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A SIGNIFICANT DATE FOR CANADA-U.S. PARTNERSHIP

The following is a partial text of an address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, at Ogdensburg, New York, on August 18, during the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Ogdensburg Declaration signed on August 18, 1940, by Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King and President Franklin D. Roosevelt:

...The meeting at Ogdensburg which we are today commemorating had two important results. First, it put an end to any thoughts there may have been on either side of the border that we should – or could – continue independently to plan and conduct each our own defence against the threat of the forces which were then ascendant in Europe. We in Canada – caught unprepared as were most of the Western allies – had committed almost all our slender resources to the battle in Europe, leaving little behind to defend our shores. The United States, caught off guard much the same as we were, was apprehensive that the enemy might obtain a foothold in Canada, thereby posing a direct threat to the North American continent as a whole.

In these circumstances, we were driven to recognize that our defence was indivisible. The recognition of that principle marks the real significance of the Declaration to which this City of Ogdensburg has lent its name. And it is a principle which – enlarged to conform to the changing configurations of the world in which we live – continues to this day to govern our approach to the problems of defence.

ORIGIN OF PJBD

The second result of the Ogdensburg meeting was the setting up of a Permanent Joint Board on Defence. For many years this was to serve as the main focus for co-operation between our two countries in the

realm of defence. If we scan the Ogdensburg Declaration carefully, we find that it has, in fact, only one operative sentence. And that is the sentence which says that "it has been agreed that a Permanent Joint Board on Defence shall be set up at once by the two countries". And so, in this unspectacular way, Canada and the United States marked the transition from friendly association to positive alliance.

The Permanent Joint Board on Defence has taken its firm place in the institutional pattern of relations between our two countries. There were those, in the early years, who looked upon it as essentially a creature of war which would not long survive the cessation of hostilities. But events proved them wrong. For when our two governments decided in 1947 that military co-operation between us would continue, they also decided that, within the framework of that co-operation, there would continue to be an important part for the Board to play. Thus the Board has served to confirm the confidence of the men of Ogdensburg who, from the outset, invested it with the title of permanence.

MESSAGE FROM MR. PEARSON

The Board, then, is the real celebrant of this anniversary occasion. The Prime Minister of Canada has, therefore, asked me to convey this message to the members of the Board:

Throughout its quarter-century of dedicated service, the Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence has symbolized the spirit of friendly co-operation which characterizes relations between our two countries. Created to meet the requirements of wartime, it has continued to fulfil a valuable role in North American defence. On this, its twenty-fifth anniversary, I congratulate the Board and wish it continued success.

(Over)