



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

MORNING SESSION: 11.06 a.m. – 1.23 p.m.

Gibraltar, Thursday, 30th July 2015

## Business transacted

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# The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 11.06 a.m.*

[MR SPEAKER: Hon. A J Canepa GMH OBE *in the Chair*]

[CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: P E Martinez Esq *in attendance*]

## Order of the Day

### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

#### **Gibraltar LNG Terminal Risk Assessment – Funding of Lloyd’s Register Report Debate commenced**

5       **Clerk:** Order of the Day. Government Motions. The Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move the motion standing in my name, which reads as follows:

*‘This House:*

*Calls upon the Leader of the Opposition to disclose the identity of the person, persons, entity or entities who funded the £100,000.00 (one hundred thousand pounds sterling) cost of the Lloyd’s Register Report titled the ‘Gibraltar LNG Terminal Risk Assessment’.*

10       Mr Speaker, many things have happened since I moved the motion which I have just read in the terms in which I have presented it. Indeed, one of the most important things that has happened since I moved that motion is unrelated to the substance of it, but was the statement by you, Mr Speaker, at the beginning of this meeting in which you asked all Members, and in fact specifically asked myself and the Leader of the Opposition, to try to tone down the level of acrimony in the debates between us. I told you, Mr Speaker, immediately that you uttered those words that I would certainly reflect on what you had implored us to do, and indeed today I will of course seek to make my intervention one which is in keeping with your statement as to your feelings about the tenor and pitch of the debates in the proceedings in this House. I am mindful, Mr Speaker, that you made a ruling at the beginning of this meeting and that what you said about tone and acrimony was not part of your ruling but your expression of your own heartfelt feelings as to the sometimes acrimonious tone of the debate.

15       Mr Speaker, let me start by saying that in politics, or at least in politics in Gibraltar, one gets used to being the subject of ‘robust linguistic exchanges’, if I could characterise them in that way. We have an adversarial system of laws, we have an adversarial system of court proceedings and we have an adversarial political system that has not served this community badly, and it has been the case for many years that that is the position, the halcyon days long past were not ones in which there was not also strong disagreement and strong debate on any less important or indeed any less relevant subject, and the debate was in no way less robust.

20       I know, Mr Speaker, that you are a political animal yourself and that you have long relished the political argument, but I get it when you tell us that you want us to stop – not debating, but you want to see us debate in a style which is less acrimonious and more befitting this Parliament in some way, and I will certainly try and reach for a higher standard in that respect, as I always have. I believe that our democracy craves and deserves that. I do not believe that I have ever failed the higher standards in that respect and I think it is important that we look at some of the recent debates in that respect in a moment.

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35 But, Mr Speaker, as I start on this motion and on this debate you will allow me for one moment to remind Members of the House of the practice of others in this place before your time here – before your second time here, if I might put it that way. Indeed, it was just under four years ago, in September 2011, that I was the subject of what I will call an attack by the then Leader of the House, now the hon. the backbencher, which I believe was and is without precedent in the history of this place. I was called many things, Mr Speaker, none of them *bonito*, as they say in Spanish, and not referring to the relative of the tuna, and in particular I was called ‘unfit’ – not generally unfit, which would be quite a fair description of my state of physical fitness, but ‘unfit to govern’ was in fact the epitaph that the hon. the backbencher, then 40 Chief Minister, sought for me. And I say ‘epitaph’, Mr Speaker, because he did want it to be my political epitaph. Indeed, I understand that the hon. Member – and I am delighted to see him here with us today – had promised his colleagues in the GSD at the time that he would finish me off during the course of that debate in September 2011 and in that way secure for himself and his party their so desired fifth successive election win. But it did not happen, Mr Speaker.

45 The debate then in this House, using the strongest possible language of condemnation against me in the mouth of the then Chief Minister and in the language of the motion passed – something that perhaps we will look at later – did not avail the Members opposite of their coveted electoral prize. Indeed, Mr Speaker, I dare say it reflected on the then Chief Minister and the party he represented in a negative way and turned people off from them. That is why I am so keen to heed your call for reflection, Mr Speaker.

50 That was a harsh debate on finances and in respect of what was best referred to as a ‘social media podcast’; a harsh debate, which when set in the cold light of day – or perhaps I should say read in the cold light of day and analysed with *Erskine May* in hand – showed that the debate was characterised by the manner in which the then Chief Minister had not been kept to the rules of debate by the then Chair of our proceedings.

55 Mr Speaker, I have no desire whatsoever to imitate that sort of style. I think I have been gracious in my references to some of the work the hon. Member has done, especially after his valedictory remarks during the Appropriation Bill. But that part of what he did and how he did it is not something that I ever want to imitate, consciously or otherwise. Indeed, as a result of that debate I have always sought not just to ensure that I do not imitate him but that I conduct myself much more in keeping with the rules of proceedings in this House and the rules of debate.

60 Despite that, Mr Speaker, after my opening speech on the Appropriation debate, on the Second Reading, or what we call the Budget debate, when I introduced the Bill on the Second Reading – an introduction that was economic, that set out the success of our nation, that dealt with the measures that were to be applied, that did not call anyone anything – I was again to be subject, by a member of the Gibraltar Social Democrats represented in this House, to much the same tactic I had been subjected to four years earlier. So when the hon. the now backbencher had said in 2011 that I was unfit to govern, his now heir and successor – who would have thought it, Mr Speaker – his new leader, adopted much the same style by starting his intervention in the Budget debate by saying that I was not to be trusted. Not much change in their attitude, Mr Speaker. The hon. backbencher and his chosen successor can at least be seen to be consistent in at least that way. Despite the many U-turns and the inconsistency that characterises the leadership now from the leadership before, the one thing they are consistent in – I suppose I should take it as a backhanded compliment – is their repeated attempts to disparage and to denigrate me and to bring me down in the estimation of right-thinking people generally, members of the public, by attacking my fitness for office and in particular whether I could be trusted with it.

75 Needless to say, Mr Speaker, I did not threaten to sue either of them, nor did I challenge them to repeat anything else that they had said here outside of this House. Imagine my surprise then when I see that the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition, the now Leader of the Opposition, stating publicly that I have tried to destroy him, denigrate him or in some other way disqualify him politically by the things I have said in a debate. Well, he and his predecessor tried to do just that to me and to others of my colleagues in almost every intervention they made from Question Time to motions to debates on Bills. In fact there is a shorthand way of referring to what it is that they have been trying to do. Let us at least just draw the line in September 2011 and look forward, but we could look back and see this everywhere also. It is, in layman’s terms, attempted character assassination, attempted political character assassination. Some might say that is the political game, not that *we* play it that way. Whether it was for me or the Hon. Mr Bossano or others on these benches, Mr Speaker, their tactic has always been the same – not unsuccessfully, the hon. the now backbencher might say: four election wins is four scalps on the side of the political vehicle.

85 But I now understand, Mr Speaker, and I think the whole of our community now understands that they consider on the benches opposite that although that is a legitimate tactic for them to repeatedly engage in, it is not a legitimate *fate* for them, even if it is brought about not by character assassination or political character assassination but by simple disclosure of facts. Such is ever the ‘do as I say but not as I do’ or the ‘holier than thou’ of the right wing of the political world, Mr Speaker, so *a la Partido Popular* because *our* style, our style whether we are on this side of the House or on that side of the House, wherever our political

95 fate may put us, is not ever to succumb to the lazy trigger of character assassination but to simply identify and relay facts in debate. In fact, character assassinations come back to haunt putative assassins, Mr Speaker. If not, for example, some of my – or, if I may say so on behalf of all Members of this House, *our* – antagonists across the Frontier, in particular certain individuals who are now being subjected to tax investigations having spent so long talking about Gibraltar and its tax affairs.

100 And so, Mr Speaker, when the time came to make a statement in this House on what we might, for shorthand, this morning call ‘the Spark affair’, for which I had to interrupt the debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, I made sure that I stuck to the facts as they were then known to the Government, completely sticking to facts and making no comment in the context of what was a Government Statement for which I suspended Standing Orders. And they were, Mr Speaker, self-evidently damning facts, they did not require comment: facts which illustrated that the company that had been  
105 responsible for power cuts in the plant that they rented to the Government was also the company that had funded the preparation of the report from Lloyd’s Register and that the Opposition had presented as being commissioned ‘for the GSD’ – that is in quotation marks, *for the GSD*, and I will come later to when those words were used – by an entity, they said, with no commercial interests in the provision of power or LNG in Gibraltar. That is what they said, Mr Speaker. Those are the *facts*, the facts without comment, just the  
110 bare *facts*.

Mr Speaker, when I returned to the subject in the course of my reply on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill – I was closing for the Government in that debate – I was equally determined to stick to the facts, and where I did not I caveated my intervention and even agreed at one instance to withdraw an inference which the Leader of the Opposition objected to, telling him that I hoped his assertions were  
115 correct in the interest of our democracy. I was praised by many supporters and non-supporters for my intervention in that debate. The *Hansard* of that reply is now available, I see, on the Parliament’s website – and I once again congratulate the Parliament for being able to make *Hansard* now available so quickly to Members – and the relevant extract reads as follows. I am now going to read from the *Hansard*, Mr Speaker. I was talking when I said this:

‘It is one thing, Mr Speaker, to take industrial action, give notice of when you are going to do it and be covered by the Trade Union and Disputes Act in the 1970s and 1980s to fight for parity and pay rises; but it is quite different, Mr Speaker, to bring about power cuts in the country with the largest gaming industry on earth, during a Euro qualifying game.’

120 Mr Feetham then gets up and he says this – I am quoting him, Mr Speaker:

‘Point of Order, Mr Speaker. He is now completely going beyond what is reasonable, what is parliamentary. What he is really saying – and which is completely and utterly untrue, it is false, it is untrue – he is saying that I have been at the centre of a conspiracy so that there are power cuts. That is absolutely untrue, Mr Speaker, and that kind of accusation has never been made in this House and he is breaching Parliamentary Rules and he is exceeding what is proper by a country mile. And I note – because it has been brought to my attention – that indeed Spark’s have today come out with a statement actually disputing any question of them being responsible for power cuts... But, Mr Speaker, what he is saying about me is absolutely false, it is not true; and quite frankly he should be brought to order because this is unparliamentary and beyond the Rules of this House.’

You did not have to speak, Mr Speaker. *Hansard* reflects that the next statement is mine. I said:

‘Mr Speaker, I am prepared to accept the position that the hon. Gentleman puts. He says he has nothing to do with it and I sincerely hope for the sake of our democracy that he does not; and if he says he does not, I have no evidence to suggest the contrary and I accept his word. He has told the people of Gibraltar today in the Parliament that he has nothing to do with it. I have been talking only about it.

So, Mr Speaker, he says he has nothing to do with it and as a democrat and as a Member of this Parliament, I sincerely hope that turns out to be true. We will see. We will let the investigations take their course, Mr Speaker; but he will accept of course that if it turns out that he is found to have been involved, then his denial today will be even more of an indictment of his involvement and will mean that he is finished, not just as Leader of the Opposition, but politically for ever. But look, I accept his position...’

Mr Speaker, the rest of my speech is also worth rereading now and I commend a good reading of it to all those who might have time – there is the summer coming and it is not a bad few pages of the *Hansard* – but there was not another squeak out of the Leader of the Opposition.

125 It is the facts, Mr Speaker, that I disclosed in my speech which were damning of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition – not the language I used, not because of any breach of the rules of debate. Indeed, Mr Speaker, Mr Feetham did not raise any other objection during the course of the debate after that, not a peep, but because the facts as they stood then, to the knowledge of the Government and as presented to the public, were damning of the Leader of the Opposition and his sidekick, the now Chairman of the GSD, who enjoys  
130 greater prominence than many of its elected Members – Mr Trevor Hammond – he seems to have taken

much objection since we left this House then. It is the facts, Mr Speaker, that damn them – not any conjecture; not any speculation; not any language, parliamentary or unparliamentary or otherwise that I might have chosen to employ. Just the plain facts.

135 And things have moved on and have become, in the Government’s view, even more damning of the conduct of the politics of the Gibraltar Social Democrats under the leadership of the hon. Member opposite, and that is what I am going to refer to today, Mr Speaker: facts. I can imagine that just the thought of that, just the thought of facts, makes the hon. Member opposite nervous. It is the facts that make him tremble, not the tone of the debate, because the problem with facts is that they just do not go away. They do not disappear and they do not lie. They have a nasty habit of demonstrating the truth that will always stubbornly  
140 come out, just like in the case of the podcast debate, the fitness debate where I was eventually, uncannily, four months later when the election was over, proved right when I showed people the doomsday memo that the Financial Secretary had provided to us, which demonstrated we were actually about to exceed the ceiling of debt – and the previous Chief Minister demonstrated that I was right by inviting me at the ceremonial opening of the House to bring a resolution to exceed the debt limit that he had said we were  
145 well clear of. Facts, Mr Speaker.

And in the case of the Spark affair the facts get curiouser and curiouser and the reality is clearer and clearer. You see, when we first brought this motion the public had been told by the Hon. Mr Feetham and his sidekick Chairman that the cost of the report prepared by Lloyd’s Register had been £100,000, but the party that had been so opaque in Government for 16 years and had spent three years in Opposition calling  
150 for greater transparency at that time would not tell us who had paid the alleged £100,000 for the GSD. But you see, Mr Speaker, a director of Spark, Mr Damian Carreras, as I think I have already told the House, had come to the Office of Chief Minister and had, in the presence of officials who are witnesses to this fact, specifically told the Chief Minister to his face, to the Minister for Utilities to his face and to the Chief Executive Officer of the Gibraltar Electricity Authority to his face that Spark had not had anything to do  
155 with the preparation of the Lloyd’s Register Report. That was the position at the time of the presentation and wording of this motion. But things moved on, Mr Speaker, and by the time we reached the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill we knew it had been Spark who had funded the report in question. There is nothing wrong with funding reports, Mr Speaker, but there is a lot wrong with a Government contractor, who has failed in its duty to provide the services contracting, compounding their failure by stating what I  
160 will call for the purposes of today ‘the opposite of the truth’ to the face of their client in the shape of the Chief Minister himself.

That is the nub of the issue, Mr Speaker, and will bring me to propose an amendment to this motion as it presently stands, given that its text has been overtaken by events. So, now that we know who funded the Lloyd’s Report, I move to amend the motion by the deletion of all the words after ‘This House’ and the  
165 replacement of them by the following new words. Mr Speaker, “This House” and then the following:

*‘This House:*

*Recognises the importance of a reliable, modern, clean, sustainable, safe and affordable power supply to Gibraltar for its political, economic and social welfare and development;*  
*Welcomes HM Government of Gibraltar’s commitment to public consultation and provision of information on its proposals for the new dual-fuel power station;*  
*Condemns all and any attempts to conflate, distort and thereby misuse any report prepared by recognised independent experts for partisan political gain, for commercial self interest by any party or purposes that work against the general public interest and transparency;*  
*And so therefore in the public interest of the whole of the community, hereby calls on the Leader of the Opposition, in the spirit of transparency that he so often espouses, to instruct Lloyd’s Register Energy or in the alternative call upon the Spark Group of Companies to instruct Lloyd’s Register Energy to release the original, full and un-redacted and otherwise edited version of their Report directly to The Speaker of the Parliament for distribution to all members and general publication in Gibraltar, as well as full disclosure of the cost of the Report paid by the Spark Group of Companies.’*

I hereby give written notice of this proposed amendment. Shall I wait for the amendment to be circulated, Mr Speaker, or shall I carry on?

**Mr Speaker:** Do you have copies to circulate?

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**Hon. Chief Minister:** I do not, Mr Speaker, I had extracted... I think I left them on my desk, so that is why I had to do it this way. Shall I wait, or..?

Mr Speaker, this is and must clearly be unobjectionable language for all parties who come to this debate with a clear conscience, and that is why I have worded my amendment in this way. It is not a motion

175 condemning anyone; it is a motion condemning behaviour that nobody can defend and it is a motion calling for unimpeachable clarity, because this is about shining a light on things.

My motion today is about power; not, I should add, the power which the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition so assiduously and eagerly seeks – nothing wrong with that – but the power that keeps our businesses operating, our babies warm and our homes illuminated, the power we have to ensure is securely  
180 supplied.

The motion had originally focused, as you know, Mr Speaker, on the anonymity behind the alleged £100,000 report, which was attributed to Lloyd’s Register and circulated by the Opposition in what has become their electoral campaign of ‘No to anything LNG’. In fact, I am grateful that the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition has recently made that clear, that in the election campaign he, in fact, has said they will run  
185 will be an entirely negative one. He has told GBC’s Jonathan Sacramento that there will be only one issue or platform for them, and that is ‘No to LNG’. Well, nothing new there, Mr Speaker, because all of their past campaigns have always been just ‘No to the GSLP’, so I guess it is only the initials of what they are against that is going to change.

‘No! Nein! Negative!’ That will be their mantra, be it to the supply and storage of liquefied natural gas to the new power station or even to the new power station being fuelled by it. ‘No! Nein! Negative!’ That will be their mantra in respect of LNG bunkering, which will be a key element in the business which our Port has until now been one of the most significant players in the Mediterranean of bunkering and which the port in Algeciras is working hard on trying to establish for themselves in competition to us. So they are saying, ‘Yes! *Si! Por favor!*’ and we are saying, in the face of the Leader of the Opposition, ‘No! Nein! Negative!’ That is going to be their election campaign, he told GBC.  
190 Negative!’ That is going to be their election campaign, he told GBC.

Mr Speaker, the Government having established that the Spark Group of Companies was behind the funding of the report, a version of which was released by the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition, I will not question what his motives were in releasing the report in the form in which it was released, but I will say that the facts suggest motives which members of the public will be able to see for themselves. Sadly,  
200 Mr Speaker, this is a very serious issue. There is more at play here than just a mischievous political tactic by a leader of an Opposition, and I shall be calling on him to reflect on some of the statements he has made to the public and perhaps trusted and relied on himself.

The last few months we have heard a great deal about experts, but the real experts have yet to be heard in their unredacted independent voice. Some experts in propaganda and distortion have had a field day in  
205 playing with public opinion and manipulating notions of fear among some of the most vulnerable in our population. The tools of those experts in distortion have been misrepresentation and deception, and all of it has been held together by clear self-interest.

I am not going to once again go through the whole story of neglect of the power station and the power network which this Government inherited from the previous administration. I am not going to talk about the failure to take up recommendations made by in-house experts to them over the decades which might have solved the problem. People know how many power-cuts they have had to put up with because of failing infrastructure – infrastructure that should have been replaced over a decade ago.  
210 infrastructure – infrastructure that should have been replaced over a decade ago.

We all know that Gibraltar has to have its own independent power supply. As far as this side of the House is concerned, dependency on Spain is not an option now, tomorrow or ever. We need a reliable power supply because Gibraltar has to fend for itself and provide security to the people and the many industries established here and those that may look to come and invest in the Rock.  
215 power supply because Gibraltar has to fend for itself and provide security to the people and the many industries established here and those that may look to come and invest in the Rock.

If I may say so, Mr Speaker, if some of our contractors were as good as going through main cables in finding petrol with those things that pile, we might actually be much wealthier than we are.

We also have to ensure that we are doing our best to meet international standards and requirements to cut pollution. That has to be put in the balance as well. These are standards that we fully agree with because they are primarily aimed at minimising the impact on people’s lives and their health. These are not esoteric targets set for no purpose. This is about what we breathe in and what it does to our bodies, and that is what we have been working on with our own Gibraltar experts – who are no less expert than those from outside Gibraltar – since the day that we were elected.  
220 cut pollution. That has to be put in the balance as well. These are standards that we fully agree with because they are primarily aimed at minimising the impact on people’s lives and their health. These are not esoteric targets set for no purpose. This is about what we breathe in and what it does to our bodies, and that is what we have been working on with our own Gibraltar experts – who are no less expert than those from outside Gibraltar – since the day that we were elected.

Thanks to Members’ opposite’s failure to invest in power before our time, grimy, smelly diesel, the very initials of which spell GSD, have been belching out from Waterport Power Station and down at Jumpers for many years longer than they should have. Indeed, Mr Speaker, if they had been re-elected they would have commissioned – they say already; we doubt that – a new facility to burn even more grimy, smelly diesel. And if they are elected now they are committing themselves again to finish our power station – because we  
230 will start it before the election – but not to burn clean LNG in it; they are committing themselves to burn grimy, smelly diesel in it.

Mr Speaker, just across the bay in Algeciras for some time, and even now as we speak, port operators there and beyond are keenly engaged in seeing how they can be ready for the LNG bunkering market as this is emerging. Gibraltar’s economy today has to keep looking forward to the future and to diversification if  
235 we are to continue to enjoy our standard of privileged prosperity – not just in financial services, not just in

gaming. We have to have an eye to where insurance is going and where online gaming is going and where financial services is going: shouldn't we have the same keen eye on where bunkering is going? Anybody with a keen eye can see that bunkering is going in the direction of LNG. The percentages may be different depending on who makes the estimate of where the bunkering market in LNG or diesel will be. It may fluctuate depending on whether estimation is made in a year where diesel is at a low price or at a high price. It may depend on how quickly the European Commission moves on its agenda to reduce emissions in the Mediterranean. But if we do not move, if we do not have an eye to the future, then Algeciras and Ceuta and Tangier Med will fulfil their aspirations, which some in our community do not seem to share, to be seen as the gateway for bunkering in that commodity when accessing the Mediterranean.

You cannot build an LNG bunkering market in a day, Mr Speaker. Today we are a leading bunkering port and I can tell this House that we are fully confident that we can be a leading player in the LNG market tomorrow as well, but not if the Member opposite has his way. He has already said, 'No! Nein!' to the concept of LNG storage, without which there can be no LNG bunkering. Instead, *our* attitude is to say that we *can* achieve Gibraltar's continued growth in the bunkering industry by focusing on excellence, on meeting all standards on safety and doing everything necessary to give us a solid reputation in that market, and at the same time ensure that of course our people are protected.

We can also ensure the continued growth of our tourist industry by being able to service the cruise ships which are being built with on-board LNG storage tanks and regasification facilities. These too would necessarily be banned from our shores by the Leader of the Opposition if there is to be one fibre of consistency in any of his arguments in relation to LNG. Indeed, Mr Speaker, I understand that some of these ships will have LNG storage tanks which will be close in size to the LNG tanks being proposed for Gibraltar.

But that is not just our view, Mr Speaker. Everything I have said is not the GSLP Liberal political Government saying this. From the Port to the GEA to the Department of the Environment that is the advice we are being given by the same experts who will advise Members opposite if they were ever to form Government again. That is what our experts are telling us we should aspire to achieve, but given that nobody is a prophet in their own land let us be clear it is also the advice we are getting from internationally renowned experts. In fact, I should add that it has been put very emphatically to us by Lloyd's Register – not by the Health and Safety Laboratory, not by any in-house expert, but by Lloyd's Register – that it must be our aim to be fully engaged in the LNG bunkering market and the opportunities that it will bring. By *Lloyd's Register*. It is them, Lloyd's Register, who are saying that they believe Gibraltar has a good future in the LNG market that is coming and that we must be a part of it – not another group of experts, not one group of experts we say are better than the experts the Member opposite relied on to say that LNG could never be done safely here. Actually, it is the same group who said, via their Mr Nick Brown, that the report of Lloyd's Register as published by Members opposite was made up in its presentation of, and this is a quote, 'conflations and distortions'.

Mr Speaker, I have the *Chronicle* of Thursday, 25th June 2015, and in that report of what Mr Brown said... At page 21, just opposite the column that says "Sir Peter is a giant of Gibraltar politics," says the Chief Minister'. There, Mr Speaker, Nick Brown of Lloyd's Register says something which I think is worth quoting to the whole of this House. I am going to read the three paragraphs of the report in the *Chronicle* so that it is set in context and nobody can accuse me of setting it out of context. I am going to be very parliamentary in the way that I read it. In fact, I am going to read four paragraphs:

'In issuing the statement, Lloyd's Register acknowledge that since it handed the report to the commissioning client the document had been placed in the public domain and cited in political exchanges in Gibraltar. Nick Brown, the company's Brand and External Relations Manager, said Lloyd's Register wanted to ensure there was a clear understanding as to its role as an impartial risk assessor and the nature and scope of the report. He said the company was uncomfortable with some of the media reports being published as a result of the political clash over this issue'.

Then the *Chronicle* opens quotation marks and says this:

'There were clearly some conflations and distortions of what the report was about', he told the *Chronicle* in a telephone interview yesterday.'

Page 21 of the *Chronicle* of Thursday, 25th June. That was not the headline of the article, Mr Speaker, but it was right there in the verbatim quotes of the published interview. I am surprised it was not the headline, but look, that is not a matter for a politician.

Of course, we also understand the concerns of people, lay people. Talk about gas and you have one of the two leading political figures in that political party saying, 'This is unsafe, it cannot be done without risk, the world's experts say it cannot be done.' We have to balance that national interest and individual interest and that is always going to be a challenge, explaining issues like this in ways that are not going to blind people with science. But something should always be a given, something should always be clear, something

should always be unimpeachable whoever forms Government after an election, and that is that none of us in this House are ever going to do anything where the safety and security of our people will be called into question. Of course it is true that people will prefer any industrial site to be as far as possible from their own home – I think that is called *nimbyism* – but that is not easy in a place that is two miles by one mile. We have long had to work in Gibraltar to ensure our safety when we are able to also do things that would not traditionally be done anywhere near a conurbation in the way that it is done here: an airport, a Z berth. The MOD have been our partners for three centuries. From cannon to nuclear submarines, all of them pass here and we have always welcomed them. Fortress life, siege life, is unfortunately in our blood. The whole world actually wonders at landings at our Airport: it is almost the ninth wonder of the world. Of course there are airports with lower risk factors than ours in terms of location, I have no doubt of that, but I will make this concession to Mr Hammond and his colleagues at air traffic control: we – the Government and every member of this community, we collectively – all trust the measures they take and that were devised by experts to lower the risks. I have never challenged or questioned Mr Hammond’s expertise as an air traffic controller; it is his lack of expertise whatsoever on LNG that I highlight and his different appetite to risk in respect of that. But those risks of flying are never zero, and they are not just risks for those who are flying or being flown in the aircraft. There are risks in particular in Gibraltar’s geography for anybody who might be affected by an air crash – that, please God, will never happen, but the risk of it happening can never be zero, which is the parameter that Members opposite have set for LNG. Mr Hammond and Mr Feetham will know, Mr Speaker, that by the setting of that standard what they are ensuring is that no bus ever runs, no vehicle is ever driven and that of course the only answer to LNG can ever be no – but not just LNG, everything else. They might have forgotten the explosion of a tank that was burning diesel to produce electricity last Easter at Waterport Power Station.

Mr Speaker, we must strive always to keep up with technology and progress, and those who have perhaps in the past few days seen reports in the United Kingdom will now be satisfied of the substantial scientific evidence that regards diesel as largely *the* dirtiest fuel and a serious risk to health. We owe it to our people to ensure that we move to a more healthy as well as a safer means of producing power. The slogan must surely be not ‘No to LNG’, but ‘No to pollution’, and believe me, Mr Speaker, we are under considerable pressure from the EU to reduce the current levels of emissions in our air. But, sadly, the story I am telling is not one where much on the opposite benches seems to be concerned about health and safety in respect of emissions. In fact, Mr Speaker, I am sure that as they quietly walk away from standing with the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition at the General Election some Members opposite may have cottoned on to what it is that is happening in their name. Indeed, Mr Speaker, if I could just pause there and be so bold as to suggest the title for the GSD’s manifesto for this election. It might actually look quite good with a big narcissistic photo of the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition on the front page and with the words ‘And then there were none’ emblazoned on the front.

Because Mr Speaker, often in Gibraltar we reflect historically on the events of 1972 as the ‘Big Lie’ election. The big lie election of this generation will not be a debate about what some might or might not have been willing to consider in relation to Spain, which was the issue in 1972. None of that could ever happen on our watch; it is not something that would ever worry people with the GSLP Liberals at the helm. No, the big lie election would be about a calculated deception played out ruthlessly, exploiting people’s natural fears and carried out with a deliberate misuse of a brand name like that of Lloyd’s Register. We could also talk about the one in 2007, which was the one about ‘no cherry-picking’, which has been demonstrated to have been a big lie by people from beyond our shores; but anyway, let’s leave the cherries out of it for once. The big lie would be a tactical deception which pretends that this side of the House, the GSLP Liberals, would be even prepared to consider entering into a major and critical infrastructure project absolutely indifferent and reckless to issues of safety, and to be joined in that negligent endeavour by some of the world’s leading blue-chip companies, by some of the world’s leading health and safety assessors of risk and by all of the experts of the Government of Gibraltar – because there are facts and then there is what is put out there by Mr Feetham and his tribe, because at the best of times what is said in Opposition invariably only carries the weight of ambition to take over Government.

Conversely, Mr Speaker, Government decisions must carry the burden of responsibility and careful due diligence, and we in Government have the obligation to work with great officials and professionals to achieve what is best for our country using our skills and resources to their full extent. We must have a power station, we must have clean air, we must also be sure that we produce these safely and responsibly, and in assessing which side is right the sequence of events and statements in this matter in the past few months is of crucial importance.

But before I get into that, Mr Speaker, let me just be categorical that at no time has any decision, revision of decision or instruction been made other than according to the best advice received by the Government. From our experts and from internationally recognised experts there has been a painstaking stage-by-stage approach and with a commitment throughout to be transparent with facts when we have them to hand in a meaningful way. We have listened constantly. Indeed, we have even listened outside



Government, because on 6th March this year, as the ESG aired their views – views which we always listen to with great respect – we issued a statement assuring the public that we would keep it fully informed and consulted. I quote from our press release 145/2015:

‘The Government takes this opportunity to reiterate that the necessary copious studies and assessments regarding the proposed facilities are underway and that there will be a full public consultation upon their completion.’

That could not be clearer. I reiterate that commitment and the reassurance of HM Government that we will not take any steps that would not conform with the best international standards and advice.

Lloyd’s Register is a major international name in the shipping, energy and safety world. It is owned not by shareholders out to make money but by a foundation, and it is fiercely and rightly proud of its independence. We have experienced that first hand when it has bent over backwards to meet those standards in its dealings with us.

We have detailed over time in numerous public statements the steps being taken and our engagement of experts, but the Opposition have wanted to create a myth that no safety report is being prepared or has been prepared. The safety report, Mr Speaker, is necessarily organic as designs and plans change and adapt to circumstances which are technical, physical or legal in nature. That is how projects work. That is how prisons cost double what they set out to cost. That is how courts cost more than double what they were initially budgeted to cost, let alone airports.

The safety experts of the companies working with us making proposals have been working continuously. They will only receive the final verdict on their work when independent experts – in this case the Health and Safety Laboratory – have their final submissions from each company. If the review by HSL and now a further review by Lloyd’s Register require changes to be made, those too will be subsequently reviewed by HSL and then by Lloyd’s Register. *They* have the final say and like all professionals they work together in an open and transparent way.

We are not asking Lloyd’s Register to design LNG storage and supply facilities; we are asking them to look at both the final proposals and the HSL safety reports. HSL have been involved in reviewing proposals every step of the way and we all know that the only reason for this belt-and-braces approach is that the Government would not do otherwise. But add to it the cynical campaign that we have had to suffer, of what Nick Brown refers to as distortion and which Gibraltar has been subjected to – and I use that word ‘distortion’, Mr Speaker, because it is the one that echoes the words of Lloyd’s Register when they were shocked to see what was being done with their report. It has become inevitable, Mr Speaker, to engage with Lloyd’s Register to ensure that their independent judgement is not further abused. The Government wants their good advice. We are very happy to now welcome Lloyd’s Register and I publicly undertake that the Government will obviously not interfere with Lloyd’s Register in carrying out its tasks. We will make the instructions to them and the assumptions that we work on public, and their full report will be made available unredacted. In our statement of 6th March 2015 we also made clear the public consultation will involve our already named experts, including the Health and Safety Laboratory Group, and at that time members of the public and the ESG will be able to ask questions, to comment and to voice any remaining concerns.

We echo the ESG’s view that the priority is to move towards completion of the new facilities, but only after due diligence has been ensured, the environmental impact assessment processes have been completed to international standards and all necessary health and safety considerations have been properly addressed. I do not think we could be clearer, but I understand, Mr Speaker, that the Opposition have muddied the waters and that the cost now of engaging the additional expertise and advice of Lloyd’s Register will be worth every penny. We would rather have been in the position of having the power station up and running long ago, of course we would, but we also had to put up with the Opposition’s ranting over 16 years in Government when they did nothing on the subject – and they still have the gall to ‘LOL’, or laugh out loud, on Twitter when there is a power cut. It has become a joke for them. How sad and cynical. This is a very serious issue.

And so let us look at the core of this motion: who is really behind the commissioning and the abuse of the Lloyd’s Register report, the abuse of a world brand hallmark and a doctored report trying to sabotage Gibraltar’s future power plans and our goal of cleaner air, our basic economic resources and opportunities?

Mr Speaker, whilst the Government is engaged in the process of working carefully towards finalising all aspects of the power station project, the Opposition instead has engaged over several months in a campaign of partly googled and partly referring to experts in demonising LNG in a series of unrelated and often doubtful examples, principally on social media. But of course the LNG experts they were talking about, who were saying that LNG was not safe, could not be Lloyd’s, the ones that they eventually came out with, because Lloyd’s go around the world doing the very opposite. They go around the world evangelising the prospects for LNG, even in crowded urban community areas.

405 When you look at the chronology of this, it is helpful in revealing some of what might have been happening. On 6th June 2015, after some discussion about the experts, Mr Feetham took to a podcast to reveal that Lloyd's Register had carried out a report, but this was after the *a duo* Feetham-Hammond film on the North Mole.

410 Then there is the 10th June press conference, where Mr Hammond not only puts himself forward as an expert on LNG and at times appears to be speaking for Lloyd's Register in what he is saying, but claims that the report has cost some £100,000. Indeed, Mr Hammond specifically told GBC's Jonathan Sacramento that the report had, and I quote – this is a quote from Mr Hammond:

‘effectively been funded by a third party who supports the GSD and are willing to commission this report on our behalf.’

415 Those are the words of Mr Hammond, the Chairman of the GSD. But we now reliably understand that the amount paid to Lloyd's Register was significantly less than the £100,000 and that the report, according to Spark, was not commissioned for the GSD but shared with them once completed. So even as to price and as to commissioning it would appear that the community has not yet had full disclosure of the real position.

Mr Speaker, many will have paused to think why a generous donor who is earning substantial profits from a contract for the Government would be afraid to reveal who they are, not least in their stated reasons of doing this for solely philanthropic purposes – for the wellbeing of Gibraltar, nothing less.

420 Perhaps even more mysterious is that, under pressure of being told that they have substantially redacted their report, they suddenly decide to issue what they now say is the full report, just days ago. So that report which had not been redacted... they now said, ‘Well, I'm now going to give you the full one. The first one wasn't redacted, but now I'm going to give it to you unredacted.’ We were told that the only thing that had been not published initially was, only, the cover page. Why hide the cover page from the public in the first instance? What is so dramatic in the cover page that they felt they should not only hide Spark's name but 425 the name of the Lloyd's Register personnel responsible for the report? If Spark wants to hide and blank out their name... I do not see why they would want to, but why also not reveal the personnel at Lloyd's responsible for the report? Well, because, Mr Speaker, this has all been a game, an irresponsible game and a game that has been played on the people of Gibraltar and at the expense of their security.

430 The Government has held meetings with the parties responsible for the preparation of the report and I can tell the House that what I read you from Nick Brown in the *Chronicle* is only the tip of the iceberg of how unhappy Lloyd's are with the political abuse their report has been the subject of. Read what they have said in public carefully. They are an international firm with a brand to preserve. They are cautious in what they say. They, like us, want to get on to the real work of providing that safe, clean and reliable new power plant that Gibraltar urgently needs. But look at the quote from Nick Brown that there were clearly 435 conflations and distortions of what the report was about. That is a hugely damning statement from the authors of a report about the way it has been presented by the hon. Member opposite and Mr Hammond.

Imagine if someone had said that about something I had said. The hon. Member, perhaps Mr Hammond – I am sure not some others, who have as high a personal regard for me as I have for them, but certainly 440 Mr Feetham and Mr Hammond – would be setting up the gallows in Casemates and contracting a gun carriage to carry me to it from here if anybody was able to accurately say that I had conflated and distorted anything which I presented to this House. It is a good thing the hon. the now backbencher is not in charge at a time when I can be said to have conflated and distorted anything. The political flagellation I would have had would have taken the skin off my back right through to my lungs if I had conflated and distorted 445 something in the view of the person who prepared the report – not in his view but in the view of the person who had prepared the report that I had then misdescribed. Because let's be clear: these are not *my* words about what Mr Feetham and Mr Hammond have presented, these are not the Government's words; these are the words of Lloyd's Register, Nick Brown – a conflation and distortion of their report. Those words in that report in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* on Thursday, 25th June 2015... That is now therefore an objective fact – 450 an objective fact that presents the hook on which the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition has hoist himself, an objective fact from which he cannot get away. The world renowned experts that he so eagerly sought to talk up and rely on, who are rightly recognised as leaders in the field, who are the evangelists for safe LNG in their own areas, they are the ones who have now described the Feetham-Hammond tandem as conflated and distorted in the presentation of their report.

455 Let's go back to the text of the report itself. Why hide the cover page and the inside page? But those two sheets were held back. What those two sheets actually reveal is that whilst a revised and final version of the report was signed off in June last month, the draft report was in fact ready in March and it would appear to me that the Leader of the Opposition was excitedly campaigning on this subject at the time because he thought he had a torpedo that could sink this Government. Because it is clear that he and his high-flying 460 sidekick seemed to believe that the draft report revealed that any form of LNG activity in or near Gibraltar would be catastrophic and an unacceptable level of risk for Gibraltar.

465 But Lloyd's have themselves now said that that is not the case. They would not be working with us if  
the only advice they had was to tell us that Gibraltar cannot touch LNG. What they are going to do is  
analyse final proposals from those bidders bidding and scrutinise them to ensure they are acceptable. And in  
470 already discarded the suitability of the use of the sites identified in the Lloyd's Register report as  
unsuitable. Had Spark's included *our* professionals in the meetings for the report they might have saved  
time and money, because they would not have looked at those sites. But no, Spark worked without  
consultation to the Government authorities. The Government actually, however, publicly told Mr Feetham  
475 on 18th February 2015 – my birthday – that his unidentified experts were working with wrong or  
incomplete information, but they kept on working with wrong or incomplete information. Even in March  
2015, when the Government said it was doing due diligence and would ensure safety and was acting on  
advice from experts, the GSD and Spark could have aired their draft report. Clearly, they were not  
interested in public safety but in holding out until they and the Opposition could play a twisted card to great  
effect.

480 Did the Leader of the Opposition know that that very month, on 26th March 2015, his putative  
philanthropic benefactor, Spark, having attended the meeting with Lloyd's Register where the unsuitability  
of *their* identified locations was the subject of discussion, also then wrote to the Government bidding to  
build a dual-power diesel LNG station? In the same month! In the same week! In addition to this  
independent power producer (IPP) power station they were proposing, they suggested – and this is a quote  
from the Spark document:

'We'

– Spark –

'would also like to discuss the possibility of evaluating investment opportunity of the construction of LNG terminal in Gibraltar.  
We believe that the first step forward in this matter could be entering into negotiations with GOG of the terms of framework  
agreement that will establish the basis of our co-operation'

I am not reading in shorthand – that is the English they used.

485 So, Mr Speaker, whilst they can claim to be philanthropically funding and making available a report  
saying that LNG is a disaster for Gibraltar, they are seeking a deal with the Government on the very subject  
in the same month.

And in their 29th June 2015 statement Spark said this:

'We instructed Lloyd's Register to produce a report in January this year. A draft was then provided that confirmed it was not safe  
to build an installation at the Detached or the North Mole. The final reply was provided in June.'

490 But the sheet that they hid and subsequently published demonstrated that they had the draft in March  
when they were writing to make the proposal. Mr Speaker, the duplicity is *staggering, staggering*, and it  
will be seen as such by members of our community.

It is also clear, Mr Speaker, that Spark were never in the league to provide LNG to Gibraltar. I have  
from even before, in August 2014, a proposal from Spark:

'LNG storage supply and bunkering project description'

– before they even think of going to Lloyd's –

'for HM Government of Gibraltar. LNG storage supply and bunkering.'

and they put our crest on their proposal. A document with the Spark logo and the Government of Gibraltar  
logo proposing LNG storage supply and bunkering! These are not the calibre of people who could ever  
have supplied us with LNG, Mr Speaker. I am quite happy to publish this and to give copies to the hon.  
Gentleman if he wants to see some of the designs.

495 In my meeting with the excellent Chairman of Lloyd's earlier this month one point that was made very  
clear was that the big players in the industry are embracing LNG precisely because they are the ones, the  
blue-chip players, that will be capable of investing in plants, people and standards of the required type to  
provide LNG safely, not just here but other places in the world. These are the world's and Europe's top  
blue-chip experts and those are the people we are talking to – the top blue-chip companies that do this  
work. That is the very high standard of operator that we are working with.

500 In fact, Mr Speaker, there are issues in relation to the Spark report that I am presently not yet able to  
discuss, but I invite the public and parliamentarians of integrity on the Opposition benches to look back on  
all the statements and tweets, the challenges taunting the Government to apologise – they said the  
Government must apologise – and, to do so, to look back in light of the fact that this report has actually now

been available in raw form for months. That is what the Leader of the Opposition says: the raw form of the report has been available for months. And yet after he says that they publish the full report, which contains all of the information I have now gone through.

505 What about the nub of the matter? Was there any grounds for this concern for the public? Well, Mr Speaker, is the full report now in the public domain? I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to state publicly in this House that he truly believes that the full Spark/Lloyd's Register report is in the public domain. I challenge him to say that there are no further important or even trivial elements left out. I invite him –since I must give him the benefit of the doubt, as I did during the course of the Second Reading – to  
510 consider the possibility that *he*, he may have been duped and that the hitherto published versions of the report, those that he referred to as raw, may still actually be less than raw – that they may be cooked and that they may still be redacted versions of what Lloyd's prepared. And let's be clear, Mr Speaker, changing the apparent meaning of a report is a substantial redaction of it, whether you remove many pages of dry data, which may mean nothing to us but may mean a lot to relevant experts, or if you content yourself with  
515 a little bit of doctoring, say with changing the title or the findings with a little bit of word processing. As we have seen just from the cover sheets, a bit of both can remove important elements of the information in a complex technical report. It can produce conflations and distortions.

I invite the Leader of the Opposition, if he has it available, to reveal whether he has a totally different version of the report to the one that is published or to call on Spark to reveal also who sat round the table with the experts from Lloyd's when they came to Gibraltar, because that is also essential. Who sat round the table when Lloyd's came to Gibraltar? Because this is far from being a report delivered by the Leader of the Opposition to save us and our community from a fire bomb that would destroy the north-western face of Gibraltar – another remark that they made.

525 What we have found, and we will continue to work to bring fully into the public eye and the relevant authorities if necessary, is a manipulation of pages of the report and its meaning, to which the Leader of the Opposition is either a party or a victim duped into presenting something to the public that is incomplete, redacted, or simply, to use the words of Lloyd's again, conflated and distorted. Whether he is aware of these redactions already disclosed, of others to be disclosed, of more conflations and distortions, is not something I am asserting. I am asking him: did he know about the conflations and distortions, or was he  
530 duped into conflating and distorting?

Mr Speaker, politically either is as damning, in my view. If he is a dupe, imagine if he were to be duped also again in the future, not by the Russian in Spark but by the Spaniard at the Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores. Were he and Mr Hammond duped or tricked into trying to rally the votes of fear in the housing estates? We now know that they knew that the report was commissioned by a commercial interest, although  
535 they said otherwise. Did they also know about the redactions that have come to light already, or were they tricked on those?

I was quite touched by Mr Hammond's reply to the Hon. Dr Cortes when he cited his expertise and played the card of being a slighted Gibraltarian. I will tell you about hardworking Gibraltarians, Mr Speaker, who have enough on their plate to be firefighting the reckless and damaging problems being caused by Opposition mischief.  
540

The team of Gibraltarian experts from the Gibraltar Electricity Authority, ably led by Manolo Alecio, they give everything in seeking to ensure we have a secure supply of power. They are seeking the best fuel source and the safest working and generating environment. *Their* work is denigrated and disparaged every day by the Leader of the Opposition and those members of the GSD executive who rubbish the work being  
545 done on the safe storage of LNG. *Their* work is denigrated and disparaged every time there is a power cut and Members opposite find it funny and laugh on social media. Whilst our professionals frenziedly and efficiently work to restore power, a twitter 'LOL' is all that some opposite can manage.

The great professionals at the Ministry of the Environment who work hard to reduce emissions, not just with a view to our climate change agenda but also so that we can breathe cleaner air: tell *them* that burning diesel – grimy, smelly diesel – is safer than burning gas, in particular in a geography the size of Gibraltar. They will 'LOL' their heads off as they loll their heads. *Their* work, Mr Speaker, is denigrated and disparaged by the Leader of the Opposition when he gets up and says that he will burn diesel if he is elected.  
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If he wants to forget emissions for a moment, has he even bothered to work out the fines he will have to pay on carbon credits if we continue to burn diesel? And what about how our port officers and our planning officers are denigrated and disparaged when we are told by the Leader of the Opposition or the hon. Member for Atajate that they are allowing unsafe ship-to-ship transfers of LNG, or that they might allow a power station to be located in an unsafe location? Denigration and disparagement is what that amounts to; not of me, but of all of those who put hours of hard work in making sure that what is delivered to Gibraltar is good for our people.  
560

Mr Speaker, the European Union is pressing for clean air on health grounds and that was precisely why the Government turned to look at reducing pollution by using gas as far as possible. Every step of the way

we have stopped and listened to the experts, we have engaged the top players in Europe and the world and we will publish their advice unredacted.

565 Mr Speaker, as I have told the House already, Daniel Carreras, one of the directors of Spark, sat in my office in front of various witnesses and volunteered the statement that the company of which he is a director had nothing to do with the anonymised report that the Leader of the Opposition had released after months of manipulation to pre-empt and torpedo the safety and consultation process already being undertaken by the Government with blue-chip bidders. A week later, Lloyd's Report Register confirmed Spark is indeed  
570 the firm involved.

I ask him today: does the Leader of the Opposition distance himself from a firm that has *blatantly*, blatantly, misled our nation's elected leader, or does he consider that that deceit was acceptable? We may be political rivals, Mr Speaker, but surely when their barefaced untruth is told to Gibraltar's elected leader, whoever he may be, it is a disgrace that this prompts sheer indifference from the person seeking to take that  
575 post in future. Imagine a comparable scene in the United Kingdom: the Russians, a Russian-backed company with a major and lucrative Government contract, working in secret with the official Opposition party; the Russians in a meeting lying to the Prime Minister, to David Cameron, in front of a number of witnesses; the Leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband as he would have been at the last election, says there is nothing wrong with that. Surely not, Mr Speaker.

580 The rules of debate say that I cannot impute an improper motive to any Member of this House. I will not do so in respect of any Member of this House, but if they really wanted to get to the bottom of whether LNG was safe or not, surely they would have wanted to get the Government's input so that the report they prepared might be accurate instead of the nonsense they have put to Lloyd's and which they have subsequently conflated and distorted. Again, those involved in the preparation of the Lloyd's report were  
585 surprised at how it had been presented by the Opposition: a very narrow and early-stage assessment of a very specific point being generalised as a global statement on LNG and the possibility of it being used in Gibraltar, whether to supply fuel to the power station or to be bunkered.

In fact, Mr Speaker, I know that it will be difficult to believe – and given the way that Mr Carreras behaved, maybe this is not worth the paper in which I quote it from – but even the totally discredited Spark said this in their press release of 29th June:  
590

'Spark did provide Government with our vision of building an LNG bunkering facility at the Detached Mole. As we have said in one of our earlier public statements,'

– on the 29th June they say this –

'we believe there is a safe way and location for an LNG installation in Gibraltar. In this regard we note that the GSD is sceptical about the use of LNG whilst we are not.'

So even Spark, even the director of Spark who is now allegedly a long-term member of the GSD, who supported the Leader of the Opposition with this report and an alleged £100,000 – he should really look after him, Mr Speaker, because I understand there are not many longstanding members of the GSD left – even he does not appear to agree with the one platform on which the hon. Member has said he will fight the  
595 next election, which is 'No to LNG'. You really could not make this stuff up, Mr Speaker.

We, and I include there our experienced technicians, were surprised at some of the elements missing from the report as released by the GSD – open-source comparable final reports by Lloyd's Register under the same team leadership that we now know, when the front sheet was finally disclosed, when the unredacted report was finally published in a further apparently unredacted form... under the same  
600 leadership, all of their reports include published detailed worksheets of the meetings that take place: where they take place, who is participating, what their qualifications and expertise is, even down to whether or not they were there for the whole of a meeting or just part of it. All of that information is always published with a Lloyd's Register report. It is not published with this one – even this one, which is prepared by the same team that publishes it in all the other instances.

605 And so this highlights also a fresh question for the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition and for Spark – for him in reply in this debate: who was taken to those meetings? In any normal process the key stakeholders would have been present at those meetings – the GEA, the Port and the Ministry of the Environment: I want to put something to the Government, I have brought an expert from outside, I want to ensure that the information I provide to the experts is the right one to prepare the report – bring in the key  
610 stakeholders. Those are the ones that you see reflected, Mr Speaker, in all the other Lloyd's Register reports, and yet here those worksheets do not form part of what is published. What is it that we are being told? Who were the experts present in the room with the experts from Lloyd's Register? Who sat round the table with the Lloyd's team? Who introduced them to the Lloyd's Register researcher when she was here? More and more questions for Spark and for the Leader of the Opposition to answer. And the  
615 issue that they have not yet dealt with: how do the Leader of the Opposition and Mr Hammond deal with

the fact that they said that this report had not been prepared by a commercial interest, and yet we now know it was prepared exactly by a commercial interest with a vested interest in LNG, as Spark have subsequently confirmed and have done so again in their 29th June remarks?

620 Mr Speaker, when one is faced with such barefaced inconsistencies it is indeed a pity that parliamentary practice does not allow one to say that persons in such situations are no more than barefaced liars, but one must observe such rules and we cannot therefore be so clear and explicit in describing the obvious untruths elicited and identified.

625 Mr Speaker, as far as how this should have been handled by the Leader of the Opposition if he were genuinely concerned about the safe use of LNG, you do not have to look as far as the UK to see how things should be done. Perhaps hon. Members would care to recall the Giraldi inquiry report. When that report was made public, Members of the Opposition did not need to read it in the press. I believe I acted entirely properly in making a copy available to news editors and to the Leader of the Opposition 48 hours before it was published. I made it available to the press so that they could properly prepare to ask questions at the press conference, and I made it available to the Leader of the Opposition himself.

630 If there was a real concern about LNG and not just a political game being played, why didn't the Leader of the Opposition call me, like I had him, and say, 'Fabian,' – because I know that calling me Chief Minister sticks in his throat – 'Fabian, I have what I consider to be a worrying report available about LNG. You should read it before I hold a press conference in the next 48 hours.' Or in the next 24 hours, or in the next hour, or in the next half hour, or after the press conference: 'Fabian, I've just published this report to the media. It's not going to be up on our website for another five hours. Here is a copy.'

635 Did he do that, Mr Speaker? Not a bit of it. He was not prepared to treat me with the courtesy that I had treated him. He denigrated and disparaged himself by not extending to me the courtesy I had extended to him. I offer him advanced sight of a report; he does not actually put his report on the website for hours after his press conference. I offer him an olive branch in December last year and I get vitriolic attacks as from the beginning of the New Year. That is what most denigrates and disparages the hon. Member in the eyes of the public.

645 Finally, Mr Speaker, reliable information presented to the Government on a number of fronts relating to the Spark Group of Companies, including the Lloyd's report, have prompted investigations and this may require action to be taken in the coming weeks. I do not wish to pre-empt the outcome of these investigations, nor indeed do I think it would be appropriate to do so, save to say that the Government is very confident of the stance it has taken throughout. I do not want to comment on other investigations which are ongoing and which are not being carried out by the Government. We will rely on the experts to advise on and ensure safety and I would invite the Leader of the Opposition, before further relying on the Spark report in his reply, to consider its provenance and the real motives of Spark in providing him with the documentation that they gave to him, especially given that they now appear to be at odds over the future of LNG as a safe fuel for Gibraltar.

650 The Government and Lloyd's Register, acting independently and doing what they do best, which is safety, will show in the coming months that the Opposition presentation of the Lloyd's Register preliminary report was just, as described by them, a conflation and distortion which our community can safely disregard. But the judgement of the public will be harsh indeed on the Leader of the Opposition. The public will not soon forget that the people he said were the top experts in the world say that he has conflated and distorted their report; for those who support – those who *he* said support – his 'No to LNG' platform are actually now saying vigorously the opposite.

655 The public will not ignore the circus of a Spark report which Spark does not agree with. The public will not forgive the clown who told an untruth to the face of the Chief Minister and who the Leader of the Opposition chooses to believe. Indeed, the question of who is the greater fool, the fool or the fool who follows him, may soon come into sharper focus in relation to the Leader of the Opposition if he has just been a dupe for interests far beyond our shores.

665 Mr Speaker, Mr Feetham has called for me to apologise over my statement that the report has been redacted. It has already been proved to have been put in the public domain with key parts missing. Its presentation has been described as worse than redacted but as distorted by those who have prepared it, since at one time it was claimed that the GSD actually commissioned the report with Spark funding. That point could be resolved by him instructing Lloyd's Register or calling upon Spark, if it is the client, to have Lloyd's Register Energy release the full and original unredacted and unexpurgated report directly to Mr Speaker so that all Members may have access to a copy, the provenance of which there can then be no doubt as to and with nothing missing for all our scrutinies. I call on him now to do so.

670 Mr Speaker, the Government has acted responsibly throughout. We condemn the conflation and distortion which Lloyd's Register has stated that Mr Feetham, Mr Hammond and Spark have engaged in, and in agreeing with the way that Lloyd's Register has characterised the abuse and misuse of its report in this way I commend the amendment of the motion to this House. (*Banging on desks*)

**Mr Speaker:** I now propose the question in the terms of the amendment to the motion moved by the Chief Minister.

The Hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

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**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, the Hon. the Chief Minister – and it has not stuck in my throat to call him such – has spent 30 to 45 minutes of his speech trying to justify his outrageous allegations during his Budget reply the last time we debated this matter.

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Let's be clear about it, Mr Speaker: he used the Budget reply to turn Parliament into a kangaroo court, making allegations of the worst sort against his principal political opponent without any shred of evidence at all. And let's be clear as well that the reason why he turned Parliament into a kangaroo court during his Budget reply was because he wanted to destroy the reputation of his principal political opponent. He was not concerned about truth. He was not concerned about debating the issues. It was a blatant attempt at character assassination in making vile allegations in this House about corruption and about the Leader of the Opposition being involved in a plot to cut the electricity to families, to babies, to mothers and to businesses in Gibraltar. Unprecedented, Mr Speaker, in this House. It has never been done.

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When he reflects on those words I want him too to reflect on the first speech that the hon. Gentleman gave as Leader of the GSLP in 2011, when he said this:

'The people of Gibraltar are tired of the politics of insults and innuendo. The people of Gibraltar want a contest of ideas, policies and commitments. This is not a time for mud slinging or empty promises. It is not a time for spin and propaganda. It is not a time for character assassinations. That is the politics of the past and it will be rejected by our people.'

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Despite those laudable words in 2011, he proceeded to undertake the biggest character assassination that we have ever witnessed in this House – protected, it has to be said, by parliamentary privilege. Mr Speaker, I too want to take him to some of the words that he used in order to describe me during his Budget reply. In a half frenzy he said this, and I quote:

'He'

– referring to me –

'has been rumbled in having taken cash for questioning the safety of LNG as a fuel for Gibraltar! £100,000, Mr Speaker!... cash for questioning.

Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, when it comes to accepting cash to question the Government, Members of Parliament in the United Kingdom have resigned for less than what the hon. Gentleman has been found doing...'

He then said:

'Their'

– referring to me and Mr Hammond –

'report'

– the Lloyd's report –

'is one of people who will get an awful lot of money if we are not able to do the right thing for our community; they...'

– referring to me and to Mr Hammond –

'get elected, they cancel the plans and then they give these people'

– Spark –

'either another opportunity to bid or have already done a deal that they are going to give them the power station, or the facility.'

A vile allegation, Mr Speaker, of corruption – for that is what it amounts to.

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I may be many things, and the hon. Gentlemen opposite delight in reminding me of my political past and the fact that I started off my political career in the party that my father founded, ending up as the Leader of the Gibraltar Social Democrats. I take all those criticisms on the chin, despite the fact that there are many Members on the Government benches who have also changed political parties, some more than

705 twice, but when I retire from politics people will criticise me for that or they will be indifferent to me, or they will think that I am competent or incompetent, but they will never say that Daniel Feetham was corrupt, because that is not an alleyway that I am prepared to walk into.

And then, Mr Speaker, he said:

‘I do not mind telling the public, Mr Speaker, that on the night of the Germany game, whilst the Germany game was still on, because of the power cut I was, with Manolo Alecio and the Minister responsible, actually down at the Spark Plant, down at Gibelec to try to understand what was going wrong. Of course I did not know really what was happening at the time, as we now know – in the light of the new dawn that has shone even on what has been happening and going on between the Leader of the Opposition and Spark...

You see, Mr Speaker, what we have here in this election year... is a disgruntled company conspiring with the Leader of the Opposition to turn an election. There is, Mr Speaker, I can tell the nation today, a potential interference with critical national infrastructure. We are investigating whether the power cuts we have experienced have been brought about in order to destabilise the Government at a time when the Opposition wanted to have a debate about power generation and its future.

I am not a conspiracy theorist... But the coincidences that we have experienced with the failure of the Spark Plant and the timing of it, as well as the timing of the collusion between the Leader of the Opposition and Spark, leads us to investigate these things. Let us be clear, Mr Speaker, our gaming companies, our lawyers, our accountants, our insurance companies, our finance centre, all our business leaders, the elderly, the infirm, those with babies and young children, not least our football fans will never forgive the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition if we have suffered power cuts to push the issue of power generation further up the political agenda.’

710 Mr Speaker, it is true that when I raised the Point of Order, he then took half a step back and he said, ‘Well, if the Leader of the Opposition says so,’ but it is incredulous that a Chief Minister, that a Leader of the House, knowing the rules of the House, can make an allegation of that nature without having a shred of evidence at his disposal. Because what you do not do – unless of course the objective of the exercise is what I said at the beginning of my speech: the character assassination of your principal political opponent – is bring allegations of that nature into this Parliament knowing that there is nothing that your political opponent can do about it, because he is protected by Parliamentary privilege, without a shred of evidence, 715 Mr Speaker. That has never ever happened in the history of this Parliament, Mr Speaker.

And of course he had no evidence of collusion between me and Spark and the power cuts. What the hon. Gentleman is actually keeping from the nation is that Spark do not even operate the temporary power generators, because the temporary power generators are operated by a renowned international company, Energyst Caterpillar, with their own employees, and Spark are effectively a go-between between the 720 Government and Energyst Caterpillar. And for his theory – without evidence, that he took a half a step backwards, because he knew the mistake that he had made, and he still has not apologised for it – is that for his theory to be correct, there has to be a conspiracy between the Leader of the Opposition, Energyst Caterpillar, a renowned company with interests all over the world, and Spark.

725 And in those same press releases that the Hon. the Chief Minister has referred to from Spark they also say – I do not know, I am not a party to it – that Energyst Caterpillar have investigated the source of the electricity cuts that he complains about and that they have concluded that it did not terminate within their power plant, and that a third party has also been brought in in order to investigate those very same power cuts and that they too have concluded that it emanated outside the power plant.

730 Mr Speaker, what he also does not refer to is this: that prior to the Spark power generators being brought to Gibraltar – I think it was in April or May 2014 – the Government had in place temporary power turbines, and we know from answers to questions in this House that out of the 40 or so power cuts that were experienced by Gibraltar during the time that those temporary power turbines were in place, half of those were due to defects within the power turbines. That is the Government’s own answers within this Parliament. Well, is that too as a result of some conspiracy between the Leader of the Opposition and 735 whoever manages those temporary power turbines? Certainly not Spark, Mr Speaker.

He has consistently said that this election is going to be the dirtiest election on record. Well, let me tell the hon. Gentleman it is certainly not going to be dirty because of anything that we are doing or intend to do on this side of the House, and my guiding philosophy in relation to how I conduct the next election campaign will be *his* words in *his* maiden speech as leader of the GSLP, Mr Speaker. Those are going to be 740 my guiding words as to how I conduct the election campaign.

745 But Mr Speaker, strip away the kangaroo court, strip away the overt purpose of his Budget reply and much of what he has said today, the character assassination of the Leader of the Opposition, and what is this about? What *is* this debate about? Well, it is about safety and it is about location. If something does go wrong at either the LNG power station or the bunkering installation, what is the effect on our schools? What is the effect on our hospital? And what is the effect on people living in the vicinity of those installations? That is the real issue at stake, Mr Speaker. Everything else is absolutely irrelevant, because no matter how much one reduces risk – and we have accepted and indeed the Lloyd’s report itself provides that risk can be substantially reduced – what you cannot reduce is consequence. What you cannot reduce and



mitigate are the consequences of an accident at an LNG bunkering installation or an LNG power station to the people living in those areas.

The hon. Gentleman, not today, but on other occasions... One of his critiques of the Lloyd's report is that the Lloyd's report is based on two tanks of 10,000 cubic meters. What he does not say is, of course, that the Government came out and invited expressions of interest for a tank with a minimum capacity of 12,000 cubic metres, a minimum capacity, and the Spark report is based on two tanks of 10,000 cubic metres each. But what he does not say – or I do not know whether he has not read the report – is that the report assumes that there are safety measures in place to actually reduce any leakage of LNG to between 60 seconds and I think it is five minutes. Between 60 seconds and five minutes it is not possible, Mr Speaker, for 20,000 cubic metres of LNG to be released, so the size of the actual storage facility in many respects is irrelevant if one takes the premise of the report at face value.

Mr Speaker, what he has singularly failed to do is to alleviate the concerns – which is *his* responsibility as Chief Minister of Gibraltar – of the parents of those children who go to those schools, of the patients who use the hospital and of the people who live in the vicinity of the LNG bunkering installation and the LNG power station, because four years down the road – I will come back to the history of this in a moment – four years down the road from when he first took the decision that cancelled the GSD contract to build a diesel power station in Lathbury Barracks, the only report that has been published is the report that the GSD has published. That is the reality and that is the reality that he seeks to wriggle away from, because it was *his* responsibility – not mine, but *his* responsibility as Chief Minister of Gibraltar – to alleviate those reasonable concerns of those people, and he has done everything in his power to attempt to divert attention from that central issue of safety, to attempt to discredit the Lloyd's report with wild allegations, which he has repeated today, that the Lloyd's report had been substantially redacted.

In his interview the day before his Budget reply what he said was that the Lloyd's report had been substantially redacted by some 80 pages, Mr Speaker. That is what he said. So when people listen to his further allegations of further redactions... What happened to his original allegation that the Lloyd's report had been substantially redacted by 80 pages? And he has challenged me to come to this House to say whether the report that has been published by Spark was unredacted or a final version of that report.

I can tell the Hon. the Chief Minister that I have seen e-mails, because I had insisted on disclosure of those e-mails between Lloyd's and Spark, where Lloyd's tell Spark, 'We enclose the final version of our report' and the attachment is exactly the same as the attachment of the report that has now been disclosed by Lloyd's. And so from 80 pages of redactions, which was the allegation that he made the day before his Budget reply, we now find that the only page that was missing was, I think, the second or third page, which identified Spark. That is it, Mr Speaker, nothing else.

If he has evidence that the Lloyd's report has been substantially redacted in other ways, let him bring it to the House. I am telling him that what I have seen in the communication between Lloyd's and Spark is that the final version has been disclosed. And he knows very well, Mr Speaker, that if there had been any smoking guns in the comparative of the final report that has been published by Spark and the one that we published with the second page missing, he would have already brought it to this House – and he has not been able to do so, and all he continues to do is refer to innuendo and further redactions and words missing here and words missing there.

I do not know, Mr Speaker, where he gets it all from, because he gave an interview on GBC – and I will come to that in a moment on another point – and he said, 'Lloyd's, for confidentiality reasons, cannot talk about the Spark report,' but then he says... again he infers that the Lloyd's report had been substantially redacted and that Lloyd's are conducting a comparison between the report that we published and the one that Spark has published.

Well, Mr Speaker, what is it? Is it that Lloyd's, because of confidentiality reasons, cannot talk about the report? Or is it that the version... in the same sentence a contradiction? Or is it that Lloyd's have communicated to the hon. Gentleman that they are conducting a comparative between the two? I can tell him now, Mr Speaker, that based on the e-mail that I have seen containing the attachment of the final report, the one that Spark has published is exactly the same as the one that we have published.

He then said, about the Lloyd's report, that the Lloyd's report was based on a single-skin tank, and we now know that it was not based on a single-skin tank. Again, I do not know where the hon. Gentleman gets his information from.

Mr Speaker, I want to pay tribute I know that he has become almost a bogeyman, a *bête noir* of the hon. Gentleman and some of his colleagues opposite, but I want to pay tribute to the Chairman of the GSD, Trevor Hammond, for his hard work, for his dedication and for the work in particular that he has done in relation to drawing attention to the risks of LNG to the community in Gibraltar. I hope that the Chairman of the GSD, who has been doing all that hard work without being a Member of this House, will soon join me in this House as a Member of Parliament, as part of a GSD slate. Whether it is on this side of the House or on that side of the House only the people of Gibraltar will decide, but I wish to pay tribute to his hard work today.

810 Mr Speaker, because he has singularly failed to alleviate the concerns of all those people in relation to the safety of LNG and the safety in particular of LNG bunkering at the Detached Mole or the North Mole, or the LNG power station barely 300 metres away from Waterport Terraces, he obviously has to turn this debate into a Punch & Judy show, or turn it, as he did during his Budget reply, into a personalised debate with no other purpose than to character assassinate his main political opponent.

815 The reality is that the Government has played footloose with the safety of people. The Government has mismanaged the issue of power supply, and to demonstrate that and to make good on that case I want to go back to the beginning, because their manifesto commitment in relation to this is as follows. It is at page 32 of his manifesto, under ‘Power generation/Alternative Energy’, and they said this – this is what they promised:

820 ‘We will ensure that Gibraltar’s power needs are provided for and any binding agreements entered into in respect of the new power station will be respected.’

Any binding agreements entered into – in other words by the GSD Government – in respect of the new power station will be respected, and the bottom line that he cannot get away from, either today or indeed prior to the election, is that if he had kept to that manifesto promise our power station at Lathbury Barracks would have been built by now and the power cuts would have been a thing of the past. Hence why he has to displace and dish out blame to everybody else for his own failure, Mr Speaker, for his own failure.

825 From the very beginning he has tried to justify the breaking of that manifesto promise. He has sought to argue – indeed, he has alluded to it today, but specifically in relation to the Lathbury Barracks power station he has sought to argue that the Lathbury Barracks power station had these huge chimneys spouting smoke, as if this were the industrial revolution in the 19th century.

830 I ask the people of Gibraltar: would a responsible Opposition, as they then were, or a responsible party or parties would they have agreed to commit themselves to honouring our Lathbury Barracks power station if contracts had been signed, if it was as bad as they say it was? Of course not, Mr Speaker! Of course not, because by then he had already seen the plans. By then he had already seen the environmental impact assessment. It is a contrived attempt, as much that the hon. Gentleman contrives, to basically just simply justify the fact that he broke *his* promise to the people of Gibraltar to honour any binding agreements that the GSD Government had signed in relation to the Lathbury Barracks power station.

835 Mr Speaker, when during the Budget speech last year, in 2014, he announced to this House that the contract had been awarded to the French company that we ourselves had contracted, that had won the tender for the Lathbury Barracks power station, for £77 million, he gave an interview in the lobby of this Parliament – yes, in the lobby of this Parliament – just after his Budget speech; and pointing to the fact that the GSD Lathbury Barracks power station would cost £120 million and their power station was going to cost £77 million, he said this, and I quote:

‘One is tempted to ask who was going to pocket the half the difference it was going to cost’

845 Another allegation, Mr Speaker, of corruption; this time not against me but against those in the GSD Government that was handling this particular project. And as he well knew when he made that comment, intended as it was to sow the seeds in people’s minds that somebody within the GSD had pocketed nearly £70 million, as he *well* knew, the £120 million that we had contracted with a French company for the new power station was not only for the new power station. It included the new power station, storage facilities, an entirely new distribution network throughout the entirety of Gibraltar, and a new building/offices for Gibelec. How on earth he can make that kind of allegation and keep a straight face... Well, Mr Speaker, only he can do it, because I certainly cannot and I hope that I am never ever in a position to, poker faced, make that kind of allegation about a previous Government without a shred of evidence.

850 But, Mr Speaker, it is on the safety issue that his Government stands politically condemned. When he decided to break that contract – at a cost to the taxpayer of £5 million – that we had signed with the French company, he announced in 2012 that the Government had decided to build an LNG power station at the North Mole. So the Government took a policy decision to build an LNG power station at the North Mole in 2012. At the beginning of 2013 the Government went out to tender for that LNG power station at the North Mole and tenders closed on 30th May 2013. We know, because of statements that have been made in this House and outside it, that the very first time that the hon. Gentleman made contact with their so-called experts, their Health and Safety Executive, was on 7th June, because in their carefully worded press statement at the end of last year they said that the first contact with the Health and Safety Executive was on 7th June. The Health and Safety Executive came to Gibraltar for the first time in January 2014, Mr Speaker. It is not possible for the Government to have had any kind of expert report on the safety of LNG prior to, at the very earliest, January 2014, but it could not have done it before the tenders for the LNG power station closed in May 2013.

865 I ask, Mr Speaker: what kind of a responsible Government makes the policy decision to locate an LNG power station at the North Mole in 2012, goes out to tender and awards the tender without even having expert reports? That is the bottom line here about the way that the Government has handled this particular issue.

870 Mr Speaker, throughout 2013 and 2014 – and he can go back to our press releases and he can refer to them – we had reserved our position in relation to LNG. We had reserved our position in relation to the safety implications of building an LNG power station at the North Mole. But what really brought this debate to a head was the disclosure, during our leaders’ debate in December 2014, that the Government was about to enter into contracts, or was exploring entering into contracts, with commercial entities in order to allow them – not the Government, *them* – to build LNG storage facilities that would then supply the power station but in return allow those entities to do LNG bunkering in Gibraltar.

875 That is when we took and started to take a more robust position in relation to this, Mr Speaker, and it is then that we started to ask, ‘Well, where are all the safety reports in relation to all of this?’ and on 18th February 2014, in press release 95/2015, the Government said this ‘all safety reports associated with the proposed power station’ had been obtained. So all the safety reports associated with the proposed power station had been obtained.

880 And then he said:

‘We are not in a position to publish these reports at this time due to the commercially-sensitive nature of the information they contain,’

– Mr Speaker, the dreaded ‘commercially sensitive information’, which they constantly deploy in order to refuse answering questions in this House and which they have deployed on a plethora of other occasions, in order to refuse to answer questions about Credit Finance.

885 Fast-forward four months, two weeks ago, and the hon. Gentleman giving an interview with GBC – which *everyone* is talking about, Mr Speaker – everyone is talking about, where he says *that there were no expert reports*, that there were no expert reports, that the proposal was still not mature. How mature do proposals need to be when the Government has already allocated the contract for the power station?

890 The reality is that four years down the line his Government has only just published an environmental impact assessment – only just this week. There has been no consultation about the proposals four years after he made the policy decision to locate an LNG power station at the North Mole, and indeed two years at the very least after he has made the policy decision of allowing LNG bunkering at the Detached or the North Mole. And there are no expert reports, Mr Speaker, so he cannot make good his assertions, or the assertions of a Minister for the Environment, that the proposed LNG bunkering installations in particular are 100% safe. He cannot make out that assertion.

895 Returning to my original question: if something does go wrong, what is the effect on our schools? What is the effect on our hospital? What is the effect on the people living in the vicinity? Because I would have expected any reasonably responsible Government to have made sure that it knows the answer to that before it makes policy decisions about locating LNG power stations at the North Mole and bunkering installations at either the Detached or the North Mole. I would have expected that from a reasonably responsible Government.

900 The reality is that he cannot provide the assurances, Mr Speaker, that people living in the area want from *him*; not from me, but from *him*, Mr Speaker, from him. He may say, that of course, that you cannot eliminate risk altogether. That is precisely what we have been saying from the very beginning. You cannot eliminate risk, but you cannot also mitigate consequence in the context of the locations where they have decided to locate this LNG bunkering installation and this LNG power station, because I have already told him that the assumptions in the Lloyd’s report are based on the release between 60 seconds and five minutes. It is not even based on a total release of the contents of those two tanks.

905 Mr Speaker, yes, we are going to fight the next election ‘No to LNG in these locations’ – of course we are going to do that. We do not believe that playing footloose – because that is what the hon. Gentleman is doing – with the safety of these individuals, of the people living there is the right way to go about power supply in Gibraltar, and I give the people of that area – of Westside One, Westside Two, of Waterport Terraces and all those who will be affected if there is ever, God forbid, an accident at the LNG bunkering installation or indeed the LNG power station – I give them a commitment that if we are elected into Government we will not go ahead with these bunkering installations in these locations, and we will not go ahead with an LNG power station at the North Mole.

915 Mr Speaker, before he says to me, ‘Ah, because you see he might consider it in a different location,’ no-one has placed before me any kind of plans whatsoever at all about locating an LNG bunkering installation anywhere else in Gibraltar, let alone anywhere else in Gibraltar that is safe. But of course if the Government were to come to us and they were to say to us, ‘Well, look, instead of doing it at the Detached Mole or the North Mole we are prepared to look at LNG bunkering somewhere else,’ we are prepared to sit

920 down with the Government and look at those locations. We are prepared to look at any location that the Government has in mind on its merits.

925 But the Government is not going to be looking at alternatives, Mr Speaker. The Government is hell bent on moving ahead with its plans in this area. It does not take a rocket scientist to tell him that that is a very bad idea indeed, and I hope for his sake that there is never an accident in the future in these locations, because he is going to have to defend himself in the light of all the comments that he has made during the last four years, and in particular the comments that he has made this year.

930 Mr Speaker, I leave my contribution in this debate with this. The hon. Gentleman keeps on referring to Lloyd's and how Lloyd's are disappointed and how Lloyd's claim that the report was distorted. Well, until I actually see and hear it directly from Lloyd's that they are accusing the GSD of having distorted or conflated their report, there is nothing that I will believe, certainly not the way that the hon. Gentleman seeks to distort quotes from Lloyd's.

935 He has also, for example, claimed that Lloyd's are very angry about the way that the GSD has made use of the report. I have consistently said from the very beginning that Lloyd's Register are not against the use of LNG either here in Gibraltar or anywhere else in the world. Of course not. Lloyd's are in the business of producing safety reports and they have produced safety reports in relation to LNG in many places across the world. The debate is not about LNG *per se*; it is about LNG in these locations.

940 And let me tell him this about this allegation that Lloyd's are concerned about the way that the GSD have dealt with this particular issue, or conflated or distorted their report: before the report was published – in other words the Lloyd's report was published – I met the expert who produced the Lloyd's report and I told him very, very clearly and left him in absolutely no doubt at all that if Spark provided me with a copy of that report that the GSD would make the report public. I told the expert, Mr Speaker, so there has been no misleading by the GSD of anyone – not Lloyd's and not the people of Gibraltar. (*Banging on desk*)

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker –

945 **Mr Speaker:** Does any hon. Member wish to –

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Before we carry on with the debate, given the hour – it may be that there are other Members who want to contribute – I am going to propose that the House do now recess until three o'clock for the debate to continue.

950 **Mr Speaker:** The House will now recess to three this afternoon.

*The House recessed at 1.23 p.m.*