



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

## SENATE

FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFERENCES  
COMMITTEE

**Reference: Regional Partnerships Program**

THURSDAY, 10 MARCH 2005

CANBERRA

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE



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## SENATE

### FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFERENCES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 10 March 2005

**Members:** Senator Forshaw (*Chair*), Senator Watson (*Deputy Chair*), Senators George Campbell, Heffernan, Moore and Ridgeway

**Substitute members:** Senator Barnett for Senator Watson, Senator Johnston for Senator Heffernan, Senator Murray for Senator Ridgeway, Senator Carr for Senator George Campbell, and Senator O'Brien for Senator Moore

**Participating members:** Senators Abetz, Brandis, Boswell, Brown, Carr, Chapman, Colbeck, Conroy, Coonan, Crossin, Eggleston, Chris Evans, Faulkner, Ferguson, Ferris, Fifield, Harradine, Knowles, Ludwig, Lundy, Sandy Macdonald, Mackay, Mason, McGauran, McLucas, Murray, O'Brien, Payne, Robert Ray, Sherry, Stephens, Tchen, Tierney and Webber

**Senators in attendance:** Senators Barnett, Brandis, Brown, Carr, Forshaw, Johnston, Murray, O'Brien and Stephens

#### Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

- (1) The administration of the Regional Partnerships program and the Sustainable Regions program, with particular reference to the process by which projects are proposed, considered and approved for funding, including:
  - (a) decisions to fund or not to fund particular projects;
  - (b) the recommendations of area consultative committees;
  - (c) the recommendations of departmental officers and recommendations from any other sources including from other agencies or other levels of government;
  - (d) the nature and extent of the respective roles of the administering department, minister and parliamentary secretary, other ministers and parliamentary secretaries, other senators or members and their advisers and staff in the process of selection of successful applications;
  - (e) the criteria used to take the decision to fund projects;
  - (f) the transparency and accountability of the process and outcomes;
  - (g) the mechanism for authorising the funding of projects;
  - (h) the constitutionality, legality and propriety of any practices whereby any members of either House of Parliament are excluded from committees, boards or other bodies involved in the consideration of proposed projects, or coerced or threatened in an effort to prevent them from freely communicating with their constituents; and
  - (i) whether the operation of the program is consistent with the Auditor-General's 'Better Practice Guide for the Administration of Grants', and is subject to sufficient independent audit.
- (2) With respect to the future administration of similar programs, any safeguards or guidelines which might be put in place to ensure proper accountability for the expenditure of public money, particularly the appropriate arrangements for independent audit of the funding of projects.
- (3) Any related matters.

**WITNESSES**

**MAGUIRE, Mr Gregory Kevin, Chairman of Committee, Australian Equine and Livestock  
Centre..... 1**



**Committee met at 4.02 p.m.****MAGUIRE, Mr Gregory Kevin, Chairman of Committee, Australian Equine and Livestock Centre**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. I declare open this public hearing of the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee. Today's hearing is a continuation of the committee's inquiry into the administration of the Regional Partnerships program and the Sustainable Regions program. So far we have had four public hearings and published a number of submissions on the committee's web site. Mr Maguire, prior to this hearing the committee determined to receive and publish your submission. Evidence given to the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that witnesses are given broad protection from action arising from what they say and that the Senate has the power to protect them from any action which disadvantages them on account of the evidence given before the committee. I remind you that the giving of false or misleading evidence to the committee may constitute contempt of the Senate. We prefer to conduct our hearings in public. However, if there are any matters you wish to discuss with the committee in private, we will consider such a request. Mr Maguire, in what capacity do you appear today?

**Mr Maguire**—I am the Chairman of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre in Tamworth, New South Wales. I am appearing today in a private capacity or as the chairman. It is up to you.

**CHAIR**—As we go through evidence and questions, issues may arise. As you are aware, of course, we wrote to you initially advising you of the inquiry and inviting a submission. We subsequently wrote to you as a result of evidence given by earlier witnesses to give you the opportunity to appear and to respond. Thank you for providing us with your written submission. I also note that you have provided us with an opening statement. I do not think it is necessary for you to read that in detail to us, but I invite you to make some opening comments.

**Mr Maguire**—I would like to read my opening address. I believe it is important.

**CHAIR**—I think the committee is happy to let you do that but we do want to get to questions from the committee.

**Mr Maguire**—Thank you. I appear before the Senate here today in my capacity as chairman of the body known as the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre. I appear before this committee voluntarily to give evidence about the matters in the terms of reference, which are attached to my formal written submission to this committee. Whilst always willing to give evidence to the Senate inquiry if required, I have formed a view that the terms of reference do not specifically address and are not concerned with the discredited allegations of bribery by the Independent member for New England, Mr Tony Windsor. Those allegations were made under parliamentary privilege in the House of Representatives in November 2004, against me and the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson, and Senator Sandy Macdonald. I categorically rejected those allegations at the time and I again do so here today before this committee.

I do not consider that I have been given a fair go by Mr Windsor or that I or any other citizen is given a fair go by the parliamentary system. This is due to the ability of persons, such as Mr

Windsor, to improperly and unfairly attack members of the community under parliamentary privilege, whether in the House or before a committee such as this. Whilst I will be able to place some material on the public record today, I will never be able to adequately compensate for the harm done to me and my family by Mr Windsor's scurrilous allegations.

Mr Windsor has been associated with the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre proposed for Tamworth for some 12 years. This was both as a state parliamentary representative and as a federal parliamentary representative. Despite that long association, the reality is that Mr Windsor has been unable to deliver and get the project across the line. Mr Windsor has been ineffectual in that regard. In the same way I believe he is unfortunately becoming ineffectual in his wider electoral representation.

I became associated with the project some 18 months ago as a result of a direct request for my involvement by Mr Windsor. Prior to that approach I had been associated with Mr Windsor on a personal level and as a campaign supporter at both the state and federal levels. I had previously been a strong supporter of Mr Windsor and had done everything to further his political career and standing in the community, as I used to believe in and have faith in Mr Windsor. That is no longer the case. As a result of Mr Windsor's discredited and offensive allegations against me and the Deputy Prime Minister, and as a result of matters of record in parliament and before this Senate inquiry by Mr Windsor, which I believe to be untrue, I no longer regard Mr Windsor as a worthwhile individual warranting support or respect by me or other persons in the New England electorate.

I would like to comment on the AFP investigation. When I was interviewed by the Australian Federal Police about this matter, and as can be seen from my formal written submission to this inquiry, there was no suggestion put to me that funding for the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre was dependent upon Mr Windsor's resignation as a member of federal parliament. There was no suggestion put to me that the centre would not be funded under the Regional Partnerships program if Mr Windsor were associated with it. There was no suggestion put to me that I had told Mr Windsor or Mr Hall that I would be prepared to lie about these matters, and I reject those suggestions. There was no suggestion put to me that Mr Anderson had told me to get my 'mate' Mr Windsor to 'pull back'—my comment on Mr Windsor's evidence to parliament and the Senate.

Not only were none of these matters put to me by the AFP but I also deny them in any event, and I consider them to be part of a number of misleading statements and specific untruths by Mr Windsor to the House of Representatives and to this Senate inquiry. One of these specific matters is that Mr Windsor had resigned from the board of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre because the Deputy Prime Minister had made it a condition of funding for the centre that he do so. This is untrue, as I personally was responsible for asking Mr Windsor to resign from the board. I discussed the matter with Mr Windsor, and he agreed to step down from the board.

I had a similar discussion with the other politician on the board, the Independent state member for Tamworth, Mr Peter Draper. He also agreed to stand down from the board. In neither case did I tell them, nor was it a requirement, that they must not be associated with the centre in order for it to receive funding at either the federal or state government level. My reason was that it seemed to me to be better not to have Independent members of state and federal parliament on the board



when we were seeking funding from a state Labor government on the one hand and a Liberal-National coalition on the other hand.

Accordingly, I did not remove Mr Windsor from the board, in circumstances as alleged by him or at all. In fact, I did not have the power to remove him from the board. He stood down from the board by agreement with me, as did Mr Draper. It was my personal view that it was better not to have any politicians on the board. I also told Mr Windsor and Mr Draper that, once we had the centre up and running, if they wanted to go back on the board then that would be fine as far as I was concerned. Their agreement to stand down was not a major issue at the time. In Mr Windsor's maiden speech in federal parliament on 14 February 2002 he told the House of Representatives:

There are a couple of local electorate issues that I would urge the ministers involved to take up. One is in the city of Tamworth where we are embracing a national equine centre. Australia does not have a national equine centre where events of international significance can be put on. Currently the Tamworth community has raised \$10.5 million to go towards the \$14 million project and requires \$3.5 million from the federal government. I am sure the Minister for Transport and Regional Services will look on that favourably.

That is in the *Hansard*. The truth is that \$10.5 million had not been raised or committed from the Tamworth community at that time. There were no formal agreements. They were not even MOUs, memorandums of understanding, in existence either then or subsequently, by the time I was appointed chairman, for any such funding.

Mr Windsor has told this inquiry that the submission recently put by the reconstituted committee of which I am chairman was the same submission as he and the committee of which he had formed a part for the last 12 years had been unsuccessfully putting to the federal and state governments for support. That is patently untrue. The previous submission, which should be available from the local area consultative committee or elsewhere, was quite different in its presentation by and assessment on behalf of the committee. Unlike the current submission, the previous submission was not supported by commitments to the extent of \$2 million from the equine industry and \$3 million from the Tamworth Regional Council, as the current submission is. The previous submission was not self-sufficient even if the requested government funding was granted. Rather it was a submission which on its face showed a \$5 million shortfall. There is no basis for Mr Windsor to assert that the submissions were the same. For Mr Windsor to now seek personal credit, effectively, for the current submission, which has received a favourable recommendation for approval, is also quite wrong and misleading.

Mr Windsor has given evidence to this inquiry to the effect that I gave him limited support in his election campaigns—that I gave some help in 2001, according to his evidence with, 'some advice to terms of advertising' and I 'approached a few people to help' raise money for his campaign—and he was 'not aware that I had made any personal contribution'. The reality, as Mr Windsor well knows, as would his campaign manager, Mr Stephen Hall, is that I was very influential in attracting financial support for him from the business community in the Tamworth region. I also organised a major part of his federal television marketing campaign strategy and placement for the 2001 federal election. In addition, for his successful campaigns in his 10-year term as an Independent member for Tamworth in the state parliament, I assisted him both in raising financial support and with advice as to his television campaign placements and strategies.

Mr Windsor is also aware that my companies have made substantial financial contributions to his political campaigns over the years.

Mr Windsor also told this committee that he worked hard with the local area consultative committee in connection with the proposal for the funding of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre under the Regional Partnerships program. The local area consultative committee now has direct responsibility to receive and process such applications. Previously the local area consultative committee did not have such a direct role when they were responsible for the Regional Solutions Program, which was an initiative of the previous federal Labor government.

I do not know how Mr Windsor could give that evidence to this inquiry. I say that because of discussions I have had with Mr Kevin Humphries, the chairman of the local area consultative committee, the LACC. Mr Humphries said that Mr Windsor chose to ignore the LACC's advice and to bypass them. Mr Humphries assumed that this was because Mr Windsor thought that the committee somehow represented the government and therefore he would be beholden to the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr John Anderson. It is my view that Mr Windsor has had an abiding and unbalanced hatred of Mr Anderson ever since Mr Anderson was selected by the National Party for the federal seat of Gwydir instead of Mr Windsor. I understand from Mr Humphries that he went to see Mr Windsor about the centre after Professor Chudleigh's report rejecting the previous proposal from the committee of which Mr Windsor formed part. Mr Humphries told Mr Windsor that it was of critical importance that the project association, the P and A, which owns the Tamworth Showgrounds, be brought on side. The P and A had to support the creation of the new centre and to agree to move their activities to the new centre, despite the fact that they had been in existence on the showground site for over 100 years. It is in fact a requirement of the Regional Partnerships program that any proposal should have community support and should not be divisive. Accordingly, without that fundamental issue being addressed—and it was not addressed in the 12 years that Mr Windsor was associated with the matter—the project was doomed to failure and would not receive the required funding from the federal government. However, Mr Windsor was not prepared to work with Mr Humphries and the local area consultative committee. He wanted to run his own race.

Mr Windsor's latest attack on me in his evidence to this inquiry, aided and abetted by his campaign manager, Mr Hall, now adds insult to injury by stating that the bribery allegations—now discredited by the Australian Federal Police and the Commonwealth Director of Prosecutions—against me and the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anderson, are matters about which I was supposedly prepared to lie. I deny that allegation. This new allegation was never raised by Mr Windsor in May 2004, nor was it ever put to me by the Australian Federal Police in November 2004, nor was it raised by Mr Windsor in the House of Representatives when he dealt with his claims on a number of occasions in November 2004. Rather, it comes as some sensationalised further revelation when he gives evidence to this committee in February 2005.

To me, the timing of this aspect has remarkable similarities to the belated disclosure of what Mr Windsor now says was a grossly offensive offer allegedly put by me to Mr Windsor on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anderson, in May 2004. The significance of such allegations would and should have been fully appreciated by Mr Windsor, if they were made, which I deny. This is because of Mr Windsor's knowledge of the Terry Metherill affair in state parliament, which this inquiry had already explored with him. Mr Windsor's original throwaway comment

has come back to haunt him. As well as seeking to justify that comment, he has now seen it as an opportunity to get even with his former National Party colleagues.

In particular, in my view, Mr Windsor is paranoid about the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anderson. I am now the meat in the sandwich in Mr Windsor's ongoing vendetta against the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia. Mr Windsor seems prepared to go to any length to blacken the Deputy Prime Minister's name and does not care what harm he does in seeking to achieve that outcome, in my view. I also believe that every time Mr Windsor sees the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia he believes that he, Mr Windsor, and not Mr Anderson, should be in that position. In the circumstances, I totally reject Mr Windsor's allegations against me. I also totally reject Mr Windsor's standing as a person of truth because of the matters referred to by me. For me, Mr Windsor no longer has any credibility.

I continue to fully support the concept of the Australian Equine and Livestock Centre and maintain that the proposal to establish it at Tamworth on the greenfield site acquired by the Tamworth Regional Council stands on its objective merits. The project justifies funding by both state and federal governments and, in particular, funding as proposed under the Regional Partnerships program. Whether this inquiry does or does not choose to do anything to protect my standing and reputation in the community, or whatever else it does, I consider that this inquiry should be able to reach the same conclusion and support the funding for the centre.

**CHAIR**—Thank you, Mr Maguire. Members of the committee, who would like to start the questioning?

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I am happy to start. Mr Maguire, thank you for coming and joining us today. Did you prepare the statement that you have just read to us?

**Mr Maguire**—I did.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I take it that the sworn declaration that was tendered as your submission was prepared with the assistance of legal practitioners?

**Mr Maguire**—It was.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—But not the opening statement?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—In terms of your appearance today, did you have discussions with anyone about the content of the submission that you have just presented to us?

**Mr Maguire**—The only person I have had discussions with is my legal adviser.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you had discussions with your legal adviser about this document, but you prepared it yourself?

**Mr Maguire**—My opening statement is mine; for my affidavit I was assisted by my lawyers.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So this opening statement was not discussed with anyone before its presentation today?

**Mr Maguire**—It was discussed with my lawyer, but it was not prepared by my lawyer.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Was there any discussion with anyone from the National Party about it?

**Mr Maguire**—There has not been.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—When was the last time you spoke to the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anderson?

**Mr Maguire**—The last time I saw Mr Anderson was at the break-up of the end of term at NEGS, the New England Girls School in Armidale, which my daughter attends. His daughter goes to that school and I saw him there.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—End of term last year?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, 2004.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—When did you last speak with Senator Sandy Macdonald?

**Mr Maguire**—I spoke to Mr Macdonald today when I walked into Parliament House.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—When was your last discussion with Mr Windsor?

**Mr Maguire**—The last time I spoke to Mr Windsor was last year. I do not know the date but it was well into last year. I have not spoken to him for quite a long time.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—The middle of the year or early in the year?

**Mr Maguire**—It would have been towards the latter part—October or November.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Paragraph 25 of your sworn submission says that you do not want this committee to ask you questions about matters other than the equine centre project. I take it that we can ignore that in the context of your statement to us today?

**Mr Maguire**—This has been fully investigated by the AFP and the DPP. I am here to answer questions according to the terms of reference, which I have read. I do not believe that I am here to be the turkey in a turkey shoot.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You have made comments in your statement and comments in your submission.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I take it that you are prepared to answer questions relating to those comments and statements?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Did you read the *Hansard* transcript—I think that it would have been sent to you—of evidence given by Mr Hall to this committee?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I did.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—That was on 3 February, I think.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I did.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You are aware then that Mr Hall gave detailed evidence of meetings and telephone conversations with you in May 2004 and later, stretching almost to the end of last year?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—In the statement that you have just made I do not recall any specific refutation. Do you refute all of his evidence or is there any part of his evidence that you agree with?

**Mr Maguire**—I would agree that I spoke to him, yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Did all of those meetings and telephone conversations occur as contained in the sworn evidence of Mr Hall?

**Mr Maguire**—Without rereading it that is a hard question to answer, to be very frank. But on the document that I read that was sent to me by the Senate the phone conversation and the meeting on 19th were correct.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—And the subsequent conversations around the time of the Federal Police conducting interviews? I want to know if the conversations that he said took place did take place.

**Mr Maguire**—I spoke to Mr Hall when Mr Windsor was going public. I do not deny that. At the end of the day this whole thing is about Tony Windsor promoting Tony Windsor. I do not deny speaking to Mr Hall.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So we can accept that those conversations took place at the time alleged by Mr Hall?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—As to the content of those conversations, Mr Hall made a number of comments which indicated that you were then in discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister about the inquiry being conducted by the Federal Police.

**Mr Maguire**—That is incorrect.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So the conversations took place between you and Mr Hall but what he says was the content of those conversations you dispute?

**Mr Maguire**—I dispute.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Can you tell us what, in your view, was actually discussed.

**Mr Maguire**—With Mr Hall?

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—My conversations with Mr Hall were purely along the lines that this was a total destructive approach by Mr Windsor. Now remember something here: this guy was my friend; this guy was a mate of mine. I think this has been lost in all of this. My conversations with Mr Hall were purely along the lines of saying to him that they are jeopardising the chance of us getting funding—the publicity would jeopardise everything and it was just not sensible to do that.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So the allegations raised by Mr Windsor, in your view, were jeopardising the funding. Is that how I should understand that last comment? Did I understand you correctly?

**Mr Maguire**—Repeat your last question.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Were you just telling me that, in your conversations with Mr Hall, you were saying that the allegations by Mr Windsor were jeopardising the funding for the equine centre?

**Mr Maguire**—Commonsense, Senator. I have been a small business man all my life, in the country, and all of a sudden I am thrown on every TV station in this land because of a parliamentary blunder made with a throwaway comment by my friend. So certainly I was offended and I did not want to speak to Mr Windsor. I spoke to Mr Hall. I told him my personal views. But if you are insinuating that I was given a message by someone or something that it would affect anything—no, that is not correct.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I am merely asking a question in relation to the evidence of Mr Hall. Mr Hall gave certain evidence about the content of conversations. He said conversations occurred at certain times.

**Mr Maguire**—Senator, if you would like to refer to that clause of Mr Hall's statement—if you would read that out—I will give you an exact comment on it.

**Senator CARR**—We might get a few comments.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I am sure Senator Carr intends to deal with that, but I want to deal with the essence of your view at that time and what you thought was actually the subject of those conversations, if indeed they took place. That is why I am asking you whether what I thought you were saying was accurate—and that was that you were saying to Mr Hall that the raising of the allegation by Mr Windsor was jeopardising the funding for the equine centre.

**Mr Maguire**—My personal view was it was stupidity, and I had told him that.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—And that is what you were saying to Mr Hall in all of those conversations?

**Mr Maguire**—That is several months ago, as you know, Senator, and if I were to remember each conversation I would be a genius, and I am not.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Mr Hall I think said his recollections were taken from contemporaneously taken notes. You do not have any such notes?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Can I take you to paragraph 7 of your submission—not the statement today but the submission. When you say the AFP advised you it was undertaking an investigation into allegations about a meeting on or about 19 May 2004, did you get that advice in writing from the Federal Police? It appears to be a quote in your submission. That is why I am asking you.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, we did get a letter from the Federal Police, and I also had, I tend to think, two or three phone calls to my PA from the Federal Police making arrangements for me to be interviewed.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So there is a record from which you have taken those words, and a letter from the Federal Police?

**Mr Maguire**—The words in clause 7?

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—Sir, if you look in your notes, I have supplied them to you and they are actually written in the press release by the Federal Police and the DPP. They are the exact words released.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—In your statement you said:

On Saturday, 2 October I was interviewed by two officers from Australian Federal Police ... I was advised that they were ...

Then you quote a passage. I was asking where that passage came from. Are you saying it came from the document dated 22 November?

**Mr Maguire**—Are you referring to clause 7 or 8?

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Seven.

**Mr Maguire**—I am not 100 per cent sure. I am not sure if that was in the letter from the Federal Police or if that was on the tapes. The whole interview was taped and there are tape records of the interview. So I would say confidently that they were either in the letter or the tapes. They would not be in there if they weren't.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You were given copies of the tapes of the record of interview?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I was. I remember now where they came from. I received tapes and I also received a fully transcribed document in writing. Those two or three there were actually in that as well. So they were in tape and in document form.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—That is interesting because other persons who were interviewed said that to their recollection their interviews were not taped, but yours was, clearly.

**Mr Maguire**—Mine were taped. I can tell you exactly: the interview went for probably 1½ to two hours and the Federal Police officers stopped the interview on two or three occasions to change the tapes. There were, I think, four tapes in the machine at each time, of which they kept three and I was given one of each copy. About three weeks after that I received the total transcript of the tapes in writing.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—And it was just you and the two AFP officers present during the interview?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, that is correct. When they rang me I thought about it. I thought, 'What should I do?' I had nothing to hide and I made a decision that I would meet with the Federal Police, and I met with them on my own in my own boardroom.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Is it the case that the subject of your interview with the AFP related solely to your meeting with Mr Windsor on or about 19 May?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, the crux of the full interview—that would be correct.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Would it be fair for me to assume, or can you confirm, that you were not asked to disclose details of any other meetings or conversations with Mr Anderson or Mr Windsor that took place, for example, in the months following your May meeting?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, there were questions asked.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Were questions asked about what took place after May?



**Mr Maguire**—Yes, there were—to my recollection. We are going back nearly a year to May but to my recollection there was—

**Senator O'BRIEN**—We are going back to October.

**Mr Maguire**—October. The investigation by the Federal Police was October but a lot of the questions were going back to May. That is what I am saying.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Yes. I am just asking the question because you will have noted that Mr Hall said that officers did not seem interested in pursuing anything beyond that May meeting with him.

**Mr Maguire**—They asked questions.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—They asked you questions about matters that took place. Did they ask about conversations you might have had with Mr Hall or Mr Windsor contemporaneous with their interview with you?

**Mr Maguire**—They asked the question whether I had any contemporaneous notes. Senator, look, I cannot remember.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I can only ask you to give evidence about matters that you can recall—

**Mr Maguire**—Thank you.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—and recount with accuracy. You say in your submission that no person ever suggested to you that the equine centre project would benefit if Mr Windsor was no longer associated with it.

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Is that what you told the Australian Federal Police?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—And that is the position you maintain today?

**Mr Maguire**—I maintain that position today, and I will broaden it for you. What you have to understand here is that I was asked to be the chairman of this project, which had failed for 12 years. Once I took over the chair I took all the documents—and they go back years, there are that many—and I had been through all those documents. It was very clear to me the reason why the project had never worked was purely that it was very unprofessionally put together. I am a businessman; I hopefully run a successful company and I try and be as professional as I can. This project had more holes in it than a colander but, at the end of the day, I went into this project as Tony Windsor had asked me to be the chairman. We would not be here today if it were not for a throwaway line on radio—that is where this whole thing started. I had started to see that Tony could not deliver this project. After meeting with the area consultative committee it was very easy to see that he had not been working with them. So that is where that was.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You are talking about a throwaway line on radio. Do you mean Mr Windsor's comments to a journalist about the alleged offer to stand down from parliament?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I do.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—My recollection is that that was to a print journalist rather than on radio, but it may have been on subsequent radio interviews.

**Mr Maguire**—No, it was a throwaway line on radio that was picked up by the press.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Okay. In paragraph 14 of your submission you say you had general discussions with Mr Anderson prior to your meeting with Mr Windsor on 19 May. Does that mean more than one discussion? I am not sure from the terminology that you put to us there whether it is general discussions at a meeting or a number of discussions at a number of meetings.

**Mr Maguire**—As you all know, when Mr Windsor came out with all of this he said the meeting was the night before. It was not. It did not take place the night before; it took place several days before. I had been trying to get to see Mr Anderson for quite a while, and the reason to see him was that it had become very clear to me—and remember, I paid the ultimate price because I committed the sin on 19 May of telling Mr Windsor as a mate that I believed he was being ineffectual. I told him in my office. The words were my words, and they are in my statement. I have said that all along. This was after working on this project. The project was so unprofessionally handled and put together that within a matter of months it was easy to see—and I was one of the people who originally came out publicly and criticised Professor Chudleigh. I am embarrassed to say that after I took the chair and was privy to all the documents I thought the government's decision to appoint an independent consultant to review the project was correct. It was correct because the project was full of holes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—If I can go back to my question, as you make that point in your submission. I think what you just told us is that where you talk in your submission about 'general discussions by me with Mr Anderson' refers to a particular meeting.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Not a number of meetings?

**Mr Maguire**—No. That refers to my meeting with Mr Anderson, which was held several days prior to the meeting of the 19th that I held with Mr Windsor.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—That was a meeting that took place over some considerable period of time.

**Mr Maguire**—No, that is incorrect. Mr Anderson was coming to Tamworth to do a budget breakfast on the following morning. I think the appointment was made for around 8 p.m. on the previous night to the budget breakfast. I received a call to say that their plane was late, and they did not arrive until around 9.30 p.m. There was Senator Macdonald, Mr Anderson and Mr

Anderson's PA, I think, or one of his advisers. We met for, I would say, probably no more than 1½ hours or one hour and 40 minutes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So it was somewhere between an hour and a half and two hours.

**Mr Maguire**—An hour and a half, somewhere around that time.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You put in your statement to us that you said things about Mr Windsor and Mr Windsor's problems with the National Party. I take it they are a snippet of the conversation and that you were talking about the equine centre and other matters?

**Mr Maguire**—We were talking about the equine centre for the majority of the time. The issue that was of paramount importance in the whole project, and I did not know this until I had spoken directly with Mr Anderson, other than with the area consultative committee—the area consultative committee had made it clear about the P and A, which are the ultimate owners of the Tamworth Showgrounds.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Can you tell us about the P and A? That is a bit of a mystery to Tasmanians who do not know the intricacies of Tamworth.

**Mr Maguire**—In New South Wales a lot of the showgrounds are owned by P and A societies. The structure in Tamworth is no different from what is fairly common in most areas of New South Wales, and I think Queensland. Originally putting the complex at the showgrounds was looked at. What you have to understand here is that there was tremendous angst within the community because, if we were to build this large national equine centre, the P and A, which owns the showgrounds and which over the years has done a magnificent job to develop the equine industry in Tamworth, would lose around 60 to 70 per cent of its total income. Remember, I have only been on this project for just under 18 months, not for the 12 years. When all the pieces were put together it was very clear, and it was not until I met with the Deputy Prime Minister that he made it very clear that, from the community's position, the government would want the city in unison because, under Regional Partnerships, there is a set of rules and one of those rules is that if there is a competing claim for funds or a divisiveness in the community the federal government will not look upon those developments.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—That is what Mr Anderson said to you?

**Mr Maguire**—No. I had known about that from documentation. But Mr Anderson was very concerned that there was divisiveness within the community, and there was.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Because of this P and A situation?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Did he raise the P and A situation with you?

**Mr Maguire**—He did.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—What did Mr Anderson say about your comments about Mr Windsor and the issue of the bad feelings between him and Mr Windsor? I take it you raised that with him as well.

**Mr Maguire**—They don't like each other, and that is paramount. Let us get one thing straight here. I supported Tony Windsor for a long time. I did not know John Anderson—I knew who he was, of course—and we did not mix. I did not support the National Party. I am not even a member of a party. It is clear that there is animosity. Because I have been on the inside I can now look very clearly at what has happened here. There is really a hatred on Tony's side. I always knew there were issues—because of discussions with Tony over the years—but, at the end of the day, the Deputy Prime Minister did not, in my meetings with him, ever talk disparagingly. Blind Freddy could see that they aren't mates but, at the end of the day, I actually brought up the subject with Mr Anderson that he had created his own problem, and we talked about that for 20 minutes. I brought that subject up and it was discussed.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Did you discuss Mr Windsor's role on the equine centre committee with Mr Anderson?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Did you tell Mr Anderson you were meeting with Mr Windsor on 19 May?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Is it anything more than coincidence that your expressed views about Mr Windsor, as reflected in paragraph 14 of your submission, bear a remarkable similarity to the National Party campaign theme in the seat of New England at the last election?

**Mr Maguire**—I am my own man. I do not copy. I do not take instructions from anyone. If you were to hold this inquiry in Tamworth, which I would welcome you to do, you would be inundated with people who would like to speak before you. There is a feeling across the board now that Mr Windsor is becoming ineffectual. For all those years I was blinded by 'he's a great bloke'. When I told him on the 19th of my own views he dug a hole for himself and the only way out was to bury me. It was very simple; that is what happened.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You are pretty bitter about having been publicly involved in this matter.

**Mr Maguire**—I am bitter, because I have worked hard all my life. I have never been a public figure. I am not a very social person. I work hard. I had 200-odd media people on my doorstep for three days. I had helicopters over my home, over my farm. I had press coming over hills down the back of one of my farms. It is not right. But I am a big boy and I suppose I can't do anything about it. If I ever had any ideas of becoming a politician, they have been dulled!

**Senator MURRAY**—That is why we take pleasure when now and again a member of the media has that experience too!

**Senator O'BRIEN**—On the question of effectiveness: you say you told Mr Anderson that many people in the electorate of New England thought Mr Windsor was not very effective. My assessment is that if effectiveness is judged by—

**Mr Maguire**—Election results?

**Senator O'BRIEN**—election results and by outcomes for one's electorate, the government has awarded Mr Windsor's electorate Regional Partnerships grants valued at \$5,787,837, excluding the equine centre project. Does that undermine your argument about effectiveness?

**Mr Maguire**—No, I believe it does not. The general feeling among the corporate part of the city is that Tony is becoming ineffectual. He will be re-elected with very strong figures next time he stands. He is well liked—as I said, he was a friend of mine for a long, long time.

**CHAIR**—Do you appreciate the argument that Mr Windsor has put and others would put that an Independent member's electorate may be penalised in some way because of the member's status as an Independent and that your comment about being ineffectual may not necessarily be because of who the person is or the work they do but because of how they are treated by a majority government—remembering that when Mr Windsor was an Independent in the New South Wales parliament the Independents had the balance of power?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**CHAIR**—That carries with it sometimes, I suppose, added strength.

**Senator MURRAY**—More responsibility.

**CHAIR**—Do you have a comment on that?

**Mr Maguire**—I agree with your view.

**CHAIR**—I am just putting that.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—As to the meeting on 19 May you had with Mr Windsor, Mr Hall—

**Mr Maguire**—Ms Tickle and Mr Hall.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Yes. Was anyone else present?

**Mr Maguire**—No, there was not.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Why did you think Mr Windsor could get a ministry if he rolled over to the Liberal Party or the National Party?

**Mr Maguire**—Read history. At the end of the day, I am not a political animal. I do not play politics. I am involved in the city. I am involved in trying to drive my area, which is Tamworth and the region. We are very proud of what we have achieved in that area. We have one of the

highest growth rates in regional Australia. There are reasons for that. We have a very strong corporate structure of citizens; we have very good businesspeople who are prepared to physically put their money in and do things and make things happen. I believe that is why our city is growing. Also, we have a very aggressive mayor who makes things happen.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I am just trying to understand your evidence and Mr Windsor's. For the scenario that I just referred to to play out, Mr Windsor would have had to stay in parliament but stand for the coalition. Is that what you envisaged?

**Mr Maguire**—When I spoke to Tony, it was apparent to me, after trying to put this project together, that you would be very foolish to think that, if you are not in government, you have the same power as if you are in government. That is me personally. One of the things I would like to point out very clearly here—which I have said in my statement—is that all of the discussions I had with Mr Windsor and Ms Tickle and Mr Hall were purely about whether he wanted to roll over. I said to him, 'I believe we would do a lot better. I believe that I have seen now, after trying to put this project together, that we can't be effectual'—we. At the end of the day, I was making those statements to them.

I would like to point out also that—maybe even in this same room—under oath the previous witnesses of Mr Windsor both admitted I never used John Anderson's name or said I was representing John Anderson or said anything to do with John Anderson. Please let's remember that. It was me, Greg Maguire, that always went to Tony—sorry; Tony came to my office, but it was me who wanted to do that. We can sit here today and we can talk about the soft and nice things but the reality is if Tony Windsor rang up one of the major parties in government and said, 'I've decided this is not working,' then I think they would be pretty happy to talk to him. That is my view and my view only.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you did not discuss that scenario with Mr Anderson at any time?

**Mr Maguire**—I did not.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—What about Senator Sandy Macdonald or his staff?

**Mr Maguire**—I did not.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you formed that view without talking to anyone in the coalition?

**Mr Maguire**—Senator O'Brien, I built my business from nothing over 35 years to what it is today. I had 400 employees up to two years ago. You build your business by working hard and trying to make the right decisions and thinking. That was not a hard decision to come to because, as I keep saying to you, it was apparent that Tony could not get this project over the wire. They had tried and tried and tried, and it was because it was so amateur in the way it was put together.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Let me put another view that an outsider might take about this as a proposition to you. Mr Windsor saw that there was something stopping the project proceeding further. He may have perceived that his involvement and longstanding enmity with Mr Anderson was a barrier, saw you as a person who might get the project over the line and approached you to become the chair. That is what happened, isn't it?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct. He approached me, yes.

**Senator O'Brien**—As a result of approaching you, you were able to get the project over the line, as he thought you might.

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**Senator O'Brien**—Credit goes to Mr Windsor for the right judgment then, doesn't it?

**Mr Maguire**—Credit goes to Mr Windsor for the selection, yes, but what I said before I repeat again: it was only because the project was totally reinvented, which is contrary to what Mr Windsor has said to you.

**Senator O'Brien**—He talked about the applications being basically the same. Presumably we can get copies of both applications.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, certainly.

**Senator O'Brien**—The government have not been prepared to assist this committee in getting those documents, but perhaps—

**Mr Maguire**—You certainly can. Tamworth Regional Council made a submission to you, in which there is a clause that says, I think, that they will cooperate fully with you and supply whatever documentation you need. But, just so you know, we selected a consultancy firm to put the project together. The consultancy firm also had an accountant audit side to it as well, so it was very, very different in the way we approached the project.

**Senator O'Brien**—I am exploring your submission, and I think we understand where you are coming from as a result of some of the answers that you have given about your feelings with regard to Mr Windsor. The proposition I put to you is that whatever the failings of his involvement, his decision to appoint you as chair was critically important in the project finally getting up. Is that a reasonable proposition?

**Mr Maguire**—That is reasonable and that is your view.

**Senator O'Brien**—In terms of the examination of this project, are you telling us that there are witnesses in Tamworth who wish to give evidence about this particular project or other projects, or is the evidence you say they want to give about Mr Windsor?

**Mr Maguire**—Senator O'Brien, I believe there would be other people that would be prepared to give evidence in this inquiry.

**Senator O'Brien**—I am just asking what their evidence would be about.

**Mr Maguire**—I think one of the people that would be interesting to talk to would be the chairman of the area consultative committee. I think the other person that would be very interesting to talk to, who has been part of the project for 12 years, would be the Mayor of the Tamworth Regional Council.

**Senator STEPHENS**—You mentioned the independent professional consultants. Who were those consultants?

**Mr Maguire**—The consultancy firm was a company called Bevan Coote and Associates.

**Senator STEPHENS**—Where are they based?

**Mr Maguire**—They are based in Tamworth. The senior partner of Bevan Coote and Associates is Bevan Coote. He was the major person with Qantas for many years who did all of their new projects and viability statements. He was very instrumental in putting Jetstar together. It is a very, very highly qualified team.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I have ascertained that although the New England North West Area Consultative Committee was not initially prepared to assist the committee they have now indicated, I think, that they will. I am not sure what the committee's program is but at this stage I do not have any more questions.

**CHAIR**—I have a question and then we will go to the government senators. You have said that you suggested that Mr Windsor should go and talk to the Liberals or to Mr Anderson. Why did you say he should go and talk to John Anderson, given that you were aware that there was this enmity, as you said, between them? Was there anything particular—

**Mr Maguire**—No. As I said, this is nearly 12 months ago now but I remember saying very clearly to him that he probably should talk to the Liberals, because I honestly did not believe that he would go and talk—

**CHAIR**—To John Anderson or The Nationals?

**Mr Maguire**—That is right, yes.

**CHAIR**—You didn't think The Nationals were ineffective, did you!

**Mr Maguire**—We talked about the Liberals because of government, and that was where I was coming from with this. At the end of it I did say to him: 'Look, you've got nothing to lose. I would go and talk to them. And I would also—I think you should—talk to John Anderson.' Over a couple of years ago I tried to talk to Tony about talking to Mr Anderson, not in terms of rolling over his seat or anything like that, but that was never going to happen.

**CHAIR**—Why would you put that proposition to him, knowing him as well as you knew him? From Mr Windsor's comments to us and I think to you in terms of what you have said in your affidavit, I understand he would be a person who would jealously guard his independent status now, notwithstanding that he was a member of the party previously. Did you really seriously think that he would even entertain the prospect?

**Mr Maguire**—No, I suppose in hindsight I did not. But where that rolled off was Stephen Hall, remember, was present in that meeting and Stephen, in that meeting, was not that anti what I was talking about. He did not really put any view forward that was negative. It was a statement that I made that I felt—



**CHAIR**—Could you at least conceive that Mr Windsor could have taken your comments as being ones that were based upon an offer that might be held out by the Deputy Prime Minister or someone else?

**Mr Maguire**—No—

**CHAIR**—In other words, if you said, ‘Go and talk to Mr Anderson,’ what did you think Mr Windsor’s reaction was?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not believe so, because I speak pretty direct. I think Tony knew where I was coming from and the others also did. So, at the end of the day—

**CHAIR**—But in that sense, Mr Maguire, it sounds like it was a proposition that you did not even think was a serious one.

**Mr Maguire**—I said it.

**CHAIR**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator CARR**—And you were serious when you said it?

**Mr Maguire**—I was serious about it. Remember what I said previously: the conversation centred on the Liberal Party, not The Nationals, but I did say it, because at the end of the day my comment to Tony was something along the lines of ‘you have nothing to lose’.

**Senator CARR**—And Mr Windsor swore at you, didn’t he, or he swore in his reply?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not believe so.

**Senator CARR**—He has provided evidence to the committee that that is the case.

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**CHAIR**—I put this to you: I would suggest that most politicians would take such a proposition as—

**Senator CARR**—Offensive.

**CHAIR**—Maybe offensive, but they would also take it as a serious proposition, unless it was actually said in the context of a joke or something like that. If somebody said, I think, to any member of the Labor Party, ‘Go and talk to so-and-so about something or other,’ you would wonder to yourself what—

**Senator BRANDIS**—Is the discourse in the Labor Party different from—

**CHAIR**—No.

**Senator CARR**—Some of the language I have heard from you, Senator Brandis, suggests it might be.

**CHAIR**—No, what I am putting to you is that, if that proposition was put to a member of parliament of one party—that they should go and talk to another party official or minister or whatever about a potential appointment—they would think that was something that was being put to them seriously. I do not suggest that they would necessarily accept, but I am saying they would not just dismiss that as a light-hearted comment.

**Mr Maguire**—The reason I had that discussion was that I believed that Tony was at that stage in a position of being ineffectual. I will not go back over the same ground. But I will also say that if conversations such as the one I had with Mr Windsor have not happened with other parliamentarians then we must all believe in fairies at the bottom of the garden.

**CHAIR**—Yes, but offers to people to—

**Mr Maguire**—This was not an offer. How could I offer—

**CHAIR**—No, but if it is taken by an MP as having been put to them as if it were an offer or a potential offer to be made if they make the relevant inquiry, that sort of thing I think would be pretty rare and that is why it would be taken pretty seriously. I am not suggesting it has not happened.

**Senator MURRAY**—Mr Maguire, I am one of six senators who will have to make sense out of this and write a report. In doing so, we will have to make a judgement about the character and coherence and truthfulness, if you like, of the evidence that is put to us. The Senate is very particular about where an inference has been made in one witness's evidence and is very keen to offer the opportunity to that person to be able to put their case to the Senate. My first question is: is this hearing important to you in terms of your reputation and putting on the record your views about the matter we are inquiring into?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, it is. Originally I was very angry about what has happened to me and my family in this matter. After time and after reading the documentation from the hearings I believe this is probably the closest way I will get to at least being able to put the truth forward, and that is why I am here.

**Senator MURRAY**—Your opening statement, your submission and, of course, your evidence to us has to be seen in that light then. Surely you would wish to be as prepared as possible in this matter, and yet you say you only discussed this matter with your lawyer.

**Mr Maguire**—In terms of my affidavit?

**Senator MURRAY**—You said that your submission to us was prepared with the assistance of your solicitor and that your written statement was discussed with your solicitor but he did not help you prepare it. That is accurate, isn't it?

**Mr Maguire**—That is accurate. Mr Sands had phoned me on a couple of occasions and written to me asking if I wanted to appear. Originally I said no. I felt that, as I said previously, I would just be the turkey at the turkey shoot. After reading the copies that I was sent by the Senate, I actually started to feel that I would be given a fair opportunity to put my side forward. In terms of my lawyers, one of the things I think is grossly unfair in all of this—and I am not given the comfort that Mr Windsor has—is that, when I was accused by Mr Windsor, as you know, I had to give a statement because I had half the press in Australia trying to find me, and my legal fees have run into tens of thousands of dollars over that period. Where we are today is that my lawyers helped me prepare my affidavit, which is a very important document. I wrote my opening statement.

**Senator MURRAY**—So you did not discuss this with a business friend or mate whose judgment you would trust and you did not discuss it with your wife or any close friend—nothing of that sort?

**Mr Maguire**—I actually sent my wife overseas because of this Senate inquiry. That is how tough it has been on my family. The other thing that will surprise you is that I have not shown or discussed both of these documents with anyone because I only finished my affidavit yesterday—it is dated yesterday—and I started writing my opening statement when Mr Sands came back to me with a time for me to appear. So these have not been discussed with friends or business acquaintances.

**Senator MURRAY**—The one thing I should reassure you on is that politicians, perhaps all and certainly most, do understand the issues of stress on family in matters of political importance.

**Mr Maguire**—I am sure.

**Senator MURRAY**—Moving on from there, I want to ask you a series of questions which are similar to those I asked the other principal witnesses in this matter. The first is: do you have a practical man's knowledge of the law or a general understanding of what is right and wrong in a legal sense?

**Mr Maguire**—I left school at 15 years of age. I am not a highly educated man but I am self-taught. I suppose I have learned the hard way, yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—Some of the cleverest men and women this country has seen have not been highly educated, so it is no measure of your intellect or your ability. I asked you whether you had a practical understanding of what is right and wrong in the law.

**Mr Maguire**—I certainly do.

**Senator MURRAY**—Are you aware now that for anyone to make an offer to a parliamentarian to stand aside from their position in return for something like a diplomatic post is a crime?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I am aware now.

**Senator MURRAY**—Were you aware of that at the time that you made statements to Mr Windsor in the language that you have described to us that you made them?

**Mr Maguire**—No, I was not.

**Senator MURRAY**—You realise that is similar to the evidence given by Ms Tickle and Mr Hall?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—That being so, I want you to go to those areas which accord with their evidence and those which slightly disagree. What accords with their evidence is what you have said—that is, they never heard you say that Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald asked you to say to Mr Windsor, ‘We will give you some post in return for you stepping aside.’ That is accurate, isn’t it?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct. I think it is even stronger than that where one of those witnesses said they felt I did not even mention Mr Anderson’s name.

**Senator MURRAY**—I have a long experience of human nature, of business and all sorts of other things, some of which I would rather not have experienced. I know that even the most able and capable people will do foolish things and make foolish statements. Were you simply being foolish and big-noting yourself by stating to Mr Windsor that he could take a certain course of action and he would get some other things, as if you were in the know about things that you could not have known about?

**Mr Maguire**—No, I was not.

**Senator MURRAY**—Are you in the practice, as a businessperson, of selling your case and of inflating your case to get an outcome?

**Mr Maguire**—I am not. If you were to come to our area and if you were to read some of press that this situation has caused I think you would see that most of it says that I lead a very private life, and I did until this matter.

**Senator MURRAY**—However, three witnesses—and you might impute a motive but we cannot; we have to make a judgment—have all said quite clearly that they were left with the distinct impression that an inducement had been made by you, but not necessarily of course, in terms of the evidence, by Mr Anderson or Senator Macdonald. They were quite clear: they were left with the impression that an inducement had been made by you. My question is: do you think that is an accurate impression for them to have been left with? An accompanying question is: do you now think it is improper for you to have made the statements you did to a person who carries the status of a Commonwealth parliamentarian?

**Mr Maguire**—There are two questions there. On the first one it is no, there is no way they could have construed that. The situation was that it was always Greg Maguire talking—it was always me. As I said to you in answer to the first question you asked me, I did not know that even discussing something like that was illegal or whatever. But, remember, I was never in a

position to do anything about it. It was me as a mate. It was me because, remember, back then we did not have the issue where Tony Windsor decided to burn me. That had not happened. So it was a discussion purely about what I felt: the region was not being effectual, that he could not deliver for us. That is what it was about.

**Senator MURRAY**—You see, Mr Maguire, we are in this situation. We have no evidence—and we have not had them before us but they have made statements in other places—either on your behalf or on behalf of Mr Windsor, Ms Tickle or Mr Hall that Mr Anderson or Senator Macdonald asked you to do what we have been told was said. We also have no reason to disbelieve three separate witnesses who have given us their account of things that they were left with the impression that an inducement had been made. If we were to believe that Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald did not ask you to make an inducement and if we were to believe the three witnesses that they felt an inducement had been made, we are left with you. This means either that you were foolish or that you were beating up your argument, as it were, to try to make your point, or that you expressed yourself in a way which they have misconstrued. What is it? Bearing in mind that I have never met anyone of any kind who has not been foolish at sometime in their life, were you foolish?

**Mr Maguire**—I was not.

**Senator MURRAY**—Were you trying to inflate your argument?

**Mr Maguire**—I was not.

**Senator MURRAY**—So is your evidence that they misconstrued what you said?

**Mr Maguire**—They misconstrued because it suited them to misconstrue that at a later date. Let us look at the real facts. All of you gentlemen in here—the lady is not in the room at the moment—know that your staff are loyal to you. Half of them would probably die for you. This is the reason we are here today. Mr Windsor and his two garden gnomes have backed that statement because Mr Windsor buries himself by a comment on radio, then he refuses to say something, then he has to dig another hole with another lie and then another lie. That is how this whole thing started. I was expendable, because I told him that I could not support him and he knew what that meant. It was said that I did not really have much input. Senator Murray, I have got all of the files for Tony Windsor's television campaigns for the last federal election—not 2004.

**Senator MURRAY**—Mr Maguire, I want to take up an interjection that I heard on my right: that there is a fourth prospect. Let us put that straight to you. The fourth prospect is that those three people are lying, in your view.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—Is it your view that they are lying?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—Each of them?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—So it is essentially your word against theirs?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**Senator MURRAY**—All right. You were in the midst of a police inquiry in October. The evidence of Mr Hall was that you threatened him. I will give you the *Hansard* exchange—it was on 3 February—so we are exact about it:

**Senator MURRAY**—Greg Maguire told you on the telephone that the Federal Police had accused him of lying.

**Mr Hall**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—They had not asked him whether he lied but had accused him of lying.

**Mr Hall**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—You then go on to say, ‘Greg Maguire then asked me to corroborate with his story.’ And he said to you, ‘I will finish you,’ which is a direct threat. Earlier, you said that you were not aware, at the time that this offer was made, that it was an inducement. But by this stage you had realised that an inducement of the kind suggested would be a crime and therefore anyone attempting to interfere with a witness to a crime would be themselves committing a crime. Do you follow me?

**Mr Hall**—Yes, I do follow you.

**Senator MURRAY**—Did that occur to you at the time of this conversation on 7 October with Mr Maguire?

**Mr Hall**—No, it did not occur to me.

**Senator MURRAY**—Did you mention it to the police?

**Mr Hall**—No, I did not mention it.

I want to put a set of questions concerning that, because it goes to your character. Did you threaten Mr Hall in the manner he asserts?

**Mr Maguire**—I did not threaten Mr Hall.

**Senator MURRAY**—Are you in the practice of making threats to people who cross you?

**Mr Maguire**—I am not.

**Senator MURRAY**—That would be a general kind of impression, I would guess, amongst the hundreds of people you would have dealt with in your business life.

**Mr Maguire**—The people that I have dealt with would say to you that I am hard. I might be tough to deal with, but I am fair and I am honest.

**Senator MURRAY**—This is slightly hypothetical, but I need to understand what you know in terms of the law. If there is a police inquiry under way, are you aware, as a matter of law, that you cannot threaten somebody who may be a witness to a crime?

**Mr Maguire**—I was unaware of that.

**Senator MURRAY**—But you are now aware of it?

**Mr Maguire**—Now that you have told me.

**Senator MURRAY**—Were you not aware of it when you read the *Hansard*?

**Mr Maguire**—I was not aware.

**Senator MURRAY**—All right. There is just one other matter which struck me as strange in your submission. It is slightly offbeat, but I think you said that Mr Tony Windsor thought he should be the Deputy Prime Minister. I think you will find that was in your statement.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—Has Mr Windsor ever said that to you? Why do you have that impression?

**Mr Maguire**—Tony Windsor has never said that to me. It is my view from working with and knowing him and knowing the passionate dislike that is there. I honestly believe that he thinks he was very wrongly done by by the National Party back in those days.

**Senator MURRAY**—Are you suggesting he thought he could have risen to be Deputy Prime Minister? Is that what you are saying?

**Mr Maguire**—I would believe that to be the case, yes.

**Senator MURRAY**—So you are not suggesting he goes around saying, ‘I should be Deputy Prime Minister,’ but he thinks if he had stayed—

**Mr Maguire**—He certainly does not go around saying that, but let us remember that today is all about Tony Windsor. This whole matter is ‘all about me’—all about Tony Windsor. That is how it started and that is what it is.

**Senator MURRAY**—The reason I am asking you this is to see whether you are a person who exaggerates, whether in the expression of your statement your own strong feelings of bitterness and anger—which are perfectly understandable in the circumstance you are in; I make no judgment on that—may lead you to make exaggerated, unbelievable statements. So when I heard that I thought, ‘I don’t believe that.’ That was my immediate reaction. Do you think, in moments

of passion or anger or when you feel threatened, that you are the sort of person who makes exaggerated and strong statements which may overstate the matter a bit?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not.

**Senator MURRAY**—I will leave it there for the moment.

**Senator BRANDIS**—There is one short question following Senator Murray's. Mr Maguire, I too thought that was quite striking—your observation about Mr Windsor's view that if he had won the Gwydir preselection he would have gone on to have the great career that Mr Anderson has had. You have known Mr Windsor for a long time?

**Mr Maguire**—When you live in a country town you know everybody. I have known him since he entered into state parliament.

**Senator BRANDIS**—You know him pretty well?

**Mr Maguire**—Not closely, personally, no.

**Senator BRANDIS**—Not closely, personally, but you have had a lot of dealings with him over a long time.

**Mr Maguire**—I know how he thinks.

**Senator BRANDIS**—You know what he is like.

**Mr Maguire**—I know what he is like.

**Senator BRANDIS**—As you say, it is a country town. Do you feel you have a sense of his reputation around the town?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I do.

**Senator BRANDIS**—From both your knowing him pretty well, or knowing what he is like, and your sense of his reputation around the place, does Mr Windsor strike you as a conceited man?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator BRANDIS**—An egotistical man?

**Mr Maguire**—He has an ego, yes, but most successful men have an ego. Otherwise they are not successful.

**Senator BRANDIS**—The sort of ego that might resent being defeated at a preselection.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.



**Senator BRANDIS**—The sort of ego that might imagine that, had it been otherwise, he would be where Mr Anderson is now.

**Mr Maguire**—Correct.

**Senator BRANDIS**—The sort of ego that would breed deep resentment at that lost, imagined career.

**Mr Maguire**—It is very public that everybody knows of the hatred that Mr Windsor has for Mr Anderson. There is an ingrained hatred that has been there for a long time. That is very clear—and it is very clear to the electorate of New England.

**Senator BRANDIS**—And that hatred, from what I hear you say, is a hatred which includes deep resentment?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator BRANDIS**—That is what I thought.

**Senator CARR**—Mr Maguire, in your opening statement you said, ‘My companies have made substantial financial donations’ to Mr Windsor. What is the extent of those substantial financial donations?

**Mr Maguire**—I believe they are a private matter.

**Senator CARR**—Unfortunately, under the laws of this country they are not private.

**Mr Maguire**—No. You can find them. The Electoral Commission will have documentation on—

**Senator CARR**—I have had a look at the declarations and I do not see a name on them. I am wondering how that might be.

**Mr Maguire**—That is because it would be under a company name.

**Senator CARR**—Which companies?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not think it is necessary that I sit here before you telling you that I put money into Tony Windsor’s campaign. I have said in my opening statement that I have done so.

**Senator CARR**—Mr Maguire, the reason I have asked you this question is that—

**Mr Maguire**—You have the statement. You have the New South Wales—

**CHAIR**—Excuse me, Mr Maguire. Let Senator Carr ask the question.

**Senator CARR**—You have raised the question. I am not trying to be difficult with you. You have raised this issue. You have stated bluntly in your evidence that you have made substantial financial donations to Mr Windsor. I cannot find them in the declarations. Any donation over \$200 is required by law to be declared. Has there been an error somewhere or have you misled the committee?

**Mr Maguire**—I have not misled the committee. You do not have the documents there for the New South Wales government.

**Senator CARR**—I see. That helps me further.

**Mr Maguire**—Let me have a go. The documents would show that my companies have donated. I also have donated in terms of putting funds into Mr Windsor's campaign under my companies' names. That could be under one of several companies' names and I do not believe it is necessary for me to tell you the names of those companies.

**Senator CARR**—Are you are saying that you gave support to Mr Windsor while he was a member of the New South Wales parliament?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes. That is correct.

**Senator CARR**—So you have not done so while he has been a member of the federal parliament?

**Mr Maguire**—He has only been elected to the federal parliament once whilst I have been supporting him. I did not support him at the last election.

**Senator CARR**—That helps me. That accounts for the fact that it is not on the federal declaration. So you made no financial contributions to his campaign.

**Mr Maguire**—I made no contributions to his—

**CHAIR**—Order! I think we have been going along quite well. Mr Maguire, you should allow Senator Carr to finish the question and, Senator Carr, you should allow the witness to complete his answer. Sorry, Mr Maguire.

**Mr Maguire**—I did not make any contributions in 2004 because, if you remember, the election was called after Mr Windsor had decided to cut my head off.

**Senator CARR**—I see. At what point did the financial contributions you made to Mr Windsor cease? When was the last time you made a substantial financial contribution, as you have said in evidence today?

**Mr Maguire**—I believe we would have made contributions for the 2001 election.

**Senator CARR**—The trouble is, I have the returns for the 2001 election before me and I cannot find your name on them. Can you indicate to me how much you donated? Was it less than \$200? That would account for the fact that it is not on the declarations.

**Mr Maguire**—My recollection is that in 2001 it would have been several thousand dollars.

**Senator CARR**—Can you recall the companies through which you donated that money?

**Mr Maguire**—I cannot. I own 37 companies.

**Senator CARR**—Thirty-seven? Do they all operate in Tamworth?

**Mr Maguire**—They do not.

**Senator CARR**—It may have been one of those companies that operated outside Tamworth?

**Mr Maguire**—Correct.

**Senator CARR**—And you believe it to be in excess of several thousand dollars?

**Mr Maguire**—It was not several thousand dollars. Normally I would have given Tony probably anywhere between \$3,000 and \$5,000. The benefit I gave to Tony was in the marketing of his TV campaigns. Before I came along, his strategy and his television campaigns were very amateurish.

**Senator CARR**—Okay. I am just struck by the evidence you gave to the committee about your companies providing substantial financial donations over and above the media guidance you have provided.

**Mr Maguire**—I have only had one opportunity in the federal field because Mr Windsor has only been in that parliament for just over one term. I am referring to this: I have made funds available to Mr Windsor's campaigns when he was also in the New South Wales parliament.

**Senator CARR**—I am not here to try to question you about the merits of donating to a federal campaign. I am just interested in the submission you have put to this inquiry because I am trying to establish, as you are aware now, the nature of 'truth' and 'credibility', which are the words you have used. I think it is appropriate that we establish what you mean by these terms. You say that Mr Windsor was paranoid. What evidence do you base that claim on?

**Mr Maguire**—It is very easy. When I was involved with Mr Windsor at meetings—strategy meetings and marketing meetings whenever there was an election being held or whatever—always Mr Windsor was totally concerned about Mr Anderson and was paranoid about Mr Anderson. It is a personal issue.

**Senator CARR**—How did he express that personal issue?

**Mr Maguire**—In comments.

**Senator CARR**—In your affidavit you say 'in general discussions with Mr Anderson prior to the meeting of the 19th'. I do not recall you actually acknowledging anywhere before that you had a meeting, so you are now acknowledging there was a meeting—

**Mr Maguire**—With Mr Anderson?

**Senator CARR**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—I acknowledged that earlier. I said a meeting was held—

**Senator CARR**—No, before today I do not recall that being acknowledged. Now this meeting went for an hour and a half or an hour and 40 minutes. I think there are different estimates but it was at least an hour and a half.

**Mr Maguire**—May I rectify it on that question?

**Senator CARR**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—If you read my statement, previously I always said that I had had a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Senator CARR**—Okay. During this meeting was Mr Windsor's name mentioned?

**Mr Maguire**—With the Deputy Prime Minister?

**Senator CARR**—Yes, Mr Anderson.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, it was.

**Senator CARR**—In what terms was it mentioned?

**Mr Maguire**—It was brought up by me when I discussed with Mr Anderson that I believed that Mr Windsor was becoming ineffectual.

**Senator CARR**—What did Mr Anderson say in response to this suggestion of the ineffectual nature of the local member of parliament?

**Mr Maguire**—He is an interesting guy in the sense that, because I do not know him, he is very quiet. He is quite reserved. The conversation was more about Mr Anderson saying that he could not understand why parts of Australia had gone to Independents. He could not understand why the Tamworth region had encompassed Mr Windsor so strongly. He felt very strongly that the party system was certainly the way to go. He is different to Tony. Tony can become emotional but certainly Mr Anderson is quite reserved. In the meetings I have had with him I have found him quite reserved.

**Senator CARR**—Was there any discussion about how the political situation in New England could be improved?

**Mr Maguire**—In that conversation I made it very clear to Mr Anderson—and Blind Freddy knew—that Mr Windsor would get re-elected. It was as simple as that, and we were just chewing the fat I suppose.

**Senator CARR**—So there was no suggestion about how the area would be better served by a coalition member of parliament?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator CARR**—I am just wondering in terms of the evidence that we have before the committee. Mr Hall tells us that there are a number of telephone conversations between you and him and you have indicated to Senator O'Brien that the evidence that he presents about the dates is right, that on 20 September, as he says, you rang him about a quarter to seven. That is right, isn't it?

**Mr Maguire**—The dates are around those. I am not sure of the time.

**Senator CARR**—I take it that, by that time, you had realised that Mr Windsor was not a friend?

**Mr Maguire**—I had, yes.

**Senator CARR**—What had led you to that conclusion by 20 September?

**Mr Maguire**—In conversations that I had, as you know—Mr Hall has already said that I had spoken to him—Mr Hall had told me where Tony was going. I knew at that stage, because Mr Hall had told me, where Tony was going with this thing. I knew.

**Senator CARR**—At what point had you discovered where Mr Windsor was going with this thing?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not have the date in front of me, Senator Carr.

**Senator CARR**—The meeting was on the 19th.

**Mr Maguire**—But the night he stood up in parliament—

**Senator CARR**—But that was not until later; that was November.

**Mr Maguire**—That was November.

**Senator CARR**—So in November he stands up in parliament, but by September you are calling him—and I understand the standing orders require me not to quote directly from the evidence, so I shall simply say you used an expletive—an amateur and a number of other expressions. So you have discovered by 20 September that he is no longer a friend and that he is an amateur and that you know where he is going. That has nothing to do with the parliamentary—

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator Carr**—So it is well and truly before that. There was some confusion in the earlier evidence at what point you discovered that he was hostile to you, but it is quite apparent on this evidence that he was hostile to you on 20 September—that is, the day after the meeting.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator CARR**—Is that right?

**Mr Maguire**—Sorry, what was the date again?

**Senator CARR**—No, sorry, that is a few months after the meeting on 19 May. At what point between then and 20 September did you discover that Mr Windsor was—

**Mr Maguire**—I cannot remember the date; I cannot remember when it was. It had certainly become very clear because I tried to speak to Mr Windsor and he would not speak to me. Stephen Hall had indicated to me what was going on. It was plain to see what was going on, but I cannot remember the date.

**Senator CARR**—The evidence before the committee was that, on Tuesday, 21 September, the day after:

*Greg Maguire advised ... that after the announcement of the Equine Centre funding earlier that day, he and John Anderson went quietly off for a walk—*

presumably that is the earlier announcement—

*away from his minders—to talk. John Anderson told Greg Maguire to get a message to Tony Windsor to back off, as this was bigger than both of them.*

Did that event occur?

**Mr Maguire**—That is totally incorrect. To set the record straight, you would be able to see, because I think the whole thing was televised, there was no such thing as a walk-off. There would have been six or eight people, including dignitaries. I walked along with three or four people, and John Anderson was walking alongside me. There was probably no more than two or three metres. There was no such thing as walking off wherever Mr Hall said. I think that would be televised.

**Senator CARR**—We are told here that you said you would not be the person who brings down the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and that you would lie to protect the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Mr Maguire**—Am I going to tell somebody that at that stage I already know has gone to war with me that I am going to lie?

**Senator CARR**—I am interested to know when it was that you knew they had gone to war, because it is not clear to me from what you are saying. You are saying it either happened in the

parliament, which was much later, in November or it was some time after the election has been called. When was it that you knew he was going to war with you?

**Mr Maguire**—I said earlier, Senator Carr, that I do not recollect the exact time. I do not recollect the exact time.

**Senator CARR**—You mentioned the Federal Police and that there were four tapes taken.

**Mr Maguire**—They had a machine about 600 or 700 millimetres wide. I think at the time it had six tapes—not CDs—of car radio size. Each tape ran for around 45 minutes. They then would change the tapes, and at the end of the interview they gave me a set of tapes. Within about three weeks I received a full written transcript of the interview.

**Senator CARR**—Have you had any dealings with the Federal Police prior to this event?

**Mr Maguire**—Never.

**Senator CARR**—You have had no dealings with police investigations at all?

**Mr Maguire**—Never.

**Senator CARR**—You say you are a hard man. You have a reputation as being a hard man.

**Mr Maguire**—I did not say I was a hard man; I said I might have a reputation as being a hard man—

**Senator CARR**—‘You have a reputation’—those are the words I used.

**Mr Maguire**—but I have a very soft heart.

**Senator MURRAY**—That is like us.

**Senator CARR**—There are many members of parliament who have that sort of thing said about them as well. Tamworth is a small place.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, but it is growing very strongly.

**Senator CARR**—Indeed, I hear that.

**CHAIR**—It is not that small.

**Senator CARR**—Do you recall that some time ago the *Armidale Express* placed an advertisement on its front page concerning you? It said, ‘A young Armidale businessman has been the subject of some vicious rumours over the past week.’ Do you recall that incident?

**Mr Maguire**—What was the date?

**Senator CARR**—That was on 2 May 1977.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I do.

**Senator CARR**—It said that people should watch out what they say about you.

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct.

**Senator CARR**—Can you tell us what the circumstances were around that?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I will be very pleased to. It is a classic example of why we are sitting here today—that is, I am here because of parliamentary privilege. I left school early, I worked hard and I built my business up. We have a thing in Australia called the tall poppy syndrome. There was a rumour around the Armidale area that some people had been caught with drugs on a sailboat. I have been a sailor most of my life, and for some reason the rumour was attached to my name. The rumour went right through the area, and the press picked it up and off it went. The bottom line is that I have never ever been involved in drugs. I have never been investigated. I have never been in any area whatsoever concerning what was accused—and they were never accusations; they were rumours. I had someone stand up at a meeting and physically state that I was the person who was supposedly doing these wrongs. As you can see by the newspaper advertisement, that was certainly the case. But the tall poppy syndrome is still very much alive today.

**Senator CARR**—So in 1977 you think you were regarded as a tall poppy?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator CARR**—I want to be clear about this. We have had evidence now from one witness, collaborated by another witness, that on 21 September, 23 September and 7 October you said you were prepared to lie to the Federal Police. You are categorically denying that matter?

**Mr Maguire**—I am. I would like to comment on that. I am being accused of lying by the chairman of Mr Windsor's campaign and by the secretariat of his campaign.

**Senator CARR**—That is all you want to say?

**Mr Maguire**—Thank you.

**Senator CARR**—I must say to you that the secretary of his campaign appeared before this committee and did not appear hostile to the National Party. She did not give me the impression that she was a vindictive person. In fact, she was disappointed with the National Party, not hostile. She did think that they basically were not worth a dob of glue—and I agree with her on that—but she did not appear to be personally motivated in this matter. Are you saying that is not the case?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not know Helen that personally. But I do not believe there would be a bad bone in Ms Tickle's body.



**Senator CARR**—But you have accused her of being a liar.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator CARR**—How do you reconcile those two events?

**Mr Maguire**—Because I know.

**Senator CARR**—Sorry? She has not got a bad bone in her body but she is a liar?

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct. You have a situation here where you have the chairman of Mr Windsor's campaign and the secretary of Mr Windsor's campaign. Mr Windsor has dug a hole and the only way to get out of it and save Mr Windsor's skin is to accuse or bury me. That, simply, is why we are here today.

**Senator CARR**—It is a big call to say—

**Mr Maguire**—A big call.

**Senator CARR**—that a person like Ms Tickle is prepared to come before this committee and say the things you have accused her of—to lie under oath. That is what you are accusing them of. What about Mr Hall? Why would he do that?

**Mr Maguire**—Why?

**Senator CARR**—Yes, why would he do that?

**Mr Maguire**—They would protect Mr Windsor at any cost.

**Senator CARR**—At any cost?

**Mr Maguire**—At any cost.

**Senator CARR**—You have said that they both live and work in Tamworth. They are prepared to destroy their reputations because of the local member of parliament. Is that what you are telling this committee?

**Mr Maguire**—You have my answer. I am not telling you that they are prepared to do that. You have heard what I have said.

**Senator CARR**—At any cost? They are prepared to lie.

**Mr Maguire**—Sir, I swore on the Bible, the same as they did.

**Senator CARR**—That is the nature of our conundrum. We have three people saying one thing and one person saying another.

**Mr Maguire**—Certainly.

**CHAIR**—We also have statements from the other witnesses saying the same thing you have said. They said that you said you would lie to the Federal Police in order to save the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Senator CARR**—I will leave it there. Thank you very much.

**Senator BROWN**—Earlier on, you were talking about a conversation you had with Mr Windsor during which it was tested whether he wanted to roll over. When did that conversation take place?

**Mr Maguire**—On the 19th.

**Senator BROWN**—What did you mean by ‘rolling over’ and how did you put it to him?

**Mr Maguire**—The conversation was along these lines: it started out by me saying that I believed he had been ineffectual in terms of the equine centre. It was not happening. He was not able to get that project going. Remember that I was in Mr Windsor’s camp originally and it was not until this project, which I was put in charge of, that I started to believe that he was ineffectual. The conversation was in unison with that.

**Senator BROWN**—The impression I get is that you were saying he was ineffectual because he was an Independent.

**Mr Maguire**—That was my view.

**Senator BROWN**—So what did you mean by ‘roll over’?

**Mr Maguire**—I can remember saying to him: ‘Look, go and talk to the Liberals. I am sure that they would welcome you with open arms.’ That is the track the conversation went down.

**Senator BROWN**—Did you also say, ‘Go and talk to John Anderson’?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I did.

**Senator BROWN**—You asked this member of parliament to roll over and then you said, ‘Go and talk to John Anderson.’ Did you indicate what he should talk to John Anderson about?

**Mr Maguire**—I made this clear earlier on. I told him to talk to John Anderson after quite a bit of the conversation. I could see that it was not going to happen. He was not showing any interest at all in what I was talking about. So I said to him: ‘Go and talk to John Anderson. Talk to anyone.’ That was the end of the conversation.

**Senator BROWN**—About what?

**Mr Maguire**—The conversation was mainly based on the Liberal Party.

**Senator BROWN**—Talk to John Anderson about what?

**Mr Maguire**—About wanting to roll over.

**Senator BROWN**—To what?

**Mr Maguire**—To go to one of the political parties—and this has happened before—and say: ‘It’s not working. I will give you the seat of New England.’

**Senator BROWN**—In her evidence, Ms Tickle said:

At the meeting on 19th May, Greg also stated that the Nationals were worried about losing another seat and that they would ‘love to get New England back’. They have always been very upset about this being an Independent Seat and were amazed that they lost the State seat to an Independent.

At this point in the conversation Greg then relayed that they would offer you anything. A diplomatic posting, or anything to stand aside.

Did you?

**Mr Maguire**—No, I did not. I will repeat again: the conversation was purely my own idea. The conversation purely was along the lines of what I have said.

**Senator BROWN**—The problem for us hearing this evidence is that this conversation took place four days after a 1½-hour meeting you had with Mr Anderson in Tamworth and it was with that background: you had stated to Mr Windsor and the others present at this meeting that you had been talking with Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald. Then you say that you said to Mr Windsor both that he should roll over and that he should go and have a talk with Mr Anderson. The evidence that we get from Ms Tickle and indeed from Mr Hall that the questions of diplomatic postings and other inducements were raised fits into the pattern of this evidence. What have you got to say that?

**Mr Maguire**—That is not what happened. I was not representing the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia. I was not representing anybody. I was representing myself. They were my ideas. They were my discussions.

**Senator BROWN**—Did you make that clear to Mr Windsor, Ms Tickle and Mr Hall?

**Mr Maguire**—How much clearer can I be, Senator Brown, when both the witnesses that you have had before you have admitted that I did not even discuss anyone’s name? It was always me.

**Senator BROWN**—My question is: did you say to them, ‘This is my idea. Let us be clear about this: I am putting this to you; this is not coming from somebody else’?

**Mr Maguire**—I did not say, ‘This is not coming from somebody else.’ I do not think I did. Gee whiz, I can’t remember a year back what my exact words were, but I don’t think I would have said that, no.

**Senator BROWN**—Ms Tickle said, in reply to a question from Senator Johnston about this discussion on the 19th:

I recall him saying, ‘They are so desperate they would offer you anything—a diplomatic posting.’ He said—

that is, you said—

Senator Macdonald was on the sidelines saying, ‘Yes, we can arrange anything.’

**Mr Maguire**—That is incorrect.

**Senator BROWN**—Did you mention Senator Macdonald during this meeting with these three people on the 19th?

**Mr Maguire**—I told them that Senator Macdonald was present, yes.

**Senator BROWN**—And did you relay to them what Senator Macdonald’s point of view was?

**Mr Maguire**—No, not in what you have just said. That never happened.

**Senator BROWN**—In any way?

**Mr Maguire**—No. That never happened. Senator Macdonald, to be frank—out of that meeting that went for 1½ hours, give or take 20 minutes, we would have spent probably 20 minutes down in the motorcycle museum and we didn’t even talk about politics; we talked about motorbikes.

**Senator BROWN**—Ms Tickle also said that you said something about, ‘They have asked me,’ but she could not remember the exact words. The problem I have, Mr Maguire, is that you went from the meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Senator Macdonald to a meeting with Mr Windsor and his two campaign officers and you have said yourself that, during that meeting, you asked him to roll over and also to speak to Mr Anderson and others. And we have this evidence from the two other people at the meeting other than Mr Windsor, although he corroborates it, that Senator Macdonald was mentioned directly as having been quoted by you and also that the impression was very clear that, having come from that meeting, you were conveying from Mr Anderson and Senator Macdonald the proposition that Mr Windsor should roll over and that there were diplomatic postings and other opportunities for him if he did so. You can see the coherence in this evidence that is before us.

**Mr Maguire**—I understand what you are saying.

**Senator BROWN**—What you are saying to us is that that impression is false, that you did not explicitly say to people: ‘This is my idea. I want to make it clear that, despite the background and the situation we are in, I am putting this forward; it has nothing to do with Mr Anderson.’

**Mr Maguire**—Why would I say that? The meeting never even took place the night before. Mr Windsor has told everybody that I had this big meeting or whatever the night before. That never even took place. The meeting was formally booked in advance. It took me 10 days or two weeks

to get an appointment and it was only because he was coming to town for the budget briefing. I would not go into a conversation where I am going to say, 'I want to make it very clear I am not speaking on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister'. Why would I say that? I had nothing to hide. It was me—it was always Greg Maguire, as I keep saying—that had the idea. It was my idea that I threw on the table.

**Senator BROWN**—I would say that it would have been wise to have cleared the air, if what you say is true, because—

**Mr Maguire**—In hindsight you would be right.

**Senator BROWN**—of these three people, one of whom was obviously directly offended by the offer that had been put forward and two of whom were with Mr Windsor that an inducement was being offered and that it came as a result of the meeting you had had three or four nights before. I would have thought that a tough, astute and honest character would have been clear that you were making this proposition to Mr Windsor and that nobody else was.

**Mr Maguire**—Senator, think through what has happened. When I told Mr Windsor at that meeting that I felt he was being ineffectual that was when the gauntlet came down on me. That is when it all happened. Why was I going to say to him that I was not representing the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia? I had no reason to say that. I had no reason to say, 'I want to make it very clear, Mr Windsor, this is purely my idea.' I do not talk like that. I would sit down with you and discuss the issue with you.

**Senator BROWN**—This afternoon you have consistently referred to Mr Windsor—and you have had a long questioning session here—as being ineffective, although the evidence I have had is that the vote for him increased at the last election, so obviously there is a different point of view in the electorate. I want to make this clear: you are saying that he was ineffective because he was an Independent and therefore not in government and therefore he did not have the leverage that he would have had if he had been a member of the government.

**Mr Maguire**—After chairing the committee for the period that I had—and remember I supported this man for a long time—it was apparent to me that he was ineffectual.

**Senator BROWN**—We also have your evidence that, in talking with Mr Anderson just a few nights before, Mr Anderson could not understand why regions of Australia like New England had gone to the Independents. He was at a loss to understand that. You say that blind Freddy knew that Mr Windsor would be re-elected. Yet you are saying he is ineffective.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator BROWN**—You are agreeing that, in large measure at least, that is because he is an Independent and not a member of the government.

**Mr Maguire**—Tony is well liked as a bloke. He works. The average bloke in the street likes him. The average workers—the factory workers, the abattoir workers—all think Tony is doing a great job. He is very approachable. He is, I would say, very good at working with the general community. But once I took on the role of this project, and after I saw that he had not even

worked with the area consultative committee—which I never knew, and the chairman of the area consultative committee had offered all of the help of the area consultative committee—through his dislike of John Anderson, that is when the penny started to drop with me that really this project should have been going. This project should have been up and running. If it were professionally run and if Tony were doing a great job, that project would have been up and running. He had never even got the P and A to the stage where they signed an MOU or agreed to move. There was always dreadful distrust there.

**Senator BROWN**—The other side of that evidence that we have is that it did not much matter what happened as far as an Independent in that situation, next to the seat of Gwydir, were concerned, but it would be very difficult for the government to take on a project coming out of the committee which was chaired by Mr Windsor, because—and Ms Tickle reiterated this—they could not allow the Independent member for New England to get the kudos for getting something up. It is not just a matter of how good the submission is or is not; we have a political impasse there.

**Mr Maguire**—I would agree with that, because commonsense tells me that, if you attract something for Tasmania or wherever, the reality of politics is that the kudos certainly would go to the people that make it happen. I think that is commercial realism. But—

**Senator BROWN**—There we are.

**Mr Maguire**—There we are.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—To your understanding, did anybody ever suggest to you that the success of your application for funding was contingent upon you doing anything?

**Mr Maguire**—No, it was not. Can you just expand a little bit more on that?

**Senator JOHNSTON**—Was it contingent upon you removing Mr Windsor or not having anything to do with Mr Windsor or giving kudos to the government or somehow doing something which was beyond—

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—the commercial relationship between an applicant and the government which was going to fund a proportion of the project?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—No inducements, no suggestions?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—From anybody?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—From Senator Sandy Macdonald?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—Or Mr Anderson?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—Let us just pause to look at the matter you raised about the radio station. I will just take you to the *Hansard* with respect to what Mr Windsor said. On 18 November, on page 54, he said:

This came about through a conversation I had with a *Sunday Telegraph* journalist called Tony Vermeer.

**Mr Maguire**—Correct.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—He then goes to say:

In the conversation with Tony Vermeer I mentioned that only a few months ago I had been approached by an intermediary—

et cetera. Is it your understanding that that is the genesis of the matter, or do you say that something else happened?

**Mr Maguire**—No, what originally happened was that Tony was doing a radio interview, and he made a throwaway comment on the radio. The radio interviewer said, and I am fairly rough on this, something along the lines of, ‘Look, when you held the balance of power in the New South Wales state government’—and so on—‘have you been approached or something to put the seat over to one of the other parties?’ He made the comment, ‘That’s happened recently and it’s happened before and it’ll happen again,’ or something.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—Did you actually hear it on the radio?

**Mr Maguire**—No, there is documentation. It is in the documentation. Tony Vermeer picked that up from there, and then—

**Senator JOHNSTON**—When you say there is documentation, what sort of documentation is it?

**Mr Maguire**—I cannot tell you. I have read it. It is in some document or something.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—If you could find it, could you give it to the secretariat of the committee?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, certainly.

**Senator JOHNSTON**—Do you have any idea which radio station it was?

**Mr Maguire**—No, but I am happy to cooperate and do that.

**CHAIR**—Have you to spoken to Tony Vermeer, the journalist?

**Mr Maguire**—I have spoken to no journalists.

**CHAIR**—Because you just said that Tony Vermeer, who wrote the story which I think was in the Sunday paper, got that from the radio interview. How do you know that?

**Mr Maguire**—Because Tony Windsor told me. Right in the beginning when it happened and before it all blew up, Tony told me that that is where it had come from.

**Senator BROWN**—The evidence from Mr Hall is that you said that at meeting on 19 May that Mr Windsor could be interested in either a diplomatic or a trade posting overseas and that that could be arranged, as the government makes 500 such appointments a year.

**Mr Maguire**—I did not say that. In my statement that I gave before to the Federal Police I have said that my comment was purely along the lines of: ‘If you were to roll over the seat, you would be able to write your own ticket. You could do one or two years and you would be able to negotiate something.’ That is commonsense. It is happened, I am sure, before where politicians have retired or whatever and got jobs. I am sure there are several names but I do not know them.

**Senator BROWN**—It does not figure with Mr Windsor. He is out of favour with the government and the Deputy Prime Minister. You are suggesting he go and approach the Deputy Prime Minister because otherwise he is not going to have a hope in hell of getting such an appointment, is he?

**Mr Maguire**—I have made it clear that I did not tell him to go and negotiate or whatever with John Anderson. I used John Anderson’s name at the end of the conversation. What I said was—and I do not know; you learned gentlemen know more than I would—I was sure that if Mr Windsor knocked on the Liberal Party President’s door tomorrow and said, ‘I’ll offer you the seat of New England,’ they would be very happy people. I might be naive and I could be very wrong—

**CHAIR**—They might tell the media too, straightaway.

**Mr Maguire**—I speak your pardon?

**CHAIR**—They might tell the media, too, straightaway to destroy Mr Windsor’s credibility completely.

**Mr Maguire**—That is where that was coming from. As I repeat, it was always me who had that discussion with him. At the end, because he was showing no interest—I could see that—I said: ‘You’ve got nothing to lose. This is not working. Even talk to Anderson. This is not working.’

**Senator BROWN**—You do not agree that he had an angry response to this suggestion when you put it forward?



**Mr Maguire**—No, he was not angry. In his statement he says he swore. I do not remember him swearing.

**Senator CARR**—How do you know the government makes 500 appointments a year?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not.

**Senator CARR**—So you did not use that term?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator BROWN**—Mr Hall in his evidence to us says that this phone conversation took place on Monday, 20 September. This is from you:

I don't know why I ever trusted you, Windsor and Tickle—You are all a bunch of fucking amateurs.

Mr Hall said:

What are you talking about?

He says you said:

You know what it is—you as Campaign Manager would have put the strategy together for Windsor.

Mr Hall said:

I don't know what you are talking about.

And then he says you said:

Fucking Windsor is going to tell the press about Anderson's offer. Watch the 7pm ABC news and you will see it all.

Is that correct?

**Mr Maguire**—No, that is not correct.

**Senator BROWN**—Did you have that conversation with Mr Hall?

**Mr Maguire**—I had several conversations with Mr Hall. I cannot recollect the date exactly. I certainly did not threaten him and I certainly did not do that.

**Senator BROWN**—But did you ring him before that ABC news program?

**Mr Maguire**—On that day?

**Senator BROWN**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—I spoke to him two or three times over a five- or six-day period, which I have already been asked about and I said that I did.

**Senator BROWN**—But, in the lead-up to that ABC news program going to air—

**Mr Maguire**—I do not know whether that was the same day, but I did speak to him on several occasions, yes.

**Senator BROWN**—Did you know that that ABC program was going to air before it showed?

**Mr Maguire**—But the ABC program was not when Mr Windsor announced this.

**Senator BROWN**—No, but it was not announcing it; it was telling all about it—two different things.

**Mr Maguire**—No, that is not correct because, if you remember, the night that he stood up in parliament was actually shown on the late news, from what I know.

**Senator CARR**—No, this is much later.

**Mr Maguire**—Oh, you are not talking about his original—

**Senator CARR**—We are talking about September.

**Senator BROWN**—The 20th.

**Mr Maguire**—No, I do not remember that conversation.

**Senator CARR**—Did you bring back when the news was on? Do you ever recall that?

**Mr Maguire**—When the news was on?

**Senator BROWN**—Yes, when the program went to air—ABC seven o'clock news.

**Mr Maguire**—No, I do not remember that, no. But I may have spoken to him around those dates, yes.

**Senator BROWN**—Do you remember that news broadcast?

**Mr Maguire**—Which, what, the *7.30 Report*?

**Senator BROWN**—No, the ABC news on the night of the 20th, on which Mr Windsor was interviewed about this matter.

**Mr Maguire**—Senator Brown, I think every television station was showing something, so I could have seen it, yes.

**Senator BROWN**—You do remember that night.

**Mr Maguire**—I remember the night, yes, but I do not—

**Senator BROWN**—But you do not remember ringing Mr Hall.

**Mr Maguire**—I am saying to you that I spoke to Mr Hall several times and I could have spoken to him on that afternoon, yes. I am not denying that.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—There were just a couple of matters that arose from answers you gave to questions I asked you earlier that I want to clarify. Firstly, you said quite recently that it was Tony Windsor who told you that Mr Vermeer had got his story from a radio story.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you had a conversation with Mr Windsor about his initial revelation to Mr—

**Mr Maguire**—No, we had a conversation, and this was before he stopped talking to me. That is where that happened.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Roughly, when would that be? Was it during the election campaign or before the election campaign?

**Mr Maguire**—I cannot recollect.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—It had to be after the story had been broadcast on radio, didn't it? Because Windsor told you that Tony Vermeer had gotten the story from a radio story. That is what you told us, so it had to be after that.

**Mr Maguire**—That is correct. He mentioned that to me.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you had a conversation, and it was before he stopped talking to you—I think those were your words—but after the time that the matter was on the radio: the initial revelation by Mr Windsor about the general—

**Mr Maguire**—Senator, I am not sure of the time.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I am trying to piece together your evidence—which was, clearly, that Tony Windsor had told you that Tony Vermeer had gotten the story from the radio story—in the context of the other evidence. You tell us that the conversation occurred before Mr Windsor stopped talking to you. In general terms, we are within the election campaign and some time before 20 September, aren't we? Or was Mr Windsor talking to you on 20 September, when you were having conversations with Mr Hall, and the news broadcast about his allegations took place?

**Mr Maguire**—No, I think it was before that.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So it was between the beginning of September and 20 September. The election campaign started on 31 August.

**Mr Maguire**—I cannot answer that. I would be guessing.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—It is a matter of public record when the election campaign started.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, I realise that, but I cannot answer truthfully to you because I am not sure.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I think we can construct that it was after the election campaign started, can't we? The writs were signed by the Governor-General on 31 August. That is a matter of public record. I think you can rely on my memory of that. The conversation that Mr Hall refers to that you believe took place and the news events were on 20 September, so this conversation with Mr Windsor took place in between those two dates. It must have, mustn't it?

**Mr Maguire**—It must have been before that, yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So some time before the events on 20 December you had a conversation with Mr Windsor about the initial revelation by Mr Windsor that he had been offered some bribe?

**Mr Maguire**—I am saying that it was before.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—After Mr Vermeer published his story and before 20 December you had a conversation with Tony Windsor about the fact that the bribe was in the public arena. You had a conversation with Tony Windsor about that.

**Mr Maguire**—I do not think that we had a specific conversation about it, but I am sure that it was Tony who told me that it was the radio that originally—

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I think it is pretty important that you are able to tell us about that. It is very important because what you are saying to us is that you had a conversation with Tony Windsor about essentially the bribery allegation before it became public, and that you were involved. That is what you are telling us.

**Mr Maguire**—I would have to look at my documents for dates and times.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I do not think that you can go back on the evidence that you have given. It must have been after Mr Vermeer's story in the newspaper and it must have been before 20 December. It was established.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, it certainly was after Mr Vermeer's story.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—At that stage your name was not in the public arena, was it?

**Mr Maguire**—At that stage, no.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you had a conversation with Mr Windsor about the allegation. I am wondering why you had the conversation. Your name had not been mentioned publicly. Did it arise in the conversation that your name would be mentioned?

**Mr Maguire**—Did it arise?

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Yes.

**Mr Maguire**—I cannot remember the context of what—

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Surely you would remember that. That would be the first time, on your evidence, that you knew that Tony Windsor was going to 'burn' you. But you do not remember?

**Mr Maguire**—I do not remember that date. That is what I am saying to you.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—But do you remember the conversation?

**Mr Maguire**—To be honest, no, not fully.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—But this is the date, the time, when Tony Windsor tells you that your name is going to be mentioned as the person who made the offer. And you do not remember when that occurred?

**Mr Maguire**—I would have to read my documents.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—It is not in your affidavit, it is not in your opening statement and it has not been in all of your evidence this afternoon. What you are telling us now is that you do not remember the first time that you heard that you were going to be the person who allegedly made the offer. That is what you are telling us, is it?

**Mr Maguire**—No. I said earlier on that it was only brought to my attention that when I spoke to Tony originally it was that conversation—and I cannot remember the conversation that far back. But at the end of the day it was, I am sure, Tony that mentioned to me that it was when he commented on the radio that Vermeer had picked it up. I did not know. As I say to you, I cannot remember those details.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I find it amazing that, if the conversation indicated to you that you were going to be named as the person—or it was possible that you were going to be named as the person, even if it only when that far—you would not recall that conversation and you would not have done something about it. Convince me that I should take a different view. I am inviting you—

**Senator BRANDIS**—Point of order.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Would you butt out? There is no point of order.

**CHAIR**—Senator O'Brien has put to you a proposition or a version of the events. He is inviting you to comment on why that would not be the case. I think that is in order.

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**Senator BRANDIS**—I have a point of order.

**CHAIR**—What is your point of order, Senator Brandis?

**Senator BRANDIS**—The point of order is badgering. Senator O'Brien has come at this about 10 or 12 times and the witness has given the same answer 10 or 12 times to questions which are essentially the same question, namely, do you remember now—

**CHAIR**—There is no point of order.

**Senator BRANDIS**—Two or three times is fine, but it is not fine to do it 10 or 12 times and then to run an editorial commentary on the answers when he has already given his answer. You should exercise a bit more control, Mr Chairman.

**CHAIR**—And you should control your propensity to interject when you think—

**Senator BRANDIS**—This is the only time that I have interjected all day.

**CHAIR**—I know, and we have been going very well because you have not interjected all day.

**Senator BRANDIS**—That is because the questions have not been badgering.

**CHAIR**—It is not badgering.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I have simply offered Mr Maguire an opportunity to remove a serious doubt that is in my mind now.

**Mr Maguire**—That is your choice.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So you have nothing further to say?

**Mr Maguire**—I have nothing further to say.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—I have questions on another matter that I want to pursue. Senator Carr asked about donations to Mr Windsor's 2001 campaign. You have effectively declined to nominate the companies that made those donations. Can you tell us whether those companies have complied with the law in declaring the donations?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes, they would have.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—You are inviting us to make the searches and identify them rather than you telling us? They are on the public record; searches can be made. I just want to find out why we need to hide behind this—

**Mr Maguire**—I do not know the company or the name. I do not know that.

**CHAIR**—Mr Maguire, would you be prepared to give the committee a list of the companies that you own?

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—That is fine.

**Senator CARR**—We can take it from there.

**CHAIR**—Mr Maguire, you can supply that to the secretary.

**Senator CARR**—You say that there was a critical point—and I asked questions before about this matter—where you felt that Mr Windsor was going to 'burn' you. I think that was the expression you used.

**Mr Maguire**—Yes.

**Senator CARR**—Can you recall the circumstances when you realised that?

**Mr Maguire**—I am reasonably brain dead after 2½ hours, but I will try. The sin was caused on 19 May. That is when I caused the sin. Why did Mr Windsor wait through May, June, July, August and September? Why did he wait for five or six months? If I had approached him with an offer from the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, why did he wait? Because no such thing happened. What has happened is very clear. Mr Windsor had dug the hole by making the comment: 'I was approached a few months ago or whatever.' I think he used another chap's name; someone else had approached him earlier on. I think that was in his statement. Nothing happened. Then it was picked up again. It ran further and then I think the Prime Minister got involved and asked him to name names. It goes on from there. That is very easy to see.

**Senator CARR**—There was a discussion at one of these meetings—I have the date here—where it is alleged that you advised Mr Windsor that there would be no further call for names to be named? Do you recall that conversation? Or was there no such conversation?

**Mr Maguire**—I made what?

**Senator CARR**—It has been put to us in evidence that in a telephone conversation on 27 September—

**CHAIR**—You should advise the witness of whose evidence it is.

**Senator CARR**—Mr Stephen Hall advised us that on 27 September you rang at 7.30 a.m. and advised that you had spoken to Mr Anderson who had agreed to stop calling for the names.

**Mr Maguire**—That is totally incorrect.

**Senator CARR**—It did not happen?

**Mr Maguire**—Totally incorrect.

**Senator CARR**—You do not recall ringing him at 7.30 in the morning on 27 September?

**Mr Maguire**—I may have spoken to him. I cannot recollect the dates. As I have already said, and I will say it again, I spoke to Mr Hall several times but that never happened. There is no such thing.

**Senator CARR**—Mr Hall told the committee:

... I agreed to talk with Tony Windsor about not pursuing the matter for the rest of the election.

That is not correct either?

**Mr Maguire**—No.

**Senator CARR**—I am interested to know when it was that you discovered that your name was going to be part of this discussion.

**Mr Maguire**—I have tried to give correct and truthful evidence here today. But I am not sure of the exact time of that.

**Senator CARR**—You do not recall the occasion on which you fell out with Mr Windsor?

**Mr Maguire**—The falling out happened later in the year, when he made the throwaway comment. That is when it started.

**CHAIR**—Mr Maguire, thank you for your appearance before the committee today.

**Committee adjourned at 6.35 p.m.**