

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 1903

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RESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER.

When the House met at half-past 3 o'clock,

The CLERK said: I have to inform the House that since its rising on the 15th instant I have received the following letter from the hon. member for Warwick:—

Brisbane, 15th September, 1903.

Sir,—I herewith tender my resignation as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

ARTHUR MORGAN.

The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Brisbane.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*) said: Mr. Bernays,—Owing to the resignation of the late Government and the change in the Administration, and also owing to the resignation of the Speaker, I take it that at this juncture it is our duty to proceed to elect a fresh Speaker. I have read that it is the custom in the House of Commons on occasions of this sort for private members to be entrusted with the duty of moving and seconding the motion for the election of a Speaker. In Queensland, I think there has been varied practice. For myself, I have no special qualification, except that of being a moderately old member of this House, for undertaking the duty which I am now undertaking—that is, of

proposing the Hon. A. S. Cowley, member for Herbert, be Speaker of this House. Mr. Cowley, as we all know, has held Ministerial office. He was Speaker of this House for six years, and I do not think there will be any difference of opinion on this point: that in Mr. Cowley we have a gentleman who has almost an unrivalled knowledge of parliamentary procedure. I do not think there is any occasion for me to make a long speech in moving this motion, particularly as I understand that an hon. member on the other side will second it, and I take it that the election of the Hon. Mr. Cowley will be pretty well, if not altogether, unanimous. It may possibly be thought by some hon. members who were in this House during the time that the Hon. Mr. Cowley was Speaker that he was inclined, if anything, to hold rather a firm hand—to interpret the Standing Orders just a little bit too rigidly, but those who think that should recollect that it is safer to have a firm Speaker than one who is inclined to go the other way. Of course, hon. members on both sides get called to order occasionally. I remember some years ago when the question of the Bowen Railway was before this House, a certain amendment was moved, which it was rather difficult to speak to, I must confess, and I very soon got called to order by Mr. Cowley. But I had the satisfaction, a few moments afterwards, of seeing the late Premier, Mr. Philp, called to order in a much more emphatic way than I was. I take it that things of that sort are bound to happen, no matter who is in the chair. I do not think there can be any difference of opinion as to Mr. Cowley's abilities, and—what, after all, is, I take it, the main consideration—I believe he will be fair to both sides of the House. I have much pleasure in moving that the Hon. A. S. Cowley, member for Herbert, be Speaker of this House. [Government members: Hear, hear!]

Mr. CAMERON (*Brisbane North*): I rise to second the motion which has just been moved by the hon. member for Kennedy—that the Hon. A. S. Cowley, member for Herbert, be Speaker of this House. I do not propose to say much, nor do I think there is any occasion, beyond this: that I feel convinced that, if the hon. gentleman is elected to the Chair, he will fill it with honour, dignity, and impartiality. [Government members: Hear! hear!]

Mr. JENKINSON (*Fassifern*): I rise for the purpose of moving an amendment. It will be within the recollection of hon. members that the hon. gentleman who has been proposed to the position of Speaker by the hon. member for Kennedy has previously occupied that position. I had the privilege of sitting in this House during his occupancy of the chair, and I was not at all impressed with the manner in which he carried out his duties on that occasion. He proved himself to be biased, bigoted, and a partisan of the first water. I take it that the President or Chairman of a deliberative Assembly like this should be fair and aboveboard, have a broad and liberal mind, and act in a judicial manner, and not merely from party motives. Feeling that this should be removed entirely from a question of party politics, and believing that the Speaker of this Assembly should be a man in whom we have confidence, I, for one, am certainly not in favour of seeing the hon. gentleman appointed to the position after the way in which he carried out his duties in the past. I am perfectly astounded at the members of the Labour party, after the expressions that they used to the Hon. A. S. Cowley during the time he occupied the position of Speaker, that they should have come to heel in such a manner as this—[Opposition members: Hear, hear!] (Laughter on the Government

side)—particularly as this is not, and is never expected to be, a party question. It is all very well for hon. members to laugh, but I say we have to maintain the dignity of this House. [Opposition members: Hear, hear!] It does not matter, if a man is likely to be a very vigorous opponent, that he should have his mouth stopped by occupying any particular position. [Opposition members: Hear, hear!] It is because I feel so strongly that I intend to move as an amendment that the name of the hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Jackson, be submitted to this House as Speaker for the ensuing term.

Mr. STEPHENS (*Brisbane South*): I second the amendment.

Mr. STORY (*Balonne*): I have waited some years for something like this opportunity. (Laughter.) My recollection is particularly good. Some years ago I proposed the Hon. Mr. Cowley as Speaker of this House, believing in his ability, and believing in his rectitude, and I was assailed with a storm of opposition from the other side who now support him. I was met with a howl of opposition. In fact, before I could get the motion out of my mouth, the question was whether I had any right to propose him at all. Things have taken such a wonderful change—(Government laughter)—that it is almost impossible to know where we are, or what any man thinks, or whether his opinion is worth anything at all. I proposed the Hon. Mr. Cowley some years ago believing that he was a good man, and I support him now, believing that he is a good man; but it is most surprising that the support that he will get on this occasion should come from the party that years ago opposed him, and, if we refer to *Hansard*, it will be found that they gave reasons why he should not only not be Speaker, but that he had not the confidence of the House, and that he had not performed the duties of Speaker in a fair and proper manner. When those objections were made, I could not understand how it was they could say so, because in the times that I speak of, though the Labour party had suffered, at any rate, from the Speaker's rulings to a certain extent, I thought that the Hon. Mr. Cowley had taken up the position of upholding the dignity of the House, in spite of a good deal of clamour, and I supported him then as a good man, and I support him now. But it is very strange indeed that the support he is now going to get should come from the very party who opposed him formerly.

Mr. JACKSON: I think it is just as well to say that, while I am very much obliged to the hon. member for Fassifern and also to the hon. member for Brisbane South, Mr. Stephens, for the amendment which has been moved and seconded in proposing me for the honourable position of Speaker of this Assembly, yet I feel it is my duty to decline the honour. [Government members: Hear, hear!]

HON. R. PHILIP: [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] Before this amendment is disposed of there are several hon. members who would like to have a few words on the present position—the position which has caused us the necessity of electing a Speaker. I have made a promise—I always like to keep my promises—and I intend to support the Hon. Mr. Cowley, because I believe he is an honest man, and knows the rules and forms of this House. And I can say that all the time he was Speaker he never intrigued with the members of this House. [Opposition members: Hear, hear!] Before sitting down I wish to say that for some time the member for Herbert was my “candid friend,” and I think it is due to him, and to the House, that I should be equally as candid. I remember the incident to which the hon. member for Fassifern referred, and at the time I felt it very bitterly. It was not what the Speaker said with which I

was hurt, but he spoke to me as I would not speak to a dog. Again, when the then Chairman of Committees, Mr. Annear, who did not often speak in the House, spoke on that occasion, he went at him in the same peremptory and harsh manner. I think, seeing that that gentleman spoke so seldom, that he might have been allowed a little latitude. I admire Mr. Cowley's ability, but he is wanting in moderation, and I advise him to take warning, because it was simply nothing but his nasty harsh manner that prevented the party supporting him when the hon. member for Warwick, Mr. Morgan, was elected Speaker. Hon. members did not doubt his honesty or ability, but they could not stand his harsh and unfeeling manner. It would be very interesting to the country to know at this stage why we are electing a Speaker. [Mr. MAXWELL: The country knows already.] The country does not know already, and I intend saying a few words which I hope the country will understand. It has been said—and I hope it is not true—that the present Chief Secretary has been plotting and intriguing for some time past. [The PREMIER: No; I can assure you it is not so.] I do not make the charge, but I am told that by dozens of people in the House and out of it. The late Speaker is rather a clever gentleman. [The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why don't you take your gruel kindly?] [Mr. JENKINSON: Take your gruel.] I would rather sit here with the gentlemen I have round me than occupy the position of Chief Secretary with some of the gentlemen who are around the present Chief Secretary. [The TREASURER: Particularly when you can't do anything else.] If I had resorted to the low dodges of the present Treasurer I would have been sitting there now. I have known for some time past that that gentleman has been trying to induce supporters of the Government to leave them. One of his colleagues, the present Home Secretary, Mr. Denham, told me that he offered him a portfolio if he would go over to the other side. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: And he has got it.] I welcome the change. I am glad to be sitting on this side. [Mr. MAXWELL: Yes; you show it.] All I wish is that the country should understand how this change has come about. I may say that if what is said about the late Speaker, Mr. Morgan, is true, he will never get that position again. [Mr. MAXWELL: Oh, don't say that.] [Mr. JENKINSON: You will not have the giving of it.] The Speaker should be the most impartial man in the House. Why, in putting through his estimates only a fortnight ago, when the division was likely to be close, I asked him if he would come in and vote, and he said, “I never vote.” [An honourable member: And he never has.] If he is so conscientious about little things like that, I hope he will be as conscientious about bigger things. I would remind the late Speaker of an incident that happened years ago, when he discussed certain matters which he thought should be discussed. [Mr. TURNER: Don't go too far back into oblivion.] I can go back as far as any man in the House, and I am not ashamed of it. I hope he has not prostituted his late position for the purpose of securing his present position; I hope he has not. [The PREMIER: That is so.] And I hope, for his own sake and for the sake of the country, he will deny that he has had anything to do with the intriguing that has been going on for the last six weeks. [Mr. HARDACRE: You got office by intrigue.] I did not, and I challenge the hon. member for Leichhardt, Mr. Hardacre, to make the same statement that he made a short time ago, and I can produce three members of the House to deny it, one of whom is the late Speaker himself. [Mr. HARDACRE: I will prove that we discussed it at our caucus

meeting.] (Laughter.) Well, the members are here, and if the hon. member for Leichhardt wishes it, I will name them. [Mr. HARDACRE: The information was given to us.] However, the question before the House is the election of Speaker. The country wishes to know why we are electing a Speaker. I cannot congratulate the present Chief Secretary. [Mr. MULCAHY: The country will.] [The TREASURER: You are taking a wide latitude when there is no Speaker to call you to order.] Every member in the House can get up and reply to me if he wishes. It is as well that the country should understand the present position, not only of the Government, but of the head of the Government. I wish him joy of some of the gentlemen who are supporting him. There are among them four men who were pledged to support me, but who walked over on division. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You ought not to discuss that now.] I want to have it discussed, and this is the best time to discuss it. I want the late Speaker, Mr. Morgan, to get up and deny that he has been a party to these intrigues. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The question is that the hon. member for Herbert be Speaker.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: You are not in the chair now.] [Mr. STEPHENS: You are not our schoolmaster to-day.] Will the hon. gentleman not get up and deny it? [The PREMIER: I should like to hear what other hon. members have got to say.] I have made a statement, and the hon. gentleman can get up and deny it. [The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You are taking it very badly.] [Mr. MAXWELL: Let the ex-Secretary for Railways get at it.] [The PREMIER: I say now that the statement of the ex-Chief Secretary is not correct, and I am prepared to prove it, but I do not want to forfeit my right to speak.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: There is no limitation to debate.] [Mr. W. HAMILTON: They don't like the physic they have been doling out to others for the last ten years.]

HON. A. S. COWLEY (*Herbert*): I am deeply sensible of the honour which is sought to be imposed upon me. It has been unsought for; and I thank sincerely the hon. members who proposed and seconded my nomination. I deeply regret the discussion which has taken place, and also the words which have fallen from my old friend, the Hon. Mr. Philp, the hon. member for Townsville. I am not conscious of ever having spoken to the hon. member as "I would not speak to a dog." [Hon. R. PHILP: You did, all the same.] As the hon. member entertains that opinion of me, I consider that I am unfit to occupy the chair, and I withdraw my nomination.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*): I think one may reasonably ask the hon. member for Herbert to review his decision, because I am satisfied that when the hon. member for Townsville comes to see his utterances in cold type they will be a source of everlasting regret to him. [Government members: Hear, hear!] I have been in the House but a brief time, and during that time I have noted that the hon. member for Townsville was invariably courteous and generous, but this afternoon he has struck out a new rôle entirely, and no one will have more occasion to regret it than the hon. member himself. I trust, therefore, that the good conduct of the House will not be interfered with by the hon. member for Herbert desiring that his nomination should be withdrawn.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE (*Mackay*): [Government members: "Thursday afternoon!"] I do not know why the hon. member for Townsville should not strike out a new rôle. Hon. members opposite have struck out a new rôle, and when an hon. member who has been

one of the strongest supporters of the late Ministry, and who was elected to support Mr. Philp, the hon. member for Townsville, and who a week or two ago was denouncing and defying "socialism in our time," is now playing an extraordinary rôle, and we now find that he is a figurehead of the Labour party—[The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not so; you are presuming a lot.] There is no doubt about the fact. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Events will prove themselves.] Events have proved themselves. It is not long ago that I was told that the hon. member was in treaty with the Labour party. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is untrue.] There is a very strong presumption that the statement was true; and if the constituents of the hon. member can reconcile his conduct in allying himself with the party which at the last election he set himself up to oppose and denounce, then they must be simple and credulous persons. Supposing the leader of the Opposition did take up a new rôle, I should like to know what position the hon. member for Oxley occupies. With regard to the hon. member for Herbert, I shall be extremely sorry if he does not accept the position of Speaker. I believe he is a very good man indeed—a thoroughly qualified man; but his action during the last few weeks has certainly lessened him in my opinion as a suitable gentleman to occupy the chair. The hon. member for Townsville has charged the hon. member for Herbert with being human—with being rather short-tempered, and with having spoken on one occasion rather cruelly to himself; but if, on the mere statement of the hon. member for Townsville, the hon. member for Herbert, who was prepared to assume the responsibility of accepting the dignified position of Speaker, is going to throw the whole thing over, then the remarks made by the hon. member for Leichhardt on one occasion with regard to the hastiness of the hon. member for Herbert rendering him unfit for the Chair appear to have some ground. But what I have been waiting for is to see what some members of the Labour party—I do not know whether it has vanished or disappeared—have to say on this question. We have on the Treasury benches the hon. member for Croydon and the hon. member for Rockhampton, and very properly, who are acting for the Labour party. The others are mere tools of the Labour party. (Government laughter.) When the Premier endeavours to bring in some legislation, or do any action, he will have to ask Mr. Browne about it. He will be the Queensland Mr. Watson. I congratulate the hon. member for Croydon on the position he has assumed. But I have been waiting for the Labour party to defend the nomination which has been made. I presume that as the nomination comes from that quarter—the hon. member for Kennedy, who is a worthy member of that party, submitted the nomination—so I presume it has got the approval of the Labour party. I am glad to find myself in harmony with the Labour party occasionally. It is not very often that I do so, but it is probably the more welcome on that account. I remember, as well as the hon. member for Balonne remembers, what took place when the hon. member for Herbert was last proposed as Speaker. The hon. member was denounced by the Labour party. I shall not confine myself to a general statement, but shall give the House what was said on that occasion, so that the people may know what an extraordinary change has taken place in hon. members opposite with regard to the hon. member for Herbert, who, I believe, and the members of the late Government always did believe, was a very good Speaker, a man whose decisions were dictated by justice,

and who was quite capable of discharging the duties of the office, and did discharge them fairly. I am going to point out what this party in power—the others are mere adjuncts, ornaments, parasites—I am going to point out what the Labour party said on the last occasion when the hon. member for Herbert was proposed for the position of Speaker, in order to show that some extraordinary change has taken place within the last few years. It was only a few years ago that this House desired Mr. Cowley's re-election, and an eloquent writer then wrote to the *Patriot*, stating that the reason Mr. Cowley was knocked out was that the present Premier was used very freely as a weapon to get rid of Mr. Cowley, who was so obnoxious to the Labour party. That is the statement which was made, not by an obscure member of the Labour party, or by someone who had joined the Labour party suddenly without any apparent reason, but by the Labour party. On the 16th May, 1899—as will be seen on reference to *Hansard*, page 4—Mr. Dawson, who was then leader of the Labour party, and who is at present the most distinguished representative of the Labour party in the Commonwealth Parliament, said that—

During the past six years we have had an experience of the hon. member for Herbert, Mr. Cowley, as an occupant of the Speaker's chair, and that experience has been a very painful one.

Mr. Dawson further said—

I would be inclined to vote for any man who was qualified by knowledge to occupy that position rather than vote for Mr. Cowley, the hon. member for Herbert.

Mr. Dawson also said—

I have found that on occasions when the Government have been in somewhat of a difficulty to rush business through they have had a very violent partisan in the person of the Speaker, who was then sitting—Mr. Cowley, the hon. member for Herbert.

Those are the opinions which were then held by the Labour party, and it seems to me that they have held those opinions until lately. Mr. Jenkinson, the hon. member for Fassfern, made a slight allusion this afternoon to somebody whose opposition it was worth while getting rid of. The hon. member for Herbert is decidedly a capable gentleman, and quite fit to occupy the chair. I do not know anyone who

[4 p.m.] would discharge the duties better. I should like to know—only there appears to be a kind of conspiracy of silence on the other side with regard to the hon. member for Herbert—how it is, seeing that those things were said of that hon. member only a few years ago, what reason there is for the change now. Was the Labour party honest then or are they honest now? What has caused them to take up a diametrically opposite position now to that which they took up on that occasion? Then, again, we find Mr. Dawson saying on page 5 that the hon. member for Herbert "has waited as a political trickster"—a remark which called forth an ejaculation of "Shame!" from the late Home Secretary. Mr. Dawson continued—

He has waited until the time has arrived for the motion to be called on, and has then politely ruled it out of order, and given no opportunity to have it put in order. I challenge any hon. member to deny the truth and accuracy of that statement.

There is placed on record the opinion of the then leader of the Labour party—probably as capable a man as has ever led that party. That gentleman was, I hold, entirely wrong, and this side of the House said he was entirely wrong; but the members of the Labour party, who supported those statements on that occasion, I think might get up and justify their position on this.

We have not had to change our opinions at all. [An honourable member: You have had to change your side.] If the hon. member has as much pleasure in changing his side as I have in changing mine, I heartily congratulate him. We will now come to another member of the Labour party, who also has been exalted—if it be an exaltation—to the position of a member of the Federal Parliament, Mr. Fisher. Mr. Fisher said—page 6—

I am of opinion that, when he does his very best, he is totally unfitted for the performance of political duties. His want of balance of mind quite unfits him to occupy a position of the kind.

So that when the hon. member for Herbert strove—and they do not give him credit for striving on all occasions—to do his best he was incapable of performing the duties of Speaker of this House. The Labour party were then entirely wrong, as they generally are. I repeat, they ought to give us some good reasons for the change that has come over them. I dare say they may fish about for reasons. I suppose they wish the public to believe that this is an honest appointment, dictated solely by the good of the House. I think they ought to show how they have come to turn this extraordinary somersault. For my part, I support entirely the nomination which has been made by the hon. member for Kennedy. I believe it is a good nomination. I believe it is the best nomination that could have been made. But hon. members opposite held only a very few years ago that it was positively the worst. I should like to know what has caused them to change their opinion and to execute this sudden somersault.

HON. SIR ARTHUR RUTLEDGE (*Maranoa*)
I rise to express an earnest hope that the hon. member for Herbert will reconsider his decision. I have had the pleasure of being acquainted with the hon. member for Herbert perhaps longer than any other member of this House. I knew him before either he or I became a denizen of Queensland, and I have never changed the high opinion I formed of him on the day I was first thrown into his company. I regard the hon. member for Herbert as being the very soul of honour, as being a man of great intellectual capacity, and with a very full knowledge of the Standing Orders of this House and of the rules which govern the conduct of affairs in the British Houses of Parliament. Of course, no man in this world is perfect. No doubt we have all felt angry at times at the Speaker in his treatment of us, because we are apt to be prejudiced in favour of the position we ourselves have taken up, and cannot see it in the same light as that in which the Speaker sees it who occupies the chair. But I do not think that because hon. members, on former occasions, without, perhaps, fully considering the effect of their words, have opposed the nomination of the hon. member for the position of President of this Assembly, they should not be at liberty to change their views, and come to believe—as certainly as I, myself, sincerely believe—that the most eligible member of this Assembly for the position of its Speaker is the hon. member for Herbert. (Hear, hear!) I do not think there is one hon. member on this side who has any other opinion than that; and I hope the hon. member for Herbert will not take what the leader of this party said as any reflection upon his honour, upon his capacity, or upon the ability which he possesses to rule this Chamber. The hon. member for Townsville was very careful to express himself that way. He was merely giving a little candid advice, and, although he did not perhaps wrap up his words in the same nice way that some others would have done, it is always allowable for an hon. member to give a little reminder that the *suaviter in modo* is a much better way

of getting along with business than the *fortiter in re*. I hope my old friend, the hon. member for Herbert, will not persist in refusing to accept the nomination to the Speakership of this House, which I am sure he will fill with every credit to himself and with every advantage to the Assembly.

HON. R. PHILIP: I regret that the words I used should have induced the hon. member for Herbert for a moment to withdraw his name. I should like to see him appointed, for I think he is the most suitable man in the House for the position. On the occasion to which I previously referred I felt the position very keenly; in fact, I believe I blushed to the roots of my hair. But he must remember that when last up for election I spoke in his favour, and I am only speaking now as the "candid friend." (Laughter.) I am very sorry if the words I used caused him pain, for I have a very kindly feeling towards him, and I am sure that if he will only modify his manner in some degree he will be Chairman for life. I do not cavil at his decisions, which I am sure have always been just, honest, and sincere. His knowledge of our Standing Orders is unrivalled, and I think it would be a good thing that the Speaker on going into that chair should stop there so long as he is elected by his constituents. I trust the hon. member for Herbert will reconsider his decision. He knows well enough that I have always been his friend; I have only spoken of him as a friend and for his own good. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

HON. A. S. COWLEY: After what has fallen from the leader of the Opposition, and believing as I do—from what hon. members on both sides have said—that it is the unanimous wish of hon. members that I should be elected Speaker of this House, I am prepared to accept if I am unanimously elected to that high position. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] I will endeavour to carry out the duties of that high office to the very best of my ability. After what has fallen from the leader of the Opposition to-day, his remarks will be duly considered by me, and in future I sincerely trust that while I will in no way shrink from acting impartially, if necessary I will try and use a little more tact and judgment in dealing with hon. members who may transgress the Standing Orders. I now submit myself to the will of the House. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

Mr. HAWTHORN (*Enoggera*): Before anything further is done, I should like to refer to some remarks which fell from the lips of the leader of the Opposition this afternoon. The hon. member accused me of being one of the four members who crossed the floor of this House the other evening, after having—[An honourable member: Wait for a better opportunity.] I will choose my own opportunity for saying what I have to say. I intend to leave this matter to the electors of Enoggera. The hon. member for Townsville has made a certain assertion, and I wish to explain to the country and to my electors my action on the point. I will go back to the year 1899, when Mr. Drake left this House. At that time, the electors of Enoggera wished to have a representative, and I was asked to stand then. I published in the newspapers my views, and I accepted the request, saying at the same time that if I was returned I would give an independent support to the then Government, reserving to myself the right to vote against them on any point which I thought would not be for the good of the country. A day or two after that Mr. W. T. Reid was taken up by the Premier, and he pledged himself to give a straightforward support to the Government. He got the endorsement of the Premier, and I retired in order that the Government vote might not be

split. In 1902, at the last general election, a requisition was presented to me signed by 650 electors of Enoggera, asking me to stand. I acquiesced again, and I said that I would stand as an independent supporter of the Government, reserving to myself the right to criticise, and, if necessary, to vote against them, and I have carried out that policy right through the whole of my career. I say distinctly that I was not pledged to support the Premier through and through. In doing what I did last Tuesday evening, I was acting within my rights, and I am prepared to stand by my action and at any time face my constituents on what I have done. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

HON. J. F. G. FOXTON: The hon. gentleman who, as we understand, is about to be announced as the leader of the new Ministry, has invited expressions of opinions with regard to matters which have been more particularly referred to by my late colleague, the hon. member for Townsville. The hon. member for Warwick is desirous that anyone who wants to make a speech should do so before he replies, and I am quite willing to accord him that privilege; but the circumstances are so peculiar and so unprecedented—and I say that advisedly—not only in Queensland, but in Australia, but I believe in the British Empire, that I think something ought to be said on this occasion. I wish to say right here that the hon. member for Warwick and myself have been on the most intimate and friendly terms for a long number of years. During the time he has been Speaker, I recognised the fact that he exercised his functions with the strictest impartiality, with excellent tact, and with unbounded good temper. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] I will give the hon. gentleman all credit for that—in fact, for the reasons that I shall give presently, I think he rather carried to excess the desire to appear to be impartial. But, as I have said, the position now is unprecedented and unique, so far as the British Empire is concerned. Lord Sidmouth, in the year 1801, then Mr. Addington, had been Speaker for about twelve years, and on the retirement of Mr. Pitt he was specially invited by His Majesty to take up the leadership and form a Ministry. After he accepted, he remained on friendly terms with the late Premier, the only thing they differed about being with regard to the Catholic Emancipation question. With that trivial exception, the two men continued on the same political lines. It was really more a personal matter with the King than a matter of the broad policy of the kingdom. On the present occasion, the hon. member for Warwick has intimated by interjection that he has been in no way intriguing with hon. members who lately supported the hon. member for Townsville or with the members of the late Opposition, who we see now supporting the hon. gentleman almost to a man. Curiously enough, the members of the new Government are on the Treasury benches, but we have never been officially informed that they exist. That is a very anomalous and unprecedented position. I want particularly to call attention to this: The hon. member for Croydon, in his speech the other day, told us that he had been unable to form a Ministry, and that he had waited on the hon. member for Warwick, on the previous Friday, I think; at all events, it was while the hon. member for Warwick occupied the position of Speaker of this House—the vacation of the position, I presume, only took place when it was read out to the House. I say this in all friendliness to the hon. member, and merely as a protest which I think should be made in the interests of the country at large, and for the preservation in the highest degree of the dignity and impartiality which we all desire to see in the

Speaker from the moment he goes into the chair until his resignation is read, or until he dies or ceases to be a member. The hon. member may have done this with the very best intentions; he may or he may not have been *sub rosa* in communication, by way of hints or otherwise, with members for the past month or six weeks. There are indications which are against the hon. member in that respect, and I shall listen with the greatest pleasure to his denial; but we cannot get away from the fact that during his occupancy of the Speaker's chair—that is to say, before he vacated it—he, at all events, had listened to proposals of the hon. member for Croydon as to the formation of a Government. [The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member for Croydon never said so.] The hon. member did say so. I may have misunderstood him. I understood that the hon. member for Croydon waited on Mr. Speaker, and asked him whether it was not possible to form a Government between them. [The PREMIER: Who said that?] The hon. member for Croydon said that. [The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member for Carnarvon is saying it; no one else said it.] If it is not in *Hansard*, I say that *Hansard* has been corrected improperly. I know exactly what was said. The hon. member will perhaps recollect that part of his speech when I remind him that he also said that when he waited on the hon. member for Warwick, Mr. Speaker, that hon. gentleman produced to him a list of the persons that he knew would support him in the event of his forming a Government. If the hon. member for Croydon did not approach the hon. member for Warwick in that way, how is it that list was there for production to him? Is not that strong circumstantial evidence that at some period—I do not say whether it was an hour before the hon. member for Croydon waited on him, or whether it was six weeks before—the Speaker had been making careful inquiries, perhaps not personally, but perhaps through the underground engineering of the prospective Treasurer, as to who would support him—and he had a list? I would like to see that list; I would like to see whether that was a correct list or not; whether it included all the members we see on the other side of the House. I rose merely by way of protest against this action. I believe it is undesirable in the highest degree; it is subversive of the privileges of members of this House that Mr. Speaker should listen to any proposal from anybody, while he occupies the chair, in regard to party politics at all. That is the stand I take; and, in order to emphasise that proposition, I will appeal to the actions of the hon. member for Warwick himself during the time he occupied the chair. As has been said by the late Premier, the hon. member carefully abstained from voting upon any question during the whole time of his occupancy of the chair except on one occasion. In doing so he followed the honourable precedent set by the Speaker of the British House of Commons for a considerable period. Time was when it was no uncommon thing for the Speaker of the House of Commons to go on to the floor of the House in committee and speak and vote; but I believe that practice has been discontinued; and, in following that excellent precedent, the hon. member for Warwick was doing that which he had a perfect right to do, and which to a certain extent the House, I think, expected him to do. [The PREMIER: The hon. member for Townsville said I ought not to have done it.] If the hon. member will not interrupt me I should be obliged. (Laughter.) I find that, excellent Speaker as the hon. gentleman was, he is apt to degenerate as soon as he gets out of the chair. On one occasion the hon. member did vote, and what was that about? It was in

support of the Warwick-Goondivindi Railway—it was not the Drayton deviation. I commend him for that, because I was interested in that line passing myself a bit. [Mr. J. LEAHY: You don't mean to say that he was interested?] I don't say he was; and I don't say that I am; but I am glad the hon. member was so bold on that occasion as to come off that high perch of impartiality and vote for something that I wanted. I don't quarrel with that a bit. But on all other occasions the hon. member has preserved that semblance of impartiality which is so essential to the proper conduct of the business of this House by the Speaker so far as divisions are concerned, even carrying it to this length: that on the occasion to which the late Premier referred, when the Speaker's own estimates—the Estimates of the Legislative Assembly—were under discussion, and a close division was expected, and he was requested to come and save the situation—I rather think the hon. member spoke, but on the division he absented himself. The numbers were equal, and the situation was only saved by the Chairman of Committees, the hon. member for Dalby, giving his casting vote in favour of the vote. I would like to point out that it does seem to me that doing this sort of thing is straining too far the honourable precedent we have in the House of Commons. The Speaker's vote in this House is worth relatively nine times the value of the Speaker's vote in the House of Commons—that is, in proportion to the number of members in this House as compared with the number of members in the House of Commons; and that is a reason why I consider that the hon. member for Warwick, in following that precedent so strictly and scrupulously was doing rather more than is absolutely necessary, in view of the circumstances here, as compared with those in the House of Commons. I have always held that opinion, and I have said

[4.30 p.m.] so. The hon. member has followed that course in order that there should not be a semblance of imputation that he is in any sense mixed up with any question which may come before the House during his occupancy of the chair—that he is above party and the kaleidoscopic changes that take place so long as two parties exist in this House. All these things he is to be above, according to the hon. member's own action—according to the rule laid down by himself. But what was the importance of some of these small divisions? Absolutely nothing. Yet the Speaker, forsooth, is to be above all these, lest anybody should say that he, as Speaker, has in any way taken sides in this House. It would have been compatible with that line of conduct if, when the hon. member for Croydon waited on the hon. gentleman on that day, he had said to him, "Browne, I am Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. I cannot listen to any possible proposition of the kind which you have desired to make to me." [Mr. MAXWELL: Is that what you would have done?] It is difficult for a man to say what he would have done, but I can consider myself a fairly straight man, and I believe that before I would have put myself in that position I would have resigned the Speakership, at all events. But I do not think that, if I had been Speaker, anything would ever have occurred which would have induced the hon. member for Croydon to approach me. [Opposition members: Hear, hear!] The hon. member had his own reasons for approaching the Speaker. [Mr. MAXWELL: You see you are not quite so amiable.] No, I am not; and perhaps that is why the hon. member for Croydon would not have come. I know that if any man goes to a judge and talks to him about matters which are *sub judice*, or likely to be *sub judice*, he must think that judge

a corrupt judge, or he would not approach him. Now, the Speaker of this House is more or less in the position of a judge between parties. [Mr. MAXWELL: Oh, no; a referee.] (Laughter.) The hon. member can call him what he likes, but he is more or less in the position of a judge; and I say distinctly that, on the one hand, there should have been nothing in the mind of the hon. member for Croydon which would lead him to think that the Speaker would listen to him on a matter of party politics, and, on the other hand, supposing the hon. member for Croydon did approach him, before entering into one syllable of negotiations in word, thought, or deed, he should have resigned the Speakership, and the hon. member for Croydon should have been able to come here to-day and say: "I believe that I can form a Ministry, but I have to inform the House that I am going to approach the Speaker on the subject." Then the Speaker's resignation would have been read. That would have been the proper course. With all sincerity, and with the best of feeling to the hon. member for Warwick—whom I regret to find in the position I now refer to—I say unhesitatingly, and with the deepest regret, that this House and those who are responsible for the proper conduct of business in it have the right to protest against any recurrence of a similar character in the future.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES AND PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. H. Browne, *Croydon*), who, on rising, was received with Ministerial cheers, said: I think we must all appreciate the very good feeling that has animated hon. members opposite. They state that they are doing what they are with the best feelings towards the hon. member for Warwick. I heartily concur with what was said by the hon. member for Oxley with regard to the utterances of the late Premier, the hon. member for Townsville. I feel very sorry indeed. I have known the hon. gentleman for a good many years. [Hon. R. PHILP: Keep your sympathy for your own side.] I think the hon. member's speech was one of the worst and bitterest and the most unmanly that I have heard him make since I have been in this House. I know the hon. gentleman is not usually guilty of that sort of thing, and I know the hon. gentleman withdrew it. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Rub it in.] I am very glad to see hon. gentlemen opposite are taking it so badly. (Opposition laughter.) When we were on the other side we had a lot of it to put up with. But what I protest against is taking an opportunity like this, just with Mr. Bernays in the chair, to bring up things on the motion for the election of a Speaker that should be referred to when the Speaker is in the chair. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: What about Dawson in 1899? You did not say so then.] There have been things said by the hon. member for Carnarvon and other hon. members opposite, that they would not have dared to say if a Speaker had been in the chair. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Nonsense.] But they purposely avoided waiting until there was a Speaker, so that they could vent their spleen on the hon. member for Warwick because he happens to hold the position he does at the present time. There has been a great deal said about the Labour party and about the leader of the Labour party and of what they are going to do. Let me say at once that I have no intention of being drawn into that this afternoon. But if the hon. members on the other side want fight from the late leader of the Labour party and a member of this Administration in the person of myself, or from the members of the Labour party who are now sitting on these Ministerial benches, they can get as much fight as they want. (Cheers from Government members.) Do not let hon. members make any mistake.

We had ten years solid on the other side, and now that we are on this side we are likely to be here ten years solid, and at any time the hon. gentlemen want a fight we are ready; but we are going to have it under proper conditions, and are not going to follow the example of hon. members opposite and subject people's characters to abuse when there is no Speaker to call them to order. [Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: You have done nothing else for years.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: We dared do it when there was a Speaker here, and we will do it again.] It is only about three weeks since the hon. gentleman did it, and I told him that he, with his 16 stone, was putting the Government into a bog which would just about strangle them, and it has come true. And let the hon. gentleman remember that in strangling that Government—many of them better men than himself—he politically damned himself for ever in the State of Queensland. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Mr. WOODS: He knows it, too.] [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: That is not parliamentary.] That is so. I would not have said it if a Speaker had been in the chair. (Laughter.) But hon. members opposite, in order to vent their spleen, have prevented a Speaker taking the chair, so that the debate could be conducted on proper lines. That is as far as I am going to take the same privilege as hon. members opposite. [Government members: Hear, hear!] I have only one other matter to refer to, and that is what the hon. member for Carnarvon said about my statement in this House. As a member of the Ministry for a long time, and having had *Hansard* under his command at one time, the hon. gentleman should have been very careful before he said—[Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: I never had *Hansard* under my command.] The hon. gentleman said that certain things that I had said in this Chamber were not in *Hansard*, and that I had improperly corrected the proof. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: No.] The hon. gentleman distinctly said that it did not appear in *Hansard*, and that it had been improperly corrected. That is, there is not only an imputation against myself, but there is an imputation against the *Hansard* staff. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Then it must be there.] Now, although a proof of my speech was kindly sent to me the next morning, that proof never went back to the Government Printing Office. During all the years I have been in this House I do not think I have corrected a dozen proofs. So far as anything I say in the House is concerned, I am quite willing to take *Hansard's* version of it. The hon. gentleman said that I said I went and made proposals to the late Speaker. I said nothing of the sort. I said that after I found out that I could not form a Ministry on the lines I would like to have formed it, and having heard all the reports that were going around, and which were in the public Press, I went at once and asked Mr. Morgan whether there was any truth in them, and whether, if I recommended him to the Governor, he had any chance of forming a Ministry? He told me immediately the number of men who had assured him of their support. [Opposition members: Oh, oh!] Hon. members need not assume that virtuous indignation in view of the fact that during the last fifteen years they have been dragging the gutters of Queensland in carrying out their diplomacy. It comes ill from them to be so horror-struck over the late Speaker having been approached. Why, I have heard members on both sides say that they were sick and tired to death of the Philp Ministry. Everyone was talking about getting a strong man to lead. The strong man of the late Ministry condemned himself before he had been an hour in the Government. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: And condemned everyone else.] However, many people thought that Mr.

Morgan, who is very well known in this community, was the man to fill the position, and if members went to that hon. gentleman I am not responsible, though I listened to all that was told me. Did hon. gentlemen opposite expect him to say, "I will resign first, and you can come to me afterwards?" How many members opposite would have done so? [Government members: Hear, hear! and laughter.] They have been like limpets clinging to a rock for the last nine or ten years; and, as a business man in Queen street said to me, it would take nothing less than blue metal or a charge of dynamite to shift them. And then they talk in this virtuous way about another man being approached. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Well, you have got office now.] Yes, and I am proud of it, too, and I hope to fill it for a good while. [Government members: Hear, hear!] I will not occupy any more time. I wish to say that I am very sorry this debate has taken place on the election of Speaker. I regret what has been said by the late Chief Secretary, and the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple. I did not think they were actually unfriendly to the Hon. Mr. Cowley, whom they both profess to believe in. The first hon. gentleman gave his own opinion, and the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple, got into *Hansard* a statement made by Mr. Dawson and Mr. Fisher at one time. On that occasion, as on this, the election of Speaker was not a party question at all, and the question to-day is, Who are we going to have as Speaker? Everyone who has spoken, with the exception of the hon. member for Fassifern, Mr. Jenkinson, has said that he thinks Mr. Cowley is the best man for the appointment, and I think it is much better, if the House thinks so, to let him be elected as Speaker, and then the fight which we know we are going to have can begin. Hon. gentlemen opposite will be in the position of resurrectionists, and will be able to turn up *Hansard*, and confront us with what we have formerly said; but I think it would be a fair thing, and would redound to the credit of hon. gentlemen, if we proceeded in the usual way to the election of speaker, and then conduct our debate in an orderly and proper manner.

Mr. STEPHENS (*Brisbane South*): I do not wish to occupy much time, but I wish to say candidly that the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, asked me some days ago to join the party, and asked me how it would go with the Speaker as Premier, but I told him I did not think the Speaker would touch anything of the sort. However, from what I could hear it was likely that there would be a little political move that I did not think at all honourable. Hon. gentlemen opposite were actually in league with the Speaker with a view of forming a Ministry. [The PREMIER: Was that statement made to you?] That statement has been made, and I may say further that, thinking it was not too honourable, I thought it no harm to find out from the hon. gentleman himself, without telling him exactly what I had heard. I spoke to him in the smoking-room and said, "There is no man fit to lead except Mr. Philp." He winked both eyes and said, "You are not in the know." I went away satisfied that he was in the know. Another gentleman was listening, and I may say the hon. gentleman left me at once. I was quite satisfied, from my knowledge of politics, of what had happened, and I came in a bit disappointed by the political treachery. [Mr. MAXWELL: Is that not what you call "pimping"?)

Mr. TOLMIE (*Drayton and Toowoomba*): The hon. member has made statements that are not altogether in accordance with fact. [Mr. STEPHENS: Didn't you ask me what I thought of Morgan as Premier?] It is quite

possible that in conversation with me something of that sort may have been said. I have no recollection of having said it. As a matter of fact, as has been pointed out by the member for Croydon, the question of a leader has been discussed not only this, but last session. It was discussed the first session I came into the House. The hon. member for Warwick was a man who, the first session I came here, was favourably spoken of as a leader. I do not remember all the conversations I have had with hon. members during the last three years, and that is the reason why I do not deny that I may have said something of the sort attributed to me by the hon. member for Brisbane South; but this I do say: that I never approached the hon. member for Brisbane South in connection with the matter. He is about the last man, or the second last man, in the House I would approach in the matter, because long before I came into the Chamber I knew what reputation the hon. gentleman had. I know the hon. member at one time endeavoured to wreck the Government he was connected with, and on the following day, when he had to substantiate the charge he made, he did not do anything of the sort. [Mr. STEPHENS: He never joined the Labour party.] [Mr. MAXWELL: They did not want him.] [Mr. DIBLEY: You came to our caucus meeting, though.] [Mr. STEPHENS: No.] [Mr. DIBLEY: Yes, you did.] I just want to say that the letter which I wrote to the late Premier on the 7th September was not the first communication I sent to the hon. gentleman. I also wrote to him on the 8th August as to the course I should adopt. I told him then that the Treasurer's financial proposals were so unsatisfactory to me that, much as I regretted it, if the matter came up for a vote, I should possibly have to vote against his Government. I wrote that because I wanted to be aboveboard. Any other communications I have had with him, I went to him and spoke to him. [Hon. R. PHILP: You promised on Thursday to vote with us.] I want to make it plain that my letter of 7th September was not my first official communication with the hon. gentleman, and, if necessary, I shall read the letter which I wrote on the 8th August. A copy of it is in the House, although I have not got it with me. If there is any necessity to speak later on in the evening, I shall read that letter to show that I was dissatisfied with the conduct of business by the Government, not only on the 7th September but a month earlier. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: You voted with them a month after that, and deserted them because of the Drayton deviation.] Let me tell the late Secretary for Lands that I voted against them because they put me in a position that I could not carry out my pledges, and I was determined that I would carry out my pledges to my electorate.

Mr. J. LEAHY (*Bullo*): I dare say that under ordinary circumstances it would probably be better if we deferred discussing matters which have been referred to in the Chamber this evening. But, as has been said already, and it cannot be denied, these are extraordinary circumstances, and extraordinary circumstances must be dealt with in an extraordinary manner. The public mind, to which hon. members opposite pay so much attention, is exercised over the change which has taken place, and the people would like to know the reason for it—whether it is in the general interest of the country for the purpose of getting the financial position right, or whether it is simply a grab for office. And I think we have a right to let the people know the circumstances. [Mr. HARDACRE: Tell us something about the way you intrigued with the Dawson Ministry.] The hon. member is entirely wrong; I never intrigued with the Dawson Ministry. I refer the hon. member to the

statement made by Mr. Dawson himself, and published in the *Worker*, where he said that I refused from the jump to have anything to do with that Ministry. It is no use for the hon. member to make these charges. [Mr. HARDACRE: I was there as well as you.] The hon. member never had any truck with me in that matter. [Mr. HARDACRE: Hear, hear!] The hon. member says, "Hear, hear!" Which statement is right? [Mr. HARDACRE: I know what you did do.] I refused to join with that party under any circumstances, or to have anything to do with them. I helped to put the then Ministry out of power. I stated publicly on the platform to my electors that I would help to put the Dickson Ministry out, and I did so; but I did not do it with the view of supporting the Labour party or of gaining any political advantage for myself. [Mr. HARDACRE: You did it to turn out the Government.] Yes. What was I to do when there was a conglomeration like the Labour party? (Laughter.) I told the late Sir James Dickson on several occasions that I would put him out of office the first chance I got. But I refused to take office with members on the other side of the House. However, that is not the point just now. I am exceedingly sorry that we have not the *personnel* of the present Ministry announced, because it would be very pleasant for me to look on the person of those celebrated individuals who are to rescue this country from disaster. If the Ministry as a whole were put up to auction, I do not think they would fetch a great price. There is the hon. member for Rockhampton, who has the reputation of being a kind of business man. I do not know if he will serve the State as well as he served some people at Rockhampton in connection with the Native Cat business, but it seems strange that a man of that kind, a man of easy trading virtue, can get metamorphosed into the Treasurer of the State. But I rise particularly just now to reply to the senior member for Drayton and Toowoomba. Toowoomba produced statesmen at one time, and not charlatans as it has been producing lately. I was ~~not~~ surprised at the late Premier getting excited; I was exceedingly pleased at the remarks which he made. If the House knew and the public knew the reason he had to speak in that way, I think the public would not be surprised at it at all. It is only a few days or weeks since I saw the hon. member for Oxley get up among members on this side of the House, and ask for three cheers for Mr. Philp, who he said was the best man in Queensland. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So he is, but his colleagues drowned him.] The hon. member also expressed approval of the Government proposals. The hon. member has never expressed disapproval of my administration; he has complimented me on the management of the departments which were under my control, so that he cannot say that I drowned the Ministry. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not say that you drowned the Ministry.] It is just as well, perhaps, if we have anything to say on this subject that we should say it this evening, and have done with it, and then settle down to business. I heard the hon. member for Oxley also tell the Premier, in the presence of a score of members on this side of the House, that under no circumstances would he think of taking a portfolio with the Labour party. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Nor have I taken a portfolio with the Labour party.] (Opposition laughter.) If the hon. member can justify the position he has taken up, nobody will be more pleased than I shall be. I have heard the hon. member tell the late Premier that he would resign twenty times before he would vote against him or take a portfolio with the Labour party. The hon.

member has told that to fifty persons in this House, and yet he was intriguing for it all the time. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not true.] As the hon. member for Carpentaria says, he told the hon. member for Warwick he would not do it, and yet he went up the line to meet the hon. member when he was returning from Warwick. If the hon. member can justify that conduct, I shall be the first person to give the hon. member credit, and to withdraw anything I have said. I feel sore on this matter. [Government members: Hear, hear! and laughter.] I had some faith in the hon. member for Oxley; from the good reputation I had heard of him I believed that there were depths of degradation to which he would not descend, and I bet the late Premier a new hat that under no circumstances would he take a portfolio with the Labour party. I hope the hon. member will pay for that hat anyhow, because I got taken down through the faith I had in his good reputation, which has fallen in. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba referred just now to something that I did with regard to the Drayton deviation. [Mr. TOLMIE: I did not mention you in particular.] But the hon. member did mention me in a letter which was published in the Press. He was looking for an excuse, and has been for a time looking for an excuse, for the action which he has taken. The hon. member told the Premier about three weeks ago that he could no longer support the Government. Then that passed off, and he returned to his allegiance; finding that the Government had a majority, he wished to be with the hon. member for Townsville. Directly there was another agitation worked up the hon. member endeavoured to get another excuse. He waited on me at Toowoomba about the Drayton deviation. He professed

[5 p.m.] the most unbounded respect for the Premier. [Mr. TOLMIE: That is correct; but not for you.] I told him I could not speak for the Cabinet, but that as soon as I got to Brisbane I would lay his views before it, and that I would give him an answer in writing as to whether the Government would be able to go on with the work. I told him the Government did not withdraw one inch from the promise they had made. They promised to build the line, and built it would be; but it could not be built without money. He wanted an answer straight off; a stand-and-deliver answer. I could not do that. I had to ask the Treasurer whether the money was available. The hon. member wanted an excuse. I want to say something further about that line to show the position of the hon. member. About two months ago, when I was at Toowoomba, at Hennessy's hotel, just before going to bed, I met Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Wonderley, Mr. Charles Campbell, and the hon. member. We were talking about the Drayton deviation, and the hon. member said he did not care a snap of his fingers whether it was built or not. [Mr. TOLMIE: That is not true.] Probably the hon. member will wait until I have done. He said the only difficulty he found about it was that it was promised, that he had made a promise on the strength of it, and that on that promise he was committed; but personally he did not care whether it was built or not. [Mr. TOLMIE: I will not say that is not correct.] There are a great many people there who do not want it. The hon. member was the only person present who did want it. They were opposed to it, as the principal portion of the people of Toowoomba are now. [Mr. FOGARTY: They are not.] I have a petition against it, signed by 400 residents of Toowoomba. [Mr. FOGARTY: And here is one for it signed by 900.] I am not referring to that distant end of

the town in which the hon. member lives. They signed against the proposed route of the railway. The hon. member would not allow me to make a fresh survey. He said a penny stamp would settle the whole thing. [Mr. TOLMIE: That is right.] It was only necessary to ask for a valuation of those properties, and O'Brien would get up an agitation, and that would squelch it.] [Mr. TOLMIE: Not at all.] Those may not have been his exact words, but they are the sum and substance of them. He said a penny stamp would do it. I went to the trouble of writing a letter and putting a twopenny stamp on it, and in reply I got a petition signed by 400 people, which was endorsed by the hon. member himself to me. He would not give me time to do anything. He put a pistol to my head, and said, "You must stand and deliver." It was an attempt to carry out an intrigue to the fullest extent. That is the position. [Mr. TOLMIE: It is not.] It is. The witnesses are there, and the hon. member himself admits most of what I say, with a mental reservation, no doubt. He told the House that it was on account of the Drayton deviation that he should vote against the Government. But there is a proper parliamentary way to do that, on a definite question before the House. That particular motion was the financial policy of the Government which he said he had previously approved of. He was, therefore, in the humiliating and degrading position of voting against a resolution he said he fully believed in. That is the position of the hon. member for Toowoomba, and it shows a wonderful falling-off in the quality of its members since Mr. Groom represented that electorate in this Chamber. If he voted against anything he would have done it in a proper parliamentary manner, and would have given good and sufficient reasons for doing so. Mr. Groom was a remarkably able man. He was not the possessor of the brazen tongue and the leaden pen of the present hon. member for Toowoomba. [The TREASURER: Go on; there is no Speaker to call you to order.] I understand that the first Act of the new Premier is to appoint seven Ministers—that is, an additional Minister. That is carrying economy into effect. They are going to save the finances of Queensland by putting their hands into the pockets of the people of Queensland to the extent of £1,000 for their own personal advantage. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you sure of that?] Has not the Premier himself said so? It is on that that I base my remark. [The PREMIER: I never said so.] I shall be exceedingly glad if it is not the case, and if I can give the hon. gentleman any legitimate assistance in putting things right I will do it. There is no humbug about that. It is the consideration of the country I look to, and if those gentlemen are able to do something which we could not do in that matter—although we were going in the right direction, and would soon have done it—they are a great deal better than their looks. All I have now to say is that I hope the hon. member for Herbert will be elected Speaker without any opposition. I have differed with him once or twice myself when he was in the chair, and probably I have the distinction which no other member has—of having twice in one night moved that his ruling be disagreed to, and defeated him. I believe that is a parliamentary record. I am not sure now that I was right, and I am not quite certain that the Speaker was not right, although he was perfectly satisfied that he was. But there must always be differences of opinion, and I give the hon. member for Herbert credit for all sincerity. We want the best Speaker the House can produce, and I believe the hon. member for Herbert to be the best. I always held that he

was a better Speaker than Mr. Morgan, though he had not so good a manner. I hope he will be appointed.

The PREMIER (Hon. A. Morgan, *Warwick*): I have no desire to intervene in this discussion, but I hope the House will bring it to an early conclusion. I think we ought to have the Speaker in the chair. His Excellency the Governor has authorised me to say that he will be prepared to receive the Speaker-elect the moment the House has made its choice. It will be necessary to agree to a short adjournment of the House for that purpose, and as time is getting on, I think hon. members on both sides will consult the best interests of the House and the general convenience if they allow the debate to come to an early conclusion. There is no reason why any matter which hon. members wish to raise should not be raised at a later stage. While I am on my feet, I would like to say, in reply to what my predecessor said in opening the debate this afternoon, that I am quite able to assure him that I have not been guilty of any intriguing whatever. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: What about that list?] And, moreover, I can look the hon. gentleman straight in the face, and without flinching tell him that every effort that I could make—certainly every effort I have made—has been in the direction of preventing this crisis arising. I can tell the hon. gentleman and his colleagues that. [Hon. R. PHILP: You never told me that. It is strange that you never consulted me on the matter.] As a matter of fact, I did not consult anyone. People have come and talked to me as private friends, and although I was Speaker, I could not prevent private friends speaking to me about politics. I appeal to hon. members on both sides to say whether I have been guilty of intrigue in connection with this matter. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Appearances are decidedly against you.] The hon. gentleman speaks of appearances, but, as a lawyer, he must know that you cannot always judge by appearances. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: What about that list?] I want to emphasise briefly what I have said. If there has been any intrigue on my part, it has been in the direction of advising hon. members not to create a crisis. I have been blamed for consulting with Mr. Browne, the late leader of the Labour Opposition, while I was in the chair; but, as a matter of fact, I did not see Mr. Browne until, I cannot exactly say how long—but probably it was about an hour before he went to Government House. When he returned from Government House, I had a summons from His Excellency— [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Did you show him a list?] What list? [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: The list mentioned.] [An honourable member: It only exists in your imagination.] [Hon. J. LEAHY: The statement that the list did exist does not appear in *Hansard*.] I am prepared to make the statement due to the House, and I want to make it as brief yet as ample as possible. When I received the Governor's summons, and obeyed it, I at once resolved that I must present my resignation as Speaker, and I took action to that end. I understand that, in the course of the debate on last Tuesday, comment was made on the fact that my resignation as Speaker was not then before the House. The hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, alluded to that. My resignation was not before the House, not because I desired to withhold it for any improper reason, but because it was quite evident to me, as it would have been to any man who had studied the subject, that had I tendered my resignation before my deputy, the hon. member for Dalby, took the chair, the House would have been without a head. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Could we not have elected a Speaker, as we have done to-day, or as is proposed to-day?] Which has

not yet been done. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : I corrected myself.] It was desirable that my resignation should come before the House in an orderly manner when the House was prepared for what must follow. The House, if it had not been previously made aware of the resignation, would have had no foreknowledge of the business to come before it ; but to-day the House is prepared. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : The election of Speaker must be the first thing.] It was well that the House should know the business to be brought before it, so that it might approach that business in a proper manner. Now, I would like to add that the course that I pursued is distinctly the right course in the opinion of the highest authorities in the State, and I am satisfied that hon. members opposite—[Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : Is that in regard to the negotiations between yourself and Mr. Browne and others?] The hon. member and his colleagues, I am sure, when they think this matter over quietly, will agree with me that the course which was taken was the right course. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : Certainly not ; I differ from you on that.] I am sorry that the hon. member for Carnarvon does not agree with me now, but I am quite sure he will agree with me on that point by and by. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : I hope you will agree with me.] I am sure that his common sense will lead him to the conclusion that the course which has been taken is the right course. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : What about that list—was there such a list?] Yes, there was. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : I would like to see it.] [An honourable member : Why was it not referred to in *Hansard*?] I have no objection to show the hon. gentleman the list. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON : Thanks ; I would like to see it as a matter of curiosity.] I have no objection to showing the hon. gentleman the list ; he will find it is made up of members who sent in their names to me—not only names of members of the Opposition, but members on both sides. The point is this : that the charge of intriguing made against me is not true. Only one member—the hon. member for South Brisbane—has attempted to prove it, and I am sorry that that hon. member has introduced a smoking-room conversation. [Mr. STEPHENS : Wherever there is treachery, I will deal with it in the same way, every time.] As a matter of fact, that exists only in the hon. member's imagination. I have a recollection of having heard the hon. member make some jocular references to politics, but I could not talk politics with him. [Mr. STEPHENS : You told me I was not in the know. You winked both eyes and left.] Well, probably I winked both eyes several times, but I think the hon. member is drawing on his imagination. I can assure hon. gentlemen opposite that my efforts were in the direction of preventing the crisis which has resulted in sending them to the Opposition benches, and I can say this in all sincerity. [Honourable members : Hear, hear !]

HON. R. PHILIP : I don't wish to delay the House ; but the late Speaker said that he has taken part in no intrigue between the time of his resigning the Speakership and now. I am not complaining of that ; but I am informed that the hon. gentleman was approached before that. The hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, showed a friend of mine a list of Ministers the day I resigned—[Mr. TOLMIE : I showed you a list ?]—a list of Ministers, and there is only one mistake in it, and that was that the hon. member for Dalby was not mentioned as a Minister. All the rest were there. [Mr. TOLMIE : To whom did I give the list?] I am not prepared to give the name. [Mr. TOLMIE : It is absolutely false.] The gentleman who told me is an upright, honourable man, and after what has taken place I am sorry to say that I could not believe the hon. member again. The list

included all the members of the present Ministry except Mr. Bell, and that was on the day I resigned. It seems strange that all this could have been arranged on the day I resigned. It looks as if a good deal of preparation had taken place when the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, could give a list of the new Ministers on the day I resigned.

Mr. TOLMIE : I wish to say a few words with respect to what took place in Toowoomba in connection with the Drayton deviation. I asked the Minister to carry out the promise that had been made with regard to the construction of that particular railway, and he went back on what he told me in November last year, and said that the people of Toowoomba did not want the railway. I told him then that, so far as I was concerned, the people of Toowoomba did want it, that I had pledged myself to it, and that if they did not want the railway it was very easy for him to ascertain their wishes. I showed him that a letter written to the municipal council to ascertain the value of the lands would probably bring forth an expression of opinion as to whether the line was wanted or not. At a subsequent public meeting held in Toowoomba I said that. At the deputation I thanked the hon. gentleman for the overt act taken in bringing the matter to a crisis ; but the Government went back on their promise given last May. [Mr. J. LEAHY : They did not ; but this Government will. You'll never get it. Why don't you be a gentleman like your colleague?] How did the hon. gentleman behave himself in Toowoomba when the deputation waited on him? Like a poltroon. How has he conducted himself to-day, but in an exactly similar manner? Can he conduct himself in any other way? I want to emphasise the fact that I told him, and the public of Toowoomba, too, that I would be quite willing to bear the cost of a petition to ascertain whether the people of Drayton and Toowoomba wanted the railway or not ; and I said I was prepared to contribute towards the cost of a petition against it if the people were opposed to the railway.

* Mr. J. HAMILTON (*Cook*) : I am glad to support the nomination of the Hon. A. S. Cowley for the position of Speaker. On a previous occasion when I voted against his nomination I said that he was the best Speaker I had ever sat under, but that I thought that the hon. member for Warwick, Mr. Morgan, would make a better Speaker. On that occasion not one man on the Government side ever suggested unfairness or incapacity on the part of the Hon. Mr. Cowley, but hon. members on the other side attacked him most grossly and bitterly, and it is amusing now to see those hon. members eating their own words. It either proves that they did not believe one word of what they stated at that time, or that they want to close the mouth of a political opponent. Personally, I suppose the members of the late Government consider this a happy release, because it is not a pleasant thing to hold office in times like these. One hon. gentleman stated some time ago that the Government were out-generalled. Yes ; but how? A number of members returned to support Mr. Philip—members who even two weeks ago were loud in their protestations of loyalty—deserted him and went over to the other side. Why? In the first instance, who are the Ministers? At the time when they were supposed to be loyally supporting Mr. Philip they were undermining. Take Mr. Morgan in the first instance. He states while he was Speaker certain members on this side of the House sent their names to him to tell him that they would support him. Why should they do that unless there was some idea that he was ready to accept the Premiership? And if

he had not the slightest intention of doing so, why make a list of those names and have them ready for presentation to Mr. Browne? [The PREMIER: I did not say so.] He said it was only one hour before Mr. Browne went to Government House that he saw Mr. Morgan; but the late Premier can inform the House that I told him three weeks before the division that it was intended that Mr. Morgan should be Premier. I told him it was distinctly settled. I heard it from the Press, I heard it from the manager of a bank, I heard it from members, I mentioned a dozen sources from which I heard it. [Mr. KER: You must have been a bit of a Mahatma.] It was my business, as "Whip" of the party, to keep my ears open, and people came to give me information. That is the information I ascertained, and I gave that information to the Hon. Premier, Mr. Phip. With respect to Mr. Denham, I heard him express himself to the Premier and others against the taxation proposals, but never against anything else. These proposals, however, were altered; and even then he went against the Government. With regard to the hon. member for Dalby, Mr. Bell, that hon. member was one of the most loyal supporters of this party. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear!] He was actually in favour of these proposals. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear!] Seeing that such is the case, it would be interesting to know whether, if that hon. gentleman had not been offered a portfolio, he would have left the leader he promised his electors to support. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Ask me that question at the proper time.] I recollect some time ago—and that was one of the reasons for the downfall of the Ministry—the hon. gentleman should have informed me, as Government Whip, that he was going away. He did not, but I subsequently heard from the Premier that he was going to pair with Mr. Denham. Subsequently I asked Mr. Denham if he had paired with Mr. Bell, and he said he had not, but that Mr. Lesina had. Then Mr. Barber came to me and said that was the case, and that Mr. Lesina was coming back that night. I did not believe that, but [5:30 p.m.] as Mr. Bell had paired with him, I could not get out of it. If Mr. Bell had come to me before he left, I would have told him that it was ridiculous to pair with any member of the Labour party for this vote, as not one of them would pair with him unless he intended to be absent in any case. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Had I imagined there was going to be a division, I should certainly have waited.] Then we have Mr. Browne. He told us the other day that he had had nothing to do with any machinations. Well, we know that Mr. Kidston, his first lieutenant, has been very active for five or six weeks, with his knowledge and connivance. Do we believe for one moment that the hon. member did not know anything about it? Then, again, he tells us that he is a loyal Britisher—or we are told in the Press that he is. I do not consider it the action of a loyal Britisher, when it is proposed to send an address of congratulation to the Queen on completing the sixtieth year of her reign, to walk across the floor and vote against it. That is what the hon. member did—the leader of his party—or the leaderette, as he is apparently not considered good enough to be the leader of the party. Mr. Kidston, of course, is the party coquette. As for the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, what is the history of his case? [Mr. TURNER: What is your own history?] I am not ashamed of my own history, and I shall be very happy to compare it with that of the hon. member, if all be true that I have heard about it. (Laughter.) At any rate, what is the history of Mr. Tolmie's

case? He first states distinctly, in the presence of thirty members on this side, that he is going to support the amended propositions. He afterwards writes to the Premier stating that he is not going to do so—that he is going to break his promise because Mr. Leahy would not give him his thirty pieces of silver. What is the assumption? That if he had given the hon. member the bribe, he would have supported the Government. It is unfortunate that the hon. member did not get his thirty pieces of silver, because, if he had, he might have gone a little further, and followed the example of his prototype. Mr. Lindley promised members on Thursday that he would support the amended resolutions, and Mr. Hawthorn not only told me—[Mr. HAWTHORN: You never came near me.] It is no use denying it, because there are too many witnesses. He not only told Mr. Petrie, who showed him the amended proposals, and is here to prove it, that he would support them. He not only told Mr. G. Thorn the same thing, he not only told me, but Mr. Boles has told a number of us that, having heard that he and Mr. Lindley were going to vote against the Government on Thursday night, he went to Mr. Lindley, who said, "No; I am going to support the Government." And then he went to Mr. Hawthorn, who said, "Yes, I am. It would be gross treachery if I did not." [Mr. HAWTHORN: I did no such thing.] I can give the hon. member other names. [Mr. HAWTHORN: I deny it absolutely.] If you deny it, there is the evidence I have mentioned of four men, and the evidence of four men is sufficient to hang a man. [Mr. HAWTHORN: You never came near me.] How can Mr. Morgan trust these men, who have made protestations to the late Premier as strong as they could possibly make them? And how can they trust him? Why, it will be a Morganatic alliance—(laughter)—and it will result in divorce. Human nature is just the same as it was 2,000 years ago, when Xenophon said that traitors are despised even by those to whom they go over. Mr. Leahy made the remark just now that he was sore, and members laughed. We are not sore at the Labour party beating us. [Opposition members: Hear, hear!] They fought us manfully. What we object to is to being, like Lazarus, licked by the dogs. (Laughter.)

Mr. FÖRSYTH (*Carpentaria*): I am exceedingly sorry that the debate has taken such an acrimonious turn. [Government members: Hear, hear!] I hope there will be no further discussion in connection with this motion. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] I have listened most attentively to the debate this afternoon, and I have been surprised that there has not been a single member of the Labour party, with the exception of the hon. member who proposed Mr. Cowley, who has had the courage to say a single word in his favour. [Mr. HARDACRE: I have tried twice to speak.] Anyone who reads what Mr. Dawson said about Mr. Cowley—and I am exceedingly sorry that we have to say these things before Mr. Cowley, because it cannot be agreeable to him—but I say the language that was used at that time—and there are a large number of members who are now in the House who were present on that occasion—the language used was an absolute disgrace to any Assembly, either in Queensland or anywhere else. [Mr. J. HAMILTON: Only one side of the House.] I believe the hon. member for Herbert is a straight man. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] But on that occasion he was accused of being biased, of being simply a political trickster—that when motions were moved by the Labour party he knocked them out if he could on some technical point. I have no desire to bring these things forward. I hate to

speak like this, but I say that, if hon. members on the other side who represent the Labour party, have got any feeling of self-respect, they should get up and at least say something. The only construction that can be placed upon their silence is that the same feeling exists now that existed in 1899, and I am exceedingly sorry if that is so. [Government members: No.] I hate this acrimonious debate, but, as I told the hon. member for Warwick a few minutes ago when he was over here, if there is one thing more annoying to me than another, it is that no encouragement should have been given by hon. members opposite, with the exception of the hon. member for Kennedy, to the hon. member for Herbert, who, whatever his faults may be, was a most excellent Speaker. Under the circumstances, hon. members opposite should have given him some little bit of encouragement and allowed bygones to be bygones; but instead of that, they simply sit in their places like stoics. Not a single man of them has the courage to get up and say what he thinks. I cannot admire the action they have taken this afternoon. [Mr. MAXWELL: No one wants your admiration.] Personally, it affords me the very greatest pleasure to support Mr. Cowley for the Chair. I believe he will be impartial, that he will be a good Speaker; and I hope there will be no further acrimonious discussion, but that we will get on with business.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): Just before the question is put I wish to have a few words, and certainly not of a recriminatory nature. I object to being placed in any position in which I can be accused of inconsistency. If it had not been for the speech of the hon. member for Fassfern this afternoon, I should not have spoken at all. The member for Carpentaria is quite wrong in what he says, because he must know that I have tried on two occasions this afternoon to speak on this question. [Mr. FORSYTH: I do not blame you.] I am glad to hear that. As one of the oldest members of this party, and also as a member who was in the House at the time the Hon. Mr. Cowley was Speaker— [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: Which party are you speaking of?] As one of the oldest members of the House; as one of the oldest members of the Labour party. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: That's right. We understand you now.] I may say as one who voted for the late Speaker, Mr. Morgan, I know there was some strong feeling at the time, but I was not one of those who held that strong feeling against Mr. Cowley. At the time of the election I made these remarks—

As a good deal of strong language has been used during the debate, I should like to give my opinion on the question at issue. I may say that during several years' experience in the House I have had no occasion to complain of Mr. Cowley's conduct with regard to myself. Generally, I consider he has conducted the duties of his position with a very great amount of ability, and has made himself well up in matters of practice and procedure of Parliament.

Then I went on to say—

Apart from that, I think he has not been altogether capable—perhaps from the peculiar political views he holds—of holding the balance fairly, without endeavouring in any way to be unfair.

I gave every credit to Mr. Cowley, but at the same time I considered that, after all, there was another gentleman who promised to be his superior to some extent in filling the chair. Now, the late Premier at that time uttered altogether different views to those which he expressed this afternoon, and I was sorry to hear him make the remarks he did because he did not make them at the time the change took place. He said then—

I have been a member of the Assembly during the whole time that the late Speaker, Mr. Cowley, presided

over this Chamber, and I can only say that at all times I have found him most impartial.

* * * * *
It cannot be said that I intend to vote for Mr. Cowley because he has shown too much favour to this side of the House. I shall do so because I think that during the whole of the time he has been in the chair he has done his duty fearlessly and honestly.

I am very glad to hear that he makes that statement now. I know that on some occasions Mr. Cowley did not give decisions which were altogether favourable to the side of the House on which I sat, and a strong feeling arose against him, but we must remember that during those years when Mr. Cowley was Speaker there was very strong party feeling on both sides, and it was quite natural that a little irritation should arise when decisions were given against one side or the other. I intend to vote for Mr. Cowley for these reasons. We all admit his unequal ability as Speaker so far as knowledge of parliamentary procedure and practice and constitutional law are concerned. In addition to that it is some years since the hon. gentleman was Speaker, and it is a rule of British fair play that when a person has been punished for an offence—[Opposition members: Oh! oh!]—we are not to insist upon the punishment being continued for all time. If a person has offended it is not fair to punish him for the term of his natural life, and since the time he occupied the chair, Mr. Cowley has, I believe, won the respect and esteem of every hon. member of this House, no matter what his political views may be. At any rate, I have come to recognise in him, although opposed to him in many ways, a manly man whom one can differ with and still respect. If there is any necessity to show the manly kind of man he is, we need go no further than the words he used this afternoon expressing his desire to take to heart the criticism which has been made upon him, and to endeavour to improve any faults which may have arisen in the past. Seeing that he has made a statement of that kind, I do not consider I, for one, would be in the least inconsistent if I express my desire that he be elected to the chair. Knowing, as we do, his ability, we should give him one more opportunity of proving his worthiness for the position. There has been much said during the heat of debate, which if I had spoken earlier I should have replied to, but I think it is better on an important occasion of this kind, when everything should be as orderly as possible, that such matters should be suppressed, and I shall reserve anything I have to say with regard to intrigue until a later occasion. I will only say that, so far as any intrigue is concerned, the members of the Labour party, as far as I know, are absolutely free of any suspicion of it. This party never had the slightest intimation of any crisis that was about to arise until Tuesday evening at tea time, when we heard the statement of the member for Toowoomba that he was about to vote against the Government. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: You are referring now to the Labour party?] We knew nothing about any crisis until about two hours before the crisis, and we never knew or had the slightest suspicion as a party that there was any approach made to Mr. Morgan. We do not know it now. As far as I know, there was no desire to approach the late Speaker long after the crisis had taken place. I have yet to learn that when there is a unanimous, earnest, and intense desire on the part of an overwhelming number of members to ask a gentleman who occupies a responsible position, and who is respected for his ability and fairness, to take charge of the country at a time of an important and vital crisis in its history, there is no intrigue about it when he is approached by members from any

side. [Hon. J. F. G. FOXTON: "The end justifies the means." That is what you mean.] I say there is no intrigue about it, and it is quite a proper thing. The real reason why the present Ministry has been formed is because members had become sick and tired of the drifting of our country to ruin, as a result of the action of the late Ministry. The proof of that is the overwhelming public opinion which has welcomed the change that has taken place in the Government. [Hear, hear! and Opposition laughter.] I have much pleasure in supporting the nomination of the Hon. A. S. Cowley for the position of Speaker.

Mr. STORY: I was the proposer of Mr. Cowley years ago, and I knew then that he was a good man for the position. We never had any reason for a change of Speaker, and the party sitting on this side of the House did not wish for a change. The change was brought about principally by hon. members on the other side of the Chamber. It is all very well for the hon. member for Leichhardt to say that, now that Mr. Cowley has had a lesson, they think he will be a good Speaker, and are going to support him for the position. I should like to read the division list to prove to the hon. member for Leichhardt that we on this side of the House, with one or two exceptions, approved of the appointment of the Hon. A. S. Cowley as Speaker when he was last proposed for the office, and considered that he was well qualified to be Speaker of the House. Mr. Cowley was Speaker in a former Parliament, and there was no reason why he should be put out of the chair. I was not capable of intrigue or conspiracy in the matter, and when I was asked to propose Mr. Cowley for the position I thought we could not have a better Speaker. The hon. member has not changed the slightest bit in his personality since then, and he will be a good Speaker now when he gets into the chair. I do not know that he had need of any lesson. Perhaps he was a little bit abrupt in his manner at times. I know that he called me to order sometimes, but I always reckoned that he was right and that I was wrong. The question at that time was "That Mr. Alfred Sandlings Cowley do take the chair of the House as Speaker," and the Ayes were—

Messrs. Dickson, Rutledge, Foxton, Chataway, Philp, Dalrymple, Murray, G. Thorn, Macdonald-Paterson, Grimes, T. B. Cribb, Callan, Finney, Hood, Story, Forrest, J. C. Cribb, Campbell, Stephenson, Forsyth, Newell, Bridges, Lord, Stodart, and Hanran.

Not one single member of the Labour party voted with the Ayes. The Noes were—

Messrs. Dawson, Glassey, McDonald, McDonnell, Kerr, Kidston, Fisher, Lesina, Dunsford, Fitzgerald, Jackson, Mackintosh, Keogh, Givens, W. Hamilton, Leahy, J. Hamilton, Curtis, Armstrong, O'Connell, Drake, Kates, Jenkinson, Luya, Tooth, Petrie, Plunkett, Smith, Dibley, W. Thorn, Moore, Browne, Maxwell, Kent, Bartholomew, Annear, Hardacre, Rylands, Higgs, and Stewart.

Mr. Cowley had our confidence years ago; he has retained it ever since, and he has it now. I believe that he is the most appropriate and best man in the House for the position of Speaker. [Honourable members: Mr. Cowley! Mr. Cowley!]

The Hon. A. S. Cowley was thereupon conducted to the chair by his mover and seconder, amid acclamation.

The SPEAKER elect, standing on the upper steps of the dais, addressed the House as follows:—I again wish to express my grateful thanks to the House for the honour done me in electing me to this high and honourable position. Notwithstanding anything that has been said, I shall feel it incumbent upon me to do my duty

honestly, fearlessly, and without favour or prejudice, to the best of my ability. I sincerely trust that I shall be supported by members on both sides of the House, for without that support no Speaker can do justice to himself nor to the Assembly over which he presides. (Hear, hear!)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. T. Bell, *Dalby*): Mr. Speaker elect,—I do not think there is any man in this Chamber who has the slightest regard for parliamentary decorum but will at this moment fervently thank God that we have at last got somebody in the chair. I rise in obedience to a becoming and recognised parliamentary tradition to offer you the congratulations of the House on your election to the position in which you find yourself. You have reached that position, Mr. Speaker elect, through the medium of a most trying ordeal. Only one Speaker, I think, in the records of the Queensland Parliament had an experience that can be compared with it, but I can assure you that even if you had not made the declaration that you made just now as to the manner in which you propose to carry out your duties, you will have the devotion and respect of the House, and the full determination of the Chamber to support you in every course you take in order to uphold the dignity of your position. We recognise—I do not think I need except anybody in the Chamber—that unless we have a good Speaker we cannot have a proper conduct of public affairs. Perhaps with the exception of the leader of the House—I am not sure even with that exception—there is no man who can so influence the tone and conduct of the House as the Speaker of the Chamber. I can only say that we shall look to you to preserve the high traditions of the great office that you now occupy, and we confidently look to you to do it in a manner that is worthy of the Chair and of your predecessors. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

HON. R. PHILP: Allow me also to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election to that high position. From what I know of you, I am certain that you will always discharge the duties of that position with honesty, impartiality, and strict integrity. It will be my pleasure to assist you in every possible way to maintain order in this Chamber, and I hope that at the next election of Speaker we shall again see you appointed to the chair. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] I think that so long as a man sitting in that chair has not forfeited the good opinion of the House he should be allowed to retain the position, no matter what may be his political opinions.

The PREMIER: I have to announce that His Excellency will be prepared to receive the Speaker immediately, and I shall be glad if representatives from both sides of the House will accompany Mr. Speaker elect to Government House.

Mr. JENKINSON: I consider that I have done my duty in presenting the protest which I did earlier in the evening, but as it is the wish of the majority of the House that you, Sir, should be elevated to that position, I am quite willing to bow to their decision. I trust that the sentiments which you have given utterance to prior to taking the chair will be translated into practice, and I am sure you will have nothing to say against me during the whole time you occupy that position and I am a member of the House.

The SPEAKER: I shall now proceed to Government House to present myself to His Excellency for his approval and I invite hon. members to accompany me.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER.

The SPEAKER, accompanied by the Clerk and hon. members, then proceeded to Government House.

On the House resuming at a quarter past 6 o'clock,

The SPEAKER said: I have to report that I have been to Government House, where I presented myself to the Governor as the member chosen by the Assembly for the high and honourable office of Speaker, and that His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

“Mr. SPEAKER,—

“I approve, on behalf of the King, the choice which the Legislative Assembly has made in your person.”

The SPEAKER: I shall resume the chair at a quarter past 7 o'clock.

The House resumed at the hour named.

THE NEW MINISTRY.

The PREMIER: I have to inform the House that on Tuesday last I received a message from His Excellency the Governor, and on attending at Government House I was asked to undertake the responsibility of forming a Ministry. I consented to do so, and have now to announce that I have completed the task, and to inform the House, as I have informed His Excellency, that the new Ministry is as follows:—

The Honourable Arthur Morgan, Chief Secretary and Secretary for Railways of Queensland.

The Honourable Andrew Henry Barlow, Secretary for Public Instruction of Queensland.

The Honourable William Henry Browne, Secretary for Mines and Secretary for Public Works of Queensland.

The Honourable William Kidston, Treasurer of Queensland.

The Honourable Joshua Thomas Bell, Secretary for Public Lands of Queensland.

The Honourable James William Blair, Attorney-General of Queensland; and

The Honourable Digby Frank Denham, Home Secretary and Secretary for Agriculture of Queensland.

It will be observed that there are seven Ministers. That course has been decided upon as it was desired to have in the Council, as the representative of the Government, a Minister of full standing. I may say, however, that the number of Ministers has been increased to seven without increased cost to the country. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] [Hon. R. PHILP: Who is the Minister working for nothing?] We have no Minister working for nothing. Ministers are keenly alive to the responsibilities they have assumed, and they will devote all their energies, and such ability as they possess, to the duties devolving upon them. Naturally, they will require a little time to assume office and give attention to matters awaiting their consideration. They will also require to review the position created by the late crisis, and to arrive at a decision in respect of the business they propose to offer to the House for consideration during the remainder of the session. I therefore propose to ask the House to consent to an adjournment for a week, and I apprehend the House will not object to an adjournment so reasonable in time. The time is indeed too short, but it will be necessary for the House to

meet next week in order that one Act, which otherwise would expire at the end of this month, should be renewed. I refer to the Stamp Act. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Is it necessary to have further taxation?] It does not involve further taxation. I have said I propose to ask the House to consent to adjourn for a week—that is, until Thursday next. I now lay on the table of the House a copy of the *Gazette* containing the notification of the appointment of Ministers and their respective offices. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

HON. R. PHILP: I have no objection to the adjournment asked for by the Chief Secretary, and I hope that in a week's time he will be able to tell the House what the policy of the Government is. I think it is a reasonable thing to expect that with a Government comprised of the remains of three parties he should be able to form a policy within a week, and I can assure him that he will not meet with any factious opposition from any member on this side of the House. (Hear, hear!) I say in all sincerity that this side of the House will assist him in every way in economising, even when he is dealing with the Estimates we have framed; for men on this side are just as anxious as the Chief Secretary is—perhaps more anxious—to see this State prosper. (Hear, hear!) I say that I and my party will assist him. I do not mean the assistance when we were in power that we got from the present Treasurer and from the leader of the Opposition, and from other hon. members. We will not stonewall any measure for six weeks, but we will give everything fair criticism, and then take a vote. We will not speak for speaking sake. I recognise that the Chief Secretary has taken a heavy load on his shoulders. I sympathise with him because he has a big thing in front of him, but I can tell him that, to my mind, things are very much better than they were two years or twelve months ago. At the present time he starts a much easier task than our task was two years ago. I omitted to announce to the House that I have been appointed by members on this side to lead them. Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

The PREMIER: I am exceedingly glad to hear that the hon. gentleman has been chosen to lead the Opposition. I congratulate the Opposition on having such an excellent leader, and I think I may also congratulate the House, because I feel perfectly sure that the Government will receive nothing but fair play from an Opposition controlled by that gentleman. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received the Auditor-General's Report for the year ending 30th June, 1903.

Ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday next, the 24th instant.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: There is one little thing that I would like to refer to. Before referring to that, however, I think it is quite reasonable that the leader of the Opposition has acceded to the request of the Chief Secretary for the adjournment. This side of the House is a homogeneous body, and the leader of the Opposition is our leader; but I would like to know if I can get the information from the leader of the Labour party, the hon. member for Croydon, or the leader of the Constitutional Opposition, what

attitude the Labour party intend to take up now. Has the Labour party disappeared? Is it a mere addendum to the present Chief Secretary, or what? I think this is a very serious consideration.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Mr. HARDACRE: Just one word, and I am speaking entirely for myself. I understand that the Government next week will bring forward their policy, and, as one member, may I ask the Government to earnestly consider the bringing forward this session of two measures, which would be almost entirely non-contentious. One is the Workmen's Compensation Bill which was introduced by the last Government this session, and which I believe will be universally welcomed. The other is the amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act, which is urgently needed, and that is the reason why I particularly ask that this second-mentioned measure be introduced as soon as possible. Although we have had good seasons just recently in most portions of the State, still there are other portions in a bad way, and there is a very urgent necessity for the amending of this Act in order to assist selectors to obtain stock.

HON. SIR ARTHUR RUTLEDGE: I understood the Treasurer to give notice that he proposes to introduce in committee next week a Bill for the purpose of continuing the operation of the Stamp Act of 1901. Should he not propose to do something more? After the 30th of this month that Act will expire, and this will be new taxation. The proposal which the hon. gentleman seeks to embody in the Bill of which notice has been given, was contained in some of the resolutions laid before this House the week before last, and the tabling of which resulted in the defeat of the then Government. [Hon. J. LEAHY: No; not defeat.] Well, which resulted in the resignation of the Government. I take it that it will be necessary for the Treasurer to go into Committee of Ways and Means, and table resolutions before he brings in the Bill, for this Bill will involve new taxation. It is not an ordinary Bill which expires on a certain date, but after the 30th of this month it will be new taxation, and in order to have new taxation he must follow the course adopted by the late Government.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-nine minutes past 7 o'clock.