. The BG-N study charts a course for the interagency community up front, taking away the vast potential for buy-in that often accompanies giving the participants a say in their own futures.

This is not a complex proposal, because the situation does not demand complexity. It in fact demands simplicity of the sort that is rare in the interagency community. This paper addresses one very narrow element of the interagency world, but one that could potentially reap substantial benefits well beyond its own scope. There is real power in getting our departments and agencies into the habit of working together. Getting them all on the same map would be a significant move in that direction.

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ENDNOTES

¹ See, for instance: Bruce R. Piernie, *Civilians and Soldiers: Achieving Better Coordination* (Washington, D.C.: Rand, 1998); David Tucker, "The RMA and the Interagency: Knowledge and Speed vs. Ignorance and Sloth?" *Parameters* 30-3 (Autumn 2000): 66-76; Clark Murdock, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, March 2004); *The Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 22 July 2004); and Stuart Eizenstat, John Edward Porter, and Jeremy Weinstein, "Rebuilding Weak States," *Foreign Affairs* 84-1 (January/ February 2005). The outcry against weaknesses in the interagency began well before Operation Iraqi Freedom, or even the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. In fact, one can trace interagency shortcomings back through all recent administrations at least as far as the Vietnam War. See also, for example, H.R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1997).

² Ibid. Most of the documents referenced above provide recommendations for improvement in the interagency structure and processes. Some, such as the Rand and CSIS studies, are wide-ranging.

³ Repeated calls and faxes by the author to the NSC staff to gain better resolution on this regional framework (what countries fall within which region, etc.)—as well as to confirm that the framework has not changed over the past two years—have gone unanswered.

⁴ Gabriel Marcella, "National Security and the Interagency Process," (n.d.), *U.S. Army War College "Core Curriculum Course 2: 'War, National Security Policy & Strategy,' Volume I, Academic Year 2005* (Carlisle, PA: USAWC, 2004): 317. Diagram modified: administrative staff elements deleted and geographic bureaus highlighted.

⁵ Department of State, "United States Foreign Service Posts and Department of State Jurisdictions, April 2003"; available from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/maps/pub/maps/US_foregn_posts2003.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 November 2004.

⁶ Department of Defense, "The World with Commanders' Areas of Responsibility, from Defense Department Unified Command Plan"; available from <<http://www.pentagon.mil/specials/unifiedcommand/>>; Internet; accessed 23 November 2004.

⁷ Department of the Treasury, "Organization Diagram"; available from <<http://www.ustreas.gov/organization/>>; Internet; accessed 28 November 2004.

⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *Factbook on Intelligence: the George Bush Center for Intelligence* (Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 2001), insert.

⁹ Department of Homeland Security, "DHS Organization"; available from <<http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=13>>; Internet; accessed 28 November 2004.

¹⁰ John Whalen, FBI Liaison Officer to United States Central Command <res8en2f@verizon.net>, "RE: FBI Regional Structure," series of electronic mail message exchanges with author <pulliamje@carlisle.army.mil>, between 9 November and 13 December 2004. Mr. Whalen reported knowing of no plan to add any further overseas regional structure to the Bureau's operations; this possibility is purely speculation on the author's part.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Mark Wong, executive assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, telephone interview by author, 7 January 2005.

¹³ Ibid and Dick Shineck, executive assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Management, telephone interviews by author, 7 January 2005.

¹⁴ Wong.

¹⁵ Department of Defense, *Unified Command Plan* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 30 April 2002 with changes published 30 July 2002, 10 January 2003 and 10 March 2004).

¹⁶ Jim Garamone, "Command Plan Change Places Syria, Lebanon in CENTCOM Area," 22 April 2004, available from <<http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/unifiedcommand/change.html>>; Internet; accessed 29 November 2004.

¹⁷ A senior military leader in a position to know the details of internal department debates of the Unified Command Plan who visited the War College in academic year 2004-2005 provided this as the primary rationale for keeping Israel in the EUCOM, vice CENTCOM, AOR, in response to a question from the author. His complete response was that EUCOM would not necessarily be averse to a shift of Israel into CENTCOM AOR, but the CENTCOM Commander would likely be strongly opposed, because it would make coordinating and developing relationships with Arab counterparts much more difficult. This senior leader closed his response with the rhetorical question, "how would you like to fly from Tel Aviv to Riyadh?" (identity of the senior leader concerned is protected in accordance with the U.S. Army War College's non-attribution policy for visiting speakers).

¹⁸ Senior leaders—whether NSC, State, or Defense—tend to change jobs every four years, whether through a change in Administration (political appointments) or because such changes are enshrined in law (e.g., Title 10 establishment of the lengths of tours of key military leaders). More junior staffers, whether State, Defense or NSC—which gets its staff largely from State and Defense—tend to move every two to four years as they progress through the military or foreign service ranks in their professional development career paths. The bottom line is constant turmoil among the key leaders and their staffs throughout these organizations, making interagency coordination difficult enough without adding the challenge of inter-organizational seams.

¹⁹ Probably most expensive for the Department of Defense, whose regional commands are large (roughly 1,000-3,000 staff, varying by command) and geographically spread out—in some cases, residing inside the region for which they have responsibility. State Department's costs would be smaller, as all six Assistant Secretaries and their staffs work within the State Department building in Washington; more a case of desk and office shuffling. The NSC's cost for reorganization would be smallest of all, as the staff is very limited in size and tends to shift from administration to administration anyway.

²⁰ Murdock.

²¹ Murdock, as quoted by John T. Bennett, "Beyond Goldwater-Nichols' Group To Study Interagency Task Forces," *Inside the Pentagon* (Washington, D.C.; InsideWashington, 23

September 2004); quoted in *U.S. Army War College Selected Readings, Academic Year 2005, Course 4: Implementing National Military Strategy, Volume II* (Carlisle, PA: USAWC, 2004): 22-6 to 22-7.

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