

H & K Communications

72 Elvaston Avenue
Nepean, Ontario
K2G 3X9

Phone: (613) 829-1800
Fax: (613) 829-2449
E-mail: hturkow@rogers.com

SOURCE: PCO

DATE: MARCH 26, 2009

REFERENCE/ RÉFÉRENCE: 2603DOC3

LOCATION/LIEU: THORNHILL, ON

TIME/ HEURE: 19:50

LENGTH/DURÉE: 9:53 MINUTES

**PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AT ERNEST MANSON LUBAVITCH
CENTRE**

H & K Communications

Phone (613) 829-1800 Fax (613) 829-6181 E-mail hturkow@home.com

For Internal Information and Research Purposes only

(APPLAUSE)

RT. HON. STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Thank you very much. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Good evening. That's just a tremendously warm welcome, several tremendous warm welcomes. I tell you, I... (APPLAUSE) I almost feel I should quit while I'm ahead up here. (LAUGHTER) I do want to begin, though, by thanking your Member of Parliament for that introduction, and for his presence tonight. As all of you know, few, very few people in this country, let alone in the Parliament of Canada, have a résumé as impressive as Peter's. He is an award-winning broadcast journalist with more than 40 years' experience. He's covered such momentous events as the Yom Kippur war and the fall of apartheid. In his role as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, he is putting this wealth of experience and knowledge to work for our government, and indeed for all of Canada, of course, including this great constituency, so let's give him once again, all, a big hand. (APPLAUSE)

And Rabbi Kaplan... (LAUGHTER) He's a tough act to follow. (LAUGHTER) I really feel under pressure now. (LAUGHTER) I have to tell you, I have...I have had 30 minutes on CBC, but all the talking's done by Mansbridge. (LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE) I have to tell you another story. It's got nothing to do with anything I have to say. (LAUGHTER) But I thought of it because of Rabbi...by the way, I'd hate to see Rabbi Kaplan when he isn't speechless. (LAUGHTER) But Rabbi Kaplan made me think of this story – it's an old political story – because of his comment about his 45-minute sermon and his experience at whittling it down. And it's a story some of you may have heard. It's an old political story about a young man who goes out onto the

H & K Communications

Phone (613) 829-1800 Fax (613) 829-6181 E-mail hturkow@rogers.com

prairies, stumping, putting up posters and stumping for the beginning of his political career. I went through this phase in my life in the late 1980s. Anyway, he goes to a small town where he's put up a bunch of posters, advertised a public meeting to talk about the policies behind his candidacy. So he gets to the hall. He comes in, he gets to the front, he waits for a few minutes past time, looks, and finally realizes that the only person who's come is this one farmer who's shown up to his event. This one farmer. So he gets up, he comes to the podium and he says, "I'm sorry, sir, but due to tonight's attendance, I'm going to have to call off my speech for the evening." Well, the old farmer gets up and he says, "Son," he says, "you know, I have a lot of cattle, horses, and I feed my livestock everyday, and I put a big feed out for them, and if only one of the cows shows up, I still feed them." (LAUGHTER) So the young guy gets the message and he proceeds to launch into his long, 45-minute explanation of all his policies and his vision and his differences with his opponents. When he's done, he stops and says, "Well, sir, what do you think of that?" "Well, son, when I put out all this feed, one cow shows up, I don't feed him the whole load." (LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE)

Honoured rabbis, distinguished members of the Jewish community, distinguished guests, mesdames et messieurs, garçons et filles, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, tonight we celebrate the culmination of a long journey, a journey, as you know, that began more than 20 years ago when Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum first shared his vision of creating a place where all Jews could gather to celebrate the faith, the commitment to community and the love of learning that lays at the core of Judaism. Together with businessman and philanthropist Ernest Manson, Rabbi Grossbaum crafted plans for a community synagogue centre to be constructed here in Thornhill. Sadly,

H & K Communications

Phone (613) 829-1800 Fax (613) 829-6181 E-mail hturkow@rogers.com

Ernest Manson, as we know, did not live to see their dream come to fruition, but the newly expanded complex we are inaugurating today bears his name as a tribute to his dedication to his cause.

Le Centre lubavitch Ernest Manson, que nous inaugurons aujourd'hui, sera une plaque tournante spirituelle, éducative et sociale pour la communauté juive de Thornhill.

The will serve as a spiritual, education...educational and social hub for this community, and of course, a tribute to this great benefactor. (APPLAUSE) Of course, thanks to the vision and leadership of the late Rabbi Schneerson, thousands of Chabad Lubavitch centres like this have opened their doors around the world. Through education and outreach programs, these centres are strengthening the bonds of the faith within the Jewish community everywhere. In so doing, they signify the enduring spirit of the Jewish people, 3320 years, 3320 years. Among all the peoples of the world, perhaps none have been tried as often and as greatly, and certainly none have persevered as resolutely and as successfully as the Jewish people. Sadly, this perseverance is once again being tested by – and I say this with deep sadness – a rising global tide of anti-Semitism. As you know, our government has taken leadership in the moral responsibility we all have to expose and confront this malignant evil; indeed, all forms of racial and religious hatred wherever they occur. But anti-Semitism in particular, and I have to say this, I've said it before, I say it again as I look around at the dangers that confront us in the world, anti-Semitism should be confronted in its own right for the moral evil that it is. But... (APPLAUSE) But I say this not just to Jews but to gentiles everywhere: it is important to remember that history teaches us that those who aim to destroy the Jewish people, to destroy the nation of Israel, that kind of spirit will not be

H & K Communications

Phone (613) 829-1800 Fax (613) 829-6181 E-mail hturkow@rogers.com

quenched by that objective. They will be a threat to us all, and that is why they must be opposed! (APPLAUSE)

As you know, we have several outstanding leaders for this cause in our government. Jason Kenney, our out... (APPLAUSE) the outstanding Minister of Immigration, Citizenship and Multiculturalism spoke forcefully of the need to combat anti-Semitism in all its forms at the recent international conference in London. And of course, closer to home, Minister Kent has vigorously denounced the anti-Semitic bullying tactics present on some university campuses in this country. (APPLAUSE) But the bottom line is this: whether at home or abroad, I hope and I know you can have not a shadow of a doubt that my government will remain a vehement opponent of anti-Semitism, an unyielding defender of religious freedom, and a staunch ally of the state of Israel. (APPLAUSE)

In closing, I'd like to thank Chabad Lubavitch for this kind invitation to this historic dedication ceremony. I wish you all well in your service to the community, and I wish you well in your efforts to spread the wisdom of the Torah, the wisdom of your faith. God bless you in your work, Rabbi. God bless all of you in your efforts, and of course, *shalom*, God bless Canada. (APPLAUSE)

H & K Communications

Phone (613) 829-1800 Fax (613) 829-6181 E-mail hturkow@rogers.com