

Press:

Mr. Pearson, I should like to know why it is that we in the West always seem to lose out in this contest. It seems to me that the Russians always seem to have the initiative. They are one step ahead of us. They are carrying the ball. Why is that and what can we do about it?

Mr. Pearson:

I do not agree that we are necessarily losing it. I think it is true that they seem to have the initiative in this field because, as I have said, it is so much easier for them to operate in it. They are one government, if you like, centred in Moscow, one little group of men running that government who can make their plans, start their initiatives, change their tactics, and do it very quickly and very simply. Therefore, it is not too difficult for them to be ahead of us, as you put it.

Press:

Is this a sort of fatal handicap for us? Are we never to achieve a basis whereby we will have that flexibility that seems to characterize their system?

Mr. Pearson:

I think that we have a certain amount of flexibility, but who are "we"? We are fifty free states and it is very difficult for us to operate collectively. If you say, by "we", "Canada", we are only a small country compared with Russia. But take India, for example! Which country has done most in this field to help India in the last five years, Canada or the Soviet?

Press:

And yet which country seems to have got the most credit? The Soviet Union.

Mr. Pearson:

That may be at the moment. But I think the Indians will realize over the years that we carry out our promises and I am not sure whether the other people will carry out their promises. They can be more exciting and more sensational and therefore they may seem to be away ahead of us.