

The Address—Mr. Pearson

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the minister wishes to ask a question, perhaps he would rise.

Mr. Chevrier: He never rises. He interrupts repeatedly from his seat.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, I would gladly accept the invitation if the hon. member would allow a question.

Mr. Pearson: Of course.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Does the hon. member say we should not have sought to obtain a full text of that speech on a matter so very important to Canada and to the interests of Canadians?

Mr. Pearson: That would depend upon how much information was given to the government in the summary. If they had all the necessary information in the summary—and I will have something to say about this—

Mr. Hellyer: Do you not trust the British?

An hon. Member: They don't trust the British.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): That is not true.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that my speech has to be prolonged, but I have to put on the record so many of these statements because the minister will never admit that he is wrong. He is not only omniscient, but he is infallible. Therefore when he goes around saying that people who disagree with him are blatant liars, we have to put on the record of this house who are these people who are disagreeing with him.

When I say that this episode caused damage abroad to the reputation of Canada's government I am under an obligation to support that statement with evidence, and I propose to do that.

Here is a quotation from a highly respected London weekly, *The Spectator*, of December 1, 1961:

The publication of the full text of Mr. Heath's Paris speech to the Six makes it clear that last week's fuss was unjustified. So far from taking advantage of the darkness of the conference room to sell the commonwealth down the river, the British government appears to have stuck up for their interests to an extent that should impress even the Canadian Minister of Finance.

I charge the government with knowing this and creating this rather silly diversion of non-consultation; this affectation of chagrin and consternation, as a smokescreen to conceal their own foolishness and errors.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Silly talk.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I hope all these very profound and wise interventions of the minister are getting into *Hansard*. I would hate to see any of them missed. The last one was "silly talk".

[Mr. Fleming (Eglinton).]

If the government really wanted the fullest possible consultation and to keep in the closest possible touch with the British over their application to join the common market, why did not the government months ago—as they were requested to do—send some special representatives, or at least one special representative to Brussels to keep in touch with what was going on?

Why did not the government accept the invitation of the British government to send them a list of goods in which they were particularly interested and which might be affected by these developments, and give some priority as to the way it would affect Canada?

Why did they turn down that invitation at that time? And now, after Mr. Heath came out here for a second visit and things went off better, why is the government making a great virtue of the fact that they are sending representatives to Brussels in 1962?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Because now is the time. They have entered a different phase of the negotiations.

Mr. Pearson: I have had some experience in the world of diplomatic negotiations in both economic and political matters. The time to keep in touch with the other parties in such negotiations is right at the beginning, not at the end. If it is desirable to send a Canadian mission to Brussels now it certainly was desirable a few months ago. No wonder the *Financial Post* correspondent in London reported on December 9, 1961 that as a result of this mix-up—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Name?

Mr. Pearson: His name is Mr. Archer Mark. He is a *Financial Post* correspondent in London, and he said:

As a result of this mix-up we were branded as hostile and untrustworthy.

No wonder the Brantford *Expositor*, another paper friendly to the government, wrote in an editorial on November 30, 1961:

Two leading Canadians, and indirectly Canada herself, have emerged looking ridiculous from the Drew-Fleming tantrum over not getting a full text of the British statement to the Paris opening of the common market negotiations, October 10.

The report went on:

When it indulges in political grandstanding, as in the Drew-Fleming affair, the government should take care to confine the performance to home grounds and not expose Canada to ridicule in a country where we still need to keep lots of friends.

This ludicrous complaint about no consultation is all the more ludicrous coming from a government which has recently, to say the least, been very careless about consulting the United Kingdom when we have been contemplating at times economic action as a