

maintaining workshops to do the work of the country, and you are quite welcome to come in and get your work done for you at cost price; we will pay the whole fixed charges and the operating charges and all the expense involved in the maintenance of these great establishments, and you will be the pink of honesty if you come in and get your goods from our employees even without our knowledge. Provided, you give us back exactly what the goods cost us and exactly what we pay the men, we will stand up and say that the people of Canada have lost nothing. Who pays to maintain that establishment? Who pays to put those facilities there, at the disposal of Mr. Lanctot, if they are at his disposal, and at the disposal of everybody else? Who pays for that entire organization of superintendents? Who supplies all the brushes and tools of every description that were used in this work? Everybody knows that paint brushes were used to paint the house, and yet there is not a solitary paint brush paid for. Who pays for all these things? Surely, Mr. Speaker, if the people of Canada have gone into the business of contracting painters, or any other business, they are entitled to have the reasonable profit that anybody else has; and Mr. Lanctot, if his payment has been made, is keeping in his pocket to-day the profit which the people of Canada were legitimately entitled to on that work.

I come to a point where, in his conclusion at all events, I am happy to be able to agree with the Minister of Justice; but it is not nearly as troublesome to me to get to my conclusion, and fortunately it does not need anything like the same eloquence as he devoted to his conclusion this afternoon; nor does it need any argument to support it. The Minister of Justice says that we have not proof of a violation of section 14 of the Independence of Parliament Act. Mr. Speaker, I do not think there has been proved a violation of the text of section 14 or section 15 of the Independence of Parliament Act, for one very simple reason: the Independence of Parliament Act deals with contractual relations between a member of parliament and the government of this country. In this case, to my mind, it is absolutely clear that there were no contractual relations between Mr. Lanctot and the government of this country. The relation that existed between Mr. Lanctot and the government of this country was the relation between a man who had unlawfully obtained another man's property and the man whose property had been so obtained, and which generates an obligation to repay it, and that is not a contractual obligation.

Now, I would stop here if it were not for what strikes me as the most extraordinary

feature of the report of the majority of this committee. I am free to confess that in the face of the evidence, I find the report as a whole extraordinary; but what is extraordinary beyond my limited powers of expression, is the censure which the committee has pronounced upon the hon. member for Champlain. And if anything could be more extraordinary than that censure, it is the reason on which it rests. It is worth reading:

Your committee feel that in view of the very serious nature of the charges made they should express an opinion on the propriety of Mr. Blondin making the charges in the manner he did. Your committee do not wish to state that Mr. Blondin did not believe there was truth in the allegations, or that he did not act from a bona fide belief in their truthfulness, but the committee think that before making so serious a charge against an honourable member of the House of Commons, he should have made some independent inquiry to verify the truthfulness of the charges made and, which he apparently did not do. The Minister of Marine was called as a witness. His evidence as to this on page 189 where he says he had information that no fraud had been committed and that all labour supplied by the shipyards had been paid for and all material supplied had been returned and which information he would have been pleased to give Mr. Blondin had he applied for same.

Now what is the information that Mr. Blondin could have had? Had it any bearing on how the member for Richelieu got these goods or this work? Not a particle. It was that the hon. member for Richelieu had paid for them. What I said at the outset, I think, quite disposes of that. If it were true that the hon. Minister of Marine had said, as he is made to say in this report, that he had information that there was no fraud at all in the matter, and had been in a position to satisfy Mr. Blondin the hon. member for Champlain of that, there might be something to be said, though for my part I question the soundness of the proposition that a man who has credible information that very grave offences have been committed, is bound to go to any minister in this government or any other and absolutely abandon them on the ipse dixit of the minister. I am not in that desirous of being understood as wishing to question in any way the truthfulness of the particular minister. I am speaking as a general proposition. To say that with the strong testimony Mr. Blondin had it was his duty to go further before he laid those charges, and that the going further meant that he should have gone to the minister and been satisfied with what he said, is, I submit, absolutely untenable. But more than that. Stop for a moment to reflect on what the committee knew. The hon. member for Champlain rose in his place and made these charges and read these affidavits; and the