

for Richelieu, they had the right to do it, and whether the hon. member for Richelieu, when he took those goods from those men and when he took the benefit of that work and allowed the government of Canada to be called upon to pay for it, had a right to do it. It is on that point that I want for one moment to refer to one statement in the evidence because I think that the hon. member for Welland (Mr. German) when he stated the evidence upon this subject—and I do not question but that he did it in perfect good faith—misapprehended the effect absolutely of the statement of these accused men themselves as to what was in their minds and what they said to each other at the time of the commission of the alleged offence. I was surprised to hear the hon. member for Welland and, if I am not mistaken, the hon. Minister of Justice, speak of Pagé as an absolutely disinterested man, as some one entirely unaffected by the result of these charges. I was surprised at this, or rather I was not surprised because there are some things that the necessities of the case exact from a counsel. I recognize the familiar devices of a counsel to get around a difficulty and the Minister of Justice finds that he must absolutely separate the hon. member for Richelieu from the employees of this department. If I understand him aright his reasoning is: Well, perhaps the employees of the department stole those goods that they gave to Mr. Lanctot, but that has nothing to do with Mr. Lanctot, nothing in the world to do with him. Innocent Mr. Lanctot; guilty Mr. Pagé; guilty Mr. Champagne! Guilty of what?—giving the country's goods to Mr. Lanctot and paying the country's money to Mr. Lanctot's workmen. They may be guilty, the Minister of Justice says, and the Department of Marine may have many things to answer for, many wrong things may have been done, but, oh, turn your eyes away from the immaculate hon. member for Richelieu because he is not affected in the slightest!

Now, my proposition—and I think it is clearly demonstrated by the undisputed facts of this matter—is that if Mr. Pagé and Mr. Champagne misappropriated the goods and property of this country and handed them over to the hon. member for Richelieu he is an absolute and equal sharer in their guilt, and if they paid out the moneys of Canada to his workmen to paint his house he is as guilty as they of the commission of the offence. Inasmuch as we seem to live in an atmosphere where it seems to be considered that when you are dealing with the property and moneys of the people of this country, the ordinary words of the English language have no application, I would like to get down to the very simplest form of expression as to

what, it seems to me, the uncontradicted evidence here, show to have been the nature of the act of Mr. Champagne and Mr. Pagé. As applied to government property and government money, at all events in the Department of Marine, the operation is described as 'borrowing.' In the ordinary parlance of this country and in the language of the criminal code it is called 'theft.' For the information of the eminent lawyers who consider that the whole question is whether this cheque was paid, I would like to read the definition of 'theft':

Theft or stealing is the act of fraudulently and without colour of right taking or fraudulently and without colour of right converting to the use of any person—

You will notice there is no exception for members of parliament.

—anything capable of being stolen—

Notice again absolutely no exception for things that belong to the people of Canada.

—with intent to deprive the owner or any person having any special property or interest therein temporarily or absolutely of such thing or of such property or interest.

On the undisputed facts, what did Pagé do when he gave that paint? What did Champagne do when he undertook, and when he did, by false pretenses, by falsehood, get the money of the people of Canada from the department here and pay it over to Lanctot's workmen? If Mr. Pagé did not convert that paint, which, so far as I know, is an object capable of being stolen, to the use of a person, which I understand the hon. member for Richelieu to be, I am at a loss to know what he did. And if he did not do that fraudulently and without colour of right, then, I would ask some of the defenders of this act who may follow me, to tell me just how he did do it. Pagé and Champagne were two servants of the people of Canada. Pagé had in his possession these things, the property of the people of Canada. He had them entrusted to him—he says so himself, and it would be impossible to deny it—for use in the works of the people of Canada. And what did he do with them, he gave them to Mr. Lanctot for use in Mr. Lanctot's house. And when he gave them to Mr. Lanctot he effectively and for all time, deprived the people of Canada of the ownership of those goods. But hon. gentlemen opposite will say: Ah, but he did not do it fraudulently. I have not heard them suggest that he did it with any colour of right, but if I understand rightly, they do attach a great deal of importance to the point that he did not do it fraudulently. I wonder what the definition of these eminent lawyers is as to what constitutes doing a thing