



**CAYMAN ISLANDS
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
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2013/14 SESSION

28 February 2014

Sixth Sitting of the Fifth Meeting

(pages 683–700)

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

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PRESENT WERE:

SPEAKER

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

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA	<i>Premier</i> , Minister of Home and Community Affairs
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 Marco S Archer, MLA	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon G Wayne Panton, MLA	Financial Services, Commerce and Environment
Hon Tara A Rivers, 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	Attorney General, ex officio Member responsible for Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS

GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Hon Anthony S Eden, OBE, JP, MLA	Deputy Speaker, 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	Third Elected Member for West Bay
Capt A Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA	Fourth Elected Member for West Bay

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

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

APOLOGIES

Hon Osbourne V Bodden, MLA	Minister of Health, Sports, Youth and Culture
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FIFTH MEETING 2013/14 SESSION
FRIDAY
28 FEBRUARY 2014
10:34 AM
Sixth Sitting**

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

The Speaker: I will now invite the Honourable Deputy Premier grace us with prayers.

PRAYERS

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell, Deputy Premier: 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: Please be seated.
Proceedings are resumed.

READING BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

APOLOGIES

The Speaker: I have received apologies from the following Members, Honourable Osborne Bodden, Minister of Health, Youth and Culture who is off Island, apologies for late arrival of the Second Elected Member for George Town, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, First Elected Member for West Bay, and the Elected Member for North Side.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF REPORTS

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC FINANCE, ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2011

The Speaker: I recognise the Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Development.

Hon. Marco S. Archer, Minister of Finance and Economic Development: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House the Ministry of Finance, Tourism and Development Public Finance, Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30th June 2011

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister of Finance wish to speak to it?

Hon. Marco S. Archer: No, thank you Madam Speaker.

STATEMENTS BY HONOURABLE MEMBERS AND MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: There are no statements this morning.

OTHER BUSINESS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION NO. 4 2013/14 SINGLE MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES

[Continuation of debate thereon]

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause]

I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Education.

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

Unlike the previous motion which asked the Government to accept a \$5.00 minimum wage without knowing how, at all, it would affect people's ability to pay their bills, or how it would help Caymanians get to work, where I rose and gave a detailed response on behalf of the entire Government, and my colleagues were content for me to speak on behalf of the Government outlining our collective agreed position on that motion as evidenced in the vote, this Motion in front of us now has elicited considerable debate on and by a majority of the Members in this honourable House. I too rise to make a brief contribution to this debate.

Madam Speaker, although I am not one of the Members of this House who launched my political career through the involvement with the OMOV [One Man One Vote] Campaign, not having been a member of the OMOV Referendum Committee, I support equality in voting for all. Even though the pledge to implement single member constituencies is not in the Independent candidates' national priority plan, I wholeheartedly support the principle of one person one vote, and the principle of equality in voting it enshrines.

As a matter of fact, for all that has been inferred in the media by persons in this House and the public, but for a brief conversation that I have had on a local talk show (when I was on to talk about my district level initiatives), I have not had the opportunity to speak publicly on this matter before. So, Madam Speaker, let me say it for the record to reflect and for all to hear I support equality in voting and moving to a system that helps to achieve this.

Madam Speaker, the voting system we have now does not promote equality among and between the voters in this country. In fact, the voting system we have now can be described as discriminatory. There is no justifiable reason why a person in East End or North Side should only have one vote when those in George Town should have six. That is not right.

Similarly, Madam Speaker, there is no reason why a constituency of only roughly 600 persons, as in both East End and North Side, should have the ability to vote for and return the same number of representatives, one each, as would be the case in a constituency of roughly 1,200 persons in George Town, more than double the voting population in East End, if we were to adopt a single member constituency simply by dividing George Town into six single member constituencies

along polling division lines. That, too, is not right.

So, Madam Speaker, where does that leave us? We need to adopt a system that is fair to all. That is the fundamental principle of equal and universal suffrage. We cannot continue to vote under an unequal system such as we have today, with some persons having multi-member, multi-voting opportunities while others, namely those in East End and North Side do not have that same opportunity.

At the same time, Madam Speaker, by simply dividing the current multi-member districts into single member constituencies based on the current 18 polling divisions would be inequitable from a numerical perspective due to the significant differences that each of these constituencies would represent between the polling divisions.

So, Madam Speaker, again, for the first time I am speaking publicly on this matter. I support equality. I support a voting system that enshrines the principles of equality because that is what we should strive for when we talk about changing our voting system. I, along with many people in this chamber agree that we need to change what we have now. It is unequal, it is unfair, and it disenfranchises our fellow voters in the eastern districts.

Madam Speaker, we heard the Premier put forward the Government's position. We heard from fellow Independent Members of the Government, as to their positions which have been consistent since the campaign. And, Madam Speaker, my position today has always been about ensuring that we move towards a system that promotes equality among and between the voters in the Cayman Islands.

Madam Speaker, on the principle of equality I have been consistent in all of my messages in this House and in the way that I attempt to live my life. I have heard the stories of what it was like for women prior to 1959, prior to Universal Suffrage being adopted in the Cayman Islands. I represent a legacy of women who fought for the principle of equality in voting and for the right to vote. And I remain true to that principle. So, Madam Speaker, I support a system which moves us closer to achieving that goal which includes one person, one vote and single member constituencies.

Madam Speaker, we have also heard from just about every PPM Member of the Government on this Motion. Even though all of the PPM Members campaigned on introducing single member constituencies in their campaign, every one of them, with the exception of the First Elected Member for Bodden Town, expressed that they had concerns about single member constituencies, some of which I share.

So, Madam Speaker, for anyone to suggest or to interpret the change in direction that is put forward, the change as is being claimed from the PPM's stated position prior to the election, as being a result of the Independent Members of Government, as was sug-

gested by the Member for North Side in his contribution, those persons are clearly mistaken. As the minority Members in a PPM led Coalition Government, Madam Speaker, we too must listen to and appreciate and respect the wishes of the majority PPM Members of the Government. That is how coalition governments work.

And, Madam Speaker, with respect to a particular online publication (which shall remain nameless), based on its track record of deliberately skewing and slanting their coverage of anything that has to do with the Independent Members of Government, their perspective will likely continue to be misleading and misrepresenting the truth. Unfortunately, you can't learn integrity. And, for some, journalistic integrity is a dream deferred.

So, Madam Speaker, I urge the listening and reading public when you view these articles, read critically. Don't let one publication's obviously biased agenda shape your perception of reality. There are other very responsible journalists and media houses in this country from which you should seek to get your source of information. It is clear, Madam Speaker, that this particular publication has an agenda.

Whose agenda? Well, that remains to be seen.

In contrast, Madam Speaker, the only agenda that I have is to serve my country and my people to the best of my ability. The same level of effort that I have put into accomplishing my personal goals prior to taking office, is the same level of effort, work and tenacity that I am putting into working for the greater good of this beloved country.

So, Madam Speaker, unlike some concerns expressed in here earlier, the issue of re-election is not an issue for me. I did not become a Representative of the people, I did not accept the role and responsibility of Minister, when asked, and I did not ask for two of the toughest subject areas with some of the most significant challenges, that being education and employment, because I was only concerned about my prospects for re-election. My only concern is about giving my talents, my abilities, and my contribution to trying to help our beloved country and our people face and overcome the many challenges that we face today.

Madam Speaker, as legislators, our concern should be to represent the people and to continue to do what we believe and know is right for this country, whether it is politically popular or otherwise. I am not afraid to stand for what is right, even if it means standing alone at times, even if it means *teking me licks*, as Brother Mac would say. By continuing to work hard as hard as I am doing along with Councillor Connolly in the Ministry, by continuing to push staff to work equally hard, by continuing to work hard along with my colleagues in Government who I know are also working hard, Madam Speaker, PPM and Independent alike, our people and our country as a whole will be better

off as a result. This is my only concern as an elected Representative, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to be an Independent Member of this PPM led Coalition Government. And as an Independent Member of Government, I will continue to advocate and support the introduction of a voting system which strives for equality for all. Thank you.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause] Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause]

I recognise the Honourable Minister responsible for Planning.

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

I have listened to various contributions from various quarters on this Motion. And before I give any personal opinions, let me speak to a couple of areas which I found of interest with points made by various contributors.

First of all I want to address some points made by the Leader of the Opposition. He knows, as well as me, that the beat-man principle is the first order of the day for him. And then, after that, any sense to be made can come. Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition went to pains so that he could get his pound of flesh out of the Honourable Premier. I just want to try to go through his line of argument.

First of all, he got his beat up speaking about broken promises. Then when he was through with that he was quick to say that he never supported single member constituencies being sought, or one man one vote being sought, from the very beginning, which is the position that he took publicly prior to that; which is fine. Then, after chastising, he comes with a new idea—not new, but he throws another possibility into the pot—and speaks to a government of committee, which I have heard him speak about in times gone by.

Madam Speaker, right now I am not so sure which one he is really advocating. He did end up with government of committee. So, what I am not sure about is whether the Leader of the Opposition, on behalf of the Opposition, is asking the Government to take that into consideration in any move forward. I don't know.

[Inaudible interjections]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: Madam Speaker—

The Speaker: Honourable Minister, may I have your indulgence?

Honourable Leader of the Opposition, as Father of the House I am sure you are more than cognisant that when the House is in session no one can cross the bar down into the inner Chamber. So I

would be grateful for your continued leadership with adherence to—

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: Madam Speaker, can I reply to that?

The Speaker: Providing you are not challenging the Chair.

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No, Ma'am. I will challenge you if I have to, I want to make you know that, but I am not doing so here. But I do want to find out what you are talking about because what you don't do is walk between the speaker speaking and the Speaker. That's what I knew was right parliamentary process. Not that you couldn't walk down to your side.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No. Members are the only ones, Madam Speaker, who can walk in the well of the House. Nobody else can do it, but Members can. Anyway, that was my understanding for about 35 years. Maybe it has changed, you know. I mean, I see all kinds of things changing, Madam Speaker. I see the Premier now can reply to the budget debate after somebody else moved the Bill, so anything can change!

The Speaker: For the avoidance of doubt by those who don't seem to know, Members are not allowed to cross the bar unless you are going to be changing your position politically while the House is in session or to walk in the well. That is my understanding and that is what I am going to adhere to.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning, would you please continue your debate?

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

As I was saying, and in listening to the Leader of the Opposition and what he spoke to on this Motion, the last position that I heard him speak to was a government of committee, and he did say that that was what we should be having as a way of government.

Now, Madam Speaker, in regard to all of that, I was saying that I am not 100 per cent sure exactly what the objective was for that and I am not clear as I alluded to earlier on exactly what the aspirations are.

Madam Speaker, there is no secret that the vast majority of us, if not all of us who are elected here, support what is being termed now as equal franchise, meaning that every person who is an elector or a voter is with the same exact right of voting. Therefore, that is in line with what was termed as one man

one vote, or one person one vote, because there are, as the Minister of Education spoke to in her contribution, varying degrees of inequality in the way we vote today, as has been the case for quite some time and as it continues (that is, the inequality) to increase as membership has increased.

When it moved from 12 to 15 the spread was where the population increase had been the most. And when it moved from 15 to 18, the same thing occurred. So, Madam Speaker, it is obvious that what obtains presently cannot continue because it will only continue to get worse. And I think everyone understands and appreciates that.

Madam Speaker, when the last Electoral Boundaries Commission made their three recommendations, one of the options was moving to the single member constituency methodology. Madam Speaker, I believe that when the Member for North Side was speaking he alluded to his belief that the last report of the Boundaries Commission could be used and simply go straight into creating the boundaries and the process will be fairly simple from there on in for the next election. That's what I understood him to say.

[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts: For 18 single member constituencies.

But, Madam Speaker, the facts are that since that was done . . . I want to believe that that was some four years ago when it was done. I think that if we were to look at that today, because of the number of registered voters at that time and the number of registered voters we have today, we would not be in a position to be able to simply use that because there have been several . . . I don't want to exaggerate, but I will venture to say there have been several thousand bodies added to the voters' list, and there also would have been several hundred changes of address.

So, in order to have empirical facts and hard evidence, the Boundaries Commission would once again have to get the voters' list up to date and look at what was proposed as the boundaries and go through the numbers within each specific catchment area and then I am of the firm opinion, as that is what it has to be at this time, that when that evidence is looked upon, that the boundaries would have to be reconstructed again in order to try to create as much equity as possible in the number of voters.

I don't think that anyone in reality questions what North Side and East End have been living with as they have been over the years during the electoral process, in that each of them, albeit that they haven't grown in large numbers, remain their own single member constituencies. I don't think there is any argument about that. But, Madam Speaker, from there on in, you would be looking, if we take everything east of Bodden Town and let us say, leave that as it is and if we say nothing more, that leaves us with having to

carve out some 14 constituencies from the boundary that exists, the eastern boundary of Bodden Town now right down to West Bay.

Madam Speaker, I am pretty certain that what was done four years ago would not work today because the numbers would show too great a disparity and certain areas would have too many more than certain areas in order to try to strike an equal balance. So that work will have to be re-done.

As I mentioned earlier, Madam Speaker, I think all told, there would probably be close to 4,000 more voters on the list since that report from the Boundary Commissioners of 2010 was done. So we don't know by any means whether the distribution of those additional voters is equal. And I am sure it is not. So we don't know that. And that is only to say that no matter what we do or which way we go, I believe that a new Electoral Boundaries Commission is going to have to be appointed.

Madam Speaker, this, albeit, as I mentioned earlier, the principle of each person having an equal right in the voting process is one that I believe most, if not all of us, subscribe to is the case. It still is not, in my view, a situation that you can just grab onto and run and be sure that what you are doing is the correct thing. I want to say publicly today that in very recent times without me actually soliciting the discussion or promoting the discussion (is perhaps a better word) there have been several people from different quarters who have made it a point of duty to bring to my attention their concerns about simply moving straight into 18 single member constituencies with what has been proposed in the past.

These are not people who are on a political side or who support this group or that group. In fact, Madam Speaker, five of those individuals who spoke to me were quick to tell me that they voted in the referendum for one man, one vote. But they have their concerns. So, this discussion (if I may call it that) is not one that does not continue to evolve. I am not suggesting that those eight or nine people who have spoken to me directly in recent times about it represent the majority of the voters. I am only saying it is a fact that there are some concerns out there.

So, when the Government deliberated on the Private Member's Motion brought by the Member for East End, seconded by the Member for North Side, the Government didn't have that discussion with pre-conceived ideas. Nor did it have the discussion with the notion in mind—*Listen, they are from the opposite side of the fence, so we can't let them showcase this motion so we can't agree to it.* I want to tell them and the public that that was not the case because I participated in those discussions. That certainly was not the case.

I am not going to lose my train of thought, but I have to interject, Madam Speaker, to say that when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition took the time out and went through the pain to have his little song

about the Premier is weak, weak, weak, while insinuating that the Premier is the ringleader of what he gave as the Government's position because he is looking out for himself politically . . . Madam Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth.

If you look at any permutation that you wish to choose, Madam Speaker, there is not one of them . . . the system we work under today, moving to the position that the Motion calls for, what the Government has proposed, what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke to that he seems to be in favour of as a system, none of those in my personal view gives anyone any specific advantage.

Let's get down to the raw facts. This coattail business that he speaks to, whether that exists all the time, whether it exists some of the time, whether it exists as much as people say it does, or whether voters are becoming more independent in their thought process and that is waning a bit, or whether any one of those obtains now or all of the above, Madam Speaker, there is no real advantage to any change to the system in my view.

When we come down to the party system, which we are operating under, whether there are multi-member constituencies or single member constituencies, the political influence that comes to bear is still going to be the same; whether it is all together or singly. Any influence that is political is going to be the same. So, in trying to use the Honourable Premier as the example to show why that would suit the Government, there is, in my view, no point to that of merit whatsoever.

Madam Speaker, I have not been involved in politics quite as long as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. But I have had my fair share of involvement over the years. Before I even thought that the day might come when I would have the privilege to represent the people of George Town, and for that matter the people of the Cayman Islands, I was a very strong supporter of one individual called William Norman Bodden. I was proud to have supported him because if ever there was a man of integrity, he is one.

I learned a lot from how he operated and what he did during his time. He was one of those who sought to be elected on three different occasions for three terms. He was elected as the First Elected Member for the district for those three terms. And then he decided he had done his tour of duty and he retired. But I only bring that point to bear to say that in all of my dealings with the politics of the country, I know that it is a continuing evolution of the people's expectations, what they want today, what they think tomorrow is the order of the day, and what they think the day afterwards is the order of the day. And, Madam Speaker, much of that can largely be driven by those who are directly involved in the process, that is, the politicians, elected and wannabe's. It can also be driven by the has-beens. And never to be forgotten, what is instilled in the minds of the voting public will

always (even more so today) be influenced by the media.

So, in many instances we have to pray to God that all of those individuals who we speak to, or whichever category [those] individuals fit into, are honest with themselves in what public utterances they make because it is going to influence the public. And, Madam Speaker, on top of the desire that everybody speaks honestly, we also know that there are going to be differences of opinion about specific topics simply because people have different interests. The responsibility of each and every individual who is elected to represent the people of this three-island nation, the Cayman Islands, as it is everywhere else in the world, is to participate in the democratic process in such a manner that at all times your desire is to help to make the decision that betters the most of your population. That is, those who vote, and even those who cannot vote, whether because of nationality or because of age. They are all residents and that is the way we have to look at it.

So, when we get that picture, Madam Speaker, it is not difficult to understand that there will be varying views on matters such as what the Motion is seeking today. What the Government has proposed by way of the Premier's deliberation . . . some people have termed it a hybrid, others not so complimentary a name. But it does not shift from the principle of each individual having equal rights and opportunity in the voting process. So, I don't think we can argue that point.

The only thing it does is seek to have [is] individual constituencies which allow for fair and equal numbers of voters in each of those constituencies outside of those that we know we can't change and reasonably do so. Hence, Madam Speaker, when we speak to no exception, no this and no that, there are those who are already exceptions. So we need to know, we need to decide what we consider to be an exception and what we consider not to be an exception.

Madam Speaker, just to continue the line of argument: In doing so there are those—and these are citizens I am talking about, not just elected Members of any party—citizens, who have great concerns that if you go to what the Motion is proposing, you accomplish the equality in the voting rights of individuals. But they continue to express the fear that because of everyone having an individual constituency which they have to pay attention to, that there may be a distraction from looking at the national good as it has to do, as the Cabinet will have to do, as the Premier will have to do, and all of those who are involved at that level. So, there are those who fear that much of that can be lost and, as a result, the operations of a Government—and this has nothing to do with individuals, we are talking of a system—could be impaired because of those individual circumstances. Hence, the proposition of dealing with a hybrid.

What that will do, as I understand the proposal, Madam Speaker, is still not change anyone's individual right by way of voting, but you would have whatever number it comprises, whether it is three or four, you would have certain seats, which in previous times have been called at-large seats, which everybody who is a voter would vote for who they want in those three or four seats. So, in addition to who they vote for in their constituency, they would also be able to have the equal opportunity to vote for who would be vying for those four seats.

Madam Speaker, the argument put forward now is that in doing so you are disenfranchising the smaller districts. I say, to the contrary. And here is why.

Let us look at what obtains right now. The single member constituencies can only vote for one person. Cayman Brac and Little Cayman can only vote for two. Bodden Town and West Bay can vote for four, and George Town can vote for six. If you split it all up you are still . . . because the point is they are saying that it is only the larger districts that will get these three or four people elected, because most of the votes are concentrated in that. I am not saying no to that, because numbers are numbers. But right now those smaller districts do not have any opportunity to influence that at all, because right now those same seats are within those larger districts. And it is only the people in those larger districts who vote for those people. So, there is absolutely no participation or no influence within the smaller districts outside of the person who will represent them. So, the argument that it disenfranchises the smaller districts cannot be a valid one because of what presently obtains.

Again, I say as of now there is absolutely no opportunity for them because all of those representatives are voted for within the larger districts. So, the point . . . I think it was the Member for North Side in his debate making the point that, for instance George Town elects six people now and if we go to this George Town will elect nine. George Town alone could not do that. While George Town has the largest number of votes, there are over 4,000 voters in both West Bay and Bodden Town as we speak, as obtains now. And when we look at what the new boundaries could well look like, Madam Speaker, while we will still know if that is what the end of the day brings, while we will still know West Bay, George Town, Bodden Town, North Side, East End, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, those boundaries would totally change the configuration of the voters that now vote in the three largest districts. By their own very existence that will happen.

So, Madam Speaker, while this may show a slight variation to straight-across-the-board single member constituencies, it does not betray the main argument which is equal rights for each voter. Let no one fool anyone. One man one vote comes from that principle. And that principle is that everyone who

votes in a country should have the same franchise of voting. That's where that stems from.

For those who see this as some evil concoction, Madam Speaker, there is absolutely no intention. It is only at this point in time, Madam Speaker, an attempt to try to stay with the principle which I just spoke to, which is allowing every individual equal franchise in their voting rights in this country, to stay with that principle and hearing all of the other concerns trying to get to the position where, while we are not going to satisfy everybody fully, we still rely on that principle, the objective will allow for that principle to kick in and, at the same time, allow for a good governance model which can create a government at the end of the day and an effective one being able to function.

Madam Speaker, if I was to take off my "collective responsibility" hat and just say, *Listen, this is me*, I can't swear to anyone that this is the best possible answer that has been proposed. But what I can truthfully say is that given all that obtains and given all the concerns, this is the best that we can come up with and stay with the principle up to present.

Now, I know, Madam Speaker, that many people are passionate about this. I know that, immediately, because of how it is portrayed, there are some who think that this is a right about-turn from what many Members (who are now Members of the Government) campaigned on. But on closer examination that is not so. Those who choose to stay with that argument will always do so because there is always an objective on their part. It is either to unseat the Government because they want to be part of another Government, or because they dislike individuals, or whatever reasons and rationales are put forward.

If people are objective in looking at it . . . I am not asking them to agree with me or to agree with anyone because of who I am. But what I would ask people to do is to become informed and look objectively to see if, really, there is this great evil that is being proposed.

Madam Speaker, I don't wish for a minute to make light of this thing. But I want to say today that the Government of which I am a part has found itself with many, many tremendous challenges. And that is no excuse because every Government prior to this one, and those to come, will be able to truthfully say the same thing. But it is no different with this one. That is really what my point is.

Madam Speaker, as a sidebar, I am going to have to tell you this too. This is the hardest I have ever worked in my political life. And my colleagues, because they must see the last little bit of strength out of me, they are milking it to the bone. But, you know what, Madam Speaker? I am satisfied, happy and grateful for the opportunity to be able to serve my country and to be a part of this Government.

So, Madam Speaker, even when the challenges will continue, and even when not everyone will

agree with the decisions that are taken, my comfort is that I am satisfied that those decisions are taken with the best of intentions with the most informed position that is possible. And then we will have to move on and keep going and the process itself will allow for what is to happen.

Madam Speaker, today as we speak, I don't think that it is unfair comment to say that [any] one of us is 100 per cent sure exactly what the end result of this process is going to be, as of right now today. While the Government has put forward a position that is a considered position, when all of the information is sought and gathered we will see how best to move it forward. But I want to say this: Any decision-making process that I am part of, as has been the case thus far, will be one where equality of voting rights of individuals in this country will exist.

So, Madam Speaker, while there is not perfection claimed in anything, I would just hope that we are able to bring resolution so that we can avoid a long distraction which we can ill afford at this point in time because of all of the challenges that the country faces. I hope we can avoid that, so that we can get the best for all concerned and be able to move the country forward.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak? [pause]

I recognise the Third Elected Member for West Bay.

Mr. Bernie A. Bush, Third Elected Member for West Bay: Madam Speaker, my personal position with regard to the one man one vote is well documented. I was on the front page of the newspaper at the last Agriculture Show with the P[ersonal] A[ssistant] of the Deputy Premier signing for it. Two things must be said off of the top of the bat: The Leader of the Opposition has been consistent in his opposition of this and he has been consistent in telling me to vote my conscience. For that I am appreciative.

Madam Speaker, as a first-time Member of this most honourable House, the position [taken] by the First Elected Member for Bodden Town serves as an inspiration to me. I do hope that as I go along in this honourable House, if the good Lord sees fit, that I am able to emulate him in keeping promises to [my] people. He first showed it on the Immigration Bill and he shows it once again.

Madam Speaker, in the time that I have spent here, I have sat and listened more than I have spoken. I have watched, unlike some others who tend to walk out when certain people are speaking, or find something else to do, I tend to listen. Even if I have my position on an issue, I want to hear what is being said that could make me better and make my decision better, Madam Speaker.

But, Madam Speaker, I have lived here—nowhere else. I know what went on in the past. I know it really well. I heard one Member say that one of the reasons they came into the arena was because the country was going to hell in a hand-basket real fast. I am not disagreeing too much. But one thing I will say, Madam Speaker, is that I would ask the Members in here to be fair. The blame does not lie all on one side.

I recall that in 2009 unemployment was high. The biggest Loan Bill for the country came up at that period. And at that time people started to lose their homes. Crime was high and young people were disillusioned. I know this. Unlike a lot of people, I didn't just jump into the election then. A year before, or two years before, I worked with them. So I know what existed then, and I still do. Ladies and gentlemen, Madam Speaker, I would say let us be fair when we stand here in this honourable House.

I want to commend the Members for North Side and East End for being consistent in their position on this issue and not wavering. It serves to highlight their passion and fortitude with regard to representing the people of their districts. And for that I commend them and say I, too, support the [Motion].

The Speaker: Does any other Member wish to speak?

I recognise the Fourth Elected Member for West Bay.

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

My position on one man one vote is well known. I am being guided by the wishes of the people of my district, and I also share their views on the issue of one man one vote. I too would like to commend the First Elected Member of Bodden Town for his unwavering position. He has always been that way because he feels that that is the wish of the people.

The Independent Members for North Side and East End have always taken the position they are holding today. So, Madam Speaker, I, too, would like to make it known publicly that my position is that I do not support that position. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of West Bay for affording me the opportunity to serve them because they felt that I would do what was best for them.

Madam Speaker, the position that I have had from day one is no secret. So I am not going to change my position at this time. I would like to make my position very clear that I do not support it.

Thank you.

The Speaker: I am going to call on the Member for the district of East End, if he would like to exercise his right of reply.

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

And (should I add?), I have served in these hallowed halls with you for the last 13 years. And you know that I always have lots to say. And you know that I shall always revere the rules of engagement. I come; you come back, and I have the right to respond. And that, I shall today!

The Speaker: I just didn't want to assume, as A-S-S-U-M-E takes on a different connotation when you do so.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: I love you too, Madam Speaker.

However, I sat here for three days, almost three days, and took my stings. Madam Speaker, without any disrespect to you, the stings shall return. And I know you are a part of the Government. Right up front, Madam Speaker, the stings are going to come. It's not directed at you as an individual.

Madam Speaker, when I introduced this Motion I made it very clear that this was not an exercise to try and embarrass the Government. It was my commitment to the people that I serve, who are, in particular, the people of East End, and, in general, the people of the country that I love. Now, after every Member, 16 other Members of this Parliament, have responded, and I listened to the Government in its primary response by the Premier, I now understand why I brought it. I now understand why I brought this Motion.

And since we are invoking God in here, let me say it must have been the intervention of God to make me bring this. Because, Madam Speaker, it is obvious . . . let me first say, I am not going to use the word that my good friend and colleague from North Side used, the word "regressive" because I may get stomped on that one. And some over on that side may say that's too big a word for my vocabulary, but I know the one that I understand, that's easy for me and the people of this country to understand, is no trust. You cannot trust this Government. You cannot trust this Government to fulfill the promises they made to the people that I serve. They are untrustworthy!

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Don't worry, Minister. You're going to get your share.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, when I came here and put this Motion forward . . . let me go back. One of the Members of this House said to me one day that they didn't know I was such a well-read person because I have so many books. Sometimes I think I'm worse than the Premier's uncle (rest his soul).

When I came and put this here, and then heard the Premier get up here with his proposals on

single member constituencies I could only think of Winston Churchill and one of the quotes from him that would suit the Premier. But, since then, it appears that there are many on that side that it suits. He was speaking of Stafford Cripps who was the Labour Statesman and Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1947 to 1950. He said, **“His chest is a cage in which two squirrels are at war—his conscience and his career.”**

[Laughter]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Oh, they didn't hear.

Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Leader of the Opposition: No.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: **“His chest is a cage in which two squirrels are at war—his conscience and his career.”**

Then, the most recent Member from that side spoke, who I consider my dear long, long, long friend who I so trusted for so long before I became a politician. And after I heard him speak, I got one for him too from Churchill, speaking of the same Stafford Cripps. He said, **“He delivers his speech with an expression of injured guilt.”**

[Laughter]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: That's my good friend, Kurt.

Madam Speaker, there are others in here that I have like expressions for. You will see who has it today and who doesn't.

Madam Speaker, I am going to demonstrate why I just said to the people that I love that this Government can't be trusted to carry out the promises that they have made under the leadership of the current Premier. And let me begin with it.

Madam Speaker, I was elected to this honourable House in 2000. I have since been part of three general elections. In every one of those elections there has been one pivotal thing, one subject that will either make you win the election or you lose it. But you must make promises to your people on that subject. In 2005, Madam Speaker, that subject was “status grants.”

Under the able leadership of the Honourable Kurt Tibbetts we campaigned—and campaigned hard—against the UDP Government. Billboards, banners, the TV, this, that, non-stop we went at them about the status grants. Kurt Tibbetts stood on a platform and led us and told the people of this country, *If you elect us, I will immediately change the Immigration Law that Cabinet will never do it again.* Madam Speaker, the usual man to his word on Wednesday, the 20th day of July 2005. Keep in mind that election was 8 May 2005.

The Honourable Temporary First Official Member, Mr. Donovan W. F. Ebanks . . . the Bill was read the first time and moved [for the Second Reading] and the Speaker asked if Mr. Ebanks wanted to speak. And he said, *Of course, Madam Speaker.* And he said:

“As the Memorandum of Objects and Reasons sets out, there are three basic objects to the Bill. The first is to provide a restraint” (a RESTRAINT!) “on Cabinet from granting the right to be Caymanian except where the grant is recommended by the Immigration Board and subsequently validated by the Legislative Assembly, and the number of such grants would be limited to four in any calendar year.”

Remember now, Madam Speaker, we were led by Kurt Tibbetts.

Madam Speaker, the now Premier, who was Minister of Education, in his contribution [as reported] in the [Hansard](#) at page . . . and I am going to try to cut it down short. On page 103, he said, among other things (and I supported what he said), **“Madam Speaker, when one looks at the Manifesto of the People's Progressive Movement under the section which deals with immigration (this Manifesto that my good friends in the Opposition described derisively as the little red book during the Election Campaign) on page 23, one of the campaign promises we made was to ‘amend the Immigration Law to prevent Cabinet from again making a wholesale grant of status to hundreds or thousands of persons.’ So, on this first opportunity that we have had, we came to this Honourable House and proposed an amendment to the Immigration Law which will do just that.** [2005/06 *Official Hansard Report*, 20 July 2005]

Madam Speaker, the next election was scheduled for 2009. During the years between that speech and the general election the subject was the Constitution. We went to the polls and we campaigned therefor as the sitting Government. The UDP campaigned against it. The Leader of the Opposition at the time reveled in saying that he was not going to vote for it (the current Leader of the Opposition).

We gave the people of this country the constitutional right to have a referendum and their voices, their wishes would be adhered to. In the referendum the people went out and voted in an overwhelming majority for the Constitution to go in place. Madam Speaker, we lost the election. We are still pondering how we did that. We only lost one Minister and got an approval on a Constitution. We don't know how we did it. I am still wondering how. McKeever Bush was, I guess, better than us.

Madam Speaker, the point of the matter is that the people spoke. The Leader of Government Business became the now Leader of the Opposition. By November 8, 2009, whether you wanted it or not, the Constitution was enacted. He stood on the steps

of this honourable House and said, "Today I am the first Premier of my country under a new advanced Constitution, one that I didn't vote for." [UNVERIFIED QUOTE] But he stood and respected the wishes of the people. That is the key!

Along came another election in 2013 (just last year). The subject was single member constituencies. We did everything to support it. And we are going to come to that a little later. Just relax, *unna* got a long time to be here today.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, I have to go through all of this so that the people that I love and respect understand in retrospect why I brought this.

The Boundary Commissioners of 2010 recommended 18 single member constituencies. Mr. Miller and I . . . and we are going to talk about how I came to be in the position I was in then too—

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Oh yes.

Madam Speaker, I will fight for the people anywhere they come from. I fight for the people that are less fortunate, in particular—all, but in particular those who are less fortunate.

Madam Speaker, not one Member of this Parliament or any candidate that was unsuccessful can tell me that they did not understand 18 single member constituencies. Not one *unna*. Some of you started your careers on it. Many of you went out and got pictures of the Minister of Finance posing for the camera while he was speaking . . . no, Financial Services . . . posing for a picture while he was signing the petition.

Madam Speaker, we went through the campaign. The Government of the day usurped the wishes of the people and they won! They used the resources of the people to fight against them. We used volunteerism, donations, like the Minister of Finance (I got it right now) said during his contribution, and walked from house to house to house. The Constitution got 65 per cent approval rating.

Madam Speaker, we are here today with this Government under the leadership of the current Premier which has turned its back on the people of this country and their wishes. I am going to tell them what I told the honourable Roy Bodden when he was Minister of Education. If I have to lose my seat in East End, I am going to make sure they lose.

Madam Speaker, it is wrong! It is downright wrong. And today I draw the line in the sand. If anyone steps over it, it is for him. Do not turn your back on the very people who actually vote for you. It is wrong. You must be punished! All you must be punished! You are not trustworthy, with the exception or two.

Unna want politics? Politics it is. No [inaudible] on the front of this. I have been very nice for nine months now. *Unna* need to stop this. *Unna* need to be like Kurt Tibbetts (no disrespect to you, Madam Speaker).

The Speaker: Minister of—

Mr. V. Arden McLean: The Honourable Minister of Works.

That man over there not calling you. The First Elected from Bodden Town, who I have the utmost respect for, understands that your life must be built on your word. Your word is your bond. Die! You are going to die anyhow, die by your word.

Madam Speaker, I prefer to deal with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition who says, *I don't support it and I ain't doing it now*. I prefer to deal with that than to deal with those who would have you believe they are going to do something for you, and make you a promise and turn their back on you. You don't know where you stand with them. At least I know where I stand with the Leader of the Opposition. He'll look me straight in the face, toe to toe.

Madam Speaker, this is not right. You do not use the circumstances that are presented to you to get what you want and then turn your back on what you promised. I too go up in East End, Madam Speaker. Your good self, the Leader of the Opposition, the majority of them know my Dad. He didn't leave us any riches, nor did he leave us any wealth. But he left us a legacy of honoring a word. Stand by it and be buried with it. Some of *unna* need to learn that, especially up in here.

And if *unna* thinks you can get up in here and have your sound-bites, and they sound good and put some licks on my back, and you're not going to get them back, *unna* missed the boat, boy. The only thing I have to lose is a whole country. You don't think that's enough? Yes, Madam Speaker, that's plenty. That's what I am here defending.

And I understand when the Premier got up and talked about when we are promoting these things we need to consider our own circumstances. True, meaning next election. Hey, let's stop thinking about the next election and do what is RIGHT!

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: I heard my good friend the Minister of Works use a very good word here this morning, Madam Speaker, just awhile ago. And if I could borrow a word from my good friend the Minister for Works that he used this morning, he said, *their proposal does not betray the equality vote that we all spoke about*, i.e., single member constituencies.

I want to use the word "betray." My good friend, you have betrayed the people. You are betraying the very people that have put you here for 24

years. Almost—don't do it!—following blindly behind a Premier that you should be in charge of.

[Inaudible interjections and laughter]

The Speaker: Is this an appropriate time for the luncheon break?

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Any time you say because I have plenty to say.

The Speaker: We will suspend for lunch and reconvene at 2:00.

Proceedings suspended at 12:15 pm

Proceedings resumed at 2:15 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Before we took the luncheon break the Member for East End was replying. You have one hour and a half remaining. Please continue.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION NO. 4 2013/14 SINGLE MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES

[Continuation of reply thereon]

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

When we took the luncheon break I was on the issue of trust and betrayal by the Government of the trust that has been reposed in them by the people of this country.

Madam Speaker, I think I have sufficiently said why I believe that is the case. I think I have proven my position on that. I had the opportunity to get the unedited Hansard for 26 February 2014 wherein the Premier in his contribution to this Motion said, in part (and Madam Speaker, I quote), **“The position of the People's Progressive Movement from the very start has been that we supported single member constituencies albeit with some modifications. In the past those modifications have principally been to deal with the unique situation in respect of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.**

“Madam Speaker, in our Manifesto, the Progressives have committed to the introduction of single member constituencies in time for the next general elections. The Member for East End went through that. I don't think I need to go through that again. As I have said before, the Progressives are a part, the majority, albeit, of a Government that is made up of a number of independents and your good self. So whatever we say, whatever we do in all our deliberations we have to take into account the views of those that form part of the Government. If I were to be so foolhardy as

to not do so, I would be sitting where the Member for East End and the Member for North Side are, very, very quickly.

“I am the Premier because I have the support of the majority of Members in this House. The day that I lose that support is the day I am no longer Premier. I am keenly conscious of that. So, Madam Speaker, in all that we have done and in all that we continue to do, I will always strive as far as possible to reach consensus to reach compromise.

“I have learned very early in the game that politics is the art of the possible.”

So, one could assume that the PPM has taken this position as a result of the compromise presented to them by the C4C and your good self. Because that is what he said, that is how the Government is made up.

Now, Madam Speaker, the Premier went to lengths to explain some of the reasons why he has taken a 180 degree [change] in direction, a turn for the worst. But I am still mindful and concerned that something he said in 2005 is not being used here now. In his contribution to the Immigration (Amendment)[Bill] of 2005, to prevent Cabinet from ever giving status in this country in large amounts, he said, and I quote (page 100, Wednesday, 20 July 2005), **“James Madison, in delivering a speech to the Constitutional Convention in Richmond, Virginia, some 200 years ago, proclaimed that the essence of Government is power; and that power lodged, as it must be in human hands, will be ever liable to abuse.”**

Madam Speaker, in my first speech (can't say maiden speech, but my first speech) in this session I took the opportunity because we had new, young, bright politicians for the very first time gracing these hallowed halls. I took opportunity to give them some sage advice, like the First Elected Member for Bodden Town did for me, the Minister of Works did for me, our dearly departed friend and colleague, the Honourable Edna Moyle, did for me, the now Leader of the Opposition did for me upon entering these hallowed halls. I may not have given it to them in the same words, I may not have used the same words that they used with me, but, in essence, what they said to me . . . and your good self too, Madam Speaker.

In essence, what was told to me was, *Do not allow anyone or any entity to determine your political future. You were elected here on equal democratic footing as anyone else. Because some of us have been elevated to the position of Premier or Cabinet Minister does not give us any more right to express our opinion. You were sent here for a specific purpose and you must live by the convictions that you came in here with.*

And, again, I give that free advice. And when the time comes to vote on this, do not allow the squirrels in your chest to decide on your career. Vote the very other squirrel, the conscience that is hanging in-

side your chest. That is what the people who have sent you here are looking for. They trust you, or they would not have elected you. Do not allow Arden or anyone else in this Parliament or in this country to view you as untrustworthy.

Madam Speaker, I want to turn now to some of the proposals that the Premier has made. As I recall the Leader of the Opposition said . . . and I believe I wrote it down. The Leader of the Opposition said he was shocked by what the Premier had proposed because that was not what they campaigned on to remove him from office. They campaigned on single member constituencies, one man one vote, and the fact that he had “changed” the game.

Madam Speaker, I was a little surprised too. But we have heard it by and by. The same way the Leader of the Opposition has his sources, and the Premier has his sources, we do too. I was a little surprised that the Premier would say to me that I had expounded on what went on in their retreat and there were spies in there. That tells you all what he thinks about you—you, and all those who were part of that retreat. He does not trust someone (or someone(s)) in there, because he says you all are spies for me.

Madam Speaker, what a surprise. I can tell you, Madam Speaker, and I am going to tell the country today, the Premier has never been convinced that one man one vote, single member constituencies was the way to go. He has paid lip service to it from the very beginning.

Madam Speaker, December 2011 is forever, and will forever, be etched in my memory. That was the month (the 14th or the 15th) that the Premier of then announced that he was putting two seats in George Town and one in BT. You notice, Madam Speaker, I ain't got no notes for it? That's because I have got it here. When something profound happens to you, it stays forever.

Madam Speaker, I left this country to travel to Jamaica on the 29th day of December. Why I remember it is because it was the Jamaica election. I travelled to Jamaica with my good wife and her mother to take my mother-in-law back home after spending the holidays with us. Prior to leaving, the Premier and I had many discussions on what the Government had just announced and how we were going to tackle it. I proposed we use the mechanism that we had available to us, which was the PPM, the People's Progressive Movement, and campaign and advocate and agitate the people of this country to make the then Government reverse their decision and fight for single member constituencies, one man one vote; and, do not install the additional three seats.

Madam Speaker, during the holidays of the end of the year the Premier and I . . . no, he was a Member of the Opposition. And I had many, many text messages and conversations over those few days. Suffice it to say, the Premier did not support my position and he made me know very clearly that the three

seats had to go in. So, if I was so adamant not to have those three seats implemented—because my position was the country couldn't afford it—then . . . if I supported the three seats he would support single member constituencies. I knew the Premier had no intention of ever, ever supporting single member constituencies, one man one vote.

Madam Speaker, I came home in January and I continued that conversation. I was very blunt to the Premier. I said, *You are being very selfish*. His response was, *Call it what you may; but that's the only way we are going to remove McKeever. And that's the objective*.

Madam Speaker, that is the genesis, and the straw that broke the camel's back. I parted company with the PPM because of that last straw. I was not prepared to live with that. I wrestled with it. I said, *Well, the Member for North Side and I are the two most appropriate people in this country to spearhead it. And I am going with him*. Thus, on the 15th of February we had a press conference on it.

Madam Speaker, the Premier never supported it. Throughout that whole campaign, until right down to the end when many of the Members of the PPM started coming on board and assisting, walking the streets that the Minister of Finance talked about, the Premier half-heartedly came on board. And the night of the returns of that referendum the Premier was celebrating when the TV said it had reached the point of no possibility to win.

Madam Speaker, that bothers me. It bothered me. And I continued to wrestle with it with my family. So much so, Madam Speaker, that my young son begged me—with tears in his eyes—to leave politics. That very act on the part of that man.

Madam Speaker, I wrestled for many, many months. And when August rolled around I had a meeting with those four good gentlemen and I told them I was leaving, the Premier broke my leaving to the press that night at Harquail, and they called me at eleven o'clock. It wasn't supposed to be broken. I was supposed to do a press release, give it to PPM for them to be able to respond, and I would then give it to the press after they had their response ready.

Madam Speaker, the Premier said to the press that I was leaving to seek my political fortunes. I wrote my release that night into the wee hours of the morning. And it wasn't nice. I consulted a lawyer friend of mine and read it out to him and he chastised me. He said, *Do not send that out*. And he edited it for me. I released it the next morning to the press, went into town and at 10:09. My 20-year-old son was in the Mediterranean and I was passing Cable & Wireless—another profound time in my life, another profound event that happened to me. And a text came in on the phone. Madam Speaker, I have it saved. It was from my son.

On the 10th day of August 2012, at 10:09 am. [He texted] “Proud of you for leaving PPM??” And two

question marks after it. I trust that you young ones, all of you, now understand. I have kept quiet about this all along. I have waited for the moment to tell this country and to tell all of you the straw that broke the camel's back—single member constituency, one man one vote.

My good friend is right there. Madam Speaker, that Premier never had any intention of ever implementing single member constituency, one man one vote. Never had any intention of ever doing it. If he would bargain with what he considered one of his best friends on it (i.e., me), do you really think you stand any chance? You don't stand any chance.

I wrestled with that. And I will have to wrestle with my family saying I should never have disclosed it. But you know what? They have to wrestle with their own conscience too. I have to wrestle with mine. No one—no one—can appease my conscience but me. And I have a squirrel in my chest too. But today I let him out the cage. Madam Speaker, I am who I am. Criticise me if you must, but when you do be objective about it. I never claimed to be any paragon of virtue. Uh-uh. But I don't know what kind of paragons you all are over there. Paragons of what?

I am really so happy. Take your time; you have a little bit too. Everybody is going to get some.

Madam Speaker, the presence of injustice makes me angry. Wherever there is injustice being paraded around, dressed up like virtue and excuses, I am going to be there with a clenched fist. Wherever there is injustice being meted out on my people, understand that I am going to be there! And those who know me know that I am not easy to deal with. Even I will admit that.

You see, Madam Speaker, this is not about single member constituencies; this is about power and staying therein. Trust me. Madam Speaker, you know the show on *CCN*, Anderson Cooper? Keeping them honest, that is my job! Okay? That's why I brought this Motion.

Churchill also said, **"I am certainly not one of those who needs to be prodded. In fact, if anything, I am a prod."**

Madam Speaker, I don't need to beat up my chest. I made my contribution to my country. This will be my second term in the Opposition. But it hasn't stopped me from advocating on behalf of my people. Castro said, **"You may paint me a devil so long as you remain objective . . ."** I am human too, Madam Speaker. And I have to live with my conscience, like everyone else.

The Premier . . . let me talk about the system that he says he wants to put in place. He said that I was one of those who promoted it and supported it over the years. Madam Speaker, I keep reminding the Premier . . . but I don't need to, he knows. He knows that I keep my paper, where my good friend . . . Madam Speaker, during the [constitutional talks](#) in 2009, here is what I had to say on at-large candidate sys-

tems. We were talking about single member constituencies. Thursday, 15 January 2009. Madam Speaker, you were there. You were in here talking about Cayman Brac as well, Madam Speaker. Always consistent with what you wanted.

I said, **"I grew up in a single-member constituency. The people of East End are better off individually than anyone in Bodden Town, Cayman Brac, West Bay and George Town because —"** (And the Leader of the Opposition said), **"Why?"**

I said, **"They are better off from a political perspective because they know who their representative is. They don't have to try to find out which one they have to go to."**

"So, I have always advocated for a single-member constituency, but it—it's unfair, it's highly unfair to the people of East End and North Side not to have a choice, too. They pay the same tax; they should be treated as equal to their counterparts in West Bay or anywhere else that has multi-member constituency."

"Now, there is a position that many in this country has taken, and I'm going to throw it out again here today, which is that many wants to be a part of the Island-wide process, such as we have in Montserrat and we also employ in BVI, which is at-large votes—constituencies. Now, I don't know if that's the answer. I know in BVI—in Montserrat it's eight and everybody votes for eight, but you only have 5,000 population, too, and that's one big constituency. In BVI you have I think it's 11 or nine, or 10 single-member constituencies, and then you have three at-large candidates that is elected." (But it's the other way; it's nine and four.)

"I don't know if that's the answer, but I do know that there needs to be broad . . . some equality in the representation for the people in East End and North Side. I think it's fair. I think it's reasonable."

"The people of West Bay or George Town are no less capable of understanding that they only go to the poll and vote for one than the people of East End. The people of East End has been doing it all their life, and North Side."

"So, I think there needs to — we need to come up with some formula that gives them a feeling of belonging—"

McKeeva Bush said, **"Mr. Chairman, I don't agree with anything much that the speaker just completing said. I'm sure that we would like to be on an equal footing, West Bay would like to be on an equal footing with East End. We have four members, they have one, and they have a Cabinet minister. That's not the way it works."**

Madam Speaker, then we went on to other things. I have always known of at-large systems. But I wasn't promoting it at that time, nor had I ever promoted it for this country. I have said that that is one of the things that people were talking about. Now, Mad-

am Speaker, let's look at at-large in this country. No one ever talked about it until it was announced here two days ago. No one. It has always been single member constituencies, one man one vote, first past the post—which was a given. Nobody talked about first past the post, but that's a given

Madam Speaker, why are we changing it? Is it for our own political possibilities, probabilities? All of a sudden 18 single member constituencies is the hardest thing to put in place. Yes, Madam Speaker, I stayed up many nights doing my research.

Here we are, today, this week, with a man leading this country who has failed to live up to the promises he and his colleagues made to the people. On the 17th day of February 2012, two days after we did our press conference on it, Brent Fuller of the [Caymanian Compass](#) wrote, with a picture of the Premier standing right there and the Member for North Side there, and the caption is, "North Side MLA speaks with George Town MLA Alden McLaughlin shortly before Mr. McLaughlin was appointed Leader of the Opposition." Same day. And he begins, "Although he fully supports the 'one man, one vote' principle, Cayman Islands Opposition Leader Alden McLaughlin wonders why there is suddenly a rush to hold a referendum on the subject in November."

"The Constitution states that a simple change in the law is all that's needed to create single-member constituencies,' Mr. McLaughlin said Wednesday. The PPM [People's Progressive Movement] has promised that it will adopt 'one man, one vote' if it is put back in government. So why do we need a referendum on it six months before the general election?"

"Asked if this statement meant he thought the PPM would be back in government by May 2013, Mr. McLaughlin said: 'I don't know who's going to get in there, but it won't be (Premier) McKeeva (Bush).'"

I made a note alongside that that week and updated it recently. "Surprise! It is him. Now do what is right, what you promised." That's my note alongside it.

It goes on further to say, "Mr. McLaughlin said there would be less than six months between 30 November and the general election in May 2013. Even though the 2010 Electoral Boundary Commission drew up and identified the 16 voting districts on Grand Cayman that would be utilised if the territory went to single member districts, Mr. McLaughlin said it would still be a matter of organising and educating voters as to where they needed to go and what 'one man, one vote' means.

Well, lots of time now.

"I'm just not sure there's enough time,' Mr. McLaughlin said."

Madam Speaker, oh how we conveniently can change our minds in such short time.

On the 27th of February, [CNS](#) wrote, "The opposition leader has said that he fully supports the petition that is currently being circulated for a people-initiated referendum posing a reform of the country's voting system. Alden McLaughlin added that not only does he back the petition's goal to have a referendum on one man, one vote but he was one of the first people to sign. However, the PPM party leader said he had reservations because, having already experienced a referendum while in government, he did not think there was enough time to organise the national ballot properly. Ultimately, the constitution still leaves the date of the vote in the hands of Cabinet so he believed the efforts were likely to be for naught."

"McLaughlin told CNS on Monday that comments he had made, which had been picked up by the premier to suggest he did not support the referendum, had been misunderstood. He said he was one hundred percent behind the principle of one man, one vote and that the PPM was the only party that had consistently supported single member constituencies."

Madam Speaker, he went on further to say, "If it can be achieved I support the goal but I cannot in all honesty see how it can happen in time,' he added. He said that if the petitioners were successful and managed to persuade government to have the referendum in November, he would be encouraging the electorate to support single member constituencies. He said he believed that the problem was it had been left too late. 'I just have doubts that it can be achieved,' the opposition leader told CNS as he rebutted allegations that he did not really support the idea of one man, one vote."

Well we now have the opportunity to prove all those that said it against him wrong.

Madam Speaker, here we are, the Premier, on behalf of his party, saying they have a change of mind. After all of that they have a change of mind. Without going back to the electorate and [asking], *What do you think of this?* There are many people in this country who only yesterday, the day before yesterday, heard that the PPM was changing the system to about four different systems: 14, 15 single member constituencies, which is bigger (they say they want bigger constituencies); at-large candidates; in Cayman Brac one person one vote (even though they voted for single member constituencies, now, supported it); one person one vote, conveniently slipping out a piece [SOUNDS LIKE] of that referendum; one person, one vote, and the first two past the post—completely different from what we have ever done. And, lo and behold, adding one Member to Parliament.

Madam Speaker, somebody needs to tell me why we are adding one person to Parliament. The Premier's idea and suggestion that it will prevent a tie

in here is rubbish! Absolute rubbish! We could have 25 in here, we could have 45 in here, we could have 101 in here. The possibilities exist that if you have two dominant parties they will have equal returns at the polls. And then independents, or another party, make up the rest.

Madam Speaker, the Constitution is specific. We have two opportunities. If a party gets the majority in the return, the majority of that party can instruct the Governor to appoint one of them as Premier, which can be the next day. And then they appoint ministers afterwards. If no party receives the majority you come down and install the Speaker, which can be from the outside. And the first order of the day is to vote to put a Premier in place. That's what we have.

We talk about how our Constitution has not been advanced? That is rubbish! The mechanisms are there. The last election we ran around trying to pick up people to make up the Government. Madam Speaker, this House, during times of change in this country, was 12 Members. For years it was 12 Members. We didn't have formalised parties, but we had teams. Madam Speaker, you were on one of them when there were 12 Members in here.

The Minister for Works was never part of the teams. He was always somewhere out there in the shadows of representing the people of GT. But he ran first with his good friend, and I heard him speak of him earlier today, good man of integrity, Mr. Norman Bodden. Planted all those Oleanders up around the airport. Didn't get *unna* elected though.

Madam Speaker, the House had 12 people and you always had a majority, except on one or two occasions that our dearly departed colleague from Cayman Brac, Capt. Mabry [Kirkconnell], went and voted with the Government. Remember what happened in [Motion] 3/90? Does anybody understand where . . . the Member of North Side was part of that ingenious political move by Benson Ebanks. We have a rich history of political possibilities in this Parliament. A very, very rich history. But we also have a checkered past. And we are going to have a checkered future now too. We have to be careful. We have to be very careful, Madam Speaker. Yes, Madam Speaker, we have a checkered past.

Madam Speaker, one of the greatest mistakes . . . I know the Premier likes to say that the mistake, the compromise, that he regrets is compromising with the now Leader of the Opposition on single member constituencies and not putting it in the Constitution and agreeing to put it in law. I agree with him, that was a mistake; but it wasn't the biggest one. The biggest mistake we made in those constitutional talks, and we need to correct it, and there is one of two ways of correcting it. The biggest mistake we ever made in that was removing the balance of power from this Parliament.

Madam Speaker, you were here. We all sat there like blind mice being led to the altar. I don't know

whether it was us or them . . . I don't remember. The balance of power does not lie in Parliament any longer. It lies in the Executive. And we need to correct it. Adding one Member does not do that. If the Premier had come here and proposed to add three Members to Parliament I would have supported him. The balance of power just happens to be the two-thirds of Parliament. No parliament in any democracy should ever survive, can ever survive with the numbers, the percentages, not representing the Executive only being one-third of Parliament. It should never, ever happen. *Only in the Cayman Islands* (that's got to be the title of my memoirs so *unna* don't steal it). *Only in the Cayman Islands*.

Madam Speaker, one Member in Parliament does not stop a tie and a stalemate in this Parliament.

The other provision the Constitution has, if the Governor sees fit he can appoint someone in the interim and set another time for election. It's all there. That's our biggest mistake. And I encourage the young ones to go look at it.

Now, there are one or two ways of doing it; increasing this Parliament by 3 and making it 21 and leaving the Executive as 7. That means 14 Members are not in the Executive and the balance of power lies in Parliament. Or, change it to a simple majority.

Say what you want, Madam Speaker, about Truman Bodden. But he refused in 1992 to maintain a two-thirds majority power in Parliament. He changed it to a simple majority. I want *unna* to try to remember that. I have a rich history of the politics of this country in my head, because this is where I live. This is my interest. This is what I do. I do nothing else.

When we had 12, we had 4 elected Members of Parliament. Two thirds were over there. In 1992 when we went to 15, we jumped that up by one, leaving 10. Okay? And we still put it down to eight to remove the Executive. Madam Speaker, we need to be careful how we promote the tenets of democracy and good governance out of one side of our mouths and spit out the other side to protect our careers.

The Premier said those of us who are promoting this things have to be mindful of our own circumstances. I am! It matters not to me whether I get re-elected. I am going to do what is right in the best interests of the people of this country and the children of this country and the future of this country! They can send me home. But I will go with my boots on and stand tall and look every Caymanian square in the eye and say, *I did it for you*. That's me!

You may call me a devil, but be objective about it, Madam Speaker. That's all I beg of you. That's what I am going to do because I can tell you this, Madam Speaker, there will come a point in my life when I will not occupy this chair. It is either one of three ways of doing it: my physical demise; I decide to leave; other people remove me. It is going to happen. I don't care what I do, I ain't that good. We have to leave. Do what is right. And what is right here is the

implementation of 18 single member constituencies for this country.

Madam Speaker, the other thing they talked about was they are going to be too small and it will still show inequality. Madam Speaker, what was it I said about my good friend? If there is ever the lack of justification and the expression of injured guilt it is them trying to explain that. Madam Speaker, they say they are going to be too small and you are still going to have inequality. But instead of doing six in George Town they will do four. That's what they will be, four in GT, four in WB, three in Bodden Town (how many is that? 11) and then two in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman (13 or 14), one East End and one North Side. So that's 15. Right? That's the 15 constituencies *unna* talking about.

Now the constituencies have to be bigger. It's worse inequality then, when it comes to the numbers. It is not about numbers! It is about each person having one vote. And I tried telling my good friend over lunch, *Let's take a look at other countries*. Do you think every state in America has the same equal number of votes? Or people? No. But within the state you split it up equally. He was talking about getting from Bodden Town and carrying it straight to West Bay so you can get the 14 in there and bang, bang, bang, bang. And then we are talking about joining East End and North Side. Don't come up there.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Oh, I heard the Premier off microphone saying, "Be careful what you ask for."

Tell him, Ask and ask not. Pass North Side Road. *Unna* not joining East End and North Side. That was floated by the Leader of the Opposition years ago. *Unna* try and swallow that one and keep it in the cage and in the chest.

Madam Speaker, George Town has 7,000 voters. You try to get them as close as possible. Bodden Town has 4,000 (or something). You can divide that up as quick as possible, because the uniqueness of those constituencies does not allow us to send people on the inside or on the outside and put lines in there. [With] every Boundary Commission that was appointed that was part of their mandate, maintain the districts. America is the same thing, maintain the states. You have local government. They split it up, one person one vote, and you try to get equal amounts. But we are trying to fool the people about the size of the constituencies. *Unna* needs to stop it, you know. *Unna* is going to get punished! Punished, punished, punished. *Unna* needs to be punished. It is about one person, one vote. That is all we are talking about.

And then, Madam Speaker, in their infinite wisdom, they come up with this thing about, *You know, there may be garrisons. And there are certain demographics*. Let me explain to the people what they

are talking about. They are talking about different nationalities in this here country. Madam Speaker, they need to tell the country which demographic, which nationality they are afraid to have control over a particular area. It cannot be American. We have two of them in here—the Minister of Education and the Deputy Leader. We have Jamaican/Caymanians in here, the Member for Bodden Town, the Member for George Town and Member for George Town, second generation Jamaican. We are one-third Cuban, I believe. My good friend from George Town is.

[Inaudible interjection]

Mr. V. Arden McLean: We have a born Jamaican in here, Madam Speaker. My good friend the First Elected Member for George Town. Okay?

Madam Speaker, those same Jamaicans were the ones we were courting since 2005 when the Leader of the Opposition went and told them that, *PPM? Nah doh like unna*. So they won nine seats in 2005, they punished us in 2009, and we went back to them again! And *unna* won the seats again. You think that only Caymanians did that? The only demographics *unna* need to be concerned about is Caymanian!

Getting hot now.

How much time do I have?

Madam Speaker, I will draw to the attention of my colleagues section 90 of our Constitution.

The Speaker: Member, you have 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Oh, plenty time.

Section 90 of our Constitution, the document that controls us all, crafted by the Premier. He told me it would embarrass him if we had to take out those three seats if we didn't have to pay for them.

[Section] 90(1), and it's under the caption "**Qualification of electors**": "**Subject to section 91, a person shall be entitled to be registered as an elector in one electoral district only, but he or she shall not be entitled to be registered as an elector for elections to the Legislative Assembly unless—(a) he or she was, on the day immediately preceding the date of commencement of this Constitution, entitled to be registered as an elector; or (b) he or she—(i) is a Caymanian.**"

Madam Speaker, may I respectfully go into the definition section of our Constitution. For the benefit of those who have not touched this Constitution yet, the emphasis was on "Caymanian." [Section 28] "**'Caymanian' has the meaning ascribed to it in the laws of the Cayman Islands for the time being in force.**"

Now, Madam Speaker, the first thing the PPM needs to do is take the Immigration Law and shred it, because through the Immigration Law we are Cay-

manians. And all those who come here you can't disenfranchise them now. We put it in this Constitution that you are entitled to be registered if you are a "Caymanian." It didn't say "naturalized Caymanian" you know; it said "Caymanian." All of a sudden we are afraid of our very own people that they are going to control an area. So what? So what? Are you telling me that if 75 per cent of East End were McLeans, I am not supposed to run? Is that what you're telling me?

This is a democracy. Are you telling me that because up by Windsor Park there is a congregation of Jamaicans who have built their homes and become Caymanians that we are afraid that they will put one of their own in there? They need to be represented by one of their own in here. But it cannot be one of those who came here and we gave status to. It doesn't allow that. But their children who were born here . . . you are telling me that we have to be afraid of them? Boy, what a day this country is coming to. That is what you are telling the people of this country. And it is wrong!

You are telling me, because we like to talk about the Englishman being of South Sound, gathering in South Sound and building their homes out there, that their second generation children who were born here are not entitled to come in here? *Unna* needs to stop this division. *Unna* needs to stop it! They are ours. Some of them mightn't want to be.

Madam Speaker, I didn't have anything to do with how you became Caymanian, you know. Oh, but I must embrace you because you are from Cayman Brac. I never had a thing to do with how you became Caymanian. Neither did I have anything to do with how an Englishman or a Jamaican or a Honduran, or whatever, became Caymanian. All of a sudden, *unna* wants to define what they can do! STOP IT!

Those are the ones the UDP Government gave it to.

Stop it!

It's over!

We must live with them! They are entitled to it the same way you are. Their children are entitled to it.

What are we going to do? Ostracize them? The same children that went to school with yours! What are you going to tell your children? It is wrong!

I'm entitled to my opinion. Some of them I wouldn't want to rub shoulders with for nothing in this world. But they are Caymanians. Indigenous ones, I wouldn't want to rub shoulders with either. What can I do about it? I must respect their rights as a Caymanian. It's not my job to make provisions for anybody in New York. It's my job to protect Caymanians! Whether you are white, green, yellow, black, blue—I don't care! And *unna* trying to cause division in *unna's* country. All of you!

Madam Speaker, put it to the vote.

The Speaker: The question is: BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Government shall consider

bringing a Bill within 3 months to amend the Election Law (2009) Revision to introduce an electoral system of single member constituencies so as to allow the next General Election to be conducted on the basis of the equal suffrage principle of "one person one vote" under the First Past the Post System, which timeframe will allow sufficient time to educate the electors on the changes to the voting system.

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

Ayes and Noes.

The Speaker: Member for East End.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, can we have a division please?

The Speaker: Madam Clerk, please call a division.

The Clerk:

Division No. 13

Ayes: 6

Hon. Anthony S. Eden
Mr. Alva H. Suckoo
Mr. Bernie A. Bush
Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks
Mr. D. Ezzard Miller
Mr. V. Arden McLean

Noes: 6

Hon. Alden McLaughlin
Hon. M. I. Kirkconnell
Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts
Mr. W. C. Connolly, Jr.
Mr. Roy M. McTaggart
Mr. Joseph X. Hew

Absent: 5

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden
Hon. G. Wayne Panton
Hon. Marco S. Archer
Hon. Tara A. Rivers
Hon. W. McKeeva Bush

The Speaker: The result of the division: 6 Ayes and 6 Noes, 5 absent. It's a tie.

By virtue of Standing Order 42(2), "**The Presiding Officer shall not vote unless, on any question, the votes are equally divided, in which case he shall have and exercise a casting vote.**"

I will suspend the House for five minutes.

Proceedings suspended at 3:37 pm

Proceedings resumed at 3:45 pm

The Speaker: Please be seated. Proceedings are resumed.

SPEAKER'S CASTING VOTE

[SO 42]

The Speaker: I have had an opportunity to also consult the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009, in particular section 75(2), which reads as follows: "**The Speaker or other member presiding shall not vote**

unless on any question the votes are equally divided, in which case he or she shall have and exercise a casting vote.”

In accordance with what has been set out in the Constitution and Standing Order 42, I hereby vote No.

The motion has failed.

By way of the Speaker's casting vote, Private Member's Motion No. 4/2013-14, Single Member Constituencies, was negated.

ADJOURNMENT

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

I adjourn this House sine die.

The Speaker: The question is that—
Member for East End, do you have . . . ?
Please continue.

Mr. V. Arden McLean: Madam Speaker, here we go again. Sine die. And there is a date set for Parliament. Can somebody explain something why the 12th of March . . . is [that] not a definitive date?

The Speaker: Honourable Premier are you in a position to state at this time?

The Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin: Madam Speaker, as I discussed with the Member for North Side, who had the next motion, we are so close to the 12th that to start the next meeting of the House means that Members will be precluded from presenting motions and questions, unless we were to do what has been the case in many instances in the past where the period gets abridged.

So, our proposal, to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to do that is, instead of resuming the House on the 12th, to resume it later in the month or early in the following month. I was discussing that matter with the Leader of the Opposition because he would be away as well to ensure that we accommodate as far as possible the movement of the various Members of the House.

So, as soon as we have reached some decision with respect to that, I will ask your good self and the Clerk to advise Members. That's the only reason, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker: Member for East End?

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

Madam Speaker, I am confused, because we all had dates set for Parliament before. I think your good self circulated those after consultation with the Government, right? I don't understand this thing about time to submit whatever when time has been given.

And if we were not prepared to submit our stuff in time for the 12th then we lose. So there seems to be some excuse being developed here for us not coming back.

And for the Premier to say in consultation with everyone else, I am a Member of this Parliament too. The Leader of the Opposition, I am sure, consulted with his two. That's an independent Member. I'm an independent Member. Now I don't want my rights to be circumvented in here either. The fact that the two of us sit close together doesn't mean we are joined at the hips. He has no obligation to discuss anything with me.

So, Madam Speaker, you know . . . you know, I'm watching.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House be adjourned sine die.

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

Ayes.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

At 3:50 pm the House stood adjourned sine die.