



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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No. 55/8 SOME ASPECTS OF CANADIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS

An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, to the Canadian Club, Toronto, March 14, 1955.

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Almost exactly four years ago, speaking in Toronto, I gave my view that the days of relatively easy and automatic relations with the United States were over. I say a good many things in the course of a year, in Parliament and out of Parliament. It is part of my duty, as I see it, to be ready to discuss with my fellow-Canadians situations in which I have some measure of responsibility for acting on their behalf. So I have to do a fair amount of talking, and sometimes what I say finds its way into the newspapers. One gets used to that, but I was somewhat surprised at the amount of attention which that particular statement, about the end of relatively easy and automatic relations with our neighbours, got in the press, particularly the American press, which is not normally unduly interested in what Canadians say. I was even more astonished at the extent to which it was misinterpreted.

These misinterpretations illustrate, I suppose, the perils of trying to put in a few sentences, if you happen to be a Foreign Minister, your view of relations with another country, without fairly exhaustive illustrations to show not only what you mean, but why you mean it, and perhaps, too, what you don't mean. Or perhaps possibly they illustrate rather the difficulties and perils of being a newspaper reporter or editor. In any case, it occurred to me that it might be interesting if I re-examined the suggestion I put forward to you four years ago, that the days of relatively - and I stress relatively, because they were never absolutely - easy and automatic relations with the United States are over. This view was, I think, true then and is still true now; not because our relations are less friendly or close than they used to be; but, on the contrary, because they are closer than ever; and with a fundamental friendliness which the occasional difference may temporarily ruffle but doesn't remove. We should be more concerned even than before about maintaining and strengthening this friendliness, both because in the dangerous world of today it is more necessary than ever, and because it is bound to be subjected to new situations - new tests.

The starting point in our relations with the people and government of the United States is, of course, the fact that we are neighbours. But though this is the first word, it is very far from the last. Neighbourhood,