



**CAYMAN ISLANDS
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
ELECTRONIC VERSION**

2015/16 SESSION

16 October 2015

*Third Sitting of the Third Meeting
(Pages 461-500)*

**Hon Juliana Y O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA,
Speaker**

Disclaimer: The electronic version of the *Official Hansard Report* is for informational purposes only. The printed version remains the official record.

PRESENT WERE:

SPEAKER

Hon Juliana Y O'Connor- Connolly, JP, MLA
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA	<i>Premier</i> , Minister of Home Affairs, Health and Culture
Hon Moses I Kirkconnell, JP, MLA	<i>Deputy Premier</i> , Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport
Hon D Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, MLA	Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure
Hon Osbourne V Bodden, JP, MLA	Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports
Hon Marco S Archer, JP, MLA	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon Tara A Rivers, JP, MLA	Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Franz I Manderson, Cert. Hon. JP	<i>Deputy Governor</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Civil Service
Hon Samuel Bulgin, QC, JP	Attorney General, ex officio Member responsible for Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS

GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Mr Anthony S Eden, OBE, MLA	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , First Elected Member for Bodden Town
Mr Roy McTaggart, MLA	Second Elected Member for George Town
Mr Winston C Connolly, Jr, MLA	Fifth Elected Member for George Town
Mr Joseph X Hew, MLA	Sixth Elected Member for George Town
Mr Alva H Suckoo, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, OBE, JP, MLA	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , First Elected Member for West Bay
Mr Bernie A Bush, MLA	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</i> , Third Elected Member for West Bay
Capt A Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for West Bay

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Mr D Ezzard Miller, MLA	Elected Member for North Side
Mr V Arden McLean, JP, MLA	Elected Member for East End

APOLOGIES

Hon G Wayne Panton, JP, MLA	Financial Services, Commerce and Environment
-----------------------------	--

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
THIRD MEETING 2015/16 SESSION
FRIDAY
16 OCTOBER 2015
10:50 AM
Third Sitting**

[Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Speaker, presiding]

The Speaker: Good morning. I will invite the Honourable Minister responsible for Community Affairs to grace us with prayers.

PRAYERS

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden, Minister of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports: Good morning. Let us pray:

Almighty God, from whom all wisdom and power are derived: We beseech Thee so to direct and prosper the deliberations of the Legislative Assembly now assembled, that all things may be ordered upon the best and surest foundations for the glory of Thy Name and for the safety, honour and welfare of the people of these Islands.

Bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth II; Philip, Duke of Edinburgh; Charles, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Premier, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, Ex-officio Members, and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.

Let us say The Lord's Prayer together: *Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and give us peace, now and always. Amen.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

The House is now in session.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS
AND AFFIRMATIONS**

The Speaker: There are none.

**READING BY THE HONOURABLE
SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

APOLOGIES

The Speaker: I give apologies for the Honourable Minister of Financial Services.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: There are no petitions

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF
REPORTS**

The Speaker: There are no papers or reports on the Order Paper.

**QUESTIONS TO HONOURABLE
MINISTERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE CABINET**

The Speaker: The Elected Member for North Side

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, Elected Member for North Side: Madam Speaker, I bring to your attention that the Minister to whom the question is being asked is not present. So, I don't know if they want to move the question down and ask the other question first.

The Speaker: Honourable Premier, would you like to move a motion to change the order of business so that question 18 can be asked later?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Member for North Side.

**QUESTION NO. 18: EDNA M. MOYLE PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: I wish to ask the Honourable Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs: Can the Honourable Minister say what was the contractual fee and the actual amount paid to MEPCO for their design and consultation for the Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) for the additions to the Edna M. Moyle Primary School?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers, Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The answer as has been provided to me by the staff in the Ministry of Education: Madam Speaker, the contracted amount to MEPCO Ltd. for the MEP Design Service for the Edna Moyle Primary School Classroom Addition is \$13,900.00. The amount that has been certified by the Public Works Department to be paid to date is \$13,900.00. As it currently stands, there have been no increases or contract adjustment payments.

However, two variations that total \$4,086.00 have been submitted to the Public Works Department, and are currently being reviewed. If approved in full, then the final contract sum is currently estimated to be \$17,986.00.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

The Speaker: I recognise the Elected Member for North Side.

The Speaker: Madam Speaker, can the Minister state whether the mechanical, electrical and plumbing plans prepared by MEPCO were approved by BCU [Building Control Unit] and Planning, or refused by BCU and Planning?

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Madam Speaker, thank you. I would like a moment to confer with the staff to answer that particular question.

The Speaker: You may proceed to so do.

[Short pause]

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Madam Speaker, I have been informed that the Ministry of Education has contracted the Public Works Department to project manage this particular project and we have been advised that in the first go 'round, the plans were disapproved. But they have been subsequently resubmitted and have been approved.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side, do you have a follow up.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Oh, Madam Speaker, quite a few.

Can the Minister confirm that the reason why the plumbing designs were disapproved by BCU was because MEPCO forgot two of the three basins which exist in the building?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Madam Speaker, again, I will need time to confer with my staff in order to be able to provide the answer at this stage.

[Short pause]

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Tell the truth because unna know I got the plans, right?

The Speaker: Members, I think at this time, it's almost 11:00 in any event, but I think it might be prudent if the House suspended for 10 minutes to give the Honourable Minister the opportunity to confer adequately with her staff so we could expedite the business of the House. I would ask Members to please stay in their seats.

Proceedings suspended at 11:00 am

Proceedings resumed at 11:08 am

The Speaker: Please be seated.

I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Education.

Hon. Tara A. Rivers: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I said in my last response, the Ministry of Education has actually contracted with the Public Works Department to carry out the construction management or the project management of this particular project. So now that the questions are delving into the specifics and the details of the actual management of the project, as such, I have asked and the Minister responsible for Public Works has kindly agreed to answer any supplementary questions in this regard, if that is accepted.

The Speaker: Are there any further supplementaries? I recognise the Member for the district of North Side.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: No, I saw you trying to catch my eye, so I was just trying to confirm whether you had a supplementary.

Member for North Side, please proceed.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Can the Minister confirm that the claims for variations to the sum of \$4,086 that has been submitted to the Public Works Department, is not related to the corrections of plans required by Planning to the original plans submitted by MEPCO?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you for accommodating. I understand the difficulty here, because we have two Ministers and the technical side is Public Works. So I am only trying to assist the Member for North Side's question.

As I understand it, the figure that the Member just gave, asking what it was in relation to, we can confirm that it is in relation to what they had to do to fix the original plans, as I understand it, which leads me immediately to believe, but I will . . . I won't anticipate the Member's question, but it leads me to . . . I'll answer it when he asks. It's okay.

[Laughter]

The Speaker: Are there any further supplementaries?
Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Minister, having confirmed that the variation claims are related to the inadequacies . . . to correct the inadequacies of the original, can the Minister give the assurance to this House that this sum of \$4,086 will be reversed and deducted from the original contract price for which they were paid, since their work was not acceptable by the government authority?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, Minister of Planning, Lands, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I can't answer the Member the way he's asking the question, but I am sure that when I am through answering it will be okay.

As I understand it, and to be perfectly clear, this four thousand-odd dollar claim is a lot to do with the fix, but it seems there may be a few other matters which are not related to that. So, the department now has to sift through and make sure to separate. But what you are asking to happen let me answer it this way: They will not be paid for the mistakes that they made. And I think that's what you need to hear.

The Speaker: Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: I would also like, Madam Speaker, for the Minister to confirm that in his evaluation of the performance of MEPCO they will take into

consideration that the original manufacturer specified on the air-conditioning, they are the sole providers, licensed by the manufacturer in the Cayman Islands.

The Speaker: Is there a question?

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Yes, Madam Speaker, because if we are hiring contractors that are specifying equipment that only they sell—they don't sell it to the other contractors on the Island, you know. They will only sell it if they are going to install it and maintain it. It's a conflict. I am asking that you will make sure that none of the adjustments that they are making a claim for in relation to the air-conditioning is related to the fact that in the final analysis we have to go to provide an alternative manufacturer for what they specified as the sole source provider on the Island because we couldn't get it to purchase from them unless they installed it.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, thank you.

From what I'm understanding from the technical people right now is at this precise moment they are not 100 per cent sure within the terms of the contract what can and can't be done. Legal advice is going to be sought as to what can be done and what can't be done. But what has definitely been discovered which I think is perhaps the most important point that the Member is making, even though it is by way of asking questions, is the fact that no more contracts will be dealt with in that manner, because it fixes a methodology to one entity no matter what you have to go through and how many pains you go through with them, there's nowhere else you can turn. And that's what they will make sure doesn't happen again. In the meantime they can't say definitely what the end result will be because they have to be looking at it from the point of view of not creating any liability issues. But all of that is being looked at and, like most other things in life, at some points in time there are lessons in the learning.

The Speaker: Member for North Side . . . actually, Member for North Side, I will recognise the Honourable Premier. It's past the hour of 11:00, to move the suspension of Standing Order 23 (7) and (8) to allow questions to be continued after 11:00 am.

Suspension of Standing Order 23(7) and (8)

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 23 (7) and (8) to allow questions to be continued after 11:00 am.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 23 (7) and (8) be suspended to allow questions to be continued after 11:00 am.

All those in favour please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 23(7) and (8) suspended.

The Speaker: Member for North Side, please continue.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Can the Minister confirm that he will look into the possibility of employing in-house, at Public Works mechanical, electrical, and plumbing professionals who will be able to avoid having to go to these kinds of companies in the future, because there is a narrow group of such companies that exist locally which Public Works has to deal with? And I would suggest that the performance on this contract alone should strongly indicate that this company never ever be contracted by government again.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

From where the Member sits the answer should be easy. If I were the Member, the answer would be easy too. But from where I sit the answer is not quite that easy. I hear exactly what he is saying. But there are three separate issues we speak to here. First of all, we have to look to see the need and whether it justifies permanent employment. And I'm not saying no to the question—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: But I am saying we have to look to that. There is also the point about numbers with the civil service and the whole world speaking to contracting out stuff rather than having more members on staff and pensions and all of that kind of stuff. So, the commitment that I would readily give is to speak to the Director of Public Works regarding the issue to look to see from a financial standpoint where the benefits are and what the pros and cons are of doing such a thing. And if there is a business case for it to happen then, certainly, we can recommend that they proceed with that. I don't have any problems at all with what you are suggesting.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side, are there any more supplementaries, or does that conclude it?

[No audible response]

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This seems to be a contract, according to the answer that I have here, for \$17,986. Not a huge contract, but it seems a hell of a lot of problems have gone on here.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, who supervises this work? Is it Public Works or the Ministry?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker, I know I have to answer the question, but the Leader of the Opposition would know that the Ministry would not be directly supervising this work, so it would have to be Public Works.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, Madam—

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you very much. To make myself clear, I wanted it to come out so that the Ministry can't get blame.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Well, I appreciate that, and I wasn't trying to slight the question.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: I was protecting my cousin.

[Laughter]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Well, Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: Order.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: In order to facilitate the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in his quest to protect his cousin, I will confirm to him it was not the Ministry, it is the Department. And when you say supervising now, we have to understand the contracts.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Sorry.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: My twins?

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Let's keep the comments through the floor.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: I know who he's talking about. I would have loved to have had twins, Madam Speaker, but God didn't bless me with those.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: You inherited them though.

The Speaker: I will allow two final supplementaries and then we will move on to the next question.
Elected Member for North Side.

[Inaudible interjections]

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, can the Minister confirm that in his evaluation of whether we should bring mechanical, electrical and plumbing in-house, he will not be unduly swayed by the private sector's often unnecessary cry to reduce the numbers in the civil service? Madam Speaker, I have sent in two FOIs, one on this matter and one to the Minister of Education, which I must congratulate them, they have responded promptly and in this last financial year 2014/15, they spent \$144,000-plus on such contracts. I have sent one to the Ministry of Planning and Public Works, now 37 days, and I have gotten no response, how much money has Public Works spent contracting consultants for MEP.

Saying all that, Madam Speaker, the sum that is being spent, in my view, justifies in house where we have more control because what the Minister would not be aware of, but what he and the country need to be aware of, is the attitude, the arrogance, of these private consultants when they come to meetings and they are asked questions. And when you question them they try to fool you with information overload and think that you don't have enough sense to calculate what it is. And just to give the Minister a good example—

The Speaker: Could you please turn it into a question as soon as possible?

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Does he believe that a classroom 23 feet wide, 30 feet wide, with only one side exposed to the rising sun, with one double window, which has 8 inches of foam insulation in the rafters, double 5/8 sheetrock on the ceiling joists, and suspended insulation ceiling tiles 2 feet below that, needs 5 tons of air-conditioning?

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, if you wish to respond you can; there's a lot of speculation—

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: That's no speculation, Ma'am, I have—

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, let me just finish.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Sorry.

The Speaker: Sir, the reason I said speculation is because unless I heard incorrectly it was 23 feet wide, and 30 feet wide, and that left that there was no length. So, I took it to be a Freudian slip. Otherwise they probably need more than air-conditioning for such a building.

Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I heard that too, but I understood what he was saying because I knew where he was talking about. So it's okay. That part is okay.

The Member asked a couple of questions before turning that last statement into a question. And let me just clear the air with the Member. I understand exactly what the Member is saying and I understand the particulars of the specific project. I can assure . . . I don't know what kind of assurances the Member is seeking, but I think the Member knows me well enough to know that I will not be influenced by anybody on the outside as to what is the best decision, but you only wanted to hear it publicly, and I understand that, as to what is the best decision for the Government, which means for the people of the country. And certainly, I will make sure to task the people who have to be tasked to have a look at this and for us to discuss it and to look at the pros and cons to see what's the best case scenario and what will bring about the best results. I have no problems doing that, and I thank the Member for bringing it to the fore.

The only thing I will say, Madam Speaker, with regard to the air-conditioning . . . I am no expert by any means. But I think I know enough that if what the Member is saying is exactly how it is, then, certainly, it should not require 5 tons of air-conditioning. I am presuming he was talking about 23 by 30 which is just shy of 700 square feet. I understand. And with all of the other stuff that he's saying. And of course there wouldn't be a lot of partitions, there wouldn't be a lot of duct work to be done or anything like that. So I hear you.

Having said all of that, Madam Speaker, I think the Member can still say that the Ministry and Public Works have done their very best to provide the classrooms and to be on time. And I do appreciate his concerns with regard to trying to save money and we are all looking out for that. But I just want to make sure and I would ask you to allow the Member to confirm to us that that has been the case so that the pub-

lic can know that at least we are all doing our best to get our best result.

The Speaker: I recognise the Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean, Elected Member for East End: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In keeping with the question that the Member just asked the Minister about in house, bringing in house, I wonder if the Minister can tell us . . . some time ago he announced that he was going to set up a section of government similar to a contractor general who would be looking at all projects. Was that part and parcel of designing and managing projects as well? Were those included in that?

Some time ago you had announced that you were going to establish an office similar to a contractor general, special projects unit. Wouldn't that entail them dealing with all of government projects? Well, try to explain it, please.

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning.

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: No, that special projects office that you were speaking about, Madam Speaker, there are some special projects, the airport project, the port project and in the Ministry of Education there are several larger projects with regard to the schools, and the waste management project. Those are the special projects that that office has been set up for.

Now, I hear what the Members are saying and I want to assure the Members that with regard to economies of scale and everything else, what I know that they are thinking about with regard to this, if that works best, then that's fine. That can easily be the course of action. But one of the things that we wanted to be very careful of is overload and not overload with the amount of work and then we don't end up . . . and I don't wish to be misunderstood, but you don't end up with another empire or another kingdom. So, without saying any more, we are just want to make sure that we are careful with that.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Some kingdoms don't have kings.

The Speaker: Member for North Side, this is the final supplementary.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I want to thank the Minister for giving me the opportunity to confirm that, yes, I am fully satisfied with the performance of the Ministry of Education on this project and with Public Works, and particularly the persons who have attended and who have attended the project meeting— Mr. Arek Gardner should be complimented for the work he has done; Mr. Evans

[PHONETIC] and Mr. Dennis, as the quantity surveyor [PHONETIC] and Mr. Tommy Bodden. They are all doing a good job.

This is not about them. This is about the government setting them up with people like MEPCO to come there and, as my grandmother would have said, carry on their skullduggery—Right?—by trying to intimidate them as young civil servants and young professionals. And it has to be left to people like me to question them and to bring these things to light. We need to support those young men more as a government and give them the technical people in-house so that they can do the job they wish to do. They are being severely hampered by having to go out in the private sector and have no control over the performance of these people after we hire them, because the contractual relationship in terms of putting them to the test by Public Works as to the standard of performance is very difficult to establish in a contract and they need to be supported by being given the staff that they need to manage all these big projects that we just heard about. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Madam Clerk.

QUESTION NO. 19: OWEN ROBERTS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the First Elected Member for West

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: to ask the Honourable Deputy Premier, Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport: Can the Honourable Minister say, (a) What is the total planned cost of the addition to the Owens Roberts International Airport? (b) Why are there not Jetways in the addition? (c) Why is there not an extension to the "Runway" or a Taxi-way provided in the plan?

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell, Deputy Premier, Minister of District Administration, Tourism and Transport: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The answer: (a) The budget for the ORIA [Owen Roberts International Terminal renovation and expansion project C\$55 million inclusive of construction costs, Consultant and Government fees.

(b) The outline business case identified a priority of needs for ORIA as follows: (1) Safety and regulatory compliance – resolving safety and regulatory issues was considered to be the highest priority.

(2) ORIA terminal capacity shortfall – a terminal capacity solution was urgently needed that would address the adverse impact on visitors experience caused by over-crowding and bottle necks at peak times.

(3) ORIA short/medium-term airside capacity – airside capacity constraints led to plane movement delays and limit the traffic volumes in the peak season.

The Master Plan document prepared as part of the Outline Business case established priority investments ensuring affordability over the twenty year planning horizon, taking into account that the capital programme is funded out of the Passenger Facility Charge. Given the affordability constraints and given the fact that the provision of passenger boarding bridges (jetways) do not contribute to any of the needs priorities stated above, they are not currently included in the terminal plan, although, it is recognised that they do represent a benefit for visitors in terms of convenience.

The Master Plan considered that passenger boarding bridges could be provided as a Phase 4 construction stage and, therefore, provision has been made to add them at a later date should funds become available. In the meantime, the Master Plan did identify alternatives, including mobile passenger boarding ramps which Cayman Airways is currently in the process of purchasing which will aid embarkation and disembarkation particularly for those with age and mobility challenges. In addition CIAA is looking at the option of box tunnels that could be pulled out during inclement weather to protect passengers from the rain.

(c) The current runway length of 7,008 feet is sufficient to meet the mix of aircraft using or wishing to use the airport, including British Airways' proposed switch to [Boeing] 777s in 2016.

Significant constraints exist for an extension either westward or eastward due to road [re]alignments to the west and environmental implications going east into the North Sound. As no airlines have currently indicated a future commitment to long haul routes particularly out of Europe, the extension of the runway is identified as a trigger event.

A parallel taxiway was considered in the Master Plan, both partial and full length. However, due to the limitations of the airport property to the west as well as the impacts on General Aviation and commercial/cargo aprons, the Master Plan recommends that the priority in the short term should be to improve runway safety an efficiency and the provision of a partial or full length parallel taxi way should be included in the long term planning horizon.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am well aware of the items 1, 2, and 3 outlined by the Minister, regulatory compliance and capacity shortfall and the airside capacity. In regard to

the consideration for rain or inclement weather and assistance for people needing wheelchair, that was not considered in the business plan. If it is considered in the business plan, what is the cost of purchasing these facilities which will aid embarkation and disembarkation for people leaving the Island for medical purposes, particularly the elderly and these options of the box tunnels? Were those things, you said, in the business case, or business plan?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:

Yes, cost and whether those items you just said, outlined, were in the business plan. And Madam Speaker, whether they are satisfied with the safety requirements in regard to a parallel taxiway. Don't need to say that in times of the rush hour, we have to circle sometimes because there is no other runway and there is not a taxiway.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for those questions, follow-ups.

First, I think from the original answer the business case itself had to look at what could be done as quickly as possible. And I know that the Member, being the previous Minister of Tourism, realises the importance of getting passengers through the airport as quickly as possible. And he also realises the opportunities for us to facilitate our elderly and facilitate the growth of medical tourism. So I am pleased today to be able to say that Cayman Airways has actually purchased a ramp system that will enable wheelchairs, the ability that they will not have to go up steps anymore, that there's actually ramp boarding to the planes. I would say that it will be a very positive step for our elderly, a very positive step for the medical tourism that we're growing.

From the standpoint of the taxiway, again, the original answer said the priority was on safety. So the emphasis had to be on making sure that, as was said, as planes circle, how do we facilitate the movement as quickly as possible? So they had to use the budgeted money to try to standardise or facilitate the landing patterns in the best possible way and in a timely manner, as a priority, look at how they could improve the taxiway and the apron.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you. Madam Speaker, two questions.

In the answer you say that Cayman Airways has purchased or are purchasing these ramps. Are these the same ramps that were identified in Finance Committee in 2014 as part of expenditure of the \$5

million that was being taken out of the reserve fund? And, if Cayman Airways is buying the ramps rather than the Civil Aviation Authority, are other airlines going to be required to purchase similar ramps for boarding and de-boarding?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the Member for that question.

No, the \$5 million as identified in Finance Committee was not the funding used to purchase the ramps. The purchase is being made by Cayman Airways and I am confident that if they are as successful as we anticipate they are going to be, then, Cayman Islands Airport Authority and the other airlines operating here can look at how they source those as well. But the starting point was we had the ability through Cayman Airways to look at this opportunity to see how we could facilitate passengers easier, and that's what Cayman Airways has done.

The Speaker: Is there a follow up, Member for North Side?

After that it will be the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Is this kind of equipment normally provided by the handling agencies that are handling airlines other than Cayman Airways? And are the ramps that Cayman Airways has purchased covered which will allow them to connect to your box tunnels?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Thank you.

The ramps were to be covered and I can't answer what the standard is in the industry, whether the airlines purchase them or whether the airport purchases them. I'm not aware of what the standard is. What I can say in this case is that Cayman Airways has purchased them, and being the Minister responsible for both Tourism and Cayman Airways, if they are successful, and also having Cayman Airports Authority, we would encourage and work to where all the airlines coming in would have these types of ramps available to facilitate the movement.

The Speaker: Elected Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Is the design and the spaces between the parking ramps adequate to allow each airline to use these kinds of ramps? And will they work on the Saab or will the Interisland operation be entirely removed from the international terminal like it used to be years ago?—separated.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: There are actually two types of ramps that have been purchased. One for the 737s, the jets, obviously because the door is higher, and, like a stairwell, they go up and they have a landing and then they go back. So that makes it need less area. Okay? For the smaller planes, the inter-island service, it's just a direct ramp that goes up, because it doesn't have to be that much higher.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: I just had some information passed to me that the ramps should actually be operational by the first week of next month.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader . . . is it a follow-up or a new question?

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Minister said that the ramps will be operational by next month. Is that date as moveable as the operation of the Saab has been between here and Cayman Brac?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier, that does not follow within there, but obviously you can answer it if you wish to.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: No, I'm absolutely happy to answer that. I thank him for the privilege of explaining that.

The ramps are arriving on the 24th. That's when they are scheduled to arrive on Island. So that's why I said that they should be operational by the first week of next month.

The other part that I am so pleased and happy to be able to tell you this morning about the Saab and when it starts operation is that it is going to be crewed by all Cayman Airways staff. And that is the reason it has not started yet. It has been brought here, and, as you know, it was brought down by a crew hired to bring it here. And now four pilots, Ricky Whorms [PHONETIC], Steve Scott, Chaz Clifford [PHONETIC] and another young first officer, and I'm sorry I don't have his name this morning, were in Miami and went through the training, the simulator there. They had to do their check-out rides here so the expertise for operating the Saab is in-house shortly, because the check rides, obviously, as you well know, being a pilot yourself, will have to be done here. Okay?

The Speaker: I recognise the Leader of the Opposition and then the Elected Member for East End.

Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Now that the door is open for the Saab, can the Minister tell us when these people, these four pi-

lots qualified to fly the Saab? When is it that they qualified?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, the pilots that I named went to Miami to go through the training. They finished their training, as much as they could do there. Now, for them to be able to fly the plane they have to have their check-out rides and their certification. That is what is being done now. The plane itself was brought down by a crew that was hired to bring it down, and the next move is, and has been taking place, Cayman Airways crew are being trained to fly the plane.

The Speaker: Elected Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: I'm just checking to see whether it's a follow-up question because the Leader of the Opposition has been waiting to—

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Yes, Ma'am, but I should tell the Minister that I'm no dentist either and I don't need to be drawing teeth in here. We need to get the numbers and the time exact. What time, because that plane has been sitting up there for two and a half months now. Were those people type rating certified prior to that plane coming to the Cayman Islands?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Let me give a little bit longer explanation that I hope is going to bring light on the question.

The plane was leased and brought here. The plane had to be deregistered from its registration in the United States, which was time consuming. It had to be re-registered under the Cayman Islands Registry. So that has taken a period of time. You've seen it sitting there and it has not been that work was not going on. From August 14, when it arrived here, they have been working to de-register and re-register. At the same time, the pilots, as I have said earlier, were in Miami and they went through a training period there. They have been back here and when they get to the point where they can fly the plane, the check-out rides and the pilots have to be brought in to check them out.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, if the Member for East End has a follow up, I think we should allow him to . . .

The Speaker: Elected Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can tell us as part of that de-registration/re-registration, is it not also a part of that, that Cayman Airways did not have an operational manual for the plane and that's why that has taken so long through Civil Aviation? And these pilots were certified type rated long before . . . or during the period that type plane came here? And it doesn't take that long to do a check ride on a type rated pilot. Those are the questions that need to be answered.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, I would assume that when you de-register and re-register that the guidelines, qualifications, restrictions, of what the Cayman Islands Civil Aviation Authority would require would have to be met. If those documents were not prepared, not ready and not what they wanted, they would have had to have been done.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Member for North Side, is it a follow up? Leader of the Opposition, are you giving way, or do you want to ask your question now?

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No Ma'am, we've gone so far into this now, might as well—

The Speaker: Member for North Side.

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller: Madam Speaker, can the Minister confirm that de-registration and re-registration is a very lucrative part of civil aviation operation, and if it happens on a regular basis without the physical plane having to come to the Cayman Islands to be de-registered and re-registered?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, I cannot confirm that for the Member because I do not know. But I can commit to him that I will find out and give him the answer.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Okay, Madam Speaker, back to my question now. Thank you, very much.

Madam Speaker, if I didn't know already because of the complaints, I have personal experience in the use of the ramp carrying the disabled. What is the cost of the facility of these ramps, these mobile ramps and . . . well, both of them. I guess both of them are some sort of ramp. And what is the lifespan

of that equipment? And the third question would be, who did the business case?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The business case would have been done by Cayman Airways. They would have gone through Central Tenders. If there is more specific information I'm happy to get it—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: They would have had to have gone through Central Tenders. I am not sure what Central Tenders would have required from them; whether it was single sourced or whether the bids had to come in. But I can get that information if—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: I don't know that.

Cayman Airways purchased the ramps. And you're—

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: What I am inquiring, to give it more clarity, is we had a business case done to get to this point that said no parallel taxiway now and none of the jetways. We had an overall company.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I apologise. I think I misunderstood the question. The business case was done for the airport. The ramps were purchased by Cayman Airways. So the business case, the ramps were not identified in the Cayman Island Airport Authority business case. The purchase of the ramps would have gone through Central Tenders from Cayman Airways standpoint.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

That's one point I was trying to bring to the fore. The business case did not identify the need for those two items. Cayman Airways, being the carrier she is, identified it, or at least somebody recognised it. There were tremendous complaints about it. And we are now trying to do something about it. And I have no

problem with that. I am trying to find out who did the overall business case, business plan, whatever you want to call it. What is the lifespan of that equipment? What is the cost of it?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, Price-waterhouseCoopers did the business case.

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: PwC.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: PwC.

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, I'm still trying to ascertain—

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: —as I now . . . what has been put on record is that there was no plan to get these items, but Cayman Airways, recognising the need for them, has now jumped and has gotten something done, let's say. What is the cost of that facility? What is the lifespan of the equipment?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Again, Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for that question. I am just reaching out to make sure that PwC was the one. And I will have that information, I'm sure, before the questions are finished. And it would have gone out to tender, as you know, for the business case to be bid on.

The ramps for the 737s are landed at a cost of CI\$50,000, and the ramp for the Saab is landed at a cost of CI\$25,000. Lifespan . . . I don't have that here, but I will try to find that out. I would estimate it's a 10 to 15 year lifespan.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeewa Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Are you saying that the ramps are the same thing as this tunnel that you were explaining? So the cost of them (that's what I'm trying to find out) . . . the cost of that tunnel, some kind of tunnel, folding or otherwise . . . rolling or otherwise.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Thanks again to the Member for that question.

I think we're trying to get to a point where we understand the cost of jet bridges versus the interim measures, is how I understand this line of questioning

going. The cost of jet bridges were estimated at \$20 million because of the construction difference in how the second floor would have been the landing for the jet bridges, rather than what we have now is . . . we have a covered walkway that gets the covering over the passengers as close as a fixed structure can. And then the box structure is looking at how you facilitate in inclement weather from the covering to the ramp to put people on the plane, because, as you know, from the jetway it's a moveable jet bridge that moves away from the plane. So, if you think about what we have now with the covered walkway, that's the bricks and mortar that doesn't move. And then we are trying to facilitate getting people in a more comfortable way to the side of the plane with inclement weather.

But I think you can appreciate and see that \$50,000 for a 737 ramp and looking at the box, the numbers are completely different and the scale of what the actual cost is, is completely different, and the commitment that as soon as funding is identified and available it was left in the business case to be able to add the jet bridges.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you. One last question, Madam Speaker: Wasn't the plan that included jetways a completely different plan than what is happening now? Wasn't the plan that included the jetways completely different? The new Board changed the plan. Isn't that a different plan from what included the jetways?

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, the question is, as I understand it, did the new Board change the plan. The new Board had a business case done to identify the needs, which I read the needs out in the original answer. And the plan that was identified to be done, I don't know how much they were able to use old plans that were there. I have certainly heard the comment made that there were two or three plans lying around. I also know that I was told that we couldn't find the original plan and we had to do "as built" drawings to find out if the core building there was suitable to build on.

What I do know is that it took us two years to get these plans done. It took us two years of doing everything we could possibly do between more Immigration officers, more staff from Customs, more people from Cayman Airports Authority, more people from Tourism, and the good problem of having more tourism and more tourists and more friends and family visit and come through that airport that we realised the priority of the business case as identified was to move as quickly as we could to create a better environment for our passengers that come.

So, I am very pleased this morning to be able to say that ground has been broken with the new plans that have been managed and put forward through the Board and we are moving forward that now when people come they see workers on the ground, they see construction going on, and they have a very comfortable feeling that we are moving in a direction to support the infrastructure that's needed to build the tourism product.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I will allow two more supplementaries.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: I understand everything the Minister says. I already know. What I am asking, though, is whether that plan is different.

The Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier.

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell: Madam Speaker, I am going to give the answer that I would assume the plan is different.

The Speaker: If there are no further supplementaries, we will move on to the next item of business.

STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: There are no statements for today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: No personal explanations.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

The Speaker: None.

RAISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGES

The Speaker: None.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BILLS

DANGEROUS SUBSTANCE HANDLING AND STORAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2015

[Motion to defer Committee stage]

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am advised that the proposed committee stage amendments with respect to the Dangerous Substance Handling and Storage (Amendment) Bill, 2015, are still not complete. I therefore move that the committee on that Bill be deferred until the next sitting of this honourable House, on Monday.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The question is that the Committee, Report and Third Reading of the Bill be dealt with at another sitting of this honourable House.

All those in favour please say Aye. Those against, No.

Ayes.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The Committee stage of the Dangerous substance Handling and Storage (Amendment) Bill, 2015 deferred until Monday 19th October 2015.

MOTIONS

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Government Motion No. 8/2015-2016—Order to Effect Recommendations of the Electoral Boundary Commission

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move Government Motion No. 8/2015-2016 entitled Order to Effect Recommendations of the Electoral Boundary Commission.

The Speaker: The Motion has been moved and is open for debate. Does the Honourable Premier wish to speak to the Motion?

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, the Motion:

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly resolved that the Governor should be invited in accordance with section 88 of The Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 (“the Constitution”), to appoint an Electoral Boundary Commission (“EBC”) on 10th of September 2014;

AND WHEREAS in accordance with section 88 of the Constitution, an EBC was duly appointed on 22nd December 2014;

AND WHEREAS in accordance with section 89(1) of the Constitution, the EBC reviewed the electoral district boundaries of the Cayman Islands and on 20th August 2015 submitted its findings thereon to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly in a document entitled: Report of the Cayman Islands Electoral Boundary Commission 2015 (“the Report”);

AND WHEREAS the EBC has recommended in its Report that the number of Members of the Legislative Assembly be increased to 19, and that the Cayman Islands be divided into nineteen (19) Single Member Electoral Districts as follows:

West Bay East Electoral District, one Elected Member; West Bay North West Electoral District, one Elected Member; West Bay Central Electoral District, one Elected Member; West Bay South Electoral District, one Elected Member; George Town North Electoral District, one Elected Member; George Town Central Electoral District, one Elected Member; George Town West Electoral District, one Elected Member; George Town South Electoral District, one Elected Member; George Town East Electoral District, one Elected Member; Red Bay Electoral District, One Elected Member; Prospect Electoral District, one Elected Member; Newlands Electoral District, One Elected Member; Savannah Electoral District, One Elected Member; Bodden Town West Electoral District, one Elected Member; Bodden Town East Electoral District, one Elected Member; North Side Electoral District, one Elected Member; East End Electoral District, one Elected Member; Cayman Brac West & Little Cayman Electoral District, one Elected Member, Cayman Brac East Electoral District, One Elected Member.

AND WHEREAS the precise boundaries of the nineteen (19) Single Member Electoral Districts as recommended by the EBC are set out in Schedule C of the Report;

AND WHEREAS the Governor has drafted an Order to give effect to the recommendations contained in the Report;

AND WHEREAS as required by section 89(3) of the Constitution, as Premier, I have laid a copy of the Governor’s draft Order upon the table of the Legislative Assembly;

BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly hereby approves the draft Order of Her Excellency the Governor for giving effect to the recommendations contained in the Report;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an Order then be subsequently made in terms of the draft, so that the changes in representation of Members of the Legislative Assembly, and determination of the boundaries of the nineteen (19) Single Member Electoral Districts as provided

therein, will come into effect upon the next dissolution of the House.

Madam Speaker, that is the Motion and the resolutions sought. I propose to lay on the Table of the House in advance of my presentation of the Motion, the Report of the Cayman Islands Electoral Boundary Commission, 2015.

The Speaker: So ordered.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, I have moved what I believe is an historic Motion; a Motion that will change and improve our electoral system for the next election and indeed for all elections to follow.

The former President of the United States, Harry Truman, once said: **“Men and women make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.”**

Madam Speaker, we who were elected to lead this country will consider whether we will make history here today and seize the opportunity before us to put this issue to rest and to modernize our electoral system once and for all.

Earlier in this Meeting, Madam Speaker, I laid on the Table of this honourable House the draft Order, which has been prepared by Her Excellency the Governor, entitled “The Nineteen Single Member Electoral Districts Boundaries Order 2015”.

Madam Speaker, for the record I will read that draft Order into the Hansards of this honourable House.

“The Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009, S.I. 2009 No. 1379, The Single Member Electoral Districts Boundaries Order, 2015.

“WHEREAS an Electoral Boundary Commission was appointed on the 22nd December 2014 under section 88 of the Constitution set out in Schedule 2 to the Cayman Islands Constitution Order, 2009 S.I. 2009, No. 1379 (in this order referred to as “the Constitution”);

“AND WHEREAS under section 89(1) of the Constitution, the Electoral Boundary Commission is charged with the responsibility for reviewing the Boundaries of the electoral districts into which the Cayman Islands are divided and submitting a report to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly containing its recommendations for any changes in the number and boundaries of the electoral districts;

“AND WHEREAS in accordance with Section 89(1) of the Constitution, the Electoral Boundary Commission, on 20th August, 2015, submitted to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly a report making recommendations for the

retention of certain electoral district boundaries and the alteration of others;

“AND WHEREAS it is provided by section 89(3) of the Constitution that as soon as may be after the Electoral Boundary Commission has submitted a report under the said section 89(1), the Premier shall lay before the Legislative Assembly for its approval the draft of an order by the Governor for giving effect, whether with or without modifications, to the recommendations contained in the report;

“AND WHEREAS a draft of this order giving effect to the recommendations contained in the report of the Electoral Boundary Commission was laid before the Legislative Assembly for its approval on 14th October, 2015, and was approved by resolution of the Legislative Assembly on. . .” (and there’s a blank, Madam Speaker, as we await the resolution of the House on this matter).

“NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 89(6) of the Constitution, the Governor makes the following order:

“1(1) the order may be may cited as the Nineteen Single Member Electoral Districts Boundaries Order, 2015;

“(2) This order shall come into force upon the next dissolution of the Legislative Assembly;

“2(1) The Cayman Islands shall be divided into the following electoral districts:

- (a) West Bay East Electoral District;**
- (b) West Bay North West Electoral District;**
- (c) West Bay Central Electoral District;**
- (d) West Bay South Electoral District;**
- (e) George Town North Electoral District;**
- (f) George Town Central Electoral District;**
- (g) George Town West Electoral District;**
- (h) George Town South Electoral District;**
- (i) George Town East Electoral District;**
- (j) Red Bay Electoral District;**
- (k) Prospect Electoral District;**
- (l) Newlands Electoral District;**
- (m) Savannah Electoral District;**
- (n) Bodden Town West Electoral District;**
- (o) Bodden Town East Electoral District;**
- (p) North Side Electoral District;**
- (q) East End Electoral District;**
- (r) Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman Electoral District; and**
- (s) Cayman Brac East Electoral District.**

“(2) The boundaries of each electoral district shall be as set out in Schedule C of the report of the Electoral Boundary Commission that was submitted to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly on the 20th August, 2015.

“(3) Each electoral district shall be represented in the Legislative Assembly by one elected member.

**“Made on the _____ day of _____
2015.
“GOVERNOR OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS.”**

So, Madam Speaker, that is the draft of the Order which will be made by Her Excellency the Governor following the resolution of this House to adopt the Electoral Boundary Commission's Report, 2015.

Madam Speaker, the recommendations contained in the report are as I have just read in some detail from the draft Order—the adoption of those, the effect of which will be to introduce single member electoral districts across all three Cayman Islands, where each voter will have one vote for one candidate of their choice. This new system will also allow voters to hold their elected member to account as they will have a single representative to look to. And as a representative it will allow us to focus our energies on those individuals in our respective electoral districts, and to be able to better serve them as a representative.

In the current system, as an example, there are six Elected Representatives for the district of George Town. And each of us is required to represent the interest at the constituency level of all of the persons in George Town. A district like George Town which has a population of almost 30,000 people, creates a real challenge when each constituent is entitled to look to each of us to address their respective needs and concerns, regardless. And so, Madam Speaker, I have no doubt that being able to represent at the constituency level, a smaller number of constituents and a smaller landmass is actually going to result in constituents getting more time and easier access to their representatives.

Madam Speaker, the recommendations also seek to introduce an additional seat in George Town, increasing the number of elected members to a total of 19. This sensible change allows for roughly equal number of voters in the three biggest districts, and proper representation for a growing George Town which has the largest number of voters on record; 7,377 compared to 4,527 in Bodden Town, or 4,163 in West Bay. But the added seat also helps to protect the integrity of the election process by now creating an odd number of representatives which will reduce the chances of a hung parliament.

Madam Speaker, many of us here today campaigned and was elected on a platform that included single member electoral districts and one person, one vote. And we have not forgotten the 2012 Referendum on the issue where the majority of those who voted, voted yes to one person, one vote, and single member electoral districts. Any government worth its salt keeps its promises made during the campaign. And, Madam Speaker, this Government which I have the honour and privilege to lead, intends to keep a promise by voting yes to Motion 8/2015-2016 and accepting the Electoral Boundary Commission's Report. And

in this process we will check off yet another of the boxes of assurances we made to the good people of the Cayman Islands, proving yet again, as we have been saying, that this is a government that gets things done. So, Madam Speaker, this Government and I believe the majority of the Members in this House will vote in the affirmative to bring about one person one vote and single member electoral districts. And it is time, Madam Speaker, that we get this done.

If you would allow me, Madam Speaker, to go down memory lane for a moment, as regards to how we have come to this point. For more than a decade it has been the Peoples Progressive Movement that has led the charge for many progressive changes to our democratic process, including one person, one vote, and single member electoral districts.

We were sitting on the opposition benches in 2002 when the United Kingdom encouraged the country to look to modernise our Constitution. And during those constitutional discussions the Peoples Progressive Movement took a firm position on one person, one vote and single member electoral districts. Indeed, in the paper which we submitted to the United Kingdom in 2002, we noted, and I am quoting from that paper, Madam Speaker.

“The present system in which a resident of George Town has four votes but the resident of East End only has one, is unfair, and, in our view, undemocratic. We strongly support the proposal to move to one man, one vote.” [UNVERIFIED QUOTE]

That was in 2002, Madam Speaker.

So, those of us who were a part of the Peoples Progressive Movement in those early days have led the charge on this from the beginning. In more recent times I helped to draft the one man, one vote, single member constituency referendum petition, and was amongst the very first to sign it. I together with the Progressive's work to assist the OMOV movement and indeed we even hosted a strategy weekend where we brought in individuals knowledgeable in such things to give advice on how to move this forward and to organise at the grassroots level so as to have a chance with a people initiated referendum being successful.

Madam Speaker, as I have stated earlier, most, if not all of us on this side, campaigned on, and was elected on a platform that included equality of the vote and single member electoral districts.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, the now Opposition Leader and his government at the time, did not support equality of the vote or single member electoral districts during the constitutional talks here in Cayman and in London. And so, we were unable to get this provision expressly set out in the 2009 Constitution. But, Madam Speaker, we fought at the time to ensure that there was provision made in the Constitution which would permit a move to single member electoral districts if and when this House was desirous of doing so. That same Constitution, Madam Speaker,

also contains other checks and balances, such as limiting the holder of the Office of Premier to two consecutive terms, allowing for a people's initiated referendum and the inclusion of the Bill of Rights. This progressive thinking and action has put the Cayman Islands in a better position today and with the passage of Government Motion No. 8/2015-2016 and the implementation of single member electoral districts and one person, one vote, we will be completing the job we started so many years ago.

So, yes, Madam Speaker, it is time to ensure that each voters ballot counts the same as all others, whether you vote in East End or West Bay. The road here has been long and winding and the journey has been far from smooth and certain, but we are here now. It is time. I am hopeful that the Leader of the Opposition will join with us today to unanimously vote 'yes' to the Motion. I believe that as George Bernard Shaw noted: **"Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds, cannot change anything."**

So, Madam Speaker, I am encouraging this House to accept the recommendations of the Electoral Boundary Commission which the Governor appointed at the request of this House. The Commission was chaired by Dr. Lisa R. Handley who was selected by the Governor. Dr. Handley is an esteemed elections expert who has provided assistance in over a dozen countries where she has served as a consultant on issues related to electoral boundary delineation and electoral system design.

Her Excellency also invited me as Premier, together with the Leader of the Opposition, to suggest one person each to serve on the Commission. I recommended Attorney, Ms. Adrienne Webb, and the Opposition Leader recommended Attorney, Mr. A. Steve McField. Ms. Webb has served as commissioner on two separate occasions in the past and Mr. McField is an attorney-at-law of many years call, a past president of the Caymanian Bar Association, a political commentator and a noted scholar of our Constitution. Both of these eminent individuals have served on various boards and committees that support democracy. In essence, both were well qualified to undertake this task and together with Dr. Handley, they collectively proved to be more than up to it. Indeed, in my view, Madam Speaker, they have done an admirable job. All told, the Commission spent many months, held several meetings and travelled to every district listening to everyone who spoke to them. They also encouraged written submissions and where these were provided, they took the views under consideration.

The Commission also used data from government's Statistics Office and took time to carefully assess where voters resided. All of this assisted in the drawing up of recommended boundary lines for each electoral district. And, in doing so, they sought to take heed of traditional neighbourhoods, but to also look to

ensure that each electoral district had as diverse a demographic as possible.

So, yes, Madam Speaker, we played our part over many years in promoting one man, one vote and single member constituencies. But despite this, as I have said previously, over time, I and others did hear from some individuals in the public, of their concerns around having electoral districts that were not diverse enough and were too small, thereby possibly lending themselves to the creation of political garrisons. I have to say, Madam Speaker, that I and many on this side took note of this concern. And I believe that the Commissioners, as they held their public meetings, also heard the same concerns. They listened, and, in my view, as I have noted a few minutes ago, the electoral districts have been drawn to help to ensure that as wide a demographic group as possible, was included in each electoral district. And so, Madam Speaker, that effort and the result has done away with any residual concerns that I may have had regarding this particular issue. And I am more than satisfied that the job that has been done by the Commissioners in terms of the division of the various districts as we now know them, into distinct single member electoral districts, is as good a job as could possibly be done working with the facts and circumstances which exist.

So, Madam Speaker, with the passage of this Motion, we will pave the way for amendments to the Elections Law and begin the education and public awareness of the new electoral districts and voting system. This is a matter not only for the entire House, but also for the entire country to think and talk about. As a government, we have never been distracted from our ambition to implement one person, one vote, and single member electoral districts and I am pleased that we will, today, bring this to fruition and have it implemented in time for the next general election.

Our first order of business following the elections in 2013 was to restore stability to the country, restore the confidence in Government, and restore the economy and government finances. All this we have done and we will continue to work hard to ensure that the good reputation of the Cayman Islands continues to be improved upon. As I have said many times in the past, this Government is one that has a plan and is disciplined and is delivering on that plan. This is a government that gets things done and we are delivering on our plan for electoral reform. Many years from now, as the history books are written, future generations of Caymanians will be taught that it was the present Members of this House that chose to modernise our electoral system. They will learn that it was us who understood clearly that progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seized the opportunity to change things for the better.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to listening to the debate of honourable Members and for the support of all Members of the House on this historic day and for this historic Motion. I thank you.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Final call—does any other Member wish to speak?

If not, I will call on the mover to exercise his right of reply.

Honourable Premier.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, I was in the restroom but I did have to take some medication also. I wish to speak. But if I am out of time, I'm out of time.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition, please continue . . . please commence, I should say.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition:

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Actually, I would have thought that we were going to take the lunch break because we had got to that point.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: It's a waiting game. You know how it is.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: I'm happy to oblige.

Madam Speaker, I have listened somewhat and really nothing new was said by the Premier, other than to lay the report. What he said in opening is basically what he's been saying all the time about this.

Madam Speaker, the Cayman Islands is a unique little place. We have achieved much over the past years in our history, particularly since our parliamentary democracy was instituted; more particularly so when we changed in 1959. We have achieved much over the past years. We have achieved it because we did not go the way as the rest of the world. We were able to survive because we could manage and let the world make a beaten path to our door; a good place to live and move and have our being.

Our people survived, Madam Speaker. We built a very good middle income population. Whatever our deficiencies were and are today, we survived the advantages taken of the larger part of the population, the poorer classes in the 1920s up to the early 1970s when some of our people were only hewers of wood and carriers of water. We survived and our people became better off.

Our parliamentary system is just over 185 years old, and it moved from a bicameral system of

the Justices, those appointed men, and the Vestry, elected men, with always some districts having more representatives than others, depending on the size of the population in that district.

Today we have six districts. And sufficient representatives—18 representatives—for 58,000 people living here (if that's what it is). There have never been any problems, Madam Speaker, with our electoral system. We had one major hiatus back in 1968 when the residents of this town saw that there were more foreign nationals on the voters list than locals. And so they demanded on elections day that the election be stopped in this town, and it did. But the election in the rest of the Island went ahead. George Town, after a proper enumeration exercise, carried out their franchise of electing the people they choose.

There have never been any problems, any huge problems . . . we've always had things that we could manage by changing the law as we came across those small deficiencies, whatever they were. But there have never been any real problems with our electoral system. We have always had a very high percentage of voters come out to choose whomever they wished to represent them. Sometimes as close as maybe over 90 per cent at one point, I believe, Madam Speaker. And that says something for the people of this country, whereas in the more metropolitan states you might find sometimes a 50 per cent turnout, even in the mother country. I don't know how much, but I know it's not a large population. And only in those states, Madam Speaker, where they have mandatory voting, do they get 100 per cent turnout. The Cayman Islands have always had, I believe, well up around 80 per cent. There have been no problems. None whatsoever! None!

In our district of West Bay we have four representatives, as it would be in the system: Bodden Town, four representatives, George Town, six representatives, Cayman Brac [and Little Cayman] two, North Side, one, and East End, one. Madam Speaker, as it stands today, I do believe . . . and I will deal with that the first thing. I don't see why we are creating another Member for this honourable House. I don't see it. I don't like the even numbers that we have. I've said that many times. I've said that there when I was Premier, and I've said that on this side, I've said that in London, and I told them that when they were choosing at Lancaster House, this Constitution—didn't like it. But the Opposition of the day said, no, they would stick with the 18 because there was a discussion as to whether we go up or we go down. And certainly, we had no mandate to go up.

It wasn't so much that we, the Opposition of the day, Madam Speaker, had the majority there, we certainly didn't, in that constitutional convention or meetings. We didn't. We were the Opposition. We were the minority. So, the UK, knowing how they play, only used the opportunity where they could see and put in a wedge to get what they wanted, that they

would jump on which side. Outside of that they would say, *You kind of figure it out amongst yourselves*. Of course, but they were throwing in that wedge.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:
Who?

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:
Yes, make him stay up there.

So, we went to this 18. I voiced it. Can we seek another Member or downgrade one? The Premier told me point blank, the present Premier, the Opposition Leader then or . . . well, yes but this was after we got the Constitution—*won't happen with him*; that's what he told me. But anyway, we left it. I was concerned about the even number. I still am. But I don't know, Madam Speaker, that we should be going to another Member added to this House in one district here in George Town who already has six. And never mind the percentages or the numbers. It is democracy that we are talking about and it is fair play that we are talking about, and we are talking about . . . I am talking about you are giving one district seven people. The only thing that might help us is God is even handed.

And maybe those with their crystal balls don't see or don't know what the Almighty knows. Because the PPM did their endeavour best, but they couldn't get a majority, to form the Government. They will stand more chance with 7 more Members, or 7 Members in one district out of 19. How many will they need to make a majority anywhere else if they grab all the seats up here?

So this is being set up good and proper. And yes, the history books, Mr. Premier, will record. But they ain't going to record McKeeva Bush as saying yes to this scheme. No, is my answer. And anyone can read Shaw or whoever they want to read, I will match my leadership abilities and vision with anyone in this House today. I will do that and let them say, *Show me what you have done. And where was your vision?*

Madam Speaker, as it stands, when our people need the help of their MLAs in a multi-Member constituency, if they cannot find one, they can find the other. And, therefore, our people get to one of their MLAs, if not the other. If, when they go to this single Member districts, proposed, if they can't reach one, and the only one, then who do they reach to get the assistance that they need? Who do they reach? Who do they go to? The next one? Only out of his generosity in the next constituency, he might say, *I will talk with you*. He might!

I know I talk to people across the board no matter where they come from, who they are, what dis-

trict they come from. However, that's not going to be . . . and maybe other people in this House do so today. But that's not going to be the way this thing grows up, because that is not the way it happens in other countries with this single Member constituency. No Bo-bo.

The proposal to change our electoral system has not been properly thought out no matter how many years they went into it, because it is not right. It sprang up because certain people who tried to get elected . . . don't talk about the PPM. They weren't even in vogue then. Kurt Tibbetts wasn't even in this House when this thing started down talking about single Member districts. So it wasn't no PPM started this, or no C4C. It started in the district of West Bay when certain people tried to get elected and failed each time that they tried to get elected. And then when I wasn't carrying their shoes, and when I said, *I got shoes and I can carry them too. So, me and you finished. I'm walking down my street myself*. That is when the hula-baloo came out. That is when McKeeva became a bad boy and they said, *We gotta get rid of him*. And then when I won the second time and the third time, fourth, fifth sixth, it all became worse. Every one of them that came to my doorstep to run with me and I had to turn down, they ran against me and lost.

We trounced them each time because the people didn't want them. Simple! And so they kept with their scandal. *Oh, he's buying out everybody*. And up here in George Town they call us the "garrison down there," because why? I got elected with four people, carry in four people. It sprang up because certain people who tried to get elected failed and blamed it and what they now claim is a coattail effect. Well, one thing they will see. That coattail effect can still carry over, because if I had that kind of influence in the total district of West Bay, and I'm talking about West Bay because I know West Bay best, but it's the same anywhere else. If I have it in West Bay, fully, amongst 4,500 voters, they are the same people. I'm going to still have that effect when I stand up and say, *Don't vote for that one over there; they're PPM. They're going to kill you. Dog eat your supper*. They understand the language.

It's the same thing with Mr. Eden; the same thing with Mr. Tibbetts. That's what will happen. The influence will still be there. It is all about what, who has served the people well. That's what it is. Coattail? This is not American politics. We shall see if Obama got any and if Biden will run against Hillary. We shall see. So I don't buy that.

But I can tell you that's where it started; down there with those people. Those Pharoahs who can't get elected but believe when they cut up West Bay in four pieces they are going to get elected. Ha! They are not going to change their spots. People know who they are. Make them come. And if they believe that by cutting it up they are going to rule me out, huh! Let's say point plank what either of you know, is that it will be better for each one of us to have 13 Members,

1,300 people. It will be better for each one of us. But I don't buy that. Yes, it would be better for me. I can go in any one of those districts and it is 300 people, 400 people that are against me. I still have 900 to 1,000 people in support somewhere about. I can get a majority somewhere about; still can do so. But it's easier, because I've only got 300, 400 people who cussing me, rather than three or four times that in the open district. So it's better for each one of us. Tell the public that. But I don't buy that because I do not believe that moving . . . giving the person one when they have four, that that person is better off. Simple mathematics! They are not better off. Come on.

I talk passionately about this because this is our democracy. No matter how you want to dress it up, or sweeten it up and talk about how much you are doing for the country, put it aside. It is a democracy we're talking about. This doesn't make good democrats, this change. Nor does it make better representatives. I will use my . . . again, my own example.

Ever since I got elected in 1984, all of my two, then three colleagues, won with me. I carried the day with the top amount of number of votes after 1988 and thereafter. So those that lost, as I said, always blame my coattail. But that thought caught on in George Town and George Town picked it up too. *We can get rid of McKeeva, if we chose another system*, they said. *So it must be fair, it must be equal*, they said. But my perspective, as I said, less can't be better. A more accountable system must equal to more people that are holding their MLAs accountable, not less people. How are we going to be more accountable if you only have 4 or 5, but you have 25 holding you accountable? How are you going to be more accountable? One man, one vote, is less people.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Eh?

Can't hide? Yes, but you're still . . . the numbers. No you can't hide. Don't think you can hide. Look, this story does not meld with me.

You believe that the Cayman people are not watching? They're watching every time. They might not come out and march, unless you say you're taking their land. Then you see them out there. But they are not coming out. But, boy, when the poll comes, I reckon they don't go behind that ballot box where they have that secret ballot and cast that vote against you. They do it. They thought they had gotten rid of me in 2005/2009. People said, *No. Not happening*. Put me in back.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Is this a convenient time for the luncheon break?

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: One last point, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Please proceed.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: All right. That's a new point, so I'll take that break.

The Speaker: We will take the luncheon break and reconvene at 2:15 pm.

Proceedings suspended at 12:55 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:34 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Proceedings are resumed.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

GOVERNMENT MOTION NO. 8/2015-2016—ORDER TO EFFECT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELECTORAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

The Speaker: I invite the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to continue with his debate.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I was about to say when we took the lunch break that we were pressed into calling a referendum at a very difficult time in the life of the Government who was struggling with the economy and trying to keep direct taxation and other things out. So that was our priority. Nevertheless, Madam Speaker, we did call the referendum. Those in favour, Madam Speaker, of the referendum had a majority that came out to vote. But it did not receive a majority of those on the voter's list which is what the constitution requires in such a people in the shaded referendum. The people stayed home, which is what I know would happen, as the constitution says that a majority of the voter's list and the people in the shaded referendum must vote for it to be successful. So a no show meant a no-vote and that is what our people know, too, so they stayed home.

So, Madam Speaker, does it have the support of our people? A clear yes or no—was that ever given? The Government says they campaigned on it but, Madam Speaker, they should look at Cameron. He had a coalition Government. On a major matter—although he had the votes with the coalition Government—he waited. He called a referendum. He did not say I have the votes so I am going to pass it in the Commons. He took the referendum.

So, Madam Speaker, does it have the support of our people? I do not believe so. There is no clear 'yes' or 'no', and that should be given. That is still my view. But nevertheless, Madam Speaker, if this goes ahead, it is fraught with problems, Madam Speaker, in a community where the expectations from our people are high and growing for Government to be the be-it-

all to the lives of people—their needs, their wants and their wishes, Mr. Tibbetts.

For sure we do not know where the cost is going to end. Some of our people will want more roads to their homes, more facilities and other infrastructure. They would want their own library, their own sport fields, basketball and netball courts. Over the years, Madam Speaker, we can expect that that is what is going to happen. Cayman will be no different in that milieu than any of the other countries with such problems—particularly here in the Caribbean. You do not need to go too far, Madam Speaker. You see what the South Sound people have said over the years about their cemetery. You see what they have said. You cannot be buried here. Do not think it does not exist. People have their lines drawn. They want this; they want that; they do not want that; they do not want the next thing.

Today, we do accept for the major part that people are well aware—one district facility to serve and facilitate their needs whatever that is. So the big push and the cry for change now is that there must be equality. They say there must be equality in votes. They say our system is not fair. Well, by the looks of it our district which has four seats will be split four times with at least 1,300 votes or more in each constituency by 2017. George Town—if you add that other one you are going to have eight seats . . . seven seats, with how many votes? And while my friends in the district of East End and North Side will have at least 40 to 60 per cent less than mine. They are going to be in a better shoe. The Member for North Side should be jumping up and down for joy. Yes?

While, Madam Speaker, the international norm for setting constituency boundaries is that there can be, yes, a 5 per cent or 10 per cent (more or less) difference in the numbers of each constituency. Meaning, for instance, Madam Speaker, that West Bay South could have 1,000 voters and West Bay North could have up to 1,100 and it would be acceptable. But what is never acceptable is for one district to have 600 and the rest would have 1,300. That is not equality. Now, you cannot tell me that that is being equal. No way in this world, but you guys are lucky—

Mr. V. Arden McLean: I'm at East End.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You are a lucky man that you are only going to have 500 or 600 votes while I got 1,300 to deal with.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, I am going to run in George Town North.

Madam Speaker, now this new vogue is that the way we run our country and the successes we have had must change and must make way now for this new international standard, internationalism. They

say it is better democracy. I do not think so. I have no problem, Madam Speaker, for change for better, no matter what the Premier reads about Shaw or anybody else. I know my limitations. I know what I can do. I know how I have represented the people and I do not have any worry about that. When change is for the better I am there with you. How many times have I not voted with this Premier—who, every time I go vote with him he takes out a mortar and pestle and licks me in the head with it. Now he just finds that good joy for him to do. But when I think there is something good, stable and right for the country, I do so. I support it. So I have no problem with change for the better.

However, a more accountable system should equate to more people holding you as a public servant and their Member of the Legislative Assembly accountable. In our case, not less people. Not less people! One man, one vote single member constituencies equates to less people. So you are going to be held more accountable? I do not think so. I do not know what kind of mathematics that is. Somebody got that wrong. But of course they make it up. A system with one representative, Madam Speaker, cannot make our people better off. They are going to be worse off! Better (as I said earlier) for the MLA, yes, but worse for the voter—the people! They are going to be worse off. No constitution as we have, or election law as we have, can make a better representative. None! Not what we have. It is a matter of what kind of representative we have. It is not a matter that the two smaller districts get less because they only have one—no! That is not so, Madam Speaker. That is not so. East End has two civic centres with one representative.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Same district. They are the same people that are going to vote for you.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Yes, they are going to vote for you. I am going to tell them so.

[Laughter]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Bodden Town—two civic centres. West Bay—four representatives—we have none as you would call a civic centre. We have a good, good school hall which we said we can utilise that and save Government money. So, it is not because they are smaller that they get less. That is not how it goes. You heard quite a bit over the years about garrison constituencies and the Premier made some reference to it. I do not know in what context. I just heard him using the word garrison.

Well, what we cannot have is a garrison constituency with four or six representatives because all the representatives know—all of them know—what is going on with each other. Sure you do! Or at least on the very important matters you know what is going on—you discuss. But in a situation, Madam Speaker . . . and I know they are not listening. I hear them, they are not listening, but I am putting it on record. But in a situation with one man who has the only say, one man who only knows what is going on and one man with all the allegiance in that constituency owed to him—one man—there can be a garrison constituency and that is what One Man, One Vote will bring. Single member constituencies will bring that. You can look out for it. You can look out for it, Madam Speaker, hear me today. Hear me, today.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You may be of a different mind.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You listen to me. I know what I know and I do not know if you have the points in your district that George Town and West Bay and Bodden Town have in ours, but those places exist. I will soon come to it.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: All right, and all I am saying is, Madam Speaker, that it can exist. The proof is throughout the Caribbean. Look! The lessons are there and we are here today as strong representatives of democracy, of openness, of transparency, of doing the best for our country, of working hard—we have not been involved in any criminal activity. But we do not know what is going to exist in the future. We do not. We pray and we hope and we teach and we compliment and we encourage. But for all of that, human beings, what we are—failures exist. Failures exist and if we do not see that, then, we are putting our head in the sand like an ostrich and not recognising what obtains in our communities around us. These are my steadfast views. There is nothing wrong with our voting system. No such change can make a person a better MLA. It has to be embedded in him or her to be a worker for his people all around. Caring for people is what it is all about.

Madam Speaker, I want to address a specific argument that I have heard by some proponents of One Man, One Vote single member constituencies—and not necessarily in this House. We have foreign nationals who have called me and berated me and telling me that I do not want good democracy because I do not want One Man, One Vote. I have had them to do so. Of course, I have had some of my own people

tell me that, too. They repeatedly suggest that the UK, Europe and US practises—and those were areas that were named out to me—practises One Man, One Vote single member constituencies and we should do so, too. But let me begin by saying that the UK does have multi-member constituencies—still have them in their councils where there are 60 members at a time with two—some just like us—some areas with one person, some areas with two, some areas with three—still in their council.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Well, we cannot compare ourselves to a country with 60 million people. We have to concern ourselves with being a small place. In their small place there is probably a couple million but they have 60 members. So we have to look at those things. They still have the councils. Their budgets are way larger than ours. So we can only sort of compare ourselves to those councils. And they operate on a parliamentary basis the same that we do so they are either voting liberal, conservatives or whatever they may be—labour, whatever they may be. They still belong to some party, the vast majority of them. In Europe—the same thing! They have multiple voting and as I understand it certain areas of the United States have them, too. But that woman comes down here because they are so used to gerrymandering that they will tell you anything. They are good at that. That's why they brought her here, talking foolishness about the best person to have—I will soon come to that.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Yes.

Madam Speaker, we are not like those countries.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: I don't know.

As of November last year, Madam Speaker, there were over 1,800 municipal governments in the United States. Many small towns use the council manager system. Almost, Madam Speaker, all large US cities have strong mayor systems. In the United States, town populations of less than 5,000 are not even allowed to incorporate and are overseen by the county government. As of July 2013, there were 295 incorporated places (counties or cities) in the United States with a population of at least 100,000. The population of the United States as of 2014 was 319 million people. There are many hundreds of mayors—well over 400—in the United States. They are responsible for running the day to day affairs of the cities.

Here is an interesting fact, Madam Speaker: some mayors are not elected by the voters. Instead, an elected councillor board selects the mayor from within its ranks. The mayors of the cities chair the city councils. There is one Governor per state in the United States. There are two Senators per state in the United States. There are 535 Members of Congress comprising of the 100 Senators and 435 Members in the United States House of Representatives. In 2012, there were approximately 219 million eligible voters—126 million voters voted in the 2012 presidential elections while 93 million did not show up to vote.

Here are some points, Madam Speaker, which we need to consider based on that information. Because of the size and makeup of the municipalities within the United States and the structure of the US Government, it is reckless (and certainly to me) dangerous for proponents from wherever they live—whether it is Australia or whether it is the UK or anywhere, or the United States, wherever they come from—to call me up and tell me that single member constituencies. . . to compare our voting system here in the Cayman Islands to that of the United States. That is like comparing a 1,000-gallon saltwater aquarium to the Caribbean Sea.

Clearly, Madam Speaker, the United States based on its size and structure believes that there must be a critical mass of over 5,000 people to support a council manager or mayor system. Here in Cayman there will not be enough critical mass to protect this new form of voting from serious vote manipulation which will ultimately lead to severe weakening of our form of democracy. I will touch a bit later on that.

Towns in the United States with population sizes of less than 5,000 are not allowed to incorporate and are overseen by the county. That is not even seen as unfair or undemocratic. It is simply seen as the most effective way to govern. There are no perfect voting systems but the United States believes that this is the best system for them at this time. Some states have more cities and municipalities and therefore more mayors within their state borders than other states. For example, Madam Speaker, the state of California has more municipalities than the state of Maine. But the people of Maine, and indeed, the people of the United States are not saying that this is undemocratic. They understand that based on population size it is only fair for California to have more incorporated cities than the state of Maine.

The population of the Cayman Islands as of 2013 was approximately—they say 58,000. I do not know if that is true or not, but that is what they say. Put another way, our population could fit into the United States population 5,500 times. As at the 1st of October of this year, the Cayman Islands have 18,285 registered voters. George Town has 7,377 voters. Bodden Town has 4,527 voters. West Bay has 4,163 voters, the Sister Islands of Cayman Brac and Little

Cayman 1,012 voters, East End, 624 voters, North Side, 582 voters. Just as an aside, Madam Speaker, approximately 80 per cent of our voters vote which would equal approximately 14,600 coming out to vote.

Now, Madam Speaker, if we look at the First Elected for each of the districts you will see that in 2013 in George Town the First Elected, Mr. Tibbetts, received 2,470 votes—or 42 per cent of the votes in the district. In Bodden Town, the First Elected, Mr. Eden, received 1,781 or 50 per cent of the votes in that district. In West Bay as First Elected, I received 1,583 or 47 per cent of the votes in my district. On the Sister Islands, the First Elected Member received 628 or 75 per cent of the votes on the Sister Islands. In East End, the Member received 317 or 57 per cent of the votes in his district. In North Side, the Member received 326 or 70 per cent of the votes in his district. Of interest, Madam Speaker, is the fact that someone in George Town was successfully elected to political office with only 33 per cent of the vote in the district.

I have taken that time to say that all things being equal and we move to one man, one vote single member constituencies of 1,300, we could see someone getting elected only receiving 350 votes. This would be happening in a district with a total population of 8,000; sort of a ratio—that same ratio. So you see, Madam Speaker, with odds like this you cannot possibly convince me that this system is not more susceptible to all sorts of voting irregularities and worse—it actually lowers the bar for accountability. There is greater accountability wherever people are held accountable to more people, not less people, Madam Speaker.

It is very easy to manage 350 people, Madam Speaker, far easier than it is to represent 7,000 or 8,000 people. We are moving from a system of representation to a system of managing the voting outcome of a very small block of voters. Madam Speaker, it cannot be right. It cannot be right. But yet, we say we are going ahead and we want it. Following the world! This is good for us! Good democracy! Oh, yes? Yes? Check the rest of them Islands to see whether they have been as well off as us that got it. Check them.

Madam Speaker, over the years, those of us elected more than once, have been accused of doing all kinds of things to get votes. As soon as you get that second term you become nobody. And do not talk about when you go in Cabinet—then you are a devil!

Madam Speaker, in chapter 2 of Roy Bodden's book entitled *Patronage, Personalities and Parties [Caymanian Politics from 1950-2000]* he discusses the commodification of power and the making of the early Caymanian merchant elite. He begins by stating, and I quote: **"The political system under, which the Cayman Islands existed up to 1950 was one of 'benign neglect' by the administering power. Not being of any economic importance and seen to be little more than of nuisance value to the authorities in Jamaica, the Cayman Islands as a**

whole society was, for the most part left to fend for itself.”

As the economy developed however, Madam Speaker, the Cayman Islands frontier society started to take shape. You see, Madam Speaker, by 1950, Caymanians had become the Argonauts of the western Caribbean. Bodden states: **“Having had a peculiar relationship with their black slaves in which the predominately domestic slavery met an absence of the violent adversarial relationship that existed in the slave societies of the British Caribbean Islands, Caymanians continued this symbiotic experience or existence into the early twentieth century when the black men crewed the schooners owned by white and near-white merchants. The main occupation at this historical juncture was turtle fishing off the Miskito Quays.**

“Later, the diaspora took Caymanian men to the Gulf ports to work on American ships.... Those who benefited most from these ventures were the white and near-white Caymanians who already held advantage, in that they had been masters during slavery and were in a position economically and socially to expand their entrepreneurial experiences and build economic bases.”

Bodden, Madam Speaker, concludes that since many of the early justices and some of the vestrymen were merchant and ship owners, it is logical to conclude that it was from such a place that political lobbying and patronage would have found a natural beginning. It is also obvious that the skin colour and the economic power between justices and vestrymen made natural patron/client relationships. Since the justices, he says, were in the advantageous position of being a merchant of some means and able to dispense credit. On the other hand, the vestrymen some of them while not being the most economically disadvantaged were obligated to the justices for favours which he was expected to repay often with political support and political loyalty—personal and familial.

So, you see, Madam Speaker, because of their social and economic standing the justices in essence controlled the masses of people. In May of 1956, George Town Vestryman, the late Mr. E. D. Merren, lodged a complaint to the then commissioner, [Andrew Morris] Gerrard, about the quantity of liquor consumed and the drunkenness during the hours of voting. Although nothing could be done at the time because the law made no provisions against selling liquor on elections day, what his complaint suggests, Madam Speaker, is that many people were given liquor to vote. So, Roy Bodden states while only registering a generic complaint, the George Town vestryman would have known what the wider problem of treating and bribery were doing. Whereby, voters at the time were supplied with liberal amounts of alcoholic beverages by those candidates seeking their support. Mind you, we never had any ballots in those

days, you know. They had a blackboard, Madam Speaker, and you walked in and you just put your X down underneath the name of the man that you wanted to vote for. You did not know if anybody rubbed it out even but that was the system of voting.

“There is no reason,” Bodden went on to say, **“to believe that such incidents were limited to treating and bribery using only alcohol. After all, more savvy men were able to bargain for other commodities . . .”** (and even for cash).

This entire arrangement, Bodden went on, Madam Speaker, to say caused Commissioner Gerrard such concern that in a letter written by him to Sir Hugh Foot in May 1954, Gerrard states, and I quote: **“The population”—and this is what is important—“The population of the Dependency”** (which is the Cayman Islands) **“is now estimated to be 8,300 persons. The franchise”** (those being allowed to vote) **“being restricted to adult males,”** (only men could vote), **“there is a maximum potential electorate which I estimate as being not more than 750 (750 men). The Dependency”** (the Cayman Islands he is talking about) **“is in fact one huge rotten borough, and it is idle to pretend that the enormous legislature represents anything more than a pyramid standing on its own point.”**

You see, Madam Speaker, Gerrard saw then what I am afraid can happen. He saw that with small numbers voting for their representative, all sorts of things could happen—could easily swing an election to get certain persons elected. Once elected, those individuals would then do the bidding of a certain subset of people. While in today's society, Madam Speaker, voting is not along the lines of colour it can still be easily controlled by certain lobbying groups, certain big businesses and even criminal elements.

Madam Speaker, I have seen the cutup of the district of West Bay and I speak to that but I will say it is no different from certain areas in George Town. I saw in one constituency two known areas which I have gone into, Madam Speaker, and talked to these persons about gangs and about the deaths and about the murders. Madam Speaker, the truth is that they are not organised and people know here that I announced that I was going to do so. Those are not organised gangs, Madam Speaker. Do you know what it is all about? It is about this one dissing this one and dissing that one and dissing this one woman and dissing this—dissing—“dis”—this one girlfriend. It is not about huge amounts of drugs where they stole millions of dollars and all that sort. Nothing! Guess what, Madam Speaker? Many of the deaths—except two and two local ones and maybe one or two foreign ones—all of them, their grandmothers were sisters—their mothers' first cousins.

These are good people, Madam Speaker. Let us get to the record straight. These were good, down to earth Caymanians who work hard to raise their family. That is what I found out. I knew them over the

years. Their grandparents voted for me. I can tell you this, I would have to see it for somebody to tell me that I do not believe it all that—that this boy walks up to this one and this one knows he does not like him and he is going to kill him and he can just walk up to him and point a gun and shoot him in the face. I do not believe it. Too many things are not right and do not add up. Do you hear what I tell you, Madam Speaker? Do you hear what I tell you? But the day that sensible persons grab hold of that and can control and educate them with money or otherwise, you will not control them in 1,300 votes. That is my concern! That is my concern.

Now, you can bring any scenario but I have seen it. I have watched it. I have talked to people—these are not . . . they come from good strong background, Caymanian families—grandparents worked hard to help build the country. Mothers worked hard to help raise them. They are not galvanised. They are not of that educational background that they can go and map out and strengthen. But the day that that is done, that will be the garrison; the day that a sensible person from somewhere else walks in with enough money and does it, that will be the garrison. We pray that it does not happen. As I said earlier, we set the right examples, we are good family men, we take care of our children. We help take care of some of the people in the community as best as we can. We work hard in our own private business as legislators. We do!

Human nature; the impacts of social degradation, no matter the programmes we put in. Do not come and tell me about 30 years being in the House. When I got in the House there were no parks in West Bay. There was only one football field. It had more bramble bush in it that you had to tear through to play football. The rocks in it—if you went down and tried to play football you got a popped mouth by falling down. That is what I found. I found people without bathroom facilities. You had no sports fields. The elderly people were getting \$25 per month. Do not tell me about what you have done, what I have done—I can point to it. We got a good sports centre with two playing fields. The old field is all with lights, they can play in the night.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You will get another one soon.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: We had the school, a very small; look at what we have done with the school. The Government facilities, I did not choose to build a million dollar post office, Madam Speaker. I said *No, I am going to take the old post office and I am going to renovate that because that*

space has historical background to it. For \$450,000 we built what we have and we can use that forever. So we put the social programmes in place. The old people were getting \$25—ask Mr. Eden. He remembers. He and I fought the battle together. Look at what they are getting today. Now there is much more because times have changed and we need to direct more thought. I am not discussing that. That is another thought for another motion. But I am talking about what creates the garrisons, Madam Speaker, that the elements are there and we are facilitating it by going into the small areas where we believe that is better off for them but we will not have the control over the community the way . . . you know that, gentlemen and lady.

We know that we cannot be everywhere no matter how much . . . and if you believe that we can be and we will do better, well check those, too! They have the smallest constituencies and they still have murders and they still have robberies beyond what should be and they can't even get police up there—cannot get a station. So where are we wrong? What have we done wrong? Where? It is not the size of the constituency and the law as we are changing, it cannot make a better people, and it cannot make a better representative. We are going to damn ourselves into eternal fire! That is what is going to happen and we will not be able to do anything to stop it. Some of us are to that point where we want to go home as Mr. Tibbetts keeps telling me—*let us go home.*

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, that is what I see, and do not say I am talking about West Bay. I promised the public that I was going in to talk to people. These are not people who just want to get up and kill somebody. They come from good families. The Minister of Education knows. Some of those families—some of them are family to me. I have had to see them in the caskets and read their obituaries.

Can I take a break?

The Speaker: We will take an afternoon break until 3:30.

Proceedings suspended at 3:15 pm

Proceedings resumed at 3:35 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Proceedings are resumed.

I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to continue with his debate.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It seems like I was holding up again but we did not hear the call.

Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: You have one hour remaining.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition:

I do believe, Madam Speaker, to introduce this system into the Cayman Islands is a retrograde step in the pursuit of greater accountability and better governance. I do believe that this will usher in a system where the average man is going to get less representation at the Government level and this system will lead to garrison politics. The system will significantly weaken the democracy. We have come a long way, Madam Speaker, since the justices handpicked vestrymen and provided them with the means to run and get elected.

Madam Speaker, on Tuesday evening gone, I watched the US Democratic presidential candidate debate. Candidates there lamented about how much political influence Super PACs [Political Action Committees], millionaires and billionaires have, over the outcome of their elections. This, too, I believe will be the sad reality if we allow one man, one vote, single member constituencies to take root in our Islands. We have a good thing, Madam Speaker. I pray that God speaks to the heart and minds of our elected representatives and that we would open their eyes to see the folly of the decision they (I believe), are going to make here. I have no doubt that they are going to vote for this. They are going to. I know that. But this decision to change our democratic system will have much more negative effect on the people than dredging the entire George Town harbour to put down a cruise berthing facility. The erosion of our way of life can be trampled on seriously. It might not happen in 2017 to the next date, it might take years to come to fruition but we are going down the same path that others have gone and failed.

As it is, there are those who have said far and wide that they do not need to be an elected representative as they have made their money in the private sector. Madam Speaker, there is always a motive for citizens to stand for public office; if not for money, then, perhaps for power. The people of these Islands need to ask what has motivated people then. What is it, Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, I have stood and endured over 30 consecutive years to represent the people of these Islands through the district of West Bay to fight for the small man in this country who cannot defend himself. I have fought for the motherless, the fatherless, the homeless, the jobless and the penniless, and my motivation has always been to improve the lives of that little man. In so doing, I have brought hundreds of millions of dollars of business to these shores. I have supported the creation of new industry. I have staved off direct taxation and yes, Madam Speaker, I have had at times to fight the Foreign Office more vociferously than some others

would like to see. Today, the people need to ask themselves, where are we going?

Surely, I am only one vote in this House. If anything, we have three votes. I only have one vote. But I am telling people to keep your votes and not divide our Islands up into little pieces. I want the people of West Bay to remain one district in solidarity—not four little subsections. So I continue to ask them to stand firm. Not to be concerned about West Bay South or West Bay East, but be concerned and continue to work for their right to participate in democratic process of their entire district. The same goes for George Town, Bodden Town, as well as the Sister Islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

Madam Speaker, this is not about our democratic system. There are no problems there. We cannot regulate or relegate ourselves in timeout and as a result, selfish, egotistical, and myopic thinking, our district suffers tremendously. I heard someone say about it is politicians that create garrisons. Yes? Well, we will see. You think that is so? You think it is so. And that is where, Madam Speaker, I heard them! But that is where this whole thing came out of because they were calling West Bay a garrison because I got elected not once, not twice, but eight times. As I said, those who thought that they had the better, they had the degrees, they come from the top families, that they were the royal family of Cayman and they should be elected and they had the money but the people said *No, you do not. We know McKeeva Bush. Get thee behind me, Satan.*

It is not about the politician. And I don't know of any around but I do not believe there is any in this House that would create it and that is exactly what I am talking about. How do they get elected in the first instance? I do not believe there is anyone in this Assembly who would do anything like that, Madam Speaker, not one of us. We are family people. We have our faults but no, we are not of that mode. But that is exactly what I am talking about. Difficult to get elected in the open voting but very easily can get elected in the small district. Perhaps, when they are smart enough to get this one to run and the next one to run and cut votes, then they can get elected. Then the scheming starts. Then the garrisons are being planted in the small districts. Not now—yes, perhaps it is politicians, but not us. No. But we don't know what is coming. That is why I said the safest way is in numbers. Stick together. Six together can stave off a lot. Four together can stave off a lot. But one could buckle in.

As I said, Madam Speaker, I do not think that this Government has a mandate to do any such thing. This is a coalition Government, Madam Speaker. It has bits and pieces of the PPM; bits and pieces of C4C and the PNA. The PPM did not have enough representatives to form the Government so they do not have that mandate. You have the votes but you do not have the mandate. A mandate is when the voters feel

overwhelmingly confident in a party's ability to lead in votes enough for their candidates to form the Government without the assistance of any other party or group. Now, I know he will jump up and say that is why you are in the minority. Maybe they did not have the confidence in 2013. But you thought they did not have it in 2009 either when you were trounced properly. I had a majority. Never say it is over till it is done.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: I never said I won yet. I would not get up from my seat even when my people called me saying, *You won, you won*. Won? I am going to stay until the last ballot box is turned upside down and I look in that and shake it and unless they come out, now I won.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Yeah, you did that.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You are right. You are right.

[Laughter]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: You are right, there.

So, Madam Speaker, as I said earlier that is why the UK did their referendum during their coalition Government. They had the votes but they did not have the mandate. They could not hold that referendum. Otherwise, if they had, they would simply say we campaigned on it because we had a majority vote and we done it. They could not—they carried the referendum, it was a powerful issue. Of course! They did a referendum with the coalition.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Yes, he said so. He said so.

So to recap, Madam Speaker, I am against One Man, One Vote single member constituencies for many reasons. One man, one vote single member constituencies will further divide our communities, districts and our Islands. It will lead to less accountability, not more accountability, as there will be less people, not more people holding their representative accountable. It will increase Government bureaucracy and Government expenses, including an increase in the number of political representatives in the districts. We already hear that.

The referendum which asks whether we the people supported one man, one vote, single member

constituencies, failed at least as less than 50 per cent of registered voters agreed to changing of the system of voting. Any Government should clearly look at that. The action being proposed by this coalition Government is, in my opinion, contrary to that good democratic principle. The voting population size of the Cayman Islands is not large enough to support splitting us up the way that is being proposed. It will lead in years to come—I am not saying it is going to happen now—but it will weaken checks and balances that are currently in place to protect our political system. Boundaries will be shifted from time to time to ensure that certain people remain in power. Gerrymandering will become the order in years to come. The PPM led coalition Government does not have a mandate to impose one man, one vote, single member constituencies. We will no longer have a system of political representation but rather one of political management. Having multimember districts is not on equal as these districts that are being proposed to be changed have a much larger number of voters and therefore require more number of representatives. Both the district of East End and North Side have less than 10 per cent of the voting population of George Town, hence the reason for only having one representative each.

From that ratio perspective if one man, one vote single—

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Less people? Same bucket.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, no, it is worse because they even have a different system. It is worse yet; one country, two systems. Worse yet!

They have less constituents to represent than any other district within the Cayman Islands. Hear me. I am not for changing the way those districts are today. I am not saying that, but leave West Bay alone if George Town wants to go that way, or anybody else. You take a trial trip. But leave us out of it. The district voted against one man, one vote—the only district to do so. One man, one vote, single member constituency will not lead to better representation but actually to many opportunities—far too many opportunities—will arise for far worse representation.

So, Madam Speaker, I do not support this. Now when you come, Madam Speaker, to the boundaries, yes we appointed one and I am not going to get into their work. What I want to get into is the actual report which I think has been unfair. I wrote the Governor on August the 24th and I will lay it on the Table, Madam Speaker. I said:

“Dear Mrs. Kilpatrick, I write to you on a very grave and vexatious matter: The Boundary

Commission. I have taken note, and I trust you have too, that the Boundary Commission have completed their report and have drawn up 19 new constituencies in these Islands.

"I do not support the scheme!

"However, I write on the matter of the district of West Bay, the district I represent in the Cayman Islands Legislature.

"I note that the Commission changed the boundaries which have been used in the last several elections which the election office and its officials told the public that those areas and boundaries within the district and voting stations 'were chosen so to get the public used to the idea of single member districts where they would be voting.' That was what was told to us.

"Those areas have now been changed in many different ways. That is bad enough.

"However, the insult to the people of West Bay who voted against any change to our Voting System gets deeper and more outrageous and even more insulting. Worse, it is not acting in the democratic fashion we were promised. Nor is it the good governance you promised these Islands that you would ensure.

"The Boundary Commission has changed those areas, made new constituencies with new boundaries as they have done with all three Islands except for East End and North Side, but have not come back to the district of West Bay to explain the changes to my people. Insult after insult after insult!!! I note in Bodden Town and George Town, meetings were held to explain to them the changes made there.

"I demand that the Commission come back to West Bay to explain exactly what they did and why.

"Madam, you cannot have good democracy with such high-handedness!!! Their actions are not something I can tolerate!!

"This new system stinks in every country it is implemented, particularly so in the United States with gerrymandering being the order of the day.

"The Commission's action on West Bay is nothing less than gerrymandering. This is the beginning of Cayman electoral woes and we will see much more when you have gone back home and we are left with a messed up electoral system where only the rich will be elected because they have the funds to control sufficient votes in a small area, and/or elements of gangs that have built their 'garrison constituencies' to take control.

"In the spirit of the good governance you espouse, then make that woman come back to the district of West Bay to explain the new constituencies and the reasons for the new boundaries; how many voters have been shifted and from where to where.

"You ought to know there is a process for judicial review in these Islands. Too much double standards and the good governance you espouse seems to be the order of the day. This is one that shows that process in this matter is 'biased'."

That was on August the 24th, Madam Speaker, and I am going to lay on the Table of the House—

The Speaker: So ordered.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Well, she wrote back to me on the 1st of September.

"Dear Mr. Bush, Thank you for your letter of 24th August about the work of the Electoral Boundary Commission (ECB).

"I am aware that the Electoral Boundary Commission presented its report to me on the 20th of August and also that a copy has been sent to the Legislative Assembly. You will recall that, following the Legislative Assembly debate on the proposed reform of the voting system in the Cayman Islands, I was invited to call for an Electoral Boundary Commission to be appointed, pursuant to the requirements of the Cayman Islands Constitution 2009. I consulted with you and the Premier on this matter as I am required to do by the Constitution, and you both nominated a member to the Commission. Once appointed, the Constitution is very clear that the ECB shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority, (Section 88(9)). I am sure you appreciate why it is important for the ECB to be fully independent.

"With the regard to the meetings that the ECB held, the public meetings held in each district in April satisfied the constitutional requirements for the ECB to invite views from members of the public. Having then produced and published a draft boundaries maps (which were available for viewing in libraries and at the Elections Office), the ECB decided to hold two further public meetings in central locations to explain the maps and receive any further public comment as well as inviting written comments. There is no constitutional requirement . . ." (this is what she says). **"There is no constitutional requirement for these additional meetings to be held. These meetings were not district meetings and each meeting covered the ECB proposal for all districts, thus West Bay was not treated differently from other districts." (What a bunch of nonsense). **"I understand that members of the public from West Bay attended both of these Cayman-wide public meetings and made their views known. West Bay electors also submitted written comments to the Commission.****

"It will not be possible to recall the chairman of the ECB to West Bay as the Commissioners vacated their office on the day following the submission of their report, as set out in the Constitution, (Section 89). If you require a briefing on

the reasoning behind the ECB's proposed boundaries, Mr. McField, the member you nominated to the ECB may be able to assist you.

"It is important to be clear that the ECB report is not binding on the Cayman Islands Government. The report and boundary maps are recommendations to the Legislative Assembly, where you will have the opportunity to speak and vote on the proposals. The Legislative Assembly decides if the recommended boundaries are implemented or rejected. No decisions have yet been taken on the boundaries.

"I hope this letter explains how the ECB sought to obtain public views prior to finalising their recommendations and reassures you that the people of West Bay have not been disadvantaged in this process. For my part, I have acted as I am required to do by the Constitution.

"Yours sincerely, Helen Kilpatrick."

Yeah, right. West Bay is not being disadvantaged?

Madam Speaker, I wrote her a letter on September 2nd.

"Your Excellency, I have read your letter today. It is a very poor and despicable excuse of an answer to the high-handedness taken by the Electoral Boundary Commission.

"Common decency and respect for the democratic process and for the people of the district of West Bay— one of the four that is being changed from the electoral system of 185 years, says it is a matter that should be explained clearly to the people. There are new boundaries made and movement of hundreds of voters and you, Madam, have the audacity to talk about how you have constitutional support?

"Facts are very clear and known to me. Your office (the Governor's) has been one of the instigators of the One Man, One Vote scheme and it is only one of the wider actions taken stealthily with schemes for change which will disrupt our Islands.

"If a few people of West Bay wrote a letter or a few people attended either of those two meetings held in the districts which boundaries are being changed, that is not a fair excuse for not coming to West Bay whose people do not have the benefit of having the changes explained to them. Over 100 people attended the first meeting held in West Bay. The vast majority of the people that attended were against the change. Common decency tells me that a meeting should have been called to explain the various boundaries and movements of voters.

"I will now proceed to see if Judicial Review of the Commissioners and your administrative action is correct and falls within the rules of natural justice."

Madam Speaker, I do not believe that it was done right because, Madam Speaker, Section 88(7) of the Constitution says it requires the Commission to invite views from members of the public and to seek such advice as it considers appropriate as regards a review of the electoral district boundaries. When she came to West Bay they had been no boundaries changed! None! So how were they going to talk to us about the boundaries and how they were shifting 300 or 400 voters? She could not talk to us about the boundaries because they were not yet created and that is what the Constitution says she should do.

Madam Speaker, I do not have the votes to stop this from going through but I am putting my thoughts on the record. I am not done yet because I still have until the 20th of November to see whether I have a judicial review to do. I do not have the money or I would have gone ahead and done it—tested it. But I am waiting to see whether I can get that judicial review because that is what the Constitution says. Look at what it says, Section 88(7). They are changing the boundaries in West Bay. Seek the views! Invite views from the members of the public. Now, they viewed the members in George Town so they are members of the public. They went to the members in Bodden Town and they are members of the public. But that is not members of the public in West Bay.

They did not want to come back to West Bay because they knew that down there West Bay was against it. So they did not want to come back. They did not want to hear from West Bay about that boundary.

Madam Speaker, we still have the petition so I am urging people to visit stopomovsmc.org. They will be able to read the petition and read information about why they should not support One Man, One Vote single member constituencies and also sign the petition. We intend to carry on with the initiated referendum and when we get the numbers that triggers the vote, once it is before the election we intend to follow it up to the bitter end. We do not believe this is right. Any time we get that number, they get it, then, the Constitution says initiated referendum. We can all see there are many elements showing themselves and being brazen as ever seeking to change our way of life religiously, culturally, economically and socially. My firm belief—it is not right.

So, Madam Speaker, to close, our system of Government has been in place for 185 years and has served us well. There are times for change, for taking great steps in society and there are times for reflection, consideration and pause. This is a time for reflection, consideration and pause, for us to talk about democracy, representation and not political efficiencies. Any change to our electoral system changes the process of how we select our leadership, of how we the people are represented in Government. Redistricting of the electoral boundaries does not result in stronger political representation of the political values of the

constituents. It results in a situation where boundaries need to be redrawn as people move from one part of the Island to another to maintain a population balance.

These districts will have disproportionate political value and that will become too tempting as a political opportunity for special concessions. Watch it down the years. It might not show its face immediately but watch it down the years. We are a country and we are a community. We are neighbours. We are not divided by large geographic distances. We are not millions of people compressed into New York City or London where just one district that spans a few miles may represent tens of thousands of people. There is no rational or reasonable need to subdivide West Bay, George Town or Bodden Town. The redistricting will not reflect a community, a group of people who identify themselves as having shared uncommon values. It will reflect a number. So when making changes to our electoral process, Madam Speaker, we must be mindful we are making changes to our democracy and to our economy. In our current system, Madam Speaker, we have a system where we maximise the representation of a community, not homogenise it into single member groups. Let me get that word right—not homogenise it—I think that is correct, what I am saying.

Uniting people, Madam Speaker, is not about creating less political choice. It is about inspiring people to stand alongside a vision for the country, yes. Shaw may have been right. Somewhere along the lines if that is who you were quoting. Creating less political choice on the ballot sheet creates more political efficiency but it does not create political representation. Any such system that pursues political efficiency is looking to make it easier for themselves, not what is best for overall—the people.

We as the Opposition Party stand against these propositions for the redistricting of the electoral zones. We do not see a benefit of the electorate for whom these changes are meant to serve. They do not improve. They do not give better political representation to the people. They do not define communities. They create not just opportunities, but motivated situations for political concessions to those districts, Madam Speaker. That is what happens in all the other areas. The redistricting and single member representation creates political efficiency. It makes it easy to win and dominate the Houses of Government, but making a race easy to win, Madam Speaker, does not make it right. But this—this is not a race. This is a way of life, our democracy and the political representation of our constituency. It should be made easy for people to have as many representatives to be able to reach out to. Not less easy as we are doing right here now.

So, Madam Speaker, I am against this. Look at those places that have it. Ask yourselves this question: Do any of those countries that moved to single member, that have single member districts, one man, one vote (ask them, look at them and ask yourselves),

are they better off than the Cayman Islands? Ask yourself that question, Mr. Tibbetts.

Madam Speaker, I believe that ends my contribution for this matter. As I said, I know that the Government has the votes. I know they are determined to do this. But my records are here for posterity. We wait and we will see what better or how better off we are going to be in the future. I doubt it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, it has been discovered that there are two typographical errors in the draft Order that was laid on the Table by me earlier this week—on Wednesday, in paragraph 2(1) which sets out the electoral districts into which the Cayman Islands is to be divided.

The two first districts are wrongly designated and we have referred the matter back to Her Excellency and we have now a corrected version of the draft. With your permission, Madam Speaker, and pursuant to the relevant Standing Order, I wish to withdraw that draft and lay in its place the corrected version.

The Speaker: The question is that the previously laid Draft be withdrawn and the corrected version be replaced on the Table.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

Ayes.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: The 19 Single Member Electoral Districts Boundaries Draft Order, 2015, earlier laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly was withdrawn and the corrected version replaced on the Table.

The Speaker: I see some quizzical looks. Please refer to the Constitution, section 29(5) for those who may not be following the procedure.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, consequent upon that I will also need to amend the similar or the corresponding provision in the Motion which I moved because that has simply transposed from the Draft Order the list of proposed electoral districts, so it contains the same error.

Madam Speaker, for the benefit of the House I should just relate that I have asked you to waive the notice period for that and you have kindly consented to do so and I have prepared for circulation to Members the proposed amendment which I will explain as soon as I have a copy.

Madam Speaker, for the benefit of Members—

The Speaker: Honourable Premier, I think the Member for East End was trying to get my eye.

A point of order?

Mr V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker and Premier, your good self and the Premier may want to respond to this, but if we are amending this Motion that means the Leader of the Opposition gets two bites at this because he is the only one who has spoken—

The Speaker: Member—

Mr V. Arden McLean: Is that correct?

The Speaker: Member for East End, it is an amendment in accordance with the Standing Orders so it is not exclusive to other Members and only inclusive to the Leader of the Opposition. Any Member wishing to speak to the amendment will have an opportunity to so speak, just as if it was any other amendment. There is no proviso in this instance.

Mr V. Arden McLean: That I understand. I will speak to the amended version.

The Speaker: If that is your desire. You are not mandated to.

Mr V. Arden McLean: Correct. But the Leader of the Opposition will now be able to speak to the amended version for the same amount of time.

The Speaker: The question will be put on the amendment. If it carries it will amend the Motion. If it is not, it will be negate the motion.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: The Speaker is not at liberty to make comment in that rebel way.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, I am sure the Member for East End was trying to be helpful but I am not sure that he was.

[Laughter]

[Inaudible interjection]

**AMENDMENT TO GOVERNMENT
MOTION No. 8/2015-2016—ORDER TO EFFECT
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELECTORAL
BOUNDARY COMMISSION**

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, back to this serious point, the errors con-

tained in the draft Order were that in paragraph 2(1) which states: “the Cayman Islands shall be divided into the following electoral districts.” Subsection (a) said in error West Bay East electoral district and (b) said West Bay Northwest electoral district. Both are errors. The correction version of the draft Order now says “(a) West Bay West electoral district; (b) West Bay North electoral district”.

Madam Speaker, the amending Motion which I propose is in the following terms seeking the leave of this House to amend the fourth “Whereas” section as follows: Remove the words “West Bay East” and substitute the words “West Bay North”; remove the words “West Bay Northwest” and substitute the words “West Bay West”.

That is the amendment that is proposed, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: The Motion has been duly moved. Does the Honourable Premier wish to speak to it?

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: No, Madam Speaker, I think I have explained the basis for the amendment.

The Speaker: Does any other Member . . .

I recognise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, this is not something that I can do anything about. As I said, the Government has the votes. But I would like for the Premier to explain to me where the words “West Bay East” came from and “West Bay Northwest” before I make any intervention.

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, I expect that that is—what is it they call that again? The—

The Speaker: Scrivener’s error.

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: The scrivener’s error or the printer’s devil or something. That certainly is not what is in the Electoral Boundary Commission’s report. The list was intended to simply reflect what is there.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: The new Boundary Report?

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Yes, because, Madam Speaker, just to make sure that—

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: This is their proposed change?

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Yes. The draft Order says, “the Cayman Islands shall be divided into the following electoral districts” What was intended was that lifted from Electoral Boundary Commission’s report would be the proposed new electoral districts and then 2(2) says, “the boundaries of each electoral district shall be as set out in Schedule C of the report of the Electoral Boundary Commission that was submitted to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly on the 20th of August 2015.” To make it absolutely clear that what the Order is seeking to do is to implement the recommendations of the Electoral Boundary Commission report 2015.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you.

I can assure the Member for East End that I do not need to take two hours on this but all this does—because what is being shown here is that changes are being made from something that we never even paid attention to what was laid out. As I said, we were told, these would be the areas that if you went into electoral changes to single member that they would be the areas you have. Well, the Boundary Commission came along and changed them and this is the change. This is the change—from West Bay East to West Bay North; from West Bay Northwest to West Bay West. So full changes, full changes. All it does, as far as I am concerned, it gives more credence to the grounds that I will be seeking if we went to judicial review. That is all.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak?

If not, I will call on the Fourth Elected Member for West Bay.

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks, Fourth Elected Member for West Bay: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: And this is on the amendment to the Motion, not the actual Motion.

[Inaudible interjection]

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks: Oh, okay.

The Speaker: I call on the Honourable Premier if you wish to exercise the right.

Member for East End, you wanted to speak on the amendment?

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Honourable Premier, do you wish to reply on amendment?

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, just to thank Members for their understanding and I note what has been said by the Leader of the Opposition. As always, every Member of this House is entitled to their view.

The Speaker: The question is that the Amendment to Government Motion No. 8 be approved.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES and one audible NO.

The Speaker: I think the Ayes have it.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Divide, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Madam Clerk, please call a division.

The Clerk:

Division No. 8

Ayes: 12

Hon. Alden McLaughlin
Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts
Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden
Hon. Marco S. Archer
Hon. Tara A. Rivers
Hon. Anthony S. Eden
Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr.
Mr. Roy M. McTaggart
Mr. Joseph X. Hew
Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.
Mr. D. Ezzard Miller
Mr. V. Arden McLean

Noes: 3

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush
Mr. Bernie A Bush
Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks

Absent: 2

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell
Hon. G. Wayne Panton

The Speaker: The result of the Division: Ayes: 12; Noes: 3 and Absent 2.

The amendment carries.

Agreed by Majority on Division: Amendment to Government Motion No. 8/2015-2016 passed.

AMENDED GOVERNMENT MOTION NO. 8/2015-2016—ORDER TO EFFECT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELECTORAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

[Commencement of debate to amended Motion]

The Speaker: Order, Members.

Does any other Member wish to speak to the now amended motion? Does any other Member wish to speak—final call—does any other Member wish to speak?

If not I will call on the mover to exercise his right of reply.

Oh, sorry, who was trying to get up?

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: I recognise the Fourth Elected Member for the district of Bodden Town.

[Inaudible interjections]

The Speaker: Just for clarity of Members, we are now speaking on the motion as amended.

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr., Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I rise to offer support for the Motion moved by the Honourable Premier. I think it is no secret that I have been a proponent of this change for quite some time now. I would like to say that I cut my political teeth campaigning for one man, one vote and single member constituencies in my home district of Bodden Town. I can recall the days that I walked, Madam Speaker, door-to-door in Bodden Town not only asking people to support and vote yes in the referendum, but also explaining to them what this change meant. I will take some time to explain again today, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, long before I decided to try to become a representative in this honourable House I joined the battle for this change—for electoral change—because I saw for myself the weaknesses of the current system. It has served us well throughout the years but as the Leader of the Opposition has alluded to, it is 185-plus years old. Anything that has been around for that length of time must (at some point in time) have to be improved. Time waits for no man.

Madam Speaker, I remember back prior to the referendum when we gathered the signatures on a petition to try and trigger the referendum and the fight we had to put up against the then Government that was determined to not make this change happen for various reasons. I remember being in the counting booth in the polling station the night that the votes were being counted and seeing the horrified looks on the faces of those Members of the Government who were there at the time and that is when it sunk in for

me why they were so adamant that they did not want this change.

This change, Madam Speaker, puts the power back in the hands of the people. I strongly believe that this change is now well overdue and I have seen numerous examples in my short time here as a legislator where we should feel compelled to move forward with this.

Madam Speaker, if you look at the voter turnout in Bodden Town, of those who turned up on that day to vote, 69 per cent voted yes. Now, I know there have been arguments thrown around stating that the turnout was low and those that stayed home were basically voting no. But, Madam Speaker, there were a myriad of reasons why people did not show up on that day. I know one of the most compelling was a sense of intimidation. When your own Government launches a campaign against something that you believe in and you start to get the sense that if you show your face and support that ideal you may be punished in some way, they will stay home. That is the same thing that is occurring here today.

Madam Speaker, so I decided that I would stand up and fight for those people, because the people that I spoke to in Bodden Town overwhelmingly supported this change. I made a vow that this would be one of the biggest issues that I would push if I was elected and that helped me to decide to actually run for political office.

What drives this home for me, Madam Speaker, is every time I look at the votes that I received in the general election in Bodden Town, and I can never get this out of my mind when I look at the fact that I got 1,393 votes. The number of people who voted yes on the referendum in Bodden Town was 1,396. That is a stark reminder for me that I must keep this promise.

So, Madam Speaker, today I plan to keep that promise. I strongly believe that had the referendum been held in the way it should have where the Government had stayed neutral and under the same conditions that we now hold our general elections where it is a percentage of the voter turnout, we would not be here today. This change would have been long gone. We would have done it and we would be moving forward. But, Madam Speaker, I have to remember my promise and this is no time for me to turn my back on the people that I promised that I would get this done.

I know the Leader of the Opposition likes to tell me that I am ruining the country and I do not know what I am doing. But 1,396 people in Bodden Town believe I know what I am doing.

Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the members of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for producing a concise, well thought out, and what I believe is their best effort when they produced their report. I believe that the 19 electoral districts are fairly demarcated and that they are designed in a way that will alleviate a lot of the concerns that I

have heard raised. I have had the opportunity to discuss the findings with the Commission and hear their explanations for their decisions and I am satisfied in myself that this is the result of their best effort.

Madam Speaker, the boundaries have been constructed in such a way as to not just include one single demographic in each district.

The Speaker: Honourable Council—if I can have your indulgence—I recognise the Honourable Premier to hold the suspension of Standing Order 10(2).

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 10(2)

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Order 10(2) in order that the business of the House may continue beyond the hour of interruption

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 10(2) be suspended to allow the business of the House to continue beyond the hour of interruption.

All those in favour please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Order 10(2) suspended.

The Speaker: Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town, please continue with your debate.

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the way the boundaries have been created they do capture a wide cross-section of each demographic in the districts. That was a concern of mine but I am happy to say that upon reviewing what has been done, in particular, in Bodden Town, I am satisfied that that concern can now be put to rest. I think that they have wisely chosen how to create these boundaries and where to put these boundaries and I am completely satisfied with that.

I also believe that the electoral districts have now been created at a reasonable size. Again, that was a concern that I heard thrown around. However, based on what I have seen, based on the fact that we are introducing another, a 19th seat, I am also satisfied that that concern has been alleviated. I do believe, Madam Speaker, and this is one of the biggest concerns I have heard expressed so far, I do believe that the ratio of constituents to a representative is reasonable.

Madam Speaker, I spent a lot of time working in my district as do my colleagues. The Ministers in particular have a harder time because of their Ministerial workload but the First Elected Member for Bodden Town and I, do spend a lot of our time on the ground in Bodden Town. And it is overwhelming at times to have to deal with such a large number of constituents. Now, that is not to say that we do not try to assist everybody, but I believe in efficiency, Madam Speaker, and this is a more efficient way of approaching our jobs. A lot of us on the Government side are councillors, Madam Speaker, and we do have responsibilities to assist the Ministers with their jobs and all of this is part and parcel of being a representative. But it is difficult at times to keep up and I am not saying that we do not want to. If there were enough hours in the day, we would. But I do feel sometimes that the constituents may be short-changed to a certain extent because there are so many constituents that we have to deal with individually.

Add to that, Madam Speaker, the fact that we deal with constituents from other districts and that is no secret. Every one of us here experiences that. I am currently assisting the Third Elected Member for West Bay with one of his constituents with an issue she is having. I do not turn anyone away. It is a bit worrisome when we find ourselves stretched to the limit and unable to help the people that we want to help. So by dividing up our electoral districts we are dividing up the work. It is more efficient; it is more manageable. I do not see anything wrong with that. We are not erecting fences, Madam Speaker, we are simply dividing up the constituency in a way that we can manage to assist them in a more efficient manner.

To me that, Madam Speaker, improves the level of representation that we are offering. By allowing each representative to focus on a smaller group of constituents primarily as their main focus that allows us to have more contact with those constituents, Madam Speaker, and allows us to be more involved in their day-to-day lives and understand the issues that are affecting them. None of us are complaining on either side of this House about having to represent people. That is what we are here for. But we are looking for ways to be more efficient at doing that.

Madam Speaker, I have heard today a lot of accusations that this is going to encourage garrisons. I have heard other individuals say that this is going to encourage criminal representatives in the House and the elephant in the room that I am going to address later on is that we are putting power into the hands of non-Caymanians and I have to attack that one. But I will deal with that one a little bit later, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, just the other day a UDP member accused me to my face of encouraging Jamaicans to seek political power in this country. I find this ironic because this same individual was involved in using Jamaicans to campaign against us in the last

election and I made a point in this honourable House, Madam Speaker, some time ago that if I saw that sort of activity happening again I would address it. It is starting to boil to the surface again. It is part of the propaganda plan that people are using to try and persuade us that this is wrong for the country.

Just to address that idea, Madam Speaker, if you have a Jamaican who came here and gotten Caymanian status, that Jamaican is now a Caymanian and is entitled to every right that we have here as Caymanians. Is it right for us to then decide that that individual should not have representation in this House when we invited them here and gave them status? Again, Madam Speaker, I will go a little bit deeper into that later on.

I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that this is such a bad system and it is terrible for the country. But why then have so many countries adopted this system and why have they not sought to make any changes to it? I do not hear an outcry in neighbouring countries that the system is so wrong.

But, Madam Speaker, the focus of this debate needs to be on one thing primarily. We need to focus on the idea of equality. We cannot have equality under the current system. What we have now allows Caymanians to have varying levels of political say. If you take someone from the district of East End or North Side, they have one vote. Take an individual from the district of George Town, Madam Speaker, and they have six. That in itself is self-explanatory. That is not equality. Why is it that my cousin in East End cannot have the same amount of political persuasion that I would have?

Madam Speaker, for equality to win the day, electoral districts must be drawn as close to equal in population size as can practically be done. I think everyone here accepts that there are exceptions here with East End and North Side because we have to respect their traditional district boundaries. I do not think that there is anyone in this Honourable House who would want to—at least not on this side—to entertain making changes to East End and North Side which I heard were put forward such as combining those two districts. I would not want to be the individual who proposed that.

Within reason, Madam Speaker, there can be minor differences in the size of the districts and allowing 5 to 10 per cent is reasonable, and that is an accepted standard. And because of the difference in size of the districts there will be a proportional change in the weight of the political power of individuals in those districts. But 10 per cent is tolerable.

Madam Speaker, I am a bit surprised to hear the Leader of the Opposition come out so strong against this because he was given the opportunity to appoint a member to the Commission. I am certain that that individual, Mr. Steve McField, was able to represent the views of the Leader of the Opposition and I know him on a personal level and I know he is

no pushover and I am sure he would have argued strongly for what the Leader of the Opposition wanted to be done. I am not sure what transpired there but I will say that I have every confidence in Mr. McField myself, and, I am certain that his work included the views of the Leader of the Opposition and I find it a bit puzzling that he said that the views of his district were not represented.

Likewise, Madam Speaker, the Government had the opportunity to place one individual on the Commission and there was obviously a technical expert who was on there as well. With that said, Madam Speaker, the views of the two majority groups politically here on the Cayman Islands, were represented. I really am puzzled to hear that the Leader [of the Opposition] is saying that he did not think that his district's views were represented well enough.

I do not think then, Madam Speaker, that the end result can be considered to have been biased in any way. It does not favour any one individual or group and I think a fair job was done and I want to congratulate the members of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for a job well done.

I think that, Madam Speaker, the universal constitutional principle of equality is satisfied by one person, one vote and it ensures that no one individual has more political power than another. I think it is unfair for Bodden Towners who currently have four votes while George Towners have six. I think it is unfair across the spectrum, across the board.

Madam Speaker, it is my personal belief that those in opposition to this change have become disconnected from their people—the political representatives. I do not think that their arguments are based on what is best for the constituents anymore. I think they are looking more out for their own personal political gains and at best it is selfish.

Madam Speaker, there are no Caymanians who wish or desire to live in garrisons or who wish to vote for criminals. What Caymanians want is to raise our children, to be able to provide for them, to live a decent law-abiding life—but how can they do that if politically they are not equal? I would be hard-pressed to find 250 or 300 Caymanians who are going to vote for a representative who they think is criminal minded or is simply buying their vote or who does not have the ethical qualities of the individuals here in this House today. I think it is scaremongering, Madam Speaker, and in my mind it is something that we need to put to the side now. The time for that is over. Save that for the campaigning. This change is positive. This change has been long awaited. Individuals have worked very hard to bring this change to this country. People like Miss Consuelo who sadly passed away, spent countless hours campaigning for this. No one can dispute the fact how much she loved her country. I doubt she would have endorsed any kind of change that she thought would have been detrimental to the future of the Cayman Islands.

The question remains, Madam Speaker, why do some people not want one person, one vote? I think, again in my opinion, it is the fear that this system puts greater political power in the hands of the voters. Madam Speaker, under this system there can be no more passing the buck. If an individual comes to you from your district you must deal with that individual. You cannot pass them on to another representative. You cannot say to them *Oh I cannot deal with that; that is not under my control*. You cannot say to them *Oh, I am not a member of the Government in power now so I cannot help you*. The buck stops with you.

Under one person, one vote in a single member constituency, representatives are obligated to have extreme knowledge of their constituents' issues. They must spend the time necessary to understand the issues that affect their constituents. They have to be on the ground. They have to spend the time in their districts. They have to have face-to-face contact with their constituents.

Madam Speaker, something that some of us may shy away from but I certainly do not, there will be intense competition for representation. If I want to run in a single member constituency, I better do a good job because the competition level for a seat is going to be heightened. There can only be one winner. There can only be one person who comes out on top. There is no second place. That in itself guarantees that the individual who is elected in a single member constituency is going to be the best of the best. And I think that is what we mean when we say no more coattail riding because if an individual has one vote to cast, they are going to think probably 10 times before they cast it.

The system as it is now (just using myself for an example) I am in the district of Bodden Town. I have four votes. I can play with those votes. I may only be serious about two people and then I might just say *Oh, well I will give so-and-so a vote, He is a nice guy*. It is no more than that. Anyone who gets elected under this system would have to earn it. And I am not afraid of the hard work. None of us here are afraid of the hard work involved in fighting and contesting for a seat to represent our people. And that is what we need, Madam Speaker. We need representatives who are willing to fight to get in here and fight to remain in here. That in itself, Madam Speaker, is a good example of the level of representation people can now expect. If I know that I can be moved by a smaller margin of votes, I am going to make sure that I am not going to lose those votes and the only way to do that is to make sure that the needs of my constituents are met.

Of course, Madam Speaker, we cannot assume now that we are only going to focus on our individual single member constituency. The same thing exists today—I just mentioned it, Madam Speaker, I help individuals from every district on this Island, even

as far as Cayman Brac. We all do, and because of the close-knit nature of our communities, because of the fact that Caymanian families are spread across these Islands, there is little to fear that you will find a representative who only wants to focus on his individual district. There are families who talk. There are friends who talk and if somebody comes to me and says *Mr. Suckoo, can you help me with such and such* and I say *No, sorry I cannot because you are not in my single member constituency*, they will talk to their family members who are in my constituency. So there is still that sense of being a country representative that will not go away. So that fear again can be put to the side.

Madam Speaker, I have also heard a number of arguments stating that this will divide the country. This is going to cause division amongst Caymanians. Again, I fail to see how that will happen. As I said earlier, Madam Speaker, we are not erecting fences. We are not going to give people special coloured t-shirts to wear. We are not going to physically draw the boundary lines. It is going to be very difficult for anyone to look at me and say exactly which electoral district I vote in or belong to, simply by looking at me. It is the same as it is now. I live in the district of Bodden Town. If you happen to know my address, then you can figure it out. But there is not going to be this division where I am only going to speak to you or associate with you because you are from my electoral district. That is absurd. I mean, Caymanians just do not function like that. We do not operate like that.

Again, because of our close-knit nature and the fact that our families are spread across these Islands, friends are spread across these Islands, I am not going to stop speaking to my friend because he votes in another electoral district or he happens to have gotten a library close to his house. It does not happen now. I do not see how it can happen then. I hope everyone can see the silly nature of that argument because it just will not happen.

For Caymanians to become so selfish that we would start to turn against each other because we perceive that one may have a slightly better representative than us, I mean it doesn't happen now. It is not going to happen in the future. It is not within our nature.

What is divisive though, Madam Speaker, and what concerns me and what has continued to concern me for the past two-plus years is that what we have now encourages division. Madam Speaker, we currently have pockets of Caymanians who have for years now, not received the political representation that they deserve. We all know the neighbourhoods. I will not bother to name them out here but there are certain neighbourhoods throughout these Islands that are considered to be low income, to have social issues, criminal issues, crime issues and under the current system, Madam Speaker, me as a representative in Bodden Town, I can choose to ignore the needs of those areas, those pockets of individuals who need

more representation, simply because I know how to pick up votes elsewhere. Now, in a single member constituency scenario where perhaps half of your constituency would consist of one of those areas, you would be in a lot of trouble very quickly if you choose to use the same approach. So the divisiveness is here now and it will persist if we do not make this change.

If the poorer areas and the areas that receive less attention continue down that road, then we will start to see what I think is the garrison mentality because they will say: *Well, the politicians are doing nothing for me so I am going to find someone who will.* And that someone may be able to assist them in a way that might not be ethical or may not even be legal.

So, what we have now breeds that sort of atmosphere and I think we need to carefully understand why people are making those arguments now. So I think the reverse will be the reality. I think when you have a representative who is able to pay closer attention to your needs and the issues affecting you and your family, then, there will be less likelihood of you going down that slippery slope of falling into the garrison mentality. With the heightened accountability, the pressure on the representatives to represent, it is very unlikely that we are going to have a continuation of that. It may happen for one election cycle but I can guarantee you that the next time around that person will not be there.

Madam Speaker, the elephant in the room.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: I want to talk about some of the propaganda that is being spread around and it has been said more to me than a few times so I think I need to address it here. I think it has been directed at me for a specific reason and I will go into that shortly. But I have been accused a number of times now of encouraging foreigners to want to gain political power in the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, anybody who believes that, is ignoring the history and cultural makeup of these Islands. It is no secret, Madam Speaker, that, my father came here from Jamaica. He came here as a school teacher. He met my mother and they were married and he got his status and they had four Caymanian children. And now here I am, a representative in this House.

There are a number of us who have similar backgrounds. But can any one of us be accused of not being loyal representatives of the Cayman Islands? Are any of us promoting any agenda that would make you question our loyalty to the Cayman Islands and our people? What caused a lot of that fear, Madam Speaker, is the fact that in the recent past, we, and I will say—I will be careful with my words—but we recklessly invited individuals here and granted them status en masse without taking the time

to make sure that those individuals were properly integrated into our culture. They became Caymanians overnight and then they were left to flounder. Many of them now are suffering. They come to see me all the time. They were given status; there was no plan for how we were going to educate them, how we were going to provide health services for them, what jobs they were going to get. A lot of them have told me they wish they were still here on work permit because now they are not able to get jobs.

That, Madam Speaker, has done more damage than us allowing people to actually assimilate into our culture and become Caymanians. I have nothing against the people who received status and the status grants because, Madam Speaker, many of my friends did. If it was me I would have accepted as well. It was a way to get a better life, to remain in a country you wanted to remain in. I am not chastising those people but I am saying that it was poorly planned and now we are seeing the end result which is fear.

Madam Speaker, just to enforce the point I was trying to make—I think we can safely say that every single Caymanian is a descendant at some point in time of a foreigner, at some point in history. These Islands were settled by people from elsewhere. If the people who originally settled in these Islands held a view that only indigenous Caymanians should be able to participate in our democracy, what kind of country would we be? There are people who came here, settle here, had families, built this country and now I am being accused of promoting an agenda to give foreign nationals power in the Cayman Islands. But a foreign national cannot have political power in the Cayman Islands. You must be a Caymanian to be a representative and you must be a Caymanian to vote. The elephant in the room is that argument and I wanted to address it.

Madam Speaker, names like Suckoo, Bush, McLaughlin, O'Connor, Connolly, Rivers, Bodden, Eden, Panton, McTaggart, Hew, Ebanks, Miller, Archer, McLean—they all have an origin in some foreign country.

[Laughter]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: I saved the best for last, Madam Speaker—Tibbetts.

[Laughter and inaudible interjections]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: That is the only indigenous Caymanian. My apologies, Madam Speaker, I neglected to mention the Tibbetts.

All of those names have an origin in some foreign country. But they all resulted in a legislature that is here fighting for Caymanians. So, when someone suggests to me that allowing the descendant of a foreigner to vote or the descendant of a foreigner to be a representative in this House is a bad thing for the

Cayman Islands, it tells me that they are being ignorant in their views because that is what exists today and that is always what has existed. This country is a melting pot. It has been built on individuals who have come here, became Caymanians and helped our nation grow. And it is going to continue. There is no stopping it. We just have to make sure that the right individuals are allowed to come here and become Caymanian and it is done in the right way.

So, for anyone to suggest that this is about the Fourth Elected Member for Bodden Town pushing some agenda to give people who he may have descended from political power, I hope that explains to them my feelings on that. I do not think anyone here can accuse me of not being loyal to this country and to my people. I would not be standing here today, Madam Speaker, if I was not.

Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition spent some time talking about the current system and how it is 185-plus years old and it has served us well. And as I alluded to earlier, Madam Speaker, there is always room for improvement. Clinging to a now archaic system of electing representatives and offering representation is not going to be good for this country. We must move forward. We must ensure equality and accountability. This is the way that we have chosen to do it. I did not take this lightly. I spent the time necessary to do the research. I have read; I have comforted myself that the pros heavily outweigh the cons.

I find it hard to believe that there are those who think that it is okay for us to move forward considering all the challenges we face ahead, Madam Speaker; all of the hardships that we currently endure and the challenges that we have ahead of us without ensuring that every single Caymanian is equal politically. This is reflected in what I talked about earlier. We have neighbourhoods; we have communities of poor Caymanians. We have Caymanians who are finding it difficult to feed their families, pay their bills, or pay their mortgages. Is there any doubt that that is happening when they have less political say? When they attract less political attention? Any representative of this House, this Honourable House, must understand, Madam Speaker, that without equality, democracy will fail. The Leader of the Opposition himself has acknowledged the many, many issues that we currently face.

He has even—in comments made outside this honourable House—alluded to being unhappy with election results and the way we have run elections and elected representatives. So for him to stand here today and say that he is happy with it—I am a bit puzzled.

Madam Speaker, this is not about us politicians. This is about the people of the Cayman Islands and what I think will be an improvement in the level of involvement they have in politics, in the running of this country. I am really not too concerned with what has been talked about here with the coattail effect and

how this one got elected and how that one got elected. I believe that it is a higher power that decided to put us all here. What I want to focus on is doing my job to make the lives of my constituents better. I think that is what we all want to focus on.

I am not too concerned about the upcoming election, Madam Speaker. I remember going to a prayer meeting prior to the election and Reverend Yvette Bloomfield telling all of us that we could go home and rest because it had already been decided who would be returned.

I believe, Madam Speaker, if I continue to do my job to the best of my ability and continue to do what God laid out in front of me to do; that if he thinks I did a good enough job, I will be returned. It will not kill me if I am not, but while I am here I am going to do what is best for my constituents—not what is best for me.

We all talk about that from time to time. We all sit around and talk about it. None of us are better off as representatives now than before we became representatives economically. We are not here for the money. I think everyone here can agree to that one. We are here for something else, Madam Speaker. We were chosen to do a job. This is part of that job.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: I am just being reminded—if you see a politician getting rich during his time or her time in office, they are doing something bad.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: Madam Speaker, I believe within me, that I can win back my seat on my own merit. I am not taking away from what effect the First Elected Member for Bodden Town had in my election. I will forever be grateful for his endorsement and his support and his guidance. But what he has done in the past two-plus years is to help me to learn to stand on my own two feet and to be a representative in my own right. So I appreciate the coattails, but my ambition is to next time around, have my own coattails.

Madam Speaker, the referendum. I heard the Leader of the Opposition talking about the referendum and it failed and it did not overwhelmingly demonstrate that the people wanted this change. They did not want one person, one vote. They did not want single member constituencies. But thinking back that was a tremendous battle. Had it been a—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.:—yes. Had the result been different and the turnout was much higher and it had passed, we would have heard a different version of events. We would have heard how the people wanted

change and they demonstrated it and it would have been embraced.

But, Madam Speaker, the people of this country were faced with going out to vote in a referendum that was being campaigned against by their own Government. It was held during the summer when many people were away. I cannot give you an account of all of the misinformation and propaganda that was spread during that time. I spent the majority of my time countering that. I went door-to-door and I was faced with just—it was unbelievable the untruths that were given to people as facts. Scare tactics—and I had to sit down and explain to them no, it is actually not like that. Saying that those that stayed home voted ‘no’, that is not correct. People stayed home for many reasons. No means no. If they wanted to say no they would have come out and voted no.

There is another claim that if we implement single member constituencies, Madam Speaker, that we are going to be inundated with unreasonable requests for infrastructure and this one is going to want a church and that one is going to want a gymnasium; this one is going to want a hospital. Madam Speaker, it is nonsense. Common sense has to prevail. If there is a hospital a hundred feet away from your house and you happen to be in another single member constituency, you are not going to go and pressure your representatives to build a hospital next to that one. There are no fences blocking you from going to that hospital.

Similarly, two schools side by side make no sense. It would not live up to the scrutiny of the Finance Committee of this House. So, at the very least if that request was made and it came here, I do not think it would go much further than the Finance Committee.

Our budgeting process is thorough. It ensures that decisions like that, that are careless and reckless and wasteful are not made. Unless there is some abuse of power, that sort of stuff will be weeded out. And a representative who is going to come and promise you that he is going to build a school next to another school when there is no need for one, I do not know why anyone would want to support someone who is that reckless with the country’s money. I would like to urge the public do not elect people who do not understand that concept. If you have someone coming to you and campaigning and saying I am going to build a school down here just because we need one in our district, I would tell them where to go. Just because you want it does not mean it is going to happen. It has to make sense—economic sense. It has to be practical.

Madam Speaker, I keep hearing the garrison talk and I need to ask: Where does the East End and North Side garrison exist? I have been visiting these two districts my entire life and I have yet to come across the garrisons in those two districts, and they are the closest things to single member constituencies that we have. I do not think that we can say it is simply

because the current representatives do not want it, because there have been other representatives as well. North Side and East End have not changed. The representatives have and we have not seen the development of garrisons in those two districts.

I know that there was some talk about the size—the number of voters—in those two districts. I think they are within the reasonable acceptance in variance in size. There might be some minor differences but in time those districts are going to grow. The way that we have set up this process, the Electoral Boundaries Commission is going to revisit boundaries. They are going to continue to continually monitor the number of voters per constituency, so, as those two districts grow they will become into the size that has been recommended and accepted as the norm. I really do not think that those fears are real fears.

I do not think anyone here would have gone down the road of supporting the concept of combining those two districts. The backlash from the people in North Side and East End would have been something that I would not have wanted to face.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, Jr.: I think it is a bit mischievous, Madam Speaker, to suggest that this is going to bring garrisons to the Cayman Islands. Our circumstances are different. We are not independent. We have not gone through major periods of violence and civil unrest. Although we do have poverty here and we do have hardship, we have not experienced it to the level of neighbouring countries that are being used as examples. We have always moved in a way that we protected our economy. We protected our industries. We educate our people. I really do not see why that scaremongering is starting to have an effect on people because common sense will tell you that our circumstances are completely different. I wonder if they see that this change might erode their power base to the point where they may not be in control of their districts to the extent that they have been and that the people will now have more say as to who represents them and what they do when they become representatives.

If we continue to ignore impoverished areas and if we continue to go down the road of counting on the votes over in this other side of the district and not worrying too much about these over here, then we will force our people into that garrison mentality. Let us not do that.

The poorer people in the Cayman Islands are not sitting waiting, Madam Speaker, on a leader to emerge to create a garrison. They know what comes with a garrison. They are under siege. They are dependent on one individual to live their lives. They may often find themselves subject to violence and control through violence. The death rate increases, the crime rate increases—I do not think that is what our people

want for their children. I do not think that that is a realistic assumption. Poor people are not criminals. If we want to avoid the garrisons let us continue focusing on educating and uplifting and empowering our people. That is a simple solution to that. That mentality has nothing to do with single-member constituencies. It has to do with poor representation and that is what will happen if we allow certain elements to become more powerful politically. So to avoid that, let us work harder for our people.

Madam Speaker, all that I have said here today has been primarily my personal views but I do have an article here that was published in the Yale Law Journal (and I can give you a copy after I quote from it). It is entitled "[Multi-Member Electoral Districts—Do They Violate the 'One Man, One Vote' Principle.](#)" The author was John F. Banzhaf, III. I will not read the whole article because it is about 30-something pages long. But I would like to quote from certain sections of this article, Madam Speaker, because I do not want my debate here to be primarily based on my personal views and there are many other articles that support my arguments here today. But this one I thought was the most appropriate.

I am quoting from page 1,313: "**In the most common legislative situation all representatives are equal, at least in terms of a simplified mathematical model. Each represents a single district and has the same number of votes as every other representative. Given these two conditions, a necessary and sufficient condition for equal representation is that each district contains substantially the same number of people.**"

"Equal representation, then, demands more than mere equality of voting power at the citizen-voter level (*i.e.*, substantially equally populous districts). If the electoral districts have substantially equal populations, equal representation also requires that all districts elect the same number of representatives who are equal in the legislature. Conversely, if the elected representatives are mathematically equivalent, then representation will be equal if and only if the districts are of substantially equal population. This much has been clear without mathematical analysis. Serious questions arise, however, when the districts are of substantially unequal populations and the legislators are also unequal in their voting power, method of election, or both."

Again, Madam Speaker, this is talking about what exists today— ". . . the ability of the citizen-voter to elect or affect his representatives and the ability of representatives to affect the outcome of legislative decisions through voting—in a single all-inclusive measure."

Moving to page 1,319—this talks about voting power and multi-member districts. "**It is possible to analyze legislative systems in terms of voting power by applying the measure just developed to**

determine if each citizen-voter has a substantially equal chance to affect the election of his representative. If all of the districts in a state have, for example, 10,000 voters, it is easy to see without any calculation that all voters have the same voting power in the Supreme Court's terms. In the abstract model a citizen of district A will have the same chance, however small, to affect the election of a legislator from A as the citizen of B will have to affect the election of the representative from B. Moreover, one can see, again without calculations, that if A becomes more populous than B, the chance of any citizen of A to affect the election of his representative decreases. Hence, in terms of the definition, and in accordance with the reapportionment decisions, one concludes that his voting power (or weight or strength) has decreased. As long as there are only single-member districts, it is evident that all citizens will have an equal ability to affect the election of their legislators only if the population of the districts is the same."

Again, Madam Speaker, this is pointing out the weakness of the current system and the strengths of single member constituencies. I am just quickly flipping to the last section—

"**In electoral systems employing different sized multi-member districts, residents of the larger districts thus have more voting power than those of less populous districts. Although the individual voter's ability to influence the election of his representative decreases . . .**

"**The broader interpretation of the reapportionment decisions is that equality in the power to vote and thereby to affect the election of legislators is only a means to an end, a part of a larger and more complicated problem. The problem is how to afford each voter equal representation under a system in which one or more legislators act for him in a legislative body. So far the courts have held that one way this can be accomplished is by dividing the state into districts of substantially equal population, allowing each district to select one legislator, and allowing each legislator one vote in the chamber. It is an open question whether voters can be equally represented where districts of different populations elect different numbers of legislators to the same body."**

I think, again, that is self-explanatory, Madam Speaker.

The article, Madam Speaker, concludes, "**The Supreme Court has made "one man, one vote" the law of the land and has held that both houses of state legislatures must meet the new standard. In issuing the edict, it has not indicated clearly whether equal voting power for all citizens was the right being protected or whether it was only a means to the more important end of equal representation. Finally, it has refused to look beyond population statistics in finding wrongs and fash-**

ioning remedies. Proponents of multi-member district systems have argued that the plans pass muster under these standards and have attempted to justify them in terms of the simplistic mathematics which has so far characterized reapportionment opinions. This article has analysed the systems in these terms and under these limitations and has found them wanting.

“Under predefined conditions, voting power is susceptible of precise mathematical analysis. To the extent that the theoretical model approximates the Court’s simplified picture of the election of legislators—i.e., where the Court considers only the relative number of voters and the rules of the elective system—it can be shown that legislative systems employing districts electing different numbers of representatives inequitably allocate greater voting power to voters in the most populous districts. This discrimination, which is inherent in all such systems, is proportional to the square root of the district population and may easily reach the magnitude of a constitutional deprivation.”

Madam Speaker, this article was written in the 1960s. That is how far behind we have fallen. It is time for change.

I want to publicly acknowledge the Member for North Side in his effort to bring this change to the Cayman Islands. As I talked about earlier, Madam Speaker, I was a member of what was the OMOV Committee—long before I thought about being a representative. We fought to initiate a referendum on this matter. We were able to bring awareness. We were able to educate people and I have no fear, Madam Speaker, that the Cayman Islands are now ready for this change. We are guaranteeing our people future equality, heightened accountability and greater representation. I do not know how anyone can say no to those three. I do not understand the arguments against this but I know that we are doing the right thing. It is something that we campaigned on. It was in our manifesto and we are moving forward to get it done.

Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the Honourable Premier and the entire Government for not only supporting this, but for ensuring that it gets done within this term. This is something that we could have pushed to the side and said it was not a priority but we have pushed ahead. I want to thank each and every one of them. I want to particularly thank the First Elected Member for Bodden Town for his guidance on this as well and his steadfast support in the district of Bodden Town and also my colleague the Minister for Sports and, of course, the Minister of Financial Services.

With those few short words, Madam Speaker, I think I have demonstrated that I am committed to this change and I am committed to voting yes when the

time comes and I look forward to hearing from the rest of my colleagues in the Opposition.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Fourth Elected Member for the district of West Bay.

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I have always heard that if something is not broken, [digital skip]; and if something is working well, leave it alone.

As you, Madam Speaker, you and the rest of the Members of this honourable House know, I have never supported one man, one vote and I do not support it now. It would be going up against my better judgement and the wishes of my people of West Bay who elected me.

Madam Speaker, our present electoral system has been around for 185 years and it has worked very successfully without any major incidents. I have yet to be shown why changing the system is going to make it any better than it is right now. The one thing I can say, knowing the people of West Bay, is that if they cannot vote for the candidate or candidates that they want to vote for, they are not going to vote.

Madam Speaker, it is not fair for them to be deprived of the right to vote because the candidate that they want to vote for is not in the constituency that they live in.

There is very little I can say to improve on what the Leader of the Opposition said but, Madam Speaker, I just wanted to say publicly that I do not support it. I have never supported it and I will stand by my convictions that what we have now is still the right thing.

Madam Speaker, that is what I have to say. Thank you.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

[Pause]

The Speaker: I recognise the Second Elected Member for the district of George Town.

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart, Second Elected Member for George Town: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I normally say when I get up here, the evening is late but I, too, shall be brief.

[Inaudible interjection and laughter]

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Madam Speaker, today is . . . I do not need that—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: It is a historic day for this country as this Motion is before us to finally (in my mind) establish equal voting rights for every person in this country; that is what this is about and let us make no bones about it.

Assuming that this Motion is carried today, what will emulate from it eventually is that at the next election I will have the same voting rights as a Member from across the aisle from North Side and East End and everybody else in this House and everybody else in the Cayman Islands. That is what it is about.

Madam Speaker, I think it is important—we must recognise the sterling job that the Electoral Boundaries Commission undertook in producing their report. Madam Speaker, they fulfilled their mandate and they did so in a very brilliant way. What they have produced for us is a very balanced electoral boundaries, electoral districts in those districts that are most populous where their focus was—that is for Bodden Town, West Bay and George Town. And, to a very large degree, they very brilliantly and calculatingly mitigated with all the risks that I had and saw with regard to the potentials for some of the potential pitfalls with single-member constituencies.

Madam Speaker, I do not intend this evening to debate the merits or demerits of single member constituencies and one person, one vote. My view is that we have been discussing this and debating this now for many years. What really is necessary this evening is that we act and if that we do so in a very decisive way in moving the country forward to what I would consider to be a superior electoral system. So, I want to go on record, too, in thinking the Premier for his leadership on this issue. Madam Speaker, I have to say throughout these debates he has been steadfast, he has been committed and he has provided leadership to us all in moving this issue forward.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. Roy M. McTaggart: Madam Speaker, I also listened quite intently to the passionate and spirited debate that was given by the Leader of Opposition this afternoon. I listened very closely to his debate. What I can only say is that I heard nothing new or nothing different that would cause me to change my mind with regard to my views towards one person, one vote and single-member constituencies.

So I conclude my contribution, Madam Speaker, by saying I fully support the Motion before us this afternoon. I am looking forward to voting in favour of it and I look forward to the time when we will truly have equality of voting in the Cayman Islands.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Premier.

ADJOURNMENT

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, again, today I think we have made really good progress and I am quite pleased with where we are at in terms of the overall agenda for this Meeting of the House. I think we are making good progress as well on the debate on this important motion.

Madam Speaker, I thank all Members for their cooperation and their contributions. I wish everyone a nice weekend and I move the adjournment of this Honourable House until 10:00 am on Monday morning.

The Speaker: The question is that this Honourable House be now adjourned until 10:00 am on Monday.

All those in favour please say Aye. Those against, No.

Ayes.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it. The House accordingly stands adjourned until 10:00 am, Monday.

At 5:40 pm the House stood adjourned until 10:00 am Monday, 19th October 2015.