

The Address—Mr. Pearson

that the Canadian government made it difficult for the United Kingdom government at Accra and other places are blatant lies, then practically every reporter at Accra was guilty of blatant lying. I shall just quote from some of the reporters who were present.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): None of them was present at the conference. They were all outside.

Mr. Pickersgill: One wonders whether the minister was present.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It was a closed conference, you understand.

Mr. Pearson: The minister has said they were not present at the conference because it was a closed conference. The fact that it was a closed conference undoubtedly explains why the office of the Minister of Trade and Commerce very courteously handed his statement to the press. It was that kind of closed conference. At least that particular speech was no hidden report.

Mr. Norman MacLeod of the U.K. press, reporting at Accra, had this to say in reference to the position taken by the Minister of Trade and Commerce:

United Kingdom association with the European six—

Referring to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. I continue:

—unless it can be accomplished on terms of existing empire preferences, will mean the end of the commonwealth eventually.

I suppose that is not making it difficult for the United Kingdom, to say that it would mean the end of the commonwealth eventually. Mr. MacLeod went on to say that this was the blunt fact and the historic choice which the Canadian trade minister laid on the conference table, either the commonwealth or the common market. The minister put it up to the British in those terms, notwithstanding the fact that the prime minister of the United Kingdom had denied that such choice was required in the policy to be adopted.

The minister, according to Mr. MacLeod, then emphasized the economic disadvantages of the U.K. moving into the common market, and to make sure his warnings were made public—these are my own words—his speech, as I have said already, was released to the journalists at Accra. In that speech he also said:

There is no substitute for the terms of access we are now accorded in the U.K. market.

Does that not make it difficult for the United Kingdom? Does that make it easier when the Minister of Trade and Commerce adopts the attitude that if existing preferences are not maintained as they are now it

[Mr. Pearson.]

will mean the end of the commonwealth eventually? What a policy to adopt. What an attitude to take. In that statement he nailed the Canadian government's colours to the preferential mast—no change—and yet the Minister of Finance says there was no criticism from Canada. Are all the headlines and stories from Accra false and lying? The *Gazette* on September 14 carried this headline "Hees leads attack on U.K. move".

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Most of the headlines were misleading.

Mr. Pearson: Another read "U.K. must choose Commonwealth or bloc—Fleming".

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Those headlines were very misleading.

Mr. Pearson: On September 12, 1961, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* had this to say:

Finance minister Donald Fleming's airplane had barely touched down in Ghana, where he is attending a conference of commonwealth finance ministers, before he had started crying his familiar song of woe.

What does Mr. Fleming expect to achieve by such public breast beating? It is time that he understood that politics is the art of the possible, and that there is no sense at all in complaining about a decision which is being forced upon Britain by sheer economic necessity.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): And which Britain says she still has not made.

Mr. Pearson: Then, in the *Toronto Telegram* of September 13, 1961, there was the headline "Tears at Accra." I repeat this was the *Toronto Telegram*, the source above suspicion. It continued:

Mr. Fleming should beware of creating an image of Canada as an international crybaby. Canada believes in looking after its interests, but it supports the progress of mankind everywhere.

The *Vancouver Province*, of September 15, carried the following:

Trade minister Hees' cry from Ghana is plaintive, primitive and pointless.

There could be no better three words than those to describe the attitude of policy of the Canadian government in this whole matter, "plaintive, primitive and pointless." The newspaper added "It must be the heat." The *Vancouver Province*, which is a charitable paper, had a good excuse for the Minister of Trade and Commerce because it went on to say it must be the heat.

Then there is the very responsible, very accurate, well informed and intelligent financial editor of the *Gazette*, Mr. John Meyer, I am sure the minister reads his article every morning, as I try to do.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Not with profit.