

The 105th American Assembly

RENEWING THE U.S.-CANADIAN RELATIONSHIP

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PREFACE

On February 3, 2005, seventy women and men from the United States and Canada including government officials, representati

We would like to acknowledge and express special gratitude to the project co-directors, Joseph T. Jockel and David G. Haglund, and for the fine work of the discussion leaders and rapporteurs who guided the participants in the sessions and helped to prepare the draft of this report: Andrew Cohen, Maryscott Greenwood, Norman Hillmer, Joseph R. Núñez, Christopher Sa

successful bilateral relationships. This most recent downturn in the cycle finds the relationship in a serious set of new circumstances.

First of all, the backdrop has changed over the past two decades, beginning with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold

administration when it publicly revealed its decision not to join the U.S.-led “coalition of the willing” in the invasion of Iraq. The announcement, carried live on CNN, was made in the House of Commons among cheering MPs, a setting not compatible with either the gravity of the decision or the importance of close U.S.-Canadian ties.

Some members of this Assembly believe that the United States under the administration of President George W. Bush has unduly disregarded the interests of its allies. Since his re-election in November 2004, President Bush has indicated a desire to improve relations with U.S. allies including Canada. This was signaled by his visit to Ottawa and Halifax soon after the vote. Canada obviously welcomes this and should reciprocate by communicating that in the future when there are significant and controversial disagreements, Canada will ensure that the United States is made aware of its decisions through appropriate public and private channels.

When Paul Martin replaced Chrétien in December 2003, Martin said that he would improve the relationship with the United States. Part of the problem has been the continued reluctance of Canadian politicians to make a case to the electorate for increased defense spending whether for reasons of Canada’s own sovereignty, its international security or improved relations with the United States. Many Canadian politicians pledge to defend their country’s independence and distinctiveness from the United States, even when there is no real menace to either. Partly based on survey data in areas such as religion and family suggesting that the values of Canadians and Americans were diverging, many Canadians came to believe they were increasingly different from their U.S. neighbors.

This Assembly believes there are some practical political constraints on bilateral cooperation. In particular, this rules out such “grand designs” as a customs union or common currency, which some have called for. In any case, it is unlikely that either side would be receptive to such proposals.

levels of taxation, the role and size of government, and the relevance of international institutions such as the United Nations. In the early twentieth century, Canada was more conservative than a liberal United States. In the 1930s and 1940s, Canadians would have

have allowed us to build the most successful partnership in the world for a century and a half.

DEFENSE AND SECURITY

It is time to strengthen the U.S.-Canada defense relationship against new threats. This Assembly strongly endorses the view that this cannot be done without a much greater Canadian defense budget increase than the government of Canada has been prepared to make in recent years. Greater commitment is needed for both the North American and the overseas dimensions of the defense bilateral relationship.

With regard to North America, we believe that the first step in improving bilateral defense and security cooperation is to conclude the debate in Canada over ballistic missile defense. It must be demythologized and placed in the proper context. Since 1957 the U.S.-Canada North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) has been responsible for continental air defense and for warning our two countries of an impending nuclear attack. As the U.S. missile defense system has evolved towards operational capability, NORAD's future role has been called into question. If NORAD and the

bring NORAD to an end or to request its restructuring should the United States ever move to place weapons in space.

With this issue behind us, our two countries can turn to what is in reality the more pressing and useful question of transforming the North American defense and security architecture to meet the new strategic environment of the twenty-first century. This Assembly believes that it is not simply renewing NORAD in 2006 (when the current agreement expires) and adding a missile defense role that suffice. Rather, Ottawa and Washington need to consider whether NORAD's mandate should be expanded to include responsibilities for the joint maritime defense of our continent and for responding to trans-border emergencies such as a terrorist attack and natural disasters. The future of NORAD may be influenced by the establishment of Northern Command, the newest U.S. unified command with an area of responsibility that includes Canada, the United States, and Mexico, and the work of the Binational Planning Group, a team of U.S. and Canadian officers at NORAD that has been tasked to prepare contingency plans and recommend new ways of defense cooperation between the two countries. Given this, the question of land and maritime force contributions to North American defense and security will be accorded new salience and will warrant further close study.

While Washington has indeed given new priority to homeland security and defense, it needs to be clearly understood that the primary focus of the U.S. military has not changed; it is not at home but abroad, as Ottawa well knows. Canada chose to join the United States in the invasion of Afghanistan, which it saw to be clearly linked to the terrorist threat, but chose not to join the Iraq War. Canada also quickly deployed troops to maintain order in the failed state of Haiti. While the Canadian forces are interoperable with their American counterparts, Canada remains free to choose which U.S.-led operations it will join. Enhanced interoperability became a Canadian defense priority during the 1990s; we believe it remains a sound one, and, in fact, serves the interest of both our countries. Nonetheless, Canada does possess and will retain a sovereign right to decide in which foreign operations, U.S.-led or otherwise, that Canadian forces will participate.

However, we must strongly emphasize that the United States will continue to view its security in global terms, and other nations will look to the United States for leadership and protection. Therefore, an important component of the twenty-first century bilateral security and defense relationship will be the extent to which Canada can make useful military contributions beyond North America. These are likely to be small-scale contingencies that are consistent with Canadian military capacity and serve to meet Canada's long held national interests in global stability. Such operations will also enhance Canada's image at home and international standing. Thus, in addition to improving capabilities for the North American role, such as enhanced maritime collaboration, Canada must significantly improve its expeditionary capability with regard to strategic lift and logistics. This improved capability will strengthen Canada's ability to respond to international emergencies, including natural disasters at home or abroad. But beyond simply increasing defense spending, Thu8fid 40 12 223.31699 B0 0t.2222 239 0 120g229he

* On February 24, 2005, Prime Minister Paul Martin announced that Canada would not sign on to the ballistic missile defense program.

ACROSS THE BORDER

TRADE/ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Canada and the United States enjoy the world's largest bilateral trading

financial commitment to enhance infrastructure is urgently needed at the borders to meet these needs. Additionally, executive and legislative action is needed to minimize legal, regulatory, permitting, and other hurdles to effect infrastructure improvements as quickly as possible.

The Assembly also recognizes that the impending requirement by the U.S. government that travelers use secure documents for crossing the U.S.-Canada border has the potential to disrupt cross-border move

better understood in the United States from the halls of Congress to the halls of academia, from Wall Street to Main Street.

An improved atmosphere of mutual confidence and accommodation at the level of leaders and sn.nh.712 132.81696 695 atm

THIS ASSEMBLY'S MAJOR FINDINGS

- 1) At a time when Canada and the United States need each other more than ever, each has diminished standing in the other's country.
- 2) The leaders, public, and media of both countries must approach and explain areas of friction in the context of our long history of friendship and cooperation as we face a future of growing common global challenges and irreversible bilateral interdependence.
- 3) There is no fundamental divergence of values between Canada and the United States, but a perception of growing divergence will jeopardize the national interests of both countries.
- 4) Troubling outbursts of anti-Americanism in Canada have been met by some nascent anti-Canadianism in the United States.
- 5) We reject the notion of a single "grand design" that can solve the problems of U.S.-Canada relations, but we strongly urge steady and determined efforts by governments and citizens towards a more prosperous and secure North America.
- 6) Canada should agree to participate in ballistic missile defense; our two governments should review and redefine NORAD for the twenty-first century to reflect new aspects of continental defense, including air, space, missile defense, and maritime and land contingencies.
- 7) Canada must improve its global force projector capacities; both countries should explore the possibility of new joint projects and units aimed at peacemaking, peacekeeping, and humanitarian relief.
- 8) Domestic counter-terrorist efforts and the land border will require intense attention for many years to achieve the vital goals of greater security and facilitated movements of Americans and Canadians and their products.
- 9) Both governments should consider ways to mitigate the disruptions that may result from the impending U.S. requirement that travelers use secure documents, and mount public affairs campaign to educate their publics about the requirement.
- 10) Despite different decisions on the Kyoto Protocol, efforts need to be intensified on a continental approach to energy development and carbon dioxide emissions.
- 11) Governments must not lose sight of the vision and promise of a truly integrated and productive continental economy, boldly exploring new areas of collaboration bilaterally and, in some cases, trilaterally, for example in the area of energy. Both

governments should reform current trade rules in order to keep our economies globally competitive.

- 12) Building on our strong foundation of formal and informal collaboration, sustained effort is required to review, support, and, in some cases, terminate institutions that frame our exceptionally valuable relationship.
- 13) The challenge for national business leaders, legislators, premiers, governors, and the stewards of the relationship is greater than it has been in over a generation.

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ARDEN HOUSE

The home of The American Assembly and the scene of most national sessions is Arden House, which was given to Columbia University in 1950 by W. Averell Harriman. E. Roland Harriman joined his brother in contributing toward adaptation of the property for conference purposes. The buildings and surrounding land, known as the Harriman Campus of Columbia University, are fifty miles north of New York City.