

HOUSE OF COMMONS, TUESDAY, March 14, 1911.

The Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections met at 3.15 p.m. and continued to investigate the charges laid against Mr. Adelard Lanctot, M.P. as stated in the Order of Reference to the Committee.

Mr. ADELARD LANCTOT, M.P. again appeared and his examination is continued as follows:—

Mr. McDUGALL states that in Andronique Sénécal's affidavit an error has been made as to a date, and that instead of 'May 3, 1909,' it should be 'May 3, 1910,' and he begs leave to examine the witness as to the date so rectified.

Mr. LAFLAMME objects to this application. He submits that if there is an error in the affidavit, this error can only be rectified by the party who gave the affidavit, and that until the man who has given the affidavit comes before the committee and declares that he has made a mistake, the committee must take the affidavit such as it is.

Mr. CHAIRMAN.—I think the objection of the counsel for Mr. Lanctot should prevail. I think that so far as he is concerned, we are bound by the record which is before the committee. If Mr. Sénécal was here and he urged that a mistake has been made in his affidavit, he may be allowed to make a correction; but if the counsel for Mr. Lanctot states that he wants the affidavit to be considered at present as it reads, I think his point is well taken.

Mr. McDUGALL.—I will suspend the examination of the witness on that point until Mr. Sénécal has been heard.

Q. Mr. Lanctot, in 1908, you were occupying, at Sorel, a house or apartment rented from a man named Bruno Leclair, did you not?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. In the month of October, 1908, did you make any repairs or any painting to that house, and if so, did any of the employees of the Department work upon it?

Mr. LAFLAMME, K.C., objects to that question and to any question of the kind on the ground that putting such questions to Mr. Lanctot now, and before the accusers have been heard and have adduced the evidence that they can adduce in support of the charges, would amount to compelling a man to prove his innocence when accused of an offence, which is contrary to all rules of procedure.

Mr. VICTOR GEOFFRION, M.P., supports Mr. Laflamme's objection, and moves that Mr. Lanctot's examination be now suspended until those who have laid charges against him have been heard.

Mr. ROY seconds that motion.

Mr. BARKER remarks that this question had already been discussed before Mr. Lanctot's examination had begun, that it has been decided that the counsel for Mr. Blondin may examine Mr. Lanctot at this stage of the proceedings and that there is no reason to reconsider such a decision.

Mr. MONK speaks to the same effect as Mr. Barker and quotes several precedents where in investigations of this kind the ministers or members involved have been heard at the beginning of the proceedings.

Mr. GEOFFRION'S motion to suspend Mr. Lanctot's examination until the persons who have given the affidavits have been heard, being put to vote, is adopted on division.