

Given these constraints, if the OAS is to become the central hub of hemispheric governance, it must perform two essential roles. Firstly, it must become a central deliberative forum through which governments and civil society shape a regional consensus on the principal issue-areas confronting them and develop the norms and guidelines for dispute settlement and inter-American co-operation. Secondly, the OAS must shake off the dust from previous decades and revitalize its capacity to perform the central secretariat/clearing-house role required by members for effective interaction in hemispheric community-building. Such an evolution of the OAS into an effective instrument of political integration would shift its organizing concept away from project execution to an overall, proactive forum, forging co-operation among member states, inducing agreements and commitments from governments, generating policy norms and principles as well as strategies, and co-ordinating co-operative ventures and activities of action bodies (InterAmerican Dialogue, 1997: 14-15), but *not* toward regulation and constraining regime-building.

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE FOR CANADA

Functionalism and Leadership

There are clear advantages to Canada in having a sound and long-term hemispheric partnership, the first of which is the possibility of balancing, however partially, the economic and political weight of the United States. But there are other advantages relating to core Canadian values such as peacebuilding and human security. A key condition of such a development is the progressive establishment of compatible norms and rules-based regimes with Latin American, Caribbean, and American partners to manage interdependence more effectively. Hemispheric governance, or the strengthening of an institutionalized and organized system of co-operation and constraint, is therefore an essential condition of community-building in the Americas. Effective governance makes the hemispheric option both feasible and advantageous; since 1990 Canadian governments have invested heavily in regional institutions, starting with the OAS. The point is that a regional 'home' is most useful to have in the globalized world, and if Canada is ever to have one, that home will have to be the Americas (Klepak, 1994). Nowhere else can Canada find a group of countries willing to consider it as part of a first circle of allies and partners, in both political and economic terms.

This commitment to the Americas, and the effective integration and participation of Canada in hemispheric governance, will not be achieved through an automatic process driven by the emergence of common needs in the face of common challenges. There is no functional necessity to Canada's option for the Americas. In fact, one could argue in a classical functionalist manner that structural forces push in the same direction as commercial trends: towards absorption within a US-centred North American universe. Despite increasing interactions with Latin Americans at the bilateral and multilateral levels, in other words, effective and full membership in the Western hemisphere remains far from assured.

Without overwhelming functional pressures to drive the hemispheric orientation, only a decisive and long-term policy option can sustain it. The benefits of such a regional option must be much more widely understood within Canada to nurture an adequate political base to sustain it. To be of interest to an open economy and a modern, developed, and democratic polity such as Canada, a regional partnership must offer tools and avenues of co-operation that support and enhance bilateral and global coalition-building. Voluntarism and long-term strategic vision must fill the vacuum of functional pressure. Effective Canadian integration in the Americas requires government leadership; a cold look at the situation and prospects of our partners, offset by sensitivity to their difficulties and outlook; effective coalition-building at home; and investment in capacity-building on the region in Canada.

Leadership and Dialogue in the Hemisphere

Canada's capacity to take the lead on inter-American trade policy before 1994 resulted not so much from solid coalition-building based on sound convergence of Canadian and Latin American interests, but instead from the incapacity of the United States to move decisively and from the unwillingness of the Latin Americans to jeopardize the whole process. The prize of hemispheric trade liberalization was and remains access to the United States market, and this is what drives the process for the biggest players in Latin America. Yet, these countries, Brazil in particular, are not interested in moving too quickly into a demanding—and thus potentially costly and destabilizing—trade regime (Botafogo Gonçalves, forthcoming). For the United States, the energy that fed the hemispheric initiative, from 1989 on, was the prospect of economic fortresses emerging in Europe and Asia on what looked like