



FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION
www.fpa.org

FPA Town Hall
A Decade of Evolving Partnership
Featuring:

Canadian Minister of Defence Peter John MacKay

[START RECORDING]

CANADIAN MINISTER OF DEFENCE PETER JOHN MACKAY: Well, thank you so much, John and Noel [phonetic] for, firstly for this very prestigious award and I want to acknowledge a few in the room. We have many distinguished citizens with us here, but I want to acknowledge our Senator, Pamela Wallin, who is joining us, as well as former Ambassador Ken Taylor, members of the military, family and friends. I'm truly honored, very humble and grateful for this award. And I accept this on behalf of all our Canadian forces and Canadians in the spirit and the solidarity that we feel with the United States of America in all of our efforts to preserve and protect the freedoms in democracy that we hold so dear. And, you know, in your earlier remarks, Noel, you mentioned a former leader, a former Prime Minister of Canada and there's nothing more popular in the world than former politicians, I can assure you. And another great story is about a former Prime Minister getting on an elevator in a very prestigious hotel like this one, a very swanky place, and as he got on the elevator alone, there was a woman in the elevator as well and she kept looking at him in sort of a distracted and strange way and finally she said, "You know, you look like a former Prime Minister of Canada." And he said, "Well, I get that from time to time." And she said, "It must make you really angry."

I want to express my thanks to both Foreign Policy Association and to the Canadian Consulate for both organizing and hosting this important conference. And it's truly wonderful to see so many influential and informed people here from the diplomatic corps from both the Canada, U.S. government, from the world of politics and journalism. And the discussion I know that is going to take place here is so critically important as we continue to strive for the peace and security that we all seek. And it's wonderful to see so many here in uniform who represent the very best of our society. Of course, as John also mentioned, the time in which we

gather, in the shadow of the tenth anniversary of the events of 9/11, are a stark reminder of what's at stake. Not far from here, also in Virginia and Pennsylvania, we honor, we remember the nearly 3,000 people from 90 countries who lost their lives in those insidious attacks. And we offer our sincere condolences to the families, friends and loved ones of those who perished.

I also want to thank, and I'm sure you will permit me the opportunity, to thank our military, our emergency service providers, our diplomats, our intelligent community, all part of a team focused on our collective security. For their service, their sacrifice, not just in the past decade, but going back to the very origins of our countries. And as Minister of National Defence, I'm familiar with your work. I have a unique vantage point, to say the least, to see what you accomplished in the name of freedom, in the incredible and historic efforts that you make to free people from tyranny, violence and oppression, embody the very values that our country holds dear, that we continually seek to strengthen and overcome adversity. And to build just, inclusive and dynamic societies. Your everyday vigilance to preempt and prevent and protect is a testament to the basic goodness necessary in the world today. Those of you who do so, you do it in an everyday, matter of fact way. You put on your boots and you uniform and you go to work and you make a difference. And you are the ones who are our most valiant citizens and so I express my sincere thanks to all of those who wear the uniform and stand on guard for us.

You know, I can't think of a better time or place to hold a conference like this. A conference that explores the depths and the breadth and the bonds that exist between our two great countries. And it continues to shape our history. Osama bin Laden is gone, but the fight against extremists continues. Growing up in rural Nova Scotia, in a province on the East Coast of Canada, I learned from an early age that great friendships are forged by facing challenging times together. Side by side. With mutual trust and respect. And the Boston states, as we used to call them, are our closest allies, our closest friends in proximity and we're very much like family. There was always a great sense of proximity growing up. My great aunt was the chief nurse at Quincy, Massachusetts Hospital and used to come home, I recall, with such treasured items a American football cards and different items that were such a fascination to me in Canada.

And, you know, it was almost 100 years ago, in the year 1917, when our provincial capital of Halifax was devastated by an explosion in Halifax Harbor. Two thousand people were killed and 9,000 were severely injured as a result of a collision in the harbor of a munitions ship that exploded. And our American cousins came to our rescue. They were the first to arrive with aid and assistance and support in what was, until the dropping of the atomic bomb, the largest manmade explosion in world history. And to show our gratitude, every year Nova Scotia sends a Christmas tree for Faneuil Hall. Now, truth be told, I still cannot cheer for the Boston Red Sox. I am a Yankees fan. My dad was a huge Joe DiMaggio guy, so I inherited that.

As allies, as all of you would know, and history will demonstrate, we have been through the thick of it. Two world wars, our proud veterans fought together in Korea, we served together under NATO and UN flags in assisting our allies around the globe for now 60 plus years. And to be clear, the friendship between Canada and the United States was already strong and strongly established prior to September 2001. It is a dynamic friendship, it is a prosperous partnership and I believe it is recognized around the world for shared values, respect and commitment to the common cause of freedom and democracy. But this relationship and a relationship this close should never be taken for granted. And we have to keep relations ever fresh. In fact, our defense relationship, this is particularly true because it is also very unique and I believe that the journey that we shared in the ten years since 9/11 has served to illustrate just how strong and important that relationship is. John has properly pointed out the work that we've been doing together on the ground in Afghanistan, over the skies of Libya and, in fact, in Canada's case, in 16 ongoing missions around the world. Including the Middle East. And this has helped us grow even closer along the way.

And when I think about September 11th, two unforgettable and two different days immediately come to mind. We have had, in the past an incredible opportunity to focus on what we felt were important causes far from our shores, but yet the impact was felt in every home and every neighborhood around North America. And if I could digress for just a moment – we were at an event in Washington last evening and Secretary of Defense Panetta was there, members of the state, or, I'm sorry, the Senate and House of Representatives and, most importantly, members of the families and survivors of 9/11. And it was a very poignant and reflective occasion. But it reminded us of the brutality that Tuesday morning, September 11th, brought to North America. And we do not live in splendid isolation in North America. And that very second that the plane hit the first tower, I think, a lot of illusions and innocence was shattered. And as your Ambassador to Canada, David Jacobson, eloquently said, and I quote, "Our shared sense of security and the belief that the oceans on either side of us and the warm relations between us kept distant and protected from the world's outside dangers came crashing down." Nine eleven, which, before the actual date, were just two out of sequence numbers, have come to mean so much. And we remember that calm and clear September morning that was shattered by senseless acts that took the lives of thousands of innocent men, women and children and these unprecedented and yet deliberated, premeditated, coordinated attacks by extremists that held no regard for human life, symbols of liberty and democracy and freedom, all came crashing down. And we remember the calamity of that day as well as those images. The images that were so personal. The ashen faced citizens that were running for help. And also the images of those that ran in. And on that September morning we bore witness, as I said, to a loss of innocence. And we cannot forget the people that were lost in New York, Virginia, Pennsylvania, including in their number, 24 Canadians who were murdered. And we continue to stand with and offer our deepest condolences and support to the families and friends and loved ones.

But I'm also reminded of another day. Just three days later when, in a spontaneous and heartfelt movement, over 100,000 Canadian citizens gathered in our capital city on Parliament Hill for what was deemed a national day of mourning. In a time of confusion and disbelief and sorrow and certainly unremarkable remorse, one thing was unshakable and clear in the minds of Canadians, we came together to honor the 3,000 victims from around the world who had lost their lives. But we also wanted to send a clear sign of solidarity with our neighbors and our closest friends in the wake of such sorrow. And that solidarity was manifested in the messages and tributes that Canadians spontaneously left outside the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa. A display that the Embassy has, just this week, very touchingly commemorated. And as well in countless other individual and community level actions across our country, the response to the attacks themselves played out. Gracious, spontaneous, personal acts of kindness. Whether it as the individual Canadian Forces personnel, including a Canadian Deputy Commander. And I spoke very recently, just yesterday morning, with General Chuck Jacoby who is the new NORAD commander and he reminded me that it was, in fact, a Canadian who was in the chair the morning of September the 11th who helped coordinate our shared aerospace defense response, including the enforcement of a continent wide grounding of all civilian air traffic.

Which leads me to another incredible response. And this was also noted yesterday in Washington. Ten thousand residents of a tiny community in Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador, bolstered by charitable donations from across their entire province of less than a million people, welcomed to their small town almost 7,000 passengers from 38 U.S. bound, transatlantic flights to their home for those days in the aftermath. It was altruism at its best. It was an episode that was referred to by at least one book as the day the world came to our town. And the mayor and some members of the council, including members of the Salvation Army and Red Cross from Gander, were honored in Washington yesterday and recognized for that incredible response. And the friendships that came from those difficult days and those human bonds remain strong to this very day. And the dinner that I had the pleasure to attend was just a microcosm of that type of outreach and response that occurred between Canadians and Americas in the days that followed 9/11. And I don't think that the impressions that were made on our countries will ever fade or be forgotten. This is what I say when I referred to the necessity of keeping these relationships and bonds at such a close and personal level. It's truly a remarkable friendship that exists between our countries. And through the difficult days it becomes even more important. In Afghanistan, the days and the events that followed were only the beginning of Canada's efforts to support the United States in the wake of 9/11. Eventually once the initial human crisis of September 11th had been dealt with to the best of our shared ability, we turned our attention to the terrorist network that had inspired and orchestrated these attacks into the heinous regime that gave that network sanctuary. As the international community quickly rallied behind the United States in condemning both Al Qaeda and Afghanistan's Taliban government, Canada took a leading role in responding behind the United States in condemning both Al Qaeda and Afghanistan's Taliban

government. Canada took a leading role in responding. First by dispatching Her Majesty's Canadian Ship Halifax and eventually 16 of our Navy's surface combatants to board ships in search of escaping terrorists and to work on the security and waters in and around the Arabian Sea from October 2001 to November of 2003. And then, being among the very first nations with you to put boots on the ground in Afghanistan in December of 2001. Eventually deploying a 750 member battle group to the U.S. led combat operations from January to July of 2002. In that following year we volunteered to lead the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul where under the command of one of our future Chiefs of Defence staff, General Rick Hillier, we helped prepare Afghanistan for its first democratic elections. And along the way, we made Afghanistan our largest ever aid recipient, delivering a billion dollars to governance, development and humanitarian assistance programs. And, there again, I can't help but pause and think about the future impact of investing in education, eradication and working to give children in Afghanistan a future. A future that doesn't involve hate, that involves an education that is balanced and inclusive and in keeping with the values that we hold dear.

We also took a leadership role at NATO leading forces in southern Afghanistan in 2008. But no single act illustrates Canada's dedication to the fight against terrorism like that which took place in Kandahar Province. The birthplace of the Taliban movement and the province where Canada led the international community's counterinsurgency and stabilization efforts from 2006 to 2010. It's Kandahar where most of our people and our efforts and, sadly, our losses were concentrated. And over a period of five years there, 11 troop rotations, nine battle groups grinded forward day after day to help make a more secure and self-sufficient province and country that would no longer be a haven for terrorism. Over 38,000 Canadian forces personnel deployed in Afghanistan, 157 gave their lives and a thousand more came home very changed and in need of help. During that time, despite limited numbers and resources, Canadians served with valor and bravery alongside our American colleagues and international allies in pursuit of that goal.

The past summer, having served exceptionally well in a harsh environment, Canada has changed its vision and its concentrated efforts and we're now carrying on that fight in a different domain. We have almost a thousand Canadian forces continuing our effort in Kabul, Afghanistan's national capital. Channeling our expertise and experience into the training of Afghan security forces so they can continue to take their own country's security on board and deliver a brighter future for themselves.

But even in our shared efforts in Afghanistan. And even having been among the largest and highest profile examples of security partnership between Canada and the U.S. in the past ten years, this is just one of a number of important examples, whether it's patrolling the waters off the horn of Africa to deter piracy or counter other security threats, promoting peace and security in the Middle East under the office of the U.S. Security Coordinator in Jerusalem, or bringing security, hope and humanitarian relief to long suffering and vulnerable populations in countries like

Haiti and others in the Americas. Or cooperating on security issues throughout the Americas as part of the strategy. Or more recently, as referenced, protecting civilians enforcing the no fly zone, the arms embargo in Libya and ensuring that the Libyan people will be able to pursue their vision of a better future. One in which the cruelty of Gadhafi is replaced by democracy and rule of law. Canada and the U.S. have been working hand in hand, in partnership and in friendship all over the world and, even more importantly, along the way, we've been strengthening our security partnership right here at home. As we all know, even the closest relationship needs care, nurturing and constant attention. And since 2001 we've been paying particular attention to the concerns and challenges and the expectations of you, our closest friends and allies. We've looked at the tried and true institutions that have served us over the years and we've worked together to make them even more robust. We've strengthened NORAD, we've worked in our unique bilateral national defense partnership, which has been at the forefront of continental defense for over 50 years. And we've expanded its role now, most importantly in my view, to include maritime domain security. Given the millions of containers coming into North America, this is something we have to share our mutual concern over. And we've used existing institutions like the Permanent Joint Board on Defense and the Military Cooperation Committee to deepen our existing defense partnership and intensify our joint training and exercise regime.

And so all of this will help us deliver security to our citizens in times of crisis and our pre-existing security partnership will also help build important tools and capability for information and intelligence gathering and sharing. The U.S. and Canada now have a direct counterpart responsibility for domestic defense and a mechanism to coordinate operations, share intelligence and exercise and prepares, as we do, to work to secure our two homelands. And together, and on a national basis, our countries have made important investments in counterterrorism and intelligent capabilities so that we can better detect, prevent and neutralize those threats before they have effect. As well, a more effective support for criminal investigation and prosecution of those who are responsible. I believe all of this, and I say this with confidence, will help our partnership, our readiness and our common resilience in the face of threats that is stronger now than ever before. Nine eleven showed us that the world has indeed changed. And so the vigilance and the seriousness that we put to this task is so critically important.

In March, the Defense Secretary, your Defense Secretary Robert Gates, the previous man to hold the office and Canada, signed a statement in principle of space situational awareness. We're working very closely in this new domain of cyber and space threats and meanwhile I know that the Department of Homeland Security and our Public Safety Departments are working to strengthen our response in these important domains.

In February, the President and our Prime Minister announced the Beyond the Borders Initiative in which they described a shared vision for perimeter security. This initiative recognizes that security and prosperity are inherently linked and strengthen both the broad range of issues that can be properly balanced around

security and economy. And for this reason, Beyond Borders, I believe, will help enhance our abilities to address threats early by improving the screening of persons and the cargo that is entering North America while not unduly thickening the border. I would far rather see a thicker parameter than a thicker border between our countries. And at the same time, this program, I believe, very much facilitates the type of growth, creation of jobs and economic prosperity that we need in the continent. So we have to strike that balance. And beyond North America we need to continue this unprecedented level of cooperation and integration of security efforts that reach far beyond our shores. For it is our countries knowing that we can foster broader global security and building new security partnerships is an investment that is, in my view, in the bank. Whether through traditional structures like NATO promoting interoperability, complimentary and burden sharing. Or through enhanced dialogue with our partners through the organization of American states and the Inter-American Defense Board or, more broadly, through our involvement in groups like the ASEAN Regional Forum. Canada and the United States are building new security partnerships that will continue to strengthen our capacity, our collective capacity around the world.

Friends, ours is indeed a unique relationship. And I believe a critical relationship. One that we share more than just the continent of North America, we share values, perspective, history, a common desire to live in a peaceful and prosperous world where freedom and human rights are protected. And, in fact, revered. Where government doesn't tell you what to think, government tells you, you are free to think. The reality remains, the world needs countries like America and Canada. They need countries that are ready to step in and to render assistance when psychotic dictators slaughter their own people. Few can do it. Few will do it. We will do it with you.

In conclusion, over the last ten years we have learned a lot. We have learned a lot from our shared experiences, from the shock and horror of 9/11, to the battlefields of Afghanistan. And I believe that we've shared important successes and achievements along the way. But suffice it to say, there is so much more to do. And now we're looking ahead. Not just to the next ten years, but well beyond. It's time for us to take all of those lessons out of the world together. It's time to look to independent sources like you to provide further insight and perspective that can help us in this task. Because in what we have achieved together in North America is a model. It's a model for others in addressing the threats and challenges ahead and I want you to know, unequivocally, that we are with you on this somber occasion. This occasion, which is one to reflect and remember and demonstrate resilience. But, more importantly, we are with you and have the same resolve and resilience to ensure that we never face a similar attack in the future.

I thank you for your attention and for this invitation. And for this award.

[END RECORDING]