

now, with American leadership being asserted all over the free world, it is much more so. Increasingly, other nations turn to us, and ask questions about United States policy. We are regarded in this field as experts. We then have to make up our minds on questions many of which have only a long-range effect on our own immediate interests, and tell them what we think. If we always only echo American policy, these other nations would regard us as a spineless satellite, and this is not a position we want to be relegated to. It is good neither for our pride -- which is important -- nor for our own proper interests. We therefore are bound, whenever we feel it necessary, to take an independent stand. This is perhaps one of the many factors which led Mr. Pearson a year or two ago, to make a speech in which he said that our relations with the United States could no longer be -- and I quote -- "easy and automatic."

Mr. Pearson got a lot of abusive letters from the United States about that speech. They were written, I suppose, mostly by people who were irked by Canada's somewhat independent stand, and by people like the editors of the Chicago Tribune who always refer to Mr. Pearson as pinko, and also by people who regard Canada as a British colony which shouldn't have any voice of its own even if it wanted one.

But the area of misunderstanding extends further than that. A lot of usually very reasonable people across the line are getting a bit confused, and I want to cite one special case which came to my notice. At the height of the Gouzenko incident, a usually sensible and level-headed American newspaper delivered quite an attack on Mr. Pearson. It wanted to know what good reason there could be for Canada to be reluctant to see Gouzenko giving evidence to the Jenner committee. It decided that the only reason could be that Canadian-American relations had soured. And why had they soured? Well, the paper said, they had been quite all right until Mr. Pearson had made that speech about relations not always being easy and automatic, and since then they had gone to hell in a hack. The United States had not changed. It must therefore be that Canada had changed; Mr. Pearson was the nigger in the woodpile.

Now this would be good for a big laugh any time, except for one thing. What is alarming about it is that this great and responsible American daily did not seem to have the slightest idea that the United States had changed in any way. The fact that the United States had changed from isolationism to a position of active and aggressive world leadership did not seem to have made any impression on it. It reminds us of the popular song during the first World War, about the fond mother watching her son's regiment marching down Fifth Avenue to the troopship. The lines I remember were these:

"Were you there? And tell me, did you  
notice  
They were all out of step but Jim?"

We are apparently, more conscious of the changes in other peoples than we are in the changes in ourselves. And I suppose this is easier when you are rich and big than when you are small and, relatively, weaker.