

May, but he was there during the summer continuously. Mr. Lanctot was there, yet he never went to see Mr. Papineau. Is it conceivable that a member of parliament, under these circumstances and at such a juncture, should not have walked across the street to see the director of work and find out what was being done, if everything was regular and proper? And I would even say further that it is somewhat surprising that a man of affairs should go through an entire summer with this kind of mandate and never seek to find out at the head office, the place whence the direction emanated, what was being done, what expenditure was being incurred, how far his account had mounted up. An entire summer was spent, the whole building was finished, and not an inquiry. I say it is impossible, under these circumstances, to entirely exonerate the sitting member from responsibility in regard to these men. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden, Halifax) asked if these men had been dismissed. I will say a word from my personal acquaintance with Mr. Papineau, the director of works. Mr. Papineau is an absolutely honest man. It is utterly impossible for him to cause a cessation of the abuses that exist there if he is not vested with authority, and he is not vested with authority. A proof of the reputation he enjoys is the fact that this work was put through, and the whole summer was spent, and he never heard of it. He asks Mr. Papineau: Would you authorize such a thing as this? Well, he said, it would have to be a pressing case, I suppose a case of a fire, or something of that kind, because otherwise I could not authorize it at all. But he was kept in ignorance the entire summer.

Now, as to the refund—I do not wish to diminish the importance of the refund. What are the facts? We are men, we know how these things happen. The summer had not yet passed, before this matter of the construction of Mr. Lanctot's house was public property in Sorel and Montreal, a matter of public notoriety. Affidavits were prepared. There were outside people—I had the visit myself of one of these men, who told me long before parliament assembled, at any rate long before the matter came up, that he hoped the matter would be brought up, and he was a good Conservative. But there is no doubt that a question of this kind, even if we exonerate Mr. Lanctot from any evil intention, is one that arises above party, and we must be careful about consecrating the principle that parliament sanctions doings of that kind. Well, when it became a matter of public discussion in the town of Sorel, Mr. Pagé prepared an account. Mr. Pagé, while he was defrauding the government, using materials which he held

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in trust, for certain private parties, and while he was countenancing the payment of men for government work who were employed on this private work, informs us that he kept a private memorandum of the time of the men. This was kept on loose leaves. I do not know that my understanding of the evidence exactly coincides with that of my hon. friend. My recollection is that this memorandum was kept on loose leaves, and slipped into a corner of the drawer in the evening; and at the end, a general memorandum was made up from them in a little book which was produced before the committee. I may be wrong as to that, but the memorandum kept was private, and from these leaves was prepared the statement of \$375.60, which, on the 22nd of November, was sent up here. Parliament was sitting, and the sitting member sent a cheque down for the labour only, on the 22nd of November, for \$375.60. That cheque was finally paid on the 12th of January following, and upon inquiry from the department, as before stated, the deputy minister wrote that he required a statement to place it in the hands of the Auditor General, so that the Auditor General might know what the object of this refund was. The sitting member went down to Sorel—and this is important, these circumstances are not trifling—he met Mr. Papineau on the street and told him, 'there are the materials, I will replace the materials out of my own pocket.' And in fact Mr. Papineau, having found out that those materials had been abstracted from the government stores in the manner I have indicated, immediately got a statement as to the materials from Mr. Pagé, or Mr. Champagne, from this private memorandum, and gave an order, had the materials replaced, and paid them himself out of his own pocket, and then on the street reminded Mr. Lanctot that this bill was still unsettled, and Mr. Lanctot refunded the director of the works.

Those are the facts with regard to which I think there is no possibility of doubt, and no controversy. \$375.60 for labour, \$81.60 for the material. I think I can say, without really wishing to make any pleasantry in a matter so serious, that I never, in my own experience, heard of a house of that kind being painted inside and outside at so very low a rate. I do not wish to make that an issue, because I think the matter is far more important. But I think the affidavits mention \$700 or \$1,000, or \$1,200 and that is what it would have cost most of us ordinary mortals to get that work done. In the meantime, affidavits had been made. I wish to say this as regards the hon. member for Champlain that the matter was public property.