

*The Address—Mr. Pearson*

year. Well, Mr. Speaker, there was then no shred of evidence for saying, when the Prime Minister spoke in June, that we would have full employment in any true sense this summer. That statement was inconceivable to any responsible person. I invite the Prime Minister when he speaks to give us one of the only two possible explanations. Either he was wrong and he knew that he was wrong; or what he means by full employment is not what the Canadian people mean. It is what anyone else would call a serious level of unemployment. In June, 1957, let me remind the Prime Minister, there were 177,000 unemployed men and women in Canada. Five years later he said that he had reached the "long-looked-for goal", and we have 301,000 unemployed. Perhaps that is progress and achievement. But that was the June figure. In fairness to the Prime Minister, I must add, and I have repeated these words, that he only "thought" we would get full employment in June; but two months later he was sure there would be full employment. And so he told the Canadian public, again on television during this speech made, I think, at Brantford on June 13, and he was a little more personal about it. He got a little more personal towards the end of the election. These were his words:

Pearson and Martin will find out that in July and August we will have the lowest unemployment total in five years.

That is not much of a standard, Mr. Speaker. The five years are Tory years, and the standards are pretty low; but even so, when July and August came, Pearson and Martin did not find out what the Prime Minister told the electors we would find out. In August 280,000 people were without jobs. Even in the Tory years, the five years, there were ten previous months when unemployment had not been as bad as that.

For the month of July the Prime Minister was even further from the mark, because the unemployment figure of 308,000 was more than it had been at twelve earlier Tory dates. But of course, Mr. Speaker, the comparison to be made is not between one Tory month and another, inaccurate though that comparison has been. The comparison is between the situation in these last five years and what it was before this government came into office. The Prime Minister talks now about full employment, that he has "licked" unemployment. He said that we would have full employment in July and August, when it is more than twice as bad, nearly three times as bad, as it was in the summer of 1956.

Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to members of all parties of this house, and I ask them to consider it in their hearts and in their consciences when they come to vote on this amendment: How can we in Canada prosper with a government that thinks that

300,000 unemployed in midsummer is something to boast about? How can we meet the needs of the Canadian people with a government that says that we have full employment, when 300,000 men and women are looking for work in summer? How can we have confidence in a government which seems to think that a summer unemployment figure of 300,000 is good enough for the Canadian people?

**Mr. Fulton:** I thought you admitted that it was 280,000?

**Mr. Pearson:** The minister is obviously a little disturbed and a little agitated about it.

**Mr. Fulton:** I was just trying to be accurate.

**Mr. Pearson:** Not knowing what these figures are, you now contradict what the Prime Minister of this country said during the election.

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

**Mr. Pearson:** The speech from the throne talks in glowing terms about 200,000 new jobs that have been created; 200,000 are to be created every year. Well, Mr. Speaker, the annual increase in the labour force during the last year was just about 200,000. Is that the objective that we are to achieve? Is that our goal? Is that our target—to create enough new jobs to take care of people coming on to the labour force, but to do nothing about chronic unemployment? With only 200,000 new jobs a year, that is exactly what must happen. Our real need is not a million new jobs in five years; it is a million jobs, as I have said more than once in this house, in four years. That is what we will have to find in order to get back to full employment; not to full employment as some theoretical abstraction, but to the level of employment which was reached under Liberal administration when we did have full employment.

Mr. Speaker, the most urgent problem before us at the present time is the creation of enough jobs to take care of the men and women coming on to the labour force, and to liquidate this problem of chronic unemployment. For that purpose we need action. We need a positive program of constructive policies, instead of the Tory leftovers in the speech from the throne.

At this time I can give only some part of the program that we are going to put forward, and I will leave other parts to be filled in by my colleagues during this debate, if indeed the debate goes on.

**Mr. Fulton:** It has not started yet.