

Australia finally stopped identifying with the Old Country and turned to the New World for alternative comfort after the Second World War. Relationships with Britain then grew much more formal, and America was looked upon as the friendly protector. This was not only because America had been more useful during the war or because it had more money afterwards. The principal attraction of America was its attractiveness. Australia encouraged America in later Asian wars not only to keep close at hand a strong friend, equally alarmed by

and even more deeply involved in the work of containing the yellow peril. That was only a good political reason for the American alliance; it would never have been popularly acceptable but for the much more relevant reason that Australia wanted to be associated with America for social reasons. America is so glamorous, so nice to look at, so familiar, so exciting to run behind.

The golden glow now came from the far side of the Pacific; it was Las Vegas seen in a twenty-four inch colour screen, and the Australian dream changed. Now ^{dreamer} the _Λ was striding out beside a tall American: mates, buddies. The dreamer did not believe that Australia could ever aspire to America's heights of excitement and well-being, but in the dream he enjoyed himself, just the same, living in colour too, plugged in and switched on — albeit through a transformer. This dream is sadder and lonelier than William Charles Wentworth's dream, for in it there is no prospect of a cultural identity. It has in common with the old Wentworth dream, nevertheless, that it is directed away from the realities of this land.

Entirely unaffected by some problems which lately have clouded the once limitless blue above the American Way, Australia still vicariously thrills to every unreachable push-button that sets the United States abuzz. When the rocket blasts off the pad those men who are strapped inside its nose are practically Australians. Turn on the lights in Perth to guide them. Who was it again who first stepped on to the moon ("A small step for a man, a giant step for the White Australia Policy")?

Was it an Australian or an American? It doesn't matter. Dr. Robin Brett is at Houston examining the moon rocks, anyway.

Yet it would be good if the friendship could be a little more mutual; if more Americans would visit Australia and see for themselves the striking likenesses underneath the aboriginal souvenirs. One does not expect Americans to come to live here. That's for Europeans. Americans come for holidays, and only briefly, which is why it is so difficult but nonetheless important for Australians and Americans to gain a better understanding of each other.