

*The Address—Mr. Pearson*

**Mr. Pickersgill:** It was slippery before then.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, in the face of this record the government of Canada saw fit to adopt the tactics that it adopted at this recent conference. Oh, Mr. Speaker, they do not seem to be aware of how much is at stake, not only for Canada but for the commonwealth and for the world in these changes that are taking place.

I would like to read what *The Economist*, which is a highly regarded and most respected business weekly, had to say about this. *The Economist* of London, England, in an editorial of September 8, 1962 entitled "Facing the Commonwealth" said, and I quote one paragraph from that magazine:

What the British entry into the common market ought in the long run to offer the commonwealth is a firm link with the new Europe that is now being shaped.

And, thank God, it is being shaped.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** Those words are mine.

**An hon. Member:** They sound like it.

**Mr. Pearson:** Then the article goes on to say:

The vision of this great adventure—

**An hon. Member:** The great "I am".

**Mr. Pearson:** It goes on to say:

The vision of this great adventure—for that is what it is—is only too easily lost from sight among the wrangling about immediate and particular interests. But the question that leaders of opinion in commonwealth countries should really be asking themselves is: do we want a key to the European door, or do we not? If the answer were to prove a negative one—

**An hon. Member:** Back and front.

**Mr. Pearson:** As I was saying:

If the answer were to prove a negative one, that would—tragically—suggest that the commonwealth has exhausted its vein of dextrous adaptability to change in the world.

Then a week later, on September 22, after the commonwealth conference was over, *The Economist* has this to say:

What one has missed in the last ten days, from the commonwealth leaders is an understanding of the plain fact that the uniting of Europe brings a new force into the world—and that Britain's participation is the best guarantee that the force will be steered in the right direction.

If our Prime Minister had shown some understanding, some awareness of the concept of what is happening in Europe and had expressed himself along those lines in London, what he had to say about protecting Canadian trading interests might have been understood; but what he did, of course, was quite the opposite. He publicly dissociated himself from that part of the communique in which was

put the reasons for joining and the beneficial results which might be achieved by everyone in that event.

Instead he told the press, as reported by the Canadian Press correspondent in London, in a report which has not been denied, that British entry into the common market must raise the question of whether the effect would be to make North America feel less obliged to share in Europe's defence.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Pearson:** And the story went on to say that his reference to a possible reduction in North America's interest under NATO was a new talking point.

Mr. Speaker, that report has not been denied, and it has appeared in all newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** It was denied. That is one thing you did not read.

**Mr. Pearson:** That report Mr. Speaker, was not denied. No denial of that report appeared at the time it was made.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Yes, it did.

**Mr. Pearson:** A subsequent denial, I think, was issued by the Prime Minister after he got back to Canada many, many days later. I ask the Prime Minister what mandate he feels he has to speak for North America.

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

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** What right did you have to speak about Suez in the way you did?

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

**Mr. Pearson:** I will be very glad indeed to speak about Suez at any time, as I have in the past, and I will be very glad to remind the Prime Minister of his attitude at that time, which would have destroyed the formation of the first United Nation's permanent force.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, there are those who say, of course, that we in the opposition have no right to criticize the tactics followed by our Prime Minister while he was in London. This government which refused to call parliament before the conference; which refused to give any information, publicly or confidentially, to anyone outside cabinet about the policies it proposed to follow in this critical international matter; this minority government was to be immune from criticism and public opinion was to conclude from our silence that we approved of what was going on.

**Mr. Churchill:** Why did you not wait until he was here in Canada before you made your statement?