

MR. PEARSON'S STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

GOUZENKO, WHITE SUBJECTS: The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Lester B. Pearson, on November 25 tabled in the House of Commons the exchange of correspondence between the United States State Department and the Canadian Embassy in Washington regarding the request by the Internal Security subcommittee of the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary to interview Mr. Igor Gouzenko.

In his statement Mr. Pearson said the Canadian Government acceded to the United States request under conditions already established, and went on to deal with the Harry Dexter White case. A rumoured tip-off communication on the White case from Ottawa, made public in the United States, was from a non-Canadian security officer, he said, who was sending back to Washington information that came from the FBI originally.

The text of Mr. Pearson's statement follows:

TEXT OF STATEMENT

Mr. Pearson: Last week, Mr. Speaker, we received this second note from the State Department of the United States making the request which I have just mentioned. Naturally the Canadian Government has given careful consideration to the second request, as it did, indeed, to the first one, having regard to the responsibilities that had been assumed and the special arrangements that have been carefully built up over the past several years for the safety of Mr. Gouzenko and leading to the development of a new identity—arrangements which would obviously not be effective if that new identity became public knowledge.

Mr. Gouzenko, as the House knows, has been given the rights of Canadian citizenship. He is therefore at liberty at any time to discuss any question that he may wish with anyone either in Canada or the United States and either confidentially or otherwise. It is, however, Mr. Gouzenko's own responsibility to determine the effect of any such discussions on the preservation of his new identity, and consequently on his safety. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have naturally done a great deal to assist Mr. Gouzenko in building up this identity so that the safety of Mr. Gouzenko and his wife and family could be assured without the limitations on their physical freedom that constant guarding might involve.

Mr. Gouzenko has certainly earned the right to this special consideration and assistance as well as to our gratitude by his great services to freedom and the risks he has taken on its behalf. While Mr. Gouzenko then is free to determine his own actions without outside influence, the United States request seems to envisage that the Canadian Government itself should make arrangements for an interview or take the responsibility of making Mr. Gouzenko available for questioning by the subcommittee

of the United States Senate which I have just mentioned. The Canadian Government of course fully appreciate the importance of the closest possible co-operation between the Canadian and United States Governments in exchanging information important to the national security of both countries. It has therefore long been our practice, and remains our practice, that security information should be exchanged on a confidential basis, which should be respected on both sides, between the competent authorities responsible for the internal security of our two neighbouring countries.

In accordance with this principle all information which Mr. Gouzenko has at any time presented to the Canadian Government has been placed at the disposal of the responsible United States authorities as it became available. Moreover, facilities are and always have been extended to these competent United States Government authorities to clarify any point arising out of any of Mr. Gouzenko's evidence or information at any time they may wish to do so.

LIAISON OFFICER

The Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington therefore has always had access to Mr. Gouzenko's special knowledge as and when requested. We have been glad to have for years a liaison officer of the F. B. I. in Ottawa, just as there has been an R. C. M. P. officer in the same capacity in Washington. Mr. Gouzenko has in fact been interviewed on a number of occasions on behalf of the F. B. I.; the latest occasion being in August, 1950. In the circumstances therefore I think it is true to say that the benefits of Mr. Gouzenko's special experience with and knowledge of Soviet intelligence organizations and their work have always been made as fully available to the competent United States authorities as to the R. C. M. P. itself. That has been the situation since 1945 and it remains the situation now.

The material secured in this way by the F. B. I. includes information which was not made public in the report of the Royal Commission on espionage because such information dealt with activities by non-Canadians outside Canadian territory. I emphasize this point, Mr. Speaker, because the second United States request that the Government make Mr. Gouzenko available for questioning by the United States Senate subcommittee quotes the chairman of that subcommittee, Senator Jenner, as attaching significance to the fact that the Royal Commission report did not mention evidence by Mr. Gouzenko that he had heard that an unnamed assistant to the United States Secretary of State was a Soviet agent.

But this particular piece of evidence, as all other parts of Mr. Gouzenko's evidence and information, was made available to the United