

*The Address—Mr. Pearson*

**Mr. Pearson:** The minister says, "Not with profit". On September 13, 1961, Mr. Meyer had this to say:

The press reports from Accra, where the commonwealth economic consultative council is meeting, were discouraging . . . All that is being accomplished at Accra is to strengthen the growing overseas conviction that Canadians are incapable of looking after themselves.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** And he was just as inaccurate as those other quotations of yours.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, we are not incapable of looking after ourselves, but the government is incapable of looking after the nation's business.

The government is now so anxious to forget this whole sorry episode and the critical reactions to it that whenever they are reminded of it they cry "foul", "murder" or "blatant lie".

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Or "Liberal misrepresentation".

**Mr. Pearson:** But their words are on the record, even though the conference was off the record. The Minister of Finance cannot deny that he said:

We believe that the United Kingdom is too deeply entangled ever to be able to withdraw. This is a slippery slope.

Did the minister say that, or not?

**An hon. Member:** No answer.

**Mr. Pearson:** The ministers concerned cannot deny that they took the position that common market membership would pose great dangers for Great Britain, and in the words of the Minister of Finance:

Political relationships within the commonwealth will be fundamentally changed.

The answer to that was given in London by Mr. Harold Macmillan, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, on July 31, 1961, when he said:

I do not think that Britain's contribution to the commonwealth will be reduced if Europe unites. On the contrary, I think its value will be enhanced.

Then he stated his belief that the choice between the commonwealth and the common market was a false one, and I say that the Canadian government adopted a false and dangerous policy in trying to drive that home as an unavoidable choice.

This childish lecturing and hectoring of the British is all the more amazing in the light of the government's own record in the field of United Kingdom-Canadian relations. There was the famous 15 per cent diversion which raised great expectations in the United Kingdom some years ago and which fell so flat. There was the free trade offer and the sterile response to that by this government.

There is the policy of pinpricking protectionism at a time when our balance of trade with the United Kingdom is so very favourable.

No wonder that a member of parliament and former economic secretary to the treasury, Mr. Nigel Birch, speaking at the annual Conservative conference last summer in Brighton had this to say:

The fact that preferences have been whittled away since the war has not been by our will but by the will of the commonwealth countries themselves. Look at what happened when John Diefenbaker became Prime Minister of Canada. He wanted to increase imports from Britain by 15 per cent. We were delighted. We offered him anything up to a full customs union. What happened? Nothing.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Birch was wrong.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Benidickson:** Everybody is wrong.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, of course everybody is wrong except the Minister of Finance.

**Some hon. Members:** That's right.

**Mr. Pearson:** Then came the sorry episode over the question of consultation between the United Kingdom and Canada regarding Britain's application to join the E.C.M. There was the complaint which was given so much publicity, that the Canadian government was not being told about British policy, and in particular that they were not given the full text of Mr. Edward Heath's speech of October 10 in Paris and received only a summary.

They developed this matter into a great issue, with all their normal sense of confused excitement. They built it up and they built it up and they built it up. Then the full text was made public and the crisis very quickly ended. But it did further damage to the reputation of this—

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** There was no crisis.

**Mr. Pearson:** It did further damage to this country's reputation abroad.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** No.

**Mr. Pearson:** The minister again says no, so I am going to have to put a few quotations on the record.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Yes, a few more of those quotations.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, if the minister would only admit once in a while that he has made a mistake, that things once went wrong and they are trying to make them better now.

**Mr. Benidickson:** Impossible.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Does the hon. member—