

The Address—Mr. Bourget

Liberal Administration

Year	Unemployed	Percentage of labour force
1953	162,000	3
1954	250,000	4.6
1955	256,000	4.4
1956	177,000	3.4

Well, that was the situation under the Liberal administration.

Let us see now what happened since the Conservatives came into power, that is since 1958:

(Text):

An hon. Member: What month?

(Translation):

Mr. Bourget: Number of unemployed—

(Text):

An hon. Member: What month?

Mr. Bourget: That is the average for the year. If the hon. member wants to have this information I can pass him the book.

(Translation):

Mr. Tremblay: Tell us about Mr. Lesage.

Mr. Pigeon: The thunder has wrought havoc in Quebec.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, I would have an answer to those interruptions, but I prefer to control myself.

Here are the figures relating to unemployment under the Conservative administration:

Conservative Administration

Year	Unemployed	Percentage of labour force
1958	432,000	7.1
1959	373,000	6.0
1960	448,000	7.0
1961	469,000	7.2

If you figure out the average for the last four years of each administration, you note that under the Liberals, from 1953 to 1956, the average was only 3.8 per cent, while it has gone up to 6.8 per cent under the Conservatives.

Mr. Tremblay: That is a misinterpretation of statistics.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, if this is misinterpreting statistics, then I should tell the hon. member that these are statistics published by the Bank of Canada in December 1961.

Mr. Tremblay: Your interpretation cannot be accurate.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, if I have misinterpreted these statistics, then the hon. member for Roberval, who does not know whether he is in Ottawa or elsewhere—for even we do not know where he stands at the moment—should complain to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming), who is responsible for the Bank of Canada.

An hon. Member: Tell us about Mr. Lesage.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, having been asked by government members to speak about Mr. Lesage, I will do so.

When your friends were in power in Quebec, what did you do about unemployment?

Mr. Valade: There was no unemployment.

Mr. Bourget: You did not even see fit to take part in the winter works program, you did nothing and you should be ashamed to claim now that Mr. Lesage is doing nothing, when Quebec is the province which is contributing the most, in the whole country, that is, 40 per cent. That you cannot deny.

An hon. Member: There was no unemployment at that time.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether we could have a little bit of order in this house. I have no objection to answering questions from those who are interrupting me, because their questions are getting sillier all the time—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It would be fitting that those who are interrupting from their seats stop doing so. The debate could then take place in an orderly fashion.

Mr. Chevrier: Especially the interruption coming from behind the curtains.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Speaker, that attitude of the government members from Quebec reminds me of the fact they always brag more in the house, where they are 208 strong, than in the province, when they try to explain the failure of their administration.

The supporters of the government can well claim that at the present time there are more people at work than there were during the previous years, and the contrary would be abnormal for an intelligent man, because the population increases and it is only normal that there should be more people at work.

However, what they cannot deny, is that the number of unemployed under the Conservative administration is almost double what it was under the Liberal government and nobody—I repeat nobody—can deny it.

Another fact that bears out my statement is that the unemployment insurance fund, in which there were more than \$900 million when we went out of office, in 1957, is now on the verge of bankruptcy.

In fact, \$25 millions are needed to replenish it. Is that not conclusive proof that the