

The Address—Mr. Bourget

Mr. Dorion: I shall make a deal with the hon. member opposite. If he allows me to continue, I shall answer his questions with pleasure.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Speaker, with the unanimous consent of this house, I should like to put a question.

Mr. Dorion: I thank the hon. member for Laurier.

Mr. Chevrier: I said that with the unanimous consent of the house, I should like to put a question.

Mr. Dorion: I first request the unanimous consent. If the hon. member for Laurier wishes to give that consent on behalf of his colleagues, I shall continue and then he may put his questions. It will be an exchange of courtesies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In the absence of unanimous consent, the minister may not continue and questions cannot be put to him.

Mr. Maurice Bourget (Levis): Mr. Speaker, before getting on with the remarks and congratulations I have to offer, I wish to take exception to a statement made by the hon. Secretary of State (Mr. Dorion), in which he said that the Liberal members from the province of Quebec had charged the present Prime Minister with being anti-French Canadian. Well, I want to remind the Secretary of State that the first people who charged the present Prime Minister with being anti-French Canadian were the delegates, the Conservative leaders of the province of Quebec at the convention held in this city of Ottawa in December 1956.

There is no doubt because they are now ashamed of their gestures, words and actions, at the time, that the Secretary of State—like many others—is trying to accuse the Quebec Liberals of exploiting the problems of language and race.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have been a member of this house for 22 years, and I have gone through six elections in the province of Quebec, and I challenge the Secretary of State to prove to me, or to find a single case in which I could have accused the present Prime Minister of being anti-French Canadian or of being a Protestant or a freemason. I challenge him to claim the contrary.

Mr. Dorion: It is not to the member for Levis that I have attributed those words;

he knows very well to whom they are addressed.

Mr. Bourget: Those are gratuitous words, like so many other things you do which are gratuitous.

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the hon. member to kindly address himself to the Chair.

Mr. Bourget: Very well, Mr. Speaker. I will close my remarks about the matter, because I would not like—

Mr. Pigeon: You are putting your foot in it.

Mr. Bourget: —to deal with questions of prejudice. On the government side, and especially the members from Quebec have been trying for some time to have us believe that the Liberal members are stirring up racial prejudice.

Mr. Pigeon: That is true.

Mr. Bourget: Well, I repeat, Mr. Speaker, because I know that on the government side, and particularly among Conservative members from the province of Quebec, they do not want to admit they were the first in this country to smear their own leader. And you cannot deny that; we have seen it on television and in newspapers, in December 1956. The member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graftey) was probably present at the convention, when it was said that the present Prime Minister had disowned the French Canadians, because he had not accepted that a French Canadian support his nomination.

Mr. Pigeon: Mr. Mackenzie King did the same thing.

Mr. Dupuis: We did not say that.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, allow me to congratulate you, first of all, on your appointment as Deputy Speaker of this house and to wish you, at the same time, much success in your new functions. I should like also, according to established practice, to congratulate the mover and seconder of the address.

I should like also to congratulate and extend my best wishes to all those who, on the government side, have obtained either a promotion or an extension of their term of office. I hope they will manage to fulfil their task with great wisdom, because they must realize now that their stay in their new posts will be of short duration.

As far as the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Flynn) is con-