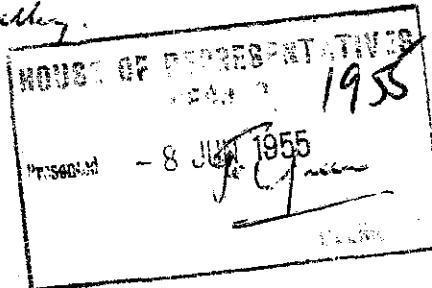


Tabled by Mr. Deputy -
(Ordered, on Motion of Mr. Justice Isaacson,
That the consideration of the Report be
made an Order of the Day for the
next Sitting.)



1954-55.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

REPORT

from the

COMMITTEE of PRIVILEGES

relating to

ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THE

BANKSTOWN OBSERVER, on 28th April, 5th, 12th and 19th May
1955.

together with

Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS NO. 47

DATED TUESDAY, 3rd May, 1955.

PRIVILEGE - ARTICLE IN "BANKSTOWN OBSERVER". - Mr. Morgan raised a matter of Privilege based on an article headed "M.H.R. and Immigration Racket" published in the Bankstown Observer on Thursday, 28th April, 1955, and moved, That the article headed "M.H.R. and Immigration Racket" appearing in the issue of the Bankstown Observer of Thursday, 28th April, 1955, be referred to the Committee of Privileges for investigation and report.

Question - put and passed.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS NO. 51

DATED THURSDAY, 12th May, 1955.

4. COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES. - Sir Eric Harrison (Vice-President of the Executive Council) moved, by leave, That Mr. Galvin be appointed a member of the Committee of Privileges, in place of Mr. Sheehan, deceased.

Question - put and passed.

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6. COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES. - Sir Eric Harrison (Vice-President of the Executive Council) moved, That Mr. W.M. Bourke and Mr. Freeth be appointed members of the Committee of Privileges.

Question - put and passed.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS No. 57

DATED 26th May, 1955.

3. COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES - SPECIAL REPORT. - Mr. McLeay (Chairman) brought up a Special Report from the Committee of Privileges relating to an article published in the Bankstown Observer on Thursday, 28th April, 1955, together with Minutes of Proceedings, and moved, That the Report be read.

Question - put and passed.

The Report was read by the Clerk.

Mr. Keon moved, That the Committee's request be acceded to.

Debate ensued.

Sir Eric Harrison (Vice-President of the Executive Council) moved, That the debate be now adjourned.

Question - That the debate be now adjourned - put.

The House divided (The Speaker, Mr. A.G. Cameron, in the Chair)-

Ayes, 48. Noes, 32.

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Ordered - That the resumption of the debate be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS No. 58

DATED 31st May, 1955.

14. COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES - SPECIAL REPORT. - The Order of the Day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the following motion of Mr. Keon, That the Committee's request be acceded to -

Debate resumed.

Question - put and passed.

REPORT.

1. The Committee of Privileges, to which was referred the matter of the complaint made in the House on the 3rd May, 1955, of the publication of certain matter in the newspaper Bankstown Observer of the 28th April, 1955, reflecting upon the honorable Member for Reid (Mr. Morgan), has agreed to the following Report:-

EXTENSION OF ORDER OF REFERENCE.

2. On the 26th May, 1955, your Committee submitted to the House a special Report asking that authority be given by the House to empower your Committee to consider articles concerning the honorable Member for Reid and the Committee of Privileges which appeared in issues of the Bankstown Observer dated 5th, 12th and 19th May, 1955, in addition to that of the 28th April, 1955. Your Committee's request was acceded to on the 31st May.

COMPLAINT.

3. The complaint placed before the House is set out in Appendix "A" hereto. The newspaper article referred to in the complaint and the three subsequent issues are set out in Appendix "B".

EVIDENCE TAKEN.

4. The Committee called the honorable Member for Reid (Mr. Morgan), who was examined and gave evidence in relation to the charges made against him by the newspaper, and also submitted his case for treating the newspaper article as a breach of Privilege.

5. The Committee also called Raymond ~~Edward~~ Fitzpatrick, proprietor of the newspaper Bankstown Observer and Frank Browne, Journalist, who were examined on oath and gave evidence in relation to the newspaper articles.

6. Application was made by Mr. Fitzpatrick to be represented by counsel. Your Committee agreed to hear counsel for Mr. Fitzpatrick on the following two points:-

1. As to his right to appear generally for Mr. Fitzpatrick, and
2. As to the power of this Committee to administer an oath to the witness.

After hearing counsel on these matters, your Committee declined to allow the witness to be so represented and ruled that it had power to administer an oath to witnesses.

G E N E R A L.

7. Your Committee made a careful study of the matter contained in the newspaper articles which formed the Committee's terms of reference and also the evidence given by Messrs. Morgan, Fitzpatrick and Browne. Your Committee determined that its investigations should, if possible, reveal -

1. Whether the articles referred to constituted a breach of the Privileges of this House,
2. Whether the charges made against the honorable Member for Reid, as a Member of the House, were of any substance, and
3. Whether the newspaper articles, in various references to the House, its Committees and its Members, constituted a contempt of the House.

8. Your Committee was firmly convinced by the evidence that a breach of Privilege had occurred in that an attempt had been made through the newspaper articles to influence and intimidate a member, the honorable Member for Reid, in his conduct in the House.

9. The intention of the newspaper's statements to silence the honorable Member for Reid is revealed from the following questions and answers given in evidence:-

MR. JOSKE (Questioning Mr. Fitzpatrick) - Mr. Morgan then stated -

"I regard it as a brazen attempt to intimidate me in the course of my public duties on behalf of the people whom I represent".

What do you say about that?

MR. FITZPATRICK.- That was our idea in printing it.

MR. JOSKE.- To prevent him saying things in Parliament?

MR. FITZPATRICK.- Yes.

MR. JOSKE.- Mr. Morgan then said -

"No doubt it has been caused by fears about disclosures that will be made in the near future as a result of inquiries that have been set in train."

What is your comment on that?

MR. FITZPATRICK. - That is the burning of the Torch.

MR. JOSKE. - You agree that that is the true reason why it was published?

MR. FITZPATRICK. - Yes, that is so.

• • • • •
MR. SWARTZ. - In answer to Mr. Joske, you said that the idea in printing the original article in the Bankstown Observer of the 26th April was to prevent Mr. Morgan saying things in the Federal Parliament?

MR. FITZPATRICK. - Yes.

MR. SWARTZ. - You still agree that that is a reasonable interpretation of what you said?

MR. FITZPATRICK. - Yes, we had to hit back. We were taking it all the time.

10. Your Committee considered that the newspaper had made a deliberate attempt to impute corrupt conduct as a Member against the honorable Member for Reid with the express purpose of discrediting him and silencing him. Your Committee considered that the following extracts from the evidence clearly revealed this:-

MR. JOSKE. - Then Mr. Morgan continued -

"The article is merely a re-hash of a scurrilous, illegal and anonymous pamphlet which was distributed clandestinely throughout my electorate a few days prior to the 1946 general election."

Let us take that piecemeal. Is it a re-hash of the pamphlet or is it substantially the same as the pamphlet?

MR. FITZPATRICK. - Yes.

MR. JOSKE. - Would you agree that the pamphlet was a scurrilous one? I am not asking you whether it was true but whether it was scurrilous which means would it affect a man's reputation very seriously?

MR. FITZPATRICK. - I think that was the idea why it was put out.

• • • • •

MR. GALVIN.- You admit that from reading this article in this paper on the 28th you would infer that Morgan was engaged in a racket on immigration at the present time?

MR. FITZPATRICK.- Yes.

• • • • •

MR. W.M. BOURKE.- You did not know the way in which he (Browne) was going to "have a go" at Mr. Morgan?

MR. FITZPATRICK.- No, I told him to get stuck into him. That is what I employed him for.

• • • • •

MR. JOSKE.- When you wrote on the 28th April that Mr. Morgan is, or was, mixed up in what can only be described as an immigration racket, did you mean to indicate that he might still, on the 28th April, be mixed up in it?

MR. BROWNE.- I do not generally plead guilty to loose writing, but that was a piece of particularly loose writing. Charges were being made currently, as I mentioned, by his political enemies.

• • • • •

MR. JOSKE.- Has he (Morgan) not the right not to be defamed?

MR. BROWNE.- As much as anybody else.

MR. JOSKE.- Answer that "Yes" or "No".

MR. BROWNE.- I won't answer it "Yes" or "No", and there is no reason why I should.

MR. FREETH.- You come back at him (Morgan) that he made his representations at £20 a time - that he made these representations as a Member?

MR. BROWNE.- I suggest that is the inference that could be taken from it.

MR. FREETH.- I want to draw your attention again to the fact that your first article did infer that it could apply to the present. Is that so?

MR. BROWNE.- Yes.

MR. FREETH. - Referring again to the article of 5th May. I ask you again, do you think this paragraph I will read to you also gives that inference? "The charges against Morgan are that he made his representations at £20 per time, a form of activity that wouldn't appeal to most of his fellow Members."

MR. BROWNE. - Yes, I think it could.

11. No evidence was brought before your Committee to substantiate the charges in the Bankstown Observer against the honorable Member for Reid. When questioned on the final section of the article appearing in the Observer of the 5th May, 1955, viz. - "We will go to Canberra and we will take with us proof of the charges against Morgan", Mr. Browne replied that he did not have the proof with him nor did he possess the proof at the time the article was written. Mr. Fitzpatrick, when asked "Have you any personal evidence of any charges against Mr. Morgan", replied "No."

12. From the evidence given and from the demeanour and manner of witnesses Fitzpatrick and Browne it was clear to your Committee that a deliberate attempt had been made to misrepresent, in the mind of the reading public, activities of the honorable Member for Reid.

13. Your Committee considered that the language used in certain sections of the newspaper articles regarding the exercise of Parliamentary Privilege by a member and the references to the Privileges Committee were somewhat unrestrained and could be construed as a contempt of the Parliament.

14. Mr. Fitzpatrick, as proprietor of the Bankstown Observer, declared that he assumed full responsibility for everything that the paper printed whether it was libellous or not. However, the evidence showed that Mr. Fitzpatrick had employed Mr. Browne as Editor and author of the articles concerning the honorable Member for Reid, at the fee of £50 per week for the express purpose of attacking the honorable Member for Reid, that he had implicit trust in whatever he wrote and that he left the writing of the articles to Mr. Browne. In these circumstances your Committee felt that guilt should lie both with the proprietor and the editor of the paper.

FINDINGS.

The findings of your Committee are as follows:-

15. That Mr. R.E. Fitzpatrick and Mr. F. Browne have been guilty of a serious breach of Privilege by publishing articles intended to influence and intimidate a member, the honorable Member for Reid, in his conduct in the House, and in deliberately attempting to impute corrupt conduct as a Member against the honorable Member for Reid, for the express purpose of discrediting and silencing him. The Committee recommends that the House should take appropriate action.

16. That there was no evidence of improper conduct by the honorable Member for Reid in his capacity as a Member of the House.

17. That some of the references to the Parliament and your Committee contained in articles referred to your Committee constitute a Contempt of the Parliament. However, your Committee considers the House would best consult its own dignity by taking no action in this regard.

J. McLEAY

J. McLEAY,

8th June, 1955.

Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA.

Thursday, 12th May, 1955.

(21st Parliament,
Seventh Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)	
Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Joske
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Clerk attending the Committee read the entry in the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives No. 47 of the 3rd May, 1955, recording the resolution of the House which referred to the Committee, for investigation and report, an Article headed "M.H.R. and Immigration Racket" published in the Bankstown Observer on Thursday, 28th April, 1955.

The Resolution of the House of 12th May, 1955, appointing Mr. W.M. Bourke, Mr. G. Freeth and Mr. P. Galvin to the Committee was reported by the Clerk attending the Committee.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved:

That Mr. C.A.A. Morgan, M.P. be ordered to attend before the Committee on Tuesday, 17th May.

The Committee adjourned until Tuesday, 17th May at 4.0 p.m.

Tuesday, 17th May, 1955.

(21st Parliament,
Eighth Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)	
Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Joske
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. C.A.A. Morgan, M.P. was called, sworn and examined.

Mr. Morgan laid before the Committee the following documents - A statement headed "Committee of Privileges, Bankstown Observer Article".

Copies of the Bankstown Observer dated 28th April, 5th May and 12th May, 1955.

A newsheet entitled "Things I hear" dated 14th April, 1955.

The witness withdrew.

The Committee deliberated.

The Committee adjourned until a time to be fixed by the Chairman.

Wednesday, 25th May, 1955.

(21st Parliament,
Ninth Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)

Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Joske
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman laid before the Committee a copy of the Bankstown Observer dated 19th May, 1955.

The Committee deliberated.

Mr. Galvin moved, That the Committee seek authority from the House to include in its investigations articles concerning the honorable Member for Reid and the Committee of Privileges appearing in the Bankstown Observer of the 5th, 12th and 19th May, in addition to that of the 28th April, 1955.

Question put -

The Committee divided -

Ayes, 5

Noes, 1

Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Turnbull
Mr. Freeth	
Mr. Galvin	
Mr. Joske	
Mr. Swartz	

And so the question was resolved in the affirmative.

The Committee adjourned until a time to be fixed by the Chairman.

Wednesday, 25th May, 1955

(21st Parliament,
Tenth Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)

Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Joske
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman submitted his Draft Special Report.

Resolved - That the Draft Special Report, be the Report of the Committee.

The Committee deliberated.

The Committee adjourned until Thursday, 26th May, 1955, at 1.45 p.m.

Wednesday, 1st June, 1955.

(21st Parliament,
Thirteenth Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)

Mr. Clark	Mr. Morgan
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull
Mr. Joske	

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Clark and Mr. Morgan withdrew from the Committee.

The Committee proceeded to consider the matter referred to it on 3rd May, 1955.

The Clerk attending the Committee read entry No. 14 in the Votes and Proceedings No. 58 dated 31st May, 1955, recording the agreement of the House to the request of the Committee as set out in its Special Report dated 25th May, 1955.

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had received from the Prime Minister a copy of a question asked in the Senate on the 11th May, 1955, requesting that the Committee hear the views of a deputation of citizens from Bankstown.

Ordered - That Mr. Raymond E. Fitzpatrick of 191 Chapel Road, Bankstown and Mr. Frank C. Browne of 51 Lancaster Road, Dover Heights, Sydney, be called to attend as witnesses to be examined and give evidence before the Committee on Tuesday, 7th June, 1955.

The Committee adjourned until Tuesday, 7th June, 1955.

Tuesday, 7th June, 1955.

(21st Parliament,
Fourteenth Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)

Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Joske
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman laid before the Committee a telegram from the honorable Member for Reid (Mr. Morgan) regarding legal representation before the Committee.

The Committee deliberated.

Mr. Raymond E. Fitzpatrick, proprietor of the Bankstown Observer was called.

The witness refused to be sworn and requested that he be represented by counsel.

The witness withdrew.

The Committee deliberated.

Mr. Joske moved, That the Committee hear counsel for Mr. Fitzpatrick on the following two points -

1. As to his right to appear generally for Mr. Fitzpatrick, and
2. As to the power of this Committee to administer an oath to the witness.

Question put -

The Committee divided -

Ayes, 5 Noes, 1

Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Turnbull
Mr. Freeth	
Mr. Galvin	
Mr. Joske	
Mr. Swartz	

And so the question was resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. R. D. Fitzpatrick was recalled.

The witness nominated his counsel (Mr. A. F. Mason) instructed by Mr. W. H. Reddy, who were admitted.

The counsel for the witness addressed the Committee.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, his counsel and instructing solicitor withdrew.

The Committee deliberated.

The witness, his counsel and instructing solicitor were recalled.

The Chairman informed the counsel that the Committee did not agree to his application to appear on behalf of Mr. Fitzpatrick and that the Committee had ruled that it had power to administer an oath to witnesses.

The counsel and instructing solicitor withdrew.

Mr. Fitzpatrick was sworn and examined.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. F. Browne, Journalist, was called, sworn and examined.

The witness withdrew.

The Committee deliberated.

The meeting of the Committee was suspended.

The meeting of the Committee was resumed.

Ordered - That the Chairman prepare a Draft Report for submission to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Committee adjourned until Wednesday, 8th June.

Wednesday, 8th June, 1955

(21st Parliament,
Fifteenth Meeting).

Present:

Mr. McLeay (Chairman)

Mr. W.M. Bourke	Mr. Joske
Mr. Freeth	Mr. Swartz
Mr. Galvin	Mr. Turnbull

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman laid before the Committee a telegram which he had received from Mr. Frank Browne, witness at the inquiry, stating that the press report in the Sydney Morning Herald which quoted him as refusing to take an oath before the Committee was entirely inaccurate and that he had made no such statement.

The Chairman submitted his Draft Report.

The Committee proceeded to the consideration of the Draft Report.

Paragraphs 1 to 4 agreed to.

Paragraphs 5 to 12 amended and agreed to.

Paragraph 13 agreed to.

Paragraphs 14 to 16 amended and agreed to.

Paragraph 17 agreed to.

Resolved - That the Draft Report, as amended, be the Report of the Committee to the House.

The Committee adjourned sine die.

APPENDIX "A".

Extract from Hansard of the House of Representatives
dated 3rd May, 1955, pages 352-355.

PRIVILEGE.

Newspaper Article.

MR. MORGAN. - I rise on a matter of privilege. I should like to address a few words to the House in regard to a matter which has arisen since the last sitting. I am referring to a vicious personal attack that has been made upon me by a newspaper, known as the BANKSTOWN OBSERVER, which circulates in my electorate. That newspaper has impugned my personal honour as a member of this Parliament, and has also challenged my fitness to be a member of this Parliament, despite the fact that less than twelve months ago I was returned to represent my present electorate with one of the largest majorities in Australia. On its facia the newspaper carries the following information about itself:-

Guaranteed largest circulation in Bankstown and South Ward. Circulation 11,000 copies. Circulating through the municipality of Bankstown

It then names the other centres through which it circulates. That indicates the extent of the influence of the newspaper, at least on its own claims. The heading of the article to which I refer is spread right across the front page and reads -

M.H.R. and Immigration Racket.

Investigation necessary.

The body of the article reads as follows :-

In the present Labour faction fight, all sorts of charges are being bandied about. Some are no doubt true, and some are without foundation.

Nobody expects politicians fighting for their political lives to be fair.

However, the anti-Evatt Group in N.S.W. are making charges that deeply concern the residents of this area.

They claim that Mr. C.A. Morgan, M.H.R., who is supporting Dr. Evatt, is, or was, mixed up in what can only be described as an Immigration Racket.

MR. GULLETT. - Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER. - Order! I ask the honorable member for Reid to take his seat for a moment. I want to assure the House that I have read this article, and any honorable member who thinks it is a laughing matter had better read it first before treating it as such.

MR. MORGAN. - Honorable members will realize, from the part of the article I have so far read, that the article questions my conduct as a member of this House, because it uses the words "is or was". The article then goes on to say -

Unlike some of the charges made, these charges are detailed, and give names and dates, upon which it is alleged certain happenings took place.

Despite that paragraph, it mentions no dates. It then goes on to make certain allegations, and brings in the names of a number of people. I do not propose to deal with them, because I intend later

to move that this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges for inquiry. No doubt the gravamen of the charges will be thoroughly sifted by the committee. The article continues -

Whether or not these charges are true, "The Observer" has no way of knowing.

Yet the newspaper flaunts these allegations to the world and right throughout my electorate. It flaunts charges the truth of which it says it has no way of knowing. What sort of conduct is that for a so-called responsible newspaper? It broadcasts to the world serious charges, and then admits that it does not know whether the allegations are true or otherwise, and it apparently has not taken any steps to substantiate them or otherwise. The article continues -

But we can't help feeling that they are a good deal more detailed than the charges that Mr. Morgan has made inside and outside Parliament when it suited him, and upon which he demanded Royal Commissions.

If Mr. Morgan has an explanation, then he should be provided with an inquiry at which he can refute the charges. If the charges are true, then in the opinion of this newspaper Mr. C.A. Morgan is totally unfitted to be a Member of the Federal Parliament.

That is a challenge which I accept. I ask for an inquiry, and I hope that the people who have made these charges will come and let us see whether they can substantiate them.

MR. MULLENS. - Was it "Mr. Big"?

MR. MORGAN. - It could be "Mr. Big". This will give him an opportunity of proving just how big he really is in the community. I have made a search of the company register at the Registrar-General's office, in Sydney, for details regarding the ownership of this newspaper. On page 14 the newspaper gives the following information, in small type:-

Wholly set up, printed and published by the Proprietors of the Bankstown Observer Pty. Ltd. at their premises, 18 Meredith Street, Bankstown.

A search of the company register in respect of the Bankstown Observer Proprietary Limited revealed that at the 20th April there were three directors. One is a reputable local solicitor, but he and another fellow director saw fit, no doubt for good reasons, to resign at that particular date. The sole remaining director is one, "Raymond Edmund Fitzpatrick, 191 Chapel-road, Bankstown, contractor". According also to the share list he is the principal proprietor of the newspaper.

I can find no evidence regarding the writer of the editorial itself. I understand that there have been some recent changes in the editorial staff of the newspaper, and that some special feature writers have been put on the staff. In fact, I detect a familiar touch, or twang, in some of the articles that I have read in the newspaper during the last two weeks, although I may be wrong in that. The Committee of Privileges will have an opportunity to discover who the present editor is, and what special feature writers have been engaged in the last few weeks.

This article is a direct attack on my integrity and my conduct as a member of this House. At this stage I should like to say and I do not want to go into all the details, or to prejudice the inquiry - that I now take the first opportunity of giving a categorical denial to those allegations, both in regard to my conduct as a member of this Parliament, and in regard to my conduct before I became a member of the Parliament. I wish to say also in regard to "Mr. Big", or Mr. Fitzpatrick, the proprietor of this newspaper, that I have not

mentioned his name publicly or in the Parliament for a matter of nearly ten years. Therefore, it is a very significant thing, and it may be relevant to certain things that have happened lately in Bankstown, that he should make this attack on me in his newspaper and spread it far and wide in my electorate. I regard it as a brazen attempt to intimidate me in the course of my public duties on behalf of the people whom I represent here. No doubt it has been caused by fears about disclosures that will be made in the near future as a result of inquiries that have been set in train. The article is merely a rehash of a scurrilous, illegal and anonymous pamphlet which was distributed clandestinely throughout my electorate a few days prior to the 1946 general election, of which this man Fitzpatrick at the time produced a printer's proof, and gave certain promises that the pamphlet would not be published. It was published at the last moment. He claimed that it cost him £3,000 to help to defeat me. That pamphlet had no printer's imprint on it. Now I am in the position that at last some organization has accepted responsibility for it. The rehash of the pamphlet has a printer's imprint which will enable me to defend myself against the charges in this scurrilous document and to disprove the allegations contained in it.

Ordinarily, one might let such things go as part of the hurly-burly of public life, but I take a very serious view of this matter, not only because of my personal position, but also because every honorable member of this House finds it necessary, from time to time, to make representations on behalf of friends or relatives who want to enter this country. No honorable member would feel safe from intimidation in making representations to the Minister for Immigration or to the Department of Immigration on behalf of immigrants in the ordinary course of his duties as a member, if he were subject to smears, lying interpretations and blackmail by ill-minded people. I would otherwise pass over the matter as I did another matter in 1946, when a foul blow was delivered at me and as I passed over the damage that might have been done to me politically. It was sufficient that I was vindicated by my electorate, which returned me at the election in 1949.

I feel however, that I have a duty to my constituents and to other honorable members who might be placed in a similar predicament in the future. Some individuals attempt to ride rough-shod over the people and to dictate who shall be their representatives and what those representatives shall do in the places to which they have been elected, but such people must not be allowed to take the law into their own hands and exercise a tyrannical dictatorship over the people. In all earnestness I recently made certain remarks publicly. Certain individuals in the community who have adopted a course of conduct over a number of years must be brought to book and made to observe the law. If their activities are allowed to continue, further excesses of a much more serious kind than those that have been committed against myself and against persons in Bankstown recently will occur. The Bankstown matters are being inquired into by other authorities, and I do not want to touch upon them at this stage.

I realise that I am placing my career in the hands of my political opponents, because the majority of the members of the Committee of Privileges sit upon the Government side of the House. However, I have sufficient confidence in their impartiality and integrity to believe that they will sift the charges and do the right thing. If there were any substance in the charges that have been made against me I should be prepared to resign my seat. In fact, I could not hold up my head within this House for shame if there were the slightest suggestion of truth in any of the charges that have been levelled at me or even if honorable members on either side of the House considered that there was any substance in those accusations. For these reasons I take the opportunity to vindicate myself and also to give my traducers an opportunity to come forward, if they see fit, and substantiate their charges. I leave the matter with the highest tribunal in the land - this Parliament. I move -

That the article headed "M.H.R. and Immigration Racket" which appeared in the issue of the BANKSTOWN OBSERVER of Thursday, 28th April, 1955, be referred to the Committee of Privileges for investigation and report.

DR. EVATT. - The honorable member for Reid (Mr. Morgan) has raised this matter purely in his capacity as a member of this House. It is in no sense a party matter. The honorable member wishes to have it investigated by the Committee of Privileges. I gather that you, Mr. Speaker, have seen the newspaper article referred to. I think that the proper course is for the House to accede to the honorable member's request, and I ask for the support of the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Sir Eric Harrison). I second the motion.

MR. SPEAKER. - I might inform the House that during the suspension of the sitting for dinner the honorable member for Reid (Mr. Morgan) saw me. I read the newspaper article that has been mentioned. It is my firm opinion that the matter should be considered by the Committee of Privileges.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

APPENDIX "B".

EXTRACTS FROM ISSUES OF THE

BANKSTOWN OBSERVER

dated 28th April, 5th, 12th

and 19th May, 1955.

Thursday, April 28, 1955.

M.H.R. AND IMMIGRATION RACKET.

INVESTIGATION NECESSARY.

In the present Labor faction fight, all sorts of charges are being bandied about. Some are no doubt true, and some are without foundation.

Nobody expects politicians fighting for their political lives to be fair.

However, the anti-Evatt group in NSW are making charges that deeply concern the residents of this area.

They claim that Mr. C.A. Morgan, M.H.R., who is supporting Dr. Evatt, is, or was, mixed up in what can only be described as an Immigration Racket.

Unlike some of the charges made, these charges are detailed, and give names and dates, upon which it is alleged certain happenings took place.

Bradly, the charges are that Mr. Morgan, in company with another M.H.R., Mr. J.J. Clarke, and a man named Walter Goldman, were procuring entry into Australia for aliens at a fee of £20 per person.

It is also charged that false particulars were placed on application forms sent to Canberra.

NAMES GIVEN.

The names of various immigrants for whom it is claimed landing permits were obtained at a fee of £20 are also being mentioned.

These include:

Andrew Grose	Stefan Molnar
Adalbert Molnar	Andrew Lazlo
Adalbert Lazlo	Ernest Lichtmann
Herman Beer	Paul Ungar
Irene Tintner	Therese Zipser
Otto Gross	Elsie Gross
Fried Ludovic	Ignas Osterneicher
Alexander Steiner	Pauls Schrotter
Laduslaus Steiner	Arpad Lakes
Margaret Heiner	Martin Singer
Robert Schrotter	

CHARGES MADE.

Whether or not these charges are true, "The Observer" has no way of knowing.

But we can't help feeling that they are a good deal more detailed than the charges that Mr. Morgan has made inside and outside Parliament when it suited him, and upon which he demanded Royal Commissions.

If Mr. Morgan has an explanation, then he should be provided with an inquiry at which he can refute the charges. If the charges are true, then in the opinion of this newspaper Mr. C.A. Morgan is totally unfitted to be a Member of the Federal Parliament.

Thursday, May 5th, 1955.

MORGAN HIDES BEHIND PRIVILEGE AGAIN

Cowardly Canberra Attack on "Observer".

Mr. Charles Morgan, MHR, is running true to form. From the shelter of Parliament, he is at his old game, slandering people that he doesn't like, and endeavouring to use the power of Parliament against them.

As a result of all this, the "Observer" has had greatness thrust upon it.

It has fallen to this paper to fight an issue which had to be fought sooner or later.

That issue is whether or not in this day and age, it is possible for any citizen who has anything to say against a Member to be dragged to Canberra, and put before some sort of an Inquisition of politicians on the grounds that the dignity of Parliament has been injured.

Nothing was further from this paper's mind than to attack the dignity of Parliament. Nowhere in the charges we mentioned was there an attack on Parliament.

Morgan had his remedy. If the charges were not true he could have approached the Courts.

He is a wealthy man, unlike some of those he attacks under privilege, and far more wealthy than a lot of the hard-working Doctors he attacked recently when he was running around trying to wreck the proposed Bill to outlaw quacks in NSW.

Not that it would have cost him a penny if he had been able to justify his conduct. His costs would have been paid, and he would have obtained damages as well.

But the valiant Mr. Morgan didn't do this. He rose in the House on Tuesday night and after using Parliamentary privilege to slander "The Observer", he then went on and asked Parliament to set up a Committee of Privilege, to clear his name. He told a sob story to the House, and finished up with the astounding assertion that if action wasn't taken against us, it wouldn't be safe for members to make representations on behalf of any migrant wanting to enter Australia.

The charges against Morgan are that he made his representations at £20 per time, a form of activity that wouldn't appeal to most of his fellow Members.

On the strength of his sob story The House agreed to set up a Committee of Privilege to inquire into the matter. So the "Observer" has had greatness thrust upon it. We are to be dragged to Canberra to confront the politicians. It rarely falls to the lot of a suburban paper to fight for the rights of the community as a whole. We are honoured that it has fallen to us to test whether or not politicians are above the Courts, in Australia.

We know that in South Africa today, they have a Government that claims that the High Court of Parliament is the supreme arbiter of the fate of all South Africans.

That the politician is greater than the Judge. We never expected that we would be the instrument selected to test whether this is true in Australia.

We will go to Canberra. AND WE WILL TAKE WITH US PROOF OF THE CHARGES AGAINST MORGAN!

Thursday, May 12, 1955.

M.H.R. ATTACKS JUDICIARY, POLICE, AND POLITICAL PARTIES
STRANGE OUTBURST BY MORGAN
IS MEMBER FOR REID A SICK MAN?

Last week Mr. Charles Morgan, our local Federal Member, was featured in a sensational story by journalist Alan Reid, who specialises in sensational stories with a political flavour, especially stories with an anti-Labor slant.

This story was certainly sensational.

It began by asserting that Mr. Morgan had last week "nervously" increased the insurance on his home.

As it went on, it became apparent that Mr. Morgan would have been spending his money to better advantage had he consulted a Doctor, especially a psychiatrist, even though he has been attacking the Medical profession savagely in recent months.

For Mr. Morgan went on to attack the Judiciary, the Police, and both Political Parties, with his most vicious attack being on the ALP, his own Party.

According to Mr. Reid, Mr. Morgan claims that a Judge is behind a reign of corruption, and Chicago-like gangsterism in Bankstown.

Mr. Reid claimed the MHR named the Judge in question.

Then, he went on to claim that the Police were not trying to find out who was responsible for the fire at "The Torch" and that one police officer had been transferred from the investigation under peculiar circumstances.

He hints at corruption at the highest levels in the Police force, and presumably in the NSW Government.

Then he goes on to claim that in the Commonwealth files there are documents incriminating to some person or persons in Bankstown.

He claims that in the past, Government action was warranted against certain citizens of Bankstown, but this was not taken because of Federal Government inefficiency or corruption.

ATTACKS DR. EVATT.

The peculiar part of this charge is that it is a direct attack on the efficiency and honesty of his own Leader, Dr. Evatt, whom Morgan claims that he supports.

Because the matters of which Morgan speaks were all raised by him some nine years ago.

They were then investigated by the Attorney-General's Department, and Dr. Evatt was then Attorney-General.

If the matter was "hushed up" then it was hushed up by the Labor Party and by Dr. Evatt, that is according to Mr. Morgan.

It was during this period that Mr. Morgan made such wild charges that the Labor Government, through Mr. Dedman, criticised him on the floor of the House.

Mr. Morgan then goes on to claim that the person against whom his attack is directed not only can corrupt the judiciary, and the police, AND the Labor Party, but also runs the Liberal Party as well!

There is talk of large contributions to Liberal funds.

How Mr. Morgan, a Labor M.H.R., would be armed with such knowledge of secret Liberal finances, is of course, not explained.

Then, Mr. Morgan passes into the sporting field, and we find that the same mysterious man who runs the judiciary, police, and both political parties, is supreme there, too.

Finally, Mr. Morgan returns to the Labor Party and makes the strangest statements of all.

BACKS "GROUPERS".

He states that this still unnamed person is plotting to get rid of Mr. W. Colbourne as State Secretary of the A.L.P. and replace him with a "creature" of his own.

Mr. Morgan apparently doesn't realise that the replacement of Colbourne has been the policy of Dr. Evatt and the anti-Grouper faction in the Labor Party for some time.

They have made strenuous efforts to get rid of him because his political allegiance lies with the Victorians who have now broken away from the Labor Party.

If Colbourne goes, according to Morgan, it will be because the unnamed target of his criticism in Bankstown wants to run the Party, and not because the Party wants a man more in accord with its own views, and not those of a breakaway group.

No member of the Santa-maria Group has made a statement more damaging to the A.L.P. than Morgan's.

WANTS F.B.I.

All this followed on Morgan's attempt last week, without consulting his Party, to get the Menzies Government to set up a secret police force in Australia on the lines of the American Federal Bureau of Investigation.

There are many things Australians admire about America, but the "shoot-first, ask questions-after," F.B.I. is not one of them.

The idea of a horde of trigger-happy secret police running around Australia does not appeal to anybody in his right mind, and it was too much even for the Security-minded Mr. Menzies, who flatly refused to move in the matter.

There is one clue perhaps to Mr. Morgan's state of mind contained in Mr. Reid's highly fanciful article.

It speaks of Mr. Morgan's "black despair".

As matters stand, the only people entitled to be plunged into "black despair" are the electors of Reid, and especially the electors of Bankstown, who are paying a man to spend most of his time slandering the district and those in it.

Thursday, 19th May, 1955.

WHAT IS BEHIND ATTACK ON BANKSTOWN?

LIES, SLANDER, POLITICAL INFLUENCE ARE WEAPONS OF LOCAL CLIQUE.

Who are the men behind the present campaign that has held Bankstown up to the ridicule and contempt of not only the rest of N.S.W., but the rest of Australia?

To-day, for a person to say he is a resident of Bankstown, invites sneers, and talk about "terrorism and gangsters". We have been depicted as a community of hill-billies, incapable of keeping the law, or of being trusted even with the control of our local affairs.

This state of affairs has been brought about deliberately by a small local clique who are prepared to use any weapons at hand to suit their own financial and political ends.

The weapons they have used, and are using are lies, slander, and political influence.

This campaign has been greatly intensified in the past month, and its effect has been so disastrous on Bankstown that it is time somebody stood up to them.

The Observer intends doing just that.

For years these people have been riding high, wide, and handsome over everybody they didn't like, and everybody who stood in their way.

GUNS, SLANDER

They have run some people out of Bankstown with guns, and others with a campaign of lies and slander.

Typical of their methods was their campaign to destroy Bankstown Council, which ended in success.

The only thing wrong with Bankstown Council was that they didn't control it.

So through their local Official Organ, they launched attack after attack on everything that the Council did.

They ran to the Local Government Department with stories of corruption and dishonesty. The politiciers they control joined in the clamour. Minister for Local Government, Renshaw, couldn't move out of his office without tripping over somebody with another story about how bad things were in Bankstown.

ANTI-LABOR PRESS

They fed the Sydney Press with stories of a similar nature. They got the Sydney Press on side by assuring it that a Royal Commission into Bankstown would bring to light enough dirt to destroy the Labor Government.

The destruction of the Labor Government is the policy of the Sydney Press, especially The Telegraph" so it is understandable that the anti-Bankstown campaign would get a run on this basis.

Their campaign of lies and slander finally resulted in the Bankstown Council being sacked for "incompetence".

This action was taken on a report which was given to the Government on December 23rd, 1953.

NEW COUNCIL

A NEW COUNCIL WITH EIGHT NEW ALDERMEN AND ONLY FOUR OF THE OLD COUNCIL HAD BEEN ELECTED ON DECEMBER 5TH!

So that the report must have referred, not to the new Council, but to the old.

But it made no difference. The clique which had not been able to secure the election of their candidates at the December election, had sufficient pull in Macquarie Street to get the new Council the sack.

It held Bankstown up to ridicule, and it deprived the citizens of Bankstown of self-Government that they had had for 56 years, but that didn't matter.

They were still not satisfied.

So for the last four weeks, they have mobilised their forces for a final effort that they think will finish the opposition to them for good and all.

OPEN SEASON

It has been an open season for the liars and slanderers of Bankstown.

A fire which may have been accidental, and may not have been accidental, has been made the excuse for charges that have made Bankstown sound like a Wild West village.

"The Observer" is not going to sit idly by while these people sling mud with both hands at decent citizens who happen to get in their way.

They are calling for exposures and revelations.

They can scarcely complain if they get them and neither can their friends in Macquarie Street or Canberra!