

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 1960

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. D. E. Nicholson, Murrumbidgee) took the chair at 11 a.m.

QUESTIONS

PRICES OF SAWN TIMBER

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) asked the Minister for Justice—

“(1) Has his attention been drawn to the fact that a new price list for sawn timber increasing prices by 20s. per 100 super. feet has been issued to distributors in Brisbane by the Sawmillers Association?”

“(2) Will he have an inquiry instituted by the Prices Advisory Board into this savage increase which will apply to kiln dried timber, mouldings and all rough hardwood used in home construction?”

“(3) Failing this will he consider the reintroduction of price control on sawn timber sales?”

Hon. A. W. MUNRO (Toowong) replied—

“(1 to 3) Timber is not a commodity at present subject to price control under the administration of the Department of Justice. The various ramifications of the timber industry, including the price structure in relation to logs and sawn timber, are closely related to the activities which come within the administration of the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry. In this connection the Honourable Member will, no doubt, be aware that certain log and timber price adjustments were brought into operation as from October 1, 1960, following upon an investigation made by the Timber Inquiry Committee. In these circumstances I would suggest that if the Honourable Member desires any further information with reference to the prices of logs or sawn timber he address his question to the Honourable the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry.”

SUBSIDENCE OF FLOOR, BULK-SUGAR SHED, TOWNSVILLE JETTY

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“(1) Who or what was responsible for the subsidence of the floor of the sugar shed at the bulk-loading installations on the Townsville Jetty?”

“(2) What was the extent of the subsidence and what is the estimated cost of repairs?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth) replied—

“(1) The subsidence was caused by volume changes in sub-grade due to a variation in moisture content under the applied sugar loading.”

“(2) The subsidence extends over half of the concrete floor. It varies from a negligible amount to sixteen inches. The estimated cost of repair is £50,000.”

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South), without notice, asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“I desire to ask the Treasurer an ancillary question. Who will pay for the cost of repairs to the floor of the sugar shed in Townsville?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth) replied—

“I am not unwilling to answer this question without notice, but I do remark that the hon. member is commencing to evidence a desire to introduce into the functioning of this Parliament something that could be very well described as the ‘supplementary question,’ which is an established practice in the House of Commons, but which has not yet been accepted in this Parliament. I do not want to convey the idea that I am conniving at the practice of answering supplementary questions.”

“The way in which all these bulk-sugar installations have been financed means that whilst the Government will provide the intermediate money to enable bulk-sugar installations to come into existence, the cost is amortised as a result of charges borne by the sugar industry over a reasonably moderate period; I think from memory it is 20 years. The result is that there is no cost to the taxpayers of Queensland in establishing bulk-sugar installations. The Government merely provide the intermediate finance to enable those installations to exist and the sugar industry, by internal levying and financing arrangements, bears the full cost.”

“The cost of repairing the bulk-sugar shed in Townsville will be intermediately financed by the Government and will be eventually paid for in full by the sugar industry.”

GOVERNMENT DENTAL SERVICES

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) asked the Minister for Health and Home Affairs—

“(1) What was the number of children examined free by school dental officers in the year 1959-1960?”

“(2) What was the cost of this service to the Government?”

“(3) What was the number of (a) adults, and (b) children treated free at Government dental clinics in 1959-1960?”

Hon. H. W. NOBLE (Yeronga) replied—

“(1) 24,026.”

“(2) £60,743.”

“(3) These statistics are not available but a random sample taken at the Brisbane Dental Hospital shows that in last financial year of 24,158 adults, an estimate of 12,562 would be treated free of charge, and of 18,711 children an estimate of 7,485 would also receive free treatment.”

ACCIDENT INSURANCE FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Dr. DELAMOTHE (Bowen) asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“Is there any provision for the insurance of Parliamentarians against accident in the course of their duties?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth) replied—

“No. It has been held that a Member of Parliament does not come within the definition of those to whom Workers' Compensation applies and there is no other special form of insurance for Members of Parliament as such. When Members of Parliament travel by air they are, in common with all other citizens, subject to the insurance benefits prescribed by the laws governing the conduct of civil aviation in Australia.”

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKLET ON TRAFFIC CONTROL

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) asked the Minister for Labour and Industry—

“(1) Is it a fact that the booklet, referred to in the question by the Honourable Member for Kedron, will be distributed by members of the Police Force delivering same to householders?”

“(2) If so, does he not concede that, in view of the fact that certain school committees' requests for the services of policemen to supervise the safe travel of school children across busy roadways have been refused, these police officers could be better employed?”

“(3) If so, will he give consideration to the distribution being carried out by the firm responsible for the publishing of this booklet?”

Hon. K. J. MORRIS (Mt. Coot-tha) replied—

“(1) No. The publisher agreed to distribute a minimum of 100,000 copies and also undertook to give 100 copies to a Police Station in every district in which the booklet is circulated, in order that these booklets would be available for perusal by callers at the Police Station.”

“(2) See answer to No. (1).”

“(3) Distribution arrangements, as outlined in (1) were made over 6 months ago and no other method was even contemplated. I repeat that, in securing this booklet for Queensland, printed and distributed at no cost either to my Department or to the Government, the Police Commissioner has made a very good and commendable arrangement. The publishing firm, Testro Bros. Pty. Ltd., has published similar booklets in other States, and also for the Road Safety Council. Its associate Company has also published a similar booklet for Police authorities in England.”

EXPORT OF BAUXITE FROM WEIPA

Mr. ADAIR (Cook) asked the Acting Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity—

“(1) Has his attention be drawn to the statement in ‘The Courier-Mail’ of September 28, 1960, to the effect that a portable bauxite conveyor is being built by S. Walter Lucas, Darra, Brisbane, for the unloading of bauxite from bulk barges into ships at Weipa?”

“(2) To what centre or country does the company intend exporting the raw bauxite?”

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education and Migration), for **Hon. O. O. MADSEN** (Warwick), replied—

“(1) Yes.”

“(2) The possible centre to which bauxite may be exported is still uncertain. However, discussions have been held between the Government and Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Pty. Ltd. in regard to possible limited export of bauxite for trial purposes. This would be similar to recent export of three parcels each of 10,000 tons of bauxite by Western Aluminium N.L. from Western Australia. In anticipation of requests for parcels for bulk testing overseas, the Company is assembling plant at Weipa. Before any finality is reached in regard to such export, the Government would have to give its consent to same as required by the provisions of ‘The Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Pty. Limited Agreement Act of 1957.’”

FINANCIAL AID FOR DROUGHT RELIEF

Mr. BEARDMORE (Balonne), without notice, asked the Treasurer and Minister for Housing—

“In view of the statement as reported in to-day's issue of ‘The Courier-Mail’ that it is intended to grant some financial relief to the dairying industry and the sugar industry, will he also consider giving some assistance to the grazing industry, especially in the western and south-western districts of Queensland, where a desperate drought has prevailed for four years and upwards?”

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth) replied—

“In reply to the hon. gentleman, yesterday's Cabinet decision was to institute drought relief. The illustrations given of how the scheme would be administered through co-operative dairy companies and sugar mills, where such were involved, were merely to illustrate the method. It has not been the practice for the Queensland Government, in past applications for drought relief, to offer that facility narrowly and selectively by industry; they seek to determine where need exists and to meet that need according to their assessment.”

"The Agricultural Bank is the Government's instrument charged with administering drought relief. It works in districts through the agencies of established bodies, such as dairy companies and sugar mills. Where there are no such local agencies, the Agricultural Bank would function directly. I inform all hon. gentlemen that applications for drought relief will be received wherever it can be demonstrated that the need warrants such relief."

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Public Service Commissioner for the year 1959-1960.

First Annual Report of the Insurance Commissioner dealing with the Administration of the Insurance Act of 1960, being for the year ended June 30, 1960.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Traffic Acts, 1949 to 1959.

Orders in Council under the Liquor Acts, 1912 to 1959.

Regulations under the Inspection of Machinery Acts, 1951 to 1958.

Regulations under the Weights and Measures Acts, 1951 to 1958.

Regulations under the State Transport Facilities Acts, 1946 to 1959.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (11.23 a.m.), by leave: I wish to make a personal statement. When I spoke on the Budget debate on Thursday last I mentioned that I had tendered my resignation from the Country Party. I have now accepted the Premier's assurance that outside pressure did not influence his decision and I wish to correct that impression that my remarks were a reflection on his integrity. The Premier and I have resolved our differences and I have withdrawn my resignation from the Country Party.

In fairness to all concerned and myself, I feel this statement had to be made.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

SCREENING OF FILMS

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to inform hon. members that arrangements have been made for a film entitled "Stabilising Techniques in Road Making" to be screened in the Legislative Council Chamber at 6.30 o'clock this evening. Hon. members are invited to attend.

POLICE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Morris, read a third time.

MACKAY GAS COMPANY LIMITED BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, read a third time.

KYLE ENTERPRISES PTY. LTD. BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, read a third time.

COAL AND OIL SHALE MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Nicklin, read a third time.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Taylor, Clayfield, in the chair.)

Debate resumed from 13 October (see p. 676) on Mr. Hiley's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1960-1961, a sum not exceeding £1,365 to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) (11.29 a.m.): The Financial Statement presented by the Treasurer discloses that the Government, after three years of office, have brought the State almost to the verge of bankruptcy.

Mr. Dewar interjected.

Mr. MANN: Despite the interjection of the hon. member for Wavell, I point out that in 1957-1958, the first year of office of the coalition Government, there was a deficit of £1,514,300, in the second year a deficit of £1,190,856 and this year a deficit of £164,675.

Mr. Windsor: We're improving.

Mr. MANN: If the hon. member for Ithaca can take any consolation from these three deficits, he is welcome to it. I am sure the Treasurer will not take any consolation from it, because he is very worried about the finances of the State, and he has every reason to be. Despite the claim of members of the coalition parties to be capable businessmen, they are unable to manage the affairs of the State. I know that the Treasurer and the Minister for Justice have a reputation as capable businessmen in private enterprise. But running a business and running the affairs of the State are two different matters, and, as I proceed, I hope to show the Chamber that the businessmen of the coalition Government are unable to manage the affairs of the State.

It has been rightly said that finance is the test of Government, and this Government, during the three years they have been in office, have had record deficits. Year after year there has been a deficit. Earlier this year, when the Treasurer presented his preliminary Financial Statement, he budgeted for a surplus of £15,000 and he is budgeting for a deficit again this year.

Mr. Ewan: You have forgotten that we had to repair all your mistakes.

Mr. MANN: That has been the cry for the last 3 years, that they have to repair the damage done by Labour administrations, but that will not stand close scrutiny. The deficit disclosed in the Financial Statement shows that the Government expected revenue to be more buoyant. As a matter of fact, the Financial Statement does disclose that there is buoyancy in some sections of the revenue, and I shall endeavour to point that out.

The Government in no way can provide for the industrial and financial rehabilitation that is so urgently needed in the interests of the people of Queensland. I point out to the Government, particularly to the Treasurer, that the extension of the poverty competition that has been initiated by this Government will not deal effectively with the problem. I say that quite advisedly. The decision to dismiss hundreds of Railway workers and married women school teachers will not do the Government any good. It is quite obvious, too, when one looks through the Financial Statement, that the Government are looking after their own supporters and they will not be called upon to make any sacrifices. They prefer to sacrifice the great mass of the people, who expect some relief from exploitation, high prices, increased commodity charges, and high and exorbitant rents. It is obvious from the Financial Statement that the Government are not prepared to legislate in the interests of the working people of Queensland in regard to price fixing.

I point out to hon. members on the back benches opposite that the Government have established two records. The first is that they have won the elections on two occasions, firstly because of a split in the Labour Party, and secondly by gerrymandering the electoral zones.

Mr. Dewar: Gerrymander is your brother.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member does not like the truth. Hon. members opposite know that they were returned as a Government on the first occasion because of the split in the Labour Party and on the second occasion because of the gerrymandering of electorates. The second record is that they have had a deficit in each of the three years that they have been in office. The Government have failed to carry out their election promises. The Financial Statement discloses that in some directions there has been a definite waste of public funds, and there has been

a deterioration in the financial position. There has been a determination on the part of the Government, in conjunction with employers' organisations—I say this very deliberately—to reduce the wages of a big section of the workers in Queensland.

Mr. Ewan: You know that is not true.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member says that it is not true, but I draw his attention to the attitude of the Government to the ship painters and dockers. The Government reported them to the Commonwealth Social Services Department, saying that they were on strike, but now it has been decided by the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission that they go back on the terms for which they struck. Has the hon. member anything to say about that? It is proof positive of my assertion. Take the attitude of the Government towards the employees at the Rocklea workshops!

Mr. Ewan: Our policy is arbitration and conciliation.

Mr. MANN: Their policy is a reduction in wages and that is disclosed by the Financial Statement. I propose to go further and show the reasons why the Treasurer is against increases in wages. In my first condemnation of the Government I referred to their waste of public money. I could go into many aspects of that but I content myself with drawing the Treasurer's attention to only one—admittedly a tiny one. Because it involves only £88,000 the Treasurer might think it does not matter. I refer to the £88,000 of public money that was spent in my area to resume 14 houses. The occupants were required to shift, the houses have been removed, and the block of land lies idle. When I asked a question of the Minister for Development, Mines, Main Roads and Electricity he said that he did not have plans or specifications from which he could give me the estimated cost of the new building. The Government spent £88,000 on a block of land and required the occupants of 14 homes to leave when only a few hundred yards away they had a building available.

Mr. Hiley: Would you draw plans of a building before you had secured the site?

Mr. MANN: The Treasurer must think I am dumb. He thinks he is funny. Apparently he wants to enter the funny competition. He must have been reading the funnies in "The Sunday Mail." The land was resumed months ago. Resumption orders were issued on the tenants, the issue of which indicated that it was the Government's intention to resume the property with one object in view. Once resumption notices are issued you surely start drawing blueprints and making preliminary estimates of cost. I can remember an occasion when I put a scheme up to the late Hon. W. Forgan Smith. The first thing he said to

me was, "How much is this project going to cost?" I said, "I don't really know." He said, "That shows that you know nothing about it. Where is the money coming from to finance this undertaking?" In reply to the Treasurer's interjection I say that once the Government issued resumption notices on these people they had made up their mind to take the property. But it was a waste of public money because right next-door to the land there was a public building going to waste. It is a home for sparrows and pigeons. The building is fast deteriorating. Although the building belongs to the Government they have done nothing with it. The £88,000 that was wasted could have been used to convert this old building.

Mr. Aikens: That is so many more votes you have lost.

Mr. MANN: I am not worrying about the votes. I am condemning the action of the Government in wasting public money. I am drawing the Treasurer's attention to it because it is a matter that he should look into very thoroughly. It is all very well for the backbenchers on the Government side, particularly Country Party members, to urge the Government to declare their districts drought-stricken areas.

Mr. Beardmore: Don't you think they are?

Mr. MANN: Listen to the big noise of the hon. member for Balonne! Of course I know there has been a drought. Friends of mine in Boulia have said that it is the worst drought in Boulia's history. It is the worst drought they have experienced and I am not complaining about their asking for relief. However, I ask the Treasurer what assistance he is getting from the Commonwealth Government to help this Government give drought relief in these areas? Not one penny, I presume.

The point I want to make is that in this document the Treasurer first pinpointed two reasons for the deficit. The first reason he gave was the failure of the railways, or the huge loss made on the railway undertaking. The second was the cost of the large increases in wages due to marginal decisions handed down by the Commonwealth Court.

Mr. Ewan: Don't forget the loss on State coal mines as well.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member wants to be funny. I am not being funny. There are none so blind as those who will not see. If the Government go on in this way year after year budgeting for deficits, it will not be long before we are back in the position we were in under his predecessor, Arthur Moore.

Hon. members opposite do not seem to worry about wasting public money. Two of them asked the Treasurer the other day to build an additional wing onto Parliament

House—at what cost? They want luxurious offices for fat, loafing Government politicians. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MANN: Hon. members opposite are not satisfied with the building of a lift for one storey; they want to waste public money by adding a wing to Parliament House. I was pleased to see an editorial in "The Courier-Mail" asking the Treasurer not to accede to their request. We have wasted enough money on public offices and other buildings now, without spending money in such a fashion.

Those hon. members opposite who want the Government to build luxurious offices for themselves supported the Government in their attack on the workers at Rocklea and the ship painters and dockers when they tried to get wage justice by strike action. That is all they were asking for. Those hon. members now want to spend thousands of pounds of public money on luxurious buildings and fittings and at the same time damn the workers and, as a matter of fact, put them in gaol or starve them into submission.

I suggest that we examine the Railway Department. The Treasurer has started at the wrong end. He has already advised the Government, the Minister for Transport and the department to increase railway fares and freights. Under big headings in "The Courier-Mail" the Treasurer also said there would either have to be severe war on border-hoppers or an increase in railway fares and freights. He decided on the latter course.

Mr. Hiley: On both.

Mr. MANN: The Government are increasing freights on commodities and fares charged to people in the community. I suggest to the Treasurer—I know he will not take any notice of me—that he will not get more firms to use the railways by increasing freights. I think railway finances will deteriorate. The Government have introduced a policy of drought relief for farmers and graziers who are in need of such relief. I do not quarrel with that policy—the Government of which I was a member extended similar aid—but I ask why those who are assisted should not be asked to sign an undertaking that in times of prosperity they will use the railways and so help the Government.

Mr. Ewan interjected.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member did very well out of a Labour Government.

All those who get drought relief from the Government should sign a contract or undertaking that they will send their goods, not only starving stock and fodder but also commodities and produce, by rail.

Mr. Hiley: And seek business, not through giving service in times of prosperity but by taking advantage of adversity?

Mr. MANN: The Government cannot have it both ways. In times of adversity the Treasurer wants to give concessions to his wealthy friends.

Mr. Hooper: How would you live without the people in the country?

Mr. MANN: I was living long before I saw the hon. member.

The Treasurer has referred to taking advantage of adversity to get business. I think that is a sound proposal, particularly when the Government are going to give concessions to those people in the way of drought relief. The hon. member for Balonne referred this morning to the effects of drought. I say to him through you, Mr. Taylor, that, if the Government want to use the public purse in times of adversity to give relief to their wealthy friends, they should, if they were fair, expect those people in times of prosperity to give their business to the railways.

Mr. Beardmore: The Government are not giving it to these people. The assistance will be paid back with interest.

Mr. MANN: I have no complaint about assistance being given in times of adversity; the gravamen of my complaint is that the Government are not asking those who are being assisted to undertake contractually that they will in times of prosperity give their business to the railways and so assist the Government.

Mr. Ewan: Blackmail!

Mr. Aikens: Do you know that many northern firms have signed such a contract and, immediately they signed it, broke it.

Mr. MANN: I point out to the hon. member for Townsville South and all other representatives of northern electorates that the workers in their districts will be the ones to suffer from increased rail freights and charges. The workers of the West, in places such as Roma and Charleville, will meet the extra charges in the increased cost of commodities they buy. The workers in industry in those places will bear the burden. Retailers of goods carried by rail to the North—to Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, Mt. Isa and Longreach—will add the increased freights to their retail prices.

Mr. Pizzey: Did you think of that in 1956 when you put the freights up?

Mr. MANN: I am not speaking about what happened then. I am trying to tell the Government how they can obviate this action. It will not do the hon. gentleman or the Government any good, and I charge the Government with giving concessions to their wealthy friends rather than to the working people in industry, who really need them.

Mr. Aikens: Will you listen to me for a moment? Do you know that many northern firms have signed such an undertaking and have broken it immediately after signing it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Townsville South must not persist in his interruptions.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I merely asked the hon. member for Brisbane if he knew that many business people in the North had signed such an undertaking and had broken it as soon as they had signed it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. MANN: I put a suggestion to the Treasurer last year, and I shall put it to him again. With due deference to my friend, the hon. member for Burke, I point out that I informed the Treasurer last year that Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. was receiving £600,000 by way of concessional rail freights. It may now be higher because of concessions on the carriage of coal and coke from Collinsville. According to my information rail freight concessions amounted to £600,000. I suggested to the Premier then that there was £600,000 that he may be able to get for the Government to help the finances of the railways, or to help balance the Budget, and he said to me, "Do you want us to break a contract you entered into?" I point out to the Treasurer, through you, Mr. Taylor, that I believe the management of Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. and their financial advisers are very sound, influential business men. They must be, because they made £3,000,000 profit last year. If the Treasurer had a conference with these men and said, "My railways are losing heavily; I want to balance the Budget of the Government; the railway finances are going backwards; you enjoy £600,000 concession rates on goods carried from Mt. Isa to Townsville; I feel it is time we called a halt to those concessions because you are making millions of pounds profit," I believe that those sound, honest business men would see the wisdom of the Treasurer's appeal and be prepared to pay the normal rates on the carriage of their goods to Townsville.

Mr. Hiley: Do you know that the Mt. Isa-Townsville line is one of the few profitable lines we have?

Mr. MANN: The Treasurer told me that last year. These are concessions given to millionaires.

Mr. Hiley: We increased the freight rates recently.

Mr. MANN: I understand that, but the Government are still giving concession rates that the Labour Party gave when Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. was struggling for existence.

Mr. Ramsden: You want to put the workers out of work.

Mr. MANN: Have hon. members ever heard such nonsense? Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. are making £3,000,000 profit a year. The hon. gentleman does not seem to understand that. They are making a colossal profit. No-one would complain if these concessions were granted to struggling industries. If these concessions were given to a company that was struggling so that it could get on its feet and establish itself as a real concern, no-one would object. If the position was pointed out to those who control Mt. Isa Mines Ltd. they would, I believe, as honest citizens and good financiers and keen business men, who are getting this concession of £600,000 and making £3,000,000 profit a year, come to some further agreement with the Treasurer.

I have not much time at my disposal because I wish to move an amendment to enable my Leader to discuss the very serious allegations that were made in the Chamber by the hon. member for Fassifern. Before I move my amendment, however, I wish to draw the Treasurer's attention to another matter that he mentioned in his Financial Statement. Dealing with the increases in margins granted by the Commonwealth Government, he said, "The effect of the 'margins' decision can, therefore, be summarised as follows," and he went on to give the reasons why the "margins" decision has made a big inroad into the finances of the Government. The Treasurer in some ways is to blame for the increased income the Commonwealth Government will receive from the Payroll Tax. Last year when he went to Canberra a new formula was adopted. I will not go into that now because I have not the time, but the Treasurer agreed that he would not test the validity of the Payroll Tax for another six years. Because of the large increases in wages of all Government employees following the "margins" case, the Government now find themselves paying an extraordinary sum in Payroll Tax. It is much higher than they were previously paying. It is a confidence trick by the Commonwealth Government on the Treasurer and this Government in getting him not to test the validity of the Payroll Tax for six years. With the increase in wages the State Government find they have to pay these enormous extra amounts in Payroll Tax.

Another matter I should like to refer to is the financial relations between the Commonwealth Government and the State. The Treasurer will agree with me when I say the Commonwealth Government have completely upset the balance of economy in this State by their actions in financial matters. Since 1949 the States and their authorities have been forced to increase their national debt by some millions of pounds, while the Commonwealth Government have reduced their debt by £80,000,000. In the same period the Commonwealth interest bill increased by something like £2,000,000 a year. The Commonwealth now receive from the States and others more interest than they pay. The interest burden has increased from £30,000,000 to over £80,000,000 in the last

10 years, and the Treasurer knows it; it is one of the difficulties he has to contend with. I should like to deal with that more fully but I have not the time as I want to move an amendment. I want to move it in view of the charges made in this Chamber last Thursday by the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, and I intend to enumerate the charges so that it cannot be said that I did not include all of them when I moved my amendment.

The first charge was that the Country Party Executive came to Parliament House and attempted to enlist the then Minister's support in the thievery of Crown lands—very serious indeed.

The second charge was that he had been threatened with the loss of his seat in this Parliament because of decisions made by him in the line of his duty as Minister of the Crown.

The third charge was that he was dismissed from Cabinet on the demand of the Country Party Executive. This morning he has denied that; nevertheless he made the charge.

The fourth charge was that he was relegated to the back benches of Parliament so that he could no longer embarrass people who were trying to extract from the Crown estate more than they were entitled to.

The fifth charge was that he was subjected to blackmailing tactics in his capacity of Minister, as directly implied by his statement assuring the Government that it would take more than blackmail to win the next fight.

The sixth and last charge was that, since his vacation of the Public Lands portfolio, his policy of refusing to open up certain Tully scrub lands for settlement has been reversed by the Government in throwing open a number of blocks for settlement, and that any Minister signing a document permitting this should be gaoled—very strong words indeed.

I add to the reasons for moving the amendment the following matters relative to the disclosure of the hon. member for Fassifern and the Premier's reply last Thursday:—

(1) That it is right of this Assembly and the people of this State to demand from the Premier his reason for misleading the people either when he said in a prepared statement to the Press on 8 June this year that he had offered another portfolio to Mr. Muller or, alternatively, when he made a categorical declaration to the Parliament on 13 October that no such portfolio had been offered;

(2) That the Premier, with the knowledge and connivance of his Cabinet, has misled the people, who would have remained in ignorance of his now stated reasons for Mr. Muller's resignation had not the hon. member risen in his place and given his version of the affair on 13 October;

(3) That all members of the Cabinet have a common responsibility in the foregoing matters. I am not laying the blame at the feet of the Premier alone, but at the feet of all members of the Cabinet, and I definitely think the charges should be dealt with fully so that the public will know the whole story;

(4) That the Premier has failed to answer the grave charges made by the former Minister for Public Lands in the Chamber and has dealt contemptuously with the rights of the Parliament and the people by declaring that there is no need for an inquiry;

(5) That the charges made demand an immediate judicial public inquiry, and that the Government should now act to set up such an inquiry.

Because of these matters I move—

"That the Item 'Aide-de-Camp, £1,365' be reduced by £1."

Mr. DUGGAN (Toowoomba West—Leader of the Opposition) (11.59 a.m.): I do not think hon. members of this Committee or the public at large will have been taken by surprise with the amendment that has been moved on behalf of the Opposition, as the allegations that have been made are indeed very serious. They probably represent Act V in the political drama that has been unfolding itself in Queensland since the last elections. Act I might be described as the sensational and unexpected retirement from the Cabinet of the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, the hon. member for Fassifern. Act II might be regarded as the stage when some time ago we saw in the week-end Press this very big headline—"Muller Promises to Tell All." Act III might be regarded as the scene in this Chamber last week when a series of very sensational charges were made, and Act IV might be regarded as the Premier's apology. The fifth act of this drama might be regarded as the scene this morning when, because of the sensational events that threatened to rock and wreck the Government, it is obvious that an attempt has been made to save the situation by the hon. member's recanting and saying that he has resolved his differences.

I think you will agree, Mr. Taylor, that these are important chronological developments in the life of this Government. I want to say at the beginning that these allegations, coming from a former senior member of the Government—a former senior Minister of the Crown—were not answered by the Premier at all in his reply.

Mr. Aikens: And have not been withdrawn.

Mr. DUGGAN: The Premier dismissed them in a very cavalier fashion when he dealt with this matter, and they were not the subject of a withdrawal in the statement of the hon. member for Fassifern this morning. So although the hon. member for Fassifern elects to remain a member

of the Country Party, it seems to me to be an extraordinary situation that he should elect to do that when he makes a series of sensational allegations about the administration of the party primarily responsible for the organisation of their political campaign and is prepared to sit in their councils as a follower of that party. I think everybody will agree without any malice at all that the Premier, reluctant as he might have been to engage in the debate—he said himself that he was, and that it was the unhappiest speech he had made in 28 years as a member of this Parliament—adopted the very self-righteous attitude that he had to see that members of Cabinet were, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. He went on to say that the hon. member for Fassifern well knew that the reasons for terminating his association with the Cabinet were unrelated to his administrative stewardship, and that it revolved round the subject of a tax defalcation, which the Premier said was a very serious matter, a matter that he felt was reprehensible in every respect. He said that in order to protect the good name of the Government, he felt that his action was necessary.

The extraordinary thing about this is the contradictory circumstances surrounding the statements about the Minister's resignation. I want to say at the outset that I am going to hit fairly hard in this debate, and I want it to be understood that what I am about to say is not to be construed, either inferentially or otherwise, as an attack on the Premier in his purely personal capacity. I have a high regard for the hon. gentleman in his personal capacity, and all the things I am going to say about him deal with what he has done in a political capacity, not in a personal and private capacity. I cannot pay the Premier a higher tribute than to say that I regard him as a very good citizen indeed and a man of the highest principles. But I am sadly disillusioned by the action he has taken in this matter. It gives me no pleasure to try to score a personal or political advantage from the misfortune of private individuals. I, myself, have been a victim of such things over the years. I do not want to come in here with any sob story, but I have had many personal misfortunes, commencing at an early age. I have been the repository of confidences that have been given to me over the years as a parliamentarian that show very definitely the extent to which human tragedy occurs in the lives of many people, and I have respected those confidences. I could prosecute my case a little more strongly today if I liked to depart from that standard of not breaching any confidences, but I do not propose even today to reveal any information that came into my possession in what I might term a private, semi-private, or confidential capacity. I shall deal only with those things that are generally regarded as being within the ambit of public knowledge. I say again that this is

not a personal attack on either the hon. member for Fassifern or the Premier. But it is an attack on the Premier as head of this Government. It might be said—and indeed it was used during the debate—that if I were aware of some of the circumstances I should have made some attempt to ventilate them at the time. The first thing is that the Premier has indicated to the Committee that he was unaware of the general allegations until after the elections. As an honourable man I accept his statement in that regard, although I must confess it is a rather amazing one because, on his own admission, which I shall quote later on, he said that this matter had reached the stage of becoming almost common general knowledge. I, myself, was rung on more than one occasion by private individuals and newspaper correspondents who asked if I were aware of the statement that was circulating that the hon. member of this Assembly who was involved in an alleged taxation breach was none other than the hon. member for Fassifern. I say with complete sincerity that it has never been my desire to score personally off a person for any private misfortune that may have befallen him. The taxation report only came into the Assembly seven days prior to the holding of the election—the date is marked on it, 23 May. From memory I do not think I was back in Brisbane during that last week; I was absent campaigning in the country. On the Premier's own declaration contained in his policy speech of 1957 he said that he was going to introduce decent government into this State. His Government were going to be built around the framework of the four D's—de-centralisation, decent government, and a few other "D's" that I need not take up time in mentioning. He went on to say in his 1957 speech—

"For very many years the Labour Government in this State has been surrounded by an unwholesome odour, originating in plebiscites for selection of Labour candidates and pervading the whole realm of governmental administration.

"It is a sad commentary on the long years of Labour rule in Queensland that the average person has now come to regard the average politician as a cross between a rogue and a fool.

"Low cunning and the ability to indulge successfully in slyde political practices are generally regarded as attributes of the smart politician.

"On the other hand, political honesty and decency are considered to be indications of weakness and ineptitude.

"I have heard it said of myself on a number of occasions, 'Nicklin is too honest to be a politician.' I ask you, as intelligent electors who may have been disposed to unthinkingly agree with such statements in the past, to reflect deeply on them and all they imply."

I paid the Premier a personal tribute not because I felt that there was some substance in some of these things in his 1957 policy speech. But I would expect the Premier himself, with his sense of propriety, to deal with the matter in the way he does now, but not only when his Government were challenged. Not because of any high moral principles but because of a series of sensational allegations that had been made against the Government he says, "I, as Leader of the Government, believe that members of my ministry, like Caesar's wife, should be above suspicion, and I want now to say that this gentleman is not guilty of a careless or irresponsible action but a tax evasion amounting to £11,000-odd." I thought that the Premier would certainly deal with that matter. I do not think that one should try to score collectively off the Government if something totally unrelated to the administration of the Government was a factor involved in the election campaign. If an individual member of Parliament does something irregular or improper the electors in his area have the responsibility of dealing with it. If Government members are involved I do not think that the stigma should apply to members of the Government as a whole. Let us see what happened in this particular matter. On the unsolicited statement of the Minister for Transport he said that I had indicated that it had been represented to me that the Adolf Gustav Muller referred to was the Minister for Public Lands. He said that. I did not say that in this Chamber. It was prior to the election. He also said to a very prominent person in Toowoomba that he gave me full credit. He said, "Whatever you say about Duggan, I have to hand it to him; he did not try to make any political capital out of this matter."

Mr. Chalk: That is so.

Mr. DUGGAN: Then the Premier says he was not aware of these things.

Mr. Nicklin: Don't you believe me?

Mr. DUGGAN: I have said I believe the hon. gentleman.

Mr. Nicklin: Are you now trying to make me out a liar? I was in the country, as you were. That was in the "Telegraph", as you know.

Mr. Hiley: But you also said that in saying that you accused him of being self-righteous.

Mr. DUGGAN: What I am saying—and I will say it again before I have finished—is that in their political dealings this Government, if they have made any sort of electoral appeal to the people, have made it on the basis of "We have Frank Nicklin—honest Frank." He has been a front for this Government's mismanagement, and a major appeal to the people. In this matter he has been neither honest nor frank.

Mr. Hiley: Is it part of your argument today that we should have kept Mr. Muller in the Cabinet?

Mr. DUGGAN: Just a moment. Here is this very polished, practised and experienced politician trying to throw in the bait, as did the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry the other night when he said, "Are there any members of the Opposition who will say that Mr. Muller should be retained in the Cabinet in the face of this very serious matter?", and he added, "None of you are game to get up." A few minutes later the Premier stood up and said, "I was prepared to keep him in the Cabinet to give some evidence of my loyalty and friendship for an old comrade." The same hon. members who tried to trap members of the Opposition into saying he should be kept in the Cabinet applauded loudly when the Premier said that.

Mr. Nicklin: Quote from "Hansard" where I said that.

Mr. DUGGAN: I will go further than that. I will quote from a prepared statement that the Premier gave the Press. I do not think that will be challenged in any way at all. This is a statement in "The Courier-Mail" of 9 June, 1960—

"Cabinet Shock: Muller Resigns After
Reshuffle"

In a prepared statement on Mr. Muller's resignation, Mr. Nicklin said:

"In setting up the new Ministry I found it desirable to make some changes in portfolios and, as a result, offered Mr. Muller a portfolio different from the one he had held in the last Ministry."

That is a prepared statement confirmed word for word in "The Courier-Mail". If it was so serious a matter as to warrant Mr. Muller being ejected from the Cabinet, on what possible moral foundation could the Government justify his retention in the same Ministry by giving the portfolio a different title?

Mr. Nicklin: Read the statement I made on it the other day.

Mr. DUGGAN: It is not for me to instruct the hon. gentleman how to conduct his own public business but he should have said to the public of Queensland at the start of this matter, when it was first being determined, "I regret to report that a member of my Ministry was involved in a difficulty with which the authorities have already dealt but I feel"—as he said the other night—"that my Ministry should be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. I have informed him that, whilst I regret the circumstances and whilst I pay tribute to his loyal services in the party and as an old political comrade, I have to preserve the decency of Government, and I shall have to ask for his resignation." If he had done that, no-one in Queensland would have had a case against him. But the Premier was complimented by his colleagues. I have

heard them say how smartly he extricated his party from a difficult situation. And I have heard it said by wives of some hon. members opposite, or at least by the wives of two hon. members opposite. They spoke of the way in which the Premier had cleverly extricated the party from the situation.

Mr. Hooper: You are getting pretty low.

Mr. DUGGAN: No. That is common knowledge.

Let me return to my point that the Premier said he was unaware that it was the hon. member for Fassifern. I accept that, but I also say that when I gave a statement to the Press on 10 June I invited the Premier to indicate to the public whether there were any other factors responsible for Mr. Muller's retirement. My invitation was relegated to a back page under a double-column heading, "Tell us the full reason: Duggan". Amongst other things the report says:—

"The pressure group of the pastoral companies and other powerful vested lands interests has already demonstrated its ability to influence the Government's land policy," Mr. Duggan said.

"He added that if this factor was not the reason for the unexpected and sensational development, the public was entitled to know whether any other factor of public importance was involved."

The Premier did not accept that invitation to say whether some other factor was responsible, and, if the hon. member for Fassifern had not made his sensational charges in this Chamber, it would never have been accepted by the head of the Government. When the Premier rang the Minister for Education and asked, "Do you know anything about this matter?", the Minister for Education said, "Yes, I do." Then we had the Premier becoming indignant the other day about the retention in Cabinet of a person involved in a tax defalcation. I should expect if he had such a high sense of responsibility that that high sense of responsibility would have been shared by his Cabinet colleagues. The Minister for Transport either did not convey to the Premier the fact that my name had been used or Mr. Muller's name had been used—

Mr. Chalk: I did not say that.

Mr. DUGGAN: I said, "Either you did not." According to the Premier, the Minister for Education did not pass on that information.

Mr. Pizzey: If I saw the name "Duggan" in a newspaper, I would not believe it was you. There are plenty of Duggans.

Mr. DUGGAN: I produce for the information of hon. members the file of newspapers at the time of the allegations against Mr. Foley. They appear across the front pages of the issues of "The Courier-Mail." Hon. members can see there on those issues

full-page articles covering those allegations against Mr. Foley, but by way of contrast I point out that when I make a statement it is given about four inches in a single column in "The Courier-Mail".

After I made that statement on 10 June a representative of "The Sunday-Mail" rang me and asked what the Opposition were going to do about it. I outlined what I thought the Opposition may do when Parliament reassembled but not a single word of the statement I gave appeared in "The Sunday-Mail". I rang up this gentleman and said to him, "I do not mind if you do not publish a statement I make off the cuff when you come to me, but I am rather annoyed to think that you should waste my time by asking me to give a prepared statement and then not publish it." What do hon. members think was the reply? "It is too hot. It has been killed. It was killed at the highest policy level." There you have indications of a conspiracy of silence among these people.

Mr. Hooper: Tell us who said it. You cannot say who said it.

Mr. DUGGAN: I have told hon. members. I was rung on a political matter by a "Sunday-Mail" reporter, a very senior reporter.

Mr. Bennett: And you know who it is.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DUGGAN: The attitude of the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Education is in marked contrast to the action taken by the hon. member for Carnarvon when serious allegations were made by Mr. Creighton against Mr. Foley, that is, in regard to the Lundavra leases. The hon. member for Carnarvon, who was then Minister for Public Lands, received a statement about some irregularities and impropriety in dealings with certain land. From Stanthorpe he sent a prepared letter to the Premier of the day setting out the allegations that had been made. I contrast the attitude of the hon. member for Carnarvon, when he was a Minister of the previous Labour Ministry, with that of the two present Ministers on this matter. These are the words of the Premier the other day—

"... these rumours were very persistent and very widespread through the community and seemed to amount almost to general knowledge, . . ."

Does the Premier deny that he said that? It seems to be extraordinary that with a Public Relations staff of five and with the Press at his door—at one time I held ministerial rank and every day I received Press representatives who wanted to know if there was any matter they could secure from me; some statement they could secure—on a matter that amounted almost to common knowledge throughout the State the Premier knew nothing.

Mr. Hart: Do you know that in the Lands Royal Commission Mr. Creighton gave evidence that he went to two Ministers—Mr. Jones was one of them, I think, and the other was Mr. Hilton—and complained and gave them all the information, but they would not do anything?

Mr. HILTON: I rise to a point of order. The allegations made concerning me by way of interjection by the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt are entirely incorrect and I ask him to accept my denial that I did nothing in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt to accept the denial of the hon. member for Carnarvon.

Mr. Hart: I accept his denial, but I remind you what I said—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DUGGAN: I draw the attention of the Committee to the different attitudes of the present Ministers for Mines and Transport and the hon. member for Carnarvon on these matters.

Let us go back a bit to some of the statements that have been made in the Press. The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt mentioned Mr. Creighton. We have heard the Premier dealing with the matter of the charge against Mr. Creighton. He said—

"Where, by all the standards of decency, is the justice in this state of affairs? Let me remind hon. members opposite of the simple but telling biblical quotation, 'He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone.'"

That was said on an occasion when hon. members opposite were all attacking the then Government. Let us see what Mr. Nicklin had to say on that occasion when he was Opposition Leader. When making his charges, he said at page 50, Volume 214, 1956-1957 session—

"The inquiry of reference by His Excellency would have met with the same plausible and glib answers given by the Premier and the hon. member for Belyando on previous occasions, and the result would have been no action against the Minister, but proceed forthwith to lop the head off that impertinent upstart,—"

Hon. members can expect, because the Premier adopted the attitude that there would be a glib sort of reply given when he made those serious charges, that today he will make the same sort of reply as he made the other day; his heart was not in it; he may have "felt" for an old colleague and he may have done all that, but his heart was not in the job. Generally the Premier's attitude is that he says too little, too late on very important matters such as this.

In the same volume of "Hansard" he said—

"Hon. members are all well aware of the intense ill-feeling created by the prospect

of the granting of Cameron's application and I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness, that the Premier's conduct in this regard clearly indicates that the Premier was highly desirous of hiding something, and that that something was a definite irregularity of which he was well aware concerning Cameron's application."

I have no hesitation in inviting the Premier to make his characteristic attack. I say that in anticipation of his trying to twist and turn my words around, because when he was in Opposition he made very strong attacks on the Premier of the day alleging a glib reply to charges he made that were of less importance and were less distinct. Is there any comparison between that attitude of indiscretion and the Premier's saying, because of his desire to preserve the integrity of his Cabinet, this man had to go.

The Premier had this to say, too—

"I am firmly convinced that the prime activating motive in his mind was to prevent further violation of the land laws in which he was steeped and to which he displayed a most profound devotion. He wished to prevent the use of the Crown estate for corrupt purposes."

Those are the very bases of the charges made by the present hon. member for Fassifern. That is my point. In that other matter hon. members opposite demanded a Royal Commission and all sorts of things. Let us see what the present Treasurer, Mr. Hiley, had to say on that occasion. At page 170 of the same volume of "Hansard" he is reported as saying—

"It is the duty of the members of the Government, who were colleagues of Mr. Foley, to make it clear to him by suasion that, in the circumstances, it is his duty to resign from Parliament."

This is the man who was actuated by such very high principles!

Mr. Hiley: When charges of corruption of that nature are made, surely it is a matter for a competent tribunal or court?

Mr. DUGGAN: And when he was brought before the court he was acquitted. Is that a reflection on the court?

Mr. Hiley interjected.

Mr. DUGGAN: Let us see how these moral principles determined the attitude of the Government. I have said it time and time again, and I challenge any hon. member to contradict it—in many of my speeches I have said that the Government for the last three years have been going around trying to sell the idea, "We will not stoop to the level of those Labour fellows. We will keep on a high plane. We will preserve the democratic rights of the people." They talk about introducing a Bill of Rights and there is all this claptrap in an effort to sell to the people of Queensland the story that, like Caesar's wife, they are above suspicion and

that they are actuated by high moral principles. Let us see what the Treasurer had to say on these moral principles. On 26 February, 1958, he addressed a meeting of the University Liberal Club—and I mention this because, if Dame Rumour is not lying on this occasion, the men who fronted the attack on the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, the hon. member for Fassifern, were the Deputy Premier and the State Treasurer. We heard Mr. Muller say that he had no confidence in the Deputy Premier.

Mr. Aikens: He said that he had never had any.

Mr. DUGGAN: That is so, never had any.

Dr. Delamothe: Do you think they should not have fronted it?

Mr. DUGGAN: I advise the hon. member for Bowen not to become involved too much. He should keep out of these matters. This is a big pool and I am dealing with big fish. I am dealing with the Treasurer, who has just interjected and whose words probably implied a reflection on the court. He was the very man who, when addressing the University Liberal Club on 26 February, 1958, was asked what his views were on the visit to Australia of the convicted Nazi arch war criminal, Alfred Krupp. This is what he had to say on that occasion as reported in "The Courier-Mail"—he posed this question himself—

"Do you believe in the application of Christian principles in the settling of this problem?"

"Do you believe that you should be reminded of whatever crime you have been convicted of, wherever you appear?"

"Let us not concern ourselves with what Krupp was a generation, or half a generation, ago."

Ten years ago! All right. This taxation offence occurred 12 years ago—less than half a generation ago. And what is the Taxation Commissioner's assessment of Mr. Muller's offence? He could have listed Mr. Muller under Class I—Cases of suspected fraud—but he did not. He found that Mr. Muller had been careless, even if it was unreasonable carelessness in the circumstances. But he did not deem the offence to be any worse than unreasonable carelessness.

It is commonly held that there was strong and unremitting Liberal pressure for the dismissal of Mr. Muller. The spearhead of this pressure is attributed to the Treasurer and the Deputy Premier. This is extraordinary. Let us read further from the report of the Treasurer's statement to the University Liberal Club. He said—

"In this country today there are two great shortages: finance and technical skills. If Krupp offered finance, I would take it. If Krupp offered technicians, I would accept them."

And when a questioner asked him—

“Does that mean that the Government is prepared to ignore all moral principles for money?”

the Treasurer replied—and these are the exact remarks quoted in “The Courier-Mail”—

“I do not call forgiving a man, or company for something that happened a generation ago immoral. To remind someone continually of a crime for which he has been punished and discharged is not a moral principle. I call that an immoral principle.”

Yet in that case he was speaking of an international criminal, a man convicted by an international court, comprising some of the greatest legal minds of the western world—a man who had slave labour in his camps, where hundreds of thousands of people had been slaughtered, a man from whom had been taken assets worth millions and millions of pounds, a convicted man—and the Treasurer was prepared to forgive him out of Christian principles! Yet for another offence where the man was prosecuted not for international crimes but for carelessness, he must go.

Of course, when people go on the march, they say all sorts of things. The Deputy Premier and Leader of the Liberal Party was reported in “The Sunday Mail” of 21 February, 1960, as saying to a Liberal candidates’ class—

“In future I am going to adopt the policy I learned years ago in the Army—‘When you see a head, hit it.’ From now on I am going to give it and they can take it.”

Apparently the Liberal Leader’s colleagues were not exempt from that threat.

There you have the question of moral principles in this matter, Mr. Taylor. The Premier, unfortunately for himself, has got himself into a dilemma. Whatever his obligations might have been, it was obvious that the Government were becoming frightened of what was rapidly becoming general knowledge in the community—the access that powerful vested interests have to this Government and the benefits they can secure from the Government. You have the statement from the ex-Minister that they wanted benefits for themselves worth £13,000,000 a year, and you have the statement that men came along and wanted to transfer a property the size of a horse paddock to a property the size of a sheep station. He came along with a whole series of statements about the Country Party demanding a more liberal attitude to the question of land settlement, and when he said, “I am going to remain firm on this matter,” he alleges that they said, “We may not have many votes, but we have lots of money.” I ask the Premier to take action to preserve the rights of members of the Government, particularly Ministers of the Crown, to enable them to discharge their duties to the community fearlessly and not have this threat hanging over their heads

from people who say they have sufficient power to force their resignation. In the case of Mr. Foley, the Premier thought it desirable that he should resign from Parliament, and he made great play of the fact that after Mr. Foley had been expelled from the Q.C.E. he was welcomed into the Q.L.P.; yet today the Country Party have taken the hon. member for Fassifern back. The other day, when the hon. member was no longer a member of the Country Party, two or three conferences were held, apparently for the purpose of dissuading him from going on with his proposal; but, red faced, hot, and flustered, he threw down the gauntlet to the Government. I should like to know—I suppose I shall never know—just what has happened in the last 72 hours to cause the hon. member for Fassifern to say now that the differences have been resolved. The other day the Premier referred to this 28-years’ mateship and the fact that every member of Cabinet would have done anything to help the hon. member for Fassifern. Is that a breach of any of the obligations that they have as Ministers, that they would have done anything to help this man? Why not say that several suggestions were made? Will the Premier deny that it was his bounden duty to say, if he felt so keenly about this matter, “Alf, I am sorry, old man. You have given great service to the party, and I am sorry about what has happened now. It happened 12 years ago and it was resolved before you came into the ministry, but I must ask you to go?” If he had done that, none of this political hypocrisy and sham that have characterised the actions of the Government would have occurred. It is a shocking thing to find this happening in Queensland, and I say that the Opposition have a clear duty to ask the Premier to set up a judicial commission to inquire into the grave allegations made by the hon. member for Fassifern which, despite his climb-down and the readiness with which he has been re-absorbed into the Country Party, have not been withdrawn.

To go on, I should like to quote a little more from what the Deputy Premier had to say—I am reading from page 64 of volume 214 of “Hansard.”

He said—

“I thank hon. members for the extension of time. I am forced by procedure to accept the denial, but the facts speak for themselves. I would remind the House that the practice in nearly all British Parliaments—obviously with the exception of this—is that when a Minister, particularly a Premier or a Prime Minister, deceives or deliberately misleads the House he immediately not only resigns his portfolio but resigns his seat.”

That was the attitude of the Deputy Premier when he considered that Mr. Gair had misrepresented the position regarding the Lundavra leases. Here we have the 1960 version of the Premier’s deliberately misleading Parliament. According to the advice

given by his Deputy he should resign if he is going to accept personal responsibility for trying to cover up in this particular matter. If the Ministry endorses him the Government should resign. That is the attitude that should be taken.

I do not care what the Premier might say or how heated he might get about this matter, I want to emphasise again that I am attacking him purely in his political capacity. I think I am succeeding, too, because the facts speak for themselves. We have heard the various allegations by Mr. Muller, listed in the terms justifying the amendment. I refer to them now to show that they are serious matters and how the Premier has misled us. He said—

"I do not think that could be called a mere trifle; in my opinion it is a very serious matter, and the report justifies the action taken by me and my colleagues in asking for the resignation of the hon. member."

He went on to say—

"Next morning the meeting to select members of Cabinet was held and the hon. member was selected by the Country Party as one of its Ministers-elect. Following that meeting, further evidence was brought to me which led me to have grave doubts as to whether the information given to me by the hon. member was correct, and as Cabinet had been elected, and as it was very clear that these rumours were very persistent and very widespread through the community and seemed to amount almost to general knowledge, naturally I thought that if they were correct it would be something that would do incalculable harm to the new Government."

Those were the Premier's words as they appear in print, not mine.

Mr. Hiley: From that it is clear that he had taken it up with Mr. Muller before he acknowledged that it had become widespread and general knowledge. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. DUGGAN: He said later that he wanted to do something for an old friend. He said he would do almost anything for him—all of you! Now that the story is out, with the one exception of the Premier, Cabinet will have nothing to do with it. The Treasurer was told that if they kept Alf Muller in the Cabinet Duggan would tear strips off them. That was the thought outside. Yet hon. members opposite get up and talk about moral principles! They would not have the hon. member for Fassifern back two days ago, but they would have him back today to save the Government's face.

Let us see whether I am drawing on my imagination. The Premier said—

"If there had been anything that any one of us could have done to help the position, we would have gladly done it because of our high regard for him."

There was no question about the preservation of the principle of Ministers of the Crown being like Caesar's wife, above suspicion, because the Premier said, "Because of our high regard for him every one of us would have been glad to do anything for him." Is the Premier going to refuse to accept my challenge to deny that this taxation matter would never have seen the light of day had the ex-Minister not made his allegations the other day? Even when he made his allegations we heard the Premier say that he had full confidence in his work as Lands Minister. Is he going to say now that he had full confidence in all of his dealings or only partial confidence when it concerns the grave allegations about Crown revenue being used for other than proper purposes? Is he going to say he had full confidence in the things that pleased him and less than full confidence in other matters which are the subject of the charges of the hon. member for Fassifern, such as the Country Party Executive coming down and standing over him and saying, "We have not many votes but we have lots of money?" Is the Premier going to wear one coat for one sort of speech and another coat for a different sort of speech? Then the Premier went on and instead of it being a clear-cut matter, this is what he had to say, according to the "Hansard" report—

"Cabinet then discussed the method by which the hon. member's resignation should be given. The hon. member did not wish to take advantage of several suggestions that were made, and it was suggested that he be offered another portfolio, if he would accept another portfolio. However, he would not accept it and resigned."

I think it was abundantly clear that the Premier's only alternative was to say, "I am sorry, Mr. Muller, but because of the stand I have consistently taken in this matter and because of my reputation for being 'Honest' Frank Nicklin, you must go. I am sorry to see you go." Several suggestions were considered. What were they, and why were they considered if it was not to save the face of the Government?

I invited the Premier the other day to answer some of those questions and he said he would be happy to, but he did not answer one single charge. Even "The Courier-Mail," the official newspaper of the Government, said there were matters that justified a judicial inquiry. This Parliament must see that there is an inquiry into these allegations covering extortion, pressure and blackmail and all those other matters that I say justify a very definite line of action by this Parliament.

After the Premier said in the statement I referred to earlier, that Mr. Muller was offered another portfolio, he said in reply to the hon. member for Kedron that he was not offered another portfolio. He had said in a hand-out statement to "The Courier-Mail" of 9 June that he was, yet in a later

speech he said that he was not. Can it be said that the Premier has done anything but try to mislead Parliament in this matter?

The Premier admitted, too, that he had said that the hon. member had done a good job and that he had been subjected to very great pressure. What did that mean? Did it mean some pressures of the type the hon. member mentioned in his allegations? Only the Premier can answer these questions.

Now let us get back to the question of an image being created outside that the Premier, in his political dealings, is regarded as a man in whom the people can have complete trust. For many years Country Party propaganda has been building up for public veneration a father image they choose to call "Honest Frank." Since the marriage of convenience between the Country and Liberal Parties in 1950 the Liberal propaganda machine has, either by choice or necessity, lent support to this image-building project. In the 1957 election campaign both parties projected a background picture of stark dishonesty in contemporary politics as a device to give validity to their father image of "Honest Frank" smiling amiably in the foreground.

No doubt some electors succumbed to this well-nigh idolatrous adulation of "Honest Frank," which was promoted so industriously by the back-room boys of the Country-Liberal high command. Indeed, so keen on the idea was the Premier himself that he made a point of promoting it in his 1957 policy speech. I have already quoted that subject matter so I will not repeat it—about the difficulties confronting the Labour Party in their plebiscites and the average person regarding the average politician as a cross between a rogue and a fool, while he himself has been regarded as "Honest Frank."

I propose to show that this image of "Honest Frank" was false in its political concept and that out of his own mouth the Premier has shown the original to be neither frank nor honest. As I said before, like its prototype in the King's Dream, the image built by the coalition propagandists has been shattered. It has feet of clay. Who destroyed the image? None other than the Premier himself.

Members will recall—if they do not, I have the report from "The Courier-Mail" of 9 June, 1960, to refresh their memories—that the Premier gave a prepared statement to the Press that the hon. member for Fassifern had been offered another portfolio.

I repeat and emphasise that these things have not been repudiated. In any case they were in italics and I take it that if there were any inaccuracies the Premier would have taken up the inaccuracies with the people concerned.

It is transparent therefore in the light of these revelations on 9 June to the Press and on 13 June to Parliament that the Premier was consciously and deliberately giving false

information to the people or to the Parliament and the people. It is equally transparent that we now have to consider the unavoidable proposition that on one of these two occasions the chief Executive of the State wilfully and knowingly deceived the people of the State on an important matter of State.

The Government cannot evade that. I do not care how many hon. members opposite get up and how much they rant and rave or introduce irrelevancies about what happened three years ago, five years ago or ten years ago. They cannot escape the indisputable logic of my statements about this contradiction in the events that have been happening. There have been too many evasions. Unless the members of the Government are culpably blind, they must realise it. Neither frankness nor honesty are apparent here. Where is the benign, honest, and frank son of the soil who was to project into an allegedly dishonest political atmosphere the clean and immaculate breath of the countryside. No sooner had Queensland been encumbered with a Country Party Government than we found the clean atmosphere of the country air being fouled by pressures on one of the chief executive officers of the State for handouts, about which he felt so strongly that he was impelled to make a series of charges none of which has been withdrawn.

I do not know what is going to happen on this matter. We had the Premier lambasting the hon. member for Fassifern, and saying it was like his cheek to claim he was the architect of all that was done by the Department of Public Lands. He attempted to set up a shadow cabinet including the hon. member for Gympie, by stating that the farm water assistance scheme was the brain-child of that hon. member. He spoke of how unremittingly the back-bench boys had worked in the framing of the policy. I suggest the back boys may have framed the policy, but the front boys framed the ex-Minister. That is exactly what happened.

Mr. Hiley: In what way?

Mr. Bennett: He said it himself.

Mr. DUGGAN: In the first place they are trying to build up within their own Cabinet a case against the hon. gentleman. At the same time they are trying to build a case for the public outside, to prove that all is happy, and now they are trying to cover up again by having the hon. member for Fassifern back in the party, when previously, in regard to a man acquitted of corruption, the Treasurer himself demanded that that person should resign from Parliament.

Mr. Hiley: The party has not declared itself.

Mr. DUGGAN: It will.

Mr. Hiley: Could we hear a word from you about your reaction to retaining in the

Cabinet a man who persisted in untruths to his Premier and Cabinet colleagues? What are your views on that.

Mr. DUGGAN: My views are quite clear. I think any self-respecting leader would have said, "You must go," but he did not say that; he said, "We looked for every possible way to avoid it." The chief executive of the Government said he would give him another portfolio, and now the Treasurer is saying that no indication has been given as to whether he will be accepted back into the party.

The ex-Minister said this morning—

"When speaking in the Budget debate on Thursday last I mentioned that I had tendered my resignation from the Country Party. I have now accepted the Premier's assurance that outside pressure did not influence his decision and wish to correct the impression that my remarks were a reflection on his integrity. The Premier and I have resolved our differences and I have withdrawn my resignation from the Party. In fairness to all concerned and myself I feel this statement had to be made."

What about it? There was a unanimous chorus of Government "Hear, hears." If he has withdrawn his resignation, he is still a member of the Country Party, so how can the Treasurer say that the party has not declared whether he is to be admitted back into the party. He has withdrawn his resignation and therefore is still a member of the party, unless he is expelled. Are party members going to do that. The Premier right along the line has tried to get Government members out of this situation, but I suppose they would hang him if they thought it was the only way of saving their political hides. I know the task is a distasteful one. Personally, I am a little sorry for the Premier, this smiling and amiable gentleman who comes from the bush and breathes the honest and pleasant atmosphere of the countryside. It goes down very well indeed. This gentleman—this Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde—talks to the people in the countryside and breathes that atmosphere, but when he gets up on the stump or on the radio, as he did in the 1957 and 1960 elections, he belches forth all this spleen about the division in this party. Now they have the division over on their side. The other day the hon. member for Roma shed crocodile tears for the hon. member for Fassifern and said how sorry he was for what had happened because of the good service that the hon. member had given. That very same hon. member bought drinks for the "boys" to get support for his own election to Cabinet. Everybody knows that! Some of the "boys" over there said they were only sorry that there was not a Cabinet vacancy every day as they had never had it so good. This is a shocking development in our political history and I am certain that when somebody writes the history of this period dispassionately he

will be able to show very conclusively that this was a sorry and unhappy period in the political history of a Government who, not content with gerrymandering themselves back into power and not content to withhold their viciousness in attacking us on this side, will resort to any lengths to save face in this matter.

I wish to stress that the Press could probably help to kill me by withholding information. Indeed, "The Sunday Mail" gave not one word to me. Contrast that with the treatment they gave to Mr. Foley when he was subject to public scrutiny and attack in this Parliament. I tell the Press that they have a responsibility in this age when they talk about the freedom of the Press and the need to uphold democracy. They have an obligation to report all the facts in these matters. They can write as many editorials as they like criticising me or the A.L.P. on what we stand for—that is their right and their prerogative, and I have no quarrel with it—but they have to accept their responsibilities in the same way as I have to. I ask the Premier to accept his responsibility, too, and realise that we who are the spokesmen for many hundreds of thousands of electors in the State have the right to ventilate these matters. We have the right to reasonable publicity on the grave charges we have levelled against the Government. It will be some solace or satisfaction to them to know that they can hurt and demoralise this Parliament but these events will not hurt the Labour Party at all. The Labour Party has nothing to be ashamed of in its attitude in this matter. It has exposed what it considers to be a very rotten state of affairs on the part of the Government. I do not care what pressure the Government apply in the matter, nor do I care how much space the Press devotes to what we have to say to it. Justice will triumph ultimately, and the time will come—it will be much sooner than we hoped—when the Government, because of their general maladministration and their disposition to treat in a cavalier way a very serious accusation affecting the revenues of the Crown and pressure applied on a Minister of the Crown, will fall.

My demand is that a suitable judicial committee be set up to inquire into these allegations and the tactics used to try to bury the charges that have been made. This action adds to the magnitude of the insults offered to the people of Queensland and this Parliament by the shabby action that has been taken—and indeed it is a shabby action—and pressures that have been exercised in this matter. When the Government were in Opposition, with not the same measure of evidence available to them, they demanded the resignation of a member of the party and accused the then Premier of engaging in glib assertions. They accused the Government of the day of trying to cover up, but in no instance were the charges half as serious as those that are now made.

Mr. Pizzev: What charges?

Mr. Nicklin: Just enumerate the charges.

Mr. DUGGAN: If hon. members opposite read their proofs they will get them.

Mr. Nicklin: You might have had the courtesy to give us the charges.

Mr. DUGGAN: This is the first time I have heard such a suggestion when someone is being attacked. When they attacked Mr. Gair on the Creighton matter did they give him a list of the charges?

Mr. Nicklin: Yes, definitely.

Mr. DUGGAN: That merely confirms that the Liberals are pretty good to their mates. They certainly have not given them to me. I must admit that a couple of Ministers have given me advance information—and I have appreciated it—but I do not know that the Premier has done that, except with one Bill last session.

A Government Member: You should have come to us.

Mr. DUGGAN: What is all this talk of my going along to them, to someone who very gladly accepts the responsibility on behalf of the Opposition of exposing this Government for what they are—a whole lot of political hypocrites? They ask, "Why didn't you come along to me?" I have no doubt I would have been given the same treatment as the hon. member for Fassifern. His first entreaty fell upon deaf ears; his second entreaty fell upon deaf ears and his third entreaty fell upon deaf ears. Over the last 72 hours an appeal has been made and I am sure the Premier will treat it in the same way as he treated that of the hon. member for Fassifern. We press these charges very strongly.

Government Members: What are they?

Mr. DUGGAN: They are with the amendment if hon. members will only read them. All I can say is that if the Government see fit to ignore serious charges such as those made against them by the hon. member for Fassifern, they must lack any moral principles.

A Government Member: What are your charges?

Mr. DUGGAN: Those are my charges, too. If the Government are so callous as to say, "Despite charges of this sort we will wipe them off the slate and we can be assured the Press will not give any publicity to the matter and in two or three days' time all will be forgiven and forgotten," I can assure them that we will not forgive or forget them, nor will the people of Queensland. I will have great pleasure in doing my duty and exposing the many acts of maladministration of which the Government have been guilty. Added to those already disclosed, including the gerrymandering of the electorates, will be

their shameful neglect of public duty in repudiating the opportunity they now have—and their interjections may be construed as indicating that they are not likely to adopt this course—of accepting our challenge and doing one of two things: resign and let the public determine this matter; or, alternatively, set up a judicial commission to investigate it. And that is what I ask the Premier to do.

Hon. J. C. A. PIZZEY (Isis—Minister for Education and Migration) (2.15 p.m.): This morning we listened to one of the most hypocritical speeches that has ever been made in this Chamber, a speech by the Leader of the Opposition in which one of his two charges was that the Government had paid no attention to the accusations by the hon. member for Fassifern that he had been subjected to great pressure in the administration of his portfolio. The Leader of the Opposition, of all men, should not have been the one to move such a motion—he who was prepared to accept direction from the Queensland Central Executive, he who reiterated it in a television interview and said that if he were directed, he would again take directions from the Q.C.E. Now he comes along here suggesting that Parliament should have no confidence in the Government because one hon. member made some suggestions about direction. I will deal with these suggestions about direction in a moment.

His other main point of criticism, on which he asked for a judicial inquiry, was the question of the method by which the hon. member for Fassifern left the Ministry. Let us go back and trace the history of it, as the Premier did very frankly and very clearly last week.

Mr. Mann: Tell us what Mr. Morris and Mr. Hiley had to do with it.

Mr. PIZZEY: They had no more to do with it than the hon. member had—or than one would expect him to have to do with it. I will put it that way. The hon. member for Fassifern knows, as does every other hon. member, that the only reasons why he was called upon to resign from Cabinet were, firstly, that he was involved in a serious taxation evasion—

Mr. Lloyd: When did you know about it?

Mr. PIZZEY: I knew about it not so many days after the election. I did not know about it before the election.

Mr. Lloyd: Another naive gentleman!

Mr. PIZZEY: The only place where it was printed—

Mr. Lloyd: It was down here on 24 May.

Mr. PIZZEY: I was not down here at election time. Firstly, he was involved in a serious taxation evasion of considerable magnitude. The question is, who knows whether he was involved or not? The Leader

of the Opposition knows very well from his own experience in a case of defamation that he was not game to fly before the election.

Mr. Duggan: Apparently you were not, either.

Mr. PIZZEY: No. I did not believe it, and I had no cause to believe it.

Mr. Lloyd: I suppose there are a lot of Adolf Gustav Mullers about!

Mr. PIZZEY: There are other Jack Duggans, too, and other Eric Lloyds about. If it were my name, I suppose one would have to believe them. Let this be known: that there is no evidence. The mere fact that a name appears in a review does not identify this gentleman concerned. It did not indicate where that farmer lived or what his place of business was.

Mr. Mann: Do you think a 12-year-old crime was sufficient?

Mr. PIZZEY: The hon. member exaggerates, just as his leader did. It was 1949-1950 to 1955-1960. You cannot get 12 years out of that by any trick of arithmetic. It was only about four years old at the time.

Mr. Mann: Do you think it was sufficient to put a man out of Cabinet?

Mr. PIZZEY: Of course I do, and I am ashamed of the hon. member if he does not think so. I am ashamed to think that the Leader of the Opposition said that he would not think it was serious enough.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is either deliberately or mistakenly applying to me a statement that I did not make. He said that I said if I was a member of the Government and a Labour colleague was in a similar position, I would recommend his retention in Cabinet. I said exactly the reverse, and I ask that he withdraw his statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the Minister to accept the denial of the hon. member.

Mr. PIZZEY: I am very glad to hear that.

Mr. Duggan: You know I made that statement, too.

Mr. PIZZEY: I have heard the Leader of the Opposition condone it. (Opposition laughter.) Let him have a look at his own speech and he will probably find that he said he condoned it. No person can exactly identify anybody whose name appears in that list unless the person concerned admits it. The Premier became aware of it at this time too, and he agreed with my suggestion that the Minister should be called before him and given an opportunity to say whether or not it was he. When the hon. member for Fassifern said that it was not he, I believed him. The Premier believed him too. I believed him without any reservation whatsoever because of his tremendous record

of good service and good government not only in Parliament and Cabinet but in many of his administrative jobs outside.

Mr. Bennett: Are you charging him with dishonesty or not?

Mr. PIZZEY: I am just saying that he denied it. The Leader of the Opposition said that this was 12 years ago but it was 1949-1950 to 1955-1956. If he, or the hon. member for Brisbane, condones it he would not have any hesitation in having in his Cabinet someone who was guilty of tax evasion of many thousands of pounds.

Mr. Mann: Why don't you tell the true story? Mr. Morris and Mr. Hiley blackmailed him out of the Cabinet.

Mr. PIZZEY: His leaving Cabinet is a different story altogether.

Mr. Mann: You are not game to tell us that.

Mr. PIZZEY: That is a different story from what is contained in the grounds for the amendment wherein the Opposition say that he was dismissed on the demand of the Country Party Executive. Now we are getting another story. The hon. member for Fassifern knows only too well that there was one, and only one, original reason why he was not allowed to remain in Cabinet. He knows that as well as he knows his own name.

Mr. Burrows: Why was he offered another position?

Mr. PIZZEY: Did not the hon. member hear the Premier the other day?

Mr. Lloyd: He told a lie about that.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the Committee that the words "lie" and "liar" have been unparliamentary expressions for a very long time. I trust that hon. members will refrain from using them.

Mr. LLOYD: I rise to a point of order. I was merely asking the Minister whether he thought that the Premier had told an untruth about the matter.

Mr. PIZZEY: The important thing to the people of Queensland is that the Government had the courage to make a decision on an issue such as this. (Opposition laughter.)

An Opposition Member: They didn't.

Mr. PIZZEY: That is indeed the most important aspect of it. They were determined to preserve the integrity of the Government. Obviously the hon. member for Fassifern could have resigned when he found himself in that position. At the time he was highly charged emotionally, as anyone would be in the circumstances. Not all of us would be completely responsible for what we said or did in similar circumstances.

Mr. PIZZEY: Various things could have been done. The hon. member could see

that he was no longer wanted. Probably at the time he thought it was trifling but I think he realises now it was a serious offence. He could have taken any one of several courses. He could have retired on the ground of his age as anyone of his age is entitled to do.

Mr. Mann: You wanted him out.

Mr. PIZZEY: I am talking about Cabinet now. Is there any great crime in trying to lessen the blow on a lifelong friend? Apparently there is in the eyes of the Opposition.

Mr. Hanlon: Apparently you are still doing it. That is what we want to know.

Mr. PIZZEY: The whole story has been told. There is nothing more to tell.

Mr. Mann: What about the charges against the Government.

Mr. PIZZEY: I will come to those in a moment. The offer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry was a nominal offer.

Mr. Duggan: In other words, a dishonest offer?

Mr. PIZZEY: A nominal offer.

Mr. Burrows: That would be a dishonest offer?

Mr. PIZZEY: There is no doubt that if the Opposition had a friend in the same position they would not take that view. It would be like the wife who asked, "How do I look?" She may have had a late night and, if one replied, "You look as fresh as a daisy," I suppose members of the Opposition would call that a lie. It is a humanitarian device to help one who has been a lifelong friend, and the Premier gave a full explanation of his view on that last Thursday.

Mr. Burrows interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must warn the hon. member for Port Curtis that his continual interjections amount to heckling and it will not be tolerated.

Mr. PIZZEY: If Mr. Muller had remained in the Cabinet the Opposition would have fallen down on their job if they had not moved a censure motion against the Government. Obviously, that is the opportunity they were waiting for and now they are disappointed.

Mr. Mann: Mr. Muller laid some very definite charges against your Government and you have not answered them.

Mr. PIZZEY: Since the Premier's explanation, the Opposition have cunningly reversed their attitude. They lured Mr. Muller into thinking that he had been very poorly treated. If hon. members will read "Hansard" for the last month or two they will see that on the Address-in-Reply debate all hon. members opposite had suggested that a contemptible thing had been done in removing Mr. Muller from the Cabinet.

Mr. Duggan: We thought so until he made his charges.

Mr. PIZZEY: Mr. Muller's long recital of his administration—and that is the basis of some of the charges—is a complete vindication of the Government and a condemnation of the previous Labour Government. There is not one shred of evidence that there was any maladministration during his term of office.

Mr. Mann: What about the Country Party Executive coming down here and putting on pressure?

Mr. PIZZEY: We do not deny pressure but let us have a look at that pressure.

Mr. Dufficy: That is what we want to hear.

Mr. PIZZEY: In any form of democratic government there are always pressure groups trying to influence Government policy. There are no pressure groups in Russia or Communist China but it is part of the democratic system that the people should be allowed to urge their points of view.

Mr. Hanlon: And intimidate?

Mr. PIZZEY: No intimidation has been proved on any occasion.

Mr. Dufficy: Mr. Muller says there was.

Mr. PIZZEY: It is usual, with, say, the closure of a railway line to have protests, and deputations, urging the Government to reverse their decision. I suppose you could call them pressure groups but is there anything wrong with that? Is there anything wrong if someone states a case? We listen to all people who feel aggrieved. The greatest pressure group of all is the trade union movement. There is no greater pressure group in the political life of Australia. The Leader of the Opposition knows that only too well. We have violent Press criticism, and that is a good thing in the community. I do not object to the Press being as critical as it likes about the actions of the Government.

Mr. Duggan: It is never critical of the Government.

Mr. PIZZEY: It so rarely has cause to be.

Every Minister has an obligation to be briefed as fully as possible.

Mr. Lloyd: By whom?

Mr. PIZZEY: By anybody who wants to put his case.

Mr. Lloyd: By the graziers?

Mr. PIZZEY: If it is the graziers, it is a pressure group, but when the building workers led by Gerry Dawson came here, the hon. member for Bremer and the hon. member for Kedron met them.

Mr. LLOYD: I rise to a point of order, and I think I can speak for the hon. member for Bremer, too. Neither the hon. member for Bremer nor I met any trade-union conference.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. I understand it is alleged that I failed in one of my duties of office by receiving a deputation down here. If I did, the same can be said of the Minister for Transport, because he received the same deputation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am dealing with the point of order of the hon. member for Kedron. I ask the Minister to accept the denial of the hon. member for Kedron.

Mr. PIZZEY: I accept the denial.

Mr. CHALK: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition has insinuated that I met Mr. Dawson and his colleagues in Parliament House.

Mr. Duggan: I said "the same day."

Mr. CHALK: I refused to meet Mr. Dawson on his visit here.

Mr. Duggan: You met them the same day at your office.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the Minister for Transport that an insinuation is not a reflection on the hon. gentleman's character.

Mr. PIZZEY: The Leader of the Opposition did not get my point. I accept the statement of the hon. member for Kedron. I was perhaps wrong in using his name. But the point is that a deputation came here and some Labour members met it. I am simply trying to justify his action. He is suggesting that I think he was wrong in doing that. I do not think he was wrong.

Mr. Newton: There were no threats.

Mr. PIZZEY: The Minister for Transport did not meet them. He said, and rightly so, that they should make an appointment with him and he would see them; and he did see them.

Mr. Mann: What about the threat that they had not many votes but had a lot of money?

Mr. PIZZEY: Who said that?

Mr. Mann: The former Minister.

Mr. PIZZEY: He did not say who it was.

Mr. Mann: That is why we want a commission—to find out who it was.

Mr. PIZZEY: What do hon. members opposite mean by "pressure groups"? Surely any organisation at all with an interest in some Government decision is entitled to state its case? If it states a case with threats, or if bribery and blackmail are part of the case, then the matter becomes serious.

Mr. Mann: That is what happened.

Mr. PIZZEY: On no occasion, and I challenge the former Minister for Public Lands to get up and indicate any occasion when there were threats of punitive action because of any decision arrived at.

Mr. Burrows: He has already done it. How many more times do you want him to do it?

Mr. Duggan: He said it on Thursday.

Mr. PIZZEY: At no time. Hon. members opposite conveniently pick out words and wrap their own story around them to make out that something is very wrong. At no time has the Country Party attempted to direct the Government on any administrative or legislative action, and there has been no evidence to suggest it.

The hon. member for Fassifern spoke of the Country Party "rolling down" to Parliament House one day—a very picturesque expression, no doubt—and putting to him the principle of the right to subdivide. That is all he said. Those were his words. And has not the Country Party the right to put it to him?

Mr. Hanlon: Did they direct the Premier to call the former Minister before him to answer for his actions?

Mr. PIZZEY: The Premier answered that allegation. At no time was he directed.

Mr. Hanlon: That is what the hon. member for Fassifern said.

Mr. PIZZEY: Nothing of the sort.

An A.L.P. Member: That he was sacked because the Country Party Executive demanded it.

Mr. PIZZEY: If the hon. member reads what was said he will realise that the hon. member for Fassifern was using words loosely on that occasion.

What happened? A proposal was put to him and he and Cabinet rejected it. Was any punitive action taken? Was any attempt made to put another man up against him in the electorate? The organisation and every member of the party were wholeheartedly behind him, and he will give you that information when he talks about the conferences at Bundaberg and Toowoomba.

There is no suggestion by anyone that the hon. member was directed to include any principle in legislation. If there had been any attempt at direction, I know what he would have said. He would have told them to "go and jump in the lake," and every other Minister would have said the same. The principle was discussed by the party, and it was rejected by the party and Cabinet. They supported the hon. member in stating a case to the party and the Cabinet.

Mr. Hanlon: What about the Tully scheme?

Mr. PIZZEY: That will be answered, too.

Listen to what the former Minister had to say about additional areas; he was very critical of additional areas. He completely vindicated the Government by indicating that during his term of office he cleaned up what he called a "racket". When did that racket exist? It was there before he came into office. Of course it was! That is one of the worst accusations in the whole matter—an accusation against the previous Administration. He had to clean out what he called a "racket"—the indiscriminate granting of additional areas. He resisted it unless it was absolutely justified. It was a scathing indictment of the Labour Government. To use the former Minister's words, "During the previous regime they started off with a horse paddock and finished up with a sheep station." That was a reference to the Labour Government, if the Opposition does not know it.

Mr. Dufficy: He did not say that.

Mr. PIZZEY: The hon. gentleman can read it.

Mr. Dufficy: I have read it.

Mr. PIZZEY: On every occasion he resisted unreasonable demands for additional areas.

Mr. Mann: Who made the demands on him for additional areas?

Mr. PIZZEY: If the hon. member for Port Curtis were to retire and he did not have enough area in his property he would be quite entitled to come along and ask for additional areas. Of course, he may not get them.

An Opposition Member: Who made the demands?

Mr. PIZZEY: Nobody made demands.

I come now to the former Minister's statement that his removal from the Public Lands portfolio could be regarded only as a reflection on his administration.

An Opposition Member: What have you to say to that?

Mr. PIZZEY: That was said only to find a way out of what he originally felt was merely a trifling incident—the evasion of taxation. The former Minister knows very well it had nothing to do with his administration. He knows very well that Cabinet and all Government members were one hundred per cent. behind him in his administration of the Public Lands portfolio.

Let me come back to the additional areas. The hon. member said that under Labour administration the areas grew from a horse paddock to a sheep station. He became Minister in 1957. He said that he resisted applications for additional areas. Do hon. members think that a man who was absolutely opposed to the indiscriminate

issue of additional areas would tolerate, under his administration, the growth of any property from a horse paddock into a sheep station? Of course hon. members do not. He said, too—and this is a condemnation of the previous Government—

Mr. Burrows: Which Government?

Mr. PIZZEY: I do not know whether it was the A.L.P. Government or the Q.L.P. Government or which Government it was, but it was the Government before us. The hon. member for Fassifern said that when he took office the Department of Public Lands was torn with bitterness among the staff. Does that reflect great credit on the previous administration?

He spoke about the Country party conference. He said it was the 1957 conference but I think he made a mistake there—probably it was a typographical error—and that he really meant 1958, because the Toowoomba conference was held after we became the Government. There a motion of confidence was moved and carried overwhelmingly in favour of the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. "Country Life" was very critical—it is entitled to be critical—but you do not call that pressure.

The former Minister said, "The policy of the Government, particularly my policy as Minister, was closer settlement, and I was determined to carry out that policy to the letter." That is absolutely true. There is no greater advocate for closer settlement than the hon. member for Fassifern. But he should have added that this policy had the complete backing of Cabinet. He was carrying out Country Party policy, as he was expected to.

He referred to the 1952 Act and dealt with the granting of extra living areas as compensation for the surrender of leases. A person surrendering the last seven years of a lease—the last term—would be given not merely a living area but an additional area. He alleged that demands were made on him to cancel all contracts. That is a very general statement. He did not say who made the demands, or what they were. There were requests. There is a big difference between a request and a demand. I am sure that on reflection he will agree that he meant requests—and no doubt strong requests. A demand indicates that you have some power to force the issue. The people concerned were not in a position to make demands. They were land-owners. All they could do was make requests, and that is exactly what they did.

Mr. Newton: With threats.

Mr. PIZZEY: Of course there were no threats.

The hon. member said there were howls about high rentals. Of course there would be howls.

Mr. Ewan: We gave the landholders a right of appeal, something that hon. members opposite would not give them?

Mr. PIZZEY: Has anybody ever heard of a landholder going along to the Department of Public Lands and saying, "My rents are too low; increase them."? There will always be howls about high rentals. It is only natural that the landholders would try to drive the best bargain. And we gave them the right of appeal, as the hon. member for Roma says—a right they did not have before.

Let us have a look at the very first charge—that the Country Party Executive came to Parliament House and attempted to enlist his support in the thievery of Crown lands. Those are not the former Minister's words at all. That is a paraphrase of them. He said, "There was the incident of the Country Party Executive rolling down to Parliament House one day and putting to me the principle of the right to subdivide and sell." Is there anything wrong with that?

Mr. Lloyd: Thievery of the Crown estate, he called it.

Mr. PIZZEY: Subdivision.

Mr. Bennett: That is a charge of corruption.

Mr. PIZZEY: Rubbish! He said "In plain language, it is thievery of the Crown estate." That is subdivision. Again he is using vigorous language. The only point at issue is whether the Government were a party to the subdivisions, whether they accepted direction.

Mr. Hanlon: He said you got rid of him so that you could go on with it.

Mr. PIZZEY: But it did not happen. Hon. members opposite are basing their assumption on what they hoped would happen, but it did not happen.

Much was made of the Payne report and the 1959 Bundaberg conference. There was no evidence of pressure there. The hon. member for Fassifern spoke in the most glowing terms of the way in which the conference was handled. He was asked by six gentlemen to go into another room to discuss land problems, and they came back with eulogistic references to the lands administration. Again in 1960 the Country Party conference complimented him on his statesmanlike land policy in Queensland. The party appreciated what he had done, and the Government, Cabinet, and I believe the people of Queensland, appreciate what he has done in many new fields of land legislation.

The hon. member said, "I gave the people the right to freehold land on the easiest of terms, the first for 27 years." Of course, he was the Minister who introduced the legislation, but I think the Premier indicated in his policy speech that we would give the people the right to freehold land.

The hon. member referred to irrigation and water conservation. Perhaps I should not speak on this because it is not really relevant to the amendment before the Chamber. Already £25,000,000 has been spent on irrigation. The debt service is over £1,000,000, and the earnings will be just over £300,000, leaving a net charge on the revenue of about £750,000. That is a lot to pay each year for a select group of people in the very large irrigation areas.

Mr. Thackeray: They can afford it.

Mr. PIZZEY: The hon. member says, "They can afford it." He is one who is paying for it, if he only thought about it. That is why the farm water supply scheme is far more acceptable. The benefits to the people would be far greater and much quicker in time of drought. The benefit of increased production is coming not from the big schemes but from individual farm water supply schemes, and the farmers throughout Queensland are producing five times as much on their individual farm areas.

Mr. Lloyd: In other words, his administration was a very good one.

Mr. PIZZEY: It was a very good one, but the other was a legacy from Labour administration. Labour never thought of helping individual farmers.

The greatest insurance against drought has been the Federal Government's generous income tax depreciation scheme on water improvements. Nothing has helped more to assist us to ride through this very severe drought than the hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of pounds that have been spent on individual properties in providing water supplies, bores, etc.

Mr. Dufficy: The Government are cutting back the vote. That is what the hon. member for Fassifern complained about, and I agreed with him.

Mr. PIZZEY: The hon. member should remember that the Government have a certain amount of money to spend, and that if you spend heavily in one direction, you have less to spend in another.

Mr. Dufficy: He quoted you on that. They are his words, not mine. Answer the hon. member for Fassifern.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Warrego will have an opportunity to speak.

Mr. PIZZEY: For years Labour Governments failed to provide education facilities for the children of the State. I am not claiming any credit for the rebuilding of the school that was burnt down, but we have built one of very fine standard. Does the hon. member suggest that this year we should have foregone the spending of £75,000 on a new high school for Charleville?

Mr. Dufficy: It is not my statement; it is the statement of the hon. member for Fassifern.

Mr. PIZZEY: Apparently the hon. member is agreeing with him. The backlog in school buildings and other public buildings is so great that money had to be channelled from other sources for several years to overcome it. I think that is perfectly good government, and perfectly legitimate action to take.

The former Minister went on to talk about land tax receipts. I do not know whether it is a misprint, but "Hansard" refers to a figure of £1,500,000 now and states that in a few years' time the land value may be £30,000,000. I am sure that the hon. member did not mean that. I am sure he meant £3,000,000 but, of course, he would not know. The truth of the matter is that now only about 12,000 people are paying land tax as against 25,000 in Labour's time. Most of the land tax is being paid by big monopolies of whom hon. members opposite are so often critical. More than half of it is being paid by non-rural landholders, and progressive relief has been, and will continue to be, given to landholders.

Mr. Lloyd: What do you say about the charges?

Mr. PIZZEY: We have dealt with most of them. The key to his statement was in the end of his speech when he said that he was labouring under a deep sense of emotion, feeling that he had been treated most unfairly. I believe that he was. When anyone labours under a deep sense of emotion and a feeling of hurt it is likely that his judgment is not always as sound as normally. I am very glad that today he retracted many of his accusations against the Premier and other members of Cabinet. Let me remind hon. members opposite and the hon. member for Fassifern that no Minister could have resisted the pressures that he alleges were applied to him without the loyal and consistent support of his Cabinet and parliamentary colleagues. As I said earlier, I have no complaints against pressure whether they come from Townsville South or anywhere else. We would appoint a committee of inquiry if there was some justification or evidence of the need for it. A careful and critical analysis of the hon. member's speech shows that it was nothing more than a commendation of the administration since the Government have been in office. Not only was it a commendation of this Government's land administration policy, but it was very critical of the Labour Government's land administration.

Of course, the Leader of the Opposition started off with all sorts of statements about how he was going to be totally impersonal, that he would not reveal confidences and that he would keep his speech on a very high level.

Mr. Thackeray: His speech was at a very high level.

Mr. PIZZEY: I do not know whether the hon. member would call it that when the Leader of the Opposition told the Committee something that he heard the wives of the Ministers were saying about the Premier. Would he call that keeping on a high plane?

Mr. Graham: Who denied it?

Mr. PIZZEY: He said that he would not stoop to such levels. He said that he was not going to reveal confidences. In other words, it was the outburst of someone who was extremely disappointed that Cabinet and the Government took the correct action, and he was thus frustrated from taking the action he would have been entitled to take had the Government not made the decision they did. The whole splenetic outburst of the Leader of the Opposition reminded me of Shakespeare's Macbeth.

Towards the end of his speech he spoke of—

"... a poor player

Who struts and frets his hour upon the stage

And then is heard no more. It is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury Signifying nothing."

I feel that the Committee will give short shrift to the amendment. There is no substance in it at all. None of the charges have been proved and, at the conclusion of the debate I am sure the Government will have the full confidence not only of the Parliament, but of the people.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (2.56 p.m.): Throughout this issue and in the statements made by the hon. member for Fassifern, if I may be permitted to quote an erstwhile member of the Labour Party, there have been, in the attitudes adopted by the Premier, the hon. member for Fassifern and the Minister for Education and Migration, "more tumbles than there are in Wirth's Circus." I admired the part played by the hon. member for Fassifern on Thursday afternoon. I think he made a precise and excellent case—a courageous case. He was prepared to record in the debates of this Chamber charges and accusations that he made against the Country Party Executive, the Premier and members of the Cabinet. He had the courage to do that after a great deal of pressure had been brought to bear on him for some hours by the Premier and other Cabinet Ministers to withhold his statement. He had the courage to resist that pressure and to make the statement. Instead of maintaining his attitude, 72 hours later he has withdrawn his resignation from the Country Party.

I took very careful notes of what was said by the hon. member for Fassifern while making his charges. One of his statements was that he disliked the deterioration in the principles of the Country Party. Towards the end of his speech he made another statement about the Country Party that that party

was not worthy of its name. This morning he came before the Chamber and withdrew his resignation.

Dr. Noble: He realised he was wrong.

Mr. LLOYD: The accusations made and the charges levelled by the hon. member last Thursday were so serious that they produced two editorials in the daily newspapers. They were allegations requiring some substantiation in the interests of the public. If the public are concerned with those allegations—as they are at present—he has a responsibility to the people he represents in his own electorate, and to the whole of the electors of Queensland, to give them some form of substantiation. Today we have given him the opportunity to participate in the debate and substantiate his allegations and accusations.

It is all very well for the Minister for Education to refute the statements that have been made but he is completely out of line with public opinion on the matter.

I do not very often quote editorials from newspapers that are opposed to us but the charges made by the hon. member for Fassifern were such that the "Telegraph" of Friday last, in its column entitled "Opinion," said, "This explanation is not enough." The article in the "Telegraph" appeared after the Premier had replied to the charges of the hon. member for Fassifern. This passage is of interest—

"Mr. Muller says he was obliged to resist a continual demand for additional leasehold areas—in plain language, a gift from the Crown estate" . . .

This is evidently not of interest to the Minister for Education. The article continues—

" . . . and that this had grown into 'something like a racket' involving £13,000,000 a year over three years."

The "Telegraph" leader-writer, or "Opinion" writer, was of the opinion, as we were and still are, that the hon. member for Fassifern was talking about his three years in control of the Public Lands portfolio.

The article continues—

"Many people also will be wondering about the procedure that surrounded Mr. Muller's departure from Cabinet."

In regard to the Premier's statement the "Telegraph" said, "This explanation is not enough." The article concludes—

"The Country Party must realise that the issues that have been raised cannot be glossed over. A complete statement is needed to clear the air."

We agree that an explanation of the charges is called for.

"The Courier-Mail" took quite some time to give its views. I believe the statement of the Leader of the Opposition to be correct, that in conference the Premier and other Cabinet Ministers arranged with "The

Courier-Mail" and other newspapers not to give publicity to this matter but to kill it. Can the Premier deny that he has not in the last few days had such a discussion with the proprietors of newspapers?

Mr. Nicklin: What did you say?

Mr. LLOYD: Can the Premier deny that he has not in the last few days had a discussion with the proprietors of newspapers?

Mr. Nicklin: I definitely deny it now.

Mr. LLOYD: I accept his denial in the same way as I accepted his statement that he knew nothing about this case, and I cannot believe that.

Mr. NICKLIN: I rise to a point of order. Did I understand the hon. member to say that he did not believe the reply I gave him?

Mr. Pizzey: He said he could not believe it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to accept the denial of the Premier. He had no occasion to make any reference to another matter in which I understood him to say he did not believe the Premier's statement. I ask the hon. member for Kedron to accept the Premier's denial and to pass on to the next matter.

Mr. LLOYD: Certainly. I said I accepted the denial of the Premier just as I accepted his denial that he knew nothing about the taxation matter.

Mr. Nicklin: You are being smart.

Mr. Hanlon: You cannot have it both ways.

Mr. LLOYD: "The Courier-Mail" article was quite a good one for the Government, except the final passage. If the Cabinet Ministers who are so uncomfortable about this matter knew what the people were thinking, they might agree to the proposal of the Leader of the Opposition that a judicial inquiry be held into these charges.

The leader in "The Courier-Mail" yesterday morning contained this passage—

"The charges made by Mr. Muller in Parliament last week alleging that pressures had been brought to bear on him as Minister to serve the interests of certain landholders are a different matter."

That is, different from the taxation matter, and that is the Opposition case. It continues—

"They should be answered.

Parliament could ask for an investigation to determine the substance of Mr. Muller's charges. Mr. Muller might then assist it with more definite testimony naming the persons who, he alleges, tried to influence him improperly as Minister for Lands.

But such an inquiry is not needed to vindicate the Premier's stand that Mr. Muller's retention of a ministerial portfolio would have been highly improper after the way he treated his Cabinet colleagues by first denying that he was the offender who had had to pay a penalty."

Those are the opinions expressed in two newspapers that are the political allies—indeed, the propaganda machine—of the Government parties. After the statements he made, it is useless for the hon. member for Fassifern to get up in the Chamber and state that he has withdrawn his resignation from the Country Party. His charges were serious, and we and the people of Queensland are entitled to an explanation.

In the interests of the people, I urge the hon. member for Fassifern to substantiate some of his charges. If pressures are being brought to bear on the Government, and if the Government are surrendering to those pressures, it is just as well for the people to know they have a weak and dependent Government—a Government dependent on the big, wealthy interests—the graziers, the pastoral companies, and Big Business. The people of Queensland should know that a minority of the people in this State are exerting pressure to secure for themselves the greatest possible benefit from the exploitation of the resources of the State.

The Minister for Education and Migration said that the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members on this side of the Chamber had surrendered to pressure in previous years. I remind the Minister that in a television broadcast not so very long ago the Premier said on the preferential voting issue that the conference of the Country Party had demanded that he should not agree to the introduction of preferential voting. He said it was the policy of the party that there should not be preferential voting, and that he had to abide by the policy of the party.

What was the position of the Australian Labour Party on the introduction of three weeks' annual leave? It was the policy of this party, enunciated by the highest Labour Party tribunal in Queensland at the Mackay convention, to introduce three weeks' annual leave in this State. As a political party, we went to the people on that occasion. Every person in Queensland and every elector in Queensland knew it was the policy of the Australian Labour Party to implement the introduction of the three weeks' annual leave provision for all workers employed in industry, but it was not under pressure or direction. It was purely and simply the implementation of policy, just as the Premier said in his television broadcast that the policy of the Country Party had been laid down at the Country Party conference, that it was against the introduction of preferential voting in Queensland, and therefore it would not be introduced. We agree with the Premier that his party

has to implement the policy of its political party, just as it is our duty to implement the policy of our party. But we do not accept dictation, as apparently the Government have done in the dismissal of the hon. member for Fassifern from Cabinet rank.

Let us look at more of these statements made by the hon. member for Fassifern and supposed to have been replied to by the Minister for Education: Firstly, that the Country Party Executive were making protests to him and applying pressure to him. Who were the Country Party Executive? No sooner did this Government get into power than the wealthy interests of Queensland—the conservative caste of this State, which many members of the Government Parties at the present time are mistaking for the inner Caucus of the Government, diagonally across the corner from here, the Queensland Club—(Government laughter.) Hon members may laugh, but if they cast their minds back to the origin of the Royal Commission into the conduct of a former Minister of the Crown, they will recall that it was started in the inner senate rooms of the Queensland Club.

As soon as this Government came into power we saw pressures exercised; these wealthy interests decided to infiltrate the Country Party, to subvert the Country Party away from their true principles concerning the interests of the primary producers, and pressure was applied to the former Minister for Public Lands. He was accused by people who were trying to get what they wanted from the Country Party of being socialistic in his policy. He said they endeavoured to dictate to him what the policy of his department should be—what the land policy should be. The Executive went as far as going to the Premier, and, in the words of the hon. member for Fassifern, the Premier brought the former Minister before him to explain what he had done. In other words, he was brought before the Premier to show cause on the things he had done in the administration of the department because of the pressures brought to bear by the subverting elements within the Country Party Executive.

The hon. member for Fassifern alleged that "Country Life" had in turn tried to exert pressure and that there had been demands for additional areas. All these things, he said, had occurred in the last three years. They wanted living areas on subdivision, plus compensation for land taken away, and demands were made in relation to higher rentals.

Mr. Ramsden: They got it.

Mr. LLOYD: Exactly. I am glad the hon. member for Merthyr has interjected. However, all these matters boiled up till the stage was reached when at one Country Party conference the then Minister had to withstand a motion of no confidence in the administration of the department.

Mr. Ramsden: He withstood it, didn't he?

Mr. LLOYD: Yes. He went on to deal with the principle of the right to subdivide and sell and said that the proposal meant, in plain language, thievery of the Crown estate. Those were the very words that the Minister for Education and Migration refused to accept as having come from the hon. member for Fassifern. The former Minister certainly used the words. He condemned the principle of the right to subdivide and sell and the terminology he used against it was that it was thievery of the Crown estate.

He said that some wanted the right to transfer to members of the family and he said also that they demanded all these things. I will admit that the very fact that the hon. member for Fassifern rejected all such demands does him credit. The Premier said that the tax evasion was a serious defalcation. That is a very strong expression—"a serious defalcation." He said quite a considerable amount of money was involved. "A serious defalcation" is a matter of great importance and a very serious one. I do not think the Taxation Department would show any fear or favour, because it happened years ago. They used the expression "unreasonable carelessness." But it happened over the ten-year period up to 1956 and a sum in the neighbourhood of £1,800 a year was involved. But was it a serious defalcation? Was there any criminal intent on the part of the hon. member for Fassifern? If I were he I should be very seriously concerned about the accusation made against him by the Premier. Was the matter serious? We consider that if the hon. member for Fassifern was guilty of defrauding the Crown he was not worthy to hold office as a Cabinet Minister, but on this occasion, although the Cabinet do not want him as one of their number, they are prepared to let him remain a member of the Country Party. If he were guilty of such things as corruption and serious defalcation—the same thing, or parallel—and if he is not entitled to be a Cabinet Minister, why have they, by some illicit arrangement or secret agreement with him, now allowed him to go back into the party?

Mr. Hewitt: Because the council would not accept his resignation.

Dr. Delamothe: The branch would not accept his resignation. You should read your paper.

Mr. LLOYD: I do not know what is going to happen to him but the Treasurer, by way of interjection just before lunch today, said he is not yet back in the Country Party. Is that a threat that he is going to be expelled? There is only one way to get rid of the hon. member for Fassifern now and that is to expel him from the Country Party, seeing that he has withdrawn his resignation. So far as this dictation is concerned—

Mr. Tooth: What dictation?

Mr. LLOYD: The dictation that the Minister for Education and Migration talked about. Let me quote a letter to the editor of the Brisbane "Telegraph" on preferential voting and outside direction, published on 12 January. It reads—

"In Sunday's T.V. programme Meet the Press (Channel 7) Premier Nicklin said he and his Deputy, Mr. Morris, were personally in favor of preferential voting but did not implement it because the last Country Party conference had instructed not to. How now, outside influences?—H. McQueen, Ashgrove."

If it is the policy of the Country Party, we accept that it is the intention of the Government to implement their own policy. But what about the Liberal Party? Are they going to implement their own policy? We agree that policies should be implemented by the Government who are elected; but if, as indicated by the hon. member for Fassifern, pressures are being brought to bear on cabinet ministers by means of threats, the position is sufficiently serious to warrant investigation. It goes much further than implementing the policy of the Government. It infringes the privileges of parliament. On previous occasions cabinet ministers have reported similar threats to the police and investigations have been made. If wealthy Country Party interests go to a minister and say, "If you do not do as we say, you will lose the seat," or, "We have not got a lot of votes, but we have a lot of money," I believe those threats warrant immediate investigation. That is pressure accompanied by threats—in other words, "If you don't do this, you will not get the moneys that we are going to advance to you."

The case made by the Premier was very weak. He first of all said that he did not know until a few days after the election that the hon. member for Fassifern was involved in evasion of taxation that commenced some 12 years before. The Minister for Education also said that he did not know. But the Minister for Transport admitted to the Leader of the Opposition that he knew all about it.

Mr. Pizzey: He knew someone of that name.

Mr. LLOYD: Someone has fallen down on the job. The booklet issued by the Commissioner of Taxation was received in the Parliamentary Library on 23 May. Everyone in Queensland who was interested politically knew that the former Minister for Lands had been involved in some cases of tax evasion. If the Premier knew nothing about it and the Minister for Education knew nothing about it and the Minister for Transport knew everything about it, that did not prevent the re-election of the hon. member for Fassifern to the Ministry in the Country Party caucus room. What is all this talk about integrity? Do hon. members opposite mean to tell me that 25 or 26 members of the Country Party did not know that the hon. member for

Fassifern was involved, or that they took so little notice of it or viewed it so lightly that immediately after the elections at their first caucus meeting, they re-elected the hon. member for Fassifern to the Queensland Ministry as a Country Party representative? Either we are going to have this right or we are not. It seems that the Premier and the Minister for Education have got the story all wrong. The Premier tried to establish himself as the epitome of veracity and talked about integrity. The Premier did not know and the Minister for Education did not know, or said they did not know. I accept that—

Mr. Pizzey: You accepted the denial.

Mr. LLOYD: Yes, but I would not accept it from every member of the Country Party. There is all this talk of integrity, yet the Country Party elected him to the Ministry when this shadow was hanging over his head. Later on, when Cabinet refused to allow him to accept the portfolio of Public Lands, the Premier issued a Press statement saying that he had offered the Minister another portfolio. Later, in this Chamber, he told us a different story. He does this on the basis of "niceness"—"I am such a lovely man that I could not bear to tell an untruth." In other words, he expects the public to believe that he is beyond reproach—"honest Frank", if you like to call him that. Because of all this integrity and honesty of which he speaks, he is able to go to the Press and tell untruths in a Press statement. That is what we are asked to believe; it is what the public are asked to believe. It is a matter of what we believe, whether we believe that the former Minister for Public Lands, regardless of his taxation evasion, was telling the truth. He was in fact kicked out of Cabinet because of his administration, in that he had allied himself very closely to a policy of closer settlement and—in reply to the hon member for Merthyr—had refused to accept dictation from outside interests.

Mr. Ramsden: Backed by the whole Cabinet.

Mr. LLOYD: Because he refused to accept dictation from big pastoral companies and big business interests he was dismissed from Cabinet.

Mr. Ramsden: What rubbish, and you know it!

Mr. LLOYD: It is just a matter of whether there is credibility in the case presented by the Premier after he admits that he has not told the truth right through the whole story. If he has told the truth on one occasion does he tell it on other occasions? How are we to believe that what he has said here is the truth?

What is the reason for the withdrawal of the hon. member's resignation? What has happened in the past 72 hours? Has something caused him to change his views? Was it because a direct appeal was made to him on the grounds that if he did not it would destroy

the Government? Was there so much truth and foundation to his story that the Government would be destroyed by it?

Government Members interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: The hon. member for Fassifern has made allegations that the people of Queensland are entitled to have explained. Was his change of mind for some other reason? Did something else force him suddenly into changing his mind almost overnight? Despite the pressure exerted by the Premier and other Cabinet Ministers he insisted on exercising his democratic right to expose in Parliament what he and we consider to be a serious state of affairs. Then, suddenly, within a couple of days, he decides to withdraw his resignation as a member of the Country Party, even though on Thursday last he considered that the Country Party was not worthy of its name. All of us on this side realise that many primary producers throughout the length and breadth of Queensland have felt the cold hand of the Government upon them. They are realising that they were better off under a Labour Government than they are under the present administration. I agree with the hon. member for Fassifern when he makes that statement.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: I notice that it is the young Liberals who are interjecting, not Country Party members. They realise that what I say is right. The steep increases in charges and other impositions by this Government placed upon separate primary industries in all parts of Queensland have led primary producers in this State to realise that they received justice from the Labour Government.

Mr. Sullivan: How many seats have you got in the primary-producing areas?

Mr. LLOYD: The hon. member has not been here very long.

There is a definite suspicion, particularly in the minds of the small primary producers of Queensland, that the Liberal Party, through the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer, are forcing their way into control of the administration of this State. In fact, at present many small primary producers who are endeavouring to make a living off the land are very dissatisfied. Let the hon. member for Tablelands say that the tobacco-growers of his area are satisfied. The same remarks apply to grain-growers. Even the graziers and pastoralists are not content at what has been done by the Government during the last three years, but most of the discontent exists among small farmers. The big men are able to exert pressure. They are the people who are infiltrating into the Country Party in order to gain control. Accountants and other business people in country areas are taking control of Country Party branches and executives and are exerting the pressure of which the hon. member for Fassifern complained.

A Government Member: Who told you that?

Mr. LLOYD: Many hon. members opposite, who are too lazy to do other than interject when something constructive is being debated, are growing further and further away from the people they are supposed to represent. The Country Party is not worthy of its name. The Premier will admit that members of this party, to whom the primary producers of the State looked for many years, never acted on the strength of the political plums that might come their way but were content to represent fairly that section of the community to which most of the small primary producers of the State belong. Those people are now unhappy and discontented at not receiving the justice they thought they would receive at the hands of this Government. They realise they were far better off under a Labour Government.

In recent years in the Country Party, big business interests have been taking control and bringing to bear the pressures that were revealed by the hon. member for Fassifern. It is all very well for the Minister for Education and Migration to talk about the influence of the trade unions. I deny that they have a great deal of influence, but at least they are representative of 80 per cent. of the population of Queensland, unlike the small minority in the community accused by the hon. member for Fassifern of exerting the pressures of which he has complained.

I ask hon. members to support the amendment. I am sure that all reasonable-thinking members of the Committee will appreciate that the influence, pressure and threats that have been charged constitute a breach of privilege in relation to a Cabinet portfolio and will support the amendment that has been put forward, and that there should be a public inquiry into the charges that have been made.

Mr. RICHTER (Somerset) (3.29 p.m.): As President of the Country Party in Queensland during the whole of the period of the previous Parliament, I feel I must correct certain statements made by both the hon. member for Kedron and the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Thackeray: What about the statements made by the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation? Are you going to deal with those?

Mr. RICHTER: Certain matters raised by the hon. member for Fassifern during the Budget debate are being used in an endeavour to make political capital against the Government. I know that for some considerable time the hon. member for Fassifern has been under mental strain and I know that pressures have been applied to him. I will be quite honest about that—pressures have been applied. It gives me no joy to take part in this debate. I have been campaign director for the hon. member for

Fassifern for a good many years, and I have been chairman of his electorate council. I have had a very close association with him.

Let me reply to certain matters raised by the hon. member for Kedron.

Mr. Ramsden: They are not worthy of a reply.

Mr. RICHTER: Possibly not. He was very disappointed at the fact that the hon. member for Fassifern withdrew his resignation from the Country Party. That upset the whole of his plans. He is now asking, "Why?" If I told him, he would not understand. He and other hon. members opposite did not understand the Premier's statement about the offer of another portfolio to the hon. member for Fassifern.

Further, the hon. member for Kedron would not appreciate the courage of the hon. member for Fassifern in getting up and saying what he did. The hon. member for Kedron referred to the Queensland Club as the Cabinet of the Government. He said the instructions to the Government come from the Queensland Club.

Mr. Lloyd: And from the newspaper moguls and the wealthy grazing interests.

Mr. RICHTER: I have been president of the Country Party for the last four years and prior to that I was vice-president for five years. I am not a member of the Queensland Club. The Premier and the Minister for Education are members of the Executive of the Country Party, but as far as I know they are not members of the Queensland Club. It is a pity the hon. member indulges in such rot.

He also had something to say about preferential voting. He read from a Press cutting, I believe, that the Country Party conference issued instructions about preferential voting. It issued no such instructions. The conference carried a motion to leave the decision on this matter to the Parliamentary party.

I have already said that pressures have been brought to bear. I know there has been pressure, quite a deal of it from landholders and possibly from hon. members who represent landholders. I believe the pressure was fairly widespread and continuous, and I know it was exerted on the former Minister for Public Lands. I know pressures have come from the Country Party, from groups, and from people. I know the Country Party has taken complaints to the Minister and to the Premier. There is no question of that, but is there anything wrong with it? Nothing at all. We have done it in the past and we will do it again. But the Premier and the former Minister for Public Lands have on all occasions made it perfectly clear that the Government desired the highest practical degree of land usage and strongly supported a policy of closer settlement. I am not arguing that these pressure groups did

not try to break that policy, but the Government resisted. The Cabinet and the Government decided that closer settlement should be followed. And the Government took Government members into their confidence in that matter of policy.

An A.L.P. Member: You were president of the Country Party while this pressure was being exercised.

Mr. RICHTER: Yes, and the pressure was exercised on me as president of the Party, and on the Executive of the party. It was exercised on the Premier, but it was resisted, and that is the matter that counts.

Mr. Thackeray: Is that why you resigned as president of the Country Party?

Mr. RICHTER: No: I was there for four years and was vice-president for five years before that.

I do not want to take up much time on this subject. I will make the position perfectly clear for the Country Party Executive.

Mr. Hanlon: Will you be covering up for the Country Party Executive?

Mr. RICHTER: I am not covering up for anybody. I am giving the facts, and I can prove them.

Mr. Morris: You are doing it honestly.

Mr. RICHTER: I am doing it quite honestly. The records of the Country Party are an open book and they can be examined at any time by hon. members so that they may satisfy themselves.

The statement this morning by the hon. member for Fassifern made it very clear that he accepted the assurance by the Premier that his decisions were not influenced by outside pressures. He made that very clear. Outside pressures include pressure from the Country Party or anybody else.

Mr. Thackeray: Was any pressure put on him to make the withdrawal?

Mr. RICHTER: No, no pressure at all was put on him.

Mr. Hanlon: Was any pressure put on him not to speak last Thursday when he was in and out of the Chamber all the time?

Mr. RICHTER: I know nothing about that, but I know no pressure was put on him to make his statement this morning. I make that perfectly clear. The management committee, or what is referred to as the Executive of the Country Party, consists of 13 members. The Premier is a member of that Executive and so is the Minister for Education and Migration.

Mr. Thackeray: Who else?

Mr. RICHTER: I will tell the hon. member. We have a president, two vice-presidents, a trustee, a treasurer, and four people appointed from the conference. I think that is all.

An Opposition Member: What are their names?

Mr. RICHTER: There is one a member of the Federal Parliamentary Party—the Postmaster-General.

There has never been a resolution carried by that executive or management committee—to direct, or to use pressure of any kind on, the Premier or any other member of Cabinet.

Mr. Hanlon: Are you denying that the Country Party Executive never considered this taxation evasion of Mr. Muller's after the election?

Mr. RICHTER: I tell the hon member—

Mr. Hanlon: Are you denying that?

Mr. RICHTER: I am still a member of the executive and I have attended every meeting since I stood down from the presidency, and I say that matter has never been raised.

Mr. Davies: You are saying the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation lied?

Mr. RICHTER: I am not saying that at all. I reiterate that never has any resolution been carried by the management committee—

Mr. Hanlon: Was it ever discussed by the Executive of the Country Party?

Mr. RICHTER: It is possible that certain members of the Executive did exactly as the hon. member for Fassifern described in the House the other day, but not on behalf of the Executive.

Mr. Hanlon: Did the Premier dance to their tune?

Mr. RICHTER: He did not, he resisted. He said he resisted, and I know he did.

Mr. Houston: Did the members of the Executive know about the taxation matter?

Mr. RICHTER: How would I know? Don't ask me that; don't be so silly about it. I heard about it a long time ago but, like everybody else, I did not believe it. I did not believe it any more than anybody else.

The former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation was quite prepared to receive members of the Executive. He was quite prepared to discuss matters with them and, in my presence, he invited them to go along and do so. I know that some of those people have perhaps abused that privilege—it is quite possible—and that is what he complained about.

During my term as President, many resolutions were submitted to Country Party conferences, to Country Party Central Council, and to the Management Committee, suggesting that the Government be directed to do certain things. I say quite definitely that I have at all times strongly resisted any attempt to direct this Government, and I have done it very successfully, because, in the whole of those three years, not one resolution

has ever been carried which had any suggestion of a direction. As I said before, the Country Party books are an open record. Hon. members opposite may go along and examine them and they will not find one resolution directing this Government to do anything. Resolutions have been presented in the form of a direction but always they have finished up as recommendations or suggestions. The suggestion has been made and the decision has been left entirely to this Parliament. And that is the way it should be.

I take no responsibility for the actions of any individual member of the Country Party; I cannot. I cannot take the responsibility if any member of the Country Party attempts to use pressure on any member of this Assembly, but I do take full responsibility for the actions of the Country Party Executive during my period as President of that body. Country Party conferences are wide open to the Press; we have always allowed the Press in, our agenda is an open book; and I challenge hon. members opposite to point to one resolution, carried at a Country Party conference, amounting to a direction to this Government.

I repeat that I am no longer President of the Country Party. But I am still a member of that Executive, and so are the Premier and the Minister for Education and Migration. As I said before, I have every reason to believe—as I attended all meetings of the Executive—that no resolution was ever passed suggesting that the Premier deal with the former Minister for Public Lands. As far as I know, the matter was never discussed by the Executive of the Country Party. I say that with all conviction. I am not responsible as President for the Country Party any longer but I do know it was never discussed in my presence and I attended all the conferences.

The Country Party Executive, as an executive and a representative body of the Country Party in Queensland, has never applied pressure on the Premier or any of his Cabinet Ministers.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (3.44 p.m.): This particular situation has been responsible for many remarkable gyrations and contradictions and, if I may try, I should like to bring into the debate the viewpoint of a temperate and unbiased man. I should like to try to tell the Committee just what conclusions the average man in the street has drawn from the various statements made in the Chamber, as they have been published in the Press. As a North Queenslander, let me say that, after the election, I heard—I think it was over the radio—that the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation was dropped from the Cabinet because he had been offered an alternative portfolio that he had refused to accept it and had resigned, presumably in a huff, or presumably because he thought that he should not have been offered an alternative portfolio. That was widespread throughout North Queensland, and

I think I can assume that it was the opinion that was widespread throughout the whole of Queensland.

Then we had a most remarkable performance the other day from the former Minister for Lands, the hon. member for Fassifern. Like the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members, I think that we do maintain a fairly reasonable standard of decency in this Assembly, and I have never known an hon. member, consciously at any rate, to disclose in the Chamber things that he has learned in confidence. Consequently, I propose to keep my remarks strictly on the basis of what I have learned from debates here, what I have read in the Press, and what I have heard over the radio. The hon. member for Fassifern waited for four months—I understand that he was dropped from Cabinet early in June; it is now October.

Mr. Duggan: It was not an impetuous outburst, was it?

Mr. AIKENS: No; that is the point I am making. It took the hon. member for Fassifern four months to make up his mind whether or not he would make a speech in this House about being dropped from Cabinet, and he also had four months in which to make up his mind about what he would say if and when he spoke in this Assembly.

We know that before the hon. member spoke continual approaches were made to him by the Country Party, and I assume they were made in order to prevent him from speaking at all or to get him to water down the remarks that he proposed to make. All hon. members know that last Thursday we sat in this Chamber while the hon. member for Nudgee was speaking and that there was a little bit of levity, not as a result of what the hon. member was saying, because he was making rather a good speech on the particular subject with which he was dealing, but because the hon. member for Roma came into the Chamber, whispered something into the ear of the hon. member for Fassifern, who was sitting here on the front bench where the whip and the secretary sit, and the hon. member for Fassifern then hot-footed it into the Cabinet room. Again we can only assume that a last-minute attempt was being made by someone in the Cabinet room to prevail upon the hon. member either not to speak at all or to water down the remarks that he proposed making.

Mr. Hanlon: Do you think there might have been some members of the Country Party Executive in there?

Mr. AIKENS: I do not know who was in there, and I am not going to guess. I am giving only the facts and the truth that are apparent to all hon. members. We all saw him go into the Cabinet room, and we all know that no-one but a Cabinet Minister or those very close to Cabinet Ministers go into that room. As I said, hon. members will remember that there was a certain amount of levity while the hon. member for Nudgee

was speaking and he was told to keep going because Alf Muller was not back in the Chamber. Then a rather coarse but appropriate remark was made to the hon. member for Nudgee sotto voce in order to keep him going. He was talking about sewerage at the time, I think, and someone told him not to do something until such time as Alf Muller came back into the Chamber. We all saw the hon. member for Fassifern come back into the Chamber.

Mr. Davies: How many times did he go into the Cabinet room?

Mr. AIKENS: He went into the Cabinet room only once that I saw, or perhaps I should correct that by saying, "We all saw." I repeat that the hon. member for Fassifern had four months in which to make up his mind whether he was going to talk and what he was going to say when he did speak. Right at what a former hon. member from North Queensland would have called the "physiological" moment, he still decided to speak. We all know that the hon. member for Roma slipped down to the hon. member for Fassifern, put his head against the head of the hon. member for Fassifern, and the hon. member for Fassifern said in a voice that was quite audible to us on this side, "No, their offer is not good enough for me."

Mr. Duggan: In addition to your statement about four months having elapsed, to make your case stronger you may as well add that he read from a prepared statement for the greater part of his speech.

Mr. AIKENS: I do not place very much significance on that point because many hon. members read from prepared statements. I am not saying this in a derogatory sense, but many hon. members are incapable of making speeches like the Leader of the Opposition, and I, and a few others, who merely have rough headings or something like that. Therefore I do not attach great significance to the fact that he spoke from a prepared statement, but it was obvious to me that the hon. member for Fassifern, who is a very good extemporaneous speaker and does not need notes, made these notes so that he would not say something he did not want to say or forget anything that he wanted to say.

Mr. Duggan: That is the point.

Mr. AIKENS: That is the point I want to make. Having said that he got up and laid these serious charges. He mentioned the word "blackmail". He said that the Executive of the Country Party were continually on his back, that prominent members of the Country Party came to him and said, "We have not got the votes but we have got the money."

Mr. Ewan: He never said anything about blackmail.

Mr. AIKENS: He used the word "blackmail". I am not trying to take any advantage of the hon. member for Fassifern

or the members of the Government; I certainly am not trying to bolster up the argument put forward by the Opposition. I am merely giving my opinion, and a considered opinion, as an unbiased observer of all these deplorable proceedings. They have created in my mind, and I am certain that they have created in the minds of every person with whom I have discussed the matter outside the Chamber, that he was removed from office because he refused to grant what was asked of him by certain graziers, some of them members of the Country Party, who had demanded either extensions of their leases or increased areas of territory. He also mentioned that these men had gone along to the Premier and complained about his action in refusing to grant the graziers extra leases, extension of leases, and enlargements of their areas. If I remember rightly, he also mentioned that the Premier had discussed with him his rejection of these requests by the various graziers and by prominent members of the Country Party.

We realise that when the Premier spoke he was under great emotional stress. He told us that Cabinet considered that the taxation defalcations of the hon. member for Fassifern were so great that they necessitated his removal from Cabinet. He told us also that he did not know of this charge against the hon. member until after the election. I am prepared to accept his assurance on that point, but it is obvious from interjections, from what we have learned since, and from what has transpired since, that other members of Cabinet knew of the defalcations of the hon. member for Fassifern and they knew that his name had been mentioned in a newspaper article in connection with them. The Premier told us that when they called the hon. member for Fassifern in he first of all denied it and said in effect, if not in fact, "I am not the man. I am not the man mentioned in the Commissioner of Taxation's report." He told us that they were prepared to believe him. But then a couple of members of Cabinet suggested a course of action in order to clear the whole matter up. Here I think we can draw the reasonable assumption that they wanted the matter cleared up beyond all reasonable doubt because they would consider that if it were not cleared up beyond a reasonable doubt they would be subject to a barrage from the Opposition as soon as Parliament met. I think that is a safeguard they were entitled to have.

The Premier told us that the hon. member for Fassifern went away to the Taxation Commissioner to get a note from the Commissioner that he was not the man, or that Cabinet asked him to give a note to a couple of Ministers to take to the Commissioner and get an assurance from him that the hon. member for Fassifern was not the man mentioned in the report of the Taxation Commissioner, and that later

the hon. member for Fassifern came back to Cabinet and threatened the members that, if they did not stop talking about his taxation defalcations, he would issue writs for defamation.

Let us accept that very serious charge at face value. I have no reason to disregard it. Let us assume that the hon. member for Fassifern deliberately lied to his Cabinet colleagues; let us assume that he tried to bluff his Cabinet colleagues into believing his lie by threatening legal action. In those circumstances—if they are true—I would say that the Cabinet acted correctly in dropping the hon. member from the Cabinet, but they should not only have dropped him from the Cabinet. If those things are true—and this is the only qualification I make—they had no right to take him back into the Country Party and he has no right to sit in this Parliament. They cannot have it both ways. Either they must take action against the hon. member for Fassifern or they must admit that they are not game to go on with it because of things that have not yet been disclosed. As I say, they cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Hanlon: The hon. member for Fassifern challenged them to a by-election but they would not be in it.

Mr. AIKENS: Let us assume that everything the Premier said the other day about the hon. member for Fassifern is true in every respect. I can only say that I very much regret that the hon. member, for whom I have the highest regard, took the action that he did. If it is true that he was involved in income tax defalcations up to 1956, I regret he did not go along to his party on the formation of the Liberal-Country Party Government, and say, "I got tangled up with the Income Tax Department quite innocently." I believe he was innocently tangled up with them. I believe he got into this mess with the department because he tried to do his own income tax returns, which is a dangerous thing to do. There is an old saying that a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client, and another that anyone in business who tries to do his own income tax returns is headed straight for gaol.

Mr. Lloyd: Do you think that now he is back in the Country Party he should be kept out of Cabinet for all time?

Mr. AIKENS: I am going to deal with the aspect of punishment in perpetuity, in which I do not believe. If the hon. member for Fassifern had gone along—assuming that all that has been said by the Premier is true—and told his colleagues in 1956 that he was tangled up with the Income Tax Department quite innocently, but that he had wiped the slate with that department and had paid his just debts and was, to all intents and purposes, a free and honourable man, I feel sure the affair would have ended.

Mr. Coburn: That is what should have been done.

Mr. AIKENS: That is what should have been done, if we can believe the story of the Premier. Now we get back to the fact that if he was responsible for these defalcations and did not do that when he should have, but waited four months after he was dropped from Cabinet to make his remarkable statement the other day, I think that every member of this Chamber and every fair-minded citizen of Queensland will agree that the hon. member should either never have made the statement he made on Thursday or, having made it, he should not have retracted; he should have gone on with it. I think he made a grave blunder in speaking and then retracting—in resigning from the Country Party and then seeking to go back to it. I am not making any attack whatever on the hon. member for Fassifern. I am merely giving an honest and considered opinion of the whole affair and, if he can benefit by it, I am happy to help him by giving my honest and considered opinion.

Now I come to the matter of his membership of the Country Party. We have been told today that his resignation from the party has been withdrawn, and we must assume that he is going to be readmitted to the Country Party with full military honours. We have to assume, of course, that he will attend the Country Party caucus tomorrow afternoon, and, having assumed those things—because I cannot imagine a man being readmitted to the Country Party and being denied the minor privileges of membership of that party—we get back to the most important point; if he is a member of the Country Party, is he not entitled to aspire to a Cabinet position? And, if he is entitled as a member of the Country Party to aspire to and be elected to Cabinet, how long are they going to hold him out?

Mr. Davies: Is that the offer?

Mr. AIKENS: I do not know the offer, but I think we should know the whole of the facts, now that the matter has been partly ventilated. I do not know if they hope that the hon. member for Fassifern with advancing years will go into the silence much quicker than would appear, but he appears to be more hale and hearty than I am. How long will he remain in the Country Party purely and simply as a back-bencher?

I have always taken a certain view, and on this point I have disagreed with trade-union leaders who say they are quite prepared to sell a man a union ticket but that he cannot aspire to any office of that union because the controlling officials of the union do not like him. I have always argued that once a man has a union ticket, or a ticket in any organisation, he should enjoy the privileges and conditions applicable to that membership ticket.

Mr. Richter: Isn't that the business of the Country Party?

Mr. AIKENS: I do not think it is the business of the Country Party. I think it is the business of Parliament now that the matter has been raised in Parliament. Once it was taken outside the confines and the four walls of the Country Party and brought into this Chamber, it became the public property of the people of Queensland and the business of Parliament.

I think we should ask those in charge of the Country Party—the Premier and the executive of the Country Party—how long the ban is to be placed on the hon. member for Fassifern. If his defalcations were as serious as the Premier led us to believe on Thursday—and they could well be—and his action in the Cabinet was as serious, reprehensible or heinous as the Premier led us to believe last Thursday—and it could well be—he would not be a fit and proper person to be in the Country Party. The Government cannot have it both ways. I ask them, “Are you going to adopt the detestable practice that operates in many Government departments with regard to the dismissal of certain men who can never be re-employed? Are you going to adopt the detestable practice of punishment in perpetuity?” We need a statement from the Premier or some responsible officer of the Country Party as to just how long the hon. member for Fassifern is going to be held, if I may use the vernacular, on the outer.

Mr. Richter: It has nothing to do with Parliament.

Mr. AIKENS: It certainly has. This has become a public scandal, and it has reached the proportions of a public scandal because of the statements of the hon. member for Fassifern. I for one am very jealous of the honour and dignity of Parliament, and I will not tolerate any suggestion of public scandal in matters that affect Parliament. I do not care two hoots in Hades what the Country Party does as a party, any more than I care two hoots in Hades what the Liberal Party does as a party, or what the A.L.P. does as a party, but I am concerned about what happens in Parliament.

I must go back to my electorate—and I shall do so gladly at the end of the session, and give my constituents a full report on what has happened in Parliament during the session, what I said on any matter and my attitude on it, and what my remarks were on every matter raised in Parliament. I want to have this matter cleaned up before I go back to the people to whom I owe my allegiance, that is, the electors of Townsville South.

He did not actually say it, but I think a man would require to be particularly obtuse if he did not infer from the remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern that certain suggestions had been made to him by graziers—some of them members of the Country

Party—who came to him asking for the theft of the Crown estate and saying that they wanted an extension of their leases or an enlargement of their area. I think that “blind Freddie”, or even the dumbest dolt in the State, would have inferred from the remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern that certain graziers had said to him, “We want an extension of those leases and we want an enlargement of our area because we have made donations to party funds.” That is the only inference I could draw, and it is the only inference any reasonable and responsible member of the community could draw. It is remarkable that although the hon. member for Fassifern must have known the story that the Premier was going to put forward, he stood up in the Chamber and said, “I was forced to resign because of actions of the executive of the Country Party, because I would not”—to use his own words—“some years ago let the graziers write their own ticket.” I think we should be told very plainly, and without equivocation or dissimulation, whether any donations have been made by graziers to the funds of the Country Party or the Liberal Party as a result of their getting extensions or enlargements of their Crown leases.

Mr. Hiley: The answer is no.

Mr. AIKENS: If the answer is no, I think the matter should be cleaned up once and for all because that is the only inference that can be drawn from the speech of the hon. member for Fassifern. I think the Treasurer will be honest enough to admit that it is the only inference that can be drawn from his speech.

Mr. Richter: It cannot be done under the the Country Party constitution.

Mr. AIKENS: We are not concerned about the constitution. I have been long enough in this Chamber to know what can be done under a constitution, and what can be done inside and outside. I know how all the constitutions in the world can be got around, over and under.

Even in my humble way as a member of this Assembly, several approaches were made to me over the years concerning representations to be made by me for the extension of leases and the enlargement of areas held by graziers and various other types of farmers. Every time that they have made that approach to me they have mentioned that they are prepared to pay for any concession they get. Anyone who knows me—and I think even my political enemies would agree—knows that I have one inviolate rule: once people talk about offering me anything or giving me anything, they tear up all their coupons in my estimation. Unfortunately over the years it has become the practice for men, particularly graziers, to be very generous with the party that gives them what they require or request on their leases.

The hon. member for Fassifern, wittingly or unwittingly, created the impression in my

mind that these men used to come to him and exercise a little bit of blackmail and mention that they were very generous donors to the Country Party funds, and that he—and I am quite prepared to believe this about him—said, in effect, “I do not care how much money you give to the Country Party funds. You are not going to get anything from me to which you are not entitled.” I believe the hon. member for Fassifern would say that. He then created the impression that they went along to the Premier and that the Premier tried to put the screws—if I may again use the vernacular—on the hon. member for Fassifern to give the graziers what he would not give them of his own volition.

Mr. Mann: That is the inference I drew.

Mr. AIKENS: That is the inference I drew as an ordinary, average man blessed with ordinary, average intelligence. In fact, he went further and created in my mind the assumption that the graziers could not write their own ticket when he was Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, but they could write their own ticket today. That is a very serious implication for anybody to make and a very serious opinion to create.

Dealing with the subject of lands—let us all be grown-up about this because, when all is said and done, chronologically we are all adults; mentally, of course, some are still in the kindergarten stage—but let us face up to the fact that there are no more prolific avenues for graft and corruption, for donations to a political party, than those that exist within the Department of Public Lands. The hon. member for Fassifern told us that, under this Government, donations go straight to the Country Party. We know, of course, this was unfortunately proved to be true in the Foley case—that, under the Labour Government, the only difference was that the donations went to the Minister and the Minister probably hung on to some of them for himself and then passed the rest on to the Premier, and the Premier used those donations for election campaign funds. If anybody has any doubt about that, he has only to cast his mind back to the brawl that occurred in 1957 when the Labour Party split in twain and we had the virulent Press statements by the late Mr. Bukowski about Mr. Gair and the statements by Mr. Gair about the late Mr. Bukowski. There is an old saying that when rogues fall out honest men get their due. I am not suggesting that either Mr. Bukowski or Mr. Gair was a rogue but I know that we were all regaled—if I may borrow a word from the Treasurer—to read the comments in the Press of Bukowski on Gair and of Gair on Bukowski. And then we learned, to our blessed astonishment, that, apparently, of all this money that had been collected by Labour Ministers from people who wished to express their gratitude to the Labour Party for concessions that had been granted to them, what was left from the Ministers trickled in to the Premier and the Premier used to take it along to Mr. Bukowski

in a brown paper bag and hand the cash over in the brown paper bag to Mr. Bukowski, who would use it, of course, for election campaign purposes.

Mr. HILTON: I rise to a point of order. I understood the hon. member for Townsville South to say that Ministers of a past Labour Government had collected, by virtue of their office, campaign funds and handed them to the Premier. I deny that emphatically and I ask him to accept the denial.

Mr. AIKENS: I do not know that I said it about one Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! On my interpretation, the hon. member for Townsville South, when referring to donations given to past Labour Ministers, did imply that the hon. member for Carnarvon was included so I ask him please to withdraw the remark.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. If you accept the requirement of the hon. member for Carnarvon, obviously it must also apply to me, so I ask that the remark be withdrawn.

Mr. Mann: I got my whack in a felt hat.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the Leader of the Opposition that no reference was made to a past Minister of the Crown in the portfolio that he held and I feel sure that the hon. member for Townsville South would not wish to impute that to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. AIKENS: I did not make any distinctions, Mr. Taylor. I will accept the denial, or the assurance, of the hon. member for Carnarvon and the Leader of the Opposition—I am required to do that in accordance with the Standing Orders—but I did use the plural with regard to Ministers. I said it would appear that people who wished to express their gratitude to the Labour Party for concessions received and so on made their donations to the Minister, who passed all or some of them, on to the Premier, who took what was left along in a brown paper bag—

The CHAIRMAN: Order The hon. member has withdrawn that remark and there is no occasion for him to repeat it.

Mr. AIKENS: Very well. I just want to say, with regard to the interjection by the hon. member for Brisbane, who was not a Minister, that if he had been a Minister the Premier would have taken it along in a corn sack. How much was left behind—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to proceed with his speech.

Mr. AIKENS: I just want to conclude on this note. As a member who is responsible only to his electors, I wanted to see and hear the fullest possible debate on this very regrettable occurrence. But I want the whole truth, and I do not think we have got the whole truth yet. I really believe

that the whole truth has not been told; but there is an old saying that truth will out, and I believe that before the end of this Parliament we will hear the whole of the story from one reliable source or another.

I could not help being amazed at the attitude adopted by the hon. member for Brisbane, who moved the amendment, the Leader of the Opposition, who apparently seconded it, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Kedron. They all posed as paragons of political honesty. They all claimed that it was the duty of every political party to keep the escutcheon of that party clear and untarnished, and they said that the Premier and all his Ministers and the Executive of the Country Party, and presumably the Executive of the Liberal Party, should be as clear and fair and as transparently honest in these matters as were the Labour Party when they were the Government. That would be really funny if it was not so touching! I refer the Leader of the Opposition to the famous, or infamous, Green Parrot case, when a very prominent member of their party knowingly robbed an unfortunate person and it was known to the Executive of the party. The Executive dealt with it, and all they said to this prominent member was, "You give this unfortunate chap back the money you stole from him and you can still continue in the full bloom of your membership of the Labour Party and as a member of this House."

Mr. Mann: That is absolutely untrue, and you know it is untrue.

Mr. AIKENS: Would the hon. member like me to tell the story of the Redcliffe inquiry?

Mr. Mann: Yes you can talk about the Redcliffe inquiry until you are black in the face. Only a coward like you would do it.

Mr. AIKENS: I remember very clearly, and I am sure you will remember, Mr. Taylor, how I used to quiver in fear at the very sight of the hon. member about whom I have been speaking. "Orrible 'Orace" from Maryborough claims that I would not have said it about him unless he was in Parliament. I am very grateful to the hon. member for Brisbane for saving me in several clashes with the hon. member for Maryborough.

I do not deny the Opposition the right to ask for an inquiry into the whole matter, nor do I deny the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Kedron the right to demand that the whole matter be completely exposed. But I was sickened—as a matter of fact, I went outside and vomited—by their slobbering and sickening hypocrisy as they posed as the champions of honest government, men who would not do anything wrong, men who would not accept a bribe, who would not accept a donation, who would not accept a consideration for something they had done for either their constituents or another section of the people. If we are

going to have honest debate, if we are going to have an exposure of this whole sorry business, let it be done without the slobbering, sickening hypocrisy of the "holier-than-thou" attitude adopted by the Leader of the Opposition and his two cronies.

Hon. T. A. HILEY (Chatsworth—Treasurer and Minister for Housing) (4.20 p.m.): I rise to take part in the debate on the amendment because the temper of its presentation would impress the average listener as an attack narrowly on the Country Party, that it is some internal dispute within the Country Party touching only a section of the Government and not the entire Government. On the contrary, I regard the motion as an attack on the Government of which I am a member, that it touches commonly every member of the Government irrespective of the party to which he belongs in that Government.

I have no quarrel with the raising of this matter in Parliament. Where an attack is to be made on the integrity of a Government, Parliament is the proper place for such an attack to be prepared and launched. Parliament is the proper institution to determine whether charges of substance have been made against the integrity of the Government. If I agree with the raising of this matter I am bound to say that I am surprised at the instruments chosen by the Opposition to present their case today. In his opening remarks the Leader of the Opposition chose to liken the whole debate and development of this procedure to a theatrical stage performance. He referred to Acts I to V. To launch the attack and to carry this theatrical presentation along one or two further Acts, they chose the hon. member for Brisbane and the Leader of the Opposition. What were the issues presented by these two gentlemen? Fundamentally they were two. The first basic principle that they advanced was a demand for purity of public administration; the second was the principle of external direction—whether public administration should be tainted by being exposed to direction from external sources. I must say that, looking at the two hon. members concerned, I marvel that the Opposition chose the hon. member for Brisbane and the Leader of the Opposition to present those two issues to Parliament.

Mr. Duggan: Do you think I should not have spoken?

Mr. HILEY: All I can say is that the hon. gentleman spoke under a considerable handicap, which I shall proceed to explain.

On the subject of purity of public administration, I must confess that I listened with almost startled amazement to high-sounding declarations of what was the proper course in purity of public administration fall from the lips of an hon. member who would be surprised and disgusted if anyone in the Chamber treated him as other than a

person of completely amoral behaviour and outlook. It is well known that in the Chamber there is no crime in the calendar that he does not confess to, and, indeed, the only refreshing fact I have found about him is that he is completely candid about it; there is nothing surreptitious about his roguery. He is proud of it; he delights in it. Yet he is the man who is chosen to present this broad subject of the purity of public administration.

Mr. Mann: I wanted to show how hypocritical you people are because you are posing as paragons of virtue.

Mr. Duggan: You have to answer charges levelled at your Government. It is a futile argument to try to answer those charges by levelling charges at someone over here.

Mr. HILEY: I shall not waste more than two or three precious minutes on the hon. gentleman. He need not worry.

The amendment was seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. He must confess that nobody in this Parliament is more vulnerable in discussing the principle of direction, because he has nailed his colours to the political mast for everyone in Queensland to see. He has not only acknowledged that he is prepared to accept direction, but has gone on indelible record that he is prepared to accept that direction, right or wrong, wise or unwise.

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order. I had occasion a few weeks ago to deal with that matter. The Treasurer is an intelligent person and I have always regarded him as being reasonably fair in his statements. He knows that that statement has been used entirely out of context and I ask him not to use willingly and knowingly a statement in this Chamber in a sense that he knows is totally untrue.

Mr. HILEY: If I feel that the Opposition were singularly unfortunate in their casting for the further act of this theatrical performance, I have no quarrel with the reason in issue. What are the issues? Later I shall deal with each of the matters set out by the hon. member for Brisbane which, as I see them, relate to three points. Firstly, why was Mr. Muller dismissed? Secondly, was he dismissed as a result of party pressure? Thirdly, was he dismissed for his policy on land administration?

Mr. Aikens: And fourthly, why did he make that statement in the Chamber?

Mr. HILEY: I propose to show that this is one of those special and tragic circumstances where a man who has lived a long life of sterling contribution to the society of which he was a part, a life characterised by leadership in many of the great industries and long and vigorous service in this Parliament, has faltered in the sunset of his career as a result of one little lie leading to a series of bigger and better lies.

Mr. Duggan: Which you attempted to conceal.

Mr. HILEY: Which, I shall confess, we did.

Mr. Duggan: That is one confession.

Mr. HILEY: Yes, which, I shall confess, we did.

Mr. Duggan: You cannot talk of the purity of government if you make that confession.

Mr. HILEY: It is necessary to make the reasons for the amendment clear. In the first place, the basic reason for the cleavage between the Government and Mr. Muller was the taxation report. I want to know the attitude of hon. members opposite because I heard the Leader of the Opposition at one stage of his speech say that taxation evasion is something reprehensible and untenable in a holder of public office. Ten to 15 minutes later he began to weaken that presentation by advancing the argument that the offence was 12 years old—that it had been fully cleared up before the hon. member concerned became a Minister—and the impression he left me with was one of those nice “yes-no” arguments, “He should be out; no, it was a long time ago and he paid the amount.”

Mr. Duggan: You said exactly the same thing about Krupps and that was 10 years ago. He was more of a criminal than Mr. Muller ever was.

Mr. HILEY: No. That is starting to suggest that we in Parliament should demand the same standards of people occupying public offices as we would apply to those in commerce. I do not agree. I think the standards demanded for the occupancy of public life should be the highest in the whole community. I do not regard Mr. Muller and Krupps as comparable tests.

Mr. Duggan: You think that Krupps, because he was a murderer, should be given the red-carpet treatment?

Mr. HILEY: Even if the hon. member thinks I am inconsistent—which is his privilege—in my opinion the tests applied to the holder of a commission from the Sovereign as a Minister of the Crown demand a higher standard than the standard I would personally apply in accepting a person for commercial investment and dealing.

Mr. Hanlon: You deal with that on a basis of fraud, rather than evasion by error or carelessness. You have to differentiate to some degree. An error may be made through carelessness.

Mr. HILEY: I am prepared to say that, if the matter had stopped there, although I would have been terribly exercised about it, I do not know whether I would have taken the fully drastic view I did when, to the background of tax evasion, came the much

more serious offence in my view of persistent deliberate untruths to the Leader of the Government and Cabinet.

Mr. Hanlon: You did not mind as a Government telling the public and Parliament a lie. How do you reconcile those two views?

Mr. HILEY: I ask the hon. member to listen to what I have to say.

It is true that the report of the Commissioner of Taxation dealt with matters between 1 July, 1957, and 30 June, 1958, that is, a period during which the hon. member for Fassifern held a commission as Minister of the Crown and we were the Government in office. We took office in August, 1957. The report shows that the background of these defalcations commenced in 1949-1950 and continued to 1955-1956, and were dealt with by the department during the year in which the hon. gentleman was a Minister of the Crown.

It may suit the outlook of some people to suggest that that was something remote, something detached, something quite previous to any matter of ministerial responsibility. But we did not so view it. The only evidence before us was the name and the information that appeared in the report, and on that report we concluded that it was something that had happened in its background incidents right up to the period before we became the Government and the hon. gentleman held a Commission as Minister of the Crown. So we did not regard it as anything other than a recent occurrence.

Mr. Lloyd: In the case of a senior public servant would you say that he should be dismissed from the Public Service for a similar thing?

Mr. HILEY: That would depend on the degree and circumstances of it, but let me say that, although I would demand a very high standard from a senior member of the Public Service, I would not admit that the standard would be as high as I should demand from a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. Duggan: Would you have taken the same view as if he had accepted the Premier's invitation to take another portfolio?

Mr. HILEY: I will deal with all that.

Mr. Burrows: Before you do, can you tell me—

Mr. HILEY: If hon. members keep asking questions, I shall never be able to explain it. They are seeking information and I am trying to give it.

The information in this document came to my notice just before the election. I was the only Minister in town and immediately after the election I made it my business to find out whether this was the person in

question. I made inquiries of my colleague, the Minister for Education, who informed me that the Premier had asked the hon. gentleman whether he was the person concerned and he had denied it.

Mr. Aikens: That was second-hand information.

Mr. HILEY: I know, but it must not be forgotten that this information was not positive. It merely gave a name. Unfortunately, and I have raised this matter with the Commissioner of Taxation, a grave weakness in the document is that it does not specifically identify the person. It should give the man's address, but it does not. It gives his occupation, but not his address. If it had given his address there would have been no doubt.

Mr. Hilton: What occupation was given?

Mr. HILEY: Farmer.

Several of us had heard around town that there was a persistent rumour that our colleague was involved. Do not forget that this was the interregnum between Cabinets. The new Cabinet had not been selected or sworn in. The minute after the new Cabinet was presented and confirmed by the joint party meeting the Premier asked the new Cabinet to wait on him. We walked without delay from the Executive Council room to the Premier's office, and the Premier raised this matter.

It was a full Cabinet meeting the first day and I will tell hon. members how we resumed the next morning, when one of us was absent. I think it was the Hon. E. Evans. At that meeting the Premier had this document in front of him. He read the information that appeared with his marking on it to help him find it quickly and turned to Mr. Muller and said, "It is necessary, because of these widespread rumours, that you satisfy your colleagues that you are not the person concerned. Are you the person concerned in that report?" Mr. Muller gave a categorical denial. Members of Cabinet were not satisfied with that denial. We questioned Mr. Muller further and asked him, "Have you ever paid any penalty of any substantial amount to the Income Tax Department?", and he said, "No." We asked him still further, "Have you ever been called upon to pay some large assessment involving the payment of a very substantial amount and covering some years?" His reply was, "I have never had so much money in my life." Cabinet was still not satisfied. We said to him, "This matter has got to be cleaned up positively."

Mr. Aikens: When you say "We said," who actually said it?

Mr. HILEY: Different members of Cabinet.

The suggestion was made to him that we should adjourn the meeting and that he go straight over to the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation and ask him for a clearance,

and the meeting adjourned on Mr. Muller's undertaking to go and see the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation. We all sat there and waited for his return. He returned some time later—whether it was 30 minutes or 60 minutes, I cannot tell you. On his return he said, "The Deputy Commissioner of Taxation has raised the secrecy provisions of the Income Tax Act." He said they were a bar to his getting any statement, yea or nay. We were still not satisfied and we said to him, "There is one way to overcome this. Under the Income Tax Act the Commissioner is entitled to discuss the personal affairs of a taxpayer with the taxpayer himself or with his duly authorised agent. Will you appoint one or more of us in writing as your agents to go to the Commissioner of Taxes and seek the truth of this matter?" All I can say is that the reaction to that question was violent. The hon. gentleman jumped to his feet and said, "I have had enough of your questions. I have taken legal advice. I will answer no more questions on this subject, and if one of you says another word about it he will get a writ."

Mr. Duggan: And then you offered him another portfolio.

Mr. HILEY: Wait a minute; be patient.

With that, he left the room. After he left the room—it was not a formal Cabinet meeting—we looked at one another and said, "It is finished; it is a complete cleavage; there can be nothing further, although we still have not ascertained the real truth on this taxation matter." Our conviction by that time had become so deep as to amount to almost certain knowledge. We were not prepared to sit with a man who had behaved to us as Mr. Muller had on that occasion, and the unanimous consensus of opinion among the members of Cabinet who were present was that we were no longer prepared to sit in his company. We were not able to tell the hon. gentleman that because he had gone.

The very first thing next morning, before we could get together of our own volition, the Premier rang us all and called us over to his office. I had to drop what I was doing and hurry across to be in time for it. I well recollect that. The Premier said Mr. Muller had been in touch with him and had broken down and confessed that he was the person concerned, and that he wanted to meet the Cabinet and make that statement to us. All I want to say is—and this helps to explain what happened afterwards—I have never taken part in a more personally moving scene than on that occasion. We have known Alf Muller for a long time; we have worked alongside him; we have fought together. The previous night he had been defiant and arrogant and immovable. But the next morning he was a shattered, broken, weeping old man.

Mr. Hanlon: He didn't look very shattered here the other day.

Mr. HILEY: I know he did not. Hon. members need not believe me but I am telling them just what happened because it is the only way I can explain what then followed, which, frankly, I regret.

Mr. Inch: Are these the actual conversations that took place or are they your own construction?

Mr. HILEY: They are the sense of the conversations. No notes were taken at the time, obviously. Speaking under the deepest emotion, the hon. member admitted that he was the person concerned; he admitted that he had deceived us repeatedly, and he told us the reasons, deeply personal to himself, why he had so repeatedly denied the incident to his colleagues. If I cannot sympathise with his denials, I can understand personally why Alf Muller, caught in this web of one lie leading to another, had gone much further down the slippery slide than he ever could have imagined and found himself in such serious difficulties.

He accepted dismissal. He accepted that in the face of what had happened, the Cabinet could no longer sit with him and discussion followed as to how his dismissal would take place. Remember that the new Cabinet had not been commissioned.

The Premier said that various suggestions were made, and I will tell the Committee some of them. We said to him, "You have just been elected for a further three years. You have reached a good age. Why don't you simply inform the party that you are too old to carry on?" Alternatively we suggested to him, "Look, go and see your doctor. Any doctor will tell any man of 73 to take it easy."

Mr. Duggan: Now where is the vigorous new administration?

Mr. HILEY: Hon. members opposite wanted to know, and I am telling them.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members will remain silent while the Treasurer is making his speech.

Mr. HILEY: We said to him, "Go and see your doctor. Any doctor will tell any man of your age to take it a bit easier." Mr. Muller declined both those suggestions and he begged the Premier and the Cabinet to offer him another portfolio, which he would decline. On that basis, and against all our advice to the contrary—we begged and implored him to take the other way out—it was agreed that that course should be followed. I want to state quite frankly that I feel now, as I did then, that we were unwise in agreeing to his suggestion. We did it, moved by the extraordinary spectacle of a colleague whom we had known and revered for a long, long period of years, a pitiful, broken hulk of a man.

Mr. Lloyd: He was not so pitiful and broken the other day.

Mr. HILEY: I know he was not.

Mr. Hanlon: Your story differs from the Premier's because the Premier told us it was his idea, as an old mate of the hon. member's, to suggest that he be given another portfolio, and we can quote it to you.

Mr. Duggan: And, rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely, you thought you would save the party's face.

Mr. HILEY: That point is fairly taken by the expert in that field.

There was discussion on another portfolio. Mr. Muller kept to his bargain. He refused to consider it, and that was the manner of his dismissal. I want to say that nothing has disgusted me more than his recent attempt to salvage the sorry remains of his reputation at the expense of the Premier and his colleagues after the consideration that they extended to him in the manner of his dismissal.

Mr. Hanlon: They resolved their differences yesterday, or this morning.

Mr. HILEY: He said so. Hon. members have not heard the Premier yet.

Mr. Duggan: You were here when he said it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HILEY: I was in every stage of this—I missed none of the meetings—and his tax breach and his repeated denials of the breach were the only reasons for his dismissal.

Let us now pass to the second leg of the motion, which is basically the suggestion that there was a wide breach based on his administration and that that breach was influenced by party direction. I say quite categorically that there was no breach of policy other than on one minor matter about which I will tell the Committee.

Let me take the main points raised by the hon. member for Fassifern upon which he contended, or sought to contend, in his speech of Thursday last that differences existed. He suggested first that the Government's policy of closer settlement was in jeopardy. Nothing is farther from the truth, and what is more I do not think any grazier in Queensland believes it. Go and ask the graziers whether they think this Government are setting their face against closer settlement.

Mr. Dufficy: I might tell you something later about what the graziers think.

Mr. HILEY: I come to the minor point of difference, because this is related to it. The Government, in sticking closely to the cause of closer settlement, were concerned that the good cause of closer settlement could be harmed if blocks were cut up into inadequate living areas. Mr. Richter told hon. members the story. Let me amplify it.

As soon as we came into office, we were inundated with complaints that the past practice of the Department of Public Lands had been to cut blocks up into less than living areas. We were swamped with applications for additional living areas from men who said, "We did not get enough on the first division. We cannot live on the block."

Mr. Graham: Hungry graziers.

Mr. HILEY: There might be a great deal in what the hon. member says. The matter was discussed at a party meeting, and after a full examination by our lands committee we laid down standards of minimum carrying capacity for grazing blocks according to the class of country involved, their remoteness, and so on. With that blueprint in front of it, Cabinet was always jealous to see that any block that was cut up was never cut up to less than the living standards adopted by members of the party. Members of the Government parties will well recall the discussions the party had in reaching those standards.

On two or three occasions we did send proposed subdivisions back for further consideration. The reason was this: we would get a locality where the living area was held to be sufficient to carry 3,000 sheep, and the block to be cut up had a carrying capacity of 8,400 sheep. The department tried in two or three instances to cut this into three blocks, with the result that some of the blocks carried fewer than 3,000 sheep. You cannot divide three into 8,400 and get 3,000 for each of the blocks, and we found a slight tendency on the part of the departmental officers to try to get an odd block through a little under our minimum carrying capacity. To the best of my recollection, in all the years I have been a member of Cabinet those were the only instances where a subdivision was sent back to the Minister for further consideration, and that was to ensure that the Government's minimum standards of carrying capacity were not being ignored.

Mr. Burrows: Did you consider that any other member of Cabinet was more competent than Alf Muller to estimate and understand carrying capacity?

Mr. HILEY: We made our decisions on his estimate of the carrying capacity each time a proposal for subdivision came in. A document would come before Cabinet setting out the departmental estimate of the carrying capacity. If we were considering a block and the carrying capacity stated by the department was 2,650 sheep—I can remember this case well—whereas the standard was 3,000, we would say, "This has to go back for further consideration. It looks as though you might be cutting up these blocks too small." The departmental reply was, "If you don't cut into three you lose a block. You get only two and those two will be oversized." That was the only point of minor difference we had with the former

Minister, and it happened only three or four times. We considered that the standard laid down for carrying capacity, to ensure that a man would have a reasonable economic opportunity, having been properly determined, should not be weakened.

Mr. Burrows: In that case, there have been instances where the Minister's decision was over-ridden by Cabinet?

Mr. HILEY: Yes, I have said so. We sent them back for further consideration. After the hon. gentleman had given them further consideration he would bring them back again in a manner that was acceptable to Cabinet.

Another matter that was raised was the suggestion put to the hon. member by the holders of some farm settlement leases who had entered into a deal with the previous Government for the accelerated subdivision of their areas on the basis that they got two priority blocks. Hon. members opposite will remember the procedure in the farm settlement land priority scheme. Following the change of Government, some of these men who had made that decision and entered into that contract with the department wanted to reverse the whole deal and go back to where they were. Not only did the Minister set his face resolutely against any such reversion, but whenever he asked their opinion all members of Cabinet backed him 100 per cent. There was not one solitary instance in which any member of Cabinet said, "Look, reopen one of these contracts and go back to where it was three, five or seven years ago."

Another matter that was raised by the hon. member himself was what he described as the evil of granting additional areas. I have no doubt that in the first few months of his administration, before he got thoroughly acquainted with all that was going on, a few additional areas may have slipped through. But when he brought the matter to Cabinet he explained it to us very thoroughly. He described the instances he referred to in his speech—how some men had started with a small area and, by the device of additional areas on a non-competitive basis, have swollen their aggregations until today they are big landholders.

Mr. Ewan: That was under Labour rule, though.

Mr. Graham: No, it was not.

Mr. HILEY: I assure the Committee that on the evidence he brought before us it was a very extensive practice with the previous administration. Let me make it clear that there is no doubt that there would be some early cases where the momentum of the practice of our predecessors carried on. When the hon. member for Fassifern brought that matter to Cabinet and explained it thoroughly to us we agreed with his view that except in exceptional circumstances where there was clear evidence that a man was on a starvation block and could not possibly exist, the device of additional areas on a non-competitive basis was bad. It had to stop and we backed him

100 per cent. in stopping it. I want to make that position very clear because the impression given by the hon. gentleman was that on these matters there was a cleavage between the views of Cabinet and of the Minister.

Mr. Hilton: Do you understand the law relating to additional areas?

Mr. HILEY: I understand that some of them were actually allotted to people without balloting.

Mr. Hilton: In view of the legislation governing the additional area, were some of them allotted on a non-competitive basis?

Mr. HILEY: That was not the picture given to Cabinet by Mr. Muller. The complaint was that these things had been given out by the Government and their predecessors in office on a clear hand-out basis, and it was on that presentation to Cabinet that we thoroughly agreed with his view that that was a bad practice and should be terminated.

Mr. Hilton: Do you know who recommended any in the first place?

Mr. HILEY: I would be interested to hear.

Mr. Hilton: We will go into that later.

Mr. Burrows: It was first done by the Moore Government in 1929.

Mr. HILEY: I am now challenging Mr. Muller and any other member of the Chamber to present any evidence that the Minister and Cabinet were divided on the additions. It is easy to make general statements in the heat of political passion. Let one instance be presented in which it can clearly be shown that there was a cleavage between the former Minister and the Cabinet on the points of principle that he advanced. I say most emphatically that, far from there being any cleavage on these matters, no member of the Cabinet ever got more unanimous support than did Mr. Muller on the vexed matter of land administration.

Mr. Mann: He says you are the architect of his destruction. He said that outside the House.

Mr. HILEY: I would not doubt it.

Mr. Davies: What about the outside pressure?

Mr. HILEY: The issue has come down to outside pressures. Every Cabinet Minister receives representations couched in varying forms of presentation from citizens, from members of Parliament on both sides of the Chamber, and from political organisations. I get them every day of the week. I know my colleagues will say they are in a similar position but, if any man writes me a letter and starts claiming what a great supporter of the party he has been and what donations he has given, he starts off uphill. I react adversely to a letter of that character. I despise a man who wants to prey on his party support as apparent justification for

what he is seeking. In my view of public administration, a man gets something because it is right. If it is not right he does not get it, even though he is ten times a party member and if he has been the largest donor in the State. I know that reflects the view of every member of the Cabinet.

Of course we get these pressures. I say, with all the conviction of which I am capable, that not one instance can be produced in which pressure was brought to bear that succeeded in getting something that was wrong or unjustified. If there is to be an inquiry let the hon. member for Fassifern, instead of coming in with these vague statements, give an instance. He sat in the Ministerial chair for three years. Does he not know of one instance that he can quote? If he does, it is his duty to do so.

Mr. Graham: You'd get a hell of a shock if he did.

Mr. HILEY: Then let him bring it.

Mr. Graham: He might, too.

Mr. HILEY: He might, and he might not. Let him bring an instance in which public administration was swayed as a result of improper pressure, threat or bribery. If he brings one instance, I know, beyond a shadow of doubt, what the reaction of the Premier and the Government will be.

I now come to the statement of the former Minister this morning.

Mr. Mann: You have not told us the answer to the Tully lands.

Mr. HILEY: The Minister for Public Lands will make a statement later today on the Tully lands. Although there are some things I could say on the matter, I assure hon. members that the Minister will deal fully with it.

Mr. Mann: He made a very definite statement about that.

Mr. HILEY: My colleague will explain the position fully.

I can only explain the former Minister's speech and his statement this morning as the expressions of a man who, having suffered a terrible blow, the greatest blow he has ever experienced, is now a confused and bewildered thinker striking back blindly in the fighting way we knew and admired so well and that he has always demonstrated.

He made a series of statements of a general nature, but he has not pointed to a single instance when pressure succeeded, and to these general allegations I and every Government member give a complete and unqualified denial. I repeat our challenge to the hon. gentleman and to any other hon. member who can produce a solitary instance of the Government's having given—because of pressure, because of threats, because of direction or because of bribery—anything

that a person was not strictly entitled to. Let him name it and I know what the reaction of the Government will be.

Mr. Burrows: Why would you object to a select committee or a judicial inquiry into the matter?

Mr. HILEY: Because no specific charge has been laid. We have heard generalities, but we are entitled by the usage of Parliament to reply to general smears with a clear and categorical denial of the premises on which they are based. If the hon. gentleman wants to go further, let him bring specific evidence of even one case. If he presents it, I know what the Premier will do.

Mr. Duggan: I should say you have apparently silenced him by your action some time yesterday or today.

Mr. HILEY: I have not seen him.

Mr. Duggan: I am speaking of the Government.

Mr. HILEY: We have had bandied across the Chamber suggestions that, because he went to the former Ministers' room on Thursday, some offer was made to him to induce him to make the statement he did. All I can say is that I know of no offer and, knowing my colleagues as I do, I cannot believe that there was ever even a suggestion of an offer. I know that the former Minister for Public Lands told the Premier that he was thinking of making a statement, and also that he proposed to see him again before he spoke. It is perfectly obvious that that it was not a matter of en rapport on Thursday.

I repeat that we are dealing with a bewildered and confused man trying to extricate himself from the grave difficulty in which he has landed himself through what started as a simple lie but which led him down and down to bigger and bigger lies and so brought on the situation in which he is placed today. There was no offer.

I think I speak for every Government member when I say that, if we found one of our colleagues had made an offer to buy him off, we would repudiate the offer; we would repudiate the man who made it, and we would refuse to sit with the man who made it if he was a member of the Government.

Mr. Hanlon: What do you think he meant by his statement that it would take more than blackmail to win the next fight? What did that signify?

Mr. HILEY: I frankly do not know, and I suspect that he does not know.

Mr. Burrows: And yet when a former Minister makes those charges in the Chamber the Government do not consider them sufficient to warrant a further inquiry or investigation?

Mr. HILEY: I have given the whole background and hon. members have had a complete denial of those charges from members of the Cabinet. I have extended the offer to the hon. gentleman, if he wants to be particular, to make a specific charge. I know what the Premier's reaction will be. That would remove the matter from the zone of general hurt reaction to a particular charge that can be thoroughly examined. That is a fair offer.

Mr. Duggan: When I made a charge two or three years ago about Inspector Currey being transferred from Toowoomba, the then Leader of the Opposition, your Leader, wanted to know whether an inquiry was not justified to probe the matter of police transfers, and you were on his side. That was a minor matter compared with this one.

Mr. HILEY: I have sat in this Parliament long enough to know that the Opposition lose no opportunity to scream for an inquiry into charges. All I can say is that where an inquiry has to be made there must be a background of something specific. There were specific charges made in relation to Mr. Foley and it was the inquiry into those specific charges that led the Royal Commission to bring in the findings it did.

Mr. Hilton: There was clamour for an inquiry long before any specific charges were made by the Opposition.

Mr. HILEY: In reply to the hon. member who has just interjected, I would say for the Government of which he was a member that directly specific charges were brought, an inquiry was held. That is quite right, and that is the attitude I adopt.

Mr. Duggan: You felt then that the prosecution might not have been presented as efficiently and effectively as it might have been.

Mr. HILEY: Not I. The hon. member is talking about two different things; he is confusing the Royal Commission with the subsequent proceedings.

Mr. Mann: You are saying that the hon. member for Fassifern is a liar and that what he has said is completely untrue.

Mr. HILEY: That is so. I am saying that his chain of untruths started with his denials and continued on the issue and proceeded to his attempt at justification on Thursday. Frankly, I can only say it with sorrow for the poor old chap. There is nothing more to say. I can still be sorry, as the Government can be sorry, for a man who has given a generation of distinguished service to the people of this State, that he could be carried away by motives that he alone can explain, and indeed, by using a falsehood it has simply landed him from a minor difficulty into a greater one, and from a greater one into an impossible one.

Hon. P. J. R. HILTON (Carnarvon) (5.8 p.m.): I think this incident is without parallel in the history of the Parliament. It is very difficult for anyone who wants to approach the problem objectively and dispassionately to arrive at the facts in this sorry episode. I am not one who has ever engaged in mud-slinging or personalities, but what we have heard here in recent times and today does give full warrant for a searching inquiry. Until that inquiry is held I believe there will be many question marks in the minds of the public of this State. If the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, when he intimated this morning that he had resolved his differences with the Premier, had withdrawn all the serious allegations he had made, the problem may have been simplified. However, all he said was that he had resolved his differences with the Premier and that he was remaining in the Country Party. It is true that that announcement was greeted with very hearty "Hear, hears!" by members on the Government side of the Chamber.

Dr. Delamothe: We admired his courage.

Mr. HILTON: I would not admire his courage. I will make myself clear on that. After what the Treasurer has said—and the whole substance of his remarks has revealed that the hon. member for Fassifern has reached the mental stage where he is not responsible for what he says and does—the announcement should not have been met with so many hearty "Hear, hears!" this morning. While I can understand the emotion the hon. member has been labouring under, I cannot subscribe to the view that he has reached the stage of being a decrepit old man unable to think and judge for himself.

There are two important aspects of the matter. One is taxation and the hon. member's position in the Cabinet. My attitude on that is that if the Premier and the members of the Cabinet agreed that his tax defalcations, whether intentional or otherwise, were of sufficient gravity to exclude him from Cabinet, that is their business and nobody could quarrel with them for adopting that attitude, but, because of the gravity of the situation and because it is a matter of such extreme public importance, sentiment should not have been allowed to enter into it; rather, it merits a factual and honest statement to the people of the State.

Dr. Delamothe: It is easy to be wise after the event.

Mr. HILTON: The experience of this Parliament on more than one occasion in the past provides ample guidance for those now controlling the Government and a warning that they should be very careful in making a statement on a matter of such grave importance to the Government and to the State. I will not say that the Premier—and

I have the highest regard for him personally—or the members of the Cabinet lack experience on that.

Dr. Delamothe: You would not say they lacked humanity either.

Mr. HILTON: I would not say they lacked humanity. As a matter of fact, the Premier has admitted that he was prompted by his kindly feeling.

Mr. Harrison: Why can't you accept that honest explanation?

Mr. HILTON: Let me finish my remarks. I said I was never a mud-slinger and that I did not indulge in personalities. I accept the Premier's statement on that, but that is only one angle. If the Government agree that the hon. member for Fassifern should not remain a member of the Cabinet, they are fully entitled to adopt that attitude. I query the public statement made at the time. Again, that is only one angle.

The hon. member for Fassifern made serious charges involving not only executive members of the Country Party, individual graziers of the State and the journal "Queensland Country Life" but also past administrations in the Department of Public Lands. Moreover, the charges made by the former Minister for Public Lands were aggravated today by the Minister for Education and Migration when he endorsed what the hon. member had said about rackets pursued by previous administrations of the Department of Public Lands on additional areas. As the charges made by the hon. member are being supported by the Minister for Education and by the Treasurer, I think that provides a full warrant for a searching inquiry into all the aspects of land administration that the hon. member for Fassifern referred to. I did not hold the portfolio of Public Lands and Irrigation for a great length of time but I will defy anybody to level any charges of rackets against my administration of the department. I am perfectly willing to have every file, and every minute I signed, brought before a committee of inquiry to see whether I participated in any of the rackets the hon. member said were perpetrated by past administrations, his remarks being supported, as they were, by Ministers of the present Cabinet. I feel justified in demanding, when such charges are made before the Parliament, that an inquiry be held and that reflections should not be cast on past Ministers for Public Lands.

In 1956 a searching inquiry was made into many aspects of land administration, but the hon. member for Fassifern said that, right up to the time he took office, there were rackets in the administration of the Department of Public Lands on additional areas. Furthermore, as an experienced and entirely responsible member of this Parliament, he used such terms as "blackmail" and "thievery of the public estate," and the various charges he made are recorded in

his speech. All the charges he made are recorded in the report of his speech in this Chamber last Thursday afternoon. I think some clarification of those charges is necessary, and, like other hon. members, I have tried to discover the reaction of the public to them. As has already been mentioned in this debate, considered views have been expressed in the metropolitan and provincial newspapers. Are the Government going to try to gloss over it and take no heed of the very stern words of advice that have been given to them by the responsible Press of this country? I think the Government should consider that question. In all fairness the air should be cleared, because until it is there will be many question marks in the minds of the people of Queensland. Not one of the charges made by the hon. member for Fassifern has been withdrawn, and when serious charges are made in Parliament, which is the place provided for the airing of public grievances and the rectification of what might be called maladministration, until the request for an inquiry is granted the people will be very uneasy.

I think it is fair to make another observation. As has been mentioned, on Thursday last the former Minister for Public Lands made his speech obviously against the advice of his party. It is extraordinary, in my opinion, that he should come here this morning and make the statement that he did. People are wondering why he changed his attitude so drastically in such a short space of time.

Mr. Harrison: His own people wanted him to remain in the Country Party.

Mr. HILTON: I agree that they did. I am not criticising the hon. member for Fassifern personally. I am only commenting on the remarks he made as a responsible member of this Chamber, and I reiterate that they incriminated, without any reservation, not only other people but also other former Ministers for Lands.

Mr. Ewan: Only on the question of additional areas.

Mr. HILTON: And other matters, too, and they were reinforced this afternoon by the Minister for Education and the Treasurer. The hon. member for Roma interjects that it was only on the question of additional areas. The hon. member knows what the law has been for many years on that subject, and what the law was when I was Minister for Public Lands. I say without hesitation that those laws were devised to give the greatest possible protection to men who were definitely entitled to additional living areas.

Mr. Ewan: It was found necessary to introduce them.

Mr. HILTON: The law has been in operation for many years.

Mr. Ewan: In many instances they rebounded directly on the landholders.

Mr. HILTON: I am saying that no qualification was made in the charges that were levelled. I have in mind one case that I remember clearly. It was full of merit, but because of the rigid conditions laid down by the law it could not receive consideration. I resent the fact that such imputations have been made without reservation. As I said, they have been reinforced in this Chamber this afternoon and referred to as a racket carried on by Labour Ministers and Labour Governments in the past.

Mr. Ewan: Some of them got three additional areas.

Mr. HILTON: The hon. member for Roma interjects that some of them got so many additional areas. If he has specific information that any hon. member of this Chamber is involved, he should be the first one to press for an inquiry into the matter, and he should support the request that is now being made for an inquiry. If the truth was known the pressure that was put on the hon. member for Fassifern by some people might have been so great that he was happy to get rid of the policy of additional areas in cases where it was warranted. Nobody can gainsay the fact that over the many years of land administration in Queensland very many blocks were cut up perhaps without due regard to adequate living areas. In my own electorate, before there was ever a Labour Government in Queensland land was cut up into blocks that were nothing like living areas—and never could be. Would anybody quibble at the idea of rectifying mistakes of the past? Those mistakes were made prior to the advent of the Labour Government. I resent the implication that all Labour Governments have lent themselves to rackets of this kind. That allegation alone warrants a direct inquiry.

Mr. Ewan: In your own administration would you consider giving a man holding 8,000 acres an additional area of 56,000 acres?

Mr. HILTON: If it was desert country and he did not have enough to make a living I would think he was entitled to it. The hon. member might just as well ask me "How long is a piece of string?" I would have to know the exact circumstances—where the land was situated, its carrying capacity, and whether it was desert country.

Mr. Ewan: You would not have done it.

Mr. HILTON: I would not have done it had he a living area, I am certain of that.

The Treasurer referred to the subject of direction. I am speaking quite independently on this motion. I do not think it helps his case to cast reflections on anybody who moves an amendment. Without prejudice to either side of the Chamber I maintain that the purity of public administration is a subject that is definitely involved in the matter before the Committee. The subject of direction is also involved. Everybody should know my views on that subject. At this juncture I should like to make a correction to the

statement of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition about three weeks' annual leave. No promise for the immediate implementation of three weeks' annual leave was made in the policy speech delivered by the then Premier in the 1956 election campaign. We did not go to the country with the definite promise to the people that it would be implemented at any specific time.

I think every member of Parliament with a sense of responsibility should resist this policy of direction and undue pressure on any Government to legislate on a particular matter at any given time. The former Minister for Public Lands, of course, has made specific charges in that direction. As one who has suffered quite a deal because of the policy of direction and undue pressure, perhaps I would have stronger feelings than many people on this matter. But I agree that if there was a directive given or undue pressure exerted covering any phase of land administration or land legislation, that matter should be sifted very thoroughly. I am opposed entirely to high-pressure groups trying to subvert Parliament and destroy what, in our concept of democracy, is its intended democratic use. When a responsible member of this Parliament and a former Minister of the Crown makes a complaint in that direction I think it warrants searching inquiry.

I have always advocated closer settlement, and I pay substantial tribute to the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation in that direction. Some of the legislation brought down by the present Government may have been a little over-generous in that direction, but I am quite prepared to admit that in the administration of the Department of Public Lands very complex problems arise and what could be sound, firm and right policy at the present time could be quite the reverse within a few years. In these matters, I would never quibble with anybody erring on the side of generosity when determining a living area.

I point out to hon. members that past administrations directed the talent and brains of the Lands Department to prepare extensive reports on carrying capacities of living areas in various parts of the State. To what extent that has been departed from I do not know but I feel that, by and large, the hon. member for Fassifern, when he was Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, adhered substantially to the policy of closer settlement. According to newspaper reports that I have read—in "Queensland Country Life" and in the provincial and metropolitan Press—he has been subjected to intense criticism from time to time and that fact, coupled with the statements he made on Thursday afternoon, indicates that high pressure was applied to him in that direction.

Mr. Davies: He has a lot of further information he could give as well.

Mr. HILTON: If that is the case, let us have that further information. I hate personalities and I regret very much seeing

anybody who has served in a high office falling from grace in that office. Those are my sincere dispositions in a matter of this nature irrespective of suspicions associated with it. Moreover, any uneasiness in the minds of the public because of that happening should be allayed.

Before I conclude I should like to refer to one small matter that arose this morning by way of interjection from the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt. The Leader of the Opposition drew a parallel between me and certain Ministers in relation to my action in notifying the Premier of certain happenings when I was in the Ministry, and the lack of responsibility on the part of other Ministers in not informing their Premier on this unfortunate taxation business.

The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt—I do not know whether he realised what he was doing—interjected and I rose to a point of order. I should like to clarify the matter further. He said that during the previous Labour Government Mr. Creighton went to certain Ministers and said certain things, mentioning the name of the member for Carnarvon, and that no action was taken in the matter. I deny that emphatically because, at the time, I was the Minister for Public Works. It is true that Mr. Creighton, then Chairman of the Land Administration Board, did approach me, as he did Mr. Arthur Jones, who was a former Minister for Public Lands.

Mr. Duggan: The letter you wrote to the Premier appears in earlier "Hansards".

Mr. HILTON: That is true. I want to substantiate the fact that I did take suitable action at that time. I informed the Premier of what was said to me by Mr. Creighton regarding a rumour on extensions of what is known as the Lundavra leases in the Goondiwindi district. That is all he discussed with me apart from certain aspersions he cast on the then lessee, who is dead and gone now. He cast aspersions on that man, and was very critical of the administration of Mr. Bergin. I repeat that I took the action any responsible Minister would take and informed the Premier. When the Royal Commission was subsequently appointed the Commissioner wrote to me. I was not asked to go into the witness box, although I would gladly have done so. The Commissioner wrote to me and I replied. I have here a copy of Exhibit 362, which clearly reveals my action in informing the Premier. I make the point that at the time no particular proposal was before Cabinet on those leases. An inquiry was being held into the Cameron application for an extension on the ground of the immense development he had undertaken. That was as far as the matter had been taken. It had never been submitted to Cabinet, but an inquiry was being held. I made my position clear to everyone who mentioned the matter to me and said that irrespective of the work carried out by the late Mr.

Cameron I would be strongly opposed to such a step, and I felt sure that in the final analysis the Government would never agree to it.

I make these remarks merely to clarify the position because the matter has been raised in this debate and the interjection of the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt appears in "Hansard."

I do not think there is need to speak at much greater length. The position is without parallel in the history of this Parliament as far as I am aware. Many people have a feeling of great uneasiness. I exhort and implore the Premier and Government to institute a judicial inquiry to clear the air and not leave the matter in mid-air as it is at present.

Mr. DUFFICY (Warrego) (5.32 p.m.): I have said on numerous occasions that land matters are probably the most important that this or any other Parliament has to consider, and I think the debate today demonstrates the truth of my statement. It should not come as a surprise to anyone when we raise the matters we have raised on this extremely important subject. Hon. members on the Government front bench have not attacked the real problem as we see it. Personally I am not the slightest bit concerned about the former Minister's taxation irregularities. I do not think that is the question in issue, although the Treasurer spent a considerable time discussing what transpired in the Cabinet and those irregularities. He did not deal at all with the statements of the former Minister, his charges against the Government, and his allegations of outside pressure.

Mr. Hiley: You must have been out of the Chamber.

Mr. DUFFICY: I was in the Chamber and I listened attentively to the Treasurer.

Mr. Hiley: Of course I did.

Mr. DUFFICY: I was present when the Treasurer referred to his former Cabinet colleague as a decrepit old man. I think it was completely despicable of the Treasurer to cast reflections on his former Cabinet colleague rather than answer his arguments. I was present when the effort was made to destroy the man personally rather than his arguments. No attack was made on his arguments. The fact remains that he said there was outside pressure from certain individuals—certain landholders and the executive of the Country Party—on land matters that made it impossible for him to remain in his portfolio as Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, and as a member of the Country Party. That is the statement he made Thursday last and up to the present no answer has been given to it. He said also that one of the pressures put on him by the executive of the Country Party was to divide leases. After that the former Minister said that had he accepted that direction and dictation from the executive of the Country Party it would have been thievery from the

Crown. I could not agree more with the former Minister when he referred to it as plain thievery from the Crown.

On this question, it may be of interest if we throw our minds back to a speech made just recently by the hon. member for Condamine. He said—

"In the brigalow country 5,000 acres might be a living area today, but as it is developed in 10 years' time half or even a quarter of that acreage might be enough for a living area as gradually it is more intensely farmed."

I made an identical statement in this Chamber when the Government were introducing legislation to freehold 5,000 acres in the brigalow belt. If the former Minister was in the Chamber—I hope he reads my speech—he would agree with me that there was continual pressure on him as Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation to extend the freehold provisions of the Act, and that to the very best of his ability he rejected that pressure. There was undoubtedly, too, pressure on the Minister to divide Crown leases. That was demonstrated also in this Chamber by the hon. member for Condamine only a few days ago when he said—

"I believe legislation can be brought in to cut up land within the family under leasehold tenure."

That is not the statement of an inexperienced or insignificant member of the Country Party. It is the statement of a man who, in a Country Party plebiscite, defeated Mr. Sparkes, who was a member of this Chamber for more years than I care to remember and represented the constituency of Aubigny. Mr. Sparkes was defeated in a plebiscite by the present hon. member for Condamine and perhaps it is very significant to remember what the former Minister said, that Mr. Sparkes regretted his removal from the portfolio of Public Lands and Irrigation. It is also significant to remember that the former Minister said that extreme pressure was placed on him by the executive of the Country Party to subdivide leases. During his speech he went further and referred to some of the pressures and some of the statements that were made as blackmail, and he issued a challenge to the Government.

Dr. Delamothe: No, he did not say that.

Mr. DUFFICY: Yes he did. I will quote his words.

Dr. Delamothe: Quote them and give them in their context.

Mr. DUFFICY: I will quote his exact words. He challenged the Country Party. He said he was willing to recontest the seat against anyone they cared to nominate and he added, "I can assure them it will take more than blackmail to win the next fight." Then he referred to some of the pressure brought to bear on him as blackmail.

It is not so much a question of what the Opposition might be prepared to do, but surely the Government are not prepared to allow the people of Queensland to believe, as they do believe at the present time, that certain land-hungry people—the executive of the Country Party, and little pressure groups of landholders—have blackmailed a Cabinet Minister and are blackmailing the Government because they want certain hand-outs from the Crown.

Dr. Delamothe interjected.

Mr. DUFFICY: It is no use the hon. member arguing with me. I am quoting exactly what the former Minister said. His statement that pressure was brought to bear on him was borne out by the statement of the hon. member for Condamine, who cannot be brushed off as an insignificant member of the Country Party or as an insignificant member of the Government party. The fact of what the former Minister said was borne out by a speech by the hon. member in this Chamber in which he said legislation could be introduced to subdivide leases. I am explaining it to the Committee because I am perfectly satisfied that many hon. members opposite do not know what the subdivision of leases really means. It means this: if I were fortunate enough to hold a lease of 100,000 acres—and that is quite common in many parts of Queensland—and, as advocated by the hon. member for Condamine, and as would be the case of pressure brought to bear on the former Minister by the Country Party Executive and other interested people were successful, I could subdivide—

Dr. Delamothe: Do you claim that it was successful?

Mr. DUFFICY: I said if it was successful.

Dr. Delamothe: Are you disappointed that it was not?

Mr. DUFFICY: The position would be this: if 25,000 acres were a living area in that part of the State in which I held 100,000 acres, and I was successful, through legislation such as that advocated by the hon. member for Condamine, and as pointed out by the former Minister for Public Lands—if I could subdivide that property into four living areas, I could, of course, transfer them to members of my family; but, if I did not have a family, there would not be anything to prevent my selling the 75,000 acres in excess of the living area, which I received as a right. Consequently, I get a handout from the Crown of £75,000, not chicken feed by any means, even if that land were sold at the ridiculously low figure of £1 an acre. That is precisely what the former Minister was speaking about.

Dr. Delamothe: Do you agree that it should go to the family?

Mr. DUFFICY: The hon. member would not know anything about land. He should

stick to removing appendixes. He might know something about that. He would be well advised to leave it to me to discuss land matters.

Dr. Delamothe: Tell us something about it. Do you agree that the subdivided blocks should be split up among the family, or don't you?

Mr. DUFFICY: I certainly do not. Nor did the former Minister, because he said it would be thieving the Crown estate—I agree with him on that—nor did I agree with the hon. member for Condamine when he advocated it, nor did I agree with the Government when they freeholded 5,000 acres of brisgalow country, which, not on my say-so—though I did say during that debate in this Chamber that I thought it was wrong—but on the say-so of a practical man on the other side of the Chamber, will in all probability within 10 years far exceed a living area. According to the hon. member's statement, in ten years' time a quarter of that 5,000 acres will represent a living area. It does not matter whether it exceeds a living area or not, it cannot be put up for public competition because of the Government's policy of freeholding, thousands and thousands of land-hungry people in Queensland who want an opportunity of going onto the land will have no hope of doing so.

Mr. Ewan: You can still subdivide freehold tenure.

Mr. DUFFICY: The hon. member does not know what I am talking about.

Mr. Ewan: It is very hard to follow you.

Mr. DUFFICY: The hon. member for Roma interjects, "You can still subdivide freehold." Let me point out to him that the only person who can subdivide freehold is the one who owns the freehold tenure.

Mr. Ewan: It can be resumed.

Mr. DUFFICY: Of course it can be resumed, but at what valuation is it to be resumed? That is where the racket that the former Minister was speaking about comes in, because instead of reverting to the Crown at the termination of the lease, the people of Queensland, for whom the Crown holds the land in trust, have to pay a tremendous sum of money for the resumption if the Government decides to freehold it. I have referred in the Chamber previously to Amby Downs. There are 70,000 acres there, and the hon. member for Roma should know something about that. If this Government wanted to resume it tomorrow, the cost to the taxpayers of Queensland would be approximately £750,000. Of course you can resume property—providing you "slug" the taxpayers, as the former Minister said. The hon. member for Roma talks about subdividing it. Once it is freehold, you can go to the Department of Public Lands and you cannot get the details of any freehold tenure in Queensland. The only place you can get

them is in the Titles Office. What is the use of talking about the Crown being able to subdivide freehold? Of course they cannot. Those people who have been given the opportunity of freeholding 5,000 acres in the brigalow belt have received a hand-out from the Crown, because in ten years' time, as the hon. member for Condamine said, it will in all probability represent three or four living areas. There is nothing the people of Queensland can do about it; it has been alienated from the Crown.

It is even worse when hon. members opposite speak about subdividing leaseholds. Pastoral leases run for 28 or 30 years, as the case may be. At the termination of those leases, under ordinary circumstances, but not under the circumstances that the Country Party brought pressure on the former Minister for Public Lands—

Dr. Delamothe: Unsuccessful pressure.

Mr. DUFFICY: I am quoting what he said. The hon. member should not argue with me. The Government have to answer his charges.

Dr. Delamothe: You are the one who is arguing.

Mr. DUFFICY: The Government have to answer the charges that he levelled against them. He said that the executive of the Country Party rolled down here to Parliament House and put pressure on him, and he said it amounted to blackmail. If the hon. member is prepared to accept that, and instead of answering the charges merely argue with me and beat all around the bush, it is all right with me. But it is not all right with the people of Queensland. The fact remains, as the former Minister said, that in the subdivision of leases lies the greatest racket that could enter the land laws of the State. But no-one should try to tell me that that has not been urged for. Let no-one tell me that some hon. members on the Government side have not urged for it, in addition to the pressure that the Minister has very definitely stated was applied to him. I am suggesting that instead of making personal attacks on the former Minister, instead of arguing about irrelevant matters such as his alleged tax irregularities, hon. members opposite should try to answer his charges. It is not for the Opposition to answer the charges, but it is in the interests of the people of Queensland that the full facts be brought to light.

Up to the present the speakers on the Government side have all occupied the front bench. After all, they are supposed to be the intelligentsia on that side of the Chamber, but if they are, all I can say is, "God help the back-benchers!" On Thursday the Premier replied to the former Minister. This morning the former Minister got to his feet and said, "I have been taken back into the Country Party. I have withdrawn my resignation and everything is all right." I am not concerned with whether or not Mr. Muller is a member of the Country Party; what I

am concerned about is that despite the statement of the Treasurer that he was a decrepit hulk of a man I can well remember on Thursday last that he stood there with a very carefully prepared case in which he made some very scathing statements about the administration of the Department of Public Lands, the pressure applied to him, and the lack of support that he in his ministerial capacity received from the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues. Nobody can take that lightly.

What did the Minister for Education and Migration have to say? He did not endeavour to answer any of the charges. He did not say that pressure was not exercised or that the Government would hold a full inquiry to ascertain whether or not the statements of the former Minister had any foundation in fact. After all, when the Labour Party were the Government and certain statements were made reflecting on the integrity of the Department of Public Lands and the Minister responsible for the administration of that department, no more definite statements were made on that occasion than those made by the former Minister in the Chamber last Thursday, but a Royal Commission was appointed on that occasion, and the facts were ascertained. Are we on this side, and the people of Queensland, entitled to assume that the Government have something to hide? If they refuse to hold a judicial inquiry, are we entitled to assume that? If nothing is done about the matter the people of Queensland can assume that the Government did everything in their power to gloss the matter over and to hush the matter up.

Bear in mind that it is not only members of the Opposition who are advancing these arguments today. "The Courier-Mail", which in the main supports the Government, carried a leading article stating that some reply must be made to the allegations. The "Telegraph" in a leading article went further and said that it was no use trying to gloss the whole matter over, that the people of Queensland needed something more than the statement by the Premier last Thursday. But we have not had any more than that; neither have the people of Queensland. All we have had is an admission by the Premier that he endeavoured to mislead not only the Opposition but the people of Queensland. As a matter of fact, it was a complete admission because, in a prepared statement he said that Mr. Muller was offered another portfolio.

During the election campaign, before any hint of this matter appeared in the daily Press and before any debate in this Chamber, it was freely rumoured in Western Queensland, and by executive members of the Country Party who are friends of mine, that the Government would be returned but, if they were, there would be a new Minister for Public Lands. That was at least one occasion when Dame Rumour could not be called a lying jade.

I did not pay much attention to that rumour but there is a new Minister for Public Lands.

That was freely rumoured in the West and I am sure the hon. member for Fassifern, if he were here now, would agree with the statement. He would not deny the truth of it, anyhow. I told him some time ago that certain interests associated with big land companies and some hungry land-owners in this State were doing everything in their power to have him removed from his office as Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. I told him that and I do not think he would deny it. As I said previously, I was informed of that directly and heard it by way of rumour. It was one of those rumours that came true.

If the Government are of the opinion that this can be lightly brushed off and that the people of Queensland will accept the Premier's attempt to mislead them and this Chamber and allow him to get away with it, they have greater faith in the stupidity of the electors than I have.

The former Minister has withdrawn his resignation from the Country Party, but not the charges made by him, some of which I have enumerated. I shall refer to one or two others. He spoke on Thursday last of the Tully lands and said that it would be criminal to resume those areas for cattle-fattening. I think those were his words. He added that any Minister who agreed to such an act should be shot. I certainly should not like to see his successor shot, but that was his statement. He said also that the Minister should be gaoled if he was guilty of that criminal act. I know something of the western country, although I do not claim to know very much about the Tully lands. As I understood the former Minister, however, he said that he had been unable to get from any officer of the department a report in favour of the resumption and subdivision of that country for beef production. He said experienced officers were unanimous that the area should be left as it is—that is, a timber-producing area—and added that the opinion was supported by officers of the Department of Forestry.

Following the change in portfolios I understand that six or eight blocks are to be made available for cattle-fattening. I was reared on a cattle property and know something of cattle and stock generally. Without having a great knowledge of the particular area, I should say that cattle-fattening would not be a success there owing to the annual rainfall of 140 to 150 inches and the fact that it is subject to buffalo fly and tick infestation. I do not want to develop my argument other than to suggest that other parts of Queensland are far more suited to beef production than the Tully area with its rainfall and pests. To that extent I agree with the former Minister. I expect his successor, the present Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, to answer that question. If he does answer it, he will be the only Minister who has answered any charge made by Mr. Muller.

We have had many tears, many statements and many attacks on the hon. member,

particularly by the Treasurer. That was despicable of him, and even more despicable that he should attack the man and not his arguments. I expect the present Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation to enter the debate and I hope he will answer the charge of the former Minister that the action he approved of was criminal. His reply will have to be a fairly good one to satisfy not only this Committee, but also the people of Queensland. The present Minister should also indicate to this Chamber that he is going to withstand the pressures that the former Minister said he was subjected to. With all due respect to Mr. Muller, I think he did succumb in some respects to those pressures.

Mr. Hewitt: In what way?

Mr. DUFFICY: If the hon. member will allow me to make my own speech, he can make his later.

The history of lands through the ages has been a struggle between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The people who enjoy Crown leases are anxious to retain the full area irrespective of the need of others, or the needs of the State. That could be understood to some extent perhaps, because when personal possessions are being dealt with, human nature has a tendency to be selfish. Large landholders who have leases from the Crown of areas far in excess of their personal needs have a tendency to be selfish and to go to any lengths to retain them.

Mr. Ewan: That is characteristic of human nature.

Mr. DUFFICY: If the hon. member had been listening to me, he would know that is just what I said. If he wants to repeat what I say, I ask him to be silent because I can state my own case quite well.

When I said it was more or less natural that a Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, who was a member of the Country Party, would be subject to some pressure, I simply meant that the Country Party represents the "haves" on land matters to the exclusion of the "have-nots." Its members represent the rural part of the State. They represent the people in possession of the land. From discussions with people in my electorate I know that immediately the present Government were returned to office the landholders said, "Well, we will now get all the things that we want." They said to themselves, "After all, these people represent us landholders, who live in rural areas." I believe the landholders—the people who live in rural areas—are entitled to every consideration from the State, but not to the detriment of the community generally or the Crown estate.

I believe and know that the former Minister for Public Lands was subject to terrific pressure and I know that the present Minister for Public Lands will be subject to pressure, too. He will be subject to pressure from those people who already hold

Crown leases, and, despite the fact that they hold leases far in excess of their personal needs, they will go to any length to retain their areas, because, as the hon. member for Roma agreed, human nature has a tendency to be selfish. Perhaps that applied particularly to the hon. member for Roma when he was successful some time ago in obtaining a living area, because he was selfish enough to get from the Crown an area additional to the lease he already held. He would be an authority on the selfishness of certain landholders, and I appreciate his interjection.

Mr. Tucker: What did he get for it?

Mr. DUFFICY: After all, that is his business and I do not want to indulge in personalities.

Some of the hon. gentlemen on the Government front bench spoke of the rejection of additional areas and alleged that all those rackets took place during the regime of a Labour Government. I again refer to the hon. member for Roma. He would know something about additional areas, as I interjected on one occasion. He would know something about the additional areas that were granted during the term of the present Government, and he would have a personal knowledge of his activities in the matter. He will know, too, that additional areas were granted by the present Government in my electorate through his representations. I was not consulted in the matter, nor did I know that any representations were to be made until the grants were an accomplished fact. I do not think he can deny that. It can also be said that no other hon. member in this Chamber has made representations for extensions of leases and new leases to the extent that he has. He is one of the important members of the Country Party, in addition to the executive of that party, who put extreme pressure on the former Minister for Public Lands. Do not make any mistake about it. The former Minister withstood many of those pressures. As I have said previously, it was no secret in Western Queensland that if and when this Government were returned there would be a new Minister for Public Lands; that was common knowledge out there. As I said previously, rumour on that occasion was not a lying jade and a new Minister for Public Lands was appointed.

I should like to say at this stage that the present occupant of that portfolio has my sincere sympathy, because he will be subject to very great pressure from within the ranks of his own party and also to extreme pressure and attempts at dictation from outside this Chamber. In all probability the same threat will be made to him as the former Minister told us was made—that is, that if he does not see the light he will have to think hard about holding his seat, or even retaining his endorsement.

The charges made by the former Minister cannot be brushed aside lightly. When the hon. member for Condamine was absent from the Chamber, I quoted some of his remarks that dovetailed very closely with charges made by the former Minister, and the Minister said that it would be criminal to grant the requests and it would be an unjustified raid on the public estate. So I suggest to the present Minister for Public Lands that he will be under some very genuine, perhaps unfair, pressure not only from within his own party but also from land interests outside the Chamber. I hope he has the intestinal fortitude to withstand that pressure, and I hope that he does not meet the fate of his predecessor and that we are not in the Chamber when a Minister and former colleague of his refers to him as a decrepit hulk of a man who should seek medical attention. That is what was said about his predecessor. It was not a very nice thing for anyone to say and it did not please me to hear it. The Treasurer, for whom in the past I had a very high regard personally—as a man; not politically—fell in my estimation when he went down into the gutter to attack a man who had been his colleague in the Ministry. He put on one of the greatest acts I have seen in this Chamber. Sir Laurence Olivier and other leading actors will certainly have to look to their laurels. I should say that the late George Arliss, whom I regarded as one of the finest character actors of all time, would have had difficulty in competing with the Treasurer in the act that he put on in making his statement here today. I am sure that some of the back-benchers opposite must have been almost sobbing in their handkerchiefs as they listened to him. I noticed that the hon. member for Fassifern was not here. If he had been, possibly he would have been sobbing for a different reason.

Let me sum up the position as I see it. In the first place, the former Minister for Public Lands, who by no stretch of the imagination can be regarded as a decrepit hulk of a man, presented a case on Thursday that was well prepared. It was also well presented. He spoke for an hour, during which he made certain very serious charges. He said that in his capacity as Minister for Public Lands he had been subject to dictation and pressure from the executive of the party of which he had been a foundation member, and a member for very many years. He referred to the executive as rolling down to Parliament House to exert that pressure. He said that the executive had exerted pressure on him to agree to the subdivision of Crown leases, which in his opinion would be a criminal act. He suggested that any Minister for Public Lands who agreed to it would be guilty of criminal neglect, and that he was subjected to pressure to agree. He went further when he was talking about the Tully lands and said that any Minister who agreed to what was proposed should be

gaoled. He went even further and said that he was blackmailed by the executive of his party to the extent that they said that perhaps they did not have very many votes but they had a lot of money.

Mr. Ewan: He never said any such thing.

Mr. DUFFICY: All right, let the hon. member read the "Hansard" proof, as I did.

He stated that they said that if he did not agree to something that in his opinion would be a raid on the public estate, he would have to consider retaining his seat. He said that his reply to that was, "Well, you can jump in the lake; if the seat is lost it is just too bad." That is what he said and those charges cannot be lightly brushed aside.

Let us consider now what the Premier has said, both in the Chamber and in a prepared statement to the Press. In the first place, he gave the Press a prepared statement wherein he said that he had offered Mr. Muller another portfolio—a portfolio other than Lands.

Mr. Ewan interjected.

Mr. DUFFICY: It is no use arguing with me. I am quoting what has been said on the Government side. The hon. member cannot deny this. In a prepared statement for the Press the Premier said exactly what I said he said. His statement, as published in the Press, was that Mr. Muller had been offered another portfolio. He said that, to his regret, Mr. Muller had declined. He went on in glowing terms to speak about the excellent service that Mr. Muller had given in the Lands portfolio and as a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. Dewar: Wouldn't you expect that from him?

Mr. DUFFICY: I do not expect anything. I am merely quoting what was said. That is the story that the people of Queensland were told: he was offered another portfolio but he rejected it; the Premier regretted that he took that action, but consequently he was no longer a Minister of the Crown.

On Thursday last, the Premier spoke about serious taxation defalcations. After all, if they were serious taxation defalcations, as the Premier said, surely they would be just as serious and of equal irregularity of Mr. Muller had been Minister for Health and Home Affairs instead of Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. The portfolio would not make any difference. That is the story the people of Queensland were told and it has been varied so often since that neither the Opposition —

Mr. Dewar: You are wrong.

Mr. DUFFICY: I am not wrong. The Premier did not contradict the prepared statement that he issued in June last. The people of Queensland and the Opposition know that story and nothing else. It is

not good enough for the Premier of this State to mislead either hon. members of this Chamber or the people of Queensland.

A Government Member: A lot of rot.

Mr. DUFFICY: It is not rot. The hon. member is the very person who produced a photograph that was circulated here, and underneath it was printed, "Mr. Muller leading his supporters—his chosen people—into the promised land." He was one of the chosen people and he was being led into the promised land. What has the hon. member to say about it now?

Mr. LOW: I rise to a point of order. I did not make the interjection. The hon. member is looking at me. Apparently he cannot see straight tonight.

Mr. DUFFICY: I am sorry. It was a stupid interjection and I naturally thought it came from the hon. member for Cooroora.

That is the position as I see it. It is no use the Treasurer, the Premier or anybody else attacking Mr. Muller personally and referring to him as a decrepit hulk of a man who should get medical treatment. That is in no way sufficient. What the Opposition and the people of Queensland expect the Government to do is to answer the charges. There is only one way they can be answered—the way in which the former Labour Government answered charges that were not nearly as serious as these are, because they were merely statements made by anonymous people in newspapers and elsewhere, and not by a former Minister for Public Lands in this Parliament.

Those statements were not made in that serious manner but the former Labour Government considered that land matters, above all others, were so important that, if there is any doubt at all in the minds of the electors of Queensland, they should be fully ventilated. The charges that were made on that occasion—not by a former Minister of the Crown in Parliament House—were fully ventilated through a Royal Commission. All the Opposition are now asking, on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of people they represent in this State, is that the Government do the decent thing, as a previous Labour Government did, and hold a public judicial inquiry into the matter. I would suggest a Royal Commission so that everybody will know exactly what the true position is.

Mr. Dewar: We know it now.

Mr. DUFFICY: If the hon. member knows, he is the only person in Queensland who does. There have been so many conflicting statements in the matter that nobody could possibly listen to the debates in this House and know the true facts.

The hon. member for Fassifern in a personal statement this morning said he had

withdrawn his resignation from the Country Party, and his action was carried on the voices by Government members who received it with, "Hear, hears!" His withdrawal was accepted on the voices without doubt, but that had no effect on the charges made by him in this Chamber, charges that to date he has not withdrawn. In view of the undoubted pressure put on the hon. member for Fassifern—I saw him being called in on three occasions prior to his speech, and the pressure may have continued—I do not think the people of Queensland are obliged to accept any subsequent statement he might make as being the absolute truth. He cannot withdraw the statements he made. He did not speak without notes, as I am doing tonight, but spoke with a carefully prepared case.

Mr. Lloyd: Written out.

Mr. DUFFICY: Written out, and therefore we must pay some regard to what he said. The Government are prepared to gloss over the matter and say there is nothing to answer; that he is just a decrepit, foolish old man and that we should forget all about it. I do not think the electors of Queensland are sufficiently stupid to accept that advice.

Mr. EWAN (Roma) (7.47 p.m.): It was my privilege to speak on Thursday last after the hon. member for Fassifern. I said that being a fair-minded and independent-minded person I thought, after listening to his speech, that every hon. member of a like disposition should reserve judgment until after the replies of Ministers who had been attacked. Being a fair-minded person and having listened to the respective replies of Ministers, I want to say unequivocally, as one who has been more closely associated with the former Minister than perhaps any other hon. member with the exception of Cabinet Ministers, that I accept the Premier's statement. I congratulate him.

While listening to the spurious remarks of hon. members opposite I was reminded somewhat of the statement by Mr. McCawley, Q.C., who opposed the Leader of the Opposition in the Towombamba by-election, that Mr. Duggan was a millionaire in words but a bankrupt in ideas. The truth of that statement became more apparent as I listened this morning to the theatrical speech of the Leader of the Opposition in which he failed to touch on fundamental factors affecting the issue and merely sought to get some small, mean, petty, political advantage at the expense of the unfortunate member for Fassifern. I wondered how he could refer to an alleged direction by the Country Party Executive in the light of his former statement, "Wise or unwise, rightly or wrongly, I will obey the Q.C.E. direction." It makes me wonder why he is prepared to accept the directions issued to him by a man such as Mr. Egerton, who, last Saturday morning, met a gentleman who claimed to represent the trade-union interests

in China, but who, according to pamphlets placed on every one of our tables this morning, turned out to be a general in the Communist Red Army. It really makes me wonder.

I accept unequivocally the Premier's statement and I think I am voicing the opinion of every back-bencher on this side of the Chamber. This debate resolves itself simply into a matter of interpretation. It has been said by the Opposition that taxation defaultation is not a very serious matter.

Mr. Lloyd: Who said that?

Mr. EWAN: Hon. gentlemen opposite have said so much today they are not conscious of what they have said. When they read their proofs tomorrow morning they will be very surprised.

It was my privilege some two or three years ago to dine with Sir Arthur Fadden and Sir Patrick McGovern at the Hotel Canberra in the Federal capital when the taxation lists had been tabled. I remarked to Sir Patrick, "This seems to be a very cruel procedure. Why is it that you publish only the names of those who have defalcated for amounts over £10,000?" He said, "Well, if we published the whole of them there would be so many that probably no-one would read them." As a matter of interpretation, hon. members opposite regard the Taxation Commissioner as fair game. Their attitude is in sharp contrast with that of the Premier. Hon. members will remember that when this party became the Government the Premier set such a high standard for his trusted Cabinet officers that they had to resign their directorships in various companies, at great personal loss to themselves. He set a very high standard, and thank God from this side of the Chamber, he has maintained that standard. However, hon. members opposite pay no respect whatsoever to that. They do not respect him for his high standards. As a matter of interpretation, their standards are so low when compared with the Premier's that they take umbrage at the Premier's action in Cabinet administration.

I have examined very carefully the statements made by the hon. member for Fassifern, and I must say that I have never listened to such rank distortion coming from any section of the people as the comments that have been made from the Opposition benches. They heard clear statements by the Premier the other night that were followed by clear statements by both the Minister for Education and Migration and the Treasurer. Because of their ignorance and their lack of understanding, and their desire not to accept the truth, they stoop to distortion.

Mr. Thackeray: You are telling so many lies.

Mr. EWAN: There were no lies at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I told hon. members earlier in the evening that the words

"lie" and "liar" have, over a long period of time, been regarded as unparliamentary expressions. I trust that no hon. member, either by interjection or in his speech, will use them.

Mr. EWAN: Thank you, Mr. Taylor.

I have listened with very great interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Warrego. I always listen keenly to anything that he may have to say. He is one of the few members in the Opposition who represents a western or a rural electorate. I was particularly amazed that he should charge the Treasurer with attempting to destroy the man, and not his argument.

Again it is purely a matter of interpretation of the standards that guide our very actions. I am sorry to say that the standards exhibited by hon. members opposite are very low in the scale of human relationships. They know nothing of the spirit of mateship, which actuated all the decisions of the Premier and the members of the Cabinet on the hon. member for Fassifern. They would not understand, when a very high executive has to be displaced, one does not, in the exercise of human relationship, publicise that he is being dismissed. Generally it is announced that he desires to relinquish his position owing to ill-health, or on medical advice. And how fair, how decent and how honest it is not to interfere with that person's chances in life. But, no, they want to be blatant about it. They want to drive everyone into the gutter.

Mr. Davies: Some of your Country Party colleagues said that your speech last Thursday, following that of the former Minister for Public Lands, Mr. Muller, was the most hypocritical they had ever heard.

Mr. EWAN: The hon. member knows a little about teaching infants at school but when he finds himself in a different sphere, among those who think on a higher plane, he just does not understand. The hon. member for Maryborough is known as 'Orrible 'Orrie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have previously had to tell another hon. member that hon. members of this Chamber shall be addressed by their proper titles.

Mr. EWAN: The hon. member for Maryborough, then.

We have listened to a great deal of discussion, coming particularly from the hon. member for Warrego, about family partnerships and just what the hon. member for Fassifern said in his statement. It is true, as the hon. member for Warrego said, that perhaps I have handled the extension of more leases in Queensland during the last three years than any other hon. member. Because of that, I was particularly close to the hon. member for Fassifern when he was Minister for Public Lands.

I have listened to the rubbish expounded by the hon. member for Warrego and his taking to task of the hon. member for Condamine, whose ability far transcends his. Bearing in mind what the hon. member for Fassifern had to say about family partnerships, I want to say that the hon. member for Warrego endeavoured with every means at his disposal to distort the real intentions behind the message conveyed in the Chamber by the hon. member for Condamine.

On family partnerships and leasehold land, I disagreed over a considerable period with the hon. member for Fassifern but it made no difference to our friendship and our association on land matters. I am one of the strongest advocates in the Chamber for family partnership and leasehold land and for allowing for the subdivision of such land. Let me explain it, but not in the same way as the hon. member for Warrego, who endeavoured to distort the position.

It was never meant at any time, in my advocacy over the years or in that of the hon. member for Condamine, that leaseholders be given the right to subdivide their leasehold land. The intention was that, where a family partnership existed on a property, for instance, if a father bought or selected a block of land for his two sons, and it was found subsequently—after the first 28 years, as granted under the Labour Government, or 30 years as granted under this Government—that the area contained two living areas in the opinion of the gentlemen who are sent out to furnish a report to the Minister on the carrying capacity of land, we believed, and sincerely believed, that as those two or more sons had grown up on that property, put there by their father, and as they had attained marriageable age and wanted to start their own families, they should not be kicked off that block of land if it consisted of living areas comparable in number with the people who constituted the partnership, particularly if they were brothers or sisters. Why should they be kicked off it? Do not forget that the Act, which was framed by a Labour Government, gave the Minister discretionary power to do that. But because of the misconduct of Ministers in past years, it was thought unwise that Ministers should exercise those discretionary powers. One of the greatest single factors in keeping experienced young men and women on the land, rather than allowing the tremendous drift to the city areas to continue at the rate of the past few years, would be the passing of an amendment making it mandatory to grant those areas provided they constituted only a living area for each of the members in the family partnership. It would be a most progressive step, one to which all sensible people would subscribe, in the land settlement of Queensland because of the great increase in population and the need to settle people on the land.

So much for the distortion of the hon. member for Warrego. In relation to the

subdivision of leasehold lands in the case of family partnerships, no-one ever suggested that the owners of leasehold land other than family partnerships at the termination of their lease should be given the right to subdivide. I want to deal now with the remarks of hon. members opposite that the Country Party Executive pressed the Minister to do that, and used undue influence. The Country Party Executive do not give directions to Ministers; they make suggestions, which is quite different from what is done by the Q.C.E.

Let us consider the arguments advanced by the hon. member for Warrego on the freeholding of 5,000 acres. What he neglected to tell the Committee was that the Government at present have legislation granting the right of conversion of leasehold land and other tenures to perpetual lease or freehold up to a living area but not exceeding 5,000 acres. He said that suggestions were made to the former Minister for Public Lands, and no doubt the present Minister would have similar suggestions made to him, that at a later stage it might be wise to extend that area. I want to know why it should not be extended. The hon. member for Warrego said that freehold land could not be subdivided. Of course it could be subdivided.

Mr. Lloyd: Can you tell us anything about that?

Mr. EWAN: Yes. The greatest living example in Queensland of war-service land settlement is the Jondaryan Estate, half-way between Dalby and Toowoomba, which is well known to the present Minister and is freehold tenure. That property consisted of about 80,000 acres. It belonged to the Wienholt Estate and was managed by the late Mr. William Kent. It was subdivided after the last war and the land was made available for soldier settlement. Today it is the most successful soldier-settlement area in Queensland. I defy hon. members opposite to show me one man who has failed on the land made available by the Wienholt Estate. What caused New South Wales and Victoria to far outstrip Queensland in the development of their rural areas? They had a system of freehold in their rural areas.

Reference was made to blackmail. The hon. member for Warrego has no excuse here, because he has lived out in the western areas, and the hon. member for Burke also understands the western mentality, no doubt, as does my dear old friend, the hon. member for Barcoo, Mr. Ned Davis. They know that the activating force behind land settlement is that a husband goes out and takes up land, no matter what the conditions might be, no matter how difficult living is, with the object of creating an estate to enable him to provide the wherewithal for a better life for his wife and a chance for his children to get a better start in life and less hardship than he had to endure. Many years ago men took up considerable areas of land out in the back

country that no-one else wanted. It is only 30 or 38 years ago to my knowledge that west of Roma you could buy any land that you wanted at a "bob" an acre—100,000 or 200,000 acres of leasehold land—if you had the money to buy it. Most of it was covered with pear, to say nothing of lack of water and dingoes.

Mr. Baxter: When was this?

Mr. EWAN: Forty years ago.

Mr. Baxter: That is not 30.

Mr. EWAN: In the early twenties. That land was taken out in fairly large areas. In their enthusiasm to develop them, and in dealing with the hardships they faced, the landholders developed a sort of kingdom that they guarded jealously. Nothing that they did would harm the land.

Mr. Baxter: Who developed it?

Mr. EWAN: The landholders. After 30 years, or 28 if they were grazing selections, the areas fell due for resumption and the landholders had to apply for extensions of their leases under Section 109B of the Land Act, setting out what they thought to be a living area, following which officers of the Department of Public Lands were sent out to furnish a report to the Minister to enable him to form a judgment on whether or not renewals should be granted. After 28 years—or 30 years in the case of a pastoral lease—would they not use every means at their disposal to try to retain the kingdom they had created? Of course they would; it is only human nature.

I always admire a lessee who puts up a tremendous fight to retain what he has built up. That is the spirit that has built the British Empire, yet hon. members opposite would speak in derogatory terms of them. Many of them realise that they cannot get a full renewal of their leases. When that is pointed out to them by the Minister in the exercise of his jurisdiction and his responsibility on behalf of the State, most of them accept it in good grace. But some do not and, being human, they start to kick up a fuss and, through their various organisations, try to bring pressure to bear on the Minister or criticise him because of what they consider is harsh action on his part. But fundamentally that is their right as citizens. Are hon. members opposite going to deny them the right to go to their organisations and seek support in trying to influence the Minister into giving them what they want, which is perhaps a little bit more than they are entitled to? If they are they must deny the right of trade unions to take direct action in industrial affairs. That is the activating motive of all people, whether they be graziers, farmers or trade unionists. To give an illustration of how hon. members opposite endeavour to distort the remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern let us see what he did say about blackmail.

Mr. BAXTER: I rise to a point of order. On your ruling the other night under Standing Order No. 114 may I ask the hon. member for Roma, through you, what district he is alluding to?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not know the motive of the hon. member in asking his question. I made no ruling but I did threaten that if interjections were maintained as they were the other night I would be obliged to apply Standing Order No. 114. If the hon. member has a reasonable question to ask of the hon. member who is speaking, he may ask it, but it remains entirely a matter for the hon. member on his feet whether or not he replies.

Mr. BAXTER: I would like a ruling—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. EWAN: I will be delighted to answer the hon. member for Hawthorne, because I believe he has put his question in a sincere manner. It is the whole of the area west of Roma, through Charleville, to Quilpie, to Cunnamulla, to Thargomindah.

Let us now consider the distortion by the Opposition of what was said by the hon. member for Fassifern. This is what the hon. member for Fassifern said; I want to show hon. members opposite where the word "blackmail" came in:—

"I have the great satisfaction of knowing that Fassifern electors, men and women, are backing me right to the hilt.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULLER: And if the Government doubt that statement I am willing to have a showdown. If it is their wish I will resign the seat and recontest it against anyone they care to nominate.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULLER: I can assure them it will take more than blackmail to win the next fight."

Mr. Lloyd: What is your reply to that one?

Mr. EWAN: He is suggesting that, over the years, it has been the practice of our opponents to use blackmail, that it would take more than any system of blackmail to defeat him. He did not say that he was blackmailed in the administration of the affairs of the department. It can be seen how hon. members opposite distort what is said. He never for one moment suggested that there was blackmail in relation to the administration of his department.

Many people support the Premier in his statement, that we as a Government, praise the hon. member for Fassifern for his administration during his three years as Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. I personally believe that the legislation for which he was responsible was the most progressive ever introduced in this parliament in a comparable period.

I should now like to deal with additional areas.

Mr. Lloyd: That is what you like.

Mr. EWAN: I like them, of course, and I will tell the hon. member why. It is because I was subjected, as were many others in the western areas of the State, to the inept and tragic lands administration of successive Labour Governments for very many years, when they opened land in substandard areas. It is a very poor state of affairs, and in making this statement I bear in mind that the hon. member for Fassifern is totally opposed to additional areas. Sir William Payne, too, is opposed to additional areas, as he stated in his report, with the exception of the areas west of Quilpie. I admit quite bluntly—and I make no apologies for it—that I am in favour of additional areas provided they are granted and administered correctly.

Let us now consider what was said by the hon. member for Carnarvon, whom I respect for his sincerity and honesty. During the period after he took over from his ill-fated predecessor, I do not think anyone could point a finger of scorn at his administration in so far as the provisions of the Land Act would enable him to administer the affairs of the State. I indicated by way of interjection when the hon. member was speaking that the legislation governing additional areas was introduced by a Labour Government. It was introduced in the 1927 Lands Act Amendment Act, from which I quote Section 9, Clause 1, It reads—

“Notwithstanding anything contained in the Principal Act, if it be represented to the Minister that any selector is the holder of a selection comprising an area which is not a reasonable living area as herein defined, it shall be lawful for the Minister, in his absolute discretion, on application by such selector in such form as may be prescribed, to permit of such selector acquiring, either by applying for land open for selection or by the transfer to him of an existing selection, an additional selection or selections for the purpose of constituting a reasonable living area for the selector concerned.”

It continues—

“Provided that such additional selection or selections shall not be applied for or transferred unless the Minister has, after due inquiry, certified by writing under his hand that the area of the combined selections constitutes not more than a reasonable living area as herein defined. Any selection acquired contrary to the provisions of this section shall be liable to be forfeited by the Governor in Council without any notice or process whatsoever.”

Mr. Hilton: Read the terms of the legislation.

Mr. EWAN: I am going to explain it. When the legislation was introduced many additional areas were granted without due inquiry.

Mr. Hilton: When?

Mr. EWAN: From 1927 to about 1936. Later, when the Land Administration Board was formed, officers—generally land commissioners—were sent out if lands were being opened for selection, and selectors in the area who thought they had a just case for additional areas—owing to inefficiency in the first place in the designing of the area by officers—could apply for an additional area. The land commissioner would sit in court and those applicants could appear before him to state their cases.

But let me give some instances of the way in which the section was applied before the inquiries were instituted. I know of one in my own electorate, and this was prior to 1936. A man drew a block of 8,000 acres and held it for four or five years. A block of 56,000 acres was opened or resumed on an adjoining property and this man was given the whole 56,000 acres as an additional area. That action was extraordinary, and the instance bears out the statement of the hon. member for Fassifern that some people start with a horse paddock and finish with a station property. This same person came to me and asked me to make representations on his behalf to the former Minister. I have not taken up the matter with the present Minister. The landholder has asked me to make representations on his behalf for permission to sell his original holding so that he can develop the station of 56,000 acres. Is that good administration? I think it would be looked on with a great deal of reserve and doubt. We have in other areas examples of an additional area being granted, and at a later stage a second additional area, and later again by Labour Governments, a third additional area.

Mr. Hilton: And under the Moore Government.

Mr. EWAN: Not under the Moore Government. They were not in power very long.

This has been going on everywhere, and when the former Minister took over the portfolio of Public Lands many people thought they could write their own tickets. The Minister disabused them of that idea. I say in all honesty and sincerity that he did a particularly good job and he would not be misled. He wanted to be satisfied that his actions were right and in the best interests of the State, having regard to his ideals and his view on the best interests of the State.

It was very pleasing to hear the Premier and the Treasurer say that only on very few occasions did Cabinet question recommendations by the former Minister. He had to be satisfied that he was doing the right thing having regard to the information placed before him. His job was very difficult. It is not my purpose to criticise officers of the department. I know Queensland perhaps as well as any other hon. member. With great

diversity of land and rainfall and the extraordinary difference in conditions in various parts of the State, it is particularly difficult to determine what constitutes a living area and carrying capacity in grazing areas. Many factors have to be considered. Of course, in many instances officers of the department in good faith—I am not doubting their good faith—go along and get the stock return, which is lodged every January, and they take those figures as the number of stock being carried. Of course, the figures may be wrong. That is not a reflection on the honesty of the landholder. He may shear his wethers in February, and sell them off-shears in March or April. His ewes may lamb in November and he may mark them in December, and they go into the January returns. When that is borne in mind it will be found that a month-to-month statement of stock, or a month-to-month estimate, is necessary to get a reasonably sound return.

The officers are faced with the problem of determining what constitutes a living area, on carrying capacity. They have to envisage the problematical potential of this country after certain developments have taken place, and it is impossible for them to be 100 per cent. accurate. Then the Minister, in good faith, makes a determination in the exercise of his administration. Because of dry times, the encroachment of regrowth of timber, and so on, it may subsequently be proved that the carrying capacity is completely incorrect. If hon. members are going to deny the Minister the right to exercise his jurisdiction in the interests of the State and the people to provide additional areas, when they are available, to make good an honest mistake of the officers of the Crown, then they are going to deny to the Minister an opportunity to give justice. That is why I have said that I am in full accord with the granting of additional areas where they are required, when an honest mistake has been made by officers of the Lands Department.

I am not going to talk for much longer. If, as the hon. member for Warrego said, hon. members opposite are sincere in asking for a Royal Commission to inquire into the resignation of the hon. member for Fassifern, and to inquire into the statements that they credit to him by distortion, when compared with the "Hansard" proof, I feel that they are simply wasting both the time of this Chamber and public money. They have not told the truth. Every member on the Government side acknowledges the truth of what the Premier has said, and we suggest to hon. members opposite that they carry on and give a bit of thought to the advancement of this State and devote their energies to its development as the Government are doing.

Mr. DONALD (Ipswich East) (8.23 p.m.): I am very disappointed with the contribution of the hon. member for Roma. As one who has been able to reap considerable benefit

from Labour's land policy, and as one who regards himself as an expert in land matters, he has just spoken for approximately 40 minutes, and not one second of his speech was taken up in defence of the Government or in attacking the amendment that was moved by the hon. member for Brisbane and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. The hon. member talks about wasting the time of Parliament, but I have never heard a more classical example of time-wasting than I did during the 40 minutes that the hon. member was on his feet. I regret that I have to speak like this, but, when you have serious matters to discuss, why should an hon. member deliberately waste the time of Parliament? Every word that the hon. member said should have been used in the debate on the Budget, or on the Estimates.

I honestly believe that not one hon. member in this Chamber tonight is pleased with the events that led to this debate and the dismissal from Cabinet of the hon. member for Fassifern. Personally, I find no joy in it because I realise the feelings of the hon. member for Fassifern. I knew him only by repute before I entered this Chamber, but I know that in the years that I have been here he has been a very loyal and honest worker on behalf of his party. He was always ready, when in Opposition, to advocate his party's policy and to attack the Labour Government, and he did it fearlessly and well indeed.

After being selected for the important portfolio of Public Lands and Irrigation, when, with the assistance of the Liberal Party, his party became the Government, after satisfying all good thinking people with his administration of that portfolio, and after 25 years of service in the Parliament—22 in Opposition, I think he said, and three as a member of the Government—to find himself dismissed from the Cabinet at his age must be indeed a very severe blow, and I feel very keenly for him. I feel genuine sympathy for him, and that is felt by every member of the Opposition, and, I think, by every hon. member of the Parliament, though I have not heard any Government member express his sorrow for the unfortunate position that the hon. member for Fassifern finds himself in.

None of us, I hope, would condone the evasion of tax payments by anyone—briefly, it means that he is cheating his fellow citizens—but every one of us can make a mistake and can unconsciously be guilty of filling in a tax form incorrectly and thereby not paying perhaps what should be paid.

I do not for a moment believe that a man of the character of the former Minister for Public Lands deliberately cheated the Commonwealth Government by falsifying his tax returns. If he did, then there is no judgment too severe to be passed upon him. A man in a responsible position who would be guilty of that deserves the severest censure.

But the amendment has been moved quite independently of any sin of commission or omission on the part of the hon. member for Fassifern. No mention is made of tax defalcation in the amendment, and no mention has been made of it by hon. members on this side of the Chamber. Every speaker on this side has mentioned the serious accusations of the former Minister not only against his party but also against the Government of Queensland. I think beyond any shadow of doubt we are justified in asking that that matter be cleared up, and it can be cleared up only by an independent body similar to the one that cleared up the matter when the former hon. member for Belyando, Mr. Foley, was accused of malpractice when he was Minister for Public Lands.

We have not used extravagant language. We have pleaded with the Government to be sincere. We have asked the Government to do what they should do—to give this gentleman an opportunity to clear his name and to give the people of Queensland what "The Courier-Mail" and the "Telegraph" have asked for. No-one, by any stretch of imagination, could accuse either of those newspapers of being a sympathiser with the Australian Labour Party or with the trade-union movement.

As hon. members opposite have accused speakers of not enumerating the charges that the hon. member for Fassifern made against the Government, I am going to be careful enough to repeat just what he said. In doing so, I will only be repeating what previous members of the Opposition have said. I do it deliberately because I want to remove the impression from the minds of those people who will not believe, or who do not want to believe, the seriousness of the accusations made by the former Minister. Bear in mind that it is not a man of no consequence who is laying these charges; it is not an inexperienced man or a man who can be regarded as untrustworthy. The hon. member for Fassifern has had 25 years in this Parliament, representing one of the most prosperous dairying areas in the State. He has been prominent on the front bench of the Opposition for over 20 years and he held the important portfolio of Public Lands and Irrigation for three years. He has won the admiration of many people for the way in which he administered that portfolio. He said—

"In a fight I like to fight cleanly and not hit below the belt. As hon. members will soon know, this fight in which I am engaged is a sincere effort to bring about better administration. It is a fight to help the Country Party take bearings afresh and to bring the party back to its time-honoured principles from which it has departed because of the domination of other narrowing influences."

That in itself is a sufficient charge to make the Government take notice and to make them institute some inquiry and not have it

glossed over in this Chamber. Here the former Minister, a responsible member of this Chamber, says that he is fighting for better administration and to bring his own party, the Country Party, back to its correct bearings and allow it to escape from domination by outside influences. No stronger condemnation could be issued by any member of that party, or any member of the community, against the present Government and their inability to govern fairly and squarely than was issued by the former Minister.

He went on to say—

"The next thing really of note was the Country Party conference in Toowoomba in the early part of 1957. You will remember, Mr. Taylor, that one of the early motions on that agenda was a vote of no confidence in the Lands Department. I flatly refused to accept that motion as a vote of no confidence in the department. I felt that, as Minister, if there was anything wrong with the department, the vote of no confidence should be directed at me, and I insisted that it was. After the matter was properly debated, I had a large majority of those present with me."

That comes from a prominent leader of the Country Party, yet hon. members opposite condemn members of the Australian Labour Party because they meet in conference and accept decisions reached at their conventions. The only difference is that every member who goes to an A.L.P. convention is elected by democratic means, while members who go to a Country Party convention are elected according to their wealth and influence. Let us not forget, Mr. Taylor, that this man is now charging the Government with exactly the same thing as members of the Australian Labour Party charged them with in 1957.

Later he said—

"The whole question of this land hogging, as you will realise, Mr. Taylor, was definitely obnoxious to me. I found I had thousands of young men on my hands, with the money and the know-how, desiring to go onto the land and many of these people wanting to hold two, three, four and in some cases half a dozen, living areas. If you had been in my office, Mr. Taylor, you would have taken the stand with me."

There we find the former Minister making another charge, which amounts to this: that there are thousands of young men in Queensland wanting to go onto the land and develop it and bring prosperity and closer settlement to Queensland, men who have the money and the know-how, but they are being prevented from doing that by the present policy of the Government. Whether it is official or unofficial I cannot say, but it is the policy that the former Minister fought against, and he says that these people who were against the Government's letting these

men with the know-how and money go onto the land and develop it were able to hold up to half a dozen living areas. Of these same people he also said—

"I found that there were people who had been given two, and sometimes three additional areas. In some instances their holdings had grown from a horse paddock to a sheep station."

He went on to say—

"There was the incident of the Country Party Executive rolling down to Parliament House one day and putting to me the principle of the right to subdivide and sell. If one examines that proposal one realises that it means only one thing: in plain language it is thievery of the Crown estate, and nothing short of it."

The hon. member for Roma did not speak on the amendment at all. He made no attempt to deny that statement. The Minister for Education and Migration had the audacity to tell an untruth here and accuse me and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition of meeting a deputation of unemployed at Parliament House. That was a sin according to him, but apparently it is quite the thing for the executive of the Country Party to come to Parliament House and stand over the Minister for Public Lands in an attempt to make him do as they wish. That is a serious charge, but did the Treasurer deny it? Of course he did not; neither did the Minister for Education. Even though they spoke at length they glossed over the matter. They did not offer any objection to that charge by their former Cabinet colleague.

Mr. Muller also said—

"All these matters raised big questions and they had to be handled with a good deal of care. I was subject to a good deal of pressure from all directions. I was told, 'If you don't do as we want you will lose this seat.' I said, 'I am sorry if we lose the seat but the seat does not enter into the argument at all.' I was told, 'We have not a lot of votes but we have a lot of money.' After being attacked by the U.G.A. that organisation saw how fair I was in my decisions and they came right my way."

Let us examine that statement. Surely that paragraph in itself is sufficient to warrant the Government appointing an independent tribunal to investigate the matter. Hon. members opposite have accused us again and again of accepting direction from an outside body, but the Q.C.E. has never come to a member of Parliament—whether he was a Minister or a private member—and said, "You do what we want you to do; if you don't we will take your seat away from you." Never has it said to a Minister or a private member of a Labour Government, "We have not many votes but we have a lot of money." What Labour Party supporters have to offer is a lot of votes—they have not much money. Therein lies the difference between the Labour Party and the Country Party. We represent

many people who have a lot of votes to offer, but little money. The Country Party, on the authority of no less a prominent member than the hon. member for Fassifern—he is still a member because his resignation was not accepted and this morning he withdrew it—have a lot of money but not many votes. The hon. member told the Committee fearlessly that they told him, "If you don't do what we want you to do the safe seat of Fassifern will be given to someone else. We have not many votes but we have a lot of money."

If the Premier and the members of the Government are prepared to take that they are ready to accept outside dictation without a struggle, and they are worthy of condemnation from every right-thinking person in Queensland. The former Minister said—

"At the last elections I was returned by a majority of two and a-half to one, the biggest majority I have ever received. However, nine days after the election, on the evening before the day that the party was to meet to elect the new Cabinet—on 6 June—the Premier called me to his office and told me that the executive of the Country Party had called and demanded that unless I could produce a letter to show that I was not the person mentioned in that report, they were objecting to my continuing in my portfolio."

This "decrepit old man," as he was referred to by the Treasurer, had sufficient courage to say that they could go and jump in the lake.

Let me point out to the Committee how the Country Party works—how its machine operates. The executive of the Country Party, not Mr. Muller's local organisation, came to the fountainhead of the Government—the Premier—and directed him in no uncertain way to get rid of Mr. Muller, otherwise there would be trouble. Why did they want to get rid of Mr. Muller? Was it because they were objecting to his continuing in his portfolio of Public Lands and Irrigation?

Hon. members should not forget that, if we are to believe the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Education and all other Government members who have spoken during the Budget debate and the debate on this amendment, these people did not know anything about the tax defalcation. Where is the justification for saying that it was only because of his failure to pay his just taxes that he was dismissed? Let me repeat again that I have no sympathy for a man who deliberately fills in a false income tax return; he is a thief and is unworthy of the consideration of decent people. But the position is totally different in this case. Nothing would have been done about it had not the Country Party Executive come to Brisbane—I do not know where from—straight to the fountainhead of the Government—the Premier—and told him he had to get rid of his Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation.

Mr. Muller continued:

"However, I now find myself, after 25 years in Parliament—15 years of hard work on the front bench; 12 in Opposition and three as a Minister—relegated to the back benches where I can no longer embarrass people who were trying hard to extract from the Crown estate much that they were not entitled to."

Never mind about the hard work he put into the position; never mind how brilliantly he conducted the affairs of the Department of Public Lands; let us see why he says he was removed—

"—where I can no longer embarrass people who were trying hard to extract from the Crown estate much that they were not entitled to."

There is another charge that, on its own, justifies the hon. member for Brisbane in moving the amendment and that justifies all thinking people, including the newspapers, in asking for something more than a mere statement to clear the Government of the suspicion under which they now lie. If that is not done the suspicion must continue and thinking people cannot be blamed for believing the Government have something to hide and that they are afraid to have their administration examined by a competent independent authority.

In order that hon. members will understand the meaning that the hon. member for Roma tried to apply to the statements of the hon. member for Fassifern, I will read a little more of his statement on blackmail. The hon. member tried to insinuate that Mr. Muller was saying that the Labour Party were blackmailing people to vote against him, but this is what the hon. member for Fassifern said—

"If the Government doubt that statement I am willing to have a showdown. If it is their wish I will resign the seat and recontest it against anyone they care to nominate."

Then Opposition members said, "Hear, hear!", and why should they not? That led up to the hon. member's saying:

"I can assure them that it will take more than blackmail to win the next fight."

He was referring there to the by-election that would follow if the Government accepted his challenge. It had nothing at all to do with the Labour Party. A deliberate accusation was made that the present supporters of the Government were blackmailing him.

Mr. Muller continued—

"To my constituents and to the people of Queensland in general, let me say that I can be of greater service as an Independent than by sticking to a party led by Mr. Nicklin and Mr. Morris. I do want to say that the whole thing, of course, has weakened my confidence in Mr. Nicklin; as far as Mr. Morris is concerned, I never had any."

Now let us examine that statement calmly. Does it not show that this man who has won the confidence of his electors and of his party, now, because of the treatment he has received, has lost his confidence in Mr. Nicklin? I assure the Premier, whom I am proud to number among my personal friends and whom I knew before I entered Parliament, that he will lose the confidence of many people who now have confidence in him if he does not accept the Opposition's suggestion that the Government appoint an independent tribunal, or conduct an investigation into the charges made not by the Opposition but by the former Minister for Public Lands. I do not think I could use stronger words in condemnation of the Government than those used by the former Minister.

This is a further passage from his speech—

"When we have regard to money values today, that would be at least £4,000,000. Now can you wonder that I am unhappy, Mr. Taylor? I am not surprised at the Liberal Party but I am surprised at the Country Party. All I can say is that they are not worthy of the name if they treat water conservation as lightly as that."

That is another reason for an inquiry. Can the Premier feel satisfied or happy at the statement of the former Minister that he is surprised at the attitude of the Country Party? Can the Deputy Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Liberal Party, feel happy about the accusation by the former Minister that he is not surprised at the attitude of the Liberal Party. That is what A.L.P. Opposition members have been saying to the people of Queensland for years, that the Liberal Party has no sympathy whatever for the Country Party. That was shown very clearly when the Government decided to make four additional seats in Brisbane, to give the people of the metropolis four more voices in Parliament, and take from the country people one representative. That action did not reflect credit on the Country Party. It was prepared to bargain with the Liberal Party because it knew that unless it agreed to the proposal it could no longer, with the Liberal Party, remain as the Government. The Country Party capitulated. I join with the hon. member for Fassifern in saying that I have lost confidence in the Country Party. I never had any in the Liberal Party.

Mr. Hanlon: It would be interesting to know how many other Country Party members share his lack of confidence.

Mr. Dewar: You are only wasting your time.

Mr. DONALD: I am not wasting my time. If I was trying to inject intelligence into the hon. member for Wavell I would, I agree, be wasting my time, as that would be quite impossible. His remark is indicative of the way in which he destroys himself.

Mr. Dewar: You have hurt my feelings.

Mr. DONALD: I should not like to do that.

This is a further passage from the speech of the hon. member for Fassifern—

"To think that I should be on the receiving end of such shabby treatment and then say, 'Yes. I will support a Government who are guilty of such an action and who have allowed the graziers to take control!'"

Again, if that was the only accusation of the former Minister the Government should be willing and happy to accede to our request to appoint a commission of some description to inquire into his charges. Unless they do, they must stand condemned in the eyes of all fair people. The hon. member for Fassifern has deliberately made a statement that he can no longer support the Government because they are under the control and direction of the graziers, a mere handful of people. Yet the Treasurer, when defending the Government, did not reply to a single charge made by the mover or seconder of the amendment. He said, "Fancy men like Mr. Mann and Mr. Duggan talking about the Government accepting a direction from outside when they have so readily accepted direction from the Q.C.E.!" I challenge any member of the Country or Liberal Party, or any of the Treasurer's supporters, to cite an instance when the Q.C.E. has exercised direction over A.L.P. members as the Country Party Executive has done over its members, including the Premier of the State. My authority for that statement is none other than a member of the Country Party and a former Country Party Minister. I am not asking hon. members to believe me. My voice does not come into it. I am merely echoing what the hon. member for Fassifern has charged the Government with. So far two Ministers and the hon. members for Roma and Somerset have spoken for the Government, but none of them has put up a case to refute the arguments advanced by the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. Dewar: Haven't you been here?

Mr. DONALD: I have been here all day. I have not, like the hon. member, been conducting another business somewhere else. The Treasurer told us that the only reason for the removal from Cabinet rank of the hon. member for Fassifern was a serious taxation defalcation, yet they knew about that before Cabinet was elected.

Mr. Hanlon: They knew it before the elections.

Mr. DONALD: Yes, they knew it before the elections. The Treasurer tried to defend any suggestion that he was prepared to exonerate Krupp, the man who has travelled all over the world and who is not only an exploiter of labour and not only had slave labour working for him, to accumulate his millions, but is a man who was a murderer of many people. He said, "Let bygones be

bygones; that was 10 years ago," and so on. What difference does it make if a man murders two years ago or 10 years ago? If they catch up with a murderer, do they say, "You have murdered someone 10 years ago. We will forget it. We will help you rehabilitate yourself. We will not only help you rehabilitate yourself, but we will help you rebuild your firm."? The Treasurer cannot get out of it. He proudly said today that he is not going to let Mr. Muller remain in the Cabinet. I honestly believe that Mr. Muller made a mistake, and we are all liable to make mistakes. Let me emphasise that I do not approve of anyone who is a tax-dodger.

I believe that the correct date of the taxation defalcation by the hon. member for Fassifern was 1949. After telling us in his opening remarks that the taxation defalcation was serious and was the only reason, the Treasurer said that it was the original reason. No member of the Government, either during the debate on the Financial Statement or the debate on the amendment, has told us the subsequent reasons for Mr. Muller's expulsion from the Cabinet. I feel I am quite within my rights in saying that the subsequent reasons were those that Mr. Muller told the Committee. Unless the Government are willing to prove they were not, they must stand condemned.

The hon. member for Fassifern said that he had the confidence of the Country Party back-benchers. That was shown conclusively when he was elected to the Cabinet. He was not removed from Cabinet by a vote of Country Party members. When he said that he has the confidence and support of the back-benches of the Country Party, he was telling the truth. He has the support of the Country Party in the Fassifern electorate, too.

The Treasurer made a very significant admission. He said he agreed with pressure groups. He said they are essential and an advantage to the Government. They may be, because what pressure group would be behind the Government? Only those people who are wealthy financiers, whether in primary or secondary industry! The pressure group behind the present Government would not come from the working class but from wealthy financial institutions, and of course they would be essential and an advantage to them, and I thank the Treasurer for admitting it. They would say, "Let us have this concession and we will finance your campaigns over and over again."

Some matters are desirable for the Treasurer's party but they become undesirable when related to the Australian Labour Party. Pressure groups, according to the Treasurer—and he cannot deny it, nor can any other hon. member who heard the debate—are essential and of advantage to the present Government; but when a trade union asks for some alleviation of working conditions, or for increased salaries or wages, it should be hunted to the Industrial Court.

What audacity its members have if they seek to talk to the Government! Fancy a pressure group like a number of working people coming along to talk to members of Parliament!

Personally, I need no pressure from any group to carry out my duties as a Parliamentarian and my duties to the electors of Ipswich East. I do my work without any domination by anyone, whether it be the Q.C.E. or anyone else. I will never refuse to meet representatives of the trade-union movement. I am of the trade-union movement, although I am a member of this Assembly, too. Once a member of the Labour Party divorces himself from the trade-union movement he divorces himself from an effective instrument of the working-class movement. I am perfectly willing to listen to any deputation of the trade-union movement because I know that every request that it puts up to me would be legitimate and worthy of consideration.

We had an example the other day with an amendment to the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Acts. What happened before we reached that stage? Is it necessary for me to recapitulate the struggles that we had to engage in? Is it necessary to remind the Committee that we had to hold two nation-wide strikes, during which not one man was working on any coalfield in the Commonwealth? Today our opponents think it is proper that the miners should have a pensions tribunal and receive a pension on retirement.

We heard a great deal about rackets in the Department of Public Lands. The former Minister was very determined that during his term there were rackets in the department. I do not wish to be misunderstood on that. He did not charge any officers of the Department of Public Lands; he gave them full credit for their co-operation, their work and their assistance. He meant that there were rackets going on in connection with the development or sale of land in Queensland during his term, and, because he did not like them—because he said they must go—he said, he had to go. They are not my words but the words of the former Minister. Again, not one spokesman from the other side has refuted his statements.

He was an advocate of closer settlement and, without doubt, he paid the penalty for his adherence to that policy. His was continuing the policy of the Labour Party on land settlement and, because he would not deviate from it, because he found it advantageous to the settlers of the State, he paid the full penalty. Was it not a vindication of the Labour Party's land policy? He made it very clear that he had been frustrated in his attempt to carry out the Government's land policy. The hon. member for Fassifern in no uncertain manner told us very forcibly for a man who is dying—for a man who does not know what he is talking about—that he was a

frustrated man in putting the Country Party's land policy into operation. No-one can achieve success when he is frustrated in his attempts, whether in carrying out party policy or in any other sphere of activity or thought. The Treasurer said the attack was on the Government and not on one section. He referred to the purity of the Government's administration, action and direction. We must realise that the charge of maladministration was made against the Government, of which he is a prominent member. That is what the Treasurer said of the former Minister for Public Lands, and he tried to justify the Government's action. He accused the Leader of the Opposition of acting this morning and then put on a turn to outdo the Leader of the Opposition! I suppose I must give him credit for succeeding, because he was acting while the Leader of the Opposition was putting up a very sincere and unanswerable challenge to the Government.

We want to know why Mr. Muller, the former Minister for Public Lands, was dismissed. The former Minister himself has told us why he was dismissed, and members of the Government parties have said that he was dismissed because he fell foul of the Commonwealth Department of Taxation. We have also heard from the Treasurer, the Premier and other Government speakers that they were well aware of the accusations levelled against the hon. member for Fassifern before that and that they knew of the income tax defalcation before the election. Mr. Muller was elected to Cabinet by people who were aware of his crime, if one could call it that. I am not saying it was a crime, nor am I saying that I approve of it, but he was elected by members of the Country Party who knew that he was in trouble for taxation evasion, and that has been borne out in this debate. But let me say this, and say it honestly and sincerely: I think it is very unfortunate that Mr. Muller did not confess the truth earlier than he did. He would have saved himself a lot of trouble, and perhaps would—

Mr. Harrison: It would have saved you the trouble of speaking tonight.

Mr. DONALD: It would have saved the hon. member the trouble of listening to me. But is the hon. member for Fassifern the only man who lied? If the hon. member lied, then other people in this Chamber have lied, also. Was it honourable to offer the former Minister for Public Lands another portfolio so that he could refuse it, as he did? If the hon. member was not honourable enough to sit in Cabinet as Minister for Public Lands, why was a clumsy attempt made to offer him another portfolio just to save the Government's face and cover up? Was it the action or decision of honest men or administrators? I ask members of the Government parties that question. If he was not fit to be a member of Cabinet because of certain action he had taken, how on earth was he fit to fill some other portfolio? Is that the action

or decision of honest men or administrators? I believe that hon. members who are unbiased will agree that it has not. It may have been, and probably was, an attempt to ease an ugly and distressing situation in which a fellow Cabinet Minister found himself.

If the hon. member for Fassifern was at fault in not admitting earlier than he did that he was guilty, every member of Cabinet was equally guilty and at fault in offering him a portfolio that did not exist. Perhaps it could be justified politically by Government members and supporters as a kindly and humane action to protect a man who had given long and loyal service to the party, the people whom he represents, and the important industry in which he had given lifelong and valuable service. No-one can dispute the fact that the former Minister has given excellent service to the Country Party, and that he was an expert in the dairying industry in all its various divisions, and that he was a valuable asset to his party and the industry. A "decrepit old man," as the Treasurer described him, has thrown the Government into panic and confusion. That is something they cannot deny. It is true that he is an old man, but I doubt if any of us in the Chamber tonight will be as active in body and mind when we reach our seventy-first birthday as Mr. Muller is today. He certainly did not show any signs of senile decay when he spoke in the Budget debate last Thursday.

Let us compare the actions of the present Government and those of the Government of which I was proud to be a member when another Minister for Public Lands was in trouble. When accusations were made against Tom Foley he did not wait for the Government to protect him; he did not wait for the Government to offer him a portfolio that did not exist. He tendered his resignation to the Premier and asked for a Royal Commission. That is all we are wanting today. The hon. member for Fassifern has asked for a Royal Commission. We have asked for a Royal Commission or a commission of inquiry to investigate the charges against Mr. Muller, as Mr. Foley asked for a Royal Commission to investigate the charge against him. That Royal Commission found that Mr. Foley had corrupted his office but that he had not gained anything himself financially or in any other way. The Q.C.E. took a very serious view of it and decided by a majority decision to expel Mr. Foley from the party. Do not forget that on the Q.C.E. at that time sat the Premier, Mr. Gair, the Treasurer, Mr. Walsh, the Minister for Labour and Industry, Mr. Jones and other members of the party including myself, although I was on the Q.C.E. as a trade-union representative. I fought with all the skill and eloquence I possessed to have Mr. Foley remain a member of the party. Mr. Foley's mistake was one of the heart, not of the head.

Hon members opposite would say that the A.L.P. are not fit to govern—that they sink

too low—but when one of our Ministers had accusations levelled against him he did not attack his party in the House. He said to the Premier, "I offer you my resignation, and I want you to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into this matter." What did the head of the party do? Did the Queensland Central Executive, about whom hon. members opposite talk so glibly, come down here in carloads to stand over the Premier? No. The matter was very calmly debated at a meeting of the Q.C.E. I make no apology for standing by Mr. Foley and trying to avert the decision to expel him from the party.

I shall conclude with the plea that the Government at least give serious consideration to the amendment moved by the hon. member for Brisbane and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. All we ask is the opportunity for the Government to clear themselves of serious accusations by a former Minister. We are supported to some extent in our request by "The Courier-Mail" and the "Telegraph".

Hon. A. R. FLETCHER (Cunningham—Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation) (9.10 p.m.): I feel that I should briefly say something about some of the matters that have been alleged or implied about my predecessor. I must say that I have listened to the debate with mixed feelings, including a good deal of indignation that we should have wasted so much time in making a chopping-block of someone who possibly has been unwise, and possibly unfortunate—who shall say which?—and who was deliberately and callously brought to the frame of mind where he made a speech last week for which I verily believe he is already sorry. Most of the things that have been said today are very loosely grouped around a series of what are called "charges"—charges that are not really charges at all but that are vamped up out of a highly emotional speech by an hon. member who is already sorry for making it. They are quite unconvincing and not one of them could be said to be a sufficient ground for an inquiry, a Royal Commission or anything else.

Mr. Duggan: Why did so many of your speakers take up so much time on them today?

Mr. FLETCHER: This is an attempt to make political capital out of the misfortune of a man who has, on both sides of the Chamber, been given credit for honesty and plenty of hard work in this Parliament. I think we can afford to be no more than amused at some of the things that have been said in the attempt by the Opposition, led by the hon. member for Brisbane and the Leader of the Opposition, to discredit the Nicklin Government and to bring public discredit upon Mr. Nicklin as Premier and upon those who are in his Ministry. We can afford to be amused at them because we know that the rest of the community will also be amused even if they do, at the same time, feel a little disgusted. Frank Nicklin

and those who stand behind him can feel a great deal of satisfaction and can afford almost to ignore those things that have been said today and the manner in which they have been said.

Mr. Duggan: Is that why all your Ministers are standing up to defend the Government?

Mr. FLETCHER: Why shouldn't they?

Mr. Duggan: If it is a travesty, why waste the time of the Chamber?

Mr. Hanlon: You said the Government, as a Government, told a lie. That is a serious matter.

Mr. FLETCHER: I have said very little so far, and I am certainly not going to admit to having said that. If I were a vainer man I would say that the recent ban that I, as Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, put on fireworks between now and 5 November has been the cause of what turned out to be such a lot of damp squibs. But I am not a vain man and I think they are only damp squibs because the Opposition could not get any heart or burst into them. Not one specific thing has been said. Not one thing has been said to which one could say, "Here is good and sufficient reason for setting up a Royal Commission into the matter or for starting an inquiry into it."

Mr. Duggan: That is only because you have quick minds and dull consciences.

Mr. FLETCHER: There have been many generalities based on a speech for which the man who made it is already sorry. As a matter of fact, it was made under circumstances that put him at a peculiar disadvantage; he was overwrought.

Mr. Hanlon: Over a period of four months?

Mr. Graham: Who forced him to make the speech?

Mr. FLETCHER: Hon. members opposite did. That is exactly what happened. There have been charges of blackmail. If hon. members come into this Chamber and charge somebody with having engaged in blackmail, who was it? Tell us something about this blackmail.

Mr. Bennett: Mr. Muller knows. That is what a Royal Commission would have to find out. He made the charges.

Mr. FLETCHER: And who moved this amendment?

Mr. Duggan: The Government did, and an hon. member opposite made the charges.

Mr. FLETCHER: Who moved this amendment?

Mr. Duggan: The Opposition moved the amendment, but we did not make the charges.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Opposition moved amendment, not Mr. Muller.

Mr. Duggan: He made the charges.

Mr. FLETCHER: Those who moved the amendment, please bring the charges and, if they have blackmail up their sleeves, let them bring it out because we have not heard about it yet. We have heard a number of generalities about blackmail, but the former Minister was needed into saying what he did.

Mr. Graham: By whom?

Mr. FLETCHER: By the hon. member. He used the word "blackmail" with regard to certain of the difficulties he experienced, difficulties experienced by all Ministers holding the portfolio of Public Lands. We have heard charges of selling the public estate, blackmail, and so on. All these statements have been taken out of the speech of an emotionally charged man who was needed into saying things he did not really mean. To the disappointment of the Opposition, the hon. member for Fassifern has withdrawn the main matter on which hon. members opposite base their amendment.

The hon. member for Warrego made a long speech, most of it completely irrelevant. He spoke of outside pressure on the Minister and pressure by the Country Party Executive. How silly can the hon. member be? He knows what the former Minister was talking about. He knows that all this matter revolves round the former Minister's personal troubles and the administration of his office. Of course people will apply pressure to get back their leases. They would not be human if they did not. If the hon. member for Brisbane had a lease somewhere, he would be doing the best he could to get it back.

Mr. Mann: You speak for yourself.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am speaking for myself.

Mr. Mann: Do not include me with those people.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will include the hon. member out and include myself in. If I had had a lease I would be wanting it back, and I would put up a fair case to get it back. Hon. members opposite have spoken of threats and blackmail, but they cannot get action on that type of indefinite rubbish. They know they cannot get it and are not entitled to ask for it. As far as I am aware, there has been no reflection on the integrity of the former Minister, on me, or on anybody else. It has been vaguely suggested, but no hon. member has said how it can be sustained.

Mr. Mann: He made some very definite charges about your opening up the Tully lands.

Mr. FLETCHER: That was not a charge, although the hon. member can treat it in that way. I shall deal later with the Tully lands. If the hon. member thinks that the way it

was put and the atmosphere in which the former Minister spoke make it incumbent on me to treat the matter seriously, he and I do not agree.

There have been no rackets, as someone has just suggested, in the department, either under the former Minister or me. The hon. member for Fassifern would be the last man to tolerate even the slightest suggestion of a racket. We have not the slightest evidence from the Opposition on which they can hang their request for an investigation, and the Leader of the Opposition knows that as well as he knows the sun rose this morning. He is out to get some advantage from this happy incident—from his viewpoint.

There will always be pressures on the Minister for Public Lands. The very method under which lands are administered and the fact that the Crown is the landlord of over 90 per cent. of the lands of Queensland and deals with thousands and thousands of lessees means there will always be pressures.

Mr. Hanlon: Is that not more reason why the Country Party Executive should keep right out of it?

Mr. FLETCHER: There is nothing I can say about the Country Party Executive in that regard. My knowledge of the Country Party Executive is that they did not come into it. Individual members of the executive may have exercised their personal right to go to the Minister, but there was no organised approach from the executive.

Mr. Duggan: They came along at separate times individually, did they?

Mr. FLETCHER: Is that not done?

Mr. Duggan: It is very undesirable.

Mr. FLETCHER: Each of them has the personal right or privilege of all of us to go to a member of Parliament.

Mr. Duggan: The former Minister resented it.

Mr. FLETCHER: That was a personal matter between him and the members, but it does not make the Leader of the Opposition's argument stick. It simply demonstrates that hon. members opposite are bringing up a position that does not exist. It was purely a matter of administration. There will always be pressures by men—some good, some greedy, some hard-working, and some lazy. I do not suppose men working on the land are any more immune from the ordinary frailties of humanity than any other section. They are all entitled to put their case, and sometimes they have put it too forcefully, or wrongly, or unjustly or wickedly. That is a matter of personal trouble for the Lands Department and the Minister concerned. It is their right, because sometimes they are in the right. The men who come to me are not always rapacious, greedy men. Many of them are jolly good fellows, and there are more good men than rapacious, greedy men, in spite of what the hon. member for Warrego

suggested. Most of them are prepared to put their case fairly and cleanly, and if some of them get a little over-impetuous it is only to be expected. Many of them have been on the land all their lives and they become very attached to it. Those hon. members who have any knowledge of men who live and work on the land know that it is only natural that they are loth to lose any part of their lease, which, from years of association, they have come to look on as their own. I would be very much the same. Those things are the administrative troubles that were referred to by Mr. Muller. There has been no blackmail. If hon. members had one single instance of blackmail that has succeeded and have not brought it forward, they have failed in their duty. The blackmail has not succeeded, and it did not have a hope to succeed with Alf. Muller.

Mr. Hanlon: We suggest that is why he was removed and it is an unfortunate reflection to be put on you as the new Minister unless the whole thing is cleared up.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am afraid hon. members opposite have overstated their case and are reading more into the speech of the hon. member for Fassifern than he intended. It is a pity the hon. member for Barooka is so dogmatic about what he said.

Mr. Hanlon: We do not know what he intended.

Mr. FLETCHER: It is a pity the hon. member does not understand what he said.

Mr. Hanlon: You have changed your story. As the Government, in the last four months you have completely reversed the story you gave to the public.

Mr. FLETCHER: Let the hon. member tell us another story another time. I am finding it difficult to keep up with him.

There was no blackmail except in the terms that pressure was put on the man who was administering the job. I quite believe that somebody said, "If you don't toe the line we will see that certain pressures are put on you," but that is nothing to do with the political party. That was an ordinary matter and the hon. member probably disregarded it as I am disregarding much of the rubbish hon. members opposite are putting up.

Mr. Duggan: Under Standing Orders members of Parliament are entitled to protection from threats from outside sources.

Mr. FLETCHER: There is no need for a member of Parliament in that position to rush to his Parliamentary privileges. He says, "Bring on your dogs and let them bark." He is not prepared to worry about anything like that. Of course there were threats.

The issues in this debate have been pretty hard to follow, as I am sure anybody sitting on this side would be entitled to confess. The debate started with very high-minded principles, but allegations have been tarred on of pressure on a Minister, or Government, to vary its lands admin-

in favour of somebody who was apparently able to exert pressure through some avenue or other. There were suggestions that this was happening, but no names were given and there was no real evidence. There were just a lot of foul innuendoes in the hope that if enough smoke was created people would think there was fire in it. We have been through the whole sorry business. And it is a sorry business. I was present at the election of the former Minister—

Mr. Hanlon: Did you vote for him?

Mr. FLETCHER: I voted for him. I did it knowing there was talk about a taxation matter going the rounds and that the Labour boys were playing bobs-i-di with the tale, but I was told that Mr. Muller had given his assurance that it was not he; that it was another Muller. So I voted for him, but I would not have voted for him if I had known the truth. Hon. members need not believe me if they do not want to, but it is true. I suppose, and I believe, that the rest of us did the same. It was not till afterwards that we learned what had happened.

The whole sorry story has been gone through step by step and has been given clearly to everybody. I do not think anything has been left out—no “i” left undotted and no “t” uncrossed. I think it has all been perfectly true.

Mr. Hanlon: There have been too many stories; they cannot all be true.

Mr. FLETCHER: There was only one story and it was true. The only diversion from the one story has come through the enormous amount of twisting by hon. members opposite—the taking of statements out of their context, the deliberate misunderstanding of what was meant and the denial that what has been offered in explanation can be taken as the true explanation.

Mr. Davies: Why not bring the former Minister in here and let him make a half-hour speech and explain it himself?

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think I need answer such a stupid interjection. The whole matter has been gone through. It would be a pity for me to go once more through each step. I am telling the Committee that I was at the meeting that elected him, that I voted for him, and that I honestly believed that his assurance was to be trusted. It went on from there and Mr. Muller got out. The Premier made a statement and that statement has been the subject of a good deal of misrepresentation today. He gave a clear and concise reason for making it. It was to the effect that he had offered another ministry to the hon. gentleman, who had decided to refuse it and resign. The reason for doing that is very much to the credit of the Premier.

Mr. Duggan: Very much a dishonourable device.

Mr. FLETCHER: If it is a dishonourable thing to want to let your old friend and companion-in-arms down lightly, then it was dishonourable. If it was a dishonourable device, I hope that I go on being as dishonourable from now on, because, in my opinion, it was a good and honourable thing to do. If some hon. members cannot understand it, as indeed the hon. member for Somerset suggested they would not, I think they are unfortunate.

Mr. Duggan: If you adopt that course of action you run the risk of the Treasurer castigating you subsequently, because he castigated Mr. Muller.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am not worried about that. I am talking about my own reaction to what was done at the request of the hon. member who was so unfortunate as to be in that position. He asked to be let out on that basis to save his face, and the Premier, in the honesty and the decency and the sympathy of his heart, agreed to it. That is now a badge of honour, not a badge of disgrace.

Mr. Graham: Why did he make the speech on Thursday if he got out of his own accord?

Mr. FLETCHER: Because hon. members opposite made him.

Following that statement, a statement appeared in “The Courier-Mail” next morning from Mr. Muller himself, and at that stage he was agreeable to the course that the Premier had accepted. He was gracious and pleased with that course. The report says—

“Mr. Muller confirmed entirely the statement made by Mr. Nicklin over his retirement. He said that, while he was profoundly sorry to sever his association with the Lands Department, he felt he should not allow his disappointment to break his allegiance with the Country Party.”

At that stage he had agreed, in the spirit of what he had asked the Premier to do for him, to go along on that basis. It was only subsequently that he changed his point of view and his intention and made the speech that he made the other day. The hon. member for Townsville South picked on that. He asked: why did he apparently agree and give his blessing to the Premier's statement at that stage, and, later on, to wit last week, make a speech that in effect was a complete denial of it? The hon. member for Townsville South made that point in a very admirable summing-up of the matter. It was very clear and concise. I think he wandered too far when he began to worry about how we ran the Country Party, and if he is in the Chamber I should like to assure him that we are quite capable of looking after that. I am deeply touched by his concern about the need to maintain the standards of this Chamber. Naturally he would be, because he has demonstrated that concern on so many occasions.

Mr. Hanlon: Can you clear up something the Treasurer has thrown a doubt on—as to whether Mr. Muller is or is not still a member of the Country Party?

Mr. FLETCHER: That has nothing to do with what I am speaking about.

The Leader of the Opposition proceeded to demonstrate the real truth of this matter. He came into the Chamber and said many very high-pressure but very indefinite things—in fact, not one single definite thing—about what was going on and what needed inquiring into. Then he began to demonstrate to the world that was watching what the real reason for this was. He said, “My early statement, which was immediately after this, was to the effect, ‘Tell the full story.’ And what did the Press do? They put it on the back page where it would not be seen.” He said, “That is not the sort of thing that happens when something happens to us.” He produced this newspaper and said, “Foley got headlines.” It demonstrated just where the shoe was pinching. This indeed was the trouble. Hon members opposite wanted to get a bit of their own back for what they suffered in the old days.

Mr. Duggan: We expelled Foley, so don’t hang that one on us.

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes, but the hon. member is still stinging over it. He said, “Foley got headlines, but I get a bit of a mention on the back page.” Then he went on to say, “After all the things we have suffered from the fellows over on the Government benches, who say, ‘We on this side of the Chamber are not low types like you Labour fellows——’”

Mr. Duggan: That is what the Premier said in his policy speech.

Mr. FLETCHER: They were the hon. member’s words.

Mr. Duggan: They were the Premier’s words in his 1957 policy speech.

Mr. FLETCHER: On this occasion they were the hon. member’s words.

Mr. Duggan: I quoted from the Premier’s policy speech in 1957.

Mr. FLETCHER: On this occasion they were the hon. member’s own words, and his concern about Mr. Foley demonstrated what the whole trouble was. The hon. member wanted a bit of his own back, and he was frustrated because Mr. Muller did not stay in the Cabinet and allow him to get a really good crack at the Government. After the election I met someone down here at Parliament House who said, “You boys are pretty lucky that Muller got out.” I said, “He could not have stayed under the circumstances.” He said, “No. but you were pretty lucky, because you know what the word all round the place is.” I said, “No. I have

been out west.” He said, “Duggan and the boys were really going to tear a strip off him.”

Mr. Bennett: Who told you that?

Mr. FLETCHER: I am not going to tell the hon. member.

Mr. Hanlon: As it turned out, the Premier tore a strip off him.

Mr. FLETCHER: The hon. member knows. I can tell by the look on his face. This man, who gets around and who is not a member of Parliament said, “The Labour boys were going round here gleefully chucking their hats in the air. They almost had a party. ‘At last we have got them,’ they said. ‘Honest Alf, Honest Frank, these fellows who have been kidding themselves about their honesty, are going to have a bloke in their Cabinet who has been ‘diddling’ the Income Tax Department’.”

Mr. DUGGAN: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. Dewar: You can’t take it, Jack.

Mr. DUGGAN: Yes, I can. The Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation said I went round the State saying that the hon. member for Fassifern had been guilty of tax evasions and all sorts of things. I give him a denial of that and I ask him to accept that the name of Mr. Muller was never mentioned by me.

A Government Member: Not publicly.

Mr. DUGGAN: Not publicly or privately.

Mr. FLETCHER: I was telling hon. members what was current round this House, and the current story was that Duggan and company were really gleeful. At last they had “honest Alf” and “honest Frank,” and so on——

Mr. Duggan: The story was that Hiley said, “Duggan will tear strips off you if you don’t sack him.”

Mr. FLETCHER: I am telling the hon. gentleman what I heard. He can tell me another time what he heard. It should be interesting.

Mr. Duggan: That is what I said.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURROWS: I rise to a point of order. The hon. gentleman has made an accusation that could reflect on me, and I ask him to withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman has made no reflection on the hon. member.

Mr. Burrows: Can I ask the hon. gentleman, through you, what member told him that cock-and-bull story he has just put over?

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. Burrows: Shut up!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member further disregards the order of the Chair he will be dealt with.

Mr. FLETCHER: Obviously the hon. member pulled the cap right down over his eyes and could not see where he was going.

Government Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Burrows: I respect confidences, which is more than——

Government Members interjected.

Mr. Burrows: What is the good of talking to you fellows?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FLETCHER: I had not hoped in my wildest dreams that I would have such confirmation of the truth of what I am saying. It is very gratifying to have the truth of my remarks so amply demonstrated.

All their glee about having someone to tear to pieces turned out to be untimely, because Mr. Muller was not in the Cabinet. They had to find a second string to their bow—the next best thing. Apparently someone immediately said, “All is not yet lost. We may be able to work on this man who is obviously overwrought, who is obviously pent up to a state where we may be able to do something by breaking this poor bloke.” They deliberately, cold-bloodedly and callously started in on Mr. Muller to bring him down to the state where he might be politically useful, in spite of what might happen to the poor “blighter” in the process. This deliberate policy proceeded to unfold itself. Those hon. members who have been here for six years know the truth of what I am saying. Over the last six years hon. members opposite have made no overtures of friendship towards Mr. Muller. It will be remembered that many times he has been chided with being “the biggest Tory of the lot of you!” I can remember one hon. member who lauded him saying, “What would a pig farmer from Boonah know about land?”

Mr. Duggan: It would be interesting to know what some of you fellows said about him after he made his speech last Thursday. It would not be very elegant language.

Mr. FLETCHER: The hon. gentleman is at liberty to speculate on that as much as he likes. I ask the Committee to remember what was said by hon. members opposite about Mr. Muller. The hon. member for Port Curtis told the Committee that Mr. Muller was an honest, incorruptible courageous man of capacity who had upheld the honour, dignity and standards of the Department of Public Lands against all comers. But at another time, when he was not speaking in that vein, what did he say? I have only half a dozen examples of what he said,

but I could have got many more. Despite his referring to him on one occasion as a paragon among Ministers, on another occasion he said, “I am grumbling about the Minister for his administration of land matters on the introduction of this Bill, which is merely an attempt to give the lands of the State to his political friends.” That is the same man as hon. members opposite said the other day was a really fine fellow.

Mr. Duggan: At that time we did not know his resistance.

Mr. FLETCHER: The hon. member for Bundaberg with this end in view buttered him up no end, and injected into every single thing he said that this was a very fine man who had been subjected to pressures from outside and incontinently thrown out of office. Last year he said with regard to the Lands Acts and Other Acts Amendment Bill that the Minister was getting intelligent officers in his department to explain to him what he did not understand. He said he had something pushed on him and he does not understand what it is all about.

The Leader of the Opposition, I note, chided Mr. Muller with having entered into a deal with the enemies of the State. He asked why he did not boldly and courageously state, when speaking on some of these land development schemes, “We have entered into a deal to sell the assets of this State for some miserable immediate advantage.” He said that the Minister was deliberately misleading the Chamber and that if he could not tell the truth on the matter he was adopting a very unworthy attitude. Those who have been in this Chamber for some years know what I am saying to be true and that Mr. Muller was often spoken of as “the greatest Tory of them all.” That used to be his opinion of Mr. Muller.

Mr. Dewar: “The cat in the vat” was their figure of speech.

Mr. FLETCHER: Exactly, and now he is the model of all Ministers for Public Lands. That has been going on and on and the poor man has been subject, first of all, to the strain of getting out of the job he liked doing and into which he put everything he had and, at the same time, to the snide suggestions that he had been betrayed by his “cobbers.”

Mr. Burrows: We did not go behind his back with a stiletto.

Mr. FLETCHER: The very nature of the man made him more susceptible to the rotten tactics that were employed. His nerves were worked on to a very fine degree and the pressure was always on. He was enthusiasm personified. He was always a keen advocate of closer settlement and, when he was caught up in his own misfortune, that misfortune was used against him coldly and callously.

Mr. Duggan: By your Cabinet.

Mr. FLETCHER: I have never seen a more coldly calculating procession of people operating on a poor man who was not in a position to withstand the attack. His life's work, so far as he could see, was in ruins about him. It was a shocking thing and made him more susceptible to the attack. The worst feature was that hon. members opposite did not believe one word of it.

Mr. Duggan: If you don't believe us, read your own Treasurer's speech tomorrow.

Mr. FLETCHER: Additional areas have been brought up as have closer settlement and pressure from outside, but still no charge. We are entitled to have a bit more grown-up common sense injected into this discussion. Hon. members opposite should bring out their charge—just one, if they cannot think of two or a half dozen. Many have been suggested; bring us one substantial charge.

Mr. Burrows: We ask you to investigate the charges made by the former Minister.

Mr. FLETCHER: There were no charges made. It was a wild emotional speech, triggered off by a political campaign by people who could not care less. There was no pressure that was acceded to. The Cabinet backed the hon. member absolutely, as it has backed me absolutely. He did not have to fear any pressure with the Cabinet always loyal to him.

It was suggested—and it is a dirty suggestion; if I thought there was any substance in it I would resent it but I can afford to laugh at it—that now the graziers can write their own ticket. Hon. members do not have to worry about the graziers writing their own tickets. If anyone wants corroboration of that I can get the testimony of a grazier who has gone on record as saying, "If Alf. Muller was a hard bloke, he is just nothing to the b—— you have now." That came from a grazier. There is no need for hon. members to worry about land matters while Alf. Muller is here, while Alan Fletcher is here and while Frank Nicklin is here with his Cabinet behind him. They will back me every single time. The criticism I had to withstand on only one occasion was more in the nature of an inquiry or a reassurance. Cabinet members are always prepared to back what I suggest, because they trust me and I trust them, and in the job of the former Minister was doing they trusted him up to the stage when something went wrong. That was a very sad day.

The hon. member for Kedron asked the reason for the sudden change and the withdrawal this morning.

Mr. Davies: It is mysterious, you must admit.

Mr. FLETCHER: Not a bit mysterious. At last the poor bedevilled man has realised who led him up the garden path. If his eyes

were not open before, he stayed in the Chamber long enough today to have them opened.

The Tully lands have been suggested as something very serious. I refuse to treat them as such. The former Minister and I have been friends, and more than friends. I have been his best backer in his land policy, and his land policy is now my land policy, with hardly any amendments. When he spoke on Thursday he was under great emotional stress and hon. members opposite were "chipping him." He said something about me that probably he is sorry for. I know he does not think I should be in gaol. Of that I am quite sure, although he said it. He said it under the stress of emotion. Many people say peculiar things such as, "You should be in gaol." I refuse to worry about that. The former Minister has always been accorded by me the status of a man who administered his department justly and honestly. But when he was Minister he had more information at his fingertips than I had as a back-bencher. Now he should be prepared to accord me the same status. Developments are taking place in the Tully area, but we did nothing until we had the matter investigated by officers of the Department of Agriculture and Stock, the Department of Forestry and the Department of Public Lands. We did not take the opinion of only the officers of the Department of Public Lands. Cognisance was taken of the views of the Forestry people, and they are officers with a sense of their responsibility to preserve the timber resources of the State.

Mr. Duggan: You said he was heckled into making certain statements. Here is his speech, and there is only the one interjection by the hon. member for Mackay right through it.

Mr. FLETCHER: Opposition members may not have been heckling him at that stage, or their heckling may not have been taken down. But whether there was heckling or not at that stage is beside the point.

Mr. Duggan: You said it a moment ago.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am saying it again. He was heckled at some stages through his speech, and the whole atmosphere of his speech makes it easy to believe that he might have said I should be in gaol. The Tully business is in good hands.

Mr. Hanlon: How do you reconcile your statement that the Department of Forestry reported favourably and Mr. Muller's statement that the Forestry Department were horrified at the idea?

Mr. FLETCHER: I am now the Minister for Public Lands and I, not the former Minister, asked the Forestry people. They may have been horrified at the idea at one time, but I am telling hon. members that we sent officers of those departments to the area. Two blocks have been opened with a view to testing the desire of men to go up there and the effectiveness of action to turn the land into good pasture land, and grow something that has not been grown successfully there

before—that is, beef—on artificial pastures. A reasonable assessment of the position was made, with the Department of Forestry being allowed to watch its interests. I assure hon. members that we have not cut across the interests of the Forestry officers, who are naturally interested in keeping the timber resources there inviolate. If we are never going to try anything new, we will never get anywhere. This was an intelligent move. We have sent three more men up there. They may be the same officers from the Departments of Public Lands, Forestry and Agriculture and Stock. They are looking for more land, but the two viewpoints have to be protected. From the forestry and timber-producing point of view we are not going to override them, but there are many blocks in that timber area that could reasonably be excised therefrom without disturbing the timber resources and used for cattle-fattening. There are nine more blocks going up there, and the timber and forestry resources will be protected. We have deliberately opened them as settlement farm leases so that the timber rights may be protected. The Forestry people have given their approval. Hon. members opposite cannot inject anything sinister into it. I am completely open about it and they may come up with me. But they must not blame me if they don't come back.

I should hate to be as guilty as the Opposition and wander all round the place talking vague generalities when there is something that we ought to get done. So far as I can see, the whole argument has not demonstrated one single reason for an inquiry. Hon. members opposite may still bring up reasons, but they are a long time bringing them up. I think it is too late now because there are only the “dumber” ones left. If the whole argument demonstrates anything, it demonstrates that Mr. Nicklin and his Cabinet had a very high sense of their responsibilities when they asked the hon. member for Fassifern to vacate the Cabinet. They were ensuring that no finger could be pointed at any one of them—even though they were not terribly blameworthy; perhaps they were unfortunate—in the interests of good government and in the interests of the very special responsibility that a Cabinet Minister must undertake. They could not afford to have it, and I think they are to be admired for that action.

With reference to the statement that the Premier made, of which so much has been made today—most of which has not rung true, because hon. members have not really meant it—concerning the offer to Mr. Muller of another portfolio, that is nothing to be ashamed of. If we are honourable men and have an honourable conception of what we owe to men who have fought beside us over the years, in my opinion it is an additional badge of honour. I am sure I speak for every one of the men behind me when I say that we are prouder of the Cabinet now that we know all the circumstances than we were when we did not know them, because they did just what we would have

expected them to do. I was only a backbencher but if I or a dozen of us had been in the same position, we would have done the same thing and we would have been proud of it.

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (9.54 p.m.): I support the amendment of the hon. member for Brisbane. I think the Opposition are fully justified in moving the amendment. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the remarks of the Premier during the 1957 election, when he was the Leader of the Opposition. These are the words used by the Premier in his 1957 policy speech—

“Low cunning and the ability to indulge successfully in snide political practices are generally regarded as attributes of the smart politician.”

If we have ever had a prime example of low cunning and indulging in snide political practices, we had it in this Chamber today from the Government. The Government say we have not presented any charges and are endeavouring only to take political advantage of the misfortunes of the hon. member for Fassifern. Despite those statements by the Government, we have heard three senior Ministers reply to the amendment moved by the hon. member for Brisbane, followed by the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Bremer and other hon. members on this side of the Chamber. We have had this snide political cunning, of which the Premier once spoke, being exhibited by several Ministers of the Cabinet in an attempt to divert the debate from the substance of the amendment. They have tried to divert it onto the rights and wrongs of Mr. Muller's record as a taxpayer—something that the amendment does not even mention. Nowhere in the amendment is there any reference to a suggestion by the Opposition as to whether Mr. Muller was right or wrong in running into trouble with the Taxation Department. It is not our purpose to set up an inquiry to decide whether he paid the correct tax. That has already been dealt with by the Taxation Department and agreement has been reached with Mr. Muller himself. He has paid whatever they considered he owed them, and so on; the matter is dead and gone. We are not for a moment suggesting an inquiry into Mr. Muller's tax, and hon. members opposite cannot point to any such suggestion in the amendment. It has nothing to do with it. But we find this dishonest attempt by hon. members opposite, by senior members of the Government, and by the Treasurer in particular—to steer the discussion into an examination of Mr. Muller's taxation matter and personal attacks on Mr. Muller.

They even went so far as to try to divert the debate into personal attacks—personal to the extreme—not only on Mr. Muller but also on the hon. member for Brisbane and the Leader of the Opposition because they had seen fit to move the amendment.

The Treasurer, who gave such a melodramatic performance this afternoon, even referred to the hon. member for Brisbane as being amoral. That was his answer to the amendment, which has nothing whatever to do with anybody's morals.

We have been charged, as an Opposition, with moving an amendment without making any specific charges; but what sort of replies have we had from the Government members who have spoken so far? They have merely tried to swing the discussion away from the amendment or to indulge in purely personal attacks on the hon. member for Brisbane and the Leader of the Opposition because they responded to what they considered to be their duty as Opposition members and brought the amendment forward. As we have been told that, as an Opposition, we should not have brought the matter forward, let us see what appeared in the editorial of "The Courier-Mail" on 17 October. Despite the fact that they went to a great deal of trouble to try to protect the Premier, nevertheless "The Courier-Mail" had this to say—

"The charges made by Mr. Muller in Parliament last week alleging that pressures had been brought to bear on him as Minister to serve the interests of certain landholders are a different matter. They should be answered.

"Parliament could ask for an investigation to determine the substance of Mr. Muller's charges."

What have we done by this amendment? We have asked for an investigation, and for an independent investigation, free, if possible—and I believe it is possible—from political interest on one side or the other. "The Courier-Mail" suggested that we should do that and we have done it; but we are told by the Government that we are only wasting the time of the Parliament and just trumping these things up. "The Courier-Mail" editorial continues—

"Mr. Muller might then assist it with more definite testimony naming the persons who, he alleges, tried to influence him improperly as Minister for Lands."

The Brisbane "Telegraph" also suggested—

"The people of Queensland are entitled to a fuller explanation of some of the circumstances surrounding the resignation of the former Lands Minister."

That was on the day after the Premier gave his explanation, which he considers to be the end of the matter—the explanation he made in the Chamber on Thursday night. It was on Friday, after the Premier had made his initial speech on the matter, that the "Telegraph" in its editorial suggested that the people of Queensland were entitled to a fuller explanation. The editorial goes on to say—

"Mr. Muller says he was obliged to resist a continual demand for additional leasehold areas—in plain language, a gift from the Crown estate—and that this had grown into 'something like a racket'."

and so on. The leader-writer of the paper says—

"The Country Party must realise that the issues that have been raised cannot be glossed over."

Have we ever seen a better effort to gloss something over than we have had from the Government today? He adds—

"A complete statement is needed to clear the air."

And do not let us imagine that the remarks of the Treasurer were a complete statement in that regard. We have already had three Ministers contributing to the debate. We had the hon. member for Roma, who was supposed to be speaking to the amendment, going into a wide general discussion of the Land Acts, in the course of which he made some rather remarkable statements. I will not deal with most of his remarks, because they were completely irrelevant. However, he claimed that the Australian Labour Party had introduced the right to subdivide. If we look at the Land Acts, Section 168, we find this provision—

"Any holding and any land held under occupation licence may be subdivided, with the permission of the Minister, upon such terms as to rent or otherwise as the Minister thinks fit."

If we look at the side of the page we see that that section was introduced in 1897. It is supposed to have been introduced by the Australia Labour Party! I am not going to waste more time on that point.

The hon. member for Roma has had a close association with the former Minister for Public Lands, and one might have expected him to make a worthwhile contribution to the debate from the Government point of view. But all he did was talk about the Land Act in a way that showed his complete ignorance of it.

The Opposition have called for an independent inquiry into the charges of the hon. member for Fassifern, and I want to emphasise that again. We are continually being asked by the Government, "What are your charges?" I want to answer that by saying, "We have no charges at all. The charges have been made by a former Minister of the Government." Could we have anybody more qualified to make charges than a member of the Premier's own Cabinet, a member who has been one of the key figures in the Cabinet in the past four years, the Minister who has been administering the Land Acts and who has been dealing with the Country Party Executive? What is the Government's answer to the charges he has made? Following a personal attack on the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Brisbane, one of his own colleagues, the Treasurer, described the hon. member for Fassifern as a decrepit hulk. I think they were the words used by the Treasurer in answering the charges made by the hon. member for Fassifern. What sort of an

answer is that to this amendment and the charges made by the hon. member? The answer of the present Minister for Public Lands is that the hon. member for Fassifern is a nervous wreck and does not know what he is saying. With the amount of pressure that has been brought to bear on the hon. member for Fassifern by Government members and Ministers during the past few days, it would not surprise me if he is a nervous wreck.

We saw a blatant attempt in this Chamber last Thursday to induce the hon. member not to speak. In the half hour while he was sitting at the lectern, he was given more attention than a show pony by the Government. He was called into the Cabinet room several times, and he would barely hit that bench before the hon. member for Roma would come out and whisper something in his ear and he would go into the Cabinet room again. He would come out and sit there ready to jump, and the next minute a messenger would come out and tell him that he was wanted in the Premier's room or in the Cabinet room and he would disappear through the doors. As was pointed out earlier, we do not know whether it was only Cabinet who were putting the pressure on him not to speak or whether members of the Country Party Executive were in there also trying to dissuade him from making the remarks that he did.

The answer of the present Minister for Public Lands to the charges was that the former Minister saw fit to make these disclosures because he was intimidated into it or worried into it by members of the Opposition. We will not allow the Government to cover up the real purpose of the amendment. We have been lectured by the Government about making political use of this matter, and "The Courier-Mail", trying to protect the Premier as much as possible, said this—

"The Opposition will bring much discredit on itself if it tries to make political capital out of Mr. Nicklin's scrupulousness."

I think that the Opposition, far from bringing discredit on themselves, are to be congratulated, because if we had wanted to make political capital out of this we could easily have raised it two weeks before the elections. The Premier told us that he did not know anything about the taxation matter before the election, but a couple of his Ministers have indicated that they did. In the Brisbane "Telegraph" of 18 May, 1960, under the heading, "22 Understated Taxable Income", we find included the name "Muller, Adolf G., Farmer, £11,205", in brackets, "£1,766" being the penalty. We saw that—we read the "Telegraph"—and we know that the Premier and his Ministers have a team of public servants and Public Relations Bureau officers who cut out any sections of newspapers containing even slight references to Ministers of the Crown or members of the Government that may have any political significance. If the Premier is going to tell us that he did not know of this matter before the elections I

suppose, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, we will accept that; we will accept his denial that he did not know about it.

Mr. Nicklin: Thank you very much!

Mr. HANLON: I would say that, like the hon. member for Fassifern—

Mr. Nicklin: I was not living in Brisbane all the time during the election campaign.

Mr. HANLON: The Premier had a number of Cabinet Ministers. He had a staff who would very quickly tell him about it if somebody said something about Duggan. If it was something from the Q.C.E. or the Trades Hall they would find the Premier no matter where he was so that he could make some comment on it. But when it was something about one of his own Ministers apparently the Premier was just too far away, notwithstanding the fact that on his own admission he considered this matter to be of such vital importance that he dismissed Mr. Muller from Cabinet. Even though the elections were coming on and all the political significance that must have been inherent in this matter as it has resulted in Mr. Muller's being dismissed, simply because the Premier happened to be in Cairns or Cooktown, or somewhere else, his Ministers were unable to contact him. What rubbish! Does anybody seriously accept that explanation? No matter where he might be in Queensland, is he not within easy access of any of his Cabinet Ministers who require him? We know that in every town the Premier visits—and this applies in most towns and to all Ministers of the Crown—the first person to meet him is the local policeman. If anyone wants to contact the Premier, whether he be in Cooktown, Coolangatta, or anywhere else, all he has to do is to get in touch with the divisional inspector of police for the area, and he will find him in half an hour at the most. So do not let us have any more of this claptrap from the Premier that he was away in the bush, and for that reason he did not know anything about it.

Mr. Nicklin: I just made the plain statement that I knew nothing about it until after the election.

Mr. HANLON: The Premier made that statement, and in the past we have had sufficient respect for his word to accept it. But let me point out, like the hon. member for Fassifern, in the course of the last few days we have had reason to doubt his word, on his own admission.

Mr. Nicklin: That is all right—on your words.

Mr. HANLON: Not on my words at all—on the Premier's own words. He admitted quite openly in the debate on Thursday night that what he told the public, Parliament, and the Press in a prepared statement about having offered Mr. Muller another portfolio was a complete untruth. Is not that a fact?

Mr. Nicklin: No.

Mr. HANLON: I do not think we can get anywhere if the Premier cannot believe his own words.

Mr. Nicklin: How many more times do you want it explained?

Mr. HANLON: I fully realise the Premier's explanation of the matter but all the explaining in the world does not alter the fact that the public, Parliament and the Press were given a complete untruth with the blessing of the Premier—

Mr. Nicklin: It was not an untruth.

Mr. HANLON: Did he or did he not offer the hon. member for Fassifern another portfolio?

Mr. Nicklin: The portfolio was offered to Mr. Muller at his own suggestion, but he was going to refuse it.

Mr. HANLON: The stream is changing direction so many times it is very difficult for us to follow it. That is one reason, I suggest, why we are entitled to ask for a full independent inquiry completely away from the atmosphere of this Chamber. Now the Premier verifies the story given out by the Treasurer that the offer of another portfolio was made to Mr. Muller at his own suggestion so that he could decline. The Premier did not tell us on Thursday night that it was Mr. Muller's suggestion at all; he said it was his suggestion to help an old pal. This is what he said—

"May I say that the purpose of this statement of mine is to give the fullest information possible. If hon. members opposite will be patient I will tell them everything. If they do not get enough information, let them ask questions—"

Then he goes on—

"The suggestion was made that the hon. member should be given an opportunity of getting out of Cabinet in that way. May I say that every member of Cabinet was against that suggestion. But, as one who had a tremendous regard for the hon. member as a result of my 25 years' association with him—and perhaps having a bit of a soft heart—I wanted at least to cover up as much as I could for an old friend and an old cobbler.

"Government Members: Hear, hear!

"**Mr. NICKLIN:** Can anyone blame me for that? That was the reason that that method was adopted.

"**Mr. Lloyd:** If this taxation evasion was so serious, why offer him another portfolio?

"**Mr. NICKLIN:** He was not offered another portfolio."

That was what the public was told in a prepared statement from the Premier, with

the blessing of the Cabinet and the Government, and that he had refused to accept it. Now we are told that that is not true. The "Hansard" report goes on—

"**Mr. Lloyd:** You said he was.

"**Mr. NICKLIN:** I said that was suggested to the hon. member to give him an opportunity to get out of Cabinet."

That is the way we got it from the Premier on Thursday night but we have since heard different versions. The Premier said it was suggested to the hon. member to give him the opportunity of getting out of the Cabinet.

Mr. Tooth: Read "by" for "to" and you will be right.

Mr. HANLON: That is very convenient for the hon. member for Kelvin Grove but the issue cannot be avoided in that way. The Premier continued—

"Possibly it may have been the wrong thing to do. If it was a wrong thing to do I personally accept the whole of the responsibility for it. I did it out of friendship for an old colleague."

In other words, the Premier took the responsibility for offering another portfolio or suggesting untruthly that a portfolio had not been offered.

Mr. Duggan: The Treasurer went further and suggested giving him a false certificate to help him out.

Mr. HANLON: The Treasurer said that a number of other suggestions were made to him.

Mr. Nicklin: They were, too.

Mr. HANLON: This is the Government who tell us that the public can trust them implicitly in their administration. One of the suggestions that the Treasurer told us was made to the hon. member for Fassifern was that he should go along and see a doctor—any doctor—and, "He will tell you that you are too old to carry on and you could say you feel you have to resign." Would that have been an honest representation of the position to the public?

We may say that there have been some resignations on medical grounds—and some significant ones—in this Government's administration over the last three years. There was one case of a person holding down a high administrative position under this Government who suddenly went to the doctor shortly after the Government came to office. Are we to think now that every time someone puts a doctor's certificate forward, perhaps even validly, there is something sinister behind it? That is the only inference if we believe what the Treasurer says.

The Opposition moved this amendment for a full inquiry into the matter because if the Premier, on his own words, was prepared to cover up, as he puts it—and he will not deny that he did that—for the hon. member for Fassifern who was a pal of 25 years' standing, what guarantee have we got that he will not rush to cover up for the Country Party

which, after all, is just as much an old pal of perhaps more than 25 years' standing? The Premier has had a life-long association with the Country Party, and is one who has stuck to it over the years when most of the population of Queensland and most of those with a political inkling had given it away. Let us not imagine his love for the Country Party is not as strong as his love for the hon. member for Fassifern. If on his admission he was prepared to cover up for the hon. member for Fassifern, what guarantee have we now that he is not covering up for the Country Party by saying, "We have had a big blow-up about this business. We do not want any more trouble. Cover it up and forget about it, and let us pretend the Opposition request for an investigation is not there."

In his policy speech in 1957 we find, as was pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, that the Premier described the Labour Government in Queensland as having been rotten to the core. He added—

"Events reached a climax during the recent two-day session of State Parliament, when accusations and counter-accusations of improper conduct and subversive actions were made by one faction against the other—not only on a political plane, but also on a personal plane. The less said about that disgusting and degrading exhibition the better."

I think we could describe the exhibition on Thursday by the hon. member for Fassifern and the Premier, and the exhibition today by the Treasurer, in much the same way.

The Premier went on to say—

"I have behind me, in the Country and Liberal Party team, a band of capable and reputable men. Make no mistake about their capability or integrity."

That is what the Premier told the public when seeking their support. He went on to say—

"Both are beyond question, as we will prove to you if entrusted with the reins of government."

Yet his Ministers—the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport—have openly acknowledged that they knew of this taxation business before the election and did not say a word about it, if we are to believe them, despite the fact that they were again seeking the support of the people.

Let us consider some of the statements of the Premier in the past on the need for open inquiries.

An A.L.P. Member: You are very quiet over there.

Mr. Herbert: You are putting us to sleep.

Mr. HANLON: It does not surprise me to learn that the hon. member for Sherwood would like to think he is asleep and having a bad dream. The unfortunate thing about it is that in the morning, when the hon. member for Sherwood awakes, the members

of the public and the Opposition will still want to know the true story and will still be asking for it. The action of the hon. member for Fassifern this morning was completely out of character for him, because anyone who knows anything of his political career would agree that his nature is such that, when he makes up his mind about something, nothing on earth can shift him. That has been a feature of his administration and of his actions in Parliament. It has been a feature of his administration as a Cabinet Minister.

Mr. Duggan: On Friday last when he was their enemy they called him a "hot-headed Hun."

Mr. HANLON: That may be true, but I can only say that it was completely out of character for the hon. member for Fassifern to come in here as he did on Thursday and read a prepared statement and then come in here this morning and make a further statement backing down. It could not be said that his speech on Thursday was an emotional one off the cuff when he might have exaggerated certain matters. It was almost completely a written statement, read by him word for word. Yet he came into the Chamber this morning and told us to forget the whole thing. He said he had resolved his differences with the Premier and added, "I do not want to go any further with it."

As I am reminded by the hon. member for Warrego, he did not withdraw his charges. He told us he had settled his differences with the Premier and that only means we are to have another cover-up. We had one cover-up before the election by Cabinet Ministers, because they did not want anything in the nature of a blot on the Government to be made public before the election. We had another cover-up after the election when the Premier found a convenient way of letting the hon. member for Fassifern get out of Cabinet by saying he had refused another portfolio. Now apparently we are to have a third cover-up. The hon. member for Fassifern has seen fit to capitulate to the Government and smother up the whole thing. I think we can rightly ask a question that nobody this evening has answered. It is, "What will be Mr. Muller's position in the Country Party in this Parliament?" I ask the Premier to answer that. Is Mr. Muller a member of the Country Party or not? The Treasurer told us that the Country Party had not decided whether he was going to be accepted back, yet according to his statement this morning he had settled his differences with the Premier, which in itself implied he had had a discussion with the Premier and the Premier was now quite prepared to accept him back as a member of the Country Party. When the hon. member for Fassifern made that statement this morning there was a chorus of "Hear, hears!" from the whole of the Government benches, and yet the Treasurer said tonight that he

has grave doubts about whether he is prepared to sit in Government with the hon. member for Fassifern. It is the Liberal Party tail wagging the Country Party dog. Let the Premier tell us whether or not the hon. member for Fassifern is a member of the Country Party. This point was rightly raised: if he is a member of the Country Party now, is he free? Is he eligible on a future occasion for re-election to Cabinet? Let that matter be cleared up.

We have had several senior Ministers speaking but none have seen fit to reply to this point because if he is brought back into the Country Party fold and takes his position as a free member of the party and there is a vacancy in the Cabinet, he is entitled to be elected to that Cabinet position. If that is going to happen, what is the use of the Premier telling us that he is sacked from Cabinet for this reason? If he is taken back into the Country Party and can be re-elected, and on the hon. member for Fassifern's remarks he can be re-elected because, as he pointed out, he has the full confidence of the Country Party. He claimed he still had the full support of the Country Party back-benchers, and he suggested that the Country Party Caucus had never voted on whether he should be dismissed from Cabinet or not. The Opposition may think his ejection from the Cabinet was made by the combined Liberal-Country Party Cabinet, and not by the Country Party Caucus. Let the Premier answer that.

I wish to refer to a few remarks that have been made by the Premier in the past on the need for open inquiries into some of these matters. They are contained in Volume 212 of "Hansard" for 1955, and I will refer to them. He said that if any scandal was associated with Parliament or its members it should be dealt with immediately, and if there was any suspicion the matter should be cleared up by appointing an open inquiry into all the circumstances. There must be suspicion on this occasion, because charges have been made by a former Minister of the Crown, and they are very strong charges. He referred later to the Redcliffe case, which was being discussed at that time, and he said:

"We on this side want this allegation in regard to the integrity of members of this House cleaned up by a full and open inquiry."

Later on, we find him saying:

"If the Treasurer has heard anything, whether from the Opposition or the Government, then that is all the more reason why there should be a full and open inquiry to clean up these dirty insinuations and to kill this whispering campaign to prevent the good names of members of this Parliament being impugned as they will be if this Government will not act to protect the rights and privileges of this Parliament and its members," and so on.

He also said:—

"The public of Queensland and every decent member of this Chamber want to know the full facts behind this case. The only way to clean it is to have an open inquiry."

On page 343 he said this:

"In view of the grave public importance of the issues involved in the motion I make no apologies for moving it. Articles have appeared in 'The Worker' newspaper, a paper published in this city, and no-one can say that that newspaper is a Tory paper. In that paper various grave charges were made in regard to a matter of particular public importance and I refer to the extension of Crown land leases in this State. It is of grave public importance because the leasehold land of this State comprises very much of the area of Queensland. As the administration, extension, and granting of leases is an important section of government, the handling of that section of Government administration should be beyond public suspicion."

The Premier on that occasion was prepared to call for an open inquiry because of an article that appeared in the "Worker." We do not say that he was not justified in doing that but, surely, if we are to accept a speculative article in a newspaper as being reason for an inquiry, we must accept remarks by a Minister of the Crown about the administration of his own department as justification. He said that if this was granted by the Government at the time—

"It will also give the Minister an opportunity to clear himself, and also clear the officers of his department who cannot come into this House to defend themselves. They have to be defended, too, against charges of irregularities or improprieties in the administration of the land laws of this State."

and so on. He said, again—and this is very appropriate to this discussion—

"I do not hold for a moment that the Government should take action on every little rumour that comes their way. It has now got beyond the rumour stage."

And has not this got beyond the rumour stage?

Mr. Duggan: It is common knowledge outside.

Mr. HANLON: As my Leader interjects, it has been common knowledge outside for some time and it certainly has got beyond the rumour stage.

Again, when the Government challenged him to make particular charges, Mr. Nicklin said—

"I was accused of making grave charges against the administration. I made no charges at all. I merely wanted the charges, allegations and innuendoes made by Bukowski against the Minister cleared up."

All those statements were made by the present Premier when he was Leader of the Opposition.

It is all very well for the Treasurer to discount these facts and to say, "Oh, we were in Opposition then. Don't take any notice of what we said in those days. We were simply trying to gain political capital." Are we to take it that everything said by any member of the Government when he was in Opposition must be ignored, and that they were a completely irresponsible Opposition who used any sort of old charge they could find for political capital? Certainly we on this side of the Chamber have not adopted that attitude. As I pointed out, we knew about these matters relating to Mr. Muller a fortnight before the election, and the Government, including the Premier himself, say they did not. But did we use it in the election campaign? Of what political value are they to us now, three years before the next election, if our sole interest in this matter is to get political publicity and kudos for the Opposition? If we were looking for political capital, why would we wait till three or four months after the election to discuss these matters?

Mr. Hughes: Defamation! You might not have been sure it was the same person, either.

Mr. HANLON: I do not know. I suppose the hon. member would know something about legal matters because he was involved in a case about some fruit barrows or something of the sort recently and he might be a little more careful in those matters than we, but in the course of an election campaign we could deal with the matters I have mentioned and there would be very little danger of any defamation proceedings. We would be quoting, as my Leader did this morning, from a Commonwealth report tabled in the Federal Parliament—an official report of the Taxation Commissioner.

Mr. Hart: If you related the matter to a particular individual and he was not the one concerned, you would be in very deep water.

Mr. HANLON: We do not believe in using election campaigns, or even this Parliament, for trying to score off the personal misfortune of a member of the Government.

A Government Member: Not much!

Mr. HANLON: Who has opened up this matter? The Opposition did not open it up. We have known about this since 18 May. The only mention made of it by the Leader of the Opposition was indirectly when he asked the Premier for a full explanation at the time of Mr. Muller's resignation from Cabinet.

Mr. Duggan: When I was in Cabinet I defended the present Deputy Premier when he desired to get four tyres from the Emergency Road Transport Committee. That proposal was attacked by one of my Labour

colleagues and I defended him on that occasion. I also supported the proposal for a secretary for the Leader of the Q.L.P., with only seven members.

Mr. HANLON: Those things bear out the fact that we are to be commended, rather than criticised, by the Government for dealing with this matter now. What sort of an Opposition would we be if we did not call for some inquiry when these serious charges were made by the hon. member for Fassifern? There again, the Government cannot deny that the hon. member for Fassifern said that he was stood over by the Country Party Executive, and he indirectly included the Premier in those allegations by saying that he was carpeted in the Premier's office because the Country Party Executive demanded to know the reasons for some of his decisions in land matters. He told us, however, that the Country Party Executive demanded that he should hand in his resignation from Cabinet unless he could prove he was not the Mr. Muller mentioned in the tax report. Somebody in this Chamber is telling lies.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HANLON: Well, telling untruths, if I can be parliamentary about it, because the hon. member for Fassifern has claimed that the Country Party Executive carpeted the Premier and asked him to bring Mr. Muller in to say whether he was or was not the Muller mentioned in the tax report. On the other hand, the hon. member for Somerset denied that the matter was ever discussed by the Country Party Executive. Who are we to believe? Which version are we to believe from the Premier, who tells us that he deliberately misled the public a few months ago? How do we know that he is not misleading us now? That is why I was disappointed that the present Minister for Public Lands adopted the attitude that he did in this debate. The remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern seemed to imply that he was dismissed from Cabinet not because of these taxation matters but because the Country Party Executive and those vested interests were trying to pressurise him into doing these things that he did not think were right and he would not do them. He has suggested that they got rid of him so that there will be no opposition to the opening up of the Tully lands, and that the present Minister will not object. He is suggesting that the present Minister will do things that are not in the interests of the State. He even went to the extent of saying that a Minister who put his signature to the approval of the opening of these Tully lands for cattle—fattening should be gaoled.

They are serious charges, and they have been set out very clearly in the amendment moved by the hon. member for Brisbane. The first charge is that during his term of office as Minister for Public Lands the Country Party Executive came to Parliament

House and attempted to enlist his support in the thievery of Crown lands. Does the Premier deny that the Country Party Executive came to this House and tried to stand over the hon. member for Fassifern? The second charge is that he had been threatened with the loss of his seat in this Parliament because of decisions made by him in the line of his duty as Minister of the Crown. They go on to say that he was dismissed from Cabinet on the demand of the Country Party Executive, and so on, and that he was subjected to blackmailing tactics in his capacity of Minister as directly implied by his statement assuring the Government that it would take more than blackmail to win the next fight. Significantly, he addressed those remarks to the Premier when he made them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that all he is stating now has been stated previously. I am sure the hon. member is anxious not to be asked to resume his seat because he is engaging in tedious repetition. I trust that in the remainder of his time he will endeavour to speak on something different from what has been mentioned by hon. members who have spoken previously and not engage in repetition.

Mr. HANLON: We have the job of getting the terms of this amendment through to the Premier, and we must repeat them if he will not listen. So far, he has shown no evidence that he is prepared to listen to them, because none of the hon. members opposite who have spoken have dealt with the charges at all. When the Treasurer of this State said that the hon. member for Brisbane was amoral, I think some reference to the Standing Orders might have been in order then as well as reference now to tedious repetition. If it is all right for a Minister to say that somebody on this side of the Chamber is amoral, it is all right—

Mr. Nicklin: What do you say he said?

Mr. HANLON: He said that the hon. member for Brisbane was completely amoral, or something to that effect.

Mr. Mann: My morals are as good as his.

Mr. HANLON: The remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern also bring out that there is a serious rift and a serious lack of trust between the Liberal and Country Parties. What do we find when the Premier was told—or when he tells us he was told—about this taxation defalcation? He consulted with his colleague, Mr. Pizzey. What about the leader of the Liberal Party, his so-called and alleged deputy? If the matter was sufficiently serious to consider dismissing a Cabinet Minister would you not expect that the first person he would discuss it with would be his deputy? But on his own admission he tells us that he consulted his colleague, Mr. Pizzey. Who is Mr. Pizzey in the Government? Is he the deputy leader, or

was this another cover-up to keep the whole matter within the ranks of the Country Party, and not to let those "nasty Liberals" get in on it? Was that the attitude adopted by the Premier? Is the fact that the "nasty Liberals" did get in on it the reason it had blown up? Examine the Premier's remarks and you will find that that is correct. Right through his statement on Thursday he referred continually to conferring with his colleague, Mr. Pizzey. At no stage was he conferring with his deputy, Mr. Morris, the man with whom you would most expect him to confer. We might be pardoned for wondering whether the Premier shows the same lack of confidence in his deputy as the hon. member for Fassifern expressed in his speech when he said that he had lost a lot of confidence in the Premier but he never had any in the Leader of the Liberal Party. It appears that the Premier, too, has not much confidence in Mr. Morris.

Dr. Delamothe: Don't kid yourself.

Mr. HANLON: Well, it is remarkable that he never saw fit to consult him. It is apparent that the matter had been discussed within the Country Party and they were happy to accept Mr. Muller's word. The Premier said that further information was given to him. Who gave it to him?

Mr. Duggan: The Treasurer said he had been making independent inquiries.

Mr. HANLON: Yes. I suggest that the position developed in this way: the Country Party discussed it among themselves and were quite happy to let the thing go and to retain Mr. Muller as a member of their Cabinet, as was indicated by the fact that he was elected on the first ballot by the Country Party after the election. But the Liberals, who had been making independent investigations, raised the matter in Cabinet, probably because of the fact that they had not been consulted by the Premier about it, and then began the great railroading of Mr. Muller. But they are not important matters now, and I do not propose to take up any more time on them except to say that neither the public, the Press, nor members of the Opposition will be satisfied unless the Government are prepared to allow what has been asked for by the Opposition, that is, a completely independent inquiry into the charges that have been made by one of their own members.

Mr. BURROWS (Port Curtis) (10.39 p.m.): This is a remarkable debate and has brought to light some startling facts. It has completely shaken the public's confidence and reduced the opinion the public may have held in general of the integrity of members of this Parliament. The only pretence of a defence by the Government to the amendment before the Committee has been that no definite charges have been made. I am not going to repeat the charges made by the hon. member for Fassifern because I might be accused of tedious repetition. But there

must be something wrong with the aural faculties of the Premier and his colleagues if they have not fully realised the definite and very substantial charges that have been made. If those charges are to be dismissed as lightly as the Premier and other members of the Government would like to dismiss them, I would say that in the eyes of the public the integrity of and respect for members of this Chamber is mud.

There is something serious at stake here and it is something more serious than the reputation of the Premier, any member of his Cabinet, the former Cabinet Minister or any member on this side of the House. It is something that we cannot guard too jealously—the respect and confidence of the public in this Parliament. If we fail in our duty to uphold the integrity of this Parliament and we lose that respect there will be great rejoicing in the Kremlin. It is all right for the Minister for Transport to adopt the hideous and inane grin with which he is in the habit of trying to dismiss intelligent remarks. I have been here for 14 years and in my opinion the matter now before the Chamber is the most serious indictment that has been made against any Government in that time and it is not to be passed lightly over.

Let us forget all the actions of the man who has been brainwashed—the former Minister. There are two matters before the Committee that have been freely admitted. We had the display of the Premier of the State standing up and believing that his plausibility can whitewash the fact that he, on his own admission, was prepared to deceive the public, to deceive this Parliament, and to be a party to something that was most improper in order to save not the hon. member for Fassifern, but the miserable hides of his Cabinet colleagues and those of other members of his party.

Mr. Chalk: You are getting worked up.

Mr. BURROWS: Never mind about that.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. BURROWS: I am not as self-righteous as some "stinkers" on the opposite side of the Chamber. The worst crime that the hon. member for Fassifern has committed is debunking the legend that has been created by those around the Premier, that he is a paragon of virtue, a man who cannot tell a lie. Shades of George Washington! If George Washington chopped down the cherry tree I would say that it would be members of the Liberal and Country Parties who would chop into the foundations of the Parliament of this country. The Premier admitted that he suggested a subterfuge that would deceive the public and cover up what he alleged was embezzlement by the hon. member for Fassifern. He made a very serious charge against the hon. member when he was cornered, but only when he was cornered. Prior to that he was prepared to tell the people of Queensland that it was

only a whim or some peculiarity of the hon. member for Fassifern, that he was like a spoilt child in that when he could not get the portfolio he wanted he would not take anything. That is far from the truth, but what I cannot understand is how any man who is prepared to play such a low-down trick on the public can come into this Chamber and hold up his head and say, "What have we done wrong? What is there to inquire into?" There is much to be inquired into, including the integrity of the hon. gentleman. The Premier went on to say that as the hon. member for Fassifern was guilty of embezzlement he was not fit to be a member of the Government.

Mr. Ewan interjected.

Mr. BURROWS: Look at the dictionary and find out the meaning of the word "defalcation". It is given as "embezzlement". It is not a word to be treated lightly. It is a very serious word that I rarely use, and then only in its proper place. I would not have used it or repeated it if I had not been provoked into doing so.

The Premier was sour on the hon. member for Fassifern and told him he had to leave the Cabinet. One of the most startling of a series of very startling statements was that of the Premier that the hon. member for Fassifern could not continue as a member of the Cabinet but could continue as a member of Parliament. Are there to be two standards? Are there to be first degree and second degree members, the first-degree members only to be eligible for Cabinet rank, and the second-degree members to remain back-benchers for the rest of their Parliamentary lives? In the words of the Premier, the hon. member for Fassifern was not honest enough to be a Minister but was honest enough to be a member of Parliament. In the school in which I was taught there were no degrees of honesty. A man is either honest or dishonest, and I am prepared to fight for that standard. I am prepared to walk out of this Chamber and never come back if I have to get down to the levels of hon. members opposite to preserve my political hide. I think this matter is a damning indictment of the Government and the tragedy of it is that it could seriously shake the confidence of the people in our democratic system.

After the Premier knew that the former Minister had told him a lie he became sour on the former Minister and told him he would have to leave the Cabinet. The Premier then said he would tell the public a lie in order to let the hon. member for Fassifern slide out of the Cabinet. Is that honest? If it is, I do not want to be honest, and I mean what I am saying. I will take that attitude inside and outside this Chamber, and I am not afraid to say outside what I say inside it.

Let us assume for the moment that we have not yet established a *prima facie* case,

The Treasurer came along today and openly and freely told us that his suggestion was that they get a very pliable doctor to supply a certificate to make it easy for the former Minister to go out. Just imagine what would happen if some unfortunate fettler came along with a "crook" certificate. What would happen to him?

A Government Member: There is no such thing as a "crook" certificate.

Mr. BURROWS: Ask the Treasurer. The Treasurer said it.

Mr. Hooper: He did not say it.

Mr. BURROWS: I was listening—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member address the Chair.

Mr. BURROWS: I think I would have a more intelligent audience by a long way, and a more understanding one, Mr. Taylor. Apart from anything else, those admissions by the Premier are more than sufficient to warrant the fullest inquiry. As the Premier is prepared to make that admission, I am sure everybody would have a lot more admiration for him if he came along and said, "We have betrayed our trust and in my opinion the Government should be dissolved to allow the people to decide whether we have done right or wrong in this matter."

The hon. member for Fassifern challenged the Premier and said, "I am prepared to resign my seat and recontest it on this issue." Did the Premier take that up? He did not take up that challenge. It was made by a man who the Premier alleged was a liar—you will not allow me to use that term, Mr. Taylor.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member was in the Chamber when on two previous occasions I told hon. members that the words "lie" and "liar" are unparliamentary expressions and shall not be used.

Mr. BURROWS: I am sorry. I have forgotten the little bit of biblical history I had. He said he was a son of Ananias.

Mr. Nicklin: Who said he was a son of Ananias?

Mr. BURROWS: The Standing Orders will not permit me to say what the Premier said. I do not think for one minute that the only people who could profess to believe that a full inquiry into the whole business is not warranted are the members of the Government, who are fearful for their political hides or of the further revelations that may come out. The Liberal Party have played a very sinister part in this. There is no doubt about that. No-one could convince me that the former Minister has not been subjected to brainwashing on a par with what we read about the Chinese Communists doing when they made the American airmen confess.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! In the opinion of the Chair the hon. member is making extravagant statements.

Mr. BURROWS: I do not wish to disagree with you, Mr. Taylor. I know the truth is strange to most men on the Government side but they will have to admit—and the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation said virtually the same—that the former Minister has undergone severe mental strain. I have read a few articles about brainwashing and that sort of thing and I can see a very great similarity between this case and what I believe Cardinal Mindszenty went through and also those American airmen who were forced down and who afterwards openly confessed. Some even became collaborators with the Communists and made broadcasts alleging that their own country was engaging in germ warfare. That is similar to the Liberal Party doctrine. There is very little difference, if any, between Liberal Party policy and Communist Party doctrine. They believe in much the same. Among the claims of the Liberal Party is unrestricted authority to impose its views and its will on the people. It has done that very successfully as far as the Premier is concerned. This claim extends into the most personal and private matters of human existence. The party is wholly intolerant of any competition. It regards itself as the repository of all truth and wisdom.

Right throughout, there has been a strange silence about the Rural Committee of the Liberal Party and the part it has played in this vicious campaign. If this inquiry were proceeded with and if it came to its logical conclusion, there is not the slightest doubt that it would reveal that the sinister hand of the Liberal Party played a very great part in this matter, which has reduced the respect and dignity of this Assembly.

The report that contains the evidence used for the purpose of crucifying the hon. member for Fassifern is very informative. It is not sordid. If it contained only sordid matter we could be certain that every hon. member opposite would have read it, but it contains a great deal of very good information. It is the report of the Commissioner of Taxation and deals only with financial matters. It does not deal with doctors who have breached the code of ethics and betrayed their Hippocratic Oath, so the name of the hon. member is not in it. The report is very useful, apart from the sordid sections, which are considered necessary—and I might say a report like this would not be possible in Russia and it would not be possible if we had a total Liberal Government in every State of Australia. The report was laid on the table of the Federal Parliament and the motion that it be printed was carried on 17 May. The first issue of the "Telegraph" subsequent to that contained the information that the former Minister, the hon. member for Fassifern, was included in the list of people who, it had been considered, had made careless income-tax returns.

Mr. Davies: That was 10 days before the election.

Mr. BURROWS: Yes. I am not one of those who, like hon. members opposite, see the cloven hoof in everything, but is it not a strange coincidence that it appeared in only one issue of the "Telegraph" and that it was altogether taboo for "The Courier-Mail" next morning—it was not used then—because the election campaign was on and the election itself was only 11 days away? Those are the circumstances of the publication of the information in the report.

The report is a publication that I study in the Library every year because it contains many financial statistics and a good deal of useful information that hon. members would be all the better for reading. Unfortunately, in some respects it contains something sordid.

The present Minister for Public Lands said that he was quite happy about the present position. I do not want to be unkind to him, but he certainly has not lost anything by the crucifixion of his erstwhile colleague. He said that no single instance of blackmail had been put forward here. Mr. Taylor, you have already warned a previous speaker about tedious repetition, and it has already been said a dozen times that evidence has been adduced.

Mr. Hart: What do you mean by the word "crucifixion?"

Mr. BURROWS: What would you know about it?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will address the Chair. If the hon. member wishes to reply to a question asked of him by another hon. member, he will do it through the Chair.

Mr. BURROWS: The present Minister for Public Lands went on to say that he quite believed that somebody had said, "If you don't toe the line, look out;" but he said that the former Minister did not toe the line, so there was no offence. If that is logic, I do not know anything about it. If somebody threatens to murder me, it is not an offence unless he can carry out the job. That is the dishonest logic used by the present Minister for Public Lands. Like the hon. member for Bundaberg, he had a little book, and he said that some member had said something to him in the precincts of the House or somewhere else. If I say anything to the present Minister for Public Lands or to any other hon. member in the Lodge when we are waiting in the queue for the bathroom in the morning or anywhere about the place, I cannot complain if it is repeated here. But I do not admire any hon. member who accepts the confidence of a man outside this Chamber and then tries to make political capital out of it. It shows how desperate the Government are for arguments and how bereft of logic they are when they resort to tactics such as that, and anyone who does those things, instead of earning respect, thoroughly deserves the contempt in which

every other hon. member would hold him. The present Minister for Public Lands admitted that the former Minister said that he, the present Minister, should be in gaol, and then said that no substantive charges had been made. What charge has to be made before the Government can be stirred into action? An hon. member mentioned the word "crucifixion." I do not think the crucifixion would even stir some hon. members opposite into action.

Dr. Delamothé: You break my heart, Jim.

Mr. BURROWS: I am not concerned about whether the hon. member breaks his heart. Hon. members opposite will break every clause of every moral code as long as they do not break their grip on the electorate.

The statements by the hon. member for Fassifern and the admissions by both the Premier and the Treasurer would be very serious if they were the subject of allegations by hon. members on this side or even by some of the irresponsible Independent members. But they are much more serious when they come from members of the Government, including the Premier and one of the leading Ministers. As I said earlier, if no notice is to be taken of such serious matters, God help democracy!

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (11.6 p.m.): I rise under a great sense of obligation to support very sincerely and heartily the amendment, which is designed to bring about an independent investigation or a Royal Commission into the extraordinary and serious allegations that I would say have never previously been made in this Parliament by any one member in any one speech. Those allegations were made by a man fresh from the Cabinet circle who had mixed closely with the present Cabinet for three years. He was prepared to make some of the most damning indictments ever made against a Cabinet as such in the history of the Queensland Parliament. I doubted that it would be necessary for me or other backbenchers to speak in support of the amendment. I had considered earlier that it would be unnecessary for the Opposition to move an amendment because any self-respecting Government, any Cabinet with a conscience, any person or body of men who had nothing to hide, would spontaneously and automatically decide to investigate by a Royal Commission the serious challenge and charges made on Thursday last by their former colleague.

The one thing I have concluded by observing the demeanour of certain members of the Cabinet, and the Cabinet as a Cabinet, is that they are a body of men with callous consciences who are running away from any inquiry into the charges against them. We have been told by no less a figure than the Premier himself that he did certain acts which, to say the least, in anybody's language and under any code of honour or ethics, were very questionable. He has raised as a defence the claim that he did certain things

on the instructions of his Cabinet and in the interests of the protection of his former colleague. He admitted this questionable code of ethics and code of conduct. He did that, as he claims, in the interest of playing mates with an old friend, and for the purpose of saving the face of his Cabinet, and yet apparently he is not prepared in the interests of the welfare of Parliament to appoint a Royal Commission or an independent board of inquiry so that the good name and prestige of Parliament will be preserved. He has a very onerous obligation in this matter. He said he is prepared to sacrifice his own personal integrity—that is what he said—in the interest of defending a mate. Is he prepared to adopt what should be expected of him as the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Parliament, that which is the only course of conduct to preserve what should be regarded as very hallowed precincts—the Parliament itself, of which he is the present Leader? Is he prepared to do all that is necessary to protect this institution, when he was prepared to do many things and to extend himself beyond the limits of his previous standards in order to protect his mates in the Cabinet?

I am asking him that simple question and I feel that, in this matter, not only is the prestige of Parliament at stake, but we have these glib remarks made by members of the Government when unions hold orderly meetings or when they conduct an orderly march that they are a challenge to our very democracy and that it is alarming that our democratic institutions should be so challenged. Here we have in the midst of our Parliament a man who was one of the senior Cabinet Ministers, who had been former Deputy Leader to the Premier himself, a close Cabinet colleague of the Premier's, saying that the Cabinet is corrupt.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I did not hear any hon. member say that the Cabinet was corrupt. I think the hon. member should not make statements that he cannot verify.

Mr. BENNETT: I look for my evidence to the testimony, if we could call it that, of the former Minister himself who was speaking under his oath of office in Parliament when he spoke, as he did, in the terms that have now been printed. In any court of law that would be taken as an accusation of graft and corruption.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to make such remarks. The interpretation of remarks by hon. members in this Chamber is a decision of the Chairman and the Chairman did not interpret any remarks by the hon. member for Fassifern to mean that the Cabinet was corrupt. Will the hon. member please proceed?

Mr. BENNETT: As I say, the prestige and reputation of this Parliament have been challenged. Certainly the prestige of Cabinet has been challenged in the remarks that have been passed. I could go further and say

quite frankly it is not I who is making the challenge, but the personal integrity of the Premier himself has been challenged and the personal integrity of the Deputy Premier has most certainly been challenged. What would one expect in those extraordinary and serious circumstances? One would expect that the Government would welcome the opportunity to preserve the prestige of this Parliament, to clarify their own actions, to explain what might or might not have gone on, and to preserve their own personal reputations, characters and integrity.

If any challenge of that sort was made against me I would be prepared and willing—indeed, if I had the power I would insist—that the person making the challenge be given the opportunity of substantiating in detail the extraordinary allegations that have been made in this matter.

Mr. Nicklin: You make a charge and we will give you the opportunity of proving it.

Mr. BENNETT: I think the Premier will agree that in his whole life, certainly in his Parliamentary life during his term as Premier, his character has never been challenged as it was last Thursday.

A Government Member: It was not challenged.

Mr. BENNETT: It was challenged and I certainly would not leave that evidence lying in the records unchallenged. I agree with the previous speaker, who said that there cannot be two standards of conduct. One cannot have truth and be a truthful man in private life and play professional politics and be untruthful in public life. One either has truth all the time or does not tell the truth at all. As a matter of fact, in public life there is a much more serious onus on one to tell the truth, particularly when in a position of trust and confidence.

The hon. member for Fassifern said,

"When I got back to Brisbane I found two blocks had been thrown open. I immediately withdrew them. They have been since opened up together with six more, I understand. When I returned to Brisbane a Press reporter said to me, 'What do you think of it?' I said, 'The Minister that puts his signature to a document opening up that land should be gaoled.'"

That is a charge.

Government Members: No.

Mr. BENNETT: It has been said that no charges were made. What the hon. member for Fassifern has said amounts to charges, first, of an offence under Section 55 of the Criminal Code, which deals with the free exercise by members of Parliament of their powers and duties, for which there is a penalty of imprisonment for three years; second, that there was an attempt at bribery, an offence under Section 60 of the Criminal

Code, for which the penalty is imprisonment with hard labour for seven years; and, third, that there was interference with him as a Minister in his political liberty, an offence under Section 78 of the Criminal Code. I submit also that he made a charge under Section 87 of the Criminal Code, which deals with official corruption. According to May's Parliamentary Practice intimidation is an offence, as also is private solicitation, and in his speech the hon. member for Fassifern claimed that there had been attempts at intimidation and private solicitation. He clearly gave us to understand that all those offences in effect had been condoned by Cabinet colleagues who ejected him from the Cabinet. Surely Cabinet members would want to have those allegations inquired into!

The Premier said he did not know of the publication of the taxation matter. I refuse to believe that that can be said of his Cabinet colleagues. I firmly believe that many of them had full knowledge of the publication of that matter and, in keeping with their oath of office as Ministers of the Crown, they certainly had a moral obligation to inform their Leader, the Premier of the State, of what they had read. They have been lacking in duty, or failing in duty, by refraining from reporting it prior to the election. It is alarming to think that in this State we have a Premier with the assistance of public servants, his Public Relations staff and security police, who was unaware of a story that the dogs were barking round the street corners and that swept through Queensland like a bushfire. With such a lack of efficiency in the Premier's Department, how on earth can we expect our affairs to be properly governed and our security maintained when a matter of such importance does not come to his knowledge?

Mr. Smith interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Windsor has had an opportunity to speak, but he has been skulking on the back benches. Despite an opportunity to speak he has remained silent, but he now chooses to make some inane interjection. He can make as many as he likes, but I shall not waste time dealing with them.

It is rather significant that the hon. member for Fassifern claimed in effect that he had been the subject of great intrigue among his Cabinet colleagues and that it was not condoned by the back-benchers. He said that he still had the support of the back-benchers. Only one of them has spoken, yet three or four senior Cabinet Ministers have spoken in defence of their political hides. The back-benchers by their silence have shown their acquiescence in the claim of the hon. member for Fassifern that they agree that he was the subject of intrigue among the Cabinet. Another serious claim has been made. I was surprised that the Premier would even entertain such an idea,

let alone publicly express his feeling or his intention and ambition that he was prepared to do anything to help his former Cabinet colleague. That is a serious thing to say.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: He was prepared to do anything to help his former Cabinet colleague. It would be very advantageous to the interests of the Premier and his Cabinet if they instituted this inquiry, because people are claiming—I do not know whether rightly or wrongly—that there are skeletons in the Country Party cupboard and in the Liberal Party cupboard, so they got together over the week-end—

Government Members interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: The former Minister said that his Cabinet colleagues in the Country Party departed from their time-honoured principles. In other words, he said, they sacrificed their principles, and there was a domination of other narrowing principles. He claimed that it was not a taxation issue.

Incidentally, the Premier has said that he never had been able to fault the integrity of the former Minister, and that he found him a man of courage and honour. The Premier said definitely that the only claim he had against him was that he had committed this taxation breach. The Premier distinctly argued last Thursday night that Alf. Muller's word should be accepted by all fair-minded men. That was the purport of his argument. The former Minister said his downfall was brought about by his endeavour to adhere to the time-honoured principles of the Country Party, and for reasons other than taxation matters.

I think the Premier has an obligation to tell the public and the Parliament the complete story as to the reasons for carpeting the former Minister, who claimed to have been carpeted on more than one occasion. He was brought before the Premier. Why was he brought before the Premier, and what transpired when he was? He said he has had the Country Party on his back. Incidentally, if the Country Party have done what the former Minister claimed they have, they have committed a gross contempt of Parliament. That is one of the most serious offences against the Parliament.

The hon. member for Fassifern said the Country Party Executive used to "roll" down here. I do not know what he meant by the expression "roll" or what he intended to convey as to their mental capacity when they came down here, but he certainly said they endeavoured to intimidate him when they came down here.

He made suggestions of sabotage in his administration in the Department of Public Lands and I do not need to remind the Committee that the charge of sabotage is a very serious one at any time. There were not merely two or three charges; his speech

was bristling with allegations of serious offences against the State and against this Parliament and against the Department of Public Lands.

He spoke of thievery and of being told, "If you do not do as I say you will lose this seat." Then he made the extraordinary allegation, in relation to the stand of the Cabinet, that they were engaged in dirty business, because he said that, after being confronted with them and after they had given him audience on one occasion, he went back to his office thinking that that had been the end of the dirty business.

I have searched the records fairly carefully in the time at my disposal and I have never known of any Cabinet being charged with engaging in dirty business and the various serious offences that have been charged on this occasion. I was rather amazed and shocked—though we see it happen in totalitarian countries, much to our derision and to the discredit of those who engage in it—at the pitiful defence put up today that the man was old and decrepit and mentally failing. The Premier did not say that last Thursday night. He said that his former colleague had all the qualifications to administer the department, that he administered it well, that he was in favour of his type of administration, and that it was only the taxation matter that was concerned. In effect, the Premier said that the former Minister's mental capacity was 100 per cent.; he was efficient, and he was good. But this afternoon we had a high Cabinet Minister, the Treasurer, casting aspersions on the mental capacity of a man who has been maligned, according to him, by his Cabinet colleagues, and who, according to the Premier, is still fit for Cabinet duty except that his name appears in that taxation report.

In any court of law, when you find witnesses disagreeing so violently on fundamental points, when there is conflict on the essential matters, when there is disagreement on the merits of the case, you can conclude only that certain people are dealing very carelessly with the truth in relation to the matters they have been discussing. When people deal carelessly with the truth they are endeavouring to hide some important matter or matters that should be brought out into the open so that the thick air can be clarified.

Finally he said that what had been done to him was done to satisfy the wish of people who had been trying to get him for a long time. In other words, he made against the Premier and his Deputy the charge of conspiracy. (Government laughter.) Yes, he does. His claim was that the Premier and the Deputy Premier conspired with his Cabinet colleagues to get rid of him to satisfy the demands and dictates of certain people outside the precincts of this Parliament. And he said that people were trying to extract from the Crown estate much that they were not entitled to. So desirous on Thursday was the former Minister, so anxious was he for some independent investigation, for some

tribunal to be appointed in order that his case could be justly considered by that independent body, that he threw out the challenge to the Government that he would resign if they were prepared to conduct a by-election on the very issues that he raised. He indicated by his very statement that he was distinctly anxious to have some independent body examine the claims he had made.

There is no more serious charge than blackmail and he made the charge of blackmail. I have not tallied up the charges, but I should say there were nine or 10 of them, perhaps 12. Leaving out murder and treason, they are the most serious charges and offences dealt with in the Criminal Code of Queensland. If the legal luminaries on the Government benches wish to disagree with me, let them get up and say what other more serious charges could be made.

Another claim was made that the graziers now have control of the Department of Public Lands.

Mr. Ewan: The graziers wrote and congratulated us.

Mr. BENNETT: The Government are not prepared to table any of the evidence, but in a court of law, a judicial inquiry, or a Royal Commission, all these documents they are supposed to have would have to be produced.

Mr. Ewan: Mr. Muller said that in his speech. Be fair.

Mr. BENNETT: It is extraordinary that the Premier, on behalf of his Cabinet colleagues and the Government, would have made no statement last Thursday and would not have told the public the truth about the falsehoods that had been dished up to them through the Press for weeks and months past had not the former Minister precipitated the discussion by his speech. There again, I think any Government have a bounden obligation to take the people into their confidence by telling the truth and clearing up any falsehoods that may have been published in the Press. I should say that this whole business stinks in the nostrils of all decent and fair-minded men.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BENNETT: I agree with my colleague, the hon. member for Baroona, that it is difficult to know what the Premier intended to convey by saying that he offered the hon. member for Fassifern an alternative portfolio. One day he seems to say that he did; another day he seems to say that he did not. Looking at the whole context of his speech, one must be pardoned for believing that the Premier did in fact offer the former Minister for Public Lands an alternative portfolio, and this is proof positive that the taxation matter had nothing to do with the change of portfolio.

Mr. Duggan: It was suggested also that he could have got a false medical certificate.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, and that if that was not acceptable to him, he should get a false medical certificate. I wonder how Ministers will accept claims for compensation through their departments by men who might be prepared to get false medical certificates from doctors who are apparently known to some members of Cabinet?

Mr. Ewan: That is a figment of your imagination.

Mr. BENNETT: That was said.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Smith: If the hon. member spoke less and listened more he would hear what was said.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: That suggestion not only rains odium on the standard of our present Cabinet but is a shocking scar on the ethics of our medical profession in Queensland.

Mr. Smith: What the Treasurer said was that any man of 71 years of age ought to take it quietly.

Dr. DELAMOTHE: I rise to a point of order. As a member of the medical profession in Queensland, I take exception to the remarks of the hon. member for South Brisbane.

Mr. Smith: The Treasurer said what I just said.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members will please be quiet. I should like to hear what the hon. member for South Brisbane has to say.

Mr. BENNETT: The Premier also said in his speech, "If hon. members will be patient I will tell everything." Examine his speech. He told nothing. We waited long enough, but he told nothing. Apparently there was a lot to tell. He did not say, "I will tell the few points involved." He said, "I will tell everything," but he has told us nothing. He also said that he wanted to assist. I suppose you cannot blame any man for assisting a friend. That is commendable under many circumstances, but he did not say, "I wanted to assist my friend." He said, "I wanted to cover up as much as I could." That is the man holding the No. 1 position in the State. He said, "I wanted to cover up as much as I could for an old cobbler." Therefore, knowing that his Cabinet colleague was not telling the truth, he was prepared to aid and abet him in his escapade of deceiving the people by himself joining in the trickery by also telling the people something that was not in keeping with the factual happenings in Cabinet.

It is rather amazing that only last Thursday the Premier referred to the conduct of the hon. member for Fassifern with scorn and derision, as did other hon. members of his

Party both publicly and privately, and yet, judging by the "Hear, hears!" this morning when the hon. member made his statement, it was abundantly obvious that they were glad to have him back within the fold. Some Ministers, either the former Minister or one or more of the present Ministers, have told untruths in replying to questions about this matter. I need not stress that any Minister who does so must resign from his office. That has been forced upon a Minister in Australia in the last few years. The only back-bencher who spoke today gave other reasons for the setting up of a Royal Commission. I refer to the hon. member for Roma, who spoke of misconduct of Ministers, and he used the plural.

Mr. Smith: If you had been following the debate you would know that more than one back-bencher spoke.

Mr. BENNETT: I know that the hon. member did not, anyway. On Tuesday, 7 August, 1956, the Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, said, "The formidable array of information more than justifies the fullest inquiry, but the commission had to be forced on the Government." He said on that occasion that they had to force the Government, leading people to believe that if he had the say the commission would be forthcoming voluntarily and spontaneously. This is the first occasion a commission has ever been required during his Government's term of office, but what do we find? The greatest frustration of all time. The defence, weak and all as it is, has been persistent. Their attitude is, "Right or wrong, we are not going to have a commission." The Leader of the Opposition, as he then was, on that same date referred to the status of a member who is not fit to sit in Cabinet, arguing that if a man was unfit to sit in Cabinet he was also unfit to sit in Parliament. "The Courier-Mail" wrote a leading article the next morning supporting him in his contention. Is he going to adopt the same standard of conduct? Is he going to argue that the Minister who he claims is unfit to sit in Cabinet is also unfit to sit in Parliament? He said that as there has been an election, referring to Mr. Foley at the time, "It is to be hoped he will see the fitness of resigning. He owes that to the electors of Belyando who voted him back into Parliament before they found he abused his ministerial trust." I am anxious to see if he adopts the same attitude on this occasion or whether he will be prepared to say that the Minister who deceived him, and his Cabinet colleagues, according to his evidence, and who fought with the Executive of the Country Party, should go back and seek his electors' support, or whether he will welcome him back into the Country Party with open arms.

One hon. member on the Government benches this evening said that the whole

thing was amusing. The public do not like being fooled and, when they are, they do not find it amusing. The average man—and the vast majority of citizens are average men—when he reads in the newspapers a considered statement from responsible Cabinet Ministers and members of Parliament likes to think that he is reading accurate and truthful remarks. He will certainly not be amused when he finds out that his leg has been pulled on this matter for the last three months.

The hon. member for Roma said that the hon. member for Fassifern has been needled by the Labour Opposition into saying what he did say.

Mr. EWAN: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for South Brisbane is deliberately telling untruths that are offensive to me and I ask for a withdrawal and an apology.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for South Brisbane will accept the denial of the hon. member for Roma.

Mr. BENNETT: I accept the denial. As a matter of fact, it was a much more distinguished person in the Government, the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, to whom I was referring. Incidentally, he came into this debate to damn his former colleague whose job he has taken. I think it was rather embarrassing to the Government to have to call to their support the man who stepped into the job of the one whom they sacked. In his weak and anaemic attempt to defend, he suggested that the hon. member for Fassifern was needled by the Labour Opposition into saying what he did say. There again I charge the Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation with deliberately departing from the truth because every hon. member who was here heard the hon. member for Fassifern read his speech almost entirely. It was not written in his own handwriting; it was a typewritten prepared speech, and he later pulled out of his pocket the second one he had also prepared. He had prepared an hour's speech and he had been considering it since he was rejected from Cabinet, deliberately, carefully and quietly, in an attempt to convey to this Chamber the exact truth, free from any emotion or any disturbance that he might receive from his former Government colleagues or from the Opposition.

That is the standard that should be expected from the present Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation, who has been charged by the hon. member for Fassifern with being a "yes" man for the Cabinet, that being the reason he got there. He is the man who suggested that the hon. member made that hour's speech after being needled by the Labour Opposition. So much for the veracity of the present Minister. After making that statement, his evidence would not be accepted anywhere.

Mr. Dewar: I would rather take his word than yours.

Mr. BENNETT: I know the hon. member would because he is in the same category himself.

When dealing with the Tully lands the present Minister said it was a personal matter. To some extent the former Minister claimed it was personal. He said that the Cabinet acted against him in a personal fashion, so apparently on that aspect the former Minister and the present Minister are in agreement. The present Minister admitted that there has been much discussion about the Tully lands, and we can infer from his speech that there was substance in the allegation of the former Minister. It would be interesting to see at a Royal Commission hearing the reports, if any, and the number and nature of them, on which the Minister radically changed the departmental policy of the last three years, the policy of his former colleague. The present Minister said he was carrying on as usual, that he had made no change in the personnel, outlook or attitude of the department. He said the policy of the former Minister was right and proper, yet in relation to the Tully lands the former Minister said the present Minister should be gaoled. Is the Minister prepared to table the reports for the purpose of showing why he made such tremendous changes in the policy of the department, or is he, like the Deputy Premier, going to refer to reports and put them back in his pocket? Is he also afraid to divulge them?

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. members who are to speak later have been referred to as "dumb" speakers. That is always the weakest and last line of defence. Whether a person is intelligent or not, if he is presenting a factual case, his arguments have to be countered on their merits. If an attempt is made to counter them with nasty personalities and reflections on standards of intelligence, it is well recognised in legal circles that the case has no substance and the argument is weak. The hon. members for Windsor and Mt. Gravatt might do that sometimes, but that is the weakest line of argument.

Mr. HART: I rise to a point of order. I object to such personal remarks.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear any reflection on the character of the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt, but if the hon. member for South Brisbane did make a personal remark I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. BENNETT: I may have offended the tender susceptibilities of the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt. I withdraw whatever it was.

I merely say in conclusion—

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BENNETT: I know hon. members opposite are trying to cover up and put this skeleton back in the cupboard with all the other skeletons. I know they want to get

rid of this debate because it is embarrassing. During the short period I have been in this Chamber I have never seen the Cabinet front benches so regularly filled throughout the whole day. It is apparent that the allegations and accusations of the hon. member for Fassifern have hit home and are near the truth. It is apparent that the Cabinet fear further truthful allegations and are very keen to kill the suggestion that there should be a Royal Commission. I should say that the members of any fair-minded forum or assembly for judicial application would heartily agree that the allegations are so serious and momentous that on that ground alone there should be an investigation by a Royal Commission or some other independent authority. Secondly, any body of manly men who have some respect to maintain, and have a code of honour and ethics, would insist that their standards remain unchallenged by having any accusations thoroughly and properly investigated.

Finally for the preservation of respect and the preservation of the welfare of the people who support the Parliament, the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues, as a bounden duty to this Parliament, should investigate the allegations so that if they are truthful they can be suitably dealt with. If they are untruthful the reputation of this Parliament can continue unsullied.

Hon. G. F. R. NICKLIN (Landsborough—Premier) (11.53 p.m.): I have deliberately refrained from entering the debate until this very late stage so as to give every member of the Opposition a chance to speak and a chance to justify the action they have taken today.

Mr. Duggan: Is this debate being closed now?

Mr. NICKLIN: No.

They have made serious allegations against the Government, and as the Leader of the Government I wanted to hear what they had to say to see whether they were prepared to make any charges upon which an inquiry could be based. If they had made any such charges I would have been the first to give them an opportunity to prove them.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: Although I have listened all day for some definite charge, I have yet to hear one. I have heard only a lot of irresponsible statements. I have never before listened to such an exhibition of political hypocrisy.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member for South Brisbane is a champion at political hypocrisy. After giving the Opposition a chance to make these charges upon which an inquiry could be given, I am convinced the Opposition have not taken this action on the point of ethics that we have heard

so much about, but purely with the idea of gaining some political advantage. Unfortunately in their endeavour to gain that political advantage they have taken undue advantage of an honourable member of this Chamber who, as we all know, made a speech here last week under considerable stress. Ever since this Parliament assembled hon. members opposite have adopted a policy, both inside and outside this Chamber, of trying to get the hon. member for Fassifern to his feet in the hope that he would say something upon which they could fasten to charge the Government and gain some political advantage.

Those are indeed despicable tactics and I am ashamed that the Opposition should descend to such a level to gain some political advantage. Speaker after speaker has asked that inquiries be made. Inquiries into what? If the Opposition has no responsibility in this Chamber we, the Government, have. Let the Opposition make those charges. If they make any specific charges the challenge will be accepted by the Government, and the Opposition will be given the opportunity to prove them.

We have heard such words as "graft" and "corruption" thrown loosely around the Chamber. If there is any graft or corruption by any member of the Government—myself or any other member of the Cabinet—let any hon. member opposite who is game to get up and challenge us make a charge of graft and corruption against us and he will be given an opportunity to prove it.

Mr. Duggan: You are not charged with that and you know it.

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member for South Brisbane spoke about graft but he was not game to make a definite charge; he resorted to innuendo.

Mr. BENNETT: I rise to a point of order. I said that the allegation or the charge made by the hon. member for Fassifern amounted to a charge of corruption.

Mr. NICKLIN: That bears out entirely what I said; the hon. member is not game to make a charge; he does it by innuendo. No responsible Government can grant any inquiry on generalisations, imputations, or conjectures. Not one single charge has been made against the Government all day. Not one specific charge has been made of improper practices or illegal administration. Not one specific charge of dishonest administration has been made against the Government, notwithstanding the fact that hon. members opposite have been talking all day. They have not yet made one definite charge of improper practice in the Government.

We have heard a lot about pressure being brought on the Government. Again, not one definite charge has been made in this Chamber by hon. members opposite of any undue or improper pressure being brought to bear on the Government by outside interests. They have referred to pressures being exerted

by the Country Party; they have referred to pressures by the graziers and by this one and the other one; but they have all been generalisations. I challenge the Opposition; let them make one charge and the challenge will be accepted and they will be given the opportunity to prove the charge. This Government stand four-square behind all their actions and invite the closest scrutiny of everything connected with their administration; they stand by that and they have stood by it during the course of their administration of the government of the State. Only a few months ago the people of Queensland endorsed the administration and the actions of this Government in their first three years of office.

Let me examine some of the statements that have been made about the allegations that the Country Party Executive exerted improper pressure on the Government and members of the Ministry. I believe that the hon. member for Somerset, who was president of the Country Party during the first three years we were in office as Government of the State, amply answered all those allegations this afternoon. Reference has been made tonight to the claim that an endeavour had been made by the Government to cover up skeletons in the Country Party cupboard. This afternoon the hon. member for Somerset said he was prepared to open the books of the Country Party to any hon. member opposite to examine any decisions that the Country Party has made at any time. Would hon. members opposite make that offer? Would the A.L.P. make a similar offer? If the hon. member wishes to examine the minute books of the Country Party, he can do so.

Mr. Bennett: Will you table them?

Mr. NICKLIN: I will not table them. They are not minutes of this Parliament. But if the hon. member comes to the Country Party office, he can have a look at them.

I give this categorical denial: never once was any undue or improper pressure applied in any shape or form to any member of Cabinet or the Government by the Country Party Executive or by any part of the Country Party organisation. Time and time again at Country Party conferences or meetings of the Central Council of the Country Party, when motions came from branches of the Country Party to the effect that a direction should be given to the Government that such-and-such should be done, the superior body, whether it was the Central Council or the Country Party conference, altered the motion to read that a recommendation should be made to the Government, or something to that effect.

Who spearheaded this attack on the Government today? The motion was moved by the hon. member for Brisbane. The hon. member is a rugged politician, a man who is prepared to take anything on politically, but I must admit that his heart was not in the game today. He was not very convincing in his attack on the Country Party. He was

supported by the Leader of the Opposition. As usual, we had a torrent of words from the Leader of the Opposition. He was like a bower bird. He hopped from point to point, from Krupp to Foley, from newspapers to "Hansard," and at the end what did he say?

Mr. Duggan: I brought four Ministers to their feet—parrot No. 1, parrot No. 2, parrot No. 3 and parrot No. 4.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. NICKLIN: He did, of course, in his own inimitable style, get up and say, "Heaven forbid that I should say anything against the integrity of the Premier. I admire his good qualities."

Mr. Duggan: I do, in your personal capacity.

Mr. NICKLIN: "But," he said, "this fellow is not all he is cracked up to be."

Mr. Duggan: He is not, either. You have proved that.

Mr. NICKLIN: "He is a liar, and he is all sorts of things." It is a subtle example of damning somebody with faint praise. I am not at all concerned about what the Leader of the Opposition thinks about me. He can think and say what he likes about me. I will be judged by the people of Queensland.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. NICKLIN: Then we had the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. We all know that he is a past-master of the innuendo and half-truth. No hon. member in this Chamber is a more capable character-assassin than the hon. member for Kedron. This afternoon, with his innuendoes and half-truths, he attempted to assassinate my character. All I can say is that I do not care what he says about me, either, and I should be very suspicious if he said anything good about me.

Let us get down to the reasons allegedly behind this attack on the Government. I have here the reasons used by the hon. member for Brisbane for moving the amendment. I thank the hon. member for his courtesy in giving me a copy of the reasons.

Mr. Mann: I like to give you a fair go.

Mr. NICKLIN: I know the hon. member does, but after looking at the reasons all I can say is that never have I seen a better example of political chicanery. This is the worst case of dishonest misrepresentation I have ever seen. The Leader of the Opposition has sunk to the lowest possible political depths by using these reasons for the Opposition's attack on the Government. It demonstrates the weakness of their case when they have to adopt such tactics. Let us take a look at the reasons. No. 1 is—

"The Country Party Executive came to Parliament House and attempted to enlist his support in the thievery of Crown lands."

Let me turn to what the hon. member for Fassifern said. He said:—

"There was the incident of the Country Party Executive rolling down to Parliament House one day and putting to me the principle of the right to subdivide and sell. If one examines that proposal one realises that it means only one thing: in plain language it is thievery of the Crown estate, and nothing short of it."

Is reason No. 1 a fair statement of what the hon. member for Fassifern said? It is a politically-coloured and biased statement in an endeavour to build up a rotten case. Why do not the Opposition put down exactly what the former Minister said if they are going to use him in making charges against the Government?

Let us look at reason No. 2—

"He had been threatened with the loss of his seat in this Parliament because of decisions made by him in the line of his duty as Minister of the Crown."

I ask hon. members to note the words "his seat". Let us have a look at what he did say—

"I was told, 'If you don't do as we want you will lose this seat.'"

not "his" seat.

Mr. Duggan: What seat do you think he is referring to? Do you think he is talking about the armchair in the Minister's office?

Mr. NICKLIN: Would the hon. gentleman doubt the fact that many a time in many of the western seats we hold we have constant representations that if such-and-such a policy is not effected in the area we will lose "this" seat? That is what the hon. member was referring to. Who suggested for one moment that anything the Government said would lose the seat of Fassifern? But that suited the dishonest purpose behind the Opposition's motion. They were prepared to use the words "loss of his seat" when they knew very well it was not his seat at all.

The third reason was—

"He was dismissed from Cabinet on the demand of the Country Party Executive."

Let us see what the hon. member had to say about that. He said:—

"On 6 June the Premier called me to his office and told me that the Executive of the Country Party had called and demanded that unless I could produce a letter to show that I was not the person mentioned in that report, they were objecting to my continuing in my portfolio."

What he said is not correct. It is altogether different from what was put in the reasons for the attack on the Government today. What I was telling the former Minister was that I had been called upon by an "executive," not the "Executive"—as the hon. member for Somerset said today, the Executive of the Country Party has not met—to express to me his concern that possibly

a Minister of our Cabinet was involved in a taxation defalcation. Mr. Pizzey, the Minister for Education, was with me. I told that executive very plainly that it was our business, and we would attend to it our way. The former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation makes the statement that the Executive demanded a letter. He did not say they demanded his dismissal from Cabinet. They demanded a letter to say that he was not involved in taxation defalcations. That has been misconstrued by hon. members opposite to mean that he was dismissed on the demand of the Country Party Executive.

Let us now look at the fourth reason:

"He was relegated to the back benches of Parliament so that he could no longer embarrass people who were trying to extract from the Crown estate more than they were entitled to."

The former Minister said he was relegated to the back benches where he could no longer embarrass people who were trying to extract from the Crown estate more than they were entitled to. But the hon. member well knew, and I think it has been thoroughly explained to this Committee not once, but three or four times, not only by me but by other members of the Cabinet who were in the discussions on the dismissal of the hon. member from the Cabinet portfolio, that there was only one reason why he was not included in the present Cabinet and that was because he was involved in taxation defalcations.

Mr. Mann: Why do you think he made that charge?

Mr. NICKLIN: I should suggest that he possibly made that charge in an endeavour to overcome the difficulty he was in.

The fifth reason was that—

"He was subjected to blackmailing tactics in his capacity as Minister, as directly implied by his statement assuring the Government it would take more than blackmail to win the next fight."

"I can assure them it will take more than blackmail to win the next fight", was all that the hon. member said.

Mr. Burrows: Is that not sufficient to constitute a charge?

Mr. NICKLIN: The hon. member made a statement that it would take more than blackmail. If hon. members take that as an indication that he was subject to blackmail, let them make that statement.

Then we come to the remarks of the hon. member on the Tully scrub lands. One would think that there was something terribly wrong about opening up the Tully lands and that all sorts of rackets were involved. There is merely a difference of opinion between Mr. Muller, who considers that the lands should not be thrown open, and the present Minister and the Cabinet, who back the present Minister, and who consider that certain portions

of the Tully lands should be opened for settlement. Cabinet's view has been justified by subsequent events. When two blocks were thrown open recently, 240 applicants sought them and they were men who knew the area; they knew the capabilities and possibilities of the land. Is that not evidence that the decision to throw them open was more than justified?

Mr. Byrne: I should say that half of them were "dummies". One family put in 14 applications.

Mr. NICKLIN: I do not know anything about that. All I know is that there were 240 applications and that demonstrates the view of persons who know this land. The hon. member who interjected comes from that area and I am sure he would say that these lands were suitable for throwing open. Would he say they are not suitable for the purpose?

Mr. Byrne: I advocated it years ago.

Mr. NICKLIN: Then the hon. member is on the side of the present Minister. He would not hang the Minister for that.

Mr. Byrne: No.

Mr. NICKLIN: I shall get back to the grounds for the amendment, the next being that I should give reasons for misleading the people either in what I said or in the prepared statement—I shall not read it in full. That matter has been fully explained. I should like hon. members to consider this matter in its proper perspective. At the time of the incident that according to hon. members is detrimental to the future of Parliament and the future of democracy, there was not a Parliament in Queensland and not one hon. member of the present Parliament was sworn in. The incident took place when the Cabinet was being formed, and Cabinet members were not sworn in at the time either as members of Parliament or as members of the Executive Council. I am not going to recount why the hon. member was not acceptable as a member of Cabinet. That has been explained time and time again.

Mr. Burrows: Then will you explain why, if he was not accepted as a member of Cabinet, you still accept him as a member of Parliament?

Mr. NICKLIN: The answer is simple. I can control the appointment of hon. members to Cabinet, but I cannot control the election of hon. members to Parliament. That is a matter for the electors, and I cannot throw any elected hon. member out of Parliament.

Much play has been made by hon. members on the fact that the hon. member for Fassifern visited me in my room on several occasions prior to making his speech. It was the Tuesday before his speech when the hon. member told me he was going to speak in the Chamber. I said, "What are you going to speak of?" He said, "I am going to speak about the incident that led to my dismissal from Cabinet." I said to the hon. member,

"I would suggest that you be very careful as to how you make that statement, and I would suggest very, very strongly as a friend of yours that you should not speak." The hon. member said, "I am going home. I will think over what you said to me. I will see you again on Thursday." He came back on Thursday and told me he was going to speak in the Chamber. I repeated my advice to him that I thought it would be better in his own interests if he did not speak, but he said he was going to speak. I said, "Alf, I am very much afraid that, if you make any allegations against your Cabinet colleagues or myself, possibly I may have to say some things that I do not want to say."

Mr. Bennett: Were you trying to silence him?

Mr. NICKLIN: Not at all. My action was taken in an endeavour to save him from himself, and I think history has shown that my action was right. I am certain the hon. member for Fassifern would be the first to admit regret for what he did and said on Thursday, which compelled me to say what I had to say. It has been said that I conspired to deceive the public of this State as to the real reason why the hon. member was not accepted as a member of Cabinet.

Mr. Dufficy: But you admit that.

Mr. NICKLIN: Yes, I admit it, and I have never tried to deny it. As the Treasurer said this afternoon, when the hon. member realised he could not be in the Cabinet we made a number of suggestions to him in an endeavour to let him out lightly. I am not going to apologise for that. I could have made a big fellow of myself by throwing him out because he was involved in a taxation evasion, but my colleagues and I wanted to let him out as lightly as we could. The hon. member would not adopt the various suggestions that we put to him, which would have offered him an easy way out, and he suggested he should be given the opportunity to refuse a portfolio. These things have been recounted time and again and I will not reiterate them tonight. All I can say is that if I committed a crime by doing what I did I am not ashamed of it. The final words of this charge are that we have failed to answer the grave charges made by the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation in this House and have dealt contemptuously with the rights of the Parliament and the people by declaring that there is no need for an inquiry. Everything that the hon. member said in his speech has been answered by me or some other member of the Cabinet. There is not one single statement that has not been answered.

Mr. Bennett: Very unsatisfactorily.

Mr. NICKLIN: It would be unsatisfactory to the hon. member. He would never be satisfied if he thought he could gain some political advantage.

The Opposition say that the charges made demand an immediate judicial public inquiry, and that the Government should now act to

set up such an inquiry. In reply to that, I say finally that if one specific charge of wrong-doing, or improper practice, or dishonesty on the part of any Minister is made by the Leader of the Opposition, or any member of the Opposition, or any hon. member of this Assembly, or if any specific instance is given of the Government's yielding to any offer, or improper pressure, or bribery, or blackmail and it can be substantiated, an inquiry will be immediately instituted. If the Opposition want the inquiry they have been talking about all day, all they have to do is make their charges. Let them make one specific charge; if they do not, they are forever discredited as political humbugs.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (12.24 a.m.): I contrast the attitude of the Premier in the Chamber tonight with his attitude when he was Leader of the Opposition some years ago. The hon. member for Baroona read excerpts from "Hansard" which showed quite clearly how the Premier on that former occasion urged the setting up of a commission of inquiry without any evidence—just because there were suspicious circumstances. That was at the time of the case known as the Foley incident. Because the Premier read certain things in the columns of "The Worker", he urged the appointment of a Royal Commission. Now, when the Opposition put forward a case on a much sounder basis, he has no words other than of ridicule.

We note with great interest the personnel of hon. members who have spoken. There were nine A.L.P. speakers and a total of 11 from the Opposition, including an Independent. There were four Cabinet Ministers, three of them Country Party members, and the other the Treasurer. It was most noticeable—and it has been pointed out previously—that the Leader of the Liberal Party did not speak. It has been stated quite freely around the House during the last week that if Mr. Morris, the Leader of the Liberal Party, dared speak on this matter there would be a serious split in the Government. That is clearly evidenced by the fact that, though he was mentioned on a number of occasions and referred to in many speeches, he did not rise; the responsibility was handed over to the third member of the Cabinet, the Minister for Education and Migration.

It is most noticeable, too, among the back-benchers who spoke that a more unfortunate choice could not have been made by the Government than of the hon. member for Roma. He was put up on two occasions. It is quite clear that there has been a lack of interest by back-benchers, particularly of the Country Party, and an unwillingness by the prominent back-benchers of the Country Party to rise and back their colleagues. It is well known that the former Minister still has strong support from many back-benchers.

The hon. member for Roma—I am sorry he is not in the Chamber at the moment—had a great deal to say about additional areas being granted, a policy so strongly opposed by the former Minister, who

expressed grave fears as to the future administration of the Department. Remember that the hon. member for Roma some years ago was granted an additional area by the Government of the day because he claimed, in the case he presented to the Government, that he did not have a sufficiently large area to enable him to make a satisfactory living. In an effort to assist him, the Government of the day granted him a further area on condition that he make use of it for the living he claimed he desired to make; but he seized the opportunity to sell it, as quickly as possible, for £37,000. That is no reflection on the Government of the day but it certainly is a reflection on the hon. member for Roma, who did not fulfil the trust the Government had placed in him. Since then, of course, he has been in retirement as a pensioner of the Crown. The way he worked the grant, it was nothing but a hand-out from the Crown. He is the man who, with slobbering hypocrisy today, stood up and attacked the former Minister for Public Lands because of his objections to the policy that the hon. member for Roma and the hon. member for Condamine so strongly support. Is it any wonder that the former Minister referred to sinister influences? If there is any doubt in the minds of hon. members about my remarks about the hon. member for Roma, I refer them to "Hansard". Files have been introduced here on previous occasions and if necessary further references to the subject can be made later in the Budget debate.

There is no doubt that the former Minister for Public Lands considers that there is a sinister influence at work in the Government, and there is no doubt that there is. This creeping influence of Tory viciousness that is helping the spirit of dictatorship—of dictation to the Government—referred to by the former Minister is clearly indicated by the intolerant attitude of the hon. member for Roma in his speeches, by the attitude of the hon. member for Condamine, who urged the sacking of a third of the railway workers and also by the hon. member for Wavell who so clearly indicated on a number of occasions—and the matter has been discussed repeatedly in the Chamber—his attitude to trade unionism. We have listened to his savage and vicious attacks on the Australian Labour Party and on the unions that comprise the industrial side of that party. Here we see revealed the viciousness that has come to the surface in the Government parties, resulting in the intolerance that has been displayed towards the former Minister for Public Lands. The hon. member for Wavell said this—

"Imagine the panic that exists in the minds of the union bosses! Like vultures and vampires they live on the blood of insurrection and strife."

He also said—

"To hell with the union bosses!"

This is the man who in his own electorate claims to be the friend of the workers.

Mr. Dewar: When did I say this?

Mr. DAVIES: The hon. member has been full of impudence tonight. He went on to say—

"The Union bosses realise this. It is only while they can keep up insurrection, strife and dissatisfaction that they can maintain their positions. I brand them as industrial anarchists living on the life-blood of the workers."

There we have the vicious Tory attitude displayed, and it was resurrected by the hon. member for Condamine when he repeated in a radio broadcast the statement he made in this Chamber that a third of the workers in the railways should be sacked.

The former Minister for Public Lands said that there is a suspicion that the Government will be more susceptible now to the intrigues of pressure groups representing wealthy grazing interests, and I shall now refer to five statements from his speech. They have already been mentioned, and I shall merely quote them. The first statement was—

"I had one long fight to protect the Crown estate and my reward was the sack."

The only inference is that he is referring to the sterling fight that he had put up against these influences that will have a strong influence on the Government.

The second statement was this—

"I now find myself . . . relegated to the back benches where I can no longer embarrass people who were trying hard to extract from the Crown estate much that they were not entitled to."

Surely he made that statement in regard to the Tully lands, a matter on which I shall not go into detail at this stage. There will be time to deal with that in the debate on the Financial Statement. The Government have neglected the forests and have decided to open up scrublands in the Tully area where forests should be growing in perpetuity.

Mr. Dewar: The party said that.

Mr. DAVIES: The hon. member for Fassifern said that. I am talking about the neglect of the forests, and I challenge the Government to place on the table the report of Mr. Grenning and other forestry officers on these forest areas. I believe the Government will not risk their reputation by tabling a report that is against their interests. The former Minister for Public Lands made the statement that the Minister who put his signature to a document opening up that Tully land should be gaolled, and the Press reported that when he was asked, "Would you go as far as that?" the hon. member said, "Yes, for being a traitor to the generations to come." He also said this—

"To think that I should be on the receiving end of such shabby treatment and then say, 'Yes, I will support a

Government guilty of such an action and who have allowed the graziers to take control."

His statement is that the graziers will take control, and he says, "It breaks my heart to think that people who should be supporting me are out to help these people."

Throughout the whole of his speech he has clearly indicated his fears that this Government will be more susceptible now to these unworthy interests to which he refers so strongly. The hon. member made his speech, and then the Premier, the Treasurer and others attempted to say that the Opposition needled him into making these statements. He spoke to the Premier, and then he retired to the quietness of his home and gave the matter thought. This strong man, this man who over the years has proved his worth and whose strong opinions have been voiced in this Chamber, in the words of the Treasurer becomes a weakling, a man lacking in mettle and backbone. He was the best fighter they had in the years the Government were in Opposition, a man whose strong character has been evidenced in this Chamber. Why should he suddenly, almost overnight become what the Treasurer describes as a weakling? When did he become a "decrepit hulk?" as described by the Treasurer. What does the word "decrepit" mean? The dictionary states that "decrepit" means "worn out with old age; enfeebled with infirmities; old and feeble. To cover themselves the Government first of all make the statement that he deceived them. Then they say that he was offered another portfolio, which did not suit him. Then we come to the point where, to save their own skins, the Government have to lay all the blame on the hon. member for Fassifern and destroy him in the eyes of the public.

The Treasurer could have left no impression in one's mind other than that he was endeavouring to create a picture in the minds of the people of the State that this man had suddenly become senile, a man fitted for one of the aged people's homes, a man no longer capable of clear and independent thought. We saw him in the Chamber when he made his speech. We have never seen him more vigorous, we have never heard him make a more calm and clear speech, or a more deliberate one. He read his statement. As we watched him it was clear that he was reading, word for word, a carefully prepared and well-thought-out statement. To anyone in the Chamber it was clear that he was not a "decrepit old man" or a "decrepit hulk". What a hurtful insult to hurl at this man in order to destroy him in the eyes of the people! The hon. members for Roma and Condamine would have already declared him away in a home. They are living in the last century. In order to bolster their case the hon. member apparently had suddenly become a useless old individual. He could not make a speech like he did unless he

were in full possession of all his faculties. He created a fine impression; the Chamber was hushed; there were no interjections.

I agree with the hon. member for South Brisbane that it was definitely in bad taste for the man who took over the office of another who had been sacked to rise in his place to condemn the one whose place he was taking. It was certainly in bad taste and it must give rise to a suspicion that the present Minister might suddenly become a decrepit old hulk, particularly with the strain of pushing another man out and taking his place—if that did happen.

It was a man in full and vigorous possession of all his faculties who said that he was "unfairly and cowardly assailed and quite wrongly transferred from the Lands, Irrigation and Forestry portfolio." He said—

"It is a fight to help the Country Party to take bearings afresh and to bring the Party back to its time-honoured principles from which it has departed because of the domination of other narrowing influences."

He is the man who saw the early days in the Country Party. What do we find throughout the length and breadth of the State today? Commission agents and other owners of property with no connection with the Country Party have share-farmers on their properties, but they are controlling the Country Party and exercising the influence that is causing so much concern to the former Minister for Public Lands. When he spoke about the time-honoured principles from which the Country Party has departed because of the domination of other narrowing influences we think of the influence we see in the hon. member for Condamine who makes the type of statement that we would not expect from a good Country Party member who has been associated—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The amendment before the Committee deals with the reduction of the item by £1. If the hon. member has good reasons why it should be reduced I should be glad if he would be a little more explicit.

Mr. DAVIES: I remember the hon. member for Roma viciously attacking the Australian Labour Party, and there was not one word in his speech about the reduction of the Vote by £1. But I will carry out your instructions, Mr. Taylor. All my remarks are centred around the phrases, sentences and statements of the former Minister for Public Lands and Irrigation. I will refer again to what he said. I know that no statement has ever been made in this Chamber that stung the Government as much as this one did. That is evidenced by the fact that a Minister of the Crown refers to him as a "senile old gentleman". When did he become senile? Was it when he made his statement on Thursday or when he made his brief statement this morning, and did he suddenly recover over the week-end?

Hon. members opposite attacked him personally, endeavouring to destroy him in order to save themselves as the Government of this State.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. DAVIES: I have dealt with the hon. member. He is the most vicious Tory in this Chamber and his statements stand on record.

The hon. member for Fassifern said—

"Finally they brought about events that were obnoxious to me and brought about my resignation."

The evidence has been revealing itself gradually to members of the Opposition. That is what he said. That is not a statement of a man who is hysterical or under pressure from the Opposition. It is the thought of a man who is expressing an independent spirit. He said—

"I intend to represent their interest, be their spokesman, advocate the introduction into the administration of the principles for which the old Country Party always stood. When I speak of my mates I mean back-bench members of the Country Party who stood by me loyally and agree with me that I have got a pretty raw deal, and who refuse to speak in this debate."

This man was a Minister for three years; he was in Parliament for 25 years. He was chairman of the Queensland Farmers' Co-operative Association, chairman of the Queensland Butter Marketing Board; chairman of the Co-operative Dairy Companies' Association, chairman of the Dairy Produce Equalisation Committee; he was 17 years on the Australian Dairy Produce Board, and a director and on the executive of the Producers Distributing Society with a turnover of £30,000,000 annually. This is a man of tremendous experience and wide knowledge, second to none in the party, and far superior to any other man on the Government side. associated with land problems. It is the man with all that experience and that illustrious record, who suddenly becomes a decrepit hulk because of pressure exerted on him. That we refuse to believe and we want to know just what happened. Is it the dictatorship that exists in this party?

Whenever the hon. member referred to the Country Party Executive he never referred to individuals; he used the pronoun "they". It was "they" who came down; it was "they" who did this and that, and these are the people who are spoken of as representing that influence in the Country Party that has taken away the old objectives and have made it the non-farmers' party that it is today. That dictatorship was evident in the Premier's statement on television that he had been ordered that he must not introduce preferential voting in the State. We also saw the display by which the Chairman of Committees said, "I will fight on the floor of the House to be Speaker." It was commonly known in the precincts of the House that he was bluntly told, "If you contest this on the floor

of the House we will not allow you to be Chairman of Committees." That is the type of dictatorship that exists in the parties opposite today.

Mr. Ewan interjected.

Mr. DAVIES: The hon. member for Roma ought to keep very quiet. He is living on a Government pension at the present time. He received the tremendous sum of £37,000 for land that he got from the Government on the condition that he use it. Instead of doing so he seized on the first opportunity to sell it. He sold to the first person who accepted his price and thus gained a profit at the expense of the State. No doubt he has an interest in these matters.

Mr. Ewan: You are a prevaricator.

Mr. DAVIES: If the hon. member for Roma wants me to deal with the matter at length, I can do so in the Budget debate. He descended to a very low level in his speech. If he wants to deal with matters in that way, we can do the same. He is known in Parliament as the greatest toady to the present Cabinet. He toadied to Cabinet Ministers to such an extent that they got sick of him.

Mr. EWAN: I rise to a point of order. The hysterical hon. member for Maryborough is making vindictive, untrue statements that are offensive to me and I ask for a withdrawal.

Mr. Dufficy: A withdrawal of what?

Mr. EWAN: The hon. member for Maryborough is making deliberately untrue statements in saying that I am recognised as the greatest toady to Cabinet Ministers and that I disposed of my property at the first opportunity. They are deliberately untrue and offensive to me, and I ask for a withdrawal and apology.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Low): I ask the hon. member for Maryborough to withdraw the remarks.

Mr. DAVIES: With all respect, may I ask just what I have to withdraw?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has pointed out that you have offended him by suggesting he is toadying to Cabinet Ministers.

Mr. DAVIES: If that offends his delicate susceptibilities, I shall withdraw the remark. I realise he cannot take it, although he is very fond of giving it. He is very definitely interested in additional areas. Certain rumours were so prevalent around the House that they could be regarded as factual. They were to the effect that certain hon. members were spreading rumours about the former Minister for Public Lands because they were desirous of obtaining his position in Cabinet, and the hon. member for Roma was one of them.

Mr. Dufficy: I might suggest that the hon. member for Roma did get some additional areas because he toadied to the Cabinet.

Mr. DAVIES: I shall leave that to the hon. member for Warrego or others with more experience in land matters.

Mr. Dufficy (To Mr. Ewan): You know it is true, and you cannot object to that.

Mr. Ewan: Who is making the speech?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Maryborough to continue with his speech and not to take notice of these interjections.

Mr. DAVIES: Is the Government's action an indication of a return of the baser, vicious Tory spirit that we hoped had departed from Queensland politics. It is rearing its ugly head in Government circles. We had the statement of the Deputy Premier that he would kick when he saw a head, and the Minister for Public Lands said, "If I get a chance I will take him for a walk and lose him." Another point I wish to emphasise is that the Minister for Labour and Industry has had an opportunity to speak, and I should have thought he would have taken advantage of the opportunity. The version I have heard around the House is that the Minister for Labour and Industry was not game to get up, that he had been ordered not to rise and attack Mr. Muller or otherwise there would be a revolt in the Government lines.

Mr. Morris interjected.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister for Labour and Industry is an authority on the subject he just mentioned.

All my remarks lead to this: We want to know what happened over the week-end. On Thursday we saw a man who was vigorous and possessed of his full faculties making an excellent speech and at his best, and today we saw him making a statement in a few short words. Either the hon. member is very cunning, or he has failed to show respect to this Chamber. For a couple of hours or more on Thursday the time of this Chamber was taken up listening to serious accusations. The Premier's time was taken up replying to them, and today we hear that the Premier and this "decrepit old hulk," as the Treasurer called him, have got together and become the best of friends and the matter has blown over.

Mr. Dufficy: That is how he was described by the Treasurer.

Mr. Davies: Yes.

We believe the hon. member is as vigorous as ever. He has claimed always that he can ride his horse with the best and chop trees with the best, and we believe he can do it today, yet for their own reasons—to save their political future—the Government paint this man for the people of Queensland as having reached the senile stage.

Mr. Lloyd: Do you think the Treasurer was right to make these horrible statements about the hon. member for Fassifern?

Mr. DAVIES: I strenuously object to them and I strongly disagree with them. The Treasurer, by describing the hon. member as senile, sank to a very low political level to save the Government. We cannot allow the matter to pass and if the Premier and the members of the Government had been in Opposition they would not have allowed it to pass.

Something must have happened over the week-end. I would not repeat a private statement—or if I heard a statement made here I would not use it—but a member of the Chamber referred in his speech to a statement that cannot be overlooked. He said that when Mr. Muller returned from the Cabinet room he was asked how he got on and he said, "The offer was not good enough." What was Mr. Muller referring to? Was there a price on his silence, and was the offer not big enough? He withdrew his resignation this morning, so he must still be a member of the Country Party.

Mr. Dufficy: He did not withdraw his charges.

Mr. DAVIES: He has not withdrawn his charges and we want to know what happened to cause him to change his mind after the statements he made in the Chamber.

Mr. Dufficy: We believe he made it seriously.

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. If the truth is not uncovered by a commission of inquiry it is certain that the hon. member will be given assistance by influential people in the Country Party Executive and even by members of the Cabinet. The hon. member may quickly regain some of the positions that he resigned from.

Mr. Hanlon: Would you say the truth has been replaced by a truce?

Mr. DAVIES: Yes. Does it mean that because he is still a member of the Country Party he is still in the running for future Cabinet positions?

The Government are under suspicion and that there is far greater need for an inquiry than there was when the Premier rose and, on a vague report in "The Worker," with no evidence to support it, demanded of the Labour Government of the day a Royal Commission of Inquiry. Now, as Premier, with all this evidence before him, with all these serious, well-thought-out, deliberate statements made by the most experienced member of the Country Party who has many years of experience in politics, he points the finger of scorn at the Opposition, denies the necessity for an inquiry and refuses it.

In conclusion let me stress the points I have made. The hon. member for Fassifern has withdrawn his resignation from the

Country Party, which he claimed was no longer the party it was but a party that had departed from its time-honoured principles—as I described before, a party that is now dominated by other narrowing influences. An examination of the members of the Country Party Executive will clearly indicate that. It is a party that treated him shabbily and that is composed of misguided individuals. This is the party he now rejoins, all over a week-end. No Labour people have had the opportunity of seeing him. So I say the Government are under suspicion and there must have been some price, some way, some favour granted him. For those reasons we must be disappointed in him for accepting. So I have great pleasure in supporting the amendment and urging the Government to clear their name, if it can be cleared, by appointing a Royal Commission to remove the suspicion that must exist in the minds of the people of the State. If it were not Queensland but some foreign land, we might rightly suspect that Moscow drugs or some other means of coercion had been used to cause the man to change his mind but even here there is grave suspicion that pressure has been applied and we very naturally suspect that a price must have been attached.

Question—That the Item "Aide-de-Camp, £1,365" be reduced to £1,364 (Mr. Mann's amendment)—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 25.

Mr. Adair	Mr. Hilton
" Baxter	" Inch
" Bennett	" Lloyd
" Bromley	" Mann
" Burrows	" Marsden
" Davies	" Melloy
" Davis	" Sherrington
" Dean	" Thackeray
" Donald	" Tucker
" Dufficy	
" Duggan	
" Graham	
" Gunn	
" Hanlon	
	Tellers:
	Mr. Byrne
	" Newton

NOES, 35.

Mr. Anderson	Mr. Knox
" Beardmore	" Lonergan
" Carey	" Low
" Chalk	" Morris
Dr. Delamothé	" Munro
Mr. Dewar	" Nicklin
" Ewan	Dr. Noble
" Fletcher	Mr. Pizey
" Gaven	" Rae
" Gilmore	" Ramsden
" Harrison	" Row
" Hart	" Smith
" Herbert	" Wharton
" Hewitt	" Windsor
" Hiley	
" Hodges	
" Hooper	
" Hughes	
" Jones	
	Tellers:
	Mr. Sullivan
	" Tooth

PAIRS

Mr. Diplock	Mr. Roberts
" Wallace	" Pilbeam
" Walsh	" Evans
" Houston	" Armstrong

Resolved in the negative.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 1.10 a.m.