

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**  
**WEDNESDAY**  
**09 MAY 2012**  
**10.55 AM**  
*Fourth Sitting*

**The Speaker:** I call on the Honourable Deputy Premier to say prayers this morning.

**PRAYERS**

**The Deputy Premier, Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly:** 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 Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Official Members and Ministers of Cabinet 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:** Proceedings are resumed. Please be seated.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS  
OR AFFIRMATIONS**

**Oath of Allegiance**  
*[administered by the Clerk]*

**The Speaker:** Mrs. Mary Rodrigues.  
Members please stand.

**Hon. Mary E. Rodrigues:** I, Mary E. Rodrigues, do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to

Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors according to Law, so help me God.

**The Speaker:** On behalf of the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly I welcome Mrs. Rodrigues, Acting Deputy Governor of the Cayman Islands—the first woman to hold this position, and the first woman to be sworn in in this House in that position as an Ex-officio Member of the Legislative Assembly.

It is a historical moment here today.

*[applause]*

**The Speaker:** I ask her at this time to take her seat.

*[pause]*

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.

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

**The Speaker:** I have no messages or announcements at this time.

**STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE  
MEMBERS AND MINISTERS  
OF THE CABINET**

**The Speaker:** There are no statements to be made at this point in this [sitting].

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**MOTIONS**

**Suspension of Standing Order 24(5)**

**The Speaker:** Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Thank you, very much, Madam Speaker.

I move the suspension of Standing Order 24(5) to enable a Government Motion to be dealt with during this Meeting.

**The Speaker:** The question is that Standing Order 24(5) be suspended to enable a Government Motion to be dealt with during this Meeting.

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

**Ayes.**

**The Speaker:** The Ayes have it.

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Can we have a division, Madam Speaker?

**The Speaker:** Madam Clerk.

**The Clerk:**

**Division No. 29/2011-12**

**Ayes: 9**

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush  
Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly  
Hon. Rolston M. Anglin  
Hon. Michael T. Adam  
Hon. J. Mark P. Scotland  
Hon. Cline A. Glidden, Jr.  
Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks  
Mr. Elio A. Solomon  
Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour

**Absent: 6**

Hon. Alden M. McLaughlin, Jr.  
Mr. D. Kurt Tibbetts  
Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell  
Mr. Anthony S. Eden  
Mr. V. Arden McLean  
Mr. D. Ezzard Miller

**The Speaker:** The result of the division is 9 Ayes; 6 absent. The suspension is accordingly carried.

**Agreed on division: Standing Order 24(5) suspended.**

**The Speaker:** We are going to suspend the House for five minutes now to allow the Motion to be circulated and the addendum Order Paper to be prepared. Five minutes please.

**Proceedings suspended at 11.04 am**

**Proceedings resumed at 11.16 am**

**The Speaker:** Proceedings are resumed, please be seated.

## **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

### **MOTIONS**

**Government Motion No. 8/2011-12—Referendum on Single Member Constituencies and One Man, One Vote**

**The Speaker:** Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Thank you, very much, Madam Speaker.

I beg to move Government Motion No. 8/2011-12—Referendum on Single Member Constituencies and One Man, One Vote.

**The Speaker:** You may proceed, sir.

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Madam Speaker, the Motion standing in my name reads as follows:

**WHEREAS section 69 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 provides that a law enacted by the Legislature may make provision to hold a referendum amongst persons registered as electors in accordance with section 90 on a matter or matters of national importance;**

**AND WHEREAS there has been much debate for the last decade on the subject of our voting system, in particular single member constituencies with One Man, One Vote;**

**AND WHEREAS in recent times the Opposition and the Elected Member for North Side has used this issue to cause great consternation and division in our small community, and a petition with the intention to cause a people initiated referendum pursuant to section 70 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 has been circulated;**

**AND WHEREAS on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 the Government announced that it intended to hold a referendum on the subject of Single Member Constituencies and One Man, One Vote on July 18<sup>th</sup> 2012;**

**BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the following question be declared to be a matter of national importance:**

**“Do you support an electoral system of Single Member Constituencies with each elector being entitled to cast only one vote?”**

**AND BE IT NOW FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the said question be specified in a Bill and brought by the Government to this Legislative Assembly for debate in accordance with the provisions of section 69 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009.**

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Honourable Premier, before I proceed, and for the benefit of the listening public, Standing Order 13(1) states, **“The quorum of the House and of a Committee of the whole House shall consist of eight Members in addition to the person presiding.”**

I want to make it abundantly clear that the House is quorate and its business will proceed.

I will now read the Resolution: BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the following question be declared to be a matter of national importance:

“Do you support an electoral system of Single Member Constituencies with each elector being entitled to cast only one vote?”

AND BE IT NOW FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the said question be specified in a Bill and brought by the Government to this Legislative Assembly for debate in accordance with the provisions of section 69 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009.

The Motion is open for debate. Does the Honourable Premier wish to proceed?

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeever Bush:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for outlining that this House is properly constituted, properly quorate, and therefore we proceed with business.

Madam Speaker, I have won seven General Elections and I have been through all sorts of battles during those years. The work of this legislature is important. We are all paid, and we are paid very well. And, Madam Speaker, I consider it my duty to be here, if I am on this Island when this House is called for business. The business of this House is guided by the Honourable Speaker, but according to the various Standing Orders that have been in vogue or in existence for many, many years; some amendments over a period of years.

The Business Committee of this Honourable House, Madam Speaker, is the committee that sets the business on any given day, or a period of days. That committee consists of the majority always being the Government. And the Chairman of that committee has always been the person leading the Government—more so in recent years. Years ago, Madam Speaker, it used to be the First Official Member of the House. That was in the early days when I first entered here. In latter days it became the person leading the Government, and more particularly so now that we have a Constitution that recognised first, the “Leader of Government”, and now, the “Premier”.

So, I chair the Business Committee. But that Business Committee also consists of the Leader of the Opposition and another Member of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition is a member and, therefore, the Opposition party—the People’s Progressive Movement—are members of that Committee. Two other Ministers sit on that committee as members.

This committee, Madam Speaker, is set up to guide the business that the Government has ready to deal with on any given point that the Speaker calls the

House into a meeting. And that is what happened with this particular meeting.

As I have already said, we have set the date for a referendum according to the Constitution and, therefore, that is of national importance—not some trumped up story by people who run around half-cocked with little information, some of which has mistakes in it to ask for things that we should not do at this time. And so the Opposition benches are empty. They are empty because they cannot have their way.

But we are a democratic country. When I was on the Opposition Bench I did not have information, I did not know from one day to the next what was going to happen. And when I did get something on the Floor of the House they kindly told me, “Not on the best of mornings am I going to listen to you.” They were the Government. Today we are the Government. And that is democracy.

And for those that believe that I am going to be shoved around for the next year, they have got a sad mistake coming, Madam Speaker. I am not going to be guided by mob rule. I do not care how many people they bring. You can see that their wish for a thousand people fell far short by about 960! So, I guess they are being militant and they have made their call to arms and they are now in Hero’s Square. I hope they do not plan to become a hero after walking out of this House. Their job is to sit here and deal with the issues because they are paid to do so.

Madam Speaker, the Government Motion No. 8 is a precursor to the Referendum (Single-member Constituencies) Bill, 2012, which is scheduled to be debated later if this honourable House were to approve this Motion and the Speaker agrees to an adjournment. Madam Speaker, much of what I would be required to say in debating this Motion will have to be repeated when the Bill is being debated. I will very brief in my remarks on the Motion, which, in any event, is self-explanatory.

Before going into the merits of the Motion, Madam Speaker, let me say that as previously stated, in 2009, the United Democratic Party considered the Constitution and constitutional matters to be of paramount importance and, as such, our Elected Members of our caucus are free to vote their conscience. They are not bound by party rules in this matter. And let me say very clearly, Madam Speaker, I am not one of those that went into a party for the sake of the party, or to have division and have a row and have a fight and stage walk-outs.

I did not start a party or support a party system for that. I saw this country going into a new Constitution at some point, and I have always felt that if we ever took up the kind of Constitution that was being pushed on us by various commissioners, that there had to be an organisation for discipline and guidance, if we were going to have first the ministerial system and then particularly one more advance to

where we are today in this particular Constitution. I do not believe in the party system so that I have got to have a meeting every week with my guys. That is not what I believe.

I believe that we would have been much better off if this country had formed the committee system of government that I pushed in the first stages of constitutional talks in this House. That was never accepted. I do not believe that we need the wrangling and the jangling that is being carried on and the call to arms that is being made by the Leader of the Opposition, and, Madam Speaker, the militant style that they operate in. I do not believe that is good for any small community. A division in the home, as small as your home may be, will bring that. It will bring division and strife and cause hard feelings.

And when you have the Leader of the Opposition who decides that he is going to take his meeting outside the doors of this Legislature, it is really something for us to think about, while we are here constitutionally conducting the business of this House. What did he say, and I quote (and mind you I am very careful about quoting [Cayman News Service](#), but this is where it comes from and I am sure they would quote him right): **“We need your support and I am issuing a call to arms of all right thinking people in this country but in particular the members of the PPM. We have to become more militant about these matters.”** [CNS: “PPM to reveal new faces” 05/05/12]

Madam Speaker, that is the Leader of the Opposition. That is probably good [compared] to some of the things he says about me directly.

What kind of Opposition [do] you have when they put people on public platforms to incite people to talk about *don't let them have to shoot Ellio Solomon*, or they hope they do not have to shoot Ellio Solomon.

*[inaudible interjection]*

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Well, they punched him down, so we never know what they will do.

But this, Madam Speaker, is not good for these Islands. It is not good. The party system, as far as I am concerned the one that I adhere to will not join in that. Those that want to do it, they can go ahead—they will not have me as leader because I am not 20, Madam Speaker. I am close to the age of retirement and I have been through the fire and the brimstone in here, and I have served with good people who gave me some good coaching and made me to understand that that is not the way we do business in this country. And there is no need to do so.

When we had cause to hold argument I will never forget the opposition and myself, Truman Bodden, Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, and others. We did not do that, Madam Speaker. We did make some demonstration, we asked, because of the expenditure

of money and so on. Madam Speaker, at my age being at this point, that is not where I intend to head.

And so, Madam Speaker, our members are free to vote their conscience on this Motion today and the Bill when it comes.

Today we are setting a prelude to the debate of the Government Bill on Single Member Constituencies and One Man, One Vote. This matter is about our system of voting and thus fundamental to our democracy and an important constitutional matter. This matter has been a source of debate for over a decade. That is how long it has been. And Cayman Brac and Little Cayman are officially on record to not support this voting system and dividing the Islands.

Even as recently as 2010, the Electoral Boundary Commission recorded the peculiar position of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Given the long acknowledged position of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, the Deputy Premier, who is also the Second Elected Member of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, will have no choice but to vote against the Motion and the Bill. To do otherwise would mean that she would indirectly take the position that she would be facilitating the introduction of One Man, One Vote and Single Member Constituencies. The entire Government and party support her in her position. And I dare say, as I have said earlier, members are free to vote their conscience in my party.

Madam Speaker, the Motion highlights the resolve section, the question of whether there is sufficient support for an electoral system of Single Member Constituencies. In such a system each elector is entitled to cast only one vote. This is to be the subject of a referendum if this House so resolves. If it does, the process will be enabled by a law to be passed by this Honourable House as contemplated by the Referendum Bill.

This issue, Madam Speaker, has engaged the country for a number of weeks now and has, frankly, become a distraction from our substantive governance responsibilities. Indeed, it is threatening to—or perhaps has already—severely polarised the society. The matter has, therefore, become one of immense national importance.

The Government, therefore, deems it necessary to put the matter to a referendum basically along the same premise that was envisaged by the proposed peoples' initiated referendum. The Government also wishes to send a strong message of good faith in this undertaking, thus making it abundantly clear that we intend to manage this entire matter in the best interests of the people and will ensure that it is fair to all concerned.

It is therefore important to note at the very outset, as I said yesterday in a statement to the media, that the day of the proposed referendum would in all fairness have to be a public holiday for many reasons—Police that have to use their auxiliary (and those are private persons who work on a private ba-

sis), and the Civil Service, and others. And I said to the country when we were going into this, *Let's not go into it because this is a full General Election*. And it is. They have to be counting in every district, and there have to be results in every district.

We are not going to do what happened in the last referendum—where I still do not know that that Constitution passed—because they grabbed up the votes from West Bay and they ran George Town with it. And I did not see or hear anything about it until the Governor came and told us that the referendum was passed and they had burnt the ballots. We cannot do business that way in a democratic country. And I am not going to support it. So, we have to put the where-withal, we have to have the resources to do so. That means people—human resources—to be able to conduct that sort of count so that people in their districts can observe the count and people, through representation, can see the ballots for themselves. That is how we plan to make this happen.

I do not believe that we would be doing the right thing to change a system that we have had that has worked and worked well. At one time our campaign [slogan] was “If it's not broken, don't fix it” or “If it is broken, let's fix it.” It is not. We have one of the highest turnouts in the region. Nobody can say that they are obstructed in voting—none! And so this is not about a better system; it's about people believing that it is going to be better for them to get elected. And what is going to be created are enclaves here in this town that we do not want to see. And they talk about bad systems. What do they believe creates the garrison constituencies in other countries?

Madam Speaker, it is because people can do things by themselves that they cannot do in a group. I have to be accountable to my three other colleagues and they have to be accountable to me.

Madam Speaker, it would be best for me as an elected Representative to want to have 1,000 people to represent rather than 3,000. It would be a whole lot better, because I would have less people knocking on my door. But I know . . . I grew up on this Island; I know what the expectations are and the rising expectations exist as Adlai Stevenson said, they exist. And it is going to be the detriment of these Islands if we change. Now, that might not happen in one election—whether I live to see it or not only God knows—but it is going to happen.

I can tell you I do not know which person that has control of four people—because that is what they have, they have four votes—I do not know who can give up four for one. That does not sound right to me. And so I could easily say that is the best thing, let me deal with 1,000 people. It would be better for me. But I do not believe that it is good for this country. I have seen it work to the detriment.

Madam Speaker, Bermuda, had a system where landowners, for instance, could vote wherever

they had land. So they had several casting votes. And over the years, until about the 50s, they made some changes. And then in 1968 they changed and they represented four people in a constituency. And I think since that they went down to two. But in 1994 they changed to one man and it did not go well for them either according to some people. But look how many years it took for them to experience four, or six, or eight, or going from a system where landowners could vote anywhere they had land to be able to vote for four to two and then to one. It took 60 to 70 years for that to happen.

Here we are, we have the system we have, we have had it all this time, but rather than jumping out and saying *I am going to change completely . . .* if they even had come and said, *Let us try to see if two would work and that would work better*. At one point I even said let them try it in George Town if they wanted it so bad; do a trial test. They said, *No, no, no, that's not going to happen*.

Madam Speaker, I know this: I do not want to have the situation—and it is not only existing in West Bay, it exists in other areas of this country—that the so-called “gangs,” who will be in separate constituencies, can control one small constituency. This is not where we have got 15,000 in one constituency, you are going to 1,000. In fact, we only have on the whole 15,000 people.

What are we . . . this is what is wrong with this country, some of it, is that we are trying to go to everything that we see somebody else doing and believe that what works for 60 million people in the United Kingdom is going to work for 50,000 people in Cayman. Not so. Not so! Even in the United Kingdom they still conduct in some of their Parish Council elections, multiple voting. They still conduct multiple voting.

Madam Speaker, it is altogether wrong and it sprung out of doors in West Bay with some here in George Town who believe that if they could cut West Bay up into four pieces they were going to get rid of McKeever. That's what they thought. Well, they might. I do not believe so, though. I do not believe so. And I ain't giving up my four votes.

I am not going to disrupt Cayman. Cayman needs to become more united, not more divided. That is a fact. [There] is too much division in the country! To the extent that you can have that out there, Madam Speaker, from responsible five elected people or six of them that get paid huge \$80,000, \$90,000 a year and more to go out there and do that? Talking about they are walking out of the House? Maybe Mr. Kurt needs to go on a hunger strike, but I do not know what he is walking out of the House for.

Madam Speaker, the politics that I see being played are not good. If they have something against me, let them bring it, put it on the table and do what natural justice says must be done; not constantly do what they are doing to destroy me, because I ain't

stepping down. It won't happen. I have nothing to step down for. I have done nothing illegal, and I am not going to.

That said, Madam Speaker, we will have that public holiday. We are going to make it abundantly clear by an amendment to do that. And, being cautious, we are going to, in an amendment, also say that it is binding, although we have said that. But we are going to make sure that the Bill says so. And I think there is at least another amendment. That way, Madam Speaker, no one can say they did not have the chance to cast their vote. Every qualified person must have that chance. And we will do everything humanly possible to ensure that they do.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, the purpose of this Motion is to seek the support of honourable Members of this House by resolving that the question be put to a referendum and that the appropriate legislation be enacted to facilitate the process.

Madam Speaker, I will, understandably, have much more to say in my debate on the Bill. But for now, with those brief remarks, I commend the Motion to this Honourable House if honourable Members wish to speak thereon.

Again, I make it absolutely clear that Members of this side of the House are open to give their conscience vote.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Premier.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

The Minister of Education.

**Hon. Rolston M. Anglin, Minister of Education, Training and Employment:** Madam Speaker, the Motion before the House is one that, as the Honourable Premier has said, is about an issue that is of national importance.

Any time, Madam Speaker, you are talking about changing a country's voting system, it must be one that is entered into soberly. It is one that we must take very seriously, because, Madam Speaker, our voting system lies at the heart of our democracy.

I have said for years now, that looking at campaign's that lead up to General Elections, looking at the numbers of people who have shown up to vote, looking at the results and outcomes in the different districts, it is clear that the Cayman Islands has a strong democracy. We have a strong democracy that is built on the premise that people are able to go to the polls in a free and fair manner and cast their vote on their ballot paper for the candidate, or candidates, of their choice.

When this issue reared its head again about two years ago now, I guess, we, as Government, did not necessarily engage in the debate at the time because our position had been clear—clear from the first round of constitutional talks that were in 2001. I have not, in my time of being an Elected Member, had any representation [made] to me from our district that indi-

cated that there was any clear mandate to change the voting system.

Madam Speaker, the Members of the Opposition—all six of them—took the decision that they would utilise the people initiated referendum tool that is contained in the 2009 Constitution Order in order to cause there to be a referendum on this issue. Madam Speaker, if this had been carried out by mature Elected Members who were out to educate the public and ensure that the public clearly understood the strengths and weaknesses of our current voting system, the strengths and weaknesses of One Man, One Vote, and, indeed, looked at other options, then the Government would have been perfectly happy to watch the events unfold, see where it got to, and at that time make a decision, if one was available—because if they had gotten 25 per cent there would not be a decision for Government to make we would simply have had to facilitate the holding of the referendum. But if that had happened, Madam Speaker, we, as Government, would have watched the events unfold, decided whether or not we would get into the debate ourselves and see it to the end.

But, Madam Speaker, when you have people in our country in 2012 who are as power-hungry as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (the Third Elected Member for George Town), the Elected Member for East End, and the Elected Member for North Side, that they would call citizens "to arms," tell people in this country they should be "more militant", and go about this all important issue in such a biased, one-sided way, where it was not about public education but simply about pushing their single position . . . And then on top of that, they have wrapped and intertwined in the whole debate a host of other issues just trying to get the people of this country upset with the Government in order to get them, (a) to sign the petition; (b) to vote in the referendum; and then (c) ultimately to vote against the Government in the May 2012 General Elections. But, once the Government saw the tack and the tactics that were being used, we took the decision that it would be better for our small community to end as best we could the infighting, the bickering, the rancour, and simply cause a referendum to be held because we felt that this issue is, indeed, a national issue and therefore would qualify under the provisions of the 2009 Constitution Order to be a subject of a referendum.

And so, Madam Speaker, as the Honourable Premier has said, this substantive debate on this topic will be on the Bill. So, I certainly reserve my detailed comments on electoral voting systems until that point. But needless to say, I give the Motion my support because this Motion, which is calling for a Bill to be brought by the Government to facilitate a Referendum on One Man, One Vote and Single Member Constituencies is, indeed, Madam Speaker, one that I believe all of us would agree is a matter of national importance.

As the Premier has said, in all this we have paid particular attention to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman and the stated position—and mind you, Madam Speaker, this is a stated position for many years now—that to divide the Sister Islands would not be in the best interests of the people or indeed in the best interest of democracy in that electoral district. And so I, too, join in supporting the position that our colleague has taken in regard to her vote on these matters because, Madam Speaker, she cannot be put, or put herself, in the untenable position to be seen as being party to a series of events in this honourable House that ultimately could lead to just that happening—the Sister Islands being divided.

And so, Madam Speaker, all of us on this side, and indeed our party (and we will be making further communications to this publicly after this debate today), are in support of our colleague, the Second Member from Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

Madam Speaker, the Government feels that it is the right thing to do to facilitate the referendum even given the dire financial affairs that still prevail within the country. Whilst we have stabilised public finances, we are by no means out of the woods. However, we felt that there could be no price put on giving the people their ultimate voice, which is to go to the polls in a democratic fashion and have their say.

Madam Speaker, in doing this, all of us as Government are by no means saying that we support the concept of One Man, One Vote and Single Member Constituencies. Indeed, Madam Speaker, the Government does not support One Man, One Vote and Single Member Constituencies. But that tells us the level of maturity that exists in our democracy—that a Government would be willing to give the people a voice in a matter of national importance and, indeed, one that the Government itself does not support.

Now, for some reason the Leader of the Opposition cannot connect the dots to see why that is appropriate and why that is something that a mature Government would do. He has been critical in saying that in his time he had never seen a Government cause a referendum but encourage people to vote against it.

What I can say to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is that if he was not spending so much time calling people to arms and trying to cause strife in the country, he might have had the clarity of mind to realise that this is a time to celebrate. This is a good first. It is good that a Government would be willing to give the public the opportunity to say yes or no, even with a matter that the Government does not support.

The easy thing for would have been for us to have gone out even from the time they were having their petition and engaged in a debate on the matter and try to discourage people from signing. But we took the position that the public must have their voice

and their say because the matter is of national importance.

That, Madam Speaker, I know would be foreign to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition because, whilst he likes to call this Government dictatorial, the one thing that is evident in his behaviour and his demeanour and manner, is that he has a lot of Hitler-like characteristics. And I say that, Madam Speaker, after much thought, observation, and consideration. I have observed that Member for 11 years now and I have seen this pattern of behaviour, and it is consistent and it has been over a long period of time. We are not that type of government. We understand when we must act and when we must relent. And in this instance, despite our personal position, we have relented this issue into the hands of . . . or are proposing to relent this issue to the hands of the people of this country.

So, Madam Speaker, I offer the Motion my support in order for this referendum to be held. But certainly the Government has made it known that we do not support this change to our electoral system.

So, Madam Speaker, with those few words I will take my seat.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister of Education.

Does any other Member wish to speak?

Fourth Elected Member from George Town.

**Mr. Ellio A. Solomon, Fourth Elected Member for George Town:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I rise to make a contribution to the Government Motion.

Madam Speaker, first of all in starting I wish to state up front, two things. One is that the Government, as echoed by my colleague the Minister for Education and Labour, does not necessarily support One Man, One Vote. But we believe it is fundamentally important to bring this Motion to the Floor of this honourable House and to give those persons out there in the public an opportunity to be able to vote, as we believe they will vote on July 18<sup>th</sup>—and that is that in large majority the present system will remain.

Madam Speaker, I believe it is important that we ask ourselves why is it that we are here today discussing the issue of one man, one vote. Why is that, as the Premier has mentioned, arguably on July 18<sup>th</sup> this Government, the people of this country, the tax payers of this country, are going to be spending hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars to have a referendum? Why, Madam Speaker, do we find ourselves in that position? Why do we find ourselves in the position that the country will, from an economic standpoint, come to a halt because arguably the public holiday, which, in turn in terms of the GDP, is concerned, is worth millions and millions of dollars?

Why will businesses have to pay employees to not show up on July 18<sup>th</sup>? Is it a matter, Madam Speaker, that this particular issue is going to resolve the concerns that I believe everyone in this honourable House hears on a daily basis?

Will it provide shelter, Madam Speaker, for those persons who need shelter? And will it provide employment for the hundreds of those persons who have no employment?

Will it provide, perhaps, the Minister responsible for Social Services with more funds so he can do a little bit more for those who need? Will it help us in terms of constructing the roads, building and strengthening the economy? No, Madam Speaker, it will do none of those things.

But, Madam Speaker, the reason we are here is because three blind mice arguably are leading this country astray. Three power-hungry persons, Madam Speaker, and that is the truth. That is why we are here; because you have persons in this country that love power more than they love their country. And the evidence is before us. And anyone who seeks to look at it clearly can see that.

The Third Elected Member for George Town (the Leader of the Opposition), the Member for East End, and the Member for North Side stop at nothing. The destructive nature that you see displayed in every media house pretty much arguably in this country in order to try to get their way. And that simply is . . . nothing is different than it was in 2009. All of that to simply make sure that they can get reins of power in this country.

And they have set the campaign, as I have stated numerous times before, that in order for the PPM to get power in this country the people must fail. And that, Madam Speaker, I want this country to consider very carefully. If the employment or the unemployment in this country drops, the PPM has nothing on which to stand on their platform in 2013. If this Government is able to get the development going, get people working, get the roads built, get the Doctor Shetty, get the Enterprise City, get housing built, and all of the other initiatives that we now have on the table, *if* we are able to succeed in those things, the People's Progressive Movement has nothing to stand on their platform with in 2013.

So their success, their progress as a party hinges, and is to ensure that this Government fails and by extension vividly, very importantly so, the people of this country—the unemployed and the list goes on—must fail in order for the PPM to succeed. And anyone who has any dubious doubts about it, Madam Speaker, have them take a look and make the calculations for themselves.

So I wish to state that the irresponsible Members of the Opposition, particularly those three that I mentioned earlier on, Madam Speaker, that is why we are here. Not because in any way at all . . . because let's understand it, after we have voted on July 18<sup>th</sup>

irrespective of what the results are, it will not have changed one single thing that I have just mentioned. No one will have any more clothes, no more shoes, no more food on their table, no more houses would have been constructed, no one would have made an extra dollar; nothing would have changed.

But I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that it is going to change, in my humble opinion, for the negative because, as the Premier has mentioned, when we talk about things . . . and I remember when the Third Elected Member for George Town, many years ago, was talking about the same thing—the garrison politics. But, oh, that tone has changed today. Well, Madam Speaker, I do not see how we have become more united in this country by further dividing it. That logic, Madam Speaker, eludes me. I do not see how that is happening.

I do not see how George Town becomes more united by taking this block and dividing it into six pieces. And I do not see how the six electoral districts become more united by dividing us up into 18. Already in this country we have persons in the district of George Town, West Bay, East End, North Side, who say, *I voted you to represent me, not the other district*. And we are not seeking to unite that any further; we are seeking to further divide it to say, *not only will you be George Town, but George Town will be divided into six*.

Madam Speaker, we will hopefully expound on another day in terms of merits and demerits of the One Man, One Vote. And I wish to make clarity on that particular issue. It is further division—no unity—further division. And they have a good saying, Madam Speaker, *before a country can be conquered from without, it must first be conquered from within*. And that is precisely what we are allowing ourselves to do—further division in this country, less unity. As the good word says, "United we stand, divided we fall." Ask ourselves, how can we further unite? How can we work more together by having more and more division?

But as someone mentioned, it seems we follow everything that some other country does. And they fail to recall and remember that the United States has 300 million people, the United Kingdom has approximately 60 million people (definitely over 40 million for sure when I checked last). Even our good neighbour Jamaica has over 2 million people. How many people do we have in this country? The census shows us just over 50,000 persons live in this country. You are talking about people running in a constituency where they are dependent on 500 votes, where an individual man or woman, male or female, may win or lose depending on one, two or three votes.

Madam Speaker, you cannot make those sorts of substantial changes without bringing about some substantial results, some substantial ramifications—be they positive or be they negative. And I assure you, Madam Speaker, we do not have to look

further than many of our neighbours to see what is going to result from that.

But I pray, Madam Speaker—and I mean it sincerely—I pray to God Almighty that the people on July 18<sup>th</sup> will go to the polls and vote against One Man, One Vote and the Single Member Constituency. It is my opinion, Madam Speaker, win or lose, that it is not in the best interests of the Cayman Islands and it is not in the best interests of the Caymanian people.

And as we talk about how we get here, understand for everyone, Madam Speaker, who has an opportunity today to hear the words coming out of my mouth that look at what is happening to the Cayman Islands. Here we are as an elected Government. And in here the people sent 15 Members in 2009 to represent them—some in the majority here on the West Side, and those in the minority there on the East Side—both equally important to give a voice. And even today is a stark representation of the lack of representation that the people have. Six Members absent—not from illness, not from some family concern, but out of selfish greed for power, six individuals are absent from this honourable House.

I don't care how you want to dice it—politically, socially or economically—it is bad for the country. That there . . . those six Members account for probably between \$600,000 and \$700,000 every year . . . or every year in terms of salaries alone. That is \$2.8 million the people of this country are spending on those of the other side. If they want to leave the honourable House, Madam Speaker, they should bring a motion so the Government can take that money and use it properly to help the people of this country. They are sitting instead outside.

Some Devil's philosophers are trying to sit outside like a mob rule saying they refuse to come into this Parliament, and why? Because they cannot get their way; because a particular motion that they want will not be [debated] on the Floor of the House, they do not want to come inside.

Madam Speaker, I brought a motion for Civil Servants to get pensions, and I am waiting for it. It has not made it yet. And I keep pushing because I understand that there are priorities, I understand that even that is being bumped off to try to satisfy and placate certain persons in this honourable House. But, Madam Speaker, does that mean that I am to walk out and not come in to represent the people of George Town and definitely the people of this country because Ellio Solomon cannot get his motion when he wants it?

That's good representation?

Maybe we need to look at it through the eyes of a parent and say to ourselves, if we were to hear that our children, be it primary, high [school], college, university, whatever it is—if that was the behaviour, *I couldn't get what I wanted on the agenda* (not that it was not coming) *but I couldn't get it when I wanted it, the day I wanted it*, that they don't go to college, they

don't go to university, they don't attend high school, they walk out of primary school? What would we do as parents?

Madam Speaker, I think any one of us as parents would have to say, assuming they cannot get to the child to scold him or her in time, is going to say that is unacceptable. Unacceptable!

And then we wonder why we are having an increase in crime, why things in this country are reaching the state they are when you have those who people are looking up to, conducting themselves like that? Can we really now have any question and concern when we hear that there are 300 children in our colleges or in high school in this country walking out because something isn't . . . can we really now look and say, *Whoa, this is shocking!* This is the example being set by the Members of the Opposition. The irresponsible and reckless behaviour of the Opposition is sending that exact same message to the people and definitely to the impressionable minds of the children of this country. It is unacceptable, Madam Speaker.

Combine that reckless behaviour with—even worse—the reckless language. Because we may want to say when it is convenient that those are simply words, but I use a good Word of God Almighty who says that **“Death and life are in the power of the tongue.”** And “if death and life are in the power of the tongue,” if those two extremes are there, I dare say everything in the middle is there. Understand the true impact of our words. Understand what it is when on the local national stage, and, even more so, the international, the global stage of this country, you are going to have the Leader of the Opposition calling for the people of this country, in particular his red party, to be more militant and to pick up arms. Think about that.

Who would have thought in 2012 in the year of our Lord that you have a potential leader of a country calling for people to take up arms and to be more militant? Tell me! Tell me, when we walk to Hero's Square and we look at the people that have passed through this honourable House over so many decades, tell me if we have not sunk really low when the Leader of the Opposition can make those kinds of statements. And do not think for a second that they are mere words.

The same Leader of the Opposition is the one that rushes in like a wild animal to strike me in my throat in our canteen! And absolutely nothing happens—not a media house runs it, there is no concern. *Ah, well there must have been some justification for that*—that is it. I wonder what would have happened for the years ago to say nothing, nothing, could have even have been said, whispered, that could justify that sort of reckless irresponsible behaviour setting out an example to our children. And I say again, can we really wonder then, when there are young men and women in our clubs and in our high schools and they are

committing crimes when the Leader of the Opposition engages in that kind of behaviour?

And furthermore . . . not just calling to pick up arms and to be more militant, got a rejected Member from George Town up on their platform saying, "I hope I don't have to shoot Ellio Solomon"!

Madam Speaker, I am not concerned about the fact that he calls my name. I do not care what name it is, Madam Speaker, on a platform for women, for men, for children in this country; that is what you are saying about anyone? *I hope I do not have to shoot X*—I do not care what name he calls?

Madam Speaker, it is a disgrace and I hope that we can look within ourselves, within the heart, soul and spirit of this country and see how low we are becoming; see the mud, see the quagmire, see the swamp that we are allowing ourselves to get into, Madam Speaker—that is where those three Members are carrying us.

When the Member for North Side can state if you go to North Side and burn the place down . . . my God! I would be concerned if I heard a 10-year-old child say that, or anyone outside the Parliament say that. But you have Members of this honourable House saying *I will go burn it down!* They use the word "niggers" "Jew"; everything on the radio and have no regard. Madam Speaker, come on! Come on! When are we as a country going to open our eyes, wake up from this horrible nightmare, and see where these Members are carrying us? It is terrible, Madam Speaker, it is terrible.

But the Leader of the Opposition is true to his promise, that the country will see a campaign unlike they have ever seen before. But I can tell you, Madam Speaker, there has never been a war fought that did not cost money and there has never been a war fought that did not cost lives and many things in between. And the cost of this campaign, the cost of this war that he is waging in this country, will also have its price. And I hope, Madam Speaker, that history will record it very clearly. Those three blind mice, followed by the other three, Madam Speaker, have done more than I can ever think of in my 43 years in this country to destroy this country.

This Government has made successes to stabilise us and keep us where we are now. I am hoping that we can take it from the point of pickup your bed now and walk, and let's get projects working, get the people back to work. That is what they fear, that they simply cannot get power and, as a result of that, they are willing to destroy this country in the process. That, Madam Speaker, is clean, crystal clear, that is the sad, sick, decrepit position that we have reached. That is the state of affairs—nothing different.

So now all the drama kings have walked out of here and they are now prancing in Hero's Square.

I will mention the Honourable Linford Pierson said it one time, you know. I recall sitting right there by the courthouse when he spoke about the now Leader

of the Opposition (the Third Elected Member [for George Town] at that time): He said, "He is an angry and mean-spirited little man." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE] That is what he said.

And if I was not there to hear it and confirm it in 2005, or we may have missed the boat in 2009, let there be no doubt that Mr. Pierson must have been a clairvoyant, he could have seen it, because he was absolutely right. That Leader of the Opposition, the Third Elected Member for George Town, is an angry and mean-spirited little man.

They are all destroying this country that we love so dearly. Therefore, if we love this country we have an obligation to stand up and to do what is right. Let our voices be heard. Mark Twain said that the world is shaped by the unreasonable man. And we have a lot of unreasonable people in this House.

But there is also a good statement. Edmund Burke said that evil prevails when good men do nothing. And, therefore, Madam Speaker, he calls on people to be militant and to take up arms, I call . . . I make my call for good men to do something because evil prevails only when good men do nothing. So I call, Madam Speaker; that is my call—for the good men and women of this country to stand up and to let their voices be heard before it is too late, before it is too late.

We heard it years ago, you know, where we talked about the little frog. It's a scenario, it's a hypothesis, it's a reality that we take for granted, Madam Speaker. The frog is there in the water and you turn it on and you are heating it up. This is what they say. Put the frog in that nice cold water and turn the stove on and if you turn the stove on and allow the pot to heat slowly that frog will stay there in that water until he cooks. But if you had taken, on the other hand, the same frog and threw him in some hot water he would jump out immediately. But the difference is you turn the water up slowly.

Understand, Madam Speaker, this country is right now in a pot of water that is heating up very slowly. And my call, Madam Speaker, is to recognise how far we have gone down the gutter, how far we have gone down the tubes with just what we have seen propagated by these three Members (six of them now, collectively, over the last three years), for us to take a conscious look and to recognise that the water is boiling. Let us not be the foolish frog. Let us jump out and let us do something about it.

Let the good men stand up and say something. Good men and women speak up so that we can take our country back.

Just on a quick point of One Man, One Vote; the Opposition had the chance to do something about One Man, One Vote and Single Member Constituencies. They were in charge of the constitutional negotiations. I did not see any marches. I did not see any fancy pamphlets—nothing typed up then. When they had all the numbers to do whatever it was that they

wanted to do they did nothing. But now . . . and I think one of the things I heard the Leader of the Opposition say is that the reason he did not do it then is because he wanted to have consensus and compromise because he was concerned about the then Opposition (which is the now Government), which means our numbers were a lot less. He was then concerned about the consensus. But, yet, now that he is in the minority and we are in a majority he has no concern about consensus because he is out there marching in Hero's Square, parading. Complete hypocrisy, Madam Speaker.

Understand, as the Caymanian saying goes, that children are the index of our homes. And let us even look at the example that we are setting for them today on a daily basis.

I want to say and echo the words of the Premier as well when he talks about voting our conscience. Everyone has a right, Madam Speaker, today, and this Government—again expounded upon, highlighted, underscored by the Premier—to vote their conscience. And I want to expound, particularly on the position of our Member from Cayman Brac, the Honourable Juliana O'Connor-Connolly. And, Madam Speaker, I say this to make sure that I shine a light into the caucus rooms, to the Cabinet rooms, that the general public does not see.

Ms. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly is a good Representative—a good Representative for all three Islands; a very good representative. And if I could choose another adjective I would say an excellent Representative for the Sister Islands particularly. And so, Madam Speaker, we have a right to vote our conscience and I know today the predicament that she is in. And I say if it is our conscience because of understanding the particulars of the situation in Cayman Brac that she votes particularly against this Motion, she has my support. In no way at all am I going to misunderstand that.

The people of Cayman Brac, the people of Little Cayman have made their position clear, it is documented. And so I wish to say, the Honourable Juliana O'Connor-Connolly has this Government's full support, as do all of the Members in voting their conscience, as we are sure that this Government has the Honourable Juliana O'Connor-Connolly's support.

So Madam Speaker, I will leave the merits and demerits of the particulars of Single Member Constituencies to the other debate because that will be a chance for us as Members, as a Government, to be able to expound on the pros and cons of One Man, One Vote and particularly combine that with Single Member Constituencies.

But I sought, if nothing else, to lay out to today, Madam Speaker, very clearly why it is and how it is that we have reached where we have reached. And I just want to say in closing to the people of this country—understand that the Opposition Members will try

to attach every single issue that they can to Single Member Constituencies and to One Man, One Vote to have them do it. But we do not even have to look any further than the words of the Leader of the Opposition that were quoted in the *Journal*—over a glass of scotch I understand. His words—no one else's, his words—were that the PPM was formed in order to fight and to remove McKeeva Bush from office. So, as many of years have gone, arguably a decade, that is the ideology, that is the philosophy, that is the ethos of the PPM. Do they have solutions? No. It is to remove McKeeva Bush from office.

Madam Speaker, I hope that one day we reach a point of maturity where the country grows beyond any one individual, and definitely the Leader of the Opposition. It has to be a point, Madam Speaker, where we put our people first, make the sacrifices that are necessary.

So I simply want to put in closing that remember when we grapple over this particular issue of Single Member Constituencies and One Man, One Vote, when all of that flurry is gone, that activity has died, and all the damage has been done, not one single soul would have been healed, not one house would have been constructed, no one's electric bill is going to be any lower, nothing positive will have changed, but definitely we will have a lot of negative.

With that, Madam Speaker, I thank you and other Members of this honourable House, and definitely for those who placed me here, for the opportunity to be able to make that contribution this morning.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Fourth Elected Member from George Town.

Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause]

Honourable Deputy Premier.

**The Deputy Premier, Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I rise to make some brief remarks and a contribution as it relates to Government Motion No. 8/2011-12, entitled Referendum on Single Member Constituencies and One Man, One Vote. And in particular, Madam Speaker, I wish to draw attention to section 89(2)(ii) of the Constitutional Order 2009 which reads as follows: "**In preparing its report under the section the Commission shall—(ii) [have regard] to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, [which] shall (between these two islands) at all times return at least two members to the Legislative Assembly.**"

Madam Speaker, it is against that constitutional mandate and background that I have no other choice than to vote in the negative for this particular Motion.

But I wish to go on record right up front, Madam Speaker, that that should in no way, shape or form be interpreted or connoted to mean that I am not in support of my Government, because I am in support of the Government. And this is not in any way attributing or contributing to no confidence in the Government.

In fact I appreciate the stance that my Government has taken in allowing me to voice my conscience and to speak expressively so that I can carry out fully and completely the mandate of my people of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. So, I want to go on record to thank the Honourable Premier and all of my colleagues on this side for affording me such a democratic privilege and a right here today.

Madam Speaker, I agree that the topic is one of national importance, and I wanted to put that on record. And I also concur, Madam Speaker, that the referendum is the correct methodology for canvassing the views and opinions of the people of the Cayman Islands. Unfortunately, because of the Government making all effort to reflect and indeed mirror the question as was requested, indirectly or directly (depending on what side of the fence one sits on), of the people's initiated referendum, I am not in a position to support the Motion as that question is so expressed.

Madam Speaker, I wish to also say that ever since the talk of constitutional change has been going around this specific jurisdiction I have been canvassing the views of my constituency of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. And, indeed, they fully concur with what the Electoral Boundaries Commission found, that very little, if any, certainly a vast majority of the people of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman do not support One Man, One Vote if it means dividing Cayman Brac and Little Cayman into two distinct constituencies.

Madam Speaker, those of us who have had the good fortune of being born and indeed raised and schooled on Cayman Brac, know what Cayman Brac was pre the building of the Cayman Brac High School now known as the Layman Scott High School. We that live on the Brac also know the significance of the Tamarind Tree at Stake Bay and what that has meant for persons in the Eastern District as compared to the Western District.

Madam Speaker, we on Cayman Brac see it as a very retrograde position if we are to go back and subdivide our beautiful Island of Cayman Brac into two districts with the dividing line, as is suggested by the Electoral Boundaries Commission to be at the Aston Ruddy Drive, which would mean that the Bight, Watering Place, Creek, Northeast Bay and Spot Bay, would be referred to as Cayman Brac East. And of course Bamboo Bay, Stake Bay, the Rocks, Cotton Tree Bay, the Point, West End and Little Cayman would be referred to as Cayman Brac West. And that would be the practical effect, Madam Speaker, if this referendum question is indeed successful on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of July of this year.

I do not have the mandate to support that, Madam Speaker, and that is the sole reason that I will be not voting in the affirmative for this particular Motion and the Bill which we will hopefully have tomorrow.

Madam Speaker, I wanted, however, to utilise some of this time to talk about what is at hand here in this country today.

Madam Speaker, at the very minimum what we are seeing transposing here in our country is one of change. And I believe that change in itself is not a bad thing, Madam Speaker. However, change must be managed and, indeed, the transition should be managed properly and efficiently. I believe that any change, Madam Speaker, should result in us staying competitive throughout any transition or turbulent position.

Madam Speaker, when we took Government a mere three years ago, we found a country that from an economic perspective left more than one could possibly desire. And despite what the cynics and those who wish to oppose and criticise the Honourable Premier and our entire Cabinet and Backbench supporters . . . the economic position that we found had been greatly enhanced and increased where we have gone from the \$81 million deficit to where we are looking forward to a surplus. And that is still against the background that the whole world economically is still reeling and trying to rebound and rebalance and reconcile from the worldwide economic turndown. So it has not been any easy feat or accomplishment that this Government has done in trying to clean up.

Yes, Madam Speaker, it has taken three years and there is still more time to go to try to get the whole economy back in a healthy state of affairs. And I believe that the Honourable Premier should be, at all material times and sundry, complimented for his efforts and for his fiscal management of this country.

Madam Speaker, we also would note that change requires energising and building morale of the people of the country. And this is not accomplished, Madam Speaker, by dividing our beloved Islands.

Change also requires a checking of our attitudes. And, Madam Speaker, what I sat here this morning and witnessed . . . I just sat in disbelief although I had had some type of notice through the media that that is what the Opposition and the Independent Member planned to do. I could not believe that in this mature democracy that rather than men who are put here, and who are given the confidence and the trust by our populace and our constituents, to come and debate. This is styled after the Westminster style Parliamentary procedure. By that nature in itself it has the inherent characteristics that are going to be adversarial.

It is not a Sunday school, Madam Speaker. But at the same time we must have that level of intellectual capacity that we can respect different views from one another and whether or not they support the

referendum or whether it necessitated amendments . . . that is their duty to stand on this Floor of the House and debate like real men and women and not take it outside.

As you ably and articulately and eloquently conveyed at the commencement of this sitting today, the House is quorate. It is constitutionally correct in that we have more than eight Members here. And, Madam Speaker, I believe that the Good Lord raises-up leaders in his own time and we are called for such a time as this. And, if we are going to get hold of the adolescent crime that we have in this country, what occurred here this morning is a far cry from the example that I believe our people expect our leaders to do.

It is one thing, Madam Speaker, through this referendum to interject or introduce the concept of the Honourable Premier stepping down. But there are many, many reasons that you look at in the characteristics. How can they be asking for such a thing when they themselves are not acting complementary? This is a Motion for a referendum, the people initiated referendum that they asked for . . . and in closer scrutiny we will see that the Opposition had a very up-close positioning and they too concurred and want it. So, it leaves us in bewilderment to wonder why they would pull a political stunt such as walking out rather than debating it today.

Attitude, Madam Speaker; change can come about but attitudes go a long way.

Madam Speaker, I believe that all 15 of us Parliamentarians should listen to our constituents and then act from a considered position. In addition, Madam Speaker, I believe that people are empowered when we build bridges and not when we tear them down. When we cultivate an environment of trust and not invoke fear and distrust among our people we motivate our people by uniting them and not through division.

I believe that with this Motion or with the Bill tomorrow we should have a clear purpose, Madam Speaker. We cannot embrace change—not by merely having a referendum. But for change to be successful as we nation build we have to have a clear purpose. And certainly, having a clear purpose is not walking out of Parliament. It shows utter disrespect for the Chair, it shows disrespect for the Members of Parliament, it shows disrespect for the people that elected them here in the first place.

You do not have to prove, Madam Speaker, that you are smarter than anyone else or that you are more connected to more people; you just have to be focused. And, indeed, I mean really focused on what we want for this country and how we can unite together as Caymanians and residents alike to achieve this.

A house divided as you would know, Madam Speaker, is not one that we can gain strength. In fact, a house united is far better—far better, Madam

Speaker—than a house that is divided as I have witnessed here today.

It is my considered opinion, Madam Speaker, that there is a killer in too many Caymanian homes. Not a killer of people in a physical sense, but a killer of dreams, a killer of achievements and success for this country. This killer is invisible, yet its deadly work is everywhere, especially in the minds of so many of our people. That killer, Madam Speaker, I submit, is destructive thinking as we have seen displayed here today, and the vitriolic hate that now seems to have permeating through the various aspects of our social stratification here in these Cayman Islands.

Long term, Madam Speaker, I do not believe that there is a single factor more detrimental to a successful life than the habit of thinking destructively. This kind of thinking has an incredible adverse effect on virtually every aspect of life. What makes it even more potent, Madam Speaker, is that in our society today few people seemingly respect the monumental power of destructive and hateful thinking. All we have to do is look at the blogs to see that.

As we seek to take this country into the first stand-alone referendum, let the 15 of us do what we were elected to do—lead, for God's sake! And if you can't lead by staying here and debating, you certainly can't lead by walking out of these hallowed Chambers.

Madam Speaker, I believe the Opposition ought to quit focusing so much on where they will be this time next year, or who will be the next Cabinet, or who will form the next Government. Let us all try to do what is best for this country and stop fighting each other and tearing each other apart. Yes, we can have passionate debate, we can also stand up and debate and defend every point with every ounce of energy that we have, but let us stop constantly sowing seeds of hate and division, such as calling our people to arms and to be militant. That is not the characteristic of Caymanians, Madam Speaker. God forbid!

Caymanians, look around you today, I implore. Think about your families, your classmates, your teachers, your friends, and yes, even your opponents. They are all human beings with feelings who are trying to survive here in Cayman. The more we divide our people the weaker we are becoming as a country. We all better check ourselves before we wreck ourselves and, by extension, wreck this country that we say we love so much.

In summary, Madam Speaker, let us all endeavour to do the right thing as the country faces challenges known and unknown. In fact, John F. Kennedy once said, **“I believe the times demand new invention, innovation, imagination, decision.” “We must prove all over again whether this nation—or any nation so conceived—can long endure.”**

Ironically, Madam Speaker, Mikhail Gorbachev said it this way: **“It is evident, for example, that**

**force and the threat of force can no longer be, and should not be . . .” “Freedom of choice is a universal principle to which there should be no exceptions.”**

We must therefore respect other people's views, be tolerant; views that are different are not necessarily bad. And it would behove the Leader of the Opposition to take full cognisance of this concept and this sage advice.

Finally, Madam Speaker, the great Barack Obama, I think put it best. He said: **“This is our time,”** (and of course, I will substitute “Caymanians” for “Americans”) **“to put our people back to work and open doors of opportunity** [to Caymanians, children, and young people]; **to restore prosperity and promote the cause of peace; to reclaim the . . . fundamental truth, that, out of many, we are** [indeed] **one** [people]; **that while we breathe, we hope** [we have optimism]. **And where we are met with cynicism** [and criticism] **and doubts and those who tell us that we can't, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of** [our Caymanian] **people: Yes, we can.”**

Madam Speaker, yes we can have a fair and peaceful referendum process. Yes, as a people, we can understand the pros and the cons of single-member constituencies, and one man, one vote. And, yes, we the people of the Cayman Islands can vote according to our conscience on July 18 this year on the referendum question. And yes, we as parliamentarians, and the Government in particular, are committed to being bound to the outcome of the said referendum. And yes, if the result of the referendum is in the affirmative that it will determine the manner of voting and the division of constituencies for the 2013 General Election.

This referendum can divide us. This referendum can unite us. The choice is ours, Madam Speaker. And as all of the eyes of our country are today zooming in on the 15 of us duly elected Members of Parliament, it is our chance to lead the country forward, a better way forward, and not backwards. So let us lead, for God's sake.

It is not time to call the people to arms, again, I repeat, Madam Speaker, or to be militant. It is time to humble ourselves and pray, so that we can hear from heaven and that our land, indeed, can be healed.

I promised the people of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman that when they elected me, they would have a voice in this honourable House to be heard. And I believe that that is best demonstrated by what I am now doing and not like the First Elected Member for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, walking out as a party mandate. My leader, Madam Speaker, is a true leader who is leading, for God's sake; who has allowed me to exercise my good conscience. Had that not occurred today, there would have been no voice for the people of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Ellio A. Solomon:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Deputy Premier.

Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause]

Honourable Minister of Health.

**Hon. J. Mark P. Scotland, Minister of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports and Culture:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise to offer a very brief contribution to Government Motion No. 8, 2011/12, Referendum on Single Member Constituencies, One Man, One Vote.

Madam Speaker, I am cognisant that we will be tabling the Bill shortly in a subsequent meeting, so I will reserve more of my debate for the substantive Bill itself, and go into more depth on that, Madam Speaker.

Over the past year, Madam Speaker, as the Motion says, **“AND WHEREAS in recent times the Opposition and the Elected Member for North Side has used this issue to cause great consternation and division in our small community, . . .”**, we have seen that division and consternation grow in recent months, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, Government saw this as a matter of national importance. Again, reading one of the resolves: **“BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the following question be declared to be a matter of national importance . . .”** And we declared that the referendum on the subject of single member constituencies would take place on July 18 of this year. I was hoping that the referendum announcement would have brought an end to the division and consternation caused by the Opposition and the Member for North Side. But, Madam Speaker, it hasn't done that. So, it is obvious that their modus operandi is not to work together with the Government. They called us to work together and we agreed to work together to bring the referendum, but are they working together now, Madam Speaker? No. It is quite obvious, as our Members have already spoken about. They picked up their toys and walked outside.

Madam Speaker, this is the same group, the same Opposition, including the Member for North Side, calling for people to be more militant, calling people to arms. Is that what is needed in the community now, Madam Speaker? In our communities right now we need more unity. We all need to continue to work together to build the economy.

Some of the projects the Government has been trying to initiate for the past three years, the initiatives, are finally starting to get going, Madam Speaker, to start moving. And as you talk to some small businesses and others, yes, we haven't seen everyone who is unemployed get back to work yet. But

people are saying that their businesses are starting to pick up.

Madam Speaker, I contend that that is one of the main reasons that the Opposition feels the need to be more militant, because it is obviously starting to see the Government gain ground. They want to get rid of the Premier so they can stop the positive progress that's been happening recently. If, come May 2013, the economy is booming and everyone is back to work that makes their very slight chance disappear even more, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, we agreed to the referendum. They complained some more and said that it wasn't going to be binding. Well, we knew it was not going to be binding but now we have agreed and that is going to be made as an amendment as well, because we intended for it to be binding, Madam Speaker. First, we said it wasn't going to be a holiday and now we have agreed that it is going to be a holiday as well. But whatever we do, Madam Speaker, they are still going to complain and grumble and continue to create more division.

Madam Speaker, on the point about 50 per cent, if they were going to get through with the people initiated referendum that requires 50 per cent of the voters on the electorate, 50 per cent of the electorate. That's 50 per cent of the 15,000-plus votes, plus 1, would have to come out that day and vote "yes" for the referendum. So, for the world of me, I can't understand how they are saying that it is unreasonable now for the Government to say that this referendum should be 50 per cent of the persons that come out that day.

Madam Speaker, it is my personal opinion that no referendum that's called should be less than 50 per cent of the electorate altogether. We have a very small community and to put issues on the referendum that is going to go out for that vote, I believe they should all be 50 per cent plus 1 of the electorate. That's my personal view, in a very small community.

Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, why is the Opposition not focusing on the economy? Why don't they tell the country their plans if they say they are the Government in waiting? Why don't they spend some of the time out on the Legislative Assembly steps or when they have their big meetings telling the country what their plans are? Why don't they answer the questions on the talk show when people call them and ask them what their plans are for the economy and their plans to get people back to work? Because they don't have any, Madam Speaker!

So, again, they focus on things like this to create division between members of the community. They don't present their plans, because they don't have any. They don't focus on the economy. As I said, Madam Speaker, it's all about creating that division.

Madam Speaker, what it is really about is that the Opposition . . . not necessarily the Member for North Side, in this instance, because he's already

from a constituency that has one Member. And, like I said, it's not a single Member constituency because we don't have that now; he's from a constituency with only one Member at this time because it's a small constituency. But, the Opposition and their cronies and some of them that want to run with them and get elected see this as an easy way for them to get elected. Because they don't have to go out and work hard, like other Members in constituencies now, and convince a larger part of the electorate, which is obviously a tougher job to do, to get elected. They believe that by doing that they can get more people elected and form the government.

Madam Speaker, it is not as simple as that.

So, Madam Speaker, as I said, I will address more of these specifics and talk about what we see as the disadvantages of the one man, one vote . . . and, Madam Speaker, it is our intention as a party to educate the public, educate the electorate. We encourage them to learn more about the pros and cons so that when you make that decision on July 18 not to vote for it, you know what you are doing, you know the reasons why you are not voting for it and why it is not a good system for us here in the Cayman Islands at present.

Madam Speaker, most of all, we want you to understand that the Opposition Members and the Independent Member for North Side (or not so independent Member) are not supporting one man, one vote because of you, the electorate; they are supporting it for themselves. As I said they see that as the easy way for them to make a grab for power, easier for them and their cronies and supporters to get elected.

Madam Speaker, very briefly I also want to say that regarding the Deputy Premier's position, and she made it quite clear just now, and our colleague for George Town, the Fourth Elected Member for George Town spoke about it as well, is that we fully support this position. This is a position that was taken by the electorate in Cayman Brac. It is mentioned specifically in the [Electoral Boundaries Commission Report of 2010](#) where in section 23, and I quote, ". . . **it was clear that there was a preference in favour of the existing position and not change to a one person one vote system.**"

In honouring that system and supporting the position that the Deputy Premier has taken, our party, fully supports her position in that regard.

Madam Speaker, as I said, all of us will debate in more detail on the Bill itself. But just to say that we have done as the people have asked. We have scheduled the referendum, which will be July 18. Now we ask for the people to come out and vote on that day. We intend to make our position known as to why we don't support it, and ask people to vote in support of us in that regard.

We look forward to the debate on the Bill itself when that comes, Madam Speaker. So, with those very brief comments I will take my seat now and thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Honourable Minister of Health.

Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause] Does any other Member wish to speak?  
[pause]

If not, I call on the mover of the Motion to conclude the debate.

Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeever Bush:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank Members for their support, those who have spoken and others who have not, but who are in agreement with what we have said here today.

Madam Speaker, I am not going to take my energy to deal with the shenanigans being played by the combined Opposition. Members in here have addressed it. Some Members have referred to the economy. Madam Speaker, there is much to be done and I need my energy to fight the bureaucracy.

Madam Speaker, they are all right, that the economy is improving very, very slowly—little bit. But I am cognisant of the many people that are hurting, the many people who can't pay their bills, and the many people who do not have jobs, who can't pay their mortgages. And nobody can say, Madam Speaker, that we haven't tried to do something.

I keep saying over and over again that there is \$4 billion of business trying to get done. But we have to fight a bureaucracy to get it because now we have built up the type of bureaucracy that is comparable to 60 million people and not 50,000. I need to get 1,500 houses and the Government has put it forward—1,500 houses on a new programme to cut their electric bill by 70 per cent. Those are people who are paying \$300, \$400 per month, to cut that by 70 per cent. And we can do that.

I am going to take my energy and do that, and the Government is walking hand in hand in lock-step on these kinds of programmes. I am going to take my energy to get the cruise dock, to be able to put 1,000 people to work. And I am going to take my energy to get the sewerage system, which will employ another 1,000 people. This is what we have to take our energy and do.

Madam Speaker, this is what is on the table, but that is what the bureaucracy is fighting. I am going to take my energy and do the work on the needed expansion of the airport. Just last week a plane sat on the runway, people complaining behind me, foreign people who came here for a vacation, because it was pouring outside and we had to sit down and wait for minutes so as not to get wet. People don't like that,

when they leave home to come somewhere on a vacation. They want to have a vacation. Who likes to sit down on a plane unnecessarily?

So, Madam Speaker, we need to stay focused. And the officials need to help. We can't get this done by ourselves, and no elected Government is going to get it done by themselves. And anyone not helping is then doing the opposite—they are trying to stop us!

Madam Speaker, I can tell this House when ministers could be chairmen of their boards, we could do something. We could move things. I am not. I have to sit down and wait on chairmen who are probably being directed by directors who don't want things to happen. So we can't move as fast. That is exactly what is happening with us. We can get this economy going better than it is, and it needs to be done. And the next seven or eight months, whatever it is, that is what my focus is going to be.

If the people chose to throw us out, fine. That is their prerogative. I have lost the government before. But by God's help we are going to put the country in a better position. I hope that those who are trying to take it over, if they get it they won't do what they did the last time.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is important. These are national issues that we have asked the country to accept. And I believe it is accepted. People want to settle this matter of a referendum. And I believe at the end of the day that people are going to reject one man, one vote, because, as I said, who is going to take one vote when they have control of four? Who?

So, Madam Speaker, I believe we are on the right track. The only thing that I am considering, if the Chair would accept, is for us to stay and do our work. Suspend the Standing Orders, take the other Bill and finish it. That's what we should be doing. Madam Speaker, why should Government lose half the day when we could finish that other Bill, complete it today? Why? Bureaucracy again! Rules that . . . we can amend, you know. We can suspend. And I put it to Members. That's what we should be doing. We are here. We are called to order to work. Madam Speaker, I thank you for your patience, but I put that out seriously for consideration, to suspend Standing Orders and take the Bill. It is of national importance.

**The Speaker:** Before I put the Motion to the vote, I want to quote two sections of the Constitution for clarity in the minds of the public who might be listening.

Section 74(2) on "quorum" says: "**(2) For the purposes of this section a quorum shall consist of a majority of the elected members of the Legislative Assembly in addition to the person presiding.**"

Section 75(1) on "Voting" says: "**Save as otherwise provided in this Constitution, all questions proposed for decision in the Legislative As-**

**sembly shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present and voting.”**

I will now put the question: BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the following question be declared to be a matter of national importance:

“Do you support an electoral system of Single Member Constituencies with each elector being entitled to cast only one vote?”

AND BE IT NOW FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the said question be specified in a Bill and brought by the Government to this Legislative Assembly for debate in accordance with the provisions of section 69 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009.

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

**Ayes and one audible No.**

**The Speaker:** The Ayes have it. I declare Government Motion No. 8/2011-12 to be carried by a majority vote in the House.

**Agreed: Government Motion No. 8/2011-12 passed.**

*[pause]*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**The Speaker:** I now call on the Premier for a motion for adjournment of this Meeting.

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Madam Speaker, I propose to ask for the adjournment, but I would rather speak to you for a minute in regard to what I mentioned earlier.

**The Speaker:** In that case, I will . . .

**The Premier, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Madam Speaker, I think it is the wish of Members that we move forward with the adjournment. So I wish to move the adjournment of this honourable House until the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May 2012 at 10.00 am.

I further move that all outstanding business of this Fifth Meeting be hereby transferred to the said meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012. So, for the avoidance of doubt, Madam Speaker, upon the passage of this adjournment motion, the House will conclude this Fifth Meeting of this honourable House.

**The Speaker:** The question is that this House do adjourn until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2012 at 10.00 am, and that all outstanding business of this Fifth Meeting hereby transferred to the said meeting on 23 May 2012.

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

**Ayes.**

**The Speaker:** The Ayes have it.

**At 1.13 pm the House stood adjourned until 10.00 am Wednesday, 23 May 2012.**

