



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

**AFTERNOON SESSION: 5.00 p.m. – 7.45 p.m.**

**Gibraltar, Tuesday, 8th November 2016**

## **Contents**

Private Members' motions .....	2
High-quality apprenticeships – Introduction to meet needs of existing and emerging businesses – Amended motion carried .....	2
Adjournment .....	32
<i>The House adjourned at 7.45 p.m.</i> .....	32

# The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 5.00 p.m.*

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

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

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

### **High-quality apprenticeships – Introduction to meet needs of existing and emerging businesses – Amended motion carried**

**Clerk:** We continue with Private Members' motions. The Hon. E J Phillips.

- 5 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move the motion standing in my name, which reads as follows:

*This House notes that we must tackle the serious skills deficit and the real need for the introduction of high-quality apprenticeships to meet the needs of existing and emerging business; acknowledges the statement by Unite the Union on 27th October 2015 for the introduction of advanced apprenticeships to counteract the skills cliff edge and the growth in substandard apprenticeship provision in Gibraltar; acknowledges the statement by the Chamber of Commerce during the 2015 General Election campaign calling on the Government to give assistance to private sector business which provides apprenticeship or other forms of vocational training; acknowledges the statement presented to all hon. Members of the House on 22nd September 2016 by concerned members of our community calling for the introduction of high-quality apprenticeships for young people; and calls on the Government to introduce high-quality apprenticeships in traditional crafts and trades as well as the creation of a modern apprenticeship programme for the training of skills in technology and allied services.*

Mr Speaker, I have brought this motion to the House because I feel, together with my colleagues on this side of the House, passionate about the creation of better opportunities for our young people.

- 10 We, as a community, need to move fast in terms of the provision of quality training of skills, otherwise we risk being left behind in the skills race if we do not act now. It is, in my view, about quality and quantity.

- 15 Brexit presents the biggest challenge to our community in recent times, and the best investment in times of uncertainty is the investment we make in our own human capital. We must look to Brexit-proofing our community and we must make sure that our people are well trained and well skilled to face the challenges that may well come.

- 20 We believe that one of the crucial ways to create sustainable and long-term growth in our economy is to build a well trained workforce. Not everyone is destined to complete a university degree – and this was talked about at length by my hon. Friend Mr Llamas, who talked about pressurising young people to complete university degrees – and we must, as a community, strive

to focus the development of our training programme and the development of skills through an apprenticeship programme which delivers on the demand for traditional skills and new modern skills, so that those who do not wish to pursue higher education, for whatever reason, can make a contribution to our community and have a fulfilling and successful career. Higher education is important, and in the context of the debate that we had today in relation to co-education, most of us, if not all of us in this room, are beneficiaries of an excellent educational support and access to higher education. But it would, in our view, be a grave dereliction of our duty if we continued to neglect those who would benefit from the development of skills-based work. In our view, apprenticeship and skills should be at the top of the agenda, running in parallel with education. We must create a gold standard in the training of skills.

I have long been vocal about the training of skills, before my time in this House and now, and the subject of skills, and we have advocated for the development of apprenticeships. I, together with my hon. Friends on this side of the House, have worked very hard to deliver our message on the development of the modern-day apprenticeship and we have received widespread support from the community at large.

Mr Speaker, I know the Minister with responsibility for training does not share our vision. In fact, in this House Minister Bossano has positively rejected our proposals and suggestions. It is regrettable that we cannot have a meeting of minds on this most important subject with the hon. Gentleman. I respect the hon. Gentleman's view, but I cannot agree with it and agree with the direction that Minister Bossano is taking training and the skills within our community. I respectfully invite him to put aside for one moment his prejudices about the creation of a modern apprenticeship and pause and reflect on what we are saying.

I know that amongst the Government there are like-minded thinkers on the question of apprenticeships and skills, and the presence of Minister Costa at the Gibraltar Start-up Community brings a new sense of optimism on this side of the House that skills development is finally going to be taken seriously and given the attention it so rightly deserves. I like to believe that there is much that we have in common on the development of a training strategy that meets the needs of young people and provides them with vital opportunities. With that in mind, and where we can, I would welcome depoliticising this issue on both sides of the House, recognising, as Unite the Union and the Chamber of Commerce have done, the serious skills cliff edge facing our community. We also need to recognise the efforts of those outside this House for raising the issue by campaigning outside this House on 22nd September 2016.

Let us not ignore the clear and unequivocal calls by the majority of people in our community on this issue, the calls by young people, parents, educators, union representatives and business leaders. Unite the Union this week repeated their request for an alternative training system and described the existing minimal training mechanism as inadequate. We must not as a Parliament, underestimate the strength of feeling on this issue, and I would invite the Government to join us and the rest of the community and actively explore ways in which we can together develop an apprenticeship programme which meets the wider needs of our community. That, in essence, is the purpose of this motion and it is hoped that the Government takes the motion in the spirit that it is intended.

When looking at apprenticeships and speaking to many people I have been reminded of the dockyard apprenticeship. People have spoken of the loss of key skills and the demise of dockyard apprenticeships and look to it with great affection. The world has changed, but there is much that we can learn from how these apprenticeships worked in the past, and I am sure the Hon. Minister will no doubt in his intervention provide us with a detailed analysis of the workability or otherwise of a dockyard type of apprenticeship in 2016 and its applicability to other trades and the modern apprenticeship.

We live in challenging times and it is our view that we must coldly assess where we are with skills and where we need to be. This is not about conducting a skills survey and plugging the skills gap. It is much, much more: it is about a 20-year plan for creating opportunity for all and supporting sustainable growth.

I have spoken to many technology companies who want to recruit our people; and, despite the clear interest from young people, they often lack basic skills which could have been supported at school and ultimately by the Government. Our new industries must be supported with a skilled and adaptable workforce – and we have been found wanting.

Mr Speaker, the emphasis is wrong, in my view. It must start with the early years and move right through our educational system, in which apprenticeship is not characterised as an alternative stream for under-achievers but a clear pathway to a successful career for those who do not want to pursue higher education. Each and every one of our young people represents a golden opportunity for our community and we cannot afford to let any of them down.

If we are, as a community, going to encourage new business to establish a presence in Gibraltar, then our people should be those we look to recruit. We are only as good as our people and our best investment is in our human capital. Therefore, I would call on the Government to strive for the introduction of a high-quality apprenticeship in traditional skills and modern programmes in technology and allied services. Our people should be the first choice because they are the best, and to do that we need to shoulder the responsibility in partnership with business to do that.

Mr Speaker, I commend the motion to the House. *(Banging on desks)*

**Mr Speaker:** I now propose the question in the terms of the motion moved by the Hon. Elliott Phillips.

The Hon. Neil Costa.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition this afternoon ... I am sure I heard him say that he thought that our contributions today were acerbic and abrasive. But, Mr Speaker, this Chamber has always enjoyed robust argument and counterargument, and I do not think there is anything wrong with the Government Ministers standing in this House to strongly put our points of view across, especially when the motions presented by the hon. Members opposite implicitly set out a premise which we just cannot accept.

By setting out a motion that somehow suggests that this Government has not done anything on training requires a robust response, and for all of the reasons that I shall set out we will prove this afternoon that in fact this Government has done more for training and more for employment in five years than the GSD dreamt of doing and never did in 16 years. **(A Member: Hear, hear.)**

Mr Speaker, if there is anyone inside or outside of this House who does not need a friend and colleague to speak to an Opposition motion which he is primarily addressing, it is of course a redoubtable giant of Gibraltar politics, which is my hon. friend Mr Joe Bossano. **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** And if I stand, Mr Speaker, it is only because I know now, from bone marrow experience, that he has a genetic inability to set out for the record everything that he has done – and I have no such qualms in setting out every single achievement that the Hon. Minister Bossano has set for training, for employment, for the present, for the future and for the prosperity of our small nation, **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** and of course I do so without ever having mentioned to Minister Bossano that I intended to speak in such terms.

Mr Speaker, the Opposition's motion as currently drafted, implicit in what is being said, is nothing more than, I dare say, a sad, uninspiring, science-fictional piece of regrettably predictable partisan political theatre, and it has to be said that it is science fictional –

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** The second one today.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, indeed, Mr Speaker. Science fictional because on these benches we are unsure how this Government or indeed any other Government can train our compatriots for a business that is emerging – short of course subscribing to *Harry Potter's Book of Wizardry*, asking

125 for a fully functioning crystal ball, or indeed graduating from a yet-to-emerge Masters in political  
voodoo.

Mr Speaker, we deal in facts, and when the hon. Gentleman opposite talks to me about vision  
I must throw my hands to my head and remember the Theatre Royal hole – a vision of the GSD;  
a £24 million airport which ended up being an £85 million air terminal – another vision of the  
130 GSD; having a hospital in an office block financed by PFI that cost the taxpayer so much more  
than had they built a purpose-built hospital. (*Banging on desks*) That is the vision of the GSD, Mr  
Speaker. So when they talk about vision, let's all throw our hands to our heads and think of what  
they are truly, which are nightmares. (*Laughter*)

Mr Speaker, having prefaced the introduction to my remarks in the way that I have, I have to  
obviously thank the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition for his very kind words this morning when  
135 he thanked me for being appointed (*Interjection by Hon. D A Feetham*) the Minister for Justice,  
which of course I very much appreciate.

So, in order to be able to ground this debate in reality and to be able to ground this debate  
on the facts as they exist, we must set out what I think are the Government's many  
achievements, in employment and in training, in the proper context; and in so doing, let the  
140 public decide indeed, on an objective assessment on the facts and the figures, who in this  
Chamber, which team in this Chamber, has done more for persons unemployed and persons  
requiring training in our nation.

Mr Speaker, it will not have escaped the notice of hon. Gentlemen opposite and the hon.  
Lady, that it will not have escaped the notice of opposite hon. Members that it is the Statistics  
145 Office – not Minister Costa, not Minister Sacramento, not indeed the Minister for Economic  
Development – who sets out in an employment survey, black upon white, the fact of employee  
growth, growth in employee jobs in our economy, recording 1,722 jobs in one year. This is the  
highest number of employee jobs ever recorded in an employment survey and is a testament to  
the success of what I never tire of saying is our tiger-like economy. Indeed, it is not me saying it,  
150 the economists have said so in previous publications, that Gibraltar boasts of a tiger-like  
economy and a regulatory, fiscal, budgetary and legal environment that Government has  
carefully nourished since taking office. And indeed it would not be a coincidence to anyone who  
objectively analyses the situation that the highest number ever of Gibraltarians in employment  
was last year at 11,010.

155 We do believe, Mr Speaker, as the Hon. Mr Phillips has said, that we are as good as our  
people, and as I will demonstrate it has been this Government that has rolled up its sleeves and  
has worked tirelessly with those who are unemployed and are seeking training to be able to  
achieve their objectives and indeed enter the labour market.

In addressing the subject of the motion, it was the private sector that saw a growth of 1,629  
160 in October last year. Of course, Mr Speaker, these facts which I have just mentioned and the rate  
of employment I have to say put in doubt, and I would say even put to shame, the record of the  
GSD when they were in Government.

**Mr Speaker:** I have to remind the Hon. Minister that in replying to this motion I am prepared  
165 to allow certain references to be made to the high levels of employment, to the fact that there is  
very low unemployment and so on, but these matters are only loosely relevant to the motion.  
The motion is not about employment; the motion is more about skills and apprenticeships. As I  
say, I am prepared to allow him to make some references in passing. I did not stop him with  
what he had to say about the airport or about the Theatre Royal by way of introduction, I have  
170 let him get away with that, but these are not matters which are germane to the motion. So by all  
means make some passing reference, but you cannot develop those points to any great extent,  
because they are not relevant to the motion.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Chair for his remarks. The reason for setting  
175 out the labour market, as I explained in my preface, is for the very simple reason that if there is a

180 motion before this House that suggests that there is a skills cliff edge and that there is a serious deficit in training, there have to be people to be trained. Therefore, if I am putting to this House that there is the highest number ever of Gibraltarians employed in all the different areas of our economy which are set out in the employment survey, it is, I think, respectfully, germane to the extent that if we are to analyse objectively and empirically and investigate which sectors indeed should there be a need for training, that we set out first of all the labour framework, which of course is our labour market.

185 Mr Speaker, talking about training, I continue to address the motion. The hon. Gentlemen opposite should know that when the manifesto was prepared last year and presented to the public, we set out there the Government's achievements in respect of training, and indeed we set out the facts and the figures of what had been achieved so far. One salient fact is that out of a total of 276 trainees who are employed by the five Government training companies, 168 of those were employed in the private sector, which is the point that I was making before Mr Speaker's contribution.

190 Mr Speaker, following on with employment, there has been no mention by the hon. Gentleman opposite that for there to be a proper identification of the skills that are required, and for which the Government should put in place any training programmes, we did launch, the Minister for Education and I, this year an Employment Development Service, which was started by the former Minister for Employment, the Hon. Mr Bossano, who went literally to schools to advise school children of the skills that will be required by our economy. It is therefore not a coincidence that, following the hon. Gentleman's identification of such skills, we shall now have over, around 60 students who are training for accounting and finance to be able to do the jobs in auditing and accounting – an industry, where there has always been a shortage of skills but now where there are over 60 students who are obtaining the skills to be able to enter the job market.

200 And of course, Mr Speaker, it also has to be said, in terms of the comment the Hon. Mr Phillips made that we are as good as our people, over the three months that started roundabout in June this year, the House will recall that we were able to employ 172 previously unemployed persons who had come to this Government for help. Therefore, it is, in our view, somewhat rich for us to be lectured about helping people in finding employment or in training when this is the Government that has assisted as much as is humanly possible, and is proven by the facts that I have set out a few moments ago as to all of the people who were previously unemployed and who now boast of being in full-time employment. In that respect it should not go unmentioned that in the four years that this Government has been in office there have been 730 full-time jobs for Gibraltarians. That is, in our view, I think, a very fair summary of the achievements of this Government since taking office.

210 Mr Speaker, in terms of the training that has been conducted until now I already referred the hon. Gentleman to pages 32 and 33 of our manifesto, and in those pages we have just some of the most salient points that I am sure the Hon. Minister Bossano will take to further elucidate during the course of this debate. But it has to be remembered that when we prepared this manifesto in 2015 the number of Gibraltarians in the construction sector had risen, and it has to be recalled that previously we had heard, when we were on the opposite side of this House, that Gibraltarians did not want to be in the construction sector and that is why they were not in the construction sector – and, as the Hon. Minister Bossano will now prove when he addresses this House, there was a vertiginous increase in the numbers of Gibraltarians who took to working in the construction centre.

220 Further, since the introduction by Minister Bossano of City and Guilds, a total of 209 at the time of writing the manifesto, had successfully completed the craft apprenticeship and were awarded or were awaiting their certificates. That is, Mr Speaker, at the time of last year, 209 trainees in less than four years, compared with 124 in 15 years. Does the hon. Gentleman therefore not realise how hollow his protestations sound when in five years we were able to achieve so much more than they did in 16?

In care, a burgeoning field as well, the Hon. Minister Bossano was able to start providing care training, and I am sure the whole House will agree that care provision is of course a burgeoning field in terms of employment.

230 Mr Speaker, in total sum there was, in the three and a half years from February 2012 to August 2015, a total of 1,242 previously unemployed persons who had obtained employment after training, so it is clearly the case that there has been plenty substantial meaningful skill training in Gibraltar in the time that we have been in office.

235 The hon. Gentleman opposite also says that we should pay heed to being able to provide training to other businesses and makes note of the Chamber of Commerce's remarks. Mr Speaker, in that respect surely the hon. Gentleman opposite knows that the Hon. the Chief Minister announced training costs as an expense against profits of a business or company at the rate of £150. That means that a company that invests £1,000 in training its employees with a view to them obtaining skills or qualifications now is able to obtain £1,500 as a deduction against  
240 its profits for the accounting period on its tax computation. That is a clear incentive, which goes to address one of the points that the hon. Gentleman made in respect of not providing sufficient incentives for training and noting the Chamber's comments.

The hon. Gentleman opposite also has to note that whilst noting the training that has been done by the Hon. Minister Bossano, it is also a fact that the Department of Education also provides for persons who want to be trained in certain skills, such as electrician, to be able to pursue that route as well. So it is not just one route that is available to persons who require or wish to raise the level of ambition and to be able to train, but there is in fact another route available to them.

245 Mr Speaker, in all, to say that it is not realistic and it is not fair to say and it is not right that there should be a motion before this House suggesting that there has been no training, or very little training, or substandard training, when a quick read of the manifesto and the statistics that are contained in here shows that in fact there has been training and the results that have been achieved there.

255 So Mr Speaker for all of these reasons I will robustly ask my colleagues to of course vote against the motion presented by the Hon. Mr Phillips, because if ever there has been a team of people down to a man and to a woman who have cared about finding employment for the unemployed, who have cared in making sure that people are trained and have the right skills to be able to enter the labour market, it is this Government. (*Banging on desks*)

260 **A Member:** Hear, hear.

**Mr Speaker:** Any other Member making a contribution?

Any other Member of the Opposition making a contribution? The Hon. Edwin Reyes.

265 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I wanted to make a contribution but I was waiting for the Hon. Joe Bossano. He had indicated at the last Question Time that he was going to provide certain figures as requested in Questions 682 to 685 inclusive. If I make a contribution now, Mr Speaker, I have used my slot, shall we call it. I then would not be able to reply or make use of any of the figures that the Father of the  
270 House was going to provide. I do not know how we can solve this so that (*Interjection*) I do have at least some information to be able to make ...

**Hon. J J Bossano:** Mr Speaker, I want to listen to what everybody has to say before I answer them all. I can only speak once.

275 **Mr Speaker:** There is sometimes a problem during debate in trying to determine the order in which Members are going to speak, but you cannot force –

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, because I have such high regard for the Father of the House and I have a soft spot in my heart for him, I will go first and then he can hear what I have to say in relation to this. I hope he will reciprocate by providing the answers to the questions, as he promised in the last session of Parliament.

I am just going to talk about a very narrow aspect of this debate that has been brought into sharp focus by the contribution of Minister Costa. Minister Costa made a point, and he said, 'Well, how can we train people in the industries of the future? We do not know what the industries of the future are.' And to hammer home his political point he said it is political voodoo, a crystal ball from Harry Potter. And then to hammer the point even further, he mentioned the hole in the ground and the airport, which hon. Gentlemen opposite manage to weave into every single political point in every single political debate that they make.

I think that is at the heart of an important division between the Opposition and the Government in relation to this point. Because our position for a number of years, certainly since I have been Leader of the Opposition, has been that what we ought to be doing is conducting a survey – engage with industries, look at what employers want in terms of training and how employers see the economy moving in the future; how does the Government itself see the economy and the sectors moving in the future; what are the sectors that we want to be attracting to Gibraltar – and then train people in those sectors. That is our philosophy. It is not about voodoo. It is about preparation, it is about looking forwards to what we think Gibraltar is going to look like: what are the industries of the future, what are the industries that we ought to be, as a nation, training our young people so that they can take up those opportunities?

The difference between the Government and the Opposition, highlighted by the sarcastic comments of the hon. Gentleman, is that they take a different view – and I understand it, in fact. I am not sure that the hon. Gentleman understands it, but I understand it because I understand where the Hon. Minister Bossano comes from. The philosophy of the Government, in statements made by Minister Bossano, is 'Well, actually, let's do something different: let's analyse in the labour market' – and that is the first survey that was made by the Government, chaired and headed by Minister Bossano – 'let's analyse what are the jobs at the moment in the economy. We look at the jobs that are there in the economy at the moment, we look at the nationalities of people within those particular jobs and then what we do is we try and fill those jobs with Gibraltarians by training people to do those jobs.' That is the philosophy of the Government and I understand it. What that has, in my view ... and I understand it, and to a certain extent it is logical and there is a worthwhile point to it, but what it does, in our respectful view, is it focuses the skills of people on a very narrow platform, and that is what are the jobs today, what are people doing today and let's get our own employees to replace the foreign workers in jobs. That is why, in terms of the training and construction centres and the other training centre in Gibraltar, what the Government is basically doing is focusing on the wet trades, for instance. The Government says, 'Right, the jobs in construction are in wet trades' – cement, bricklaying, those kinds of things – but it is narrow, Mr Speaker. I understand that there is a benefit to that, but it is narrow because we should be training people in a much wider skill set than just simply the wet trades. We should be looking at electricians, we should be looking at carpenters, the traditional skills which are being forgotten – they are being taken up by ... we are having to import that skill set from outside because we are not training our people in those skills. Therefore, training is much more than just analysing the figures, much more than just analysing the nationalities; it is also about proper planning, it is also about a much wider skill set and looking to the future.

That, without looking at any Harry Potter crystal ball or without any voodoo economics or voodoo of any kind, is really what we believe that we ought to be doing. That is my own contribution and that is what certainly I have urged the hon. Member and hon. Members opposite to be doing – is to be looking at that wider skill set. We are losing those skills and we are also losing a golden opportunity, particularly now that we have got to have an eye not only on the present but also on the future, because of Brexit, and looking at what are the skills that



330 an economy that now needs to move on, that needs to de-diversify into different sectors ... what are the skills that are going to be necessary for the future.

That is the approach in a nutshell. I hope I have fairly summarised what the differences are between us, but that is the approach certainly that we would advocate from this side of the House, and therefore I associate myself with everything that the hon. Gentleman, my hon. and  
335 learned Friend, Mr Phillips has said, and I too commend the motion to the House.

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. Albert Isola.

**Hon. A J Isola:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

340 I have some difficulty understanding what we are hearing from the other side of the House in a number of different ways.

The first is that I remember when, in the Election in 2011, the Future Job Strategy was announced, and everything that the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition has been talking about just now has been talking about looking at the future to ensure that in the future we have  
345 people in a position to take jobs locally to support the local economy. I remember also at the time – I was not in this House – hearing the hon. Member talk about the failed job strategy. And so if you rewind the clock five years to 2011 when the Future Job Strategy – failed job strategy from that side ... and you then fast forward five years, I think if there was going to be the remotest teeny bit of fairness, the Members opposite would have to concede that the Future  
350 Job Strategy has been a huge success. How do you measure that success? Well, Mr Speaker, the only way is by looking at the numbers of employment. At the last Election, in 2015, the hon. the mover of the motion would go on television and even in their pamphlet talk about ‘dead-end jobs’, that in fact what we were doing was training people in dead-end jobs. We never found out what those dead-end jobs were, and we still have not heard that today of course, and that  
355 seems to have slipped through the net – we have not heard it much since the 2015 Election.

But in real terms, when you look at the motion that has been proposed by the hon. Member and you read ‘serious skills deficit’, and he talks of ‘high-quality apprenticeships’, I would like to understand what a high-quality apprenticeship is – because he has not told us. We do not know what ‘advanced training’ is, we do not know what ‘high-skills apprenticeship’ is. Is it high skills if  
360 the tools they use are made in Switzerland as opposed to China? What is it? Because he said absolutely nothing, and in their pamphlet in 2015 absolutely nothing about what this great training scheme that they are going to provide for the future of Gibraltarians is. I struggle to understand. He says that the motion should be taken in the spirit it is intended, and the first line – I do not know what spirit it is that he intends it – ‘notes that we must tackle the serious skills  
365 deficit’. (*Laughter*) Are you serious? Are you seriously telling this side of the House that you expect us to take the motion in good faith – good faith which the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition said that was what the motion this morning was about – when you are telling us that there is a serious skills deficit, that we need ‘high-quality apprenticeships’, that we have a ‘skills cliff edge’, ‘substandard apprenticeships’? (*Laughter*)

370 Mr Speaker, (*Interjection*) I am the newly named Minister for Commerce, so I represent the bulk, I would say, of the working community. I meet with the Finance Centre Council, which represents the entirety of the financial services sector, the Gibraltar Gaming and Betting Association, the entire gaming... I know you did not mention them in your pamphlet, but I think when you talk about skills you may want to have the GBJ in the back of your minds. I talk to the Chamber and I talk to the GFSB. As the Hon. Minister Mr Costa just said, the one item that he  
375 refers to in his motion has actually already been done; it is just that you have not even realised. The bit in the motion where you talk about providing private sector business with support and assistance has been done since the last Election.

380 So when you talk about all of these things, and when I talk to all these different groups and associations that really between them represent the entirety of the business community, *not*

once, not once have they said to me, 'We really have a skills shortage, we really have a skills cliff edge, we really need high-quality apprenticeships,' which God knows what that means.

385 I was hoping that today with this motion the hon. Member would get up and spell out once and for all what it is that the GSD and the Opposition mean when they talk about high skilled apprenticeships, what they mean by their skills school and the other bits and sound bites that they mention, because it all, from this side of the House, seems very much the same. It sounds good but it is actually meaningless. There is no substance to what they are telling us.

390 So I do not understand how you could ever have a motion before this Parliament talking about skills, talking about labour, talking about employment, without in the very first line congratulating the Hon. Minister Joe Bossano for absolutely everything he has done to achieve the highest levels of employment ever with the lowest levels of unemployment ever. I am not surprised they do not want to listen, because it cannot make very pleasant hearing.

395 Mr Speaker, in all seriousness, a motion that seeks to denigrate the training and the skills that this side of the House has provided is frankly astounding. The Leader of the Opposition talks about the division between us, and I think he analysed the two parts as two philosophies with a degree of accuracy, but for me it is more about another word which they so much like to use on that side of the House – it is about a vision. We do not believe in visions, we believe in reality and we believe in getting people trained and into jobs as quickly as we possibly can for their long-term future and for the benefit of our community in securing that. Anything else, anything  
400 other than that, is simply playing politics with people's lives and I do not believe that anybody in this Parliament should stand before the community today and mess around with talking about these things which are absolutely meaningless. They sound good, they promise a lot, but as usual they deliver nothing.

405 Thank you, Mr Speaker. (*Banging on desks*)

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. Roy Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, the motion before the House this afternoon is no less important than the one this morning. We have a duty in Parliament, obviously, to provide  
410 meaningful jobs for all.

I have just heard the Minister for Trade – I believe that is his new Ministry – congratulate the Government for the highest levels of employment. There are lies, damned lies and statistics, and I am sure Mr Bossano will lead us through them later.

415 The highest level of jobs ever in this economy was the growth of 1,722 jobs from 2014 to 2015. It is interesting when you analyse that growth number, which is 7.1%, because of those 1,722 jobs generated in this economy in that year, for which the Government claims credit, 1,248 of those workers are described under nationality in the official statistics report as Spanish. So their fantastic growth of 7.1% in one year – of those jobs, 72.5% went to our friends across the way. I am sure the Gibraltarians listening would be interested to know, of those 1,722 jobs  
420 that this Government has generated, how many went to Gibraltarians. Well, according to this, 19 went to Gibraltarians, which is more or less about 1.1% of the growth. So Members here, we can talk about statistics, and statistics and more statistics, but the fact of the matter is that the jobs growth has not gone to Gibraltarians, and this is something that has to be made clear. It is not just the statistics that matter, but to whom these jobs go to.

425 I remember many years ago, when I was doing an economic analysis of the economy, I went to the Stats Office and I asked for the unemployment statistics, and I was told, 'Well, we don't actually produce those.' There has been a lot of talk about reduction in unemployment, but unfortunately in this report, which is quite rightly called an Employment Report, it says nothing about unemployment, nor do we have any accredited statistics in here talking about  
430 unemployment levels. It may be something that this Government or future governments may consider introducing.

Of course, an employment survey which goes to employers is obviously by definition only existing jobs. There is nothing in here that talks about unemployment, the length of unemployment, the nationality, the period and other things like that which would be useful in any normal economy. We hear quite a lot about the unemployment rate in the UK going up and down and in America the same way, non-farm payrolls in the US, but in Gibraltar we do not have anything to say – *(Interjection)* Well, we don't. If anybody does have it or if it is published, please let me know. I would love to have it. So when we talk about statistics we have to be very careful, because either side of the House can spin them any way we want – Mr Bossano knows that and I know that – but the reality for the man on the ground is have they got a job, have they got a future, is it a meaningful job. For those reasons, I identify very much with my learned colleague's motion.

The Minister for Trade talks about affectively meaningless comments about skills gaps and what are we really talking about. Well, perhaps you should go, instead of to the Chamber of Commerce you should go and visit Unite the Union as well, because Unite the Union, I quote, and this is only yesterday, says it is 'concerned about the skills gaps that exist regarding manual trades in Gibraltar'. Their words, not mine. *(Interjection)* Unite says it cannot allow Gibraltar to see itself short of trades people and believes leg work to resolving the matter has to start now. The union recognises the current minimal training mechanism but claims this training programme is inadequate to furnish Gibraltar with the quality tradespeople it deserves. Mr Speaker, those are not words coming from the Opposition, they are not words coming from the Chamber; these are words coming from Unite the Union, whose responsibility it is to look after its membership and ensure that they have good and meaningful jobs in the future.

And so, Mr Speaker, for the reasons I have outlined, Unite the Union have got their concerns, the statistics do not necessarily seem to indicate what the Government would wish us to believe, and for those reasons I identify myself with the motion by my learned colleague and obviously I will be voting in favour of this motion.

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. Joe Bossano.

460

**Hon. J J Bossano:** I am not sure which of the three motions I should be speaking to, Mr Speaker. There is the motion by Mr Phillips, the motion by Mr Clinton and the motion by Mr Feetham, because they spoke about three different concepts.

Let me say the one I have little difficulty in agreeing with is the one from the Leader of the Opposition, but of course what he said has nothing to do with the motion that has been brought to the House, because what he has told us is that the difference between us – that is between the party in opposition and the party in Government – is that they understand that we are looking at the present requirements but they believe we should be looking at the future. I understand what he is saying, but I will explain to him why, in fact, there is a flaw in the analysis that he has put to us. The hon. Member is right, and I am grateful to him, not because he has been nice to me because he loves me, but because he is being accurate, which is something I think he should commend to his colleagues – **(Hon. Chief Minister:** And to himself.) and to himself when he talks to other Members, but he has been accurate with me. *(Laughter)*

It is true that we carried out the skills audit. In fact, I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that his present colleagues did not know that we had done it. I was asked when it was going to be done, in an earlier meeting of the House since the last Election, and I had to remind them that it had in fact been done in 2012. It was a very comprehensive thing. It was based on records that are not 100% accurate. Because for the benefit of Mr Clinton, let me say that we consider the figures on the level of employment that are provided by the returns from employers to be more accurate than the figures that exist in the records of the Ministry for Employment, for the simple reason that quite often people employ people and their employees are recorded because the contract of employment is recorded. But very frequently the termination is not recorded; or, if recorded, is recorded a long time after it has happened. So

480

485 there is a discrepancy and there have always been of the order of 2,000 or 3,000 between the  
people who are supposed to be working in Gibraltar according to the records of the ETB and the  
people who are employed in Gibraltar according to the records of the employment survey. So  
the Government – this Government and the previous Government – have used the more  
conservative figure as the more accurate one, and that conservative figure shows the increase  
490 that there has been in the private sector, not in pseudo jobs as the hon. the mover of the motion  
has described it in the past: pseudo private sector jobs. These are real private sector jobs. So we  
have moved in a situation where our training has been geared to make sure that we took a  
greater number of people into jobs who were residents that previously were taken by frontier  
workers.

The economy has grown, so although we increased the percentage of Gibraltarians in  
495 employment in 2011, if he looks at the 2012 employment survey he will find that in that year the  
total number of workers came down because the construction slowed down, and in the  
construction sector that was shrinking the number of Gibraltarians went up. But of course  
subsequently, with the developments that have been taking place in recent years, the  
construction sector expanded and that expansion brought in workers from outside. We have  
500 always accepted that when you have got a lot of building going on, the size of the construction  
sector – at least it has always been described by me in those terms and nobody has ever  
challenged it ... There is a size of construction industry in Gibraltar of around 2,000 people that is  
there all the time, and there is a size of construction sector that is between 3,000 and 3,500  
which is there when there is a lot of building. What we need to do, in terms of having a resident  
505 construction workforce, is to look at ensuring that we have as many of the jobs in the 2,000  
category as possible. That is what we set out to do. It is not true that we concentrated on the  
wet trades to the exclusion of anything else; what we did was we put more emphasis on the wet  
trades, and therefore the intakes in the Construction Training Centre have been eight for  
plumbing, eight for carpentry, eight for painting and 24 for the wet trades. I explained from the  
510 beginning ... and if there was logic and genuine intentions in the motions that are brought by the  
Members opposite, then you would expect that the explanation that we give would have some  
effect, but if somebody says something in a motion which is the same thing that they said in the  
elections and they ignore everything that was said before the election, everything that was said  
during the election and everything that was said since the election and carry on saying the same  
515 thing ... Well, look, as my colleague has rightly pointed out, how can we note that there is a  
serious skills deficit that we must tackle? If we know that there is a serious skills deficit we must  
tackle, which the mover of the motion says exists ... The Hon. Mr Clinton says it exists because  
the union said so yesterday, and the Leader of the Opposition says he does not know if it exists  
because we need to do a survey of the businesses to find out if it exists and that is what we need  
520 to be doing. Well, it cannot exist because it is looking to future skills in future industries. I do not  
dispute that that is a policy which is not necessarily different or in conflict with ours. I think the  
policy described by the Leader of the Opposition, with which I have no quarrel, is compatible  
with ours but it cannot be the exercise that we need to do to train the people that are  
unemployed now, because if we provide training now to the unemployed people in expectation  
525 that there will be a future demand for those skills. And if the demand does not arrive, they will  
not be in a dead end job, they will be in zero job – they will be unemployed. They will be more  
skilled but still without work. That is why investing public money in providing skills starts from  
the premise that it has to be demand led. That is the difference: that we train in the knowledge  
that there is a skills deficit. For me, a deficit is a gap between supply and demand. I do not know  
530 what the hon. Member means, but that is what it means to me, and I can only assess that the  
gap exists by using two sources of information, which is what I have used.

One source of information is: is there a gap that is currently being filled by outsiders which I  
know can be filled by our people, not because we need to sack the outsiders but because there  
is a huge turnover? The transient workers in Gibraltar have a churn of 4,000 a year. We lose  
535 4,000 people and 4,000 new ones come in. If we have got 300 people out of work and 4,000

540 people leave, all we need to do to help the unemployed is to see which of the 4,000 jobs that have become vacant because people have left – not because the economy is shrinking but because the labour market is expanding ... So we can look to the jobs that are coming new and the jobs that are becoming vacant and channel the training into those areas, and that will lead to employment, which is the purpose of training.

545 If we, in addition, think that there might be a skills deficit in the future in skills that do not now exist then I have no problem with that, as put by the Leader of the Opposition, because that is not in conflict with what we are doing in the present circumstances but is looking to the future – and I believe we need to look to the future but the indications of what might come in cannot come simply from asking the present employers. It has to be linked to inward investment. This is why the training precisely is in the Ministry for Economic Development and has been, from the beginning, linked to inward investment – because the original concept from the start was that if an investor comes tomorrow and says, ‘I want to bring a new industry to Gibraltar but the skills that I need do not exist’, we will not wait for the cliff to hang over. What we will do is say to the new employer, ‘You have to tell me what skills you need and I will give you all the necessary support – if you need work permits, I will give you the work permits – but there will be one condition: there have to be x number of locals shadowing the people you bring in, for which we will pay, we will provide them free, and then when the local guy is trained he takes over from the outsider.’ That is looking for future skills for future industries, linking it to things that are coming in. Until now, we have not had that kind of new skills set being demanded from us, because until now the expansion that we have had has not been from totally new industries but expanding organically from people who work here already or from people who came to add to those who were here. We have had gaming companies or other entities coming in entering a market that was already there, we have had insurance companies coming in entering a market that was already there.

560 If we are really serious, if this is not just playing politics – which I believe it is, but if it is not – then the debate has to be serious, it has to be professional, it has to be technical and it has to be based on facts. And there are no facts. We start from a position where what we are being asked to do is the antithesis of the democratic process, because if the hon. Member says this was the difference we had in the election campaign ... Well, look, this is the manifesto we had in the election campaign and we were voted to implement this. We produced a detailed account of craft apprenticeships and vocational training. We explained what we had done and we asked people for a mandate to carry on doing it. (**Hon. Chief Minister:** Seven out of 10.)

570 The position of politicians is that they are expected to implement their manifesto when they get into Government. When the GSD was first elected to this House in 1996, the first thing they did in the first few months was to bring a censure motion against me – it has taken the present Opposition a little bit longer than it took the last time – and I said to them, ‘If you censure me, the logical thing is that if you were to win we would have to resign and call a new election, something that I would enjoy – since I have beaten you 73 to 20, I do not mind repeating the exercise.’ Obviously, the pleasure would not be as great this time because this time we only beat them 63 to 37, but with a bit of pushing – (**Hon. Chief Minister:** Sixty-eight to thirty-two.) Ah, 68 to 32 – I was being too generous! (*Laughter*) It must be all the nice things that he said to me at the beginning. (*Laughter*) (**Hon. Chief Minister:** Seven out of 10.)

580 So what is it then that we should do if we were to not fulfil our manifesto: look to theirs? What is it that they had in theirs that we should be looking to? Can I remind the Leader of the Opposition that he invited the electorate to welcome the 2015 manifesto, and having explained all the things that we were doing wrong – which is perfectly legitimate if he wants them to vote for him and not for us – he then said at the end, having first welcomed them to the manifesto, ‘This isn’t the manifesto, but we are still finalising it, but here are some of our priorities.’ Well, they have not finished (*Laughter*) finalising their manifesto. They are still saying the same things that they did when they were beginning to prioritise it. In politics people are criticised for not fulfilling their manifesto. They did not even get round to printing it or producing it! It is a failure

of a magnitude that is geometric, not arithmetic (*Laughter*) – and they criticise us for what we do. They were saying the same thing then: ‘We will abolish the Future Job Strategy and the false promises, our apprentices will be given the opportunity of learning real skills for real jobs.’ Why do they want to know what people are learning? Why is it that in the 15 years from the time that Pepito Baldachino left the Training Centre – which was the year that it produced most trainees, by the way; it went down after that with every year of the GSD – in those 15 years, the Construction Training Centre was producing the same skills in the same trades? What was it about those 15 years that stopped in 2011 and then it became unreal jobs and unreal training?

The hon. Member has asked me am I going to give him the information that he asked for in Question Time. Well, yes, I will give him the figures showing who is being currently and really trained for unreal jobs, the low quality useless training that is now being done by the people in the Training Centre who were doing wonderful training between 1996 and 2011 and decided, for reasons not known to me, to stop giving people quality, real training and produce rubbish training, which somehow we conned the City and Guilds Institute of the United Kingdom into accepting as real and they gave certificates and signed them.

We have got, at the moment, four doing plumbing at level 2, one doing tiling at level 2, one doing bricklaying at level 2, two doing plastering at level 2, six doing carpentry at level 2 – I hope that makes him happy, Mr Speaker, because when he spoke he was concerned that I was only doing wet trades and not doing carpentry: six doing carpentry – and two doing painting. They all started in the Training Centre in October 2015.

In the case of engineering apprenticeships, the numbers and start dates are as follows: fabrication and welding, two at level 3 – I do not know if level three is a sufficiently high level or the hon. Member wants us to do welding at level 4, which I understand is the equivalent of an honours degree in welding; two doing mechanical engineering at level 2, who started in 2016; four doing mechanical engineering at level 3, who started in 2014; four doing mechanical engineering at level 3, who started in 2016. So in mechanical engineering we have got a total of 10. Is mechanical engineering a sufficiently attractive skill to satisfy the hon. Member, or is that a dead-end-job rubbish skill as well? Or is it that he does not know that this is happening?

In electrical engineering we have got three at level 3 and eight at level 3. The three are the ones who started in 2014 and the eight are the ones who started in 2016: 11 doing level 3. Level 3 is something that is not required for a craft rate of pay, as previous Ministers of Employment in the GSD administration have told the House for 15 years. Or is it that, before, a level 2 was a craft skill obtained by an apprentice which enabled him to get the craft rate of pay which is accepted by the employers in the industry and accepted by the union, and now the fact that we have got so many people doing level 3 is that we are failing and we are doing minimal training?

The number of intakes per financial year in both centres have been 11, 12, 1 – I am not counting the ones that happened before November 2011; 12, 13, 3; 13, 14, 11; 14, 15, 21; and 15, 16, 12.

The potential trainees for enrolment at level 1 have been identified, contacted already and interviewed, and the new intake is expected to take place in the month of November – this month. They have already been selected, they have already been interviewed, and there is an intake altogether, covering the four construction trades that I have mentioned, of something of the order of 34 or 36, I think. I think more were contacted, but the ones who have actually turned up I think is around 34 to 36 and during this week they are being given the induction and the protective clothing and that kind of thing for the start of the course. They will be doing the generic health and safety thing, which everybody does initially, and then they will be doing an NVQ level 1 and then specialising in their trade in level 2, which is the way the system works under City and Guilds.

Mr Speaker, this is the latest information in the context of a motion that the hon. Member is asking me to accept, which says that we must tackle a serious skills deficit and that there is a real need for the introduction of high-quality apprenticeships to meet the needs of existing businesses and emerging ones. Well, I do not know what the needs of the emerging ones are

640 going to be because they have not yet emerged. *(Laughter)* I am concentrating on the existing ones, which I know are there, and I am doing it with the same quality training that was done for 15 years.

I think it is an absolute disgrace to pretend to be seriously wanting to find common ground, on the basis that we accept that we have done more of what they were doing, when they were  
645 doing ... it was less in quantity but better in quality. What we are doing now is more in quantity but less in quality. It is now rubbish, but it is the same qualification – the NVQ. It was the hon. Member opposite who, in fact, corrected me a long time ago – three years ago – when I talked about the NVQ being one thing and the City and Guilds being another. He put me right and he said, ‘No, you are wrong, they are all NVQs; it is the awarding body that is different.’

650 When the hon. mover asked me will I consider doing things other than City and Guilds, the answer was no – not because I do not want to agree with him; I explained to him we were already doing it. I said to him, ‘We are already doing the Construction Board certification, the City and Guilds certification and EAL certification, so if you ask me, “Would you consider doing more than City and Guilds?” the answer is no, I do not consider doing it, because it has been  
655 going on all the time. The fact that you do not know that it is happening does not mean that I am being unco-operative or not wanting to respond to you; it is that you just do not know what you are talking about – and I cannot help that.’ *(Laughter)*

Mr Speaker, in trying to interpret what the hon. Member thinks is reality one can only go by what has been said previously by the mover, and one has to assume that the mover of the  
660 motion is in fact continuing the same story that he told in the election campaign. I would remind the hon. Member of the radio interview he did on this subject, and in that radio interview when he was asked about the gold-plated apprenticeship he said he was very excited about it and it was about finding an academic route for young people who do not have the requisite skills to pursue vocational training in terms of craftsmanship. The core principle behind this, he says, is  
665 creating opportunities for young people so that we can create sustainable jobs in plumbing, craftsmen and electricians. Well, look, these are the rubbish jobs that we are training them for now. I have just told him the number of people who are doing level 2 and level 3 in plumbing, craftsmen and electricians. It is happening. If it was not happening, then he would be entitled to say he wants me to do something that I am not doing.

670 He also said we have to look at new technologies, gaming and e-commerce. Well, look, I have said publicly ad infinitum that I welcome being approached by employers who are interested in taking on apprentices and we will provide all the support that they need. Nobody has come forward.

My Department wrote to him immediately after the elections – and you wrote back. What  
675 you wrote back was to say, Mr Speaker, that he could not tell us the names of the people who were crying out desperately for the apprentices. I said, ‘Okay, well don’t tell me their names. Go back and tell them that this offer is an open-doors policy. I want to welcome them and I want to give them all these apprentices they are crying out for.’ Well, clearly they prefer to carry on crying but they will not come forward. *(Laughter)* Clearly they are so committed to the GSD that  
680 they are willing to spend an eternity waiting for the miracle to happen when they come into Government so that they can stop crying and get their apprentices. I do not believe it. I think he is making it up. *(Banging on desks and interjections)* I do not think there are people out there, because if I was an employer – and I hope that there are employers listening to me – then I have to tell them you do not need to wait for Mr Phillips to be in Government to come forward. Come  
685 and see me and I will give you all the support and all that you need, because if you wait for Mr Phillips all your businesses will be out of date and we will then have to be looking for the new businesses that the Leader of the Opposition says we should be looking at, because that is how long it will take.

Is it that apprenticeships for nursing careers, which he does not mention, is something not  
690 worthwhile? Does he not know that we have got now degree courses for staff nurses and that we have reintroduced enrolled nurses? *(Interjection)* No, not the degree courses. They did not

exist, because they have happened in the middle of our time. We started doing something else, diploma courses, and now they are degree courses. But we have reintroduced enrolled nurses, which they abolished, and the system we put in place means that we have been training people who were unqualified. We trained them first by employing them through the Training Company and they did on-the-job training to become nursing assistants, and then, following that, they have gone into an 18-month training which gives them up to NVQ level 3 and they become enrolled nurses. After that, they still have, as a result of the NVQ level 3, an opportunity to go into the grade of staff nurse and get a degree, even though they were the people who did not have the opportunity of going to university. These are the people who did not have the A-levels and who could not go to university, and now we have found a route that gets them up to NVQ level 3 and opens up an opportunity for them – after they have trained as an enrolled nurse, after they have been working – to enhance their skills further and get something that was out of reach before.

Is that not something worth supporting and is that not an opportunity for those people who fall behind, ensuring they get an opportunity to get quality skills? Or do we have to carry on increasing the number of frontier workers in our Care Agency and in our hospital, which, if we had a hard Brexit and a problem at the frontier will lead to the collapse of our medical services and our social and care services because of the level of dependence created in the last 15 years which was not there in 1996? And they are going to lecture us!

I suppose he does not know it. I suppose he does not know what happened in those years, but if he wants to be honest then he should make it his job to see whether what we can be criticised for compares favourably or not with the track record of the party he has chosen to join. I know it is quite possible that when the party he has chosen to join was in office he was criticising it as PDP and the leader was criticising it as the Labour Party, *(Interjection)* but they have got to understand that they were right when they were criticising it and now they are wrong when they are defending it. *(Interjection)* They were right when they were criticising it. *(Laughter)* He was wrong to have left the GSLP and form his own party – that we all agree. *(Laughter)* But for as long as he was still a Labour opposition wanting to get rid of the GSD more than I did, according to him – *(Interjection by Hon. D A Feetham)* As long as that was the case, then I think he was on the right track. I think when the love affair started then I am afraid it was all lost. *(Interjections by Hon. D A Feetham and Hon. Chief Minister)*

Mr Speaker, the jobs that have been created in our economy and the growth in our economy are important statistics, not because it is the inevitable consequence of the training, because the training is only a part of it, but because the hon. Member says without quality training we will not be able to develop the economy and produce economic growth. Well, look, we are growing at 7.5% - we are actually growing a bit faster than China now. What is it we need to do in quality training to break the speed of sound at the speed he wants us to grow? In the four years from 2007 to 2011 the private sector grew by 1,339 jobs, which was considered a magnificent achievement by the GSD in government. In opposition, the GSD rubbish a four-year growth of 3,110 jobs in the private sector. *(Laughter)* So we grow by two and a half times as much, which was a miracle – so ours is 2.5 miracles, which is rubbish. *(Laughter)*

How can he expect me to take him seriously and accept the hand of friendship? I am likely to get it bitten off! *(Laughter)*

Inferior qualifications: if the hon. Member is able to identify the skills that he says exist ... because I accept the version of the Leader of the Opposition that there will be skills that will be needed in future, and we do not know what they are now but it is clear that the technology-driven global economy, if capitalism continues to survive, which is a big *if* but assuming that it still does, *(Interjection and laughter)* then Gibraltar's own economy will have to adapt to that. But let us look at what is the nature of the economy we have got today and let us be realistic in what we can deliver, and if we are not doing enough of it the Opposition is perfectly entitled to criticise us for it. And if they think that they can put forward proposals – specific, identifiable proposals that we have not thought of – I will welcome that and I am happy to give them the



745 credit for doing it. So what? What is wrong in accepting that they might have thought of something that we have not thought of? But it has got to make sense and it has to be done with the private sector.

I gave the example. When I answered the hon. Lady's question in the previous session I explained to her what we had done with the bus drivers as an example – the coach drivers. The industry was concerned that there were a greater number of cruise liner calls planned and that the cruise liners had only agreed to come here on the basis that we could guarantee that there would be coaches and coach drivers. The industry was interested in having resident coach drivers, because it is no good having the cruise liners having the coaches and the drivers on the other side because on that particular day the guy got out the wrong side of the bed and was stopping everybody, so they preferred to have local people. In order to do that, we funded the training of people who had normal driving licenses and were unemployed and who were willing to take on this job. And then we went one further: in order to make it possible for what is a seasonal trade and therefore not very attractive – that is to say it was not attractive because there was no guarantee of a job all the year round ... But by the definition of the hon. Member what we have done is retrained unemployed people and put them into dead-end jobs, because if you are a coach driver, even though the dead-end job pays £10 an hour, which is quite a good rate for the private sector, it is not a job where you get promoted from bus driver to anything else – you are a coach driver, you do the Rock tour and you explain the tourist side to the tourists. That is an industry that we want, that is an industry that they support and that we support, and we invested public money in making sure that those jobs which were not previously attractive to Gibraltarians were made attractive, and we used the EU funding – which I am trying to use up before it disappears, as Members will understand – to provide funding that will enable people to be given two-year contracts. Therefore, people who were previously not even interested in being given a job on the basis that they were called when the liner arrived and then laid off when the liner left – for reasons that are very understandable because they would say to me, 'Well, look, Joe, if I take this job I may make a few hundred pounds in a couple of days but I may miss the opportunity of a regular job by coming off the unemployment list' ... So now we are giving them, by agreement with all the industry, all the employers in the industry ... and although they gave me the credit for it I have publicly said no, the credit goes to them because I responded to what was their initiative. That is something that I think is important that the private sector should be aware of: that we have got an open mind and an open job policy and we will respond. But they have to come to us and convince us. They have got to produce a business plan that shows that we are not throwing away public money, that we are investing public money in something which in effect will regenerate itself because the activity that is now happening as a result of having trained 58 otherwise unemployed people to do the coach driving means that now that money stays in the Gibraltar economy. Before, it would have been vulnerable to Frontier problems. It could have cost us people taking us off a list of reliable cruise ports, and therefore it is an investment that we made. That is the kind of things that makes us ... We do not say, 'Who wants to be a coach driver?' We will wait until there is a secure, gold-plated, lifelong job and meanwhile we will keep the guy unemployed.

785 This is what the motion is talking about. The motion and the things that the hon. Member said when he was interviewed ... When he was interviewed in that radio interview he kept on about the nature of the work. I quoted the bit about the craftsmen. He said that the Government should get the private sector to take on apprentices and that the employers would get top-up grants to reach the minimum wage. Doesn't he know that what he was proposing in his manifesto and in his election campaign is less than what we are already doing? We are asking the employers not to pay anything. We pay the minimum wage, 100%. Doesn't he understand that quite apart from the fact that the people who are training now are getting over £1,000 a month and that in the GSD they were getting between £150 and £280, doesn't he understand the fact that in Germany an apprentice gets €632 euros and in Gibraltar he gets €1,200 euros a month must mean that we are making it much more attractive for unemployed people to go

down the route. We are actually rewarding those who wish to learn at a level that nobody has ever done before in Gibraltar and nobody is doing anywhere else in Europe? Nobody has ever done it before us and nobody is doing it now, currently, anywhere else. That shows the level to which we are committed to attracting people, to persuading people that they should take on learning, because in many cases the minimum wage is what is being paid in the private sector for 60% of the jobs and we are saying to people you do not have to choose between working as a labourer for £6.28 or being an apprentice for £3, because you will get your £6.28 by being an apprentice, and then when you have learned, you are getting paid the same as a labourer while you are learning, and then when you have learned you will be able to get £7.50 or £8 in the industry. That is the difference that there is. That is what a craftsman gets, that is what a carpenter or a painter or a brickie gets in the private sector, about £8 an hour.

This is not a wonderful job that you have got to go forward to, so when the hon. Member said in that interview that instead of going to the UK to do a degree, what they would do would be to persuade people that an apprenticeship is as good as going to university, he was asked by the interviewer, 'Do you really think people will take it up?' and he said, 'No, I do not.' Even he did not have confidence in his alternative, and the reality is why should people take up the job if it is a question simply of wanting ... You have got the choice of going to university. The prospect of coming back and getting more than the minimum wage is guaranteed if you come back with a degree. The fact that you then become a craftsman in the trades that he mentioned will not get you anywhere near those rates of pay. That is the reality. Even if you do the level 3, which allows you to be a chargehand, if we trained everybody to level three there would not be enough chargehand jobs for all of them.

So it is not that we are doing less training or less quality training because that is our policy and theirs is different; it is that we are doing what the market requires. There is no deficit in terms of the market, other than the deficit between the demands of the market and the resident workforce, and that deficit is both numerical and in skills. It is numerical because we have got 26,000 jobs in our economy and a population of 31,000. At the rate we are going there will be more workers than the population. Obviously, the skills requirement of the economy requires numbers that we do not have and requires skills that we do not have, but the bulk are in areas where the level of skills required is not that high but those jobs are not attractive. If people have to choose between working in catering, which has got unsocial hours for which no payment is made and weekends for which no payment is made because that is the way the industry ... If the industry has to pay a different kind of pay structure for resident workers than what they have to pay for imported workers, they will not employ the resident workers.

When we had the situation under the GSD where people did not want to join the construction industry, which was the original explanation for the low intake into the construction industry, the position changed in 2010, as I have explained to members previously. In 2010 the Government took the view that there was a reluctance on the part of the private sector to employ local people and a reluctance on the part of the construction company to employ local people and to accept them when they came out of the Training Centre, and the way they addressed that reluctance was by saying, 'Well, if you work for the Government then you will be required to be on the approved contractor list, you will be required to give priority to the people we send you from the unemployment list,' something I supported when I was in opposition and something that we have continued doing in Government. And, in fact, recently, in conjunction with my colleague the former Minister for Employment, we have extended that beyond the areas where it was before, which was construction, security and cleaning, and we are now extending it to everybody who has got a Government contract and is supplying a service, so that we can then have more opportunities. But that does not mean that we have got enough workers to replace all the important labour force. We would need to have a population of 60,000 to be able to do that. We may get there one day, but we are a long way off.

So the position is that we are trying to get a situation where not only do we want to have unemployment well below 300 but we want the employees that we get employed to get an

850 opportunity to move up the scale in terms of the available jobs in the private sector – but they  
must be jobs that exist, and therefore we monitor what we found in employment and the next  
thing we do is we monitor the vacancies. If I say to the hon. Member the average number of  
vacancies is 200 a week. Fifty a week come with the person to fill the job already identified and  
selected by the employer. Of the 150 that remain, something like 125 are on the minimum  
wage, £6.28, which is already paid to the apprentice, and most of them are in areas which are in  
855 the catering or construction industry. The big area that we have not been able to get into has  
been the gaming industry. It is not for want of trying but we have not been able to identify the  
kind of skills that they need where we can provide people who are capable of acquiring those  
skills, because the reality of it is that the biggest problem we face in Gibraltar ... and I think the  
failure to home in on that shows that the gap between us is bigger than the hon. Member  
thinks. The big problem that we have in Gibraltar is not that there are those who want or do not  
860 want to go to university; it is that there are people who come out who, if nothing is done for  
them, finish up in what has been used in the United Kingdom and in other places in Europe as  
NEETs, which is that they are not in employment or training or receiving education. That  
category, which are the people who come out without paper qualifications and are in a situation  
where we have to concentrate in that area.

865 This is why when we started looking at the training programme that we are doing, what we  
have done is not to lower the quality, because the quality is the quality of the body that gives  
the qualifications, but to look at the problems that our people have. And there is a serious  
problem that we have got where when they go from level 1 to level 2 they have to be doing it at  
work. This is not something they do in the Training Centre; they are away from the Training  
870 Centre. The people from the Training Centre visit them on the sites and they have to build up a  
portfolio. The guy may have no problem in building a cavity wall – and I use the example of the  
cavity wall because one of the things that has kept bricklayers in training for four or five years  
was the fact that part of the requirement was that the trainer, the lecturer, the person doing the  
assessment, had to go on a building site and see a cavity wall being built. It was not accepted  
875 that the cavity wall should be built in the Training Centre. Somebody somewhere in Gibraltar has  
to have a cavity wall. So the guy had completed everything in his portfolio, he had done  
everything he needed to do, but he could not get the papers as a level 2 craftsman until we  
found a cavity wall for him. But having found a cavity wall, he then has to put in the portfolio the  
description of what he has done. This requires a level of command of the English language even I  
880 or Members opposite might not have in actually writing out everything. I can tell the hon.  
Member that that is a real and a serious problem, and we are producing people who have got a  
problem in passing the element of the portfolio, the academic part of it, when they are actually  
totally, totally competent in doing the physical work. I think that is discriminatory against our  
own people, because if somebody has got some problem in describing in English what he has  
885 actually done, the Portuguese construction workers, the Rumanian construction workers, the  
Polish construction workers, the Spanish construction workers, all of whom are building in  
Gibraltar, none of them will get the NVQ, none of them, if they have to do the portfolio to get it.  
But of course nobody gives them a portfolio when they go to the building site, somebody gives  
them a brick, the cement and the mortar and says go and build a brick wall.

890 So we have to look at having a situation where testing the skills is something that is  
important, because we want our people not to be disadvantaged. We want them to do those  
jobs if they are prepared to do them. We want to encourage them to do it. We want to make it  
financially attractive to do it by paying them the minimum wage, and then we want to resolve  
the problems that they have. And all the time we are looking at how we can get round this  
895 problem. We have agreed with the union that we need to be looking at local qualifications in a  
way of meeting this or doing something that enables the people who are otherwise held back by  
... Some kids who come out of school at 15 come to the Training Centre and say, 'I don't want to  
be here as if I am back in school. I did not want to stay in school and this is not what I want. I  
want to get my hands dirty. This is what I want to do – I want real work.'

900 Everything that is taking place outside Gibraltar, the hon. Member has argued that he has  
been ... In the election he said he had done a lot to look to the UK and that he was going to  
follow what the UK was doing. Well, I am not sure that he has looked at what the UK is doing,  
because what the UK is doing is closer to what we are doing than to what he is saying. No? Well,  
Mr Speaker, I can tell him that in England – because there is not even a system in the whole of  
905 the UK; England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have each got their own system – and in  
England, the new apprenticeship schemes provide that there is no mandatory requirement for  
qualifications. Apprenticeships are no longer defined by qualifications, as there are no  
mandatory requirements. They have moved to a position where there is an end assessment  
when they assess the skills, and this is the new scheme that has come in in 2015-16 and is due to  
910 be completed by 2020. Scotland is carrying on with the previous scheme that they have with  
their own qualifications, and Wales and Northern Ireland have not yet decided whether they are  
going to follow England or follow Scotland.

So he says he has done all this research – well, look, I have done the research and the people  
who are employed in the Ministry in the training area have done their research and they try and  
915 keep abreast of what other people are doing. We adapt it to what Gibraltar's needs are, because  
we find, for example, that if you have got a situation where the qualification is that they want to  
do an NVQ in plumbing, you cannot find an NVQ in plumbing because in the UK the NVQ is  
plumbing and central heating. So what do you do? Do you train people for central heating that  
they are never going to use? If they fail the central heating, they do not get the plumbing. We  
920 have got to be in a situation where we are able to meet the demands of the private sector of  
Gibraltar to ensure that our unemployment is not the result of our people having a deficit of the  
skills that are required. The skills that are required are not the ones invented by the Member  
opposite. The skills that are required are the ones reflected in the vacancies opened by the  
employer. The employer comes to the ETB and says, 'I want somebody with this skill,' and either  
925 we are able to provide it or we are not.

So I am afraid that the hon. Member does not know what he is talking about. He did not  
know it when he was talking about it in the election campaign and he has not learnt anything  
since, and even when he comes to this House and puts questions and I give him the answers, he  
then goes on his webpage and puts the opposite. When I told him, in answer to a number of  
930 questions that he put to me earlier this year, that I could not agree with the analysis that he said  
that we had to provide quality skills because he did not tell me what the quality skills were and  
he did not tell me where they came from, what did he do? He went on to say that we were not  
prepared to co-operate, that we are not prepared to create modern-day apprenticeships and  
the alternative training for technical skills. Well, look, what he is saying is not true. It is not true  
935 on the website, it is not true in the Parliament and it is not true in the election campaign. So how  
can he say that he is coming here hoping that we can work together in accepting all his fictional  
problems, which he claims we do not want to solve? Where are all these people who are crying  
out for apprenticeships? Why is it that, having told us that they exist and having been asked by  
me to contact them, not one single person has materialised, not one? Where are they? We have  
940 met with the Chamber of Commerce, we have met with the GFSB, we have told them to come  
forward – nobody comes. So how can the hon. Member keep on saying the same thing that he  
was saying then, when it is not possible to believe him?

I am telling him that the crying need for apprenticeships from the private sector is a fiction of  
his imagination and therefore we will not support it, and I am telling the Opposition that, as far  
945 as I am concerned, the version of what the motion was about produced by the Leader of the  
Opposition is something that is acceptable to me and is acceptable to me that in future there  
will be jobs which require skills that do not exist now because the jobs do not exist now, and  
that we need to be in a position, when that time comes, to be ready for it. But we do not know  
what they are going to be and we do not know now, even with less certainty than we might have  
950 known before the Referendum, because we really do not know what is the direction in which  
our economy will have to develop until we know what is going to come out of the negotiations

that have got to take place over the next three years. Certainly, if there was tomorrow somebody new coming to Gibraltar, I can tell him that there is one particular entity that has come to see me – one – with a proposal which may or may not materialise because, as I have pointed out before, there have been many false dawns with many, many people, but this particular entity wants to come to do a business in Gibraltar which I think is very attractive. It has to do with the maritime industry. They are willing to take on apprentices, they are willing to take them to Scotland to do training in diving, which is what the work will involve, and we have already got an agreement with them that if they proceed with that we will be funding the training and we have already identified 28 people who have expressed an interest if it materialises.

I do not like announcing things. I do not announce them before I do them and I do not announce them after I have done them. I am just telling him to make him understand that if he is genuine about what he is saying, it is not that we are not constantly on the lookout for opportunities that bring new industries and help to diversify our economy and help, preferably, to bring industries, income and employment which is not frontier sensitive. So, if we can get people here who are going to be using Gibraltar as a base for a completely new industry that we do not have at the moment and are willing to – they will have to bring some people in initially, but are willing – to give us the opportunity of providing local people to be trained, we are happy to do that.

For all those reasons, Mr Speaker, I cannot accept that this motion is an attempt to create a cross-party understanding on the basis that we are equally committed to providing skills and providing employment for our people, but in fact a censure of my performance as the person who has been responsible for training since December 2011. It cannot be interpreted in any other way. The hon. Member is entitled to go to an election and censure me and the electorate is the judge of whether they accept that he would do a better job than me or they put me back to do the better job. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, this is what I said to people in the election campaign and this is what I have to deliver, because this is what I asked them to vote for. I did not ask them to vote for his promised manifesto which never materialised, on which they were working at the time. Just to put a picture of Rooke and say this is where the new centre is going to be and this is what everybody is going to be doing [*Inaudible*] When he was interviewed and he was asked what it consisted of, he said, 'Well, no, we do not know yet what it is,' and when it is a year later in his web page he still does not know what it is. Those are his very words. He says, 'We will have to talk to the unions, we will have to talk to the business community and then we will have to find out exactly what it is.' Well, fine, talk to the unions, talk to the business community, and when you have found out what it is come and tell me and you can take the credit for it, but at the moment all that you tell me is that there is a skills shortage and we are on the cliff. Well, look, we cannot have been on the edge of the cliff last October and we are still on the edge of the cliff now and there is no chance of us going over the cliff. What does it mean to be over the cliff? What does it mean? The collapse of the economy? Is he seriously telling me that the economy that we have got to emulate is the one in the United Kingdom that grows by 1.8% because they are doing things that are making them grow at 1.8% and we are doing all the wrong things and we are growing at 7.5%?

In those circumstances I am afraid I am not going to be able to vote in support of the motion. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I will move an amendment to the motion, which, as you would expect, will delete all the words after the words 'This House'. (*Laughter*)

I therefore beg to move, Mr Speaker, an amendment to the motion by deleting all the words after the words 'This House' and replacing them with the following:

*notes that the skills deficit which existed in 2011 was identified by the Government's skills audit in 2012, which audit has been instrumental in determining the provision of craft apprentice and vocational training and resulted in a huge reduction in the levels of unemployment between 2011 and 2015; welcomes that the Government, in the 2015 General*

*Election, renewed its commitment to continue with its programme of craft apprentice and vocational training to deliver the strategy of training for employment which is in line with the criteria used in employer-based training in England and in the European Union; congratulates the Government for its commitment to provide craft apprentice and vocational training and reduce unemployment; and calls on private sector employers to co-operate with the Government by providing craft apprentice and vocational training job offers in order to further expand the scope of the training programme and increase the opportunities for residents seeking employment.*

1000 That, Mr Speaker, is the purpose of the exercise. The purpose of the exercise is getting people into jobs. Therefore, it is obvious that the hon. Members opposite know and understand this, because they change the speech. The speech changes from the level of unemployment to the level of dead-end jobs. That is to say if you are an unemployed labourer and we train you to be a craftsman, you are in a dead-end job. Well, look, you are in as dead-end a job as a craftsman as you were as a labourer, except that it is a job that earns more money. But if the  
1005 hon. Member thinks that he should encourage the people of Gibraltar, the people who come out of school, that it is possible for him in Government to do something that nobody ever has done in Gibraltar, which is to guarantee that nobody will have a dead-end job, well, we are all going to be managers managing other people who will do all the work. What does he mean by a dead-end job? Does the hon. Member not understand that the issue is not whether the job is dead  
1010 end or not dead end, but whether you have got a job or you have not got one? And under them they did not have a job!

Therefore we are committed to a policy that is training for employment, not training for unemployment. Again, Mr Speaker, it is something that has to be understood in the context of the limitations that Gibraltar has. In the United Kingdom, and indeed in the European Union, the  
1015 philosophy is that you train people. This is why in the European Union the freedom of movement of workers is such an important issue, because as far as the European Union is concerned there is a single labour market and you can be trained to be an electrician in La Linea and if there is no work you finish up in Barcelona, and you can be trained to be an electrician in the north of England and if there is no work you come to London. But in Gibraltar, if there is no  
1020 work there is no work – period. We are training for a labour market of 26,000 jobs and all that we can do is monitor those jobs and try and train our people for the jobs that look most effective in terms of the income that they generate. But the bulk of the jobs that are out there are jobs on the minimum wage and those are the jobs that our people prefer not to do, and the skills that we provide for them ... And we provide retraining opportunities even for people who  
1025 are in employment so that they can be upskilled. We give people the opportunity of bringing to the Training Centre a portfolio of the work that they do and then they can be assessed, and based on the prior learning that they have had on what they have learned at work they can be regraded. We do that as well, so it is not just limited to the unemployed. We give the opportunity to those even in employment because by increasing the skills set within the  
1030 community we are increasing the potential for income generation, and income generation is what increases the GDP. But of course it can only happen if there is an employer willing to pay for those skills. If the employer does not exist, the skills are meaningless in terms of economic activity and in terms of the opportunity we are giving to those who are affected.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I think that, without a doubt, what the hon. Member claims he wants  
1035 to see happening in Gibraltar can only happen if, instead of trying to use this as a political weapon with which to criticise the present administration Lips, he actually does what he claims to be wanting to do, which is to say, 'I am aware of an area of the economy or a group of employers that are desperate for trainees, desperate for apprentices, but they have not gone to see you, they do not want to see you, but they have provided me with the information and I will  
1040 provide you with it.' Unless and until he produces somebody who comes forward and demonstrates that that need is there and is there today, then I am afraid he is not going to

convince me that there is something that I am not doing which can be done, because until there is an employer willing to commit himself to employing the trainee we are not going to be training people for something that does not exist.

1045 I commend the amendment to the House. (*Banging on desks*)

**Mr Speaker:** The position now is that all hon. Members may speak on the amendment.  
The Hon. Edwin Reyes.

1050 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

May I, for the sake of clarity, come back to a couple of things because other Members present may not be as updated as the Father of the House and I are on this issue.

We are talking about NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3 and so on. Can I make it clear to those Members in the Chamber and those listening behind the Speaker's Chair that in the traditional construction trades everyone starts off training with level 1 and you achieve a recognised qualified craftsman by attaining level 2. However, in the engineering trades – that is those that the Father of the House actually listed as being the mechanical trades, the welders, the fabricators and the electrical trades – there, the level 1 is much, much shorter than level 1 is in the constructions trades, level 2 makes you a quasi-craftsman, but the official recognised craftsman level is the attainment of level 3. There is a bit of confusion for those not acquainted with this sort of education terminology. Of course, the Father is correct in saying that in the construction trades level 3 is what is normally accepted as a chargehand or foreman type of qualification. I do not think we are miles apart, but certainly where the craftsman has the ability I would encourage them to complete level 3 in the same way that as educators we always encourage people who have attained a certain professional qualification to carry on and attain more; otherwise, the Government and the Opposition would not be supporting those who, for example, go on and do a Master's degree. It does not make you a better or worse lawyer if you have simply a Bachelor's in law or a Master's in law, but certainly the higher the qualification the better the academic background the individual has.

1060  
1065  
1070 Mr Speaker, I want to clarify as well that the accreditation of what the Minister referred to as enrolled nurses via the NVQ route is something that I think – in case he was not sure – has always been supported by this side of the House. In fact, I can vouch for it because I was the holder of the budget between 2000 and 2003. When I was accountable for training funds for the Department of Education, we were actually contributing funds towards helping the GHA. They already had some individuals undergoing NVQs and funding was required, because one of the problems with NVQs is that not only do you need an instructor who delivers that, but you then need to have an assessor and an internal verifier – all these terminologies that will just bore Members, but like the Minister and I know, at the end of the day it is just a money-drawing machine. But certainly, although we are supportive of that NVQ route for those who are not academically minded to follow the degree course ... we are supportive, but I hope the Minister recognises that they were in existence during my party's time in government as well.

1075  
1080  
1085  
1090 The part that perhaps the Minister may not have been briefed on 100% by those involved in the Employment Ministry and so on is that yes, it is true that the apprentice, in order to obtain an NVQ level 2 or level 3 – but let's keep to level 2 – in the craftsman trade had to produce a portfolio. The bulk of the portfolio is actually photographic evidence with very, very small captions. It is the instructor and the verifier who have a longer piece of writing to do, and especially those who do not have the academic ability to be able to read and write properly may even ... the same as I am sure Steven Linares can vouch for me, you can even use a scribe to sit down and do a GCSE exam if you have certain difficulties. For example, a person whose vision is poor can actually do an exam like in an oral basis. So I would urge the Minister, because I know his heart is in the right place ... We can have scribes. (*Interjection*) Yes, especially I am thinking of teachers who have community care hours to do – they can certainly act as scribes in the Training Centre.

1095 The Minister is right: I did try a few years ago to introduce a certain level of basic numeracy  
and literacy skills among these apprentices. Certainly numeracy skills come to mind – for  
example, those who are carpenters, who measure, and they say this is 12 cms, 30 cms and  
12 cms, but they need to have at least the basic skill to be able to add that that equals 54 cms.  
But there is nothing wrong in having a scribe in that, and as long as they are able to speak, if at  
least become a little bit articulate, then the handwriting does not have to be good, because  
1100 typed out papers are acceptable and it is totally acceptable to be done within any length of time.  
It is not like a GCSE exam where you are given one and a half hours. You can actually have  
someone doing the typing for you if the correct notification is given to the examination board.  
So these are areas, Mr Speaker, that I know the Minister will take to heart and proceed on.

I do not know who guided the Minister, but an NVQ level 4 is not equivalent or anywhere  
1105 near an honours degree, Mr Speaker. There is a particular chart – I know I had it in my office in  
the Department of Education and Training. It is more akin to an HND type of equivalent. And  
again, if someone can obtain the level 4, they certainly receive my wholehearted support. Why?  
Because one of the areas that perhaps we can identify as emerging skills – and the Minister  
already used the words, ‘How can I identify, how can I know what are going to be the emerging  
1110 needs of the community?’ ... Well, look, Mr Speaker, one of the exercises, if I may humbly  
recommend to him, is let’s look at our current work force – let’s say the Housing Works Agency.  
Those who are 50 years of age have five years after in they are going to start to count pounds,  
shilling and pence, as we used to call it, and say, ‘Is it worth my while leaving at age 55, or not?’  
and they might leave vacancies which we want to be filled up not only by qualified people but by  
1115 qualified and experienced people. I think here the Minister and I both sing off the same hymn  
sheet. One thing is to have a piece of paper saying you have this level of qualification; another  
thing is what you learn in the street. The University of Gibraltar is fantastic, but the university of  
the workplace is at times equally as good, if not even better. It shows you all the little tricks of  
the trade and so on. I believe – well, I can virtually vouch for it – that at the moment within the  
1120 Housing Works Agency we have great craftsmen who have over the years achieved positions of  
clerks of work, estimators and so on, and that is something that the Training Centre itself ... no  
matter how good the instructors there are, they can never teach that. That will be taught in the  
actual workplace.

So, in the same manner that the Minister is trying to say that he would like the private sector  
1125 to be supportive of apprentices and so on, I think we should lead a bit by example and maybe  
both sides of this House can actually ask the Government-owned companies to be leaders as  
well in taking on apprentices and so on. I believe the Housing Works Agency have had  
apprentices learning with them, but I am talking now beyond the level 2 and the level 3. The  
estimators, the clerks of works and so on should also be equally encouraged to do that,  
1130 Mr Speaker.

I am surprised, because I know the Hon. the Father of the House is always in love with  
producing tables, statistics and so on, and I have never ever been able to get quite in one sitting  
all the correct information that I want to have. I do not know why. Maybe those who have held  
the portfolio of Minister for Education have always been able to provide, deducting from  
1135 questions, how many trainees do we have, when did they start, when did they finish, what  
accreditation did they achieve – some sort of simple type of chart that has columns at the top.  
For example, if I base myself on Question 684, it has columns at the top 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015  
and 2016 and then a list of trades: carpenters, how many started level 1, how many started  
whatever level, how many actually completed and on what date did they complete that level.  
1140 Although I am grateful that the Minister said at present in 2016 there are six individuals working  
towards level 2 in carpentry, I am none the wiser what has happened in the previous four years,  
how many started, how many completed, how many gave up after level 1 and so on.

I may have missed it, but I do not think I have got anyone down at all in the engineering  
trades other than in level 3, and I do not have anyone in the construction trades other than in  
1145 level 2, other than the Minister making a reference that he was about to take on a 2016 intake



1150 where what they do is they do that initial basic health and safety ... I think it is to do with the multi-trades so that they are able to get a flavour and then they move on to that. If that is going to lead towards quality training, then at a personal level I can be supportive of him. But let's make sure that people who take on these trades take it on because they want to be fruitful in what they do and they take pride behind the job, and that they are not misled under the conception that they once got, where I have had more than one person telling me that in 2011 they were sold an idea by today's Father of the House that if they attended the Training Centre and completed this course they would actually end up in a Government job. That perception seems to still be alive. I know it could be many moons ago – over five years ago – but, like I say, 1155 mud sticks, so that is perhaps something that the hon. Member has to look forward to and spell out clearly. (*Interjection*) Yes, I will give way.

**Hon. J J Bossano:** Let me assure him that everybody who comes in is told that that is not the case before they start. So, once they have started they cannot be ... They might be under a 1160 misapprehension before they arrive, but once they arrive I go to talk to them and I make it absolutely clear that we are training for jobs in the private sector.

In terms of whether somebody wants to be a plumber, in fact we give them their first choice of ... We ask them first which they would like. If we are only able to take in eight people for plumbing and there are nine, then they are given the choice of either doing something else or 1165 waiting for the next intake. But we assume that if they express an interest in being in one area they are more likely to do better at it than if they are forced into something else. It is also the case ... I do not know if it was happening in their time, but some people studying one subject then change their mind, and at an early enough stage, because it is multi-trade, they are able to switch.

1170 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Yes, it is something that has happened from time immemorial, even when Her Majesty's Dockyard was in existence you did an entry exam and according to the ratings those were the first ones that went and you chose a trade. If you were candidate 11 and you wanted to be an electrician and there were only 10 vacancies available and they had all gone, 1175 then tough.

But again, Mr Speaker, looking at the figures, and unless the numbers of instructors have changed drastically from the information provided a couple of years ago, I know that the instructor plumber retired and they were training another one, and I believe the Minister told me that in September this year he was supposed more or less to complete the course. But we 1180 will leave that question until January.

In the others, in carpentry there is more than one instructor and there are only six apprentices there. In painting there are two instructors and only two apprentices, so that is a ratio of 1:1, which every school teacher would love and give half their salary for. But anyway, that is beyond the Minister's control as well; it is up to an individual what he wants to do.

1185 My contribution to that was let's open our minds as well and not just think of today's need but the emerging need, if I can go back to that, as well, because if one looks at what Government's programme has been of late ... and what they are saying is going to continue happening is more co-ownership housing projects and so on after the period of which ... Let's take Beach View Terraces at the moment: after that period when there is still a certain warranty 1190 and defects have to be made right, the management company is going to have to assume the general repairs, maintenance and so on. I would really love it for the management company to be able to have local resident workers that they can call upon who would produce good quality work to carry out the repairs in a good, competitive, economic price. I live in a co-ownership estate, and most of the work that has been engaged by the management company does not 1195 happen to be local resident labourers and that is something that I think we should all work together to avoid in the future.

1200 The future is there, the jobs are there, certainly emerging quite soon, and if the other housing projects take place then there is going to be a great demand. So, in the same way that we invest heavily in GCSEs and A-levels to produce the doctors we are going to need for the future, let's do likewise in these grades because they are as honourable a working trade as whether one is a lawyer or a humble teacher like us, Mr Speaker.

1205 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, I just wanted to add that I completely agree with what the hon. Gentleman says. I do not want to get into the whole debate, but it is important to understand that what I have tried to do, for example, in GCS where we have a core of young people who are now maintenance workers and they have actually qualified for that, there is a handyman's qualification where they do a little bit of everything – electricity, plumbing, masonry – and they become what we call a *manita*, a person who is able to do maintenance, and that is a qualification which has an NVQ and there are levels 1, 2 and 3. Those young people who are now  
1210 in employment and doing that, so these are very meaningful jobs and this is what we have been trying to do, and we are doing it. Therefore, anybody who is employed now or who wants to do those courses will have the prospect of getting other jobs. So I completely agree, but my emphasis is that it has been happening since 2012 onwards. There are employees, for example, in Kings Bastion now who also get employed as handymen, or women – because there are a few  
1215 as well – and then, as employers we send them to train so that they do have a qualification at the end of the day. So it is not only that they are employed to do things; they have the opportunity to become qualified, because ultimately some other private sector management company in the estate that the hon. Member has mentioned wants a person to be able to do a little bit of everything, and with that qualification they might want to get employment there because they get more wages than what they have been getting.  
1220

So it is happening and those are very meaningful jobs. That is why I cannot understand either the motion, because there are many, many areas in which I know that the hon. Member, the Father of the House ... I send all the jobs that I need for GSLA, for Kings Bastion, for GCS to him and he sends me young people who want to work and then we do the training with them. So it is  
1225 happening. I completely agree with him that this is what we have been doing and this is exactly what these qualifications will do for them, and they are very meaningful.

**Mr Speaker:** Any other contributor to the debate?

1230 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, very briefly on the amended motion. The Hon. the Father of the House is not one to blow his own trumpet at the best of times, but I have to say that on this particular occasion on the amended motion he has exceeded himself. He realises that it is not possible for us to support what is this blatant ... Well, I was going to call it brilliant; I am not sure that it is brilliant, because it is just a blatant piece of propaganda starting with 'notes the skills deficit which existed in 2011 and congratulates the Government' for what they have done since  
1235 2011.

In my contribution I want to make a number of observations. I have listened to the hon. Gentleman and some of what he has said – in fact, a lot of what he has said – I can relate to, and indeed some of the arguments that he has deployed today were arguments that we were  
1240 deploying from the Government benches.

One of the points indeed, that I made during the debate – and the hon. Gentleman is wrong when he said the debate, when I was in the Labour Party and my learned Friend was in the PDP ... It was a debate that occurred in 2011 and it was a debate where I was representing the GSD, my learned Friend, Mr Phillips, was representing the PDP and it was Mr Licudi who was  
1245 representing the other side, and that was in 2011. One of the points that I made there was that in 16 years of government the GSD had created 8,500 new jobs – total, private and public sector – and there had never been 8,500 unemployed in Gibraltar, so it was physically impossible to fill that amount of jobs just simply with locals, and it is a point in fact that he has made during the

1250 course of his own contribution today to take the sting out of the criticism – or the observation, because it was not a criticism – of my hon. Friend Mr Clinton when he said that if you looked at the employment survey there had been a very low number of Gibraltarians who had taken up jobs within a particular sector.

1255 I think there are three separate strands. I am trying to characterise it as fairly as possible. I am going to just characterise as well our criticism and, I think, the wider community's criticism of the hon. Gentleman's strategy. I think there are three separate strands to this.

1260 The first, rightly, is a strategy of the hon. Gentleman – which I have described and he has agreed with my description – which starts from the skills survey that was done in 2012: let's see what are the jobs, what are the nationalities and let's try and get Gibraltarians into those jobs. That is a valid strategy and I accept that it is a valid strategy, but it is not a valid strategy to just simply look at in isolation. In other words, it needs other things to the strategy, and the weakness, I think, in the hon. Gentleman's strategy has been in taking it too far. That is my own personal view of the strategy, because if you look at the Job Strategy, for example, from its manifesto conception, where it said a training scheme of up to two years, it went from two years to one year, to three months and sometimes less than three months. The criticism that can be reasonably and, I think, credibly labelled in terms of training – not in terms of putting people into jobs; in terms of training – is what can somebody learn in three months. I think that where one can criticise the Government is in an over-focus on the statistics – in other words, getting those Gibraltarians into those jobs occupied by Spaniards, or whatever, which I believe is a valid objective, but to the exclusion of the real training, which is the point that is being made by my learned and hon. Friend, Mr Phillips.

1270 And I come to the second, because you need a second strand, and if you then look, in terms of the second strand, at the training, the intakes – to illustrate my point – into I think it was the Construction and Training Centre and the other Training Centre over the last five years, the new intakes have been one in the year ending 2012, three in the year ending 2013, 11 in the year ending 2014, 26 in the General Election year ending 2015, and 12 in 2016 in the year so far. I think those are low numbers and I think the Government needs to invest more time and more money – and I know it costs money – into boosting those numbers, not only in the wet trades. Again, I accept that it is valid to look at the wet trades, because that is an area that is being undertaken on our construction sites throughout Gibraltar, but also in your plumbing, in your electricians, in your carpenters, and we need to boost the numbers. I think that if one looks at the criticism that is being made by Unite, the criticism that is being made by the Chamber of Commerce, I think it is a reflection of the low numbers – and I am just quoting from the intakes – and therefore what I would urge the Government to do is to examine that and to see whether the numbers can be boosted in terms of intakes into those craftsmen, if I can call it that, craftsmen jobs. Because worthy as the matching Gibraltarians with jobs is, what we have got to also do is ... that those Gibraltarians, or some of them, have the skills that are necessary that will equip them not only for today but also for the future.

1280 The third strand, Mr Speaker, is the strand that I spoke of during the course of my own intervention earlier. I am not going to repeat it, but I think that the hon. Gentleman underestimates the importance of it in a Brexit situation. The hon. Gentleman I know attempts to have an eye on these things and attempts to have an eye on the future, so I was rather surprised at the way that he dismissed it at the end of his intervention. In a Brexit situation we have to ... and I realise that there are difficulties in knowing precisely where the United Kingdom is going, first of all, in relation to Brexit – that is the first question – and then, secondly, whether we are going to be able to go in the same direction as the United Kingdom. That is also an open question as well. I realise there are difficulties, but any prudent, reasonable Government and a Government that is looking towards the future has to be able to look at all the various alternatives and all the various permutations and say, 'Well, look, what is our economy going to look like in three or four years' time, and is it possible for us to do something now in order to make sure that our people are prepared and are trained for that eventuality?'

1300

That is the approach certainly I would urge on the hon. Gentleman. Those are the three strands – there may be more, and no doubt there are more strands: Gibraltarians filling those jobs; your trades training, the training that people go for one, two or three years, depending on the level that they undertake in terms of NVQ; and also looking towards the future.

1305 That is my intervention on the amended motion.

**Mr Speaker:** Is there any other intervention on the amendment? If not, I will ask the hon. Mr Bossano to reply. The Hon. Mr Bossano.

1310 **Hon. J J Bossano:** I welcome the contribution that has been made pointing out the areas on the technical side of how the NVQ problems that I have identified can be addressed. I am grateful for that and I will certainly take that on board.

Dealing with the last contribution, where the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition is saying that his concern is that we may need to do more, the 26 intakes that he quoted – I do not know whether he thinks that an intake is an individual trainee. As far as I am concerned, an intake is ... For example, if we have taken in 24 trainees to do the wet trades, that is one intake made up of 24. So the intake is the number that start the course in a particular year. *(Interjection)* Yes. *(Interjection)* No. I think he mentioned that there were 26 intakes, no? The figures that he was quoting which he thought could be – *(Interjection)* Yes. The figures that I quoted of the intakes – the breakdown that I gave him is not 26 individuals. If I have said there are 26 intakes it means that in that financial year we had, for example, eight plumbers coming in and that is one intake, eight painters coming in and that is another intake. The intake is the class, not the number of individuals. Obviously, the hon. Member has had the number of individuals previously given to him in previous answers to questions. *(Interjection)* I think the question was intake and I gave him intakes; that is my understanding. *(Interjection)* I will give way, yes.

1320 **Hon. D A Feetham:** No, the question was how many people are currently undertaking level 1 NVQ. That related to people. That is why, when the hon. Gentleman came back and talked about intake, what I am assuming is that when there is one intake it is one person and three intakes is ... which struck me as very low numbers in terms of the people who are being taken on to do the NVQ level 1 in any given year.

1330 **Hon. J J Bossano:** The figures that I gave for the number of intakes per financial year does not show 26 in any of them. It was one in 2011-12. That is to say there was one intake between December 2011 and March 2012. That was not one person; that was one intake, one class. In 2012-13 there were three intakes. In 2013-14 there were 11 intakes. At the moment, we have got four intakes that are starting now. The four intakes this year is an intake for plumbers, an intake for carpenters, an intake for painters and an intake for the wet trades. The total number of the four, in terms of individuals, is 34 individuals. I mentioned that the numbers ... In answer to the question who is starting with level 1 this year, in level 1 this year, in this month there will be something like 34 individuals spread over four intakes, which is an intake of plumbers, an intake of carpenters and an intake of painters, which will be less than the intake of wet trades, which continues to be a larger class than the others.

1340 So I am sorry if I misled the hon. Member, but the figure is not that there have been 26 individuals, because in fact he knows, from the questions in previous meetings of the House, that we have talked about something like 190 persons or 170 people having done the level 1 and level 2 since December 2011. There could be an intake of one, but it is unlikely to be the case. We aim for an intake of eight and, as I have explained, if we have, for example, more than eight people wanting to be plumbers in the ones that have been interviewed ... I do not know, I have not been given the distribution because they are still in the process of finding out what they would like to do, but if there were nine plumbers then if there was a spare capacity in painting or carpentry they would pick the ones that they think have got the best chance of succeeding

and then to the ninth person they would say, 'You have two choices: either you wait maybe for our next intake,' which could be in six months' time, 'or you can choose to not do plumbing and do something else.' At this stage it is quite an easy thing to do, actually, because the bulk of the level 1 creates a basis of skills that then they can specialise in, in level 2. And sometimes when they start doing the level 1 the people who said they wanted to do plumbing change their mind and decide they want to do painting or something else. That is what I explained when I was explaining it previously in my original contribution in support of the amendment.

1355

1360

I appreciate the point that the hon. Member has made, that having congratulated the Government – I have not congratulated myself, I have congratulated the Government – in the amendment and having said that there was a skills shortage then ... Well, look, I think it cannot be denied. The skills shortage that existed at the time was reflected in the skills audit. If we have got a situation where there are 100 people working in the wet trades in the construction sector and seven are Gibraltarians and 93 are imported workers – if that is not a skills deficit I do not know what you call it. I have to say to him the percentage is now better than it was then. It is nowhere near 100, because I think of the different construction trades this one is the least attractive and it is a cleaner job to be doing plumbing, painting or carpentry than to be mixing mortar and building brick walls and doing tiling and that kind of thing. But remember that the emphasis is, as I explained already and as we explain to the trainees ... We say to them, 'Look, the reality of it is that Aerial Farm has finished and 300 jobs have disappeared.' If we are talking about giving people a sustainable job – it may be a dead-end job, but it is a job that will be there – the job that will be there will be the job that was mentioned by his colleague. It will not be in the building of Aerial Farm; it will be in the maintenance of Aerial Farm. What we are trying to do is to ensure that the bulk of the permanent construction workers should be local, so that there will be people there who will be able to look to continuity of work all the year round that will not be seasonal work, particularly because something that has happened in the construction industry which created problems for us from the date that the Frontier opened has been that, by the very nature of specialisation in the construction industry, nowadays one company gets a contract to deliver a site –

1365

1370

1375

1380

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I want to listen to the hon. Gentleman's contribution but there are people on the other side talking and I just cannot focus on what he is saying. I would just ask the hon. Gentlemen to give some courtesy to the Hon. the Father of the House who has the floor. *(Interjection by Hon. Chief Minister)*

1385

**Hon. J J Bossano:** I will try and speak a little bit louder.

The point that I am making is that in the nature of modern training ... We had a situation, Mr Speaker, on the Aerial Farm housing estate where the main contractor subcontracted the doors. We do not have carpenters making doors anymore. A company comes in and fits a thousand doors in the estate. Training somebody to fit doors is not a quality apprenticeship; nor is it something that we would want to do in Gibraltar, because when that estate is finished the people who come in and fit doors will have gone off somewhere else to fit doors. The industry in the United Kingdom, for example, provided training for bricklayers, but the only thing they did was lay bricks. The bricklayer would work not by the hour but by the number of bricks he would lay. A really good bricklayer would lay thousands of bricks and would have two labourers just bringing him bricks to lay and earn £1,000 a week. But of course for anybody to have a secure job laying bricks there must be an ability to move from building site to building site throughout a nation state laying bricks, which is done. There are people who are professional bricklayers, who can build brick walls blindfold. What do we have to do here? What we have to do here is produce people who will go to maintain the housing estates that we are building and those we want to be local, and there will be the people who will have to be craftsman made, skilled labourers, there will be the people who will be the skilled workers who are doing the maintenance, and there will be the people who have supervisory and managerial jobs. That

1390

1395

1400

1405 structure is the structure that we are trying to build now, and we are trying to build it in  
 anticipation of where the expansion of home ownership will create permanent jobs all the year  
 round. That means, in effect, that the construction industry will have, as I have mentioned, in  
 ball park figures, 1,500 people who come in, build housing estates and disappear, and we have  
 2,000 people, which is likely to be a growing field the more housing estates that we have. What  
 1410 we are doing there is something that is planned, that is logical, that is based on figures.

What the hon. Member suggested was not something that we were doing in terms of  
 concentrating too much on this, because having concentrated on this we can see what is  
 achievable. For example, if the *Sunborn* says they want somebody to help in the kitchen and we  
 are sending somebody who has never helped in a kitchen, we are not going to pay the *Sunborn*  
 1415 for three years to have somebody in the kitchen when the job can be learnt in three months.  
 This is not an apprenticeship. So there are apprenticeships which lead to a qualification and  
 there is on-the-job training which does not lead to a qualification but leads to the person who  
 says, 'I will not take the man or lady you sent me, because they have never been in a kitchen  
 before.' In order to remove the excuse for rejecting the local worker on the basis that he has no  
 1420 prior experience and no prior knowledge, we say, 'Okay, we accept that while the guy is learning  
 the job he is not productive, not producing enough for you and may actually be a negative  
 element in the workforce because you may have to have somebody else who is productive being  
 interrupted to explain to the new person how the job is done, but what you cannot have is a  
 three-year apprenticeship for somebody who is a kitchen hand.' A kitchen hand may be a dead-  
 1425 end job. It is a dead-end job that some people who are unemployed will find attractive.  
 Members will acknowledge we have had them questioning why was the take-up in the *Sunborn*  
 not higher, given that they have received support from the Government. We have tried to make  
 it higher, and the same thing applies to local companies that are willing to take people on.

So it is not that I am unwilling to listen to constructive criticism, and if it makes sense I take it  
 1430 on board and I am grateful for it because I do not pretend to have all the answers, Mr Speaker. I  
 understand that it would be asking too much of the Members opposite to congratulate us in the  
 way that the motion was, but it may be as unrealistic to expect them to vote for the amendment  
 as it was on their part to expect me to vote for their original motion.

1435 **Mr Speaker:** We will now put the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr Bossano to the vote.

All in favour? (**Several Members:** Aye.) Those against (**Several Members:** No.) Carried.

Now, on the motion as amended all Members who have not spoken on the original motion  
 may now speak, if they so wish. If no one wishes to do so, I will then ask the Hon. Elliott Phillips  
 to exercise his right to reply. That is the position.

1440 The Hon. Elliott Phillips.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful for this debate because I think that it is actually  
 much more fundamental than some of the discussions and some of the comments that have  
 been made by hon. Members opposite.

1445 In fact, I think, starting with Minister Costa when he referred to the unemployment figures, I  
 think he understands by a slight reprimand from the Speaker that this is not a debate about  
 unemployment, it is not a debate about full employment, it is not about the GSD's time in office;  
 what it is about is real jobs and real opportunities for young people.

I think what the motion does is try to set out the serious concerns that have been highlighted  
 1450 by not just the Members in this House and opposite the Government, but the unions, the  
 Chamber of Commerce and people who campaigned outside this House. What Members  
 opposite are trying to do is, to use Mr Isola's words, denigrate the union's views, who even this  
 week have commented in relation to a serious skills deficit. The Members opposite can choose  
 to ignore the unions, the Members opposite can choose to ignore the Chamber of Commerce,  
 1455 but at the end of the day they will choose to ignore the people outside this House who handed  
 them all leaflets complaining about the lack of apprenticeships. They can choose to do that and

they will continue to do that, but what I would say is that the intention of this motion was to show the Government that there are serious concerns about the skills deficit in our community.

1460 Minister Bossano talks to this House about me not knowing what I am talking about. I am not too sure whether he walks round Waterport Place or he walks around Europort, whether he talks to young entrepreneurs who have employees in their business, who are looking at developing Apps, looking at gaming and looking at individual programming and coding. I speak to these businesses and I speak to young men who work in these industries, and their offices are filled with Spaniards. That is the reality that he wants to talk about, that is the reality I am going to talk to him about, because when I walk into those offices and I am invited to see them, they say they have been to see him, they have been to see Minister Costa (*Interjection*) but there has been no reply, (**Hon A J Isola:** Nonsense!) they are not interested...finished!... they are not interested in the modern technologies, they are not interested in growing a workforce to feed that industry. That is a shame. I think we should all be trying to promote gaming, app development, coding – (**Hon A J Isola:** Gaming! Are you serious?) (*Laughter*) It is called gaming. It is not the traditional gaming that you are responsible for; it is another form of gaming – apps, computer games and allied services to the industry that Mr Isola, in financial services ... I think that is what we should be looking at, surely: developing our young people, giving them the opportunity to work in these industries and giving them the tools to do that.

1475 We are looking at apprenticeships, not three-month apprenticeships where we can learn a trade and then be thrown into a job where they have not got the adequate skills and the adequate training to do it. We are not talking about three months; we are talking about a three-year-long process by which these people, in partnership with business, can create apprenticeships.

1480 I commend the hon. Gentleman in relation to the maritime apprenticeships that he speaks of. I know he does not want to commit to them now because he is obviously in discussions with them, but I commend him for that. That is exactly what we should be doing: sending our young people off to get that training and to come back and work those jobs. But I walk around Gibraltar, we all walk around Gibraltar – walk up Waterport Place in the morning and see the hundreds of people flooding the buildings, who are not from our home. Surely we should be creating an opportunity for those young people in our community who do not go to university – they do not have the opportunity to go to university – who want to do these jobs. Why can't we do that? I think that is really the nub of the Private Member's motion in respect of apprenticeship. It is with the greatest of goodwill that I say to all Members opposite that I think we should create better opportunities for young people moving forward.

1490 I take the point that he makes in relation to plumbing, electrical engineers, mechanical engineers – of course all of that is required, that is needed; but in a serious threat, which Brexit clearly is to our community, I think we should have a bit more foresight into the future as to what skills will be needed in the future. That is what I am talking about.

1495 We talk about ... (*Interjection*).

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Try and just ignore them.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Yes, I will do.

1500 He talks about demand led, and I think we have to do more than that, not just be reactive to the market. What we need to do is look at what opportunities there are in the future, surely. I would invite him to walk into those businesses and see them for himself, and I think he will really acknowledge the fact that we are not doing as much as we should be in relation to that.

1505 The hon. Member opposite seems to be fixated with NVQs. It goes beyond NVQs and City and Guilds. An apprenticeship is a long-term experience for these individuals who want to work in industries; it is beyond qualifications. That is what I am arguing for and that is what I am advocating for, and that is what people outside this House, when they are campaigning, are arguing for as well. That is what the unions are looking at. That is what the Chamber of

1510 Commerce is looking at. What you are doing is ignoring the views of the Chamber, ignoring the views of the union, ignoring the views of the people who have commented to me and have written in the *Chronicle*, and ignoring the views of the people in relation to this issue.

I am just extremely disappointed that they are rejecting, effectively, the Private Member's motion, which is intended to stir debate on apprenticeships and long-term sustainable jobs for our community moving forward, and replacing it with a self-congratulatory statement on what they have done so far and ignoring the genuine concerns of people in Gibraltar about apprenticeships and training.

That is all I have to say. (*Banging on desks*)

1520 **Mr Speaker:** I will now put the motion, as amended by Mr Bossano's amendment, to the vote.

Those in favour? (**Several Members:** Aye.) Those against? (**Several Members:** No.) Carried.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr Speaker:** The Hon. the Chief Minister.

1525 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn *sine die*, but not without thanking the Hon. the Father of the House for his lesson in how to deal with training and debating this afternoon.

1530 **Mr Speaker:** I now propose the question, which is that the House do now adjourn *sine die*, and not having received any notification of any Member wishing to raise anything on the adjournment I will put the question, which is that this House do now adjourn *sine die*.

Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Carried.

The House will now adjourn *sine die*.

*The House adjourned at 7.45 p.m.*