Scholars Explain Bush's SPP

by Phyllis Schlafly October 10, 2007

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Those who seek to understand what's behind the chatter about Bush's Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) as a possible prelude to a North American Union (NAU), similar to the European Union (EU), should read the 35-page White Paper published recently by the prestigious Hudson Institute called "Negotiating North America: The Security and Prosperity Partnership." This Washington, DC think tank is blunt and detailed in describing where SPP is heading.

Here's how Hudson defines SPP's goal: "The SPP process is the vehicle for the discussion of future arrangements for economic integration to create a single market for goods and services in North America." The key words are "economic integration" (a phrase used again and again) into a North American "single market" (another phrase used repeatedly).

"Integration" with Mexico and Canada is exactly what North American Union means, but there's a big problem with this goal. "We the people" of the United States were never asked if we want to be "integrated" with Mexico and Canada, two countries of enormously different laws, culture, concept of government's role, economic system, and standard of living.

Here's how Hudson explains SPP's process: "The most important feature of the SPP design is that it is neither intended to produce a treaty nor an executive

agreement like the NAFTA that would require congressional ratification or the passage of implementing legislation in the United States. The SPP was designed to function within existing administrative authority of the executive branch."

Hudson explains further: "The design of the SPP is innovative, eschewing the more traditional diplomatic and trade negotiation models in favor of talks among civil service professionals and subject matter experts with each government. This design places the negotiation fully within the authority of the executive branch in the United States."

Indeed, SPP is very "innovative." The arrogance of SPP's "design" to give the executive branch full "authority" to "enforce and execute" whatever is decided by a three-nation agreement of "civil service professionals," as though it were "law," is exceeded only by its unconstitutionality.

The Hudson White Paper admits the problem that SPP completely lacks "transparency and accountability." Hudson freely admits "the exclusion of Congress from the process"; constituents who contact their Congressmen discover that Members know practically nothing about SPP.

Hudson states that, under SPP, one of the U.S. challenges is "managing Congress." Is Congress now to be "managed," either by executive-branch "authority" or by "dozens of regulators, rule makers, and officials working with their counterparts" from Mexico and Canada?

The Hudson White Paper reminds us that the 2005 Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) document called "Building a North American Community" bragged that its recommendations are "explicitly linked" to SPP. The CFR document called for establishing a "common perimeter" around North America by 2010.

Hudson praises the CFR document for "raising public expectations" about what SPP can accomplish. Hudson explains that, while immigration is not an explicit SPP agenda item, "mobility across the border is central to the idea of an integrated North American economic space."

"Harmonization" with other countries is another frequently used word. One of SPP's Signature Initiatives is "Liberalizing Rules of Origin."

The Hudson Paper reveals SPP's cozy collaboration with "some interest groups and not others." Translated, that means collaboration with multinational corporations, but not with small business or citizen groups.

After the heads of state of the United States, Mexico and Canada met in Waco in March 2005 and announced the creation of SPP by press release, the North American Competitiveness Council emerged as "a private sector forum for business input" to SPP working groups. But, according to Hudson, it wasn't merely "private" because it was "given official sanction."

After the three amigos met in Cancun in 2006, Bush provided taxpayer funding for a think tank called the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) to meet secretly and produce a report called "The Future of North America." That document's favorite catchword is "North American labor mobility," which is a euphemism for admitting unlimited cheap labor from Mexico.

The Hudson White Paper states that "SPP combines an agenda with a political commitment." That's exactly why those who want to protect American sovereignty don't like SPP.

Among the people who take SPP seriously are Rep. Virgil Goode (R-VA) who introduced H.Con.Res. 40 opposing a North American Union and a NAFTA Superhighway, similar resolutions introduced into the state legislatures of 14

states, and Rep. Duncan Hunter's (R-CA) amendment to prohibit the use of federal funds for SPP working groups, which passed the House by the remarkable bipartisan vote of 362 to 63 on July 24, 2007.

The Hudson White Paper suggests that it might be "necessary" for SPP to change its name and acronym. It is unlikely that a change of name will silence the American people who are outraged by the SPP's goals and process.