

Alleged Lack of Government Leadership

amendment is going to be a certain field such as that which I think has been indicated, and he gives brief illustrations of it, then I believe we may have an idea of where he is going. But we must not then expect that after he has moved his amendment, anyone will stand up then and say, "Oh, you cannot discuss anything the Leader of the Opposition said, but what is in the amendment." If he said something in debate in leading up to his amendment, then it is as much a subject of discussion afterwards as it was previously. We know that in orderly debate there must be some reasonable control in this regard. With those words from me I think the Leader of the Opposition will govern himself accordingly. This is not the subject for any applause or anything of that kind. I am looking for orderly debate in this house, so let us proceed on that basis and get on with our business.

Mr. Pearson: We all hope there will be orderly debate in this house, Mr. Speaker. However, if the position taken by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fleming)—and I thank him for his intervention, as it gave me a breathing space—were to be considered a valid one, it would mean that in moving a vote of no confidence against the government because we think it is a bad, indecisive and bungling government, we would be able to produce only one illustration in order to support that charge and nobody following us from the other opposition groups would be able to deal with any other illustration than the one I produced. The Minister of Justice said this will prevent the opposition from answering. But they can deal, as you have just said, with every point I bring forward in an attempt to prove that this government is indecisive, confused and not giving leadership. Surely no limitation will be put on their contribution to this debate. Certainly we on this side of the house would not raise the points of order which have been raised on the other side if they do that.

Mr. Speaker: I think we may leave the point of order and get on with the business.

Mr. Pearson: When I discussed defence, I did not discuss it as an analysis of defence policy. I discussed defence as an illustration of our thesis that this government is confused, fumbling and indecisive. I brought in the subject of defence as an example to show that, as it is one which is very close to us at this time. However, there are others which could be mentioned. I mentioned one other one, namely unemployment.

In 1962 during the election campaign the Prime Minister told us that the unemployment problem would be licked by the middle

of 1962. He said it was all over. He said, "Keep the government in office and it will be found that this summer we would have full employment." But we all know what happened; and this bears on the policy and the actions of the government, although it is not, of course, entirely responsible for these matters and we have never made that assertion. But since that statement made by the Prime Minister that unemployment would be licked by the middle of the summer, unemployment has stood at a level of 6 per cent on an annual basis. It is unfortunately rising now. The current issue of the *Financial Times* predicts that unemployment at the winter peak this February or March may total 600,000 or about 9 per cent of the labour force. We on this side of the house assert that the government has not taken quick and effective action that would really do something about this matter.

It was the Prime Minister himself and the government that said, "We are going to put into effect long range economic programs which will put this country on the way to growth and progress again". That is another illustration, and perhaps in some ways it is the most important one we have, to support the charge we make against this government for the way in which it has conducted the affairs of this country since the last election. Where is this long range economic program? Where is the new budget? Why have we not even managed to pass the estimates of the old budget? Why have we not been permitted to discuss the \$200 million of taxation which was imposed by order in council? All these things bear on my main thesis that this government has lost the capacity to govern. Surely I am entitled to speak about them.

In order to obscure their own defects and their own defaults, they are now throwing up a smokescreen about obstruction on this side. We are told that this is the reason we cannot have the estimates. Let us just look at the situation with regard to the estimates which we are now discussing on this motion to go into supply. Only two days were allocated to the estimates prior to the election last spring.

Mr. Diefenbaker: How many days were spent on supplementary estimates?

Mr. Pearson: The Prime Minister intervenes again in order to remind me that we were obliged to spend a good deal of time on supplementary estimates because there was no other opportunity of discussing the expenditure of the people's money. Indeed, not one dollar of the main estimates has been discussed and decided in this house, I believe, since September, 1961. That is an example,